Greetings Legion Family, I hope this month finds you healthy and in good spirit.

Hard to believe that by the time you read this “Turkey Day” will have passed and Christmas is right around the corner. Thank you to those who put together food baskets and supplies to care for Veterans in their areas. To our Veterans we say, “Thanks for Giving”.

The holiday season is a special time for the Legion Family, for instance many posts put on special events to serve veterans, families and the community or VA hospital Christmas shopping, food box programs and clothing drives are just a few of the many activities one can participate in to reach out and let veterans know how much they are appreciated. Please, if you can find a way to reach out, do so.

As we know, this remains a challenging time for everyone but as many have experienced, we remain committed to our “Four Pillars”. We cannot back off this commitment in our local communities. Teamwork at the post, district and department level is key to our success, whether it be membership, legion programs or just stepping up to help our family members and with so many students doing schooling at home, many may need more support right now, reach out to the community It is what we are committed to when we say our Preamble to The American Legion Constitution.

How’s the membership coming at your post? It’s time to finish signing up those last few renewals from your membership rosters,

Continued on Page 2
hope you got all those snowbirds renewed before they headed south for the winter, if not best hurry. Let us not forget that if you want your post to grow and continue into the future you’ll need to have new members and yes they are out there. Should you see someone wearing something that indicates they are a veteran, ask them if they are a Legionnaire, then be prepared to sign them up in your post.

During the October National Executive Committee meeting several resolution changes where implemented that are a must read, starting with Resolution 38: that updates our ‘Vision and Mission statement’ this was done in effort to have a more succinct and concise vision statement that is more relevant. Resolution 36: Mission Blue Post Assistance Program which will provide $1,000 grants to qualified Posts who have been impacted by (COVID-19). Resolution 19: Updated Program Guidelines for The American Legion Riders National Program which is most certainly a hot button topic right now. Resolution 28: American Legion Baseball regional tournaments sites and dates for 2021-2023 have been ratified. Resolution 31: American Legion Eagle Scout of the year eligibility changes. Resolution No. 26: Support For The United States Space Force our newest member of our armed forces. Resolution No. 32: Risk Management Mandates for National Youth Programs Please be sure to pass this information down to your district posts.

For a complete listing of all resolutions adopted during the 2020 NEC meeting go to American Legion Digital Archives.

In these trying times, Drew and I extend our warmest wishes to you and yours for a joyous and happy holiday season. While we recognize that the year 2020 has been stressful for many, we hope you find the means to enjoy family and friends during this holiday season.

Yours in comradeship,

Jodie Pajak
Department Commander

The American Legion Family
On July 30, 2019, 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. As you reach out to these non-members, visit legion.org to search for and read the article “11 things you need to know about the LEGION Act.”

But communicating with these eligible members is not limited to just today or this week. Invite eligible members to your Thanksgiving or Christmas event at the post or elsewhere in your community.

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.

Wishing all a Happy Thanksgiving!

Building a Foundation for the Future

James W. "Bill" Oxford
National Commander
Happy December!

Where has this year gone? We’ve all been so busy working from home. On behalf of the Department Officers, I would like to thank you for your continuing support of the American Legion’s programs for our veterans, enlisted, and communities.

Christmas Gift Shops have either been cancelled this year or changed extensively. Two Districts have collaborated with VA facilities to provide Christmas stockings filled with goodies for the veterans to enjoy. As I indicated in my last message, you can still participate by donating funds. Contact the Department office for more information. Junior members and Unit members can make Christmas cards for veterans by sending them to the facilities/soldiers’ homes. Consider sending cards to our enlisted, as well. Some Units and Districts will host Christmas events for veterans. Social distancing regulations will be followed. Depression is being reported among elderly people during these difficult times. Please contact your Legionnaires and ALA members to check in.

Are you doing activities within your communities? Our Department chairman, Katina, is looking for your input for her report. Have you checked out the Department Community Service Facebook page? If you’d like to join, contact Katina.

My Department theme is “I’m Proud to be an American”. There are all sorts of things you can do at home to show your American pride. Your Department Americanism chairman is Donna Blattenberger. Email her or call her for suggestions. Here’s one: Fly your American flag on your property.

Please remember to update your Unit/District Governing Documents (bylaws, standing rules). There have been changes in who can be a member of the ALA and these need to be included in your documents. Questions? Our very capable Department C&B chairman, Rosemary, can help!

All Department chairmen need to submit a mid-year report. Deadlines are in December. So, if you have done anything (masks, food pantries, helping vets, etcetera), please send off a note to the appropriate chairman. Call the Department office for an address or email for any chairman.

May you have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. The holidays will be different this year, so don’t forget to stay safe as you attend activities or gather with others. Wear your mask! Practice social distancing. And, may 2021 bring us a vaccine!

Coral May Grout
Department President
Warmest Thoughts
And Best Wishes
For a Merry Christmas
And a Very Happy New Year
The American Legion
Department of Massachusetts
Department Commander
Jodie Pajak
Department Adjutant
Milton Lashus
And the Department Staff
Oops! We're slipping: For the past 5 months, we were ranked in the top 10, nationally! Just got the bad news, we are now at number 15, down from number 10. What happened? Can't say its the pandemic? What's happening in Massachusetts, is happening in all 50 states. So, if others states can maintain a higher level of memberships, than so can we! Let's not let our guard down and make an extra effort to reach out, perhaps through our buddy program, check in on our veteran friends, see how they are doing and ask them to send their membership dues in.

The good news is that we have successfully met and surpassed out goal of 65% and are currently at 71.3%. Our next level is rapidly approaching and is 75% on December 9th (Pearl Harbor Day). We all know it gets more difficult as we begin to go into the final phase of our membership drive. Congrats to Districts #2, #9 and #4, who have came in 1, 2 and 3, respectfully.

There is an issue that is an age old problem! I need to remind all Post Commanders of sitting on paid membership, where ours members are not being processed through the Department. I see it happening in all 10 Districts. Last year I saw a post in my our district that was sitting on 43 members. That is crazy, not to mention, our members believe their dues are being sent in and they believe they are active members and they are not!

What's the next step? Check your post rosters, identify who has not paid? Best approach is to print out your post roster from myLegion.org. If not signed up, its simple and a very useful site for all your legion needs. Any questions or need help, call our Nation Office.

Call your members, ask if they are going to continue with their memberships? If a hardship exist, perhaps the post can assist with a payment. I know of several post that have instituted such a program. Another program I have seen, is some Post pay for veterans who have reached the age of 80 or are veterans of WWII, maybe even the Korean War. These veterans deserve it!

Whatever works, make it happen. I know most post are not even open during Covid 19, but that shouldn't stop us from doing our job. Keep in touch with your officers, your members, your SAL, your Riders and lets not forget your Auxiliary.

Our Department Membership Team, in Boston, is waiting to help with any questions you might have regarding our members. Please don't hesitate to make a call. No question is too silly?

Additionally I continue to offer my services, along with a team from our Department and National who are standing by, ready to assist you, or your district. Our goal is 100%.

Thank you all for your hard work and I ask that you all remain safe and bear with this situation we are all in. Keep in mind, we are in it together, brothers and sisters that are just a phone call away, if anyone needs our help!

With the upcoming holidays around the corner, I caution you all to being safe and watch over all your love ones! Wishing you the very best.

---

**Department Membership Standings**

**(11/25/2020)**

**District 2:** Franklin Hampshire 78.37%

**District 9:** Bristol 77.36%

**District 4:** Worcester 76.15%
Legion posts affected by COVID can apply for $1,000 grant

Public health mandates in response to the coronavirus included stay-at-home orders and business closures. Those mandates financially impacted American Legion posts nationwide as member and community outreach efforts were limited, resulting in a loss of revenue.

To provide some relief during these challenging times, financial grants are now available for eligible American Legion posts.

Resolution No. 36, Mission Blue Post Assistance Program, will provide $1,000 grants to posts that are in good standing with their respective department. These funds must be used exclusively to pay current or past due rent, mortgage, utilities and insurance.

The American Legion National Executive Committee approved Resolution No. 36 Oct. 14, during its annual Fall Meetings. Funds for the approved grants will be provided through The American Legion National Emergency Fund (NEF).

Eligibility for a Mission Blue Post Assistance Program grant requires posts to have:

2. Filed an IRS 990 within the prescribed due date.
3. Filed all other required forms and reports as prescribed by the department.
4. Actively participated in one or more American Legion programs in the last 18 months.
5. A financial need.
6. A certificate of insurance naming The American Legion doing business as American Legion National Headquarters as an additional insured.
7. Documentation indicating that the post is properly incorporated.

The Mission Blue Post Assistance Program grant application will be a fillable PDF. Please stay tuned for its release. American Legion posts applying for a grant will be required to first submit the completed application to their respective department for approval before it can be sent to National Headquarters. This application procedure is the same as the NEF.

American Legion posts have until Dec. 31, 2021, to apply for an Operation Blue PAP grant.
As part of my duties as Department Treasurer, I would like to keep all post well informed on issues, events and information which may be helpful as we move forward during these crazy times.

As an example; recently spoke to our Department Adjutant Milton Lashus, who brought to my attention the many post that may have revenue sitting at the Commonwealth’s Treasurery as “Unclaimed Property”. The good news is, we can request those funds be returned to its proper place, i.e. your post. The process is very simple! Sign on to Mass.gov, go to Living, then to “Unclaimed Property” and follow the instructions. Very easy, have done it myself and now awaiting the money due my post. Might not be a ton of money, but it's better where it belongs.

Second point I would like to make is a fact that financial institutions have what is called, a community investment or re-investment funds that is used to assist organizations with many of the things the American Legion stands for, our Four Pillars. Call or visit your local bank or credit union, maybe the one your doing business with, and ask them about applying for an assistance grant, I have done it and know it works. The average is about $1,000 to $5,000. Have questions, feel free to contact me.

Lastly, due to the pandemic, we need to start thinking out of the box and come up with ways we need to tap into, just to survive! I have seen projects such as drive-by meals to go, cash raffles or even ask your town or city for a stimulus package, knowing its going to help the many veteran and community programs and projects we are all active with.

These are a few suggestions for now and wish to share many more as we move our agendas forward. Feel free to share your success stories, especially when so many of us can use a helping hand.....thanks. Keep up the good work!!!
Sale of Assets Including Real Estate by Non-Profit Corporations

As economic and other factors exert pressure on American Legion Posts, they may become exposed to financial risk. Corporations may find themselves unable to properly maintain their Post Home of keep pace with their expenses. As the Officers and Directors review the corporation’s financial health, they may be faced difficult decisions relating to whether it is in the corporations best interest to sell the Post Home, dissolve and turn in their Charter or to sell their Post Home as a means of generating cash in order to support and enhance other aspects of the American Legion’s mission and continue in operations as a so-called “Paper Post”. In either case, since the Officers and Directors of the corporation have a fiduciary duty to insure that they are being responsible fiscal stewards of the corporate assets, they are advised to consult with an attorney experienced in real estate and non-profit corporate law prior to taking any action to avoid personal liability. The follow general discussion is for information purposes only and not meant to be legal advise nor does it create an attorney-client relationship with the author.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SALE OF CORPORATE ASSETS BY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION.

A sale of all or substantially all of a non-profit corporation’s assets must be approved by two-thirds of all members entitled to vote. This requirement is not two-thirds of the members present at a meeting but two-thirds of all members entitled to vote on any matter. Notice of the meeting at which the approval of members is being sought must be given in accordance with G.L. c. 180, : 6B, which provides, in pertinent part, that notice must be given to every member entitled to vote on any matter, not just to those members entitled to vote on a sale of assets. Notice may be given in any manner reasonably likely to make such members aware of the proposed action.

However, such vote is not required by G.L. c. 180 : 8A (a) & (b) where: (1) the disposition is of less than all or substantially all of the corporation’s property and assets; (2) the disposition does not involve and will not result in material change in nature of the activates conducted by the corporation; or (3) if granting a mortgage or pledge or granting a security interest in the assets. Thus if an American Legion Post intends to continue to function as an American Legion Post after the sale of the asset or post home, the notice is not required. That said, there is no downside to providing the notice and is always advisable to avoid any possible claims of breach fiduciary duty.

For American Legion Corporations, there is another step in the sale of assets process. Notice must also be given to the Division of Public Charities within the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office in accordance with G.L. c. 180 : 8A©, at least thirty days before transaction is consummated if sale involves: (1) all or substantially all of the Post’s property; or (2) will result in material change in the nature of the activities conducted by the corporation, except that no notice is required if written waiver of such notice has been executed by the attorney general. Thus, where Post intends to sell the Post Home which represents substantially all of the corporations assets, and/or intends to cease operating as an American Legion Post, it must notify the Attorney General’s Office 30 days prior to the sale G.L. c. 180 : 8A(c).
The Purpose of the notice is to give the Department of the Attorney General the opportunity to review the Post’s intentions in an orderly fashion and determine prior to a transaction whether, in the Department’s view, court approval for such a sale is required. No special form of notice is prescribed by the statute, but a letter setting forth the circumstances and addressing the checklist of concerns outlined in the Attorney General’s Guidelines on Notice Requirement will suffice.

The Division of Public Charities invites corporations intending to sell substantially all of their assets of cease operations and their attorney to bring these matters to its attention as early as possible, even “hypothetically” for informal consideration to avoid later surprise as to the Division concerns. If the Division’s understanding of complex facts will be necessary, send a letter explaining the situation. Of course, the eventual position of the attorney general on the particular matter will depend on the facts as they fully unfold.

Three fundamental, long-standing principles of charitable law are important here:

- Charitable (AL Post) assets may not be used for private enrichment.
- A charity (AL Post) does not have total freedom to transfer control of its assets to another organization (even to another charity or AL Post) without authorization of either the legislature or a court.
- A Charity (AL Post) does not have freedom to change the use to which charitable asset are to be applied without court approval.

Post must also determine whether the sale of the assts is inconsistent with the terms of any gift or trust instruments governing the corporation’s assets. Should such a restriction exist, court approval may be required.

**Voluntary Dissolution**

If an American Legion Post decides to cease operation, it must formally dissolve the corporation and distribute any remaining corporate assets. Once the corporate asset has been sold, the corporation may be dissolved by either of two methods: by vote of a majority of its board of directors, or, if so permitted in the corporation’s articles of organization or bylaws (if the bylaws have been adopted by the member), by a majority vote of the members either entitled to vote thereon or as a whole, G.L. c. 180 : 11A.

If the corporation has no remaining assets, it should file a petition for dissolution with the public Charities Division of the Office of the Attorney General. The petition for dissolution should clearly set forth the ground for dissolution. The division is directed to approve dissolution upon finding that the charity (Post) has or will become inactive and that dissolution would be in the public interest.

If the corporation has assets at the time of dissolution, it should file the petition for dissolution with the Supreme Judicial Court. The petition should clearly state the grounds for the request for dissolution and request that the court authorize the administration of its funds for such similar public charitable purposes as the court may determine.

The court may approve the dissolution of provide, by rule or order, that court authorization is nor required. G.L. c. 180 : 11A(d). Prior to submitting its petition to the court, the corporation should submit its complete dissolution complaint package to the Charities Division of the Office of the Attorney General. The Division of Charities is willing to review draft dissolution pleadings in advance of filing before the Supreme Judicial Court, thereby greatly expediting the voluntary dissolution process. Also note that, if the liabilities of the dissolving corporation exceeds its assets, counsel should expect scrutiny from the single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court and the Division of Public Charities. In any case, corporate assets may not be distributed at the discretion of the Officers, Directors and/or members of the Post without court approval.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. If the Public Charity wants to sell substantially all of its assets to a for-profit, is that allowed?

Yes, so long as the charity can establish that it received fair market value and otherwise complies with applicable law. If the charity intends to change it activities or dissolve, 8A(c) notice and court approval is required. In addition, other requirements may be placed on the buyer to share with the charity profits realized on future sale of the property within a specified time period to ensure that the property was not under-valued at the time of the sale.

2. If the public charity is selling substantially all of its assets but does not yet know how the proceeds will be used, is a 8A(c) notice required?

Yes. If the charity’s board of directors is uncertain as to how the proceeds from the sale will be used, it does not know whether there will be a material change in the nature of the entity’s activities. In addition, there may be fiduciary duty issues arising out of the decision to sell the charity’s property without a plan for subsequent use of the sale proceeds.

3. Is an 8A notice necessary if the charity is making a donation of a larger part (but less than substantially all) of its assets without receiving fair value in return?

No, but the charity may need to file a petition with the Supreme Judicial Court (Single Justice Session for Suffolk County) with the Attorney General’s assent, since a charity cannot ordinarily give away a large part of its assets to an organization not controlled by the charity.

By Richard D. Paster Esq., Mr. Paster is a member of the law offices of Paster, Rice & Castleman, LLC, 1212 Hancock Street, Suite 110, Quincy, MA 02169, Tel 617 472-3424 X 11 Fax 617 472-3427
Email: rpaster@prclawoffice.com
Gift giving can be an expression of love, affection, or part of an effort to promote good will and compassion. It has been a human tradition since ancient times, and when we learn that it is “better to give than to receive” it will certainly help when it is time to downsize. As all of us are very aware, the holiday season can be stressful, and those families struggling to survive have the added burden of providing toys and other presents to their children as part of the celebrations.

Fortunately, there are many charitable organizations focused on helping families grant the dreams of their children. The Toys for Tots program has, for over 70 years, handed out millions of toys. This effort has always been run by the United States Marine Reservists with the help of the Marine Corps League. Beginning in mid November each year with certain events scheduled, and toy collection boxes set out, the Marines accept donated toys in most communities in the United States. The toys are then transported to a central location where the sorting is undertaken, and in coordination with other local charities, distributes the toys to the local needy families.

The alliterative slogan “Toys for Tots” has been the organization that many people have come to think of when the Christmas season begins, and when we tend to be more generous and thoughtful. Those wishing to donate can easily locate a collection box in their hometown at many businesses and public buildings. Also a virtual toy box can be accessed through the Toys for Tots website, where you can select and donate toys, or make a cash contribution

Semper Fi
Mike Whalen

Nominations for the 2021 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year award are now being accepted. An applicant’s nomination packet must be received by their respective American Legion department headquarters no later than March 1, 2021. Departments must then select and certify their department’s top nominee to American Legion National Headquarters no later than April 1, 2021. Award and application information is available at legion.org/scouting/nominate.

The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year will receive a $10,000 scholarship. Three runner-up scholarship awards will be granted in the amount of $2,500 each.

Applicants that have questions or need additional information about their application, or the application process, should contact their respective American Legion department (state) headquarters.
Boys State Committee

THE AMERICAN LEGION
Department of Massachusetts
617-727-2966

546-2 STATE HOUSE
BOSTON, MA 02133

To: All Post Commanders, Adjutants and/or Boys State Chairmen
From: Mark Avis, Chairman, Massachusetts Boys State

The 2021 Boys State Program will be held at Stonehill College, North Easton, from Saturday, June 12, 2021 to Friday, June 18, 2021. This year, the cost of sponsoring each boy will be $375.00 for the regular tuition, or $550.00 for those who pay for students by the early bird registration date of April 6, 2021 after the cost is $375.00. Please make your check payable to “The American Legion” and designate “Boys State” in the lower left corner of the check. Please use the tear-off sheet at the bottom of this notice indicating your Post Chairman, as all future correspondence will be mailed directly to them. All checks for the 2021 Boys State Session must be in the hands of Mark Avis Chairman by May 20, 2021. The first 400 applications will be accepted. We encourage you to actively seek outside co-sponsors (e.g. politicians, businesses, or banks) to help pay for these boys to attend.

Boys chosen to attend Boys State must be interviewed by the Post Chairman, and his signature attesting to this must appear on Citizen Applications. Each Post Chairman should explain Boys State in detail to the boys and their parents so that they will know what is expected of them during their stay. The Boys State website (http://www.maboystate.org) contains a wealth of information, including video, photographs, program books, and program descriptions. Students and parents should be directed to this resource for information and announcements.

Beginning in January 2021, we will have applications available via email or regular mail. Please select the email option on the tear-off sheet if that is how you would like to receive the paperwork. Once we have received payment for your 2021 Boy Stater, detailed instructions will be provided in the application packets that are sent to the Post. FOR THE 2021 YEAR ONLY 12TH GRADE STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE PROGRAM.

Contact your District Chairman regarding transportation.

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<td>Dale Alden</td>
<td>PO Box 193, Ashley Falls MA 01222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aildendale@hotmail.com">aildendale@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>413-229-8163</td>
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<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>George Olen</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:gao1964@gmail.com">gao1964@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>413-229-6670</td>
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<td>02</td>
<td>Leo Barber</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
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<td>Lisa McPhee</td>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
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<td>617-335-0241</td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Michael Davis</td>
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<td>08</td>
<td>Bruce Helsey</td>
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<td>508-235-4418</td>
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<td>09</td>
<td>Robert Hicks</td>
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<td>508-235-4418</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>David Stillars</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:siliymani505@outlook.com">siliymani505@outlook.com</a></td>
<td>508-264-3545</td>
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TEAR OFF SHEET

POST

DISTRICT #  NUMBER OF BOYS  CHECK AMOUNT

Sponsor(s) Name (if applicable)

Chairman:  Telephone

Address:  City/Zip Code

High School

High School Contact (if known)

Please send the application via email to this address:

SEND TO: MARK AVIS
14 SHAW STREET
PALMER MA 01003
The winter sweepstakes have been distributed and the winter drawing will be held at the January Department Executive Committee meeting. It is by no means too late to get your sweepstakes tickets in to the department office. Please, consider a donation if you have yet to remit your tickets and remember that you can win up to $3,000. These fundraisers help to fund your department and the programs of The American Legion as we serve the community, state and nation via our programs.

The updated catalog has been distributed by Emblem Sales and there are plenty of great official American Legion items available including uniform items, post and personal necessities as well as official American Legion face masks. Any item purchased from Emblem Sales by catalog or via their website entitles the department in which the buyer resides to a royalty. In March of this year The Department of Massachusetts received $3,323.45 in royalties from Emblem Sales to help with our funds and programs. This was based on sales from 2019. Please, also remember that use of The American Legion Emblem is available only with the permission of the national adjutant. Purchasing from Emblem Sales avoids any violation of its use. Thank you to all who purchased items from Emblem Sales. Your purchase helps both the national organization and your department.

Many of you purchased The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coins from the U.S. Mint as did yours truly. These coins brought a 1.4 million dollar total to the national organization. Many thanks are appropriate to all who purchased these coins. Not only do you possess a collectible coin set of The American Legion to treasure for generations to come but you helped The American Legion and its many programs.

Volunteer at National Oratorical Finals

The 2021 National Oratorical Contest will be held as scheduled April 9-11 in Indianapolis and conducted in its traditional manner of live and in-person.

The American Legion is looking for volunteers to help with the 2021 National High School Oratorical Contest Finals. The contest is held at the Wyndham Indianapolis West hotel where more than 50 youth from across the country deliver a speech on the U.S. Constitution and compete for more than $203,500 in college scholarships.

All volunteers will be required to complete a criminal history background check and sexual abuse awareness training prior to staffing the contest. The American Legion has the utmost confidence in its volunteers and staff, however, any organization entrusted with the safety of youth must take measures to sustain participant safety and mitigate the organization’s risk and liability.

Instructions and a link to take the background check and sexual abuse awareness training will be emailed out after the new year. The application to be a volunteer is on the Legion’s Oratorical web page, legion.org/oratorical/volunteer.
Community Service

We remind everyone it is not too early to submit your nominations for the Conway Community Service award and the Mulkern Educator of the year award. They are due by March 31, 2021 to be considered. Even if they have been submitted previously and were not selected a new submission is needed. Conway award recipients need to be a Legion, Auxiliary or SAL member – this would include all your Legion Riders. The Mulkern award does not need to be a Legion family member.

The Pendell/Shriver award is also due to me by March 31, 2021 – This should include what you put in your Post Consolidated Reports so it is a good way to collect your information for both at the same time. Also remember that you should be including the activities done by your Post American Legion Riders as it is a program of your post that don’t do a separate consolidated report. The guidelines and report are on the Department website. I would be happy to talk to anyone who needs additional information to complete this award submission.

Al White Award submissions are due within 45 days of event – the first 6 months submissions have been sent to the committee members yesterday and we will have recipients for the next meeting. Submissions have included districts 1, 4, 3 and 8 – It would be great to have submissions from every district. With all the unique community events happening during Covid-19 every district should have at least one Post with an event to submit.

National Economic Commission Awards

The first American Legion National Economic Commission Award was established in 1947, and recognized individuals across the country who had established outstanding records in the employment and retention of workers with disabilities. Since that time, categories were added to the current nine award programs. The National Economic Commission is striving to award all possible pending awards that are available to The American Legion. We implore all departments to continue to submit award nominations for the awards with the hope that we receive all 400 + possible nominations. We are striving to reach 100% participation in this program. 1. EMPLOYER OF VETERANS AWARD - (SMALL) 2. EMPLOYER OF VETERANS AWARD - (MEDIUM) 3. EMPLOYER OF VETERANS AWARD - (LARGE) 4. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AWARD - (DVOP) 5. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AWARD - (LVER) 6. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AWARD - (LOCAL OFFICE) 7. EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS AWARD 8. ENHANCE THE LIVES OF DISABLED PERSONS AWARD 9. HOMELESS VETERAN OUT-REACH AWARD Posts submit nominations to their Departments for consideration. To be considered for the National Award, the deadline for Department submittals to the National Economic Commission in Washington, DC is January 15, of the following year. Example: To be nominated for the 2020 awards the nomination must be in by January 15, 2021.
In 2019, VA reported that the suicide rate among male veterans was 1.3 times the rate of other adult men in 2017. For women veterans, the suicide rate was even higher at 2.2 times the rate of their civilian counterparts. Recent statistics on suicide are shockingly high but conservative because many suicides are misclassified as death by motor vehicles, poisonings, drownings, overdoses or other accidents.

Many factors increase the risk of veteran suicides: post-traumatic stress disorder; traumatic brain injury; loss of a sense of purpose; loss of a sense of belonging; stigma surrounding mental health; access to lethal means (firearms, bridges, opioids, etc.); and substance use and abuse disorders.

The American Legion launched an online mental health survey in May as part of the organization’s continuing research into mental health issues impacting veterans. The survey was created by the American Legion’s TBI/PTSD Committee and was designed to collect data that will help The American Legion bring local resources related to TBI, PTSD and suicide prevention to veterans and their families.

The data collected indicated 82.47 percent of participants never received any form of suicide prevention training and 67.39 percent of participants were somewhat likely, likely or very likely to take suicide-prevention training if offered.

The survey identified that 84.23 percent of respondents never sought mental health care from VA Vet Centers, and nearly 40 percent of respondents were unsure of eligibility for VA mental health services.

WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO?

- Urge the DoD and VA to implement an automatic flagging system to alert providers of potentially fatal prescription drug combinations.
- Provide VA the necessary funding for complementary and alternative therapies for treating TBI, PTSD and other mental health conditions.
- Improve VA’s hiring process for mental health providers.
- Increase funding for DoD and VA suicide-prevention programs.

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An estimated 20 veterans a day take their own lives. Every one of these instances is tragic. More veterans die from their own hands than are killed by our nation’s enemies. We must do a better job of embracing and listening to these men and women.

James W. “Bill” Oxford, American Legion National Commander
The American Legion recognized Syracuse University’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) with its prestigious Patriot Award. The award was presented Nov. 17 during a livestreamed ceremony held on the campus in Syracuse, N.Y., at the new National Veterans Resource Center at the Daniel & Gayle D’Aniello Building.

“The American Legion was founded by World War I veterans concerned about the well-being of their comrades as they returned home and transitioned back into civilian society,” said Past National Commander Fang Wong of New York during the ceremony. It’s fitting that we recognize the IVMF with The American Legion Patriot Award. More than 142,000 transitioning servicemembers and their families have benefited from IVMF’s outstanding programs. They understand that America has an obligation to serve veterans as well as veterans have served this country.

The American Legion presents the national honor to organizations or people who “have demonstrated a profound and exceptional commitment to military personnel and their families.” Dr. Mike Haynie, IVMF founder and vice chancellor at Syracuse University, said IVMF is "truly honored and humbled by this recognition" and hopes the award will be "a springboard" to an enduring relationship "between the Legion and the IVMF, working together to empower those who have served across every dimension of their post-service life."

Haynie continued in his remarks that "today's veterans service organizations look to follow the leadership example of The American Legion with its focus on grassroots advocacy, position to influence and inform the issues that are most important and most pressing to the veterans community. Syracuse University in many ways has a history that parallels that of The American Legion. We are an institution that throughout its history has been transformed by a commitment to serve veterans and military-connected families."

After World War II, then-Syracuse University Chancellor William Pearson Tolley "kicked open the doors of this institution to returning war veterans ... kicked open the doors wider than most any other institution in the nation," Haynie said. "In the years following World War II we welcomed 10,000 returning veterans to our campus. "Fast forward to today and our institutional commitment in the words of current Chancellor Kent Syverud is to be the best place of higher education for our veterans, our servicemembers and their families. It is our mission every day, our passion, and it's on display in the work of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families."

The presentation of the Patriot Award to IVMF was originally scheduled to occur during The American Legion’s national convention this past August in Louisville, Ky., which was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. American Legion National Commander James "W." Bill Oxford could not attend the presentation ceremony on campus due to COVID-19 travel restrictions to New York. However, he sent personal remarks of "appreciation for the outstanding work and advocacy of the IVMF."

Previous winners of The American Legion Patriot Award include former Indiana governor and current Purdue University President Mitch Daniels, Sen. Bernie Sanders, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, former Rep. Jeff Miller and the chaplain corps at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.
This has to be the craziest of times for all of us. Between the Covid Virus and the Presidential election this is also a time to remember and put behind us. Personally, I have learned some things from observations and just life itself.

On the political side, it is good to have the election process done - unless you live in Georgia where they have a runoff in January for their 2 US Senate seats. My observations include some of the following: It was great to see such a large overall turnout of citizens voting; there needs to be better Federal oversight on voting laws and actual procedures. To still be counting votes a week after the election makes no sense in the times we live in. I found that I cannot rely on my past sources of information. In years past, I would look to the Boston Globe, NY Times, Washington Post, major TV outlets (ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN). Unfortunately they are all very much showing their bias towards particular candidates. And Facebook, Twitter and others have shown they can be biased and also a lot of misinformation has been spread around. I found myself doing what I have done the last number of years and that is going to the candidates sites and party platforms to see what they were proposing to do. Also, I looked at what they had done in the past.

Having had the privilege to serve a couple of years on the American Legion National Legislative Commission, I looked back at what I learned from that experience. When looking at a candidates record, it would be rare that one would agree 100% with all their votes on legislation. Also, many bills contain amendments that often have no relevance to the original but were added on as a compromise. That will determine how a legislator votes. Please remember that for the next election process.

Going forward we need to hold all our elected officials accountable. Too many in both parties promote hate speech. It is ok to disagree and hold opposing views. It is not ok to advocate outright revenge against others. That is NOT the American way. I cannot figure out how those people get elected over and over when they are on national news promoting hate to others. Or how some television networks allow this on their programs. By the number of people voting in 2020, it has shown that we all care. Let’s continue this message and let it be a positive one.

We do have to heal. It does begin with each and every one of us. This holiday season should reinforce that we need to connect with family and friends and put politics aside. Granted this will be difficult as travel is pretty much nonexistent. How about doing something old fashioned and pick up the phone! Radical but practical idea!

As we do our best to celebrate this holiday season, let us remember all the first responders and the health care professionals who are taking care of all of us. Remember our law enforcement professionals who are being wronged in the media. And let us remember those who are serving in the military and their families who keep us safe as they defend our freedoms. Freedoms that too many take for granted.

May God Bless America and all of us in this turbulent time.

John Lenotte, Past Commander, Post 4 Haverhill MA; Past Commander District 8 Essex County and Past Commander, Department of MA. I may be reached at jplenotte@gmail.com
July 18 A Year ago today the first rays of light were breaking through the ominous Prussian clouds. Our men were proving their mettle in an onslaught which revealed American manhood in its true light. The boche hordes found themselves unable to stand before the olive drab avalanche on the Allied front. The Prussian armies were started on their race towards the Rhine. Paris ceased to be the Kaiser's objective. His journey towards Holland—the Tower of London—had set in, accelerated by American bayonets, wielded by American doughboys. Today the great job over there is finished. The doughboys have returned, or are returning, from the hardest task that ever tried the souls of men. But the gains are yet to be consolidated; and the Americanism for which America fought must be fortified and perpetuated. That is the task ahead today.

Exit Rank and Titles—THE routine action of the Joint Executive Committee of the American Legion in voting to abolish rank and titles at national headquarters in all its dealings has attracted considerable attention and caused some little surprise. But there was nothing radical or nothing unusual in such a step. Rank and titles are admittedly necessary to achieve an end in the emergency of war, but they have no place in the working plans of the Legion which is essentially a civilian organization. Furthermore the vast majority of the Legion members served in the ranks and it is the majority voice that will direct the Legion and govern in all its actions and policies. The national headquarters has gone further than to eliminate military rank from its own considerations by asking the State organizations to pursue the same course in all their records and meetings. This is nothing mere than a true expression of the spirit that underlies the American Legion.
Dear Veteran:

As your Department Commander, I am very proud of every member of The American Legion of Massachusetts, proud of what we have accomplished and proud of what we will continue to do, together, to help keep our great Nation strong and free.

I am delighted to send you the enclosed sweepstakes tickets, which represent your chance to win up to $3,000 and to support our very important Department of Massachusetts programs at the same time! It is a truly unique opportunity and I am confident that you will help by sending in your optional donation along with the sweepstakes tickets in the enclosed envelope today.

When you return a donation of $5 per ticket, $20 for 6 tickets, or $30 for all 12 tickets – you’ll carry on our time-honored tradition of service to our troops and veterans. In particular, you will be supporting our Service Officers who are there for our veterans and tirelessly work with the VA in getting the help and benefits they need and deserve!

The drawing will be held at Post 414, (Dudley – Gendron), 156 Boston Rd., Sutton, MA 01590. Enter today for your chance to win $3,000 or one of several other prizes.

Your help and support are truly needed, so please act today. Every single gift is vital; each gift is appreciated by all of us and by those we serve.

Please mail your sweepstakes tickets as soon as possible but no later than January 7, 2021 to be eligible to win.

Grand Prize $3,000 • Second Prize $2,000
Third Prize $1,000 • Fourth to Seventh Prizes $500

Winners will be selected on January 16, 2021, at the Post 414, (Dudley – Gendron), 156 Boston Rd., Sutton, MA 01590.

Please act today and reinforce the worthy programs of our Department. Make your check or money order payable to “The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts” and send your sweepstakes tickets in the enclosed envelope. Although not required to enter, I hope you’ll also send a donation to support all our charitable programs. Your tickets have been addressed for your added convenience. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you and God bless America.

Still Serving America,

Jodie Pajak
Department Commander
The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts

P.S. No purchase or donation is necessary to enter. A purchase or donation will not improve your chances of winning. Good luck to all who participate and a very sincere “Thank You” to all Legionnaires.

Please Respond by January 7th
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 $143,108 which was distributed to 71 members and 12 posts.

American Legion Riders (ALR) – To date, the Legacy Run donation web site has generated $100,800 surpassing the $100,000 set goal. The fulfillment items have been sent out to all donors.

National American Legion College (NALC) – Chancellor Rehbein selected his Legion college review committee. Chairman Newman notified them via email with instructions to convene and review all applications submitted for the 2020 class to be held March 20-26, 2021. They will rank all second seat applications in the event COVID restrictions decrease, and more seats can be filled. As of right now, the class size will be 30 seats to match the 30 departments that submitted applications.

American Legion Washington DC Office—Executive Director Chanin Nuntavong, Maureen MacDonald, NVC Frank MacDonald
American Legion honors nation’s veterans in Washington, D.C.  

By Mackenzie Wolf

American Legion National Vice Commander Frank MacDonald honored the nation’s veterans on Veterans Day by placing wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery and at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

”Every veteran – regardless of their branch or time in service – gave up a portion of their lives in service to our great country,” he said.

“Ceremonies like those attended today reinforce the thanks of a grateful nation.

”While I celebrate Veterans Day every year with meaningful ceremonies and events around Massachusetts, the opportunity to attend Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery with the president of the United States is a once-in-a-lifetime honor. I am extremely privileged to have this honor bestowed upon me.”

President Trump issued a proclamation earlier in the day honoring the nation’s veterans.

"America's veterans have fought to defend our country, its values and its interests since the first days of our founding," he said. "They have defeated tyrants, eliminated terrorists and secured freedom at home and abroad. Their courage and fortitude in the face of adversity serve as an example for all Americans.”

American Legion Chairman of the National Security Commission Steven Brennan, from left, and National Vice Commander Frank MacDonald talk with Kelly McKeague, director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, at a Veterans Day ceremony at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Photo by T.J. Kirkpatrick/The American Legion
President of the United States honors all at the Tomb of the Unknown

NVC MacDonald waiting for transport to Arlington with members of the Medal of Honor Society, VFW and the Military Order of the Purple Heart at Joint Base Meyer/Henderson Hall
Post 500 members, Sergeant at Arms and Chaplin, David Fuller, Commander Eugene McCaffrey, Desert Storm Veteran and Judge Advocate, Steve Campbell and Junior Vice Commander Mike.

Ribbon Cutting for new Pavilion  Bedford VAMC PDC Whitey McKittrick, PNC Jake Comer, NEC James Breio.
Around the Department (Continued)

Veterans Day North Adam Post 125

Veterans Day Ludlow
Around the Department

Veterans Day Westfield

Veterans Day Oxford Post 58

Veterans Day Whitman Post 22
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

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<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% of Goal</th>
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National Quota 31,476 22877 72.68%

2021 Membership Standing as of November 25, 2020

Target Date 12/9/2020 75% Pearl Harbor

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

www.masslegion.org
POSTS

Post 117 Oliver Ames Jr.
Post 198 Mansfield
Post 298 Housatonic
Post 327 Mission Hill
Post 399 LTJG W.M. Penny
Post 415 Petersham
Post 424 Freetown
Members helping members – that’s the American Legion Auxiliary’s mission of Service Not Self in action. Hard times can fall upon us at any moment. That’s when the American Legion Auxiliary is committed to help. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis.

Established in 1969, the AEF was created with a bequest from the estate of Auxiliary member Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisconsin. Five decades later, the AEF is still helping fellow Auxiliary members get back on their feet. In order to carry on the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, we need your generous support.

For additional Information goto:
Www.alafortveterans.org/members/Auxiliary-Emergency-fund
Hello everyone

Christmas and New Year’s will be here before we know it. Now is the time to start pushing your American Legion Family membership renewals even harder. (For the Sons please remember that the per capita for each member is now $12). Even though the cards are good until the end of this year an early renewal guarantees all your benefits will go uninterrupted as the new year begins. Please also keep in mind that membership chairmen need to send completed cards and payment to Department every two weeks please do not hold them longer, or membership can be processed online. When membership is held it slows down not only the Department processing but also National which could impact members benefits. If National does not receive a member’s payment in a timely manner a member could be denied when trying to place a request for benefit payment.

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

I wish all of you Seasons Greetings & Happy Holidays

Regards

Ernie Laberge
Commander
S.A.L. Detachment of Massachusetts
Candidate for National Vice Commander (Eastern Region)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% of Goal</th>
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THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 40

STUFF A BUS

Saturday, December 5, 2020
9:00 to 1:00

The New England Center & Home for Veterans
Is a multidimensional service and care provider dedicated to assisting Veterans who are facing or at risk of being HOMELESS...

Things that are needed:
Bring NEW items such as... WINTER COATS (UP TO XXXL), BLANKETS, UNDERWEAR (Male & Female) All sizes of... SOCKS, SCARVES, HATS, PJ’S, TURTLENECKS, SWEATPANTS
And GIFT CARDS are always appreciated

Please bring Donations to:
American Legion Post 40
199 Federal Furnace Rd.
Plymouth, MA 02360

First Student
WE NEED YOU! CHARITY AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE CHESTER P TUTTLE POST 279 REBUILDING FUND

Please forward; help us get the word out...

Chester P Tuttle Post 279
Call for Charity Auction Donation Items

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Request for Donated items - Charity Auction
100% of proceeds go to the Tuttle Post’s rebuilding fund

512-844-4617  Charity Auction  sales@kings

Our Charity Auction ‘Call for Donation Items’ is underway. We’re asking for your help. Please forward & pass the word.

Kings Auction Inc. Veterans charity auction December 2020
This charity auction features three restored 1952 GMC M211 Troop
American Legion Auxiliary District 5 (Middlesex County)

FUND RAISER

Win a brand new book of $1.00 Massachusetts State Lottery Scratch tickets (VALUE $300)

15 CHANCES FOR $10

Drawing December 12, 2020
For tickets contact
Diane Di Leo 978-204-9329
or
Sukey Blake 978-746-1845
We Accept VENMO & PayPal
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
Massachusetts E-Legionnaire

The Massachusetts E-Legionnaire is the official publication of the Department of Massachusetts American Legion and is published at least 12 times per year.

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email: fmacdonald53@comcast.net

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Francis J. MacDonald, Jr.

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Sr. Vice Commander
Tony Dias

Vice Commanders
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Sandra Kee
Lisa McPhee

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Nelson Blake

Executive Committee Women
Neysa Wright

Sergeant-at-Arms
Cindy Lacoste

National Executive Committeeman
James Brehio

Alternate National Executive Committeeman
Michael Davis

Service Officer
Mike Whalen
Paul Prefontaine

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.

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Room 546-2, State House
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