

The ALASKA

LEGION NEWS
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LEGIONNAIRE

1948 POW/MIAs still unaccounted for - Why?

Vol. 92 No. 12

December 2011

Unpaid Officers 2011- 12

Post 1
David Young

Post 2
Chris Tossey

Post 8
Gary Graham
Vern Kuder

Post 11
Francis Semaken

Post 12
Troy Fotta

Post 13
Carl Dominicks

Post 19
Ben Labenski
Cory Christiansen
Jacob Kenick
Aaron Irworriagan
Clifford Johnson

Post 20
Roy Brendible

Post 21
Deborah Todd

Post 27
Lee Adler
Bruce Heaton

Post 34
Larry Fries
Henry McKnuckles

Post 57
Gregory Parish

Post 75
Omar Bresland

Post 2222
James Mings
Danny Sells

Western District
April Berry

The American Legion
Department of Alaska
1550 Charter Circle
Anchorage, AK 99508

*Merry Christmas
and a
Safe and Happy New Year*

Adjutant's Corner



By W.E. "Gene" Franks
Department Adjutant

Below is the article I wrote one year ago this month and very little has changed except that our Veteran population is increasing both in numbers and claims. It is more important than ever that the Veteran and their families have a strong advocate.

The American Legion is that advocate. In addition to the staff we have in Washington, D.C. staying abreast of current happenings, our staff at National Headquarters in Indianapolis is doing the same.

More than 600 disability claims appeals per month for veterans trying to get their VA medical benefits were not processed.

More than 5,000 American Legion Baseball teams, which are made up by more than 100,000 players did not play.

Emergency financial assistance to Legion families hit by hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and other disasters was not available.

College scholarships to children whose mothers or fathers have sacrificed their lives in the global war on terrorism were not awarded.

Families of deployed troops through the Family Support Network and Operation Military Family Outreach has less help.

The children of veterans who are suffering hardships had no Temporary Financial Assistance.

About 100,000 pints of blood donated annually to the American Red Cross went by the wayside.

No funds were raised to improve the quality of life for active-duty troops with the Wounded Warrior Recognition Program and Operation Comfort Warriors.

Local communities now have *Adjutant Cont on Page 4*

Commander's Corner

By Sharon Cherrette Department Commander



Hello? Anybody/somebody there? Are you hiding away and not venturing out now that our sunlight is disappearing? Has time slipped by and you misplaced your membership renewal form? It's Christmas time already, the New Year around the corner, and snow (yes that beautiful white stuff) is on the ground. If the chilly weather is keeping you in, RENEW on-line--it's a simple process, go to www.legion.org/renew. Better yet so you don't have to remember where you put your renewal form each year, complete a PUFL (paid up for life) with Christmas money received, or any funds left from your PFD (I know wishful thinking on that idea). A PUFL membership can be paid over a 3-year period. Great savings if your Post is considering raising its dues in the next few years; you don't pay the extra.

Membership is slooooooowly flowing in—we just squeaked by in making our 65% goal for November. We are near the bottom, once again, in the membership listing of 55 Departments.

A big YEA goes out to all our Posts who achieved their 65% goal by November. We do have a few already over 100%--Woo Hoo.

December's cut-off is 9 December to Department Headquarters for our 75% goal. To those officers who didn't renew by the end of October (check your Officer's Guide), shame on you. Is your name now in the December paper? That's horrible. How do you expect members to renew when you haven't done so? Officers are supposed to set the example. We are near the bottom once again in the membership listing out of 55 Departments.

Remember, The American Legion fights for veterans' benefits and rights on The Hill (Washington D.C.). It is hard to get Congress to listen when our membership numbers keep dwindling. The big push lately is trying to find jobs for the veterans returning from the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It takes each one of us in the Legion family to keep this great organization going. The work cannot be done by only a few as many of you know from your own Post experience. It takes a lot of hard work and dedicated volunteers to achieve our goals *Commander Cont on Page 4*

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THE ALASKA LEGIONNAIRE
(USPS 012-100)

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
The American Legion,
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1550 Charter Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
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W.E. "Gene" Franks, Managing Editor
Peggy S. Bateman, Editor

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Advertise your
business in the
Alaska

Legionnaire
and reach 9,000

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Call Department Headquarters
for an advertising rate card at

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Do you have an over abundance of lanyards from past conventions?
Turn them into Department for recycling for Boys and Girls State.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Using this form, provide new address, attach entire address label from recent paper, and mail to:

Alaska Legionnaire
1550 Charter Circle
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Name _____

New Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

*** Attach Old Address Label Here ***

**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA**

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2011-2012

Commander.....Sharon Cherrette..... 7776 Boundary Ave, Anchorage, AK 99504
First Vice Commander.....Steve Huisman 4700 Rivers Street, North Pole, AK 99705
Second Vice Commander..... Alvin Diaz..... 1112 Walnut Ave., Kenai, AK 99611
Adjutant-Finance Officer.....Gene Franks 1550 Charter Circle, Anchorage, AK 99508
Service Officer.....Jim Pisa.....1201 North Muldoon Rd., Anchorage, AK 99504
Sergeant-At-Arms.....Don Garrett.....1380 Brent Pointe Dr., Wasilla, AK 99664
Chaplain.....Greg Kowatch..... 1628 Adonis Dr., Anchorage, AK 99515
Historian..... Elexzanderia Carr..... 4300 Ambler Cir., Anchorage, AK 99504
Judge Advocate.....Wev Shea..... 1550 Charter Circle, Anchorage, AK 99508.
Executive Committeeman.....Hunter Davis.....PO Box 23470, Ketchikan, AK 99901
Executive Committeeman..... Jim Scott.....1124 Holmes Rd, North Pole, AK 99705
Executive Committeeman.....Tim Clarke PO Box 472, Homer, AK 99603

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMEN

NEC Committeeman.....Jim Pisa.....1201 North Muldoon Rd., Anchorage, AK 99504
Alternate Committeeman..... Harry Pawson1150 Crowberry Cir., Anchorage, AK 99515

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S AIDES

Muldoon Post 29.....Chuck Boring..... 7605 Island Dr, Anchorage, AK 99504
Con Miller Post 30.....April Berry4700 Rivers Street, North Pole, AK 99705
Ketchikan Post 3.....Joe Craig.....2323 1st Ave, Ketchikan, AK 99901
Robert G. Blair Post 17..... Maurice Burum.....PO Box 8351 Kodiak AK 99615
General Buckner Post 16.....Bill Sheldon.....P.O. Box 3024, Homer, AK 99603
Susitna Valley Post 35..... Dave Webster HC 30 Box 12885, Wasilla, AK 99664

DISTRICT COMMANDERS

Western District.....Tom Schanrock53235 Thunder Rd., Kenai, AK 99611 .
Southeast District.....Jim Moran..... PO Box 452., Haines, AK 99827

**From the desk of the Second
Vice Commander**

By Alvin Diaz
Department
2nd Vice Commander



The month of November brought us exciting times for the veterans of Alaska and the Nation to those that are serving overseas. There were 2 holidays that we as Americans, celebrate in honor continued traditions. The first there Veterans Day and there are programs that are conducted every year, but this was a special date was that comes once every ten years. 11-11-11 with the memorial that is conducted at 11 o'clock for this special day. Here in Kenai/Soldotna George H. Plumley Memorial Post 20 was there years' host that is rotated between the American Legion, AMVETS and the VFW. There were the Commander from each post, with invited guest city and borough Mayors also some government representatives. A Post 20 member William Schwenke who is a Army veteran from the Desert Storm/Desert Shield, was our main Veteran Speaker that talk about the active soldiers and the affects on their spouse and families lives. The main topic as he spoke to the audience was, to "THANK A VETERAN!" and to give recognition of the service and Freedoms that we have today. Not only for us that live in America, but also for the people and countries that our military personal are serving and helping them have that same Freedom. So the next time you come across any veteran at any time, Thank them for Serving!

Next holiday was Thanksgiving Day where we show our friendship to our neighbors and fellow veterans with the gift of a Thanksgiving Dinner to share with. I hope that everyone had a good to great turn out.

Now comes all of the activities with December

2nd Vice Cont page 5

**American Legion
Department of Alaska
2012 MEMBERSHIP BAROMETER**

No.	NAME	GOAL	ACTUAL	%
26	Prince of Wales	20	24	120.0
07	Skagway	35	36	102.8
22	Jack Warren	28	26	92.8
04	Pioneer	32	28	87.5
09	Koyukuk Arctic	30	25	83.3
02	Valdez	29	23	79.3
18	Ninilchik	135	106	78.5
16	General Buckner	175	132	75.4
14	Edward Locken	8	6	75.0
49	Gen Claire L. Chennaul	40	30	75.0
35	Susitna Valley	323	234	72.4
01	Jack Henry	593	425	71.6
11	Dorman H. Baker	288	204	70.8
28	Spenard	732	514	70.2
03	Ketchikan	219	153	69.8
15	Matanuska Valley	292	201	68.8
33	Peters Creek	386	260	67.3
20	George H. Plumley	305	204	66.8
29	Muldoon	381	253	66.4
12	Lynn Canal	127	80	62.9
05	Seward	249	156	62.6
2222	SFC Paul R. Smith	13	8	61.5
75	Sterling	31	18	58.0
17	Robert G. Blair	293	169	57.6
30	Con Miller	168	96	57.1
08	John W. Jones	20	11	55.0
77	Department Hdqtrs	629	381	54.1
13	Sitka	177	94	53.1
GM-01	Mid Pacific	114	54	47.3
21	Aurora Borealis	74	35	47.3
25	Auke Bay	106	48	45.2
06	Merlin Elmer Palmer	84	38	45.2
34	Chappie JAMES	93	40	43.0
27	Gladys M. Heintz	90	38	42.2
57	C. Russell Huber	320	135	42.1
19	Nome	109	4	3.3
	Headquarters	704	381	54.1
	Pacific District	173	92	55.0
	Southeast District	815	455	60.1
	Western District	5410	3337	64.4
	Grand Totals	6823	4289	62.8

National Executive Committeeman

By Jim Pisa

National Executive Committeeman
"From the Doghouse"

National Commander Wong has announced his membership incentive awards for 2011- 2012.

The Super Eight Incentive Program: National Commander Wong will award his national commander pin to any Legion Family member who signs up Eight (8) members. These can be a combination of new members, members who transfer from the their Department HQ post (Department of Alaska Post 77), or current members who renew. Very simple and very easy for anyone to obtain. Remember: Recruit, Renew, Retain.

National Commander Wong also has three other membership incentives. They are District Christmas Bonus Award, District Commander Post Visitation Award, and Post Excellence Award. For more information go to the National website at www.legion.org.

Our Fall meetings in Indianapolis were very busy for the all who attended. For your C&Y, VA&R, Economics and Naval Affairs chairpersons, meetings were long and very productive which included passing of resolutions, guest speakers and training on new changes

to the programs. On the NEC side we had Fifty One (51) new resolutions that were discussed, passed or rejected. Also the Alaskan delegation had the honor of attending the hospitality rooms of Leading Candidate for National Commander for 2012-2013, James Koutz from Indiana and candidate for National Commander 2013-2014, Dan Dellinger of Virginia. Most of you who were in attendance at last years Western District convention have met James Koutz. This year at the Western District convention in Kenai you will get to meet Dan Dellinger.

Boys State and Oratorical: For the last couple of months we have been putting the word out about the Oratorical contest which is just around the corner. It's time to put the word out at the local high schools, private schools and home schooled students. For more information on Oratorical, contact your Department Oratorical Chairperson Jan Scott at 907-460-6707 for more info.

On the Boys State, Department Boys State Director Bill Jacobi is getting ready to send the registration packages out very soon. The application is now on the Department website at www.alaskalegion.org.

org. For more information you can contact Bill at 907-723-8028. As always we will be looking for volunteer consular's to assist in next years program.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Boys/ Girls State: Over the past years our number of boys / girls attending Boys and Girls State have been declining in numbers. There has been discussion about joining both programs together. Several larger Departments in The American Legion have gone to this in an effort to have larger sessions and financial savings. Some of the reasons for doing so are financial savings, scheduling of guest speakers, rental of facilities, food cost, larger classes and more consular's. And "YES" there are other concerns that need to be discussed. If you would like to discuss this suggestion, please feel free to contact your Boys/Girls State Directors, Department Commander,

Auxiliary President, Department Adjutant, Department NEC, District Commanders/District Presidents and express your ideas or concerns.

Post, District and Department Elections: I know that it may seem early to start thinking about elections, but January and February are fast approaching. Do you have what it takes to be a leader at the Post, District or Department level? If you "DO" talk to the Senior members at the Post, District and Department level for guidance and mentoring.

REMEMBER: The American Legion is looking for Legionnaires to guide us into the future.



1st Vice Commander News

By Steve Huisman

Department First Vice
Commander & Membership
Chairman

SEASONS GREETINGS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM MY FAMILY TO YOURS.

As I am writing this it doesn't look like we will meet the 65% membership goal for the 16 Nov. deadline. I know that the holidays are a busy and stressful time of the year but lets' see if we can beat the 75% goal for 14 Dec. and end the year with a big bang by improving the current standing of 50 out of 55 departments and remember that the 80% 19 Jan. goal is just around the corner. This is the time of the year that the Legion Posts of Alaska should be excelling in membership, with the majority of fishing and hunting seasons over and the onset of shorter, colder days and longer winter nights the post should



become a hotbed of activity, a warm place out of the weather, a light in the darkness a place of camaraderie and friendship, and a family friendly meeting place.

There are three R's in membership and one statement applies to all three.

To recruit a new member, JUST ASK.

To retain a member, JUST ASK.

To renew a current member JUST ASK.

As I said before have a HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON and please be safe as we would like to see you around the post and at conventions next year.

Women Veterans Community Partners

It is time to bring our group together again to discuss the best way to serve Alaska Women Veterans.

This is an informal meeting meant to inform attendees of the services available in the community as well as identify needs and possible gaps in service. I hope you are able to attend.

Wednesday December 7th from 1130-1230 on the second floor of the VA room 101

Elizabeth Baltensperger, LCSW
Women Veterans Program Manager

Alaska VA Healthcare System

1201 N. Muldoon Road

Anchorage, Alaska 99504

v. message: (907) 257-4737, fax: (907) 257-7460

Thursday, December 15th is the deadline

For the January issue of the "Alaska Legionnaire" December 15th is the deadline for all stories and/or photos to be submitted. All material must be into Department Headquarters no later than 5:00 pm. Please be reminded that only those articles that are typed, preferably sent via e-mail or provided on a diskette will be considered for publication. Faxed articles will not be considered. As always, the editorial staff can edit all submissions. Photos are also being sought for publication. They should be clearly marked and must be originals for good quality camera reproductions. Anyone interested in submitting an article and/or photo, or anyone interested in advertising in an upcoming issue contact the Alaska Legionnaire office at 1550 Charter Circle, Anchorage, Alaska 99508 or call (907) 278-8598 or email us at legion@anch.net. Please request a return receipt for any emails you send to us, in order to verify that it was received.

ALERT!

LEGIONNAIRE
DEADLINE

December
15th

THE AMERICAN LEGION SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Commander
Jim Moran

First Vice Commander
Hunter Davis

Adjutant
Bill Jacobi

Finance Officer
Scott Kline

Chaplain
Frank Ockert

THE AMERICAN LEGION WESTERN DISTRICT

Commander
Tom Schanrock

Senior Vice Commander
April Berry.

Zone One Commander
Cris Vrable

Zone Two Commander
Tim Clarke

Zone Three Commander
Harry Schuster

Adjutant

Eileen Faulkner

Finance Officer

Tom Stockmal

Sergeant-At-Arms

Kirk Waldhaus

Chaplain

Marjorie Ream

Historian

John Harrington

Judge Advocate

Milton Roy

Executive Committeemen

Mary Johnson

Gary Fisher

John Magmore

THE ABOVE ADS ARE PAID ADVERTISEMENTS

By Greg Kowatch
Department Chaplain

Taps



Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. I Corinthians 13:7

Taps

Lester Brown Post 28
Thomas Doney Post 28
Jason Ellis Post 25
Carroll Fader Post 3
Walter Griffeth Post 77
Sam Huddleston Post 20
Alan Jardinski Post 8
Henry Keene Post 3

George Knapp Post 28
A. McBride Post 33
Frankie Melchor Post 28
Emmet Norton Post 1
Neal Osgood Post 4
William Overbay Post 6
Pat Verney Post 33

Adjutant Cont from Page 1

no programs that encourage the intellectual and social growth of America's children, such as Boys State, National Oratorical Competition, and Boy Scouts.

Less pressure was brought to bear on Congress to provide enough VA funding to take care of veterans' medical needs – and provide it in advance.

About one million volunteer hours every year at about 160 VA medical facilities nationwide did not happen.

Less lobbying to Congress to upgrade and improve Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits which The American Legion wrote the original 1944 GI Bill that educated 8 million veterans.

The Heroes To Hometowns program, working with communities to welcome back their returning veterans and help them make the transition to civilian life does not exist.

Aide to local communities sponsored by Districts and local Posts,

i.e., scholarships, Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets, Easter egg hunts, Halloween parties, local dances, parades, Flag Day ceremonies, and the list goes on, did not happen.

More than 14,000 American Legion Post do not exist, which in many cases has an effect and impact on the local community.

Why did all of the above happen, WHAT IF The American Legion did not exist?

If you're a veteran, The American Legion will help you with VA health care, GI Bill benefits, sudden emergencies and the needs of your children. The American Legion does it all for free, because we have an army of volunteers, each one a wartime veteran.

What makes all of this possible, YOU DO, and you make this possible through your membership in The American Legion. Let no one say that your membership does not count.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy

Commander Cont

all levels-- Post, Unit, Squadron, Department, and National.

How are you doing on checking out the Legion website (www.legion.org)? There is a great source of information available at your fingertips. Don't forget the public announcements or press release assistance available. The information/publications are FREE.

My October visitations to Posts 20 (Kenai) and 5 (Seward) went extremely well (including wildlife along the drives to the Posts). The Silver Tea held by Unit 1 (Anchorage) was a big success. The funds received at the Silver Tea through donations/silent auction are used

to purchase Christmas gifts for VA Domiciliary residents' family members. Legion family members assist at the Gift Shop each year on the first Saturday in December at the Anchorage VA Domiciliary.

Don't forget to send your events listing to legion@anch.net, be sure to include Calendar in the subject line. Check with Peggy about including events that are happening in your local area.

Be safe in and have a wonderful Christmas holiday and a Happy New Year.

Questions/concerns? E-mail me at scherretteinak@gmail.com. Don't forget, keep the membership aflowin'.

Service Office News

By Jim Pisa,
Department Service Officer

From your Department Service Officers, Katie, Jeff, Bill & Jim

Returning Service Members (OEF/OIF): Have you recently returned from Military Service? If you served, you've earned benefits. Now is the time to take advantage of the benefits VA offers OEF/OIF veterans.

Here are just a couple of the programs that the VA offers to returning OEF/OIF Veterans,

Five (5) Years of Cost Free Health Care: OEF/OIF Veterans combat veterans can receive cost free medical care for any condition related to their service in the Iraq/ Afghanistan theater for 5 years after their date of discharge or release. In order to take advantage of these benefits, OEF/OIF vets "MUST" enroll in the VA healthcare system.

180 day dental benefits: Once again OEF/OIF veterans must be eligible for one time dental care, but you must apply within 180 days of your separation date from active duty.

Find Family Support at your local Vet Center, going back to school to continue your education, the new Post 9/11 GI Bill could be for you, Looking for a good job, check out the VA's Veteran Employment Coordination Service. Call the following phone number for more info, 1-866-606-6206.

Some important phone numbers to call:

Benefits: 1-800-827-1000, Education and Training: 1-888-442-4551, Life Insurance: 1-800-699-8477, Health Care: 1-866-606-8216. For more information check out the VA website at www.va.gov

Breast Cancer Awareness: Although October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, everyday day is Breast Cancer Awareness Day. The VA is asking all female veterans to talk to their health care providers about appropriate

breast cancer screenings, such as regular mammograms.

Both men and women can develop breast cancer, though male breast cancer is rare. In women, breast cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death and the odds that a women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime are one in eight.

Women Veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of the Veteran population. Of the 22.7 million living Veterans, more than 1.8 million are women. They comprise nearly 8 percent of the total Veteran population and 6 percent of all Veterans who use the VA Healthcare services.

What is COPD: COPD is short for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, also known as "Emphysema or Chronic Bronchitis". It is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States, following heart disease, cancer and stroke. COPD has bypassed stroke to become the "Third" leading cause of death in the U.S. and the fifth prevalent disease in the Veteran population, affecting 15 percent of the VA health care users.

COPD is a progressive lung disease that can cause shortness of breath, coughing, mucus production, wheezing, and other symptoms. Cigarette smoking is the primary risk factor for COPD, but long term exposure to other irritants may also contribute. In addition to shortness of breath, COPD patients commonly suffer from anxiety and depression, making this disease a serious medical, financial, and emotional burden on both patients and their families. Currently, there are no treatments available to halt the progression of COPD.



ORATORICAL NEWS

By Jan Scott
Department Oratorical Chairman

ALL high students need college dollars. This program High School Oratorical Scholarship Program- "A Constitutional Speech Contest" is a way to get funds for college that is not dependent on grade point average, letters of reference, community service, sports abilities, being a member of a particular organization or being a certain nationality. This money only depends on the willingness of a student to write and deliver an eight to ten minute speech on the Constitution of the United States.

The amount accumulates at all levels starting at Post Competition to Zone to Department to National. At Department there are four contestants. The scholarships awarded are: First

place \$3,000, Second place \$2,000, and \$1,000 for the remaining two contestants. The Department winner then goes to the Nationals in Indianapolis, Indiana and receives a \$1,500 scholarship for attending and delivering his/her oration.

These dollars also accumulate for freshman year to senior year. The opportunity is open to all high school students. The top three winners at National receive scholarships in the amounts of \$18,000 and \$16,000 and \$14,000.

So now is the time, before the post holds the contest, to invite any high school student who is in need of college funds to participate in High School Oratorical Scholarship Program- "A Constitutional Speech Contest." Jan Scott 460-6707 cell

janscott1@alaska.net

2011

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER

HOLIDAY BLOOD DONOR DRIVE

•Dec 3 Domiciliary Gift Shop 10 AM
C st and Benson

• Dec 23rd to Dec 26 Department Offices are Closed
Dec 25 Christmas

•Dec 31 New Years Eve

Dec 30 - Jan 2 Department Offices are Closed.

•Jack Henry Post / Unit 1
Auxiliary Tuesday night meals \$8.00
Wednesday Taco's
Friday Night Steaks

•Seward Post 5
Taco Tuesday
Friday Night Steaks
Food served most nights at Post

•Matanuska Valley Post 15
Taco Monday
Friday Night Steak

•General Buckner Post 16
Friday Burger & Brew 6 - 8 PM

•Spenard Post 28
Sunday Brunch 10 AM - 2 PM
Burgers 6 PM
Thursday Karaoke 9 PM
Friday Steak and Seafood 5 - 8 :30
Karaoke 9 PM

•Muldoon Post 29
Sunday Brunch 11 - 1
Monday Tacos 2 for \$2.00
Wednesday Karaoke and Food
Friday Night Steak

•Chappie James Post 34
Friday Socials 6 PM with Buffet.
Pinochle, Dominoes, Music
Saturday Dinners 3 PM - 8 PM
Catfish, BBQ Ribs, Fried Chicken. Prk Steak, Pigs Feet,
Liver & Onions

Susitna Valley Post 35
Friday Night Steak Nights 6-8:30 pm
Every Sunday Turkey Shoot, Starting at 1 pm. Ammo
and Guns supplied or bring your own 12ga shotgun
Legion Riders Sunday Pancake Breakfast 10 am - 2pm
Senior's Dance Last Thursday of he month 2 PM - 4
PM Everyone invited, Come enjoy, dance sing and meet
new and old friends.

Raising Funds for Veterans

Following are some considerations and tips for raising funds for veterans:

- Raising funds for veterans and troops requires extra care and sensitivity. Keep in mind that not everybody likes to have their name mentioned publicly or be called a hero and that many veterans have health issues. (Read Raising Funds for an Individual)

- You may feel like you want to jump right into helping out a veteran in your neighborhood, but what you think this person needs may be quite different from what they actually need most desperately. Try to speak to the family directly before you start drumming up help.

- The U.S. Postal Service used to accept packages and letters to "Any Service Member" or "Any Wounded Service Member," but stopped doing so. Consider supporting one of the nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping our veterans and troops and their families.

- Are you planning on creating your own non-profit for helping out veterans and troops? Chances are there is already a charity out there doing exactly what you're planning on doing. Why not support them? They will already have a well oiled system in place to get help and support to veterans and troops quickly.

- Charities that support veterans and troops:

HomesForOurTroops.org – builds homes for severely injured veterans.

GuardianAngelsForSoldiersPet.org – takes care of a wounded veteran's pet.

DVDs4Vets.org – donates DVDs to veterans.

SoldierPackages.org – sends a care package to hospitalized veterans and troops.

OperationGratitude.org – this organizations helps out troops and veterans in many different ways.

CellPhonesForSoldiers.com – provides calling cards for free talk time for troops overseas.

OperationGratitude.org – donate your leftover Halloween candy for care packages. Note: They take donations of toothbrushes as well.

MilServe.org – volunteer your professional expertise.

For a larger list of organizations that help out and support our veterans and troops, visit Military.com.

OurMilitary.mil – this list of organizations supporting our veterans and troops only shows non-profits that have been screened.

Get more information about a specific non-profit at Charity-Navigator.org.

Finally, if you're planning on raising funds for a veteran in your neighborhood, consider helping in some very simple, basic and personal ways as well: you could offer to help out with driving (or feeding) the kids, taking care of pets or repairing things. An invitation to share a meal may be a welcome distraction for a veteran and an opportunity to share stories about his or her experiences. Being able to talk about one's experiences (good and bad) can be the best gift of all.

2nd Vice Cont from page 2

and the joy of Christmas. In the beginning of the month comes the Domiciliary where we get to help our vets in need and help them with their winter coats and clothes and a few small gifts for families. Next to follow is Pearl Harbor Day and the time for remembering our fallen sailors and events that followed, to McArthur and the surrendering of the Japan. With all of these dates the Biggest one Christmas, and the times for giving joy. One way is to send a small note or gift to a military personal that is away from their home and families. Do not forget the Family members that are left behind and could use our sup-

port. Food Baskets, gifts, or even an invite to a dinner is a great way to support our military Family and our veterans and legion family members. So lend a hand and Thank the veteran and their families for the time and service.

Enjoy the time with your friends and family and don't forget that this is the season that we come together united as one big "American Legion Family" to share and celebrate.

God bless our Military personal and their families, God Bless you, and God Bless America!

HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!



Detachment Commander

By Kyle Parkerson

Detachment Commander

December isn't just about Christmas

Hello everyone, I'm having a blast serving as your Detachment Commander.

Although Christmas is always the first thought when it comes to the month of December, I wanted to remind everyone to recognize Pearl

Harbor Day on December 7th. It is a date we should all remember, right along with 9-11.

Hope to see everyone at the Detachment Executive Committee Meeting and the Auxiliary's Veterans Gift Shop at the VA Domiciliary on December 3rd! It was a great experience last year, and I'm looking forward to doing it again this year!

Notes from the S.A.L. National Executive Committeeman

By Darrel Williamson Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committeeman

Christmas is just around the corner. I hope everybody had a good Thanksgiving.

Our next membership goal of 45%

is due on December 14th. As of the November 14th, we are at 30.5%. I know with your help we can make it.

S.A.L.utations

By Kevin Collier, Sons of The American Legion Detachment Adjutant

Remember the Detachment will be doing their 32 oz. T-bone Steak Dinner. Our Steak Feed will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2012 at Spenard Post #28, in Anchorage, Alaska!

This will be our 16th year doing this event. This fantastic dinner will be held from 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm. The price this year will be \$25, with the proceeds going toward The American Legion Alaska Boys State and the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs. See one of your Detachment Officers for tickets.

There will be a Detachment Executive Committee Meeting at 2:00 pm on the day of the Steak Feed at Spenard Post #28.

Remember Pearl Harbor Day is December 7th. Several of the Post will be holding programs to remember that fateful day in 1941. We should all stop and take time to attend one of these programs and remember the sacrifices and the effect that day had on this nation.

December is the time that we celebrate the holidays with our family and friends. This is also a time when we need to take the time to remember those that do not have the simple pleasure of spending time with their loved ones.

Open up your heart during this time of giving. Visit a child or a person in a long term care facility and watch their faces light up as someone cared enough to take the time to wish them a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah or Happy Kwanzaa.

Please visit the Domiciliary as they do the Christmas gift-wrap on Saturday December 3rd at 10:00a.m. The Veterans that are staying there are given the opportunity to send gifts to their loved ones, some they have not seen or

been in contact with for several years.

Most of the Post will be giving out Christmas Holiday Baskets. If you get the opportunity to deliver one of these to a needy family it will not only melt your heart but give you even more reason to be thankful for all your many blessings, of health, family and friends. Please remember to be sure to take the time to count your many blessings even those that we usually take for granted, for there is always someone with far less.

We should everyday pay tribute to our veterans by celebrating our freedom and the men and women who fought for our country. Always remember that with out the sacrifices of our veterans this country would not be the great Nation that it is. They have given of themselves so that we all may live in peace and enjoy all the rights and privileges we have being an American Citizen. All veterans gave something of themselves; some even gave all to ensure our blessings of life, liberty, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. Take a moment out of your day to say "Thank You!!" to our veterans.

The National Membership Goal is 375,000 Members. The National Membership theme this year is "Sons Membership Ride – 2011-2012."

As of writing this article we have had a total of fourteen Squadrons turn in membership so far for the 2012 Membership year, the other five Squadrons are still stalled on pit row.

The Detachment as a whole has 465 members transmitted out of our year-end goal of 1468 (so far). This



Super Eight Incentive Program. National Commander Wong will award his national commander pin to any Legion family member who signs up eight members. These can be any combination of new members, members who transfer from their department headquarters post, or current members who renew.

Post Excellence Award. To qualify for the Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, youth activities, community service, and support to currently serving troops or veterans.

is equivalent to 31.70% of our goal. Remember that membership is everyone's responsibility! Keep up the great job and riding in with 100% membership.

The "TARGET DATES" (Membership target dates)

Winter Ride:	
Ride #4	1 2 / 1 4 / 1 1
45%	
Ride #5	0 1 / 1 9 / 1 2
60%	
Ride #6	0 2 / 0 8 / 1 2
75%	
Spring Ride:	
Ride #7	0 3 / 1 4 / 1 2
80%	
Ride #8	0 4 / 1 1 / 1 2
90%	
Ride #9	0 5 / 0 9 / 1 2
100%	
Championship Ride:	
Ride #10	0 7 / 2 6 / 1 2
105%	

Remember we need your cards into Detachment Headquarters about 1 week prior to the Target Dates in order to get them processed at National in time to count as reaching the goal.

If the membership team is stuck in a snow bank or just plain frozen at the gate and the snow is too deep then you might want to switch over to the Membership Sled. Remember The drive is on, so rev up your engines and lets gets trucking...

We are well on our way to obtaining the goal of 60% set for the Winter Ride in Ride #5. Lets beat that goal prior to the December 08th cut off.

Keep up the great job you are doing in membership. Remember the three "R's" "Renew", "Recruit" and "Reinstate". Do not just sit on it! Keep it rolling

in.

National Commander Jim Roberts has asked every Detachment to work on what is still being called the "Triple Nickel" – to push membership to retain at least 85% of their current members, reach 105% by National Convention next year (2012) and charter at least 5 new Squadrons.

If you still have not taken the opportunity to turn in your Certification of Officers, please do so as soon as possible. This helps the Detachment Commander, Kyle Parkerson and myself in having points of contact at your Squadron.

Again this year we will have a Consolidated Squadron Report Form, there will be some changes on the form from last year and will be coming out somewhere around February or March. As soon as they are received at Detachment Headquarters then I will be sending them out to the Squadrons. In the mean time remember to keep track and record everything that you do so it can all be put on the Consolidated Squadron Report Form by Detachment Convention in Kodiak.

If there is anything that any of your Detachment or District Officers can do to assist you or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. My email is kcollier@alaska.net. Hope to hear from you soon.

On behalf of the Detachment Officers and myself, I would like to wish you a very Joyous and Merry Holiday and a Happy New Year. God Bless each and everyone of you. May all your dreams and wishes come true throughout the ensuing year.



From the Desk of the Auxiliary President



By Sue Diaz
Department President

Reach for our Stars

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!

Speaking of the Christmas, our annual Anchorage Christmas Shop at the Domiciliary will be held on December 3, 2011. Our Auxiliary Chairman this year is Peggy Bate-man, and she wish's to invite anyone who wish's to volunteer for this event to please show up at the Domiciliary by 9:30 am Saturday morning she is also asking for old Newspapers for stuffing of the boxes that will be mailed out. If you haven't had the chance to volunteer for this event I strongly urge you to do so if your

time allows, it is the most fun and heartwarming experience!

Also this month all our mid year reports need to be mailed and received by each chairman no later then December 15th. As per our Workshop held November 19 of last month every Chairman handed out there plan of action with a reporting sheet. If you can't find your Units reports please look on our Auxiliary Department of Alaska website. (All chairman have pledge to send in their report forms and plan of action to our Electronic Public Relations chairman Lisa Williamson.

Now on to pressing news from our National Headquarters;

1.) December 31st is the Last Day for All PUFL processing, All PUFLs received after this date will have to be paid their 2012 dues in order for us to accept their applications. Applications failing to meet this standard will be sent back.

2.) January 15, 2012 – 2nd Renewal notices mailed out from printer

3.) February 1, 2012 Annual Rollover Membership- Unpaid 2011 & 2010 members are moved to "expired" and unpaid, 2009 members are moved to "former" members, all of which will have their continuous years reset to ZERO.

4.) FEBRUARY 1, 2012 closing 2011 year; LAST DAY FOR ANY 2011 TO 2012 DUES REVERSALS; (As our Units know National has raised their dues per cap. By \$4.00, which in turn will possibly (more the likely) raise each Units amount sent to Department by \$4.00. If your Unit

wishes to raise your dues to match the new amount which will take affect for the 2013 dues YOU MUST vote and have it sent in to National by this date. If you surpass this date you will be unable to adjust your unit's dues until the following year for 2014.)

These dates are extremely important to your Units welfare as well as your Department's; please do not allow them to slip by!

Before I close this newsletter I would like to send out my sincerely Thanks to all the Department Chairman! The workshop was a great success! You all did a wonderful job!

As this year comes to a close I find myself reflecting back with great emotion, to all our Auxiliary members, you are phenomenal Women! You give of your time, emotions, money and heart! I am Proud to stand with you and say "I am an American Legion Auxiliary Member and I am here to Help! God Bless you all and again have a wonderful Holiday Season!

Junior Member Activities

Engaging the next generation to become members in the American Legion Auxiliary is the important purpose of the Junior Activities program. Junior membership is open to girls from infancy through age 17. The Junior Activities program prepares girls under the age of 18 to become active adult members of the organization by providing positive volunteer experiences that instill the ideals of the Auxiliary. These young ladies develop leadership skills while having fun and will hopefully become the future leaders of our organization.

Juniors are members of the Auxiliary who are organized as a committee of a unit. Juniors are not a separate organization. Junior members conduct their own meetings and perform their own special activities. Junior members plan their own community service projects, along

with supporting projects sponsored by the Auxiliary and The American Legion Family.

Connecting with our Junior members and involving them in worthwhile activities that support our mission is the best way to ensure the continuation of the Auxiliary for as long as there are veterans to serve.

Purpose Statement

To interest eligible young women (under age 18) in adult membership through positive experiences of mission-based volunteer opportunities that instill the ideals of the organization.

National Junior Officers

The Junior officers are honorary in title. Their work should be coordinated with the work of unit officers. At the unit level, honorary Junior officers traditionally include president, vice president,

chaplain, historian, secretary, treasurer and sergeant-at-arms. Honorary Junior officers may vary by department but are likely to reflect the structure of the unit.

The honorary national Junior president is an ambassador for the American Legion Auxiliary and the Junior Activities program. She maintains contact with the national Junior Activities chairman and National Headquarters program coordinator. She also leads and motivates attending Junior members to a successful National Junior Meeting at the Auxiliary's annual national convention. Current National Junior Officers

Juniors Patch Program

The Juniors Patch Program is designed to foster the ideals of volunteer service in our communities and for our veterans. The Patch Program incentivizes active participation and helps Junior members

learn about the Auxiliary. An annual Junior Meeting is held to provide these young members with an opportunity to become acquainted with girls from different states and experience multicultural team building while forming exciting new friendships.

Scholarships

Junior members are eligible to apply for the Auxiliary's National Spirit of Youth Scholarship. Each year, five young women are competitively selected to each receive a four-year scholarship to pursue a college education, currently awarded at \$1,000 per year for four years.

Junior Activities National Chairman

Lisa Williamson

Department of Alaska

junioractivities@ALAforVeterans.

Western District President By Barbe Wolkoff

It's been a very weird and exhausting month for me. Following National Convention I accompanied my husband to Anchorage where he had a brain tumor removed at Providence Hospital. Non-cancerous, thank the Lord. I'm happy to say he is doing very well and we are back in Kodiak. He is planning to go back to work in November. The sad part is that I was unable to make visitations in Homer, Ninilchik and my own Kodiak. I am looking forward to visiting Kenai and Seward in October. My sincere apologies to all.

There is always a special time for us to remember and honor our Veterans. An

opportunity to teach the young people in our communities "What is a Veteran" and "Why there are Veterans". Take "Poppies" to you local elementary schools and pass them out to the students. Explain to students what the poppies are, what they mean and where they come from. Talk about sacrifice, ultimate sacrifice, patriotism and about the lives that have been freely given for our beliefs and rights/freedom. For our wonderful country and flag. Teach respect and appreciation to our children/students.

Make a special effort to do something



for a Veteran. Clean their house or yard, cook or bake, and in the coming months shovel snow for them. Maybe just visit and hang out, I know so many whom are just lonely. Seems so easy and small or even insignificant

compared to what they've done for us. Do not let our most important neighbors slip through the cracks!!

Get ready, get set, now go and the race has begun for 2012 renewals. Don't forget to get all those new memberships along the way. we must focus on members whom

have not renewed for whatever reason. Give them all the reasons they should renew, the benefits (ie. discounts) and the opportunity to belong to the worlds largest Patriotic women's organization. Make sure they know exactly what they get for their dues!

This truly is a great country and we must appreciate our freedom. Thank God for all those whom have given all for us to maintain our wonderful lives. Make it a daily goal to do something for a veteran that shows that you appreciate what they have given for us. Help a veteran to live better.

Membership Chairman by Marge Blankenship

I know that Dept Pres. Sue and Dept Sec Linda have mentioned this already but my Unit membership Chairman brought it to my attention that she continues to receive notes from members regarding what they feel is an incorrect amount of membership years on their cards. This is a copy of the letter that she is sending out to our membership and I thought other Membership Chairman might want to do the same.

"When you receive/d your 2012 membership card you noticed that the year

showing in the star maybe the same as it was last year. So you ask yourself now wait a minute I should not have the same number of years as I had in 2011. Here is the reason why:

When you first joined you had not been a member for a full year and National Headquarters finally realized that. Thus a correction was made on the 2012 cards to reflect this change. So if on your 2011 card for instance you have been a member for 10 years your card will still show 10 years

on your 2012 cards. When you receive your card for 2013 you will notice the number of years in the star will show 11 years. This is not a mistake by National or your Unit Membership Chairman. I repeat this is a correction in membership years made by the National Headquarters.

Another change that is being made is with the VIM or Paid up for life cards. If this pertains to you, you will be getting a new card (I am not sure when this will happen) that will say "a member since (and

the year you first joined). This will replace the need for both the VIM or Paid up for Life card and the paper membership card you receive from your Unit.

I hope this will clear up the confusion that many are having regarding the number of years showing on your 2012 membership cards".

If you have not already paid your 2012 membership please take the time to Honor Your Veteran by keeping your membership current.

Jack Henry Post 1
Meets 1st Thursday
Commander
Jim Grant
1st Vice Commander
Sam Shields
2nd Vice Commander
Vacant
Adjutant - Greg Kowatch
Finance Officer - Kevin French
Historian Kyle Stetson
Service Officer
Diane R. Kallna
Sergeant-At-Arms
Elizabeth Ipsen
Chaplain - Myron Jenson
Executive Committeemen
Mark Berg
Tim Benintendi
David R. Young
272-5242, FAX 272-5792
P.O. Box 91285
Anchorage, AK 99509

Ketchikan Post 3
Meets every Monday, 7pm
Potluck every 3rd Saturday
Dan Ball, Commander
Calvin Anderes, Adjutant
Hunter Davis, Serv. Off.
225-2021, P.O. Box 5121
Ketchikan, AK 99901
www.americanlegionpost3.com
ktnpost3@yahoo.com

SEWARD POST 5
Meets 2ND Tuesday 7p.m.
Claire Sullivan
Commander
Taco Tuesday ~ 6p.m.
Steak night Friday ~ 6p.m.
P.O. Box 306
Seward, AK 99664
907-224-5440

Dorman H. Baker
Post 11
Howard Majors
Commander
Billy Smith Adjutant
Gary Davis
Service Officer
Pull tab sales at the club
452-2228, 129 First Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Haines Alaska
Post 12
Commander
Robert Lix
First Vice - Pat Murphy
Second Vice - Jim Moran
Finance Officer - Pat Murphy
Adjutant - Terry Pardee
766-2530

Matanuska Valley
Post 15
Dennis Walter
Commander
Don Maupin Sr. Adjutant
Club Manager
Mary Roeser
Meets 1st & 3rd Mon., 7 p.m.
P.O. Box 1146, Palmer, AK 99646
745-4440

Robert G. Blair
Post 17
Richard Heglin
Commander
Troy Park
Adjutant
Perry Page
Service Officer
318 Center Ave.,
Kodiak, AK 99615
Office: 486-3258 / Bar: 486-5757

NINILCHIK POST & UNIT 18
Ray DeMoss Commander
Dave Shandy,
Adjutant
President
Jean Shandy
Sec./Treas.
Betty Randall
Mile 136.5 Sterling Hwy
Phone 567-3918

George H. Plumley
Memorial
Post 20
Neil Duperron Commander
Al Diaz, Adjutant
Herb Stettler,
Service Officer
283-3222, 902 Cook St.
Kenai, AK 99611

Aurora Borealis
Post 21
All Female Post
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Marjorie Ream Adjutant
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Christy Hill Chaplain
Kathy Moore Sgt-At-Arms

Spenard Post 28
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1st Vice Kenneth Gilpatrick
2nd Vice Wes Lancaster
Adjutant Arnold Heck
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Chaplain Ken Jacobus
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907-344-3841

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Meets 3rd Tuesday 6:30 PM
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Chuck Boring
Service Officer, Carol Gross
1467 Muldoon Rd
Anchorage AK 99504
(907) 338-3550
FAX (907) 338-0756

Susitna Valley
Post 35
Commander Dallas Massie
Adjutant Bill Fikes
Service Officer James Francois
MONTHLY MEETINGS,
1st and 3rd Tuesday's
@7:00 PM
Friday Night Steak 6:00 - 8:30 PM
PO Box 370870
Wasilla, AK 99687

C. Russell Huber
Post 57
John Magmore
Commander
Service Officer
Darrell Peterson
Pete Duchscherer, Ajutant
1634 S. Cushman St.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
452-5757

Jack Henry
Unit 1
Peggy Bateman
President
Jill Pawson, Secretary
Meets
1st Thursdays @ 7 p.m.
P.O. Box 92747,
Anchorage, AK 99509

Matanuska Valley
Unit 15
Kelly Sawyer, President
Amber Sawyer
1st Vice President
Jennifer Erwin - Treasurer
Dawn Schneider, Secretary
Meets 1st Monday,
at 6:00 p.m.
P.O. Box 541,
Palmer, AK 99645
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SATURDAY CLINIC AT THE NUGGET MALL
OCTOBER 1 10 AM TO 5:00 PM

WALK IN CLINIC HOURS OCTOBER 5 - DECEMBER 15 ARE:
MONDAY - THURSDAY 9:00 AM TO NOON AND 1:00 PM TO 3:00 PM
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL, 794-4300

MAT-SU VA COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC

WALK IN BEGINNING OCTOBER 1
MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00 AM TO NOON AND 1:00 PM TO 3:00 PM
FOR MORE INFOMATION, CALL 631-3100

KENAI VA COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC

WALK IN CLINIC HOURS AT THE KENAI CLINIC ARE
MONDAY - THURSDAY 8:00 AM TO 3:00 PM
FRIDAYS 10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 395-4100

**Zone One Breakfast Schedule
2011/2012**

The Zone 1 Breakfast meetings will continue at the following locations, if you need to change to another month just let me know. Thank you for all your help and cooperation. I have really enjoyed our time together and have learned lots.
Cris Vrabel, Zone 1 Commander Post 1 444-2999

December 17	2011	Post 35
January 21	2012	Oratorical
January 28		Post 1
Hosted by Post 21		
February 18		Post 15
March 17		Post 21 @