PROCEEDINGS

of the

National Executive Committee

of

THE AMERICAN LEGION

National Headquarters
Indianapolis, Indiana

May 4 – 5, 2016

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PROCEEDINGS

of the

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

...At 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 4, 2016, the National Executive Committee was called to order by National Commander Dale Barnett.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I call this meeting of the National Executive Committee to order. With the flag of our nation in place, hand salute. Two. Please uncover. I now call on Past National Chaplain Randy Cash for our invocation.

Invocation
Tierian 'Randy' Cash, North Carolina, Past National Chaplain

As we pray this morning, please remember the family of Ted Kelley, also the family of Charlie Keating IV, the Navy SEAL who was killed yesterday fighting ISIS in Iraq.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, we are gathered in this place to observe and to conduct the business of our great American Legion. It is fitting that we pause, if but momentarily, amidst all that will happen today to recognize you, the one in whom does finally reside all authority and all power, and by whose grace in whom does finally reside the will that will lead us and guide us. So accept our homage this day.

We pray for those who are in harm's way, fighting for our nation around the world. We pray that you would give us clarity of thought and unity of purpose. This I pray in the tradition of my faith and invite all to do the same. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony
Tierian 'Randy' Cash, North Carolina, Past National Chaplain

Resolution 288 adopted at the 67th Annual Convention requires the designation of all POW/MIA chair at all official meetings of the American Legion. This is the symbol of the thousands of American POWs and MIAs still unaccounted for, from all wars and conflicts involving our nation. With the POW/MIA flag positioned to my left, let it serve as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners, the repatriation of the remains of those who have been killed in action, and a full accounting of those who are still missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor.

Pledge of Allegiance and
Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion
Daniel L. Zimmerman, Georgia, National Sergeant-at-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Dan Zimmerman of Georgia for the purposes of Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I call on National Adjutant Dan Wheeler for the purposes of roll call.

Roll Call
National Officers

National Commander
Harold D. Barnett, Georgia

National Adjutant
Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia

National Vice Commanders
George E. Cushing, Arizona
Jimmy F. Lane, Arkansas
Alan A. Davis, Sr., Minnesota
David L. Gough, Wisconsin
John W. Hargreaves, Maine

Past National Commanders

Keith A. Kreul, Wisconsin (Excused)
Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland
John P. 'Jake' Comer, Massachusetts
Hon. H. F. Gierke, North Dakota (Excused)
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia
Robert S. Turner, Georgia
Dominic D. DeFrancesco, Pennsylvania (Excused)
Bruce Thiesen, California (Excused)
William M. Detweiler, Louisiana
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine
Butch L. Miller, Virginia
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr., Idaho (Excused)
Richard J. Santos, Maryland
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania
Hon. John A. Brieden, III, Texas
Thomas P. Cadmus, Michigan (Excused)
Thomas L. Bock, Colorado
Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts
Martin F. Conatser, Illinois
Robert W. Spanogle, Michigan
David K. Rehbein, Iowa
Clarence E. Hill, Florida
Jimmie L. Foster, Alaska
Fang A. Wong, New York
James E. Koutz, Indiana
Daniel M. Dellinger, Virginia
Michael D. Helm, Nebraska

National Executive Committeemen

Department	Committeeman	Alternate
Alabama	Willis Frazier	
Alaska	James E. Pisa	
Arizona	Richard W. Perry	
Arkansas	Mary V. Erdman	
California	Hugh E. Crooks, Jr.	
Colorado	Francis W. McCurdy	
Connecticut	D. Joseph Jackson	
Delaware	Kenneth G. Whitman	
D.C.	Warren N. Cuffee	
Florida	Dennis R. Boland	
France	John H. Miller	
Georgia	Charles F. Wessinger	
Hawaii	Marvin R. Siegfried	
Idaho	Thomas E. Mattice	

Illinois	Wayne Wagner	
Indiana	Paul I. Steward	
Iowa	Bruce C. Feuerbach	
Kansas	David O. Warnken	
Kentucky	Randall Coffman	
Louisiana	Charles D. Aucoin	
Maine	Ramona A. Naragon	
Maryland	Elbert D. White	
Massachusetts	Francis J. MacDonald, Jr.	
Mexico	Michael E. Wood	
Michigan	Roger H. Webster	
Minnesota	Marland A. Ronning	
Mississippi	Robert E. Gosa	
Missouri	Charles W. Goodin	
Montana	Mervin G. Gunderson (Excused)	David A. Driver
Nebraska	Jerry Landkamer	
Nevada	Ronald L. Michalski (Excused)	John F. Warden, Jr.
New Hampshire	William R. Roy	
New Jersey	Daniel E. McCole	
New Mexico	Felix M. Trujillo	
New York	William H. Burnett	
North Carolina	Bill G. Richard	
North Dakota	Robert L. Krause	
Ohio	Robert J. Kimball	
Oklahoma	Jerry A. Ball	
Oregon	Charles E. Schmidt	
Pennsylvania	Robert C. Miller, Jr.	
Philippines	Herbert J. Scholten	
Puerto Rico	Ildefonso Colon, Jr.	
Rhode Island	Robert D. Winston	
South Carolina	Cecil F. Hennis	
South Dakota	Paul A. Evenson	
Tennessee	Gary R. Drennon	
Texas	James E. Prendergast	
Utah	Terry D. Schow	
Vermont	Francis J. Killay	
Virginia	Thomas E. Saunders	
Washington	William R. 'Bob' Wallace	
West Virginia	William W. Kile	
Wisconsin	Steve Krueger	
Wyoming	William R. Wright, III	

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That completes the roll call.
NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: A quorum has been declared.

Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Call on the national adjutant for the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.

RESOLUTION SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move that since the minutes have been printed in digest form and distributed, that they be approved without being read. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

Announcements from National Adjutant

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time I call on National Adjutant Dan Wheeler for purposes of announcements.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: In December the NEC held a mail vote, a mail roll call on the issue of issuing a temporary charter to Ireland 01 Department of France. The final count were 59 in favor, zero opposed, and one not voting. The temporary charter has been issued.

The National Commander's Dinner honoring the NEC is tonight at the Sheraton City Centre, Indianapolis. The reception will be held in the Circle Suites at 6 p.m. Dinner will be served in the Meridian Ballroom at 7 p.m. NECmen who haven't yet submitted names or attendees will find a bright yellow form on their desk. This needs to be completed and returned to Kevin Long, who is in the back of the room raising his hand. The cutoff for seating requests is 10 a.m. this morning. So if you have a yellow form, please complete and turn it in immediately. Tickets will be available in the front office for pickup after lunch. That completes my announcements, sir.

Resolution No. 1 (Mail): Authorize Issuance of Temporary Charter to a Foreign Post
Origin: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, Application for the issuance of a charter to a post outside of the United States has been received, properly endorsed by officers of the department which will accept responsibility for supervision, and all in conformity with Resolution No. 42, adopted by the National Executive Committee at its meeting of April 29-30, May 1, 1959; and

WHEREAS, There was an objection at the National Executive Committee meeting on October 14-15, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Further research has caused the objection to be withdrawn; and

WHEREAS, The resolution can now be voted on by email in accordance with Rule 12 of the Rules of the National Executive Committee, so that the members who have joined the new post can be activated; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion, by email vote pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of the National Executive Committee, That the National Adjutant is authorized to issue a temporary charter to the following post to be affiliated with the named department

1. **Dublin, Ireland Post IR01, located in Dublin, Ireland, and affiliated with the Department of France; and, be it finally**

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee shall vote by email and that the final deadline for receiving votes for this resolution is the close of business December 30, 2015, provided however, that as soon as a majority is received, the National Adjutant shall cause the temporary charter to be issued.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time I call on National Vice Commander John Hargreaves.

...*National Vice Commander Hargreaves assumed the chair.*

Opening Remarks
Dale Barnett, National Commander

Good morning, national officers, past national commanders, members of the NEC, fellow Legionnaires, staff, and guests. During my congressional testimony this year, the word "accountability" was invoked on many occasions. One of the key points of my testimony was that we fully supported giving veterans the option to seek alternatives to VA health care. But do not be fooled by the word "choice," which some smaller veterans groups and some politicians are using as a code word for the outsourcing and dismantling of the VA system. Our veterans are not mercenaries fighting in a privately owned army. They served in the United States military, and the United States government has a solemn obligation to care for them. It wasn't the private sector that sent our heroes to war, it was Uncle Sam.

Last month, our Past National Commander Joe Frank wrote this: "VA care is a cherished benefit reserved only for those who pledged our lives to defend our nation. It's something we get in return for what we've given." And I want to thank Past National Commander Joe Frank for putting a face and a story of how much the VA health-care system means to our veterans across this nation.

Let me be very clear. Our criticism of the VA is not condemnation. Our message to the White House and to Congress is "fix it," and that the VA health-care system is truly a system worth saving. Some would like to privatize it, and the private sector works very well when building automobiles, computers, and other popular goods and services. However, it's not a solution for making veterans whole again. Veterans are not commercial products. If you outsource veterans from the VA, I guarantee you, the cost for the remaining veterans will go up.

It should also include a commitment from our VA, that the bills to providers on choice will be paid in a timely manner. The goal is 80 percent, which is pretty much an industry standard. But I will tell you, as I've gone to several VA hospitals across the nation, the number that are being paid within 30 days is closer to 25 percent. That is totally unacceptable, especially when one of our elderly veterans gets a bill maybe for the first time in their life. That's flat wrong.

The American Legion can never be accused of excusing bad behavior at the VA. This is the organization that two years ago, under the leadership of Past National Commander Dan Dellinger, stood as the only veterans service organization calling for the resignation of VA secretary then Eric Shinseki.

As you remember, in October I addressed you about an issue, and I flew in October to Washington, D.C. for a hearing on relocation allowances. Much to my chagrin, when I got there, I saw five empty witness chairs, and one who wasn't there because that person had already resigned because they knew that they had done wrong.

They still haven't been held fully accountable for taking advantage of that flawed relocation program, which allowed them to take advantage and enrich themselves but did nothing to improve the lives of veterans. But I'm proud to say that, because of our stance, that relocation program was immediately eliminated after that October hearing.

We talked at the congressional hearing in February about the Merit System Protection Board that has repeatedly blocked any attempt to discipline poorly performing VA executives. It's a system that needs to be reformed.

We welcome VA efforts to shift senior executives from Title 5 to Title 38 status, which would expand its authority to remove inept or corrupt employees. A massive new bill has just been introduced in the Senate that would do that and more. It would allow VA to pay outstanding doctors and health-care professionals more, but at the same time corral

the lengthy grievance process to under 21 days. We also support the VA Accountability Act of 2015, and would like to see it pass the Senate as it has in the House.

Most VA employees are dedicated servants who truly care about veterans. It's a huge system, and it doesn't take a lot of poor performers to give the system a black eye and generate negative media coverage. It's our job to put things in perspective and ensure that VA provides the best possible health care to serve our veterans.

We also need to be heard on national defense issues. Manpower cuts have put our military on the brink of breaking. I have seen on multiple occasions where lack of equipment maintenance funding has caused units to cannibalize and put old parts on new equipment because there's no new parts available, and no new contracts are being issued. Without endorsing or showing favoritism for any particular candidate or candidates, we should remind all who seek federal office that defending our nation should be job one. *(Applause)*

Some in Congress have also suggested eliminating the Selective Service System. This is not the right move when our Global War on Terrorism is not diminishing. The threat is increasing. We need to be able to mobilize in time of national emergency, and the Selective Service System is designed to maintain that emergency readiness.

Because of sequestration, our troops are expected to do more and more. Yet again, some in Congress want to offer a small 1.6 percent pay raise for 2017. This would continue a six year stretch in which military pay raises are below 2 percent. These troops are unable to advocate for themselves, which is the very reason why The American Legion will continue to be their voice in Washington.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of you for the outstanding support you have given me on awareness walks. They've been pretty exciting. I got to walk on water in Minnesota. Of course, I've got to tell you, Past National Commander Ludwig was right with me, so you know that ice was pretty thick. *(Laughter)*

But each and every one of the walks have been so memorable. We walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, that historic bridge, the site of Bloody Sunday in April of 1965. We walked hand-in-hand with groups from all across that community and began a process of healing that community that was deeply needed. Only The American Legion can provide that type of healing to communities, and what a memorable event it was.

We walked with Star Wars characters in California. Very interesting. But it was interesting in the fact that veterans from all over the country, because no one in Hollywood is from Hollywood; they're all from Kansas. *(Laughter)*

But they came up and they told us their stories of The American Legion and how uniquely it had impacted on their lives. And we got to share our stories.

Recently, we walked in West Virginia on the campus of Marshall University with the university president. They told us the story of "We are Marshall," and we told them the story of We are The American Legion.

We walked on the beaches of Virginia. Oh, Dan Dellinger got sand in his shoes. We walked in six state capitals on behalf of veteran-friendly legislation. We walked in Hawaii just before Pearl Harbor Day. Literally and figuratively, The American Legion family walks for those who march for us every day.

So far I've been on 30 awareness walks. Too many to mention each of the stories because each is so unique. But each has offered an opportunity to tell our story of who we are and what we do. I'm passionate about being a part of this American Legion and The American Legion family.

I want to continue to urge you to raise money for the National Emergency Fund. Recently, historic flooding in Texas and Louisiana has reminded us once again of the importance of our National Emergency Fund. Even more recently were tornado warnings

in states from Nebraska all the way to the East Coast. The American Legion family comes together in times of crisis. Many of the flood victims have lost everything, but we need to offer that lifeline of support to at least help with lodging and other costs until further resources are available. I'm always struck by the generosity demonstrated by posts, units, and squadrons as I have visited your departments. I know I can count on you to continue that.

I would welcome the opportunity to stand before you in Cincinnati and be able to say the same thing that Past National Commander Mike Helm said, that he was a 7 million dollar man. I would like to be another 7 million dollar man, and I know we can do it.

Lastly, at this NEC, a challenge will be issued to look strategically and globally about membership and promoting a culture of membership growth. Our organization has often put Band Aid solutions to organizational issues that need your vision, and a strategic long-range plan. Legionnaires 20 years from now will judge this body, either favorably or unfavorably, for our vision and our desire to cultivate a global culture of growth.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for allowing me to be your national commander. Thank you for what you do each and every day. And let's have a very productive NEC meeting. Thank you all very much. *(Standing applause)*

...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: The floor now recognizes Past National Commander Bob Turner.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER TURNER: Mr. Commander, may I approach the podium?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: You may.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER TURNER: Thank you, commander, and good morning to the members of the National Executive Committee, friends, our guests, all of you.

I'm sure that most of you are aware of the fact that for the past several months, our situation has been in turmoil with some serious illness of my wife. There is no way that we could write to you thank yous, because we've had over 400 cards, letters, and contacts during these last few months.

I just wanted to stand before you this morning and tell you, we love and appreciate everything you've done. Certainly, we appreciate your prayers. It has been interesting to see the outpouring of love and support from all of you.

I especially want to thank our Commander Dale and his aide Dewey. Many of you have been in touch with us, some of you almost on a weekly basis since last August, and I can tell you now that with every one of those cards or phone calls or emails, I sit by her bed and I explain to her who it was and where it came from. And I have to tell you that not too long ago, we had a card from Commander Barnett, and I was telling her, I said, "These past national commanders," and I was naming all of them, and she said, "Oh, Commander Barnett, that's my commander."

I said, "Well, what about me? I was your commander."

She said, "You're my husband. He was my commander." *(Laughter)*

One quick story. You know the wife of a national commander wears a little badge that says "First Lady," and my wife wore that badge many years ago. But Dale, Donna, and their children came to see us just after Christmas. And when they left, there was a little lady, she has a mental problem, she was riding up and down the hall looking down at us while Dale and Donna were there and we were sitting in this lounge.

When they left, she rolled immediately down and said, "And who was that?"

And my wife looked at her and said, "That was the First Lady."

Well, within an hour, it was all over the building that the first lady had been to see Betty, and well, five or six of them had even shook hands with her. *(Laughter)*

Thank you all so very much. Please keep your thoughts and your prayers coming. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you, Bob. Bob, thank you so much for your friendship and for your years of dedicated service to The American Legion. Thank you, sir.

Sergeant-at-arms, would you please escort to the podium the national president of the American Legion Auxiliary, Sharon Conatser from Illinois. *(Standing applause)*

Greetings: Mrs. Sharon Conatser, Illinois
National President, American Legion Auxiliary

Thank you so much for that warm welcome, and thank you, Legionnaires, one and all, for your service, and we appreciate so much your service that we're able to meet in this way. I have one very pleasant task to do before I bring greetings.

Mr. Commander, The American Legion Auxiliary has a donation for the Child Welfare Foundation, and I would like to present that to you.

...National Vice Commander Cushing assumed the chair.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT CONATSER: The American Legion does support the Child Welfare Foundation. When I was department president, it was part of my special project. So I'm very pleased to present this check on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: $2,500. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT CONATSER: This year we've been keeping the promise the entire year to work not only as an Auxiliary, a successful Auxiliary, but to work as an American Legion family. I thank you for electing an amazing commander in Dale Barnett for me to work with.

Commander Dale, Commander Kevin from the Sons, and myself, as we've traveled this nation, have talked and walked The American Legion family. I was so proud to walk in the awareness walk in Hawaii with the three national leaders in the front, leading the walk. What an awesome opportunity and what a privilege to share with our American Legion family.

I also walked the beaches of Virginia Beach and they said, "Oh, the sand will be really hard and you can walk on it." Well, it wasn't. But we made it, and it was a wonderful experience. Thank you, Virginia, for that experience.

Not only are Dale and Donna leading The American Legion, but they're our friends. It's been a wonderful time sharing this special year with Dale and Donna and their family, and Dewey, of course.

I am once again asking each of you to go home and sign your eligibility up for the American Legion Auxiliary. It is a privilege for them to have membership in our organization, because it honors you, their eligibility, for our organization.

We would like to stop the membership slide this year. And I have to tell you, we could close in on that with your help. Our numbers are looking pretty good. We are ahead of last year just a little bit, but we can do this as a family. Go back, ask your posts, your districts, divisions, counties, whatever you have in your department, to support The American Legion family and sign their eligibility up to belong to our great organization. Because as an American Legion family, we can put our numbers together and our voices together, and make a difference for our veterans across this great nation.

Female veterans, we want to thank you for your service. So both this year and next year, a first time American Legion Auxiliary female veteran, the national organization will pay your per capita at the national level. And in some departments, the state is also waiving that. So please check in your area. We would love to have you. You are eligible by your own right to belong to our American Legion Auxiliary, and we would like to honor you. That is a one-time, first-year membership, and then after that you would be paying your dues. But we honor you and thank you for your service by waiving the national per capita for you.

As Commander Dale said, a culture of growth is what we're looking for for our American Legion Auxiliary and our American Legion and our Sons of The American Legion. The Sons do really well at that; they just keep growing, so I think we need to catch up with them.

But with a culture of good-will, it will create a culture of growth. I hope all of you will think of that when you visit your posts back home and remember that a culture of good-will will create the culture of growth that we are looking for in our family.

I want to thank you all for letting me share a few words with you. As I keep the promise to close out the year, I hope that you will keep the promise that you made to help the American Legion Auxiliary grow, because we are a family and we need each other just as we need our biological families.

I hope God continues to bless each of you, continues to bless our troops both here and on foreign soil, and most of all, He continues to bless our awesome United States of America which we are so proud to call our home. Thank you. *(Standing applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the remarks of National President Conatser. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report of our national president. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Sharon, thank you so very, very much. You are a real inspiration for The American Legion family. You have done such great work. She really promotes that family atmosphere. The American Legion Auxiliary has done so much this year in so many different ways, helping veterans, helping families, helping their communities. Thank you for your friendship and thank you for your dedication. And we'll even thank your husband Marty. We're still working on this aide job, Marty is, but we're going to work with him a little more. Thank you so much for your dedication.

At this time I'd like to call on David Warnken from the Department of Kansas for a report from the resolution committee.

Oral Report: Subcommittee on Resolutions
David O. Warnken, Kansas, Chairman

Good morning. Commander, your Subcommittee on Resolutions has been in session the last two days reviewing the resolutions to be presented to the National Executive Committee. We have 32 resolutions that will be presented coming from the commissions and committees who will make the reports. Any resolutions dealing with that commission will follow that report. All of the resolutions that have been disposed of by other action or held for further study will be reported out as an addendum. Commander, I ask that you prepare the NEC room for memorializing resolutions.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Please rise and uncover.

Memorial Resolutions
H. C. Ted Kelley

Whereas, It has pleased almighty God, the Great Commander, to summon to His immortal legions our beloved comrade, H. C. Ted Kelley, National Chaplain 2015 to 2016; and

Whereas, We humbly bow to the will of Divine Providence, while ever cherishing in our hearts the memory of his distinguished service to our country and his outstanding contributions to American Legion comradeship; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the National Executive Committee of The American Legion, in regular meeting assembled on this 4th day of May in the year of our Lord 2016, does mourn the passing of our distinguished Legionnaire, H. C. Ted Kelley, that we commend to all men his works and to God his spirit; and, be it finally

Resolved, That in token of our common grief, a copy of this resolution be presented to his family.

Eulogy for National Chaplain Ted Kelley

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I would ask that the NEC be seated.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Please recover and be seated.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: I will yield the podium to Past National Commander Conley.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: National Commander, members of the National Executive Committee, it's an honor to stand before you and reflect on the life of National Chaplain Reverend Dr. Ted Kelley.

It's a difficult task to sit there and try to summarize one's life in a couple minutes. Most of you didn't get a chance to know Reverend Kelley. It seems like he just took over as the national chaplain when he took sick, and he didn't realize that at that time he had cancer.

I would like to thank Randy Cash, the national chaplain; Michael Lawler, the SAL chaplain; Dan Dellinger, past national commander of The American Legion; and Dominic DiFrancesco, past national commander of The American Legion, for attending Reverend Kelley's funeral.

Reverend Kelley was a compassionate and humble man. He was a patriot, serving first in the United States Army during the Korean War, and then went back into the United States Navy where he was a member of the Chaplains Corps from 1960 to 1983. He was ordained as a pastor of several churches including one here in South Bend, Indiana.

Reverend Kelley was committed to the moral values of not only people who served in the military, but also the Pennsylvania State Police. He went to the police commissioner in Pennsylvania and he lobbied to create a Pennsylvania State Police chaplain. He was successful in that. Today, there are 48 state police chaplains in the Pennsylvania State Police.

Reverend Kelley was an organizer. Each of his prayers at the Pennsylvania Department Executive Committee meetings and conventions always started out in remembrance of somebody. For example, at our convention in 2001, he remembered Dr. John Baxter. He was mortally wounded on Guadalcanal. He reflected what it was like as Dr. Baxter lived the last moments of his life.

On his second election, he started out with, "Good morning, everyone. I was thinking about a golfer. He was a new golfer, and he took a shot, and it was a terrible one. He dug up a pretty good size piece of turf. While he stood there looking at it, the golf pro came up

and he said to the golf pro, 'What do I do with it?' The golf pro said, 'Why don't you take it home and practice on it?'" *(Laughter)*

Well, you know, he said, "I've been practicing this job as a chaplain for a year now, and I think it's been a pretty good one. We've gotten along pretty well, and so since I'm starting to get the hang of this, I am very pleased that you have reelected me, and I hope we have another very fine year."

To close the convention that day, he said "Before the prayer, I do have a couple of items here. One of the privileges and responsibilities of being a Legionnaire is to remember, to remember our own and to remember people who are in need. I have two names. One of them is a memorial, a person who, this past year, who is loved by us, had died, and his name was missed the other night, and we don't want to forget anyone. So let us be privileged to remember Peter Stanish, past 26th district commander, and past western vice commander for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

"Also, I have a special request for a prayer for healing. One of our members who is currently ailing, his name is Tom Curtis. He is a finance officer of Post 810 in Philadelphia and needs a healing prayer."

And then he goes, "Let us pray. May Almighty God, the creator of the universe and grand inspirer behind the movements of the sun and the moon, the stars and the planets. There is no place, O God, where you are not there. You've got the whole world in your hands. You've got the tiny little babies in your hands. You've got you and me, brother and sister, in your hands.

"So we pray, O God, that the words of our mouths and the thoughts of our hearts will be pleasing in your sight. Inspire the work of this convention and prosper the witnesses of The American Legion. We pray this so that others see us and respect us as being a source of Godly behavior in this world which needs sorely the witness of moral men and women.

"Bless our meeting today together, O God, and always your prayer. Amen."

At the end of the convention he said, "Confirm your faith with a life filled with love and camaraderie, and terrific Legionnaire togetherness. Be responsible to The American Legion which needs a community of moral minded men and women. And go from here to the peace and the shalom of the state." And everyone said with enthusiasm, "Amen."

So in his prayers, since I related to you of how he conducted himself at American Legion meetings, he was always concerned about having The American Legion foremost in the minds of those who were in the room, and to be inspired and go forth to carry the word of The American Legion and its Four Pillars.

I wish you would have had an opportunity to get to know Reverend Ted Kelley as some of us in Pennsylvania have. He would close once in a while, which I'm going to do now, with the Irish blessing.

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. And let the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Please uncover. Similar resolutions will be presented to the families of the following: Andrew J. Cooper, Alabama; Bruce A. Conklin, Arizona; S. Paul Griffin, Arizona; Calvin C. Turpin, California; Leonard E. Bunch, Jr., Delaware; Edward S. Phillips, Jr., Delaware; John J. Ross, Iowa; Eugene G. Heiman, Kansas; Glenn H. Ainsile, Michigan; Virgil V. Persing, Minnesota; Hershel O. Ladner, Mississippi; Thurman E. Parrish, Mississippi; Edwin H. Merriman, Mississippi; Robert R. 'Bob' Williams, Montana; Lewis L. Adams, Nebraska; Kenneth F. Governor, New York; William P. McLaughlin, New York; John P. Folk, New York; William K. Balser, Ohio; Elmer H. Fuhrhop, Ohio; Dr. Michael J. Chakeres, Ohio;

Kerrie G. Gill, Sr., Pennsylvania; Roy L. Layton, Washington; Charles E. Forsythe, West Virginia; Donald H. Priest, Wisconsin

A Good-night

Close now thine eyes and rest secure;
Thy soul is safe enough, thy body sure;
He that loves thee, He that keeps
And guards thee, never slumbers, never sleeps.

The smiling conscience in a sleeping breast
Has only peace, has only rest;
The music and the mirth of kings
Are all but very discords, when she sings;
Then close thine eyes and rest secure;
No sleep so sweet as thine, no rest so sure.
–Francis Quarles (1592-1644)

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I call on the Convention Commission, Michael Walton from the Department of Illinois, chairman.

Oral Report: Convention Commission
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Good morning, Commander Barnett and members of the NEC. Although my written report is in your packet, I would like to touch on some highlights of our meetings.

Past National Commander Clarence Bacon, president of The American Legion Maryland National Convention Corporation, gave a final report regarding our 97th National Convention in Baltimore, which we believe was a great success. Commander Bacon will be presenting a check to the NEC this morning.

James Morris, president of The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Ohio, Inc., gave an update on the progress of our 98th National Convention in Cincinnati, this coming August 26 through September 1. We believe the Department of Ohio and the city of Cincinnati are very ready and willing to host this convention.

We conducted three site visits to cities seeking to host the 103rd National Convention in 2021. Those cities were Phoenix, Arizona; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Salt Lake City, Utah. All three of the cities presented to the Convention Commission on Monday, May 2. It is the recommendation of the Convention Commission that the 2021 103rd National Convention of The American Legion be awarded to Phoenix, Arizona, for the dates of August 27 through September 2, 2021.

A resolution authorizing the signing of the contract with The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana for the 101st National Convention in Indianapolis, which will be August 23 through the 29 of 2019, was unanimously approved.

A resolution was received from the Department of Michigan endorsing the city of Detroit, Michigan, to host the 2022 104th National Convention of The American Legion. The commission voted to receive and record the resolution. Thus far, this is the only resolution we have received regarding hosting the 2022 National Convention, but departments have until May 31 of this year to submit a resolution of support to national. We are told that additional resolutions and cities will be forthcoming prior to that due date.

Our national conventions are now set through 2020 as follows, which this year the 98th will be in Cincinnati, August 26 through September 1. The 99th will be in Reno,

Nevada, August 18 through the 24, 2017. Our 100th Anniversary convention will be in Minneapolis, August 24 through the 30 of 2018. Our 101st will be here in Indianapolis, August 23 through the 29, 2019. And the 102nd will be in Louisville, Kentucky, August 28 through September 3, 2020.

Mr. Commander and members of the NEC, that concludes my report. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Report: Convention Commission
May 4, 2016
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman

Chairman Michael E. Walton, Illinois, called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M., May 2, 2016. Roll call was taken and all members were present.

Items Requiring NEC Action:

2019 National Convention Contract– Approval of the recommendation by the Convention Commission that the contract between the National Organization of The American Legion and The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana for the dates of August 23 – August 29, 2019, be signed by the National Commander and the President of the 2019 National Convention Corporation.

Resolution No. 2734– submitted by the Department of Michigan supporting a bid for the 2022 National Convention from the city of Detroit, Michigan. Received and Recorded

The following cities provided presentations requesting they be awarded the 2021 National Convention of The American Legion: Phoenix, Arizona; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Salt Lake City, Utah. The city of Phoenix, Arizona, is recommended to receive the tentative award of the 2021 National Convention for the dates of August 27 – September 2, 2021.

Planning for the 98th National Convention of The American Legion is on schedule. President of The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Ohio, Inc., James Morris, gave an update on the progress. The Duke Energy Convention Center will be the site of the general sessions, the exhibit hall, color guard contests, band contests, the National Commander's Banquet and the Auxiliary States Dinner. The National Staff Offices for The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, Distinguished Guest Registration and Badges & Packets will also be in the Duke Energy Convention Center. The Color Guard contests will take place on Friday, August 26, 2016, starting at 5:00PM. The Competitive Concert Band Contest and Exhibition Contest will be Saturday, August 27 at 1:00PM in the Duke Energy Convention Center. Sunday evening, August 28 will be the annual parade in downtown Cincinnati starting at 4:00PM. This year a Post Parade Party will be hosted by the Department of Ohio. The National Commander's Banquet, on August 30, 2016, will feature Larry Gatlin and The Gatlin Brothers.

Clarence Bacon, President of The American Legion Maryland National Convention Corporation, Inc., gave the final report to the Convention Commission for the 97th National Convention of The American Legion. Mr. Bacon reported the 2015 Convention Corporation generated a net profit of $105,433.90. He will present a check to the National Executive Committee for $52,716.95.

Our National Convention Request for Proposal (RFP) has been updated to reflect our current numbers and to ensure what we provide to bidding cities is properly reflected within the RFP. The RFP will be updated each year as necessary.

Chairman Walton assigned each member of the commission specific committee functions to observe at the 2016 National Convention. Each commission member will

report their findings to the full commission during the 2016 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana.

We have one Department of The American Legion currently that has submitted the proper resolution expressing their interest in bidding on the 2022 National Convention. The city being supported by the appropriate resolution is Detroit, Michigan.

Dates for future National Conventions are:

Cincinnati, OH..... August 26 – September 1, 2016
Reno, NV..... August 18 – 24, 2017
Minneapolis, MN..... August 24 – 30, 2018
Indianapolis, IN ..... August 23 – 29, 2019
Louisville, KY ..... August 28 – September 3, 2020

Addendum A

Register Resolution No. 2734 (MI) (DEC): **City of Detroit Offers to Host the 2022 National Convention**

Addendum B

The Convention Commission recommends the following dates for the events/meetings from our report, which was presented to the body for disposition.

Commission Meeting Date	Event/Meeting	Dates
Convention	2021 National Convention – Phoenix, Arizona	Aug. 27 – Sept. 2, 2021

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, a motion to receive and file the report of the Convention Commission, with the exception of one resolution, Addendum A and Addendum B. ... *Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report. Any discussion? All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Resolution No. 31 is being under Rule 8A. I note the time is 9:55.

Resolution No. 31: 2019 National Convention Contract
Origin: Convention Commission
Submitted By: Convention Commission

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission has reviewed the status of the proposed National American Legion Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 23 – 29, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Subject to receiving a properly executed contract from the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana the Convention Commission believes that all conditions for a contract covering The American Legion National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 23-29, 2019, have been satisfied; and

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission hereby recommends to the National Executive Committee that it enter into the appropriate contract with the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana to cover the 2019 American Legion National Convention; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the national commander, after receipt of an executed contract from the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana and the review and approval of same from the national judge advocate, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said contract and the national adjutant, be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution is being read under Rule 8A, and four hours must elapse before it is read again and action is taken. Commander, attached to the report of the Convention Commission is Addendum A and Addendum B. I move that the actions of the Convention Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, I call on Clarence Bacon, past national commander and president of The American Legion Maryland National Convention Corporation, Inc., for his final report of the 2015 National Convention.

Final Report of the 2015 National Convention
Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland
Baltimore Convention Corporation President

Thank you, Commander Barnett, past national commanders, members of the National Executive Committee, ladies and gentlemen and guests.

In compliance with National Adjutant Dan Wheeler's memo of April 5, 2016, I am here today to provide you with a brief report on The American Legion Maryland National Convention that took place in August.

Our primary purpose of the convention from the very outset was not motivated by profit, but rather to provide each and every convention attendee with an outstanding, memorable, and lasting convention experience. We are pleased, however, to report that after all convention expenses were paid and after the financial statement was compiled by Shawn Long, we had a gross profit of $105,433.90.

We had 11 hotels in the mix in Baltimore. Ten of those were within walking distance, within four blocks. Four of them were just across the street, 3 connected to the convention center. And with Callaway Transportation Company, they made a ten minute circulation among and between each hotel and the national convention, and that went extremely well.

Based on a memorandum from National Adjutant Wheeler which asked us to submit observations on proposed improvements for future conventions, so we have two suggestions.

The first has to do with the reviewing stand, and we recommend that all of the steps on the reviewing stand be highlighted with tape that is easy to see, so that people will not fall and stumble and injure themselves, as the national historian did when she tried to step down from one of the steps. She was immediately rushed to the VA medical center, which was about four blocks away, and about three hours later, returned with a broken wrist and injuries to her hand. So we think that would be a tremendous improvement to future conventions, to have every step highlighted, or have someone stand there with a flashlight to help elderly veterans.

And lastly, our suggestion would be that future conventions work closely with the Convention Commission. We had great help from Bridget and Andrea and from the chairman of the Convention Commission. Lots of pre planning, organization, and

cooperation with the national staff, I think you'll find that that makes things a lot easier. They have a lot of experience that most people having a convention do not have, and I believe that it would be a benefit to everyone to do your planning, have your organization, and make certain that the people are qualified to do their jobs in each committee.

With our convention corporation, we had 18 members and about 130 volunteers. I thought everything went extremely well in Baltimore.

Two highlights that I'd like to suggest. One was the patriotic memorial service. That room was huge and it was packed with people, and I think that was the highlight of the convention. The second highlight, of course, was the parade. It stepped off promptly on time, and ended 55 minutes later. National Commander Helm didn't sit up on the platform. He was down on the street and he shook hands with everybody that came in front of that convention reviewing stand. I don't know where he got all the energy, but he certainly did a great job.

Lastly, based on the many handwritten notes and letters, we in Maryland think we had an outstanding national convention. It was very safe, too; no crimes. Even though we had a lot of bad publicity from the national media, but the convention went well.

Mr. Commander, if you'd please join me here at the podium, I'd like to present you a check. *...National Vice Commander Cushing assumed the chair.*

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BACON: This is the national organization's share, Commander, of $52,716.95. I know the Convention Commission will spend it well.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Well, thank you so much. And Past National Commander Bacon, your crew did a super job. I truly like Baltimore. *(Laughter)* Thank you so much for your hard work and continued success.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BACON: In 1989, Sparky Gierke liked it, and you are the second national commander to host the convention in Baltimore. And you did a tremendous job, and all of your staff did, too.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BACON: Thank you. *(Applause)*

...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of Past National Commander Clarence Bacon on the 2015 National Convention. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report. Any discussion? All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, I'd like to call on Ken Danilson from the Department of Iowa, chairman of the Marketing Commission.

Oral Report: Marketing Commission
Kenneth D. Danilson, Iowa, Chairman

Thank you. Commander, national officers, and members of the NEC and guests, your Marketing Commission met Monday and Tuesday of this week. We received reports from several other American Legion divisions, and received updates on programs such as fundraising, DMS, and social media.

The American Legion Marketing Commission oversees multiple national business interests and the ways in which they are delivered to members and others, in tandem with the national Media & Communications Commission and the Emblem Committee. The commission is working with national staff and professional agencies to improve awareness of the organization and its mission, drive membership and retain it, enhance charitable

giving opportunities, promote merchandise sales, strengthen corporate relationships, and establish a strategic foundation to propel us into the second century.

As the integration process continues, many critical and familiar business initiatives of The American Legion National Headquarters fall within the Marketing Commission's responsibility. You have my written report which goes into greater detail about these initiatives, so I will just highlight some now.

The DMS program is on pace to meet or exceed its goal of 110,000 new members by the end of this membership year. The integration process has helped refresh many of the packages, and they are performing well, including the recent launch of a national digital media membership campaign.

The member benefits program has been overhauled and is now being cross promoted in all national media. A major shift is a $25,000 minimum required marketing commitment from providers who want access to The American Legion audiences. This is an annual commitment. This had generated over $350,000 in gross sales and over $233,000 in net revenue. In addition, it has placed a standard and a reasonable value on The American Legion brand.

The nonmember fundraising program continues to grow both in terms of funds raised and net revenue. It is on pace to hit the year end goal of $1,925,000 in net revenue.

The department fundraising program is steady and expected to generate similar or slightly better revenues to participating departments in 2016. We now have 21 departments in the program and 14 participating on an ad hoc basis, which means part of their fundraising is done through national.

A new planned giving program rolls out this month, starting with a brochure which I think was passed out, for estate planners. It was just printed this last week. A new American Legion web platform to make planned giving much more effective and convenient is in production right now.

A new website architecture and design for legion.org has increased overall visitation by nearly 30 percent since it rolled out in March. Access to this new mobile friendly website, through smartphones and electronic tablets, has increased by over 200 percent compared to last year.

At this time, Mr. Commander, I would like to have Holly show a short video, and then I'll continue with my report.

HOLLY SORIA: So while he's getting this cued up, this video is something we worked together with the national commander on. It's a little introductory video that is actually on a DVD that we're passing out right now. This DVD has a collection of about a dozen videos. Some of them are recruiting tips, some of them are some membership success stories, and it also has the PDF files of three of our more popular recruiting tool brochures. So that's all available on the website and in this new membership hub. But those are some copies so that, if people are going to posts where they don't have Internet connection, it's just a little easier access. We'll go ahead and show the video.

...A video was presented to the National Executive Committee.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DANILSON: Thank you. To continue, I think this video is going to be available on the website for anybody that would like to view it and share it.

In social media, I would like to mention that the national commander's VA Accountability Thunderclap on Facebook and Twitter generated a social media audience of more than 1.5 million hits during the testimony in Washington in February. A new Thunderclap campaign is now underway at the American Legion's AbbVie Take Down Hep C campaign. Already that campaign has a social media reach of 206,000 hits.

On May 3, the Marketing Commission voted in support of an Internal Affairs resolution establishing The American Legion involvement, including the assembly of an

ad hoc committee in support of the 75th anniversary of World War II Commemorative Committee and its activities through September 2, 2020.

The bottom line, areas of business in The American Legion that have much to gain through integration are making changes and strides, all while holding together, and improving traditional marketing revenues, such as advertising and fundraising.

There is plenty to be done, but the Marketing, Media & Communications division staff is dedicated to working as a team in alliance with all of our divisions and professional agencies in advancing The American Legion brand, to position the organization for growth and success as the dawn of our second century approaches.

In conclusion, I have been involved with The American Legion for over 45 years and I have never been more excited or optimistic about our future. Much of this is because of what is happening in the marketing arena. We are breaking down silos, we are pushing out our message to hundreds of thousands of people we never touched before. We are becoming leaders and not followers in how we deliver our message, and promoting our organization.

We had a full room of not only our commission members, but a lot of people that came who were interested, and I'd invite anybody that's interested in what's going on in this area to attend meetings. But I would like to paraphrase the movie "Jaws" and tell Mr. Adjutant, "We need a bigger room." *(Laughter)*

Mr. Commander, thank you for appointing me chairman of this commission and being part of these exciting times. This concludes my report.

Advance Report: Marketing Commission
February 22, 2016
Kenneth D. Danilson, Iowa, Chairman

The American Legion Marketing Commission had its first full meeting Feb. 22, 2016, at the Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C. Chairman Kenneth Danilson, Iowa, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked members of the newly formed commission to introduce themselves, expressing their backgrounds and interests in American Legion marketing.

American Legion Marketing, Media & Communications Director Chuck Krupa reported on the status of the Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) program to date. At that point in the cycle, DMS was running slightly behind the budgeted member target of 110,000, but with nine new promotions yet to distribute, he was confident the goal can be reached. A target of 122,000 DMS members was proposed, and the commission voted to recommend to the Finance Commission a 2017 budget request of $6,879,000 to reach it. Rich Heigert, Connecticut, moved and Paul Sanford, Kansas, seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Following a presentation from American Legion Membership & Post Activities Committee Chairman Kenneth Orrock, South Dakota, Sanford moved and Tom Marciciak, Illinois, seconded a motion to recommend to the Finance Commission a $150,000 budget for the National Commander's Membership Awards program. The motion passed unanimously.

Krupa reported on the fundraising program, including non-member fundraising, planned giving, and department fundraising programs. The non-member fundraising program continues to grow a database of active donors, and the department fundraising program is now operating according to a new model, paying departments 50 percent of revenues after target is achieved.

American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett visited the commission meeting to express his support and to applaud the success of the social media Thunderclap campaign

on VA accountability. He asked the commission to explore similar low-cost, high-impact ways to share the Legion story.

Representatives from companies attached to The American Legion's lead marketing agency, ResourceOne, provided an overview of initiatives and campaigns executed over the previous year, including: corporate alliances, fundraising, direct-response television and public relations. Highlighted were 2015 campaigns with Great Clips ("Buzzcut Challenge") and with Hollywood star William Shatner that generated more than 2.4 billion media impressions, valued at approximately $2 million.

Ellen Roeder of ResourceOne, who serves as interim chief marketing officer for The American Legion, presented three DRTV videos for the commission, which were due to debut late in the first quarter.

Representatives of Empower Processing presented its credit/debit payment processing service and discussed their model to pay American Legion posts a percentage of net profits back on each transaction. The company will return to the Marketing Commission for a follow-up presentation on May 2.

Divisions that execute certain marketing initiatives reported to the commission. They included Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission Chairman Ralph Bozella and Division Director Louis Celli, who discussed grant availability through the Elizabeth Dole Foundation among other topics, as well as support for AbbVie, a corporate alliance of The American Legion, and its Hepatitis C screening program. Also presenting were Legislative Commission Chairman Brett Reistad and Director Ian De Planque; Veterans Employment and Education Division Deputy Director Mark Walker; and Marketing, Media & Communications Division Director Jeff Stoffer.

Stoffer distributed a document titled "The American Legion Marketing Orbit," a report of all national marketing activities, their trends and performance metrics. He also distributed a model publication called "This is The American Legion," which can be customized for local use. He also discussed activities to re-invent NALPA (National American Legion Press Association) and leverage more American Legion brand messaging through NALPA members, who are producers of American Legion media at the local level.

Chairman Danilson recommended that the staff develop a media kit for potential corporate sponsors of American Legion programs and services.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Report: Marketing Commission
May 4, 2016
Kenneth D. Danilson, Iowa, Chairman

The recently formed American Legion Marketing Commission continues to work toward strategic integration of the organization's promotional, fundraising, membership, merchandising and data management functions. Specific oversight responsibilities of this commission include: corporate alliances, fundraising, membership marketing, brand awareness and promotion of American Legion values, products, services and activities for multiple audiences.

The Marketing Commission and the Media & Communications Commission work in tandem make best and most efficient use of communications resources to achieve desired American Legion goals. Also, the Emblem Committee reports to the Marketing Commission, thus creating the opportunity to connect various messaging and business objectives within a shared strategy -- from promotions to products to membership mailings and social media impressions.

As the integrated Marketing, Media & Communications Division at National Headquarters takes shape, many standard business activities press on, with greater

collaboration than ever among various divisions, such as Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS), non-member fundraising, direct renewal, member discount relationships, The American Legion Magazine, the national website, social media, brochures and videos.

Key highlights so far in 2016 include:

- Overhaul of The American Legion member discount provider program to include a $25,000 minimum marketing commitment from providers. To date, this overhaul has eliminated non-paying discount providers and produced no fewer than 14 providers who have made the commitment to purchase the minimum amount of marketing exposure required to maintain the relationship. This overhaul has produced $350,000 in gross sales, an estimated $233,000 in net revenue so far in 2016, and established a baseline value for access to American Legion audiences. Many discount provider relationships previous to this paid little or nothing for participation.
- The Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) program for the membership year ending in June 2016 is on track to meet or exceed budget of 110,000 new members ($2,896,300 in dues revenue), leaving membership at 2,050,000 or more for the year. A variety of direct-mail packages to eligible non-members and those whose memberships have expired has been augmented with new digital promotions using social media, web advertising, search engine advertising and email solicitations.
- The multi-faceted American Legion fundraising program – which includes non-member fundraising, department fundraising, planned giving, vehicle donations and more – continues to evolve, improving and netting positive in nearly every measurable category.
    - **NON-MEMBER FUNDRAISING:** Gross revenue for 2016 is on pace to meet or exceed budget so far, with $3,984,137 in funds raised and $750,451 in net revenue through four months of 2016. The program is on track to meet or exceed the budgeted net of $1,925,000. The donor file has grown by 5 percent in 2016, up to 339,235 active donors.
    - **DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING:** The total number of participating departments remains the same in 2016. Twenty-one are full co-op departments, and 14 are ad hoc programs. The mail label and sweepstakes department fundraising campaigns are likewise on pace with 2015 performance, which was 9.4 percent ahead of 2014 with gross revenues of $4.4 million.
    - **VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM:** The American Legion vehicle donation program is on pace to exceed 2015's performance of 91 vehicles for a total of $42,831. Through April 2016, the program had generated 45 vehicle donations for $12,210. The program was introduced in 2014 when just four vehicles were donated for $1,788 in revenue.
    - **PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM:** Division staff and agency provider CDR are working together to build a multi-media promotional and informational program to facilitate American Legion planned giving.
    - **DIRECT RESPONSE TV:** In light of current market conditions, The American Legion DRTV program has been placed on hold. The American Legion will continue to air free public service announcements using The Oak Ridge Boys as "spokes-band" but does not intend to purchase any new TV advertising until conditions change.
- To streamline and improve operations in fundraising and membership acquisition, the Marketing, Media & Communications Division staff has

launched and executed a number of infrastructural changes and developed promotions to include:

- An overhaul of the design, architecture and user experience of www.legion.org -- the national website – to better promote marketing objectives and create a better mobile device user experience. Since the March 15 rollout of the new design and architecture, unique site visitation has increased 28 percent overall and by 280 percent (year over year) for mobile-device access.
- Within the new framework is an American Legion membership hub that puts onto one platform material of use and interest to three primary audience types: joiners/renewers, recruiters/retainers and managers/administrators. The hub is located at www.legion.org/membership.
- A data-integration task force has been assembled, involving multiple divisions, and is working to develop a single sign-on, cloud-based smart data bank with cross-promotional capabilities, to include the ability to monitor and target market to web users with specific demographics and/or behaviors.

During the May 3, 2016, meeting, the commission voted unanimously after member Tom Lee III moved and Mark Sutton seconded a motion in support of an Internal Affairs resolution appointing an ad hoc committee to the 75th anniversary of World War II. Commemoration activities which offer many opportunities for The American Legion, particularly in light of the 100th Anniversary celebration of the organization.

As the new American Legion Marketing Commission continues to synergize areas of business that were organizationally separated in the past, greater emphasis is placed on strategic planning, focused priorities and measurable performance in the areas of veterans advocacy, membership, fundraising, merchandising and data collection/management. To achieve this goal, the commission is working with other American Legion commissions, committees, divisions and staff that have various marketing responsibilities in order to ensure that the organization's identity and brand are properly valued, presented and effective.

Report: Emblem Committee
May 3, 2016
Alvan T. Fuller, Massachusetts, Chairman
(Submitted through the Marketing Commission)

The Emblem Sales Division of the American Legion provides patriotic and American Legion emblematic merchandise to the organization's members, posts and departments.

In 2015 over 113,000 orders were processed via mail, fax, call center and our websites. The division's annual net profit contributes to the American Legion's general fund.

In the 2015 financial year, Emblem Sales had YTD revenue of $13.17 million vs. $12.27 million in 2014. Net YTD profit for 2015 was $2.100 million vs. $1.798 million in 2015. In the first quarter of 2016, Emblem Sales had YTD revenue of $2.902 million vs. $2.633 million in 2015. Net YTD profit was $395,688 million vs. $379,241 million in 2015.

Flag sales continue to be strong in 2016 with $528,614 in flags sold, which represents a 24% increase over last year. Currently 1,481 posts are registered for "Flag Rewards" and 11,700 schools, businesses, churches and individuals have signed up to sponsor posts.

Emblem Sales continues to market items to members and patriotic Americans electronically and in print. In 2016, Emblem Sales has sent out over 183,000 marketing emails with a cost of only $549. These marketing emails have resulted in $41,500 revenue.

Emblem Sales developed and now offers over 70 new items in this year's 148 page 2016 catalog.

Addendum A

Hold for Further Study

Register Resolution No. 2729 (PA) (DEC): **Remove Legion Members from National Solicitation Lists**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Marketing Commission with the exception of Addendum A. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? Receive and file the report.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Attached to the Marketing Commission report is Addendum A. I move the actions of the Marketing Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? Motion carries. Ken, thank you so much. Holly, I don't know how you've made an old guy like me look at least somewhat decent. But I enjoyed the video. *(Laughter)*

Thank you for what you're doing in media and marketing. I think it is exciting, and we need to continue to leverage that excitement. I could see using a lot of the materials they have in post meetings.

At this time, I call on the Finance Commission chairman, Gaither Keener, from the Department of North Carolina, for the purposes of a report.

Oral Report: Finance Commission
Gaither M. Keener, Jr., North Carolina, Chairman

Thank you. Commander, national officers, past national commanders, members, and guests. Your Finance Commission met on Monday and Tuesday, May 2 and 3. All commission members were present. Also present were national adjutant, Daniel S. Wheeler; national treasurer, George Buskirk; executive directors Verna Jones; and Jeff Brown; finance director, Shawn Long; and finance NEC liaison committee chairman, David Warnken; and members Tom Mattice, Bob Krause, and Tom Saunders. Several guests joined throughout the days of the meetings.

Reports were received from the national adjutant; the national treasurer; the national judge advocate; the national headquarters' executive directors; the finance director; Convention Corporation of Baltimore; Endowment Fund Corporation; Internal Affairs Commission; Membership & Post Activities Committee; Fifth Third Bank; Hoosier Trust; Marketing Commission; Media & Communications Commission; Americanism Commission; Crowe Horwath LLP, our auditors; McCready and Keene, our actuaries; and S.A. Van Dyk Insurance Company.

The net operating deficit for 2015 was $2,484,645.

The NEC approved the 2016 budget based on revenues of $81,862,021, and expenditures of $83,737,000, for a net operating deficit of $1,874,989.

The budget is based on a 2016 membership of 2,050,000 members. As of March 31, actual membership stands at 1,941,304 members.

At the Finance Commission's February 22 meeting in Washington, it approved the upcoming year's membership efforts and budget at a cost of $6,879,000. It also approved an emergency of $12,300 budget overrun for the DC office heating elements, they didn't have any heat, and $3,789.25 in Emblem Sales write offs and uncollected accounts made since its fall meeting.

Hoosier Trust and Fifth Third Bank reported briefly on investment performance to our commission.

The Finance Commission approved the 2015 audit as presented by our auditors, Crowe Horwath LLP.

The Finance Commission approved $37,822.81 in emergency purchases and budget overruns made since this Washington Conference meeting, the bulk of which is to promote the junior cadet law enforcement program.

PNC Clarence M. Bacon, Baltimore Convention Corporation president, reported that the 2015 convention corporation will present to national headquarters, which he did, the sum of $57,716.95.

The Finance Commission recommends approval of a resolution granting authority to purchase a parking lot at 106 East North Street. This is an excellent investment, within a block of the national headquarters, and will afford parking for 48 of the 55 people of the Legion headquarters that are on a wait list currently. Detailed information can be found in the resolution. And I will say that several members of your commission actually walked the lot and made an assessment of the lot prior to the recommendation.

Resolution No. 3, Baltimore National Convention, increased the national per capita dues of The American Legion. The final clause of that resolution read, "RESOLVED, that rates established for purchase of a paid up for life membership shall remain at the current rate until June 1, 2016, at which time the Finance Commission shall adjust the rate to reflect prudent actuarial assumptions."

This week, based on a report from our actuaries, McCready and Keene, the Finance Commission set the PUFL pricing effective June 1, 2016, and you'll see that in the written report.

There are currently 293 authorized positions at the national headquarters, which includes eight assigned to the BVA that can only be used for appeals representatives.

Several years ago, actually I think it was 2008, national retirement plans were frozen due to concerns that recent past laws back in 2006 called the pension fund, might cause national headquarters extreme expense if it kept the plan. National headquarters does offer its employees the opportunity to participate in a 401(k) plan with contributions up to 6 percent matched up at 3.5 percent by the national organization. However, many young employees at lower income levels are unable to save significant amounts for their future.

Therefore, the Finance Commission recommends approval of a defined benefit plan at a very much lower amount than the former plan, and starting fully funded under current law. This plan will benefit employees and may cause them to make a career of working for The American Legion. The proposed resolution is attached.

A meeting was held with the national leadership and several department adjutants to discuss areas of mutual interest. One area discussed was direct mail fundraising. National headquarters does not solicit from its membership list. However, it does mail to members whose names have been purchased from other donors' lists.

Based on the discussion at the aforementioned meeting, the Finance Commission recommends that moneys raised from Legionnaires via direct mail fundraising be shared

as follows: If the department does all of its direct mail fundraising through National, they will receive 100 percent of the net money raised from members in their department through direct mail fundraising. You heard from the Marketing Commission that that's 21 departments currently.

Those departments that do not use National for their direct mail fundraising will receive 80 percent of the net money raised from members in their department through direct mail fundraising.

These shared amounts will not include other moneys received from these members, such as bequests and estates.

The Finance Commission added $750,000 to the 2016 budget for monthly contact of new DMS members which are still held by National Headquarters. They will educate them about The American Legion and offer opportunities to support its program. If this effort is successful, the Finance Commission will consider an enhanced DMS program for future years, having a target membership goal of 200,000 to 300,000 new members per year.

A list of the resolutions recommended for approval is attached, commander.

Report: Finance Commission
May 4, 2016
Gaither M. Kenner, Jr., North Carolina, Chairman

The Finance Commission met on Monday and Tuesday, May 2-3. All commission members were present. Also present were national adjutant Daniel S. Wheeler; national treasurer George Buskirk; executive directors Verna Jones and Jeff Brown; finance director Shawn Long; and Finance NEC liaison committee chairman Dave Warnken and members Tom Mattice, Bob Krause and Tom Saunders. Several guests joined us throughout the meeting.

- Reports were received from
- National adjutant
- National treasurer
- National judge advocate
- National headquarters' executive directors
- Finance director
- Convention corporation of Baltimore
- Endowment Fund corporation
- Internal Affairs commission
- Membership & Post Activities committee
- Fifth Third bank
- Hoosier Trust
- Marketing commission
- Media & Communications commission
- Americanism commission
- Crowe Horwath LLP
- McCready and Keene
- S. A. Van Dyk Insurance company

The net operating deficit for 2015 was $2,484,645.

The NEC approved the 2016 budget based on revenues of $81,862,021, and expenditures of $83,737,010, for a net operating deficit of $1,874,989. This budget is based

on a 2016 membership of 2,050,000. As of March 31, actual membership stands at 1,941,304.

At the Finance Commission's February 22 meeting in Washington, it approved the upcoming year's membership efforts and budget at a cost of $6,879,000. It also approved an emergency $12,300 budget overrun for DC office heating elements, and $3,789.25 in Emblem Sales write-offs and uncollectible accounts made since its fall meeting.

Hoosier Trust and Fifth Third Bank reported briefly on investment performance.

The Finance commission approved the 2015 audit as presented by Crowe Horwath LLP.

The Finance commission approved $37,822.81 in emergency purchases and budget overruns made since its Washington conference meeting, the bulk of which is to promote the Junior Cadet Law Enforcement program.

PNC Clarence M. Bacon, Baltimore convention corporation president, reported that the 2015 convention corporation will present to national headquarters a check for $52,716.95, which represents 50 percent of the convention's net profit.

The Finance commission recommends approval of a resolution granting authority to purchase a parking lot at 106 E. North Street. This is an excellent investment, within a block of the national headquarters, and will afford parking for 48 of the 55 people on the Legion parking lot waiting list. Detailed information can be found in the resolution.

Resolution no. 3, Baltimore national convention, increased the national per capita dues of The American Legion. The final clause of that resolution reads: "RESOLVED, That rates established for purchase of a paid-up-for-life membership shall remain at the current rate until June 1, 2016, at which time the Finance Commission shall adjust the rate to reflect prudent actuarial assumptions." This week, based on a report from actuaries McCready and Keene, Inc., the Finance commission set PUFL pricing effective June 1, 2016, as follows,:

18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
$1,535	$1,399	$1,229	$1,025	$815	$599	$429	$329

This table is used for all paid-up-for-life pricing for posts' dues rates of $48 or less. For all dues rates $48.01 and higher, telephone customer service at 317-860-3111 or 800-433-3318.

There are currently 293 authorized positions at national headquarters, which includes 8 assigned to the BVA that can only be used for appeals representatives.

Several years ago, based on legal advice at the time, national's retirement plan was frozen due to concerns that recently passed laws might cause national headquarters extreme expense if it kept the plan. National headquarters does offer its employees the opportunity to participate in a 401K with contributions up to 6 percent matched at 3.5 percent by the national organization. However, many young employees at lower income levels are unable to save significant amounts for their future. Therefore, the Finance commission recommends approval of a defined benefit plan at a much lower amount than the former plan, and starting fully funded under current law. This plan will benefit employees and may cause them to make a career of working for The American Legion. A proposed resolution is attached.

A meeting was held with national leadership and several department adjutants to discuss areas of mutual interest. One area discussed was direct mail fundraising. National headquarters does not solicit from its membership list. However, it does mail to members whose names have been purchased from other donor lists. Based on discussions at the aforementioned meeting, the Finance commission recommends that monies raised from Legionnaires via direct mail fundraising be shared as follows:

If the department does all of its direct mail fundraising through national, they will receive 100 percent of the net money raised from members in their department through direct mail fundraising.

Those departments that do not use national for their direct mail fundraising will receive 80 percent of the net money raised from members in their department through direct mail fundraising.

These shared amounts would not include other money received from these members, such as bequests.

The Finance commission added $750,000 to the 2016 budget for monthly contact of new DMS members which are still held by national headquarters. This will educate them about The American Legion and offer opportunities to support its programs. If this effort is successful, the Finance commission will consider an enhanced DMS program for future years, having a target membership goal of 200,000 to 300,000 new members per year.

A list of resolutions recommended for approval is attached.

Resolutions

The Finance commission recommends the NEC approve and adopt the resolutions listed below. Copies of the resolutions accompany this report.

- Resolution #1: American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement. Recommends in addition to continuing to provide educational benefits to those children of military servicemembers who have died while serving on active duty on or since September 11, 2001, that effective in 2017 the scope and administration of scholarships will be further enhanced by establishing additional conditions as set out in the resolution.
- Resolution #2: New Defined Benefit Plan for National Headquarters Employees. The national finance treasurer and the national finance chairman shall negotiate a contract with a corporate fiduciary to manage a new defined benefit plan for employees of the national headquarters at a cost not to exceed $652,000 per year, plus adjustments based on cost-of-living increases in wages, related fees and expenses.
- Resolution #3: Purchase of Parking Lot. The American Legion shall purchase a parking lot at 106 E. North Street at a price not to exceed $450,000 plus reasonable attorney fees, survey fees, title insurance and other necessary closing costs. The national commander is hereby authorized to choose the best way to finance the purchase of said property after reviewing recommendations of national treasurer and consulting with national adjutant and finance commission chairman.
- Resolution #4: Establishing the Elmer H. Fuhrhop Memorial Room at The American Legion National Headquarters. Conference Room 210 at 700 N. Pennsylvania will be renamed to honor long-time Children & Youth Commission Chairman Elmer Fuhrhop of Ohio.
- Resolution #5: Creation of an American Legion Baseball Department Website Network. A national network of American Legion Baseball websites will be created by agreement. Said agreement shall not exceed five years in length with a cost not to exceed $25,000 per year. Departments will be given option to participate in program at a cost not to exceed $500 per year, and departments may offset costs by allowing advertising on their respective websites.
- Resolution #6: Renaming the National Commander's Public Relations Award to National Commander's Media and Communications Award. This allows the choice of awardees to be more broad.

- Resolution #7: Rescinding of National Finance Non-Legislative Policy Resolutions. Recommends rescission of 71 resolutions due to accomplishment of purpose, having become obsolete, or having been superseded by later resolution.
- Resolution #22: Establishment and Appointment of Members to the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee. Recommends a committee be established to recognize the 75th anniversary of World War II.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to approve the Finance Commission report with the exception of eight resolutions. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second to approve the report. Any discussion? I recognize Past National Commander Ron Conley for the purposes of a question.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask you a question about a statement you made earlier dealing with the deficit on the membership, and I was wondering when the $5 dues increase was kicking in. I didn't think we would have a deficit of $1.8 million with a new $5 dues increase. Can you explain that to me?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: I do have the experts here, and I'll rely upon the national finance director.

NATIONAL FINANCE DIRECTOR LONG: The dues increase that was passed at the last national convention was for membership year 2017. So membership dues collected starting in July will reflect that increase, for the most part. We had it effective January 20, but if you recall that's the 80 percent target date, which means you have about 20 percent of your membership still to renew at that point. So it has a very little effect on 2016, but its full effect will be 2017.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, we started collecting the $5 increase in Pennsylvania January 1, 2016, and every post that submitted membership was going to submit that extra $5 to the national organization. So that's not being counted until 2017?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: It is being counted to 2016. However, commander, in a lot of departments, numerous people renewed at the older amount, since the collection of the $5 did not occur until January. So that money from January 1 on, the extra $5, is being collected, correct, and it is going to 2016. But if you recall at convention, the graphs, it will take some time in 2017 until we get the full effect. I hope I answered your question.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: Well, I appreciate you giving me an answer. I'm still a little confused by it because in April or May or June, people are going to start getting ready to start paying for the 2017 American Legion membership, and they're going to be submitting that. That's how we operate in Pennsylvania. In January, on December 31, and a lot of that's going to come in in July. And so that's not being considered when we forward that money on to the national organization?

NATIONAL FINANCE DIRECTOR LONG: That dues that is collected beginning in July is revenue for membership of the calendar year 2017. So while we have received the cash, it is not reflected in our deficit or surplus until 2017.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: Well, I think it needs a better explanation past this room, because people are going to start saying, "We have a 1.8 million deficit, and I just paid a $5 dues increase. What's going on here?" You know, that's what I'm talking about.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor of approving the report, aye. Opposed? Report is approved.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: **Resolution No. 1** titled, "American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement." Mr. Commander, the Resolutions Subcommittee recommends this resolution be held for further study. Therefore, I so move. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second to hold for further study Resolution 1. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

Resolution No. 2: New Defined Benefit Plan for National Headquarters Employees
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion does not have an active defined benefit plan for employees because the old plan was frozen in 2008, and it would be prohibitively expensive to reactivate it; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of The American Legion National Headquarters to establish a defined benefit plan for employees of The American Legion National Headquarters so that they will want to make working for The American Legion a career; and

WHEREAS, The Finance Commission has recommended the funding in the amount of $652,000 plus related fees and expenses; and

WHEREAS, The amount of funding will remain constant until such time as increased or decreased by the National Executive Committee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled at Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the national treasurer and Finance Commission chairman shall negotiate a contract with a corporate fiduciary to manage this new defined benefit plan for employees of the National Headquarters at a cost not to exceed $652,000 per year plus adjustments based on cost of living increase in wages, related fees and expenses; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate, shall sign such agreement and the national adjutant shall attest same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: Resolution No. 2 has the approval of the Finance Commission, the Resolution Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second to approve Resolution 2. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

Resolution No. 3: Purchase of Parking Lot
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion National Headquarters employs approximately 100 full-time staff in its Indianapolis downtown office; and

WHEREAS, A total of 41 employees park on the Legion owned parking lot, just northeast of the building, at a rate of $25 per month; and

WHEREAS, There are 55 employees on a waiting list to park on the Legion lot; and

WHEREAS, It takes a new employee seven to ten years to get a parking spot on the Legion lot; and

WHEREAS, In the meantime, employees are on their own to find parking and they park in lots that vary from a few blocks away to nearly a quarter of a mile away from the building; and

WHEREAS, Parking in the area varies from a few spots at $25 per month all the way up to $60 per month; and

WHEREAS, Some lots are located in or near increasingly less than desirable areas, raising concern for employees' safety as they arrive to and depart from work each day; and

WHEREAS, The area from city-center up to north of The American Legion Mall is experiencing explosive growth with several new condominium and retail building projects completed or planned; and

WHEREAS, As a result, parking spaces will become even scarcer and more expensive for employees in the more desirable directions from the building, and likely in all areas within walking distance of the building; and

WHEREAS, In shopping the area it was discovered that The American Legion can acquire a lot in close proximity to the building for the negotiated price of $450,000 plus legal and other reasonable closing costs; and

WHEREAS, The lot contains 48 parking spaces and is located to the east of The American Legion Mall in relatively the safest direction to walk; and

WHEREAS, With the addition of this lot The American Legion can provide safe, affordable parking for nearly every employee while providing positive value for The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, There are currently 70 development projects of various sizes under shovel in the downtown area with a totally investment of more than $2.5 billion; and

WHEREAS, The significant growth and development that is currently taking place in downtown Indianapolis is projected to continue well into the future making this property a sound long-term investment at $450,000; and

WHEREAS, The Finance Commission has compared the negotiated price of this parking lot property to the price of the only other parking lot property for sale in the area and this property is superior both in price and location; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has several options as to how it can finance the purchase of the property, including the use of internally held assets, and/or the use of a bank mortgage; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion national treasurer is analyzing finance options to determine which is the most advantageous and desirable to the organization and will report his findings to the national adjutant and chairman of the Finance Commission who can then determine which option is best; and

WHEREAS, This resolution has the approval of the Finance Commission, and the Subcommittee on Resolutions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion purchase the property located at 106 E. North Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204, currently owned by Triangle Point Properties, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, for a price not to exceed $450,000 plus reasonable attorney fees, survey fees, title insurance and other necessary closing costs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander is hereby authorized to choose the best way to finance the purchase of said property after reviewing the recommendations of the national treasurer and consulting with the national adjutant and the chairman of the Finance Commission; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That, subject to review and approval by the national judge advocate, the national commander be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute all contract and contractual documents needed to complete the purchase and the national adjutant is authorized and directed to attest the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: Resolution No. 3 has the approval of your Finance Committee and Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to approve Resolution No. 3. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 4: Establishing the Elmer H. Fuhrhop Memorial Room at The American Legion
Origin: Committee on Children & Youth
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, Elmer H. Fuhrhop was a 70-year member of The American Legion from the Department of Ohio who joined The American Legion after his return from service in the United States Army during World War II; and

WHEREAS, He held leadership roles at all levels of The American Legion, to include Department of Ohio Children & Youth Chairman from 1962 to 1963 and 1993 to 1994; department finance officer from 1981 to 1982; and department finance chairman from 1989 to 1990; and

WHEREAS, He served the national organization of The American Legion for over 42 years, as vice chairman of the National Foreign Relations Council from 1982 to 1984 and as member of the National Commission on Children & Youth in various roles since 1964, including Midwest Area general member for seven years, Midwest Area vice chairman for three years and Midwest Area chairman for three years, as well as a National Children & Youth Commission member for four years, commission vice chairman for 11 years and commission chairman for 11 years; and

WHEREAS, He was appointed chairman emeritus of the National Commission on Children & Youth by Resolution No. 49 at the 2006 National Executive Committee Fall Meeting; and

WHEREAS, He served as a member of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation board of directors for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, The Americanism and Children & Youth Division regularly met in Room 210 of the National Headquarters at 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, Elmer H. Fuhrhop passed away on February 3, 2016, at the age of 92 but he left a long line of current leaders in The American Legion who benefited from his leadership and mentorship because of his selfless commitment, organizational skills and ability to model and teach what it means to be a Legionnaire; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That meeting room 210 in the National Headquarters of The American Legion, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Indiana, hereafter be known as the Elmer H. Fuhrhop Memorial Room; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That authorization be given to spend up to $500 for the purchase of a display in order to exhibit mementos of Elmer H. Fuhrhop in room 210 in honor of his long and dedicated service to The American Legion.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: This resolution has the approval of the Finance Commission, the Americanism Commission, the Committee on Children and Youth, and the Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. The chair recognizes Past National Commander Jake Comer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Comrade Commander, I certainly respect Elmer Fuhrhop and all he's given to this American Legion over the years, but I'm against the resolution by using room 210 of this headquarters where the team meets. No one discussed this with us. I ask that this resolution be held for further study. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion to amend. Do I have a second? *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, is there any further discussion on the amendment? All those in favor of the amendment that was proposed by Past National Commander Comer, signify by saying aye. Opposed? All right.

So now we have on the floor Mr. Comer's amended motion which now must be voted on to be held for further study. So what you will be voting on is to hold this amended motion for further study. Is there any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? The motion will be held for further study.

Resolution No. 5: Creation of American Legion Baseball Department Website Network

Origin: American Legion Baseball Committee

Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, American Legion Baseball was organized in 1925 to teach practical lessons in sportsmanship and citizenship by emphasizing such qualities as loyalty, respect for the rules, fair play, courage and physical fitness; and

WHEREAS, Team enrollment in American Legion Baseball has seen a consistent and dramatic decrease; and

WHEREAS, Competition in youth baseball and youth sports overall has never been more fierce, which has contributed to the declining team enrollment; and

WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of national governing bodies, including most youth baseball organizations, have website networks; and

WHEREAS, Department baseball chairmen and The American Legion Baseball Committee have repeatedly expressed the need for an increased national marketing and promotions presence; and

WHEREAS, The position of assistant director for baseball promotions was created to further the efforts to grow the program; and

WHEREAS, Websites are essential in the modern age for organizations to disseminate information; and

WHEREAS, Consistent branding is crucial in promoting a positive image of the program; and

WHEREAS, Currently, only 32 of 50 departments have active American Legion Baseball websites with vastly different designs; and

WHEREAS, Mobile access to information has grown exponentially, including becoming the majority of all internet traffic, the majority of American Legion Baseball newsletter, “The Dugout,” traffic and the overwhelming majority of web traffic from American Legion Baseball’s core demographics; and

WHEREAS, Marketing studies show that a third of users will not use any websites that are not mobile friendly; and

WHEREAS, Search engines punish websites without mobile-friendly capabilities, making these sites hard to find; and

WHEREAS, Only three department baseball websites are mobile friendly; and

WHEREAS, Based on survey results conducted by the staff, the overwhelming majority of department baseball chairmen have expressed the desire to improve their online presence but lack the technical savvy, time and/or financing to do so; and

WHEREAS, The creation of a department website network would allow each department to have a professional online presence at a low cost; and

WHEREAS, It is anticipated that advertising and corporate sponsorship would greatly offset the cost of department website network, as the national baseball website had over 2.5 million views in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Proposals have been submitted by leading sports technology companies which would allow for the creation of a network of 53 websites; and

WHEREAS, It is necessary that The American Legion enter into a contract for the purpose of designing a website network, providing customer service, migrating content from current department websites and securing advertising partnerships on the website; and

WHEREAS, The Americanism Commission, the Media, Marketing & Communications Commission, and the Finance Commission have each approved this resolution and recommend it to the National Executive Committee for favorable action; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion enter into an agreement to create a national network of American Legion baseball websites; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the agreement shall not exceed five years in length with a cost not to exceed $25,000 per year; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments be given the option to participate in this program at a cost not to exceed $500 per year; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments be given the opportunity to offset the costs by allowing advertising on their respective websites; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments be given autonomy and control of the management and the content of their respective website, consistent with branding standards as established by the National Headquarters; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That after review and approval by the national judge advocate of said agreement for legal sufficiency, the national commander be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said agreement to accomplish the purpose of this resolution, and that the national adjutant be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: Resolution No. 5 has the approval of the Finance Commission, the Media & Communications Commission, Americanism Commission, the Baseball Committee, and the Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. *...Second*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 5. Any further discussion? Recognize NEC Ball.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN BALL (OK): In this thing, first of all, advertise on the website. Do we have an oversight committee on that, to make sure, you know, the whiskeys and beers and condoms, whatever?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Gaither, do you want to answer that, please? The question was referenced to oversight.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: National always has oversight, even of the department, when you use the emblem, the trademark, et cetera. There's my understanding in the brief discussion before it came to our commission, because this is about a $25,000

spend to assist departments, that the national media will be reviewing and assisting the departments in the development of their sites.

In regards to advertising, that question has not been determined yet, to my understanding. But there are rules, what national uses for advertising. I'm sure that once national develops these and assists the departments in regards to these websites, national will have rules in regards to how you advertise, what you advertise, how you may advertise, et cetera, because those advertisements could reflect the brand of The American Legion. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Is there any further discussion of Resolution No. 5? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed. Motion carries.

Resolution No. 6: Renaming the National Commander's Public Relations Award to National Commander's Media and Communications Award
Origin: Media & Communications Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The National Commander's Public Relations Award was approved by the national adjutant June 10, 1968 in accordance with Resolution No. 30, National Executive Committee, April 30-May 1, 1958; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's Public Relations Award is presented each year to individuals, companies or organizations that have garnered exceptional public and national media recognition of the promotion of one or more areas within the Four Pillars of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, The award honors specific achievements of accomplishments that are in accordance with, or in furtherance of, established American Legion policies or programs that have contributed to the preservation of the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, The award serves to further advance public awareness of military and veterans issues; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion recognizes that modern technology and communications provide opportunities to promote its programs, policies and initiatives beyond traditional public relations communications; and

WHEREAS, This resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission: therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The National Commander's Public Relations Award be renamed The National Commander's Media and Communications Award; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion shall provide the award recipient with one roundtrip airfare ticket within the United States to the National Convention, plus transportation to and from the airport if the award winner is not a resident of the National Convention metropolitan area; two nights lodging at the National Convention headquarters hotel; up to two tickets for the National Commander's Head Table Reception and Banquet; reimbursement of normal and customary expenses as determined by The American Legion; an 18" X 22" walnut shadow box plaque with metal etched inscribed plate not exceeding the cost of $750, adjusted as needed for inflation; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 7, October 16-17, 2013 is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: Resolution No. 6 has the approval of the Media & Communications Commission, the Internal Affairs

Commission, the Finance Commission, and the Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 6. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 7: Rescinding of National Finance Non-Legislative Policy Resolutions
Origin: Finance Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The National Finance Commission has concluded an extensive review of National Executive Committee and National Convention resolutions relating to the finances of The American Legion from years 1919 – 2015; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the following resolutions be, and they are being, rescinded by reason of (1) accomplishment of purpose, (2) being obsolete; and (3) being superseded by later resolutions.

(1)Accomplishment of purpose:

No. 1 MAIL 1971	**CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE DISASTER – 1971**
No. 1 MAIL 1972	**RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA, FLOOD DISASTER – 1972**
No. 14 SPRING 1975	**SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY PROGRAM**
No. 24 FALL 1977	**AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT WITH AN ARCHITECTURAL FIRM FOR DESIGN OF AMERICAN LEGION FREEDOM BELL MEMORIAL IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**
No. 7 SPRING 1979	**APPROVAL TO REIMBURSE THE AMERICAN LEGION FOR LIFE INSURANCE EXPENSES**
No. 1 FALL 1985	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 3 SPRING 1986	**DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION**
No. 2 PRE 1986	**AUTHORIZE LITIGATION TO CHALLENGE AND CLARIFY VA POLICIES ON P.L. 99-272**
No. 9 FALL 1986	**PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 2 PRE 1987	**CONSENT TO CHANGE OF NAME OF CARRIER FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION LIFE INSURANCE PLAN**
No. 1 FALL 1987	**DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR CONVENTION**
No. 23 FALL 1987	**INCENTIVE FOR DISCOUNTED AIR TRAVEL**
No. 41 FALL 1987	**FUND RAISING FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION**
No. 7 SPRING 1988	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 8 SPRING 1988	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 9 SPRING 1988	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 10 SPRING 1988	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 18 SPRING 1988	**MONEY MARKET PROGRAM**
No. 9 FALL 1988	**DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION**
No. 15 FALL 1988	**JUNIOR UNIFORMED MUSICAL GROUPS**

	PARTICIPATION AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
No. 21 SPRING 1989	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 25 SPRING 1989	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 15 FALL 1989	**JUNIOR UNIFORMED MUSICAL GROUPS PARTICIPATION AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 1 MAIL VOTE 1990	**PUBLISHING CONSULTANT FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY**
No. 2 MAIL VOTE 1990	**PUBLISHER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY**
No. 3 MAIL VOTE 1990	**APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE**
No. 12 SPRING 1990	**SUPPORT TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES FLAG FROM DESECRATION**
No. 13 SPRING 1990	**DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION**
No. 21 SPRING 1990	**APPROVAL TO REIMBURSE THE AMERICAN LEGION FOR LIFE INSURANCE EXPENSES**
No. 3 FALL 1990	**AUTHORIZING WITHDRAWAL FROM PAID-UP-FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES**
No. 15 FALL 1990	**REVENUE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM BETWEEN THE AMERICAN LEGION AND THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**
No. 31 FALL 1990	**JUNIOR UNIFORMED MUSICAL GROUPS PARTICIPATION AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 32 FALL 1990	**RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA PROJECT**
No. 30 SPRING 1991	**REVENUE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM BETWEEN THE AMERICAN LEGION AND MADISON & COMPANY**
No. 31 FALL 1991	**EVALUATION/REVIEW OF INVESTMENT ACCOUNT(S)**
No. 22 SPRING 1992	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 20 SPRING 1993	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 30 SPRING 1995	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 31 SPRING 1995	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 18 FALL 1995	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 5 SPRING 1996	**SUPPORT FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM FOR VIETNAMESE VETERANS, TO BE ADMINISTERED THROUGH VIETNAM ASSISTANCE FOR THE HANDICAPPED**
No. 10 SPRING 1996	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 28 SPRING 1999	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 27 SPRING 2000	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 14 FALL 2000	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 7 SPRING 2001	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 8 SPRING 2001	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 9 SPRING 2002	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 18 FALL 2003	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 19 FALL 2003	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 16 SPRING 2004	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION (ESTATE OF LEROY B. BARDWELL)**
No. 17 SPRING 2004	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION (ESTATE OF STANLEY D. CAMERON)**
No. 7 SPRING 2005	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION – WILLIAM K. SLICHTER**

No. 8 SPRING 2005	**ADDITIONAL BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION – STANLEY D. CAMERON**
No. 12 SPRING 2006	**BEQUEST (ESTATE OF ARNOLD OTTO ZAFF) TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 13 SPRING 2006	**BEQUEST (ESTATE OF IONA FAYE DEGROSS) TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 16 SPRING 2006	**CHARITABLE GIFT TRUST**
No. 20 SPRING 2006	**BEQUEST (ESTATE OF CECIL E. DOUGHER) TO THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 14 FALL 2008	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION (ESTATE OF ALINE K. TRISLER)**
No. 15 FALL 2008	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION (ESTATE OF ADA M. ROVINSKY)**
No. 16 FALL 2008	**BEQUEST TO THE AMERICAN LEGION (ESTATE OF WILLIAM L. PRIVATT)**

(2) Being obsolete:

No. 10 SPRING 1990	**AFFINITY TELEPHONE CALLING CARD PROGRAM**
No. 1 PRE 1990	**EXPANSION OF AFFINITY TELEPHONE CALLING CARD PROGRAM**

(3)Superseded by Later Resolution:

No. 18 SPRING 1983	**INCREASED REGISTRATION FEES FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION**
No. 3 PRE 1987	**AFFINITY CHARGE CARD PROGRAM**
No. 21 SPRING 1988	**SECOND AMENDMENT TO ADMINISTRATION AND PROMOTION AGREEMENT**
No. 29 Fall 1988	**INCENTIVE FOR DISCOUNTED AIR TRAVEL**
No. 14 SPRING 1990	**AFFINITY CARD PROGRAM CHANGES**
No. 2 PRE 1990	**ADDITIONAL AFFINITY CARD ENHANCEMENT**
No. 37 SPRING 2006	**INCREASE IN NATONAL PER CAPITA DUES OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
No. 1 CONV 2006	**INCREASE IN NATIONAL PER CAPITA DUES OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: This resolution has the approval of the Finance Commission and the Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second. Any discussion on Resolution 7? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 22: Establishment and Appointment of Members to the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Finance Commission

WHEREAS, The Friends of the National World War II Memorial are now gearing up to kick-off an ambitious four-year World War II 75th Anniversary Commemoration from December 7, 2016 to September 2, 2020 and the commemoration will be highlighted by reunions, symposiums, museum exhibits, and battle anniversary ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, The 75th Anniversary of World War II is being celebrated in communities throughout our Nation between 2016 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has opportunities to focus our organization at all levels to participate in the commemoration of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Many of these activities and events will coincide with events that our posts and departments are conducting to celebrate The American Legion's 100th Anniversary in their communities; and

WHEREAS, It is advantageous for The American Legion to establish a select committee to work with the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee to focus on both celebrations as we work to celebrate both events, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion continues to fully support the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of WWII from 2016 to 2020; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander be authorized to establish and appoint select members to the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the committee's purpose is to work in concert with American Legion posts, districts, departments and the general public to build awareness and support for the 75th Anniversary of WWII by also working with the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee shall consist of a chairman, and not to exceed a total of five members appointed at large by the national commander and approved by the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander is authorized to fill vacancies as required, subject to ratification by the National Executive Committee at its next ensuing meeting until this committee is terminated the 2nd day of September, 2020 unless sooner disbanded; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee be assigned to the Internal Affairs Commission and the National Officers, Department Officers and Commissions and Committees book published by the National Headquarters shall be updated to reflect the name change above.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCHMIDT: Resolution No. 22 has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, the Marketing Commission, the Finance Commission, and the Resolutions Subcommittee. Therefore, I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second for Resolution No. 22. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

In so much as you have passed Resolution No. 22 citing the advisability of having a national committee to oversee and guide us through the World War II commemorative celebration, I hereby nominate the following: Chairman, Past National Commander Fang A. Wong, New York. Members: Past National Commander Clarence Bacon, Department of Maryland; Robert B. Sussan, Department of Virginia; John C. Hatfield, Department of Virginia; and Dr. E.B. Hellman, Department of Virginia.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion that those appointments be approved by the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve the recommended committee. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, I'd like to call upon the chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, Ralph Bozella, Department of Colorado, chairman.

Oral Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

Good morning, Commander Barnett, NEC, and guests. A written VA&R report is filed, and I would like to highlight some of the activities of the commission since we met in October of 2015.

Commander, VA&R never rests. These persistent issues which affect the quality of life for veterans and their families just continue to exist. It seems like we are always dealing with affairs of the VA. So I want to thank you, commander, for authorizing a special meeting of the VA&R Commission while we were here in Indianapolis this week. The nine members that were called in and guests met this past Monday and Tuesday to discuss these persistent issues that seem to dog veterans through VA health care, benefits, and cemeteries.

In addition to the meetings here this week, the commission has met in Washington, D.C. at the legislative conference, and then our three subcommittees, Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefit Committee, and the National Cemetery Committee, met by telephone the last week of April in order to get us better prepared for the spring meetings.

Commander, your remarks this morning on the issue of problems with the VA were right on target, and your directive for The American Legion to fix it is exactly what we intend to do.

We have revised and revitalized the System Worth Saving program. Since December of this past year, 2015, we have taken five System Worth Saving site visits, and we are authorized to do seven more, to make 12 over this year.

Now, rather than utilize a specific task force like we used to do with the System Worth Saving, we are utilizing commission members, committee members in the different departments. They're working with their department leadership to go on the site visit, with the support and assistance from our national staff. What this enables us to do is to get the local Legionnaires directly involved with their VA health-care system and benefit system.

So far the site visits have taken place in St. Cloud, Minnesota; Big Spring, Texas; Montgomery, Alabama; Reno, Nevada; and Grand Junction, Colorado. What we have planned for the rest of this calendar year are Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Vegas, Nevada; Long Beach, California; Walla Walla, Washington; Shreveport, Louisiana; Augusta, Maine; and Batavia, New York.

The site visits include a town hall meeting, which we instituted a few years ago, and that's where the veterans have the opportunity to tell us what successes they've had VA, as well as their problems and concerns. Then we do the actual site visit to the hospital with our team, where we assess the VA standards and how that medical center is meeting those standards. We certainly talk about things like outpatient wait times, staff vacancies, turnover rates, as well as a variety of the issues that affect that hospital.

We take the information we learn from the town hall meetings and present those to hospital administration. We meet with administration as the first meeting of our visit, and we have an exit interview as the last meeting of the visit. If time allows, we try to visit a homeless shelter, any VA homeless projects, and our vet centers that might be in that particular area.

The other thing that we are revitalizing and actually doing are the Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) teams, where we have accredited service officers and representation from the National Veterans Legal Services Program, as we go into the VA regional offices to assess their adjudication of the claims process, with the goal to improve that process. Now, we have visited so far Buffalo, New York; St. Petersburg, Florida;

Cleveland, Ohio; and Roanoke, Virginia, and two more visits are planned for Boston, Massachusetts; and Portland, Oregon.

Information that's gained from these kind of reports, both the System Worth Saving and the ROAR visit are published and online at the American Legion website. We also make executive summary reports available to the president of the United States, VA leadership, and Congress.

What we're finding out right now from the System Worth Saving is that the VA's Choice Program is failing veterans. It's failing them in the clinical appointments, it's failing veterans in the payment of the bills; the commander talked about some of that this morning. We're also finding out that medical records transfers are another serious, serious problem. We're finding out in the claims that the claims backlog is dropping. Yes, we're all really pleased about that, but the appeals pile is growing, and we're not satisfied with that. We are working closely with VA, with our claims department, to try to rectify that problem as well.

You know, we are in this political environment right now where politicians, candidates for office, and at least one veterans service organization are crying for the privatization of VA healthcare. Commander touched on that this morning. Sir, I want to thank you for giving part of my report today. *(Laughter)*

Everything that the commander brought out about that is absolutely true, but not The American Legion. We are here to work with VA, to work with VA shoulder-to-shoulder at these site visits, to develop those relationships so that we can fix it. It really is up to us to get this done. These are some serious times.

In our agenda this week, our staff helped us address these issues with staff presentations, and we were joined by Past National Commander John Brieden and Past National Commander Bill Detweiler for a couple of presentations on their behalf. Commander Brieden talked about, to increase the transparency of asbestos claims, and Commander Detweiler talked to us about, from the TBI/PTSD Committee research on medical marijuana as an alternate healing therapy for veterans. The operative word there is "research."

We were able to dispose of seven resolutions that were in your resolutions book. Resolution No. 27 is mistakenly in your book right there and I'll take responsibility for that. That should not be in there for approval. That resolution, the recommendation to the subcommittee is that that resolution be disposed of administratively.

Commander, our division staff and volunteer members of this commission are working hard and are available to meet the challenges that you put before us this morning, in working with the VA as much as possible to get that done. We believe that our work will improve veterans' health care, claims adjudication, and the memorialization of our veterans in our national cemeteries. Sir, I want to thank you for allowing me to have this opportunity to work with veterans in this capacity. Thank you, sir.

Advance Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
April 13, 2016
Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

I. 2016 DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICERS SCHOOL

The first session of the 2016 Department Service Officers School was held at the Washington DC Hilton from February 17-19. Over 130 Department, State, and County Veteran Service Officers from around the country and Puerto Rico were in attendance.

The event began with three speakers representing the VA: Ron Burke, Director of the National Work Cue, Scott Blackburn, Director of MyVA, and Laura Eskenazi, Executive

in Charge and Vice Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals. The speakers provided informative presentations and each concluded with thorough question and answer sessions.

Following the featured speakers, the training curriculum broke out into two tracks depending on the level of experience of the attendee: Track 1 for beginners and Track 2 for intermediate and advanced students. National VA&R staff provided the curriculum and facilitated training for the Track 1 Service Officer session, and staff from the National Veterans Legal Services Program facilitated Track 2.

Track 1 covered basic information that targeted the development of compensation and pension claims, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) forms, claim development, fully developed claims (FDC), medical opinion, code of procedure, using the 38 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), appeals basics, 646 preparation, Medical Evaluation Board (MEB), Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) and eBenefits.

The next Department Service Officer School will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana from July 28-30, 2016.

II. NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION CONFERENCE

The 93rd Annual Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Conference was held at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. on February 22, 2016.

III. MEETING OF THE NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMISSION

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission met on February 22, 2016, in the Lincoln, Concourse Level, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC. Previously, the Commission met in Indianapolis, IN, October 14-15, 2016. Commission Chairman Ralph P. Bozella, (CO) presided. The Commission heard reports from VA&R Committees and updates from the Washington Headquarters staff.

Reports received, together with matters considered during this meeting, are as follows:

A.) Report of the Committee on Certificates of Appreciation

Your Committee on Certificates of Appreciation met on Monday, February 22, 2016 in the Washington Hilton, Lincoln, Concourse Level, and considered no new nominations for this award.

B.) Report on National American Legion Volunteering

The American Legion Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program continues to provide for our nation's veterans while they are cared for by VA health care facilities, interned in national cemeteries and file claims at VA Regional offices. In Fiscal Year 2015, The American Legion's 7,638 VAVS volunteers donated 856,649 hours with a value of more than $19.8 million in savings to the VA. During the first quarter of FY 2016, 6,284 TAL volunteers donated 186,721 hours at a value over $4.6 million.

1st Quarter FY 2016

Regular Schedule Count	Regular Schedule Hours	Occasional Hours	Total Hours
6,284	186,721	15,918	202,639

National Commander Dale Barnett awarded Mr. James Whelan and Mr. Alfredo "Fred" Zamora, from the Department of Georgia, the VA Voluntary Services (VAVS) Volunteer of the year award.

Remarks

Dr. Baligh R. Yehia, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for the Veterans Health Administration provided the VA&R Commission with a presentation discussing how the VA intends to transform the future of VA's Community Care. Due to today's complicated community care program, VA proposed a plan to Congress to consolidate all of its community care programs. According to Dr. Yehia, the proposed changes will improve the veteran and community providers experience for community care; however, VA cannot move to the future state of community care without Congressional action. Dr. Yehia asked for The American Legion's assistance in contacting Congress, providing support for the consolidation plan, educating veterans on the program, supporting outreach, providing actionable feedback, and understanding that things will take time.

Mark Bilosz, Acting Director of Compensation Service for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provided the VA&R Commission with VBA's missions and service offerings in FY2015. In FY 2015, $63.7 billion was paid to 4.1 million veterans and 1.4 million claims were completed for compensation, 3.1 million non-rating end products were completed, more than $5.5 billion was paid in pension benefits to over 500,000 veterans and survivors, $6.3 billion was paid in dependency & indemnity compensation to 386,000 survivors, and fiduciary services were provided to 183,000 beneficiaries.

The National Cemetery Administration's Interim Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, Ronald Walters, addressed the VA&R Commission about the accomplishments of NCA in FY 2015, and the goals of NCA for FY 2016. According to Interim Under Secretary Walters, NCA interred more than 130,000 veterans and family members, placed more than 364,000 headstones and markers, and issued more than 661,000 Presidential Memorial Certificates in FY 2015. Interim Under Secretary Walters also discussed NCA's long range plan goals of:

- Ensuring veterans and their eligible family members will have increased access to burial benefits.
- Increasing the use of VA burial and memorial benefits by veterans and their eligible family members.
- Enhancing tributes befitting to veterans' service and sacrifice.
- Increasing stakeholder trust in NCA based on enhanced accountability.
- Serving stakeholders more efficiently and effectively by NCA's internal capacity.

Interim Under Secretary Walters closed his session with brief updates on the status of The American Legion's resolutions concerning the NCA.

B.) Reports on the Health Administration Committee & Veterans Benefits Committee

Following the VA&R Commission meeting, several of members of the Health Administration Committee and the Veterans Benefits Committee took a tour of the Washington, DC VA Medical Center (DC VAMC). The members were greeted by staff of the DC VAMC's public affairs office. While at the medical center, the members got a chance to meet and share stories with many of the patient in the inpatient units. Gift bags from The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warrior were presented to the veterans residing in the long-term care facility.

Other members of both committees went to the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH). In 1991 Congress incorporated the U.S. Naval Home (opened in 1834) and U. S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home (founded in 1851) into an independent establishment of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government named the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) Agency. In 2002, the names of the two homes were officially changed to The Armed Forces Retirement Home - Gulfport and The Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington.

Upon arrival, the members were greeted by the Assistant Director of Operation Comfort Warrior, Bruce Drake, who provided each Legionnaire a comfort gift package to present to residents at the home. Staff from the AFRM escorted Commission member and National VA&R staff on a tour of the home, and allowed the members and staff to present comfort gifts to residents. During the tour of the AFRH, an American Legion VA&R Commission member met a resident who was a member of his post, which led to a happy occasion.

System Worth Saving Program (SWS)

The SWS Program began in 2003 under Past National Commander Ronald Conley leadership as National Commander. At the 2006 American Legion National Convention, Resolution 206, "Annual State of VA Medical Facilities Report," authorized a continuation of VA site visits; The American Legion Veterans Benefits Center Committee was created to facilitate the visits. At The American Legion 2015 Spring National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting, Resolution 26, Veterans Benefits Center was approved, which realigned and combine the SWS Program and the Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) visits to create The American Legion's Veterans Benefits Centers. At The American Legion 2015 National Convention, Resolution 105, "Reiteration of the System Worth Saving Program" was approved, which established the program as a permanent program under the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission.

Since December 2015, The American Legion has conducted four site visits and has the approval to conduct 8 additional site visits for a total of 12 over a 12 month period. The 2015-2016 SWS schedule is as follows: St. Cloud, MN; Big Spring, TX; Montgomery, AL; and Reno, NV. Pending-Grand Junction, CO; Salt Lake City, UT; Las Vegas, NV; Long Beach, CA; Walla Walla, WA; Shreveport, LA; Augusta, ME; and Batavia, NY.

SWS Site Visits Include:

Veterans Town Hall meetings: Upon arrival, The American Legion conducts a veterans town hall meeting at a local American Legion post for veterans and their families to discuss their experiences with the local VA medical center and how The American Legion can assist to ensure they are receiving the best of VA services.

Site Visit: The American Legion National Staff, along with a Commission Member, meets with the executive leadership of each VAMC. During this meeting, the leadership is given an opportunity to discuss and/or explain their responses to mail-out-questionnaire that is sent prior to the site visit. Additional questions that are constructed post reviewing the mail-out-questionnaire will then be presented by a Commission Member or National staff member. Also, the information collected during the town hall is provided to the leadership for feedback. An exit briefing is held at the end of the second day to do a final review of data collected.

Homeless Shelter Visit: During this visit, the SWS team discusses local homeless veterans issues with VA staff and their plan to combat and ultimately end veteran homelessness in their catchment area. These visits gives The American Legion a chance to see if programs and services are productive and efficient in assisting homeless veterans and their families while also noting 'best practices' and/or remaining challenges in assisting

this vulnerable demographic. Also, The American Legion speaks with staff to receive reports of success stories of veterans that have pass through the shelter onto employment and permanent housing.

Vet Center Visit: The purpose of the Vet Center visit is to maintain a partnership with the centers based in the communities and to assist the centers when they have a need.

Commission on Care

Congress passed the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA) of 2014 in response to concerns about the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) ability to provide access to medical services for veterans and manage the operations of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). In Section 202 of VACAA, Congress established the Commission on Care, charging it to examine veterans' access to VA health care and to examine strategically how best to organize the VHA, locate health resources, and deliver health care to veterans during the next 20 years. The Commission reports to the President of the United States through the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Duties of the Commission on Care

The Commission will undertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of access to health care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). To carry out this charge, the Commission has the power to hold hearings, take testimony, and receive evidence. The Commission will review findings, data, and recommendations as it evaluates and assesses results of the Independent Assessment, mandated by Section 201 of VACAA.

MyVA

MyVA is what VA is calling their transformation from their current way of doing business to one that puts the veterans in control of how, when, and where they wish to be served. It is a catalyst to make VA a world class service provider. It will modernize VA's culture, processes, and capabilities to put the needs, expectations, and interests of veterans and their families first. MyVA represents an opportunity to affect fundamental changes in VA's systems and structures to align with our mission and values. The MyVA vision is to provide a seamless, unified Veteran Experience across the entire organization and throughout the country.

C.) Report on National Cemetery Committee

Following the VA&R Commission meeting, the National Cemetery Committee toured Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and received an eligibility briefing from Renea Yates, Deputy Superintendent for Cemetery Administration. The American Legion asked Ms. Yates about the recent eligibility concerns for Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs). According to Ms. Yates, in 2002 ANC allowed "active duty designees" (or WASPs) to be inured in the cemetery's Columbarium; however, because the ANC Superintendent at that time did not have the authority to unilaterally alter the eligibility criteria for inurnment in ANC, the Secretary of the Army, on 23 March 2015, rescinded the ANC Superintendent's 2002 decision. Currently, Active Duty Designees' are not eligible of inurnment in ANC. Since the eligibility rules for inurnment are published in the Federal Register, any change in policy would need to be accomplished through a formal rulemaking.

E.) Report of The American Legion TBI/PTSD Committee

On Saturday, February 20, 2016 the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Committee meeting convened during The American Legion's 2016 Washington Conference to listen to various speakers present on topics such as the 2015 American Legion PTSD/TBI survey data, suicide rates among service members and

veterans, programs for military and veteran caregivers under the direction of the Veteran of Affairs and Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and barriers to researching medicinal cannabis for veterans diagnosed with treatment resistant PTSD diagnosis.

Staff from The American Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Division along with members of the TBI and PTSD Committee held a TBI and PTSD Committee meeting during the 2015 Washington Conference from 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. EST in the Jefferson East Concourse Level of the Washington Hilton Hotel located at 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009.

The TBI/PTSD committee members present during the meeting included Past National Commander (PNC) Bill Detweiler (LA), Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Chairman Ralph Bozella (CO), National Executive Committee (NEC) William Kile (WV), (PA) John P. Powers (NY), as well as the two medical consultants, Colonel (ret) Dr. Ronald Poropatich (PA), and Dr. Jeanne Mager Stellman, Ph.D. PNC Ronald F. Conley was not in attendance at the meeting.

There were six speakers during the conference, which included TBI/PTSD Committee Consultant Dr. Jeanne M. Stellman, Dr. Suzanne Sisley who specializes in Internal medicine and Psychiatry, as well as Laurel Rodewald, Foundation Program Coordinator and her associate Emery Popoloski, Elizabeth Dole Fellow and Caregiver Community Program Coordinator from the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. In addition, Margaret Kabat, LCSW-C, CCM National Director Caregiver of Support Program and Dr. Robert Bossarte Epidemiology Program Director from the Department of Veterans Affairs spoke to the committee.

Past National Commander and TBI and PTSD Committee Chairman William Detweiler opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and provided an introduction and mission of the TBI and PTSD Committee. Rebecca Davila, Assistant Director for TBI and PTSD Programs (DC Office) provided the roll call of the committee.

Speaker Presentations:

There were five presentations that were made to the committee. They were as follows:

1. TBI/PTSD 2015 Survey: Dr. Jeanne Stellman

The American Legion conducted a new TBI/PTSD survey in July 2015, which had over 1,890 veteran respondents. To determine if veterans were benefiting from complementary and alternative medical treatments and therapies, the survey focused on four key areas:

- Types of treatments that veterans received
- Access and availability of CAM therapies
- Perceived benefits of treatments
- Reasons for treatment termination

Dr. Stellman noted that this was a self-selected survey and not a true snapshot of a comprehensive report for PTSD and TBI. Nevertheless, the committee gleaned from the survey that more data is needed regarding the term caregivers and prescribed medication to treat TBI/PTSD.

The survey highlighted that over 50% of TBI respondents received pain management and 54% of veterans suffering from PTSD received medication treatment. Accordingly, 37.69% of respondents remarked that they experienced no change and 13.8% worsened from the prescribed medications. Over 55% of the survey respondents answered that their provider was not receptive or had not discussed complementary and alternative treatments. However, veterans are receiving CAM treatments, such as hyperbaric oxygen therapy, virtual reality, mediation, relaxation, journaling, guided imagery, Tai Chi and various other services offered either at VA or civilian facilities within the community. Results also

indicate that for various reasons, 31% of all respondents have terminated their treatments prior to completion. On a positive note veterans are receiving more CAM treatments in VA facilities.

Following the presentation by Dr. Stellman the TBI/PTSD committee discussed the 2015 TBI/PTSD American Legion survey and proposed various options. Proposals stemmed from not conducting another survey, to administering several focused surveys due to the purpose of collecting further information that the initial survey did not specifically highlight. To determine if veterans are being over medicated, one recommendation centered on the requisite to know the amount and categories of medications veterans are being prescribed for their TBI and PTSD symptoms. The committee members also proposed that a follow-up survey focus on the various alternative types of treatments that are being offered by both the VA and civilian community, by determining the rate of long and short term effectiveness versus percentage of opt or drop-out for each treatment program. In addition, a follow-up survey could center on the number of treatment/therapy sessions and if current treatments and therapies for treating TBI and PTSD symptoms are practical and effective as well as and whether or not veterans perceive the benefiting effect from these treatments and/or therapies.

Other recommendations entailed collaborating with all VSO's to conduct a new TBI/PTSD survey that has a limited amount of focused questions that only contain multiple choice answers. Currently, the VA&R TBI/PTSD Assistant Director is exploring potential collaborative means with research analyst from another organization.

2. Suicide among Veterans and Studies of Combat and Related Outcomes: Dr. Robert Bossarte

The main baseline for the presentation is that the reported number that 22 veterans die to suicide is an estimate number from previous data. New VA suicide data will be available summer of 2016 and will be more in depth. Also, service members and their families are susceptible to suicide while transitioning from military to veteran status and the emphasis to assist them should be a primary focus for all VSO.

3. Hidden Heroes- Elizabeth Dole Foundation "Awakening America to the service and struggles of our nation's military and veteran caregivers": Laurel Rodewald and Emery Popoloski

Previously, the TBI/PTSD committee requested to learn more about caregivers and the obstacles that have arisen from their new role and responsibilities, which became the focus for the presentation. Laurel Rodewald explained the origin of the foundation and the function of the organization while Emery Popoloski shared her personal story and trials and tribulations as a caregiver spouse.

Popoloski, stressed that caregivers frequently had difficulties filing service-connected VA claims, which inadvertently affected the level of healthcare benefits the veteran could receive. The TBI/PTSD committee and VA7R division proposed that The American Legion DSO Volunteers could assist the Dole Foundation Caregivers by filing VA claims and assist with discharge upgrades. Also, at the conclusion of the presentation the speakers suggested that The American Legion join the Elizabeth Dole Foundation Coalition and enhance the collaborative role between organizations, which commenced directly following the presentation.

4. Caregiver Support Program Department of Veterans Affairs: Meg Kabat

Meg Kabat provided an overview of the VA Caregiver Support Program which encompassed the importance of a strong peer support group for caregiver mental stability

and the beneficial aspects of networking and sharing resources information within the community. In addition, caregiver support for veterans increases engaged healthcare and decreases probability of suicide.

The Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 currently provides a stipend to caregivers of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) veterans, but not to caregivers of veterans from previous eras. Kabat shared that the 2016 budget for caregiver support program is 605 million and VA will request 705 million for 2017 due to the number of post OEF/OIF caregivers are in the program. However, the current VA caregiver support program does not assist pre 9/11 veterans, which The American Legion disagrees with based on the 2014 Resolution No. 160: Veterans Receive Same Level of Benefits.

The American Legion has always advocated on the principle of equal benefits for equal service and continues to campaign that the pre/911 caregivers receive the same stipend and benefits.

5. Safety and Efficacy of Medical Cannabis for Veterans with Treatment Resistant PTSD: Dr. Sue Sisley

Dr. Sisley commented that she has faced challenges in receiving DEA approval to research medicinal cannabis and obtain the plant from NIDA which has halted her process to move forward with the study. Dr. Sisley stressed that NIDA provides medicinal cannabis but it is not pure since it includes stems and leaves. The Committee suggested that Dr. Sisley write a thought paper and outline previous research and then have it published to bring more awareness to the issue. Dr. Sisley also requested that the individual VSO organizations unite to voice the position on eliminating barriers to researching medicinal marijuana. The TBI/PTSD committee is gathering additional facts and currently exploring the notion to take a position on the issue of medicinal marijuana.

E.) Report on Women and Minority Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs released statistical data showing women veterans as the fastest growing population in 2014 from http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Demographics/New_Vetpop_Model/VetPop2014Document.pdf. In August 2015, The American Legion reintegrated the position, Assistant Director for Women and Minority Veterans Outreach. Since that time, an updated women veteran's brochure will be release in later 2016 as well as an updated American Legion Departmental women coordinator listing.

The American Legion's Woman and Minority position has allowed the Legion to make major strides in connecting with women veterans, knowing what issues are plaguing this growing community, and fighting for benefits and quality healthcare. On November 17, 2015, the Assistant Director for Women and Minority Veterans of The American Legion gave witness testimony before the Subcommittee on Health Committee on Veterans' Affairs United States House of Representatives on pending legislation H.R. 1603: Military Sexual Assault Victims Empowerment Act/ Military SAVE Act. The American Legion gave support to this bill with Resolution No. 18 Women Veterans.

Networking with Department of Veteran Affairs

The Assistant Director for Women and Minority Veterans has met with Women and Minority veteran leadership at the Department of Veterans Affairs. To include the follow:

- Elisa Basnight, JD, Director for the Center of Women Veterans- is the primary advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on programs and issues related to women veterans.
- Dr. Betty Mosely Brown, Associate Director of the Center for Women Veterans- is responsible for advising and assisting the Director of the Center for Women Veterans in planning, directing, managing, and coordinating programs and activities of the center.
- Dr. Patricia Hayes, Chief Consultant of Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group- oversees the delivery of VA healthcare services for over 400,000 women veteran healthcare users.
- Barbara Ward, Director for the Center for Minority Veterans- serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority veterans.
    - Denise Wright, Liaison for African American veterans
    - Dwayne Campbell, Liaison for Hispanic American veterans
    - Juanita Mullen, Liaison for American Indian/Alaskan Native veterans
    - Ronald Sagudan, Liaison for Asian American-Pacific Islander
    - Gale Bell, Women Veterans Program Manager and Clinic Coordinator at the DC VAMC- oversees the women veterans program which has over 16,000 enrollees.

Networking within the Community

The American Legion has connected with many services within the community. This has allowed The American Legion to build relationships, future collaborations, and extend the amount of resources the Legion can provide to our women veterans. These connections have been collect due to meetings, summits, symposium events, and other women veterans events within the community. They are listed as follows:

- Andrew Ashley, Military Legislative Assistant to U.S. Representative Martha Roby
- Laurie Artis, President & CEO of Civility Management Solutions
- Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation, Inc.
    - (Ret.) Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, President Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc.
    - Dee Ann McWilliams, (newly appointed) President Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc.
    - Maria St. Catherine McConnell, USAF Officer of Emerita
    - Donna Houle, Director of Memorial Education Center
- Shurhonda Love, Assistant National Legislative Director of Disabled Veterans of America (DAV)
- Paula Smith, Office of the Chief of Staff, Health Director of Soldier for Life
- Mary Bandini, National Legislative Committee of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Rebecca Newton, Public Affairs Specialist at the Armed Forces Retirement Home
- Advisory Committee on Women Veterans
    - Shirley Ann Quarles, Current Chair, (Retired) Colonel U.S. Army Reserve, Nurse Corps.
    - Sherri Brown, (Retired) Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Reserves

- Tia Christopher, Navy veteran
- Octavia Harris, (Retired) Master Chief U.S. Navy
- Louisa Long Jaffe, (Retired) Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
- Joyce Johnson, (Retired) Rear Admiral, U.S. Public Health Service
- Latoya Lucas, (Retired) Specialist, U.S. Army
- Sara McVicker, (Retired) U.S. Army Corps nurse
- Shannon Mc Laughlin, Major, U.S. Army National Guard
- Delphine Metcalf-Foster, (Retired) First Sergeant, U.S. Army
- Felipe Torres, (Retired) Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps.
- Mary Westmoreland, (Retired) Colonel, U.S. Army

Outreach within the Community

The American Legion participated in a women veteran expo, "Invisible No More" on Friday, November 6, 2015. The purpose of the event was to connect women veterans to resources to include job opportunities, networking, learning of benefits, and get involved to help other veterans.

On Wednesday, November 11, 2015, The American Legion's Executive Director Verna Jones and VA&R's Assistant Director of Women and Minority Veterans attended United States' First Lady, Michelle Obama and United States' Second Lady, Dr. Jill Biden's Joining Forces Veterans Day Luncheon. The purpose of this gathering was to honor women veterans and their service to the country and to speak on the collaborating efforts of the First Lady and Second Lady on rights for our Nation's veterans.

On Friday, October 20, 2015, the Assistant Director for Women and Minority Outreach Veterans, attended the Washington DC VA Medical Center's Women's Clinic entitled "Ladies Night." This event gave ladies a chance to be seen by physicians, as well them the opportunity to network, learn about VA benefits, and celebrate the service of women veterans.

From February 4-5, 2016, the Assistant Director for Women and Minority Outreach Veterans traveled to Hampton, VA to meet the Women Veterans Program Manager, Patrice Melena. The purpose of this event was to have a meet and greet, discuss the issues affecting women veterans in her area, and participate in the Women Veteran Go RED event for heart health.

On March 28, 2016, The American Legion hosted a Women Appreciation Day in recognition of Women History Month for the women veterans at the Armed Forces Retirement Home (ARRH) in Washington, DC. The Assistant Director for Women and Minority Veterans, LaRanda Holt; Assistant Director for Health Policy, April Commander; and Colleen Mulroney, Department of Maryland volunteer took time to show appreciation to our nation's women veterans who have come before us. At this event, the ladies handed out military bears to represent their branch of service and The American Legion's Women Veteran Coin. In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War, all women veterans of the Vietnam era received a Letter of Commemoration signed by President Barack Obama and a Vietnam lapel pin in honor of their service. The day continued with a bus ride to the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, or the Women's Memorial, where a few of the ladies from the AFRH, took a tour of the only women memorial in the country. Their special day concluded with a hand shake from Brigadier General (US Air Force Retired) and President Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc., Wilma L. Vaught.

The Assistant Director for Women and Minority Veteran has events and activities in the pipeline to include the follow:

- Women Veterans survey to evaluate and analyze the trends within the women veteran population. The survey in schedule to launch in the Spring of 2016.

- A Women Veterans symposium to involve a panelist of subject matter experts and gather women veterans to hear the VA resources and the results from the women veterans survey.
- Attend other women veteran outreach events as they develop

Report: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
May 4-5, 2016
Ralph P. Bozella, Colorado, Chairman

The National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission met on May 2-3, 2016, at The American Legion Headquarters, Illinois Room, 21st Floor for the purpose of considering those matters that had previously been referred for study and to discuss other current matters.

Presiding: Ralph P. Bozella (CO), Chairman
Present at the meeting were:

James W. Stanko (CO)
Phil Youngblood (GA)
Lloyd H. Woods (ME)
Patrick R. Rourk (NY)
Milton A. Willis Jr. (VT)
Jeffrey L. Olson (MN) (Excused Illness)
William C. Barbknecht (MN)
Kelly L. Ackerman (MT)
William J. Smith (PA)

Also in attendance were:
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division staff members present were: Louis Celli (MA), Director for VA&R, Roscoe G. Butler (MD), Deputy Director for Health Care, Zachary Hearn (PA), Deputy Director for Claims

Matters Received, Considered and Acted upon by the Commission:
RESOLUTIONS
The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission introduced seven (7) resolutions to the National Executive Committee for adoption:

Origin	Title
2015 Convention	PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE
MA DEC	OPPOSE CLOSING OR PRIVATIZATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
MA DEC	CONSOLIDATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN THE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
MA DEC	REINSTATE ENROLLMENT OF PRIORITY GROUP 8G VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS' PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM
VA&R	INCREASE THE TRANSPARENCY OF ASBESTOS CLAIMS
VA&R	SUPPORT FOR VETERAN QUALITY OF LIFE
VA&R	RESCINDING RESOLUTIONS FROM THE VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMISSION

Zero (0) resolutions were received and recorded and one (1) resolution was disposed of administratively. Six (6) resolutions were presented to the Resolutions Subcommittee by the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

Six (6) were forwarded to the National Executive Committee for adoption.

On May 2, 2016, Past National Commander John Brieden (TX) addressed the VA&R Commission to discuss the Federal Asbestos Claim Transparency (FACT) Act of 2015 and the need for the asbestos resolution. Veteran comprise of 30 percent of deaths from asbestos-caused lung cancer, which can occur decades after exposure. Companies that produce asbestos, and sometimes hid its dangers, were forced to set up trust funds over the years have paid out at least $17.7 billion to more than 3 million victims.

The FACT Act of 2015 was passed in part due to legal action brought against Garlock Ceiling Technology alleging the company was 100 percent responsible for a complainant contracting asbestos. The federal judge ordered that all of the Federal Trust Claims be unsealed and learned that the same complainant had filed numerous lawsuits alleging that other companies were 100 percent responsible for him contracting asbestos.

Legislation is necessary to ensure the asbestos trust funds are preserved and are not diminished due to individuals seeking to defraud companies by filing false claims.

On May 2, 2016, Past National Commander William Detweiler (LA) addressed the VA&R Commission to discuss the need for a resolution to support research on medicinal marijuana. Marijuana is classified as a Class 1 narcotic, which until recently has preventing researchers from obtaining the plant from the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) to study. Legislation is required to support the declassification of marijuana as a Class 1 drug so that it can be studied to determine if there is any scientific benefit in developing the plant into a drug to treat those suffering from traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. Veterans are still overdosing taking one medication after another. Suicide rates continued to rise. We have seen a lot of success with alternative treatments, and this would be a good step in the right direction.

On May 2, 2016, Milton A. Willis Jr. (VT) address the VA&R Commission to ask if The American Legion has a policy that would speak against lawyers from collecting money if they have been fired by a veteran and The American Legion who assists the veterans on the appeal to win their claim. There have been cases where the veteran fired their lawyer and turned to The American Legion for assistance, and when the veterans won their claim, the lawyer collect 20 percent of the money awarded. Zachary Hearn (PA), Deputy Director for Claims was requested to review and determine whether The American Legion has a resolution that addresses Mr. Willis concerns.

CLAIMS UPDATE

The first session of the 2016 Department Service Officers School was held at the Washington DC Hilton from February 17-19. Over 130 Department, State, and Veteran Service Officers from around the country and Puerto Rico were in attendance.

The event began with three speakers representing the VA: Ron Burke, Director of the National Work Cue, Scott Blackburn, Director of MyVA, and Laura Eskenazi, Executive in Charge and Vice Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals. The speakers provided informative presentations and each concluded with thorough question and answer sessions.

Following the featured speakers, the training curriculum broke out into two tracks depending on the level of experience of the attendee: Track 1 for beginners and Track 2 for intermediate and advanced students. National VA&R staff provided the curriculum and facilitated training for the Track 1 Service Officer session, and staff from the National Veterans Legal Services Program facilitated Track 2.

Track 1 covered basic information that targeted the development of compensation and pension claims, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) forms, claim development, fully developed claims (FDC), medical opinion, code of procedure, using the 38 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), appeals basics, 646 preparation, Medical Evaluation Board (MEB), Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) and eBenefits.

The next Department Service Officer School will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana from July 28-30, 2016.

Board of Veterans' Appeals:

Since March 1, 2016, the Board of Veterans' Appeals reached dispositions on 1,409 American Legion represented appeals. Of those dispositions, 74% of the denials were overturned with outcomes favorable to the veteran. In 386 cases, the Board granted benefits outright after considering The American Legion's arguments. In 657 cases, The American Legion was able to point out errors in the development of the veteran's claims which mandated corrective action under the law. Of the total number of dispositions, only 291 (20.7%) were outright denials

Also during this period, the BVA Appeals Unit reviewed, prepared written Informal Hearing Presentations (IHP), and/or orally argued 1250 veteran's appeals. These claims included originals, remands, as well as specialty cases (Advance on Docket, Independent Medical Opinions, Court Remands, etc.). The BVA unit handled numerous telephone inquiries and provided consultations with veterans, VSO's, and Congressional Offices. The administrative team completed 1046 phone inquiries during this period. The appeal representatives provided assistance for 45 walk-in veterans for their respective VA Central Office Hearings.

Insurance, Pension and Debt Management:

The VA&R VA Insurance unit reviewed and processed 1478 applications for new insurance coverage, of which 97 were for Supplemental insurance for totally disabled veterans in the Service-Disabled insurance program, along with 860 disability and settlement claims on other veteran's VA policies. Further case development included 788 other insurance inquiries or transactions, 383 phone calls with veterans, family members and VSOs, and 815 veteran policyholders were contacted by mail on their policies, insurance options and action deadlines. There were also 403 direct contacts with VA personnel in regards to correcting or having additional actions taken on veteran's accounts.

The VA&R Pension units at the Philadelphia, St. Paul and Milwaukee VA Pension Centers processed 2,130 new claims for Veterans or Death pensions, along with reviewing and preparing 2,856 case actions for support of on-going pension benefits. Casework also included processing 3,436 additional transactions and case inquiries to VA, performing 5,106 audits of Rating actions, and 1,109 phone contacts with claimants and VSOs. There were 632 personal interview contacts, and 92 waivers of overpayments processed with 62 appeals. Additionally, the VA&R unit at the St. Paul Center received some 103 original Debt Management claims.

Training to Others

On January 16, 2016, Edward Lilley, Team Leader for Health Policy, provided LEAD training to The American Legion's Department of Nebraska regarding the Legion's involvement in the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services (VAVS) Program.

System Worth Saving (SWS)

Since December 2015, The American Legion has conducted 5 site visits and has the approval to conduct 7 additional site visits for a total of 12 over a 12 month period. The 2015-2016 SWS schedule is as follows: St. Cloud, MN; Big Spring, TX; Montgomery, AL; Reno, NV and Grand Junction, CO. Pending- Salt Lake City, UT; Las Vegas, NV; Long Beach, CA; Walla Walla, WA; Shreveport, LA; Augusta, ME; and Batavia, NY.

SWS Site Visits Include:

Veterans Town Hall meetings: Upon arrival, The American Legion conducts a veterans town hall meeting at a local American Legion post for veterans and their families to discuss their experiences with the local VA medical center and how The American Legion can assist to ensure they are receiving the best of VA services.

Site Visit: The American Legion National Staff, along with a Commission Member, meets with the executive leadership of each VAMC. During this meeting, the leadership is given an opportunity to discuss and/or explain their responses to the mail-out-questionnaire sent to the medical center prior to the site visit. Also, information collected during the town hall meeting is discussed with the medical center leadership for feedback. On the last day of the site visit, an exit briefing is held with the medical center executive leadership to discuss our findings, recommendations, and the report.

Homeless Shelter Visit: During this visit, the SWS team discusses local homeless veterans issues with VA staff and their plan to combat and ultimately end veteran homelessness in their catchment area. These visits gives The American Legion a chance to see if programs and services are productive and efficient in assisting homeless veterans and their families while also noting 'best practices' and/or remaining challenges in assisting this vulnerable demographic. Also, The American Legion speaks with staff to receive reports of success stories of veterans that have pass through the shelter onto employment and permanent housing.

Vet Center Visit: The purpose of the Vet Center visit is to maintain a partnership with the centers based in the communities and to assist the centers when they have a need.

Operation Comfort Warrior (OCW) Grant Presentation: During each SWS site visit, OCW works with the medical center in identify specific patient needs and awards each medical center a grant to support their needs.

Since December 2015, during the SWS site visits, OCW has awarded grants to VA Medical Center totaling $23,943 to support patients at the medical centers. Examples of OCW grants provided in support of the SWS site visits are:

- St. Cloud VA Health Care System (SCVAHCS), St. Cloud, MN - The American Legion's Department of MN delivered a $7,857 Operation Comfort Warrior grant to the SCVAHCS to help meet the immediate needs of veterans served by the medical center.
- VA Central Alabama Health Care System, Montgomery, AL - The American Legion's Department of AL delivered a $5,300 Operation Comfort Warrior grant to the VACAHCS to help meet the immediate needs of veterans served by the medical center.
- VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System, Reno, Nevada - The American Legion's Department of Nevada delivered a $5,700 Operation Comfort Warrior grant to the VASNHCS to help meet the immediate needs of veterans served by the medical center.
- The West Texas VA Health Care System (WTVAHCS), The American Legion's Department of TX delivered a $5,086.96 Operation Comfort Warrior grant to the WTVAHCS to help meet the immediate needs of veterans served by the medical center.

Volunteering

The American Legion Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program continues to provide for our nation's veterans while they are cared for by VA health care facilities, interned in national cemeteries and file claims at VA Regional offices. In Fiscal Year 2015, The American Legion's 7,638 VAVS volunteers donated 856,649 hours with a

value of more than $19.8 million in savings to the VA. During the first quarter of FY 2016, 6,284 TAL volunteers donated 186,721 hours at a value over $4.6 million.

1st Quarter FY 2016

Regular Schedule Count	Regular Schedule Hours	Occasional Hours	Total Hours
6,284	186,721	15,918	202,639

Report on Health Administration Committee

On Monday, February 22, 2016, the Health Administrative Committee participated in the VA&R Commission meeting during The American Legion 93rd Washington Conference at the Washington, Hilton. Immediately following the morning session of the VA&R Commission meeting and lunch, the Health Administration Committee loaded buses and traveled to the Washington DC VA Medical Center (DCVAMC) and the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH). During the visits, commission members toured both facilities and presented patients and residents with gift packages which totaled $2,500, donated by Operation Comfort Warriors. During the tour of the AFRH, committee members met with Mr. William Cruice, who is a resident at the AFRH and a life member of Morvay - Miley Post 524 in Ocean City, NJ.

Report on National Cemetery Committee

Following the VA&R Commission meeting on February 22, 2016, the National Cemetery Committee toured Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and received an eligibility briefing from Renea Yates, Deputy Superintendent for Cemetery Administration. The American Legion asked Ms. Yates about the recent eligibility concerns for Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs). According to Ms. Yates, in 2002 ANC allowed "active duty designees" (or WASPs) to be inured in the cemetery's Columbarium; however, because the ANC Superintendent at that time did not have the authority to unilaterally alter the eligibility criteria for inurnment in ANC, the Secretary of the Army, on 23 March 2015, rescinded the ANC Superintendent's 2002 decision. Currently, Active Duty Designees' are not eligible of inurnment in ANC. Since the eligibility rules for inurnment are published in the Federal Register, any change in policy would need to be accomplished through a formal rulemaking.

On Thursday, April 21, 2016, the National Cemetery Committee participated in a conference call to discuss the resolution on Presidential Memorial Certificates. After discussing with James Flanagan, Presidential Memorial Certificate Program Manager for the National Cemetery Administration, the average timeframe for the delivery of PMCs is 12-16 weeks, so this would not be able to coincide with the veteran's funeral. During the conference call the Committee has recommended that the resolution be disposed of administratively at the Spring NEC and will work with staff at the National Cemetery Administration to help better promote the Presidential Memorial Certificate program as it is heavily underutilized.

Report on Benefits Committee

The Veterans Benefits Committee Meeting was conducted on March 30, 2016. William Smith, Chairman (Pennsylvania) and Patrick Rourk, Vice-Chairman (New York) were involved in the teleconference. Additionally, Ralph Bozella, Chairman, VA&R Commission was a participant in the teleconference. Topics discussed during the meeting included:

Training:

The American Legion trained service officers in the Department of Oklahoma March 1-4, 2016. In an effort to provide greater assistance to veterans, the Department of Oklahoma's commander requested National Headquarters to provide initial service officer training.

Zachary Hearn, Deputy Director for Claims, and Matthew Labozzetta, Assistant Director for Claims offered the three day new hire training program. The Department of Oklahoma has placed accredited representatives in regions of Oklahoma to offer assistance to veterans and their family members in their quest for VA disability benefits.

The Department of Minnesota requested National Headquarters to provide training at the annual County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) Conference. Mr. Hearn provided an update regarding the current appeals reformation initiative to 125 CVSOs.

The Veterans Benefits Committee was updated regarding the outcome of Washington DSO School and the upcoming Indianapolis DSO School. Mr. Labozzetta will be serving as the primary point of contact for the school. Additionally, the Committee was advised of individuals and topics currently being considered to present at the school

Regional Office Action Review

The Veterans Benefits Committee was advised regarding Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) visits currently scheduled. Through April 2016, The American Legion has visited the following VA regional offices:

- Buffalo
- St. Petersburg
- Cleveland
- Roanoke

Upcoming scheduled visits are in Boston and Portland, Oregon. Information gained from these visits will be available in the annual Systems Worth Savings Report.

Chairman William Smith adjourned the meeting at 12:17 PM.

Report on the TBI/PTSD Committee

On Saturday, February 20, 2016 the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Committee meeting convened during The American Legion's 2016 Washington Conference to listen to various speakers present on topics such as the 2015 American Legion PTSD/TBI survey data, suicide rates among service members and veterans, programs for military and veteran caregivers under the direction of the Veteran of Affairs and Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and barriers to researching medicinal cannabis for veterans diagnosed with treatment resistant PTSD diagnosis.

Staff from The American Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Division along with members of the TBI and PTSD Committee held a TBI and PTSD Committee meeting during the 2015 Washington Conference from 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. EST in the Jefferson East Concourse Level of the Washington Hilton Hotel located at 1919 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009.

The TBI/PTSD committee members present during the meeting included Past National Commander (PNC) Bill Detweiler (LA), Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Chairman Ralph Bozella (CO), National Executive Committee (NEC) William Kile (WV), (PA) John P. Powers (NY), as well as the two medical consultants, Colonel (ret) Dr. Ronald Poropatich (PA), and Dr. Jeanne Mager Stellman, Ph.D. PNC Ronald F. Conley was not in attendance at the meeting.

There were six speakers during the conference, which included TBI/PTSD Committee Consultant Dr. Jeanne M. Stellman, Dr. Suzanne Sisley who specializes in Internal medicine and Psychiatry, as well as Laurel Rodewald, Foundation Program Coordinator and her associate Emery Popoloski, Elizabeth Dole Fellow and Caregiver Community Program Coordinator from the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. In addition, Margaret Kabat, LCSW-C, CCM National Director Caregiver of Support Program and Dr. Robert Bossarte Epidemiology Program Director from the Department of Veterans Affairs spoke to the committee.

Past National Commander and TBI and PTSD Committee Chairman William Detweiler opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and provided an introduction and mission of the TBI and PTSD Committee. Rebecca Davila, Assistant Director for TBI and PTSD Programs (DC Office) provided the roll call of the committee.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation with the exception of seven resolutions. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second to receive and file the commission report. Any discussion? All in favor? Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 23: Support for Veteran Quality of Life
Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion was charted and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness; and

WHEREAS, Through the first pillar of The American Legion, thousands of American Legion accredited service officers and other professional staff work diligently to assist veterans in obtaining the benefits and care they have earned and deserve through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA); and

WHEREAS, As the nation's largest veterans service organization, The American Legion is often called upon to support legislation expanding veterans benefits through the VHA, VBA, and NCA either through testimony or letter of support; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion may not always have a specific resolution addressing future legislation; and

WHEREAS, When legislation is aimed at directly enhancing veterans' quality of life by expanding their VHA, VBA, or NCA benefits, The American Legion needs be ready to firmly support; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion urges Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to enact legislation and programs within the VA that will enhance, promote, restore or preserve benefits for veterans and their dependents, including, but not limited to, the following: timely access to quality VA health care, timely decisions on claims and receipt of earned benefits, and final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorates their service.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution has been approved by the VA&R Commission and your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 23. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 24: Increase the Transparency of Asbestos Claims
Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, Veterans comprise up to 30 percent of deaths from asbestos-caused lung cancer, which can occur decades after exposure; and

WHEREAS, The flame-retardant material was widely used in Navy ships and buildings until 1980; and

WHEREAS, Companies that produced it, and sometimes hid its dangers, were forced to set up trusts over the years that have paid out at least $17.7 billion to more than 3 million victims who were sickened; and

WHEREAS, Trial attorneys have been able to file multiple claims with different funds on behalf of the same victims; and

WHEREAS, Every dollar that leaves the trust funds through fraud reduces future awards for legitimate claims; and

WHEREAS, Asbestos trust funds must be protected from future fraud claims through further transparency, but not at the cost of invading veterans' private information; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation requiring public disclosure by trusts regarding the receipt and disposition of claims for injuries based on exposure to asbestos while protecting veterans' private medical and work history, as well as Social Security numbers; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Congress continues to assure adequate compensation for veterans harmed by asbestos and deserve compensation.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution has been approved by your VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 24. Any further discussion? All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 25: Reinstate Enrollment of Priority Group 8g Veterans and Dependents into the Department of Veterans Affairs' Patient Enrollment System
Origin: Register Resolution No. 2733 (MA) Department Executive Committee
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) is a comprehensive health-care program in which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shares the cost of covered health-care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, To be eligible for CHAMPVA, you cannot be eligible for TRICARE, and you must be the spouse or child of a veteran who has been rated permanently and totally disabled for a service-connected disability by a VA regional office, the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died from a VA-rated service connected disability, the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who was at the time death rated permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected disability, or the surviving spouse or child of a military member who died in the line of duty, not due to misconduct; and

WHEREAS, Title 38 USC 8153 stipulates that the VA secretary may authorize the furnishing of services to individuals who are not veterans, but only when the secretary determines that veterans will receive priority under such an arrangement, and only when

such an arrangement is necessary in order to maintain an acceptable level and quality of service to veterans at that facility, or when such an arrangement will result in the improvement of services to eligible veterans at that facility; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes in a strong robust veterans' health-care system that is designed to treat the unique needs of those men and women who have served their country; and

WHEREAS, The congressionally created Commission on Care's proposed strawman document recommends that "the most obsolete and underutilized facilities should be closed and those patients transferred to local providers"; and

WHEREAS, Rather than decrease care, the VA should consider expanding enrollment into the VA health-care system to veterans in Priority Group 8g, as well as consider expanding care to the dependents of enrolled veterans beyond the dependents eligible under CHAMPVA and Title 38 USC 8153; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion urges the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to conduct a feasibility study to determine the impact and cost of reinstating the enrollment of Priority Group 8g veterans and all enrolled veterans' dependents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges Congress to ensure VA's appropriation is adequate to expanding enrollment and reinstate enrollment of Priority Group 8g veterans; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress enact legislation that would allow veterans to use their Medicare health-care coverage, or private health-care coverage, when receiving medical care or services in a Veterans Health Administration health-care facility, and Medicare be authorized to reimburse VA for such medical care and services; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the VA should remain open to other options of providing health care within its existing sharing authority; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That if the VA secretary expands health care to dependents of enrolled veterans, veterans will receive priority under such an arrangement, and such an arrangement is necessary in order to maintain an acceptable level and quality of service to veterans at that facility; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That if VA provides health care to dependents of veterans, VA will develop a sustainable business model to ensure the cost of care is offset using private medical insurance and an appropriate co-pay schedule and that VA's health care will remain a viable option for all future veterans.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution has been approved by your VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion of Resolution No. 25? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 26: Oppose Closing or Privatization of Department of Veterans Affairs Health-Care System

Origin: Register Resolution No. 2731 (MA) Department Executive Committee

Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion began its support for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 1930, even before there was a VA, by lobbying Congress to consolidate and coordinate government activities affecting war veterans by creating the Veterans Administration as a federal entity; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion fought hard for the elevation of the Veterans Administration to cabinet-level status in 1989, arguing that veterans deserve representation at the highest levels of the government; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has kept close watch on the quality of the Department of Veterans Affairs health-care system through the System Worth Saving program; and

WHEREAS, The System Worth Saving program has evolved into a full-service benefits delivery and watchdog program that has helped educate the federal government and veterans as to the strengths and weaknesses of VA's health care system and the services it is responsible for delivering to veterans; and

WHEREAS, The program has garnered presidential praise while influencing congressional action and administrative regulation; and

WHEREAS, Recent discussion by groups such as the congressionally created Commission on Care have considered closing VA medical centers and transitioning veterans into the private sector for health care; and

WHEREAS, The Commission on Care's proposed strawman document recommends that "the most obsolete and underutilized facilities should be closed and those patients transferred to local providers;" and

WHEREAS, Transforming the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to more private care would not only be disadvantageous to our nation's veterans, but it would not be cost effective according to a Congressional Budget Office report titled "Comparing The Cost Of The Veterans' Health Care System With Private Sector Costs"; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion does not believe VA should close any of its existing medical centers simply as a method of generating savings; and

WHEREAS, VA is prohibited from billing and collecting Medicare reimbursements for the treatment of non-service connected medical conditions of enrolled Medicare-eligible veterans; and

WHEREAS, Programs such as Fee-Basis, Project Access Received Closer to Home (ARCH), Patient Centered Community Care (PC3), and the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) were enacted by Congress to ensure eligible veterans could be referred outside the VA for needed, and timely, health-care services; and

WHEREAS, It has become apparent that layering yet another program on top of the numerous existing non-VA care programs, each with their own unique set of requirements, resulted in a complex and confusing landscape for veterans and community providers, as well as the VA employees that serve and support them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion opposes any legislation or effort to close or privatize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health-care system; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress enact legislation that provides VA the authority to consolidate its multiple non-VA community care programs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress enact legislation that would allow veterans to use their Medicare Health Care coverage, or private health care coverage, when receiving medical care or services in a Veterans Health Administration health-care facility, and Medicare be authorized to reimburse VA for such medical care and services; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion remain open to further discussion on the possibility of expanding and improving VA's health-care services.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution has the approval of the VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. *...Second*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 26. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: **Resolution No. 27**, a motion to dispose of administratively and will not be read. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to not read Resolution No. 27 and dispose of administratively. Do we have any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 28: Consolidation of Department of Veterans Affairs Care in the Community Programs

Origin: Register Resolution No. 2732 (MA) Department Executive Committee

Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes in a strong robust veterans' health-care system that is designed to treat the unique needs of those men and women who have served their country; and

WHEREAS, Even in the best of circumstances there are situations where the system cannot keep up with the health-care needs of the growing veteran population requiring Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) services, requiring veterans to seek care in the community;

WHEREAS, The VA has implemented a number of non-VA care programs to manage veterans' health care when such care is not available at a VA facility, could not be provided in a timely manner, or is more cost effective through contracting vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Programs such as Fee-Basis, Project Access Received Closer to Home (ARCH), Patient Centered Community Care (PC3), and the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) were enacted by Congress to ensure eligible veterans could be referred outside the VA for needed, and timely, health care services; and

WHEREAS, It has become apparent that layering yet another program on top of the numerous existing non-VA care programs, each with their own unique set of requirements, resulted in a complex and confusing landscape for veterans and community providers, as well as the VA employees that serve and support them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion urges Congress to enact legislation that provides the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the authority to consolidate its multiple care in the community provided:

- **VA standardizes its reimbursement rates, but not set the rates too low where providers are discouraged in partnering with the VA in providing needed health-care services to veterans outside the VA health-care system;**
- **It does not circumvent the VA infrastructure or health-care system entirely;**
- **All payment claims are made electronically by January 1, 2019;**
- **Eligible veterans receive timely quality health care, including all specialty and ancillary services deemed necessary as part of the treatment recommended; and**
- **VA is authorized to pay for an enrolled veterans non-VA emergency or urgent medical care when, at no fault of the veteran, the veteran is unable to obtain VA emergency medical care or services.**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: This resolution has been approved by your VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any further discussion on Resolution No. 28? All those in favor? Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 29: Rescinding Resolutions from the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

WHEREAS, The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission has conducted an extensive review of National Executive Committee and National Convention resolutions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the following resolution be rescinded, for the reason listed below.

No.	Year	Meeting	Title	Reason
532	1970	National Convention	Urge Adoption and Support of a National Organ Donor Registration Program	Accomplished
43	1971	Spring	Directs Staff of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission to Study the Present Pension System and Recommend Changes and Improvements	Obsolete
455	1971	National Convention	Reaffirms Opposition to the Discriminatory Order of February 10, 1967, Relating to the Burial Policy in Arlington National Cemetery	Superseded
35	1972	National Convention	Education and Training for the Vietnam Veteran	Superseded
137	1972	National Convention	Amend Schedule of Rating Disabilities to Provide a Total Rating for Certain Veterans Who are Hospitalized for Less Than 21 Days but Require Prolonged Post-Hospital Care and Convalescence	Obsolete
157	1972	National Convention	Amend VA Regulation on "Deferred Determinations" Governing the Amount of Pension Payable When There is Doubt as to the Amount of Anticipated Income a Claimant May Receive	Obsolete
455	1972	National Convention	Urges Expediting of Veterans Records from Federal Records Center	Superseded
11	1973	Spring	Amend the Dual Compensation Provision to Exempt Employment with the Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery	Obsolete
3	1975	Spring	Urges the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to Include on all Government Headstones or Grave Markers, the War or Wars in Which the Veteran Served	Accomplished
366	1975	National Convention	Requesting the Veterans Administration to Review the Requirements for Additional Aid and Attendance Benefit and Liberalize its Application to Those Veterans Receiving Home Dialysis Treatment	Accomplished

20	**1976**	**National Convention**	**Urges the VA to Notify all NSLI Policyholders of Waiver of Premium Provisions of Their Contracts**	**Accomplished**
253	**1976**	**National Convention**	**Urge the Bureau of the Census to Consult and Coordinate with the Administrator of Veterans Affairs as to the Questions to be Included in the Veteran Population Section Enumeration Questionnaire for the 1980 Decennial Census**	**Obsolete**
519	**1978**	**National Convention**	**Oppose Enactment of the Special Provision of HR 10173 as Amended and Passed by the U.S. Senate Which Prohibits Payment of Benefits Under the Veterans and Survivors Pension Improvement Act to Veterans and Their Dependents Residing Outside the Fifty States and the District of Columbia**	**Superseded**
148	**1980**	**National Convention**	**Urges The American Legion to Exert Such Efforts as will Assure that the VA Shall Continue as the Sole Agency for the Administration and Control of Veterans programs**	**Superseded**
405	**1982**	**National Convention**	**Urge that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs Implement More Equitable Regulations for Use in Considering Waivers of Overpayment**	**Superseded**
280	**1982**	**National Convention**	**Urges that Veterans Compensation, Pension, and Readjustment Allowances not be Considered as Benefits and Entitlements, but Shall be Considered as Rights**	**Superseded**
285	**1988**	**National Convention**	**Urge the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to Revise the Eligibility Verification Report**	**Superseded**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Resolution No. 29 has been approved by your VA&R Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and a second for Resolution 29. Any discussion? All those in favor? Opposed? Approved.

At this time, I call upon the Membership & Post Activities Committee chairman, Ken Orrock from the Department of South Dakota, for the purpose of a report.

Oral Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Kenneth E. Orrock, South Dakota, Chairman

Good morning, National Commander Barnett, national officers, past national commanders, members of the National Executive Committee. Thank you for once again giving me this opportunity to address you. I always take great pride in addressing this august body about a subject that's near and dear to all of our hearts: membership. You have a copy of my written report that you will find as the final document in your packet of morning reports. Please take time to review that at your leisure, and I will always be ready to answer any questions that you may have as to it.

The 2016 membership year has brought about some major changes. Some of those we're familiar with, and some of those don't happen very often. We saw a dues increase passed and implemented. We continue to average 18 to 20 posts canceled at each meeting of the National Executive Committee, at a rate much greater than we see the chartering of new posts. Traditional renewal continue to be on the decline. This is really not a recipe for success, and a trend that I'm sure no one in this room is happy to see.

In two years we will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of this great organization. What a proud time in the history for all of us. We know that it's the wish of every one of us to move into our next hundred years with the trend of membership growth, to see the mark of three million members once again reached in our history. It can be done, ladies and gentlemen, but it will take a tremendous amount of work on all of our parts.

Do we really know what it takes to reach that mark again? Will we and are we prepared to do the work? What will be each and every one of your personal roles in reaching that three million mark? What things has your department planned to do to support the membership program? Do you have a strategic plan? The answer to that is yes, every department does. But is it working? And more importantly, is your department working its strategic plan? All these questions need to be answered if we're going to be successful in our membership programs.

Yes, I'm a little passionate when it comes to talking about membership, but I believe that these members, that these veterans in need are more than figures on a chart and more than dollar signs when it comes to the bottom line of operating our organization. These are veterans that need us. They need The American Legion, they need our assistance, and we need to be there to provide it. They're the foundation upon which a hundred years of history is built, and upon which this organization stands.

As Commander Rehbein has often said, they are the foundation upon which rests the Four Pillars of The American Legion. They're also the foundation of our communities. Oftentimes, in those many small posts scattered across this great country, they are the epicenter of life within that community. They provide programs and services that no one else can.

It's time again to move membership to the forefront in every effort we do, and we must move to make every eligible member and every eligible veteran a member of this organization. We have to do that to continue to assist current and future veterans. They need to join us, and we need to open our arms and welcome them in.

We need to continue to pay it forward and then find the best way to get it done, the best way to bring in new members. Maybe we've been a little busy focusing on those other important things that we do, and maybe we've forgotten the place that membership has to be in this organization. It has to continue to be our foundation.

Ladies and gentlemen, membership is more than a conversation piece. Membership requires more than groups sitting around and coming up with good ideas. We need to take action to put these concepts into play. We can't just be hearers anymore, hearing great ideas on what to do with membership. We must, each of us individually, become doers and do the hard work that is membership in this organization.

Membership in these individual posts are our lifeblood, and we heard that in the commander's video earlier today. No greater truth has been spoken in this august chamber. Membership is the lifeblood of The American Legion.

There is no time like the present to start, ladies and gentlemen, and begin restoring those glory days that many of you remember and some of us long for. There are more than 14 million veterans right now who have the potential to become members, that are not yet members of this organization. Fourteen million with the potential to be actively involved in more than 13,500 local posts. The worst part is, and the bottom line is, that most of them are not members because they haven't been asked to be.

It's a good chance we will not get all of them signed up, but it should not be for lack of trying on our part. Our goal can no longer be just to sustain membership. We must have goals that plan to move us forward. We, the membership committee, will do our part. Can we count on each of you?

Commander Barnett, thank you for the opportunity to again address the National Executive Committee. I leave you with this: Membership. What will each of you do today to build our membership for tomorrow? This concludes my statements. Thank you.

Report: Membership & Post Activities Committee
May 4, 2016
Kenneth E. Orrock, South Dakota, Chairman

2016 Membership Campaign Update

We are nearing the end of the 2016 membership campaign. Some departments have performed well throughout the year – others not so well. The 100% target date is May 11th and we expect several to be closer to if not over 100% of their goal.

We had eight departments as of the 95% target date, whose membership has exceeded last year's membership. Only one department has exceeded 100% of their goal – Department of Philippines.

We are confident that if followed, the strategic plans that have been developed will continue to yield successful membership campaigns within the departments. So far, all the departments have met the requirement of developing and implementing their plans. We are now turning our attention to refining those plans in the upcoming months for the 2017 membership campaign. The membership committee will be meeting for the second time this year during the membership workshop to discuss and refine the current plan as needed.

District Revitalization addresses all of our concerns; retention, new starts, training and development, post operations, program implementation and much more. During the three day event for revitalization, we have seen members who come to the event as non-believers, leave as believers. Some of the participants have gone on to become gold and silver brigade winners. Posts that were once on the verge of closing their doors, now work feverishly to keep them open. The program is on pace for 2016 to assist over 2,000 posts!

DMS is a valuable tool to the membership program. Those members acquired each year are a great resource for posts' membership growth. Many of the departments as well as national headquarters now allow members transferred from department headquarters to count toward the yearly goal – this has been a great incentive for posts to seek out lists from their department. The goal has never changed for acquired DMS members – get them into a local post. The renewal rate for those members who do transfer into a local post remains 23% higher than those who have not.

The final two updates are online renewals and DMS. The online renewal program continues to prove it was a smart idea to begin allowing our members to renew online. To date, 207,410 have renewed online – this is 7,281 less than the final 2015 total. The goal for DMS is 110,000 and the current total is 102,998 – we are on track to meet the goal.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Membership & Post Activities Committee. There are no resolutions, no addendums. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We've got a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

I'm going to make a command decision. I hope everybody is listening. Unless there is a great reason why I should not do this, I would like to start the afternoon session, instead

of 2:00, at 1:30. That will still give you approximately two hours for lunch. Being an infantry guy, I think you can do that in two hours. *(Laughter)*

Is there anything I don't know about that would alleviate us starting at 1:30? None being, we will start the afternoon session at 1:30.

At this time, I call for recess and reassembly at 1:30. We stand in recess.

... At 11:10 a.m. the National Executive Committee of The American Legion stood in recess.

Wednesday, May 4, 2016 Afternoon Session

... At 1:30 p.m. the National Executive Committee was called to order by National Commander Barnett.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I now declare the NEC back in session. At this time, I'd like to recognize, from the great state of Mississippi, NECman Robert Gosa. Mr. Gosa, the floor is yours, sir.

NEC MEMBER GOSA: Roll tide, I'm not. *(Laughter)* I know several of you have been through the same ordeal as I've been through, and we never know what's going to happen. But for three years, my wife had fought cancer. She never hindered me from going to the Legion. I lost her January 6 at 9:30 at night. I lost a friend, I lost a wife, I lost a mother, and a grandmother, and a great grandmother. It was like a rock hit me.

I started getting emails, cards, and phone calls from the Legion family, from the NEC, from the staff, from the commander. It's something that you don't realize until it happens to you, and I really appreciate the support that everybody in the Legion family has given me and my family after her death. I hope you never have to go through it.

So with that, that's about all I can sit up here and do, but thank you a lot for being family and being there to help me when I need it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you so much, Robert. At this time, I'd like to call forward Mr. Walter Ivie from the Department of Texas, chairman of the Media & Communications Commission. Thank you, Walter.

Oral Report: Media & Communications Commission
Walter W. Ivie, Texas, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Commander, members of the National Executive Committee. You have my written report, so I will keep my comments brief.

The Media & Communications Commission is pleased by the continued progress and innovation demonstrated by the Media & Communications division staff members. They have worked hard to afford other divisions the Legion's many valuable programs and initiatives, while providing more revenue and awareness of the organization.

Staff members have completed two phases of a project to overhaul and redesign of the national website. So far, the results have exceeded expectations. The number of unique mobile visitors coming to legion.org has grown by nearly 300 percent since the new launch. Overall, 25 percent more visitors are coming to the website since the launch.

Editorial and advertising staff have worked together on a project honoring our heroes. The May issue of the magazine featured many stories tied to remembrance and Memorial Day. At the same time, three new advertisers were placed, generating revenue over $80,000 just for that issue. We expect two of those brands, GM and Hilton, to advertise again in the coming months.

The division is ahead of budget on magazine and overall advertising sales, and below cost in production and distribution. The Media & Communications area continues to benefit from reduced paper prices and stable U.S. Postal Service rates. The postal service recently removed a surcharge on postage, resulting in an estimated savings of $150,000 on magazine mailing costs through the end of 2016.

Commander, it is an honor to serve on the Media & Communications Commission. That concludes my report. Thank you for your continued support of our media programs, outreach, and revenue.

Report: Media & Communications Commission
May 4, 2016
Walter W. Ivie, Texas, Chairman

This Media & Communications Commission report will focus on the media and communications section of the new Marketing, Media and Communications Division, primarily content and advertising related to the monthly magazine, website, e-newsletter program and more.

Operations within the Media & Communications Commission are progressing smoothly. Staff members from throughout the M,M&C division are working together on high-profile targets to increase membership, revenue and awareness for The American Legion. Since the last commission report during Fall Meetings, staff members have been developing rich content for the magazine, website and other products in addition to redesigning the national website, and increasing the organization's reach through its e-newsletter and social media programs.

Some examples of successes in the past six months or so:

Website: The national website went through the first two phases of an overhaul, first a redesign of the home page around Veterans Day, which made the mobile version of the site much easier to navigate for those using cell phones and tablets. Secondly, staff implemented the "hero" concept – large art, small bites of text, focusing on membership and donating – in mid-March. The results have exceeded expectations. Comparing the first quarter of 2016 to the same time frame a year ago, the number of unique mobile visitors increased 287 percent while the number of visitors overall increased 25 percent. In the same time frame, the percentage of page views has decreased – an anticipated figure because the site renovations were intended to make it easier for visitors to find the information they were seeking.

Magazine: The editorial and advertising staffs worked together to produce the "Honoring Our Heroes" special package in the May issue. Stories included the repatriation of a World War II pilot, a first-hand look at funerals during the Iraq War and a mystery war memorial in the Colorado mountains. Advertising reps brought three new advertisers – Hilton, GM and Ascension – into the special feature, generating more than $80,000 in revenue for the May issue along with advertising spends in future issues. A similar approach will take shape for the November issue.

E-newsletters: The e-newsletter program continues to be a success with each of the 10 newsletters recording average open rates of between 25 and 40 percent, far superior to the industry standard of 14 percent. Additionally, the number of subscribers has grown 8 percent in the past year, totaling more than 1.4 million.

Social media: Working with First Degree, staff members produced a "Thunderclap" social media campaign that raised awareness during National Commander Dale Barnett's testimony to Congress regarding VA accountability. The Thunderclap campaign allowed Facebook and Twitter users to use their statuses to support the Legion's call for accountability. In all, the call for accountability reached more than 1.5 million Facebook and Twitter followers.

Through the May 2016 issue of advertising sales into The American Legion Magazine, and through March for digital media advertising and through March for all division costs, operations under The American Legion Media & Communications Division were running ahead of budget. The division is $78,199 over budget for magazine advertising.

Printing costs are expected to remain flat in 2016, based on price reductions received from RR Donnelly while negotiating the current contract. The magazine is 8 pages over budget, due to increases in advertising sales. Paper costs are slightly under budget and

should remain steady throughout the year. Currently, the magazine is right on budget for postage costs. In February 2016, the United States Postal Service announced that it intended to remove an exigent surcharge effective April 10. This decision means that we will save roughly 4.1 percent – or $151,000 – on our mailing costs throughout the rest of the year.

Addendum A

Rejected

Register Resolution No. 2683 (NC) (DEC): **Place the Emblem of The American Legion on the Cover of *The American Legion Magazine***

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission, with the exception of one addendum. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to receive and file the report of the Media & Communications Commission. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, no. Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, attached to the Media & Communications Commission report is Addendum A. I move the actions of the Media & Communications Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, no. Motion carries. I think everybody has Resolution No. 33 now.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: All right, we're good to go.

Resolution No. 33: Congressional Gold Medals for Vietnam War Dust Off Crews
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted By: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, Dust Off crews in Vietnam provided essential services to their fellow sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen, soldiers and Marines, often at great personal risk; and

WHEREAS, These Dust Off crews need to be appropriately recognized by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, The United States Senate has introduced Bill No. S.2268 – Dust Off Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act under consideration to award all Dust Off personnel the Congressional Gold Medal; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled at Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion calls upon the United States Congress to award to all Dust Off personnel who served in the Vietnam War the Congressional Gold Medal.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has the approval of the Resolutions Subcommittee. I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion?

NEC MEMBER KIMBALL (OH): Mr. Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes.

NEC MEMBER KIMBALL: Shouldn't there be airmen in that resolution?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you, Bob. Is it a specific place in the "whereas" clause that you are referring to?

NEC MEMBER KIMBALL: The first sentence.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I understand that's alright. I'm going to accept the amendment unless there is a dissenting vote that was brought up by Bob Kimball of Ohio. Hearing none

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DETWEILER: Commander?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes, sir.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DETWEILER: If you're going to include everybody, I think the Coast Guard was involved in that.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I'm hearing comments up here, Past National Commander Detweiler, that sailors, when you're in the Coast Guard during the time of war and I cannot confirm or deny that, that you're considered a sailor. Now, I cannot confirm or deny that, but I've been given that information here at the podium.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DETWEILER: That's my understanding for the Merchant Marine.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We will add it, unless there are any dissensions other than the one that was already brought forward. Any dissensions?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: Mr. Commander, may I ask one question?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes, sir.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: Because with all the talk about Stolen Valor, I would assume that there is a criteria set down on who exactly the dust off crews are and what qualifies them? Because I don't think we want to get into that kind of an argument.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Okay. At this time, we're going to call on the chairman of the Resolution Committee to reread the resolution.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: I'm going to read the resolution in its entirety, including the "whereas" clauses.

... Resolution No. 33 was read in its entirety.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: My motion still stands.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We still have a motion and a second. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? I have one nay. Motion carries.

At this time, I'd like to call on Past National Commander William Detweiler, from the Department of Louisiana, for the purpose of a report on the TBI/PTSD Committee.

Oral Report: TBI/PTSD Committee
Past National Commander William M. Detweiler, Louisiana, Chairman

Thank you, Mr. Commander. Mr. Commander, members of the NEC and guests. On Saturday, February 20, 2016, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Committee met in Washington, D.C., during the 2016 Washington conference, to listen to various speakers on various topics that were of interest to the committee.

Topics included a discussion of the 2015 American Legion PTSD/TBI survey data, suicide rates among servicemembers and veterans, programs for military and veteran caregivers under the direction of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and barriers to researching medicinal cannabis for veterans diagnosed with treatment resistant post-traumatic stress.

The TBI/PTSD committee members were present during that meeting, including Veterans Affairs Chairman Ralph Bozella; National Executive Committeeman Bill Kile;

John Powers of New York; as well as medical consultants, Colonel (retired) Dr. Ronald Poropatich, and Dr. Jeanne Stellman. And you might recognize the name of Dr. Stellman, as she and her husband Steve are the research team who helped us prove that Agent Orange was the cause of the many problems and injuries and illnesses coming out of Vietnam.

There were six speakers during the conference, which included post-traumatic stress and TBI committee consultant Jeanne Stellman; Dr. Suzanne Sisley who specializes in internal medicine and psychiatry; as well as Laurel Rodewald, the Caregiver Community Program coordinator for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. In addition, Margaret Kabat, the national director of the Caregiver Support Program; and Dr. Robert Bossarte, epidemiology program director for the Department of Veterans Affairs, spoke to the committee about veteran suicide rates.

Today, I would like to talk a little about the work that Dr. Sisley is doing. She delivered a presentation to the committee that I think all of our members should see as well. It looks to the possible benefits of the different chemical components of the cannabis plant yes, medicinal marijuana. Dr. Sisley is a medical doctor that does not prescribe marijuana, nor does she advise on the use in her practice. What she does want to do is study it, because she has discovered that there are properties in the plant that can alleviate the symptoms of various different ailments, including seizure disorders, Crohn's disease, nausea caused by chemotherapy, and others.

She is committed to studying this plant and its many different properties further, but legally, she can't. She has won a federal grant worth several million dollars to study the effects of marijuana on veterans suffering from severe post-traumatic stress, but can't get the government to release the marijuana that only they control, so she can begin her study. What they have is dried, the dried plant, but not the live plants. They won't release those to her.

Dr. Sisley's presentation was so compelling, that the two physicians that I mentioned that are on our committee, have both offered to co-author papers with her to try to convince the federal government to reschedule marijuana and classify it as eligible for scientific research. Today, marijuana is a Class 4 drug, that of having no medical purpose whatsoever, and it is in the same class as PCP, LSD, and other powerful and addictive intoxicants and hallucinogens, which makes it illegal for scientists like Dr. Sisley to study in any form.

The committee does not believe that free and unregulated use of marijuana is even remotely an option, and absent the appropriation of federal regulations, what we can end up is a complete cottage industry of states issuing a range of conflicting laws authorizing marijuana in different ways with relatively no follow up, supervision, or oversight as to the patient. At least if marijuana were not banned from federal funding for research, it could properly be monitored in the clinical hospital setting and administered by a physician, and not being used for any self-help type cure.

The different forms of cannabis medication include derivatives that have absolutely no intoxicants contained in it, like the CBD oils that are used to help children with severe seizures, as well as intoxicating strands that are used to help regulate nausea and appetite.

Our staff has spoken with the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the National Institutes of Health, and has invited them repeatedly to address the committee to offer us any negatives to counter Dr. Sisley's work, and they have refused to participate and offer no information to refute what she has done.

We would like to invite Dr. Sisley to speak to our national convention, space permitting. And if we aren't able to get a spot on the stage, then we will definitely have her speak to the VA&R Commission. I wanted to share this information with you because the topic of medical marijuana is controversial and, quite often, very misunderstood. I want to

be clear about one thing before I go. Marijuana is not a cure for post-traumatic stress. We are not advocating the issuing of bongs at the VA. *(Laughter)*

What we are saying is that medicine is composed of a great variety of pharmaceuticals: opioids, narcotics, steroids, and both chemical and natural derivatives of a variety of plants and chemicals. How did marijuana get restricted from that group? I encourage you to attend Dr. Sisley's presentation, whether or not she's on the main stage or in the VA&R Commission, and I'm confident that you will be impressed with the work that she has done and her intentions.

I can suggest only to you, ladies and gentlemen, that our veterans are deserving of any tool that's available that help with those conditions. I don't care what it is. We keep fighting the battle of the oxygen situation, with hyperbaric oxygen. There are other medications that are out there, there are other forms of treatment that are out there, and the veteran is entitled to anything, within reason, that will work. And it is a situation that she's not even being given the opportunity to do the research, and it's ridiculous.

Thank you very much, Mr. Commander. *(Applause)*

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the TBI/PTSD Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the TBI/PTSD Committee. Are there any further discussions? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

I will make a side comment about that. Every one of you in leadership positions better be prepared to answer the hard questions, because I've been out on the road in some states that have already gone forward, and received questions from the press. So you should be prepared to talk almost in the terms that Past National Commander Detweiler answered: That we are studying it, we are a progressive organization, we are an open minded organization. But we do have resolutions that support alternative methods of treatment for TBI and PTSD. I think if you say that, you'll be on good stance.

At this time, I call on the chairman of the Internal Affairs Commission, Larry Besson, from the Department of Illinois.

Oral Report: Internal Affairs Commission
Larry J. Besson, Illinois, Chairman

Thank you, commander. Members of the NEC, my fellow Legionnaires, ladies and gentlemen. You have a detailed report of our actions and deliberations. There is a complete list of the official and unofficial awards which were earned over the past year and to date this year. Congratulations to the departments, posts, and our members for their hard work in supporting the pillar programs of The American Legion. Pass on congratulations when you return to your department. It has been a long day, and I will be brief in my remarks.

I draw your attention to the great work of the Sons of The American Legion, the Legion Riders, and the 100th Anniversary Committee. They are doing a commendable job at the departments, and your support of this great program. What a great job they're doing.

The commission reviewed a resolution submitted by the 100th Anniversary Committee to hold a two day conference for the department chairmen in 2016-2017, and it was decided to hold for further study, because of the cost concern and the possibility of enhancing the workshop that is held annually at the national convention.

Our NEF is in great shape. We currently have $4.6 million available in the trust fund to help our members and families impacted by recent flooding and tornadoes. It may go in the blink of an eye if Mother Nature decides to visit us again. As you know, Commander Barnett has set $1 million as the NEF goal for this year, which translates to about 50 cents

for each member of The American Legion. As you can see, we are about 23 percent of that goal. You still have time by August, but time is running out. Commander Barnett sent a letter to all department commanders last week, asking for their support to hit this goal.

Mr. Commander, I submit my report and our resolutions for the action of the NEC, with my deepest respect and appreciation for the support and encouragement we enjoy from this body. Thank you.

Report: Internal Affairs Commission
May 4, 2016
Larry J. Besson, Illinois, Chairman

Chairman Larry J. Besson (IL), called the Internal Affairs Commission to order at 9:00 a.m., May 2, 2016, and at 8:30 a.m., May 3, 2016, in the Herman G. Harrington Conference Room, National Headquarters, Indianapolis, Indiana.

This report consists of the following sections: Standing Committee Reports (Section I); Program and Internal Action Reports (Section II); and Actions on Assigned Resolutions (Section III).

I. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee met in Indianapolis, Indiana at 8:30 A.M. on May 2, 2016. Present were Hon. Vincent M. Gaughan (IL), Chairman and Charles G. Mills (NY), Vice Chairman.

There being no business to come before the Committee, the Committee adjourned.

B. MEMBERSHIP & POST ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Kenneth E. Orrock (SD), Chairman of the Membership and Post Activities Committee reported on status of membership programs and results of their annual planning session held in January 2016. Chairman Orrock presented the written recommendations from the January Annual Membership Planning Session to the Commission for acceptance, which is attached.

2016 M&PA COMMITTEE RECOMMMENDATIONS

RESOLUTIONS:

The following resolution was discussed by the committee and the actions that were taken are as followed:

Resolution No. 18 (Spring 2015): APPROVED WITH AMENDMENT
"Membership Credit be Given to Departments for Transferring First and Second Year Direct Membership Solicitation Members into Local Posts."

The committee discussed Resolution No. 18 which was adopted by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion during its regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on May 6-7, 2015. The following changes were approved by the committee and will be considered by the Internal Affairs Commission, Spring 2016.

The changes to the original are as follows:

ADDED:

WHEREAS, The American Legion encourages early payment of membership dues and allows members to pay dues for the upcoming year beginning July 1 of the current year; and

REVISED:

RESOLVED, That departments will receive immediate credit toward its national membership goals for DMS members who have paid dues for the upcoming year and transfers into a local post on or after July 1; and, be it further

2016 MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION:

The following topics were briefed and discussed:

1. The importance of renewal & retention, brand awareness and the future of The American Legion.
2. Strategic Plan (briefed in the following areas):
   - Marketing, Media & Communications
   - National Security
   - DMS/Fundraising
3. Minority Veteran Outreach with focus on enhancing Hispanic recruitment.

AWARDS PROGRAM:

The committee reviewed and discussed the National Membership Awards Points Manual. A survey was conducted to determine if the membership awards that are in place foster a culture of growth within our organization. Attached is a copy of those results.

The committee requested that two additional surveys be distributed to a wider group of individuals regarding the membership awards that are currently in place as well as the Gold Brigade program.

THE AMERICAN LEGION STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW:

No changes were made to The American Legion Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth. However, First Degree Marketing will be working with staff and the committee to expand areas of the strategic plan.

C. TROPHIES, AWARDS & CEREMONIALS [TAC] SUB-COMMITTEE

The Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Subcommittee was called to order by Chairman Randall W. Busch (NE), at 10:15 a.m. on Monday, May 2, 2016, at National Headquarters, Room 311, for the purpose of conducting its annual meeting.

Official and Unofficial Awards for 2015-2016

Numerous awards given out since the last meeting of the Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Subcommittee are a part of the annual report that goes to the National Executive Committee to become a part of the permanent record of that body. Information on these awards is attached to this report. Patricia Harris (NC) made the motion and James R. Bojanowski (NY) seconded the motion to recommend for approval both the 2015 official awards and the 2016 unofficial awards listings. Motion carried.

Canadian Friendship Award Nominees

Robert Wilson (PA) moved to accept the list of ANAVETS nominees from the Royal Canadian Legion for the Canadian Friendship Award. Motion seconded by Bob Klostermeier (OH). Motion carried. Two (2) additional nominations were received for The Canadian Friendship Award. James R. Bojanowski (NY) made a motion to deny the additional nominees due to lack of provided information regarding the nominees military

service in conjunction with United States military forces and references noting collaboration with The American Legion. Robert Wilson (PA) seconded. Motion carried.

Official Awards Approved for 2015:

The American Legion Distinguished Service Medal Award: Awarded annually to an individual(s) or organization for their outstanding service to the nation and to the programs of The American Legion by nomination by department action or by the National Commander.

RECIPIENT: Senator Chuck Hagel, Former Secretary of Defense

American Legion Baseball Graduate of The Year Award: Presented to the major league baseball player who played American Legion Baseball as a teenager and best exemplifies the principles and purposes of the program in sportsmanship, citizenship, general good conduct, integrity and playing ability.

RECIPIENT: Alex Gordon – Kansas City Royals

Bob Feller American Legion Pitching Award: Awarded annually to that American Legion Baseball player recording the greatest number of strikeouts during the regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.

RECIPIENT: Jordan Ragan, Post 15, Medford, OR (23 strikeouts)

Commissioner of Baseball Trophy: Awarded annually at the Major League World Series to that baseball team which becomes the National Champion as a result of playing in The American Legion World Series.

RECIPIENT: Chapin Post 193, Chapin, SC

Dr. Irvin L. "Click" Cowger Memorial R.B.I. Award: Awarded annually to The American Legion Baseball player who is credited with the most runs batted in by the official score keepers of the respective regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.

RECIPIENT: Justin Hawkins, Post 193, Chapin, SC (12 RBI's)

Ford C. Frick Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department having within its jurisdiction the runner-up team in the National Finals of The American Legion Baseball program.

RECIPIENT: Crescent City Post 125, New Orleans, LA

The Frank N. Belgrano, Jr. Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department which has rendered the most outstanding service during the year to the program of the Boy Scouts of America.

RECIPIENT: Department of California

George W. Rulon Baseball Player of the Year: A Plaque is presented to recipient by appropriate official upon conclusion of The American Legion Baseball World Series. Citation is presented to recipient at a special Hall of Fame ceremony at Cooperstown, NY, the following summer.

RECIPIENT: Justin Hawkins, Post 193, Chapin, SC

The Howard P. Savage, Jr. Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department having the baseball team which becomes the Champion as a result of playing in The American Legion World Series.

RECIPIENT: Chapin Post 193, Chapin, SC

Jack Williams Memorial Leadership Award: Awarded annually to the manager and coach of the national championship team, as representative of the adult leadership Jack Williams stressed during his lifetime.

RECIPIENT(s): Manager: Ken Minasian – Coaches: Daniel Gregory, David Coats, Marion Baker and Michael Robertson, Chapin Post 193, SC

James F. Daniel, Jr. Memorial Sportsmanship Award: Awarded to The American Legion Baseball player participating in the World Series that represents the principle of good sportsmanship emphasized by the program.

RECIPIENT: Ben Hess, Crescent City Post 125, New Orleans, LA

American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Trophy: Awarded annually in four categories to the top performing Individual and Team in the Sporter and Precision categories competing in the annual USA Shooting National Junior Olympic Air Rifle Championship who are members of clubs and teams affiliated with The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Precision Team:**	Hardcore 4, Post 233, Loganville, GA – Dana Bowen, Rachel Kimbell, Mary Pratt and Dakota Spivey
	Precision Individual:	Sarah Sutton, Black Swamp Junior Rifle Club, Post 114, Oak Harbor, OH
	Sporter Team:	Zion Benton NJROTC, Post 865, Zion, IL – Justin Hamilton, Jaycie Hoenig, William Newman and Howard Norrish
	Sporter Individual:	Gabriel Palermo, Freeport High School NJROTC, Post 139, Freeport, IL

The American Legion Baseball "Slugger" Trophy: Plaque is presented to recipient, or designated representative, by appropriate official upon the conclusion of The American Legion Baseball World Series.

RECIPIENT: Ben Hess, Crescent City Post 125, New Orleans, LA (.488 batting average)

Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department within the continental limits in the United States showing the greatest Americanism activity in use of The American Legion School Medal Awards.

RECIPIENT: Department of Maryland

The American Legion Baseball "Big Stick" Award: Awarded annually to that American Legion Baseball player having the highest total number of bases as determined by the official score keepers of the respective regional tournaments and World Series of American Legion Baseball.

RECIPIENT: Justin Hawkins, Chapin Post 193, Chapin, SC (31 total bases)

Spafford National Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department of The American Legion having within its jurisdiction the winner of the National High School Oratorical Contest.

RECIPIENT: Department of Florida

Francis M. Redington Sportsmanship Award: Awarded annually to the athlete competing in The American Legion Junior Air Rifle National Championship who best exemplifies good sportsmanship and fair play.

RECIPIENT: Howard Norrish (Post 865), Zion Benton High School NJROTC, Winthrop Harbor, IL

Daniel J. O'Connor Award: Awarded annually to that Department attaining the greatest number of percentage points compiled from information contained in the Consolidated Post Reports and supporting Department narrative. (Originally named the William Randolph Hearst Trophy)

RECIPIENT: Department of Ohio

The American Legion and Scouting "Square Knot" Award: This award is designed to recognize American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member who completes the requirements for the award. The Award is meant to recognize dedication and work required by an American Legion, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.

RECIPIENT(s): ***2013*** – George M. Harrison, David F. Jennemann, Jr., Larry E. Wittmayer, William H. Greenleaf, John De Young. ***2014*** – Thomas J. Pendergast, Charles A. Spitz, Gilbert C. Harper, Tim L. Liffrig, Peter K. Walsh, Ronald L. Layman, Richard L. Hawkins, Bobby H. Barnes, Robert Wojcikowski, Ronald E. Foster, Russell W. Loquist, Randy B. Strickland, Peter R. De Kramer, Ralph Rivera, Bruce A. Winslow, Michael E. Jones, Richard L. Mills, Michael B. Quintin, Melvin Parsons, Kenneth C. Nichols, Thomas M. Mechler, Frederic M. Sieg, James A. Ashe, Leroy Williams, Lyle E. Miller, Jeffrey S. Burt, Horace, H. Robbins, Jr., Joseph Thomas, Frank Abate, Jr., Arthur Smith, Gerald A. White, Tom Dobelbower. ***2015*** *(as of 8/27/2015)* – Raymond Untiet, Albert Gangolf, Wayne Newland, Deana Rowe, Lowell Badgley, Ronald LaRose, Marvin R. Levy, Stephen Mataraza, Gerald A. White, Joseph Thomas.

The American Legion National Education Award: Awarded annually to an individual, group or organization that has promoted the education programs of The American Legion, including the promotion of "Need A Lift?", correspond to the goals of The American Legion or has promoted or advanced education programs at the national level.

RECIPIENT: Mrs. Nesse Godin, Holocaust Survivor, Silver Spring, MD

The American Legion Canadian Friendship Award: Awarded by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the National Executive Committee at such times and places as may be consistent and appropriate. It shall be awarded to specific individuals who shall be war veterans within the accepted meaning of the term and members of authentic veterans' organization in Canada. It shall be awarded to such individuals in recognition of outstanding service in the field of veterans' affairs and in the development and perpetuation of the spirit of international good will and comradeship between the United States and Canada and between their veterans' organization and The American Legion.

RECIPIENT(S): ***INDIVIDUAL*** – Omer J. Brunet ***ANAVETS*** – *None Awarded. Nominees only submitted by Royal Canadian Legion on biannual basis (even years).*

Department Award for 100% Post Children & Youth Reporting: Awarded annually to those Departments which achieve 100% of Posts indicating Children & Youth activity on Consolidated Post Reports.

RECIPIENT: Departments of Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Virginia and Wisconsin

National Employer of Veterans Award Recipient(s): Awarded to an employer in recognition of outstanding achievement in the employment and retraining of veterans.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	The Home Depot, Atlanta, GA
2014	**Category II**	Frito-Lay, Austin, TX
Winners	**Category III**	Veteran Energy, Houston, TX

Note: The 2015 National Employer of Veterans Award Recipient(s) will not be announced until 2016 National Convention.

National Employment Service Award Recipient(s): Awarded in three categories: Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) of the Year; Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) of the Year; Employment Service (ES) Office of the Year.

RECIPIENT(s):	**LVER of the Year:**	Frankie Billingsley, Fort Wayne, IN
2014	**DVOP of the Year:**	Linda "Michele" Scuito, Lufkin, TX
Winners	**ES Office of the Year:**	Ohio Means Jobs Columbus-Franklin County, Center, Columbus, OH

Note: The 2015 National Employment Service Award Recipient(s) will not be announced until 2016 National Convention.

Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award Recipient: The program is a joint project between the National Organization & the AETNA Company, to award those Posts that enhance the lives of disable persons by providing opportunities for their participation in community activities.

RECIPIENT(s): Bobby Dodd Institute, Atlanta, GA

2014 Winner

Note: The 2015 Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award Recipient will not be announced until 2016 National Convention.

National Employer of Older Worker Award Recipient: The program provides an Employer of Older Worker Award for a company that consistently hires older workers, especially veterans and serves as an inspirational recognition of a company with a record of support and commitment to the hiring of America's older workers.

RECIPIENT(s): Sturdevants Auto Parts, Sioux Falls, SD

2014 Winner

Note: The 2015 National Employer of Older Worker Award Recipient will not be announced until 2016 National Convention.

National DEPARTMENT History Contest Awards: Awarded annually at the Fall Meeting of the National Executive Committee to those contestants entered in the National Department History Contest having submitted the One-Year History *Narrative* or

Yearbook of the Department which best meets the standards established for that particular competition.

RECIPIENT(s):	Department of North Carolina	**(One-Year Narrative History)**
	Department of Nebraska	**(One-Year Yearbook History)**

National POST History Contest Awards: Awarded annually to those contestants entered in the National Post History Contest deemed by a duly authorized panel of judges to have submitted the One-Year History of the Post which best meets the standards established for the competitions.

RECIPIENT(s):	Banks Post 90, Banks, OR	**(One-Year Narrative History)**
	Carroll Post 143, Carrollton, GA	**(One-Year Yearbook History)**

International Amity Award: Awarded by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the National Executive Committee at such times and places as may be consistent and appropriate. It shall be awarded to specific individuals who shall be war veterans within the accepted meaning of the term and members of an authentic veteran organization established in the territory of any of the nations associated as war-time allies of the United States of America. It shall be awarded to such individuals in recognition of outstanding service in the field of veterans affairs and for service and contributions made in the development of international good will and comradeship between their organization and The American Legion.

RECIPIENT(s): None awarded for 2015

Distinguished Public Service Award: Awarded annually by the National Commander with the advice and consent of the Commander's Advisory Committee at the time of the annual Washington Conference. It may be awarded to one or more person(s) of the United States Congress.

RECIPIENT(s): Ashton B. Carter, Secretary of Defense

The Arthur D. Houghton Sons of The American Legion Trophy: Awarded annually to that Detachment of Sons of The American Legion in each of five membership categories (I – 200-1,000 members; II - 1,001-3,000 members; III - 3,001-6000 members; IV – 6001-12,000 members; V – 12,001 or more), each of said Detachments attaining the greatest percentage of increase over previous year's membership when compared with all Detachments in its category.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	Detachment of Oklahoma
2015	**Category II**	Detachment of Wyoming
Winners	**Category III**	Detachment of Massachusetts
	Category IV	Detachment of Minnesota
	Category V	Detachment of Florida

General Henri Gouraud Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department in each of six categories established by the National Membership and Post Activities Committee, each of said Department having been the first in its respective category to attain or exceed its nationally assigned membership quota (effective 1986).

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	None qualified
	Category II	None qualified
	Category III	Department of Georgia
	Category IV	None qualified
	Category V	None qualified
	Category VI	None qualified

General John J. Pershing Honor Award: Awarded annually to that Department having the greatest percentage of its posts receiving the Honor Ribbon for having 100 percent or more, of the post's previous year's membership enrolled for the coming year by December 31, and having reported such achievement to National Headquarters by not later than January 31.
RECIPIENT: Department of South Dakota

Henry D. Lindsley Trophy: Awarded annually to the Department attaining the highest percentage of membership over its preceding year's membership by March 31.
RECIPIENT: None awarded for 2015

The American Legion National Recruiter of the Year: Awarded annually to the individual certified with the highest number of new members recruited from among all of the departments.
RECIPIENT: Edgar J. Johnson, Department of Georgia

North Carolina Trophy: Awarded annually to the Department, not included among the several state Departments or the Department of the District of Columbia, attaining the highest percentage of membership as of March 31, over its preceding year's membership.
RECIPIENT: None awarded for 2015

O. L. Bodenhamer Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department designated to lead the parade at the time of the ensuing National Convention.
RECIPIENT: Department of Georgia

The American Legion Air Force Academy Award: Awarded annually to that cadet of the graduating class at the Air Force Academy who demonstrates the highest proficiency in all academic subjects.
RECIPIENT: Cadet Rebecca A. Esselstein

The American Legion Coast Guard Academy Award: Awarded annually to that cadet of the graduating class of the United States Coast Guard Academy who is considered to have personally excelled in athletics.
RECIPIENT: Ensign Christian Brindamour

The American Legion Merchant Marine Academy Award: Awarded annually to that graduating midshipman of the Merchant Marine Academy, enrolled in the Pre-Commissioning Seminar Course, and selected by the Academy Faculty, as achieving the highest grade pertaining to a 1,000-word composition dealing with the subject of National Security.
RECIPIENT: Midshipman Jake B. Wade

The American Legion Military Academy Award: Awarded annually to cadet of the graduating class at the United States Military Academy with the highest standing in Chemistry.
RECIPIENT: Cadet Matthew Bryan

The American Legion Naval Academy Award: Awarded annually to that graduating midshipman of the United States Naval Academy who stands highest in those English, History and Government courses taken to complete a Foreign Affairs major.
RECIPIENT: Ensign Andrea Howard

National Commander's Blood Donor Awards: Presented to departments in different sized categories for participating in The American Legion's Blood Donor Program.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Category I**	**Departments with 100,000 or more members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Minnesota
	Individual Participation:	Department of Minnesota
	Category II	**Departments with 70,000 to 99,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Maryland
	Individual Participation:	Department of Maryland
	Category III	**Departments with 40,000 to 69,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Georgia
	Individual Participation:	Department of Georgia
	Category IV	**Departments with 25,000 to 39,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Tennessee
	Individual Participation:	Department of Tennessee
	Category V	**Departments with 10,000 to 24,999 members:**
	Post Participation:	Department of Montana
	Individual Participation:	Department of Montana
	Category VI	**Departments with less than 10,000 members:**
	Post Participation:	No Submission
	Individual Participation:	No Submission

The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award: To recognize an outstanding law enforcement officer as selected from Department law enforcement officer winners for distinguished on-and off-duty service. The accomplishments for which the award is presented shall have been in accordance with, or in furtherance of, established American Legion policies or programs and it shall have contributed to the preservation of law and order as well as the American way of life.

RECIPIENT: Deputy Sheriff Ben Adams, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Ocala, FL

The American Legion National Firefighter of the Year Award: To recognize an outstanding firefighter as selected from Department for distinguished on-and off-duty service. The accomplishments for which the award is presented shall have been in accordance with, or in furtherance of, established American Legion policies or programs and it shall have contributed to the preservation of law and order as well as the American way of life.

RECIPIENT: Steven Brune, West Point Rescue, West Point, NE

Paul H. Griffith ROTC Trophy: Awarded annually to that Department giving the highest degree of support to the ROTC program within its jurisdiction, based on criteria drawn up by the National Security Commission.

RECIPIENT(s): Departments of Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota and Tennessee

The American Legion Fourth Estate Award: Awarded to press, radio, TV, or other communications media; to associations of same, to owners, executive heads or staff members; such award to be in recognition of outstanding service to community, state, or nation, which service shall have been in accordance with or the furtherance of established American Legion policies and programs.

RECIPIENT: Newspaper: USA Today; Broadcast: CNN; Internet: CBSNews.com

The American Legion National Commander's Public Relations Award: Awarded to an outstanding individual and/or organization for distinguished public service in the field of communications.

RECIPIENT: None Awarded for 2015

The American Legion Patriot Award: Awarded to an outstanding citizen who has demonstrated a profound and exceptional commitment to military personnel and their families.

RECIPIENT(s): The Oak Ridge Boys

The American Legion Spirit of Service Award: Awarded annually by the Department of Defense and the five military departments that have identified the most outstanding men and women that have received press coverage in Armed Service News dispatches, the Pentagon Channel, their military base newspapers and their hometown publications.

RECIPIENT(s):	**Army:**	Sgt. Danielle M. Salley
	Navy:	HM2 Fredelyne Dolores
	Marine Corps:	Sgt. Stephen K. Little
	Air Force:	SrA Richard L. Baskerville
	Coast Guard:	PO2 Casey B. Lawrence

Arch M. Cantrall Trophy: Awarded annually to that American Legion Band winning first prize in competition with all other American Legion bands during the annual National Convention of The American Legion.

RECIPIENT: None awarded for 2015

Glen R. Hillis Trophy: Awarded annually to that Color Guard winning first prize in competition with all other Color Guards during the annual National Convention of The American Legion.

RECIPIENT: Harrisburg Color Guard, Post 472, Houston, Texas

The Lemuel Bolles Trophy: Awarded annually to that band winning first prize in competition with all other bands during the annual National Convention.

RECIPIENT: None awarded for 2015

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy: Awarded annually to that State Department of The American Legion excelling in welfare work for war veterans, providing the membership of that Department shall be no less than 80% of the membership of the preceding year.

RECIPIENT: Department of Ohio

General Henri Gouraud Trophy: Awarded annually to that department in each of six categories established by the National Membership and Post Activities Committee,

each of said departments having been the first in its respective category to attain or exceed its nationally assigned membership quota (effective 1986).

RECIPIENT(s):

Category I **Not yet determined**
Category II **Not yet determined**
Category III **Not yet determined**
Category IV **Not yet determined**
Category V **Not yet determined**
Category VI **Not yet determined**

General John J. Pershing Honor Award: Awarded annually to that department having the greatest percentage of its posts receiving the honor ribbon for having 100 percent or more, of the post's previous year's membership enrolled for the coming year by December 31, and having reported such achievement to National Headquarters by not later than January 31.

RECIPIENT: Department of North Dakota

The Henry D. Lindsley Trophy: Awarded annually to the department attaining the highest percentage of membership over its preceding year's membership by March 31.

RECIPIENT: None awarded for 2016

The North Carolina Trophy: Awarded annually to the department, not included among the several state departments or the department of the District of Columbia, attaining the highest percentage of membership as of March 31, over its preceding year's membership.

RECIPIENT: Department of Philippines

The O. L. Bodenhamer Trophy: Awarded annually to that department designated to lead the parade at the time of the ensuing national convention.

RECIPIENT: Not yet determined

2016 UNOFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Contained within this extensive program are a wide variety of prizes ranging from simple certificates and ribbons to valuable gifts and travel. The awards are designed to reward the membership success of dedicated Legionnaires at all levels of the organization and to encourage continued growth. By getting active in membership recruiting, and by asking a veteran to join our ranks, one or more of the many prizes and awards listed below can be earned. The department membership chairman can be contacted for more information.

EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF - SEPTEMBER 16, 2015: Fifty-one departments qualified for the 50% target date they are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, France, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

FALL MEETINGS - OCTOBER 14, 2015: Fifty-three Departments qualified for the 55% target date they are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, France, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan,

Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

VETERANS DAY – NOVEMBER 13, 2015: Fifty-three Departments qualified for the 65% target date they are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, France, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

PEARL HARBOR DAY – DECEMBER 9, 2015: Thirty-three Departments qualified for the 75% target date they are: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Philippines, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

MID WINTER – JANUARY 20, 2016: Fifty-two Departments qualified for the 80% target date they are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, France, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Philippines, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

PRESIDENT'S DAY – FEBRUARY 10, 2016: Forty-five Departments qualified for the 85% target date they are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, France, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Philippines, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

LEGION BIRTHDAY – MARCH 9, 2016: Nineteen Departments qualified for the 90% target date they are: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Philippines, South Carolina, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

"BIG TWELVE" COMPETITION WINNERS:

Category I	**None qualified**
Category II	**Michigan, Minnesota**
Category III	**Georgia, Wisconsin**
Category IV	**None qualified**
Category V	**South Dakota, Arkansas**
Category VI	**Idaho**

CHILDREN & YOUTH – APRIL 13, 2016: Four departments qualified for the 95% target date: Georgia, Idaho, Mexico, Philippines.

ARMED FORCES DAY - MAY 11, 2016: Two departments qualified for the 100% target date: Not yet determined.

By achieving 100% of the department's 2016 membership goal, the department will receive a plaque recognizing this achievement. The plaque will be presented at the National Convention in *Cincinnati, Ohio,*

DELEGATE STRENGTH – AUGUST 1, 2016: Delegate strength is determined by the membership in the hands of the National Treasurer 30 days prior to the National Convention. Total number of delegates for each department is based on five delegates at large, one delegate for each 1,000 members or major fraction thereof, and the members of the National Executive Committee.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER OF THE YEAR: Any department commander, who met or exceeds his/her 100% goal for 2016 by May 11, 2016, will receive a plaque recognizing his/her achievement. The plaque will be presented at the National Convention in *Cincinnati, Ohio.*

GOLD BRIGADE RECRUITER AWARD: A Legionnaire who recruits 50 or more NEW members by May 11, 2016, will qualify for enrollment in the elite GOLD BRIGADE of The American Legion.

POST HONOR RIBBONS: Post Honor Ribbons were shipped to 1,591 posts whose 2016 membership as of December 31, 2015 exceeded their final 2015 membership.

CERTIFICATE OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE: These certificates were awarded for 223 posts for attaining a new All-Time-High membership for 2016 by December 31, 2015.

FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS ALL-TIME-HIGH: These citations are awarded to Posts with five or more consecutive years of all-time high membership in **2016**.

DISTRICT COMMANDERS "RACE TO THE TOP":

District commanders are the lynchpin of The American Legion's chain of command, serving as the vital link between the national and department organizations and all posts. As we are all aware, the local post is where the "rubber meets the road." If it doesn't happen at the post level -- it doesn't happen at all. District Commanders are the people charged with ensuring all posts in their district maintain their vitality.

Consequently, this unique award was created to provide a meaningful incentive for the five top district commanders in each category and reward their successful membership efforts. The winning district commanders and guests receive:

Distinguished guests of the National Commander at National Convention.

1st class hotel accommodations for four nights at convention location.

Legion cap that signifies they are Race-To-The-Top winners.

The following provides more specific information on how you can win.

Competition is divided into five categories based on the membership of the district without regard to geographic locations. District commanders will compete in each of the following categories based on the final **2015** totals, and a top district commander for the national award will be selected from each of the five categories. Second and third place awards will also be presented in each category.

Category I	**Districts of:**	**15 to 1,499 members**
Category II	**Districts of:**	**1,500 to 2,999 members**
Category III	**Districts of:**	**3,000 to 4,999 members**
Category IV	**Districts of:**	**5,000 to 7,499 members**
Category V	**Districts of:**	**7,500 and above members**

Trip to National Convention will be presented to the top district commander and spouse in each category whose district membership on **March 31st** represents the greatest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. **Cannot be less than**

100% to qualify. First place award entitles you and your guest to attend the 98th National Convention in ***Cincinnati, Ohio.***

Second Place Awards will be presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on **March 31st** represents the second highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. **Cannot be less than 100% to qualify**. Winners will receive a **$500** check.

Third Place Awards will be presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on **March 31st** represents the third highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. **Cannot be less than 100% to qualify.** Winners will receive a **$375** check.

This year's winners are:

FIRST PLACE WINNERS: (TRIP TO NATIONAL CONVENTION – CINCINNATI, OHIO):

Category I	**Chris O. Bradley, Sr.**	**Alabama**	**122.95%**	**District 35**
Category II	**Dean M. Noechel**	**Colorado**	**100.69%**	**District 7**
Category III	**Robert M. Shreve**	**Georgia**	**106.37%**	**District 3**
Category IV	**None qualified**			
Category V	**Aaron R. Cunningham, II**	**Ohio**	**102.29%**	**District 4**

SECOND PLACE WINNERS ($500 CHECK):

Category I	**Robin D. Rucker**	**South Carolina**	**118.58%**	**District 20**
Category II	**Harold D. Perry**	**Florida**	**100.62%**	**District 7**
Category III	**Jodie L. Pajak**	**Massachusetts**	**101.16%**	**District 3**
Category IV	**None qualified**			
Category V	**None qualified**			

THIRD PLACE WINNERS ($375 CHECK):

Category I	**Terry A. Brown**	**Oregon**	**109.02%**	**District 7**
Category II	**Joseph A. Piento**	**Illinois**	**100.23%**	**District 7**
Category III	**None qualified**			
Category IV	**None qualified**			
Category V	**None qualified**			

DISTRICT COMMANDER NEW POST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS:

District Commanders, who achieve the goal of creating new American Legion Posts in their respective District and have the new Post's Temporary Charter Application on file at National Headquarters by May 11, 2016, qualify for a special recognition framed certificate.

DISTRICT COMMANDER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD W/DISTRICT HONOR RIBBON:

All district commanders whose May Target Date membership exceeds the previous year's membership by at least the number of posts in that district will be awarded the District Commander Achievement framed certificate. In addition, the district will receive a District Honor Ribbon for its district colors.

DEPARTMENT RECRUITER OF THE YEAR: Each American Legion post will have the opportunity to submit the name of the "Top Recruiter" for that post who has signed up the highest number of new members for the 2016 membership year by May 11, 2016. Department adjutants will determine the top new member recruiter for their respective department and certify their "Department Recruiter" to National Headquarters on or before May 31, 2016.

The "Department Recruiter" properly certified from each department, will be awarded a plaque with his/her accomplishment inscribed thereon.

NATIONAL RECRUITER OF THE YEAR: The individual certified with the highest number of new members recruited from among all the departments will be declared "National Recruiter of the Year". The winner of this award receives an all-expense paid trip to the 98th National Convention in *Cincinnati, Ohio.*

D. MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Monuments & Memorials Subcommittee was called to order by Chairman Alton R. Ford (MI), at 10 a.m. on Monday, May 2, 2016, at National Headquarters, Room 315, to study Resolution No. 15, *Additional Names to be added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Members present were Alton R. Ford (MI), Chairman, William O. Moore, Jr. (KY), Robert E. Newman (IN), Jerry D. Sebben (IA).

The subcommittee was asked to consider Resolution 15, *Additional Names to be Added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, which was tabled for further study by the National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, September 1-3, 2015.

The members carefully studied various requests over many years from The Frank E. Evans (DD754) Association to add the names of 74 sailors killed in a training accident in the South China Sea on June 3, 1969. The FRANK E. EVANS, a U.S. Navy destroyer, was cut in two by the Australian aircraft carrier HMAS MELBOURNE during SEATO Exercise Sea Spirit. The destroyer was not engaged in combat operations, nor was it steaming in transit to or from a designated area of combat operations.

Notwithstanding the desire of the subcommittee to honor and memorialize the sacrifice of these sailors, the members felt strongly that the circumstances did not warrant an exception to the existing and very specific criteria administered by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. This criteria was agreed to by the various Military Departments as well as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund leadership and are long standing. The names inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are intended to afford special recognition to those whose deaths were combat-related.

A motion to recommend rejection was made by member William O. Moore, Jr (KY), and seconded by Jerry D. Sebben (IA). Motion carried.

The recommendations of the Monuments and Memorials Subcommittee were approved by the Internal Affairs Commission.

E. INTERNAL AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (SAL)

The Sons of The American Legion Sub-Committee of Internal Affairs met at 10:17 a.m. on May 2, 2016. Members present were George V. West (NH), Chairman; Larry D. Sheets (FL), member; Herbert W. Odell (TX), member; William Lienhop, Jr (GA), member; James F. Army (MA), member; John W. Kerestan (IN), Headquarters Staff.

The Chairman, Mr. George V. West (NH) opened this meeting thanking this committee for all the fine work they do and what the Sons are accomplishing.

The National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, Mr. Kevin L. Collier (AK) was introduced and gave brief comments on SAL programs, goals, and accomplishments for this year. He also discussed the new Sons Strategic Initiative Ad Hoc Committee being formed to identify direction, problems, and future goals. Next, the leading candidate for Sons National Commander, Mr. Jeff Frain (AZ) was introduced and he provided comments toward his goals for 2016-2017 and his special projects of support to the Child Welfare Foundation and American Legion Baseball. Past National

Commander Douglas Bible (MN), Chairman of the National Commanders Advisory Committee of the Sons was introduced and provided his report and recommendation for SAL National Commander for 2018-2019. All the SAL members in attendance thanked the Sub-Committee for their support and assistance throughout the year. The sub-committee expressed their thanks to the Sons of The American Legion for their accomplishments, continued growth and support to The American Legion programs and family. The SAL members were then excused for consideration of resolutions.

There were eight (8) resolutions that came before the Sub-Committee that requires action from the Internal Affairs Commission and the National Executive Committee of The American Legion. They are as follows:

- SAL NEC-1-S16 – Endorsement of Mr. Danny J. Smith (NE) for National Commander 2016-2017 Sons of The American Legion – **Received and file.**
- SAL NEC-2-S16 – Endorsement of Mr. Michael L. Lawler (WI) for National Vice Commander Sons of The American Legion – **Received and file.**
- SAL NEC-3-S16 – Support for Get Out the Vote – **Recommend approval.**
- SAL NEC-4-S16 – Support for the Family Support Network – **Recommend approval.**
- SAL NEC-5-S16 – Child Welfare Foundation Donation of $5,000 budgeted line item. – **Recommend approval.**
- SAL NEC-6-S16 – Recognizing recipients of the George B. Evans "Veterans Advocate of the Year Award" – **Recommend approval.**
- SAL NEC-7-S16 – Creation of the Sons Strategic Initiative Ad Hoc Committee – **Recommend approval.**
- SAL NEC-8-S16 – Endorsement of Mr. Mark A. Cannito (SC) for National Vice Commander Sons of The American Legion – **Received and file**.

The SAL Sub-Committee concurs with the recommended actions as listed above.

The Sub-Committee reviewed and discussed three special requests from the SAL National Commander as follows: (1) To amend the present policy covering SAL National Commander spouse travel (four trips) to allow the substitution of the Sons National Commanders Aide in lieu of, when the spouse is not able to travel. This request for substitute travel was approved as there is no change to any budgetary allocations (four trips maximum). (2) Travel of the SAL National Commander to Normandy, France. This request was held for further study. (3) To allow additional travel call-ins for the Sons National Chaplain and Sons National Vice Commanders to attend the Washington Conference. This request was rejected.

The Sub-Committee then reviewed all candidates for National Commander (2016-2017 and 2017-2018), National Vice Commander, and National Appointments for all Commissions/Committees for 2016-2017. All Sons candidates were approved and Sons National appointments has been cleared until the SAL leadership presents the final list to the SAL National Executive Committee for their approval at the Post SAL NEC at the National Convention in August 2016. The SAL Sub-Committee of Internal Affairs has also approved the tentative selection of appointments for the SAL National Commanders Advisory Committee and the SAL National Committees on Committees to be announced subsequent to the National Convention in 2016.

The SAL Sub-Committee approved the Sons National Commanders Advisory Committee's selection for National Commander 2018-2019 to be announced at the close of the National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The recommendations of the Sons of The American Legion Subcommittee were approved by the Internal Affairs Commission to include the actions taken on resolutions. See Addendum B

II. PROGRAM REPORTS

A. SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (ANNUAL SPRING MEETINGS REPORT)

Submitted by: Kevin Collier (Alaska), National Commander
Sons of The American Legion

The Sons of The American Legion has just completed a very successful National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend.

As of April 29, 2016 we have a total reported membership of 333,859. This is 92.15 % of our 100% target and 83.5% of our membership goal for 2016 of 400,000 members.

Again this year, we remained a strong supporter of the Child Welfare Foundation, raising $170,225.68 total to date as of April 22, 2016. During the National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend an additional amount of $94,142 was donated to the Foundation, with more coming prior to May 31st. The total, after the donations this weekend, is over $269,368, which is 67.3% of our goal of $400,000.

The SAL is also focused on assisting The American Legion through donations to the National Emergency Fund. During the National Executive Committee meeting this past weekend $4,856 was donated to the NEF Fund, with more coming in all of the time.

Two hundred sixteen National Executive Committeemen, Alternates, Commission and Committee members attended the 2016 Spring National Executive Committee meeting representing forty-four Detachments. Twenty nine guests also attended.

The Member Training and Development Committee continued training our members with the National Management Institute. Three Hundred and Thirty-three S.A.L. leaders have now completed all phases of this three session Management training. Twenty graduated during this 16th Anniversary session. All graduates receive a Certificate of Graduation. The N.M.I. is a three-course seminar that encompasses Communication Skills and Public Appearances, Time Management and Personal Administration, Building Action Plans for results, Driving for Results, Develop Oneself, Acting with Integrity and Thinking Strategically.

In addition to the donations for CWF and NEF, our members presented the following donations: The Endowment Fund $1,071, Children's Miracle Network $784, Fisher House $2,750, Operation Comfort Warriors $4,670 and Legacy Scholarship Fund $100. The donations received this weekend, without the resolutions, totaled $103,373. The donations came from various detachments, districts and squadrons from across the country.

With our membership goal for this year appearing to be very attainable, we appear to be heading towards another record year. Our members from around the country have been actively supporting the programs and ideals of our parent organization, The American Legion. The Sons of The American Legion will continue to work for the benefit of our veterans who helped make this country great. Our work in assisting veterans in the local VA Medical Centers and Hospitals continues to grow and will remain the top priority of the S.A.L.

Through the use of our in-house training courses, and the mentoring from our current leaders, our members will continue to enhance our dedication to the purposes and programs of The American Legion. We will continue to develop in-depth programs so that the Sons of The American Legion will become even more of an asset to The American Legion Family.

B. DIRECT MARKETING SOLICIATION (DMS) AND DIRECT RENEWAL

Year-to-date the DMS program has successfully recruited approximately 103,000 members split evenly between new, never before members and expire re-joins. The program is on pace to meet budgeted expectations by generating an additional 7,000 members by the end of the 2016 membership cycle. In addition to the program's extensive mailing schedule, the 2016 program included a mix of email correspondence, automated telephone calls, and an introduction into other digital advertising that includes paid internet ad placements, search engine marketing, targeted remarketing and on-line cart abandonment tactics.

Earlier this year, at the Washington Conference, the 2017 membership budget was approved. At about 5.5 mission dollars, the DMS portion of this budget is based on acquiring 122,000 new members in a cycle that begins in late June to be in home by the beginning of the new membership year in early July. The 2017 plan was approved to include a larger testing budget that will explore new package designs and mailing timing. Email and digital efforts will continue to be used and grow as these efforts are proven to enhance the overall process.

The Direct Renewal program is the mailing program where the Marketing, Media & Communications Division helps to manage for Membership. As you are already aware, this program is instrumental in stimulating timely membership renewals from the active membership. It utilizes six notices mailed to traditional members throughout the year and a 7th notice is mailed to recent DMS members encouraging a late cycle renewal to these newer members.

We are nearing our fifth complete year of a national on-line renewal process. This process has allowed Legion members to renew their membership on-line using a credit card. To date, about 207,000 members have renewed their membership through this tool and we expect to receive an additional couple thousand before the end of the membership year. As a percentage of total renewals, we are expecting on-line renewals to finish at about 11.4%, which is slightly ahead of last year's pace.

C. AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS STAFF REPORT

The American Legion Riders Program (ALR) is now in its ninth year as a nationally recognized program that is under the administrative control of the departments and posts. The National American Legion Riders Advisory Committee is appointed annually by the NEC to make recommendations for the national officers and national commissions regarding the structure and growth of The American Legion Riders and to provide guidance for the annual American Legion Legacy Run.

Just before the Fall meetings in October 2015, the ALR Committee met in Indianapolis with the Americanism and Finance Commissions to discuss proposed improvements to The American Legion Sept 11 Memorial Scholarship. The committee voted unanimously to support the changes and to actively promote the improvements among the ALR community. The committee also discussed possible route plans for the Cincinnati national convention and made recommendations to Internal Affairs for safety equipment and procedural changes. The Committee also made recommendations regarding Rolling Thunder activities in Washington, DC, trademark and patch issues, promotion of regional ALR activities and other matters, resulting in additional guidance and direction being provided to the departments.

American Legion Legacy Run 2016 - Route planning for the American Legion Legacy Run to Cincinnati is nearing completion. The route will be rehearsed by run leaders about six weeks before the event. The Run begins Aug. 21, 2016 in Indianapolis and will visit cities in Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Ohio. The

Legacy Run will arrive at Ohio's Harrison Post 22 on the afternoon of Thursday, August 25. The 2016 Run has been greatly enhanced by the enthusiastic involvement of American Legion Riders and Legion Family leadership from each of the departments along the planned route

The American Legion Riders have made significant contributions to The American Legion Legacy Scholarship in connection with The American Legion Legacy Run. To date the Run has raised over $6M of the $9.5M now in the fund, including $1M raised in 2014 and $1.25 in 2015 from all sources. The National Commander's goal for this year is $500,000.

D. LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) STAFF REPORT

Leadership, Education And Development, (L.E.A.D) is a one day, eight hour training session designed to provide professional development training for posts, districts and department level members. National staff subject matter experts cover a wide range of topics relevant to the Four Pillars (Americanism, National Security, Children & Youth and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation) of The American Legion. Subject matter experts, any lesson plans, handouts and training materials will be provided at no expense to departments. Departments are responsible for identifying and providing the training facility and audio visual equipment.

In 2015, sixteen training opportunities were budgeted for a total of $60,000 which accounted for four National staff attendees at each event. Totals for 2015 were 15 LEAD events with $28,220 spent.

Those lower costs are a direct result of what the LEAD program has been transitioning to; empowering departments to conduct their own training programs by providing department-picked trainers to receive Train-the-Trainer LEAD materials from national staff, thus allowing for more training opportunities at the district and post levels.

To qualify for a LEAD pin, any combination of 25 offered classes may be selected, making up eight hours of instruction. One classroom is needed for each eight hour session. If department desires a repeat of sessions or selects more than eight hours training, additional classrooms and equipment may be required.

Since LEAD's inception over 30 departments have participated in the LEAD training program with just over 2,750 Legion family members trained by national subject matter experts. The top three most requested classes continue to be: "American Legion Extension Institute" "Post Operations," Developing an Effective Post Membership Team," and "myLegion.org."

E. NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND (NEF) STAFF REPORT

Since its creation in 1989, the National Emergency Fund (NEF) has awarded just over $9,000,000 to American Legion family members and posts.

So far in 2016, we have approved twelve grants (11 members and 1 post) totaling $27,150. Most of the grants were for flooding and tornados. With the spring storms just now getting started we expect those totals to increase.

Two Year Summary:

Year	Grant Amount Approved	Donations Received
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2015	$43,700	$666,834
Jan 1 – Apr 26, 2016	$27,150	$226,240

Fund balance: $4,648,016.80
Current NEF fundraising promotion:

National Commander Dale Barnett has challenged every department to donate $.50 for every member with a total challenge of $1,000,000 raised. As an incentive, when a department reaches their goal, they will be honored on stage at the 98th National Convention in Cincinnati, OH, with a plaque and picture in Dispatch. As in the past, the challenge started when Commander Barnett took office and ends on August 1, 2016.

The following is a breakdown of donations received as of April 26th. Thus far, there are four departments achieving their goal (Delaware, District of Columbia, Mississippi and New Mexico). A follow-on letter was mailed to department leadership regarding the current status of Commander Barnett's challenge.

NEF Commander's Challenge Barnett

DEPARTMENT	Delegate Strength Membership as of 8/3/2015	NEF GOAL 2016	Contributions as of April 26, 2016	% of Goal
Alabama	22,454	$10,542.22	$ 1,200.00	11.38%
Alaska	6,296	$2,955.99	$ 750.00	25.37%
Arizona	46,316	$21,745.50	$ 695.25	3.20%
Arkansas	15,681	$7,362.28	$ 400.00	5.43%
California	108,325	$50,858.91	$ 36,659.40	72.08%
Colorado	24,665	$11,580.29	$ 1,137.55	9.82%
Connecticut	22,111	$10,381.18	$ 3,089.08	29.76%
Delaware	11,215	$5,265.48	$ 5,950.00	113.00%
Dist. of Col.	1,930	$906.14	$ 1,100.00	121.39%
Florida	131,023	$61,515.69	$ 20,387.50	33.14%
France	3,002	$1,409.45	$ 90.00	6.39%
Georgia	49,420	$23,202.84	$ 450.00	1.94%
Hawaii	2,919	$1,370.48	$ 110.00	8.03%
Idaho	10,369	$4,868.28	$ 725.00	14.89%
Illinois	95,135	$44,666.16	$ 8,375.40	18.75%
Indiana	91,517	$42,967.50	$ 5,371.50	12.50%
Iowa	51,059	$23,972.35	$ 1,142.00	4.76%
Kansas	34,315	$16,110.99	$ 70.00	0.43%
Kentucky	25,574	$12,007.07	$ 85.00	0.71%
Louisiana	24,579	$11,539.91	$ 5,157.50	44.69%
Maine	20,598	$9,670.82	$ 45.00	0.47%
Maryland	57,603	$27,044.78	$ 16,884.00	62.43%
Massachusetts	41,183	$19,335.54	$ 3,057.25	15.81%
Michigan	77,670	$36,466.30	$ 5,045.00	13.83%
Minnesota	83,873	$39,378.62	$ 17,453.50	44.32%
Mississippi	16,676	$7,829.43	$ 9,289.00	118.64%
Missouri	46,389	$21,779.77	$ 2,537.50	11.65%
Montana	11,883	$5,579.10	$ 3,834.00	68.72%
Nebraska	35,177	$16,515.71	$ 15,342.63	92.90%
Nevada	9,846	$4,622.73	$ 3,461.00	74.87%
New Hampshire	18,490	$8,681.11	$ 1,720.00	19.81%
New Jersey	51,838	$24,338.09	$ 6,079.00	24.98%
New Mexico	12,947	$6,078.65	$ 7,389.38	121.56%
New York	122,097	$57,324.90	$ 13,812.00	24.09%
North Carolina	46,085	$21,637.04	$ 131.00	0.61%
North Dakota	15,794	$7,415.33	$ 175.00	2.36%
Ohio	108,670	$51,020.89	$ 3,651.00	7.16%
Oklahoma	21,302	$10,001.35	$ 105.00	1.05%
Oregon	21,194	$9,950.65	$ 3,650.00	36.68%
Pennsylvania	173,264	$81,347.96	$ 4,229.66	5.20%
Puerto Rico	4,815	$2,260.66	$ 506.00	22.38%
Rhode Island	5,646	$2,650.81	$ 200.00	7.54%
South Carolina	24,019	$11,276.99	$ 425.00	3.77%
South Dakota	21,481	$10,085.39	$ 110.00	1.09%
Tennessee	29,603	$13,898.70	$ 980.00	7.05%
Texas	80,313	$37,707.19	$ 3,736.00	9.91%
Utah	8,668	$4,069.65	$ 364.00	8.94%
Vermont	13,109	$6,154.71	$ 600.00	9.75%
Virginia	51,743	$24,293.49	$ 3,454.12	14.22%
Washington	31,621	$14,846.15	$ 131.00	0.88%
West Virginia	19,253	$9,039.34	$ 2,310.00	25.55%
Wisconsin	61,986	$29,102.61	$ 198.12	0.68%
Wyoming	7,171	$3,366.81	$ 2,390.00	70.99%
TOTALS	**2,129,912**	**$1,000,000.00**	**$226,240.34**	**22.62%**

F. PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) STAFF REPORT

At the Fall 2013 meetings, the Internal Affairs and Finance Commissions approved a restructured means of obtaining a Paid Up For Life membership. The promotion campaign was conducted for two years starting January 2014 and ending December 31st, 2015. In that two year period we added 36,429 new members into the program with $22,934,412.94 to the PUFL trust fund (see chart to the right). The goal for those two years was to acquire 16,000 new PUFL members. We achieved over 36,000.

Since the national per-capita was increased by $5.00 this year, the Finance Commission has decided to end all promotion of the PUFL program in the event a new rate chart is developed after a new actuarial study and further analysis of the dues increase impact on the program.

So far this year, with no advertising, we have acquired 1,441 new members, adding just over $1,000,000 to the fund.

III. RESOLUTIONS

Disposed of Administratively

Resolution #2730, Subj: Call-ins for May and October National Executive Committee Meetings from the Department of Pennsylvania will be handled administratively per agreement with the Department of Pennsylvania representatives. The method of allowing the National Commander, which was used for this year's Spring Meetings, to approve additional call-ins for members of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission or National Security Commission is totally acceptable and meets the intent of their resolution.

Since these two commissions meet in full only during the Washington Conference and the National Convention and issues arise between these meetings, the appropriate commission chairman may recommend to the National Commander the need for additional call-ins to the Spring or Fall National Executive Committee meeting for study and recommend actions on issues of emergency nature. These actions may require more than just the Commission Chairman to act on either before Convention or the Washington Conference. This procedure is particularly essential while the Department of Veterans Affairs is experiencing issues of mismanagement of veterans' benefits.

Approved and forwarded to Sub-Committee on Resolutions

Resolution No. 13	Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition
Resolution No. 14	Assignment of the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative Committee to Internal Affairs Commission
Resolution No. 15	Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee
Resolution No. 16	Membership Credit be Given to Departments for Transferring First and Second Year Direct Mail Solicitation Members into Local Posts
Resolution No. 17	La Fiere Bridge Memorial Agreement
Resolution No. 18	Appointment of Susan Eisenhower to The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee
Resolution No. 19	Promotional Support of "100 Cities/100 Monuments" Grant Program of Pritzker Military Museum and Library and National World War I Commission
Resolution No. 20	Reiteration of 1960 NEC Resolution to Remind Chairman of Their Authority to Amend, Consolidate, Approve, Reject, etc., Resolution for Further Study Before Being Acted Upon
Resolution No. 21	Reiteration of 1960 National Executive Committee to Urge Departments to Restrict Resolutions to Matters Relevant to Purposes for Which The American Legion Was Organized

Approved and forwarded to the Finance Commission

Resolution No. 22 Establishment and Appointment of Members to the 75th Anniversary of WWII Commemorative Committee

Disposition of all other resolutions is addressed in Addendum A.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your assistance and for giving us the opportunity to appear before you. Our commission is "Still Serving America."

NOTE: The complete Internal Affairs Report with Subcommittee Reports and the entire staff report text can be provided upon request.

Attachments: Addendum A – Report to Subcommittee on Resolutions
Addendum B – List of Sons of The American Legion Resolutions

Addendum A

Report to Subcommittee on Resolutions

The Internal Affairs Commission recommends the indicated action on the listed resolutions, which are presently before this body for disposition.

Disposed of Administratively

Register Resolution No. 2730 (PA) (DEC): **Call-ins for May and October National Executive Committee Meetings**

Rejected

Resolution No. 15 (AZ) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Additional Names to be Added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

Addendum B

Internal Affairs Commission Report to National Executive Committee
May 4 – 5, 2016

Disposition of Action of Sons of The American Legion

In compliance with Resolution 21 "entitled", "Establish Procedure for Handling Matters Originating from SAL National Conventions and SAL National Executive Committee", adopted by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion at its meeting April 30 – May 1, 1973, this is to report disposition made by the Internal Affairs Commission of SAL actions taken at the National Executive Committee May 4 -5, 2016.

Approved

Resolution SAL Res 3 – Spring 2016: Support for Get Out the Vote (GOTV)
Resolution SAL Res 4 – Spring 2016: Support for the Family Support Network

Resolution SAL Res 5 – Spring 2016: Child Welfare Foundation Donation of $5,000 from the 2016 Budget
Resolution SAL Res 6 – Spring 2016: Recognizing Recipients of the 'George B. Evans, Veterans' Advocate of the Year Award
Resolution SAL Res 7 – Spring 2016: Creation of the Strategic Initiative Committee

Received and Recorded

Resolution SAL Res 1 – Spring 2016: Endorsement of Danny J. Smith (NE) for National Commander
Resolution SAL Res 2 – Spring 2016: Endorsement of Michael L. Lawler (WI) for National Vice Commander
Resolution SAL Res 8 – Spring 2016: Endorsement of Mark A. Cannito (SC) for National Vice Commander

No.: SAL Res 1 – Spring 2016
Title: Endorsement of Danny J. Smith (NE) for National Commander
Origin: Detachment of Nebraska

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Danny J. Smith has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of Nebraska as elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of the American Legion Family; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, That the Sons of The American Legion in National Executive Committee assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, April 30 – May 1, 2016, That the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Nebraska hereby endorses Danny J. Smith for the high office of National Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of Nebraska and the Department of Nebraska with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Adjutant Harold E. Thompson Jr. and Department Adjutant David W. Salak are on the submitted resolution.

No. SAL Res 2 – Spring 2016
Title: Endorsement of Michael L. Lawler (WI) for National Vice Commander
Origin: Detachment of Wisconsin

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Michael L. Lawler has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of Wisconsin as elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of the American Legion Family; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, that the Sons of The American Legion in National Executive Committee assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, April 30 – May 1, 2016, That the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Wisconsin hereby endorses Michael L. Lawler for

the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of Wisconsin and the Department of Wisconsin with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Adjutant David R. Faust and Department Adjutant David A. Kurtz are on the submitted resolution.

No. SAL Res 3 – Spring 2016
Title: Support for Get Out the Vote (GOTV)
Origin: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion has always promoted an active involvement in the voting process in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The year 2016 will be an especially important year as a new President of the United States will be elected; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 136, at the 1952 National American Legion Convention, Get Out the Vote, established an American Legion voter education and participation program by the same name; and

WHEREAS, Our Democracy is ill-served by far too many apathetic and disenfranchised voters who choose not be participate in the election process; and

WHEREAS, The Legion Family members, who typically vote in numbers that exceed the national average, have the opportunity to participate in the election process and encourage others to do so as well; and

WHEREAS, The Get Out the Vote program is non-partisan and has as its purpose the encouragement of all eligible voters to register and participate in all elections; federal, state, and local; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 30-May 1, 2016 that the Sons of The American Legion reiterates its longstanding commitment of service to the United States of America by promoting the truest form of Americanism and personal responsibility to our government, the act of voting on Election Day; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Sons of The American Legion, through the Get Out the Vote program, encourage its members, squadrons, districts, and detachments to fully involve themselves in the election process by serving as poll volunteers, poll workers, by voting, and by encouraging and assisting others to register and to vote in the upcoming Presidential election.

No. SAL Res 4 – Spring 2016
Title: Support for the Family Support Network
Origin: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion has traditionally supported services for our active military and returning veterans; and

WHEREAS, Since 2001 there are a greater number of returning veterans than in past years due to large scale deployments in recent years; and

WHEREAS, The Reserves and National Guard have been deployed in large numbers these past years and they are seldom located near military bases to get appropriate services and; and

WHEREAS, These returning veterans may find it difficult to meet normal monthly expenses, families with minor children may find themselves in financial need, and they simply may need help doing regular everyday chores; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has set up the Family Support Network to help military families deal with reintegrating into civilian life and the associated issues; and

WHEREAS, The Legion Family members, including the Sons, seek to respond to our men and women in uniform's needs as they return home; and

WHEREAS, The Family Support Network has as its purpose the support and aid of military and their families in times of need as they return home to a grateful nation; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 30-May 1, 2016 that the Sons of The American Legion reiterates its support and active engagement with the promotion of a high level of Americanism and personal responsibility to our men and women in uniform; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Sons of The American Legion, through the Family Support Network program, encourage its members, squadrons, districts, and detachments to fully involve themselves in the ability to help our returning service members by encouraging them to connect with The Family Support Network, and get the help they need during, perhaps a difficult, transition period.

No. SAL Res 5 – Spring 2016
Title: Child Welfare Foundation Donation of $5,000 from the 2016 Budget
Origin: Child Welfare Committee

WHEREAS, The Child Welfare Foundation is a vital part of the Sons of The American Legion since its inception in 1987; and

WHEREAS, There is a constant and vital need for funding of many programs and grants that can assist children in need; and

WHEREAS, Donations by the Sons of The American Legion have provided greatly needed assistance to these children in our country; and

WHEREAS, The support and recognition provided by The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation has further established our organization as a true partner in the goals and principles of the "Legion Family"; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular sessions in Indianapolis, Indiana, April 30-May 1, 2016 that a donation in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars, ($5,000) be made to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. And be it further;

RESOLVED, That the funds be taken from the 2016 Child Welfare Foundation Donation budgeted line.

No. SAL Res 6 – Spring 2016
Title: Recognizing recipients of the 'George B. Evans, Veterans' Advocate of the Year Award"
Origin: Detachment of Maryland

WHEREAS, The "George B. Evans, Veterans' Advocate of the Year Award" was established at the 39th

National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, The recipients of this prestigious award have demonstrated exemplary devotion to the promotion of Legislative initiatives that benefit Veterans in the Local Community as well as the State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Recipients of the "George B. Evans, Veterans' Advocate of the Year Award "deserve to be recognized by all with an awarded Sons of The American Legion Uniform Cap, for their Grassroots work; and

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Maryland, Detachment Executive Committee assembled on April 3, 2016 in Rockville, Maryland, reviewed this resolution and approved its intentions and objectives; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular session in Indianapolis, Indiana, April 30-May 1, 2016 that a Sons of The American Legion Uniform Cap, that appropriately recognizes the Annual recipient of the "George B. Evans, Grassroots Veterans' Advocate of Year Award"; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this would take effect with the 45th National Convention to be held August 26, 27, 28, 2016.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs Commission with the exception of nine resolutions. We have two addendums: Addendum A and Addendum B. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Internal Affairs. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 13: Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition is a nonprofit grassroots coalition of organizations and individuals that are helping to plan, promote and implement events and activities commemorating one or more of the 75th anniversaries of major WWII events that will be taking place in 2016-2020; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has the opportunity to associate and work with the Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition to promote the spirit that won WWII; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion shall work with the Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition and associate with it while retaining its own independence so it is not controlled by any other organization; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion shall work with the Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive Coalition to promote and commemorate WWII and its spirit.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 14: 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative Committee
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The Vietnam War resulted in a very difficult and tumultuous time for our country and many returning service members did not receive the honorable "welcome home" and respect they richly deserved; and

WHEREAS, The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act authorized the secretary of defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War in 2012; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion first recognized this anniversary in 2012 by Resolution No. 27 (NEC, May 2012); and

WHEREAS, The initial appointments of The American Legion were made by the national commander and approved by the National Executive Committee in October 2013

to our U.S. Government 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War Commemorative Committee; and

WHEREAS, By presidential proclamation on May 25, 2012, the commemoration extends from Memorial Day 2012 through Veterans Day 2025; and

WHEREAS, The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration was established in order to facilitate programs to honor and pay tribute to Vietnam Veterans and their families to achieve the following objectives:

1) Thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War and their families, and give special recognition to those who were held as prisoners of war and to the families of those listed as missing in action,

2) Highlight the service of the armed forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of the armed forces,

3) Pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the citizens of the United States in support of the Vietnam War,

4) Highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to the military research conducted during the Vietnam War, and finally

5) Recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, The Vietnam War Commemoration program is outlined on their website (http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/) and consists of a series of national and regional events and activities to assist states in engaging local communities and organizations to broaden the knowledge and bring recognition to those who served or supported the Vietnam War effort; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion continues to fully support the Department of Defense in their efforts to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War throughout all of our communities across this great country; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the committee now be called the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative Committee whose purpose is to work in concert with American Legion posts, districts, departments and the general public to build awareness and support for the Vietnam veterans and their families as directed and approved by the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative Committee shall consist of a chairman, and not to exceed seven members selected at large and approved by the national commander and the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander is authorized to make such interim appointments as may be required to fill vacancies, subject to ratification by the National Executive Committee at its next ensuing meeting until this committee is terminated the first day after Veterans Day 2025 unless sooner disbanded; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative Committee be assigned to the Internal Affairs Commission and the National Officers, Department Officers and Commissions and Committees book published by the National Headquarters shall be updated to reflect the name change above.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second for the approval of Resolution 14. Is there any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 15: Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion founded creation of a nonprofit organization known as the Citizens Flag Alliance, Inc., a coalition of over 140 member organizations representing millions of Americans, for the purpose of lobbying and campaigning for grassroots support of persuading Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to return to the American people the right to protect their flag; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion further created its Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee, an oversight committee of knowledgeable American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary officers and volunteers who help manage and direct lobbying and campaign efforts; and

WHEREAS, Creation of the Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee originated from the Americanism Commission in 1994 by National Executive Committee Resolution No. 19 (May, 1994); and

WHEREAS, No standard method has been observed for bringing resolutions and concerns forward from the Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the Citizens Flag Alliance Advisory Committee be attached to the Americanism Commission for the purpose of preparing and submitting any resolution as needed and recommended by said committee in order to enact legislation or establish policy to protect the Flag of the United States from physical desecration and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Officers, Department Officers and Commissions and Committees book and the Outline of Authorization published by the National Headquarters shall be updated to reflect the said attachment.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 15. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 16: Membership Credit be Given to Departments for Transferring First and Second Year Direct Mail Solicitation Members into Local Posts
Origin: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion prides itself as the largest wartime veterans organization dedicated to mentoring youth and sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities; and

WHEREAS, Membership is the backbone that allows The American Legion continued devotion to our fellow service members and veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion encourages individuals to become members of the post that they desire and that can best serve both that individual's preference and the overall goals and objectives of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, Members that are recruited through the Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) program are retained by the national organization along with their dues for the first two years; and

WHEREAS, First and second year DMS members that are transferred into local posts count as current membership, but do not count in department membership totals which has caused a disparity in membership numbers between departments and National Headquarters; and

WHEREAS, Through the District Revitalization Program, a list of these members are provided to individual departments for active recruitment into local posts; and

WHEREAS, A failure to give departments credit under the current membership year for DMS members that are transferred into local posts would in fact serve as a deterrent to actively recruit these members; and

WHEREAS, Article V Section 3 of The American Legion National Constitution states; coded DMS members acquired in each membership year shall count toward the respective department's delegate strength 30 days out from the National Convention; and

WHEREAS, Allowing departments to count transferred DMS members in their membership counts would increase their chances of reaching their membership goals for the year; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion encourages early payment of membership dues and allows members to pay dues for the upcoming year beginning July 1 of the current year; and

WHEREAS, Departments have the ability to transfer Legionnaires from their headquarters post into a local post and give said posts credit for a new member during that membership year, which in turn provides a huge incentive for posts to actively pursue these members; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That departments be afforded the same privileges with Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) members that are transferred into local posts through the District Revitalization Program, lists obtained from MyLegion.org or through the request of the member; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments will receive immediate credit toward its national membership goals for DMS members who have paid dues for the upcoming year and transfers into a local post on or after July 1; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That no monies will be transferred to individual departments for individuals who have renewed as a first or second year member under the DMS Program, rendering this action, if approved, revenue neutral to the national organization, and thus, requiring no action from the Finance Commission; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 18, May 2015 NEC titled, "Membership Credit be Given to Departments for Transferring First and Second Year Direct Membership Solicitation Members into Local Posts" is hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 16. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 17: La Fiere Bridge Memorial Agreement
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission
Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion, Amis des Veterans Americains (AVA) and The City of Ste. Mere-Eglise, Normandy, France, share a common purpose to ensure that U.S. military sacrifices of the World War II D-Day invasion of France are honored, respected and memorialized for future generations; and

WHEREAS, AVA and Ste. Mere-Eglise annually invite American Legion participation in ceremonies at the La Fiere Bridge Memorial in Normandy to commemorate the anniversary of the invasion that led to the end of World War II in Europe; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion National Executive Committee passed Resolution No. 16 May 6-7, 2015, commending AVA for its many years of organizing ceremonies, honoring veterans and advancing the Normandy story to new generations, including active-duty U.S. military personnel; and

WHEREAS, AVA owns the heavily visited memorial park, site and monuments near La Fiere Bridge, and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise provides maintenance of the site; and

WHEREAS, AVA wishes to ensure that the memorial site serve in perpetuity as a tribute to U.S. military sacrifice in the World War II liberation of France; and

WHEREAS, AVA and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise, trusting The American Legion as a faithful guardian of honor and remembrance for those who fell fighting during World War II, requested the nation's largest veterans service organization specifically; and

WHEREAS, AVA and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise also seek to ensure that no changes in the memorial site's configuration, including the removal or sale of any monuments, plaques or statues, can occur without mutual consent of AVA, The City of Ste. Mere-Eglise and The American Legion, representing the U.S. veteran and military community honored there; and

WHEREAS, AVA and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise plan to produce and display an engraved plaque to honor The American Legion's commitment "to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars," as stated in the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution; and

WHEREAS, A ceremony on June 6, 2016, at the La Fiere Bridge Memorial is scheduled to recognize the alliance of honor among The American Legion, AVA and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise, with an agreement-signing ceremony, pending passage of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, AVA and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise seek no financial obligation from The American Legion in any agreement related to the site; and

WHEREAS, This agreement has been reviewed by The National Judge Advocate and the National Adjutant and found to be in compliance with American Legion policy and values alike; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion is authorized to enter into an agreement with Amis des Veterans Americains and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise that would require consent of all three parties before any changes in the configuration of the La Fiere Bridge Memorial can be made; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee recommend to the national adjutant that The American Legion emblem may be used on a plaque

recognizing the alliance among The American Legion, Amis des Veterans Americains and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise to be displayed at the La Fiere Bridge Memorial in Normandy, France; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate, is hereby authorized and directed to execute appropriate agreement with Amis des Veterans Americains and the City of Ste. Mere-Eglise at no cost to The American Legion, and the national adjutant is hereby authorized and directed to attest the same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 17. Is there any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 18: Appointment of Susan Eisenhower to the American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee

Origin: 100th Anniversary Observance Committee

Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion is drawing nearer to its 100th anniversary commemoration in 2018 and 2019, and significant planning has been conducted and executed to honor both the legacy and vision of the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization and all whose lives have been positively influenced by its programs, policies and values, and those who will be in the future; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 1, passed by The American Legion National Executive Committee Oct. 17-18, 2012, authorized the formation of a 100th Anniversary Observance Honorary Committee chaired by Theodore Roosevelt IV, grandson of American Legion co-founder Theodore Roosevelt Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Theodore Roosevelt IV has appointed to serve on The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee, with concurrence of The 100th Anniversary Observance Committee and the National Executive Committee, the following members: former American Legion Baseball Player and American Legion Boys State participant Tom Brokaw, a longtime television broadcaster and author; Maj. Gen. (ret.) Patrick Brady, Medal of Honor recipient and former chairman of The American Legion-supported Citizens Flag Alliance; Gen. Lester Lyles, chairman of the board of USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services; Jamie Corkish, former American Legion Junior Shooting Sports champion and 2012 U.S. Olympic Gold Medal winner; Diane Carlson-Evans, Vietnam War combat nurse and driving force behind The American Legion-supported Vietnam War Women's Memorial on the National Mall; Purdue University President Mitch Daniels, a Former American Legion Boys State and Boys Nation participant and former two-term Governor of Indiana; Boy Scouts of America President and former Department of Defense Secretary and CIA Director Robert Gates; and NBC News Vice President and American Legion post service officer Val Nicholas, bringing the number of American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee members to eight, leaving no more than four seats to fill; and

WHEREAS, Author and educator Susan Eisenhower is an internationally respected international affairs and global security expert, as well as a granddaughter of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States, Supreme Allied Commander-Europe during World War II, and recipient of the 1946 American Legion Distinguished Service Medal and a life member of the Abilene, Kansas, American Legion post; and

WHEREAS, International affairs and global security have been prominent interests of The American Legion since its founding in 1919; and

WHEREAS, Theodore Roosevelt IV has offered an appointment, and Susan Eisenhower has accepted the offer, to serve on The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee be composed of Maj. Gen. (ret.) Patrick Brady, Gen. Lester Lyles, Tom Brokaw, Diane Carlson-Evans, Jamie Corkish, Mitch Daniels, Dr. Robert Gates, Val Nicholas, and Susan Eisenhower, and no more than one additional member, with two seats held for Presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush in the event they accept invitation; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That any future appointments to The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee, or fulfillments of any vacated seats, be approved through established procedures and brought to the National Executive Committee for final approval.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 18. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 19: Promotional Support of "100 Cities/100 Monuments" Grant Program of Pritzker Military Museum and Library and National World War I Commission

Origin: 100th Anniversary Observance Committee

Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion was formed by veterans of World War I who returned from battle to lead numerous efforts to memorialize their fallen comrades by raising funds and constructing monuments in honor of those sacrifices; and

WHEREAS, Many newly formed American Legion posts, composed of World War I men and women, were instrumental in the creation of these memorials and monuments; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee has identified as a priority in its five-year strategic plan connection and promotional support for the national World War I Centennial Commission, of which one member, James Whitfield, is an American Legion representative; and

WHEREAS, The Pritzker Military Museum and Library in Chicago is likewise strategically aligned with the national World War I Centennial Commission and, as part of that alignment, has offered a "100 Cities/100 Monuments" program to provide grant money in local communities to restore and improve the conditions of World War I memorials and monuments; and

WHEREAS, A large percentage of those memorials and monuments are in need of restoration and maintenance, due to their age; and

WHEREAS, "To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the great wars" is a sacred purpose of The American Legion and can be found in the Preamble of The American Legion Constitution; and

WHEREAS, The Pritzker Military Museum and Library wishes to reach communities worldwide to offer restoration grants and sees The American Legion as a vital ally to deliver that message and execute the program; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion assist the Pritzker Military Museum and Library in the promotion and execution of a nationwide grant-availability campaign to restore World War I monuments and build public awareness of the effort and of the importance of remembrance of our nation's military sacrifices; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee authorizes and directs the National Adjutant to use of The American Legion emblem and name to encourage American Legion posts to apply for funds from the Pritzker Military Museum and Library's "100 Monuments/100 Cities" program and the national World War I Centennial Commission, at no financial obligation from The American Legion.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the national Internal Affairs Commission, your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 19. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 20: Reiteration of 1960 National Executive Committee Resolution to Remind Chairmen of National Convention Committees of Their Authority to Amend, Consolidate, Approve, Reject, etc., Resolutions for Further Study Before Being Acted Upon

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion is concerned with the fact that resolutions designed for consideration of the national convention are sometimes faultily drawn in that they are

1. Couched in ambiguous wording not clearly defining an intent;
2. Designed with no material relevance to any program for which The American Legion was formed; or
3. Impossible to use since they contain errors of fact or law; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled at Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That chairmen and members of National Convention committees are reminded that they have the authority to amend, consolidate, approve, reject, refer back to the originating authority, or refer to a standing commission and its staff for further study, in addition to other parliamentary procedures set forth in the Uniform Code of Procedure for the Organization of National Conventions of The American Legion or Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, as they consider resolutions referred to them for study; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That in the exercise of their authority they have the responsibility of transmitting to all Legionnaires, to the Congress, and to the public, their determination that The American Legion shall engage only in those activities for which it was organized; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national adjutant be and he hereby is directed to transmit copies of this resolution no later than September 15th of every year to the National Convention committee chairman with the direction that it be read to all of said

committees at the time of their organization with copies to each department commander, department adjutant and department NECman, chairman of the national commissions and committees, directors of all commissions and the chairman of National Convention committees who shall receive a copy upon their election to the convention committee chair; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 20, adopted May 4-5, 1960, is hereby rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission and your Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second for Resolution 20 approval. Are there any further discussions? I have a question in back.

NEC MEMBER BALL (OK): What is the difference between this resolution and Resolution No. 21?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: The question was: What is the difference between Resolution No. 20 and Resolution No. 21, did you say, sir?

NEC MEMBER BALL: Yes, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: There is a slight difference between the two. If you look at 20, it goes to chairmen of convention committees; 21 goes to departments. There is a slight difference, but I understand your question and the question was a valid one. Did we answer your question, sir?

NEC MEMBER BALL: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Okay. Any further discussion? All those in favor of approval of Resolution No. 20, signify by aye. Opposed? Resolution No. 20 is approved.

Resolution No. 21: Reiteration of 1960 National Executive Committee to Urge Departments to Restrict Resolutions to Matters Relevant to Purposes for Which The American Legion was Organized

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted By: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, One of the major objectives of The American Legion is the enactment of its national legislative program; and

WHEREAS, Each year the National Convention committees are required to give consideration to numerous resolutions referred to them, through channels, as the result of action taken at department conventions in adopting resolutions calling for the enactment by Congress of legislation concerning matters which are far afield of the main objectives for which The American Legion was organized, namely Rehabilitation, Child Welfare, National Security and Americanism; and

WHEREAS, It has become necessary to remind the departments, a main source for all resolutions, that the national organization operates through commissions and their subordinate committees established by the National By-laws of Article I, Section 6; and

WHEREAS, Such commissions and their subordinate committees should forthwith discontinue their present policy of considering resolutions submitted by private organizations to further their own interests by submitting to departments resolutions calling for legislative action by Congress and urging their adoption by the delegates to our National Convention; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled at Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the national adjutant be, and he hereby is empowered and directed to send a copy of this

resolution, together with an appropriate covering letter no later than September 15th of each year, to all department commanders, department adjutants, National Executive Committeemen, the chairmen of all national commissions and committees, the directors of all commissions, and the chairmen of all National Convention committees, with the directive that every reasonable effort be made to reject resolutions which are far a field of the main objectives for which The American Legion was organized which are today known as "The Four Pillars" at the department level; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee hereby requests that all of the departments, through their department commanders, department adjutants and National Executive Committeemen, bring this situation to the attention of the delegates assembled at their annual department conventions; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee hereby requests that all resolutions calling for consideration by the National Executive Committee or the National Convention of The American Legion, be supported by the identification of the individual or group originating the resolution, and also by a written statement or brief containing the support arguments in favor of the action sought, and clearly establishing the material relevance of the subject to the purposes for which The American Legion was formed; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 21, adopted May 4-5, 1960, is hereby rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER RONNING: Mr. Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Internal Affairs Commission, your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second for the approval of Resolution No. 21. Is there any further discussion? Hearing none, All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, attached to the Internal Affairs Commission report is Addendum A and Addendum B. I move that the action of the Internal Affairs Commission become the action of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second. Do we have any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries. At this time, I call on the chairman of the Internal Affairs Commission, Mr. Larry Besson.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN BESSON: Thank you, commander. I would ask that the vice chairman of Internal Affairs, George West, submit the next part of the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. West, if you would, please.

Oral Report: Ad Hoc Committee to Study Departments and Posts Located Outside of the Continental United States
George V. West, New Hampshire, Vice Chairman

Mr. Commander and members of the National Executive Committee, good afternoon. At the 2015 fall meetings, the national commander appointed this ad hoc committee to study departments and posts located outside of the continental United States, the subcommittee consisting of Larry Besson as chairman from Illinois; George West, New Hampshire, vice chairman; Past National Commander Clarence Bacon from Maryland, a member; Past National Commander William Detweiler of Louisiana, a member; Past

National Commander Jimmie Foster, Kansas, a member; and Past National Vice Commander Douglas Haggan, France, a member.

The purpose of this ad hoc committee was to take the policies and factors developed by the 2015 ad hoc committee with the same name, submitted in their report to the spring 2015 National Executive Committee, to review foreign departments for potential cancellation. Our mission was to complete our task and recommend to the national commander and the National Executive Committee our findings here at these 2016 spring meetings.

We met in Washington, D.C. at the Washington Conference, and again here at these spring meetings. You have a copy of a report on your desk which also lists the policy and basic principles used in our review.

We took these principles and we reviewed all of the departments outside of the continental United States. During the review process, we looked at staff reports on participation in American Legion programs, consolidated post reports, membership reports, the plan of those departments for the strategic membership growth, and surveys submitted to the 2015 ad hoc committee. We were extremely interested in their plans for membership growth and support of The American Legion Four Pillar programs.

Mr. Commander, at this point I would ask for your permission for Past National Commander Bill Detweiler to outline our review, findings, and the recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you. The chair recognizes Past National Commander William Detweiler for purposes of the ad hoc committee on the foreign and outlying departments.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DETWEILER: Thank you, Mr. Commander. This is an interim report. Please understand that and please take it, because that's what it is, because there's more to do. Mr. Commander, NECmen, and guests, Vice Chairman West has given you the purpose and the authority for this committee. I will discuss our findings and recommendations.

As was stated, we went back to the basic principles developed by the 2015 ad hoc committee appointed by National Commander Mike Helm. We were particularly interested in the membership growth potential and support of the Four Pillar programs in all of the foreign departments.

National Commander Barnett appeared before the committee at the February 2016 Washington conference, and gave his assessment and observations on the outlying departments that he had visited up until that time. He cited examples of positive growth at the post level, but also his concerns about leadership support and additional program growth.

During our review, we were concerned that two departments, specifically Mexico and the Philippines, had failed to submit a strategic plan for a culture of growth in membership. We felt that this may be an indicator of the lack of involvement by the department in establishing a culture of growth not only in membership, but the Four Pillar programs. As you will recall, there was an initial request for all departments to develop that strategic plan in 2013. The ad hoc committee was concerned that the membership numbers of these two departments are far less than the average district in the continental United States, and in some cases, even less than that of a mid-size post.

The committee noted that in these two departments, some 25 to 65 percent of their membership have continental United States addresses. However, we could not determine if the CONUS addresses indicated where the member was getting his or her mail or where they actually individually physically resided in the United States.

As to the Philippines, you might ask, how can we look at a department that is sitting in first place, be considered for possibility of cancellation of a charter? The department

does play to its advantage. The department is about 40 percent as large as the average Legion district. The districts are approximately 1,000 members. As we will highlight later, their involvement in the Four Pillars program was a major deciding factor in making any recommendation to maintain or cancel a department charter.

Almost 75 percent of the membership of the Philippines now resides in three posts, namely its two newest posts, posts in Okinawa and Korea. These two posts make up 45 percent of the current membership, but they show signs of positive growth. We have received word that Korea is considering establishing at least two more posts, one at Camp Humphrey and one at Daegu on the Korean Peninsula.

We also reviewed the consolidated post reports from these two departments. We found that the number of reports submitted were far fewer than the posts listed as still active in the departments. So we could not determine the departments' actual participation in and their support for the program and the Four Pillars. As a result, the ad hoc committee was required to rely on the summaries outlining their involvement in the Americanism and Children & Youth programs, as well as the 2015 survey completed by the departments at the request of the committee. The committee was concerned with the lack of support of our signature programs, such as the oratorical contest, junior shooting sports, baseball, Boys Nation, Boys State and Boys Nation, and for the American children located in their area.

The committee recognizes the difficulty of communications between overseas departments and their posts and their membership. But with the technology that is available, it seems logical that there is a readily available means to communicate, such as email or Skype, that could be used to provide leadership and mentorship to the overseas departments. The answers to the surveys provided by the departments gave great concern to the committee. Their responses indicate that getting the mentorship and support from their department headquarters is certainly a need.

We were very impressed with the positive approach to membership that the posts in Okinawa and Korea have taken, and it appears that their initiatives have been very much on their own, without any top down assistance from the department. The Korean post appears to be relying on the information from the national headquarters and the very positive leadership that exists within their areas of operation.

In looking at our foreign departments and outlying posts, it appears that over the years, we have lacked a consistent policy as to where we assign the outlying posts. There is no logic for where our posts are assigned. It appears we assign them to a department that is willing to take them or where the department per capita meets the demands of the post. As a result, we have developed a patchwork organization of outlying posts. In essence, we have actually been reacting rather than acting for the good of the members, the departments, and the national organization. Once assigned, there appears to be a lack of communication between the department and the posts. Therefore, there is no mentoring process for leadership or guidance for the establishment of the Four Pillar programs.

Perhaps some of the posts like this because they are on their own, they want to be their own entity; while others want to seek mentorship, seek assistance to assure growth, and participation in the Legion programs. At the time when the foreign departments and the outlying posts were formed, there was a need to serve veterans and their families within the local area. Over the years as things have changed in the outlying areas, the Legion has had to adapt with the times.

The ad hoc committee suggests that we need to decide whether or not the format, that is the department structure that we use to meet the needs of our veterans and their families when the foreign departments were formed back in the 1920s, is still beneficial. We need to determine whether there are additional needs that we have failed to address and whether, to do so now, requires a more efficient way to deliver the needed services.

Over the years, we have canceled some foreign charters for various reasons, but we have not considered a better way to organize the outlying posts to respond to the needs of our members, their families, and the U.S. citizens residing abroad. So the committee suggests that the National Executive Committee must now consider whether the current organization of our foreign departments and outlying posts is fulfilling our obligation to provide a mutual helpfulness to our members, or whether there is a more efficient format that we can adopt that will allow the Legion to establish better communications with our members in the outlying areas, to provide that needed mentorship, and to encourage them to participate in the programs.

Thus the question: Are we, as a National Executive Committee, fulfilling our obligations to our members by allowing an inefficient department and/or post format to exist? A format that is failing to meet the needs of our members and their families in these areas. We realize that communications and travel are difficult to these overseas areas. So the question is: Is there a better way to respond to the needs of our veterans residing overseas, by creating a different department and/or post format?

The ad hoc committee met with National Commander Barnett here in Indianapolis just prior to this meeting. He shared with us a summary of his travels and his vision for the future. When the departments were started in the 1920s, there were needs in these countries where departments were formed to establish a legal entity, a department. But does that need still exist today, or can a regional structure meet that need?

The national commander feels that with today's communication, such as Skype, FaceTime, and the use of conference calls, we can readily fulfill and provide a better communication with the post and membership base. More importantly, the national commander feels that we should look to the future and determine what format is needed over the next 15 to 20 years to provide services to our members and their families and the U.S. veterans who live in those areas.

The commander is concerned that canceling or suspending a charter or placing a department on probation may be just delaying and prolonging problems that could be and should be fixed now. He suggests that we need to handle these issues now by developing a format and establishing a consistent method to serve the posts and the needs in the outlying areas.

Commander Barnett has recommended that we consider establishing one overseas department made up of all outlying posts, organized into regional districts, but with some exceptions which I'll discuss a bit later. The overseas departments, as we know them today, would become districts under one department. Each district would consist of at least three posts. This organization would be approximately it would contain approximately 9,000 members if Puerto Rico was included. This size compares to the smallest of our local or mainland departments.

What would the one department be named? We suggested, because of its location to our founding and its historical significance to the organization, that the department could be named the Department of France, but that's open for further discussion.

Then the question is: Where would the department headquarters be located? It would depend on how we could provide the best possible oversight and mentorship for the benefit of the members. We recommend that consideration should be given to locating the department headquarters within the continental United States, unless such location would raise a constitutional, charter, or legal issue. I understand from the judge that that would not be a problem. Locating the headquarters in a central location within the continental United States would allow for more efficient administrative command and control, with certain exceptions. Outlying or overseas posts currently assigned to other departments would be reassigned in a rational, regional district in an area that makes more sense. The department convention could be held just prior to our national convention.

This one department concept would not include Departments of Alaska and Hawaii since they are U.S. states, and we need to give more thought to addressing the issue of Puerto Rico. Although not a state, it is a U.S. territory and its citizens are U.S. citizens that have nonvoting representation in Congress. Additionally, we should address the Canadian posts that are assigned to and affiliated with the departments along our Canadian border. Over the years, they have established enduring relationships. Should they become a district under the one overseas department concept, or should they be allowed to continue their affiliations? That's a question.

The ad hoc committee recommends that the national commander's concept be further studied. If the National Executive Committee approves further study of this concept, we will start the process by meeting with representatives of the foreign departments at the upcoming national convention in Cincinnati. This would allow us to develop recommendations for presentation and consideration by the NEC in next October, the fall of 2016. As has been mentioned, there will be a meeting of representatives of the foreign departments on Monday of the upcoming convention, August 29, at 11 a.m. in the headquarters hotel.

Mr. Commander and members of the National Executive Committee, I want to thank you for allowing us to study these issues and to look at what is in the best interests of our organization, our membership, as well as the veterans and families that we serve in those areas. With the approval of the National Executive Committee, we look forward to continuing to study the issues relevant to our foreign departments, the outlying posts, and the one department concept that you, commander, have presented.

Thank you. That is our report.

Report of Ad-Hoc Committee to Study Departments and Posts Located Outside of the Continental United States
May 4, 2016

Background: The National Commander appointed the Ad-Hoc Committee at the 2015 Fall National Executive Committee Meeting to review departments and posts located outside of the Continental United States with a report to be submitted at the Spring 2016 National Executive Committee Meeting. Members of the Committee are:

Larry Besson (IL), Chairman
George West (NH), Vice Chairman
PNC Clarence Bacon (MD), Member
PNC William Detweiler (LA), Member
PNC Jimmie Foster (AK), Member
PNVC Douglas Haggan (FR), Member

Purpose: To review departments outside of the Continental United States as far as membership growth potential and support of the Four Pillars and make recommendations. If cancellation is recommended, the Committee is asked to recommend where the posts are to be assigned after cancellation. The Committee will use the basic principles developed by the 2015 Ad Hoc Committee contained in their report to the National Executive Committee:

- Review reason for establishment of department – still relevant
- Department headquarters physically located in country of department's name
- Department leadership being active within the department area of influence
- Maintains Department Officers as outlined in National Constitution (Art VIII, Sect 2)

- Department Constitution and By-Laws reviewed annually by Department Executive Committee and ratified by Department Convention and copy submitted to National Headquarters
- Developing and executing Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth
- Support of the Four Pillars by department
  - Number of Legion programs supported
  - Number of children supported with TAL Youth programs
  - Number supported in TAL Americanism programs
  - Submitted Consolidated Post Reports—How many posts? Number of years submitted?
  - Number of veterans supported for VA claims – Does capability exist?
- Maintain positive communication by leadership with membership
  - Department conducts assistance visits with posts—if so how often?
  - Convention—number of posts and membership in attendance
  - Department Executive Committee— How often and number of posts represented?
  - Fall/Winter or Spring Conferences – How often and who attends?
  - Does Department have training program?
  - Media interaction with post--- website, Facebook, newsletter
- Capable of Maintaining a Positive Membership Growth
  - Number of active posts and are they sustainable
  - Growth potential—number of veterans eligible
  - Dues transmittals every 30 days for last year (National Constitution, Art X, Sect 3.2)
  - Viable strategic plan developed
  - Membership trend last five years
- Maintains Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion

The Ad-Hoc Committee met on February 20 and 22, 2016 at the Washington Conference and on May 1, 2016 at the Spring NEC meetings. All members were present.

Discussion: The Committee applied the above basic principles developed by the 2015 Ad-Hoc Committee to evaluate the departments. Emphasis was on potential membership growth and support of the Four Pillars of the organization. The National Commander appeared before the Committee on February 20th and gave his assessment and observations of those departments he has visited up to this point in his year as National Commander. He cited examples of positive growth as well as concerns where more could be done in membership and programs.

As far as the foreign and outlying departments, only Philippines and Mexico have not submitted a strategic plan for membership. These were first asked for in 2013 from all the departments.

The Committee expressed concern with the difficulty of communication with and between overseas departments and their membership. Based on information available and the surveys used by the 2015 Ad Hoc Committee, there was concern about leadership involvement with their posts. Departments must know the condition of their posts by reports, making visits, meetings, conferences, emails, phone-calls and by utilizing technology such as Skype, Face Time, etc.

The Committee received some new information just prior to the Spring NEC Meeting as far as potential troop build-up in the Philippine Islands. It is not clear at this point if it will be permanent assignment or just forward stationing with troop rotation. Exact numbers are not known at this time but if this in fact true in either case this gives them a broader market for membership and further expansion of The American Legion programs.

However, the Committee still has concerns with communication between department leadership and their posts and the membership base. This needs to improve.

Today, the Philippines has a large population of Americans and people with American roots, as well as a burgeoning Amerasian population, along with a number of Filipino Americans with U.S. citizenship who returned to their country of birth. The total number of US citizens living in the Philippines is more than 250,000, with estimates reaching as high as 600,000.

As far as Mexico, the State Department estimates between 700,000 to 1,000,000 US citizens residing in country with another 200,000 estimated in Central American countries. An interesting comment in estimating births to US citizens in overseas areas is that in the last ten years the number of births to US citizens in Mexico, Japan, Great Britain, Canada and Philippines has out grown European countries. In Mexico and Central America over the last ten years, they estimate 120,000 US citizen children were born in these two countries (12,000 to 15,000 per year).

The Committee reviewed the Consolidated Post Reports from these two departments and once again the number submitted were very few from the posts listed as still active in the departments. Therefore not giving us a good basis for programs in support of the Four Pillars. We relied on the Americanism and Children and Youth summary of department involvement in their programs as well as the 2015 survey completed by the departments. The Committee was concerned of the lack of support of our signature programs such as Oratorical, Junior Shooting Sports, Baseball, Boys State/Nation for American children located in their area (if any).

For both Philippines and Mexico, the Committee was concerned with the level of involvement in Four Pillar Programs. There appears to be a lack of emphasis on getting US citizen children living in these two countries involved in our longstanding American Legion programs for youth. While support of children of their local communities is very acceptable and commendable, our pillar programs (Boys State, Oratorical, and Junior Shooting For Example) are not being offered to US citizen children living overseas. This is an area where the two departments can show improvement.

The Committee was impressed with the positive approach to membership that the posts in Okinawa and Korea, assigned to the Department of Philippines, have taken and it appears very much on their own without any top down assistance from the department. The Korea post appears to be relying on information from the National Headquarters and the very positive new leadership within both countries.

The Ad-Hoc Committee met with the National Commander here in Indianapolis just prior to this meeting. He shared with us a summary of his travels and his vision for the future.

When the departments were started in the 1920's there was a need in the countries where departments were started but does that need exist today or can a structure meet the needs on a regional basis. The National Commander feels with today's communications that meetings such as Skype, Facetime, and conference calls can fulfill the need for communication with the posts and membership base. Thus, being an excellent means to stay in touch with the posts.

More importantly, the National Commander feels we should look to the future and determine what the end state for foreign departments and outlying posts should be 15-20 years out vice placing a department on probation and delaying decision.

He is concerned we may be just prolonging the outcome on what should be done now. Also, he expressed concern of "patch working" the assignment of posts to a department. We need to have a consistent policy and one department concept would solve that concern.

The National Commander envisions one overseas department organized with regional districts. The overseas departments as we know them today would become districts under

the one department. Each district would consist of at least three posts. This organization would be approximately 9,000 if Puerto Rico was included. The size compares with our smallest continental states departments.

What would the one department be named? There is a feeling that because of our founding and historical purposes it should be named Department of France. Thus can remain for discussion as we continue this study.

Where would the location of the department be? It would depend on how to provide the best possible oversight and mentorship. We should give some consideration to locating the department headquarters within the continental United States if location is not a constitutional, charter or legal issue. This could allow for more efficient administrative command and control if located in a more central location.

Outlying overseas posts currently assigned to other overseas departments would be reassigned to the regional district in their area.

The department convention could be held in the National Convention city just prior to the National Convention.

This concept would exclude the Departments of Alaska and Hawaii since they are US states. We need to give some thought to answering the issue of Puerto Rico. Although not a US state, it is a US territory and its citizens are US citizens with a non-voting representation in Congress.

Additionally we should address the Canadian Posts that are assigned to and affiliated with the departments along our Canadian Border. Over the years they have established enduring relationships. Should they become a district under this one overseas department concept, continue their current relationships or be allowed the option to seek another continental department?

Recommendations:

The Ad-Hoc Committee recommends that the National Commander's concept be further studied. If the National Executive Committee approves the further study of the National Commander's concept, the Committee will start the process by meeting with the overseas departments at the National Convention to discuss their issues and feelings on this concept, The Committee will develop their recommendations for the Fall 2016 NEC meeting.

We have reserved a room for the special meeting of the Foreign Department Ad-Hoc Committee at the National Convention on Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:00 am in the Millennium (Headquarters Hotel), Bronze Ballroom A, Second Floor. A representative from the foreign departments will be invited for their views on the National Commander's concept.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion to receive and file the report of the Committee to Study Departments and Posts Located Outside the Continental United States. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, at this time all those in favor of receiving and filing the report of the ad hoc committee, signify by saying aye. Opposed? Report is received and filed.

At this time, I'd like to consider a motion to continue the Ad Hoc Committee for the Study of Departments and Posts Located Outside of the Continental United States.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I so move. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to continue the ad hoc committee for further study of the outlying posts and departments. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion is passed.

NATIONAL COMMAMNDER BARNETT: Chairman Besson, if you would come forward and ask for any receipts of the NEF funds at this time, sir.

... National Vice Commander Gough assumed the chair.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN BESSON: Are there any departments that have donations for the NEF? Would you please line up on my right.

NEC MEMBER RICHARD (NC): Department of North Carolina, we have a donation for National Emergency Fund for $2,328.75. Child Welfare Fund, $848.75.

DPARTMENT COMMANDER ENDT (MS): The Department of Mississippi has a check of $7,509, which the amount submitted exceeds our goal. Thank you.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER GOUGH: Are there any other donations to the NEF?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I know the postage rates have gone down two pennies but it's still an essential amount of money. So in lieu of putting this in check form and sending it as I normally do, I wish to make a personal contribution of $100.

NEC MEMBER FRAZIER (AL): Commander, on behalf of my friend, the Running Rebels from Ole Miss, I would like to make a donation of $100. *(Applause)*

...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I'd like to call on Past National Commander Robert Spanogle from the Department of Michigan, chairman of the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee, for purposes of a report.

Oral Report: American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee
Past National Commander Robert W. Spanogle, Chairman

Mr. Commander, national officers, members of the National Executive Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to address you today on behalf of your 100th Anniversary Observance Committee.

By action of the National Executive Committee at its October meeting in 2015, and at the suggestion of the leadership, the 100th Anniversary Committee became a standing committee of the Internal Affairs Commission. But first, I'd like to introduce some other members of 100th Anniversary. We have Dave Rehbein, past national commander from Iowa, as our vice chairman; Dave Warnken, NECman of Kansas, chairman of the Subcommittee on Resolutions; Jim Copher is with us today, the national historian. The Auxiliary and the SAL are part of our committee. Our National Commander Dale, thank you for stopping in and sharing some of your observations with our committee last Saturday.

A full report and attachments and resolutions are part of the Internal Affairs Commission's report to this body, and that report has been received and filed and the resolutions have been approved. They have been reported by Larry Besson, the chairman.

I encourage you to read the reports attached to the Internal Affairs Commission report as they outline the 100th committee's actions to date and updated five year plan for the observance and celebration of the 100th anniversary of the American Legion year beginning in 2018 at the Minneapolis national convention through the 2019 convention here in Indianapolis, culminating on Veterans Day of 2019.

Our theme is "Legacy and Vision: Still Serving America." You know, I look at that, and I had the privilege of serving this organization in multiple capacities, and coming as a blue cap Legionnaire to the National Executive Committee in 1969. And I know there are others here, a few others that were here. So when I talk about legacy, I remember Tom Miller as the NECman of Nevada, who was the chairman pro tem of the Paris Caucus. I

remember Harry Colmery who was the architect of the GI Bill. I know many in this room remember that also.

By your action last October, assigning our committee as a standing committee of Internal Affairs, reminded me of a personal legacy. Everyone in this room, whether you remember Harry Colmery or Tom Miller in person, are part of the legacy of The American Legion, each and every one of us. So I thought I might share just a little bit of my personal legacy.

I joined The American Legion in 1969. Started my staff career in 1972 as assistant director of membership division, where I served in that capacity. My members were Bill Gormley of Pennsylvania, then the chairman of membership; Lloyd Wignall, who was the director of membership and past adjutant of Utah; Don Smith, who later became chairman emeritus of Internal Affairs; Jack Carey of Michigan, followed by who followed Don Smith as chairman; and Jimmy Dean of Mississippi, and Herm Harrington of New York. Jack Carey and Jimmy Dean went on to serve as national commanders. These were my mentors, and maybe they were a mentor to you. All of them have joined the ranks of Post Everlasting. My point here may be a little personal, but each and every one of us in this room had a mentor. The men and women who served The American Legion before us are our legacy.

The Legion was here when we became members, and I have a positive outlook that it will be here when I answer to the final roll call. Our mentors were here to serve The American Legion with personal commitment, the Legion goals, the Four Pillars. They did so with a can do attitude, they set aside personal differences, they were comrades and buddies whose common goal was the good of The American Legion.

Each and every day, our posts carry out the programs of The American Legion. Every program of The American Legion had its start at a post. Boys State in Illinois, baseball in South Dakota, oratorical in Missouri, Legion Riders in Michigan, just to name a few.

Before I go into the specifics about the progress of our journey to the centennial of The American Legion, I want to remind everyone that the national 100th Anniversary Observance Committee has worked hard to involve everyone: all commissions, all committees at the national level, but particularly, the posts and the departments. That said, our centennial program has reached and energized local Legionnaires and posts in what I term "remarkable ways," including the fact that nearly 2,000 posts now have profiles on the centennial website. You may have seen some excerpts of these profiles in the magazine over the last few months.

The interactive website is now and will be the biggest ever library of The American Legion post histories ever assembled in one place. In order to fulfill those profiles, Legionnaires are digging into their post histories like never before.

I want to show you a short video now that illustrates just one aspect of the centennial, and one post adjutant's efforts to bring forth a piece of history we all know is right at our fingertips: the post namesake, that fallen soldier, airman, Navy, or Coast Guardsman, Marine Corps, soldier that died.

...A video was presented to the National Executive Committee. (Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SPANOGLE: Post adjutant Rob Willis will be joining us at the Cincinnati National Convention to share his story in two workshops that your 100th Anniversary Committee is running on that proverbial free day. We will have one in the morning, the other is in the afternoon, and it will be open to all. That's Monday afternoon of the convention.

Our posts will celebrate the centennial in their city and town with our legacy of service and a vision for future service, inviting all of the community to be part of that celebration. In some communities, it may just be the prescription to reconnect and reeducate the community on Legion programs. It reminds me of National Commander Dale's walks.

The American Legion Centennial will touch us all. Every American Legion family member, every alumnus of a youth program of The American Legion, every post, every county, district, and department. It also touches every commission, committee, and division of the national organization.

Last weekend at our annual meeting of the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee, we heard reports from staff and volunteers, and received many suggestions from every level of The American Legion. Our committee includes mature people like myself, but also includes post-9/11 veterans, Legionnaires on our committee.

You have on your desk one of our newest projects, and this is truly amazing, but it's just a few highlights. It's called the "Every Department Has a Story," and the template has been created using the Department of Montana as an example. This idea originated with Al Zdon of Minnesota, one of our committee members, and the sample is on your desk.

If that doesn't say all there is to say about the Department of Montana, and they had control over this, I don't know what does. It's a great piece. They are available in print and digital form. Our staff will help your department, working with your department officer. They can be customized with local department information. The layouts tell a truly unique story of The American Legion department, with a chronology running the gamut between the founding members of the department, their legacy and vision for The American Legion, and the future among the post-9/11 veterans. These department profiles may even be assembled for a soft cover book, table book.

I'm taken with this because one of our committee members said, looking at this, he said, "Wouldn't this make a good table placemat?" I'm thinking that could be reproduced in placemat form. Then I'm always reminded that 60 percent of the small businesses in America are owned and operated by veterans, and many of those are cafeterias, places where we eat, and you could offer it to them for free.

"Indivisible: The Story of Our flag." More than 20,000 copies of this Legion bookazine, a product of our centennial committee, were sold between November 2015 and February of 2016. The supply at Emblem Sales sold out, that was 9,000 copies. Nearly 12,000 more copies were sold at national retailers: Barnes & Noble, Sam's Club, Hastings, Books a Million, Book World, and military PXs and commissaries. That is the book. It tells the story and the history of the flag of the United States of America.

We believe the Legion demand, and is still in demand, for this publication remains great, and our committee believes a reprint for The American Legion only should be considered as part of our flag education program, which has long been one of our priorities.

We'd like the opportunity to continue with this project with another bookazine. One worthy of consideration is a bookazine on America's military heroes. You may remember, we asked our members, through the magazine, to rank the top 100 military heroes starting with the Revolutionary War through Afghanistan and Iraq. The No. 1 was Audie Murphy.

This is a budget matter, but we believe with our experience, with the story of our flag, and the adjustments to our business model, we can project a profit. We came very close to a profit on the flag bookazine. But as important as that profit is, the education provided is just as valuable. It puts our emblem, it puts our story, and it puts our programs out into the general public.

Emblem sales has introduced new centennial merchandise including commemorative coins and patches, and you will see more that can be used at the post, district, and department level.

The Centennial Legacy Run is now being organized and mapped out. It will use portions of The American Legion Highway, which is U.S. Highway 281 which runs north to south through the heart of America, from Canada to Mexico. Bob Sussan, chairman of the Riders committee, along with Larry Besson and Jack Querfeld, attended our meeting, and the logistics for that run are now underway in the planning.

The centennial conventions are now being planned, and we are working with national Convention Commission Chairman Mike Walton and his staff, and the Department of Minnesota who were present, and others, to have World War I reenactors to be a part of the program. We are considering an opening similar to the Paris Caucus where the three main pillars of The American Legion were adopted.

Washington, D.C. We are about ready to introduce legislation to present the Congressional Gold Medal to Harry Colmery, past national commander, the architect of the GI Bill. This has been a recommendation of The American Legion for, I'm going to guess, back to probably the late '60s and the '70s. We think this is an opportunity, a great opportunity to have that Congressional Gold Medal presented in the name of the architect of the GI Bill and of The American Legion, and it's due, and will be done.

We're identifying a gift to the nation, working with Arlington Cemetery. For those of you who may not know, at the 50th commemoration of The American Legion, The American Legion's significant gift to the nation was the lighting of the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery. The Army personnel who run that cemetery still remember that. So what we are doing is asking Arlington Cemetery to give us four needs. From those needs, we will raise the money to complete the centennial gift to the nation. Because Arlington has it here in our heart and represents all of the branches of service, and is a national treasure to the people of this nation.

We're going to have the United States Postal Service issue an American Legion centennial stamp.

The Pritzker Foundation, you had a resolution you approved just a few moments ago. I want to say just a few words on that. We are supporting that resolution through your committee with the involvement of the National World War I Centennial Commission, working with the Pritzker Foundation out of Chicago, Illinois, to promote and execute a 100 Cities/100 Monuments project, where grants will be offered to posts for reconditioning and refurbishing of World War I monuments in their communities.

Just a little sideline. Those memorials and monuments to World War I men and women are the most numerous monuments throughout this country. It isn't the Civil War or the War of Northern Aggression or whatever. It's World War I. And I can't help but believe that those 5,200 posts that are still in existence of The American Legion, active posts out of the 13,000 we had that were formed in 1919, 1920, that that post and their history didn't have something to do with erecting those memorials in those cities and towns, so it will be part of our history.

You approved a resolution on Susan Eisenhower.

Finally, I want to thank our committee, our primary support staff of Jeff Stoffer, Holly Soria, Laura Edwards, and Howard Trace. They are professionals, but more than that, talented and committed to the work of The American Legion.

Finally, time and tide wait for no man. I know it doesn't wait for me, because when I pull out my Legion card and I look at my continuous membership, time is running. I'm just happy that they didn't put my birth date on that card.

But I remember back in '72 when I started here, that Veterans Day, the Wall Street Journal ran a column on the front. It was titled something along the demise of The American Legion. The Vietnam veteran will not join The American Legion because he doesn't like smoky halls. He doesn't like those old stories. He doesn't like anything. Well, the days of The American Legion are numbered.

I took that kind of hard, because I was in this building. I didn't believe it then, and I don't believe it now. And I don't believe it about the post-9/11 generation. But I think and truly believe that if our posts celebrate the centennial as our committee and you, have designed, we will include our program alumnus in this history, in this celebration, of all of our Americanism programs, and we'll reeducate or reconnect with our communities. And

on a personal note, I would be happy, if I'm still able, to travel at my own expense to the Wall Street Journal with those 13,000 post histories and say, "You were wrong then and you're wrong now." *(Laughter)*

I thank you very much. The five year plan is on your desk. And one thing about the legacy that we all are part of: I ask you to go back and I ask you to talk up the centennial. Find your chairman and the members of the committee, slap them on the back and say, "Thank you for doing one hell of a job, and I'm here to help you." That's comradeship and that's being a buddy. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

Report: American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee
May 3, 2016
Past National Commander Robert W. Spanogle, Chairman

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee continues to reach milestones in the journey toward fulfillment of a five-year strategic plan that was first presented in 2014 as a report to the National Executive Committee. That plan described the committee's mission to "raise awareness and stimulate activity nationwide and beyond, in honor of the organization's first century, with a vision of continued relevance for veterans and their families as the nation's largest veterans service organization moves into its second century." With few exceptions, the plan is progressing according to schedule.

The five-year plan is divided into the following categories, each with a subcommittee to lead efforts in particular areas. Following is an update of progress, based on the categories:

- **Organizational.** American Legion departments, counties, districts and posts have established centennial leaders and teams that are now well on their way to commemorations in their geographic areas. The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee, meeting April 30 and May 1, 2016, discussed at length the need for local and department centennial leaders to network, share ideas and understand national resources available that can benefit them.

  The committee voted unanimously to advance to the Internal Affairs Commission a resolution to offer two two-day conferences for department-level centennial program representatives in Indianapolis, one in 2017 and another in 2018.

  The American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee did not meet in February 2016 due to a lack of quorum caused by travel and health concerns. Honorary Committee Chairman Ted Roosevelt IV and staff centennial co-chairman Jeff Stoffer have communicated by phone and by e-mail, as well as an in-person meeting in January with Honorary Committee member Robert Gates. Ted Roosevelt IV has invited and received acceptance from Susan Eisenhower, international security scholar and granddaughter of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, a life member of The American Legion and 34th President of the United States. Her appointment is presented in the form of a resolution to the NEC for consideration at the May 3-4, 2016, meetings.
- **Post & Department Activities:** Numerous centennial guides, media support materials, marketing and promotion items are in development now for posts and departments. So far, 1,845 posts have registered and begun fulfilling profiles on the centennial interactive web page of www.legion.org.

  Robert Willis of Frank Collings Post 111 in Edmond, Okla., has been approved to be called in to the national convention centennial workshop on Aug.

29 in Cincinnati. He has been passionate about researching and sharing his post's story, particularly the story of its namesake, the first World War I combat death from Edmond, Okla. At the workshop, he will share his approach with other participants.

- **Media & Communications:** The centennial bookazine "INDIVISIBLE: The Story of Our Flag" was produced in November 2015 and marketed through February 2016 via Emblem Sales and national retailers through a third-party distributor. The publication sold out at Emblem Sales and had a 21 percent sell-through at the retailers, but distribution costs and art/editorial acquisition costs were higher than expected and prevented it from achieving a net gain financially. Total sales were approximately 20,000. The 100th Anniversary Observance Committee viewed the project as a success in other ways, particularly with Legion audiences, and recommends continuing the bookazine program, with adjustments in pricing and cost management based on lessons learned, to share the Legion's centennial message. Staff will also be looking into a schedule of future centennial bookazines to include "America's Most Beloved Veterans," "Honor & Remembrance" and the "Greatest Legislation: The Story of the GI Bill."

National staff is now also working on an advertising media kit for "100 Years for God and Country," a special issue of The American Legion Magazine that aims to have more than 200 pages.

National staff will also begin monthly delivery of American Legion centennial e-newsletters starting in May 2016 with frequent reminders of coming events, tips and stories from the interactive site. Production and delivery of centennial e-newsletters have been inconsistent.

The Media & Communications subcommittee, led by Al Zdon of Minnesota, is building templates for the "Every Department Has a Story" project that takes a department-by-department look at The American Legion worldwide, in a two-sided poster of text, imagery and graphic design that can be used as a placemat at a post or restaurant, or hung on a wall, to deliver the message of the centennial, from legacy to vision. The Department of Montana template is now created and has been shared with the committee, which gives it positive reviews. Other templates in process include Wyoming, Minnesota, Alaska, Connecticut and Kansas. The product offers multiple uses, both print and digital, with the ability to customize it for local contact information.

The Media & Communications team is also at work producing a video to show a diversity of Legionnaires in a number of different places and situations reciting the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution and explaining what it means to them.

- **Special Events & Projects:** Plans for the centennial national conventions in 2018 and 2019 are taking shape. Convention and Meetings Commission Chairman Mike Walton and Director Bridget Robinson presented to the committee various options for the Minneapolis venue, home of the 100th anniversary kick-off convention. The committee is working with departments and posts to locate war-era re-enactors and period entertainment, as well as re-enactments of important moments in Legion history, such as the Paris Caucus, the St. Louis Caucus, the First Convention, the GI Bill effort, and more.

  National Legislative Director Ian de Planque is working on three initiatives in support of the 100th anniversary, including application of a Congressional Gold Medal for American Legion GI Bill architect Past National Commander Harry Colmery; approval of a commemorative American Legion centennial

postage stamp; and a Gift to the Nation from The American Legion to Arlington National Cemetery.

Legion Riders Chairman Bob Sussan has mapped out potential routes for the centennial Legacy Runs to Minneapolis and Indianapolis in 2018 and 2019, which would have a core group ride the whole route and hundreds join in along the way, carrying proclamations of support and funds for the scholarship from their communities. The committee also intends that the St. Louis American Legion time capsule, buried at the 50th anniversary of the organization in 1969, will be dug up in a ceremony there on the centennial Legacy Run.

Library & Museum Outreach: The National World War II Museum in New Orleans has proposed American Legion presence in the new Liberty Pavilion about the GI Bill and its many effects. Proposed is a temporary American Legion exhibit to display artifacts, art, videos and other items belonging to The American Legion related to the GI Bill. The exhibit would open June 22, 2017. The museum envisions a moderated panel led by Honorary Committee Chairman Ted Roosevelt IV and figures who represent the benefits of the GI Bill on higher education, home ownership, discharge review, VA health care and more.

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee has submitted a resolution to the Internal Affairs Commission to authorize national support of the Pritzker Museum and Library grant applications program "100 cities/100 monuments" to restore and improve World War I memorials throughout the country and beyond. The resolution calls for The American Legion emblem to be used in the campaign and to promote the availability of the grants, as well as the fulfillment of the restorations.

The Museum Subcommittee will follow up on a 2014 visit to the National World War I Museum in Kansas City to explore ways to share The American Legion story there.

- **Merchandising:** Emblem Sales reports more than $47,000 in gross centennial merchandise sales through the first quarter of 2016. New products are now entering marketing, including commemorative centennial coins, vest patches, new shirts and other items, including custom items like post centennial license plates and yard signs.
- Also, the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee is now exploring new membership and post recognition strategies, including certificates for ceremonies and displays during the centennial, and special recognition for posts chartered to enter the new century of Legion advocacy. Rolanda Herron of the Membership Division is the committee's liaison on this area and will work with staff to build out a complete centennial-based membership campaign.

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee is working in a number of other areas beyond those listed in this report, as well. The centennial touches some aspect of every division in the organization. The goal of the national committee is to provide resources and support for all American Legion entities – from individual American Legion Family members (to include the Sons of The American Legion and the Auxiliary), to posts, counties, districts, departments and national, division by division, program by program. The committee views the centennial window as a great opportunity to spread awareness about The American Legion Family, shine a national spotlight on all of the organization's accomplishments so far, as well as those yet to come.

That was the consensus among 100th Anniversary Observance Committee members who attended the April 30-May 1 meeting in Indianapolis. Committee members in attendance included Vice Chairman David Rehbein, Iowa; James E. Copher, Minnesota;

Lowry Finley-Jackson, Missouri; James Fratolillo, Massachusetts; G. Michael Schlee, Maryland; Michael Walton, Illinois; David Warnken, Kansas; Alan Zdon, Minnesota; Charles Zelinski of Illinois; and Joe Hovish, Indiana. Called in but absent was Pierre Harper, New York. Also absent were Derek Blumke, New York, and Charemon Dunham, South Dakota. Guests at the meeting included Tom Simons, Jr., Ohio; Robert Sussan, Virginia; Denise Rohan, Wisconsin; Mike Rohan, Wisconsin; David Salak, Nebraska; Josh Clement, Montana; Cathi Taylor, Indiana, American Legion National Auxiliary; Tony Wright, Pennsylvania, Sons of The American Legion; Randy Tesdahl, Minnesota; Jim Gillis, Colorado; Larry Besson, Illinois; and George West, New Hampshire.

The committee was delighted to receive a visit from American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett, who explained that he has seen high enthusiasm about the centennial during his department visits and Walk 4 Veterans events this year.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee. …*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to receive and file the report of the 100th Anniversary Committee. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed, no. Motion carries.

I need to do a couple of paperwork things here. It's come to my attention that I can name up to five members of the national committee to oversee and guide us through the World War II commemorative celebration. Therefore, for the fifth member of that committee, I hereby nominate Dennis 'Mike' Duggan of the Department of Maryland.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that your appointment be approved by the National Executive Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve Mike Duggan from Department of Maryland. Is there any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Carried.

Secondly, it's been brought to my attention that The American Legion National Headquarters should have representation on the Cleveland County American Legion World Series Board, which oversees the activities for the World Series in Shelby, North Carolina. I would like to nominate for your consideration Past National Commander Jake Comer and Finance Commission Chairman Gaither Keener to serve in that capacity until such time as the NEC desires to make a change.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that your nominations be approved by the National Executive Committee. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed?

Now, before I turn it over for announcements to Mr. Wheeler, make sure, if you have no voice or vote in this body, you will be asked to depart so that the NEC can convene in executive session. The national officers and executive directors are asked to remain, along with Internal Affairs Chairman Larry Besson and Vice Chairman George West. I would like a motion on that. Don't leave yet, we've got announcements. Don't leave yet.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the NEC go into executive session. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second. Please don't leave until we get the announcements. Is there any further discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Any nays? Motion carries. Now you can do your announcements.

Announcements from National Adjutant

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I just have one announcement as a point of information. Some people have asked me why do they have a Uniform Code of Procedure for the Organization of National Conventions of The American Legion in their folder. The reason is because this was newly revised on April 15, so the old one is out of date. You approved this in October, but when it was printed, there were a couple of errors in it. We found those errors and printed this correct copy. That's why you have it. This concludes my announcements.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: One other thing before you leave. The entertainment tonight should be fun, it should be light. I plan on having a good time. The reception is at 6, dinner is at 7. Look forward to seeing you all there.

Those who are not in the execution session, if you would please depart at this time.

... At 3:08 p.m., the National Executive Committee went into Executive Session.

... At 3:19 p.m., the National Executive Committee recessed, to reconvene at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, May 5, 2016.

PROCEEDINGS

of the

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 5, 2016

...At 8:30 a.m., the National Executive Committee of The American Legion reconvened, National Commander Barnett presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a procedural matter that we need to take care of. We went into executive session yesterday afternoon for the purposes of a vote for an award. At this time, I'd like to entertain a motion to bring us out of executive session and into regular session.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion that we resume regular session and come out of executive session. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to come out of executive session into regular session. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? All right. With the colors of our country in place, hand salute. Two. Uncover. I'd like to call on Past National Chaplain Randy Cash for the invocation.

Invocation
Tierian "Randy" Cash, North Carolina, Past National Chaplain

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Let us pray.

Dear Father, we thank you for the dawn and promise of a new day. Give us courage and strength to lead with integrity and compassion. Thank you for keeping those who stood watch by night. Now guide those who watch by day. Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance and
Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion
Daniel L. Zimmerman, Georgia, National Sergeant-at-Arms

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Please remain covered. I call on National Sergeant-at-Arms Dan Zimmerman for the Pledge of Allegiance.

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I call on National Adjutant Dan Wheeler for the purposes of roll call.

Roll Call
National Officers

National Commander
Harold D. Barnett, Georgia

National Adjutant
Daniel S. Wheeler, Virginia

National Vice Commanders

George E. Cushing, Arizona
Jimmy F. Lane, Arkansas
Alan A. Davis, Sr., Minnesota
David L. Gough, Wisconsin
John W. Hargreaves, Maine

Past National Commanders

Keith A. Kreul, Wisconsin (Excused)
Clarence M. Bacon, Maryland
John P. 'Jake' Comer, Massachusetts
Hon. H. F. Gierke, North Dakota (Excused)
Miles S. Epling, West Virginia
Robert S. Turner, Georgia
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, Pennsylvania (Excused)
Bruce Thiesen, California (Excused)
William M. Detweiler, Louisiana (Excused)
Daniel A. Ludwig, Minnesota
Joseph J. Frank, Missouri
Anthony G. Jordan, Maine (Excused)
Butch L. Miller, Virginia
Hon. Alan G. Lance, Sr., Idaho (Excused)
Richard J. Santos, Maryland
Ronald F. Conley, Pennsylvania
Hon. John A. Brieden, III, Texas
Thomas P. Cadmus, Michigan (Excused)
Thomas L. Bock, Colorado
Paul A. Morin, Massachusetts
Martin F. Conatser, Illinois
Robert W. Spanogle, Michigan
David K. Rehbein, Iowa
Clarence E. Hill, Florida
Jimmie L. Foster, Alaska
Fang A. Wong, New York
James E. Koutz, Indiana
Daniel M. Dellinger, Virginia
Michael D. Helm, Nebraska

National Executive Committeemen

Department	Committeeman	Alternate
Alabama	Willis Frazier	
Alaska	James E. Pisa	
Arizona	Richard W. Perry	
Arkansas	Mary V. Erdman	
California	Hugh E. Crooks, Jr.	
Colorado	Francis W. McCurdy	
Connecticut	D. Joseph Jackson	
Delaware	Kenneth G. Whitman	
D.C.	Warren N. Cuffee	
Florida	Dennis R. Boland	
France	John H. Miller	
Georgia	Charles F. Wessinger	
Hawaii	Marvin R. Siegfried	
Idaho	Thomas E. Mattice	
Illinois	Wayne Wagner	
Indiana	Paul I. Steward	
Iowa	Bruce C. Feuerbach	
Kansas	David O. Warnken	
Kentucky	Randall Coffman	
Louisiana	Charles D. Aucoin	
Maine	Ramona A. Naragon	
Maryland	Elbert D. White	
Massachusetts	Francis J. MacDonald, Jr.	

Mexico	Michael D. Wood	
Michigan	Roger H. Webster	
Minnesota	Marland A. Ronning	
Mississippi	Robert E. Gosa	
Missouri	Charles W. Goodin	
Montana	Mervin G. Gunderson (Excused)	David A. Driver
Nebraska	Jerry Landkamer	
Nevada	Ronald L. Michalski (Excused)	John F. Warden, Jr.
New Hampshire	William R. Roy	
New Jersey	Daniel E. McCole	
New Mexico	Felix M. Trujillo	
New York	William H. Burnett	
North Carolina	Bill G. Richard	
North Dakota	Robert L. Krause	
Ohio	Robert J. Kimball	
Oklahoma	Jerry A. Ball	
Oregon	Charles E. Schmidt	
Pennsylvania	Robert C. Miller, Jr.	
Philippines	Herbert J. Scholten	
Puerto Rico	Ildefonso Colon, Jr.	
Rhode Island	Robert D. Winston	
South Carolina	Cecil F. Hennis	
South Dakota	Paul A. Evenson	
Tennessee	Gary R. Drennon	
Texas	James E. Prendergast	
Utah	Terry D. Schow	
Vermont	Francis J. Killay	
Virginia	Thomas E. Saunders	
Washington	William R. 'Bob' Wallace	
West Virginia	William W. Kile	
Wisconsin	Steve Krueger	
Wyoming	William R. Wright, III	

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: That completes the roll call.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I declare a quorum. At this time, we will move to unfinished business of the preceding day. I call on National Executive Committeeman Dave Warnken.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: We have some unfinished business from yesterday, and we'll take care of it at this time.

Under Rule 8A, Resolution 31 was read yesterday at 9:45. It is now 8:40 on Thursday.

Resolution No. 31: 2019 National Convention Contract
Origin: Convention Commission
Submitted By: Convention Commission

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission has reviewed the status of the proposed National American Legion Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 23 – 29, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Subject to receiving a properly executed contract from the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana the Convention Commission believes that all conditions for a contract covering The American Legion National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 23-29, 2019, have been satisfied; and

WHEREAS, The Convention Commission hereby recommends to the National Executive Committee that it enter into the appropriate contract with the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana to cover the 2019 American Legion National Convention; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the national commander, after receipt of an executed contract from the 2019 The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Indiana and the review and approval of same from the national judge advocate, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said contract and the national adjutant, be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to same.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has the approval of the Convention Commission and Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and second for Resolution 31 for approval. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Resolution No. 1 titled, "American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement." This resolution was held for study. We've studied it. We're ready to act on it.

Resolution No. 1: American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement
Origin: Committee on Youth Education
Submitted By: Finance Commission
(As amended)

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2 of the National Executive Committee, October 2001, entitled The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship authorized the establishment of said scholarship in memory of our military men and women who died while serving on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 (hereafter referred to as "Post-9/11"); and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20 of the National Executive Committee, May 2002, entitled The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship Trust Fund authorized the establishment of said trust fund, under the same name, at the Hoosier Trust Company to fund a scholarship program for children of those members of U.S. Armed Forces who died while serving on active duty on or after September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 16 of the National Executive Committee, May 2003, entitled Clarification of Purpose, The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship allowed the scholarship to also be known as the American Legacy Scholarship; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 31 of the National Executive Committee, May 2005, entitled Amend Rules and Conditions For Administration Of The American Legacy Scholarship Program clarified eligibility to apply and rules and conditions for administration of the scholarship program; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Riders have been the most dedicated fundraiser and supporter of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship, participating in the annual American Legion Legacy Run that has grown in success each year with an excess of one million dollars raised in both 2014 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, By resolution the fund is also known as the American Legacy Scholarship, however, referring to the scholarship as The American Legion Legacy

Scholarship for marketing, promotion and fundraising purposes and related materials establishes clear branding for the organization; and

WHEREAS, The impact of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship has been diminishing in the past five years due to a much greater availability of federal educational benefits that are evolving for children of fallen servicemembers, most notably Public Law 111-32 which created the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship, along with greater availability of state and local educational benefits, thereby fulfilling the vast majority of their education costs; and

WHEREAS, Those servicemembers having been injured in the line of duty while serving on active duty have demonstrated dedication and sacrifice for their nation; and

WHEREAS, A disability rating assigned by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of fifty-percent (50%) indicates a potential loss of income by fifty-percent (50%) for labor intensive employment, shows significant disability, and a veteran may not be able to earn a high enough income to save for college; and

WHEREAS, A disability rating assigned by the VA of fifty-percent (50%) is considered serious disability that allows VA medical care of all conditions; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Division of National Headquarters relates there are 1,712,236 veterans who have been assigned a disability rating of fifty-percent (50%) or greater by the VA, although there is no breakdown by war era available; and

WHEREAS, There is opportunity to enhance the relevance of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship by providing educational assistance to children of Post-9/11 veterans having been assigned a disability rating by the VA; and

WHEREAS, Enhancing the current merit-based American Legion Legacy Scholarship program to that of a needs-based educational scholarship program can allow for providing more equitable benefit among eligible beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon The American Legion to ensure the legal requirements for distribution of the trust fund are met and the trust fund be preserved as a public charity; and

WHEREAS, Enhancing the current American Legion Legacy Scholarship program to reflect an expansion of eligibility and relevance will benefit a larger pool of beneficiaries, is more relative to the beneficiaries, and reinforces the organization's renowned reputation as the nation's premier veterans service organization; and

WHEREAS, Enhancing the current American Legion Legacy Scholarship program can still allow for growth and long-term sustainability of the existing trust fund; and

WHEREAS, The Committee on Youth Education, the Americanism, Internal Affairs and Finance Commissions each have approved this resolution and recommend it to the National Executive Committee for its favorable action; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the American Legacy Scholarship trust will continue to provide educational benefits to those children of military servicemembers who have died while serving on active duty on or since September 11, 2001, (hereafter referred to as "Post-9/11"); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That effective in 2017 the scope of American Legacy Scholarship trust eligibility will be further enhanced by establishing conditions to allow awarding education benefits to children of Post-9/11 veterans having been assigned a disability rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of at least fifty-percent (50%); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That effective in 2017 the American Legion Legacy Scholarship will be enhanced from the current merit-based scholarship program to that of a

needs-based scholarship whereby the program will serve to fulfill a financial gap remaining after all federal and state grants/scholarships available to an eligible applicant have first been sought, with the gap fulfillment not to exceed $20,000 within a calendar year per applicant; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Legion Legacy Scholarship program will annually prioritize distribution of allotted funds to those eligible applicants demonstrating the greatest financial need, with top priority consideration first given to children of fallen Post-9/11 servicemembers, then secondly to children of Post-9/11 veterans having been assigned a disability rating by the VA of at least fifty-percent (50%), until such allotted funds are exhausted; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the strategy for establishing a maximum amount of allotted funds that may be awarded per annum will be that half (50%) of the annual trust fund income earned plus half (50%) of monies fundraised for the American Legacy Scholarship trust during a calendar year will be made available the following year to award as individual needs-based scholarships, with any allotted funds not awarded at the end of the year then returned the trust fund for continued growth; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the other half (50%) of monies fundraised during a calendar year for the American Legacy Scholarship trust will automatically be invested into the trust fund for continued growth; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the above distribution formula and/or individual scholarship maximum may be changed with concurrence of the Finance Commission and approval of the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Americanism Commission will determine, establish in writing, and review annually thereafter, all other conditions, rules, guidelines and procedures for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship program so as to attain maximum equity and efficiency for the eligibility, application, selection, award and disbursement processes; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the existing trust fund from which monies are issued will maintain the legal title The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship Trust Fund, which is also referred to as the American Legacy Scholarship; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the title The American Legion Legacy Scholarship will be used for marketing, promotion and fundraising efforts and related materials so as to promote brand awareness and help alleviate confusion with other funds/scholarship programs associated with the September 11, 2001, attack on America; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Americanism Commission will be responsible for the awarding and administration of scholarships and will report same through the Finance Commission to the National Executive Committee at its annual May meetings; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Americanism Commission will maintain an accounting of work hours, wages, and expenses associated with administration and promotion of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship to further include in the annual report through the Finance Commission to the National Executive Committee at May meetings; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That to provide for the expenses associated with the promotion of the American Legacy Scholarship trust, an amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the income earned for the trust may be allocated annually; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national judge advocate and national treasurer shall cooperate in the drafting of the appropriate amendment to The American Legion

September 11 Memorial Scholarship Trust, as originally established in Resolution No. 20 of the National Executive Committee, May 2002, titled The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship Trust Fund; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national commander, after review and approval by the national judge advocate for legal sufficiency, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute all appropriate contracts, trust indentures and documents to accomplish the purpose of this resolution and the national adjutant be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to the same; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the following resolutions: Resolution No. 2 of the National Executive Committee, October 2001, titled The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship; Resolution No. 16 of the National Executive Committee, May 2003, titled Clarification of Purpose, The American Legion September 11 Memorial Scholarship; Resolution No. 31 of the National Executive Committee, May 2005, titled Amend Rules and Conditions for Administration of the American Legacy Scholarship Program, are hereby superseded and rescinded.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: This resolution has approval of the Finance Commission, the Internal Affairs Commission, the Americanism Commission, the Committee on Youth Education and the Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion of Resolution No. 1? The chair recognizes Past National Commander John Brieden from Texas.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: Number 1 "Resolve" clause, which is talking about up to five percent for expenses. How much money are we talking about?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Would you answer that, Gaither?

FINANCE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: Five percent of the trust. The trust is nine million, it could be five percent of that amount. We do not expect it to be that amount, but it could be, John. [Correction: 5% of trust annual earnings, only to be used for promotion.]

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: I tell you what, I have a problem with that. We constantly tell people, "When you contribute to our programs, we do the expenses. Every dime you give, goes to our programs."

And then for us to say, "Okay. We got a pot of money here, so let's just dip into it," just rubs me the wrong way. I do not like the fact that we're going to be taking those expenses out of this fund.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I was at the ad hoc, and I will guarantee you they looked at it. It's interest only. It's designed to keep the scholarship fund intact for years to come. It's going to maximize the number of people that we're going to help. I will tell you, and you can look at the length of this resolution, that they have studied this in depth with the various committees. So I understand your concerns.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: I appreciate that. Still rubs me the wrong way.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Point taken. Any further discussion? Past National Commander Conley.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CONLEY: On the part dealing with the 50 percent or greater disability, do we have an idea of how many veterans we're talking about that have 50 percent? Fifty percent is somebody that you can go in at 20 percent, you're more or less older now so you go for an upgrade in your disability and you can get to the 50 percent. So is there any numbers that we're dealing with as far as 50 percent or greater disability?

FINANCE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: Yes, Commander, and I'll let one of the experts go in more detail on that.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Past National Commander Conley, when the committee studied it, the number that they got would be approximately 1.7 million. The reason they selected 50 percent was that was the number where you are fully eligible for VA benefits. That could be adjusted, and I think that is outlined in the resolution that was just read.

FINANCE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KEENER: Gentlemen, let me bring one thing to your attention. The Finance Commission approves the 990 tax form. There is over $11 million in the trust. Last year, because of the way the trust is set up with scholarships, only 51,000 was sent in scholarships. The year before, 45,000. We're on a five year review by the IRS. If you do not meet certain requirements, this trust will be considered as not a nonprofit. Taxes will have to be paid, and the individuals that gave to it, when they took it off their taxes, will receive documentation that will indicate it is not a deduction. Please remember that. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Any further discussion? The chair recognizes Department of Arkansas. Mary?

NEC MEMBER ERDMAN (AR): I just have a question. On page 5 and 6 they refer to American Legacy Scholarship and it's also American Legion Legacy Scholarship. Is it the same?

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you for bringing that to our attention. Is that correct, Jill?

AMERICANISM DIVISION DIRECTOR DRUSKIS: Sir, if I may?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes.

DIVISION DIRECTOR DRUSKIS: Good morning, everyone. Actually, by resolution currently, it is called the American Legacy Scholarship. That's in a separate resolution. So this resolution helps to bring it into line with American Legion Legacy Scholarship when we're doing marketing and promoting and that type of thing, for brand awareness. Thank you, commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Any other discussion? Call on Past National Commander Dellinger.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: I would like to make an amendment to this resolution. I would like to see it amended to state that up to 5 percent only for promotional purposes, no administrative fees for the administration of this scholarship.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. We must vote on the amendment first. Is there any discussion or clarification needed on the amendment proposed by Past National Commander Dellinger? All those in favor of the amendment proposed by Past National Commander Dellinger signify by saying aye. Opposed? All right.

At this time, do we have any further discussion on the motion that has been made with amendment. Are there any further discussions? All those in favor of the motion as amended, signify by saying aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, if I may, I have one more resolution that I would like to take care of at this time.

Resolution No. 32: Adjutants Advisory Committee to the Marketing Commission
Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions
Submitted By: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, It is important to include department adjutants as advisors to the Marketing Commission to insure proper coordination and information sharing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the National Executive Committee hereby creates an Adjutants Advisory Committee to the Marketing Commission consisting of three department adjutants to serve for a term that ends with the close of the October National Executive Committee meeting following their appointment.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Subcommittee on Resolutions. I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

In so much as Resolution 32, you have just passed it, I hereby nominate the following department adjutants to serve in that capacity through the October 2016 National Executive Committee meeting: Iowa Adjutant John Derner; Minnesota Adjutant Randy Tisdale; and Virginia Adjutant Dale Chapman. I make that as a motion.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I move that the National Executive Committee approve your appointments. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to approve those appointments. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, I've been asked by NECman Herbert Scholten from the Philippines for the purpose of a discussion with you. If you would, sir, please come forward. Thank you.

Remarks: Herbert Scholten
Department of the Philippines, National Executive Committee Member

Good morning. There are actually two major things that I would like to mention. One of them is personal, and that is that this is probably the last time, after about ten years, that I will be wearing this cap, this hat, in our room. The time has come for me to move on to do other things, but I will always be available to any and/or all of you to assist our Legion.

The primary reason I am here is to address the situation relative to the special committee dealing with the foreign departments. I would like to thank the group that has been working on it for pre-inviting the members affected for a meeting on the 29th of August. I think that when we get a good idea of what is actually going on, and all of the departments have their issues and differences, but I think one of the reasons that FODPAL operates is that, while we all have really different issues, depending on where they are, they are a bit unique to what we're used to.

Let me ask a question, and I can only speak for what I know of the Department of the Philippines. Where does the American flag stand anywhere around the world? On the left? This is right *(indicating)*. When you're facing it, it's on the left. Everywhere? There is one country where the flag is on the right, by law. Agreed with United States and the Philippines, the flag there is on the other side, except on U.S. territory such as the cemeteries and the embassy, et cetera. So in our posts over there, the flag is supposed to be

on the other side. Some of the folks over there don't like it either, but it's the law. And I'll bet you that in the other foreign departments, there are similar issues.

Last May at this time of year, I made a trip to our meeting here, a special trip. And this is intended to help us all just understand of some of the issues that I know all of the members of FODPAL face in being outside of the contiguous states, especially those that, we have Alaska and Hawaii that are states, they've got some issues. But those of us that are in actual foreign countries each have some very unique things to face.

Last May when I visited the study group for the first time, they had a constitution and by-laws from the Department of the Philippines dated 1968. Upon further exploration, it was discovered that there was indeed a revised constitution and by-laws that was presented in 2010. All of this information from the foreign departments, I'm sure it's difficult to keep up with and so on and so forth.

Now, I just want to point out, and one of the reasons I'm up here, you think I'm not nervous, you're wrong. In the report that I was a bit surprised by yesterday, stated that the Korea post was supported by national but not the department. Certainly, national supported the establishment of the first Korea post. The department, I happened to be a member of the department, and I also, as a representative of the Philippine department, helped shepherd that through the process so that our commander was able, upon his visit last year, not this year, to go ahead and be there for the establishment of the department. Correct?

Now we've got a second post in Korea, and I have been in constant contact with Mike Napsey over there, in working with him on behalf of the Philippine department. One of the things that was mentioned, and I'm just pointing out some things here because I know it is this entire group who is going to be making the decisions about what happens with, I'll call them, the "foreign departments."

In the Philippines, with the situation of the Four Pillars, there is mention of shooting. It's a great thing we can do over here. In the Philippines, those of us who are there doing funerals are not even allowed to have blank guns so we can do the salute. It's the law over there. It's what, I will use the term, we have to put up with, we choose to put up with, but it's not our choice. If we want to have somebody shooting guns, we either have some Philippine folks join us, which is fine, but we can't have blanks or anything of the sort. We might be able to play it on tape, but we probably have to have some people watching us. That's the way it is, whether we like it or not.

It is true that those of us who choose to live outside of our wonderful country here, choose to put up with those constraints. But I think I would ask this body and The American Legion and those of you who have, I'll call it I know everybody has their issues an easier time of getting things done, assist us and help us to work through those items.

Child care was mentioned. Again, over there, in the Philippines, the posts, and I can speak for the post that I come from, Post 4, we support the early education, because another group of Americans takes care of the grade school and high school. So we do what they call, well, we call it child care, they call it preschool. And in Olongapo, there are four of them we support. Perhaps the reports don't get in because we got such a go around with the government to even be doing what we're doing.

And finally, the situation relative to, and I know it is only a proposal and I know it is something that might work out, but I do believe that the American Legion Auxiliary has set up something similar. The reason I mention that is because the ALA of the Philippines now reports to a department that is located in this city, along with the other ones.

I bring these issues up as critique, not criticism. We have our own issues here. We should not be competing. We should be assisting. We're a family, and I am going to especially miss this part of the family, although hopefully I'll be available. But it's a long ways from the Philippines over here. But it's a lot shorter than it used to be, and I think that

some of the suggestions that are in the proposal or the report from yesterday, whichever is appropriate, are good.

Use the computer. We can call overseas. I reside part of the time, it's been for a while now, in Michigan. We've got the Philippine channels on our TV set, got two dishes. Come over and watch the dancing girls, they're there right on TV, in good old Coloma, Michigan. It is possible, got a special deal on the phone. My wife can call over there. I have a Philippine wife.

I thank you, and I hesitated. Well, I hesitated a lot yesterday. However, I think that, for the good of the order, I may be out of order, but for the good of the order, I wanted to let you know and make sure that we are dealing with the right information. And even if we deal with the thing rightly with the wrong information, we'll be making more trouble for ourselves than if we have the right information and use it right. What we're dealing with is one thing.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: Point of order, commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: I respectfully ask the NECman to get to the bottom of what you're trying to do.

NEC MEMBER SCHOLTEN: I'm done.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COMER: We have a meeting in Cincinnati, and we welcome you to come to that meeting, and that's where you should be expressing all of this, where changes are going to be made. There are individuals here in this room that have to meet many, many planes this morning, and I think you're going on a little bit too far.

NEC MEMBER SCHOLTEN: I was very close to finishing.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: If you would kind of wrap it up, though, as rapidly as you can, please.

NEC MEMBER SCHOLTEN: All right. The reason I mention this now is so that you have that information for when we get together then. As I started out by saying, I'm glad that the FODPAL people have been invited to the meeting, and I will be there.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you so much.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to receive and file the report of the NECman from the Philippines. Any further discussion? All those in favor, signify by saying aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time I call on the Veterans Employment & Education Commission, Mr. James Oxford, from the Department of North Carolina.

Oral Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
James W. Oxford, North Carolina, Chairman

Commander Barnett, national officers, NEC members and guests. Commander, before I present a summary of my printed report, I'd like to say thank you for the opportunity to serve as chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. It is an extreme honor to be able to serve.

The Veterans Employment & Education Commission met in conjunction with the 56th Annual Washington Conference. The commission met at the appropriate time and place to consider appropriate materials and information. No action is required by the NEC based on these discussions.

The awards selection subcommittee met to review nominations and select award winners for 2016. These winners are listed in the printed material you have, and the awards will be presented at the National Convention. However, there has been one change since

that report. The winner from the medium category withdrew their nomination, so the runner up has been named as the winner. Colorado will be the new winner in the medium category.

In addition to the commission meeting, several other events took place. A Career Fair was hosted in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. Twenty-five employers were represented, and more than 100 attendees participated. Our commission also sponsored an employment and empowerment workshop designed to help veterans, servicemembers, and their spouses find meaningful careers by expanding networks and gaining the tools necessary to make a successful transition. Both of these events were termed very informative by those who attended.

The commission also sponsored a veterans small business workshop specifically designed for servicemembers, veterans, and spouses who own their own business or are considering starting one. This intensive course was created and sponsored by The American Legion in collaboration with Vets GSA, Goldschmitt & Associates, and the National Veterans Small Business Coalition. This program was as intended to support and advocate for veterans who are self-employed.

The commission also hosted a homeless veterans roundtable that dealt with benefits, programs, and other services that are available for homeless veterans. We have many success stories, but there continues to be a significant need to make veterans' homelessness a priority for The American Legion.

Since the D.C. conference, two resolutions have been received for consideration. One we'll discuss; the second will be held for further study. The VE&E Commission recommends approval on the first.

Commander, before I conclude, I'd like to say a special thanks to Washington Director Verna Jones and Adjutant Wheeler for their help and support to the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. I'd also like to take just a moment to recognize the Veterans Employment & Education staff for their work and support. Director Joe Sharpe is here. Deputy Director Mark Walker; Assistant Director Daniel Smith; and Assistant Director Davy Leghorn. They do great work in D.C. Commander, this concludes my remarks.

Advance Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
April 14, 2016
James W. Oxford, North Carolina, Chairman

Members and guests of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission and its two standing committees on Employment and Veterans' Preference and Veterans Education, Other Benefits and Homelessness met at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., on Monday, February 22, 2016. Those meetings were held in conjunction with the Fifty-Sixth Annual Washington Conference.

In addition, a Career Fair hosted with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was conducted on Friday, February 19, an Employment & Empowerment Workshop, to discuss the Commission’s ongoing initiative to assist veterans with a successful transition from active-duty to gainful employment and financial stability. An Awards Selection Subcommittee composed of members of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission and its two committees met in the morning of Tuesday, February 23, for the purpose of selecting the national winners and runners-up in the Commission's two national awards programs.

Finally, The American Legion’s Small Business Task Force hosted a Small Business Workshop at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, February 23 and Wednesday, February 24, as well as a Homeless Veterans Roundtable on Wednesday, February 24.

A synopsis of the meetings follows:

I. CAREER FAIR

The National Veterans Employment & Education Commission of The American Legion collaborated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to host a hiring event on Friday, February 19, in the International Terrace, Terrace Level, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. This event started with an opening ceremony, which included speakers Eric Eversole, President, Hiring Our Heroes and Senior Advisor, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation; Michael Michaud, Assistant Secretary, Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS); Verna Jones, Executive Director, Washington, D.C. Office; and Harold 'Dale' Barnett, National Commander, The American Legion. There were 25 employers from various industries and over 100 attendees that participated in the Career Fair. In addition, the smaller roundtables (at the Career Fair) gave prospective employers opportunities to engage jobseekers in a more personal manner, creating a relaxed atmosphere where veterans felt comfortable practicing their pitches and seeking job opportunities.

The American Legion manned a table at this event. The table was manned by Davy Leghorn, Assistant Director, Veterans Employment & Education Division and Bob Looby, Employment & Education Committee, Department of New Jersey. These Legionnaires discussed how The American Legion assists veterans with reintegrating back to their local communities. Additionally, they answered service members/veterans questions about benefits and described the Legion's programs as well as explained how to become a member. The employers and participants at this event were pleased with the outcome. The employers stated that the participants were professional and qualified. The participants liked that employers were from different industries and willing to hire veterans.

II. EMPLOYMENT & EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOPS

On Friday, February 19, the Veterans Employment & Education Commission hosted an Employment & Empowerment Workshop at the Washington Hilton. The workshops were designed to help veterans, service members and their spouses find meaningful careers in the civilian workforce, expand their networks and gain the tools necessary to stand out throughout the hiring process. The day began with a free networking breakfast, and then segued into employment/empowerment workshops where leaders in the public and private sectors offered guidance on how to properly use LinkedIn for networking and employment purposes, personal branding and financial literacy. Speakers for these workshops included Robert Smith, Financial Education Specialist, ClearPoint Credit Counseling Solutions and Sarah Worley, Senior Manager, Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Following the morning workshops, attendees were able to mingle with each other and prospective employers during a luncheon.

The new Job Fair/Workshop dynamic that The American Legion and U.S. Chamber created really has stepped outside the box, benefitting frustrated jobseekers. The opportunity to polish and use the skills they have been refining during their job searches seemed to tremendously benefit participants. Jobseekers stated that the workshops along with the Job Fair was very informative and filled with quality job opportunities.

Finally, in a November 2015 economic report to Congress, it noted some relevant facts about veterans of the Post-9/11 era. Listed below are some findings pertaining to this demographic:

- **4 out of 5 Post-9/11 veterans are working or actively searching for work**: Recent veterans have a significantly higher labor force participation rate than the overall veteran population because most Post-9/11 veterans are in their prime

working years. Males and those ages 25 to 54 years old are most likely to be in the labor force. Overall, Post-9/11 veterans who served in Afghanistan and/or Iraq have a lower labor force participation rate (78.2 percent) than Post-9/11 veterans who served elsewhere (83.1 percent).

- **Post-9/11 veterans face a somewhat higher employment rate than nonveterans**: The unemployment rate for Post-9/11 veterans averaged 6 percent over the past 12 months. Over the same period, the rate for nonveterans averaged 5.3 percent. The overall employment rate for veterans across all service periods averaged 4.7 percent. The unemployment rate for Post-9/11 veterans has fallen steadily since peaking at 12.1 percent in 2011.

- **The falling unemployment rate understates the challenge facing recent veterans**: One out of every two service members (53 percent) faces a period of unemployment after leaving the military, according to an analysis by the VA. However, most find work within six months. High rates of physical and psychological injuries and the stigma associated with the negative effects of combat zone experience can present hurdles to finding and sustaining employment for some veterans.

- **More than one in four Post-9/11 veterans in the labor force have a service-connected disability**: Of the nearly 2.5 million Post-9/11 veterans in the workforce, 28 percent report having a disability resulting from their military service. However, of those Post-9/11 veterans with a service-connected disability, 75 percent are in the labor force – either having a job or looking for one. Veterans with lower disability ratings are more likely to be in the labor force: 84 percent of those with a disability rating of 50 percent or less are in the labor force, compared with 67 percent of those with a disability rating of 60 percent or more.

- **Post-9/11 veterans earn more than their nonveteran peers:** Unlike veterans of earlier eras, Post-9/11 veterans typically earn more than nonveterans with similar demographic characteristics. In 2013, the median earnings of Post-9/11 veterans were about 11 percent higher than the median earnings of their nonveteran peers. The earnings premium persists across age groups, generally growing with age.

III. VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION FORUM

On Monday, February 22, the Veterans Employment & Education Commission assembled in Jefferson West, Concourse Level, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington D.C., to address education, employment and small business concerns regarding veterans and their families. The meeting started with an update on the Kingdomware Technologies, Inc. case, which will be considered by the Supreme Court. In 2012, Kingdomware filed the claim against the VA in federal claims court alleging that VA failed to comply with the Veterans Benefit, Health care, and Information Technology Act of 2006 – a federal law which requires, in part, that VA evaluates subprime and prime contracts submitted by Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOSBs) before it evaluates contracts submitted by non-military contractors. Under the law, VA is required to award the contract to a veteran contractor

provided the bid is reasonable and of fair value, and the veteran contractor is not the only veteran contractor who could submit a reasonable bid. VA has taken the position that the law's "set aside" requirement for contracts submitted by VOSBs and SDVOSBs is optional and that it may continue to award contracts according to its usual procurement method – the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) – which evaluates veteran-submitted contracts alongside contracts submitted by the general public. The American Legion, in support of Kingdomware, argues that granting the VA discretion in awarding contracts will cost millions of veterans the benefits their country owes them for their service. The American Legion contends that the VA's use of the FSS to purchase goods and services diverts up to $10 billion in contracts away from veterans each year.

Additionally, there was discussion on our continued support for Representative Michael Fitzpatrick's bill, the Fairness to Veterans for Infrastructure Act. If enacted, this bill would amend current legislation to add VOSBs to the list of entities eligible for the Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. Such an addition would not presume that veterans are "socially and economically disadvantaged." Instead, VOSBs would become independently eligible for participation in the DBE program. By law, the federal agencies are mandated to award no less than 3 percent of all federal contracts to SDVOSBs. For a number of reasons a few agencies have not met this goal. One of the most noteworthy exclusions of VOSBs occurs in the Department of Transportation's DBE program. Current legislation requires that states receiving federal dollars for infrastructure repairs have to set aside 10 percent for "preferred goods" of small businesses. However, VOSBs are excluded from participation. It is a misconception that this 10 percent is solely relegated to road and infrastructure construction firms. There are in fact a variety of industries involved, such as personnel, administration, engineering, landscaping, utilities and IT -- so this is an issue that affects all VOSBs. The Fairness to Veterans for Infrastructure Act is a bipartisan, common sense, and 'no cost to taxpayer' update of existing legislation, that redresses the exclusion of veteran small businesses when the framework of the DBE program was originally drafted.

Lastly, shortly after The American Legion National Commander Michael Helm testified before Congress on the Legion's legislative priorities in February 2015, Representative Fitzpatrick successfully added an amendment to rail infrastructure legislation. The amendment directed the Secretary of Transportation to conduct "a nationwide disparity and availability study on the availability and use of certain classes of small businesses -- including veteran-owned businesses. The forum speakers included: Emily Murphy, Senior Counsel & Policy Director, U.S. House of Representatives; Michael Fitzpatrick, 8th District of PA, Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives; David Wallace, USN (Ret)., Military Relations Project Manager, Lockheed Martin Corporation; Jared Lyon, President & CEO, Student Veterans of America; and Harriet Fulbright, Former Executive Director, Fulbright Association.

IV. AWARDS SELECTION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Prior to the Washington Conference, the Chairman of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission appointed an awards selection subcommittee to review all the nominations that had been received during 2015 in the Employer of the Year awards program, and in the Employment Service awards program. This subcommittee met on Tuesday, February 23, in Chairman Oxford's Suite in the Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C., to select winners in the small, medium and large employer, LVER and DVOP categories, as well as Employment Service Local Office of the Year, Employer of Disabled, and Older Workers categories. During 2015, Departments submitted 57 nominations for employers and employment services. 9 were for small companies (1-50

employees), 7 were for medium size companies (51-200 employees), and 9 were for large companies (201+employees). 4 were for Employer of Older Workers, 2 were for Enhancing the Lives of the Disabled. Departments also submitted 8 nominations for Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), 10 for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and 8 for Local Employment Service (ES) Offices. Those appointed to the subcommittee were James Fratolillo (MA) - Chairman, Donna Brown (AL), Alfred Canale (MA), Dennis Tipsword (IL), Eric Measles (CA), David Eagan (TX) and Frederick Nelson (SD).

The winners and runners-up in the Employer of the Year categories will be reviewed by the Department of Labor for pending safety and health or fair labor practices violations before announcement is made.

SMALL EMPLOYER:	**Operation: Job Ready Veteran** Indianapolis, Indiana
MEDIUM SIZE EMPLOYER:	**Stresscon Corporation** Colorado Springs, Colorado
LARGE EMPLOYER:	**New York Shipping Association, Inc.** Edison, New Jersey
ENHANCE THE LIVES OF THE DISABLED:	**Outdoor Freedom Network** Broaddus, Texas
EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS:	**First Transit** Houston, Texas
LVER OF THE YEAR:	**Nancy Brown** Wausau, Wisconsin
DVOP OF THE YEAR:	**Dwight Butler** Fayetteville, North Carolina
ES LOCAL OFFICE OF THE YEAR:	**Fargo Customer Service Office** Fargo, North Dakota
HOMELESS VET OUTREACH:	**The Department of Georgia** Stockbridge, Georgia

V. SMALL BUSINESS

The Veterans Employment & Education Commission (along with the Legion's Small Business Task Force) conducted a two-day Veterans Small Business Workshop on Tuesday, February 24, and Wednesday, February 25, at the Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. Approximately 50 veterans and military spouses participated in this event. Participants traveled from as far away as New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, as well as Maryland and Virginia.

The two-day workshop, “Small Business Roadmap to Success”, was specifically designed for service members, veterans and spouses who own their own businesses or thinking of starting one. The intensive entrepreneurship course was created by The

American Legion in collaboration with local small businesses such as Vets GSA LLC, Goldschmitt & Associates LLC, and the National Veterans Small Business Coalition. The workshop featured informative sessions presented by veteran business owners and women entrepreneurs, and included representatives from the Small Business Administration (SBA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Caucus for Women Veterans in Business. Each agency and organization outlined key initiatives aimed at assisting veteran business owners and touched on the importance of tapping into available resources.

Topics at the workshop included: Realizing the Benefits of the 8(a) Program; SBA Loan Programs; TSA Contracting; Teaming, Compliance, Protests; and VA updates on Veterans Business Development. Presentations were given by Barbara Carson, Associate Administrator, Office of Veterans Business Development, SBA; Marc Goldschmitt, CEO, Goldschmitt & Associates; Antonio Doss, District Director, Washington District Office, SBA; William Dorwart, Chief of Contracts, TSA; Dismas Locaria, Partner, Veneble Law, PLLC; Gunjan Talati, Senior Counsel, Thompson Hine, PLLC; Scott Davidson, CEO, Vets GSA, along with the Legion Small Business Task Force members.

Following the informational sessions, participants were invited to a networking luncheon where they interacted with federal and private sector representatives. Our commission understands that for many veterans, entrepreneurship is a viable option, especially for those veterans who may find the job market tough to navigate. Consequently, The American Legion recognizes how important it is that we assist and advocate on behalf for our veterans who are self-employed. This is why The American Legion is one of the few Veterans Service Organizations that have invested in tangible programs and services for veteran entrepreneurs.

The American Legion's Small Business Task Force is a consortium of accomplished veteran business owners who have volunteered to advise the Legion on legislative matters that pertain to veteran businesses. The group of 30 members share their experiences -- ranging from the public and private sectors -- to help inform the Veterans Employment & Education Division on matters relating to federal contracting for veterans, procurement and other areas that affect veteran business owners.

VI. VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

On Wednesday, February 24, the Veterans Employment & Education Commission hosted a homeless veterans roundtable that dealt with the benefits, programs and services that are available for homeless veterans and their families. The roundtable discussion centered around topics such as: Grant and Per Diem, HUD-VASH Case Management, Landlord Engagement, Prevention & Diversion, Collaboration, and Funding & Momentum. During the roundtable it was noted that VA and HUD reported roughly 48,000 homeless veterans on a single night in January 2015 (2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress). VA has taking decisive action toward its goal of ending homelessness among our nation’s veterans. To achieve this goal, VA has developed a plan to assist every homeless veteran willing to accept services retain or acquire: safe housing; needed treatment services; opportunities to retain or return to employment; and benefits assistance.

Also, VA has implemented a prevention initiative - the Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF), which is VA’s primary prevention program designed to help veterans and their families rapidly exit homelessness, or avoid entering homelessness. Also, mentioned was the successful Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) within the Department of Labor’s Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS). HVRP is the only nationwide program focused on assisting homeless veterans to

reintegrate into the workforce. This program is a highly successful grant program that needs to be fully funded at $50 million. Currently, HVRP is funded at $38 million.

The American Legion continues to place special priority on the issue of veteran homelessness. With veterans making up approximately 11 percent of our nation's total adult homeless population, there is plenty of reason to give the cause special attention. Along with various community partners, The American Legion remains committed to seeing VA's goal of ending veteran homelessness come to fruition. Our goal is to ensure that every community across America has programs and services in place to get homeless veterans in housing (along with necessary healthcare/treatment), while connecting those at-risk veterans with the local services and resources they need.

Lastly, the roundtable panelists included: Kathryn Monet, Program & Policy Analyst, National Alliance to End Homelessness; Linda Kaufmann, National Movement Manager, Community Solutions; Joshua Stewart, Director of Policy, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans; Elisha Harig-Blaine, Principal Housing Associate (Veterans & Special Needs), National League of Cities; Shurhonda Love, Assistant Legislative Director, Disabled American Veterans; Jana Lynch, Housing Program Specialist, Salvation Army; and Bob Looby, Employment & Education Committee, Department of New Jersey, The American Legion.

Report: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
May 4 – 5, 2016
James W. Oxford, North Carolina, Chairman

The Veterans Employment & Education Commission met on May 2, 2016, at Headquarters Room 311 in Indianapolis, Indiana for the purpose of considering those matters that had previously been referred for study and to discuss a range of other current matters.

Presiding: James W. Oxford (NC), Chairman

Also in attendance was:

The staff member present was Joseph C. Sharpe, Jr. (DC), Director, for the Veterans Employment & Education Division.

MATTERS RECEIVED, CONSIDERED AND ACTED UPON BY THE COMMISSION:

RESOLUTIONS

Your Subcommittee considered two (2) resolutions. One (1) was referred from the 2015 National Convention which is being held for further study and one (1) resolution from the Veterans Employment & Education Commission has been forwarded to the National Executive Committee for approval.

The Commission then discussed the following issues:

EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION COMMISSION FORUM

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D.C., to address education, employment and small business concerns regarding veterans and their families. The meeting started with an update on the Kingdomware Technologies, Inc. case, which will be considered by the Supreme Court. In 2012, Kingdomware filed the claim against the VA in federal claims court alleging that VA failed to comply with the Veterans Benefit, Health care, and Information Technology Act of 2006 – a federal law which requires, in part, that VA evaluates subprime and prime contracts submitted by Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOSBs) before it evaluates contracts submitted by non-military contractors. Under the law, VA is required to award the contract to a veteran contractor provided the bid is reasonable and of fair value, and the veteran contractor is not the only veteran contractor who could submit a reasonable bid. VA has taken the position that the law's "set aside" requirement for contracts submitted by VOSBs and SDVOSBs is optional and that it may continue to award contracts according to its usual procurement method – the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) – which evaluates veteran-submitted contracts alongside contracts submitted by the general public. The American Legion, in support of Kingdomware, argues that granting the VA discretion in awarding contracts will cost millions of veterans the benefits their country owes them for their service. The American Legion contends that the VA's use of the FSS to purchase goods and services diverts up to $10 billion in contracts away from veterans each year.

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EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER FAIRS

The Veterans Employment & Education Commission of The American Legion collaborated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to host a hiring event on Friday, February 19, in the International Terrace, Terrace Level, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. This event started with an opening ceremony, which included speakers Eric Eversole, President, Hiring Our Heroes and Senior Advisor, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation; Michael Michaud, Assistant Secretary, Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS); Verna Jones, Executive Director, Washington, D.C. Office; and Harold 'Dale' Barnett, National Commander, The American Legion. There were 25 employers from various industries and over 100 attendees that participated in the Career Fair. In addition, the smaller roundtables (at the Career Fair) gave prospective employers opportunities to engage jobseekers in a more personal manner, creating a relaxed atmosphere where veterans felt comfortable practicing their pitches and seeking job opportunities.

The American Legion manned a table at this event. The table was manned by Davy Leghorn, Assistant Director, Veterans Employment & Education Division and Bob Looby, Employment & Education Committee, Department of New Jersey. These Legionnaires discussed how The American Legion assists veterans with reintegrating back to their local communities. Additionally, they answered service members/veterans questions about benefits and described the Legion's programs as well as explained how to become a member. The employers and participants at this event were pleased with the outcome. The employers stated that the participants were professional and qualified. The participants liked that employers were from different industries and willing to hire veterans.

Additionally, on Friday, February 19, the Veterans Employment & Education Commission hosted an Employment & Empowerment Workshop at the Washington Hilton. The workshops were designed to help veterans, service members and their spouses find meaningful careers in the civilian workforce, expand their networks and gain the tools necessary to stand out throughout the hiring process. The day began with a free networking breakfast, and then segued into employment/empowerment workshops where leaders in the public and private sectors offered guidance on how to properly use LinkedIn for networking and employment purposes, personal branding and financial literacy. Speakers for these workshops included Robert Smith, Financial Education Specialist, ClearPoint Credit Counseling Solutions and Sarah Worley, Senior Manager, Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Following the morning workshops, attendees were able to mingle with each other and prospective employers during a luncheon.

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The American Legion's Veterans Employment & Education Division, through its relationships, continues to play a vital role in assisting American Legion Posts to produce successful Job Fairs, small business development workshops, and employment training services throughout America. In addition, the staff of the Veterans Employment & Education Division is also involved in a number of advisory committees. Assistant Director Davy Leghorn is a member of the Small Business Administration's Advisory Committee, and Deputy Director Mark Walker is a member of the Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Veterans Advisory Committee.

Aside from advisory committees, The American Legion is also a stakeholder and active participant in numerous government agencies and private businesses' veteran

initiatives, where our input into their programs is highly valued. The American Legion has a representative on the Department of Labor's Advisory Committee Veterans' Employment, Training and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO) and Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development. Lastly, The American Legion participates in the Veterans' Entrepreneurship's Task Force (VET-FORCE) business forums and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Service Member's Affairs meetings.

Finally, in a November 2015 economic report to Congress, it noted some relevant facts about veterans of the Post-9/11 era. Listed below are some findings pertaining to this demographic:

- **4 out of 5 Post-9/11 veterans are working or actively searching for work**: Recent veterans have a significantly higher labor force participation rate than the overall veteran population because most Post-9/11 veterans are in their prime working years. Males and those ages 25 to 54 years old are most likely to be in the labor force. Overall, Post-9/11 veterans who served in Afghanistan and/or Iraq have a lower labor force participation rate (78.2 percent) than Post-9/11 veterans who served elsewhere (83.1 percent).
- **Post-9/11 veterans face a somewhat higher employment rate than nonveterans**: The unemployment rate for Post-9/11 veterans averaged 6 percent over the past 12 months. Over the same period, the rate for nonveterans averaged 5.3 percent. The overall employment rate for veterans across all service periods averaged 4.7 percent. The unemployment rate for Post-9/11 veterans has fallen steadily since peaking at 12.1 percent in 2011.
- **The falling unemployment rate understates the challenge facing recent veterans**: One out of every two service members (53 percent) faces a period of unemployment after leaving the military, according to an analysis by the VA. However, most find work within six months. High rates of physical and psychological injuries and the stigma associated with the negative effects of combat zone experience can present hurdles to finding and sustaining employment for some veterans.
- **More than one in four Post-9/11 veterans in the labor force have a service-connected disability**: Of the nearly 2.5 million Post-9/11 veterans in the workforce, 28 percent report having a disability resulting from their military service. However, of those Post-9/11 veterans with a service-connected disability, 75 percent are in the labor force – either having a job or looking for one. Veterans with lower disability ratings are more likely to be in the labor force: 84 percent of those with a disability rating of 50 percent or less are in the labor force, compared with 67 percent of those with a disability rating of 60 percent or more.
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NATIONAL EMPLOYER AWARDS

During the Washington Conference, the Commission's Awards Subcommittee met to select winners in the Employer of Veterans and Employment Service awards categories. Winners include:

SMALL EMPLOYER:	**Operation: Job Ready Veterans** Indianapolis, Indiana
MEDIUM SIZE EMPLOYER:	**Stresscon Corporation** Colorado Springs, CO
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HOMELESS VET OUTREACH:	**The Department of Georgia** Atlanta, Georgia

VETERANS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

A very important part of the work of the Veterans Employment & Education Division is the preparation and presentation of congressional testimony as well as letters of support on issues affecting the economic well-being and financial stability of America's veterans. Since January 2016, the Veterans Employment & Education Division has been involved with two (2) congressional testimonies and have written four (4) letters of support.

The following is a synopsis of the congressional hearings and correspondence held from January to May 1, 2016, on matters pertaining to the Veterans Employment & Education Commission:

On February 9, the staff wrote a letter of support to Representative Derek Kilmer (WA) for "The Military Retiree Employment Act", which would update and improve the ability for a service member to obtain employment as a civil servant at the Department of Defense for a pilot period of five years.

On March 29, the staff wrote a letter of support to Representative Steve Chabot (OH) for "The Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act", which would amend the Small Business Act to direct the task force of the Office of Veterans Business Development to provide access to and manage the distribution of excess or surplus property to veteran-owned small businesses.

On April 8, the staff wrote a letter of support to Senator Roy Blunt (MO) for "The Military Families Stability Act", which would amend title 10, United States Code, to provide a limited timeframe for the relocation of spouses and dependents of certain Armed Forces members undergoing a permanent change of duty station to facilitate the familial relocation with ease.

On April 8, the staff wrote a letter of support to Senator Chris Coons (DE) for the "Stop Taxing Death and Disability Act." When the federal government discharges student loans due to someone, including veterans, being 100 percent disabled or who has died, the IRS recognizes the forgiven loan amount as income, and taxes it as such. It seems extremely unfair to have one part of the federal government forgive a debt and then have another part of the same government tax the amount forgiven.

On April 14, the staff testified before the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on "Pending Legislation" regarding education and employment issues. The hearing included 9 different bills. Listed are several bills we supported: (1) H.R. 3286 is a step in the right direction by rewarding exemplary companies who employ our veterans with a Presidential medallion. This is a low-cost measure that would hopefully spur private industry to hire more veterans and allow the Department of

Labor (DOL) to implement a real-time data collection to properly measure veteran's hiring at the state level; (2) H.R. 2551 - The American Legion has identified that the GI Bill can be a useful tool to help employers defray the costs of training of veterans by developing an on-the-job training or apprenticeship programs thereby benefiting both the veteran and employer. Consequently, The American Legion passed a resolution (No. 297) directly supporting the development of joint projects to enhance apprenticeship opportunities for eligible transitioning service members through their educational benefits; and (3) H.R. 748 - The American Legion wants our veterans to succeed and would like to see more veterans enter Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. Recent studies from the Department of Education has shown that for delayed-start or non-traditional students, such as veterans, it takes close to 6 years to graduate. Considering the shortage of skilled workers with degrees in STEM subjects, this bill would incentivize more veterans to enter a field where there is a critical shortage and high yearly job growth. The American Legion supports this bill that would allow extension of Title 38 education benefits up to nine months.

On April 20, the staff testified before the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on "A Review of Veterans' Preference in Federal Government Hiring." One of the reasons Veterans' Preference was established was to assist our nation's veterans, who joined the military and were not typically exposed to standard professional social settings. Veterans' Preference accounts for this by giving them inroads into government employment that will allow them to learn the soft personal skills that their civilian counterparts learned early on. Absence from the highly competitive job market due to military service creates an unfair and unequal burden on veterans in competing for employment with non-veteran peers upon completion of military service. Veterans' Preference was created to help restore the place of veterans on equal footing with their civilian counterparts by giving them an advantage. Veterans' Preference is important and a great benefit to the government, or indeed any organization, to stock their employee ranks with qualified veterans. The government has already invested a great deal of resources in training veterans during their military service, and that training can be put to use in further service of the government.

CONCLUSION

The Veterans Employment & Education Commission is fully aware that it would be impossible to carry out its mandates without the active involvement of Posts, Districts, Counties, Departments and individual Legionnaires. We deeply appreciate their continued support and involvement. Chairman Oxford also thanks the National Commander, the National Adjutant, the National Executive Committee, and the staff of both the Washington and Indianapolis offices for the outstanding support and cooperation they have provided during the past year.

Addendum A

Hold for Further Study

Resolution No. 12 (GA) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Operation Veteran Empowerment**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the Veterans Employment & Education Commission report with the exception of one resolution. There is one addendum. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the report to receive and file? If not, all in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 30: Support Student-Veterans Return-on-Investment Education Outcomes
Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission
Submitted By: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion, over the past several months, has been encouraged by the growing recognition within Congress of the need to make basic, but critical, information about the return on investment in higher education available to student-veterans; and

WHEREAS, Student debt and college costs are reaching new heights, and the public is increasingly questioning the benefit of a college degree; and

WHEREAS, Information about the value of specific degrees will allow those directly affected by higher education, students, families, taxpayers, policymakers, institutions, and employers, to make informed decisions; and

WHEREAS, Federal taxpayers spend more than $150 billion a year on federal financial aid, $30 billion on GI Bill benefits, and $1 billion on military tuition assistance, while students, states, and employers spend billions more, yet we cannot get answers to basic, fundamental questions; and

WHEREAS, With significant federal investment in programs and institutions, policymakers should demand better information about the effectiveness of higher education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 4-5, 2016, That Congress is urged to embrace outcomes-focused data systems that produce information which enable stakeholders to make informed decisions; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge Congress to pursue systems that provide timely, contextual, and actionable data necessary to calculate "return on investment" measures, but also to document continuous improvement within higher education institutions and training programs, as this information is vital to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment which are all critical pieces of the efforts to improve the outcomes of our education and workforce development systems; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Congress not make any legislative changes to the Post-9/11 GI Bill that may unduly harm veterans in their pursuit of a vocation that leads to gainful employment.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER PISA: Commander, this resolution has the approval of the Veterans Employment & Education Commission and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER PISA: Commander, attached to this report is Addendum A. I move the action of the commission become the action of the NEC.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time I call on National Historian James E. Copher from the Department of Minnesota for the purposes of a report.

Report: National Historian
James E. Copher, Minnesota, National Historian

Commander Barnett, national officers, members of the National Executive Committee, good morning to each and every one of you. Thank you for the opportunity to address this body of distinguished legionnaires, for it is an honor to serve as your historian. Commander Barnett, I would like to take a moment to thank you for your visit to Minnesota in February and speaking with all of the Legionaries and community leaders along the way. I hoped you enjoyed the snowmobiling and ice fishing.

As historian, I have received requests for information on the 2015 contest that was held at the fall meeting of the NEC. We as historians need to find a way to give feedback to the post and departments historians. I have talked with several past national historians and post historians to get an idea of the type of feedback that is needed. NADHAL, the National Association of Department Historians of The American Legion, talked about feedback at our fall meeting this past October, and we will find a way to give feedback to the historians.

I announced the winners of the National History Book Contest at fall NEC. I would like to give you some statistics about that contest. Only 38 books were entered. Ten books were represented at the department level, and only 28 departments were represented with post narrative or post history books. I can only hope that the remaining departments and the thousands of posts are recording their histories. For as we all know to not record our histories, what our founding fathers strived to do, will be a blank to those whom come after we are gone. With the 100th anniversary celebration coming up, this should be a reminder that we need to ensure departments and posts are recording our history.

At this time I am working on the annual historian's luncheon that will be held at the Hyatt Hotel Cincinnati on Saturday, August 27. I am working on a guest speaker for the luncheon. Please remind your department historians of our luncheon and special guest, and encourage them to attend.

Before I go any further, I must thank Mr. Howard Trace and his fine library staff for their assistance and support in the past months. They have been of great help.

In closing, I would like to thank my Minnesota Legion family for all their support and especially, my wife, Joyce. I look forward to seeing all of you, your department historians and all the past national historians this coming August in Cincinnati for the 98th National Convention.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to serve as the historian of the largest veteran organization in the world, The American Legion. Thank you very much.

Commander, this concludes my report.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN KILE: Mr. Commander, motion to receive and file the report of National Historian James Copher. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and second to receive the report of the national historian. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries. Thank you, James, you've done a terrific job, and keep up the great work.

NATIONAL HISTORIAN COPHER: Thank you, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I call on Richard Anderson from the Department of Connecticut, chairman of the Americanism Commission, for the purposes of a report.

Oral Report: Americanism Commission
Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman

Good morning, Mr. Commander and members of the National Executive Committee. I am privileged to stand before you and report on the actions of your Americanism Commission. Copies of my detailed written report have been distributed for your review, so I will only brief you on some of the highlights of our meetings.

The Committee on Youth Education met on Saturday and Sunday, and reported to the commission on Monday. The commission approved the committee's recommendation to award 31 American Legacy Scholarships, with each receiving an award of $1,612.

The committee recommended that The American Legion National Education Award be awarded to Sydney T. Ellington, Ph.D., Commander, United States Navy, retired. Dr. Ellington is currently the executive director of the Warrior Scholarship Project. Ellington's exceptional and impactful service to this country, both in uniform and as a veteran educator, relentless passion to the future of the education of our nation's children and veterans, as a teacher, professor, school administrator, and nonprofit education executive, reflects the highest values of The American Legion.

The Americanism Commission is concerned that in today's society, law enforcement is not always regarded with the respect that it deserves. The commission further recognizes that The American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program is an excellent vehicle through which young people are empowered to realize, early on, that peace officers stand as staunch supporters for moral and legal rights, and that the dedication and impact that they have in local communities, state, and nation should be regarded with respect and appreciation. The program also serves as an intellectual steppingstone in the life for high school students considering a career in law enforcement, as they experience, through those professional practices and concepts, firsthand during their weeklong experience at a state training academy.

A goal of the Americanism Commission is to grow the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program to a level whereby a national capstone program could then be developed to maintain the high standards to which the Boys Nation program is to Boys State. There are currently 19 departments with youth cadet programs. More are needed before developing a capstone may be considered. Departments without a program may be more confident to engage, if they had available to them, focused one-on-one guidance, strategies, methodologies, tools, and resources for establishing a program.

Last fall, I asked for the staff to work up a study on the expansion of the program throughout the country, and to make this available to the Youth Activities Subcommittee during its meetings earlier this week. As such, the Youth Activities Subcommittee recommended to the commission that an American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Subcommittee be established. At the commission meeting on Tuesday, a five member Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Subcommittee of the Americanism Commission was put in place. The purpose of the subcommittee is to work toward establishing a national capstone program by, one, developing and executing strategies and methodologies to encourage and assist those departments without the program to establish one; two, formulating and recommending guidelines, policies, strategies, plans, program tools, resources, and activities of the youth cadet program; and number three, promoting the youth cadet programs and its principles at all levels of The American Legion.

I have appointed Americanism Commission Vice Chairman Larry Price of South Dakota to serve as chairman of the new subcommittee. I will be making other appointments at a future date, which may include members of The American Legion and nonmembers having a strong background in the field of law enforcement and youth development. The subcommittee will meet up to four times a year, reporting to the Americanism Commission

twice a year. I hope to report to you at this time next year of additional departments that have put the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program in place.

The 79th National Oratorical Contest proved to be another successful competition. Benjamin Crosby from the Department of Washington won the competition. Over $136,000 in scholarships were awarded to participants during the national finals.

Jacob Kelley from Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, was selected the 2016 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and will receive a $10,000 scholarship. Runners-up and recipients of a $2,500 scholarship each are Jeremiah Lovestrand from Florida, Liam O'Conner from Delaware, and Jacob Quigley from Illinois. Thirty-three applications were considered.

Your commission received a briefing from Mr. Eddie Holbrook, chairman of the Cleveland County American Legion World Series Executive Committee in Shelby, detailing for the 90th American Legion Baseball World Series to be held August 11 through 16 in Shelby, North Carolina.

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation board of directors met on Sunday and was presented with donations in excess of $101,163 from the Sons of The American Legion, that they raised during their recent spring NEC meetings, bringing their total to this current program year to over $276,301. With the continued support of the Legion family, the Child Welfare Foundation continues to work for the betterment of all children.

The commission would like to thank Mr. Ken Orrock, chairman of the Membership & Post Activities Committee, for providing an overview of The American Legion strategic plan for membership growth, and how that plan can overlay with programs of the Americanism Commission.

The commission again is enthusiastically looking forward to a great week of competition in Shelby, North Carolina, as I stated earlier.

Our service to veterans and their families through the Temporary Financial Assistance Program for 2015 reached over $819,971 with the help of The American Legion. There were 1,511 children of 631 veterans afforded this.

Mr. Commander and members of the National Executive Committee, the Americanism Commission again thanks you for your longstanding support. I thank you for consideration of the resolutions emanating from the Americanism Commission this morning, and a special thanks to the staff of the Americanism Commission here at national headquarters. Mr. Commander, that completes my report.

Report: Americanism Commission
May 4 – 5, 2016
Richard W. Anderson, Connecticut, Chairman

The Americanism Commission met at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana on May 2-3, 2016. There were 90 members present, including members of the Americanism Council, Committee on Children & Youth, Committee on Youth Education, and Baseball Committee. We were privileged to have with us Past National Commanders John “Jake” Comer (MA), Daniel Ludwig (MN), Daniel Dellinger (VA), Robert Turner (GA), Anthony Jordan (ME) Thomas Bock (CO) and Joe Frank (MO). Other distinguished guests included Sons of The American Legion Americanism Chairman Greg K. Gibbs (NY), American Legion Auxiliary Education Chairman Sue Britton (NY), Edwin Holbrook, Consultant, American Legion Baseball Committee and other honored guests representing The American Legion and affiliated organizations.

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH EDUCATION
Michael Bredeck, Minnesota, Chairman

The Committee on Youth Education (COYE) considered two resolutions. After review and discussion, the COYE recommended approval of the following resolutions:

- ***American Legacy Scholarship Enhancement***
- ***World War I Centennial Commission Education Plan***

The COYE recommended the following resolution be withdrawn:

- ***American Legacy Scholarship Enhancement*** – May 2015 NEC, Register Res. No. 8

Your committee recommended that the American Legion Legacy Scholarships awarded at the 2016 Spring Meetings of the National Executive Committee remain subject to the applicable guidelines and policies in place prior to any passage of the resolution "American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement". Specifically, it is recommended that the total amount available for 2016 scholarship recipients be limited to $50,000, and the total amount be equally divided among such recipients.

The COYE recommended that should the resolution "American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement" be approved, the following administrative criteria be used in the application and awards determination process beginning with the 2017 award year:

Children of Fallen Post-9/11 Servicemembers

- Child/children or legally adopted child/children or the child of a spouse by prior marriage or dependent child as defined by the United States armed services of active duty United States military and National Guard and military reservists, who were federalized and died on active duty on or after September 11, 2001
- Official (Form DD1300) military death certificate
- FAFSA Summary showing expected family contribution
- If applicable, any award notifications from federal or state veteran benefits programs (e.g. The Gunnery Sergeant Fry Scholarship, GI-Bill benefits, etc.)
- Financial aid package notification from their prospective/current institution of higher education
- Breakdown of all education-related expenses to include but not limited to tuition, fees, books, program costs, meal plan, housing and transportation
- High school senior or high school graduate currently accepted to or

Children of Post-9/11 Veterans VA-rated 50% or greater disabled

- Child/children or legally adopted child/children or the child of a spouse by prior marriage or dependent child as defined by the United States armed services of active duty United States military and National Guard and military reservists, who were federalized and received an injury while on active duty on or after September 11, 2001, leading to a Department of Veteran Affairs disability rating of 50 percent or higher
- Official disability rating paperwork from the Department of Veteran Affairs
- FAFSA summary showing expected family contribution
- If applicable, any award notifications from federal or state veteran benefits programs (e.g. GI-Bill benefits, etc.)
- Financial aid package notification from their prospective/current institution of higher education
- Breakdown of all education-related expenses to include but not limited to tuition, fees, books, program costs, meal plan, housing and transportation
- High school senior or high school graduate currently accepted to or attending

attending a nonprofit and regionally accredited institution of higher education within the United States

- Scholarship funds be available for award and use at the undergraduate and graduate levels of study

a nonprofit and regionally accredited institution of higher education within the United States

- Scholarship funds be available for award and use at the undergraduate and graduate levels of study

The COYE has tasked the national staff with the development of a formula for accurately determining needs-based award amounts for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship for review by The Committee on Youth Education and for recommendation and approval by the Americanism Commission.

Your committee also recommended that national staff be tasked with developing a "Scholarships of Americanism: Policies and Procedures" manual for review and approval by the Americanism Commission for the administration of all scholarships which fall under the umbrella of the Americanism Commission. Such policies and procedures should include, but not be limited to:

- Level of study
- Institutional Internal Revenue Service IRC status and accreditation status
- Scholarship, leadership and citizenship
- Financial need

Additionally, the committee recommended that the criteria above and forthcoming needs-based formula for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship be included in said manual.

The COYE selected Dr. Sidney T. Ellington, Ph.D., Commander-USN (Ret.) of Washington, D.C., as the recipient of The American Legion's 2017 National Education Award for his exceptional service to his country both in uniform and as a veteran educator. Ellington is currently the Executive Director of the Warrior Scholar Project. He spent five years working in various roles with Teach For America from a standard corps member to the Director of Military Veterans Outreach and Support. He has also served in the capacity of Dean of Students for ReNEW Schools of New Orleans, Louisiana, and has been a program manager in the Louisiana Department of Education's Office of Special Services. During his 20-year service with the U.S. Navy, Ellington served as a SEAL and Adjunct Professor at the Joint Special Ops University. Ellington's exceptional and impactful service to his country, both in uniform and as a veteran educator, as well as his relentless passion to further the education of our nation's children and veterans as a teacher, professor, school administrator, and nonprofit education executive, reflects the highest values of The American Legion.

The COYE recommended the Americanism Commission award 31 American Legacy Scholarships with each of the following receiving a $1,612 scholarship:

New Awards:	Renewal Awards:
• Dennis Jallah – North Carolina • Chelsea Briggs – Hawaii • Faith Martin – Tennessee • Kyana Goodman – Florida • Mika Hobart – New York • Jetta Greene – Kansas • Alexander Menke – Kansas • Brody Pristap – Michigan • Ashlyn McCain – Texas • Justin Mariano – California • Angelika Henderson – North Carolina • Nia Tolbert – Kansas • Alyssa Hill – Tennessee • Willie Bryant, III – South Carolina • John Colman, II – North Carolina • Elijah Harris – Maryland • Kevin Curry – Washington* * Last U.S. home base; family is currently stationed in Italy.	• Alexis Baker – Arkansas • Chris Kimmerly – New York • Paige Hobart – New York • Karina Bertolino – California • Jason Bertolino – California • Jacob Martin – Tennessee • Craig Thurber – Kansas • Kenneth Wilder – Virginia • Peter Witt – Ohio • Shane Sexton – South Carolina • Mackenzie Lilley – Pennsylvania • Laura DuPont – Illinois • Sean McVey – West Virginia • Donovan Caldwell – Iowa

REPORT ON THE AMERICAN LEGION WORLD SERIES
Eddie Holbrook, North Carolina, Chairman, Cleveland County ALWS Committee

Eddie Holbrook, Chairman, Cleveland County American Legion Baseball World Series (ALBWS) Committee provided an update to Americanism Commission regarding future goals and the various events scheduled for the 90th American Legion World Series, including the growth of the Seventh Inning Stretch Festival and the continued live telecast of "Semi-Finals Monday" and "Championship Tuesday" games on ESPNU. Holbrook reported that discussions with ESPN to live telecast the three Sunday games of "Military Appreciation Day" are moving in a favorable direction and a decision is expected by end of the month. The commission is enthusiastically looking forward to the ESPNU coverage and another outstanding week of competition and camaraderie in Shelby, North Carolina, the "home" of The American Legion Baseball World Series. The commission and Baseball Committee expressed their appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Holbrook, the Cleveland County American Legion Baseball World Series Committee and the many hundreds of volunteers for their hard work and dedication, who consistently provide the "wow factor" every year.

On behalf of the entire commission, Chairman Anderson extended heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Holbrook, his executive planning committee and the entire Shelby community for their efforts and support in making the American Legion World Series the premier event that it has become.

REPORT ON TROOP & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS
Bruce Drake, Indiana, Assistant Director, Americanism

The Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) program awarded 32 grants in 2015. These grants provided comfort and therapeutic items, activities and events for several hundred wounded, injured and ill servicemembers and their families, estimated to have directly impacted over 6,000 individuals.

OCW highlights of 2015 include:

- Supporting the Army and Marine Corps warrior game trials that led to the national-level Department of Defense's Warrior Games competition.
- Collaborating with VA&R staff to deliver $45,000 in grant items to ten VA Medical Centers in Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, North Carolina and Minnesota.
- Hosting several wounded warriors and families as weekend guests in Baltimore during the national convention and Past Department Commander Club luncheon.
- Hosting 800 wounded warriors and their families from Brooke Army Medical Center for a day of fun and barbeque at Six Flags San Antonio, Texas.
- Sponsoring a whitewater rafting trip for 24 wounded Marines and sailors on the Colorado River.
- Presenting bicycles to the Balboa Naval Medical Center in San Diego, California, to replace equipment that had been stolen from the facility.

These highlighted grants are just a fraction of the comfort that The American Legion's OCW program was proud to provide in the last year.

Donations to Operation Comfort Warriors for 2015 have reached a new high of $624,399 and showed a 21% increase over the donation total for 2014.

During 2015, The American Legion's Family Support Network fielded 907 requests for information and assistance just at national headquarters alone, with untold other requests certain to have been received at post and department levels throughout the nation. Despite reductions in reserve and National Guard activations and deployments, military families still have special needs that The American Legion continues to address through our Family Support Network.

REPORT OF THE YOUTH ACTIVITIES SUBCOMMITTEE
Charles T. Tucker, Georgia, Vice Chairman

The Youth Activities Subcommittee (YASC) met Monday, May 2, 2016, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The subcommittee reviewed the following resolutions and recommended the following to the Americanism Commission:

- ***Proposed Change to the Oratorical National Finals*** – Res. No. 5 CONV 2015 (AK) Reject
- ***Presentation of American Flags to the Families of Deceased Boy and Girl Scouts*** – Res. No. 9 CONV 2015 (CO) Handle Administratively
- ***Revise Eligibility Requirements for The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year*** – Res. No. 22 CONV 2015 (TX) Approve
- ***Amend Oratorical Contest Rules to Allow American Sign Language Interpreters*** – Res. No. 58 CONV 2015 (VA) Reject

- ***American Legion Scouting Advisory Council Register Res. No. 2735*** – (NV-DEC) – Hold for Further Study

Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program

There are currently 19 departments with Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Programs: Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Virginia.

The Youth Activities Subcommittee recommended to the Commission that an American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Subcommittee be established.

Chairman Anderson declared the establishment of a five-member Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Subcommittee of the Americanism Commission. Chairman Anderson further appointed Americanism Commission Vice Chairman Larry Price (SD) to serve as chairman of that subcommittee. Chairman Anderson will make other appointments at a future date which may include members of The American Legion and non-members having a strong background in the field of law enforcement and/or youth development. The subcommittee will meet up to four times a year, reporting to the Americanism Commission twice a year.

The Americanism Commission is concerned that in today's society law enforcement is not always regarded with the respect it deserves. The Commission further recognizes that The American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement (YCLE) program is an excellent vehicle through which young people are empowered to realize early on that peace officers stand as staunch supporters for moral and legal rights, and that the dedication and impact they have in local communities, state, and nation should be regarded with respect and appreciation. The YCLE program also serves as an influential stepping stone in life for high school students considering a career in law enforcement as they experience those professional practices and concepts first-hand during their week-long experience at a state police training academy.

The goal of the Americanism Commission is to grow the YCLE program to a level whereby a national capstone program could then be developed, analogous of what Boys Nation is to Boys State. It is felt departments without a program may be more confident to engage if they had available to them focused one-on-one guidance, strategies, methodologies, tools and resources for establishing a program.

The purpose of the subcommittee will be to work toward establishing a national capstone program by:

1) Developing and executing strategies and methodologies to encourage and assist those departments without the program to establish one.
2) Formulating and recommending guidelines, policies, strategic plans, program tools, resources and activities for the YCLE program.
3) Promoting the YCLE program and its principles at all levels of The American Legion.

Junior Shooting Sports Program

The 26th American Legion Junior Three-Position Air Rifle National Championship will be held July 19-23, 2016, at the USA Shooting range facility located at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The second annual Junior Shooting Sports Chairmen's Conference will be held September 16-18, 2016, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. Additional information will be posted on the program website. This is the same weekend as the annual Children & Youth Conference.

American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program
"A Constitutional Speech Contest"

The 79th National Finals Contests were conducted on April 15-17, 2016, at the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel. The 53 department winners who entered the national competition were all outstanding representatives of today's youth. The top three national finalists are:

First Place	Benjamin Crosby (WA) Post 91	$18,000
Second Place	Solomon Brown (MS) Post 200	$16,000
Third Place	Cheyenne Mathews (AK) Post 3	$14,000

The national finalists are also the recipients of a $1,500 scholarship for having participated in the quarter-final contest.

The 2017 contest will be held on April 21-23 at the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel. The certification of department winners is due to National Headquarters by March 18, 2017.

The 47th annual meeting of department chairpersons will be held September 23-25, 2016, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana.

American Legion & Scouting

Jacob Kelley from Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, was selected the 2016 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and will receive a $10,000 scholarship from The American Legion. Runners-up and recipients of a $2,500 scholarship are Jeremiah Lovestrand from Floral City, Florida, Liam O'Conner from Wyoming, Delaware, and Jacob Quigley from Bourbonnais, Illinois.

Thirty-three applications were submitted from the following departments: Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, France, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

In 2015, there were 2,448 Scouting units chartered by American Legion posts, American Legion Auxiliary units, and Sons of The American Legion squadrons, serving 61,273 young men and women.

American Legion Boys State & American Legion Boys Nation

The 2016 session of American Legion Boys Nation will be held July 22-30, 2016, on the campus of Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia.

The 81st annual meeting of American Legion Boys State Directors and Chairmen will be held September 23-25, 2016 at the Sheraton Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH
Herbert J. Petit, Jr., Louisiana, Chairman

The Committee on Children & Youth met at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel, Panorama A, 21st floor in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Monday, May 2, 2016.

PNC William Detweiler (LA), President of the American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation (EFC), updated the commission on the status of the EFC. During 2015, the fund transferred over $187,960 to The American Legion for Children & Youth and

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation programs. The Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program, which is partially funded by the EFC, received $160,267. The TFA program will continue to be a focal point in promotional efforts by the board of directors in order to bring visibility to the Endowment Fund.

TFA continues to provide for the basic needs of children of eligible veterans through cash grants made possible through the generosity of the American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation. During 2015, TFA assisted 1,511 children of 631 veterans throughout the United States maintain shelter, utilities, food and clothing with over $819,971 in cash grants. For the first quarter of this year, TFA has provided over $167,000 to 280 children of 131 veterans' families.

The Board of Directors of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) met on Sunday, May 1, 2016 at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis. During their meetings, the Sons of The American Legion presented donations from their recent spring meetings totaling over $101,613. This amount brings their total donations to the CWF to over $276,231 for the current donation year (June 1, 2015-May31, 2016).

The 10th annual national Children & Youth Conference will be held on September 16-18, 2016, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis. This conference will educate Legion representatives from 52 departments on current children's issues and the children & youth programs of the Americanism Commission. Conference participants will learn practical implementation strategies for conducting children & youth programs and conferences within their departments. As our children and youth programs work best due to a concerted effort from all members of the Legion family, please encourage the children & youth representatives from your Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion to consider joining us for a number of informative sessions.

The committee considered two resolutions. After review and discussion, the Committee on Children & Youth recommended approval of the following resolutions:

- ***Continued Operation of the Family Support Network***
- ***Establishing the Elmer H. Fuhrhop Memorial Room at National Headquarters***

REPORT ON THE AMERICAN LEGION STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Kenneth Orrock, South Dakota, Chairman
Membership & Post Activities Committee

The Americanism Commission received an overview of The American Legion Strategic Plan for Membership Growth to aggressively grow membership over the next five years and beyond. The Americanism Commission represents two pillars of the organization through Americanism and Children & Youth programs, therefore, it is vital to the future of The American Legion that these programs continue to enhance the following five strategies outlined in the strategic plan:

- Creating brand awareness by incorporating the name of the organization and our emblem into program marketing plans.
- Communicating at all levels of the organization and the general public through internal and external media, social media and department media teams about our programs.
- Increasing leadership and training opportunities for members at all levels of the organization.
- Post creation, development and revitalization to promote growth of posts and programs.
- Membership recruitment and retention.

REPORT OF THE BASEBALL COMMITTEE
Gary Stone, Missouri, Chairman

The American Legion Baseball (ALB) Committee met Monday, May 2, 2016, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The ALB Committee recommended to the Commission resolution ***American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2017 and 2018*** be approved. Regional sites are:

Region 1 – Open
Region 2 – Open
Region 3 – Asheboro, NC
Region 4 – New Orleans, LA
Region 5 – Napoleon, OH
Region 6 – Dickinson, ND
Region 7 – Missoula, MT
Region 8 – Denver, CO

The Baseball Committee is seriously concerned regarding no bids have been received from Regions 1 and 2. Additional efforts will take place over the summer in order for a resolution to be brought forward by your Committee at the Fall Meetings.

The committee also recommended to the commission approval of the following resolutions:

- ***Creation of an American Legion Baseball Department Website Network***
- ***Taylor Hooton Foundation***

The ALB Committee is pleased to report as of May 1, 2016, the number of teams that have registered online for the 2016 season totals 2,744. It is anticipated that an additional 1,200+ teams will be registering in the next 28 days as the high school baseball seasons conclude throughout the country.

The committee discussed the Major League Baseball/USA Baseball initiative, entitled "Pitch Smart," that provides a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. It is the recommendation of the committee that a USA Baseball representative be invited to the fall department baseball chairmen's conference to provide a presentation regarding this initiative. The committee recommended to the Americanism Commission that the guidelines and requirements of Pitch Smart be adopted for the American Legion Baseball national tournaments commencing with the 2017 season.

REPORT OF THE CITIZENSHIP & NATURALIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Joseph Caouette, New Hampshire, Chairman

The Citizenship and Naturalization Subcommittee met on Monday, May 2, 2016, in the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Panorama B, 21st floor. Discussions of the subcommittee began with reviewing its purpose and focus for promoting understanding, appreciation and active participation in the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship and government, as well as it seeking the cultural assimilation of immigrants and lawful residents seeking a legal path to citizenship into local communities.

The Citizenship & Naturalization Subcommittee concluded by summarizing its recommendations to the Americanism Commission:

- That the Americanism Commission use all means available to encourage promoting positions, programs and initiatives that uphold the path to legal immigration and naturalized citizenship.
- That the Americanism Commission strongly urge vigor by Legion posts, districts and departments to collaborate with the Office of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) by undertaking activities that assist and

assimilate immigrants seeking the legal path to naturalized U.S. citizenship, using guidance and resources provided in the *Citizenship Outreach Guide*.

- That the Americanism Commission strongly urge active participation in the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship and American government, most especially by "getting out the vote" and undertaking local community GOTV activities detailed in the *Vote America* booklet.
- That the Americanism Commission use all means available to encourage and promote the honoring of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day on September 16, 2016, and that staff use available resources including newsletters, bulletins and other means of communication to promote the same.
- That the Americanism Commission continue to use all means available to encourage honoring National Motto Day on July 30, 2016, and the public and private display of "In God We Trust" and that staff use available resources including newsletters, bulletins and other means of communication to promote the same.

Addendum A: Resolutions Not Approved

Rejected

Resolution No. 5 (AK) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Proposed Change to the Oratorical Contest National Finals**

Resolution No. 58 (VA) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Amend Oratorical Contest Rules to Allow American Sign Language Interpreters**

Hold for Further Study

Register Resolution No. 2735 (NV) (DEC)**: Formation of an American Legion Scouting Advisory Council**

Disposed of Administratively

Resolution No. 9 (CO) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Presentation of American Flags to the Families of Deceased Boy and Girl Scouts**

Withdrawn

Resolution No. 8 (Americanism) (2015 Spring NEC)**: American Legacy Scholarship Enhancement**

Addendum B

The Americanism Commission recommends the following dates for the events/meetings from our report, presented to the body for disposition.

Meeting Date	Event/Meeting	Conference Dates
May 4-5, 2016	**American Legion Boys Nation – 2016**	**July 22-30, 2016**
	American Legion Boys Nation – 2017	**July 21-29, 2017**
	American Legion Boys Nation – 2018	**July 20-28, 2018**
	American Legion Boys Nation – 2019	**July 19-27, 2019**
	American Legion Boys Nation – 2020	**July 17-25, 2020**
	American Legion Boys Nation – 2021	**July 23-31, 2021**
	Americanism Conference – 2016	**September 23-25, 2016**
	Americanism Conference – 2017	**September 22-24, 2017**
	Americanism Conference – 2018	**September 28-30, 2018**
	Americanism Conference – 2019	**September 27-29, 2019**
	Baseball Regionals – 2016	**August 3-7, 2016**
	Baseball Regionals – 2017	**August 2-6, 2017**
	Baseball Regionals – 2018	**August 8-12, 2018**
	Baseball Regionals – 2019	**August 7-11, 2019**
	Baseball World Series – 2016	**August 11-16, 2016**
	Baseball World Series – 2017	**August 10-15, 2017**
	Baseball World Series – 2018	**August 16-21, 2018**
	Baseball World Series – 2019	**August 15-20, 2019**
	Children & Youth Conference – 2016	**September 16-18, 2016**
	Children & Youth Conference – 2017	**September 15-17, 2017**
	Children & Youth Conference – 2018	**September 21-23, 2018**
	Children & Youth Conference – 2019	**September 20-22, 2019**
	Jr. Shooting Sports Conference – 2016	**September 16-18, 2016**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2016	**April 15-17, 2016**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2017	**April 21-23, 2017**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2018	**April 13-15, 2018**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2019	**April 5-7, 2019**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2020	**April 17-19, 2020**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2021	**April 9-11, 2021**
	Oratorical Contest Finals – 2022	**April 22-24, 2022**
	Scouting Conference (telephonic)	**October 27, 2016**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2016	**July 19-23, 2016**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2017	**July 18-22, 2017**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2018	**July 24-28, 2018**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2019	**July 23-27, 2019**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2020	**July 21-25, 2020**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2021	**July 20-24, 2021**
	Shooting Sports Nationals – 2022	**July 19-23, 2022**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, Motion to receive and file the report of the Americanism Commission with the exception of five resolutions. We have two addendums, A and B. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to receive and file the report of the Americanism Commission. Any discussion? I've got a question.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: I have something that's just not looking right here. We just heard a little while ago on the Legacy Scholarship that we're giving 45,000, and IRS is looking saying, "Hey, you're not giving enough, you can lose your nonprofit." We're got 31 kids, we've giving them $1,612. That's an odd figure. Somehow we came to the idea we're going to share this much money and not more. Was there bigger need? Why did we say only $1,612? I don't comprehend.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: Commander, that allocation was awarded prior to this resolution going into effect. We went by the standards for 2016 that were in place. As of next year, those standards, of course, will be changed, and there will be probably in excess of $700,000 given out.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: These kids right here, we're giving them a one-time $1,600?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: That's correct.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: If they're in college next year, can we get back with them?

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: They can reinstate again next year. Yes, they can.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: I'm hoping they'll do that because, you know, it sounds to me like and I'm glad we're addressing it. It sounds to me like we're correcting a problem we've got. But we have been, cheap is not the word that I want to use. *(Laughter)* Frugal.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: If you want to say pretty stingy, sir, you're correct.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRIEDEN: It wasn't matching up in my mind. So I'm looking, saying, wait a minute, something's wrong here.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ANDERSON: At that point of discussion, this scholarship was based on merit. Now the scholarship is going to be based on need, so we will see a greater increase in that. As of this year, we went by the standards that were in place, and that will be corrected. And yes, they can reapply next year.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Is there any further discussion of the commission report of the Americanism Commission? If not, all in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Receive and file the report.

Resolution No. 8: Continued Operation of the Family Support Network
Origin: Committee on Children & Youth
Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion, throughout its history, has been dedicated to acting in support of our nation's armed forces and their families, both during their service and after; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 30 titled Continued Operation Of The Family Support Network adopted at the 1991 Fall Meeting of the National Executive Committee allowed for continued operation of the Family Support Network program of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, The Family Support Network, which served our nation's military families through Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, continues today to respond

to thousands of requests for assistance each year from the family members of those who have served or are currently serving in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, The Family Support Network maintains a service of great importance to American service members and families, and its value was recognized by the Department of Defense entering into a community covenant with The American Legion at the National Convention on August 24, 2009; and

WHEREAS, The Family Support Network has been repeatedly called upon to be a component of support to deployed and mobilized servicemember families since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, The resulting Global War on Terror has prompted the U.S. Armed Forces to redefine the mission of the National Guard and Reserve so that all forces – Active, Reserve and National Guard – are subject to multiple activations and deployments; and

WHEREAS, America's military continues to be assigned missions across the country and around the world resulting in servicemembers being separated from their families and communities more often and for longer periods of time in service to our nation and its allies; and

WHEREAS, American Legion posts, most especially those near military facilities, are the best means of determining how to assist the military families within their communities; and

WHEREAS, Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Family Support Network program management migrated from the Magazine Division, now currently the Marketing, Media & Communications Division, to the Americanism Division of The American Legion, to more align with the family-focused emphasis of Children & Youth; and

WHEREAS, The Americanism Commission, believing that the Family Support Network provides valuable services to deployed servicemembers and their families, recommends a renewed dedication and participation by members of The American Legion; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion urges departments and posts to reinvigorate Family Support Network programs in their local communities to aid military families of servicemembers in the Active, Reserve or National Guard components of our nation's armed forces; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That American Legion posts be encouraged to maintain an ongoing relationship with local military organizations to help ensure that the Family Support Network program remains a viable asset for future support needs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the proponency and administration of the Family Support Network Program be officially ratified under the Americanism Commission.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the chairman of the Committee on Children and Youth, Americanism Commission, and your Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We've got a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 9: American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites and Dates for 2017 and 2018

Origin: American Legion Baseball Committee

Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 9 of the National Executive Committee, May 2009, established that beginning with the 2011-2012 seasons, regional tournaments of The American Legion Baseball program will be sited in one location for two (2) consecutive years based on accessibility and central location as determined by open bids using objective, weighted evaluation criteria; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the Americanism Commission to select the sites and dates for the regional and World Series tournaments of American Legion Baseball; and

WHEREAS, It is customary that the sites for regional tournaments be selected in advance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the dates for regional tournaments of The American Legion Baseball program shall be August 2-6, 2017, and August 8-12, 2018; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That sites for the 2017 and 2018 regional tournaments of The American Legion Baseball program be awarded to:

Region 1 – No Submissions	**Region 2 – No Submissions**
Region 3 – Asheboro, North Carolina	**Region 4 – New Orleans, Louisiana**
Region 5 – Napoleon, Ohio	**Region 6 – Dickinson, North Dakota**
Region 7 – Missoula, Montana	**Region 8 – Denver, Colorado**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Baseball Committee, the Americanism Commission, and the approval of your Subcommittee on Resolutions and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We've got a motion and a second. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 10: Revise Eligibility Requirements for the American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year

Origin: Resolution No. 22 (TX) 2015 National Convention

Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion sponsors an annual American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year award and scholarship; and

WHEREAS, The current eligibility requirements include being the son or grandson of an American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary member; and

WHEREAS, Applicants cannot claim an eligibility by being the son or grandson of a Sons of The American Legion member; and

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That the requirements for Eagle Scout of the Year award be amended to include being the son or grandson of a Sons of The American Legion member.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Americanism Commission and the Subcommittee on Resolutions, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Resolution No. 11: World War I Centennial Commission Education Plan
Origin: Committee on Youth Education
Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The Preamble of The American Legion in its constitution states as a foundational purpose: "To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars"; and

WHEREAS, The United States World War I Centennial Commission was founded by an Act of Congress in 2013, and its membership includes members of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, The commission is responsible for serving as lead organizer for the nation's World War I commemorative events; and

WHEREAS, A major goal of the commission is to "develop educational programs targeted at a variety of audiences and delivered through a variety of broadcast, print and digital media, with the goal of teaching Americans about the country's most forgotten war"; and

WHEREAS, The commission made public its "National Education Plan" in July 2015; and

WHEREAS, The commission's education plan, as reviewed by the Americanism Commission's Committee on Youth Education, reflects a visionary and collaborative approach to reaching every student and teacher in grades 5-12 across the nation by 2019 with fully-inclusive curricula, and the plan also coincides with The American Legion's 21st Century Policy on Education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion proudly commends The United States World War I Centennial Commission for its tactical, vital and creative National Education Plan; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this commendation is done at no cost to The American Legion which withholds all grants of authority to use The American Legion's name and/or trademark without specific authority, except in fair-use reporting of this resolution.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Committee on Youth Education, the Americanism Commission, and the Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries

Resolution No. 12: Taylor Hooton Foundation
Origin: American Legion Baseball Committee
Submitted By: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, Taylor Hooton, a 17-year old high school athlete from Plano, Texas played American Legion Baseball and took his own life on July 15, 2003, after using anabolic steroids; and

WHEREAS, The Taylor Hooton Foundation (THF) was formed in 2004 in memory of Taylor E. Hooton; and

WHEREAS, Over 1.5 million teens have admitted to using anabolic steroids and the median age for first-time steroid use being 15; and

WHEREAS, Taylor Hooton's parents, family and friends founded THF after learning of the growing number of middle school, high school and college students illegally using and abusing anabolic steroids, Human Growth Hormone (HGH), unregulated dietary supplements, and other appearance and performance enhancing drugs (APEDs); and

WHEREAS, APEDs include a wide range of substances borrowed from a wide range of medical disciplines and associated fields and have a long history in sport and competition; and

WHEREAS, Two tenants of The American Legion Baseball Code of Sportsmanship are "Keep myself fit" and "Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body"; and

WHEREAS, The THF is widely recognized as a leader in education on the topic of youth APED in the United States, Canada and Latin America; and

WHEREAS, To date, the THF has spoken to almost one million people directly with their education programs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 4-5, 2016, That The American Legion commends the Taylor Hooton Foundation for its efforts in providing parents, coaches and other adult influencers with knowledge and tools to help raise awareness about the dangers of appearance and performance enhancing drugs (APEDs) by making the right choices with respect to healthy lifestyle; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this commendation is done at no cost to The American Legion which withholds all grants of authority to use The American Legion's name and/or trademark without specific authority, except in fair-use reporting of this resolution.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: This has the approval of the Baseball Committee, the Americanism Commission, and the Resolutions Subcommittee, and I move for its adoption. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER BOLAND: Commander, attached to this report is Addendum A and B. I move the action of the Americanism Commission become the action of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I've got a motion and second. Any further discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, if there's anyone who has any donations for Operation Comfort Warriors or others, please come forward.

...National Vice Commander Davis assumed the chair.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KOUTZ: Thank you, Mr. Commander. Before I get into the donations, I hope that many of you in this room saw the OCW pistol down in Emblem Sales. There were only 16 of these made. If you all get one for a fundraising project for your department, be sure you do so. It will be at the National Convention in Cincinnati on display also.

I have two checks here, commander, for Operation Comfort Warriors from Department of Indiana. I want to talk just a minute about one post. Just last month we had a one day Operation Comfort Warriors benefit at Wayne Post 64 on Holt Road. You all know where Post 64 is at. We had a ham and bean dinner, plus there was other things that went on on that Sunday afternoon. But in one day, this post, we had this benefit and we raised $50,864. *(Applause)*

So some of the other donations we have is Squadron Post 64, $2,500. Elberfeld Squadron Post 351, $1,000. Valparaiso Post Squadron 94, $250. Squadron 172 of Jasonville, $100. That check totals $3,850.

The other check I have is Wayne Post 64 Wayne, $44,567. Valparaiso Post 94, $5,000. Boonville Post 200, $2,000. Beech Grove Post 276, $1,000. Post 467, Franklin Fee post, $1,000. Post 64 American Legion Riders, $1,000. Floyd Knobs Post 42, $850. Fort Wayne Post 47, $800. Newburgh Post 44, $600. Post 241, Waynedale, $501. The Auxiliary Unit 94, Valparaiso, $500. Arthur Gibson, $500. Bristol Lions Club, $300. Vevay Post 185, $300. Mt. Vernon Post 5, $300. Post 198, Plainfield, which is a prison post that we have in Indiana, $250. Ellen Dalton, $150. Richard and Andrea Woodke, $150. The King Charitable Foundation, $100. Post 47 American Legion Riders, $100. Auxiliary Unit 47, Fort Wayne, $100. Ed Harris, $100. Pulaski Post 357, $100. Post 414 in Burlington, $100. Auxiliary Unit 42, Floyd Knobs, $60. Post 205, Franklin, Indiana, $50. Sergeant Raymond Oeth from Missouri, $50. And Charlie Schmidt, when he visited Indiana and we got some fines and got $28. So that total check is $60,606. *(Applause)*

I know, commander, our American Legion Auxiliary department president's project this year is Operation Comfort Warriors. I know that she's already raised over 22,000, so that will be presented at Cincinnati. Thank you very much.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you. I think many of you remember when we were here at the Fall meeting. There was a very generous check. I've lost count of how much money that the Department of Indiana has raised for Operation Comfort Warriors. But Past National Commander Jim and the rest of the leadership team, thank you for what you're doing for Operation Comfort Warriors, and just keep up the great work. We appreciate you so much. *(Applause)*

NEC MEMBER GOSA (MS): Mr. Commander, it's hard to follow that act, being from a small state. Maybe my colleague from Alabama will do the same thing he did yesterday. I have a smaller check for child welfare of $3,100. *(Applause)*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Robert, thank you very much. That's not a small check, that's a big heart. I tell you what, every little bit counts. I thank you for what you've done. Thank you so much. *...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I call on National Security Commission Chairman Michael Schlee from Department of Maryland, for purposes of a report.

Oral Report: **National Security Commission**
G. Michael Schlee, Maryland, Chairman

Thank you very much, commander, and good morning ladies and gentlemen. Having been a staffer for 40 years, I always still feel a little uncomfortable being up in front of this august body. But it's a pleasure to be with you. You have received a copy of our advanced report from the meeting at the Washington conference wherein we discussed a variety of issues, had a good session.

In addition, two resolutions were considered during the business session in the afternoon, and they will be attached to our addendum to our report from today. Additionally, in the intervening period, all the resolutions are of legislative intent. A portfolio of nearly 80 plus resolutions have been sent to all the committee chairmen for review, consideration, possible submission through the department conventions for consideration at the 98th National Convention.

We prepared a new report for you today where we discuss a variety of issues which we think are of concern. But I'd like to do just simple bullet points on three primary issues today.

The first is the health of the force. Most of us in this room are Vietnam veterans, and I'm still absolutely stunned when I see the amount of three, four, and five combat deployments. I know during my experience, some career soldiers in Vietnam maybe spent two, three, in some cases, four tours, but three, four, and five tours is just absolutely amazing. This is not limited to the active forces. This includes the reserve and guard. Obviously, this level of deployment burns out the force. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs says we will not reset the force until about 2020.

There are some other stressors going on out there which affect both the readiness and the psychological readiness of the force. As you know, last year there were changes in the military retirement system. There's a proposal kicking around now to reduce the commissary subsidy by a quarter of a billion dollars. Additionally, there are proposals kicking around out there in legislation to increase the TRICARE costs. There's a decision made to do the full integration of women into the combat arms. While we're not going to debate the merit of that issue today, that is, in fact, an additional stressor on the troops. So what I'm saying today, these troops are burned out, they're over-deployed, and it's an area of serious and continuing concern to this commission and to me personally.

Second area I want to touch on with a few bullet points, is providing for the common defense. We've escaped sequestration for just a little while, it's on temporary hold. The effects from three years of sequestration are still being felt, and there's going to be a continuing problem.

I will say that I've had the good judgment not to have watched too many hours of the political debate thus far in that silly season, but I will say, in my review of those things, I've seen no serious discussion of either strategy of where we need to go, nor for defense resourcing by any of the candidates. I think we have to demand, before this election is over, that both the strategy of the United States and the resourcing for our defense become key issues in the 2016 presidential election.

The National Defense Authorization Act, which was approved last week, outlined five threats which we all know about. I'll touch on them briefly, though. Obviously, North Korea, and they're planning some intermediate missile stuff right now. Iran, that's a continuing problem. A third area was China, and they're continuing naval exploits in the Pacific area. Russia, obviously they buzzed a couple of our war ships in the Baltic Sea. The fifth area was radical Islam. I'd like to spend a minute or two on radical Islam.

As you know, last week, I think, was the fifth anniversary of the killing of Osama bin Laden. However, al Qaida is not dead, they're making some inroads in Afghanistan. My understanding is they continue to make inroads in Africa, and they're not going away. Additionally, as we're all aware, the third U.S. SEAL was killed by ISIL in combat in Northern Iraq earlier this week. I guess Chief Petty Officer Keating, who is actually, I think, Charlie Keating's grandson, Keating, back in the '70s or '80s.

This is an ongoing problem, it won't go away. I think we should have had wake up calls by what happened in Paris and Brussels. I know that the FBI Director Comey said that currently they are tracking 1,200 potential terrorists in the United States. So in my view, we have internally been awfully lucky so far. Unfortunately, that luck may not continue.

General David Petraeus wrote a piece in the Washington Post that appeared two weeks ago. In it, he discussed what he called "the long war." The continuing war, which won't be years but decades, against radical Islam. I commend it to your attention, and we gave a pretty good excerpt in the report that's before you today. These are basically three areas I just wanted to share your commission's concern about and reflect with you.

I want to take a privilege of the chair for a second. This is actually something I enjoy doing. After a three month search, we finally do have a new staff director. I certainly want to introduce to you Rhonda Powell. *(Applause)*

Rhonda, it's great to have you aboard. Rhonda took over two weeks ago, and she is still serving, after a distinguished career as a major in the U.S. Army Reserve. It's great to have you with us. *(Applause)*

Additionally, in the first three months of this year, we were without a director through the Washington Conference. I want to introduce Freddie Gessner, the deputy. Freddie kept the ship afloat for those three months. I will be forever grateful to him, a true professional. Freddie, too, continues to serve as an E7 in the Air Guard. So thanks a lot, Freddie. *(Applause)*

In closing, I want to thank you, national commander, and I particularly like your Job One part of your speech on Monday. I didn't write that, but I would have. *(Laughter)*

I want to particularly thank our NEC liaison. Our thoughts, our prayers are with Merv like they are, like the rest of you. Additionally, I want to thank the entire body of the NEC for your continuing support of this commission, in our efforts to take care of the troops and to provide for the common defense. Thanks. *(Applause)*

Advance Report: National Security Commission
February 22, 2016
G. Michael Schlee, Maryland, Chairman

The National Security Commission convened on February 22nd during the 56th Annual Washington Conference at the Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C. The following report is a summary of this session:

The commission was honored to welcome National Commander Dale Barnett and Past National Commanders (PNCs) Clarence M. Bacon and Clarence Hill. The National Security Commission was honored by their attendance and very appreciative of their participation.

National Commander Barnett began the session by giving an in-depth discussion on the importance of the National Commander Barnett described his personal experiences of being part of a planning mission while in South Korea. He also described a South Korean own forensics lab he visited that was assisting DPAA with identifications of remains. Commander Barnett concluded by recognizing the Director of DPAA, Michael Linnington, who was in attendance as an invited speaker.

The program proceeded in the following four sections: 1. Strategy and Force Development; 2. Marine Corps recruiting; 3. Cybersecurity presentation; 4. POW/MIA Update; and 4. National Security Commission Business.

1. Department of Defense - Force Strength Update

Mr. Christopher Skaluba, Principal Director for Strategy and Force Development in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was our first guest speaker. Previously, Mr. Skaluba was Principal Director for European and NATO Policy where he acted for and collaborated with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Europe & NATO) on all matters falling within the broad spectrum of European and NATO policy. Mr. Skaluba was also OSD's Director for European Policy, where he was responsible for formulating, coordinating, and implementing U.S. defense policy for Europe. Mr. Skaluba began his presentation with a brief history and outline of DoD's roles post-World War II which lead to the establishment of his office, which has three primary roles. The first is developing and using advanced computer simulations to predict the future needs of DoD versus each opponent worldwide. The second role is assisting each individual military branch to development their future budget predictions. His final role is assisting the SECDEF with the allocation of the current budget in relation to future predictions. He provided the Commission with an overview of the President's recently released $600

billion defense budget request for fiscal year 2017. When the budget is developed, his office focuses on three areas: 1. Modernization; 2. Force Stability; and 3. Readiness Capabilities. The current challenges faced are due primarily to the budget remaining the same while personnel costs continue to increase. The most noticeable impact to his office has been the decline in our ability to establish air superiority against China and Russia. Mr. Skaluba concluded by addressing the threats of unconventional warfare in the 21st century which continue to grow as our enemies develop more offensive capabilities while we fall further behind.

2. Marine Corps Recruiting

Guest speaker Lieutenant General Mark Andrew Brilakis, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, United States Marine Corps provided the Commission with an update on recruiting and retention within the Marine Corps. LTG Brilakis has served as the Battery Officer, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines; Battery Commander, Battalion FDO, and S-3, 5th Battalion, 10th Marines; Naval Gunfire Control Officer and Assistant Supporting Arms Coordinator, Amphibious Group Two; Future Operations and MAGTF Planner, G-3, II MEF; Executive Officer, 10th Marine Regiment; Commanding Officer 1st Battalion, 10th Marines; Commanding General, 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, Deputy Commanding General, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Commanding General, 3d Marine Division.

LTG Brilakis began by reporting that the three barriers to enlistment are mental, physical, and moral. Only approximately twenty five percent of 18 – 24 year olds are eligible for enlistment and these are the same best and brightest that the military is competing for against top colleges. He explained that the military finds millennials as just a different part of America. While they are different, they are just as dedicated to service as other generations. LTG Brilakis discussed the Marine Corp's 20 year plan to reach out into more communities to find a broader variety of Marines. They would like to see at least four out of every 10 officers to be female and/or diverse. The Marines are required to do more with less as force reductions continue. In response the Marines are providing more resources through modernization of equipment, family support programs, and behavioral health programs.

3. Cybersecurity

Mr. Gregory J. Touhill, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cybersecurity and Communications within the National Protections and Programs Directorate (NPPD) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provided the cybersecurity presentation. His office he focuses on the development and implementation of operational programs designed to protect our government networks and critical infrastructure systems. His team's mission has three folds with the first being managing risks for government departments. The second is managing private sector risks. The final being communicating the cyber eco system throughout the private sector to act as an overwatch against threats. Mr. Touhill emphasized that best practices would reduce approximately 80% of all risks. Our enemies are constantly scanning our defenses for vulnerabilities. He sees our greatest vulnerabilities being a poorly trained and task saturated workforce. He informed the Commission that financially motived criminals are expanding from bank account and credit card theft to selling medical records. Financial hacks are usually cut off quickly as people keep a close eye on their finances through activity alerts, whereas theft of medical information is often never noticed and has an emerging market. Mr. Touhill concluded by informing the Commission of his office's Stop.Think.Connect program that can be accessed at their website and provides many tools to assist with cybersecurity at the user level.

4. POW/MIA Update

The National Security Commission welcomed Mr. Michael S. Linnington, Director of the of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency; and Ann Mills-Griffiths, Chairman of the Board, National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, who briefed the commission on the progress of the DPAA and noted the challenges that lay ahead for the agency charged with the accounting and recovery of missing DoD personnel.

The speakers provided membership with very informative updates regarding overcoming successive budget crises, the remaining obstacle to increasing the pace and scope of accounting efforts while ensuring the safety of field recovery teams. Mr. Linnington provided his personal experience regarding the establishment of the U.S. – Russian Joint Commission following his recent 10 day trip to Moscow. The Russian government is developing an archive of records that DPAA will be allowed access to which will greatly increase records retrieval and updating.

Mr. Linnington updated the commission on DPAA staff relocations domestically and worldwide. He also provided and updated list MIAs by each war: WWII: 73182; Cold War: 126; Korea: 7824; Vietnam: 1623; and Current Conflicts: 6. He also announces that the new 130,000 square foot headquarters building located at Joint Base Pearl Harbor – Hickam was up and running with 50,000 square feet of laboratory space.

Ann Mills-Griffiths highlighted challenges the accounting faces due to political insecurities. The unsettling conditions created by China island building in the South China Sea have created more military to military interaction which has helped with recovery efforts in neighboring countries. She also express strong support for Director Linnington and applauded the inclusion of The American Legion at DPAA family updates.

5. Business Session

The business session commenced by Chairman Schlee leading the Commission in reviewing two resolutions that were referred by the 2015 National Security Convention Committee, Resolution 25: Merge PX/BX Commissaries and Resolution 92: Retirement Benefits and Survivor Benefit (SBP) Gap. After a discussion the Commission voted to reject Resolution 25. After further discussion, the Commission decided that the intent of Resolution 92 could be resolved by communicating its message to DFAS by staff and it was therefore voted that the resolution be disposed of administratively.

The business session continued with remarks from remarks from Mr. Larry Romo, Director of the Selective Service System. Mr. Romo brought to the attention of the Commission two House Bills recently introduced with language to repeal the selective service system. These bills were introduced following implementation of the DoD policy allowing females to service in combat arms professions. He explained that the system not only ensure manpower when needed but acts as a show of strength to our enemies at a cost of only $23 million. Changes have been made to improve the system such as college students would have to serve once they finish their current semester if selected. The system is now implemented as a lottery and is tested monthly. The need for the system was emphasized with by addressing growing threats in China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and terrorism.

Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee Chairman George Wehrli and members of the Committee reviewed 26 Law Officer of the Year packages and 20 Firefighter of the Year packages. Once the 10 regional winners were selected they selected the National Law Enforcement Officer and National Firefighter of the Year winners. The 2016 National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year winner is from the Department of Illinois and the National Firefighter of the Year winner is from the Department of Florida.

Chairman Schlee provided the Commission members with a summary of the National Security Commission Outline of Authorizations. He reviewed assigned responsibilities covered in the summary as they are divided by the Commission, Committees, and Council. Chairman Schlee also addressed the workload associated with the renewal year for resolutions. In preparation, the Commission and Committee chairmen will be performing a review of all positions prior to National Convention.

To round out the meeting Commission Chairman Mike Schlee provided the Commission with a quick overview of the upcoming plans for this year's National Security Commission Pre-Convention Trip. Deputy Director Freddy Gessner indicated a visit to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base will be the likely destination for the commission's tour just prior the 2016 National Convention which will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Report: National Security Commission
G. Michael Schlee, Maryland, Chairman
May 4 – 5, 2016

You have received a copy of the report of the meeting of the National Commission during the Washington Conference which took place on February 23rd and 24th. During the business session, two resolutions were considered and our recommended action is in the addendum to this report.

The National Security Commission and its seven committees along with the council continue to review developments in the national security and foreign relations arenas. There are more than 80 active national security resolutions with legislative intent. These active resolutions have been sent to seven the Committee Chairmen for review, assessment, and update for recommendations to Convention Committees at 98th National Convention - legislative renewal year. The following are updates on several critical areas for your review:

Defense Resourcing

While temporarily on hold, the biggest challenge to the military's readiness is sequestration. Sequestration is a provision of the Budget Control Act of 2011 that imposes across-the-board spending cuts if Congress and the White House cannot agree on more targeted cuts aimed at reducing the budget deficit. The uncertain and restrictive budget environment is forcing the military to make tough choices.

The ripple effect of sequestration through the years causes services to cancel deployments, maintenance is delayed, and worst of all is losing quality person. The Marine Corps is no longer in a healthy position to generate readiness while simultaneously resetting all of its equipment. The Army is forced to accept considerable risk by reducing its end strength while deferring modernization programs and infrastructure investments. The Air Force broke faith with civilian airmen because of furloughs. The Navy struggles with balancing readiness with critical modernization investments.

In regards to Russia, Defense Secretary Carter stated during a hearing before the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee last week that despite the progress we've made together since the end of the Cold War, Russia has in recent years appeared intent to erode the principled international order that has served us, our friends and allies, the international community, and also Russia itself so well for so long.

He also stated that to reinforce our NATO allies and build our deterrence posture in the face of Russia's aggression, this budget significantly increases funding for our European Reassurance Initiative to make a total investment of $3.4 billion for FY 2017 – more than quadrupling the $789 million that we requested last year – allowing us to increase the amount of prepositioned equipment sets in Europe as well as the number of

U.S. forces, including Reserve forces, rotating through Europe to engage with friends and allies.

Last week, the House Armed Services Committee passed its version of the fiscal year 2017 defense authorization bill that seeks to shift $18 billion of overseas contingency operations funding into the Pentagon's base budget to pay for unrequested weapon procurements and troop increases.

Women in Combat Roles

In the coming weeks, the Army is set to commission 22 female lieutenants into ground combat roles, a first for the service. The move comes just months after Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter opened all jobs in the military to women, including roles that were previously closed such as those in the infantry and artillery fields. According to the release, the women are about to graduate from their respective ROTC programs and service academies. One woman is currently in Officer Candidate School.

The American Legion's position states that the mental and physical qualifications of all military personnel, regardless of gender or age, should be held to a single duty position specific standard depending on Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) and not be amended without Congressional authority.

Nine women will head to the infantry while 13 will commission as armor officers. Armor means the officers will be in charge of vehicles such as the M1A2 Abrams main battle tank and M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle.

Selective Service

The House Armed Services Committee will include instructions to examine the Selective Service program's viability and possible "alternatives" as part of its review of the annual defense authorization bill. The agency's activities cost taxpayers roughly $23 million each year.

The move comes following months of hand-wringing over whether women will be forced to register for the draft as part of the military's plans to open combat jobs to all troops regardless of gender.

The American Legion's position states that the retention of the Selective Service Registration Program as being in the best interests of all Americans, and its maintenance is a proven cost-effective, essential, and rapid means of reconstituting the required forces to protect our national security interests as well as supporting legislation to amend the Selective Service Registration Program to include the mandatory registration of females between the ages of 18-25 years of age.

Force Health

The military must not lose sight of its most important quality, which is retaining high quality people. Today there is a mismatch between the pace of worldwide global operations and the demands on U.S. forces and available resources, which has steadily fallen since 2012 following withdrawal of most ground troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Army end strength was 490,000 in FY 2015 and will fall to 420,000 by FY 2017.

To further add to retention, last year Congress enacted military retirement reform and is promising to reform TRICARE. The Defense Resale Board has set up pilot programs to study variable pricing options for defense commissaries and exchanges in order to cut costs.

The Joint Chiefs has expressed concern over the proportion of budget dollars for military compensation versus other needs of the military. The Marine Corps reported compensation for military and civilian personnel is 68 percent of its budget. Military men

and women are not overcompensated and the primary reward of service is anything but financial.

ISIL/War on Terrorism

U.S. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced last month the United States will send 217 additional troops to Iraq to serve as advisers and trainers to Iraqi forces. The new forces will raise U.S. troop presence in Iraq to over 4,000. As the war continues we remember the recent attacks on Brussels which claimed 32 lives and injured dozens more.

Retired General Petraeus recently said the formulation of sound national policy requires finding the right overarching concepts. Getting the "big ideas" right is particularly important when major developments appear to have invalidated the concepts upon which previous policy and strategy were based — which now appears to be the case in the wake of the Arab Spring.

Ungoverned spaces in a region stretching from West Africa through the Middle East and into Central Asia will be exploited by Islamic extremists who want to establish sanctuaries in which they can enforce their extremist version of Islam and from which they can conduct terrorist attacks.

It is also apparent that the attacks and other activities of such extremists will not be confined to the areas or regions in which they are located. Rather, as in the case of Syria, the actions of the extremist groups are likely to spew instability, extremism, violence and refugees far beyond their immediate surroundings, posing increasingly difficult challenges for our partners in the region, our European allies and even our homeland.

Partners from the Islamic world are of particular importance. Indeed, they have huge incentives to be involved, as the ongoing struggles are generally not clashes between civilizations. Rather, what we are seeing is more accurately a clash within a civilization, that of the Islamic world. And no leaders have more to lose should extremism gather momentum than those of predominantly Islamic states.

Success against these extremists will require sustained commitment, not just of our military forces, but also of the capabilities of other departments and agencies. A comprehensive approach is neither easy nor cheap. But that is also true of the actions we have to take as inadequately governed spaces become ungoverned and in turn are exploited by transnational extremists. The Long War is going to be an ultramarathon, but we and our partners have the ability to respond in a thoughtful and prudent manner.

The National Security Commission thanks National Commander Dale Barnett, our NEC Liaison committee and the distinguished members of the National Executive Committee for their continuing support for Commission efforts to take care of the troops and "provide for the common defense".

Addendum A

Reject

Resolution No. 25 (PA) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Merge PX/BX Commissaries**

Dispose of Administratively

Resolution No. 92 (NC) (2015 Natl. Conv.)**: Retirement Benefits and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Gap**

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission with the exception of one addendum. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the National Security Commission. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, attached to the National Security Commission report is Addendum A. I move that the actions of the National Security Commission become the actions of the National Executive Committee. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carried.

At this time, I call on our chairman of the Legislative Commission, Brett Reistad, from the Department of Virginia.

Oral Report: Legislative Commission
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, Chairman

Commander Barnett, national officers, past national commanders, and members of the National Executive Committee, good morning. The commission's written report was distributed to you in advance of this meeting. Attached to this report is Addendum I listing resolutions with legislative intent pertinent to the 114th Congress, including those approved at this and other meetings of the National Executive Committee, and the 96th and 97th Annual National Conventions.

The National Legislative Commission has met once since the National Executive Committee's last meeting in October 2015. The commission met in February at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. to discuss the national commander's testimony and the activities of the Legislative Council.

The American Legion continues to be an active and vocal participant in this nation's legislative process. Already this year, The American Legion has provided testimony for nearly 20 congressional hearings, and will do so several times again in a flurry of activity before the Memorial Day recess at the end of this month.

Our Legislative Council puts Legionnaires in hundreds of congressional offices to amplify our voice. When our action alerts go out, we monitor the feedback and can see thousands of responses to our congressmen and senators.

At this year's testimony before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs' Committees, Commander Barnett laid out a strong and powerful message about bringing accountability to the VA, while working to strengthen the VA health-care system. Chairman Johnny Isaacson from Georgia promised to bring forward an omnibus bill to achieve these goals. Just this past week, he and the Senate have delivered a broad bill in scope that will work towards these ends.

While it's not perfect, this legislation will improve accountability, it will improve efficiency problems with the VA health-care system, and it will take steps to help in other areas The American Legion has been fighting for, from finally expanding caregiver benefits to veterans of all eras, to improvements in GI Bill benefits, and to better controls on pain medications.

We need to see this bill through the Senate, and pressure the House and Senate to conference together to get a bill to the president's desk before Memorial Day. Our commander laid out a vision for reform, and Congress is working to keep up. We just have to make sure that they keep their end of the bargain. We have to make sure that they are accountable to America's veterans.

Finally, Mr. Commander, the commission appreciates your continued support and involvement, as well as that of the national adjutant and the National Executive Committee and the staff in both Washington and Indianapolis. I'd just like to take a moment to introduce my counterpart, Ian DePlanque, the director of the national Legislative Division. *(Applause)*

Thank you for the honor and privilege of serving this great organization, and this concludes my report.

Advance Report: Legislative Commission
April 13, 2016
Brett Reistad, Virginia, Chairman

There has been one meeting of the National Legislative Commission since the National Executive Committee last met in October, 2015. Twenty-nine (29) members of the Commission met on February 22, 2016 at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC. Legislative Commission Chairman Reistad (VA) chaired the meeting. National Legislative Council Chairman Jeff Joyner (NC) presented his report on Council activities.

The Commission welcomed two guest speakers to its meeting who participated in a panel discussion about how Legionnaires can have more effective meetings with their Members of Congress, and especially with the Members' staff personnel. The two guest speakers were: Chris Bennett, Military Legislative Assistant from the office of Representative Tim Walz (MN); and Mike Wakefield, Veteran Affairs Legislative Assistant from the office of Rep. Mike Coffman (CO). Their recommendations included:

- When discussing legislation with the Member of Congress or their staff, concentrate on two or three topics of interest to The American Legion. In a meeting with limited time, Legionnaires are more effective when they can direct focus on a few issues they know very well; and
- Don't forget about meeting with Members or their staff in the district offices, not just in Washington.

Legislative Director Ian de Planque reported on the status of current legislation impacting on issues critical to The American Legion. Major discussion topics included: the fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget for the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Veterans Affairs (VA); the continuing controversy over implementation of Public Law 113-146, the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014; and, addressing the continuing problems with transparency and accountability in the VA.

Recent Congressional Developments

The Second Session of the 114th Congress convened on January 4, 2016. Major issues on the agenda for both chambers revolved mainly around deficit reduction and its effects on the budgets of the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Veterans Affairs (VA). To date, The American Legion has participated in 6 congressional hearings during the Second Session.

The American Legion and the Citizens Flag Alliance continue to support a proposed constitutional amendment: "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." The American Legion supports passage of the measure and ratification by the state legislatures. A House bill, House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 9, was introduced on January 6, 2015 by Representative Steve Womack (AR). This measure currently has 38 cosponsors, and more are being sought. Senator David Vitter (LA) introduced a companion measure, Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 21, on July 30, 2015. It currently has 8 cosponsors.

The Legislative Division thanks everyone who attended the Washington Conference to visit with their respective Members of Congress. We also extend a special thanks to those who have already submitted their Call-In Status Reports. Thus far, the Legislative Commission has received about 190 reports and more are still coming in. These call-in reports keep us informed of the great work that you and the departments are doing to advance our legislative priorities. The reports are also an excellent resource for keeping track of which congressional offices were visited and the issues that were discussed. If you have not already submitted a report, we look forward to seeing it soon. You can use the following web form to submit the report quickly and conveniently: http://www.legion.org/legislative/aar.

A more substantive report on congressional developments will be presented by the Legislative Commission at the May 4-5, 2016 meetings of the National Executive Committee.

Report: Legislative Commission
May 4 – 5, 2016
Brett P. Reistad, Virginia, Chairman

This report provides a summary of congressional actions since the National Convention on issues of particular concern to The American Legion. The report is arranged by program areas.

Recent Congressional Developments

The Second Session of the 114th Congress convened on January 4, 2016. Major issues on the agenda for both chambers revolved mainly around fiscal year (FY) 2017 appropriations for the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Veterans Affairs (VA). To date, The American Legion has participated in twenty-two congressional hearings during the Second Session.

On February 9, 2016 the Obama Administration released its budget request for the FY 2017 federal budget, including VA. This proposal includes $75.2 billion in discretionary funding to include medical programs to provide high-quality health care for veterans and research for conditions and diseases that affect these veterans. The proposed budget would also allocate $102.5 billion in advance appropriations for VA's mandatory benefits accounts, for a total of $177.7 billion for all VA programs for FY 2017.

Some of the major areas of emphasis which are an integral part of the FY 2017 budget's services to veterans include:

- $65 billion in advance appropriations for FY 2017, and $66.4 billion for FY 2018;
- $5.8 billion to continue VA's focus on expanding and transforming mental health services for veterans to ensure accessible and patient-centered care;
- $2.8 billion to fund the Veterans Benefits Administration; an increase of $118 million;
- $1.6 billion for VA programs aimed at ending veteran homelessness;
- $528 million for major construction projects, and $372 million for minor construction;
- $663 million for medical and prosthetic research; and,
- $286 million for the National Cemetery Administration, a $15 million increase over FY16.

AMERICANISM

On January 6, 2015 Representative Steve Womack (AR) introduced House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 9, a flag protection constitutional amendment for the 114th Congress. It has been assigned to the House Judiciary Committee. The measure currently boasts 38 cosponsors. A Senate companion measure – Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 21 – was introduced on July 30, 2015, by Sen. David Vitter (LA). At this time, the Senate measure has 8 cosponsors. The American Legion will continue to seek passage of a constitutional amendment to protect the American flag because it is the right thing to do. Let "We the People" decide.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

On the morning of December 18, 2015 the House passed the omnibus appropriations measure for FY 2016 by a vote of 316-113. A few hours later, the Senate approved the measure by a 65-33 recorded vote. The bill was signed into law by the President later that day, as Public Law (P.L.) 114-113.

This new law contains $1.15 trillion in funding for all federal government programs, including the Departments of Defense (DOD), Homeland Security (DHS), Justice (DOJ), Labor (DOL), and Veterans Affairs (VA).

Under the provisions of P.L. 114-113, Department of Justice programs will receive $28.7 billion in funding for the remainder of the fiscal year (which ends on September 30, 2016). Specific areas of interest to The American Legion include:

- *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)*: The FBI received $8.8 billion for this year, an increase of $362 million over FY 2015.
- *Immigration Courts* – The legislation increases funding for Immigration Courts to $427 million. The increase will support an additional 55 immigration judge teams to expedite removal proceedings.
- *U.S. Marshals Service*: This agency would receive $1.2 billion for FY 2016.
- *Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)*: $2.4 billion is tabbed for this agency, an increase of $558 million above FY 2015.
- *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)*: The legislation contains $1.2 billion for ATF.
- *Juvenile Justice Grants*: One program area that has been a primary Legion concern since 1974 is the account for juvenile justice grants, which totals $270 million for FY 2016. These grants address such concerns as child abuse, youth gangs and violence against children, missing / exploited children, and underage drinking.

On April 21, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved **S. 2837**, legislation to fund these programs for FY 2017. This measure would provide $29 billion for Department of Justice (DOJ) programs, $156 million more than FY 2016 funding levels. Among DOJ programs which concern The American Legion are:

- *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)*: The FBI received $9.4 billion for FY 2017, an increase of $652 million over FY 2016.
- *Immigration Courts* – The legislation sets funding for Immigration Courts at $426 million. The increase will support the hiring of additional immigration judge teams to expedite removal proceedings.
- *U.S. Marshals Service*: This agency would receive $2.71 billion for FY 2017.
- *Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)*: $2.49 billion is tabbed for this agency, an increase of $34.1 million above the current year.

- *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)*: The legislation contains $1.26 billion for ATF.
- *Juvenile Justice Grants*: One program area that has been a primary Legion concern since 1974 is the account for juvenile justice grants, which totals $272 million for FY 2017, a $2 million increase over the current year. These grants address such concerns as child abuse, youth gangs and violence against children, missing / exploited children, and underage drinking.
- *Drug Courts and Veterans Treatment Courts*: These innovative panels would receive $49 million for the upcoming fiscal year.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

On August 19, the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission, an independent panel, selected five finalists to design a memorial to honor the World War I generation in the nation's capital. The five were selected from more than 350 proposals sent to the Commission. The winning design will be selected in January 2016.

The finalists are:

- "Plaza to the Forgotten War," submitted by Andrew Cesarz, Johnsen Schmaling Architects;
- "World War One Memorial Concept" by Devin Kimmel;
- "The Weight of Sacrifice" by Joseph Weishaar;
- "An American Family Portrait Wall in the Park" by Luis Collado, Jose Luis de la Fuente, Jose Luis Perez-Griffo, Ignacio Espigares, Marta Bueno, Shoko Nakamura, of STL Architects; and
- "Heroes' Green" by Maria Counts.

The proposed site for the World War I Memorial is Pershing Park on Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th and 15th Streets N.W. in Washington DC. It is one block from the White House with a clear view down Pennsylvania Avenue of the U.S. Capitol. In the park there is a statue of General of the Armies John J. Pershing – the leader of the American Expeditionary Force during World War I.

The five finalists will now work in consultation with the commission, public agencies, and other stakeholders to develop and refine their initial design concepts. At the end of Stage II, the jury will make recommendations to the World War I Commission, which expects to announce the winning design concept in January.

The "War to End All Wars" began in 1914 and lasted more than four years. More than 17 million people died by the time the armistice ended fighting on November 11, 1918, and another 20 million were wounded. The United States entered the war April 7, 1917, and at war's end, more than 4 million Americans joined the military, with 2 million serving "over there." A total of 116,516 Americans were killed in the war, and more than 204,000 wounded. The war caused the fall of empires and redrew world maps. The German Empire, the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire all fell as a result of the war. Dozens of new nations were formed from these four empires. Decisions emanating from that war still led to the Second World War, and still affect the world today.

The World War One Centennial Commission was established by the World War One Centennial Commission Act, part of P.L. 112-272, passed by the 112th Congress and signed by President Barack Obama January 16, 2013. The commission is responsible for planning, developing, and executing programs, projects, and activities to commemorate the centennial of the First World War; including encouraging private organizations and state and local governments to organize and participate in commemorative activities; facilitating and coordinating activities throughout the United States relating to the centennial; serving as a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of information about events and

plans for the centennial; and developing recommendations for Congress and the president for commemorating the centennial.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Under the provisions of P.L. 114-113, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2016 – signed by the President on December 18, 2015 – military construction accounts would receive a total of $8.2 billion, an increase of $1.4 billion over the previous year. This amount includes $1.4 billion for family housing projects, with another $623 million slated for military medical treatment facilities. It further appropriates $551 million for the construction or alterations of Guard and Reserve facilities, and $334 million for essential safety improvements and infrastructure work at ten DOD Education Activities facilities in the U.S. and overseas.

Other provisions in the law address Department of Defense (DOD) funding for fiscal year 2016. DOD appropriations include $514.1 billion in the base budget and $58.6 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations. Defense spending includes:

- *Military Personnel and Pay*: $129.2 billion for military personnel and pay accounts, including a 1.3 percent pay raise for all uniformed personnel. The funding is $1.2 billion above FY 2015.
- *Operation and Maintenance*: $167.5 billion ($5.8 billion above the previous year). This category also includes $263.3 million for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response programs, and an additional $25 million to continue expansion of the Sexual Assault Victims' Counsel program to all military services.
- *Procurement*: $111 billion, $17 billion over the enacted 2015 level.
- *Research and Development*: $69.8 billion; $6.1 billion above the previous year's levels.
- *Health*: $32.3 billion for DOD health and family programs. Overall, the legislation includes increased funding for cancer research, as well as traumatic brain injury and psychological health research and suicide prevention outreach programs.

FY 2016 funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was contained in P.L. 114-113. A total of $41 billion were appropriated, an increase of $1.3 billion compared to FY 2015. Some of the accounts which interest The American Legion are:

- *Customs & Border Protection (CBP)*: $11 billion, an increase of $359 million over last year's amount.
- *Coast Guard*: $10.8 billion, which is $933 million above the previous fiscal year's funding.
- *Disaster Relief*: Funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) totals $7.4 billion. This includes $2.5 billion for first responder grants; and $1.5 billion for state and local grants, amount equal to the previous year's amounts.
- *Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)*: The law provides $5.8 billion for ICE. Among ICE's areas of responsibility are human trafficking, child exploitation, cyber-crime, and drug smuggling. The bill also fully funds E-Verify, a program that helps companies check if their employees may legally work in this country.
- *Transportation Security Agency (TSA)*: $4.9 billion. This includes funding for security enforcement, cargo inspections, intelligence functions, and increases for canine detention teams and privatized screening operations.

- *Secret Service*: $1.9 billion. The bill increases funding for cybersecurity investigations, rejects the President's proposed cuts to critical Secret Service staffing, and continues funding for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children which the President proposed to zero out.

The measure also includes a prohibition on the transfer or release of detainees from Guantanamo Bay.

On April 13 and 14 respectively, the House and Senate Appropriations committees gave voice vote approval to **H.R. 4974** and **S. 2806**, legislation to fund military construction projects in FY 2017. The bills would provide $7.9 billion. These measures now go to the full House and Senate for further action. Some specific projects funding include:

- *Military Family Housing*: $1.3 billion in both bills;
- *Guard and Reserve Facilities*: $673 million in both measures;
- *Military Medical Facilities*: $350 million in the Senate bill, $304 million in the House version;
- *DOD Education Facilities*: $272 million in the Senate version, $246 million in the House bill; and,
- *NATO Security Investment Program*: $178 million in both measures.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

On October 15, 2015 the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), which is the measure of increases or decreases in the Cost of Living, was lower than last year. This meant there would be no COLA increases in 2016 for those receiving Military Retired Pay, VA payments, Social Security benefits, and Federal Government civilian pensions. The drop in the CPI was largely attributed to a 23 percent drop in gas prices. There was no COLA in 2010 or 2011, also because of an insufficient increase in CPI, and some market analysts believe that 2016 may also yield no increase.

Under the provisions of P.L. 114-113, the *Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2016* – signed by the President on December 18, 2015 – the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) received a total of $162.7 billion, with discretionary funding totaling $71.4 billion, an increase of $6.4 billion above the FY 2015 level. Included in the discretionary funding accounts are:

- *VA Medical Services* – $50 billion, $4.7 billion above last year's enacted level. Individual accounts which interest The American Legion include: $7.5 billion in mental health care services; $6.7 billion in homeless veterans treatment, services, housing, and job training; $1.5 billion for Hepatitis C treatment; $605 million for family caregivers of seriously injured veterans; $232 million for traumatic brain injury treatments; $270 million in rural health initiatives; and, $144 million in suicide prevention activities.
- *Medical and Prosthetic Research* – The new law provided $631 million for this account, an increase of $42 million over the previous year's funding.
- *Advance Appropriations for All Veterans Programs for FY 2017* – $165.8 billion. Discretionary medical programs will be funded in 2017 at $63.3 billion. In addition, mandatory programs will be funded at $102.5 billion. This was done to eliminate the possibility that VA programs would go unfunded in case of a government shutdown.
- *National Cemetery Administration* – This agency received $271 million for its operations, $14 million more than FY 2015.

- *Information Technology (IT)* – This account received $4.1 billion, an increase of $230 million.
- *Disability Claims Processing* – $2.7 billion to address the burgeoning claims backlog. This amount is an increase of $10 million over the President's request and $173 million above the 2015 enacted amount. This funding will support 770 additional staff to tackle claims and appeals work, $141 million for digital scanning of claims; and $26 million for centralized mail. Funding for the Board of Veterans Appeals was increased by $11 million to a total of $110 million, to address the looming appeals backlog.
- *Construction* – Major construction funding totals $1.2 billion, $100 million more than the budget request, and $862 million above the 2015 amount. Funds will be used for correcting critical seismic deficiencies, new hospital and clinic construction, and repairing crumbling infrastructure in some of VA's oldest structures. Minor construction is set at $406 million.
- *Construction Grants* – The state extended care facilities account will receive $120 million (an increase of $30 million), with the state cemeteries programs being assigned $46 million. Both of these programs have been essentially flat-lined for a number of years; The American Legion has urged Congress to make substantial increases in both grant accounts.

The House Appropriations Committee on April 13 passed by a voice vote **H.R. 4974**, a bill to fund VA programs for FY 2017. The next day the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a companion measure, **S. 2806**. The House bill provides a total of $176.1 billion in funding for VA – $73.5 billion for discretionary programs – while the Senate companion would provide $177.4 billion – $74.9 billion for discretionary programs. Included in the funding accounts are:

- *VA Medical Services* – $52.5 billion, $2.5 billion above last year's enacted level in the House bill, $65 billion in the Senate version. Individual accounts which interest The American Legion include:
  - ❖ $7.8 billion in mental health care services in both bills, including $370 million for post-traumatic stress disorder treatment and $164 million in suicide prevention activities;
  - ❖ $7.2 billion in homeless veterans treatment, services, housing, and job training in the House bill;
  - ❖ $7.2 billion for the new Medical Community Care account to provide non-VA care in both measures;
  - ❖ $535 million for health care specifically for women veterans;
  - ❖ $284 million for traumatic brain injury treatments in both measures; and,
  - ❖ $250 million in rural health initiatives in both bills;
- *Medical and Prosthetic Research* – The House draft bill provides $663 million for this account, an increase of $42 million over the previous year's funding, while the Senate measure would provide $675 million;
- *VA Electronic Health Record* – Both measures provide $260 million for this for the modernization of the VA electronic health record system;
- *Advance Appropriations for All Veterans Programs for FY 2018* – Both bills will fund discretionary medical programs in 2018 at $66.4 billion. In addition, mandatory programs will be funded at $103.9 billion. This was done to eliminate the possibility that VA programs would go unfunded in case of a government shutdown;
- *National Cemetery Administration* – This agency received $271.2 million in both measures for its operations, an amount equal to FY 2016 funding;

- *Information Technology (IT)* – Both bills fund this account at $4.2 billion;
- *Disability Claims Processing* – $2.8 billion is contained in both measures to address the burgeoning claims backlog. This amount is an increase of $119 million above the 2016 enacted amount. This funding will support 242 additional staff to tackle claims and appeals work;
- *Board of Veterans Appeals* -- $156 million in both measures, an increase of $46 million, to address the looming appeals backlog;
- *Construction* – Major construction funding would be pegged at $528 million in both measures. Funds will be used for correcting critical seismic deficiencies, new hospital and clinic construction, and repairing crumbling infrastructure in some of VA's oldest structures. Minor construction is set at $372 million.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

On October 16, 2015 President Obama signed P.L. 114-68, the Border Jobs for Veterans Act. The Senate passed the measure on October 1 by unanimous consent. The House had previously approved the bill by a vote of 410-0.

The law requires the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) division to "actively recruit" military veterans who are separating from service. The legislation is needed, according to the bill, because an "estimated 250,000 to 300,000 members of the Armed Forces separate from military service every year." At the same time, CBP is seeking officers to help it perform its mission, including meeting the congressionally-funded staffing target of 23,775 officers for fiscal year 2015.

Senate supporters also said in a prior statement that the CBP is still seeking to fill nearly 1,200 of the 2,000 new officer positions established by Congress in 2014 to improve security at the nation's ports. DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson said the hiring shortfall is associated with applicant background investigations, low polygraph clearance rates, and a shortage of federal polygraph examiners, and is combined with CBP officers leaving the agency.

The *Border Jobs for Veterans Act of 2015* will:

- Direct DHS to identify (using the Department of Defense (DOD) Military Occupational Specialty Codes, Air Force Specialty Codes, Naval Enlisted Classifications and Officer Designators, and Coast Guard Competencies) that are transferable to the requirements and duties assigned to CBP Officers, and to consider hiring qualified candidates who are eligible for veterans recruitment appointment.
- Direct DHS and DOD to establish a program to actively recruit servicemembers who are separating from service to serve as CBP Officers. This program will include provision of CBP Officer opportunities in relevant job assistance efforts under the Transition Assistance Program; to place CBP officials, or other relevant DHS officials, at recruiting events and jobs fairs involving separating servicemembers; to provide opportunities for local CBP field offices to partner with military bases; to conduct educational outreach to qualified servicemembers to CBP Officer requirements; to work cooperatively to identify shared activities and opportunities for reciprocity related to steps in hiring CBP officers with the goal of minimizing the time required to hire qualified applicants; to work cooperatively to ensure the streamlined interagency transfer of relevant background investigations and security clearances; and to ensure separating servicemembers are aware of opportunities to fill CBP Officer vacancies.

The consolidated appropriations bill for FY 2016 – P.L. 114-113 – included funding for the Department of Labor, specifically for the Veterans Employment and Training

Service (VETS). Spending for VETS totaled $271.1 million. Funding for individual VETS accounts includes:

- *Jobs for Veterans state grants* received $175 million, which fund DVOP and LVER personnel;
- *Federal administrative costs* were funded at $40.5 million;
- *Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs* received $38.1 million;
- *Transition Assistance Program (TAP)* was funded at $14.1 million; and,
- *National Veterans' Employment and Training Services Institute (NVTI) received* $3.4 million for its operations, including the training of DVOPs and LVERs.

On March 31, the President enacted **P.L. 114-142**, the *Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2015*. This new law extends one of the provisions of P.L. 112-154, the *Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012*. It would extend through 2017 the one-year period after a service member's military service during which: (1) a court may stay proceedings to enforce an obligation on real or personal property owned by the service member before such military service; and (2) any sale, foreclosure, or seizure of such property shall be invalid without a court order or waiver agreement signed by the service member. The extended one-year period under P.L. 112-154 expired on December 31, 2015, and returned to a nine-month period under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

This concludes The American Legion National Legislative Commission's Report to the National Executive Committee.

Addendum I
Report: Legislative Commission
May 4 – 5, 2016

The National Legislative Commission is required, under Rule 8-b of the National Executive Committee, to compile a list of resolutions with legislative intent adopted during meetings of The American Legion National Convention and The American Legion National Executive Committee. The following resolutions constitute an ongoing list of all resolutions that are legislative in nature. This list of resolutions will constitute part of The American Legion's legislative program through the 114th Congress.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE 96TH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CHARLOTTE, NC AUGUST 26-28, 2014

AMERICANISM

Res. No.	5	Financially Assist Families Faced by Catastrophic Illness of Their Children
Res. No.	6	Support Funding Comprehensive Health Care for Children & Youth Programs
Res. No.	7	Funding for Drug Trafficking Prevention Programs
Res. No.	8	Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation
Res. No.	9	Oppose any attempt to Weaken Present Laws Governing Penalties for the Production, Sale and Distribution of Pornographic or Obscene Materials to Minors
Res. No.	27	School Prayer
Res. No.	63	Return Patriotic Holidays to Traditional Dates
Res. No.	69	The Purchase of American Made US Flags

Res. No.	117	The Boy Scouts of America and the Department of Defense
Res. No.	118	Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance
Res. No.	119	Support Fairness for Immigrant Spouses
Res. No.	204	Conscientious Objectors Tax Diversion
Res. No.	213	English Language be declare as the Official United States Language
Res. No.	214	Establish "National Family Week"
Res. No.	221	Locate Missing Children and Prevent Child Victimization
Res. No.	222	National School Lunch Program
Res. No.	240	Prevent Child Maltreatment
Res. No.	241	Programs and Organizations that Promote Child Safety
Res. No.	242	Reducing or Preventing Teenage Pregnancy
Res. No.	243	Support for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Res. No.	270	Pledge of Allegiance
Res. No.	357	Star Spangled Banner
Res. No.	358	Eliminate Damages and Attorney Fees in Establishment Clause Lawsuits
Res. No.	359	Oppose Flag Code Change Conduct during Hoisting, Lowering or Passing of the Flag or during the National Anthem
Res. No.	360	Constitutional Amendment to Protect the Flag or the United States

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Res. No.	192	Support and Defend Veteran and Military Memorials
Res. No.	208	POW/MIA Forever Stamp
Res. No.	356	Change Internal Revenue Rules in Counting Sons of The American Legion Membership at the Post level as outlined in Section 501 (C0 (19) of the U.S. Code

NATIONAL SECURITY

Res. No.	3	Commission the USS American Legion
Res. No.	34	Name a United States Navy Ship in Honor of Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr.
Res. No.	39	Central America Democracy Promotion
Res. No.	40	Enhanced Funding for USAID
Res. No.	41	Expand Foreign Service Officer Corps
Res. No.	43	Military Retiree Mail at Overseas Embassies
Res. No.	44	Middle East/Gulf States Foreign Policies
Res. No.	45	Policy on Africa
Res. No.	47	Policy on the United Nations
Res. No.	50	Support for The American Battle Monuments Commission
Res. No.	51	Social Security Survivor Benefits for Non-Resident Alien Spouses and Dependents
Res. No.	52	Securing Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal
Res. No.	53	POW/MIA Policies
Res. No.	54	Vietnam Human Rights
Res .No.	55	Support for Foreign Exchange Education Programs
Res. No.	57	Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINEC)
Res. No.	58	Support for World Press Freedom
Res. No.	59	Secure National Borders against Illegal Drugs

Res. No.	61	Security of Overseas Embassies
Res. No.	62	Ratify Disabilities Treaty
Res. No.	72	Benefits and Burial Rights for Select Surrogate Forces
Res. No.	76	Position on the Operational Reserve
Res. No.	77	Support Research and Funding for Alternative Energy Resources
Res. No.	78	Develop Defense against Electromagnetic Pulse Attack
Res. No.	79	Fully Enforce Immigration Laws
Res. No.	80	Support Financial Anti-Terrorism Law Enforcement
Res. No.	81	Fully Fund NASA
Res. No.	82	Guard and Reserve Space-A Travel
Res. No.	83	Support for the Department of Homeland Security and Coast Guard
Res. No.	84	Illegal Immigration Policy
Res. No.	85	Long Range Strike Capabilities
Res. No.	86	Modify Battlefield Helmet
Res. No.	87	Support for the Non-Federal Roles of the National Guard
Res. No.	88	Pipeline Construction and Energy Independence
Res. No.	89	Protection, Preservation and Retention of Federal and Military Monuments in the United States
Res. No.	90	Reclassify Fort Hood Shooting
Res. No.	91	Reserves and National Guard Retirement Benefit Fairness
	92	Second Amendment
Res. No.	93	Commercial Shipbuilding for Defense
Res. No.	94	Support Full Funding for the Department of the Army Budget
Res. No.	95	Support for the United States Air Force
Res. No.	97	Support for NASA and Advancements in Aeronautical and Space Research
Res. No.	98	Support for Research and Development of Air Breathing Scramjet
Res. No.	99	Support for National Missile Defense System
Res. No.	162	Amend the "Temporary Protected Status" Portion of the Immigration Act of 1990
Res. No.	163	Include Chiropractic Care and Services in Tricare Coverage
Res. No.	164	Codify Burial Eligibility for Arlington National Cemetery
Res. No.	165	Support for Concurrent Receipt of Military Retirement Pay and VA Disability Compensation
Res. No.	166	Support Fight against Cyberspace Threat
Res. No.	167	Earned Military Benefits
Res. No.	168	Flexible Savings Accounts
Res. No.	169	Support Full Funding and Resourcing for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps
Res. No.	170	Grant Access to all U.S. Military Facilities to Military Retirees and Their Dependents
Res. No.	171	Support for the Global War on Terrorism
Res. No.	172	Handling of Military Remains
Res. No.	173	Support for the Jones Maritime Act and Related Cabotage Laws
Res. No.	175	Military Commissaries
Res. No.	176	Department of Defense Military Retirement System
Res. No.	177	Support for the Reformation of the Military Voting System
Res. No.	179	Oppose Tricare Fee Increases
Res. No.	180	Department of Defense Personnel Policy
Res. No.	181	Correction of Military Records
Res. No.	182	Support for Military Quality of Life Standards

Res. No.	183	Rebuild America's Defense Industrial Base
Res. No.	184	Reference Veterans Service Organizations at Discharge
Res. No.	186	Establish a Strategic Plan for the Internal Security within the United States
Res. No.	188	Support armed Services Retirement Homes
Res. No.	189	Support for Legislation Prohibiting Hate Speech at Military Funerals
Res. No.	190	Support for Pain Management Research Treatments and Therapies at DoD, VA and NIH
Res. No.	191	Support for Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
Res. No.	225	National Defense Budget
Res. No.	227	Prevent a Nuclear Armed Iran
Res. No.	230	Prescription Drugs and Military Suicides
Res. No.	271	Authorize and Fund Tricare for Reserve Components and Dependents
Res. No.	272	Buy American
Res. No.	273	Support Domestic Energy Production
Res. No.	274	Identifying National Interests before Committing Military Forces and Assets
Res. No.	277	Military Occupational Specialty Standards
Res. No.	278	Rare Earth Elements
Res. No.	279	Support for the Selective Service Registration Program
Res. No.	280	Support Unmanned Vehicles

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Res. No.	16	Assured Funding for VA Medical Care
Res. No.	17	Amend Title 38, United States Code, to Increase the Special Monthly Compensation (K) Award
Res. No.	18	Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Compensation
Res. No.	19	Extend the Filing Period of An Appeal Notice to the Court of Veterans Appeals for Veterans Claims
Res. No.	20	Presumptive Conditions for Former Prisoners of War
Res. No.	21	State Veteran Home Per Diem Reimbursement
Res. No.	22	National Cemetery Administration
Res. No.	23	The Department of Veterans Affairs Dental Care
Res. No.	24	The Department of Veterans Affairs' Role in National Emergency Preparedness
Res. No.	30	Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense
Res. No.	31	Prevent Exploitation of Veterans and Family Members Applying for Aid and Attendance
Res. No.	35	Oppose any Reductions to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Budget Due to Sequestration
Res. No.	36	Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Program
Res. No.	37	Department of Veterans Affairs Rural Healthcare Program
Res. No.	65	Veterans Discounts on Federally Funded Public Transportation
Res. No.	66	Department of Veterans Affairs Means Test
Res. No.	68	WWII Veterans Hospital and Medical Entitlements
Res. No.	70	Include Korean War Veterans in Priority Group 6 for Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care
Res. No.	105	Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record

Res. No.	106	Veterans Transportation System & Benefits Travel
Res. No.	107	Prosecution of VA Employees Engaged in Fraudulent Practices in the Department of Veterans Affairs
Res. No.	114	Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Integrated Service Networks
Res. No.	125	Environmental Exposures
Res. No.	126	Extend Department of Veterans Affairs Mortgage Protection Life Insurance to Service-Connected Veterans who are Permanently and Totally Disabled
Res. No.	127	Gulf War Illnesses
Res. No.	128	Increase the Transparency of the Veterans Benefits Administration's Claims Processing
Res. No.	129	All Veterans Receive "Wartime" benefits for Active Military Service between February 28, 1961 and August 5, 2064
Res. No.	130	Amend the Eligibility Requirements and Extend the Eligibility Time Period for Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Res. No.	133	Designate United States Air Force C-123K Transport Aircraft as Agent Orange Exposure Sites
Res. No.	134	Disability and Death Pension Program
Res. No.	135	Extend the Presumptive Period for Service Connection for Gulf War Veterans with Undiagnosed Illness
Res. No.	136	Oppose Legislation authorizing Legion-Accredited Representatives to Develop Claims Directly on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs
Res. No.	137	Radiation Exposure
Res. No.	138	Recognize Operations in Lebanon (1958), Grenada (1983), and Panama (1989-1990) as Periods of War for Department of Veterans Affairs Pension Purposes
Res. No.	139	Revision of Work-Rate Standards for Department of Veterans Affairs Adjudications
Res. No.	140	Support Presumption of Service Connection for Hepatitis C
Res. No.	141	Means Test for Married Veterans
Res. No.	142	Opening the Federal Supply Schedule for Pharmaceuticals to Medicare and Medicaid
Res. No.	143	Oppose any Reduction of Eligibility Criteria for Department of Veterans Affairs Per Diem
Res. No.	144	Prostate Cancer Research and Treatment
Res. No.	145	Protection of Religious Rights and Ceremonies at National Cemetery Administration National and State Cemeteries
Res. No.	146	Provide the Department of Veterans Affairs the Ability to Purchase Medication Located outside the United States
Res. No.	147	Exempt Purple Heart and Medal of Honor Recipients from VA Prescription Co-Payment
Res. No.	148	Request Congress Provide the Department of Veterans Affairs Adequate Funding for Medical and Prosthetic Research
Res. No.	149	Service Dogs for Injured Service Personnel and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions
Res. No.	150	Strategic Capital Investment Planning Program
Res. No.	151	Support Legislation to Place Mariner Medal Recipients in Priority Group 3 for the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care

Res. No.	152	Support Medicare Reimbursement for the Department of Veterans Affairs
Res. No.	153	Policy on State Veteran Homes Inspections
Res. No.	154	Department of Veterans Affairs Enhanced-Use Leasing
Res. No.	155	Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health Services
Res. No.	156	Department of Veterans Affairs Nursing Home Capacity
Res. No.	157	Department of Veterans Affairs Pharmacy Benefits
Res. No.	158	State Veteran Homes' Extended Care Facilities Grant Program
Res. No.	159	Veteran Treatment Courts
Res. No.	160	Veterans Receive Same Level of Benefits
Res. No.	194	Authorization to Apply for a Headstone, Marker, or Medallion
Res. No.	196	Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act
Res. No.	200	Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for Surviving Spouses
Res. No.	202	Department of Veterans Affairs to Provide Interim Benefits for Pending Claims over 90 days
Res. No.	212	Designate Hypertension as a Presumptive Condition for Veterans Exposed to Agent Orange
Res. No.	215	Extend Eligibility for National Cemetery Administration Medallion
Res. No.	216	Automatic Waiver for Over-payments of $300 or Less
Res. No.	219	Increase Maximum Coverage under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Res. No.	220	Oppose Lump Sum Payments for Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Compensation
Res. No.	233	Agent Orange
Res. No.	234	Co-Payments and Enrollment Fees for Priority Groups 7 & 8
Res. No.	235	Improvements to Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans Programs
Res. No.	236	Exempt Certain Income from VA Pension Rate Determination
Res. No.	238	State Veterans Home Funding for Construction Grants
Res. No.	239	Research to Develop a Blood Test to Detect Colorectal Cancer
Res. No.	245	Exempt Funds Related to Interment Services at VA National Cemeteries from any Future Sequestration
Res. No.	246	United States Census to include Veterans Information
Res. No.	250	Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans
Res. No.	251	Extended Hours and Weekends for Veterans' Health Care
Res. No.	255	Allow Beneficiaries to Retain $90 of their Benefits while in Medicaid-Covered Nursing Homes
Res. No.	257	Exempt certain Income from VA Pension Rate Determination
Res. No.	262	Grant a Ten Percent Rating for Veterans who must take Daily Medication for Hypertension
Res. No.	264	Timely Processing of Overpayments for Reserve Components and/or Active Duty Pay
Res. No.	281	Advance Appropriations for all of the Department of Veterans Affairs Discretionary Accounts
Res. No.	282	Congressional Budget Office Scoring on Department of Veterans Affairs Leasing
Res. No.	283	Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists
Res. No.	284	Department of Veterans Affairs to Develop Outreach and Peer Programs for Rehabilitation
Res. No.	285	Congress to provide Back Pay to Veterans and Dependents

Res. No.	287	Agent Orange Presumption for Service in Southeast Asia since 1975
Res. No.	288	Department of Veterans Affairs Involvement in the Department of Homeland Security
Res. No.	291	Oppose Lowering of Cost-of-Living Adjustments
Res. No.	292	Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Programs

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Res. No.	101	Oppose the Department of Labor's Restructuring of Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative Roles
Res. No.	102	Support the Increased Funding of Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative Programs
Res. No.	103	Support the Elimination of Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service Regional Offices
Res. No.	223	Support for Expansion of Oil Refineries
Res. No.	263	Support Employment Services for Spouses of Servicemembers Killed in the Line of Duty
Res. No.	293	Support Accountability for Institutions of Higher Learning
Res. No.	294	Allow Military Retirees to apply for Position in Federal Law Enforcement after Age 37
Res. No.	295	Amending the Eligibility for the Transfer of the Post 9/11 GI Bill Education Benefits
Res. No.	296	Support "Buy American" Policy at the Department of Veterans Affairs to Create Jobs and Opportunities for Veterans
Res. No.	297	Support the Development of Veterans on-The-Job Training Opportunities
Res. No.	298	Veteran Education Debt Forgiveness
Res. No.	299	Eliminating Dates for the Montgomery GI Bill and Post 9/11 GI Bill
Res. No.	300	Support Elimination of the VA Home Loan Funding Fee
Res. No.	301	Enforcing Veterans' Preference Hiring Practices in Federal Civil Service
Res. No.	302	Support Major Enhancements for the Montgomery GI Bill
Res. No.	303	Expanding Post 9/11 GI Bill for Entrepreneurship
Res. No.	304	Federal and State Incentive for Employers to use Veterans' Preference
Res. No.	305	Support Funding for Additional Housing for Homeless Veterans with Families
Res. No.	306	Support Funding for Homeless Veterans
Res. No.	307	Support Home Loan Guaranty Program
Res. No.	308	Homeless Veterans Assistance
Res. No.	309	Support Housing Preference for Low-Income Veterans in the Department of Housing and Urban Development
Res. No.	310	Improve Transition Assistance Program
Res. No.	311	Support Legislation to Improve the Post 9/11 GI Bill
Res. No.	312	Ensuring the Quality of Servicemember and Veteran Student's Education at Institutions of Higher Learning
Res. No.	313	Support Licensure and Certification of Servicemembers, Veterans and Spouses

Res. No.	314	Support Extended Time for Mortgage Payments for Servicemembers
Res. No.	315	Oppose Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service Hiring of Non-Veterans
Res. No.	316	Oppose Efforts to change the Residency Requirements for State Directors of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)
Res. No.	317	Oppose the Transfer of Veterans' Employment and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs
Res. No.	318	Oppose any Weakening of the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative
Res. No.	319	Support Increase in Reporting Fees for Educational Institutions
Res. No.	320	The Status of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business after the Death of the Veteran Owner
Res. No.	321	Support Student-Veteran-Return-On-Investment Education Outcomes
Res. No.	322	Support an Investigation of Hiring Practices in the Federal Government
Res .No.	323	Support Legislation the Ensures that all Agencies that Receive Funding from the U.S. Department of Labor or the Workforce Investment Act Meet the Mandatory Compliance Standards for Veterans' Preference
Res. No.	324	Support and Strengthen the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)
Res. No.	325	Supporting the U.S. Economy and Increase U.S. Energy Security Through a Canadian-American Oil Pipeline
Res. No.	326	Support Legislation that would change the 12 Years Delimiting Date for Eligibility for Chapter 31 benefits (VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program)
Res. No.	327	Affirm Support for Emerging Internet-Based and Peer-Financed Alternative Capital Options for Veteran Owned Small Businesses
Res. No.	329	Support Legislation that Bolsters the Hiring of Veterans in the Public and Private Sectors
Res. No.	330	Support Funding for the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Homeless Program
Res. No.	331	Support Improvements in the Reporting Programs Available to and Administered by Veterans' Employment and Training Service
Res. No.	332	Support Federal Legislation that Protects the Employment of Veterans in the U.S. Postal Service Mail Processing Facilities that are Slated for Closure
Res. No.	333	Support Recognition of Military and Pay when Calculating Starting Federal Civilian Salaries
Res. No.	334	Support for the Military Transition Program
Res. No.	335	Support for the Strengthening and Adequate Funding of the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVIT)
Res. No.	336	Support the Restoration of the Duties and Responsibilities of the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER)

Res. No.	337	Support the Rollover of IRA Account Penalty of Tax Liability of Permanent and Total 100 Percent Service-Disabled Veteran with Individual Unemployability
Res. No.	338	Support effort of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of Veterans Business Development
Res. No.	339	Support Reasonable Set-Aside of Federal Procurements and Contracts for Business Owned and Operated by Veterans
Res. No.	340	Support Legislation that would return Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Funding to a Staffing Grant
Res. No.	341	Support Legislation to Amend Title 38 United States Code, to Prohibit Discrimination and Acts of Reprisal by Employers against Veterans the seek Treatment for their Service-Connected Disabilities
Res. No.	342	Support Veterans' Preference in Public Employment
Res. No.	343	Support for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program Hiring more Counselors and Employment Coordinators
Res. No.	344	Surviving Spouse Mortgage Eligibility
Res. No.	345	Transition Assistance Program Employment Workshops for National Guard and Reserve Members
Res. No.	346	Support Tax Credit for certain Employers
Res. No.	347	Support Legislation to increase Telework (Telecommuting) Opportunities for Service-Disabled Veterans and Military Spouses
Res. No.	348	Transitional Housing Allotments for Returning Combat Veterans
Res. No.	349	Support Verification Improvements for Veterans' Business within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense
Res. No.	350	Veterans Employment Initiative
Res. No.	351	Veterans Entrepreneur Training Program
Res. No.	352	Support Licensure and Certification Standards for Veterans Health Administration
Res. No.	353	Veterans Home Loans
Res. No.	354	Support Veterans Housing Repair and Modification for Pilot Program
Res. No.	355	Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE FALL MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 15-16, 2014

AMERICANISM

Res. No.	27	Flag Code Amendment

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Res. No.	17	Federal Properties Distinguished Veterans Pass

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Res. No.	19	Exempt VA Benefits and Services from Pay-Go Provision
Res. No.	20	Department of Veterans Affairs Preservation of National Historic Properties
Res. No.	21	Legislation to provide Reporting, Tracking, and Action Dealing with Sexual Assaults at Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Res. No.	13	Expanding Veterans Employment and Homeless Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE SPRING MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY 6-7, 2015

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Res. No.	22	Reinstate Enrollment of Priority Group 8g Veterans into the Department of Veterans Affairs Patient Enrollment System
Res. No.	23	Department of Veterans Affairs Quadrenniel Plan for Budget
Res. No.	24	Department of Veterans Affairs Construction Programs
Res. No.	28	Department of Veterans Affairs Appeals Process
Res. No.	30	Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Res. No.	11	Support Elimination of Funding Fees for Government Guaranteed Loans
Res. No.	12	Expanding Post-9/11 G.I. Bill for Entrepreneurship

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED AT THE 97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN BALTIMORE, MD SEPTEMBER 1-3, 2015

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Res. No.	97	National Eisenhower Memorial

LEGISLATION

Res. No.	89	Puerto Rico Conduct Federally-Sponsored Plebiscite

NATIONAL SECURITY

Res. No.	23	Family Subsistence Supplement Allowance
Res. No.	27	Extended Care Health Option (ECHO)
Res. No.	33	Support for Military Quality of Life Standards
Res. No.	34	Department of Defense Military Retirement System
Res. No.	35	National Defense Budget
Res. No.	36	Support Veteran Status for National Guard and Reserve Servicemembers
Res. No.	37	POW/MIA Policies
Res. No.	38	Taiwan Defense Arms Sales
Res. No.	40	South China Sea Island Building
Res. No.	60	Support for Concurrent Receipt of Military Retirement Pay and VA Disability Compensation

Res. No.	68	Prisoner of War Status for Patrick O. Ford
Res. No.	79	Medal of Honor for Dorie Miller
Res. No.	81	Support for Public and Private Manned Space Exploration
Res. No.	106	Cybersecurity and Identity Theft
Res. No.	107	Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission Position
Res. No.	108	Oppose Iran Deal
Res. No.	7	Black Hills National Cemetery Expansion
Res. No.	8	Oppose Closure of the VA Black Hills Health Care Systems Hot Springs Campus
Res. No.	28	In Vitro Fertilization
Res. No.	32	Department of Veterans Affairs Provider Agreements with Non-VA Providers
Res. No.	64	Fit to serve Initiative
Res. No.	74	Compensation for Veterans Requiring Hearing Aids for Service Connected Hearing Loss
Res. No.	75	Restore VA's Informal Claims and Appeals Process
Res. No.	78	Extend Dental Care to Veterans with Service Connection Ratings of 50% or more
Res. No.	99	Complementary and Alternative Medicine
Res. No.	100	Non-Department of Veterans Affairs Emergency Care
Res. No.	101	Department of Veterans Affairs Recruitment & Retention
Res. No.	102	Priority Care for Medal of Honor Recipients
Res. No.	103	Fiduciary Responsibility
Res. No.	29	Support Elimination Funding Fees for Government Guaranteed Loans
Res. No.	30	Support Housing Preference for Low-Income Veterans in the Department of Housing and Urban Development
Res. No.	31	Support and Strengthen the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)
Res. No.	65	GI Bill Medical Transferability Right
Res. No.	93	Support Licensure and Certification of Service Members, Veterans and Spouses
Res. No.	94	Improve Transition Assistance Program
Res. No.	95	Support Employment of Veterans in the Public and Private Workforce
Res. No.	96	Support Funding and Changes to VA's Grant and Per Diem Program

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE FALL MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 14-15, 2015

AMERICANISM

Res. No.	20	Honoring the Anniversary of "In God We Trust"

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Res. No.	12	National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Res. No.	16	Veteran Caretaker Stipend
Res. No.	17	Honoring Those Who Have Earned the Medal of Honor
Res. No.	18	Women Veterans

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED IN THE SPRING MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY 4-5, 2016

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Res. No.	23	Support for Veteran Quality of Life
Res. No.	24	Increase Transparency of Asbestos Claims
Res. No.	25	Reinstate Enrollment of Priority Group 8g Veterans and Dependents into the Department of Veterans Affairs' Patient Enrollment System
Res. No.	26	Oppose Closing or Privatization of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System
Res. No.	28	Consolidation of Department of Veterans Affairs Care in the Community Programs

RESOLUTIONS

Res. No.	33	Congressional Gold Medals for Vietnam War Dust Off Crews

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Res. No.	30	Support Student Veterans Return on Investment Education Outcomes

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, motion to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission with the exception of one addendum. …*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second to receive and file the report of the Legislative Commission. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, pursuant to Rule 8b of the National Executive Committee, I move the resolutions on Addendum I be ratified for distribution as part of the legislative program to the 114th Congress. …*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, we'll continue on with Confirmation of Interim Appointments.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander may I address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: You may, sir.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list on interim appointments is a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move that the list of interim appointments be approved without being read. …*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Confirmation of Interim Appointments
National Executive Committee Meeting
Indianapolis, Indiana
May 4 – 5, 2016

Sidney R. Damsgard, Jr. (Florida), Committee on Children & Youth, 2016 Member (Replaces Stephen Shuga – resigned)

Joseph R. Magee (Florida), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Arthur J. Schwabe – resigned)

Patricia Jean Stiles (Florida), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Sidney R. Damsgard, Jr. – resigned)

Darrel R. Homer (Idaho), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Steve Nielsen – deceased)

Donald E. Feltz (Ohio), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces William K. Balser – deceased)

John M. Emil, Sr. (Pennsylvania), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Eugene R. Paul – deceased)

James R. Vollrath (Pennsylvania), Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Joseph V. Glazier, Jr. – resigned)

Barbara Burdette (West Virginia) Americanism Council, Member (Replaces Richard H. Davison – resigned)

Joseph V. Glazier, Jr. (Pennsylvania), Constitution & By-Laws Committee, 2018 Member (Replaces Kerrie G. Gill, Sr. – deceased)

Donald T. Tetreault (Vermont), Constitution & By-Laws Committee, 2017 Member (Replaces Richard R. Gray – resigned)

Arthur J. Schwabe (Florida), Legislative Commission, Vice Chairman (Replaces Stanley M. Gold (Florida) – resigned)

Arthur J. Schwabe (Florida), Legislative Commission, 2016 Member (Replaces Stanley M. Gold – resigned)

N. Larry Rozier (North Carolina), Media & Communications Council, Member (Replaces Benedict A. Lee – resigned)

Rev. Dwight Brown (Mississippi), Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee, 2016 Member (Replaces Thurman E. Parrish – deceased)

Richard Sucee (Washington), Law and Order & Homeland Security Committee, 2017 Member (Replaces Roy L. Layton – deceased)

John L. Bloxom (Oklahoma), Unconventional Forces & Intelligence Committee, 2018 Member (Replaces Mitchell T. Henderson – membership cancelled)

Benedict A. Lee (North Carolina), National Security Council, Member (Replaces N. Larry Rozier – resigned)

William S. White (Montana), Health Administration Committee, 2016 Member (Replaces Jack L. Mitchell – resigned)

S. Paul Griffin (Arizona), National Cemetery Committee, 2017 Member (Replaces Bruce A. Conklin – deceased)

Jack D. VanMatre (Arizona), National Cemetery Committee, 2017 Member (Replaces S. Paul Griffin – deceased)

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Confirmation and cancellation of post and/or squadron charters.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, may I address the national adjutant again?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Yes, sir, you may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify the list of cancellations of post and squadron charters is a true and correct list, and everything has been done to try to revitalize these posts and squadrons?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move the list be approved without being read. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Post Charters of The American Legion Presented to the National Executive Committee for Cancellation May 5, 2016

On October 15, 2015, at the Fall Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of eighteen (18) posts. The research done on each post prior to any recommendation made as an attempt to see whether these posts could be revitalized is based on the following criteria:

Community Size
Veteran Population

Eighty-two (82) posts have been submitted for cancellation consideration during the 2016 Spring National Executive Committee Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. Eighty-two (82) posts are recommended for cancellation.

It is recommended that the following eighty-two (82) posts be cancelled:

Department	Post #	Name	Location
ARIZONA	47	Somerton	Somerton
	67	Frank Mick	Roll
ARKANSAS	96	Lloyd King	Gurdon
	101	Barker-Lockwood	Delight
	104	J. W. Partridge	Amity
	135	Douglas Dooley	Glenwood
	322	Raymond Featherston	Mountain Pine
CALIFORNIA	662	South Side	Sacramento
	671	Orosi	Orosi
FLORIDA	232	North Hawthorne/Waldo	Hawthorne
IDAHO	27	Stewart-Runyon *(to merge with Lewis-Clark Post 13)*	Lewiston

ILLINOIS	7	Victory *(to merge with Billy Caldwell Post 806)*	Chicago
	198	Kirby-Watkins *(to merge with Menard County Post 129)*	Petersburg
	320	Skokie *(to merge with Morton Grove Post 134)*	Skokie
	346	Tiskilwa	Tiskilwa
	605	Beardstown	Beardstown
	712	Kosciuszko	Chicago
	1234	Creve Coeur	Creve Coeur
	1273	Freeman Spur *(to merge with Herrin Prairie Post 645)*	Freeman Spur
IOWA	327	Volga	Volga
	478	Ackles-Roberts	Trenton
	506	Duncan-Smith	Lineville
KANSAS	29	Thompson-Tyler	Junction City
	78	Claude Newlee	Cottonwood
	115	Harry E. Everist	Mankato
	177	Fury-Blochlinger	Miltonvale
	208	Shepherd-Moore	Lakin
	215	Weaver-McLane	Fowler
	246	Parks-Wade	Galena
	266	Paul D. Linnell *(to merge with Harmonson-Redd Post 63)*	Almena
	329	*Kanopolis Harvey Merrill*	Kanopolis
	356	Bogue	Bogue
KENTUCKY	58	Morehead Rowan County	Morehead
	171	Elliott County	Sandy Hook
	224	John Meek	Catlettsburg
LOUISIANA	197	Federal	New Orleans
	566	Lawrence Lewis	De Quincy
MASSACHUSETTS	127	Southern Berkshire	Great Barrington
	158	James J. Mansfield	Concord
	274	McCar-Nell	Lenox Dale
	284	Edwards-Quimby	West Acton
MISSOURI	187	St. Louis Police	St. Louis

	531	Centertown	Centertown
NEBRASKA	361	Memorial	Republican City
	380	Murray-Beaver Lake	Murray
NEVADA	34	Comstock	Virginia City
NEW HAMPSHIRE	113	Bruce R. Mills	New Durham
NEW YORK	CN21	The American Legion of Toronto	Toronto, Canada
	226	Brown-Di Santo	Clyde
	1053	Neversink Valley	Fallsburg
	1344	Frank Acquavia Memorial	Dunkirk
NORTH CAROLINA	41	Culbreth-Harris *(to merge with Jim Leonard Post 8)*	Thomasville
	302	Lawndale *(to merge with W. R. Gray Post 527)*	Lawndale
	538	Deniose Meeks, Sr.	Bessemer City
OHIO	403	Community *(to merge with Albert E. Baesel Post 91)*	Olmsted Falls
	415	Summerfield *(to merge with Belle Valley Post 641)*	Summerfield
	538	Hyatt-Allen	Toledo
	679	Richard Regula *(to merge with Homer Weiss Post 494)*	Baltic
	732	Kelly-Ward-Varley Memorial *(to merge with Road of Remembrance Post 472)*	Youngstown
	742	Hammondsville	Hammondsville
OKLAHOMA	26	Earl Maggart	Pawnee
	57	Lone Wolf	Lone Wolf
	87	Robert Gordon Davenport	Pauls Valley
	96	Phillips-Smith	Ringling
	104	Beavers-Ketcher	Watts
	165	Otto G. Abbott	Newkirk
	177	Vaughan-Ellis	Granite
	189	Smart-Raulston	Willow
	211	Frank E. Hert	Perkins

	279	Roff	Roff
	381	Clayton Milligan	Wynnewood
OREGON	195	Brookings-Harbor	Brookings
TEXAS	381	Pammie Landers	Robert Lee
	433	Bob Bishop *(to merge with Tommie Aiken Post 423)*	Rising Star
	632	Moses-Whitlock	Los Fresnos
WASHINGTON	71	Colonel James W. Carroll *(to merge with Richard C. Emigh Post 508)*	Napavine
	114	Colville Tribes	Nespelem
	206	Roslyn-Ronald	Roslyn
	208	Battle Ground	Battle Ground
	1925	Dan Sowers	Centralia
WISCONSIN	139	Hanson-Terrio	Abbotsford
	266	Raymond Peter Firnstahl *(to merge with Otto H. Kops Post 358)*	Colby

SAL Charters of The American Legion Presented to the National Executive Committee for Cancellation May 5, 2016 Meeting

On October 15, 2015, at the Fall Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana the National Executive Committee approved the cancellation of six (6) Squadrons.

Twenty-eight (28) Squadrons have been submitted for cancellation consideration during the 2016 Spring National Executive Committee Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. Twenty-eight (28) Squadrons are recommended for cancellation.

It is recommended that the following twenty-eight (28) Squadrons be cancelled:

Department	Sqdn #	Name	Location
ILLINOIS	103	Crang-Bennett	Clinton
	120	Effingham	Effingham
	229	Irwin Lee Terrey	Viola
	297	Gittings-Sandine	Dallas City
	459	Irwin Knudson	Newark
	585	St. Mihiel	Shawneetown
	701	Everett C. Burton	Waggoner
	983	East Peoria	East Peoria

	1017	Manuel Perez, Jr.	Chicago
	1025	Donald J. Ashpole	Thomson
	1141	New Haven	New Haven
	1166	Community	Reynolds
IOWA	327	Volga	Volga
KANSAS	94	Andrew Newton	Leavenworth
	207	Wingate-Crumpton	Ogden
	258	Dwight-Lamson	Little River
	266	Paul D. Linnell *(to merge with Homer White Squadron 66)*	Almena
KENTUCKY	171	Elliott County	Sandy Hook
MASSACHUSETTS	127	Southern Berkshire	Great Barrington
NEW HAMPSHIRE	113	Bruce R. Mills	New Durham
NEW YORK	CN21	The American Legion of Toronto	Toronto, Canada
	1344	Frank Acquavia Memorial	Dunkirk
OHIO	415	Summerfield *(to merge with Belle Valley Squadron 641)*	Summerfield
	679	Richard Regula *(to merge with Homer Weiss Squadron 494)*	Baltic
	732	Kelly-Ward-Varley Memorial *(to merge with Road of Remembrance Squadron 472)*	Youngstown
OKLAHOMA	165	Otto G. Abbott	Newkirk
	381	Clayton Milligan	Wynnewood
WASHINGTON	114	Colville Tribes	Nespelem

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Confirmation of dates for future meetings.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, may I again address the national adjutant?

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: You may.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Adjutant, do you certify that the confirmation of dates of future meetings is a true and correct list?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: I so certify.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I move they be recorded in the digest. ...*Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Confirmation of Dates for Future Meetings

2016 FALL MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	October 10-11
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 10-11
National Executive Committee	October 12-13
2017 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE	February 26-March 1
2017 SPRING MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	May 8-9
National Executive Committee	May 10-11
2017 FALL MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	October 9-10
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 9-10
National Executive Committee	October 11-12
2018 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE	February 25-28
2018 SPRING MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	May 7-8
National Executive Committee	May 9-10
2018 FALL MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	October 15-16
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 15-16
National Executive Committee	October 17-18
2019 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE	February 24-27
2019 SPRING MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	May 6-7
National Executive Committee	May 8-9
2019 FALL MEETINGS	
Commissions and Committees	October 14-15
Commanders and Adjutants Conference	October 14-15
National Executive Committee	October 16-17

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Sir, if you would like to continue with the final report of the Resolutions Subcommittee.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: I will. Thank you, commander.

Final Report of the Subcommittee on Resolutions
David O. Warnken, Kansas, Chairman

Your Subcommittee on Resolutions has been in session since May 2. We've considered all resolutions that have come before the committee, and considered and acted on 33 resolutions.

I would like to take this time to thank the members of the committee who have done such an outstanding job and who have attended every session and participated in the discussion of all resolutions. My special thanks goes to Vice Chairman Bill Kile, West Virginia; Charles Schmidt of Oregon; Dennis Boland, Florida; Jim Pisa from Alaska; Marlon Ronning of Minnesota. And please keep our fellow committee member, our good friend Merv Gunderson in your prayers during this time of healing and recovery. Thank you, gentlemen. *(Applause)*

Appreciation is also extended to Howard Trace and his staff who have served our committee so well. I also want to thank the document center, directors and chairmen of the commissions and committees who have been most cooperative and helpful to the subcommittee in this week's work, in order to bring the reports to you. During our deliberations, we have met with a number of chairmen and staff who have been very helpful to us in explaining questions that we had about resolutions.

I would ask that the commission chairmen handle resolutions as early in their deliberations as possible, in order to expedite the work of the subcommittee and allow time for any revisions or corrections to be made to those resolutions.

Please remember that all active resolutions back to 1969 are available on the Digital Archive at archive.legion.org. Resolutions from this meeting will be available early next week. If you have any questions about the digital archive, please contact the Library and Museum Director Howard Trace.

Mr. Commander, it's been a pleasure to serve as chairman of the Subcommittee on Resolutions. We would like to thank the National Executive Committee in reporting of these various resolutions. You have been most cooperative. Mr. Commander, I move that this report be received and filed. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: I have a motion and second to receive and file the Resolutions Subcommittee report. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

Are there any miscellaneous business and technical motions that need to come before this body?

Miscellaneous Business and Technical Motions

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Mr. Commander, I have a technical motion. I would like to make the motion and move that the national adjutant be instructed to review the minutes of the National Executive Committee meeting and make any necessary corrections, without changing the intent of the National Executive Committee meeting, and to proceed and edit and distribute those minutes. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Thank you, commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Thank you, sir. Thank you so much for the Resolutions Subcommittee. Really, we are very thankful to have your committee that does so much to make sure that these meetings run so smoothly, so thank you so much. At this time, I'd like to call on the national adjutant for the purposes of any announcements.

Announcements

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WHEELER: Your national headquarters produces a number of newsletters digitally. You can subscribe to any of them by going to legion.org/newsletters, and we encourage you to do so. That concludes my announcements.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: At this time, I'd like to call on Al Davis to take the podium, for the purpose of closing remarks.

...National Vice Commander Davis assumed the chair.

Closing Remarks
Dale Barnett, Georgia, National Commander

Well, first of all, I want to thank all of you for what I think has been a great NEC meeting. Now, the teacher came out in me this morning. In front of you, you've got a graphic organizer. Now, I know sometimes when you go from the NEC meeting, your head's spinning. What all happened? So I sat down this morning and I jotted out some key things that I think happened here.

But you know the title of that says, "Educate." Now, you can put your department name. Now, Mr. Wessinger, you make sure you're taking good notes, because I'll be checking on you. At the end you're going to give yourself a grade; not right now.

But let's talk about some things that happened at this meeting. Let's talk about what just happened this morning on Resolution No. 1. We didn't talk about the Fry Scholarship. You know, that federal government just aced us out because we had such a great plan on the Legacy Scholarship, that they thought that they ought to take that idea, and so our applicant pool went down. So that became a violation of our trust laws, and we had a past national commander that asked, "Why don't we give more money away?" And the IRS says, "Why aren't you giving more money away?" So we had to take action, because the IRS is not a very patient organization.

But we also have a sacred pledge to our members that, when we get a dollar, that dollar ought to be going back 100 percent to the cause we get. So you came up with a solution. And it was studied, and I got to thank those ad hocs that came up with the solution. You can see, it was a pretty lengthy resolution. It took a long time to read that resolution. A lot of thought was taken in. Is it the perfect solution? It will probably need to be tweaked, and we're going to see what happens. I know that Past National Commander Conley asked about that. We're on new ground.

You need to educate, and I will tell you that when I've been out with the Legion Riders all across the country, and once they were educated that they could help more kids, they could fill a void that currently exists, and we can target the right group. I will tell you that the response was very positive everywhere I went. So I want you to be my deputies. You need to go out and educate on what happened here this morning with Resolution No. 1.

We had some lively discussion of our foreign and outlying departments. We've been working for a long time. I will tell you that I was confused. You could have the same country and have two different departments. God bless Kentucky, they were talking about going into Cuba. We had New York already in Cuba. We had departments here and there, and I couldn't figure it out. Because we had done a patchwork, that when something happened, we didn't look strategically. I think I upset some people, because I told them, "We need to look at this strategically." If you remember, in my opening comments, I said, "We need to look strategically, because people will judge us 20 years from now on what we have done or what we anticipate doing." We haven't made any decision, but I think we all agree that we need to have a strategy. It's not only in the foreign departments. Every department should have a long range strategy.

We need to maximize technology. We need to leverage what we have available that maybe wasn't available to our predecessors 20 years ago. We need to look globally about our programs. That's what we need to do in every department. Just not in the outlying departments, in every department. And we need to talk. We need to talk, and we need to feel that we can be free to speak our mind on what's best for this organization. Maybe not what's best for me, but what's best for the organization and the future.

I want to talk a little bit about the budget. We had a great question yesterday. Oh, my gosh, we had a budget deficit. But we need to educate our members. I've got two reports here. This is the membership report from when, the day that membership dues went up this year. At that time we had 85.526 percent. We've only had 6 percent more increase since that dues increase went in. So that's why it didn't change. And exactly why we voted last year to have a dues increase, is the very reason. Your Finance Commission told you, if we took no action, we would have a deficit. Doggone it, we had a deficit. So you need to educate your people.

Now, look at the next bullet. You know what drives that? Membership. Membership. If we don't meet our membership goals, guess what? We're going to be sitting here five years from now and we're going to have the same discussion. We can't continue to lose membership and balance a budget. It can't happen. We've got to educate our people on where our membership dues go. It pays for that staff. As you were briefed, there's 293 of them. It goes to our programs and all these great things that all these commission chairmen have told you we've done. It goes to the operating expenses of running a national organization. You need to educate. You need to educate. Nobody's taking your money. But they allocate the money on what we have. And if we have less members, I will guarantee you, we will not be able to continue to do what we've done in the past.

Lastly, you need to take an assessment. You know I asked all the NECmen to give me input on what they're doing on their strategic plan of growth. I've got them, I've got them. I didn't do that just because I wanted you to give me a paper. I might even ask you about it. You better be prepared to answer me based on what you put on there, because you need to be involved.

We need to get communications down to the lowest level. That's what we're here for. You're my liaison between this body and the post level and the district level. We need to get the word out. There's so much that's been talked about here. You need to share that information and communicate. You need to make people aware. Not only Legion people, but remember when I was in the video and I said those wavers and honkers? We need to turn the wavers and the honkers into members. I bet you a lot of those folks who are waving and honking when we're out on awareness walks and you're in the community, are potential new members of this organization.

We've got to inculcate a culture of growth, a culture of growth in this organization. Or if not, 20 years from now, they'll be looking at us and saying, "You should have taken action. You should have taken action." I think you have taken action here, and it's been controversial, and that's good. It should be controversial, because when you have controversy, you have discourse between two bodies. That's what we've done.

Everyone can contribute. Everyone can make a difference. And especially you can make a difference, that's in this room. You're my varsity, you're my A-team. You need to leave here and take this back and do it. Look at my note. Take this with you. Give your department a grade. You can do it on the plane. You can do it sometime in the next week. But you need to make an assessment.

Then you need to start educating others in your department at the district level department meetings about what we're trying to do as an organization of The American Legion. You need to implement an aggressive and forward looking plan that inculcates a culture of growth.

I can't tell you how proud I have been to serve the last eight months as your national commander. It is such an honor. It's an honor to be here today before you. I have enjoyed every minute, even those 1:30 in the morning wake up calls.

But I will tell you, there is work that still needs to be done. And I dedicate myself to you, that I will give you the absolute best this last four months, because I love this organization. I love each and every one of you for what you do, and I encourage you to do the best you can for God and country. God bless you all. Thank you. *(Standing applause)*

...National Commander Barnett resumed the chair.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WARNKEN: Commander, I make a motion to receive and file your report. *...Second.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Is there any discussion? All in favor, signify by aye. Opposed? Motion carries.

At this time, if you would uncover, I would like to call on Past National Chaplain Randy Cash, for the benediction.

Benediction
Tierian 'Randy' Cash, North Carolina, Past National Chaplain

We depart from this place as people of faith, knowing that He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. May God be with you 'til we meet again. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER BARNETT: Recover. Colors of our nation in place. Hand salute. Two. I now declare this meeting of the NEC adjourned. Thank you all.

... At 10:07 a.m., Thursday, May 5, 2016, the National Executive Committee meeting of The American Legion was adjourned. Sine die.

Abbreviations

A

AFRH ..... Armed Forces Retirement Home
ALA ..... American Legion Auxiliary
ALB ..... American Legion Baseball
ALR ..... American Legion Riders
ANAVICUS ..... Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans in Canada Association – United States
ANC ..... Arlington National Cemetery
APED ..... appearance and performance enhancing drugs
ATF ..... Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
AVA ..... Amis des Veterans Americains

B

BVA ..... Board of Veterans Appeals

C

CAM ..... Complementary and Alternative Medicine
CBD ..... Cannabidiol
CBP ..... Customs and Border Protection
CCM ..... Certified Case Manager
CEO ..... chief executive officer
CHAMPVA ..... Civilian Health and Medical Program of Department of Veterans Affairs
CIA ..... Central Intelligence Agency
COLA ..... cost of living allowance
CONUS ..... contiguous United States
COYE ..... Committee on Youth Education
CPI ..... Consumer Price Index
CVSO ..... County Veterans Service Officer
CWF ..... Child Welfare Foundation

D

DBE ..... Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DEA ..... Drug Enforcement Administration
DEC ..... Department Executive Committee
DFAS ..... Defense Finance and Accounting Service
DHS ..... Department of Homeland Security
DOD ..... Department of Defense
DOJ ..... Department of Justice
DPAA ..... Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
DSM ..... Direct Membership Solicitation
DSO ..... Department Service Officer
DVOP ..... Disabled Veterans Outreach Program

E

EFC ..... Endowment Fund Corporation
EST ..... Eastern Standard Time

F

FACT ..... Federal Asbestos Claim Transparency
FAFSA ..... Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FBI ..... Federal Bureau of Investigation
FDO ..... Fire Direction Officer
FODPAL ..... Foreign and Outlying Departments and Post of The American Legion
FSS ..... Federal Supply Schedule
FY ..... fiscal year, fiscal year

G

GOTV ..... Get Out the Vote
GSA ..... General Services Administration

H

HR ..... House Resolution
HUD ..... Department of Housing and Urban Development
HVRP ..... Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program

I

ICE ..... Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IRA ..... Individual Retirement Account
IRC ..... Internal Revenue Code
IRS ..... Internal Revenue Service
ISIL ..... Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS ..... Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

L

LCSW ..... Licensed Clinical Social Worker
LEAD ..... Leadership, Education, and Development
LSD ..... Lysergic acid diethylamide
LTG ..... lieutenant general
LVER ..... Local Veterans Employment Representative

M

MAGTF ..... Marine Air-Ground Transport Force
MEF ..... Marine Expeditionary Force
MIA ..... missing in action

N

NADHAL ..... National Association of Department Historians of The American Legion
NALPA ..... National American Legion Press Association
NASA ..... National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO ..... North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA ..... National Cemetery Administration
NEC ..... National Executive Committee

NEF .....National Emergency Fund
NIDA .....National Institute on Drug Abuse
NIH ..... National Institutes of Health
NJROTC .....Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps
NLSI ..... National Service Life Insurance

O

OCW ..... Operation Comfort Warriors
OEF .....Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF ..... Operation Iraqi Freedom
OSD ..... Office of the Secretary of Defense

P

PCP ..... Phencyclidine
PL ..... Public Law
PMC ..... Presidential Memorial Certificate
PNC .....Past National Commander
PNVC ..... Past National Vice Commander
POW..... prisoner of war
PTSD..... post traumatic stress disorder
PUFL ..... Paid Up for Life

R

RBI .....runs batted in
RFP..... request for proposal
ROAR..... Regional Office Action Review
ROTC ..... Reserve Officer Training Corps

S

SAL ..... Sons of The American Legion
SAVE .....Sexual Assault Victims Empowerment
SBA..... Small Business Administration
SCVAHCS ..... St. Cloud VA Health Care System
SDVOSB .....Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business
SEAL..... United States Navy Sea, Air, Land Teams
SEATO .....Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SECDEF..... Secretary of Defense
STEM .....Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
SWS .....System Worth Saving

T

TAL..... The American Legion
TBI ..... traumatic brain injury
TFA ..... Temporary Financial Assistance
THR ..... Taylor Hooton Foundation
TSA ..... Transportation Security Administration

U

USAA ..... United Services Automobile Association
USAF ..... United States Air Force
USAID..... United States Agency for International Development
USC ..... United States Code
USN ..... United States Navy

V

VA ..... Department of Veterans Affairs
VACAA ..... Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act
VACAHCS ..... VA Central Alabama Health Care System
VAMC ..... VA Medical Center
VASH ..... Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing
VAVS ..... Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service
VBA ..... Veterans Benefits Administration
VETS ..... Veterans Employment and Training Service
VHA ..... Veterans Health Administration
VOSB ..... Veteran-Owned Small Business
VSO ..... Veterans Service Organization

W

WTVAHCS ..... West Texas VA Health Care System
WWII ..... World War II

Y

YCLE ..... Youth Cadet Law Enforcement
YTD ..... year to date

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