PROGRAMMING FOR LEGION LEADERS

Vol. 1 February, 1953 No. 2

K-VETS HONORED:-

"To hell with the men in Korea!" This embittered chant of Korean veterans describes how they think the general public feels about them.

Read James A. Michener's story "The Way It Is In Korea," January Reader's Digest, for proof of this statement.

The American Legion through the Korean Veterans Recognition Plan wants to prove to the K-vets who are coming back that somebody is interested in their welfare.

That's why the "Chicago Plan" originated by the Cook County Council, American Legion--awarding certificates of honor and appreciation to every returned Korean war veteran at an appropriate public ceremony--is catching on all over the country. It should be a part of your own post's "welcome home" program.

Names of all men being discharged from the armed forces can be obtained through your Legion Department Office. (Through cooperation of Secretary of Defense). Sample copies of the certificate of recognition can be obtained through the National Public Relations Division. Here's a real chance for the post commanders to meet and render these new members of the veteran population a fine personal service. The post can also offer help in finding jobs or solving other veteran problems. Write to National Public Relations, 1608 K Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C., for complete details of this Korean Veterans Recognition Plan which tells you how the man in the street, the Mayor and other leaders of your community can share in this recognition of Korean veterans--with the Legion.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM:-

Ardent collectors of Legion insignia are drooling over the new gold lettered cap ornament awarded to the National Commander's Flying Squadron. The letters "N.C.F.S." designate the wearers as outstanding Legion speakers who have addressed at least six non-Legion groups such as Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, or other organizations on the principles and achievements of The American Legion. Legionnaires who can get out and tell the Legion story to service and civic groups are eligible. They must be certified by their state commander to National Headquarters to obtain the coveted insignia; which reminds us that National Public Relations Division has prepared a series of timely talks on subjects of interest to the general public. Write for them, National Headquarters, 700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis 6, Ind.

NATIONAL BOY SCOUT WEEK:-

National Commander Lewis K. Gough has urged Legion posts throughout the nation to cooperate with the Boy Scouts of America in observance of National Boy Scout Week, Feb. 7 to 13. "Forward on Liberty's Team" will be the theme of the observance, in which more than 4,000 American Legion-sponsored Boy Scout troops will have an active part. Posts not already sponsoring troops are urged to contact Boy Scout officials in their communities and offer to lend a helping hand in this great citizen-building movement.

HAVE YOUR BIRTHDAY CAKE---AND EAT IT--TOO!

When The American Legion celebrates its 35th Birthday on March 15-17 your post can have its cake and eat it!!.....That sounds far fetched, but it can be true if you plan a birthday celebration that properly identifies The American Legion as the world's greatest veterans organization in the minds of the general public. Get a "name speaker," if you can, but don't forget the rest of the supporting cast---your audience---and how to pack them in!

Start planning your guest list now---and somewhere near the top of that list include your hometown newspaper editor---and "the working press and radio". Have a committee call on them and formally issue the invitation. This may be old hat, but it gets the attention of these people in advance---and they in turn can help in the Big Build-up for The Legion Birthday Party; providing of course, you have a live wire public relations chairman who will make it easy for them to write about the affair by furnishing news releases and background material on the Legion history. Give 'em the glamour and glitter of the biggest birthday cake your baker will donate or your Legion Auxiliary will bake, but, grand finale of the birthday party can be a "turn in" of 1953 membership cards, the kind of "cake" that really counts when the chips are down. The National Emblem Sales division will provide brief histories of The American Legion (10¢ each). National Public Relations will furnish Legion Birthday speeches upon request. TIMELY TIP:- Have your local merchants use a few lines---congratulating the local post on its birthday---in their regular advertisements. (A few days in advance of your Birthday Party).

P-U-P-M:-

Pepping Up Post Meetings is just a matter of giving a little thought to taking advantage of the best possible material available for this purpose. For example: Now that your post is grooming some high school youngster to win the state Legion oratorical contest, why not have that girl or boy come to your post meeting and give their talk on the United States Constitution and our rights and responsibilities under the same? It's good practice for them and certainly makes for a more interesting Legion meeting. When the national finals in the American Legion's High School Oratorical Contest will be held in Jersey City, N. J. next April 20th, the winner will emerge from more than 350,000 contestants. Wouldn't your post like to be able to say, we gave that boy or girl a hand?

SERVICES RENDERED:-

The National Membership and Post Activities Division at your National Headquarters, Indianapolis, Indiana, is at your service. It provides membership promotional material for American Legion posts which may be obtained by writing to Director C. M. Wilson, at American Legion National Headquarters, 700 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.

A recent survey of the actual services rendered by this office revealed that there were more than 35 pamphlets, handbooks and various certificates of award and other accessories conceived by the Membership Division. If your Department Headquarters does not carry what you are looking for in this line, we would be happy to hear from you. We'll do our best to supply your need for certain promotional material.

No amount of printed pamphlets can take the place of personal contact on the membership getting front, but we believe a well-informed Legionnaire is a better Legion salesman.

GET 'EM AND HOLD 'EM:-

Post commanders should be concerned with keeping members after they get them. See to it that the new Legionnaires are properly introduced. Give them a job to do--so that they get the idea they are one of the team right away. See to it that they are properly initiated at a post meeting, which with the right type of leadership can be kept dignified, as well as educational and entertaining. Sell 'em, sign 'em, satisfy 'em and secure 'em.

APRIL--CHILD WELFARE MONTH:-

The prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency will be the keynote of The American Legion's annual observance of April as "Child Welfare Month," it has been announced by Samuel S. Fried, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, National Child Welfare Chairman.

A special leaflet entitled "For Want of a Nail" is being readied to outline the growing delinquency problem and activities which can be sponsored by posts to meet it. The publication will emphasize the importance of heeding the early warning signals of delinquency and providing corrective treatment at that time.

In making plans for April post meetings, it is suggested that post commanders invite juvenile court judges, police officers or others working with delinquents to speak on this subject.

Single copies of the special juvenile delinquency publication "For Want of a Nail" may be obtained without charge from National Child Welfare Division, The American Legion, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis 6, Indiana.

POST COMMANDERS SHOULD GET ON "THE FIRING LINE":-

Allen B. Willand, National Americanism Director, suggests that counter-subversive activities as outlined in "THE FIRING LINE," published by the National Americanism Commission, should make for an interesting discussion at a post meeting. Your post counter-subversive chairman might head up the discussion group and use "THE FIRING LINE" for proper background material.

The chairman should not monopolize the discussion; opinion makers, local clergymen, editors and publishers and other community leaders should be invited to attend; question and answer periods would bring such subjects as, among others, the Legion's Memorial Book Plan. This worth while program provides an opportunity for every American Legion Post or Unit to furnish public libraries with good anti-communist books.

By this time each post has received a 4-page pamphlet which includes a letter from National Commander Gough and National Auxiliary President Ashton explaining the Memorial Book Plan, plus a complete list of the books and their cost. A Post or Unit can purchase these books and dedicate them to local veterans of World Wars or Korean veterans.

If you are not already a subscriber of "THE FIRING LINE," you can be by mailing $3.00 to: National Americanism Commission, The American Legion, Box 1055, Indianapolis 6, Indiana.

ATTENTION POST SERVICE OFFICERS:-

T. O. Kraabel, National Director of Rehabilitation, will provide PROGRAMMING FOR LEGION LEADERS with information every month that should be of real interest to all post service officers. In turn, as a result of these suggestions, the post commander should see to it that the service officer's report at the post meeting is allowed sufficient time, to present some phase of the Legion's rehabilitation program.

Kraabel suggests a census of all veterans in the territory served by the post should be taken as a starter for this program. Post Commanders should appoint a large committee to work with the service officer in this undertaking. Get some publicity on this project. The veterans census records should be kept current and contain the following information: Veteran's Name and Address; Service Serial Number; VA Claim Number, if any; Dates of Service; Type of Discharge; Place of Entry into Service; Place of Discharge; If Married, Maiden Name of Wife; if any Previous Marriages, When, Where, and how Dissolved; If Any Children, Names, Date and Place of Birth; If Treated for any Disease or Injury in Service, State Where, Nature of Disability and Dates of Treatment; If treated after Discharge State Where, Nature of Disability and Dates of Treatment; If in receipt of Compensation or Pension, State Amount and for what Disability; If Claim for Benefits pending give Status.

It is the service officer's job to keep the veteran population informed of all veterans benefits. When contacted for assistance the service officer should secure a Form 2-22 giving Power of Attorney to The American Legion. Keep record of all claims and furnish Department Service Officer with the information he requests, so he'll know progress made.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SPEAKERS:-

Roy A. Duffus of Rochester, New York, former Monroe County Commander, has offered the following suggestions for Post Commanders who wish to make an effective speech: (1) Arrive at assignment at least TEN minutes before scheduled time. (2)Give Chairman a slip with your name, subject and any points you wish him to use in introduction. Ask Chairman for points on which he wishes particular emphasis. (3) Ask Chairman for names of those he wishes given recognition in your talk. (4) Ask Chairman the length of time he wishes you to speak. It is most important to learn the time at which meeting must end, particularly so if the group is in a school where a schedule of time is in force. (5) If you wish to use a stand for your notes, be sure to ask Chairman if it is in place before the meeting. (6) While waiting for introduction, note preceding items on program. They may give a cue to you for emphasis on some part of your talk.

(7) In speaking, remember these points: Speak in the language of the group; be enthusiastic; remember that you are selling an idea; make the group feel that you are interested in them; follow your outline, if you stray, you will not finish on time; address the whole audience; raise and lower voice for emphasis; do not apologize; do not scold your audience, pat them on the back. (8) Every gesture, every word, every effort in your talk should be directed toward persuading your audience; (9) Do NOT take yourself too seriously, but be serious where points in the talk require it; (10) Leave the group feeling that they wished that you had talked ten minutes longer, rather than ten minutes less.

Comrade Duffus has set up the suggestions for use in a much more attractive form. We suggest that if you reproduce this information, it be given more space.

MEMO: YOUR NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS WILL WELCOME YOUR SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS FOR PUBLICATION IN FUTURE ISSUES. WRITE US IF YOUR POST HAS PUT ON PROGRAMS THAT CLICKED! THIS INFORMATION IS NOT FOR POST COMMANDERS ALONE, BUT HIS KEY LEGION WORKERS AND SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH THE ADJUTANT AND POST CHAIRMAN.

THE AMERICAN LEGION
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
P. O. BOX 1055
INDIANAPOLIS 6, IND.

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BIRTHDAY CAKE

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Form 3547 requested