

Sons Of The American Legion—Detachment of Virginia



FOCUS



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Detachment Officers

- Detachment Commander –A.D. Carter, III
- Detachment Vice Commander— Doug Ferrell
- Detachment Vice Commander— Dellie Suiter
- Detachment Vice Commander— J.R. Dye
- Detachment NEC—Steve Gower
- Detachment Alt-NEC— Linwood Moore
- Detachment Adjutant—Scott Williams
- Detachment Finance Officer—HB Hall, Jr.
- Detachment Chaplain—Robert Wilson
- Detachment Historian—Clarence Fenner
- Detachment Sgt At Arms—Mike Butler
- Detachment Judge Advocate— Elton Morgan, Jr.

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Sons Hold Annual Fall Conference

Amidst the threat of Superstorm Sandy, the Sons Of the American Legion Detachment of Virginia held its annual Fall Conference, in Colonial Williamsburg. National Vice Commander John Jennings, from Florida, was our special guest for that weekend.

Detachment Homeland Security and Civil Preparedness Chairman, Bob Borkovich asked the assembled membership 'Are you ready?' noting the relevance of his report to approaching superstorm Sandy. He said this would be the right time to check various websites including www.ready.gov for tips to prepare for these types of conditions.

Two major issues were discussed at the Fall Conference. One, was

that the American Legion no longer supports the Wounded Warrior project. Instead, the American Legion family supports Operation Comfort Warrior where all proceeds go back to the veterans.

The second issue was background checks. All Sons members of the National Americanism Commission, Children and youth Commission, Child Welfare Foundation, and those working with children must pass a background check. National is encouraging the Detachments to do likewise.

Total donations brought in this weekend were \$8,260.64 which consisted of Fisher House \$1,575, Childrens Miracle Network \$1,750, Child Welfare Foundation \$3,635.64, Operation Comfort Warrior \$250,



and National Emergency Fund \$1,050.

National Vice Commander, John Jennings addressed the assembled membership and thanked us for the hospitality. He stressed, National Commander Chris Huntzinger's first priority this year of educating our members which will help renewals. He also said that communication is also key to our success especially down to the Squadron. Lastly, motivation is key to keeping people involved. He ended with his three motivational points –work hard, play hard, and have fun.
Scott Williams

VA & R—Supporting Our Veterans

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee of the SAL took huge leaps in the past year. Donations from all over the commonwealth went to such programs as Operation Comfort Warriors, and many others. The VA

Hospitals received countless donations and volunteer hours to help veterans enjoy a more comfortable recovery.

National Commander, Chris Huntzinger's project this year is Fisher

House. Fisher House provides free housing to the families of veterans while in a VA Hospital.

The SAL thanks you for your continued support of these programs. **Mike Butler-Det. VA & R Chairman**

Commander's Corner

Detachment Commander, A.D. Carter, III

For the Good of the Squadron

Remember when your Squadron used have "GOOD" meetings. It wasn't the fact that you were at the meeting, but the fact that the guys came together, to create projects, handle the business of the squadron and to honor this great nation. All these things all got done under the structure of an officially conducted meeting. The Squadron Commander and the Vice Commander's took charge and followed the agenda to assure that things got done as planned allowing for the opening and the official closing of the meeting. The Chaplain would invoke "God and Coun-

try" as an inspiration and dedication of your energy. These things were always a priority for a Son.

The whole point of these meetings was that you would never forget who you were working for. We have continued to remain dedicated to a life of service. It's not something we think about, we just do it. Remember we are here to serve.

The older veterans need to eat. We need to make sure they have heat and clothing for the winter.

All of these things can be accomplished due to our strength in membership. As

a Detachment, we were in the last three weeks, ranked number three(3) in the nation in membership. That in and of itself is why we need to re-energize our membership and regain all of our renewals. I think we can be number 1 in the nation, if we take charge of our squadrons and our membership priorities. Never forget who we are working for.



Adjutant's Blog—Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams

We are more than half way through our year. We hope that all of our Squadrons are tracking their hours and dollars donated to the various programs we support.

The Consolidated Report Form has been revised this year. We hope to have those available at the Spring Conference.

At our Mid Winter Meeting, the

Executive Committee approved the re-design of our website. We hope to roll it out at our Spring Conference. The url for our website will remain the same at www.vasons.org.

We sent out a couple of letters regarding the requirement for Squadron Finance Officers to be bonded. There will be a follow up on the New Officer Form for 2013-14

where we ask you to indicate if your Finance Officer is bonded or not.

For those on Facebook, please connect to us by 'liking' the 'Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia' on Facebook..

We will have registration forms for the State Convention at Spring Conference. Please register early as rooms are first come, first serve.

Membership Minute—Membership Chairman, Scott Williams

We continue to make great progress with membership this year. Congratulations to Squadron 56(Northampton), Squadron 5(Norfolk), Squadron 67(Hampton), Squadron 368 (Newport News), Squadron 233 (Richmond), Squadron 242 (Sandston), Squadron 284



(Colonial Heights), Squadron 89(King George), Squadron 148(Colonial Beach), Squadron 156(Orange), Squadron 188(Harrisonburg), Squadron 290(Stafford), Squadron 270(Mclean), Squadron 99(Bruce Walker), Squadron 29(Danville), Squadron 16

(Lynchburg), and Squadron 104(Appomattox) for achieving their 100% in membership.

Please get your renewals in as soon as possible. We are going into tornado season and we don't want any of our members fail to get needed benefits.

Americanism-Promoting Our Patriotic Beliefs

Americanism simply means strong affection or support for the United States. We are simply sold out promoting this to our Youth. Raising their awareness NOW ensures our country's future leaders will continue to honor and respect the sacrifices that make the United States of America, "the land of the free and home of the brave."

The many activities of the National Americanism Commission of The American Legion are designed to acknowledge and preserve our heritage, recognizing the rights of man and woman cannot be taken away. Just a few of the many Americanism programs that benefit our nation's youth include:

American Legion Baseball which began in 1925 . It strives to teach practical lessons of good sportsmanship and citizenship. Loyalty, respect for rules and decisions rendered, fair play, courage, and physical fitness. American Legion Baseball depends on its posts and other Legion Family organizations to promote the activity.

American Legion and Scouting. Scouting is a positive program for our nation's youth. Support has remained constant through the years with local posts chartering more than 2,700 units that serve more than 71,000 young people. Hundreds of other units benefit from financial and other forms of support from American Legion Posts.

American Legion Shooting Sports which is gaining popularity. The American Legion's Junior Shooting Sports is a national activity administered through Le-

gion-sponsored clubs organized to provide gun safety and marksmanship training for young people. Youth with disabilities are encouraged to participate. Any recognized youth group with responsible adult leadership can become involved with this program. The group or club must be sponsored by an American Legion Post and affiliated with the national organization. The American Legion, based on its own involvement in programs like the Junior Shooting Sports and American Legion Baseball, was awarded membership on the United States Olympic Committee.

American Legion Boys State is one of the most respected educational programs of government instruction for High School Students in the nation. It is a program where each young man learns about the operation of his local, county and state governments. Forty nine states conduct this program serving more than 20,000 young men every year. American Legion Posts interview and select participants for their Boys State program after receiving recommendations from school officials. Costs are usually paid by an American Legion Post, a local business or another community based organization.

Flag Education Program. The American Legion Flag Education program is designed to build patriotism in our youth and all Americans and to develop a thorough understanding of proper flag display and courtesy. Flag Education has been a major activity of The American Legion since its inception with thousands of flag education programs presented each year in classrooms across the country. Flag education in the schools fills a great need since more than half the states mandate some form of instruction of flag education to their school districts. The American Legion encour-

ages and supports efforts to display the U.S. Flag in our nation's classrooms.

The Americanism programs mentioned here are just a few of the many available. You can visit www.legion.org and find a program that will work for your Squadron.

Please report what you are doing on the Consolidated Report Form. Filling out this report is very important to The Sons Of The American Legion and The American Legion. The American Legion uses what we report on Americanism when they meet with Congress to fight for the Veterans of our country. So report what you are doing for the Veterans of our Country. Thanks for all you do for Americanism. ***Doug Ferrell, Detachment Americanism Chairman***



SAL Members along with Leading Candidate for American Legion National Commander, Dan Dellinger at a Presidents Day Parade in Virginia.



Squadron 327 Members working a Seafood Dinner in October 2012.



Children and Youth 'Our Flagship Program'



"Established in 1954, The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation was developed as a repository of funds from individuals who wished to contribute to the betterment of children in this country. Our foremost philanthropic priority is to provide other nonprofit organizations with the means to educate the public about the special needs of children across this nation." Yes, The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is 'Our Flagship Program.' The Sons Of The American Legion raised over \$5 million for Child Welfare Foundation. The support that goes to the non profit organizations is awarded in the form of grants. The Sons Of The American Legion have sponsored several grants.

Virginia has been the recipient of several grants totaling over \$1 million in grants.. This represents more than a one hundred fold return on our investment or donations our detachment made to the Child Welfare Foundation.

This year Our Military Kids of Mclean was the lone Virginia recipient of a grant for \$60,000 for their project "Strengthening Our Military Kids Brand". The grant will produce and distribute a public service announcement and a public relations campaign. The Sons Of The American Legion sponsored this grant. The Sons have sponsored many grants over the past several years.

The Child Welfare Foundation awarded over \$730,000 in grants this year. The American Academy of Pediatrics, Childhood Leukemia Foundation, and Children's Organ Transplant Association were some of the recipients of grants this year.

The Child Welfare Foundation is doing the \$1 per Capita Banner program this year. The form is available at www.cwf-inc.org.

We would like to see all of our Squadrons to participate in this program this year. It does not matter how big or small the donation is. America's kids are counting on us!! **Scott Williams, Nat'l Child Welfare Committee Mbr.**

Legislative Update—Contact Your Representative

Happy New Year to all! We have a busy year ahead and there is no better time to get started than right now. We need you to contact your representatives right now, to insist they end their stalemate and come to a compromise for a debt reduction plan. The automatic cuts that went into effect March 1st will devastate Virginia and the nation.

Our military will become understaffed, unable to defend this nation as it has for all of history. The cancellation of an Aircraft carrier deployment (Harry S. Truman) should raise a big red flag as to what is to come. So please take time to contact your Congressman or Senator today. Do it for your self, do it for America.

I will not be at the Spring Conference but will submit a written report about the Washington Conference and current topics. **Jeff Evans, Detachment Legislative Committee Chairman and National Legislative Commission Member.**



Homeland Security and Civil Preparedness—'Are You Ready?

Lets get the word out! The Homeland Security and Civil Preparedness Committee is a young program for the Sons Of The American Legion. I was appointed chairman of the Detachment Committee last Summer and appointed to the National Homeland Security and Civil Preparedness Committee, at the

Convention last Summer. This Committee is just a few years old. In these few short months, I know that we need to get information out to all of our Squadrons. Does your Squadron have someone appointed to Homeland Security?

Chances are, you don't and you are not alone. The more people we get involved in Homeland Security the more information we can get out to the Detachment.

Hurricane Sandy devastat-

ed the New Jersey shore and it could have easily been our Eastern Shore. Squadron Commanders this is a way for you to get someone involved in Homeland Security. We need your help! **Bob Borkovich-Chairman, Det. Homeland Security Committee.**

Sesquicentennial of the Battle of Fredericksburg

December 12, 2012 marks the 150th anniversary of the momentous Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia. My “other” Sons organization, the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* (SUCVW, founded in 1881) was privileged to be one of the sponsors of the sesquicentennial commemoration on December 7th-9th, 2012. The following is a description of some of the highlights from the weekend.

The actual Battle of Fredericksburg took place from the 11th to the 15th of December, 1862 with the crossing of the Rappahannock River by the Army of the Potomac on the 11th and the main action taking place at Pritchard’s Hill (Slaughter Pen) on the downstream side of Fredericksburg and a ‘fixing’ attack, followed by a ‘spoiling’ attack upstream at Marye’s Heights, behind the town. The main attack, at Pritchard’s Hill on the Union left, actually broke Stonewall Jackson’s line, but was unsupported and eventually repulsed. The more famous attack (actually seven assaults) on Marye’s Heights cost the Union around 7,000 casualties, or a total of ~12,500 Union dead, wounded or missing for the entire battle. I had three collateral ancestors among the Union troops who attacked Marye’s Heights, two of whom would die of wounds...the youngest dying on December 21st at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in DC, just eight days short of his 20th birthday.

On the morning of the reenactment the Union Infantry crossed the Rappahannock River in pontoon boats, operated by the Engineers, to drive back the Confederate sharpshooters who were harassing the bridge builders at the City Docks (middle pontoon site).

Driving the skirmishers back, the Federal Irish Brigade crosses the Rappahannock on a modern pontoon bridge provided by the Virginia Army National Guard. As it happened, the river had risen overnight and the ‘ribbon-bridge’ was no longer quite long enough! Rumors spread that the National Guard Engineer unit must have had Confederate unit lineage!

Once across, the Union infantry, the Irish Brigade, formed up on Sophia Street and began to push the Confederates back into the town. Once across, the Union infantry, the Irish Brigade, formed up on Sophia Street and began to push the Confederates back into the town. The Street fighting was intense along Sophia up to Hanover and Caroline Streets! The Mississippians waited for the Federals to advance and then poured fire on from all sides.

The Action passed through the town and ended in the doomed Federal assault on Marye’s Heights. Throughout the day, people remembered the history, bravery and compassion of American Soldiers from both sides. They learned about camp life in both Armies, the civilians, lives of slaves, the technologies of the artillery and engineers and Civil War medicine. The re-enactment was only a small part of the day and should never be confused with people glorifying war or a particular battle. It was a way to remember the sacrifice of those who came before and to teach history in a way that everyone can understand and comprehend.

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This is the reason I was privileged to help my SUCVW Camp Sponsor, teach and remember those who stood where our veterans and active duty stand today.

Our Sons Of The American Legion Squadron does much of the same thing today, remembering our veterans and the sacrifices they made. We assist them when they need help and support their families and survivors. We honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice or have since passed to their reward on Memorial Day (which, incidentally, was started by the Grand Army of the Republic [G.A.R.], the SUCVW’s parent organization, in 1968) and on Veteran’s Day.

It was an honor to represent both the SUCVW and the Sons Of The American Legion. We both teach and honor the same principles and serve today’s veterans. *Jay Rarick, Squadron 364 Adjutant—Woodbridge, Virginia.*



Representatives of the National Headquarters, SUCVW, the Department of the Chesapeake and the Irish Brigade Camp No. 4 (Jay Rarick, SAl Squadron 364, is second from the right, kneeling, in the front row).



Detachment Scholarship 'Developing Our Future'

The Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia is proud to continue its annual College Scholarship Award.

The rules of the Scholarship program are as follows. One, the applicant must be an active member of The Sons Of The American Legion, Detachment of Virginia. Two, Applicant must be a High School Senior who graduates with his class in spring of 2013. Three, the winner must attend an accredited College, University, or Trade School. Four, this is a one time award. Any recipient of this scholarship may not apply in subsequent years. Five, applicants will be largely

judged on their involvement in the activities of The Sons Of The American Legion. Transcripts, SAT Scores, GPA, work experience, and special interests will also be considered. Six, applicant must list all grants and/or scholarships received.

Additionally, the applicant must submit a written recommendation from the applicant's Squadron Commander and a recommendation from his American Legion Post Commander in support of the Scholarship Application. The applicant must also write an essay (not to exceed 800 words) explaining the reasons they feel they should receive this scholarship.

The completed application and attachments must be postmarked no later than June 3, 2013 and sent to Elton Morgan, Chairman, S.A.L. Scholarship Committee, 404 Thom Hall Drive, Hampton, VA 23663. For further questions, Chairman Morgan can be reached at 757 739-7017.

The Detachment Scholarship is \$1,500 to be used in the 2013-14 School Year. The winner of this year's scholarship will be announced at the 2013 State Convention in Dulles. This is a great opportunity to help a future college student! ***Elton Morgan, Detachment Scholarship Chairman***

Squadron Everlasting

Richard Kraus(176)-July 2012, Mark White(176)-September 2012, Thomas Williams(67)-July 2012, William Randell(67)-July 2012, Taylor Terry(67)-July 2012, Bruce J. Reid(67)-July 2012, Carl H. Fisher(68)-July 2012, Larry W. Ritchie (72)-July 2012, Claude D. Cash(274)-July 2012, Robert L. Fox(25)-September 2012, Richard M. Good Jr.(284)-September 2012, James C.

Mills(162)-October 2012, Kevin E. Rhodes(53)-June 2012, Richard Stegeman(74)-November 2012, Donald C. McLaughlin(2)-January 2013, Ricky Tuck(16)-January 2013, Jeffrey R. Lockhart, Jr.(146)-January 2013, George D. Feldpusch(162)-January 2013, Robert Leisher(293)-January 2013, Kenny Sisson(320)-January 2013, Harold Runft(320), January 2013.

Please keep their families in your thoughts and prayers over their passing. If you have any Squadron Member who has passed, please email the information to SonsVA-DetADJ@yahoo.com.



Public Relations—Getting The Word Out

Public relations is critical to the success of The Sons Of The American Legion. We need to promote the good deeds we do as Sons Of The American Legion as often as we can.

What makes a good article? The Four 'W's'. Who-What Squadron, any guests that might speak or persons of interest. What? Why is it newsworthy what will happen. Where?

Always give complete street address. When? Have the date and make-up date if possible.

If you have any news that needs to be published in the newspaper, newsletter, or webpage, please deliver it to the person as soon as possible and make a back-up copy. Determine if they want the information hard copy or electronically.

Will they accept a picture? Would they like to send a reporter to cover the story? Please contact Fargo Wells at rfargowells@hotmail.com or at 540 659-4023. ***Fargo Wells-Detachment Public Relations Chairman.***



Leadership College 'Developing Future Officers'

Each year, The Sons Of The American Legion holds a Leadership College in conjunction with the American Legion Leadership College, in August. Legion College for 2013 will be held at the Holiday Inn Koger Center in Midlothian. The registration fee will be \$65 again this year.

This is a great opportunity for those who are new members of the Sons Of The American Legion and newly elected Squadron Officers to learn more about our organization and its programs. We will go into greater depth about our programs, such as Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Re-

Habilitation, and Membership. We do this in an informal setting and invite those in the class to ask a lot of questions. It is also a great forum to share ideas and help our Detachment grow.

At our Legion College session last year, we had a guest speaker talk about Homeland Security and Civil Preparedness. We will try to do something like that again this year. As we mentioned earlier in this issue, Homeland Security is a new and up and coming Committee within the organization.

We look forward to seeing you at Legion College in August. *Scott Williams, Legion College Director*



Detachment Activities



SAL Participation in the 17th District Four Chaplains Ceremony at American Legion Post 177



Members of the Detachment of Virginia at the Washington Conference Wreath Laying Ceremonies with Sons Of The American Legion National Commander, Chris Huntzinger.

WELCOME TO THE DETACHMENT!!

The Detachment of Virginia would like to welcome two new Squadrons to the Detachment. Squadron 221, Caroline County, from the Twelfth District of the Eastern Region joined the Detachment in January with an initial 17 members. Squadron 157, Madison, from the Thirteenth District joined the Detachment in January with an initial 15 members. Welcome!!

If your post does not have a Squadron and is interested in starting up a Squadron, you need 10 members to charter a Squadron. It also needs to be approved by the sponsoring American Legion Post.

If you need more information about starting a Squadron, please feel free to contact one of our Detachment Vice Commanders-J.R. Dye (Northern Region), Dellie Suiter (Eastern Region), Doug Farrell (Western Region) or the Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams. We would be glad to help you in any way to get a Squadron started.



‘It’s not what we do, it’s who we are!’ - *Michael Peterson*

Founded in 1932, Sons of The American Legion exists to honor the service and sacrifice of Legionnaires.

SAL members include males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership. Members of The American Legion, [American Legion Auxiliary](#) and Sons of The American Legion comprise the Legion family, which has a combined membership of nearly 4.2 million.

Although Sons has its own membership, the organization is not a separate entity. Rather, SAL is a program of The American Legion. Many Legionnaires hold dual membership in SAL.

Help Wanted!

The Detachment is looking for an Assistant Detachment Adjutant. We are looking for someone with Computer Skills (Word, Excel, and emailing abilities), who has served as a Squadron Adjutant, and can commit to attending our conferences and conventions.

If interested, please contact Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams at 571 236-4831(Cell), 703 771-4046(Home), or by email at SonsVADetADJ@yahoo.com.

WANTED!!

Interested in serving at the Detachment Level? Want to learn more about the programs The Sons Of The American Legion supports? We are looking for Sons Members to serve on our Detachment Americanism, Children and Youth, VA & R, and Homeland Security Committees. If interested, please contact Detachment Commander, AD Carter, Detachment NEC, Steve Gower, or Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams.

Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia

“The Focus”

Articles and information contributed by: Detachment Commander A.D. Carter, Josie Patrick (Department Headquarters), Detachment Judge Advocate Elton Morgan, Jr., Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams, Detachment Sgt. At Arms Mike Butler, Detachment Vice Commander Doug Ferrell, PDC Jeff Evans, PDC Bob Borkovich,, and PDC Fargo Wells.

Photographs provided by: Detachment Historian Clarence Fenner, Detachment NEC, Steve Gower, Bob Sussan, and Scott Williams.

Edited By: Scott Williams