

Sons Of The American Legion—Detachment of Virginia



FOCUS



Volume 6, Issue 2 April 2015

Detachment Officers

- Detachment Commander –Richard Pregnall
- Detachment Vice Commander— Vacant
- Detachment Vice Commander— Dellie Suiter
- Detachment Vice Commander— David Tuck
- Detachment NEC—Steve Gower
- Detachment Alt-NEC– Linwood Moore
- Detachment Adjutant—Scott Williams
- Detachment Finance Officer-HB Hall, Jr.
- Detachment Chaplain-Robert Wilson Sr.
- Detachment Historian-Willie Morgan
- Detachment Sgt At Arms-James Logan
- Detachment Judge Advocate-Clint Bolt

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Sons Hold Annual Spring Conference

The Sons Of The American Legion, Detachment of Virginia held its annual Spring Conference at Virginia Beach. Newly appointed Detachment Commander, Richard Pregnall called the Spring Conference to order.

The Detachment Spring Conference had American Legion National Commander, Mike Helm, American Legion Candidate for National Commander, Dale Barnett, American Auxiliary National Vice President, Sue Heil, and SAL National Vice Commander—Southern Region, Jeff Evans.

National Commander Mike Helm reminded us that renewals are the key to growth of our organization.

SAL National Vice Commander, Jeff Evans talked about SAL National Commander' Mike Moss' theme for the year 'Building Bridges To The Future..' He also talked about SAL National Commander Mike Moss' projects this year-The National Endowment Fund and the National Emergency Fund. He also talked about Membership with an emphasis on renewals.

Detachment Commander Pregnall and National Vice Commander Evans presented the Squadron 120 Charter.

Past National Vice Commander Clint Bolt and SAL National Vice Commander, Jeff Evans, NEC Steve Gower, and Past Commander Bob Borkovich presented SAL Sub-



committee Chairman Emeritus Chic Ferguson with an Honorary Detachment Commander's cover for his many years of service.

In the picture above, Detachment Commander, Richard Pregnall shares the donations at the Department Banquet. Donations were Fisher House \$1,500, CMN \$984, Endowment Fund \$900, CWF \$8,384, Operation Comfort Warriors, \$500, NEF \$1,133, Boys State \$100, CHKD \$500 totaling \$13,965.

About This Issue

We will talk a little more about how our Detachment Operates and the importance of Communication to our Membership. There will be some information from some of our committees throughout this issue.

We are also going to include some pictures and information of various activities that our Squadrons are doing to support our various programs.

We hope you will take time to read this issue.

Commander's Corner—A Time of Transition Detachment Commander, Rick Pregnall

At our Mid-Winter meeting in January, the Detachment Executive Committee voted to accept the resignation of Detachment Commander, Doug Ferrel, as of December 31, 2014. Commander Doug had to resign due to a new job and new demands as a result of the new job. The Detachment Executive Committee voted to appoint Detachment Vice Commander, Richard Pregnall as Detachment Commander to fill out the remaining term. SAL National Vice Commander, Jeff Evans installed Rick Pregnall as Detachment Commander. We welcome Rick and wish him all the best for the remainder of this year.

Hello, I'm Richard Pregnall I would like to thank the Detachment for

the Detachment for giving me the opportunity to step forward earlier this year as Detachment of Virginia Commander.

I have been a member of Squadron 320 for 7yrs. In this time on the Squadron level I have served as Vice Commander, Commander and currently Adjutant. Currently I'm serving as S.A.L. adviser on the 12 District. On the Detachment of VA level I have served as Sergeant-At-Arms, Vice Commander and currently Commander. And several Committees along the way!

As we all know membership is the bloodline to any organization.

I would like to thank the membership committee for all the e-mails and phone calls that have been made! The numbers show it's working, we still have a little ways to go! The end of the year is coming and we have 2 more membership milestones upon us. The 1st being 100% May 6th! The 2nd being 105% the end of June! So let's keep those transmittals coming!

OK Membership may be the bloodline of our organization. However Consolidated Reports are the Novels! They tell our stories of commitments, dedication, for God and Country! Without the Consolidated Report *Con't Page 10*

Adjutant's Blog—Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams

We continue to have a good year this year. We had a great turn in of donations at our Spring Conference. See the Spring Conference article on the cover page of this issue.

We gave out the Consolidated Report Forms to the Squadrons who were present at the Spring Conference. For the rest of the Squadrons, we mailed out the Squadron Consol-

idated Report Forms. We also emailed out an 'online version' of the Squadron Consolidated Report Forms. Please complete your form and return it to Detachment Commander Richard Pregnall, 18634 Louisa Rd, Louisa, VA 23093. We would like to have as many Consolidated Report Forms turned in this year as possible. We had over 30 turned in last year.

If your Squadron has a member that passes away during the year, please have your Squadron Adjutant send the information to Department Headquarters. Department provides me with the information for the Squadron Everlasting section of our E-letter.

We look forward to seeing you at our State Convention in July.

Squadron Everlasting

Please Keep These Comrades and their families in your thoughts and prayers!

Joseph Daly (Squadron 162), Raymond Case (Squadron 180), Danny Callihan (Squadron 148), Wes Helsey (Squadron 21), James Bankert (Squadron 320), Patrick Kelleher (Squadron 2), Carl Driskill (Squadron 2),

Gary Wade (Squadron 2), Wayne Lowe (Squadron 164), Charles Carroll (Squadron 72), Russal White (Squadron 72), Joseph Warzecha, Jr. (Squadron 1976), Edward W Edwards (Squadron 7), Steve F Hare (Squadron 7), Charles L Kalbaugh, Jr. (Squadron 293), Andrew D Webb (Squadron 159) - Elton Morgan, Jr. (Squadron 67), Ed Muddiman

(Squadron 85), and Frank Kelly (Squadron 148).

If you have any Squadron Member who has passed on to Squadron Everlasting, please email the information to SonsVA-DetADJ@comcast.net.

Rest In Peace Comrades!

Homeland Security - Securing Our Nation

Detachment Homeland Security Chairman, Bob Borkovich shared five ways we can secure our nation at our Spring Conference. Mr. Borkovich is also a member of the SAL National Homeland Security and Civil Defense Committee.

These are really good points to consider and share with your respective Squadron.

The first, Citizen Corps, is for the education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safe and able to respond to threats of terrorism, health issues, and disasters. We all need to be responsible in being prepared to get training in first aid and emergency skills to be able to help our families and community. Here are a few volunteer programs Citizen Corps are partnered with: Community Emergency Response

Team, Fire Corps, National Neighborhood Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, and Volunteer in Police Service.

The second, Blue Campaign, is the Department of Homeland Security's effort to fight human trafficking by working with law enforcement, government, and private organizations to protect the right of freedom, and to bring those who exploit human life to justice.

The third, 'If you see something, say something'. We all have daily routines, walking through our neighborhoods stopping at the grocery store, gas station, and we are aware

of the workings of our community. If it seems out of place, don't be afraid to point it out and say something to the authorities. Informed and alert communities play a major role in keeping our nation safe.

The fourth, Ready. There are a few simple steps you can take to be ready. Stay informed, prepare, and plan. Build an emergency supply kit for your family. Make a plan on where to meet in case of an emergency. Be aware on what to do before, during, and after a disaster, and get involved in your communities efforts to rebuild and get your life back to normal.

Finally, 'Stop, Think, and Connect' is a national awareness campaign aimed at the understanding of cyber threats and asking for the American public to be safer and more secure online. **Bob Borkovich, Homeland Security and Civil Defense.**

Consolidated Reporting

It's that time of year again! By the time you get this issue of The Focus, your Squadron should have received their 2014-15 Squadron Consolidated Report Form.

Last year we had over 30 Consolidated Report Forms turned in. We would like to have over 40 turned in this year. If your Squadron even did one thing this year, report it. Each Squadron Report is combined with all of the other Consolidated Re-

ports turned in from Virginia to give totals in Volunteer Hours and Dollars donated for Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation from the Detachment of Virginia. Our Detachment totals are combined with the other Detachments to get totals for the entire Sons Organization and reported at the National Convention. We published our totals for the Detachment and National in the last issue of The Focus.

Our efforts are reported to Congress each year and this is what helps get our Veterans the support they get from the Federal Government.

If you have questions on the CSR, please contact Detachment Commander Richard Pregnall, NEC, Steve Gower, Detachment Vice Commander, David Tuck, or Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams. **R e m e m b e r - R e - p o r t...Report....Report.**

Squadron 162 Focusing on Junior Members

Primarily, when you think of a Post's Squadron, you see mostly grown men honoring their father's or grandfather's service and "may" see an occasional junior member out and about but, for the most part have not had anything to truly participate in to understand the meaning behind being a member.

On April 18th at 1:00 p.m., Squad-

ron 162 will begin changing their approach to its junior members by having their first meeting in the Post home to explore ways of how they too can contribute to the Lorton Legion Family.

Led by Squadron 162 First Vice Commander Dave Wallace, these S.A.L. members will begin learning

about their organization through the "Ten Ideals Program" and will map out a variety of activities to participate in at the Post over the course of the next year. This meeting is designed for the S.A.L. members at the 2nd to the 12th grade-level. If interested, contact David Wallace at david.f.wallace@lmco.com. **David Wallace - Squadron 162**

Communication - Lifeline Of Our Organization

We always say that Membership is the Backbone of our organization. Communication is the Lifeline of our organization. The worst thing we can do is not to communicate with our members.

The Detachment of Virginia can pride itself on many things. One thing is that with our size, we are well represented at the National Level. We have people serving as National Vice Commander, Chairman of the SAL National VA & R Commission, Child Welfare Committee. We also have had people serving on the National SAL Legislative Commission, Children and Youth Commission, and Membership Committee. The people serving in these capacities are serving because of their ideas, experience, and knowledge of the programs of the Sons Of The American Legion.

Our National Officers, Commissions, and Committees work hard throughout the year—not just at the Fall and Spring NEC Meetings—but all year to work the programs, promote the programs, and come up with new ideas to support these programs.

All of this information is not meant to stay at the National Level. It is meant to be sent down to the Detachments and from the Detachments to the Squadrons and from the Squadrons to the 'Blue Cap' Members.

Yes, we said it—the information is meant to come down to our individual members. The intent is to inform but also share ideas within our Detachments and Squadrons. But even more importantly to make our 'Blue Cap' members feel as though they are a member of something larger than their local Squadron. Let me repeat - we need to make our 'Blue Cap' members feel that

They are a part of something larger than their respective local Squadron.

There could be ideas for membership drives that are successful in Washington DC and could work in Virginia. There are fundraising ideas that are successful in Colorado that could be successful in Virginia. The exchange of ideas through communication can help our organization grow and become a stronger organization.

When this information is shared with our 'Blue Cap' members, some may be interested and want to work one of these projects for your Squadron. This is where we need to keep the information moving to ALL of our members—whether they serve as an officer or not.

One could argue the same thing for our Detachment. We have two conferences—Fall and Spring and a State Convention each year. We also have a SAL Legion Leadership College in August each year. We share a lot of information on these programs at these meetings. We also share a lot of information on what our Detachment is doing throughout the year.

As we move forward in time, more and more technology becomes available to help improve our communication. The internet and Social Media are the top two forms of communication that are used. At the same time, we can not let all of this technology prevent us from making the personal phone calls and offering a hand shake or saying hello to a member you have not seen. Regardless of how we do it, we must always be in communication with all of our members whether it is through the Internet, Social Media, phone call or whatever the means.

The Detachment of Virginia does a majority of its communication through e-mail, our Detachment Website (www.vasons.org), or our Detachment Facebook Page - Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia.

Over the past several years, it has become cost prohibitive to mail information out to our various Squadrons. Postage costs have increased and will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. This has forced us to change the way we communicate with our Squadrons. We now have to communicate through our website, Facebook Page, or via email.

We want to make sure that ALL of our Squadrons are getting the best and most up to date information about our activities, conferences, and conventions. We want to have more participation by our Squadrons at our Convention and Conferences.

So, to bring this to conclusion, we talked about the importance of communication and how it is supposed to work. So, what are our next steps. First, Squadrons will be getting the Officers List for next year. Please complete these forms with the most accurate information possible. Please provide email addresses for your officers. At least one or two officers should have email addresses. Provide complete phone numbers. Secondly, if you are a Squadron Officer, please check your email a couple of times a week. We do send a lot of information out to our Squadrons. Lastly, share this information with your Squadron Members. As I said early on, the worst thing we can do is not communicate. This is the main reason we lose members.
Scott Williams, Det. Adj.

Detachment of Virginia Wants You!!!

We want you!! Yes, we want you! While we are looking for members to grow our Detachment, we need members from our Squadrons to step up and serve at the Detachment Level. So, where is the help needed?

Help is needed in two areas. One, we need Squadron Members to serve on various Detachment Committees. And two, we need people to serve as various Detachment Officers.

Lets look at the Detachment Committees first. We would like to have our Detachment Committees have at least three people on each committee. Detachment Committees include Americanism, Children and Youth, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Child Welfare Foundation and Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, Public Relations, Information Technology, Homeland Security and Civil Defense, and Membership.

We would like for each Committee Member communicate to the Squadrons they are assigned the various programs under their Committee. For example, if you were on Americanism, you should be focusing on Boys State, Girls State, Flag Education, National Emergency Fund to name a few. We would also like for a prospective Committee Member to be able to call various Squadrons in a given region to find out what activities they are doing to support Americanism programs.

We would like for our Committee Chairman and Committee Members to have access to a computer and the internet. From time to time a Committee Member may need to do some online research on programs within your Committee.

As a Committee Chairman, you will need to give reports at our Fall and Spring Conferences. The best Committee Report would be one that would promote and inform the membership on some of the programs on your Committee. At some point, we



Would like to have the Chairman, with assistance from his Committee members, submit an article for The Focus spotlighting some of the programs of your Committee.

It is a tremendous honor for your Squadron to have a Squadron Member serve at the Detachment Level, in any capacity.

The second area, where our Detachment needs Squadron Members to serve at the Detachment Level, are Detachment Officers. Our Detachment Officers where we need help are Detachment Sgt. At Arms, Detachment Historian, Detachment Assistant Adjutant, and Detachment Vice Commander(s)(3).

Detachment Sgt At Arms and Detachment Historian are good places for people to get in at the Detachment Level. This is a great level to see how things operate at the Detachment Level.

For Detachment Vice Commander, we would like for individuals to commit to three years. Two years as Detachment Vice Commander and one year as Detachment Commander. If you do well and are inter-

ested, you could serve in a position at the National Level.

For prospective Detachment Vice Commander candidates, in addition to committing three years, two as Vice Commander and one as Detachment Commander, here are some requirements for serving as Detachment Vice Commander. For the Detachment Vice Commander we would like for him to have served as a Squadron Commander for one year.

We would like for the prospective candidate to have a steady job with some disposable income to cover expenses until they are reimbursed.

The candidate needs to look the part and be able to address the Legion Family in large group settings. This will help over come the fear of speaking in front of large groups. When attending meetings, conferences, and conventions, you would be expected to be dressed in a coat and tie.

We would like the person to have a computer with basic computer skills. They need to be able to send and receive emails. They will also need to be able to coordinate and hold regular Conference Calls in their regions.

Lastly, we would like the person to have a cell phone and they would need to return calls and messages in a timely manner.

If you are interested in serving on a Committee or as a Detachment Officer, please feel free to contact NEC Steve Gower (stevegower@cox.net), Clint Bolt (sonscdbolt@aol.com), or Scott Williams (sonsvadetadj@comcast.net).

We really are in need of help in all of these areas. We are a detachment of over 4,000 members and should be able to have people serving in these various positions. It is a very rich and rewarding experience to serve at this level. **Scott Williams Det. Adj.**

Spotlight On Americanism - Education

Education was first addressed by the American Legion in the 1919 Convention when it was realized that the development and support of a continuous constructive educational system needed to be designed to accomplish certain citizenship and Americanism objectives. Early on in those days there were no school boards, no school districts, no PTAs, and very little oversight, particularly regarding educational curriculum. The American Legion worked to ensure teachings in citizenship, the constitution, and physical fitness became a standard part of school curriculum nationwide.

Another early accomplishment was American Education Week. During World War I it was discovered that an alarming proportion of the American populous was illiterate and physically unfit. In 1921 the newly formed American Legion and the National Education Association entered in discussion which resulted in the observance of the first American Education Week, the third week in November. The basic principle that is driven from this observance is that nothing is more vital to the well-being of our nation than the education of our citizens.

Since those days, the American Legion's education programs main objectives are; to make it possible for any child of a veteran to receive an education beyond high school; to encourage the membership of the American Legion and its affiliated organizations to take an active part in the development and maintenance of a school system that will serve the needs of all children at every level; and to encourage students to select careers where personnel shortages exist.

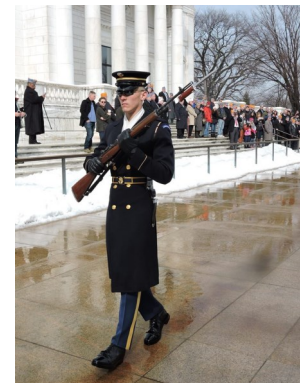
The first step that should be taken is to form a Coordinated Education Committee to facilitate cooperation between the Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders. Next, [here's how you can play a most important role:](#)

a partnership should be formed with your local educators including the school boards/districts and the PTA to promote **American Education Week, Boys State and Girls State, the Oratorical Contest, the Essay Contest, Flag Education**, as well as offering any other available scholarships. This partnership, once established, will open the door for numerous other opportunities such as patriotic observances, including Veterans Day programs, **American Legion School Award** program, **Veterans in the Classroom** program and countless community event support.

As in any calls made or actions taken in your community, the first step to be taken is always to communicate your intentions first with your Post Commander. There is no sense in wasting anyone's time or efforts if someone has already called on an educator. You should also consider that contact may have been made at a school from another Post or Squadron, there are no borderlines to be observed; when you call an educator for an appointment, ask if they have previously received a visit from a Legion representative.

I would like to encourage all reading this to get involved, more information is available thru the American Legion's website and there are a number of publications detailing more information which can either be downloaded or obtained from Emblem Sales as follows: The Guide for Parents and Students # 755.209, American Education Week #23-006, Policy on Education

23-005, PACT (Post, Auxiliary and Community Together) # 23-002, American Legion School Awards Medal program #23-007, Veterans in the Classroom # 23-015 & 23-016. Source: American Legion Americanism Manual (also available at www.legion.org). *Submitted by National Americanism Commission, Chairman, Danny Smith and National Americanism Commission Member, Jim Borgman.*



April - Children and Youth Month

This issue will come out at the very end of April. April is Children and Youth Month and we hope that our Squadrons did fundraisers in support of the various Children and Youth Programs. We will look briefly at the various Children and Programs that the Sons support.

Child Welfare Foundation - this is the Hallmark program of the Sons Of The American Legion. The Sons raised over \$6 million to date for this program. Its mission, *'Our foremost philanthropic priority is to provide other nonprofit organizations with a means to educate the public about the needs of children across this nation.'* Non profit organizations dedicated to the welfare of American Children are awarded grants from the American Legion Child Welfare

Foundation.

Josh Dogs/GI Josh - the Josh and Friends Project is emerging to national attention with the ability to impact the lives of even more children by introducing the book "I'll Be O.K." and the cuddly stuffed animal named "Josh." Our children are overcoming the fear and anxiety of being in the hospital and feeling alone, so the Josh and Friends Project is helping to transform anxious hospital stays for children.

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals - Headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah they have raised over \$4.7 Billion supporting a network of over 170 hospitals

throughout the United States and Canada. These funds have gone on to support research, training, the purchase of equipment and pay for uncompensated care with the mission of to save and improve the lives of as many children as possible.

This is only a sample of the Children and Youth Programs that our organization supports. We did not cover every program and gave only a brief description of the ones we mentioned here. If you want more information, please go to www.legion.org. Please consider supporting these programs this year or in the upcoming year as you begin to plan next year's activities. **Source—American Legion**

MySAL—A Membership Tool

Our Squadron, Squadron 293 (Purcellville, Virginia), signed up for MySAL in 2013. Our renewals for 2014 slowed and we were able to use MySAL to help make our 100% for the year. Once we got access, we downloaded the information for our Squadron in .csv format (comma delimited). We were able to create mailing labels for all of our members. We created a Membership Invoice where we promoted some of our accomplishments at the National, State, and Local levels and explained what their dues money was used for including donations to CWF and NEF. We also requested updates on the Member's information. We then mailed these membership invoices or renewal notices to our unpaid members. As a result of our mailing, we were able to have the remaining unpaid members pay their dues for the year.

When our members sent their dues in along with their updated

membership information, we can go into MySAL and update their membership information, 'real time'. With the access to MySAL, your Squadron can better maintain your membership records. If your members have a change to their information, have them fill out a Member Data Form and use that as your backup when updating their information in MySAL. By maintaining these records on MySAL, this will help you communicate with your members. It will also help the National Organization communicate with your members through The National Update.

MySAL is not set up to do Transfers. The Member Data Form is still needed for Transfers. But you can update other information. You can use MySAL to update Birthdates, Phone Numbers, and E-mail Addresses. With this information available to you online, your Squad-

Ron can keep your members informed on Squadron and Post activities. Remember that our members are the lifeline of our organization and we need to make them feel a part of something larger than our local Squadron. MySAL will help do that. If your Squadron has not signed up for MySAL.org, please do so today!

To date, the Detachment Of Virginia has 21 Squadrons signed up on MySAL. We would like to see all of our Squadrons signed up for MySAL. The form is available at www.legion.org/sons and look for the MySAL on the right hand side. **Scott Williams, Detachment Adjutant**

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. The 2015 Legion College will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Midlothian from August 7 to 9.

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.. Topics covered will be Officer's Duties, Membership, Programs, and Consolidated Reporting.

With elections coming up over the next couple of months, it would be good to start planning to send someone or a group from your Squadron to our Legion College in August. Registration fees are \$70 and should be sent to Department Headquarters by July 23, 2015. Rooms at the Richmond-Midlothian Doubletree Hotel are \$105.37 per night including tax. Reservations need to be made separately with the hotel by July 23, 2015.

This will also be a great opportunity to meet your newly elected Detachment Officers for the 2015- 16 year. We look forward to seeing you there!



Washington Conference and Sons Spring Conference Photos



SAL National Vice Commander, Jeff Evans (Left Photo) looks on at the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier. Right Photo, SAL National Commander, Mike Moss lays a Wreath at The Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier.



SAL National Commander, Mike Moss and SAL National Vice Commander, Jeff Evans lay the Virginia wreath at the Korean Memorial - Left Photo. Last photo on right, Sons participants at the Wreath Laying Ceremonies of the 2015 Washington Conference.



In the Spring Conference Photos to the left, PNC, Dan Dellinger addresses the Sons Spring Conference talking about his year as National Commander and issues with the VA. In the second photo, Detachment of Virginia presents Squadron 120 with their Squadron Charter.

Detachment Activities



2014 Fall Conference - Membership Chairman, Linwood Moore, presenting National Membership Award and All Time High to Past Detachment Commander, Doug Ferrell.



Det. Vice Commander, Rick Pregnall at AL Post 320 Oratorical Competition with the 12th District Commander.



Spring Conference 2015 - SAL PNVC, Clint Bolt, SAL Nat'l. Vice Cdr., Jeff Evans present SAL Committee Chairman Ermeritus, Chic Ferguson with Honorary Detachment Commander's Cover and Plaque. PDCs AD Carter and Bob Borkovich and NEC Steve Gower also honored Mr. Ferguson.



Squadron 284 held a Boston Butts Fundraiser on April 5. The Squadron made over \$1,700 from the event. This is one of this Squadron's major Fundraisers during the year. They do two of these fundraisers each year. One in November—one week before Thanksgiving and one in the Spring—one week before Easter. The profit made on this event paid for two boys to attend Boys State and two girls to attend Girls State. The remaining funds were used to help award Squadron Scholarships to local Colonial Heights High School Students. At the Fall Fundraiser, they donated one to a new Post 284 member who was unemployed. They have donated these to Homeless Shelters.



SAL 180 Christmas Party-PNC Dan Dellnger in top photo. SAL Member taking pictures of children sitting on Santa's lap. Post 180 Legion Family with Santa Claus at the Christmas Party at Post 180 - Vienna



Detachment Mid Winter Meeting. Newly appointed Det. Cdr. Rick Pregnall installed by SAL Nat. Vice Cdr., Jeff Evans. Mid Winter Meeting Attendees group photo. Det. Chaplain, Robert Wilson at Wreath Laying Ceremony at Blandford Cemetery, Petersburg.

WANT TO ADD A SQUADRON?

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 Detachment Commander Richard Pregnall, Detachment Vice Commander, Dellie Suiter (Eastern Region), Detachment Vice Commander, David Tuck (Western Region) or Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams. We would be glad to help you in any way to get a Squadron started.

THE FOCUS

The Focus is the Detachment of Virginia, Sons Of The American Legion's E-Letter or newsletter . This is a great tool for our Squadrons to promote their activities and accomplishments. Every Squadron does something within the Detachment. It can be putting flags on veterans graves to a Fisher House Fundraiser to having a Squadron Member who is an Eagle Scout to a Child Welfare Foundation Fundraiser. We want to hear what your Squadron is doing.

It does not take that much time to put a simple article together for The Focus. A few of our Squadrons contributed articles to this issue. The basic points or questions the article needs to answer are as follows: 1. What was the event? Dinner, Raffle, etc. 2. Who held the event? 3. What was the event for? 4. When was the event held? 5. Where was the event held? 6. Other highlights from the event... 7. What were the results from the event? How much did you raise?

We are in REAL need of getting articles from our Squadrons on their various activities. We received over 35 Consolidated Reports this year. We know Squadrons are active. We want to hear from you!

Please send your articles to Scott Williams at SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net

‘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.

Commander's Corner - A Time Of Transition, Detachment Commander, Rick Pregnall. Continued from page 2

we as a Detachment/National Organization have nothing to show for our member's hard work and dedicated hours of service. In return we have nothing to show to Congress have we've done to prove we have earned our Charter. Say your Squadron only has 1 member who did 1 thing all year. We have 70 Squadrons within the Detachment of VA. So that means if every Squadron turned a Consolidated Report with only 1 even that would still be 70 Consolidated Reports and 100% reporting for the 1st time!! Guys something is really better than nothing.

If I could ask you to take a minute and think to why you joined the S.A.L.? For me it is to honor my Father and Grandfathers, who have given me their priceless heritage. **Det. Cdr. Rick Pregnall and Det. Adj. Scott Williams**

Help Wanted!

The Detachment is looking for an Assistant Detachment Adjutant. We are looking for someone to help compile, maintain, and distribute the Detachment Directory in Microsoft Access or another Database program.

If interested, please contact Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams at 571 236-4831(Cell), 703 687-4775(Home), or by email at SonsVA-DetADJ@comcast.net.

Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia

"The Focus"

Articles and information contributed by: Detachment Commander Richard Pregnall, Linda Hardwick (Department Headquarters), Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams, Linwood Moore, Bob Borkovich, SAL National Americanism Commission Chairman, Danny Smith, SAL National Americanism Commission Member, Jim Borgman, and David Wallace, Squadron 162. **Photographs provided by:** Scott Williams, Linwood Moore, Squadron 284 Members, and Detachment Commander, Richard Pregnall.

Edited By: Scott Williams



The Sons of The American Legion

VA&R Commission

National Newsletter

April 2015

Becoming a VAVS Representative or Deputy Representative

Submitted by Doug Murphy

What is meant by being a VAVS Representative or Deputy? What are the duties of this position how does one become such a person?

A VAVS Representative or Deputy is an appointed position. This person becomes a part of the VAVS committee whose job is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Director and other concerned staff in coordinating plans and policies for community participation in the VAVS Volunteer Program. This Committee is generally chaired by the Associate Medical Director and the Deputy Chair is the "Chief" of Voluntary Service. Its members are the Rep's and Dep's of each service organization active at the Va. Hospital.

The duties of a Rep or Dep are simple, attend the quarterly meetings, be an active volunteer member and report the information back to your Detachment. Making sure that all information such as policies, procedures, needs and special programs of the hospital are being relayed down to the Squadron members

To qualify as such a person, one should have sufficient time to attend the VAVS quarterly meetings and participate in its activities and have a desire to help the Veterans who use that facility. This person should also have sufficient leadership ability to gain the respect and support of the Detachment they represent. They must be able to understand and explain to the Detachment and Squadrons the VAVS programs, the issues affecting the hospital and the Veterans in its care. Also having the great ability to coerce, cajole, plead and beg for volunteers and donations to support the programs and events put on by the hospital.

Once you are selected by your Detachment, a Certification form should be completed by the Detachment, Department and sent to the National Authorized Certified Official. You should then receive your confirmation letter from The American Legion, which will also be sent to the Chief of Voluntary Service. You then contact the Chief of Voluntary Services to schedule your training and background check. After training, and you are accepted by VA, you will begin your work as a Representative or Deputy of the Sons of The American Legion at that VA hospital.

“National Veterans Assistance Day”

May 16th 2015

Submitted by Mark McCue

Once again, it will be “National Veterans Assistance Day” and the myriad of needs facing our Veterans is constantly growing. On Saturday May 16th 2015 Sons of The American Legion Squadrons from all across this great nation, will be joining together to assist our deserving Veterans with those needs.

Sons will be helping Veterans in their own neighborhood and communities; it doesn't get much better than that. Whether it is helping with yard work, household hold chores, running some errands or a community event for Veterans or just spending a little of your time with the less mobile Veterans or those that are hospital bound.

We must also see if we can assist the family members of our servicemen and women. Just knowing that their families are being looked after is a huge relief for our service members and a great way of showing our appreciation for their service.

With today's privacy laws finding a veteran in need sometime proves to be a difficult task. The National VA&R Commission has developed a poster that you can distribute that invites Veterans to contact you.

Another way of getting the word out is to let Veteran Service Providers know about your desire to help. A good place to start is your Post service officer, town or County Veterans agent and Blue Star Mothers. Any of these can help you by letting their clients or members know you are available to assist.

All Squadrons are encouraged to develop an active VA&R program which encourages all its members to participate in” National Veterans Assistance Day”. This can be coordinated as a group effort or each member can assist Veterans on their own. This is also a great way to expose your fellow members to the satisfaction you get when you help Veterans. There are no special skills needed to assist our Veterans just a desire to help Veterans and their families.

Since May of 2008, "National Veterans Assistance Day" has been growing and we hope that May 16th 2015 will be our biggest year yet. So dust off your shovels and rakes, gas up the lawn equipment, rally your fellow Squadron members and let's get this one done!

Please do not forget to record your hours and money spent on your Consolidated Report Forms.

Charles B. Rigsby Volunteer of the Year Award

Submitted by Chairman Clint Bolt

This is the most prestigious individual award given by The Sons of The American Legion. It recognizes the very best of the best, and speaks right to the very heart of why we were established. That is to "Volunteer" for and assists America's Veterans.

Names like PNC. Bill Sparwasser, Doug Murphy, Ersal King and last year's recipient Bruno Williamson. These are some of the men that have been selected, in years past, as our "Volunteer of The Year". To further Honor these recipients the National Commander makes each a Distinguished Guest of our National Convention.

The application and guidelines are on our National web site and it can be reproduced by detachments for their Squadrons.

Squadrons submit their member to the Detachment Adjutant at their Detachment Convention where the Detachments select one winner and that is sent to National Adjutant, Indianapolis IN. Thirty (30) days prior to Nation Convention. Our National winner will be selected from those entries at National Convention in Baltimore Md. this summer.

Missing in America Project

Submitted by Greg Price

The Missing in America Project is sometimes called MIAP for short. It was launched nationwide in early 2007 by Fred Salanti, a former Major in the U.S. Army during Vietnam. The MIAP is made up of volunteers that are willing to visit funeral homes and mortuaries across the U.S., for the purpose of helping locate, identify and inter any unclaimed cremated remains (cremains) of our Veterans that may be sitting on shelves sometime for many, many years.

In May 2007, The American Legion showed its support for the MIAP with Resolution 24. This resolution lets Legionnaires know they can assist in locating and identifying the created remains that have been unclaimed in their local areas.

We Sons of The American Legion have also shown our support for Resolution 24. We too, have committed ourselves to visiting funeral homes in our communities, and assist in finding unclaimed remains. Then we seek to obtain the documentation that will help to secure a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.

One example of those forgotten Veterans that had been sitting on shelves for years. The McCormack brothers Zuinglius and Lycurgus fought with Indiana's 132nd and 103rd Infantry Regiments in the Civil War. They had been sitting on a shelf since their deaths in 1908 and 1912 respectively. MIAP volunteers discovered them in 2013 and with their help were able to get them buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

So far, 33 states have passed legislation that will hold Funeral Homes harmless for sharing any personal information with non-family members that have volunteered to help get Veteran cremains off the shelves and to help inter them with the Honors that they have earned and deserve.

Since 2007, more than 2000 veterans have been located and buried across the country. Their military service spans from the civil war to the Vietnam War eras. All Veterans that are located and identified as Honorably Discharged from service will be interred with full military honors.

Not all unclaimed cremains are veterans. That is why it is important to get as much information as possible to verify if any are Veterans. Ask if there is a DD214 available or any military documentation that shows their release from service was under condition other than dishonorable.

Share the information you find with your Post Service Officer. If there is a discharge or a document that **does not** show Dishonorable, the service Officer can contact a National Cemetery in your state to arrange a possible burial date.

You can also ask the Funeral home for the name of, their date of birth, date of death and social security number. Then with this information the Service Officer can contact the MIAP State Coordinator (go to miap.us and click on contact us, scroll to your state). They will then contact National Military record Center in St. Louis and fill out the National Cemetery Scheduling and Eligibility Office verification form on each cremain. Once those verifications are returned you will know if that cremain is a Veteran.

The possibility of getting one of those forgotten Veterans buried with Honor could begin with you. Visit those Funeral homes see if there are any remains. Let your MIAP coordinator know which homes you visited so that information can be added to the list of visited funeral homes

Helping with this project is just another way the Sons of The American Legion support our Veterans. The bottom of the POW MIA flag says, "You Are Not Forgotten". Let's continue to remember them and help them join their military brothers and sisters, so they can hear the words "Welcome Home".

Fisher House

Submitted by Chuck Treat

Fisher House Foundation receives 10th consecutive "Four-Star" rating from Charity Navigator

March 2014

For the tenth year in a row, Fisher House Foundation has received the coveted "Four-Star" rating for sound fiscal management from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier charity-rating agency, placing Fisher House among the top 1% of charities nationwide.

Out of the thousands of nonprofits Charity Navigator evaluates, only one out of four earns 4 stars — a rating that, now, with our new accountability and transparency metrics, demands even greater rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness," said Ken Berger, president and CEO, Charity Navigator.

Charity Navigator helps guide intelligent giving by evaluating the financial health and accountability & transparency of roughly 5,500 mid-to-large sized charities that garner roughly 50% of all private contributions made in the USA each year (not including houses of worship). Charity Navigator accepts no advertising or donations from the organizations it evaluates, ensuring unbiased evaluations, nor does it charge the public for this trusted data.

"We are humbled that our nation's premier charity-rating agency has recognized Fisher House Foundation ten years in a row for the work we have done for our military families," said Ken Fisher, Chairman of Fisher House Foundation.

"Our 4-star Charity Navigator rating demonstrates to our supporters that we take our fiduciary and governance responsibilities very seriously."

"Only 1% of the charities we rate have received at least 10 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Fisher House Foundation outperforms most other charities in America.

This "Exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Fisher House Foundation from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust," Berger said.

Forbes, *Business Week*, and *Kiplinger's Financial Magazine* and others have celebrated Charity Navigator's unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. Charity Navigator evaluates ten times more charities than its nearest competitor and currently attracts more visitors to its website than all other charity rating groups combined, thus making it the leading charity evaluator in America. Charity Navigator's irrefutable data shows that users of its site gave more than they planned to before viewing its findings.

A Fisher House is "a home away from home" for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. The homes are normally located within walking distance of the treatment facility or have transportation available. There are 64 Fisher Houses located on 23 military installations and 24 VA medical centers. Many more houses are under construction or in design.

About Fisher House

Fisher House Foundation is best known for a network of comfort homes where military and veterans' families can stay at no cost while a loved one is receiving treatment.

These homes are located at major Military and VA Medical Centers nationwide, close to the medical

center or hospital they serve. Fisher Houses have up to 21 suites, with private bedrooms and baths. Families share a common kitchen, laundry facilities, a warm dining room and an inviting living room. Fisher House Foundation ensures that there is never a lodging fee. Since inception, the program has saved military and veterans' families an estimated \$235



64 Houses In Operation - 25,000 Families Served In 2014
\$282,000,000 In Savings To Families Since 1990
5.8 MILLION Days Of Lodging Provided

million in out of pocket costs for lodging and transportation.

Fisher Houses are given to the U. S. Government as gifts. Military service secretaries and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the homes. The Fisher House Foundation, Inc., a not-for-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the

IRS code, builds new houses, and assists in the coordination of private support and encourages public support for the homes.

The foundation also manages a grant program that supports other military charities and scholarship funds for military children, spouses and children of fallen and disabled veterans.

Volunteers

Fisher Houses have full-time salaried managers, but depend on volunteers and voluntary support to enhance daily operations and program expansion. Learn more about volunteering by contacting your local Fisher House.

Assist at a Local Fisher House

At our Fisher Houses, volunteer opportunities include: bringing in meals and snacks for residents, helping with general housekeeping chores, organizing goods drives such as paper product drives, cleaning supplies, laundry supplies, etc. Also, there are often young mothers and fathers in the homes who may feel overwhelmed, our volunteers offer babysitting service and help play with the children to give the parents a break and some quiet time.

During the holidays we often have volunteers who will help with decorating, children toy drives, and gifts for those staying at the home through the holidays.

Some Fisher Houses have a 'wish list' of items that the manager would like to add and/or replace in the house. These wish lists have included large items such as children's back yard play sets, barbeque grills, laptop computers for each room, outdoor tables and chairs, as well as smaller items such as books, DVDs, and small appliances.

We also welcome volunteers to tend to the gardens surrounding the house. Although the homes and landscape are maintained by the military base and the Veterans Administration, both are limited in offering enhancements to the landscape. Our volunteers often step in and plant the seasonal flowers and shrubbery to make the homes an even more inviting environment.



*For more about Fisher House Foundation,
please visit: www.FisherHouse.org*

S.A.L. National VA&R Committee

National VA&R Chairman

Clint Bolt — sonscdbolt@aol.com

National VA&R Vice-Chairman

Doug Murphy — doug_m_3214@yahoo.com

VA&R Commission Members

Mark McCue — mbrianrne@charter.net

Gregory Price — grinnerman@msn.com

Daniel O'Rourke — Danmo42455@yahoo.com

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Chuck Treat — ChuckTreat@aol.com

Gary Crocket — gncrockett1@gmail.com

Raymond Thornton — jjct@bellsouth.net



National Veterans Assistance Day

May 16, 2015

“You Served US,” now it’s our time to serve you.

Finding the opportunity to be of service...for those who served...

- Take a Veteran to the store • Visit a Veteran at home • Invite a Veteran to dinner
- Take treats to Veterans at your local nursing home
- Sponsor a group of Veterans to an Baseball game or other local Event
- Sponsor a group of Veterans today at the Museum
- Invite to the Post for dinner and camaraderie with other Veterans • Visit our Veterans at the V.A.
- Does a Veteran need help with house repairs?

Find the Opportunity!



Sons of The American Legion

How may we
be of SERVICE?

Contact:



Sons Of The American Legion Detachment Of Virginia 2015 Scholarship Application

In an effort to promote programs, which encourage its members to seek higher education, the Sons Of The American Legion, Detachment Of Virginia is proud to continue its Annual College Scholarship Competition.

The winner of the scholarship will be announced at the Detachment's July 2015 Detachment Convention in Roanoke. The individual will receive \$1,500, to be available for use during the 2015-16 school year (scholarship check is issued to the winner through the school's finance office).

Anyone interested in being considered for this scholarship must complete an application. The form is attached.

The rules of the scholarship program are as follows:

- Applicant must be an active member of a squadron within the Detachment of Virginia, Sons Of The American Legion.
- Applicant must be a high school senior who graduates with his class in the spring of 2015.
- Winner must attend an accredited college, university, or trade school.
- This is a one-time award. Any recipient of this scholarship may not apply in subsequent years.
- Applicants will be judged largely on their involvement in the activities in the Sons Of The American Legion. Transcripts, SAT Scores, GPA, work experience, and special interest will also be considered.
- List all grants and/or scholarships received.
- In addition to the application, the applicant must submit:
 1. A written recommendation from the applicant's squadron commander, and additional recommendation accepted from the American Legion Post Commander in support of the Application.
 2. An essay written by the applicant (not to exceed 800 words) explaining the reasons they feel they should receive this scholarship.
 3. Completed application and attachments must be postmarked no later than June 1, 2015 and sent to:

Clint Bolt, Chairman
Detachment Scholarship Chairman
9598 Bristersburg Road
Catlett, VA 20119

540 788-1212(H)
540 522-2545(C)

SonsCDBolt@aol.com

2015 S.A.L. Scholarship Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Telephone Number: _____

Squadron: _____ **Member Since:** _____

SAL Membership ID. # : _____

High School & Address: _____

High School Telephone Number: _____

College and Address: _____

College Telephone Number: _____

College Student ID #: _____