PROGRAMMING

FOR AMERICAN LEGION LEADERS

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

Vol. 3 November 1955 No. 11

NATIONAL COMMANDER'S MESSAGE:-

All of us agree that "It's GREAT To Be An American Legionnaire!" Let's say it with membership for 1956.

The 1956 Membership Operation is well under way in all Departments and Posts. I believe that enthusiasm is in high gear and will pay off where it counts--at the Post Adjutant's desk.

Like all of you, I know that membership enrollment is a job which must be done by the loyal, volunteer workers right down in the community Posts of our great organization. Membership is a Post operation.

I appeal to you now--to every member of The American Legion to get behind this membership push, so that we may clean up the 1956 membership job by November 11--or not later than December 31.

We must remember this! We would not have any program or activity without membership--whether it be Rehabilitation- Americanism- Child Welfare- National Security or Community Service. The sooner we get the membership job done--the sooner we can put our manpower to work on these other activities.

Membership is the mainspring which makes The American Legion tick.

We must set our sights higher if we are to accomplish new records. Therefore, I would like to set forth here the National Commander's goal for 1956--separate and apart from the established quota set by the convention. I URGE ALL DEPARTMENTS AND ALL POSTS TO AIM FOR AT LEAST A 5 PER CENT INCREASE OVER THE 1955 MEMBERSHIP TOTAL.

I am confident that this can be done. I know it will be done, if you keep the bonfires of enthusiasm burning.

Yours--for a greater American Legion

J. Addington Wagner

J. ADDINGTON WAGNER
National Commander

RECREATION HELPS MEMBERSHIP:-

Recreation is refreshment of body or mind; a pleasurable exercise or occupation. Post Athletic Officers will find most younger members eager to participate in Post sponsored sports and recreation activities. A well planned sports schedule will include sports minded older veterans.

Such a recreation program serves a number of purposes; (1) it provides a personal activity for members; (2) it provides recreation for many who, because of reasons of age or health cannot actively participate in an athletic program, yet they derive their recreation from a spectator angle; (3) the program will keep the membership interested and give them a common topic for discussion; and (4) a good athletic and recreation program is an excellent "selling point" in obtaining new members. It also helps hold members--many become active in such Post programs.

Here are a few suggested sports programs for your Post to sponsor in the fall and winter months.

BASKETBALL: Many Departments conduct state Legion basketball tournaments. Basketball is still the number one spectator sport of our land, and a Post entry in a local league will provide many benefits to the Post and its members....BOWLING: Many Posts and Departments have found this to be a most acceptable activity and it is open to all age groups.

BOXING AND WRESTLING: May include the holding of public shows under Legion supervision. Establishment of classes for boys. Many Legion Posts sponsor Golden Gloves tourneys....TABLE TENNIS: Many Post members played table tennis during the past wars in their day-rooms and service clubs. Inter-Post and inter-city matches may be held.

VOLLEYBALL AND HANDBALL: These activities provide good, wholesome exercise and good competition....ROLLER AND ICE SKATING: Legion Posts may help construct rinks in cooperation with other groups, or as a Legion project.

REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR, DEC. 7th:-

A good way to 'Remember Pearl Harbor' is to use National Security as the theme for your Post meeting during the anniversary week, December 7th. The Pearl Harbor attack, among other things, clearly demonstrated the need for an adequate and alert civil defense program. In the war years which followed, many thousands of people died needlessly because of lack of adequate preparation and training.

Your Post's December meeting offers an excellent opportunity to re-emphasize Civil Defense in your community. Civil Defense educational material and films are available upon request to the National Security Division, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. (Handling charge on films $1 each).

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE IN:-

American Legion Post No. 493 of Homer City, Pennsylvania, rings a bell this month with a very practical suggestion for better attendance at Post meetings as evidenced by the following newspaper account of a recent Post meeting.

read this story—
then hold a similar meeting!

"HOMER CITY, PA.:- Homer City American Legion met with representatives of service and civic organizations and churches in its Post home Wednesday evening. Present were the Presidents of the Kiwanis, Lions, P.T.A., Borough Council, Chambers of Commerce, VFW Auxiliary, Legion Auxiliary, Firemen and the burgess. Four ministers also participated.

The meeting was held at the invitation of the Legion so that community leaders would have a better understanding of the Legion, and to promote better public relations.

Commander Kenneth Davis explained the ritual of The American Legion and said that any war veteran was eligible to join the group; that they recognize no difference in race, creed or politics.

He said the Post hopes to promote better public relations, carry on more community service, advance the 'Back to God' movement, continue all present activities, and increase membership to at least 400. Guests attending from other organizations were called upon to discuss local problems and the possibility of all groups working together in community service. They were asked to present suggestions for projects that could be worked up cooperatively..." end of news account.

Commander Davis writes: "The meeting hall was packed with Legionnaires and guests. It ended in a 'bull session' in which our guests participated. It was a wonderful way in which to promote good feeling between other civic and service groups, and attracted a large number of our own members to the meeting."

Some of the routine Legion matters came as eye-openers to the visitors. They heard the news that:

The Post would sponsor a teen-age club in conjunction with the Women's Civic Club.

A program was planned for Veterans Day; steps were taken to implement a county-wide blood donor program.

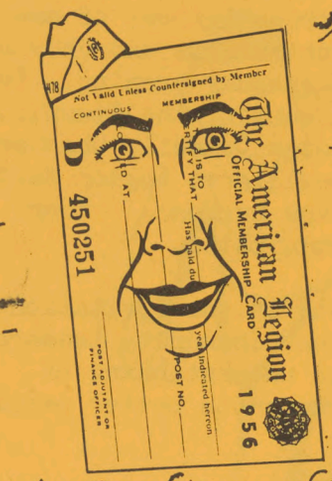
The Post will sponsor a benefit dance for the family of a hospitalized veteran.

The Post color guard will raise the flag at the opening of local night football.

What a simple and effective way to get The American Legion story to the public.

MEMBERANDUM:-

The next membership target date nationally is December 31. The objective is to have every Post with 100 per cent of its 1955 membership re-enrolled for 1956.



The Best Christmas Card A Veteran Could Get!

Special recognition in the form of a Certificate of Meritorious Service will go to all Posts which have a 1956 membership equal to or greater than their all time high by December 31. It's a citation you will be proud to frame and display on your club room wall.

Don't forget that the "Distinguished Dozen" card will be awarded to all Legionnaires who sign up twelve or more members for 1956 (new or renewals) prior to December 31, 1955.

Here's an idea that we suggest annually. What better Christmas present could you give an eligible veteran than a 1956 American Legion membership card? A telephone campaign offering this suggestion to the families of veterans would be a good way to step up your membership enrollment.

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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

P. O. BOX 1055

INDIANAPOLIS 6, IND.

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IT ALL ADDS UP TO MEMBERSHIP!

WHEN YOU TELL THE AMERICAN LEGION STORY TO THE PUBLIC!