

The ALASKA NEWS

LEGION NEWS
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LEGIONNAIRE

1948 POW/MIAs still unaccounted for - Why?

Vol. 93 No. 01

January 2012



In a world where differences have all too often created conflict and separated brothers, the Four Chaplains found a special kind of unity, and in that unity they found strength. Despite the differences, they became "brothers" for they had one unseen characteristic in common that overshadowed everything else.

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

Happy New Year

Adjutant's Corner



By W.E. "Gene" Franks
Department Adjutant

That time of the year to throw out the old calendars, put the new ones up, maybe change the batteries in all of the appliances, practice writing 2012 and not 2011, maybe even check your membership card and if it does not have 2012 on

it, maybe you should do something about it. Guess that is about enough said about membership.

You should have your first call for elections this month. The first thing on the agenda for this year will be the Oratorical contest. Please make contact with your local schools and get the information out. Boys/Girls State, never too early to get a head start. Bill Jacobi should have the information out soon. It looks like the Southeast District Convention this year will be low in attendance. I know that the economy will have something to do with that. Western District Convention will be held in Kenai, hosted by George H. Plumley Memorial Post 20. Our National Vice Commander Mervin Gunderson will be in attendance. The Department Convention will be held at Matanuska Valley Post 15, April 26-28 2012 and our National Commander Fang Wong will be in attendance.

Should you be planning on running for an office at any of these Conventions, it would be advisable to have your Post endorsement or letter of intent ready to go.....

Seems like every year we wait until the last minute, and in some cases we have to, but it is never too early to start thinking about the Commander, Adjutant, and Legionnaire of the year. Should your Post submit a name for one of these awards, remember they must go through the Districts and then to Department. The selection will

Adjutant Cont on Page 4

Commander's Corner

By Sharon Cherrette Department Commander



I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and wish you a prosperous New Year. If you haven't already renewed your Legion membership, it expired on 31 December. If for some reason you weren't able to make it to the Post by 31 December or mail in your membership fee, renew on-line (go to www.legion.org/renew). Please print the page that shows you have renewed on-line. This is your receipt. Remember: a member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January 1st shall be classed as delinquent. If the dues are paid on or before February 1st, membership shall be automatically reinstated. If still delinquent after February 1st, individual shall be suspended from all privileges. If still under such suspension on June 30th of such year, membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be forfeited. A member so suspended or whose membership has been so forfeited may be reinstated to active membership in good standing by vote of the Post and payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs.

This month is the start for the call for the nomination of Post officers with elections being held in March (per our By-laws). Read the Officer's Guide to see what the duties are for the position you are considering running for. Ask Post Officers (current and past) on what the job entails for more detail. The Guide is a reference; the Post may have additional duties that go with that position (for instance at some Posts the Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for setting up the Flag Retirement Ceremony in June). For those of you considering running for an officer position within your District or Department level, get with past and current officers or the Adjutant to ensure you understand what is expected of you. Don't wait until after you are elected and then decide it's not the position for you or that you are unable to do the duties required.

Just why does The American Legion exist? A plan to provide "Service" to our veterans, their families and their communities is as solid today, in a period of high technology and lightning fast changes, as it was in 1919, when the founding fathers of The American Legion

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THE ALASKA LEGIONNAIRE
(USPS 012-100)

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
The American Legion,
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Peggy S. Bateman, Editor

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The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement by The American Legion, The Department of Alaska, or Anchorage Printing, of the products or services advertised.

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES
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Members of The American Legion, Department of Alaska subscription included in payment of annual dues.

ALL OTHERS: United States and possessions - \$5.00 per year; Foreign - \$10.00 per year.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Alaska Legionnaire, 1550 Charter Circle, Anchorage, Alaska 99508.

Advertise your
business in the
Alaska

Legionnaire
and reach 9,000

PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Call Department Headquarters
for an advertising rate card at

278-8598

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



HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Well, it's time to check another year onto the books of history, but back to the month of December. The snow and wind came and went as usual during our busy lives as legionaries. I was happy to attend the activities on the weekend of the 2nd through the 4th. We first had a visitation at Post 29 for the Home coming of the Dept Cmdr. and the visiting officers. We had a great dinner and visited with some of the members. On Saturday day most of the officers from the night before show up at the veteran domiciliary to wrap presents for some of the veterans that were able to attend this year's Christmas Secret Santa's work shop. There were a lot of volunteers that helped the Auxiliary with their great program during this festive time, and if you missed it or don't know what this is about, there is always next year to volunteer. Soon after that on Sunday I drove to Wasilla to Post 35 for a combined visitation and WWII / Korean War veteran dinner. There was time to thank those veterans for their services and to hear them talk about of the stories was heart felt, and made me proud to be in the same family of veterans for the same cause,... "FREEDOM!". This is a great program that Post 35 has done for several years, and they have received a lot of compliments from those visiting veterans for the meal that was served. Great Job Post 35 on that meal of Prime and Halibut, also to your members.

On Wednesday the 7th, I'm sure that everyone conducted there own program for Pearl Harbor Day. This is a time of remembrance and think of our loved

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**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	28	100.0
09	Koyukuk Arctic	30	29	96.6
19	Nome	109	102	93.5
04	Pioneer	32	28	87.5
18	Ninilchik	135	116	85.9
02	Valdez	29	24	82.7
16	General Buckner	175	137	78.2
35	Susitna Valley	323	252	78.0
2222	SFC Paul R. Smith	13	10	76.9
14	Edward Locken	8	6	75.0
49	Gen Claire L. Chennaul	40	30	75.0
33	Peters Creek	386	288	74.6
28	Spenard	732	546	74.5
03	Ketchikan	219	163	74.4
01	Jack Henry	593	437	73.6
11	Dorman H. Baker	288	208	72.2
15	Matanuska Valley	292	210	71.9
12	Lynn Canal	127	91	71.6
20	George H. Plumley	305	218	71.4
05	Seward	249	174	69.8
29	Muldoon	381	260	68.2
17	Robert G. Blair	293	191	65.1
13	Sitka	177	109	61.5
GM-01	Mid Pacific	114	69	60.5
30	Con Miller	168	101	60.1
75	Sterling	31	18	58.0
21	Aurora Borealis	74	42	56.7
77	Department Hdqtrs	629	397	56.3
06	Merlin Elmer Palmer	84	47	55.9
34	Chappie JAMES	93	52	55.9
08	John W. Jones	20	11	55.0
25	Auke Bay	106	58	54.7
27	Gladys M. Heintz	90	45	50.0
57	C. Russell Huber	320	156	48.7
	Headquarters	704	397	56.3
	Pacific District	173	109	65.2
	Southeast District	815	510	67.4
	Western District	5410	3673	70.9
	Grand Totals	6823	4713	69.0

National Executive Committeeman

By Jim Pisa
National Executive Committeeman
"From the Doghouse"

Belonging to several other Veterans Organizations and receiving their monthly magazine, I came across an article written by Denny Boller, AMVETS National Service Officer. This is a well written article explaining who Veteran Advocates

are and what we can do for you. I hope you enjoy the article.



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ones that are away doing their duties that maintain our way of life. How we can celebrate holidays like Christmas and New Years with our families, friends and neighbors because of our veterans and military personal that have served and are serving us today and still tomorrow. Now with the New Year, we need to focus towards the future. Our children will grow up and some will enter the live of the service men and women, while some of those that are in our military will come out and join the ranks of the civilian world that we live in today. Those are the ones that we need to get in to our American Legion Family, so that we can work together to support our veterans in and out of the

service. There are two other dates to look forward to for January, the 16th that is Martin Luther King Jr. day and the 28th. Of course we know about the 16th, but what's up with the 28th you might ask, well it is the day for the S.A.L. 16th Annual Detachment T-Bone Steak Feed, with that 32 oz. steak and all the fix'ins just for \$25.00. So Help our SAL Detachment as they help us, and buy a ticket from your SAL member. Come and join us at Post 28 from 4 pm to 9 pm on Saturday the 28th of January, and we'll have some food and Fun. Let start this year with a great time of American Legion Family activities that will help our great organization.

Monday, January 16th is the deadline

For the February issue of the "Alaska Legionnaire" January 16th 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.

1st Vice Commander News

By Steve Huisman

Department First Vice Commander & Membership Chairman

Welcome to the year 2012. Happy New Year to you and yours.

The New Year is here and it is time to start all over with your new years resolutions. You know the ones about losing weight, exercising and quitting this and that. Well let's start something new this year and start with membership. So far this year the best that the Department of Alaska has done is to rise to 49th out of 55 departments. The next goal of 80% is on 19 Jan 2012 and it would sure be nice to achieve this on time or to even go above and beyond these expectations. Thirteen Posts made the last goal of 75% and I salute you but that means that 21 posts need to push a little harder to achieve the next goal. Enough for the bad news lets' start the New Year with a bang and see if we can get



some of the people on the books to renew and find some of the new and eligible individuals to sign up and become new members. Just a reminder that to advertise the Legion is a very simple thing to do, wear your colors every day, the ball cap, a shirt, the Legion lanyard, and remember that the easiest way to sign up a new member is to just ask.

Service Office News

By Jim Pisa,

Department Service Officer

By Denny Boller

Reprinted with permission from American Veteran Magazine

While waiting in the airport for a plane to travel to the AMVETS National Convention, my thoughts wandered and I found myself thinking about service officers, veterans advocates. I contemplated what type of person becomes an accredited service officer? Starting with the "whos", brother, sister, mother, father, etc... flashed through my mind before I stopped. This runs a lot deeper than that. I needed to look at the "whys."

Starting the thought process again, considering that service officers are individuals who truly care about their fellow veterans. They do not become a service officer to make a lot of money. They become service officers because they want to; they are driven and need to. Many do this for the personal satisfaction of a job well done while some are tired of seeing their fellow veterans not receive what they are due via questionable rating decisions that the courts have labeled as arbitrary and capricious.

Veterans advocates will try and help as many people as reasonably possible. Occasionally this means squeezing one more person into a time slot such as lunchtime, or coming in early or staying late to see a person who is in a time crunch. However, many advocates believe that the great Veterans est contribution they make on any claim is increasing the accuracy and

quality of the claim package while providing honest and compassionate guidance for their clients. These are not attributes of



any governmental bureaucracy. To quote Ronald Reagan, "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help.'"

A well-trained veterans advocate knows what questions to ask during an interview that will ensure that all conditions allowable under the current law are correctly documented and included in the claim. When this occurs, the quality of claim packages increases. The veteran has a better chance of being correctly rated, the VA's job is made easier and the veteran's anxiety level is reduced. Couple this with a service officer's comprehensive explanation of the decision, if necessary, and appeal rates drop. This is a win-win situation for all.

A veteran's advocate will listen to a small bit of ranting and raving by potential clients who are very upset with the government in general, the VA specifically, their branch of service and their general misfortune. Advocates understand this kind of frustration people have when dealing with the governmental bureaucracy of both the Depart-

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ALERT!

LEGIONNAIRE DEADLINE

January 16th

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 al-
ways hopeful, and endures
through every circumstance.
I Corinthians 13:7

Taps

Walter Burkhardt Post 12
Albert Cottle Post 17
Ronald Hall Post 19
Victor Hubert Post 19
Jimmie Muckridge Post 20
Linne Rose Post 19
Leonard Sarja Post 19
Walter Shade Post 77
Stanley Sobocienski Post 19
Donald Williams Post 13

Adjutant Cont from Page 1

be made by the Awards Committee at the Department Convention. This would also apply to the Educator of the Year also.

I would like to thank those of you who donated to our Christmas Label Program. This year there were some very generous donations and these funds are used for our American Legion programs. I think it would be interesting if you could read some of

the notes that are enclosed with these contributions. Of course there are always the notes that say, "PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MORE LABELS, I HAVE PLENTY", but there are the notes, and more than one, where \$5, or \$10 are enclosed saying that the Legionnaire is sorry but since they are on a limited budget, this was all they could afford. To those I say sincerely, THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS.

Commander Cont

met in Paris March 15th-17th. They were true visionaries. Much of The American Legion's success rests on its understanding that the fight for veterans' rights - past, present or future - is never-ending. While our purposes may remain unchanged, our capabilities must not. The environment is changing and we must stay in front of change to be this nation's leading advocate for veterans. For continued success, we must provide first-rate service to our veterans throughout this century and on, the basis for this blueprint is the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion, which was finalized at the St. Louis caucus in September 1919 and reaffirmed at Minneapolis in 1994. Personal contact at every level of leadership within The American Legion is the catalyst that has made us successful in the past and will make us even more successful serving veterans in the future. Since our founding fathers gave us a sound, clear focus, we need to build on this direction as we seek every opportunity to excel in growth and membership in the 21st century.

21st Century Key Challenges: The key challenges facing The American Legion in the 21st century have a common denominator to success -- personal involvement of Legionnaires.

Vision: Every American Legion member must focus on service to the veteran, to their families and to the communities as their number one priority. Legion officers at every level must lead the way in reinforcing this vision.

Image: We must be aware at all times of our image and how others perceive us and our work in the community. We must remain the champions of service to our veterans and their communities. Everyone in a Legion leadership position must set the example for all members to follow.

Partnership: The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion need to be partners in providing service to our veterans, their families and their communities. Legion officers again must set the example for inner-organization dialogue and cooperation. Our work of service to our veterans is a "family affair."

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ment of Defense and Veterans Affairs. Most of us NSOs have been through it ourselves. That is another reason why we are advocates. A seasoned advocate knows how to calm veterans down and get them to focus on the issue at hand. Once they are calm, then both the advocate and the veteran roll up their sleeves and get to work on the claim.

A good veterans advocate knows when, why and how to say "No." By this I mean there are times when someone's desires and/or needs exceed what is allowable under the law. This is when an advocate should and will say, "No" to their client. If a claimant wishes to continue after the explanation, that is their right to do so. However, since the law that covers accredited representatives was changed several years ago, fewer and fewer advocates will represent a frivolous claim. This is a claim not based in fact or the law. You might ask why the change? The reason is that accredited representatives may now lose their accreditation for filing repetitive frivolous claims.

Veterans advocates will go that extra mile. I know of some advocates who conduct research on their own time to locate evidence for a claim. Usually via the internet, an advocate will try to find a document, a precedent setting case, an individual who

might write a buddy statement, or military records in the National Archives or other civilian sources.

A real veterans advocate will take the time to explain the VA's decision. That explanation will be based on the facts, the evidence contained in the claim file and what is allowable under the current law. The need to explain VA's decisions is due to numerous requirements that must be met in the VA's letters, none of which contribute to clarity in communication; however, the points of law have been covered and the required boxes have been checked. All of which causes veterans to ask, "What the heck does the VA mean by this?"

Veterans advocates are very caring of their fellow veterans, and share in the passion to ensure that what is right is done. They are giving of their own time and knowledge and dedicated to serving their fellow man.

If you are in a period of severe pressure or distress and need to talk with someone, don't go it alone. Make a call that is confidential to the folks at the Veterans' Crisis Line:

800-273-TALK (8255), press 1. They are available 24/7/365.

Brother, sister, you are not alone. There is help to get you through this crisis - call them.



Directory of All VA Social Media Sites:

www.va.gov/opa/SocialMedia.asp<<http://www.va.gov/opa/SocialMedia.asp>>

Boys State

By Bill Jacobi, Boys State Director

The Alaska Boys State Application Packets were mailed the first of January for the 2012 Boys State program. As many of you may have heard, the program has been declining in attendance and we are exploring the feasibility of joining the Alaska Boys State and Alaska Girls State programs to reduce costs and increase participation.

For the up coming year we are still at the Meier Lake Conference Center in Wasilla and the date is June 2, Saturday, to June 8, Friday. Graduation will be Friday evening beginning at 7:30 PM.

Applications are due to me by April 30, 2012, any received after that date will be returned to the responsible Post to be returned to the boy explaining that it was not timely submitted. It is the Post's responsibility to collect, interview, select and submit the boy's application so it will be in my hands by April 30.

The application is at the Alaska Legion web site www.alaskalegion.org Boys State tab. The application is a fillable form and has to be signed along with the NOTICE Form and submitted to the post in the school's vicinity. I look forward to a good effort by all Alaska Legion Posts to keep this program alive and thriving.

If you have questions about Boys State, you can contact me at 907 723 8028 or Bjacobi680@aol.com.

2012

Calendar of Events

JANUARY

HOLIDAY BLOOD DONOR DRIVE

- Dec 30 - Jan 2 Dept Offices are Closed
- Jan 16th Martin Luther King Jr Day Dept Offices are Closed

• Jan 28 Saturday

**S.A.L. 16th annual 32oz T-Bone Steak Feed
4:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**

American Legion Post 28

Whole or Split to Stay or Go

**Corn on the Cob, Steak Fries, Garlic Bread and Toss
Salad**

\$25.00 See SAL Members or the Post Bartenders

•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**

New Years Eve Party Dec 31, 2011 8:00 - Closing

\$15.00 for one or \$25 for two

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 Every-
one invited, Come enjoy, dance sing and meet new and old friends.**

C Russell Huber Unit 57

Raffle Cash Drawing \$5,000 Payout

Drawing to be held on February 14, 2012

300 Tickets Sold \$50.00 each.

Need not be present to win.

**From the desk of the Western
District Commander**

By Tom Schanrock

Western District Commander

Seasons greetings to all, hope everyone had a good Christmas and New year, I did.

Since Sept. have been taking care of my 3 ½ yr old grandson Dalton, he has two speeds, Full speed or dead stop!! I have lost twenty pounds trying to keep up with him.

Since my last newsletter I have made visitations to Homer, Post 16 ,I had great time meeting and talking to members down there the food was first rate and thanks to Commander Warren and all who made our visit so great.

Next stop Ninilchik, Post 18, I had a great time meeting all my frends and other members, we talked about membership and other concerns that they have mostly with our state government .

This is information for all posts and other nonprofits it seems that ABC bunch are trying to catch us with stings, they hit the Moose Lodge in Kenai so be aware do everything by book!!

Now back to Post 18 after dinner had some refreshments and listened to a band, Jeanie S got me up danc- ing it was fun, I am not much of a dancer but she wouldn't take no .

The next morning went to post they were making cinnamon rolls had one right out of oven it was super got coffee to go and headed back to Kenai.

I want to thank Com. Ray, Dave S and volunteers for making my visitation great.

I was at Post 33 for Freds re- tirement party, good luck on new venture Fred.

I went to my home Post 20 for visitation all went really well, Alvin and his crew did a swell job on food, Sue D did a good job on the meeting hall it looked great, thanks to all the volunteers who made this possible

Next visit was at Post 5 in Se- ward, Com. Sullivan and officers/ volunteers did a bang up job with preparation of food and post for visit.

It was a real good turnout for this event wall to wall people ,glad to see so many show up for great food and comments by Dept. Com. Sharon and other guests that were in attendance.

All in all on my part it has been a great year..

**For more information on the
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
Program go to www.theLIT.com**

**FREQUENT FLYERS MILES
SOLICITED FOR VETERANS
WORLD WAR II TOURS-2012**

This is the ninth year that Vi Ranney will be escorting veterans and others to Europe for the 68th anniversary of D-Day. The tour is produced by Rupiper Travel and de- signed by WWII veteran Dr. Brooks Ranney of Yankton, SD. Highlights will include:

- Paris, Normandy and Eisenhow- er's headquarters in France
- Patton's grave in Luxembourg
- the Battle of the Bulge area in Belgium
- the Remagen Bridge, Munich, Dachau, Hitler's Eagle's Nest and more in Germany

The tour features professional guides, great hotels, most meals and is economically priced. Two departures are slated: June 3-13 and August 8-18. Veterans are especially honored at the June 6th ceremonies.

Mrs. Ranney stated that "since

our WWII veterans are elderly and often living on a small pension, a trip like this is not always feasible unless help is solicited. Therefore, we are asking individual, businesses, large corporations, VFW and Legion Posts and Departments for contribu- tions of extra frequent flyer miles. If we could get the air transportation covered for our needy veterans, they could afford the rest in most cases. Each year I hear from between three and four hundred veterans who would like to make the trip, but just can't afford it. After all they have done for us, isn't it a shame they can't go. They need to go back and make a closure. If you can help, please call me," she concluded. Call Mrs. Ranney at 605-665-3596 if you would like a brochure or to donate frequent flyer miles.



Detachment Commander

By Kyle Parkerson
Detachment Commander

“Renew, Recruit, and Retain.”

Happy New Year all! Hope everyone’s 2012 is fantastic. I will keep this short but very sweet.

We’re doing fantastic on membership. Thank you all for the hard work everyone is doing.

I was at the VA Domiciliary in

December for the Gift Shop, and it was special being on the other side of the gifting. I usually receive more than I give and to give that time to those veterans was fantastic! I would do it again in a heartbeat!



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

By Darrel Williamson Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committeeman

I hope everyone had a nice Christmas, Where did the year go?

Now that we are in January, we have another target date of 60% on the 20th. Keep that membership coming.

Martin Luther King Day is the 16th.

I wish you all a happy and healthy new year.



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 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:

From the desk of the Western District Detachment Commander

By Austin Diaz
Western District Detachment Commander

Hello and Happy 2012,

In December I had made the visitations one on the 2nd at Muldoon Post 29 and the other on the 4th Wasilla Post 35 and I did get a chance to talk to some of SAL members that were at the dinners and had a good visitation at each post. In between the visitations at the post on Saturday the 3rd we helped the Auxiliary at the Veteran’s Domiciliary in Anchorage wrapping Christmas gifts to be sent to the veterans’ family member that they were not able to be with. Then right after that at Post 1 we had the Detachment DEC committee meeting. There we discussed things like the finances, ideas, conventions, and up and coming events like on the 28th of this month is the S.A.L. Detachment’s Annual 32 oz T-Bone Steak Feed that is at Post 28 and is held in January of every year for the past 16 years. The ticket is \$25.00 for the steak, fries, salad, bread, and a desert with a lot of friends and family from the American Legion organization.



With all of that food going around lets start thinking about the up coming Conventions, like Western District that will be at my Squadron 20 in Kenai during March and then in April at Matanuska Valley Squadron 15, we have the Detachment Convention. So let’s start looking for those 2012 new slate of officers. So membership is always our task and to support our American Legion is our objective, but without the new members and the support of the ones that we have, we can not complete our objective and as stated be the future of the American Legion. So let’s be that S.A.L. of the New Generation and give the support to our Squadrons so we can help our American Legion Family.

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 member-

ship 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

Happy New Years to all of you! I hope the holiday season was filled with wonderful memories for each of you. I would like to send a Thank you to Units 29 and 35 for inviting me for a visit. Post, Unit and Sons of #29 had a wonderful Coming Home Party for our Department Commander

Sharon! Our visitation with Post, Unit, and Sons of #35 was in conjunction with their Annual WWII veteran's dinner what an honor it was to witness their event. In between these two visitations was the Auxiliary Domiciliary Christmas event, and I would like to send a huge Thank You to our own Ms. Peggy

Bateman for chairing the event, and Thank you to all Auxiliary, Post and Sons that came in to help!

As most of you know our Department Secretary Ms. Linda has been ill and although she is on the mend please continue to send ALL membership transmittals and all correspondence for the Department to Ms. Judy Pusti at 1392 6th Avenue Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 until father notice. Judy has graciously accepted the temporary office of Acting Secretary until Linda is well on her feet.

Because for the unfortunate circumstance the Department of Alaska was delayed in sending out to all the Units and chairman our booklet with all the contact information from

each Unit and Department Chairman. This is being taken care but, until you do receive it you can find this information on our Auxiliary Department for Alaska website at www.alaskalegionauxiliary.org. If you haven't yet used our website I urge you to, Lisa Williamson our Department Electronics media Chairman has and continues to do a wonderful job keeping up to date with all our new information.

As I close this newsletter Please remember that if your Unit wishes to raise their dues for the 2013 year you must have that information to National Headquarters no later then the end of January.

Alaska Girls State can help fund college with Samsung Scholarship

What single American Legion Auxiliary event can be inspirational, educational, life-changing, and fun? It is American Legion Auxiliary Girls State/Girls Nation, a marquee Auxiliary program since 1937. At American Legion Auxiliary Girls State, high school students who have completed their junior year are competitively selected to participate in the seven-day mock government program where they learn about civics and American government in a fast-paced, interactive program of campaigning, debating, voting, and electing mock local and state leaders.

More than seeing and hearing we learn and remember by doing. That's one reason ALA Girls State has such an impact. For a whole week the young women are actively engaged in "doing" government. The two-party political system is brought to life

through setting up and administering city, county and state governments. From campaigning, party rallies, and debating to mock legislative sessions and parliamentary procedures the girls are immersed in experiential learning. The result? Many participants choose a career path involving politics or community service. And all leave with knowledge about their responsibilities as U.S. Citizens and memories that will last a lifetime.

Girls State citizens are also eligible to apply for the Samsung Scholarship.

Recently, the four members of the American Legion Auxiliary Education Committee traveled to Indianapolis to meet with The American Legion Committee on Education. This is one of the few committees where the Auxiliary has equal representation with relation to voting and participation.

The first order of business was to select nine Samsung Scholarship winners. Each will receive a \$20,000 scholarship. The remaining 89 applicants each received \$1100.

Forty-nine Departments submitted applications, one from Boys State and one from Girls State. Only students who have participated in Boys State or Girls State are eligible to apply. Although it is not a requirement that the applicant be the descendant of a Korean War veteran, additional points are awarded for this.

The awards are from annual interest earned through a fund established by the Samsung Corporation in collaboration with The American Legion. Each year, since 1996, an average of ten scholarships have been awarded.



Department President Sue Diaz poses with National President Kris Nelson at the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana during the President & Secretaries Conference in October.

Western District President By Barbe Wolkoff

I pray everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a promising New Years. The best part of the holidays are getting to enjoy heartfelt time with our families counting our blessings. Thank God, we are Americans and may worship and celebrate openly according to our spiritual beliefs. These freedoms are reason enough to be ever in debt to our veterans and enlisted military personnel. All the more reason to constantly strive to enrich their lives and the lives of their families. Be ever mindful of the needs of the family, while their deployed family member is absent.

Renewals must be paid by Jan. 31st in order for the membership to avoid lapse. Thus, the member will lose advantage of all ALA benefits and Post privileges. Race onto those renewals. Keep your unit membership goals in mind. We want our Department to meet all the membership goals. I for one would love to see our own President Sue Diaz on stage at National Convention.

There will be "Mission Training" in Las Vegas on the 21st and 22nd



of January, which I have planned to attend. It is open to all members. Looking forward to learning new ways to "energize our members". This is a new mission-focused training program to assist the grassroots member. We will learn simplified ways to put ALA's outreach programs in action, ask questions, voice concerns and interact with national leaders. I am very excited for the opportunity to increase my knowledge of these programs.

Lets make sure we complete all program reports this year. Mid-year reports should all have been turned in so the Dept. Chairmen have the information they need to complete there annual reports. I would love to have a 100% reporting at Dept. level. We all work the programs so why not let our state get the credit we so deserve. At every general meetings at your unit, have the members turn in their volunteer hours. This makes it super easy to fill out your mid-year and year-end reports. The hours are worked, so turn them in. It's like working with out clocking in, not making much sense. Thank you for all

Membership Chairman by Marge Blankenship

I trust that everyone had a safe and happy Christmas and New Year's. With that went all the parties, both children's and adults. Now it is time to get back to membership. On New Year's Day at our Post we have someone present from the Legion/Aux/SAL to work membership for renewals and new members.

Are you still reaching out to your members that have still not renewed? Do you have someone that calls these members? Are some members dealing with reduced income and trying to decide where best to spend their money?

Let them know that for the cost of their dues how they are supporting the American Legion Auxiliary Programs that affect our military, veterans and the families. Let them know they are honoring the person they received their eligibility for ALA membership through. Perhaps it is a parent or grandparent that has been paying for a Junior or young SAL member that has become a senior member and the cost of membership has increased. In these times of decreasing income and higher living expenses we all are taking stock of how we spend our money. Our

ALA Units, Districts, Departments and National Headquarters are no different.

Consider for a short time, say of one month, that you will reduce the dues to only the cost of what you send in to the Department. You may find a surge of renewals. Let us know what unique activities your Unit does to encourage renewals or new membership.

Our next membership milestone is 70% by the first Tuesday in February. This means your memberships need to be into Department by January 31.

Unit membership chairman and secretaries, are you keeping track of those

members that qualify for the Renew 3/ Recruit 3 award?

Let your members know about it this in your Unit newsletter or by posting a flyer in your Post Club Room.

Keep those memberships coming in. Complete your Alaska Flag for a chance to have a star named after your Unit to forever shine in the night sky.



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

BOBBIE SIMMONS
Commander
Marjorie Ream Adjutant
Elexzanderia Carrs Service Officer
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Sept - May
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Christy Hill Chaplain
Kathy Moore Sgt-At-Arms

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1st Vice Kenneth Gilpatrick
2nd Vice Wes Lancaster
Adjutant Amold Heck
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Chaplain Ken Jacobus
Historian George Tillman
Service Officer Kirk Waldhaus
Sgt-At-Arms Darril Stuhlmler
Judge Adv. Kenneth Jacobus
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Jack Appoloni
Robert Marquez

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- AL Baseball Service High
- Boys Scout Troop 214
- Cub Scout Pack 214
- Dimond High JROTC
- Post 28

Scholarship Program

7001 Brayton Drive
Anchorage, AK 99507
907-344-3841

Muldoon Post 29
Meets 3rd Tuesday 6:30 PM

Commander
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
Pull Tabs Available
Visit us on the web at <http://www.mat-valleypost15.org>

C. Russell Huber
Squadron 57

Kyle Parkerson
Commander

Thomas McClelland,
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Zone 1, What is it?

Western District is divided into three Zones. Zone I includes the Anchorage Bowl, Peters Creek, Wasilla and Palmer. I, Cris Vrabel as Zone I Commander, have chosen to conduct monthly meetings.

This allows me to keep in touch with all the Post Commanders and for them to keep in touch with each other.

The Zone I breakfast meeting is held the 3rd Saturday of the month, every month at 10:00 a.m., the location is rotated among the Posts and published. The Zone I meeting is primarily for the Post Commanders but has always been open to all. The general membership is encouraged to attend. Come see and hear what all the Posts and your elected officers, on all levels are up to.

The Zone I meeting is conducted to encourage networking among the Post Commanders, to get an idea of how other Posts are doing in membership and get some tips or new approaches, to see the other Posts

- what's new and how did they get it done (volunteers, eagle scouts, what?).

What new outreach program are the Posts into, welcome home to the troops, wounded warrior program, Korean War Vet's dinner, etc.?

What's working to keep the members active, interested and bringing in new members.

The Zone I meeting is also a great place to bring or be a speaker when you want to get information out to all the Posts.

Lastly, you get a great breakfast and a chance to chat with friends.

See you soon?

Zone One Breakfast Schedule 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.	2012	
January 21 January 28 Hosted by Post 21 February 18 March 17 Post 1	2012 Oratorical Post 1 Post 15 Post 21 @	

Cris Vrabel, Zone 1 Commander
444-2999