



Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage



Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado Electronic Update



**THESE ARE OUR
OUR PROGRAMS**



This is Our Purpose:

To Adapt in Letter and Spirit, All the Great Principles for Which The American Legion Stands, and to Assist in Carrying on for God and Country

**A 2012-2013 Triple Nickle Detachment
Home to Past National Commanders
Mike Moss and Danny Smith
2022-2023 National Vice-Commander Michael Kirschner
Commander Richard Humphrey**

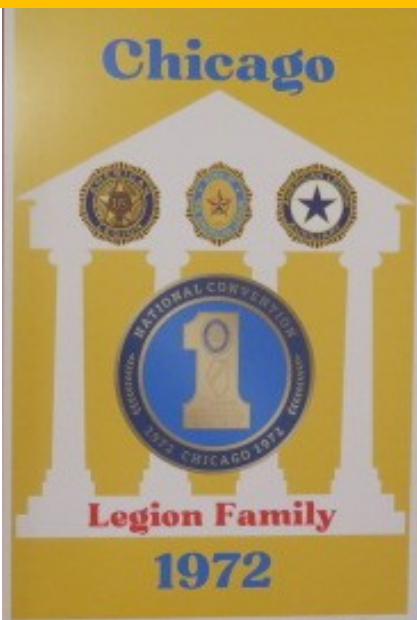
This publication does not express the official position of the SAL Detachment of Colorado, The American Legion Department of Colorado or their respective National Organizations. It is a forum to share information about events and happenings within the Detachment of Colorado, the National Organization of the Sons of The American Legion, and information that is pertinent to the programs and four pillars of The American Legion. This publication is compiled and published as a volunteer service by Detachment Adjutant Mark A Kilstrom. Submit comments, photos and stories to saladj@coloradolegion.org.

Commanders Mission Objective: Rekindle the Spark

Mission Statement: To not only honor our fathers, mothers and grandparents by our continued service to God And Country, but to rekindle the spark of our veterans and community with the ideas of patriotism, citizenship and the American Flag

The 50th SAL National Convention

PDC Michael Kirschner Elected National Vice-Commander



Milwaukee WI. Aug, 2022

The 50th National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion opened with the drop of the gavel by National Commander Michael Fox on Friday August 26th. The day started with a variety of committee meetings ranging from history book judging, and Convention Rules to Legislative and Internal affairs. The Detachment of Colorado was entitled to 8 Delegates and alternates and two at-large Delegates for our two Past National Commanders. Attending the Convention representing Colorado was outgoing Commander Bobby Jones, in-coming Commander Richard Humphrey, NEC Scott Garrett, ANEC Nick Arceo, Adjutant Mark Kilstrom, Chaplain Brad Henderson Sr. Vice Commander Walley Weld, Finance Officer Rick Baldessari and PDC Mike Kirschner. Richard Humphrey currently serves as a member of the National Legislative Commission

and Mike Kirschner has been serving on the National Internal Affairs Commission for the past six years. During the Convention, many year end reports were given by the various standing committee chairs as well as Convention Committees.

During the convention, the SAL held it's first ever Children and Youth camp. The one day session had nine participants, ranging in age from 6 thru 14, all young SAL and Jr Auxiliary members. During the camp, the participants learned about patriotism, the



U.S. Flag and love of country. Each participant completed and received certificates for having completed the ten ideas program.

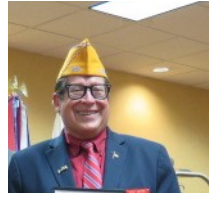
The Ten Ideas program is available for all SAL members regardless of age and is designed to instill the principles of patriotism and good citizenship. They are: Patriotism, Faith, Health, Helpfulness, Knowledge, Courtesy training, Reverence, Honor and Comradeship. The Ten ideas program is a prerequisite to completing the Five Points of Service award program. These two programs are a key part of Commander Richards plan of success for this year. Full details and

(Continued on page 2)

Your 2022-2023 Detachment Leadership



NEC (Assistant Adjutant)
 Scott Garrett
 123 Laura Ave
 Clifton, CO 81520
 (303) 257-8698
 ceilingmanjsg@yahoo.com
 Squadron 200



ANEC
 Nick Arceo
 7821 Owl Creek Cir
 Littleton, CO 80125
 (303) 903-5262
 nicrco@gmail.com
 Squadron 103



Commander
 Richard Humphrey
 1803 Carson St
 Aurora, CO 80011
 (720) 244-7389
 dandrich11@comcast.net
 Squadron 23



Sr. Vice Commander
 Wally Weld
 1187 E Berry Ave
 Englewood, CO 80111
 (303) 995.1739
 wwrmac24@msn.com
 Squadron 1



Jr. Vice Commander
 Robert Jones
 PO Box 815
 Durango, CO 81302
 (970) 749-7104
 norton85020@yahoo.com
 Squadron 28



Jr. Vice Commander
 Ron Noakes
 1477 3rd St
 Pueblo, CO 81007
 (719) 544-3284
 mrron14@yahoo.com
 Squadron 2



Jr. Vice Commander
 David Smith
 221 W. 8th St
 Loveland, CO 80537
 dueces65@gmail.com
 Squadron 1985



Jr. Vice Commander
 Robert Barry
 4245 Midlothian Ct
 Colorado Springs, CO 80909
 (719) 930-5725
 Colo.rsrb@yahoo.com
 Squadron 209



Jr. Vice Commander
 Jim Gaddis
 1755 Road 3
 St Francis, KS 67756
 (720) 963-8343
 Jeremiah_579@yahoo.com
 Squadron 211

Picture not Available. (broke the camera)

Jr. Vice Commander
 Randy Forsythe III
 12449 Wagon Wheel Rd,
 Eckert, CO 81418
 (970) 644-7811
 jax5203@gmail.com
 Squadron 65



Adjutant
 Mark A Kilstrom
 1870 River Dr
 Fountain, CO 80817
 (719) 640-6692
 sadadj@coloradolegion.org
 mark.kilstrom@comcast.net
 Squadron 2



Chaplain
 Brad Henderson
 2960 Tuft Blvd #117
 Colorado Springs, CO 80922
 (830) 660-4072
 bradh229@gmail.com
 Squadron 209



Sergeant-at-Arms
 Teddy Kuntz

 Contact Detachment
 Adjutant
 Squadron 1985



Finance Officer
 Rick Baldessari
 P.O. Box 615
 Golden, CO 81230
 (303)423-1887
 rbaldessari@hotmail.com
 Squadron 21



Assistant Finance Officer
 Jim Gelwicks
 P.O. Box 539
 Gunnison, Co 81230
 (970) 641-1101
 jgelwicks@western.edu
 Squadron 54

50th National Convention

(Continued from page 1)

guidelines on implementing the programs are available in the Squadron Hand book and on the SAL website www.legion.org/sons.

Youth Champions

One of the most inspiring moments of the convention was the presentations of The American Legion youth Champions. First we met the National Oratorical champion Emma Nobel of Birmingham, AL. Emma's winning speech was on the Constitutional power of the Executive Order given the President in Article II of the Constitution. She is a senior at the Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham with plans to pursue college degrees in public policy and economics before attending law school.



Legion Oratorical National Champion
 Emma Nobel

Next up was an up coming High School Senior from Michigan, Tamarus Darby Jr. Darby gave a very touching speech of gratitude to The American Legion family for the opportunity and his new found reverence for the U.S. Military from the many interactions he

has had with veterans throughout his Boys State and Boys Nation journey. He plans to attend college at Howard University in Washington, D.C. on an ROTC scholarship. He will major in political science and international affairs and minor in economics. His life ambition is to one day be President of the United States and vows if he gets there, the cry for "no veteran left behind" will ring out from every corner of the nation.



Boys Nation President Tamarus Darby Jr

The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year is now a Cadet 4th Class at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO.



Eagle Scout of The Year
 Christopher Adam

His project was inspired by the lack of knowledge if his high school classmates about America's involvement and roll in WWII. For

his Eagle Scout project, Adam designed and constructed a [World War II D-Day memorial called Liberation Point](#) to "honor the sacrific-



es of D-Day and World War II veterans and to make sure that America's future generations do not forget what these men and women did for our country and for the world." The memorial is located on the grounds of the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, PA. Christopher was nominated by American Legion Post 109 in Mechanicsburg. Christopher received a \$10,000 Scholarship. Charlotte Beatson of Littleton, CO was selected as a runner-up and received a \$2,500 scholarship.



Jr. Shooting Champion
 Samantha Zermano

The next champion we met was Jr. Shooting 3-Position Sporter Champion, Samantha Zermano. Samantha shoots

(Continued on page 3)

50th SAL National Convention

(Continued from page 2)

for the Nation Ford MCJROTC rifle team in Fort Mill, S.C. She scored an impressive 2,293.3 points in the National Championship held in Colorado Springs, CO the 22-23 July at the USOC Training Center.



ALB All-Academic Team Captain Dylan Owen

Of the Youth Champions that crossed the stage the final one to express their thanks was American Legion Baseball All-Academic Team Captain Dylan Owens of Jacksonville, FL. Dylan has played several years of American Legion Baseball is now coaching younger members participating in the program and currently plays baseball for Trinity Baptist

College in Jacksonville where he is studying to be a history and physical education teacher.

One of the most well known SAL member who addressed the Convention body is former Saturday Night Live performer Joe Piscopo.



Actor / Comedian SAL member Joe Piscopo

Joe was inducted into the Sons of The American Legion Squadron 491 in Woodstock, IL on May 14th by National Commander Michael Fox. The actor told the audience about his decision not to enlist during the Vietnam war was influenced by his father

a World War II Army Air Corp veteran. He said his father told many stories about his war experience and did not want him to have to live with similar dramatic events. Piscopo stat-



ed he was excited to learn he could become a member when he was told of it and was proud to join in honor of his deceased father. National Commander Michael Fox presented Piscopo with his 2023 membership card.



Past Detachment Commander Elected National Vice-Commander

After serving in a variety of positions within the Sons of The American Legion, Past Detachment Commander and member of Squadron 2 in Pueblo, Michael Kirschner was Nominated



Detachment Adjutant Mark Kilstrom Nominates Past Detachment Commander Mike Kirschner for National Vice-Commander

and elected to serve as the National Vice-Commander to represent the Mid-west Region for the administrative year 2022-2023.

Mike has served as the Adjutant and Finance

Officer for Ovie Vernon Squadron 2 in Pueblo, CO for 20 years

Mike has served at the Detachment level as a Jr-Vice Commander, Sr-Vice Commander and two terms as Detachment Commander. During his tenure as Commander, the Detachment grew from a previous all time high of 2,761 members for 2008 to over 3,000 members for 2013 and achieved the National Triple Nickle Award. Mike has also served as National Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, National Sergeant-at-Arms and has served as a member of the National Internal Affairs Commission for 6 years. In the membership year 2021-2022 Mike served as the Midwest Membership Chairman. Mike was nominated by Detachment Adjutant Mark Kilstrom and his nomination was seconded by each Detachment in the Midwest Region. His eligibility in the Sons is through his fa-



National Vice-Commanders Installed at Convention



Incoming SAL National Commander Chris Carlton and incoming National Vice-Commanders

ther George Kirschner who served in the US Army's 101st Airborne during the Vietnam War and is a member of Pony Express Post 359 St Joseph, MO. Michael has been married to his wife Yvonne for 23 years. She is a 28 year member of Auxiliary Unit 2 Pueblo. Along with the Midwest, each other region elected their National Vice-commanders. Representing the East region is Ernest Laberge from Massachusetts. The Southern Region is represented by Ronald Roberts from Mississippi. David Mennel from Michigan will represent the Central Region and Jack Youngs from Idaho is standing up for the Western Region.



50th Convention Elects Chris Carlton National Commander

From Legion.org/sons By Andy Profit

The Sons of The American Legion elected Indiana's Chris Carlton as their next national commander on Sunday as the SAL's 50th National Convention came to a close.

Carlton, a member of Squadron 495 in Indianapolis, is the state's first SAL national commander since Raymond Giehl Jr. in 2008 — coincidentally, Carlton's father-in-law.

Giehl was the one to bring Carlton's nomination to the floor in Sunday's election, with Carlton being elected by acclamation. Carlton has embraced leading candidate for American Legion National Commander James Troiola's support for the "Be the One" campaign aimed at ending the stigma around veterans' mental health issues.

"To 'Be the One,' we just need to ask a veteran in (our) life how they're doing. To 'Be the



One,' we need to listen when a veteran needs to talk. To 'Be the One,' we need to reach out when a veteran is struggling," Carlton said.

It's important to help the veteran's family as well, Carlton said.

"As that veteran is going through hard times and struggling, so is that family. We can reach out to those children, to those spouses,

see what kind of help we can give them, what kind of support we can give them, point them in the right direction, in the direction of need, and help," he said.

"... I look forward to 'being the one' with you," Carlton added.

He also voiced his support for helping reach Troiola's \$2 million goal for the Veterans & Children Foundation.

"We gave \$500,000 this year; how much can we give next year?" he said.

And Carlton is supportive of the goal announced Saturday of reaching 1 million SAL members by the program's 100th anniversary in 2032. He encouraged the SAL to work on attracting new members while also retaining current members. "Do those buddy checks on members you haven't seen in awhile," he said.



Commander's Message

By Richard Humphrey, Detachment Commander



We have just celebrated our 50th year convention and our 90th year as Sons of The American Legion. What a great convention. A lot of information, training, and meetings were crammed into 3 days, but it got done. Now it is time to start working hard to finish up with the 2022 year and begin working the 2023 year. The Detachment of Colorado stayed in 50th place almost all year long, but rallied closing toward the convention time ending in 29th place. Thank you, gentlemen. For not being able to get out and do our thing these last two years, we are still going strong. Let's strive a little harder this upcoming year and finish a little closer to the top of the membership pole. We can do this because we are The Best in The Mid-West. This is going to be a great year for Colorado.

Most of the Squadrons have reached their 100% plus in membership for 2022, but there are a few who are lagging behind. Commander's, Adjutant's contact your members who have not renewed. I'll bet you those are also the ones you have not seen at the post or squadron in a while. Make sure they are OK, let them know they are missed and remind them of your Squadron meeting date and time. Get your fundraiser going again, get your meals on Friday or Saturday or Sunday, whenever you used to hold them, going again. Your community activities – Halloween and Thanksgiving – are just around the corner. Planning is short, so get after it. And believe it or not, Christmas is only 3 months away. Toys for Tots, stuffed animals for the kids in the hospital that will not be able to get home and Veterans in Nursing home.

Hopefully we will be starting a Detachment raffle involving a former adjutant, whose name I will not divulge. And if things go right, there will be some changes made at our Annual Awards night. So, keep those things in mind and be sure to come out to the festivities. A fun time is always had by all.

New officers have taken over for the upcoming year, or the same officers have renewed their position. Don't forget to send in your Consolidated Squadron Report and Officer Report and Squadron Data report to the Detachment Adjutant. We need this information to know how you are doing and who you are. This information also needs to be forwarded to National Headquarters.

One of my goals this upcoming year is to get out and visit. I hope to visit with each Squadron in the State at least twice this year. If for no other reason than to just say Hi and see how you are doing. No pressure, no beating you over the head, just to let you know that you are not forgotten, and YOUR Detachment is there for you if needed.

And last but by no means least, a GREAT BIG CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR OWN MR. MIKE KIRSCHNER WHO WAS ELECTED NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER.



Legacy Run 2022: Auxiliary National President Kathy Daudistel Makes History – and a Lot of New Friends

From Legion.org; By Steven B Brooks

Aug 25, 2022

Kathy Daudistel didn't set out to make history when she became the first American Legion Auxiliary president to ride her own motorcycle, rather than participate as a passenger, during this year's Legacy Run.

For Daudistel, traveling from Mobile, Ala., to Oak Creek, Wis., with 200 or so other like-minded individuals was simply fulfilling a goal she's had since 2006.

"I always wanted to ride this Legacy Run, ever since it first started," said Daudistel, who has ridden her Harley-Davidson on every leg of this year's ride, including through a torrential downpour on Day 1. "I rode a leg or two here or there, but I've never rode overnight. Now or never, right? I wasn't thinking about making history. I was thinking more about getting through a whole ride."

A self-proclaimed "weekend rider" who rides with her sister, Daudistel said she almost immediately felt the same camaraderie on the ride that most participants say they experience.

"Almost instantly you start to feel like a family. Everyone watches out for everyone," she said. "Just today, alone at the gas stop, a man walked up to me and said, 'I think your tire may be

(Continued on page 5)

Chaplain's Corner

Why Me, God?

Submitted by Brad Henderson Det. Chaplain



It is the unexpected in life that keeps us on our toes. Sometimes, it may be something very good; other times, it may be something very bad.

There is the story of a fellow named Job. Job was a believer, a man with a strong faith in his God. He was one of those folks who "have it all"; wealth, friends, family – everything. Then Job lost his wealth. He lost his friends. He lost his family. Finally, Job lost the one remaining thing he had – his health. The man who had everything, lost everything.

Some of us aren't as strong in our conviction as Job; some have no religious persuasion at all. When trials and times of suffering happen to us or someone close to us, we are often overwhelmed. We may be okay on the outside, but on the inside, we feel lost, confused, scared, and unsure of what we're supposed to think and feel.

Why me, God? Why him? Why my family?

It is healthy to ask the hard questions, to be angry and upset. We wonder whether if we said a prayer, that God would even listen to us. Even Job asked questions. These times are what I call "faith tests". Tough times require tough decisions. The toughest decision for all believers; whether strong in their relationship with the Good Lord or not, is to keep the faith; to hold on to hope when it seems there is no hope. Lean into your faith and beliefs, especially in a crisis. There is a source of hope, strength, and peace. If you don't have that assurance, now is a great time to open a relationship with God. And why not? Successive empires rise and fall, but God remains.

"...His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:14)

That fundamental truth lends perspective to the events of our lives. Believers know that even in times when we least understand what is going on, God is in control.

Samantha Bentley, caregiver whose father has cancer and author of "Why Me, God?" writes, "I know the valleys and the seasons are tough and even unbearable at times. It's easy to get tunnel vision and only focus on the distress of the season, instead of looking beyond and realizing that light, hope and blessing could be just ahead."

My faith tells me that whether you or someone you care for is in a room with no one else around, the God I believe in is always present. That realization gives the believer courage, direction, and motivation.

"Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

None of those statements change the small and the great events of our lives, nor do they protect us from challenge. Life is life, and life happens to all of us. The best that we can hope for is to thank the Good Lord for our many blessings, to ask for wisdom, guidance, strength, and solutions, and to trust Him regardless of the outcome - on the inside, and on the outside.

"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

The good news? Prayer is simply a quiet conversation with God. Talk to Him. Ask for His strength - today, and every day.

Serving God and Country,
Chaplain Brad



National President Makes History

(Continued from page 4)

low. Let's check it.' And we had three or four people checking the tire because I don't do that, obviously. They got it fixed ... and they had me set up and ready to roll.

"Everyone cares about everyone. Even when you get to the hotel. They're always watching out for you. It's an amazing group of people. I love this group of people."

She's also been impressed by the passion the Riders have for the cause: [The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund](#). "Their dedication is outstanding," Daudistel said. "I have witnessed people just walking around collecting money from their groups to beat the other flights just because they want the bragging rights. Their hearts are so strong and good and large. They're incredible. Their digging into their own pockets and bringing out pockets."

One of the highlights for Daudistel was a stop in Mayfield, Ky. – a community devastated by a tornado last December – where the Riders donated \$6,650 to American Legion Post 26 there.

"The best part of it, in turn, is (Post 26) had a check for us for the Legacy Fund for \$1,000," said Daudistel, a Kentucky resident. "Service, not self. It was the most incredible event that's happened in a while."

But the national president will take away a lot more memories from this year. "I will never forget this," she said. "It's been such an incredible week. I've made so many new friends. It's awesome."



Words From the Sr. Vice-Commander

Submitted By Sr. Vice-commander Walley Weld



Be the One

That's the mantra we heard at Convention last week. Hello Sons of the American Legion-Colorado. I want to thank you for "Being the One" this past year. For the first time in several years, YOU have brought us to the 100% renewals/new membership level. The National average was approximately 101.7%. Again congrats!

I am excited to experience that feeling again as we enter this new year! Commander Humphrey and I are looking forward to visiting as many Squadrons and Posts as possible this year. In doing so we will ask both parties to work together to insure each is assisting the other to maximize enrollment. The Auxiliary has also said they will join us as family to insure the same.

I cannot stress enough the amount of opportunities the Four Pillars offer to a potential Son. My initial introduction was through Colorado American Legion Baseball (CALB). My love for the game as a player and an umpire was the tipping point for me. This came only second to honoring my father's service during World War II in the Army Air Corp. We surround ourselves with

the people we enjoy and that is the first place I look for brother's who believe like we do. However it is amazing with just a simple question or two, to someone we just met, how that allows us to find that "other brother" to join our ranks. Discussing the things we do as they pertain to the families of our military almost always tugs at the heartstrings of just about anyone. CWF is our baby!! Being the premier program of the American Legion is definitely humbling and an honor for us. Service is something we come by naturally as if was born in us and cultivated by our parents and grandparents. Makes the qualification(s) seem kind of natural doesn't it?

Please don't forget the buddy checks as they remind our members they are missed and needed. Invite them to the post for burger night or just to hand out for an evening. I promise you they did have a reason or two to join us and desire that camaraderie in their lives again. The definition of camaraderie is mutual trust and friendship and that's The Sons of the American Legion.

For God, Family and Country

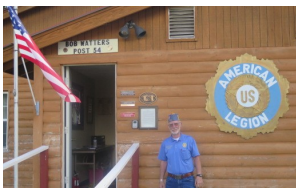
Wallie Weld
Sr. Vice Commander
The Sons of the American Legion



"When faced with overwhelming obstacles, your faith in God and your commitment to your friends and loved ones will guide you to take the right action. You simply know what it is you have to do."
Alejandro R Ruis, US Army Medal of Honor

Around The Detachment

August 17th Gunnison Commander Richard and Adj. Mark attended the joint Legion and SAL Meeting at Post 54 in Gunnison. Post and Squadron members placed flags along



Main Street to help out with the annual car show held downtown Gunnison.



August 20th, Manitou Springs Commander Richard visited Squadron 39 in Manitou Springs for their monthly meeting. Squadron 39 will be putting on a bar-b-queue on October 29th during the

annual Emily Crawford casket race in Manitou Springs, The funds they raise will go toward supporting the annual USMC Reserve Toys for Tots drive. If you

want to see some really freaky craziness, you gotta go check out the costumes, get-ups and flat out madness at the coffin race and stop by Post 39 for a bratwurst or burger. Get more information on the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce Facebook page

August 22 Colorado Springs SAL National Commander Michael Fox was in town to attend the National Jr Shooting Championship. Although this was not a official Colorado visit

the American Legion Post 209 family held a welcome dinner for the competitors and Legion National Commander Paul Dillard and SAL National Commander Michael Fox were in attendance. Of course Colorado Jr, Vice-Commander Rob Barry



could not pass up the opportunity to invite him to get up in our beautiful Colorado blue skies. Rob and his fiancé Sarah, who was an Air Force Fighter pilot, took him up in their private plane for an aerial view of The Pikes Peak Region and the



Royal Gorge.
Photos provided by Rob Barry

Colorado Springs, Post 5



While he was in town, SAL National Commander Michael Fox stopped by Post 5 in downtown Colorado Springs along with National Auxiliary President Kathy Daudistel, pictured here with past Department Commander Chip Kossow and dual member of Post & Squadron 5 Keith LaMee. Post 5's home is listed in the National Directory of Historical buildings, and they are putting together nice military museum in their recently remodeled home.

Estes Park, Squadron 119 will be having a

fundraiser offering discounted computer service, cleanup and security software installation on October 15th.. Services are being donated by a local computer pro and proceeds will go to support Squadron 119 programs in keeping with the Four Pillars. Mid-October in Estes Park, what a nice drive going up the canyon it should be. Still some fall colors to be seen, and maybe some Elk. I here there are a few up there. Take the drive and even if you don't need computer work, it's a friendly Post with a historic building, stop in for a visit.

Pueblo Squadron 2 is serving dinners every 3rd Friday beginning in September. These dinners are a big source of revenue for the Squadron to support American Legion Programs. Following the dinner the Squadron will perform the POW/MIA empty chair ceremony. Other entities of the Post 2 family have dinners on the other Fridays plus they rotate hamburger night every Wednesday, If your in the neighborhood, stop on, they'd love to welcome you in and view their Military Museum.

Squadron 209, Colorado Springs will be visiting Revel Providence senior living center in Colorado Springs on September 16th to pay respects to resident veterans during their monthly "coffee". The Squadron will be presenting some awards and performing the POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony.

We've got more room for your events.

What are you up to?



Newly Elected National Commander: “We all need to ‘Be the One’”

From Legion.org; By Steven B Brooks
September 1, 2022 Milwaukee, WI

In April, The American Legion teamed with Chip Ganassi Racing to announce its ‘Be the One’ initiative, an effort aimed at stemming the tide of veteran suicides.

During the Legion’s 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee on Sept. 1, newly elected National Commander Vincent J. Troiola pledged to make the effort his biggest focus during the upcoming year.



“My platform and No. 1 priority for my year as national commander will be tackling the toughest challenge facing veterans: veteran suicide,” Troiola said.

“The American Legion is asking you to ‘Be the One’. And by you, I include every one of us, military and civilian alike. We all need to ‘Be the One’ to begin thinking, talking and acting to save just one life.”

Troiola said ‘Be the One’ is a multifaceted approach to tackling veteran suicides that includes:

- Destigmatizing asking for mental help support.
- Providing peer-to-peer support and resources in local communities.
- Creating safe spaces for veterans to be open about their struggles and encouraging every American, veteran and civilians alike, to take the pledge to ‘Be the One’ to help end veteran suicide.

“As the military changes, and as military issues change, so does The American Legion,” Troiola said. “While the Legion continues to celebrate its past, it does so while also marching toward an evolving future, discovering ways to stay relevant and add even greater value to the lives of younger veterans.

“One thing that hasn’t changed is the Legion’s dedication to addressing the toughest challenges facing veterans and their families. Veteran suicide may be the biggest challenge yet, but anyone can ‘Be the One’ to help save just one veteran.”

A life member of American Legion Post 1682 in Rockland County N.Y. – and a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 1682 – Troiola announced a goal of raising \$2 million for the Legion’s [Veterans & Children Foundation](#). He also said this year is an opportunity to see growth in the organization’s membership, crediting immediate Past National Commander Paul E. Dillard with providing the foundation for such a task.

He also announced his program to recognize American Legion posts that help with that effort. “You will see the V.E.T.S. acronym a lot

this year,” Troiola said. “It stands for Veterans, Education, Teamwork and Sponsor. It’s how we build a stronger and larger American Legion.”

Posts that achieve 90% retention in this membership year will receive a special national commander’s pin with V.E.T.S. engraved on it, while posts with 95% will receive a V.E.T.S. coin.

Membership-Excellence pins with V.E.T.S. will go to posts that recruit five members from expired rosters. If post excellence is achieved, the post will also receive an autographed national commander’s license plate. All departments will receive an additional numbered V.E.T.S. coin to be given to a Legionnaire of their choice who has gone above and beyond for membership.

Troiola noted that the pandemic changed the way we go about our daily lives, and that goes for the Legion Family as well. “Many Legion posts throughout the country were forced to close their post homes or had no access to their meeting places,” he said. “Many of our Legion posts that were able adapted and found ways to support their communities who needed help to get through the issues that arose from the pandemic.

“We may have survived the coronavirus, but many of our youth programs have suffered in diminishing number for a variety of reasons. Change will be a big part of our lives, but healthy organizations adapt to the times and move forward. Through innovative strategies and greater flexibility, we can grow the numbers to pre-pandemic levels.”

Troiola urged Legionnaires to reach out to school officials and share information about the organization’s youth programs. “The best advertisement for our programs is through the students that have attended, but with the pandemic, that method of communication has diminished,” he said. “One thing is for sure: ZOOM and (Microsoft) Teams has not gone away and is being utilized all over the country. I know my school district where I work meets virtually. The PTO/PTA meetings (and) school board meetings all take place virtually. That sounds like the place to start.”

Troiola praised PNC Dillard for his advocacy in gaining passage of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act, as well as the Legionnaires responsible for sending more than 34,000 messages of support for the legislation to their senators.

“For some members of Congress, this may have been the first time seeing the full effect and unity of our voices,” Troiola said. “But it will not be the last. We must take the spirit and message of our ‘Be the One’ campaign and pass comprehensive mental health care legislation for veterans, including establish-

ing a national Buddy Check week. To do this requires modernizing VA facilities that are more than 50 years old on average. We must never forget that suicide continues to be a problem in the active-duty ranks as well. Every Legion post located near a military base should provide a welcoming environment to those still serving.”

Troiola also continued the Legion’s push for U.S. citizenship through military service, telling convention delegates, “we must honor immigrants who have worn the uniform of the U.S. military. They took an oath to die for this country if called upon. Those who serve honorably should receive their citizenship before leaving active duty. Veterans and spouses who have not committed serious felonies should not be deported.”

And coming off the one-year anniversary of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, Troiola called for remembering those who assisted U.S. troops during their mission there.

“We must remind Congress that America always stands by its allies for freedom,” he said. “Bipartisan support exists to codify the safety of our evacuated Afghan allies. It is imperative that we offer them immediate passage to the United States. On these issues and more, we must carry the burden of leadership as America’s largest veterans organization and most powerful voice for veterans, national security and 100-percent Americanism. I ask that you join me in this fight.”

Troiola served in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserves from 1969 to 1974. He spent his entire professional career in the automotive service industry, retiring retirement in 2017 as director of service and parts at a New York Metro Mercedes Benz dealership. After a brief time at home, he began an entirely new career as a school bus driver for the Falmouth School District and part-time motor coach operator.

He has served in many offices and position within The American Legion, including department commander of New York, and chairman of the National Security Commission, Legislative Commission, Veterans Employment and Education Commission and the Membership and Post Activity Committee. He was elected national vice commander for 2016-2017.

“I will hit the ground running to work with you to having a productive, successful and fun-filled year,” Troiola said. “Remember: We are The American Legion, the voice of the veteran since 1919. As long as America has veterans, there will always be an American Legion.

“We are witnessing a movement in The American Legion. All of you are part of exciting times now and will ride into the future.”



About the National Commander

From Legion.org

Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola (pronounced Tree-Ola) was elected national commander of the nation’s largest veteran service organization on Sept. 1, 2022, in Milwaukee during The American Legion’s 103rd national convention. His theme as national commander is “V.E.T.S., Veterans, Education, Teamwork and Sponsor.”

A life member of American Legion Post 1682 in Rockland County, N.Y., he served in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserves from 1969 to 1974. He completed a tour aboard the USS *Nitro*, an auxiliary ammunition ship with the Sixth Fleet. He was honorably discharged as a boatswain’s mate third class. He is also a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 1682 based on the World War II ser-

vice of Jim’s father.

Jim spent his entire working career in the automotive service industry, where he began as a parts manager at a local Chevrolet dealership and went to serve in many capacities of management. At the time of his retirement in 2017, he was director of service and parts at a New York Metro Mercedes Benz dealership. After a brief time at home, he began an entirely new career as a school bus driver for the Falmouth School District and part-time motor coach operator.

Jim served in many offices at every level of The American Legion. He was elected department (state) commander of New York for 2010-2011, and chaired several national commissions to include the National Security Commission, Legislative Commission,

Veterans Employment and Education Commission and the Membership and Post Activity Committee. He was elected national vice commander for 2016-2017.

He married his wife Saveria (pronounced Sa-Vare-ee-ah) in 1973. They have two daughters, Laura and Jeanette; a son-in-law, Michael; and three grandchildren, Alexander, Abigail and Natalia. The Troiolas include three generations of American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion membership.

Jim currently lives in Maine to be close to a daughter and his grandchildren, while still being within driving distance to the Department of New York.



An 'audacious' goal: 1 Million SAL Members by 2032

From legion.org/sons: By [Andy Proffet](#)

Joseph Paviglianti admitted it is an “audacious” goal: 1 million members of the Sons of The American Legion by the program’s 100th anniversary in 2032.

But he also expressed optimism that it’s a goal that can be achieved when he spoke about it during Saturday’s general session of the 50th SAL National Convention at Milwaukee’s Miller High Life Theater.

“We can be at a million members within 10 years if we plan accordingly and we look at how we do it sincerely and seriously and honestly,” said Paviglianti, speaking in his role as chair of the SAL Century Committee.

“Are you with me in getting to that audacious goal of 1 million members?” he asked to resounding applause. “It is possible.”

The current SAL membership is 361,587.

The goal may come, but it will do so without Paviglianti in as active a role. After 43 years in national office with the SAL, rising from assistant adjutant to adjutant to national judge advocate, Paviglianti announced that this convention would be his last as the SAL’s top legal counsel as well as his last as chair of the Century Committee.

“We have changed our constitution and by-laws, for the better, and come into alignment with those of The American Legion. That is a very good thing; it keeps everything clean, it keeps everything tight, it keeps everything organized,” Paviglianti said. It also eliminates the SAL national judge advocate position as The American Legion National Judge Advocate assumes those responsibilities.

“I have absolute confidence and great optimism about the future, where the Sons of The American Legion is going,” Paviglianti said.

That’s in part due to the strategic plan the SAL Century Committee has been working on since being established a year ago. Paviglianti compared the process to a marathon, not a sprint.

“I ask all of us to be a little patient” as the plan is developed, he said.

“We are in a multi-phased process of developing and gathering data on what exactly we want our organization to be as we move into our next century,” Paviglianti said.

In the wake of Paviglianti’s retirement, a resolution adopted unanimously by the SAL bestowed upon him the rank of honorary past

national commander. He’s the third SAL member to receive that honor after Pat Shea, an endorsed candidate for the office of national commander who passed away unexpectedly 19 months before that election, and Brian O’Hearne, who served as a national vice commander and assistant adjutant before serving as national adjutant from 1999 to 2017.

A stream of SAL past national commanders seconded the resolution to make Paviglianti an honorary past national commander on Saturday.

“I failed as judge advocate, because part of the role as judge advocate is to see all resolutions that come through and make sure they have some sort of properness. I obviously screwed up on this one,” Paviglianti joked.

“I am extraordinarily humbled and embarrassed by what was just bestowed upon me, and I use the word ‘embarrassed’ because I do what I’ve done for the organization because I love the organization. I wish my dad were here to celebrate with me, celebrate with us ... I wish my wife were here because she also knew of my love of the organization. I have nothing but the greatest degree of appreciation to each and every one of you.”

Resolutions. The SAL adopted two other resolutions Saturday. One would establish call-in rights for the program’s entire Legislative Commission for the duration of the annual Washington Conference, as the commission members are responsible for the wreath laying the SAL conducts at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on the Sunday before the conference begins. The other resolution calls for adoption of American Legion Family Day to take place annually on the last Saturday in April, “when all American Legion posts throughout the nation open their doors to their members and the members of their local communities with the intent of celebrating all great deeds and works of the American Legion Family, with the intent to educate, recruit, recognize and give back to those members that continually support the gift of giving.” The event would also place special emphasis on the “Be the One” campaign.

Why I Belong

Submitted by Nick Arceo, Squadron 103

My name is Nick Arceo. Currently I am the Alternate National Executive Committeeman. I am also on the National Veterans Employment & Education Commission, Sons of The American Legion. I have also held many Detachment offices including Detachment Commander. Here is “My Story”. I am a retired retail grocery Store Manager, King Soopers part of the Kroger company. Back in 2012 I managed a store located in Lakewood Colorado. I had been the Manager there for a few months when one day I was called to the front desk, told that a few customers wanted to talk to me. Upon arriving, I found this was a group of Veterans that pointed out to me that the flag in front of the store needed replaced. They also told me they had seen the flag being mishandled after being taken down. I acknowledged their concerns, although at this time I was very ignorant of any flag etiquette. About a week went by, and again I was called to the front desk. Here again were those veterans. They informed me they noticed I had not taken care of the flag. They went on to inform me if I did not act on their concern, they were going to stop shopping at my store, tell all their neighbors and families to do the same. This got my attention! I gave them my word I would address their concern. I asked around to a few employees about replacing the flag. Someone informed me that The American Legion would do this. I at-

tempted to reach the local Post with no luck. Finally, I got ahold of the adjutant at the Littleton post 103. He informed me they would be honored to come out and replace the flag and asked me what size I needed. On Friday February 22, 2013, three guys dressed in blue blazers wearing white gloves and funny little hats with a new flag showed up at my store at 11:00 am. Commander Mike Romero, 1st Vice Commander Ed Pietch and Adjutant Harry Ciruli. I had posted signs throughout the store announcing this event. Several Veterans and customers joined employees to witness this flag raising ceremony. As I watched this, I was very moved and brought to tears. I remembered my father, Greg Arceo Jr. (deceased) a WWII Army Veteran. After the ceremony, I spoke with those Legionnaires and told them I was overly impressed and moved with what I had just witnessed and asked if I could be involved. I was asked if I was a Veteran, I said no, then asked if my father was a Veteran, I answered yes. Harry said you are in! As the saying goes, the rest is history. I am so thankful each day that those Veterans got my attention. My Squadron has replaced that flag two times since that chilly day back in 2012. I’m so proud of my father’s service to our great country and every time I’m involved in a son’s event, I remember my father and honor him.

(Tell us your Story next edition)

Flying Flags for Heroes

From legion.org/sons By [Andy Proffet](#)

Tim Aboudara Sr., the national chair of SAL National Commander Michael Fox’s service project, Flying Flags for Heroes, gave an update on the project. “At the end of March, we were just under 250,000 flag placements,” Aboudara said. But some innovative activities and buy-in from the entire Legion Family helped shatter Fox’s goal of 1 million flags placed on veterans’ graves at local cemeteries. “As of today, we have placed just over 1.835 million flags at the gravesites,” Aboudara said. Fox said, “Flying Flags for Heroes was about getting our message out, getting outside of our four walls, getting back in the communities where the American Legion Family dominated in the 60s and the 70s and into the 80s. We can’t be complacent; we have to continue to strive for greatness.”

National Vice-Commander’s Message

I wanted to take a moment and reach out and say thank you for your confidence and support in electing me your National Vice Commander for the 2022-2023 membership year. Thanks for all your hard work last year and I look forward to working with and hopefully coming and visiting each of the great Detachments in the Midwest. I’m here to assist you in any way I can. While at convention someone came up and said “let me know what we can do to make your year successful” My response to that is your job isn’t to make me successful my job is to make you, your squadrons, and your detachments successful. If you are strong locally, we are strong as a national organization.

As was discussed at the caucus the monthly calls will not always be on the same time every month. I will give you a head up at least 3 weeks before and then a reminder a few days before it happens. We will not be holding a call in Sept due to that fact we just got done with convention. Thanks again to past NVC Torres for all your hard work this past year and I know that I can count on your help to make this an easy transition.

Let’s start this year out strong with membership and keep doing what we always do to help out our communities, children, and veterans. remember that along with the rewards of membership there are also responsibilities.

Michael Kirschner
National Vice Commander Midwest
Sons of The American Legion

Legion leadership through the decades

The American Legion
JUL 05, 2022

The Emil A. Blackmore Museum is pleased to announce the launch of a brand-new exhibit, [American Legion Past National Officers](#), featuring the first 50 years of national officers, as well as past national commanders and honor-



(Continued on page 8)

Museum adds Legion Exhibit

(Continued from page 7)

ary commanders, from 1919-1969. The national commander and five national vice commanders who lead The American Legion are elected every year by the American Legion national convention. The other five national officers appointed annually by the National Executive Committee include the adjutant, treasurer, judge advocate, historian and chaplain. The national officers provide leadership for the organization in support of Legion members, American servicemembers and veterans. In addition to historic photos, documents and artifacts from the American Legion archives, visitors can learn more about each national commander with historical documents from their time in office.

The national officers from 1970-2019, and sergeant-at-arms listings, will be forthcoming in future updates. Other exhibits



Impact Report: An August for the history books

From legion.org

President Biden's Aug. 10 signing of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act stands as history's most comprehensive development to provide help and relief to veterans exposed to contamination in the service. The American Legion-supported measure stands to assist some 3.5 million veterans who were exposed to toxic burn pits in the Global War on Terrorism, along with others who have been previously denied government recognition.

Meanwhile, a record-setting Legacy Run that brought more than \$1.32 million to the stage of the 103rd American Legion National Convention for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, the first American Legion World Series championship for an Alabama team since 1967, one couple's shattered goal in the 100 Miles for Hope challenge and much more filled August with accomplishments and milestones.

34,000+ Number of emails sent to U.S. senators in the days after the Senate delayed passage of the PACT Act on a technicality at the end of July; the grassroots outreach effort led to Senate passage of the bill, by an 86-11 tally, on Aug. 2 that will help millions of veterans exposed to toxic contaminants in the service.

20+ Health-care conditions, including a dozen cancers, that are now presumed to have been service connected for veterans of the Gulf War and the Global War on Terrorism, under the PACT Act

\$1,324,548.36 Record amount for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund delivered Aug. 30 onstage at the American Legion's 103rd National Convention, generated from the 2022 Legacy Run, state Legacy Rides, American Legion posts, Sons of The American Legion squadrons and American Legion Riders chapters worldwide.

50 Youth scholarships distributed by The American Legion in August, totaling \$231,286 in college assistance

\$39,850 American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grant funds disbursed in August to three non-profit organizations that assist young people facing challenges beyond their control

333 Number of VA disability claim appeals granted in favor of the veteran in August, with free assistance from American Legion national appeals specialists



Legacy Run 2022: Middle East Conflicts War Memorial Triggers Strong Emotions During Stop

From legion.org By [Steven B. Brooks](#) AUG 25, 2022

During Day 4 of The American Legion Legacy Run, the 200 or so riders and passengers made a stop at the [Middle East Conflicts War Memorial](#) in Marseilles, Ill. Dedicated in 2004 and the nation's first memorial to honor those killed in action while the conflict was still ongoing, the site consists of multiple granite walls with the names of fallen soldiers killed during Middle East conflicts since 1967.

One of those names caused American Legion Rider Cindy Guthrie to put her head against the wall and begin to cry. It was the name of her brother, Army Sgt. Kenneth R. Nichols Jr., who was killed in action at age 28 on Dec. 1, 2009, while serving in Afghanistan's Kunar province. Even though her brother has been dead for almost 13 years, seeing his name was an emotional experience for the Legacy Run's VIP escort.

"I've never been here before," said Guthrie, an Operation Desert Storm U.S. Army veteran and member of American Legion Riders Chapter 192 in Evans, Ga. "I've known (about the memorial) for a long time. It just brings it to a different level. It brings it home."

When Nichols was killed, he had four children ages nine months to 6 years old. All of them either are at or are approaching the age in which they could use [The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund](#) – the cause behind the Legacy Run.

"I'm proud of this organization. I love being a part of it," Guthrie said. "And I will continue to be a part of it. And I think (Nichols) would have been a part of it, too, had he been alive. He had a motorcycle. He wanted to ride when he got out."

The wife of fellow Legion Rider and Flight G road captain George Guthrie, Cindy said she still remembers talking to her brother the morning he was killed. "He had just been promoted to sergeant that day, and I was bragging to him that we were going to go for a ride, me and a couple of guys, and he said he couldn't wait until he got home and was

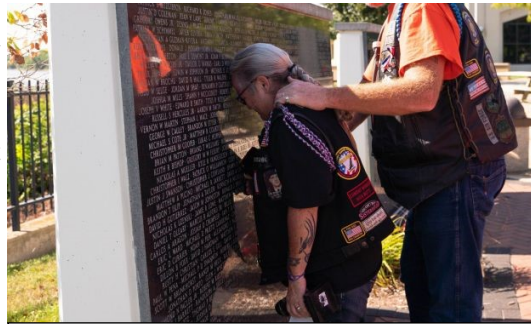


Photo by Hilary Ott/The American Legion

able to go for a ride.

"He wasn't even supposed to be there that night. He had volunteered for his first platoon sergeant mission, and his last."

The stop also hit home with Iowa Post 535 Legionnaire James Kearney Jr., the tail gunner for Flight L. On Nov. 1, 2004, Kearney's son – Army Spec. James C. Kearney III – was killed in Afghanistan at age 22 when his convoy was ambushed near Sharan. His father said the group was coming back from delivering school supplies to a mountain village when his son was hit by a sniper while in his Humvee's gun turret. James III was the first Iowa National Guardsmen killed in Afghanistan; his name also was on the wall in Marseilles.

It's the third time that Kearney II has visited the memorial. It's still hard seeing his son's name on the wall.

"It's hard to put into words unless you've lived it," said James II, a U.S. Air Force veteran who also spent 15 and a half years in the Nebraska Air National Guard. "This is a club I don't want anybody else to join."

James II still remembers the day he found out his son had been killed. Knowing something had happened but not knowing the entire circumstances, he remembers saying, "Lord, whatever it is, give me the strength to get through it. And he has provided very well," he said. "Everybody has a little bit of God inside of them. With all the sharing that happened to us when we lost James, that teeny tiny little bit they shared, that's a heck of a lot of power. And all I can try to do is give it back. And that's what I try to do."

Both Nichols and Kearney III were honored during a ceremony at the memorial. Legacy Run Chief Ride Captain Mark Clark said everyone on the ride knows someone who died during their time in service and "whose name is carved on a memorial in a small town somewhere in this country. Each of these names has a story, a family, a grieving mother, brother, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister.

"I know all of you, particularly those from my generation that served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, you know someone here. Visit them here. Tell them you love them. Let their families feel through your love here that they have not been forgotten."



A year of incredible achievements

From legion.org/sons

The following are excerpts from National Commander Michael Fox' final message to the SAL members, edited for space.

Membership. The SAL membership report from Aug. 11 showed that 18 detachments had surpassed the 105 percent membership goal. Thirty-seven detachments have reached the 100 percent membership goal for this year. The SAL stands at 360,618 members, which is 101.09 percent of our membership goal for 2022.

Donations. The SAL continues to be the biggest supporter of the Child Welfare Foundation, and we surpassed \$9 million in total donations to CWF this year. I look forward to seeing the SAL hit the \$10 million mark in CWF donations, and beyond.

I also want to thank those of you who participated in the 100 Miles for Hope Challenge. It's such a great way to improve your own fitness while supporting our disabled veter-

ans and military families. I hope we'll see even greater participation next year.

Flying Flags for Heroes. My commander's project this year was Flying Flags for Heroes, aimed at placing 1 million flags on veterans' graves in local cemeteries nationwide. We shattered that goal! At last count, we were at over 1.8 million flags placed. I am amazed and grateful for your support in this, and I hope this will continue so that no veteran's grave goes without recognition.

This has been a year I will cherish for the rest of my life. Thank you all for your support and hospitality during my travels.

There is no limit to the amount of good we can do.

We are #SALSTRONG.

God bless our veterans.

God bless our military in harm's way.

And God bless the United States of America.

Michael Fox

SAL National Commander "Leadership through action, not through position"

