



“Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage”

Commanders Communication—July/August 2020

Summer Greetings to all our members! If this were a normal year, we would be just back from our Detachment Convention, and we would be introducing our newly elected leadership. As we all know, none of that happened. Covid, social distancing and safer at home changed a lot of what we do. One thing that never changes is how dedicated our members are to the mission of our organization. The Consolidated Squadron Reports that were submitted showed the countless hours that our members volunteered for our veterans. The list of awards is not yet available, but I look forward to presenting those awards to some of the squadrons that won them as I travel this fall. As we begin a new year as *“Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage”*, we need to look to the words of the Preamble to our Constitution and re-dedicate ourselves to the ideals of our great organization. The new year will likely present some challenges, but what year doesn’t? As we get back to having meetings and fundraisers, they might look a little different than what we are used to, but we will adapt our thinking and move forward to overcome whatever challenges that may happen. We need to remember that our mission is to help our veterans whenever we can. If we keep that in mind we can and will continue meet and even exceed our goals. I know 2020-21 will be another great year for the Detachment of Wisconsin if we all work together as The Legion Family...*for God and Country!*



Membership: 2019-20 was another outstanding membership year for the Detachment of Wisconsin! As of the latest national membership report, the Detachment is at 105.636%, renewals at 88.57% renewals. We have 64 squadrons at 100% or more, 22 squadrons at their all-time high in membership, and we added many new members. I want to welcome all our new members and also welcome the five new squadrons that joined our ranks this year: #324 Osseo, #270 Theresa, #33 Neehah, and most recently #98 Cumberland and #454 Mount Calvary. I want to thank everyone for all their hard work!

A new membership year is about to begin. Your goal for the coming year will be to meet (and definitely exceed) your 2020 membership number. So, for example if you had 50 members paid for 2020, you will need that many to make your 100% goal. Squads under 10 members will have 10 as their goal. All the goals are very attainable, so start now to renew your members and find new ones!

National and Central Region goals are listed below. Please don’t hold memberships, process them ASAP!

National Membership Goals for 2020-2021

SEPTEMBER 10, 2020--10%
OCTOBER 15, 2020 25%
NOVEMBER 12, 2020 35%
DECEMBER 9, 2020 45%
JANUARY 21, 2021 60%
FEBRUARY 10, 2021 75%
MARCH 10, 2021 80%
APRIL 14, 2021 90%
MAY 12, 2021 100%
JULY 28, 2021 105%

Membership Cards: 2021 Membership cards have been sent out to every squadron. They were addressed to the address on file for your Post. **PLEASE** contact your Post and get your cards as soon as possible and start sending in your memberships.

2021 Dues Increase: By now you have heard this several times, but I'm going to say it just one more time! Dues for 2021 will be \$3 more than last year. National did not raise dues in over 35 years, and this small increase is necessary for the organization to properly fund the cost of programs. The Resolution was passed at the SAL National Convention last year. For your information, the "resolved" clauses of the Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLVED, That the Sons of The American Legion in National Convention assembled on August 23-25, 2019, in Indianapolis, Indiana, amend the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, Article X, Section 2 to read, "The amount of such annual National dues shall be \$5.00 per member and shall be payable October 20 of each year and for the succeeding year;" and be it further

RESOLVED, That the increase take effect on June 1, 2020, with the distribution of the 2021 National Membership cards, and applied to all membership transmittals received after that date.

Detachment and National dues are now \$12. For any memberships you submit after July 1st, you must submit \$12 per member. I also need to share the following from Deputy IT Director, Joe Gallagher:

As most of you are aware, a National Dues increase was put into effect beginning July 1 of this year for the SAL. If your Detachment or Squadron is still receiving dues payments for the previous year at \$2/member, you may submit those payments via the Traditional method by paper checks and cards.

The online transmittal process through myLegion/mySAL will only process 2021 dues at \$5/member. Effective January 1, 2021, the National Per Capita of \$5/member will apply to all dues payments regardless of the membership year being paid.

That's the latest on the dues increase. If you have any questions, let me know.

COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT: HOMELESS VETERANS—Goal \$100 donation per squadron

Our Special Project will continue to be raising awareness of homeless veterans.

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans states the following:

[The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) estimates](#) that over 40,000 veterans are homeless on any given night. In addition to the complex set of factors influencing all homelessness – extreme shortage of affordable housing, livable income and access to health care – a large number of displaced and at-risk veterans live with lingering effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse, which are compounded by a lack of family and social support networks. Additionally, military occupations and training are not always transferable to the civilian workforce, placing some veterans at a disadvantage when competing for employment. A top priority for homeless veterans is secure, safe, clean housing that offers a supportive environment free of drugs and alcohol.

The fact that there are so many of our nation's heroes the are sleeping on the streets or in shelters is a terrible statistic. We need to do whatever we can to help these veterans! Every donation, large or small helps. You can find information on the VA website at www.va.gov/homeless or the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans at www.nchv.org.

Operation A.L.F: 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. Donations are also needed to continue funding this great program, so please consider a minimum donation of \$1 per member to this great project.

Saying good-bye to Josh: Now that the Josh program has ended, we still have a supply of the small G.I. Josh dogs available for immediate shipment, cost \$10 each. Anyone that would like to purchase some, please send your check with complete shipping address to me at: 9428 W Eden Pl, Milwaukee, WI 53228.

WISAL.ORG: Have you checked out the Wisconsin SAL website? It has a lot of information that you need for your Squadron. Need a script for a good meeting? A template for your Constitution & Bylaws? Info on how to write good minutes? Officer Duties? It's all there on the Resources tab. More info is being added all the time, so keep checking for the latest updates. GO to: www.wisal.org for information on programs, upcoming events and much more. Don't forget the national website is also a place to find information www.legion.org/sons

Celebration of Freedom: The 2nd Annual Celebration of Freedom will be held September 11-12, 2020 in Portage, WI. This is a STATE-WIDE LEGION FAMILY event that was attended by over 20,000 people throughout Wisconsin and beyond in 2019. Some of the events already planned are:

Friday, September 11th

- Opening Ceremonies- POW/MIA Silent March
- Traveling 911 Exhibit
- LEGION FAMILY CHILI COOK-OFF
 - There will be trophies for the 1st place team from Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and Riders.
 - Voting will be done with dollar bills, and the winner from each family will receive half of the voting money they earned.
 - You can compete at your Post Level (Unit or Squadron), County Level, District Level or as a Department Officer.
- Live Music during the Cook-Off
- Beer Garden

Saturday, September 12th

- Traveling 911 Exhibit
- Legion Program Exhibits
- Kickball and Corn Hole Tournaments
- Obstacle Course
- Vendors
- 2 bands starting at 3 PM and going until 11 PM.
- Beer Garden
- Blood Drive
- Saturday's live entertainment will be [The Hounds](#) from 3-6 PM and [Madison County](#) from 7-11 PM.

For more information, go to the Wisconsin American Legion website, www.wilegion.org, go to the Events page. The SAL will have a table in the exhibit area. Volunteers are needed so if you would like to help, please email me at wisalcmdrbob@att.net

WISAL eNewsletter: Are you on the Detachment Newsletter email list? If not, you can sign up by going to www.wisal.org/newsletters. Our eNewsletter is a great way to keep up on the latest things happening, get news about upcoming events and meetings and more.

Squadron Information Forms: Every squadron needs to go on our website www.wisal.org and update your officer information. Whether or not you elected new officers this year, it is really important that you fill out the form. There are many squadrons that haven't updated their information in several years so please take a minute and make sure your info is current. It's simple: Go to the Resources Tab. Click on Squadron Information Form. Select your District, then your Squadron. Hit Submit to continue. Fill-in or correct your information, and you are done!

www.mysal.org: The American Legion National Headquarters has designed a secure internet site that allows officers access to SAL membership records. This site will assist with day to day membership duties and allow better communication with members. This Squadron Support Program allows you to view and edit membership data on file at National Headquarters. This information is considered confidential and access should be closely monitored. An Authorization Form must be completed and returned. If you are not the person who would be using the website, please share this information with the person in your squad that should have the information.

Politics...ugh!!! In case you haven't noticed, there will be an election this fall. Remember that our Americanism program encourages us to exercise our right to vote. If you are old enough to vote, as members of the SAL, a committee of The American Legion, you also need to be aware of the following that was provide by The American Legion:

According to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion, "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment." The National Charter, approved by Congress, also stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical which has been interpreted by the National Judge Advocate as "nonpartisan" in modern lingo. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is prohibited from contributing, helping or endorsing a candidate. However, a member, as a private citizen, and not representing the organization, can employ whatever legal and ethical means to advance his or her candidate.*

The Legion or Sons cap is considered the official Legion uniform (see The American Legion Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies). It is not an individual Legion member's decision on the appropriate usage of the cap and emblem. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with the emblem visible, should be removed so as not to imply endorsement by The American Legion or S.A.L. The problem is the assumption of endorsement by those who see the emblem or name worn at in improper location, such as a partisan rally.

When using post facilities to host candidates, post should remove the emblem and Legion flag to avoid any impression of endorsements. Candidates for all parties must be presented equal opportunity at the same time to use the facilities on the same terms and conditions as other competing candidates.

If financial contributions are offered by candidates for political office, campaigns, political action committees or political parties, The American Legion should politely decline. Accepting these contributions may be perfectly legal, but The American Legion must avoid any perception of supporting any candidate or political party.

The American Legion values its independence and effectiveness on veterans' issues. This stance is best maintained by neutrality on individual candidates or political parties. The American Legion by legal definition is non-partisan and supports only issues which impact the Four Pillars.

Patriotism and Purpose Art Contest: The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin has announced the 2020 Patriotism and Purpose Art Contest to honor our Veterans and the sacrifices they have made for our country. The winning artwork will best reflect the impact our Veterans have on our communities and our nation, particularly in inspiring patriotism and love for our country among Wisconsin's youth. Entry deadline is September 1, 2020 and is open to Wisconsin residents under 18 years old. Please see the attached flyer for complete contest information.

Detachment Vice Commanders: I am pretty sure you know these guys, but I want to introduce them to you again. Your Detachment Vice Commanders are a hard-working bunch of great guys that are ready, willing, and able to assist when you need something (that would be SAL related, of course 😊) These guys have many years of experience and are very knowledgeable about all things SAL.



David Fuller
Districts 2-6-7
608-449-7188
dcfuller@litewire.net



Rich Ruland
Districts 1 & 3
608-444-2699
Richardruland48@gmail.com

Steven DuBois
Districts 10-11-12
715-554-0666
sdubois188@aol.com



Allen Watry
Districts 4/5-8-9
920-997-4629 H
920-224-3276 C
awatry@mindspring.com



Save the Date for our Fall DEC Meeting: Our fall Detachment Executive Committee meeting will be Saturday, September 26, 2020, at Legion Headquarters in Portage. The notice will be sent out when we get closer, so watch your email for the agenda. Although Detachment Officers, including District Commanders are required to attend, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend. We need more squadrons to send representatives so please make plans to send at least one representative from your squadron.

Please share the information in this newsletter with all your members! Communication is the key to our success. Send me pictures and articles about your projects and events and I will include them in a future newsletter. Email is our preferred form of communication so if you received this newsletter via snail-mail and have an email address, please send it to me so I can update the records and save some postage! Thanks!!

I look forward to visiting our squadrons this coming year seeing first-hand all the great things that you are doing for our veterans, active duty military and their families and our communities.

Thanks for all you do, keep up the good work!

Bob Sirovina, Jr
Detachment Commander
Sons of the American Legion-WI
9428 W Eden Pl
Milwaukee, WI 53228-1410
414-321-1479-home, 414-881-0721-cell
wisalcmdrbob@att.net

2020 American Legion, Department of Wisconsin



Patriotism & Purpose Art Contest

LEGION
— WISCONSIN —

The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin announces the 2020 Patriotism and Purpose Art Contest to honor our Veterans and the sacrifices they have made for our country.

The winning artwork will best reflect the impact our Veterans have on our communities and our nation, particularly in inspiring patriotism and love for our country among Wisconsin's youth.

The submission must be produced by the child without assistance from anyone else. The entry must be original and not a copy of another work. Good luck!

For more information, on the contest, please email angela@wilegion.org or visit our website at wilegion.org

Entry Deadline

September 1, 2020

Who Can Enter

Wisconsin residents under age 18

Entries

Original unfolded artwork on minimum 8.5" by 11" paper

Prizes

\$200 for each of the five grade categories (K-1st, 2nd-3rd, 4th-5th, 6th-8th, 9th-12th)

How to Enter

Patriotism & Purpose Contest
The American Legion,
Department of Wisconsin
2930 American Legion Dr
Portage WI 53901

Honoring Our Veterans



CONTEST RULES

1. Entry deadline is September 1, 2020. Winners will be notified after judging. Contest winners will be officially announced via the Department website and social media.
2. Children who have not turned 18 before September 1, 2020 are eligible.
3. The child must produce the artwork without assistance from anyone else. The entry must be original and not a copy of another work.
4. Artwork can be a drawing, painting, collage or other two- dimensional piece. Artwork must be horizontal in layout (also known as landscape), without a matte, frame or border and created on paper no smaller than 8” by 11” and no larger than 18” x 24”.
5. Artwork will be judged on its positive representation of military veterans and their impact on children.

SUBMISSION RULES

1. Included with the artwork, but not stapled to the artwork, should be the student first and last name, category for submission (A through E), birth year, parent name, home address, parent or child email address, and parent phone number.
2. The contest may copy and modify any entry for reproduction. Artwork will not be returned and may be used for future contest promotions.
3. All entries must be postmarked to the address listed below no later than August 29, 2020.

Patriotism & Purpose Contest
The American Legion,
Department of Wisconsin
2930 American Legion Dr
Portage WI 53901

CONTEST RECOGNITION

One GRAND PRIZE and two HONORABLE MENTION winners are awarded in each of the five categories:

- Category A: Artists entering Kindergarten or 1st grade in September 2020
- Category B: Artists entering 2nd or 3rd in September 2020
- Category C: Artists entering 4th or 5th grade in September 2020
- Category D: Artists entering 6th through 8th grade in September 2020
- Category E: Artists entering 9th through 12th grade in September 2020

Honorable Mention winners will receive a certificate of recognition. Each winner’s artwork will also be featured in a press release, highlighted on multiple social media sites, and featured on the Department website.