



“Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage”

Commanders Communication—March 2020

Spring Detachment Executive Committee (DEC) Meeting: Due to concerns over the Coronavirus (COVID19) and following guidance from the CDC and the Wisconsin Department of Public Health, our March 21st DEC Meeting was cancelled. We will hold our Spring DEC via conference call on Tuesday, April 14th. An agenda and instructions for joining the call will be forwarded in advance of the meeting. Please stay safe and healthy as we all adjust to the changes happening every day. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Membership: I have to talk a little about membership! First, we have three new squadrons that have been chartered so far this year: #324 Osseo, #33 Neenah, and #270 Theresa. Congratulations and welcome! I would also like to congratulate the 54 squadrons that are at 100% or more, 17 of those at an all-time high...outstanding! The Detachment is over 94% and leading the Central Division. Everyone has been working very hard this year and it shows! We are doing great, but we still have a way to go to get to our 105%. I know we can reach that goal, so please keep working on getting every one of your members renewed and sent in. Last weekend part of our team attended the Legion’s “March Madness” event at headquarters in Portage and made many phone calls to members that haven’t renewed for 2020. If you have members that have not renewed for 2020, please give them a call and remind them to send their dues in immediately.

Children & Youth Program Report: Michael Kalsbeek, Children and Youth Chairman
Since 1938, our American Legion family has been designating April as Children and Youth month. What activities does your squadron have planned? If you are looking for ideas, browse this pamphlet at <https://www.legion.org/publications/160931/april-children-youth-month>.

Throughout the year, there are three main areas to consider and support:

- **Child health** activities could be anything related to the health of the children in your community, giving special consideration to the children of those currently serving and children of veterans.
- Child safety activities might include a Halloween Safety program, in conjunction with hosting safe trick-or-treating, or programs on the effects of alcohol, drugs, pornography, all forms of abuse and suicide prevention.
- **Family Support** activities might include hosting a family movie or game night, participating in the National Family Week (during the week of Thanksgiving) or fundraising for the Temporary Financial Assistance program (which supported families of those serving in the Coast Guard during the last government shutdown).

Please keep in mind our Commander's goal of supporting the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation with donations of at least one dollar per member!

Consolidated Squadron Reports: So, what has your squad been doing lately? Have you been keeping track of who is working on projects, how many hours they are volunteering, and how much is being spent on the projects? Are you keeping track of how much money is being donated? CSR report time is coming sooner than you think, so why not take some time now to get your records in order? Remember, every hour counts, every dollar counts.

Elections: Many squadrons will elect new officers this spring. Please remember to submit the Squadron Information form on our website www.wisal.org as soon as possible. It is very important to have the correct information on file so we can get in touch with your squadron with updates and information throughout the year. Even if you don't elect officers this year, go online and check if the information listed is correct.

Operation A.L.F.: Our brand new "Comfort puppy" has arrived! Our cute and cuddly pup is ready whenever and wherever the need arises to provide comfort to help children through the challenges of a parent's deployment or their own hospitalization for major medical issues. I will be attending as many spring conferences as time and distance will allow to introduce the newest member our team to the entire Legion Family. Donations are also needed to continue funding this great program.



Saying good-bye to Josh: As the Josh program comes to an end, we still have a supply of the small G.I. Josh dogs available. Anyone that would like to purchase some can send a check to Detachment Finance Chairman Tom Petrie, 808 E Cady St, Watertown, WI 53094. Cost is \$10 per dog. Please send an email to wislcmdrbob@att.net and let me know how many you want. Once your payment is received by Tom, we will get the dogs to you.



The world today: The Coronavirus has changed virtually everything we do. No bars or restaurants to go to. Schools closed, kids having class online. People working from home. Meetings and travel cancelled or postponed. We have learned new words and terms...social distancing, self-quarantine, shelter in place. We are all in a place where we have never been before!

As we all learn to deal with our new and strange circumstances, let's remember who we are, what we do and why we matter! We are "*proud possessors of a priceless heritage*". When there is something to be done, we pitch in and do it. We care for our veterans and our communities. Here are just a few things you can do during these uncertain times, and still follow safe guidelines. I know you will find many more.

- Check on veterans in your neighborhood to see if they are ok or if they need assistance with anything.
- Do some "buddy checks" with your members, and Post and Auxiliary members as well.
- Older people may feel especially isolated and lonely during this time. Call just to say hello and ask how they are doing.
- Check with older neighbors to see if they need groceries or other items. Offer to pick up items for them.
- Have your young SAL members, and your kids and grandkids write notes and draw pictures and send them to senior residences or nursing homes.
- Patronize local restaurants that are offering carry-outs, or curbside pick-ups to help them and their employees.

We need to remember that we are all in this together. Time will pass and we will get through this. Then we will get back to our SAL business, stronger and more determined than ever to advocate for our veterans, assist our active duty military and their families, and be visible in our communities. Stay safe and healthy, and thank you for all you do for our veterans, and our communities.

Bob Sirovina, Jr., Detachment Commander
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Wisconsin Leadership attend the Department of Illinois Annual Lincoln Pilgrimage in Springfield February 12th
SAL Commander Bob Sirovina
ALA President Joanie Dickerson
TAL Commander Dave Wischer



Hartland Squadron 294 "Sleep-Out" to raise awareness of homeless veterans February 14-16

Washington D.C. Conference
March 7-9
Wreath laying ceremonies
at the World War II Memorial
with
National Commander
Clint Bolt



Commander Bob and Vice Commanders David Fuller and Allen Watry participating in March Madness at Headquarters in Portage March 14th. Buddy Checks to connect with our members were very successful!