PROGRAMMING

FOR AMERICAN LEGION LEADERS

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PHONE 6 FOR '56!

National Commander J. Addington Wagner kicked off a nationwide membership drive January 10 with a telephone call to all Department Commanders. In a dramatic conference call to top U. S. commanders, Wagner said:

"Let's wrap up this membership job for 1956 with the greatest all time enrollment in American Legion history."

Stressing the use of the telephone as an effective means of membership sales force, Wagner asked all Department Commanders to immediately begin statewide campaigns in their own Departments by calling District Commanders on the telephone and sounding a membership alert.

District Commanders, in turn, will call Post Commanders and relay the National Commander's message to "Phone 6 for '56!"

Post Commanders should call six Legionnaires and ask them to do two things: (1) Enroll one member. (2) Call six other members to ask them to enroll one member each, new or renewal, and in turn, ask these six Legionnaires to call six other Legionnaires with the same kind of a message.

The idea is, of course, to keep the telephone task force going until all present members have been called and asked to secure one member each.

This edition of "PROGRAMMING" offers specific suggestions as to how such a campaign might be initiated in your American Legion Post.

Calling all cards! (Membership cards, that is) Let's Add 'em Up For Add!

Phone 6 for '56!

HERE'S SOME IDEAS:-

Here's a few suggestions for post commanders on how to promote the National Commander's 'Phone 6 for '56' campaign:

First of all phone your post publicity officer and hold a conference on ways and means to make the public conscious of the campaign.

Call a special meeting of your membership committee. Start the campaign off right by calling them on the phone. Don't discuss details over the phone. Get them in to post headquarters and put them to work.

Build your whole campaign around the telephone as your best means of communication.

Make the whole town telephone conscious to the degree that folks will be calling post headquarters saying: "Have you called so and so?" --mentioning the name of some eligible veteran, you may have overlooked.

Once you get this campaign under way you'll discover that you have a phone chain gang working for you.

Don't get your wires crossed. You'll have a certain percentage of 'wrong numbers'. Don't get discouraged if the "line is busy", it may be another Legionnaire trying to 'Phone 6 for '56!'

The best way to keep the campaign under control is to use post headquarters as the 'Phone 6 for '56' GHQ, or such headquarters with as many phones as possible available for continuous use. Teams of at least six Legionnaires should man the phones at certain designated hours -- backed up by travelling teams of Legionnaires who will actually pick up the dues.

Have names, addresses and telephone numbers of your prospects on 3 x 5 cards for handy use of your telephone teams and pick-up squad.

When the travelling "pick-up squad" completes a job of signing up a prospect, they call back to headquarters for the name of additional prospects already 'sold' by the telephone team.

Maximum phone and pick-up contacts should be made between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. week nights. Some posts have found that similar drives of this type are particularly effective on week ends, Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday.

CALLING ALL ELIGIBLE VETERANS!

Don't wait for your District Commander to call you on the phone and tell you about the National Commander's telephone campaign. Get your post campaign underway now -- so that when your District Commander calls, you can say: "Mission accomplished!"

See your local telephone company branch manager and let him know how your Post is using the telephone to round up membership. It's possible he may like to 'tie-in' with such a campaign and give your post a boost with a cooperative advertisement in the hometown newspapers.

Don't overlook the Auxiliary as "hello girls' or 'switchboard operators' the night you decide to kick-off this person to person campaign.

As you well know, these gals are great for dishing up chow and hot coffee to hungry membership getters.

Preliminary work will save time later on. Prepare a list of phone numbers you want your membership getting teams to call. Your Post Adjutant should assist with this list.

Line up a good 'telephone picture' for the local paper. Post Commander with his hands full of phones trying to get the membership message across might be a good one. Committee making phone calls around conference table is a picture that might be taken at the local telephone exchange.

CAMPAIGN SHOULD LAST SIX DAYS:-

The 'Phone 6 for '56!' theme should be pounded hard. Plan to have the campaign run for six full days. With proper planning this should be ample time.

Maybe you might be able to enlist the help of some local radio disc jockey. At a time well advertised in advance he might have local Legionnaires conduct a phase of the phone campaign right from the radio studio. Thus publicizing the campaign and making the member contacts at the same time. If the disc jockey has a TV outlet, see to it that you actually sign someone up on TV.

Once you have the job done get your membership cards and transmittals in to Department Headquarters and magazine subscription cards in to National Hdqtrs.

According to the National Commander's plan, Department Headquarters will then process the cards and get transmittals and remittances in to National within six days or by a deadline of not later than January 30.

ORDER BIRTHDAY MATRIX NOW:-

Once again the office of Membership and Post Activities will provide a free matrix service featuring a cooperative advertisement promoting The American Legion Birthday. Such a birthday co-op mat is being designed now. We advise you to order yours early.

Over 2000 such mats were requested by posts last year. This means that 2000 daily and weekly newspapers in the smaller communities ran the advertisement saluting The American Legion Birthday. The ads in most cases were sponsored by friendly merchants, banks or public utilities.

A brand new advertisement will be available soon. It will come in 5 column and 3 column sizes. Place your order now and the mats will be mailed out as soon as we get them from the printer.

We have received many unsolicited testimonials from post commanders as to the value of such co-op ads. If you haven't used one yet, why not make plans to have one run in your hometown paper prior to the March 15-17 birthday?

EDITOR'S NOTE:- WHY NOT WRITE TO PROGRAMMING AND TELL US WHAT YOUR POST IS DOING TO ENCOURAGE GREATER INTEREST IN POST MEETINGS, ETC., YOUR POST WILL GET PROPER CREDIT IF WE PASS THE SUGGESTION ALONG.

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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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