Greetings Comrades,

With fall upon us and our youth adjusting to their new form of schooling, I am sure this year is going to present challenges to us in regards to getting into the schools and promoting our Flag Education, Americanism, Boys State and Oratorical Programs, etc. Thanks to the COVID our youth are missing out on an incredible experiences that can help shape their future.

Never before has so much been impacted, preventing us from our mission of service to our Veterans, Youth, Legion Family and our Community. It is our priority to get these activities up and running for the coming year. Our Children and Youth programs really are part of the fabric that binds us to our communities and I remain confident you will do whatever is necessary to make this happen in order to get our great Legion Programs rolling again.

We have always placed special priority on the issue of our veteran homelessness which has steadily increased in the light of this pandemic, even with the moratorium on preventing foreclosures sense this past March. This is where our food pantries and food drives are so very important in helping our struggling brothers and sisters in arms and we can also provide outreach resources to each veteran who is homeless or facing possible homelessness during this trying time.

So I want to thank each and every post member who has volunteered their time and effort to secure this badly needed resource.
in our communities and to keep up the outstanding work you do.

I’d like to encourage you if you are not involved with your Post that you begin. Go to your Post meetings, help where you can and support your Post and your Officers. We should all remember that everyone’s opinions have the right to be heard – so go to your Post meetings to listen, learn and help wherever you can.

Our organization needs all the four groups in our Legion Family to work together, The American Legion, Auxiliary, The Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Riders. I believe when we work as one team, we are unstoppable and we can accomplish a great deal.

I know we all have been through so much in the past months, but I believe we can get back to taking care of Legion business safely.

If your Post does not manage their membership by using Mylegion.org, I urge you to do so. It is amazingly easy and we have plenty of people that are very willing to help you with any questions, concern or guidance you may need. I hope you believe me when I say whether your Post is small, medium or large this is the way to better serve your members and your Post.

I have said if before but I like to reiterate that I am here for you. I enjoy meeting everyone and if I can help in any way let me know. I feel I am reaffirming my commitment to The American Legion and you.

In closing, I want to thank you for your service to our Country and your continued service with your membership in our organization. Please keep all our military personal that are serving all around the world in your thoughts and prayers. They sacrifice so much for all to help make this world a better place. Please do not forget them, send a card or a small package of goodies, they will appreciate it more than you may ever know. Also say a few prayers for our younger Veterans, many of our law enforcement come from military backgrounds and have become targets for the streets. They stand there with an extraordinary amount of restraint, that I’m sure weighs heavily on their minds and to that I commend them.

I cannot wrap up this article without mentioning that the U.S. Navy will be celebrating our 254th birthday on October 13th. Go Navy!

Yours in Comradeship,

Jodie Pajak
Department Commander
Dear American Legion Family Members and Friends,

It’s been a little more than a year since the LEGION Act was signed into law, which extended the ongoing declared period of war back to Dec. 7, 1941. The act paved the way to honor thousands of veterans who were killed or wounded on duty during periods not previously considered wartime.

Notably for The American Legion the LEGION Act — Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act — filled in the gaps of membership eligibility. What that means for us is that any veteran with an honorable discharge who served since the day Pearl Harbor was attacked is now eligible to join The American Legion.

For these newly eligible members — roughly 4.2 million — it means they can now join the nation’s largest and most influential veterans service organization, and enjoy the rewards of membership.

But many of these now-eligible members don’t yet realize they can join. They have tried to sign up in the past, only to learn they were not eligible due to the previous definitions of war periods.

So, it is up to us to spread the word and let these deserving veterans know that we are now allowed to welcome them into our family. And what better of a time to do that than this week — American Legion Day is Sept. 16. As you reach out to these non-members, here are some things to know about the LEGION Act.

But communicating with these eligible members is not limited to just today or this week. I know that many of you are planning Veterans Day activities at your post or elsewhere in your community. Be sure to invite these eligible members to these events.

What a wonderful opportunity to welcome them and demonstrate how we continue to serve our great nation, states and communities. And now, these newly eligible members are not only able to observe the great community service we provide, they can serve with us.

Stay safe, my friends and comrades.

Building a foundation for the future

James W. “Bill” Oxford
National Commander
Welcome to the month of October!

Please remember to mark your calendars for our Virtual Fall Conference on October 24th at 10 AM. This will be a much shorter version than the in-person conferences we have always had. But, it will be very helpful to all of you. The Department officers and I have selected the seven programs that Massachusetts members are most involved with. The chairmen of all other programs will be providing short PowerPoint slides outlining their programs for the year. There is always an opportunity to learn something, no matter how many years you’ve been a member! At the conclusion of the two-hour Zoom conference, there will also be an opportunity to ask questions. It’s free to everyone.

October is also the month for Halloween, which, again because of Covid19, will be very different. Some communities are cancelling Trick or Treat. Others are holding drive-by distributions of candy. While you may not be distributing candy this year, you can still participate as an Auxiliary member. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper reminding people in your community about the need for safety. Whenever there is a ball rolling across the street, there’s always a child chasing it. So, this is a perfect time of the year to remind everyone to be alert.

Nursing homes are opening up once again to visitors. This is a great time to visit a veteran in a nursing home. Many of these people haven’t seen anyone other than staff members for more than six months. Make someone’s day with a visit.

Have you walked your 100 miles for Children and Youth yet? There is still time, but you’ll have to double up on your walking in order to finish your goal by November 11th. For $30, you get a really cool shirt and a certificate upon completion. But, better still, your activity is supporting Children and Youth.

It appears that Christmas Gift Shops will either not be held this year or the selection and distribution will be done differently. Please stay tuned for more on this in November.

What have you done for veterans, students, your community over these past six awful months of quarantine? Sewed masks? Held virtual raffles and auctions? Called people who are alone? Given financial support? Whatever you have done is important to our Mission. Please keep track of your hours, mileage, expenses, and number of people helped. It adds up when we add everyone’s contribution. And, annual reports are so important. Keeping track of what you do as you do it makes the report a whole lot easier.

Happy Fall. Stay safe!

Coral May Grout, Department President
I would first like to state that our department has overall performed well with our second benchmark of 55%, achieving 58.57 as of 9/15/20, for our October goal. We achieved a national standing of placing our Department in 8th place. Great job, however our work has just begun. Although we have 9 of 10 districts (District 7, short by just 21 members) at 55% or better, there are still some commanders who have not kept up the pace with many other hard working post.

Our next goal is 65% (Veterans day, November 12th), and we have plenty of time to meet that objective. Let’s show each other, we can get it done!

I now look to the Department Vice Commanders (DVC) and our Department Executive Committee Woman (DECW), who have the responsibility to motivate there districts and post in reaching those goals presented to us by our National organization. Many post still have not processed their membership from members who have faithfully sent dues to there respected post and expect a fully paid card in return. Please don’t get caught using membership dues money for other post expenses, as we have seen this done?

Membership should be processed within a week or two at the very most. It's becoming easier with electronic membership submittals. Any questions, feel free to call National headquarters at 317-860-3100. They are waiting to help!

Secondly, I would like to ask why, many post, have not responded to the request made to transfer members from our DMS list by our Adjutant, back in January? Some 75 (30%) of our post have not responded!!! Additionally another 34 (11.6%) of our post have indicated they do not want transfers! In fairness to some post, they have chosen to transfer from the DMS, themselves. That however is a slim minority. Many of these members from the DMS list are waiting to be contacted and transferred into a post within their community. Last year some 1,500 DMS members were transferred and a great majority stated positive satisfaction with these moves. DVC's and our DECW need to get involved and follow-up on this request.

For those many post commanders, senior vice commanders, adjutants and District Commanders that are working hard to stay on top of our membership, I thank you, we thank you. As you all know, Membership is the life blood of our organization, replacing those many members who have join post everlasting, or have not simply renewed there membership. Use the buddy program for the latter, as they will appreciate a call from your post?

Continued on Page 6

---

**Department Membership Standings (9/25/2020)**

- **District 9: Bristol 66.83%**
- **District 2: Franklin Hampshire 66.32%**
- **District 1: Berkshire 64.82%**
I challenge all ten (10) districts to strive to obtain 100%, as we were able to reach 5 of 10 last year. We can do better. Let's just, do our job!!

Lastly, if any post or districts needs training, assistance or revitalization, my team is standing ready with experienced people. We have had nothing but success last year with the districts we helped.

Thanks for your time, but we now need action as it will prove our Department can complete with the best in the nation.

Virtual National Membership Training Workshop

The PowerPoint slides and the audio presentations for each session can be found at www.legion.org/training/membership. To go directly to the membership workshop videos and other training videos, visit https://vimeo.com/showcase/4552712.

Mark Your Calendars

Another virtual training session is in the works. On October 27th, a virtual training session will be held covering Buddy Checks and Membership processing.

On-Line Renewal Activity/Post Direct Transmittal

2021 Membership Year On-Line Renewals are at 146,434. The online renewal option is very successful and for this to continue to be successful, the posts need to ensure they are sending these members their membership card in a timely manner. We finished 2020 membership year with 289,216.
Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability is a significant benefit available to some veterans who are collecting less than 100% disability compensation. If the veteran’s service connected conditions also render him unable to secure or continue substantially gainful employment, his rating could be increased to the totally disabled level. The threshold for eligibility is to have one service-connected disability rated at 60%, or multiple service-connected disabilities combining to 70%, with at least one disability rated at 40% or more. An important factor in this benefit are the guidelines the VA must follow to determine eligibility. The VA cannot consider the age or retirement status of the veteran, and the veteran’s education, skill and training must be included determining his occupational level. Also, a TDIU claim is considered “inferred” when any veteran initiates a claim for compensation, but the veteran must complete form 21-8940 to eventually be granted this additional benefit. As an example of the monetary increases that would occur with the granting of a TDIU claim: the monthly rate for a 90% compensated veteran [single with no dependents] would jump from $1,862.96 to $3,106.04.

Semper Fi

Mike Whalen

Community Service—DVC Sally Nay

Keep the Al White Awards coming! We have been receiving award nominations each month and encourage all posts that have a community event to submit. This is a Legion family award so be sure to include your Auxiliary, SAL and ALR information.

The Joseph P. Conway award for 2019/2020 was awarded to Marge Cavanaugh a 60 year member of Merrill L. Simmons American Legion Post 130 from Palmer. The award was presented at the Post 9/11 service and members of the community were present. Marge Cavanaugh was selected because of her tireless efforts to help her community and the Veteran’s within her community. Marge still sits on the Domestic Violence prevention board and works with Woman Veteran’s at need in Western Mass.
Improving care for women veterans

Never before have so many women service members been routinely assigned to combat zones. They sustain the same types of injuries as their male counterparts. The 2017 Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans Report noted that the total population of women veterans is expected to increase at an average rate of about 18,000 per year for the next 10 years.

According to the Veteran Population Projection Model between 2015-2045, the women veteran population increases annually at 0.6 percent while the male veteran population declines at 2.2 percent. VA must ensure women veterans receive gender-specific health care to meet their needs across the entire network. Finding ways to ensure that these veterans are welcome and receive the services they deserve is vital to The American Legion.

The American Legion strives to improve quality of care for all women veterans.

The American Legion continues to focus on:
- Visiting VA health-care systems to explore any issues that could be preventing VA hospitals from providing gender-specific care.
- Educating women veterans about the importance of identifying as veterans.
- Ensuring full-time gynecologists are available at all VA medical centers.
- Advocating for an increase of women’s health providers to assist women veterans who have been victims of military sexual trauma.

WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO?

Enact legislation for VA facilities to implement current standards of care to women veterans, providing the latest diagnostic and treatment methods.

Provide child-care services at all VA medical centers.

Urge VA to meet the privacy needs of women veterans at its facilities.

KEY POINTS

- Women have voluntarily served in every war since the American Revolution.
- Women now routinely serve in combat and deserve equal benefits as their male counterparts.
- Women are the fastest growing demographic in the veteran community.
- Hypertension, PTSD and depression are the top three diagnostic categories for women veterans treated at VA.

Women now make up the fastest-growing group of veterans enrolling in VA health care, and many of them face challenges with the invisible wounds of war, like PTSD and military sexual trauma. VA needs to adapt to the complex and unique needs of our women veterans, and that means ensuring there are specific programs and resources to support them.

In the few days the House of Representative passed a number of bills brought to the floor by the Veterans Affairs Committee. This legislation will reform the VA’s debt collection process and support homeless veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as help reduce veteran suicide through Chairman Takano’s Veterans’ COMPACT Act and the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care improvement Act of 2019. With less than 25 days remaining in this congress lets hope the Senate follows suit shortly!

**S. 785—Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 (Tester, Moran):** provides additional tools and reporting that will inform continued efforts to address the multifaceted and complex challenge of veteran suicide.

**H.R. 5245 -SHIELD for Veterans Act, as amended (Pappas):** reforms VA’s debt collection process to remedy the gross inefficiencies revealed in VA’s process and the financial hardship such issues have created for veterans.

**H.R. 7105 – the Dependable Employment and Living Improvements for Veterans’ Economic Recovery (DELIVER) Act, as amended (Levin):** includes six provisions to help ensure we can support our most vulnerable veterans throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by providing food, safe shelter, and access to VA telehealth services.

**H.R. 8247 – Veterans’ COMPACT Act, as amended (Takano):** contains nine provisions to further enhance veterans’ mental health and well-being, and prevent deaths by suicide by supporting women veterans, eliminating cost for emergency mental health care, and providing critical support during the transition from servicemember to veteran.

**H.R. 3798 - Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act, as amended (Brownley):** ensures all women veterans have access to the same no-cost contraceptive care as their non-veteran counterparts.

**H.R. 3010—Honoring all Veterans Acti (Rice, Mast):** directs VA to modify its current exclusionary motto to recognize the service of women and LGBTQ veterans throughout the country.

**H.R. 4908—Native Americans PACT act, as amended (Gallego):** prohibits VA from collecting a copayment from any veteran who is a member of a tribe—copays that never should have happened because of a US treaty obligation to native people.

**H.R. 6589—VA Chief Financial Officer Authority and Collaboration Act ((Lee):** holds VA leadership accountable in their efforts to fix VA’s financial system that sometimes leaves VA vulnerable to risk and bad financial decisions.

**H.R. 3228 - VA Mission Telehealth Clarification Act, as amended (Carter):** corrects an error in the MISSION Act by allowing VA trainees to use the telemedicine system.

*Continued on Page 11*
Legislation—Congress Passes Veterans Bills

H.R. 6092 - Veteran's Prostate Cancer Treatment and Research Act, as amended (Cunningham, Dunn): creates a standardized clinical pathway for prostate cancer detection and treatment for veterans at VA.

H.R. 7795 - Veterans Benefits Fairness and Transparency Act of 2020 (Luria, Barr): protects veterans applying for VA disability benefits by requiring the VA to maintain availability of disability benefits questionnaires (DBQs) on the VA website.

Legislation—Congressional Veterans’ Affairs leaders’ top legislative priority—connecting veterans with life-saving mental health care—heads to President’s desk

House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Mark Takano (D-Calif.) and Ranking Member Phil Roe (R-Tenn.) along with Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Ranking Member Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Chairman Jerry Moran (R-Kans.), today released the following statements after the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed S.785, the COMMANDER JOHN SCOTT HANNON VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT—groundbreaking legislation to connect more veterans with critical mental health care.

“Today is a win for veterans with the passage of the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act through the House today, and I want to thank Senators Moran and Tester for their hard work passing this fully bipartisan, bicameral package and for their commitment to passing the House’s latest package to address veteran mental health care, the Veterans’ COMPACT Act, through the Senate,” said Chairman Takano. “There is still so much more we need to do to comprehensively reduce veteran suicide, but this is a good first step. I’m grateful that Ranking Member Roe has joined me in making veteran suicide prevention a priority, and I know we all stand ready to work across party lines to meaningfully address this crisis.”

It is estimated that more than 20 veterans die by suicide every day. Of those, 14 have received no treatment or care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act will improve outreach to veterans

If you or a veteran you know are struggling, contact the Veteran Crisis Line 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255 and select option 1, or text 838255.
THE FOLLOWING ARE THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNER’S FOR 2020

$1000.00

THE FRANK KELLY AWARDED TO HANNA GIGLIO SPONSORED BY HER GRANDFATHER ROBERT YEAGER OF POST 208.

THE ROBERT (SAM ) MURPHY AWARDED TO MADELEINE SOUDANT SPONSORED BY HER MOTHER SALLY SOUDANT OF POST 340.

THE H.P. REDDEN AWARDED TO SAMUEL KIERSTEAD SPONSORED BY HIS FATHER BARRY KIERSTEAD OF POST 40

THE JOSEPH ELLINWOOD NURSHING AWARDED TO SAVANNA MOREHOUSE SPONSORED BY HER GRANDFATHER FRANCIS BOURDIN OF POST 160.

THE GRACE FULLER OLSN AWARDED TO PAIGE SPIVEY SPONSORED BY HER FATHER WENDELL A. SPIVEY OF POST 193.

PDC SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO BRENDON CAPUZZO SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER WILLIAM COMER OF POST 78.

THE PDC DANIEL DOHERTY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO ADAM LABOMBARD SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER ROBERT AHLQUIST OF POST 138.

THE PNC JOHN P. COMER SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO GRACE HOBIN SPONSORED BY HER GRANDFATHER WILLIAM COMER OF POST 78.

THE PNC PAUL A. MORIN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO MOLLY A. WALSH SPONSORED BY HER FATHER BENNETT WALSH OF POST 275.

$500.00

THE GRADUATE TO ACTIVE MILITARY WAS AWARDED TO JAMES G. ST. PIERRE (HE STARTS THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY ON September 15TH) SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER PAUL E. LENNONOF OF POST 320.
$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO CALEIGH MILLET SPONSORED BY HER FATHER ALLAN MILLET OF POST 10.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO DANIEL LUPO SPONSORED BY HIS FATHER MICHAEL LUPO OF POST 293.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO PAUL GIOVANONI SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER RICHARD MCMAHON OF POST 91.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO CONNOR ANDREWS SPONSORED BY HIS FATHER GREGORY ANDREWS OD POST 440.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO DEVIN KELLY SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER EDMOND KELLY OF POST 435.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO ABBY BRUNTON SPONSORED BY HER GRANDFATHER ROBERT OPSITNICK OF POST 430.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO BRENNNA TOBIN SPONSORED BY HER GRANDFATHER ARTHUR TOBIN OF POST 294.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO CHRISTOPHER GAGE SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER TED GUAGE OF POST 124.

$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO MATTHEW MALONE SPONSORED BY HIS GRANDFATHER PDC TOM SHOEMAKER OF POST 440.

CONGRADULATIONS TO THIS YEARS SCHOLARSHIPS WINNERS.
This past year the committee continued its Challenge Accepted partnership with The Springfield Thunderbirds of the American Hockey League. This involves a "Veteran of the Game" named at each home game and that veteran receives a challenge coin and appears on the overhead scoreboard. The team also runs a 30 second American Legion advertisement on the board. This is estimated at over 303,000 impressions and an exposure value estimated at over $8,300. The Thunderbirds also dedicated a POW-MIA chair to remain empty of course. The dedication ceremony was attended by our POW-MIA chairman Bill Chisholm.

As is our yearly practice, we held our two sweepstakes in January at the D.E.C. meeting and again at convention which was handled remotely due to COVID restrictions and the cancellation of convention. Also, per yearly practice we distributed our winter trinket-gift which was sent to members in late February early March. These three fundraisers are all in coordination with Magnet Direct in Braintree. The committee has decided that we will be cancelling the winter trinket starting in 2021. There was not enough enthusiasm for this and the committee was of the opinion that it did not raise enough revenue and that perhaps members were over solicited with two sweepstakes, a trinket and our label program which is not distributed by the department and Magnet Direct but rather by national. Nevertheless, members were solicited with four separate fundraisers and were perhaps jaded and or were asked for money at an inopportune time not long after the holiday season when they had heavy holiday bills to pay.

As for the aforementioned label program, that was distributed by national in the spring as is the custom. A donation is never too late or too small and we welcome any funds. Reminders have also been sent by national so please, if you have yet to do so, consider a donation or perhaps even a second donation.

As always, I would like to thank all who donated to any and all of these fundraisers. Remember, these support your department and its programs. Thank you all.

New item from Emblem Sales

Custom Legion Ceramic Mug
Item $ 740.317AR—$8.95
Order Yours today!

Your Lettering Here
Editorial—John Lenotte, PDC

Here we are about a month away from the election. Every 4 years, I find it sad that so many millions of dollars are spent on media ads, most of which are garbage. I stopped paying attention to them years ago. I try not to watch them. Instead of spending all that money on useless ads, what about spending some of that money on useful work. Like rebuilding neighborhoods; getting internet access to those areas; housing for the homeless; or mental health services for many in need. Sorry, I guess that these suggestions would make sense.

It does appear that monies are even being spent to pay bail on criminals so that they can vote. In my personal opinion we need more campaign finance reform as well as term limits for Congress.

And as noted in one of my recent articles, it is unfortunate that we cannot rely on the mainstream media for information due to their obvious bias. As I have been mentioning, there are some decent sites on the Internet. Sources include: votesmart.org; politifact.com; factcheck.com; snopes.com; and checkyourfact.com. I am partial to votesmart.org, they have done great work on their site and have a phone application.

As citizens it is critical that we vote whether by absentee ballot or in person. It is what we used to call “our civic duty”. There are so many around the world that want to come to our great country because of our freedoms and opportunities. Too many in this country take those for granted. The right to vote is a precious one and so taken for granted. And as I have and will keep saying, be an educated voter!

May God Bless America and the troops and their families who sacrifice to keep us free.

Financial grant assistance through the American Legion National Emergency Fund (NEF) is available for American Legion posts, and American Legion and Sons of The American Legion members, who have been impacted by declared natural disasters, like the current Hurricanes Laura and Sally, and West Coast wildfires.

As American Legion posts and departments assist those eligible with an NEF grant application, National Headquarters created an audio PowerPoint that shares what the NEF is, what it does and does not cover, the correct way to fill out an application, and eligibility.

Access the instructional video here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYTPVnmrsh0

To request assistance, a fillable NEF individual and post application is online at legion.org/emergency/apply.
The Legion Today

The American Legion is an established fact. It is the concrete realization of "some sort of organization after the war" which was talked of in every cantonment in America, on board every ship in the Navy and in every unit and section of the A. E. F. It is the crystallization of the wish of every soldier, sailor and marine to organize after the war. "In union there is strength," and in this particular union will be found the bulwark of Americanism.

The Legion has grown and its spirit has spread because it is worthy. In every test at the outset it repelled selfishness, narrowness, partisanship and clung tenaciously to the underlying theme—democracy. In every test it has withstood the temptation of exploitation for its members at the expense of the country at large. In no instance has it sought anything that was not just and equitable and in the best interests of all America. It is now, always has been and will continue to be nonpartisan and non-political in the accepted sense of those terms.

But while it is non-political it has and always will have policies, in that it reflects the will and opinions of the majority of its members—whose sanity, unselfishness and patriotism may be depended upon in questions affecting national or international integrity and adjustment. The American Legion spirit is reflected in the preamble to its constitution, which reads:

For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent. Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make Right the Master of Might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

It is more than a preamble. It is the Legion's promise as well.
Walk, run, bike, row, kayak whatever. 100 Miles between now and Veterans Day! Benefits the Veterans and Children Foundation. I did it! You Can Too! Contact Emblem Sales $30.00 include a red 100 Miles t-Shirt you can wear on Red Shirt Friday!
I’ll never forget him. Or his voice. That southern drawl made him sound sleepy, but there was more to it. He was weary, frustrated.

He wanted to kill himself.

It was a story as old as war: He made it home. His buddies didn’t.

He was a cavalry scout, an Iraq war veteran. Somewhere in Baghdad, one of the 15-month tours during the surge. He swapped with someone on patrol, the other guy didn’t make it. “Should’ve been me.” That kind of thing.

I was coming to the end of my career, and volunteering with a local organization as a veteran peer mentor. I wasn’t a mental health counselor yet, just trying help other vets. Someone in the program thought he was thinking of hurting himself.

So I called him and asked him.

That’s the first step: Get them on the phone.

It doesn’t matter that you’re not a medic, or a therapist, or a first responder. It doesn’t matter to your friend, and it shouldn’t matter to you: The fact is, you are now the one connection to life that they have. Intimidating? You better believe it. That veteran’s life is in your hands in a very real and critical way.

That veteran’s life is in your hands in a very real and critical way.

You have to view suicide like any other kind of danger. You would do literally everything you could to save your friend, whether it’s from a burning building, a car accident, or a heart attack. Suicide calls for the same kind of immediate action.

I asked him how he would kill himself.

“I’ve got a gun here at the house,” he told me. “I’ve tried before.”

You have to ask it directly. No messing around. No, “are you in danger?” or “are you going to hurt yourself?” or “you’re not thinking of doing something stupid, are you?” All of these questions can be denied. Don’t mince words. If they are far enough along in their thoughts, they think the danger lies in living, not dying. People struggling with depression view death as peace, not pain.

Continued on page 14
“Once, I got drunk and put a round in the chamber,” he told me. “I was so wasted, I forgot it had a magazine disconnect. It wouldn’t fire.”

Don’t judge them. That’s first thing to remember: It’s not about you. It’s not about how you feel, what you think, what you did this morning, what you’re doing tomorrow. It’s not about how shocked, or betrayed, or sad, or scared you feel. Your total and complete focus is on your friend, on the other end of the phone, holding onto you, holding on to life.

Once you ask directly, and get a positive answer, then you can move on, because you know what you’re dealing with — a life-and-death situation.

It’s not about you. It’s not about how you feel, what you think, what you did this morning, what you’re doing tomorrow.

Maybe you think you’re done at that point: “Now I know, I can call 9-1-1, it’s out of my hands.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Settle in, because it gets real from here. Listen to their story. Tell them you want to hear about it, hear about what’s going on. You can be clear with one thing, though: are they in a place, head-wise, to talk? If they’ve already taken some pills, or they’ve got some other means, and they are literally seconds away from taking their own life, then 9-1-1 is absolutely one to call. You can even tell them that: “Now that I know what’s going on, if you hang up, I’m calling 9-1-1 immediately. If you don’t want that to happen, then keep talking to me.”

So, if they’re not in immediate danger, take it slow and listen to their story. Something happened today, or yesterday, or this past week, to get your friend to this place. It is certainly going to be an accumulation of things, leading back to and possibly beyond their time in the service, but the chance is that there is something very specific that happened to get to this point. That’s the story you need to listen to. Without judgment. Is it being with, the one you don’t like?

At some point, something is going to come up that makes them move back toward life. A reason to live, a reason they want to live. Their kids. Their spouse. You, because you’re important to them too, if there’s nothing else.

Continued on page 15
Don’t throw guilt, don’t throw shame, no “how do you think they’ll feel when you’re gone?” Just listen, and when they start talking about things that could happen in the future, then you may have started to turn a corner.

After talking for a period of time, they got some stuff off their chest, they might have gotten a reminder that there is some stuff to live for anyway. Here’s where you can start asking questions. What was your plan? What were you going to do? Because we need to figure out how to disable that particular plan.

Pills? Let me have them, or give them to someone to keep safe. Guns? Rope? Let’s figure out how to keep them out of the way.

Not forever, just for now, until we can make sure you’re safe. Probably best not to get drunk or high right now, because that keeps us from being focused. The best plan is one that you and your buddy come up with together, and then you confirm that plan.

Next step: Where are we going? Who are we going to tell next? Because we want to stay alive, right? If we’re not in the same town, who do you want me to call that will be safe to hang out with you until you can get in to see your doctor, or get into the vet center, or to see a therapist?

Once they’re safe — once you know they’re safe — tell them you love them like a brother or a sister, and how thankful you are that they chose you to connect with. Trust and believe me, it is an unparalleled honor to be the one who your buddy reaches out to in their darkest moment, and it will do you good to let them know that. Once you’re 100% sure they are in a better place and have someone safe near them, you can hang up the phone.

Trust and believe me, it is an unparalleled honor to be the one who your buddy reaches out to in their darkest moment...

Then you can focus on you. It will be one of the most draining and intense experiences of your life, but know this: You just saved a veteran’s life, and that is no small thing.

If you or a veteran you know is in crisis, you can call the Veterans Crisis Line, call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

This article originally appeared on Task & Purpose, a digital news and culture publication dedicated to military and veterans issues.
The loss of Veteran lives at the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home during the Covid-19 pandemic is nothing short of tragic.

While we can’t change the past; each of us has an opportunity to provide input to the future of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke.

The state has created a survey to get public input into what the “reimagined” Home should provide for future generations of Veterans.

This is YOUR CHANCE to provide input to the design of the Home. Please do your part to help the state “Get It Right”!

Please click on the link and complete the survey today.  https://www.mass.gov/reimagining-the-future-of-the-soldiers-home-in-holyoke

The Holyoke Soldiers’ Home Coalition recently met with the Payette architectural design team and made recommendations for the first phase of the expedited capital project for a new Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke.

The meeting on Sept. 15 was conducted as part of the process for the state to receive information from key stakeholders, to include the Veteran community, in reimaging the future of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke.

The nearly two-hour discussion included representatives from the Department of Veterans’ Services, the Executive Office of Administration and Finance and the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance. The Coalition’s presentation cited research and background to assist the state’s needs assessment in planning for the construction of a Veteran-centric campus in Holyoke.

The Coalition noted the demand for long-term care in the Veteran community, to include a significant wait list that historically has been 300-plus Veterans seeking long-term care in Massachusetts. The Coalition also presented information on the need for greater behavioral health services for Veterans; the expected increase in senior citizens diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of dementia; the increase in the number of women Veterans; the rising demand for palliative and hospice care; the greater reliance on family caregivers for Veterans for Activities of Daily Living; and the cost effectiveness and benefits of Adult Day Health Care.

The Coalition issued this statement followed by a list of its recommendations:

“The Coalition was pleased to have an opportunity to share its recommendations on areas the Coalition believes the state must not overlook when designing a new home.

“The Coalition was impressed with the Payette team’s sincere interest in receiving feedback and hearing about our ideas for a future Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke that, we hope, will set the standard for all long-term care facilities for state veteran homes in our nation. We genuinely believe this is our state’s opportunity to create a new campus for Veterans that will prevent any future outbreak of infectious disease and will be the model for care.

“We emphasize to the design team that the new Soldiers’ Home will need to serve Veterans for 70 to 100 years or more. This is our chance to get it right for future generations of Veterans.
“We look forward to continued dialogue with Payette during its engagement work and in doing everything we can to assist in the development of the state’s implementation plan to meet the April 15, 2021 federal Veterans’ Affairs’ State Home Construction Grant application deadline.”

The Coalition met over the summer and developed the following recommendations, which were presented to the Payette design team. *The Coalition acknowledges that what we have proposed is not all inclusive, and that you may not agree with the Coalition’s recommendations*. The list of recommendations is provided it for your awareness, and to stimulate your thoughts as to what may be essential in the design.

1. Build a new Soldiers’ Home with a state-of-the-art design that accommodates a 120-room addition plus the maximum number of additional long-term care rooms in the Soldiers’ Home current main building. All rooms must be for single occupancy and include private shower & toilet and in accordance with small house design principles. The design should ensure there are provisions for current and future long-term care needs to include a secure behavioral health unit, a secure dementia special care unit, and end of life care.

2. Create an enabling outdoor environment on the Holyoke campus that meets legal requirements for a dementia special care unit, allows for a vibrant Adult Day Health Care program and the needs of all Veteran residents in having daily access to the outdoors.

3. Create an Adult Day Health Care area that is economically self-sustaining and that allows Veterans to age in place with a program that provides medical, nursing and personal care services with outcomes that in many cases would delay nursing home placement and reduce hospital admissions.

4. Create a Family Contact Area with virtual technologies during times when quarantining or social distancing protocols prevent direct family visitation.

5. Ensure optimal clinical space requirements for essential on-site specialty care necessary for long-term care in such areas as podiatry, urology, cardiology, respiratory therapy, dentistry, optometry/ophthalmology and physical therapy.

6. Accommodate service animals & pet therapy as more Veterans require the use of service animals and pet therapy for their health care.

7. Renovate and modernize the Soldiers’ Home “canteen” recreation center with movie screen, space for community events.

8. Sustain the current Green House and Recreation Room areas with sufficient space to meet the increasing demand for non-traditional and whole health therapies such as yoga and meditation.
9. Build in sensory stimulation best practices to include space for a Snoezelen Room. Such a room in long-term care facilities help reduce agitation and anxiety in supporting people with Alzheimer’s and dementia. The room would have music, aromatherapy, lighting and textures to help stimulate the senses, encourage interaction and aid in communication with Veteran users.

10. Create a gaming center with both traditional recreation like billiards, card and puzzle tables as well as virtual technologies that appeal to Veterans who enjoy gaming devices.

11. Create areas for quiet reflection that use soft music and lighting and other design principles that assist Veteran residents with dementia who are experiencing symptoms of sundowning.

12. Redesign the current outdoor courtyard at the Soldiers’ Home for a much-improved environment for common area use throughout the year to include a rubberized surface conducive for senior citizens. The courtyard should include shade and landscaping for a stimulating and comfortable space.

13. Retain the Soldiers’ Home Canteen with a snack bar for in-between meals and to support family gatherings and large community events that are so popular for Veteran residents.

14. Create a gift shop for purchases throughout the day for incidentals, cards, sundries, and apparel.

15. Keep a Multi-Denominational Chapel for the spiritual needs of Veterans and their family members.

16. Upgrade the Home’s elevator system for improved wayfinding and in keeping with the best nursing home industry practices for safety.

ABOUT THE COALITION: The Holyoke Soldiers’ Home Coalition is a grassroots organization of Veteran leaders, family members, Veteran services’ representatives and concerned citizens, including former members of the executive leadership team of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke. Additional information is available at their website: www.holyokesoldiershomecoalition.org
Dear Veteran,

We are looking for Veterans to participate in a study about PTSD and substance use.

Eligible participants will receive 8 group therapy sessions of Mindful Self-Compassion. Each group will have approximately 6 - 12 participants.

You will help us learn more about helping Veterans who have PTSD and substance use issues. Participants will be paid for their time. Groups will be held virtually via video visits.

Eligible Veterans Include:
* PTSD diagnosis
* Current substance use disorder
* Guilt or shame related to an event(s) that occurred during your military deployment*

For more information, please contact:

Project MSC
Mimi Sevin
Providence VA Medical Center
401-273-7100 x 16280 OR by email: elizabeth.sevin.va.gov
VA’s new website landing page makes it easier for Veterans and family members to access VA benefits and services information. The website, [www.va.gov/getstarted](http://www.va.gov/getstarted), provides two newly updated booklets on information about VA benefits and services, as well as how to apply for them.

The first booklet is the *2020 Federal Benefits Handbook for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors*. The handbook contains a comprehensive listing of VA benefits and services with direct links to contact benefits and services representatives. In fact, an index located on the inside cover lists both phone numbers and websites for easy reference.

Importantly, the handbook provides a legal overview on eligibility requirements to include the definition of a Veteran. Additionally, as VA serves many generations of Veterans, there are specific qualification guidelines for distinct periods of service to clarify eligibility during both peacetime and wartime environments.

The handbook aligns with benefits information and services for VA’s three administrations: Veterans Health Administration; Veterans Benefits Administration; and Veterans Cemetery Administration. Also, a section of the handbook discusses non-healthcare services, such as homelessness, survivor assistance, women and minority Veterans, and many other programs.

The handbook is a one-stop resource for Veterans, family members and survivors. Limited printed copies may be available at medical centers or VBA regional offices. The website allows Veterans to access VA benefits and services information.

The second resource booklet, *the VA Welcome Kit*, complements the handbook with easy-to-understand words and graphics to better navigate VA’s many benefits. This booklet is structured on the idea that no two Veterans are the same, and not all experience major life events and moments in the same order. Based on where a Veteran is in his or her life, VA serves Veterans in different ways. This resource includes a journey map to help explore how VA supports Veterans both now and in the future.

This resource also reviews VA benefits and services. This includes a useful check list to help Veterans learn and organize important documents needed for application purposes. In addition, Veterans can also learn eligibility periods for certain benefits, such as education or life insurance. The best part is that one can simply crosswalk a search by benefit, how it can help, documents required and VA points of contact.

Want to apply for health care, education, compensation, assistance for care givers, or memorial benefits? These are just a few of the resources in this booklet that can save Veterans time, increase their awareness and understanding of how to apply. VA is working to take the complexity out of navigating its myriad benefits and services. Visit [www.va.gov/getstarted](http://www.va.gov/getstarted) to learn more about the VA benefits Veterans have earned with their service.
SHARE this post and invite fellow members to take advantage of this FREE member benefit!

This training is open to ALL MEMBERS! Registration is now open for ALA Academy Live: Mission Delivery – Veteran Service!

This FREE 50-minute webinar is designed to provide you with resources to tailor your programs to meet the needs of the veterans in your community. You will also learn about opportunities to serve in VA facilities.

We will be offering the same content multiple times on the following dates and times:
- Tues., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. EDT
- Tues, Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. EDT
- Thurs., Oct. 15, 9:30 p.m. EDT

Spaces are limited are on a first come, first serve basis.
https://cvent.me/BNONPL?RefId=Facebook
The below information is subject to change due to COVID 19

The Department of Massachusetts American Legion Auxiliary sponsors Christmas Gift Shops where Veterans in the VA Medical Centers or State Veterans’ Homes (Chelsea Soldiers’ Home and Holyoke Soldiers’ Home) can shop for their family members. These gifts are provided at no charge to the Veteran. Each Unit is asked to donate these items based on their membership as of June 30th each year. We ask that each member donate 1 gift, although we hope you do more. Be generous, have fun with the Veterans and make this shopping experience for their families a special time to remember.

Remember it should be Christmas for our Veterans all year long.

Below is the list of date for the Christmas Gift Shops and the VAVS & MVS Representatives:

**Bedford VAMC** - Rosemary Tower  
Drop off November 23rd to 27th (Not Thanksgiving) Building 62, Room 120  
Gift Shop: November 30 to December 2 9 to 3

**Jamaica Plain Campus** - Ruby James-Saucer  
District will be concentrating on Building 4 and the Transition home.

**Brockton Campus** - Judith Hall  
Gift Shop: Thursday Dec 3, 10 to 3 and Friday Dec 4, 9:30 to 2:30  
Volunteers will need to register

**West Roxbury VAMC** - Anne O’Connell  
November 27th & 28th, 9 - 6 3rd Floor auditorium.

**VA Central/Western Healthcare System** - Deborah Barber  
December 1 from 9 –1 in Recreation Hall.

**Chelsea Soldiers’ Home** - Donna Blattenberger  
Set-up Day: Sunday Dec 6th 12-3 PM  
Gift Shop: Monday—Wednesday Dec 6th—9th, 9-3

**Holyoke Soldier’s Home** - Ann Johnson  
Pending
The National Emergency Fund (NEF) - January 1 – December 31, 2019 we granted $88,845 to 37 members and seven posts in emergency assistance. To date the total disbursement for 2020 NEF grants is $106,833 which was distributed to 39 members and nine posts. Hurricane Laura hit the Gulf Coast states two weeks ago, devastating Lake Charles, Louisiana, and surrounding areas, and Hurricane Sally made landfall on the Gulf Shores as a Category 2 hurricane as of this writing and is moving slowly with massive flooding. Additionally, firestorms are continuing all over the Western half of the country, and the NEF Coordinator sent an e-mail with NEF info to all departments since there are so many impending disasters on the horizon. Grants are starting to roll in because of the hurricanes.

American Legion Riders (ALR) – The advisory committee met on September 18, 2021. Discussion points were proposed Legacy Run routes for 2021 & 2022, as well as the importance of obtaining corporate sponsors for future runs. Americanism gave a brief on the changes in how the Legacy Scholarship Funds are evaluated and awarded.

National American Legion College (NALC) – To date, there have been 45 student applications from 25 departments submitted. This is approximately 40% lower than in 2019. No students have canceled so far since changing the dates for the college to March 2021. The deadline for applications is October 1, 2020.

Training Development – The Training Sub-Committee of the Internal Affairs Commission met via Zoom at 7pm on September 22, 2020. Sub-committee members discussed the evolution of online training opportunities and were briefed by national staff on new training modules in development for our blue cap members. A full report will be presented to the Internal Affairs Commission for inclusion in their report to the National Executive Committee.

American Legion Fall Meetings to go Virtual— As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to make social distancing a priority for the health and safety of everyone, and to stop the spread of the virus, Fall Meetings of The American Legion National Executive Committee will be held virtually. This includes the meeting of commissions and committees.

In advance of these meetings, commission chairmen or division directors will send attending members instructions on how to join the meeting.

October

2 – Finance Commission, 3 – Americanism Commission, 5 – Convention Commission, 5-6 – Finance Commission 14-15—National Executive Committee Meetings
Teamwork brings new life to Legion hall

By Prudence Brighton
Correspondent

Dracut – For American Legion Post 315, canceling scheduled functions started weeks before COVID-19 shutdown the nation’s economy.

In the third week of February, one of the sprinklers in the building at 574 Broadway Road broke and flooded the entire building.

“We had to close, even though we had books,” says Barry Kuntz, who is adjutant for the post and manager of buildings and grounds.

When he arrived at the building fire crews were already on the scene trying to pump out the water.

The space needed restoration from top to bottom. Ceiling tiles, floors and rugs were all replaced. The building needed new insulation. Computers and other electronics were beyond repair.

“It was time consuming to get all the damage out,” Kuntz says. And then, he confronted the wall paint in the first floor function room. “People said the paint was Dracut blue, but I called it 1970s blue.”

The paint made the first floor seem dark and unwelcoming.

He approached Post Commander Richard Ducharme who gave him the go-ahead to paint the walls.

So when the other work was done and contractors gone, Kuntz set to work on the walls. But not without help.

Ducharme wants to make sure that Kuntz’s wife, Lorraine, and daughter, Karen LaChance, get a big share of the credit for wielding paint brushes. The amiable Lorraine recently retired from The Sun, where she was employed for many years on the production side of the business.

Kuntz said the family spent five weeks on the job of painting the function hall, which seats 120 people and has a dance floor. First, they primed and then they painted. They were relieved that the blue paint did not bleed through the primer except in a few small spots.

The color of the walls now is a soft white. Dracut blue has not been entirely banished. Shades in the room are blue and white. Shades on windows with exterior views were open on the day Kuntz showed off the results, highlighting the airiness of the walls.

Now that the work is done, the post is waiting to book functions on the first floor again. Renting the hall is a big part of the post’s revenue, both Ducharme and Kuntz say. And, they’ve had to curtail their own fundraisers.

Despite the restrictions, members continue contributing to the community. As always, they placed flags on the graves of veterans in the town’s cemeteries this Memorial Day and did the “firing” – the gun salute. Some 400 flags were placed this year.
PLYMOUTH – Members of American Legion Post 40 in West Plymouth are opening a new food pantry next week.

They’re working under the concept of veterans helping veterans, but the pantry is open to all.

Veteran Jim Kelley, who formerly ran a food pantry for St. Mary’s church, teamed with Beth Lynch, the post’s function manager, and Post Commander Richie Holbrook to start the Legion’s pantry. It will be open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday, starting next week. Kelley said members of the post recognized the need for a continuing program after more than 100 people attended a traveling food pantry event at the post over the summer. Kelley said a lot of pantries are not operating because of Covid-19 restriction and the need is real.

To start, the pantry will feature non-perishable goods collected by members of the American Legion as well as goods available through the town’s Center for Active Living, the South Shore Community Action Council and St. Peter and St. Kateri Tekakwitha churches. In addition, Quintal’s Market will donate fresh fruits and vegetables, and Panera Bread will provide baked goods. Kelley said the pantry will eventually begin receiving donations from the Boston Food Pantry. The Legion purchased a freezer so the pantry can distribute frozen foods as well.

The pantry will distribute toiletries as well as food. Pet supplies are about the only thing not on the list, Lynch said. Post 40 is accepting non-perishable donation at the post. The organizers are also running a raffle to raise money for the pantry. Tickets are available at Post 40. The top prize is a smoker, but the raffle features gift certificates to Alden Park and 3A Café too. The drawing is Nov. 22.

The South Hadley American Legion Post 260 conducted a COVID compliant Post meeting (physical distancing and face coverings strictly adhered too) at Buttery Brook Monday. This was our first meeting in many months due to the pandemic.
Today we had the pleasure of Presenting Chapter 142 Ashburnham with the Chapter Charter, thank you to the following Chapters that came out for this event. Athol 102, Sutton 414, Baldwinville 373, Beford 221, Chicopee 275 and Of Course Ashburnham 142 and Command Pajak and Chairman Breault!

Day one for the Willette’s representing the American Legion Family and American Legion Franklin-Hampshire District 2 for #100milesforhope, the American Legion National Headquarters effort to support the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. The foundation provides necessary funds to support military and Veteran families facing financial crises are eligible to receive Temporary Financial Assistance. The fund also trains and supports the Legions network of Service Officers, providing VA claims assistance to Veterans at no cost. We plan to bike, walk, run or go to Planet Fitness to make our 100 miles - 13 miles in today, keep you posted! To join us or get more info go to: http://www.legion.org/100miles

The Post attended the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA) observance of the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII and honoring our Chinese American WWII veterans and their next-of-kin with the Unsung Heroes book that CACA put together.
Veterans ensure Holyoke Soldiers Home vets recognized with Honor Bricks

Pictures from the Springfield Republican
Around the Department

Departments of Massachusetts

September Executive Committee Meeting conducted by Zoom

CHESTER P. TUTTLE AMERICAN LEGION POST 279
COMING SPRING 2021
**It is with great pleasure that we ask for your help in supporting our Candidate**

**Jodie Pajak**  
Alternate National Executive Committeeman

With all of us Working as a Team, I have had the opportunity to work diligently on improving our membership by engaging our younger veterans. I've had the opportunity to work with our National Guard and Reserve units both pre and post deployment to let them know that the American Legion is here to help before during and after deployment. With your help we have increased our Public Image And Visibility in social media and at large Public Venues in order to reach our goals. With your support we helped create and push for more education opportunities for our posts and department officers. We have advocated on every opportunity to improve our VA system for our veterans along with pushing for reform to better understand the needs of women veterans. With your help I was able to work with many organization to help improve our children's needs and opportunities. For the first time we ventured into applying technologies to host virtual meetings to keep our committees and our department moving forward in our mission.

My passion for improving our American Legion is the reason why I'm looking to represent Massachusetts on the National level. I hope you believe my record shows that I have worked our four pillars and will continue to do so. Having started my second year as Department Commander, a First in our state, I would be honored as the first woman from Massachusetts to wear a red hat and represent all of you as Alternate National Executive Committeeman.

I am proud to have earned the support and respect of my peers....

Supported by the committee to elect Jodie Pajak Alternate National Executive Committeeman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NVC Frank Macdonald</th>
<th>PNEC Louie Brault</th>
<th>PNC John P. “Jake Comer</th>
<th>PNC Paul Morin</th>
<th>ANEC Mike Davis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chairman</td>
<td>Co-Chairman</td>
<td>Co-Chairman</td>
<td>Co-Chairman</td>
<td>Co-Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVC Sally Nay</td>
<td>NEC James Breio</td>
<td>PDC Jim Army</td>
<td>DVC Lisa McPhee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 CDR Kevin Hamel</td>
<td>D4 CDR Scott Gauthier</td>
<td>Richard Croteau</td>
<td>DSGT Cindy Lacoste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 SVC George Oleen</td>
<td>D3 SVC Scott Conner</td>
<td>PDC Tony Bicchi Jr.</td>
<td>D8 CDR Paul Genest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis St. Pierre</td>
<td>Hist. Nelson Blake</td>
<td>PNVC / PDC Mark Avis</td>
<td>Bruce Heisey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2 CDR Leo Barber</td>
<td>D5 CDR Mike Deegan</td>
<td>PDC Tom Shoemaker esq.</td>
<td>D6 CDR Bob Jerdan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surg Ed Bezio</td>
<td>D5 SVC Jim McMath</td>
<td>PDC Larry Connors</td>
<td>O.C. O’Conner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asst Surg Walter White Ray Samko</td>
<td>John Dyer</td>
<td>PNVC / PDC Hank Bradley</td>
<td>PDC Fred White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PDC Whitey Mckittrick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District 1</th>
<th>District 3</th>
<th>District 4</th>
<th>District 10</th>
<th>District 8</th>
<th>District 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drew Pajak, Chairman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pa
The American Legion Family

SPECIAL NOTICE
FROM THE DEPARTMENT
TO

POST, DISTRICT & MEMBERS WHO MAY HAVE ALLREADY PURCHASED TICKETS AND ADS TO THE NATIONAL COMMANDERS, NATIONAL PRESIDENT & SAL NATIONAL COMMANDER VISIT TO MASSACHUSETTS

ALL TICKET AND AD DONATIONS WILL BE HELD AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE BANQUET ON APRIL 24, 2021 AT THE SAME LOCATION

IF FOR ANY REASON A POST, DISTRICT OR MEMBER WHO CHOOSES TO REQUEST THEIR DONATION BACK AT THIS TIME PLEASE CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT BY PHONE 617 727-2966 WITHIN THE NEXT THIRTY (30) DAYS AND YOUR DONATION WILL BE REFUNDED
Dear Legion Family,

There are many questions in all of our lives right now. When will it be safe to gather? When can we get together for meetings and planning? When can we have large events again?

The committee to honor Carolyn Baranowski as the Northeastern Division National Vice President for the American Legion Auxiliary has been listening and thinking. At this point in time we feel it is prudent to postpone Carolyn's Homecoming event to the spring. Hopefully in the Spring we will be able to celebrate fully together and without fear.

So, with that in mind here are the details:

Date: May 16, 2021  
Time: 12:00 cocktails - 1:00 Dinner  
Place: Storrowtown Carriage House  
135 Memorial Highway (Eastern States Exposition Center)  
West Springfield, MA  
Menu: choice of three meals (Chicken Francaise, Prime Rib, Baked Scrod)  
Price - $50.00 per person

Please await further mailings regarding tickets and details. We did want to get this information out for planning purposes.

Jen Jillson Hamre
Department Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/15/2020</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>District Ten Meeting</td>
<td>Plymouth Post 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21/2020</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Finance Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Baldwinville Post 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21/2020</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Membership Meeting</td>
<td>Baldwinville Post 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21/2020</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Department Executive Committee</td>
<td>Baldwinville Post 373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2021 Officers and Committee Appointments and District Rosters have been posted to our website

www.masslegion.org

2021 Membership Standing as of September 25, 2020

Target Date 10/15/2020 55%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 BERKSHIRE</td>
<td>1339</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>64.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 FRANKLIN/HAMPSHIRE</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>66.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 HAMPDEN</td>
<td>2763</td>
<td>1566</td>
<td>56.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 WORCESTER</td>
<td>4751</td>
<td>3037</td>
<td>63.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MIDDLESEX</td>
<td>4212</td>
<td>2593</td>
<td>61.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 NORFOLK</td>
<td>2624</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>60.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 SUFFOLK</td>
<td>1301</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>55.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ESSEX</td>
<td>2777</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>56.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 BRISTOL</td>
<td>2659</td>
<td>1777</td>
<td>66.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PLY/BARN/NAN/DUKE</td>
<td>4270</td>
<td>2624</td>
<td>61.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>297 CAPITOL HILL</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>94.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>462 HEADQUARTERS</td>
<td>2343</td>
<td>1331</td>
<td>56.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30,721</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Quota</td>
<td>31,476</td>
<td>18,902</td>
<td>60.06%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
American Legion Auxiliary Foundation

“Sometimes, we just get off the path and need a little help. You make us feel like we are not forgotten.”
– Resident at Pennyroyal Veterans Center, VPF grant recipient

The ALA Foundation’s Veteran Projects Fund helps support veterans in need by providing grants to units and departments across the country. Show your support for our nation’s heroes by making a donation to the ALA Foundation today. [www.ALAFoundation.org/donate](http://www.ALAFoundation.org/donate)

---

### Auxiliary Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Units</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>2021 Goal</th>
<th>Present Membership</th>
<th>District Percentage</th>
<th>No. Quota Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BERKSHIRE</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20.81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>FRANKLIN /HAMPSHIRE</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22.71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>HAMPDEN</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>17.66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WORCESTER</td>
<td>1072</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MIDDLESEX</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NORFOLK</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SUFFOLK</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18.22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ESSEX</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>BRISTOL</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19.87%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>PLY/BARN/NAN/DUKE</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>24.26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>462</td>
<td>HEADQUARTERS</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31.65%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>5433</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>16.47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
S.A.L. Detachment Commander—End of Summer Message

Hello everyone, I hope you all have been joying your summer as much as you can under the current conditions. As we prepare to head into the fall season it’s time to start thinking about everything that happens this time of year; such as Fall Festivals, and Halloween. But let’s, not forget the maintenance that we all must undertake. Soon we will be raking leaves and cleaning rain gutters and down spouts. This is a good time to start to check in on our area veterans and neighbors who may need a hand with these tasks. Especially the handicapped and disabled many of which are unable to do these tasks without our assistance.

If you know someone who needs a hand reach out, better yet get other members of your Legion Family together and make it a day of community service. By doing this your community will become more aware of who the American Legion Family is and all they do for their community.

Also, do not forget to record this information on your Consolidated Report Form it’s never too early to start documenting all that you do to support our veterans, their families, and our communities.

Please continue to stay safe and healthy during this pandemic and I look forward to seeing many of you at a future event.

Working, together we can make a difference in the lives of our Veterans, Their Families, and our Communities.

Regards

Ernie Laberge  S.A.L. Americanism Chairman 2019-2021, Detachment of Massachusetts S.A.L. Commander 2017-2021, Candidate for Sons of The American Legion National Vice Commander (Eastern Region)

2021 S.A.L. Membership Standings as of 9/25/2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 BERKSHIRE</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 FRANKLIN /HAMPShIRE</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 HAMPDEN</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>28.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 WORCESTER</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>13.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MIDDLESEX</td>
<td>1238</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 NORFOLK</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>25.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 SUFFOLK</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ESSEX</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 BRISTOL</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PLY/BARN/NAN/DUKE</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>22.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Hill</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5214</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>15.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTENTION

THE DEPT. OF MASS. AMERICAN LEGION

POW/MIA COMMITTEE

IS LOOKING FOR A NEW VENUE

TO HOLD THE SEPTEMBER 2021

POW-MIA REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

We are looking for a location

with the following requirements:

✓ Worcester County or Western MA

✓ Free – no Fees

✓ Handicapped accessible

✓ Seating for 100-200 people

✓ A stage or platform

✓ Public Address System

✓ Separate Reception Area

All suggestions are welcomed

Please Contact: Bill Chisholm

bigbillwjc@yahoo.com

339-226-1029
National Cemetery
Bourne, MA

Saturday, November 7, 2020, 10:00 AM

Help us Honor Our Nation's Heroes by placing 77,000 Flags on their graves.

Hosted by SFC. Jared C. Monti Charitable Foundation
AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS
3rd ANNUAL FALLEN RIDERS FUND RIDE
October 4, 2020

$20 rider / $10 passenger

Starting Location:
Dudley Gendron Post 414
156 Boston Road
Sutton, MA 01590

Registration:
9:30 - 10:15 am
KSU @ 10:30 AM

Central Massachusetts
Oxford Chapter 58  Uxbridge Chapter 33
Northboro Chapter 234
Auburn Chapter 279  Sutton Chapter 414

Ride will end at Halligans

HALLIGAN’S
BAR & FUNCTION HALL

Funds from this ride are used to assist Massachusetts Legion Riders who have been injured in accidents during the year.
The annual Women Veterans’ Network Conference will be held virtually this year and changed from the summer to the fall. The 2020 conference will take place on Saturday, October 3rd and the theme will highlight the benefits all veterans have earned through their service to our country. As before, “attendance” is free, and all are invited to attend.

Details can be found on the Massachusetts Women Veterans Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/MAWomenVets/.

Additional information regarding benefits can always be found on the website: http://www.mass.gov/veterans/womenveterans/

Susan McDonough
Massachusetts Department Veterans’ Services
Women Veterans’ Network Director
600 Washington Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
Office: 617-210-5930
Cell: 857-303-3017
Central Mass ALR
Fallen Riders Fund
Barrel of Booze Raffle
October 4, 2020

The Central Mass ALR Chapters will be doing a "Barrel of Booze" raffle this year during our annual ride. Tickets are available for presale and will be available the day of the ride. Buy a few tickets, support a GREAT cause!!!!!!!!!

Tickets: 1 for $5
3 for $10
7 for $20

American Legion

Central Massachusetts
Oxford Chapter 58  Uxbridge Chapter 33
Northboro Chapter 234
Auburn Chapter 279  Sutton Chapter 414

Funds from this raffle are used to assist Massachusetts Legion Riders who have been injured in accidents during the year
Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Massachusetts? If so, please follow these basic guidelines for submissions.

• Submit your text in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf). Save your file as the same name as the article, so we can easily keep track of it. Be sure to make it clear who the author is, whether it’s you or if you are just forwarding it to us. • WE LOVE ARTICLES WITH PHOTOS, or any other kind of images! Include photos and/or artwork for articles separately (NOT embedded in the article) as high resolution (300 dpi, or better) JPGs. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article. Let us know in your e-mail of any corresponding captions, and/or name of the photographer if necessary.

• Spell check everything! Especially people’s names, web addresses, etc. You can help us greatly here by simply running your spell check function in your word processing program.

• E-mail everything directly to us at fmacdonald53@comcast.net no later than the 25th of every month for it to appear in the very next issue. This way we have plenty of time to work with in case we need to clarify anything with you.

Want to Subscribe to Mass E-Legionnaire:

Send your email address to: deptsecretary@masslegion.org or to the Editor at fmacdonald53@comcast.net.

Still receiving correspondence through the U.S. Postal Service? Send the Department office your Name & Address and you will get a hard copy mailed to you.

The American Legion, Dept. of Mass, Inc.
Room 546-2, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Massachusetts e-Legionnaire is a member of
The American Legion Media Alliance
TALMA

Follow the Department of Massachusetts on Facebook @
The American Legion Department of Massachusetts