THE AMERICAN LEGION

A NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR POST COMMANDERS AND POST ADJUTANTS . . .

Advance

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'REACH OUT . . .'

Funds Sought for Quake Victims

NEW DIRECTIONS for his "Reach Out" theme have been determined by circumstances existing at the mid-point of National Commander Alfred P. Chamie's term of office.

The American Legion now is involved in a compassionate program of "Reaching Out" to the people of that area of California which was devastated by an earthquake on Feb. 9, with particularly severe damage to Veterans Administration hospitals and to American Legion Post homes in the area.

"In traditional American Legion fashion, we have reached out with a helping hand to our comrades in distress, and have done and continue to do what we can to alleviate the suffering of those most affected by this disaster. I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to those who have responded to the call, and, at the same time, to encourage those who have not yet taken part in this mission of mercy to do so in order that we can bring this project to a quick and most successful conclusion," the National Commander said.

NEC Approves Drive for Funds

In a mailed ballot to the National Executive Committee, the National Commander asked, and received, National Executive Committee approval to conduct the drive for funds among the posts and departments of the Legion, and to advance $25,000 for immediate relief to the stricken area.

Past National Commander John R. Quinn is chairman of a special American Legion Earthquake Disaster Fund Committee, comprised of other Legion leaders from the affected area, to recommend disbursement of the funds for relief and rehabilitation of the victims.

Contributions may be made through your own department direct to National Headquarters from individuals, posts or districts. Checks should be made payable to American Legion Disaster Fund and mailed to National Headquarters, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206.

Intensify POW, MIA Campaign

Circumstances also call for a continuation of the National Commander's POW program to arouse public attention and concern for our POWs, those missing in action in Southeast Asia, and their families.

During the recent Washington Conference, the special committee on the POW project again convened and recommended the next step in the program be aimed at elected public officials at all levels of government, encouraging them to write expressing their own sentiments on behalf of proper and humane treatment of the POWs.

Expressions Needed From Officials

As a continuation of the program which was initiated by the proclamations of governors for special days designated as POW days, the distribution of an American Legion Prayer for the Prisoners of War, plus a continuation of individual letter writing and petitions, The American Legion is now asking all elected public officials, regardless of politics or of personal convictions regarding the war, to join in the campaign for proper treatment of the POWs.

You can help by bringing this project to the attention of your own local officials and encouraging them to take part in the program as soon as they have been contacted by the National Organization by letter.

Let's all pitch in and get the job done for the POWs, the MIAs, and their families.

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...Suggested NEWS RELEASE!

(School Medal Awards)

Two graduating students at .....(**Name of School**)..... have been selected to receive The American Legion School Medal Award, sponsored by .....(**Name of Post**) ..... Post No. ....., Post Commander .....(**Full Name**)..... announced today.

(If the school wishes to withhold their names, pending presentation at an awards ceremony, honor such a request. If the names are to be made public prior to the presentation, insert a paragraph identifying each student by full name and name of parents or guardian.)

Students who qualify for this award show outstanding development of the following qualities:

COURAGE—Bravery in the face of opposition and danger; determination and force to do the right without public applause and regardless of personal advantage.

HONOR—Highly developed moral character; moral excellence; strength and stability of character; high standards of conduct; devotion to duty; adherence to truth; practice of clean speech and thoughts.

LEADERSHIP—Ability to lead and accomplish through group action; ability to work in harmony and in unison with other leaders in accomplishing group results; desire and ability to fill the voids in lives of others caused by timidity, illness, and other handicaps.

PATRIOTISM—An ideal of loyal Americanism, religious tolerance, righteous freedom, and the willingness to defend our country's flag against all enemies, foreign or domestic.

SCHOLARSHIP—Attainments in school studies; quality of school work reflecting the fine traits of industry; perserverance; efficiency and intelligence.

SERVICE—Kindliness; unselfishness; fellowship; protection of the weak; promotion of the interests and welfare of associates; and constructive aid for the upbuilding of the school and the community.

The medals will be presented as a part of .....(**Type of Ceremonies**)..... scheduled for ..... (**Time**) ....., ... (**Date**) ....., at ..... (**Place**) ....., Commander ..... (**Last Name**) ..... added.

The American Legion **ADVANCE**

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MEMBER AMERICAN LEGION PRESS ASSOCIATION

Editor: Frank L. Megnin

April, 1971 Vol. XIV, No. 4

COMMANDER'S CALENDAR

April	Children & Youth Month.
1	Delinquent members suspended from all privileges.
6	54th anniversary of U.S. entry into World War I, 1917.
19	Regional competitions, National High School Oratorical Contest.
26	Sectional competitions, National High School Oratorical Contest.
29	Finals, National High School Oratorical Contest, Maryville, Mo.
May	
1	Law and Order Day.
2-8	National Employ the Older Worker Week.
3-4	Standing national commissions and committees meet, Indianapolis, Ind.
5-6	National Executive Committee, Indianapolis, Ind.
8	V-E Day.
8-10	52nd anniversary of St. Louis Caucus.
15	Armed Forces Day.
22	National Maritime Day.
31	Memorial Day.
June	
6	27th anniversary of D-Day, 1944.
14	Flag Day.
25	21st anniversary of U.S. entry into Korean War, 1950.

Plan Now, Avoid Post's Summer 'Slump'

HOW DOES YOUR CALENDAR of post events look for the summer months?

There's a natural tendency to let things slide over the summer. School's out. People are away on vacations. There may be a break in the continuity of leadership as the Post Commander and the other officers end their terms and another group waits to be elected and installed. A few posts do not even attempt to hold regular business meetings over the summer.

Yet your members pay dues for a full year and have a right to expect a year-'round schedule of activities. As a matter of fact, the close of school and the arrival of warm weather offer opportunities for recreational and social activities that can put added value into Legion membership.

Two Types of Projects

Two types of projects are available—those which are of benefit to others and those which are of benefit to the members.

Under the first category, one thinks immediately of American Legion Baseball. (And if your post is not in

on the baseball program, get in touch with department headquarters at once and see how simple it can be to get started.) Then, there are many other kinds of recreational activities that can be sponsored for young people.

Minnesota has its summer camp for school traffic boys. Indiana has a state camp-out for SAL members. This summer many posts which sponsor Explorer Scout Posts will be sending a young man to the first national congress of Explorer Scout presidents. Swimming meets, playground basketball leagues or tournaments, junior golf—all represent possibilities for Legion sponsorship or support.

Plan Activities for Members, Too

Just as important are recreational and social events appropriate to the season for your members. If your post is beginning to get a number of younger members (*and it certainly should be by now*), find out what kind of program they would like. Then, help them get it started.

In some areas, slow-pitch softball has become extremely popular, and teams of Legion members are taking part in league play. One state has a tremendous turn out for a Legion district and department golf tournament.

Take In A Special Event

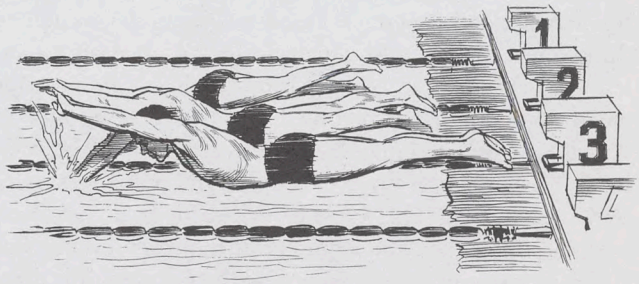
If your post is located in the area of a major league baseball club, an organized trip of Legion families might interest your sports enthusiasts. And, whatever you plan, be sure to include that big event on your summer calendar—your annual department convention!

In one county seat there is an annual (and by now traditional) Fourth of July baseball game between "picked" Legion and VFW teams with the trophy a battered sprinkling can. There's not too much player skill involved—and good baseball strategy probably is all but concealed but the members and families have a good time. That, after all, is the main purpose of your social and recreational programs.

Keep Service Programs Going

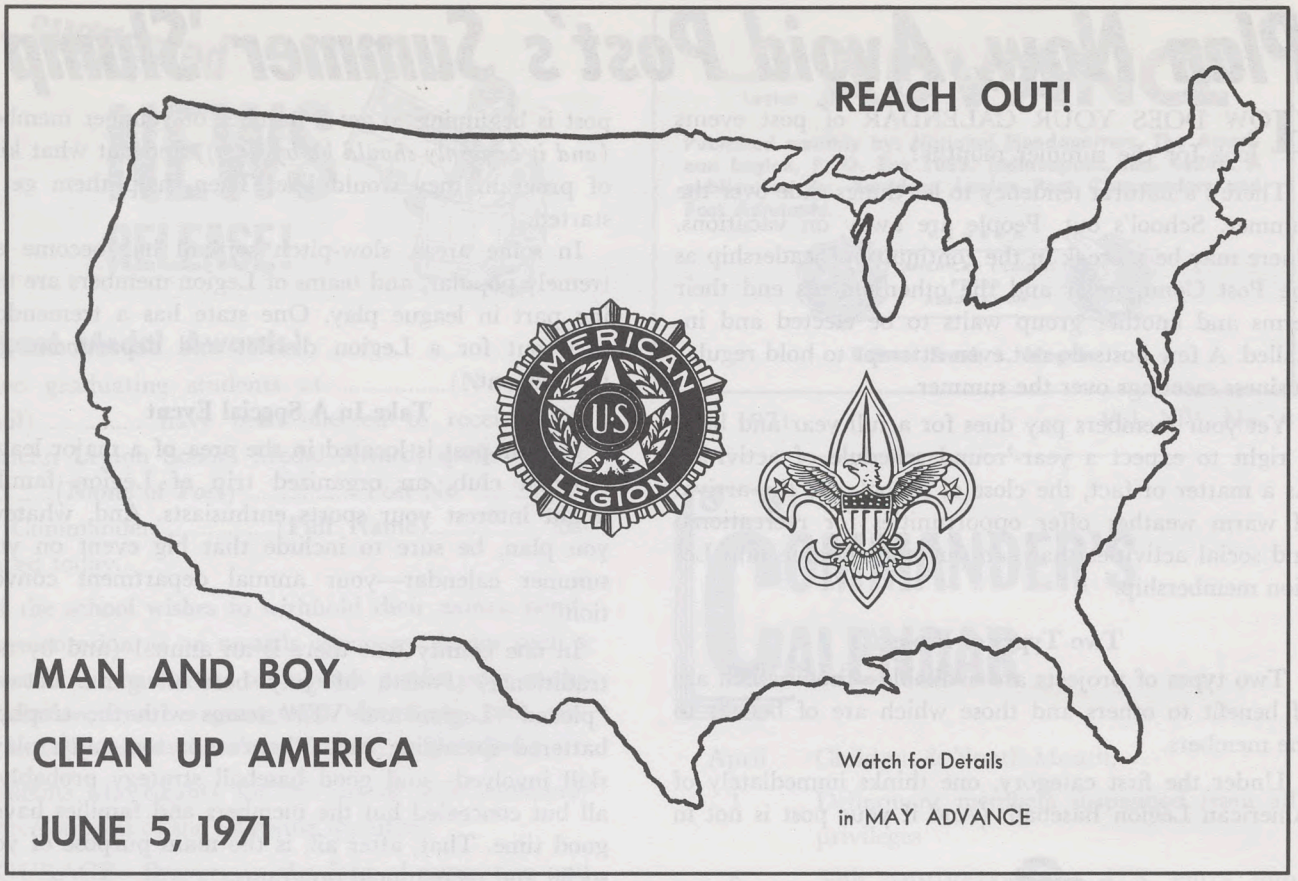
Of course, the regular service programs should be continued during the summer—contacts with and service to the returning veterans; Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Fourth of July observances; Boys State; Jobs for Veterans; etc.

But we need to remember that at least 50 per cent of those who join The American Legion do so because of the anticipation of social or recreational benefits. If



they don't find them, they won't stay around long as members, and they won't be available to help in the necessary service programs.

People are willing workers if they have a job they want to do and if they derive personal satisfaction, pleasure, or prestige from it. One of the biggest assignments for the post's leadership is to find the activities that the membership wants. If you can, all that is needed is post sponsorship and assistance. Those who are interested and will derive the benefit can be expected to do the rest.



National Commander Alfred P. Chamie is calling upon American Legion Posts throughout the nation to "provide a timely and much-needed service to America" on June 5 in cooperation with a **nation-wide clean-up campaign** scheduled by the Boy Scouts of America. Post Commanders are urged to contact their local Scout leaders and executives to offer assistance and cooperation. The scope of this drive indicates there will be many areas needing adult participation. The American Legion's cooperation with this clean-up drive is in full accord with Resolution 51, NEC, Oct. 21-22, 1970, "That problems of pollution and preservation of the environment are germane to the purposes of The American Legion, which pledges itself 'to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation.'" Further specific details on this project and suggestions for post implementation will appear in the May issue of the **ADVANCE.**

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Any American Legion Post sponsoring an Explorer Boy Scout organization or located in a community where such an organization exists is urged by National Commander Alfred P. Chamie to provide any possible assistance to have the president of the Explorer group attend the **First National Explorer Presidents' Congress**, June 2-6, 1971, Washington, D.C.

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Effective with the 1971 competition, the NRA/American Legion Postal Marksmanship Matches will be expanded to include individual and team matches for adult members of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary in the **15-ft. and 25-ft. ranges,** using smoothbore air rifles, precision air rifles, and pellet rifles and pistols. Further information may be obtained by writing National Americanism Division, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206.

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Detroit Steel Corp., New Boston, Ohio, and **Fred W. Beal, Inc.,** Ellsworth, Me., are the winners in the second annual selections of The American Legion's Employer of the Year Awards for Hiring Veterans, **National Commander Alfred P. Chamie** has announced.

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Posts sponsoring competing uniformed groups are reminded that the 1970 edition of American Legion *Regulations for Competing Musical and Drill Units* is the current edition for the 1971 season. No further changes in the manual, rules, or score sheets will be considered until the Uniformed Groups Congress in October.

Duty Assignment: Memorial Day

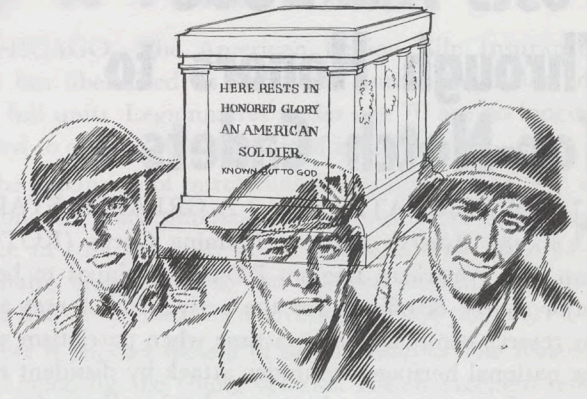
MEMORIAL DAY, originally called Decoration Day as a time for decorating the graves of Civil War veterans, has become a day for remembering all honored dead.

At the close of the Civil War, a group of women in Columbus, Miss., honored both Confederate and Union dead by placing flowers on their graves. When this news reached the North, it helped to heal some of the wounds afflicting a war-torn country.

Probably the greatest impetus for establishing a commemorative holiday was given in 1868 by General J. A. Logan, National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his order to all chapters to set aside May 30 as a day for decorating the graves of those who died in defense of their country.

Today, all the states, the District of Columbia, and the U. S. possessions, celebrate Memorial Day. The last Monday in May has been designated for national observance by Congressional action.

Memorial Day observance is marked by parades of military units, bands, civil officials, youth organizations, school children, and other local groups. Speeches and music fitting to the occasion are a part of a traditionally dignified and reverent observance.



Every American Legion Post is afforded a tremendous opportunity to participate in recognition and honors due our deceased comrades. A few ideas for a Memorial Day observance would include an "Avenue of Flags." This is used in many communities and more posts are utilizing this outstanding program each year. (See December 1970 **ADVANCE.**)

The *Post Commander's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies* provides an outstanding guide for a Memorial Day service. American Legion Posts are encouraged to sponsor such a service, making it available and encouraging the public to attend. This can be held in your post home, public hall, or many posts utilize a church in their community for this activity.

All veterans' organizations should be invited to participate either by supplying the color guard, firing squad, or any other performing function. The sponsorship during Memorial Day or other patriotic holidays observed is an important service a post can render to its community and to the cause of a free government.

Appoint a well-qualified patriotic holiday observance committee. This committee, to function properly, should contact the other veterans' organizations, civic groups, fraternal organizations, and the general public. The chairman of this committee should be civic minded. To obtain maximum benefits it is suggested that the committee be sufficiently large to permit breakdown into subcommittees.

Armed Forces Day Calls for Close Support by Posts

"Americans are proud of our Armed Forces. Without the dedication and the preparedness of the men and women who wear the uniform, our country would have neither security nor freedom. On this Armed Forces Day, let us reaffirm our faith in this freedom and rededicate ourselves to the goal of world peace, mindful of the great sacrifice so many men and women have made in serving this cause."

—Melvin R. Laird
Secretary of Defense

THIS YEAR, ARMED FORCES DAY will be Saturday, May 15. In their annual report to the nation, many of the military installations throughout the country will participate with appropriate observances, inviting the general public to an "open house," a firepower demonstration, displays and exhibits, etc.

It behooves each of us as veterans to say a simple "thank you" to the millions of dedicated Americans in uniform today. Contact your nearest military installation and talk to the information officer there. He can provide full information as to what events will occur there on May 15.

Also, a telegram, a letter, or a personal visit by you and some of your post officers to the military commander there will be deeply appreciated.

Many American Legion Posts throughout the country sponsor a banquet or luncheon, honoring our men in uniform, during the week prior to Armed Forces Day. Guests of honor will include active duty personnel, reservists, National Guardsmen, and ROTC cadets. This is an ideal way to reach out with a hand shake to thank them for their service.

Boys State Develops Leadership

AS YOUR POST PREPARES for its spring and summer activities, give some serious consideration to participation in the Boys State program. Of prime importance should be a close look at the boys selected to attend Boys State.

With new influences being felt in some high schools, there is that growing possibility of selection of some undesirables who could have an adverse effect on those who wish to learn during this annual civics workshop. Inasmuch as Boys State is an American Legion program, perhaps more emphasis on the selection of boys to attend should come from your post.

Maintain Close Liaison

A close liaison should be maintained between the post and each boy and his family to avoid possible misunderstanding or confusion concerning the identity of his sponsor. Because of the scope of Boys State and the impact on those attending, each post should assure its respective Boys Staters the opportunity to communicate their ideas and describe their experiences upon their return.

Boys State graduates can exert a positive influence upon their classmates who have not had the opportunity to learn the workings of state, county, and municipal government. The young men who have participated in these civics workshops may help deter the potential school dropout by pointing out the need of government, as well as industry, for better educated citizens.

The young men of Boys State age today will eventually become the chosen leaders of this land. Their Boys State experience can help them in rejecting the apathetic thinking prevalent in some areas of our society.

Develop Pride in Citizenship

Boys State helps to develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship. This program arouses a keen interest in the detailed study of our government. These civics workshops stress the importance of maintaining our form of government and bring better understanding of our national traditions and beliefs to more than 27,000 young men who participate each year.

The Boys State program is always good copy for newspaper, radio, and television. Make sure that adequate plans and arrangements have been made for press, radio, and tv coverage of all newsworthy events related to your post's participation.

Newsworthy items include, but are not limited to, the announcement of those to attend Boys State, their departure for the workshop, any possible achievements while there, their return, and any public appearances before community groups after their return.

Ask your news media to identify accurately the Boys State as a program sponsored by your American Legion Department. Also, be sure that any co-sponsors of youths from your community are identified properly and adequately.

Boys State builds citizens. The American Legion, through the Boys State program, builds character in boys.

Posts Aid ROTC Through Honors to Top-Notch Cadets

NO ORGANIZATION HAS A GREATER STAKE in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) than The American Legion. ROTC continues to be a major source of officers for the active duty forces and our reserve components. At a time when patriotism and our national heritage are under attack by dissident elements of our country, American Legion Posts can do much to counteract these detrimental attacks through active interest and support for the ROTC program at the high school, college, and university levels.

One of the most effective means of demonstrating both Legion interest in and support of this vital program is by awarding The American Legion ROTC Achievement Medals.

You, Mr. Post Commander, or your representative, should reach out and establish contact with the local professor of military/naval/or aerospace science. Also, you or a leader in your post should be available to personally present the awards at the school's awards day ceremony.

Together with the school's ROTC faculty you can determine which of the medals to present. The medals with ribbon bars are available to recognize military and scholastic excellence at both the high school and college level. To heighten the cadets' interest in the medals, it is an excellent idea to present a set of medals for permanent display in the ROTC offices.

Because the awards ceremonies are scheduled in May or June, orders for the medals should be sent as soon as possible to National Emblem Sales, The American Legion, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206. Illustrations of the medals and their respective prices are contained in the current Emblem Catalog.

To assist your ROTC program, a revised brochure describing the program is available from the National Security-Foreign Relations Division, The American Legion, 1608 K St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20006.

Legion Life NEWS

American Legion Life Insurance Plan — Chicago, Illinois

$10 MILLION IN BENEFITS

CHICAGO—The month of January 1971 saw the 10-million-dollar mark surpassed in benefits paid under The American Legion Life Insurance Plan since its establishment in 1958.

Payments in 1970 were made to beneficiaries in 53 departments. New York led all departments in total claims ($165,037) received by beneficiaries; Illinois was second ($164,876); Pennsylvania, third ($115,139); California, fourth ($83,996); and Massachusetts, fifth ($65,797).

A breakdown by departments of American Legion Life Insurance claims paid during 1970 is as follows:

Alabama	$ 18,503	Montana	$ 9,545
Alaska	2,645	Nebraska	20,953
Arizona	8,694	Nevada	2,530
Arkansas	17,670	New Hampshire	11,293
California	83,996	New Jersey	42,551
Canada	1,150	New Mexico	5,474
Colorado	3,640	New York	165,037
Connecticut	27,618	North Carolina	39,846
Delaware	9,959	North Dakota	21,505
Dist. of Col.	4,134	Ohio	46,914
Florida	34,920	Oklahoma	37,018
Georgia	43,148	Oregon	9,763
Idaho	6,129	Pennsylvania	115,139
Illinois	164,876	Rhode Island	3,295
Indiana	56,396	South Carolina	21,269
Iowa	57,971	South Dakota	8,314
Kansas	19,446	Tennessee	30,084
Kentucky	24,414	Texas	54,076
Louisiana	21,298	Utah	6,359
Maine	28,186	Vermont	7,935
Maryland	42,688	Virginia	11,304
Massachusetts	65,797	Washington	24,552
Mexico	397	West Virginia	27,318
Michigan	21,320	Wisconsin	34,787
Minnesota	56,459	Wyoming	3,824
Mississippi	22,603	Miscellaneous	5,175
Missouri	46,541		

Legionnaires May Expand Coverage Up to Four Units

CHICAGO—The American Legion Life Insurance Plan has liberalized its Insurance purchasing limits to four full units. Legionnaires under age 70 are no longer limited to owning just one unit of insurance.

The expansion of purchasing limits now means that a Legionnaire may purchase up to four units at no increase in cost per unit. For example, a Viet-Time Legionnaire under age 30, and in good health, can purchase $46,000 in insurance coverage for $96 per year.

Here is another benefit of membership in The American Legion for the young veteran. It's an excellent selling point for new members and also serves as a means of retaining members.

Inform the members of your post of this big, new development.

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Mr. Commander: Complete the coupon below to order the materials needed for informing your post membership of the many advantages of the official American Legion Life Insurance Plan.

American Legion Life Insurance Plan
P. O. Box 5609, Chicago, Ill. 60680

Please rush the following items, free of charge:

(How Many?)

..... Insurance Applications

..... Question and Answer Brochures

1 ..... Prepared talk for a Post meeting

YOUR NAME..... POST NO.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY ..... STATE ..... ZIP .....

Evaluate Post's Role in VAVS Program

REPRESENTATIVES OF 44 NATIONAL voluntary organizations, including The American Legion, their local hospital counterparts, hospital volunteers, colleagues and others from all over the country met in Washington, D. C., March 31-April 2, for the 25th anniversary observance of the Veterans Administration Voluntary Service (VAVS).

Mr. Post Commander: The observance of its 25th anniversary by the VAVS is an appropriate time for your post to evaluate its own participation in this program which is related directly to one of the founding purposes of The American Legion. If your post is not performing up to its potential in this area, you may wish to discuss this matter with your visiting or VAVS committee.

If your post is an active participant in the VAVS program, this 25th anniversary observance is an appropriate time for recognition of those who have served. Perhaps you will want to arrange a special post program which would embody or adapt some of the features of the national observance described in the following paragraphs.

Five concurrent sessions were conducted for the purpose of presentation and discussion of the findings and possible recommendations coming out of the 166 hospital work study groups.

The topics of these were (1) present and future contributions of volunteers in hospital service, (2) new and creative assignments, (3) recruitment, (4) staff-volunteer relationships, and (5) recognition.

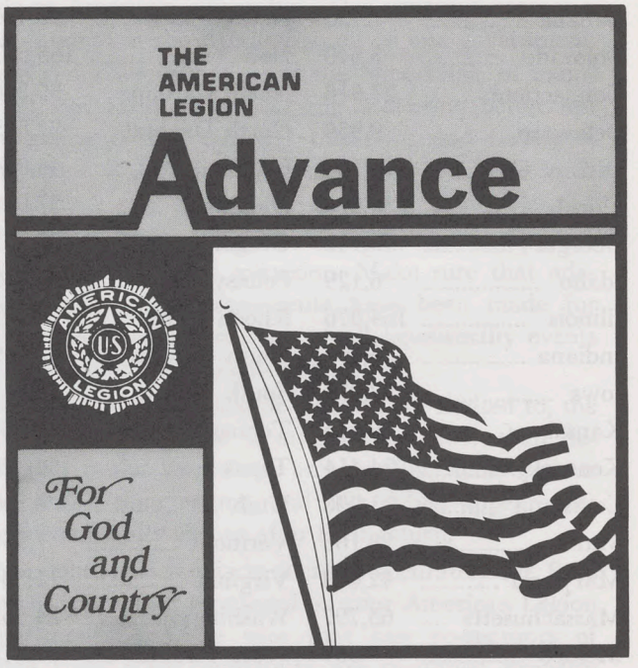
Youth volunteers representing the over 7,000 high school age students serving in the VAVS program held special sessions of their own as well as participating in all the sessions and events of the anniversary meeting.

A spotlight recognition program held on the opening evening included the introduction of the award winners of the national competitions and the presentation of commendations.

The second day of the program began with the presentation of the final recommendations of the first three work study groups. On the final day of meetings the remaining two work study groups and those from the youth volunteer group presented their recommendations.

The highlights of this meeting presented to all the profound debt that the nation owes to the thousands of volunteers who contributed nearly 10 million hours of service last year in VA hospitals across the nation.

The need today far exceeds that of 25 years ago. Able and qualified leaders in the VAVS program are important but in the final analysis it is the volunteer worker actually performing the task at hand that determines the true value to the hospital and the patient. If we are to continue to maintain our high ideals of service to veterans, we must continue to expand our efforts in the VAVS program.



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