



# FOCUS



Volume 8, Issue 1 | November 2016

## Detachment Officers

- Detachment Commander – Johnny Baker
- Detachment Vice Commander—Willie Morgan
- Detachment Vice Commander—Victor Graulau
- Detachment Vice Commander—Jeff Lee
- Detachment NEC—Linwood Moore
- Detachment Alt-NEC– Robert Borkovich
- Detachment Adjutant—Scott Williams
- Detachment Finance Officer—Jeff Evans
- Detachment Chaplain-Robert Wilson Sr.
- Detachment Historian-Richard Pregnell
- Detachment Sgt At Arms-James Logan
- Detachment Judge Advocate-Steve Gower

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## Sons Hold Annual State Convention

The Sons Of The American Legion held its Annual Convention in Richmond to celebrate our accomplishments for the 2015 –16 year, present awards for Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, and elect officers for the new administrative year.

One of the first orders of business was to present the Detachment Scholarship Award. The Detachment Scholarship was presented to Andrew Evans of Squadron 327 (Norfolk). Scholarship Chairman Bolt read the essay written by Andrew Evans about responsibility in Americanism.

Candidate for American Legion National Commander, Brett Reistad addressed the membership as well. He talked about the support the Sons give on the legis-



Scholarship Chairman Clint Bolt presents Andrew Evans the Scholarship Award with Jeff and Jane Evans.

lative front as well as the support he will need to be elected American Legion National Commander.

New Officers were elected for the 2016 - 17 Year. The officers are as follows— Johnny Baker, Detachment Commander, Willie Morgan, Victor Graulau, and Jeff Lee, Detachment Vice Commanders.

We also recognized HB Hall, Jr. for his many years of service as Detachment Finance Officer and Detachment Commander on his retirement. Mr. Hall was also presented the Son Of The Year Award for the 2015—16 year. Several officers shared memories during this presentation.

## About This Issue

This issue will be the first issue for the 2016—17 year. This will issue will be a wrap-up of the year we just completed as well as a look ahead to the 2016 –17 year We will briefly re-cap the State and National Conven-

tions.

We will take a look at the new theme for this year for both the Detachment and National levels. We will take a look at membership at both Detachment and National levels.

We will spotlight our Children and Youth programs in this edition as well as look briefly at our Commander's project, St Judes.

It is early in the year and we still need to look to the future as we can always use help.

# Commander's Corner—Johnny Baker



**Detachment Commander Baker introducing his officers at the State Convention.**

To my fellow SAL members I would like to take this time to introduce myself. My name is Johnny Baker. I am a member of Squadron 320 (Spotsylvania). I have been a Squadron member for 10 years. I am also a dual member serving in the US Army in Desert Storm.

This years theme is Cultivating our Youth. I would like each Squadron to choose a younger member and start mentoring them. So, they can work one of the SAL programs or even move up to a Officers position in the Squadron or even in the Detachment.

The Commanders Project for this year is St. Jude's Children Research Hospital. The information on how to donate will be posted on the Sons web page. The information will be given to the Detachment Vise Commanders to be given out on their travels. The Squadrons will be mailed or e-mailed a copy of the project as well.

St Jude's mission - 'The mission of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is to advance cures, and means of prevention , for pediatric catastrophic

Diseases through research and treatment. Consistent with the vision of our founder Danny Thomas, no child is denied treatment based on race, religion or a family's ability to pay. Treatments invented at St Jude have helped push the overall childhood cancer survival rate from 20% to more than 80% since it opened more than 50 years ago. St Jude treats children from all 50 states and all over the world. Families never pay for treatment, travel, housing, or food so they can focus on helping their child live.

Please if you have any Questions please contact your area Vice Commanders and they will get you the information you need. If you have any Questions for me please contact me at [nx62065@hotmail.com](mailto:nx62065@hotmail.com). **Johnny Baker—Detachment Commander**

## Adjutant's Blog—November 2016

We had a very successful State Convention and National Convention this past Summer. We recognized Squadrons who did great things to support our Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation programs. We also recognized a long time supporter, Past Detachment Commander, and Detachment Finance Officer, HB Hall, Jr., for his many years of service to the Detachment.

But now we must look ahead to the year in front of us. It is another year with veterans needing our help, children needing our help, and our communities needing our support. But in order to do this, the most important part of this is our members, our Blue Cappers. For us to work the programs, we need our members. If our Squadrons have memberships to send in, please send them in.

Yes, it is early in the year, but in a few short months, the new Consolidated Report Forms will be sent out. So,

Please keep track of those hours worked and dollars donated.

Lastly, please consider Legion College next year. We had a great program this year with a lot of new Sons members attending for the first time. It will be at the same location in Richmond/Midlothian in August 2017.

We are going to leave the contact information that was included in the last issue of the focus in this space. If your Squadron has any questions, please feel free to contact one of our Past Detachment Commanders. If we can assist, please let us know.

Here are some of those Past Detachment Commanders and their email addresses. Linwood Moore—NEC ([woodman989@Aol.com](mailto:woodman989@Aol.com)), Bob Borkovich—Alternate NEC ([vapittfan959@yahoo.com](mailto:vapittfan959@yahoo.com)),

Jeff Evans, Detachment Finance Officer ([vacobblers@cox.net](mailto:vacobblers@cox.net)), Steve Gower—Detachment Judge Advocate ([stevegover@cox.net](mailto:stevegover@cox.net)). Scott Williams—Detachment Adjutant ([SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net](mailto:SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net)), Clint Bolt—Detachment Scholarship Chairman ([sonscdbolt@aol.com](mailto:sonscdbolt@aol.com)), and Doug Ferrell—Detachment Membership Chairman ([ferrells15@yahoo.com](mailto:ferrells15@yahoo.com)). We are here to serve and to help in anyway possible. We all want the same things. We want our organization to be successful and for all of our Blue Cappers to be successful in their support of our programs. So, please feel free to reach out to any of our Past Detachment Commanders for assistance. **Scott Williams—Detachment Adjutant**

**Remember—Day On The Hill on January 18, 2017 in Richmond at Department Headquarters.**

# 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 Vice Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission, Chairman of the SAL National VA & R Commission, and Child Welfare Committee. We also 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.

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, 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](http://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, 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. Secondly, encourage your members to provide you with their email addresses. Email appears to be the most efficient way to communicate. 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, Detachment Adjutant.**



**In the pictures above, HB Hall, Jr is presented with a plaque for his many years of service to the Detachment as Finance Officer. He is also presented the Son Of The Year Award for the 2015—16 year. He also served as Detachment Commander during the 2005—06 year.**

**Remember December 7, 2016 will be the 75th Anniversary of the Japanese Attack on Pearl Harbor.**



# 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, 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 interested, 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 to move up to Detachment 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 overcome 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 Judge Advocate, 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 Detachment Adjutant**



**New Detachment Officers—  
Commander, Johnny Baker; Vice  
Commanders –Willie Morgan,  
Jeff Lee, and Victor Graulau.**

**Here is wishing all of our Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and Sons Members a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!!!!**

## MySAL—A Membership Tool

Our 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. 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 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 Squadron can keep your members informed on Squadron and Post activities.

You 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](http://www.legion.org/sons) and look for the MySAL on the right hand side. **Scott Williams, Detachment Adjutant**

**Inauguration Day, January 20, 2017**

## And The Winners Are...2016 Year

|                             |               |                                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Americanism</b>          | <b>Small</b>  | <b>Squadron 270 (McLean)</b>         |
|                             | <b>Medium</b> | <b>Squadron 74 (Charlottesville)</b> |
|                             | <b>Large</b>  | <b>Squadron 2 (Petersburg)</b>       |
| <b>Children &amp; Youth</b> | <b>Small</b>  | <b>Squadron 120 (Disputanta)</b>     |
|                             | <b>Medium</b> | <b>Squadron 85 (Arlington)</b>       |
|                             | <b>Large</b>  | <b>Squadron 180 (Vienna)</b>         |
| <b>VA &amp; R</b>           | <b>Small</b>  | <b>Squadron 270 (McLean)</b>         |
|                             | <b>Medium</b> | <b>Squadron 67 (Hampton)</b>         |
|                             | <b>Large</b>  | <b>Squadron 327 (Norfolk)</b>        |





**Congratulations one and all on your accomplishments!!!**



# MySAL – Squadron Sign Up Form

The American Legion National Headquarters has designed a FREE and secure internet site to assist Squadron Adjutants in their day-to-day membership processing duties. This site serves as a direct portal from the local squadron to National Headquarters' membership system.

Features include:

-  View and Edit squadron membership
-  Generate reports
-  Reports available in CSV file format allowing users to work with the data in other applications such as Microsoft Excel and Access
-  Squadron Inquiry

**Payment process for individual membership dues does not change. Your Squadron must continue to transmit membership cards and dues payments to your State Headquarters.**

**Fill out this form and mail or fax to us to register. Please type or print.**

Yes! We would like to sign up for MySAL Officers Portal:

**State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Squadron Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information:** Does not have to be Squadron Adjutant. The information below indicates who to call with any questions and where to send correspondence and registration instructions once authorization to release data is received from the state headquarters.

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ID#:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail (required)** \_\_\_\_\_



Signature required, **must be Squadron Adjutant only**

Member ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_



Signature required, **must be Post Adjutant only**

Member ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail To: The American Legion IT Division  
Product Support Specialist  
5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216  
Fax: 317-860-3130 Phone: 800-433-3318**



## Detachment of Virginia 2016 Accomplishments



### Americanism

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 28               | # of Boys sponsored at Boys State                             |
| \$ 11,595.00     | Cost  |
| 12               | # of Girls sponsored at Girls State                           |
| \$ 4,064.00      | Cost  |
| 4                | # of Squadron Color Guards                                    |
| 90               | Total # of appearances  |
| \$ 300.00        | Cost  |
| 840              | # of Flags presented  |
| \$ 634.00        | Cost  |
| 35               | Flag Education Programs                                       |
| \$ 425.00        | Cost  |
| 276              | Hours   |
| 43               | Flag Retirement Ceremonies                                    |
| 3,087            | Flag presented (Cemeteries & Parades)                         |
| \$ 1,689.00      | Cost  |
| \$ 11,550.00     | In Scholarships Awarded                                       |
| 1644             | Hours for Educational Programs                                |
| 41,889           | Community Service Hours                                       |
| \$ 19,764        | Community Service Donations                                   |
| \$ 3,533.00      | National Emergency Fund (N.E.F.)                              |
| 77               | # of Blood Drives   |
| 88               | # of Pints Collected  |
| 5                | American Legion Baseball Teams                                |
| \$ 2,975.00      | Sponsorship Cost  |
| 0                | Boy Scout Troops Supported                                    |
| \$ 1,286.00      | Sponsorship Cost  |
| 15               | 5 Star / 10 Ideals Program                                    |
| \$ 55.00         | Sponsorship Cost  |
| <b>\$ 64,531</b> | <b>Overall Total Cost of Support for Americanism Programs</b> |
| <b>45,232</b>    | <b>Overall Service Hours for Americanism Programs</b>         |

### Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

|              |                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 469          | # of Visits to Homes/Centers  |
| 1588         | Hours of Service              |
| \$ 1,810.00  | Cash Donations                |
| \$ 11,640.00 | Cost of Items Donated         |
| 52           | # of Veterans helped (VA Day) |
| 102          | Hours of Service              |
| \$ 1,650.00  | Cost                          |
| \$ 6,746.46  | Support the Troops            |
| 759          | Service Hours                 |
| \$ 6,050.00  | Fisher House - Donations      |
| 435          | Hours of Service              |
| \$ 30,081.43 | Other Misc. Donations         |
| 19415        | Other Misc Hours of Service   |

### Children & Youth

|              |                              |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| \$ 17,325.72 | CWF Donations                |
| 1256         | CWF Hours of Service         |
| 0            | # of Josh Dogs given away    |
| \$ 3,644.00  | CMN Donations                |
| 396          | CMN Hours of Service         |
| \$ 2,538.00  | Special Olympics Donations   |
| 658          | Hours of Service             |
| \$ 40,845.84 | Other C&Y Projects Donations |
| 6384         | Other C&Y Projects Hours     |

### Overall Totals of Hours & Dollars Donated from Virginia Squadrons

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>\$ 319,497</b> | <b>Overall Cost of Donations for all Programs</b> |
| <b>79,583</b>     | <b>Overall Service Hours for all Programs</b>     |



## 2016 S.A.L. ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### **Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

- 66 REGISTERED (VAVS) REPRESENTATIVES
- MEMBER OF NATIONAL VAVS BOARD
- 455,656 TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS RECORDED WITH 21,913 VISITS AND \$1,618,370 IN CASH AND GIFTS
- \$89,525 DONATED TO FISHER HOUSE WITH 3,228 HOURS
- 15,098 HOURS WITH \$69,244 TO THE FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

### **Children & Youth**

- SINGLE LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION: \$360,299 WITH 66,542 HOURS OF SERVICE
- SPECIAL OLYMPICS - \$200,602 DONATED WITH 24,246 HOURS OF SERVICE
- CHILDRENS MIRACLE NETWORK - \$67,754 IN DONATIONS WITH 7,149 SERVICE HOURS
- \$646,154 AND 134,755 HOURS IN SUPPORT OF OTHER CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS, BRINGING THE TOTAL YEARLY DONATIONS TO ALL C & Y PROGRAMS TO \$1,310,035 WITH 236,338 SERVICE HOURS

### **Americanism**

- 1,006 BOYS STATE REPRESENTATIVES AT A COST OF \$218,569
- 9,019 COLOR GUARD APPEARANCES AT A COST OF \$77,778
- 148 AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL TEAMS SPONSORED AT A COST OF \$197,493
- OTHER TEAMS SPONSORED AT A COST OF \$123,345
- \$95,024 IN SUPPORT OF SCOUTING
- \$11,321 IN DONATIONS AND 1,964 SERVICE HOURS TO THE ORATORICAL PROGRAM INVOLVING 123 CONTESTANTS
- 12,130 HOURS AND \$29,671 TO JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS
- 38,399 FLAGS PRESENTED AT A COST OF \$76,895
- 1,041 FLAG EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT A COST OF \$18,099 WITH 5,166 HOURS
- 8,234 FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONIES
- 440,082 FLAGS PLACED AT CEMETERIES & GIVEN AT PARADES AT A COST OF \$88,390
- \$429,016 IN SCHOLARSHIPS WITH 12,909 HOURS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- 2,259 - 5 STAR / 10 IDEALS PROGRAMS AT A COST OF \$4,930
- VARIOUS COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS AT A COST OF \$977,099 AND 725,645 SERVICE HOURS
- \$39,224 IN DONATIONS TO THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND
- A TOTAL OF \$2,441,124 AND 792,121 HOURS OF SERVICE IN SUPPORT OF AMERICANISM PROGRAMS

### **2016 MEMBERSHIP**

**364,000 MEMBERS IN 6,113 SQUADRONS  
IN 54 DETACHMENTS**



## 2016 - 17 Committee Chairman

|                                   |   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Membership                        | - | Doug Ferrell               |
| Finance                           | - | Jeff Evans                 |
| Americanism                       | - | Jeff Lee                   |
| Children & Youth                  | - | Joe Gallagher              |
| Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation | - | Fred Vaccarella            |
| Veterans Employment & Education   | - | Jeff Evans                 |
| CWF & CMN                         | - | Bob Borkovich              |
| Legislative                       | - | Linwood Moore              |
| Public Relations                  | - | Victor Graulau             |
| IT                                | - | Victor Graulau             |
| Nominating                        | - | Steve Graulau              |
| Webmaster                         | - | Victor Graulau             |
| Constitution & ByLaws             | - | Jeff Evans, Scott Williams |

## Spotlight on Children and Youth

I trust and hope that this finds you all doing well and off to a great start this year with your Squadron SAL activities and promoting our programs. For those who don't know me yet, I am Joe Gallagher and I have the honor of being the Detachment of Virginia Chairman for Children and Youth for the 2016-2017 year. I am a member of Squadron 284 in Colonial Heights and serve as First Vice Commander.

I recently attended the National Conference on Children and Youth held in Indianapolis. I must tell you that seeing the power of our work and the positive effects that it is making on so many is quite humbling, but also quite confirming. What we are doing for our children and youth is beyond just a "Thank You".

Each of you should feel proud of the service you are providing and I honor each of you for your contributions toward all of our Children and Youth Programs.

I would like to encourage all the squadrons in Virginia to commit to at LEAST 2 Children and Youth Programs this year. I would like to ask that the first program be the St. Jude Children's Fund that our Detachment Commander, Johnny Baker, has chosen as his project for this year. I want to challenge each squadron to support our Commander's Project with a minimum of \$2.00 per member. We all know the effects of cancer and the toll it takes on us, both physically and financially. Let's join our Commander and get behind his project and make a difference in the lives of the St. Jude's children and their families.

The Second, (or more!) programs would be of your own choosing. We have many great ones from which to choose, if you need a list let me know.

I look forward to working with all of the squadrons in the Detachment of Virginia this year and please feel free to reach out to me if I can help in anyway. If you have a question, I will do my best to answer it on the spot. If I don't have the answer, I pledge to you that I will get you an answer as quickly as possible. You will find my contact info below and I am always available to you.

Lastly, I ask that all remember those that have and do defend this country each day. I give thanks daily for my Dad and his service in the Navy during WWII. **Joe Gallagher - Detachment Children & Youth Chairman**

“...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan...”

## A. Lincoln, 2nd Inaugural Address

My name is Daniel J. Riegle, and I am a veteran. I fought in the war to preserve the Union. I was 38 years old with a wife and family of five children when I enlisted on February 26th, 1864 in Company I of the 49th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. I was a farm laborer and had stayed away from the war as long as I could honorably do so. Times were hard and the \$160 enlistment bonus was as much as I could make working on another's farm in two years. So, to support my family and my country, I was enlisted by Capt. Kephart in the new Company I.

My first engagement with my Company was in the Battle of the Wilderness where we were only lightly engaged. But next, on May 10th, 1864, ours was one of the twelve regiments chosen to assault the Rebel works at Spotsylvania's infamous "Mule Shoe." The 49th Pennsylvania was amongst the twelve regiments, brigaded under Col. Emory Upton, who broke the Rebel line and captured a section of the enemy's guns, but I was wounded twice in the head by secesch musket balls. One left a dent in the left side of my head ½" wide, ¼" deep and 2" long that I would carry the rest of my life. This is where my journey truly began....

I was helped from the field by two comrades and brought to a dressing station. My wounds could not be properly dressed in the field so I was forwarded, through Belle Plain landing on the Potomac, to Campbell General Hospital in Washington City. After a stay there, I was furloughed home and then returned to a convalescent camp in Northern Virginia. Six weeks after my wounding, I was returned to Company I, now at Winchester City. For the rest of the War I remained on limited duty, gaining other physical ailments in camp and continuing to suffer dizziness and loss of hearing in my left ear which would continue for the rest of my life.

The 49th was engaged in many more actions of note as we moved from the Shenandoah Valley down to Petersburg and then pursued the Army of Northern Virginia to Sailor's Creek where we were engaged once more. After that, the 49th was detached and we eventually made our way back through Richmond and Fredericksburg to Northern Virginia and marched in the "Grand Review" for General Grant and President Johnson (after the assassination) down Constitution Avenue in Washington City.

It was in this last that I received the final blow to my health as I passed out from the heat and was unconscious for two days. Upon mustering out, I returned home to Snyder County, Pennsylvania and tried to resume my former occupation of farming. I could not support myself by physical labor and was aided by the charity of farmers who would allow me to work half days and do the lighter work.

You see, in those days there were no pensions or aid from the Government for wounded soldiers. We who had borne the battle and who carried the wounds in our bodies and in our minds were thrown back on our families and our local communities. After the first wave of welcoming home, we were seen as drunks and untrustworthy, as violent, as slackers and undependable as the reward for our service to the nation.

It was then that we began to band together in what became the "Grand Army of the Republic" or G.A.R. for short. I became a charter member of the Major William H. Byers Post, No. 612 of the Department of Pennsylvania. Within our Posts we could talk with other Veterans about what we had experienced, we raised money to help destitute or ill Brothers and to assist the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in battle, or who fell afterward to depression and suicide, and to bury our dead.

When we came together we found we had strength and petitioned the Government for pensions for those wounded or ill due to their service and unable to work (before this, pensions were only awarded on a case by case basis for those who had extraordinarily served the Government) and for the parents, widows and orphans of loyal soldiers, sailors, Marines and Revenue Cuttermen [i.e., what is today the Coast Guard] who died in or because of their service.

We of the G.A.R. were the living embodiment of patriotism when the Boy Scouts of America were founded in 1910 and when our sons went to war in 1898 and our grandsons in 1918. (In our pride, we would not let those Veterans join as we were composed of those who loyally served from 1861-1865. Our descendants went on to form the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, respectively, freely using our G.A.R. as a model.)

When my days were finally ended in 1901, I was receiving a generous pension of \$18 a month. I was surrounded by my Brothers of the G.A.R. and buried with military honors near my home in Beavertown, Snyder County,

“...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan...”

## A. Lincoln, 2nd Inaugural Address

Pennsylvania.

Pvt. Daniel J. Riegle, of Company I, the 49th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry was a real person. He was my twice-great grandfather and the story above is true.

The G.A.R. was the principal Veterans' organization for Union Veterans after the Civil War, being founded in 1866. By the 1890's it had grown to around 490,000 members in ~7,000 Posts across the nation. It was the first and largest racially integrated organization of the 19th Century. It was a political force that lobbied Congress for pensions and services to veterans and their surviving families. It filled the void that existed before there was a Department of Veterans' Affairs and assisted those suffering from physical wounds of camp and combat and what we would today identify as PTSD in the only ways available to it...by being community for and by serving Veterans.

As noted above, the G.A.R. was the model for the VFW and American Legion, which succeeded it. The G.A.R. ceased to exist when the last member (indeed the last reliably documented Civil War Veteran, Alfred Woolson, a drummer boy) died in 1956 at 107 years of age. Today the G.A.R. is represented by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) who were formed by the G.A.R. in 1881 to “keep green the memory of the “boys in blue”” and to be their successor and legal heir.

Today the American Legion stands in the gap for Veterans and families; providing services, petitioning Congress, lobbying the Department of Veterans' Affairs, standing up for Veterans and their families and providing a safe place for Brothers & Sisters who have served and by providing a ready ear and understand when another Veteran needs someone to listen.

My brother, a Navy Veteran of the Vietnam era and my father, a career Army veteran of World War II through the cold war eras, were members of the American Legion and my grandfather, an Army veteran of World War I, was a charter member of his American Legion Post. All stand in the legacy of the G.A.R.

I am myself am a Department of the Army Civilian of 36 years, am a Past Camp Commander of the Irish Brigade Camp No. 4 (SUVCW), Fredericksburg, VA and have the honor to be the current 3rd Vice Squadron Commander for Squadron 364, Sons of the American Legion, Woodbridge, VA. **Jay Rarick, Squadron 364, Woodbridge, Virginia.**

## Membership –Harvesting Super Heroes

In keeping with our Commander's theme this year of 'Cultivating our Youth', our membership theme this year is 'Harvesting Membership'. It takes members to carry out the various programs the Sons support.

The 'Big Idea' for our membership theme this year is that the more members we recruit, renew, restate or harvest, the more successful our programs will be. Or, we will be able to help more veterans and children in our communities. Our membership goal for this year is 4,675 members.

Our emphasis is to have a bountiful

Harvest so that we can successfully carry out the programs of the American Legion.

Our goals are—Williamsburg (Fall Conference) 35% with no zero squadrons and all Squadrons should be at 35% or higher; Virginia Beach (Spring Conference) 80% with Squadrons having a minimum 70% renewal rate and all Squadrons being at 80% or higher in membership.; and finally Herndon (State Convention) 90 to 100% with all Squadrons having a minimum 85% renewal rate and all Squadrons being at 90 to 100%.

Incentives are Detachment Individual Recruiting Awards for recruiting three

New members, Chuck Belles award for squadrons achieving 110% membership, and 100% Squadron Ribbons.

Our organization is one of heroes. We are being asked to be Super Heroes by recruiting Legion and Auxiliary members. By helping the Legion and Auxiliary grow, the Sons should will grow as well. We are being encouraged to sign up three Legionnaires this year. Currently there are 13 to 20 million eligible veterans that qualify for membership. **Scott Williams, Detachment Adjutant.**

# 2016 State Convention Photos



**CWF Plaque in Memory of PDC Chip Byers.**



**Mbrshp Chairman, Jeff Evans presents Chuck Belles Awards.**



**Dept. Cdr. Jim Chapman addresses the Sons Convention.**



**NEC, Linwood Moore gives the Legislative Report.**



**Brett Reistad addresses the Sons Convention.**



**C&Y Chairman, Willie Morgan presents C & Y Award.**



**JAG, Steve Gower presents the award to HB Hall, Jr.**



**Det. Cdr. Johnny Baker introduces the new officers.**

## Leadership College Our Future Leaders

Each year, The Sons Of The American Legion holds a Leadership College in conjunction with the American Legion Leadership College, in August. The 2016 Legion College was held at the Doubletree Hotel in Midlothian from August 12 to 14.

We had a full class and covered topics from Membership 'How To's', Programs, Reporting, and Ambassador's Training for Squadron Officers. This year's Spirit Award Winner was Mike Latham from Squadron 284 (Colonial Hieghts). Mr. Latham was a first time attendee to this year's Legion College.

This year's SAL Legion College was different than past years. We had several officers and committee chairman talk about programs and various aspects of leadership. We spent more time on fundraising and how to do fundraisers. The group also shared different ideas on fundraisers that their respective

Squadrons do each year. We covered some of the standard topics like membership and reporting. Both of which are important to the success of our organization.

We do want to hear ideas from you. What would you like to see at a future Sons Legion Leadership College? Please email ideas to Steve Gower (Stevegower@cox.net) or Scott Williams (SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net). Mark your calendars now for 2017, August 11 to 13 in Richmond.



**Left-Candidate for AL National Commander, Denise Rohan addresses the Sons class. Top, Sons class in session. Bottom, Detachment Commander Johnny Baker, hands a Sons graduate his Legion College Diploma.**



## Squadron Everlasting

Please keep the families of these Squadron members in your thoughts and prayers. Kenneth Young (Squadron 25), H R Jones (Squadron 146), Gayle Wilmoth (Squadron 1097), Kenneth Collins (Squadron 1097), Arthur Moser (Squadron 1097), Dwight Holmes (Squadron 67), Robert Faison (Squadron 2), Harry Ferrell, Jr. (Squadron 325), David Surin (Squadron 162), John Surin (Squadron 162), Dwight James (Squadron 67), Mike Hatcher (Squadron 8), Donald Sparrow (Squadron 56), and Bob Hansen (Squadron 330).

If your Squadron has any members who have passed away, please email Linda Hardwick (membership@valegion.org), Scott Williams (SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net), and Detachment Chaplain, Robert Wilson, Sr (robertwilsonsr54@gmail.com)



### Squadron 284 Fundraiser.

From Linwood Moore—"I would like to thank everyone that supported our spaghetti dinner to night at the American Legion in Colonial Heights . We raised a little over 2400.00 dollars for two special women tonight. The Special Olympic children and some of the Colonial Heights Police Dept. That helped support us thank everyone one of you . Linwood Moore The Sons of The American Legion Squad. 284 we just keep giving back to our community . '

From Roger Santini -'No Shots No Nibbles for Mya and the entire Santini family want to say THANK-YOU to all involved in the Sons of the American squad# 284 Spaghetti Dinner. It was very humbling to see such wonderful people coming together..... doing something to make a difference for two families.....not because they had to it or were told to do it....but... because they saw an opportunity to help someone in need was the only reason they needed. The love and support received from those who bought

## Around the Detachment...

and took the time out of their busy lives to spend the evening with us was truly amazing. Again, THANK-YOU so much to all involved !!!! The Santini family is truly honored to be around such great people!!!! '



### Sons Legion College

2016-various photos including SAL Director, Steve Gower; Instructor, Scott Williams; and Detachment Commander, Johnny Baker; Department Leadership - Dept Cdr., Dave Stein, Dept Pres., Sallie Rossman, and Det Cdr., Johnny Baker; Dept Cdr Stein talks to Sons session about his goals for the year; Dept Pres., Rossman talks to the Sons Class about her project for the year.



Squadron 327 Fish Fry Fundraiser to benefit VA & R programs with Squad Cdr, Fred Vaccarella, Det Fin Offi., Jeff Evans, and Nat'l VA & R Chairman, Clint Bolt.



### Upcoming Dates

Spring Conference (Virginia Beach, Virginia)

State Convention (Herndon, Virginia)

Legion College (Richmond, Virginia)

March 10—12, 2017

July 13—16, 2017

August 11-13, 2017



# Around the Detachment



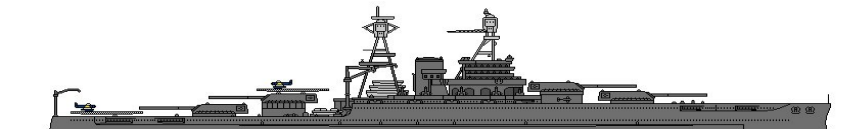
Squadron 284 cooks out for American Legion Riders 6th Annual Rally.



**2016 National SAL Convention—** Previous page bottom right - Det. Cdr., Richard Pregnell accepts CWF Award for the Detachment of Virginia. Left side—SAL Nat'l. VA & R Chairman, Clint Bolt gives the final report and presents National VA & R Awards. Left Bottom and above— SAL Detachment Members in the National Convention Parade.



**Fall NEC—** Detachment Commander, Johnny Baker presented with his Commander's School Certificate by SAL National Commander, Jeff Frain. SAL Detachment leadership at Fall NEC supporting Candidate for National Commander, Brett Reistad. SAL Members Steve Gower, Clint Bolt, Kevin Chaplin, Clint Bolt, and Scott Williams.



## 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 Johnny Baker, Detachment Vice Commander, Willie Morgan (Eastern Region), Detachment Vice Commander, Jeff Lee (Western Region), Detachment Vice Commander, Victor Graulau (Northern 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](mailto:SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net)

Find us on 

Like us on Facebook - Sons Of The American Legion Detachment Of Virginia. We currently have 310 likes. With our membership at 4,500, we should have 450 likes on our Facebook Page. This is one great way to promote our activities and accomplishments. Please like us today to keep up with our Detachment Activities.

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

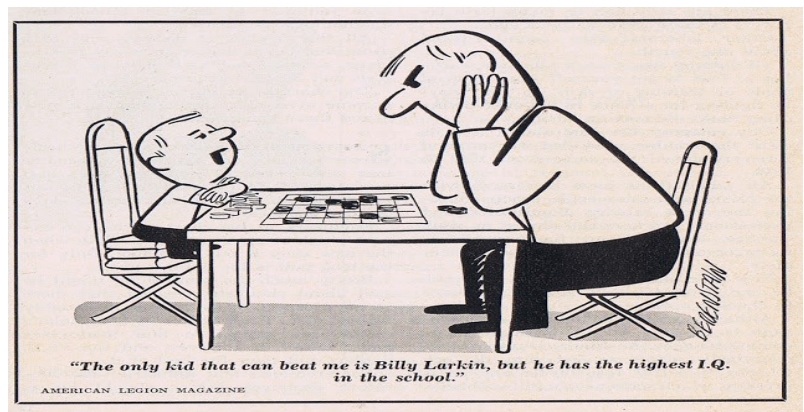
SAL members include males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership. Members of The American Legion, [American Legion Auxiliary](#) and Sons of The American Legion comprise the Legion family, which has a combined membership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

### \*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*

Please send all email correspondence to the Detachment Adjutant at [SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net](mailto:SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net). I have been told that there have been email messages sent to the Detachment Adjutant which were never received. However, we do not check the old email account—[SonsVADetADJ@yahoo.com](mailto:SonsVADetADJ@yahoo.com). Please do not use this email address anymore. We rarely check that email account. Thank You!!

**Detachment Officers and Committee Members Needed** - If you are interested in serving at the Detachment Level—either as an officer, committee chairman, or committee member, please contact Detachment Commander, Johnny Baker, NEC, Linwood Moore, Alt NEC, Robert Borkovich, or Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams. It is a great honor to serve and represent your Squadron.



### Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia

#### "The Focus"

**Articles and information contributed by:** Detachment Commander Johnny Baker, Linda Hardwick (Department Headquarters), Detachment Adjutant, Scott Williams, Joe Gallagher, Detachment Children & Youth Chairman, and Jay Rarick, Squadron 364 3rd Vice Commander. **Photographs provided by:** Kevin Chaplin, Detachment NEC, Linwood Moore, and various other SAL members.

**Edited By:** Scott Williams