



“Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage”
Colorado Sons Electronic Update January 2024
Supporting the Principles of The American Legion Since 1932
Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado
A 2X Triple Nickle Detachment
Home to Past National Commander Michael Moss
Richard Humphrey, Commander



www.salcolorado.org

Visit us on Facebook @ Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado



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 questions, comments, photos and stories to saladj@coloradolegion.org.

Commanders Mission Objective: Shake The Trees, Lets Go For Three

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

National Commander’s Message

Make Your Squadron a National Four Pillars Squadron

By SAL National Commander Donald “JR” Hall

JAN 18, 2024

Happy New Year American Legion Family,

I hope everyone has had a safe holiday season and now is ready to get rolling in 2024. While 2023 saw the Sons reach a new all-time high in membership, we cannot spend too much time celebrating that. We need to use that as fuel to keep doing what we are and getting even better. I know by the commitment that we see from all of our members that this year can be better!! Thanks to everyone that is still working membership and knows how important it is to our organization.



Has your Squadron made plans to support the

Four Pillars Challenge? If not, now is the time to do so; as you get rolling in 2024, make your Squadron a “National Four Pillars Squadron.” Taking part in this challenge is truly doing exactly what we should all be doing, supporting the Four Pillars of The American Legion. Just a dollar a member based on 2023 ending membership to Operation Comfort Warriors (VA&R), Child Welfare Foundation (Children & Youth) your department’s Boys State program (Americanism) and have or support a blood drive for National Security. You can do it!! Let’s do it together and raise money and awareness of our programs of The American Legion Family. We have Squadrons that have completed the challenge and we say, “thank you.” It’s time we all “Step Up to The Challenge” to support The American Legion. We will make the effort to award Squadrons as the year goes on when leadership travels to your departments.

Washington Conference is just around the corner, and if you watch the news, you can see that in these times it is important that we stand up and fight for the rights of our veterans. Many say, “I will do anything to support our veterans,” yet they don’t get on the legislative bus and ride it. We need to make sure our elected officials know that we are part of the Legion Family, and we support the American Legion’s agenda. “Representing More Than Me” is just that — your opportunity to help the members of your family and our veterans get what they deserve from our government. I look forward to seeing everyone in D.C. as we continue to work to make our organization strong.

Representing More Than Me,
 Don “JR” Hall
 National Commander
 Sons of The American Legion



‘We Change Lives’

The American Legion

JAN 03, 2024

At a [special event](#) Oct. 3 at The American Legion’s John H. Geiger Operations Center (GOC) in Indianapolis, veterans shared stories of life-changing assistance from Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) staff in successfully filing or appealing VA disability claims. Since 2018, the GOC service office has delivered more than \$195 million for veterans and their families, free of charge. “If it hadn’t been for (Indy-based VA&R team lead Tony Cross), I wouldn’t have ended up with any benefits,” says Marine Corps veteran Bill Clarke, who for decades dealt with medical and mental health issues related to his Vietnam service. “I love this country, and I love The American

Legion.”

- In “The Road to Catastrophe,” Alan W. Dowd traces the roots of the conflict between Israel and Hamas to Arab rejection of the U.N.’s two-state blueprint in 1947, and the inability of subsequent Palestinian leaders to follow Washington’s roadmap to peace. What was a low-grade war changed Oct. 7, when Hamas launched 7,000 rockets and the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, transforming what Israel saw as a manageable security issue “into an existential crisis,” Dowd writes.
- In fiscal 2023, American Legion appeals representatives secured more than \$76 million in retroactive compensation for veterans whose claims were incorrectly denied. Couple that success with assistance provided by

more than 3,000 accredited Legion service officers across the country, “and the results are jaw-dropping: more than \$16.8 billion in VA disability compensation in 2023,” National Commander Dan Seehafer writes. “That is no typo. Billion with a B. [Membership in The American Legion](#) ensures this kind of help for disabled veterans and their families. Donations to the Legion’s [Veterans & Children Foundation](#) provide training needed for service officers and appeals reps to do all they do, at no cost to the veteran.”

Members can click [here](#) to access the digital magazine. To join The American Legion and enjoy monthly digital issues of *The American Legion Magazine*, visit legion.org/join.



Why would someone want to join the SAL?

For many, membership in the SAL has allowed them to become involved in American Legion programs alongside their fathers. Others join out of respect for their parents' and grandparents' service to our country in the military. Many younger members get involved and learn valuable leadership skills involving organization, public speaking, and negotiating, budgeting and fundraising skills. Membership in our organization also provides individuals with opportunities to forge lifelong friendships with people who share a common bond.



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER

P.O. BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206-1055 * WWW.LEGION.ORG/SONS * P: 317-630-1205

**NATIONAL COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE
NATIONAL FOUR PILLAR SQUADRON CRITERIA & VALIDATION FORM
Children and Youth**

Donate \$1.00 for Squadron's membership total as of July 31, 2023 to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Please list check # and submission date:

[Empty form box for Children and Youth criteria]

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R)

Donate \$1.00 for Squadron's membership total as of July 31, 2023 to The American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors. Please list check # and submission date:

[Empty form box for Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation criteria]

Americanism

Donate \$1.00 for Squadron's membership total as of July 31, 2023 to your home Department's American Legion Boys State Program. Please list check # and submission date:

[Empty form box for Americanism criteria]

National Security

Host a blood drive or donate \$1.00 for Squadron's membership total as of July 31, 2023 payable to the hosting organization of the blood drive. Please list date blood drive held, quantity of blood donated & recipient organization and/or list check # and submission date:

[Empty form box for National Security criteria]

Squadron Name: [] Squadron No: []
Squadron Address: []
Submitted By: [] Title: []

Return Application to:

Thomas Deal, 1434 Clayton Street, Perryville, MD 21903
(email) tom.deal@verizon.net

Your 2023-2024 Detachment Leadership



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Sergeant-at-Arms
 Teddy Kuntz

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 rbaldessari@hotmail.com
 Squadron 21



Assistant Finance Officer
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 (970) 641-1101
 jgelwicks@western.edu
 Squadron 54

Commander's Message

By Commander Richard Humphrey

Hello Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado. Well, we made our third membership goal, thank you, thank you, and it appears that we will be making our fourth membership goal as well. Please keep up the good work and get those membership in either to Adjutant Mark or online. We had an excellent year for 2023 and the awards passed out at our Awards Banquet proved the outstanding job you did last year, let's keep up the great work and make 2024 even better. As far as the National standings are concerned, we are still at the bottom of the list, but I know that will change this coming year. Colorado ROCKS.



Adjutant Mark and I will be starting to travel again as we begin the year and visiting as many Squadrons as possible and starting up some new Squadrons in Colorado. First on the agenda will be to visit those Squadrons we did not get the opportunity to visit last year. I really enjoy going out and visiting with you, seeing what you are doing with your squadron, your post, and your community. I see that at Awards night, but when only 13 out of 65 squadrons report, it doesn't really give the full picture of just how much the Squadrons and the Detachment of Colorado contributes to The American Legion programs.

Mid-year has been scheduled in Longmont

Post 32 again and we have been given a better place for our meeting. So please come join us. (If you were not at the Awards Banquet, you might be able to pick up your awards from 2023.) And I see that the Annual Convention has been scheduled also. Appears that we will be heading back to the Western slope to Ignacio. This was a good venue for us last year and I'm sure it will be the same again this year. So, start saving up and join us for this great event. The election of new officers will be done for the upcoming year so that we can keep the Detachment of Colorado moving forward. So, if you are thinking of running for a detachment office, let us know at Mid-year and start your campaign. You are also more than welcome to join Adjutant Mark and myself on visits to see what is involved in moving up the ranks.

Gentlemen, let's have a great year and see you soon.

Shake the trees and Go for Three

Richard Humphrey
 Triple Nickel
 Detachment Commander

Detachment Launches New Facebook Page

Vice-Commander Rob Barry has set up a new Facebook page for the Detachment. It's set up as a group so members and the public can make posts to the page. Please keep them relevant to SAL and Legion matters, but feel free to post your Post family events. Rob monitors the page and will remove any inappropriate post. The page name is "Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado"

Pikes Peak National Cemetery

16h · 🌐
 Volunteers Needed! Please Share!!

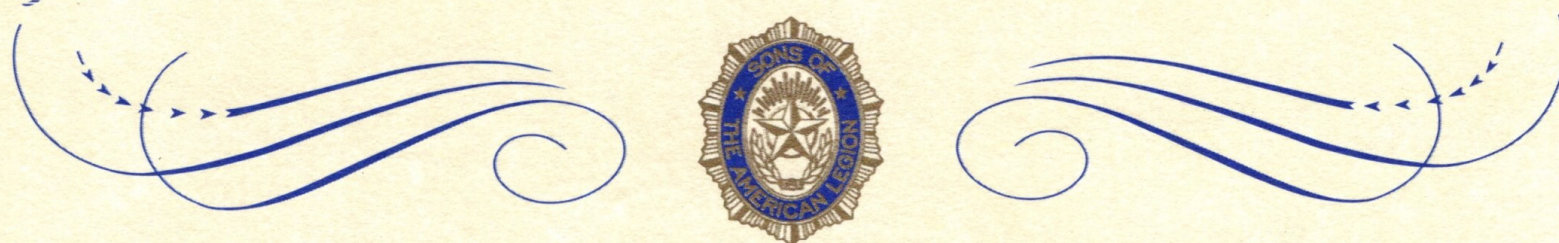
On Saturday, January 27th, all Wreaths from Wreaths Across America will be picked up from the grave sites and columbariums. Volunteers are requested to assist in this effort. If you are able to help, please arrive at the cemetery by 9AM. Dress for the weather, and leather gloves are recommended.

All wreaths and any other personal items attached to the wreaths will be collected and disposed of. Items on the gravesite other than the wreaths and/or not attached in any way to the wreaths will be left undisturbed. If any family member added any items to the wreath on your loved ones site, and wish to retain it, please be sure to remove it before Friday, January 26th.

Thank You for the support.



Sons of The American Legion



2023 NATIONAL TRIPLE NICKEL MEMBERSHIP AWARD

is hereby given to the
DETACHMENT OF COLORADO

for achieving all three membership goals of
105% of Membership Quota,
Chartering five (5) New Squadrons,
and 85% Renewal Rate by July 1, 2023.

Your untiring efforts and dedication to the
membership program have brought great credit
to your Detachment and the Sons of The American Legion.

Presented at the 51st National Convention
in the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, August 25-27, 2023.

Christopher Carlton (IN)
National Commander

Anthony W. Wright (PA)
National Adjutant

Congress Must Pass Spending Bill to Ensure National Security

From Legion.org
By Daniel J. Seehafer, National Commander

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

Once again, the Department of Defense (DoD) may be faced with another continuing resolution (CR), which would compromise national defense strategy and undermine improving quality of life issues for servicemembers.



In essence, a CR would cap funding at the previous year's levels, providing none of the approved increases and preventing any new programs from beginning that were authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

This comes at a time when America is facing multiple national security threats such as China's aggression, Russian provocation and the possibility of

the Israel-Hamas war spreading. It is not the time to be reducing our military capability. But that is exactly what the CR would do.

Consider this: Under a CR, our nation's defense programs would receive \$26.6 billion (3%) less than the \$886.3 billion authorized by the NDAA.

This stop-start-stop-start game also disrupts the hard-working employees of DoD, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). They are the backbone to the services provided to our veterans and the defense of our nation. Their ability to carry out their critical work should not be subjected to the whims of a polarized Congress.

Speaking of Congress, I am scheduled to provide testimony on behalf of our great organization on March 13. If Congress does not sufficiently pass funding to support our military and VA, you better believe I will make our feelings known loud and clear.

After all, resolution after resolution opposes such inaction by Congress. Among them:

- Our steadfast support for improv-

ing quality of life for servicemembers and their families, [Resolution 85](#), approved by the National Executive Committee (NEC) in August 2016.

- Our call for a DoD budget, based on the 2022 National Defense Strategy, [Resolution 11](#), approved by the NEC last May.

- Our military commitments in the Indo-Pacific region, [Resolution 118](#), approved by the NEC in August 2018.

Last but not least, the CR would present a devastating setback for operations by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). In order to fulfill ongoing missions, DPAA received a \$40 million increase in budgeting for FY24. But that would be wiped out due to the CR. Another CR will only continue to hurt our national security.

There is no better time than right now to do the right thing for America, its military members and their families. Congress must pass an actual spending bill to ensure our military is properly funded throughout this year.

Daniel J. Seehafer



National Commander's Incentive Program

American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer will award his national commander "Be the One" dog tag coin to any Legionnaire who obtains two new members into The American Legion. One to replace you and one for growth. A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2024 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2023 membership year. Transfers do not count as new members.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. New Auxiliary members and Sons of The American Legion members do not count toward this incentive. Forward names of Sons of The American Legion members or Auxiliary members to your squadron or unit for use in their respective incentive programs.

Only one coin will be awarded per individual. Upon receipt, national membership staff will confirm the names in the national database and mail the coin directly to the person who earned it.

[Download the National Commander Incentive fillable PDF form.](#)



Post Excellence Award

To qualify for the American Legion's Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, submission of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR), attaining a 90% renewal rate, and community activity.

The purpose of this award is membership growth, exposure of American Legion values to the community, and increased visibility of the American Legion Family through service projects. A post achieving this qualification will have had numerous post members involved in planning and achieving these goals. Many posts are already active in these areas and will qualify without extra effort. Others, however, will need to increase their efforts in one or more areas to qualify for the award. The standard to be achieved in each area is as follows:

Membership: The post must attain at least 103% of their membership goal. At least one post officer attends district meetings.

Consolidated Post Report: CPRs must be submitted by July 1. The American Legion's federal charter requires the submission of an annual report to Congress on activities for the year. MyLegion.org has made it simple for a post to submit its CPR in a timely manner.

90% Renewal Rate: The post must renew at least 90% of their members that were on the 2023 roster.

Community Activity: The post must conduct an event that connects the local community with The American Legion post. The objective is to open your doors, welcome the community in, and educate them on what The American Legion is all about and how the post is an asset to the community. Posts do not need to have a physical building to accomplish this. This activity can be held in a park, a community center, or anywhere the post can welcome and interact with the local community.

Certification for the award: The district commander responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria. The district commander will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to department headquarters. That list should include the post name, phone number, address and commander's name. If possible, accompany the last two criteria with copies of press releases submitted to the local media about the projects to show that the projects were not only accomplished but that an attempt was made to enhance the image of The American Legion through local media. The copy submitted should include a date and time stamp showing receipt by the media outlet.

The department adjutant will transmit information as posts qualify to:

The American Legion National Headquarters
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055



No matter how difficult it seems at the time, it's easier to do the right thing than spend a lifetime regretting that you didn't.

Robert E O'Malley USMC Medal of Honor

We Oppose the PLUS Act Because We Stand for Veterans

By Daniel J. Seehafer, National Commander

NOV 27, 2023

Dear American Legion Family and Friends,
Let me say this in the clearest terms possible: Veterans should feel safe and confident when filing for claims, knowing that no matter who they choose for representation, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has reviewed, approved and accredited that party.



That is why The American Legion opposes the PLUS (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans) Act. If enacted, the PLUS Act would transition our system

of securing benefits for disabled veterans to an unregulated profit-driven industry. Currently, there are unaccredited third parties that present themselves to veterans as legitimate claims service companies to assist veterans in obtaining their earned benefits. The PLUS Act aims to legalize these companies by allowing automatic accreditation after 90 days regardless of whether VA has completed its verification process. The VA-accreditation program exists to ensure that veterans and their family members receive appropriate representation on their VA benefits claims. The American Legion wants to hold bad actors accountable, not give them a free pass to prey on veterans. Our team is working hard to protect all veterans from the PLUS Act. In September 2023, The American Legion sent a letter of opposition to the congressional representatives sponsoring the Plus Act and I personally

voiced our opposition during my congressional visits just last month.

However, there is legislation that would help veterans elude the clutches of bad actors. In an effort to protect our nation's veterans, The American Legion supports the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act. The legislation would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for VA disability compensation benefits.

The American Legion continues to muster support to protect all veterans and their families from claims sharks. Join us in [telling Congress to support the GUARD Act](#).

Daniel J. Seehafer
National Commander
The American Legion



NEC Clarifies, Reaffirms Legion Support for GUARD Act

The American Legion

DEC 12, 2023

The American Legion National Executive Committee passed a [new resolution](#) reiterating its support for penalizing unaccredited companies that charge veterans for benefits claims assistance during a special meeting on Dec. 12. Prior to the NEC vote, American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission Chairman Autrey James explained what's at stake.

Right now, there are more than 100 unaccredited claims companies "illegally profiting millions of dollars from veterans under the guise of legitimate professionals. Some veterans are being taken advantage of while others are content to pay the exorbitant fees," he said.

These companies charge veterans for assistance with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits claims that The American Legion provides at no cost to any veteran.

Resolution 1 calls on Congress to:

- Pass legislation that restores criminal penal-

ties for people or companies violating VA rules regarding representing or charging veterans fees to file, prepare or prosecute initial VA claims without VA accreditation.

- Oppose legislation that would allow unaccredited parties to become legal representatives without completing the accreditation process.

There are two bills pending in Congress related to the issue, the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act and the PLUS (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans) Act.

The American Legion supports the GUARD Act. The legislation would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a VA disability claim.

Conversely, the PLUS Act would force VA to recognize applicants for accreditation automatically after 90 days, even if they fail to

meet VA standards. This legislation also calls for a fee cap of \$12,500 to be paid by the veteran.

"Our national commander made it clear that we oppose the PLUS Act — in September when a letter of opposition was sent to Congress, in October during his visits on Capitol Hill, and again last month in his [published Commander's Message](#)," James said.

After the vote, American Legion National Commander Dan Seehafer said, "Our agenda was short today but very important. Our position is now crystal clear to all unaccredited firms wishing to exploit veterans, and that is, not on our watch!"

With the current congressional term concluding soon, it is likely the legislation will be a focal point for the next session.

"Your work today will only strengthen our testimony that I deliver to Congress in March," said Seehafer, concluding his remarks.



'We Stand With Israel'

The American Legion

OCT 09, 2023

The American Legion strongly condemns the violence in the Mideast and extends full support for the U.S. troops heading into the Eastern Mediterranean to deter further escalation, National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer said.

"We find ourselves on the precipice of a war that could lead to the loss of more lives and lead to a broader conflict," Seehafer said. "We stand with Israel and condemn the attacks by Hamas. At the same time, we pray for those lost to the senseless violence and for the safety

of our men and women in uniform who are standing by to protect our national interests."

Hamas carried out a massive attack on Israel on Saturday, firing thousands of rockets while dozens of Hamas fighters infiltrated the border by air, land and sea. The attack occurred on Simchat Torah, a major Jewish holiday when Jews complete the annual cycle of reading the Torah scroll.

More than 700 Israeli civilians and members of the military had been killed. Another 2,150 were wounded. "The enemy will pay an unprecedented price," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, adding that

Israel would "return fire of a magnitude that the enemy has not known."

Additionally, Seehafer pointed out that this attack comes at a time when Congress has failed to act on several major issues related to national security.

"The fact that the U.S. House of Representatives is without a speaker is alarming," he said. "Congress must prioritize filling the speaker's seat and expediting key matters involving our military such as confirming all general officer nominations, funding our military and ensuring our servicemembers get paid."



National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

From www.legion.org

Each year, The American Legion gives its National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award to a well-rounded law enforcement officer who has exceeded the duty requirements expected of his or her position and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service coupled with professional achievement. The award, which especially takes into account heroic acts, is presented annually at the Legion's national convention.

Department Law and Order Committees are encouraged to select and honor a Law Enforcement Officer of the Year at their conventions. Departments nominate their winners for

the national award by submitting an application to The American Legion, Attn: National Security-Foreign Relations Division, 1608 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. Applications must be received no later than Feb. 1. Departments may only submit one nomination per year. Only department winners are eligible for the national award, which should be accepted at the national convention.

Nominees must be U.S. citizens and living, active, full-time and paid, sworn law enforcement officers entrusted with full authority and the powers of arrest. Posthumous awards will be acceptable only if the nominee's death has occurred after the department's selection.

Nominees must be assigned to or fully recognized by municipal, county, district or state police; highway patrol; sheriff's office or as a sworn federal law enforcement officer (FBI, Secret Service agent, U.S. Marshal, National Park Police, U.S. Capitol Police, etc.) Military police officers or investigators are eligible if they are state law enforcement certified.

Nominees must also reside and be assigned or attached for duty in the nominating department. Federal agents serving overseas should be nominated by the overseas department.

The American Legion will provide round-trip

(Continued on page 7)

Member Online Renewal Available to SAL members!

IDENTIFY ONLINE PAYMENTS THROUGH MYLEGION.ORG

Members of The American Legion and Sons of the American Legion can renew their membership online. As members renew, they can print a membership card signed by the National Adjutant. Many members expect to receive their membership card from the post/squadron as well. Post/Squadron Adjutants and Commanders can view members renewing online through MyLegion.org.

Post and Squadron leadership should use this report to identify members that renew online, send them their membership card, and thank them for their renewal.

1. From your My Account page, enter My Groups to access Group Profile
2. Go to "Reports/Labels" from the left MY VIEWS menu.
3. Select Member Online Renewal.
4. Set parameters. First select group, next set the date range using the calendar icons and "View Report"
5. Names display one column. From the export pulldown menu export to a PDF.
6. Print labels from PDF document.

MyLegion squadron officer membership management tools:

- Online roster and reports
- Membership management
- Print a current membership card for a member
- Assign group permission
- Add a photo and emergency contact information to a member's record
- Process membership and transmittal history
- Consolidated Squadron Report
- Officer materials, brochures, and speeches

REGISTER AN ACCOUNT TODAY!

Registration for a MyLegion account is achieved using the email address on your membership record. The email address must be present on your membership record to access post and squadron membership information. Go to [MyLegion.org](https://mylegion.org) and register today!

NEED HELP? VISIT MYLEGION RESOURCES

Online help is available at MyLegion.org in Resources. Step-by-step instructions and videos can help with registering an account, creating rosters and reports, membership processing, membership management, and other administrative tools.

Contact your MyLegion support team at mylegion@legion.org



Just A note about online renewals, If your Squadron has not submitted a Squadron Data Report, the national organization does not know what your Squadron dues are. This means if one of your members renews online, he will only pay detachment and national dues, and will be able to print a membership card. The Squadron will not receive their per-capita from national or detachment. You'll have to collect directly from the member.

Law enforcement Officer of the Year cont.

(Continued from page 6)

coach airfare or vehicle mileage, in accordance with its employee mileage reimbursement rates, staff per diem for two days, two tickets to National Commander's Banquet, and lodging for one night in accordance with travel policies of The American Legion for an individual recipient or a single representative of a group or organization to receive the

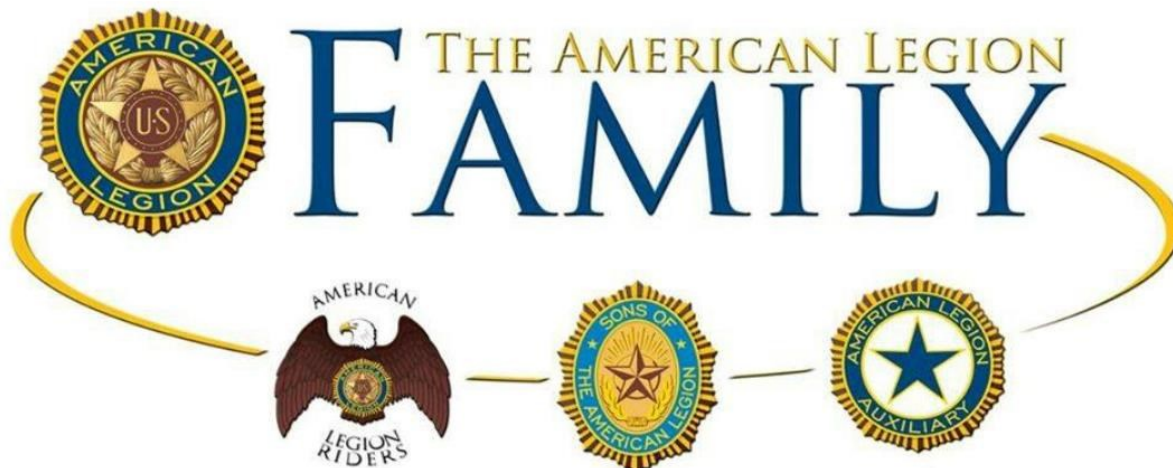
award at National Convention. The American Legion will not provide for any incidental expenses or any expenses incurred by guests accompanying the award recipient.

The National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award recognizes officers who go above the call of duty. A major secondary purpose of this award is to encourage further development of department and post Law and Order Committees through continued

recognition of law enforcement officers. It is firmly believed this award serves to promote public trust and support of our law enforcement agencies.



[Download Officer of the Year Application »](#)



**The American Legion Family
Mid - Year Conference
Friday January 26 - Sunday January 28, 2024**

LOCATION: The American Legion Post 32
315 S. Bowen St., Longmont, CO 80501

All meetings, meals, and entertainment will be held at the post.

Registration, meal prices and agenda will follow in the near future.

Need a place to stay? There are 50 rooms blocked for the American Legion Family.

LOCATION: Hilton Garden Inn, 470 South Martin Road, Longmont, CO 80501.

PHONE: 720-759-4422

https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/denlcki-hilton-garden-inn-longmont/?SEO_id=GMB-AMER-GI-DENLCGI&y_source=1_MTY2Njg2NjktNzE1LWxvY2F0aW9uLndlYnNpdGU%3D

This is just 1.5 miles down the road. There will be scheduled shuttles to the post.

Price: \$109 + tax

Rooms are available to book today. Make sure you reserve under **CAL block** to get the quoted room rate.

The room block and rate is good until **12/26/24**.

When calling the Hotel, if you get an automated answer with options, select 0 to speak with the hotel reservations directly.

A Message from PNC Rehbein on the Status of the Department

From www.coloradolegio.org

There is conversation on social media regarding the election of Department officers when the Department of Colorado American Legion comes back into being. That conversation may be somewhat premature since that election cannot happen until June 2024 at the earliest. Regardless, it is necessary to take note of that conversation in order to prevent misconceptions from taking hold during the period leading up to that election. That conversation currently seems to be centering on whether candidates for Department office should be required to have held Post and District Commander positions in order to be recognized as a candidate. To be very clear, it has been a long-standing ruling from the National Judge Advocate that creating such a requirement goes against Article IV, Section 2 of the National Constitution and therefore is unconstitutional. Those elections can only happen once the National Executive Committee authorizes reinstatement of the Department's charter and a Department Constitution and Bylaws are approved. While events appear to be trending toward that this spring and fall, it is easily possible that progress toward that can be derailed if focus is not kept on the understanding of

redevelopment of the operational functions of the Department. We must all keep in mind that a Department of the American Legion is really a two-headed entity. On one hand it is the organization that determines the policies and programs of The American Legion within the state of Colorado. The Department officers through the Department Executive Committee make the decisions to determine those policies and operate the programs. Secondly, but equally importantly, the Department is also a multi-million-dollar corporation operating under the laws of the state of Colorado. The Department officers through the Department Executive Committee constitute the Board of Directors of that corporation. As that Board of Directors, they make the decisions overseeing the business of the corporation. Failing to operate effectively as that Board of Directors led to the suspension of the charter of the Department of Colorado. Pointing fingers at individuals for specific actions or lack thereof is tempting, but it is really the responsibility of the entire membership and the Board of Directors to ensure that laws and regulations are being obeyed as well as common business practices being obeyed. The investigation com-

mittee found several instances where the Department was not within the common practice of business law and business practices. That points out the need in selecting the next Department Officers and members of the Board of Directors to not only consider experience in American Legion affairs but also experience and knowledge in business and other affairs. In order to do that it is necessary for the candidates for those offices to put forth their entire experience that prepares them for office. They need to earn your vote by showing you, the prospective voter, their entire resume, not just their Legion experience. It is our plan through Headquarters to create a place where candidates for office can publish their resumes and highlight their qualifications. We will have that webpage prepared to begin use shortly after the Midwinter conference. In order to maintain security, candidate resumes will need to be submitted to Headquarters and posted through them. There will be more information available concerning campaigning for office as the Legionnaires of Colorado continue progress toward possible reconstitution of the Department of Colorado in 2024.

PNC David Rehbein



Squadron 11-11 Rally's for Kids

Submitted by David Bucher Squadron 11-11 Adjutant

On Dec 3rd 2023 the American Legion Post 11-11 participated in the Annual Children's Hospital Toy Run. We were able to donate approximately \$3,500 worth of toys to the run this



year. We weren't able to ride in the run due to the weather, but look forward to the next year and hopefully better weather.

Also, Detachment Commander Richard Humphrey, Vice-Commander Rob Barry and Adjutant Mark Kilstrom visited Squadron 11-11 at their monthly meeting on January 11th. The Squadron committed several thousand dollars to various charities including \$5,000 to CWF. Commander Richard present them their awards for MY 2023.



New Verification Requirements for Officers

Indianapolis, IN May 2019

At the fall meeting in 2019 the SAL National Executive Committee passed a resolution requiring verification of membership eligibility for the Sons of The American Legion be provided the National Organization for all members holding a Detachment level or National level office. Here is the resolved clause of the resolution.

S.A.L. Resolution 4 - Fall, 2019

Title: National Officer, NEC Representative and Chairman Certification of Membership Eligibility Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on October 12-13, 2019, That it is required that before the induction into office, every National Officer, National Executive Committeeman, Alternate National Executive

Committeeman, and National Chairman of the Sons of The American Legion provide satisfactory evidence of eligibility for membership in the Sons of The American Legion as follows:

a) Eligibility for Sons of The American Legion membership of National Officers, National Executive Committeemen, Alternate National Executive Committeemen, Commission and Committee Chairmen, after initial review by the National Judge Advocate, will be certified by the National Adjutant and reported to the Post-Convention NEC Meeting of the Sons of The American Legion; and

b) Eligibility for Sons of The American Legion membership of detachment officers will be certified by the detachment adjutant, with notification to the respective department adjutant and National Adjutant of the Sons of The American Legion within 30 days of election, but no later than September 30 of each year, using the detachment officer re-

port document provided by National Headquarters; and

c) Acceptable eligibility verification will include copies of descendant's Veteran's current American Legion membership card, DD-214 or to include other acceptable forms (if deceased) and must comply with the period of times established for American Legion membership; and, be it further RESOLVED, That any member with aspirations of future national leadership in the Sons of The American Legion may, at any time, submit one's proof of eligibility for Sons of The American Legion membership to the office of the National Judge Advocate; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That all submissions be electronically transmitted to the National Judge Advocate, with copy to the National Sons of The American Legion Liaison, and that the aforementioned requirements take effect with the 2020-2021 administrative year and occurs annually thereafter.



Legislative News

The American Legislative Update 12, January 2024

GRASSROOTS ACTION UPDATES

The American Legion is urging Congress to include vital language in the Defense Supplemental to support our Afghan allies. To support the Legion's efforts and protect the brave men and women who fought by our sides, please click here: [Legislation Action Center | The American Legion](#)

Last session, three critical bills began picking up speed in the House of Representatives: The Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023 (H.R. 542), the HOME Act of 2023 (H.R. 3848), and the COPE Act (H.R. 3581) bill. If the Senate agrees to pass this Legion-backed legislation, Congress has an opportunity to provide indispensable support for our Nation's veterans and their family caregivers. If you would like to contact your representatives in support of H.R. 542, H.R. 3848, and H.R. 3581, you can visit our grassroots actions center to identify and email your elected official.

The American Legion supports the Pay our Troops Act and encourages all Legionnaires to contact their members of Congress and ask them to support the legislation. Click here to

reach out today.

While The American Legion hopes to see more of our priorities passed during the second session of this Congress, we are extremely grateful that many of our priorities were included in the NDAA and two stand-alone bills were signed into law by President Biden. With support from the Legion, S. 777 and S. 30 became public law this summer less than 6 weeks apart. The bills, both of which were introduced by Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), take critical steps to ensure the financial and physical wellbeing of our nation's veterans. S. 777, also known as the Veteran's COLA Act of 2023, requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) to increase wartime disability compensation, clothing allowances for disabled veterans, and certain compensation for dependents and surviving spouses and children. The amounts payable must increase in conjunction with the cost-of-living increases. As law, this will directly improve the quality of life for veterans and military families across the country. S. 30, the Fiscal Year 2023 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, reached the President's desk about a month after the Veteran's COLA Act of 2023. S. 30 approves the construction

of

several VA hospitals and medical facilities and provides the budget to do so. According to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs (SVAC), the aim of this bill is to improve upon the "historic infrastructure investments" that came with the PACT Act. The second session of the 118th Congress will commence in the coming week, and there are at least 12 bills with Legion support that have passed one chamber. 10 bills have passed the House and are waiting their turn in the Senate, and 2 have passed the Senate and must be approved in the House. S. 316 aims to repeal the authorizations for use of military force (AUMFs) in Iraq, a long-standing priority for The American Legion. On the other hand, S. 656 would establish commercial driver educational programs through VA if it were to pass the House as well. Of the bills that have passed the House, 2 provide support for caregivers, 4 strengthen education and employment benefits, 2 focus on disability compensation and benefits, 1 ensuring that veterans have equal access to the second amendment, and 1 improving housing allowances and aid for homeless veterans.



Legislation Supported by The American Legion

The American Legion Legislative Update January 12, 2024

The Love Lives On Act

Gold Star Spouses are currently put in a heartbreaking predicament—choose love and happiness through remarriage before the age of 55 and lose critical benefits, or forgo companionship and lose their benefits. This predicament creates an untenable choice for our widows and widowers between personal happiness and financial stability. It's time to change this! The Love Lives On Act aims to correct this egregious wrong by proposing the following actions:

- Eliminate the age limit for remarrying without loss of benefits.
 - Allow remarried surviving spouses to retain education benefits.
 - Preserve Commissary and Exchange benefits for remarried spouses.
 - Enable remarried spouses to regain TRICARE benefits if the subsequent marriage ends.
 - Abolish the "Hold Themselves Out to Be Married" clause, an outdated law causing unnecessary fear and inhibiting freedom.
- However, we need YOUR help to ensure this bill becomes a reality. The American Legion believes in standing up for the rights and benefits of our Gold Star spouses. They should not be penalized for finding love again. They are still the surviving spouses of our fallen heroes, and they have earned these benefits through their service and sacrifice. The time for action is NOW. Contact your members of Congress today and urge them to pass the *Love Lives On Act of 2023*. Together, we can ensure a fair and respectful future for our Gold Star Spouses. It's time to honor their sacrifice and let love live on!

Expanding America's National Cemeteries Act

Access to Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and its tradition of bestowing full military honors during burials is currently under threat. The Department of Defense (DoD) has proposed restricting Arlington eligibility primarily to recipients of awards such as the Purple Heart, Silver Star, or higher, potentially disregarding the service of deserving veterans

from World War II, Korea, and the Vietnam era, as well as a significant number of female veterans.

Implementing such reductions would not only affect those who have spent decades planning to be laid to rest with full military honors, but would also limit the capacity of ANC for the next 42 years. We must act to devise a sustainable, long-term solution.

The American Legion finds these proposed reductions wholly unacceptable, and we urge Congress to take immediate action to safeguard this crucial benefit. H.R. 1413, the *Expanding America's National Cemeteries Act of 2023*, represents a vital lifeline. It enables an existing VA-run national cemetery to transform into a new location capable of providing full military honors as ANC nears capacity. By maximizing our resources rather than restricting them, this legislation offers a pragmatic and effective solution.

It is time to take a resolute stand for our military families and demonstrate our unwavering commitment to honor those who have dedicated their entire lives to serving our great nation. Let us not falter in maintaining the promise made to them. Together, we can ensure that the legacy of our heroes is preserved and revered for generations to come. Contact your members of Congress and urge them to pass the *Expanding America's National Cemeteries Act*!

Pay the Coast Guard Act

Coast Guard personnel are vital to national security, but they serve in the only military branch working without pay during government shutdowns. The Department of Homeland Security, not the Department of Defense, oversees the Coast Guard. That means that during shutdowns Homeland Security employees — Coasties and others — are not paid.

While the Coast Guard is not a part of DoD, its role involving national security on our nation's borders and around the world is equally vital to the work our military performs. The Coast Guard provides law enforcement, port security, and maritime and coastal safety, while too often operating outdated equipment and vessels.

Organized under the Department of Homeland Security since 2003, more than 50,000

members of the U.S. Coast Guard operate a multi-mission, interoperable fleet of 259 cutters, 200 fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, and more than 1,600 boats and vessels. Previous government shutdowns caused members of the Coast Guard to temporarily lose pay and benefits, resulting in unnecessary financial burdens, and significant degradation in readiness. During the 2019 government shutdown, The American Legion stepped up and issued more than \$1 million in expedited Temporary Financial Assistance grants to Coast Guard personnel and their families.

The American Legion believes that the Coast Guard's mission is essential to national security, and its personnel should never go without pay. H.R.2693 - *the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2023* would make appropriations for Coast Guard pay in the event an appropriations Act expires, providing the same protection for personnel that the other U.S. Armed Forces branches have.

Contact your members of Congress to call on them to pass the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act!

Veterans Programs Improvement Act of 2023

Recently, the Senate didn't get enough votes to pass the *Veterans Programs Improvement Act of 2023*, a package of bills that includes the *Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act* - which means we need your voice more than ever to let the Senate know that we will not abandon our caregivers. With no agreement over consolidating legislation in the *Veterans Program Improvement Act of 2023*, is no longer the vehicle, the *Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act* remains stand-alone legislation: [S. 141](#). This bipartisan bill would

- Expand community-based services for aging veterans and improve VA support for veterans and caregivers of all ages, and would: Increase the expenditure cap for non-institutional care alternative programs from 65 percent to 100 percent of nursing home care costs;
- Expand access to home and community-based alternative care programs for veterans at all VA medical facilities, as well as to veterans living in U.S. territories and Native veterans

(Continued on page 11)

Legislation supported by The American Legion

(Continued from page 10)

enrolled in IHS or tribal health programs:

- Require VA to create a centralized website to disseminate information and reSources related to home and community-based programs and help veterans and caregivers determine their eligibility.
- Require VA to review staffing and resource needs, accessibility, and other aspects of the Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care and Caregiver Support Program Office to make sure they are appropriately serving veterans and caregivers;
- Create a pilot program to provide home health aide services for veterans that reside in communities with a shortage of home health aides; and
- Require VA to establish a warm handoff process for veterans and caregivers discharged from or ineligible for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Veterans with significant disabilities, like spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), require specialized and long-term services and support. Unfortunately, the number of veterans requiring this level of care greatly exceeds VA's existing capacity to provide it.

Most significantly, disabled veterans would prefer to receive non-institutional care or home and community-based services (HCBS). VA HCBS must be more accessible to veterans with catastrophic disabilities. The Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program, which allows veterans to receive HCBS in a consumer-directed way, is currently available at only some VA medical centers. Furthermore, VA is limited on how much can be spent on each veteran's home care. When VA reaches this cap, the only alternatives are to place the veteran in a facility or rely on the veteran's caregivers, often

family, to bear the extra burden. The Senate can no longer deny veterans these essential services.

The American Legion Resolution No. 18: Comprehensive Supports for Caregiver Support Program resolves that the Department of Veterans Affairs provide more robust and available comprehensive home and community-based support better to alleviate the physical and mental strains of caregiving. Please write your Senators today to demand they co-sponsor S. 141, the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act!

The Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA

Few insults are more egregious than to take advantage of disabled veterans or their families, under false pretenses. We know it's immoral to exploit any veteran filing for VA benefits. The American Legion wants the return of criminal penalties enforced against these non-accredited violators.

The American Legion or other accredited veterans service organizations (VSO) are the best first step for veterans seeking assistance because we successfully provide expert help free of charge for hundreds of thousands of veterans a year. We also understand and support a veteran's freedom to choose representation – whether it's a VSO, another claims agency, law firm or private company.

But we support that right on a key condition: that anyone who represents a veteran in the filing of a claim is accredited with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Accreditation means the representative has been vetted, is trained, and is accountable to VA's rules, which include the regulation of fees that can be charged.

These rules exist for good reasons. They prevent exploitation. As it now stands, nothing


stops or deters profiteers from overcharging and taking advantage of veterans. That has to end.

The American Legion continues to work with VA to share information and educate veterans about free services available through VSOs like accredited American Legion service officers who helped veterans receive \$16.8 billion in disability compensation last year alone. All accredited representatives who assist veterans must be held to the same level of accountability as our service officers, who have been successfully helping with claims since the birth of VA.

The Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation benefits.

The Major Richard Star Act

Right now, VA deducts the retirement pay of veterans with a disability rating of less than 50%. These veterans who have been forced into medical retirement are being penalized for their injuries, and there is no excuse for it. Disability compensation and retirement pay are two different payments, and should be treated as such. DoD awards retirement pay for honorable service, while the VA is responsible for disability compensation. Conflating the two and forcing deductions in retirement pay is an injustice.

The American Legion stands with disabled veterans and urges Congress not to continue this denial of retirement benefits. The Major Richard Star Act would repeal this draconian offset for those veterans who are medically retired due to injuries sustained in combat and allow them to receive both their retirement 

A Priceless Heritage

Submitted by Vice-Commander Rob Barry (209)


I was in a discussion recently that Sons of The American Legion members in a leadership position may need to prove their eligibility. My first thought was that we have moved a few times. If you move like me, you know that my worries were valid! After much stress while digging in boxes and folders that I haven't touched for years, I found the elusive envelope. I opened the paperwork to find my grandfather's WWII discharge papers. At first, I was relieved to have found them and realized I should put in a safer place. A few minutes later it dawned on me just how amazing these documents were to our family. These papers have been sitting in the original envelope untouched for 80 years. A piece of family history.



As I read the old waxy paperwork, it reminded me of the reason I am honored to be a part of the SAL. I am here to represent him. This man that didn't think twice about joining the mili-

tary at the age of 19 during a world war to support his country. I could never be prouder.


My granddad never once spoke of his time in the Navy. It was something I didn't think of growing up. He was just the small-town Colorado barber that everyone loved. He was always a very active Legion and Elks member. As a kid, I just knew he was always busy traveling to different meetings wearing weird hats.

There are times when our everyday schedules, volunteering, and life can possibly distract us from the mission. Finding that paperwork helped me re-focus. I am here in this great organization because of him. Take a moment to reflect on why you are here. Think back about those selfless family members that gave of themselves for this great nation. I am hoping in you doing so that it gives you the same feeling that it gave me. I am even more energized and focused to represent the Sons of the American Legion as a proud member. Thank you, granddad. 

Commander's Visitation

Commander Richard is continuing to make his visits to the various Squadrons. On January 15th, he visited Squadron 204 at 4200 N Pecos Street in Denver to attend their monthly meeting. While there he presented them their membership awards that they earned for the 2023 membership year, and got to meet their officers.

Commander Richard also visited Squadron 17 at 1901 Harlan St in Edgewater for the start of their Sunday morning breakfasts.

Upcoming visits are with Squadron 22 on January 24th, Mid-year DEC on January 27th at Post 32 Squadron 17 meeting on February 10th with Squadron 26 at their meeting at Post 109 in Windsor. If He has not visited your Squadron yet, Adjutant Mark will be calling to set it up. 



“Make the world a better place by being more mindful of your children, thoughtful of the elderly, charitable to those less fortunate and open to opposing views.”

Leonard B Keller
U S Army,
Medal of Honor

CWF Banquet to be on Western Slope

Last June at our gathering in Ignacio, Squadron 65 in Delta was selected to host our annual, CWF Fundraiser Banquet. We understand that it's a ways to get there and an overnight for most of us but we still expect it to be a great success. Squadron 65 is working some local businesses to have some great auction and raffle items and hotel discounts. We encourage as many of you to attend as possible. Keep in mind that although we have one Squadron hosting the

even, **IT'S A DETACHMENT EVENT!** It's never too early to start collecting items for raffle or auction. Even if you can't make it, do what you can to gather items. You can contact any Detachment officer and we can get them from you if you can't go. If you collect items from local merchants, please be sure to get a contact name so that we can later thank them and recognize them with a certificate signed by the Detachment Commander. Knowing that we appreciate their

support and acknowledge them will go a long way towards their willingness to help us in the future. We have a letter available for you with the pertinent information the CWF and their 501c(3) Tax ID number. If you want the letter to print and give to merchants, reach out to Adjutant Mark and it'll be sent to you. Let's keep up the Colorado standard and make this event Rock!



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

CHILDREN'S WELFARE FOUNDATION BANQUET

HOSTED BY SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON 65

APRIL 6, 2024

DELTA ELKS LODGE

563 MAIN STREET

DELTA, CO 81416

BBQ DINNER

\$20.00 PER PERSON

DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 PM

DINNER AT 6:00 PM

CASH BAR AVAILABLE

New Squadron Commander Award

From www.legion.org/sons

Resolution #4 adopted at the fall NEC Meeting on October 2nd, 2021 approved the creation the Squadron Commander of the Year Award tom be awarded at the annual National Conven tion of the Sons of The American Legion. The resolved clause reads as follows:

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on October 2-3, 2021, That the Sons of The American Legion hereby creates the "Squadron Commander of the Year Award," and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the Membership Committee shall judge the nominees annually at the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the presentation of this

award shall begin with the 2022 National Convention; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the recipient of this award be presented with an official Sons of The American Legion uniform cap embroidered with "Squadron Commander of the Year" and the designated year; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That each national nominee will receive a signed certificate of appreciation.

Nominees for the Sons of The American Legion "Squadron Commander of the Year" Award must meet the following criteria:

- Be a member in good standing (current membership year dues paid)
- Hold only the office of Squadron Commander at the time of nomination at any level within the Sons of The American Legion

Demonstrate leadership through action and involvement in squadron activities that benefit his community

Must obtain 100% squadron membership or better by March 15th (American Legion Birthday)

Nominations must be submitted by the Detachment Adjutant and received at National Headquarters by the opening of the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting

A Detachment may submit only one nomination for consideration

To get the nomination form click the link here

[SAL Res 4B - Fall 2021 - MBSP - Squadron Commander of the Year Form.pdf \(legion.org\)](#)

Or go to www.legion.org/sons select meetings then resolutions and find it on the list .



Sons of The American Legion Squadron Commander of the Year Nomination Form

Nominee _____

Membership ID# _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Squadron Name _____

Squadron Number _____ Detachment _____

Contribution Details

How many events _____

Total volunteer hours _____

Total monies raised / donated \$ _____

Description details (who, what, when, where), including picture(s), if possible

Detachment Adjutant Name _____

Signature _____

Email to: sal@legion.org (Subject: Squadron Commander of the Year Nomination)

or USPS to: Squadron Commander of the Year Nomination
c/o National S.A.L. Liaison
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055

Forms must be received by March 15th



SAL



SAFETY INITIATIVE

Sons of the American Legion
Squadron 209 will replace and install
smoke detector batteries at no cost for
veterans in financial need or with
physical limitations

Contact SQ 209:
Rob Barry
719-930-5725
colo.rsb@yahoo.com





**DEPARTMENT OF COLORADO
AMERICAN LEGION CONVENTION**

JUNE 20 - 22, 2024
SKYUTE CASINO/HOTEL

**14324 HIGHWAY 172 NORTH,
IGNACIO, COLORADO
RESERVATIONS - 1-800-876-7017**

BLOCK OF ROOMS UNDER:

**DEPARTMENT OF COLOARDO AMERICAN LEGION
THE BLOCK IS AVAILABLE FROM JUNE 16TH - JUNE 25TH
TO OFFER ALLOW MEMBERS TO INCLUDE A SHORT
VACATION WITH THEIR DEPARTMENT CONVENTION PLANS**

**\$145.00 PER NIGHT ROOMS
\$50.00 NIGHT FOR RV**

**INFORMATION ON CONVENTION REGISTRATION WILL
COME OUT AT DEPARTMENT MID-YEAR.
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTION PLEASE FEEL FREE TO
CONTACT HEADQUARTERS AT 303-366-5796**

