



“Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage”

Colorado Sons Electronic Update

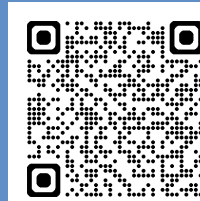
Supporting the Principles of The American Legion Since 1932

Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado

A 2X Triple Nickle Detachment

Home to Past National Commander Michael Moss

Robert Barry, Commander



www.salcolorado.org

Visit us on Facebook @ [Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado](https://www.facebook.com/SonsOfTheAmericanLegionDetachmentOfColorado)



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.

American Legion Mourns Massing of President Carter

From www.legion.org
December 29, 2024

American Legion National Commander James A. LaCoursiere, Jr., issued the following statement today concerning the passing of former President Jimmy Carter.



President Jimmy Carter speaks at The American Legion National Convention.

“President Carter was a Legionnaire, a distinguished Navy veteran and a devout Christian. His commitment to human rights and community service was respected worldwide. He lived longer than any president in American history and made the most of his post-presidential years by strongly advocating for world peace and improving the lives of the disadvantaged. His energy, integrity and hu-

mility were admired by people across the political spectrum. President Carter’s wife, Rosalynn, was a leader in mental health

awareness. They will both be missed. Our condolences to the entire Carter family and the many lives that they have touched, especially in their home state of Georgia.”

During an address to The American Legion’s 1980 national convention, President Carter described his vision for America on the world stage. “We do not maintain our power in order to seize power from others. Our goal is to strengthen our own freedom and the freedom of others, to advance the dignity of the individual and the right of all people to justice, to a good life, and to a future secure from tyranny. In choosing our course in the world, America’s strength serves American values,” he said.



Game-show Format Educates Student Veterans About VSOs

From www.legion.org
January 04, 2025

By Jeff Stoffer

Nearly 50 Student Veterans of America (SVA) Conference attendees answer questions, and hear explanations, from groups including The American

Legion. How much do student veterans know about veteran service organizations, other than Student Veterans of America? Forty-nine SVA National Conference attendees took part in an app-based game Friday morning in Colorado Springs to test their knowledge and learn more.

They heard from panelists representing The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Wounded Warrior Project and Blue Star Families.

By playing the game, the students discovered history, marquee programs, assistance services, eligibility requirements, scholarships and more. They also learned that the VSOs in Washington are more often than not to work as allies on behalf of the veterans they serve. “Obviously, we’re all friends,” said Julie Howell, associate legislative director for Paralyzed Veterans of America. “We all work hand in hand with one another. You are never going to achieve anything independently when it comes to big change. The name of the game is community. We’re all veterans. We’re all here to do this together.”

After the audience placed their answers on the Vevox app, organization representatives elaborated. In Jeopardy! fashion, students typically heard the answers first and had to name the organization. Answers regarding The American Legion included:

- “This organization’s past national commander was known as the architect of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, the original GI Bill, and his name was later attached to the 2017 makeover of the benefit, known at the Forever GI Bill.”



American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Policy Analyst Andrew Petrie elaborates on the organization during a quiz-show panel among other VSOs at the 17th Student Veterans of America NatCon Friday morning in Colorado Springs, Colo. Photo by Jeff Stoffer

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Health Policy Analyst Andrew Petrie of The American Legion explained to the group that, “when it comes to education

benefits, we have a division specifically within our DC office that handles all of our education and employment. Additionally, we have our VA&R Division, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. We deal with any and all claims on that floor, and health policy. And within that, the GI Bill is also included – anything from Chapter 31 to 35. And we’re proud to have the namesake (Harry W. Colmery) behind the Forever GI Bill.”

- “This organization created a framework for the VA Buddy Check in 2019 and still performs this vital function throughout the year.”

Petrie told the students why, as “a grassroots effort through local posts, we started the Buddy Check program in 2019. A post commander, someone in leadership, or just a regular post member, reach out to other members in the post and veterans who aren’t in

The American Legion that are in the local area. That’s why we have partnered with VA, and VA has (moved) the program forward. We just want to check to make sure that our veterans are transitioning well into civilian life, or through those obstacles we may face through life. We have a support system behind us.”

- In March of 1919, this organization was founded by veterans returning from World War I in Paris, France, meeting stateside in May to complete its constitution and adopt its official name.

Petrie explained: “About 1,000 servicemembers met in France for our original meeting, and with that, we discussed creating a service organization that would be able to encapsulate everything from benefits for veterans coming back to supporting the veterans ... throughout the rest of their lives. With that, when they got back in 1919 in May, The American Legion was officially named at the first conference, which was in St. Louis. A pretty cool history.” The group’s average score was 11.1 out of 21, and there was a tie for first between two who were correct on 16 responses.

In addition to Petrie and Howell, the panel consisted of:

- Kaitlynn Yancy, director of membership programs for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

- Naomi Mathis, assistant legislative director for Disabled American Veterans

- Dr. Kirsten Walsh, government affairs associate with Wounded Warrior Project

- Joe Grassi, associate director of grassroots advocacy in the VFW Legislative Service

- Jenny Akin, vice president of strategic alliances for Blue Star Families



Your 2024-2025 Detachment Leadership Team



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



ANEC
Richard Humphrey
1460 Sunset Place
Loveland, CO 80537
(970) 685-7018
rlhumphrey03@gmail.com
Squadron 23



Commander
4245 Midlothian Ct
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 930-5725
Colo.rs@yaho.com
Squadron 209



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



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



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



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



Sergeant-at-Arms
Ted Kuntz
Squadron 68

Contact Detachment Adjutant



Parliamentarian
Michael Kirschner
(719) 821-2265
3725 Hollybrook Ln
Pueblo, CO 81005
mlkirschner@comcast.net
Squadron 2

Chaplain
Vacant

Historian
Vacant



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

Committee Chairmen

Membership: Randy Forsythe (65)

Permanent Membership: Rick Baldessari (21)

Finance: Rick Baldessari (21)

VA &R/VE&E: Nick Arceo (103)

Public Relations: Mark Kilstrom (2)

Legislative: Richard Humphrey (23)

Americanism: Vacant

Community Service: Mark Kilstrom (2)

Commander's Message

By Commander Robert Barry

Another year has gone by. Hard to believe. I can remember as a young firefighter listening to the “old guys” complaining about how fast time has flown in their careers. Now I am that old guy, and it is true! With the passing of another year, it is time to think of that new year’s resolution. As your Commander, I am making a resolution to increase information and education to the Squadrons.



Through my visits, it has come to my attention that the fundamentals of why we are an SAL member are not always known. I feel that this is a very important item, and why we belong. Visiting with you has shown me what amazing things are being done in Colorado, and the amount of fundraising is jaw dropping. Your involvement with the community and your post families shows the heart of our program to the state and nation. I could not be prouder.

With all the hard work we are putting in, I would ask that you take the time to focus on the “why”. Why are you a member of this great organization, and what keeps you going? I am just as guilty for getting so busy my why gets buried under all the work. Share your why at your membership meetings. Take the time to get back into the Squadron Handbook and pick something to share in your meetings. Take the time to read training materials. There is a lot of good information that can be shared with the post and the community that you might not even know about.

Your Detachment leadership is working on putting together training events around the state. Most of us attended the regional training ran by national that was here in Westminster, which was a fluid event, meaning they taught us information that we asked for. We will be working on our events to be what you want, and what you need. You might not know, but our Adjutant is on the National training committee and helped put together a library of training modules that turned out great. I would recommend you check them

out.

When you are filling out your event calendars, pass on your information to the Detachment. We would like to put your information in our newsletter. I would also like to know what you are up to so I can participate with you! The best way to get to know a squadron is to see them in action. I look forward to being a part of this with you.

My friends, we have an incredible organization, and every day I am seeing more and more of it. Every time I meet a brother, I feel as though I have one more friend. We are all part of this for the same reason – family. Always remember that and know that we are your family and are always here for you. I am always just a phone call away. Take care of yourself and each other.

Rob Barry
Commander
Detachment of Colorado



Dole Act Becomes Law

From www.legion.org
January 03, 2025

American Legion praises President Biden and Congress for the significant victory for the nation’s veterans, their families and caregivers.

President Biden signed into law on Jan. 2 an American Legion-supported bipartisan omnibus bill that will give a significant boost to veterans, their families, their caregivers, and their survivors.

The Sen. Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veter-



Former Sen. Elizabeth Dole visits with National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. at the Army-Navy Game Dec. 14.

ans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act amends various Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) authorities related to health care, economic opportunity, disability and memorial affairs, veteran homelessness, and oversight and

investigations.

The bill enhances and reforms the delivery of services by prioritizing veterans, their families, their caregivers and their survivors. Several proposals represented key legislative priorities for The American Legion.

“The American Legion is delighted that President Biden and Congress prioritized America’s veterans and families by enacting into law the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act,” American Legion National Commander

(Continued on page 3)

New Year Message

From Harl (Butch) Ray
Central Region NVC (IL)

Happy New Year my friends!

...Therefore, be it resolved"... Sound familiar? I'm sure it does as every American Legion and Sons of The American Legion resolution contains these very words! Why do I bring this up? Well, it happens to go with another word that is really popular this time of

year, **RESOLUTION.**

How many of us each year **"Resolve"** to do better, try to get healthier, plant a garden, travel more, volunteer more, etc. Those of us that come up with New Year's resolutions and in essence make a plan for the future. We think of the new year as a fresh

start, a chance for endless possibilities and opportunities to come to us. Let's look at this idea differently!

Rather than to have these possibilities and opportunities come to us; why don't we structure our resolutions to create possibilities and opportunities for others. Personal and professional growth occurs when we push beyond our



perceived limitations. So let us step out of our comfort zones and **"resolve"** to further the mission of The American Legion Family!

"There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind" - C. S. Lewis

The adventures we will take and the memories we will make should be motivation enough for a fresh start and a new beginning. The new year should inspire us all to get excited and motivated to make 2025 a banner year for The American Legion Family! Let our service to our Veterans and our communities be the inspiration to put our best foot, heart and soul forward into the new year! **Cheers to a New Beginning!**

Speaking of beginnings! As the attached membership report will show, the **Central Region has moved into 2nd**

place nationally and I could not be prouder of the work all of our members have accomplished to make this happen. We are still tracking ahead of last year's numbers in our race to reach 400,000 members this year! **KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK**

CENTRAL REGION!

The new year is a time to renew ourselves! It's time to reset our minds and thoughts to go forward with a sharp purpose to meet and exceed all of our goals! We cannot use old ideas to reach new levels of success! T. S. Eliot said it best... **"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."**

Let each of us be that voice! Let's all **"Be the ONE"** to keep an eye open for veterans that may be thinking of self-harm. Let's **"Resolve"** to take the **S.A.V.E.** training! Let's be the volunteer force that makes a difference in our VA, State, and Local hospitals.

Together we make a difference! Let our New Year's resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word. **Therefore, be it resolved...**

For GOD and Country,
Butch Ray, NVC Central Region
"I'm the ONE, You're the ONE, BE the ONE!"



Dole Act

James A. LaCoursiere Jr. said. "One of the most meaningful ways to honor veterans is to show support for their loved ones and caregivers. Sen. Elizabeth Dole epitomized the role of a loving caregiver through her many years of devotion to the late Sen. Bob Dole, a World War II hero."

LaCoursiere thanked members of Congress who paved the way for the significant victory for the nation's veterans, their families and caregivers. [Read a personal story why this legislation matters.](#)

"This new law was the result of true bipartisan advocacy and had the full support of The American Legion and other veterans organizations," he concluded. "By opening new benefits to dedicated caregivers, the United States sends an important message that the sacrifices of our veterans will not be forgotten."



National Emergency Fund

From www.legion.org
January 10, 2025

This is a notice about the National Emergency Fund (NEF) and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) programs. Our Legion and SAL members may be eligible to apply for grants to meet immediate needs.

Please review it carefully and share it as necessary with others. The NEF Grant Application (fillable) can be found at this link:

<https://www.legion.org/emergency/apply>

The two links below provide important information about NEF. First is the PowerPoint of how to complete an application:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYTPVnmrsh0>

The second is Illinois Department Adjutant and PNC Marty Conatser's account of how they set up disaster teams within Illinois following a massive tornado disaster a few years ago, which could help you within your own departments.

<https://www.legion.org/emergency/videos/PLF29FAF30BB761026x5ZlecXviD8>

Please review the NEF Grant Application carefully, and remember, until there's an emergency declaration for a natural disaster in

NEC Report

By Nick Arceo
National Executive Committeeman

Comrades, I bring you greetings from the National Organization Sons of The American Legion. Thank you for all you are doing for our Veterans and their families and our communities. Did you know that our commander, Joseph Navarrete is also the first Son of a past Auxiliary President? Also, the first National commander from the Detachment of New Mexico? I will now quote Navarrete, "You have bestowed upon me the highest of honors.



In so doing, you have honored in a special way all the members of the great little Detachment of New Mexico." One of Joe's slogans this year is "everything is possible with God and Family." The Commander has a few challenges for us this year, 400,00 members, the last two years The Sons have set all time membership records! Wow let's keep that going this year. Our goal this year is 401,263, currently we are at 257,596 heading to that goal of 400,000. Keep up the good work, we can do this. Another challenge to our detachments and squadrons is to raise \$500,000 For The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF). As our country continues to be challenged by mother nature and other obstacles, let's support our Legion family

members with thoughts and prayers. Please continue to participate in your Posts Buddy Check efforts. Most likely you're American Legion Post is likely participating in buddy Checks. Please join them and be prepared by using the resources available at legion.org/advocacy/Be-The-One/Buddy-Check.

As we begin a new year, lets reflect on our great accomplishments of 2024 and be more determined to make 2025 an even bigger and better year! Let's keep in mind that we live in the greatest nation on the planet. The Sons of The American Legion are truly making a difference across our great country. I'm reminded of "The American's Creed", this Creed appears in our handbook, (this is the Authorized version) "I believe in The United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon the principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies." Let this inspire each of you as we move forward this year.

God Bless
Nick Arceo
Detachment NEC



Don't Miss Deadlines for SAL Awards

From www.legion.org
January 7, 2025

Detachments, squadrons and individual members are encouraged to submit award nominations.

Some important deadlines are coming up for Sons of The American Legion awards. Here are details; forms for these awards and more are available [here](#).

Squadron Commander of the Year Award Nominations for this award must be submitted by the detachment adjutant and received at National Headquarters by the opening of

May's Spring NEC meeting. Nominees must be a member in good standing in the SAL; hold only the office of squadron commander at the time of nomination; demonstrate leadership through action and involvement in squadron activities that benefit his community; and must obtain 100% squadron membership or better by March 15.

Marvin P. Nay Veterans Employment and Education Outstanding Contributor Award Nominations for this award must be received prior to the May Spring NEC meeting of the

(Continued on page 4)

NEF

place (federal, state, or local), NEF can't help until one is called. If a declaration happens, ensure that the applicant is current on their membership before the disaster and, at the time of application submission, provide photos, receipts, and any insurance paperwork. FEMA statements are reasonable, too. Statements from American Legion Post/District/Department officers or community leadership are encouraged to reinforce the grant application. Ensure the application is filled out, or it could be returned to you for more information. This is all outlined on the application and is provided for on the instruction sheet.

NEF does not provide for repairs or replacement of lost or damaged items in the primary home of residence. If the member owns the destroyed property but he/she does not physically live there, that is not covered. Vehicles or outbuildings are not covered. That is what insurance should cover. If available, provide copies of the insurance determination, if any. If the home is rented, renters insurance information should be provided, if any. Call or e-mail me for any clarifications.

You can mail, fax (317-630-1413), or scan/e-mail the application and any attachments (photos, receipts, other supporting documents) to ia@legion.org. Staff will process from there. If the TAL National Adjutant approves, a check will be cut from Finance and mailed to the department adjutant to disburse to the member. The address to mail grant applications is:

The American Legion National Headquarters
ATTN: National Emergency Fund
Internal Affairs & Membership Division
P. O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

If a National Emergency Fund application comes to us directly from the member, we will scan and e-mail it back to you for your recommendation. Remember, you and your leadership are "boots on the ground," so the department must make the best determination for The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Program is also ready to assist American Legion-eligible veterans with minor children in the home (18 or younger) who need financial help to pay for shelter, food, utilities, and medical expenses.

Please make sure that all pertinent documentation and the investigator's report are included in the packet. Missing documentation will slow down the process and may result in the application being denied.

If you have any questions regarding Temporary Financial Assistance, please get in touch with Stacy Cope, Youth Welfare Program Manager in the Americanism Division at 317-630-1202 or scope@legion.org.

Stay safe and healthy, and let me know if you have any questions on NEF. My phone numbers are: 317-630-1379 or cell: 317-287-9974. Mark Woodsmall is the NEF backup and can be reached at 317-630-1265 or e-mail mwoodsmall@legion.org

Here is the link to where you can download and print the actual fillable application on our new website:

<https://www.legion.org/get-involved/community-programs/national-emergency-fund/request-assistance>

MICHELE STEINMETZ |
Member Engagement Coordinator
Internal Affairs & Membership
700 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, IN 46204
msteinmetz@legion.org |
www.legion.org
317-630-1379



SAL Awards Deadline

(Continued from page 3)

Veterans Employment and Education Commission meeting. The award will be voted on at that meeting and presented at the National Convention in August.

Nominees must be a member in good standing in the Sons of The American Legion engaged in the fundraising, distribution of funds or goods, and/or volunteering at an event deemed beneficial to veterans' employment and/or education, to include homelessness. A detachment may submit more than one nominees, and an SAL member may nominate himself.

All-Time High Honor Ribbon Request

Pursuant to Resolution F3-85, the All-Time High Detachment Honor Ribbon (Red) will be awarded at National Convention to a Sons of The American Legion detachment which has exceeded all previous years' membership. The form should be reported to National Headquarters when an all-time high for membership occurs for the applicable membership year.

Charles B. Rigsby Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Volunteer of the Year Award

Squadrons should submit their nominee to the detachment adjutant during the detachment convention once the nominee form has been attested by the squadron or post commander. The appropriate detachment officials should select one nominee for award consideration and the detachment adjutant should forward the nomination form to National Headquarters no later than 30 days prior to the National Convention to be considered.

George B. Evans Grassroots Veterans Advocate of the Year Award

This award recognizes an SAL member in good standing who has performed outstanding service and made significant contributions in time and effort to grassroots veterans' advocacy work. An award may be presented each year to a member who takes on a bold leadership role by building relationships with elected officials who directly impact public policy; by actively taking the message of the national Sons of The American Legion to key media outlets; and by developing strong grassroot initiatives.

Nominations may be submitted by an individual, squadron, district or detachment and are due by July 20.

Snapshots of Service Award

Submitted photos must be based on the Four Pillars of The American Legion — Americanism; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; Children & Youth; or National Security — and be in a digital JPG or TIF format. Submissions also will become the property of the SAL; must not have a right of restriction; must contain Sons with their covers or identifiable clothing on during the activity or event and a brief history of the event. Entries must be submitted from a squadron, with a maximum of three photos per category, and submissions must be from the current time period (Aug. 1, 2024 to 30 days prior to the National Convention).

Blue Brigade Award

Any SAL member who signs up 30 or more new members into the Sons of The American Legion by July 22 is eligible for this award.

Membership Recruiter Award

Any SAL members who recruits five new members into the Sons of The American Legion during the current membership year is

Five Things to Know, Jan, 6, 2025

From www.legion.org
January 6, 2025

1. [North Korea on Monday fired a ballistic missile that flew 685 miles before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan](#), South Korea's military said, extending its heightened weapons testing activities into 2025 weeks before Donald Trump returns as U.S. president. The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the midrange missile was fired from an area near the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and that the launch preparations were detected in advance by the U.S. and South Korean militaries. It denounced the launch as a provocation that poses a serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The joint chiefs said the military was strengthening its surveillance and defense posture in preparation for possible additional launches and sharing information on the missile with the United States and Japan.
2. [President Joe Biden awarded the Medal of Honor – the nation's highest military award for valor – to seven US Army soldiers in a White House ceremony Friday](#), marking the last time he would preside over such an occasion as commander in chief. "These are genuine, to their core heroes. Heroes of different ranks, different positions and even different generations. But heroes who all went above and beyond the call of duty – heroes who all deserve our nation's highest and oldest military recognition, the Medal of Honor," Biden said as he introduced the stories of courage and gallantry. Six of the medal recipients were posthumously recognized decades after their heroic actions during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, while the seventh, then-Private First Class Kenneth J. David, attended the White House ceremony in person.
3. [Beneficiaries living in Tricare's West Region who missed last Tuesday's deadline to set up recurring payments with the new regional contractor, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, have been granted an extension](#). Beneficiaries enrolled in Tricare Young Adult, Tricare Reserve Select and Tricare Retired Reserve plans now have until Jan. 15 to set up recurring payments directly with TriWest, while those enrolled in Tricare Prime or Tricare Select have until Jan. 30, according to [Tricare's website](#). The requirement applies to those who pay enrollment fees or premiums by credit card, debit card or electronic funds transfer.
4. [The U.S. government has proposed selling 1,200 advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles to Japan to help counter threats in the Indo-Pacific region](#). The State Department approved the sale of up to 1,200 AIM-120 (D-3/C-8) advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles, or AM-RAAMs; up to 20 AIM-120D-3 guidance sections; and up to four AIM-120C-8 guidance sections, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced in a news release Thursday. The proposed sale is worth an estimated \$3.64 billion.
5. [Russian troops in eastern Ukraine have captured the stronghold of Kurakhove after a monthslong battle](#), Russia's Defense Ministry claimed Monday, adding the wrecked town to the Kremlin's list of conquests in the partially occupied Donetsk region during the almost three-year war. The claim, which drew no response from Ukrainian authorities, came a day after the Russian Defense Ministry said Ukrainian forces had launched a new thrust in Russia's Kursk border region. The inauguration in two weeks' time of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump has brought a new element of uncertainty into the conflict and triggered an apparent effort by both sides to establish battlefield gains before any possible peace talks are held





The American Legion

Rocky Mountain Boys State

A Week that will shape a Lifetime



“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction... it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation.”
-Ronald Reagan

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS – Your Future starts here!
YOU can join the nation’s premier civics program
developing future leaders in Colorado since 1949

- Build leadership skills AND lifelong friendships
- Fun Action-based learning in Self-Government
- Support and defend our Constitution
- Stand up for America’s political heritage
- If selected all tuition costs are included



June 1st - 7th, 2025 – Sterling, CO

Start your application NOW!

www.CoLegionBoysState.org

December Impact: Legion Voice Heard on Capitol Hill

From www.legion.org
January 6, 2025

Testimony, support for military quality-of-life funding and a torrent of emails in support of the Senator Elizabeth Dole Act among the top moments of the month.

The American Legion was heard loud and clear in Washington throughout the final month of December. Thousands of Legionnaires and supporters weighed in for Congress to pass the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Act; the national commander commended a commitment to military base improvement funding; and testimony was delivered in support of federal grants to reduce veteran suicide.

December 2024, as the 118th Congress was coming to a close, was a busy one for The American Legion's team in Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, the nation's largest veterans organization also disbursed nearly \$31,000 in youth scholarships, completed a second straight record year of U.S. flag sales, issued over \$100,000 in National Emergency Fund grants and more.

[Click here to see the December 2024 American Legion Membership Impact Report and reports from previous months.](#)



Teams May Begin Online Registration for the 2025 Season

From www.legion.org
January 6, 2025

Registration for the 2025 American Legion Baseball season is open at baseball.legion.org.

Teams registered after May 15 may be subject to a department late fee through the final deadline of June 1. Please note that each American Legion department may set an earlier deadline for registration. To learn more about your specific department's state fees and deadlines, [contact your department chairmen](#).

As part of NEC Resolution No. 17 October 2023, and the education and training requirements of Public Law 115-126, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, all adult participants (coaches, managers, volunteers and players, 18 years of age or older) must complete the Abuse Awareness course either through USA Baseball. All adult participants (coaches, managers, volunteers and players, 18 years of age or older) must also have a completed and passed background check. Click [here](#) to access the Abuse Awareness Training.



American Legion Chaplains

From www.legion.org

The chaplaincy has many purposes. One of its major purposes is to help persons grow in their relationship with God and one another. Also, we serve as a reminder of the transcendent and seek to develop an environment within which Legionnaires are encouraged in their personal and collective moral and spiritual growth. We are to remind all Americans that God is the source of all rights and privileges.

The American Legion is comprehensive in nature embracing all religions, faiths, and denominations within its ranks. The chaplaincy being non-denominational and non-sectarian, wishes to minister to the spiritual needs of all without regard to either affiliation or non-affiliation.

Chaplains seek to minister to people wherever there is a need. For many, chaplains are the only ministers they will ever know, as they have no affiliation with church, synagogue, or other religious institution. The role of the chaplain is ever increasing due to the aging of our membership. Each Legionnaire should be alert to the physical and spiritual needs of his/her comrades. The chaplain should be notified when there is death, illness, or special concern in the membership. At that point the chaplain should provide all ministry and service available.



American Legion Membership Impact, By the Numbers



DECEMBER 2024 MEMBERSHIP IMPACT REPORT
A Report from American Legion National Headquarters



VOICES

"The money allocated toward new construction and updated housing is sorely needed at some bases. We applaud the negotiators for including these measures."

- American Legion National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr., in response to the inclusion of \$15 billion for military quality-of-life improvements in the National Defense Authorization Act passed in December by the House and Senate Armed Services Committees

4 million
Estimated number of viewers who saw American Legion advertisements in targeted local markets with strong military presences during the Dec. 14 125th Army Navy football game.

0
Times a U.S. veterans service organization had a sponsorship role in the Army Navy Game in its 125-year history until Dec. 14 when The American Legion's associate sponsorship began.

544
Informal Hearing Presentations prepared by American Legion VA appeals representatives, free of charge, on behalf of disabled veterans disputing their initial claims decisions, in December.

\$1,105,563
Amount in retroactive VA disability benefits awarded in December to veterans who used American Legion appeals representation, free of charge.

11,250
American Legion Family members who took the Be the One/Columbia University Training Protocol in 2024 to learn how best to respond to veterans who may be at risk of taking their own lives.


27
New American Legion service officers who received accreditation in December to assist and represent veterans, free of charge, with their VA disability claims.

\$5,785
Amount in American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance grants disbursed in December, stabilizing homes for 14 children.


9,342
Number of messages sent to lawmakers via the American Legion's Grassroots Advocacy Center web portal in support of the Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, which was approved by Congress Dec. 16. The number of messages sent to lawmakers in the previous month, altogether, came to 18,017.

\$1,847,813,025
Amount in VA disability benefits secured for veterans in December, using free American Legion initial claims and appeals representation.

American Legion Membership Impact, By the Numbers

 **129**


Board of Veterans Appeals dispositions rendered in December for veterans using free American Legion representation, of which only 17.8% of cases were denied. Of those, 37 appeals were granted outright and another 66 were remanded for further documentation.

 **\$108,555.32**

Amount in American Legion National Emergency Fund grants disbursed in December to six posts and 25 individuals who faced severe losses due to natural disasters.

 **111**

American Legion Junior Shooting Sports clubs that completed their registrations in December for 2025 competition.

 **98**

Number of ROTC/Junior ROTC recognition certificates distributed to American Legion posts by the National Security Division in 2024.

 **7%**


Increase in flag purchases through American Legion Emblem Sales in 2024, over the previous high record year of flag sales in 2023. Ten of 11 months in 2024 were single-month highs for Emblem Sales.

 **2,934**

Downloads for the podcast episode featuring Tim Jensen, Chief Brand Officer of Grunt Style and chairman of its foundation. That's the most downloaded of any episode during 2024 and the fourth most of all time.

IN MEMORIAM

"His commitment to human rights and community service was respected worldwide. He lived longer than any president in American history and made the most of his post-presidential years by strongly advocating for world peace and improving the lives of the disadvantaged. His energy, integrity and humility were admired by people across the political spectrum."




- American Legion National Commander James A. LaCoursiere Jr., following the Dec. 29 death at age 100 of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a Navy veteran and member of The American Legion

 **\$30,942**

Amount in American Legion national youth scholarships disbursed in December, to 13 recipients.

TESTIMONY

"(VA's Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant program) grants have allowed organizations to coordinate initiatives related to post-traumatic growth, peer-support services and cultural/faith-based programs. This upstream approach aligns with The American Legion's Be the One campaign and Buddy Check program, and we strongly support any effort by this committee to address the veteran suicide epidemic. But we also recognize Congress' duty to ensure taxpayer dollars are going to effective programs and organizations. The American Legion supports H.R. 9924, which would establish standards for clear and measurable objectives to help evaluate the effectiveness of programs like Fox, and the creation of a standardized methodology for future initiatives."



- American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director Cole Lyle, testifying before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health Dec. 17

 **3,365**


Miles spanned, coast to coast, by the national Medal of Honor Highway, U.S. Highway 20, which was officially designated by President Biden on Dec. 17 after years of effort by Oregon Legionnaire Dick Tobiason and his fellow veterans.

 **279,000**

Approximate rounds of ceremonial ammunition distributed to 315 American Legion posts and 39 departments in 2024, as part of the Military Surplus Loan Program, administered by The American Legion National Security Division. The program also distributed 945 rifles, 1,650 clips and 15 static displays.

 **\$4,490**

Amount of an American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grant issued in December to help purchase two sails for a sailboat that will be used for veterans' mental health therapy. One sail will have the Be the One logo and the other will have The American Legion logo.

 **100**

Filled Christmas stockings distributed to active-duty personnel living in barracks at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base by Tucson, Ariz., American Legion Post 36 in December. The post followed that by donating 125 pairs of socks to veterans in the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System and another 250 for VA Volunteer Services.

 **21**

Eagle Scout recognition certificates distributed in December by The American Legion's Americanism Division, to go along with one Gold Star certificate to a Girl Scout.

 **3**

New Sons of The American Legion squadrons chartered in December: San Fernando, Calif.; Deer Lodge, Mont.; and Collegedale, Tenn.



Old man Winter interfered with our Awards Banquet, so we are going to “Plan B”

**Join us on Friday January 24, 2025
At George Beach American Legion
Post 4
2124 County Rd 54 G
Fort Collins (LaPorte) CO
for their Friday night dinner at 5pm
for our recognition and awards
presentations**



This will be an informal event

Please join us as we celebrate our membership accomplishments and recognize our over \$2,000,000 in contributions to the Four Pillars of The American Legion

**Cost of dinner is your generous donation.
Menu is TBA.
Dress is casual.**



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

