



# THE LEGION TIMES

Official Newspaper of The American Legion, Department of Texas

August 2012 • Volume 94, Issue 1



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*Do you have an article or  
announcement for  
The Legion Times?*

*If so, please send all  
submissions to [times@txlegion.org](mailto:times@txlegion.org) by the  
20th of every month and it will appear in  
the following issue*

## Message from the Commander

Thank you for electing me the State Commander at the Convention in Houston on July 15, 2012. During the next year, I will work hard to gain your trust and respect.

This year, the Department of Texas will focus our efforts on helping the posts be successful. In order to be successful, your post must be visible in your community and be actively involved in Legion programs. Every post should send at least one boy to Boys State and have an Oratorical Contest participant. Now is the time for each Post Commander to appoint a committee for each of these programs. As soon as school starts, make an appointment to meet with the high school principals in your area and tell them about these programs and solicit their support.

If you have a successful post, eligible veterans will want to join your post, which will make it easier for you to attain your membership goals.

Dan Corbin  
State Commander  
2012 - 2013

## 2012 Department Sweepstakes Winners

Prize	Amount	Name	City	P/U/S
Grand Prize	\$10,000.00	Joe Duarte	San Antonio	2
Second Prize	\$5000.00	Donna Lee Miller	La Feria	439
Third Prize	\$2500.00	Anton Lesak, Jr	Gonzales	40
Fourth Prize	\$1500.00	Charles Schumann	New Braunfels	35
Fifth Prize	\$1000.00	Tommy Lee	Winnsboro	340
Sixth Prize	\$500.00	Rodolfo Oliveira	Laredo	59
Seventh Prize	\$500.00	Henry Denham	Converse	593
Eighth Prize	\$100.00	Claude Denton	San Antonio	171
Ninth Prize	\$100.00	Charles Donges	Vernon	67
Tenth Prize	\$100.00	Robert Savage	Temple	345
Eleventh Prize	\$100.00	Joseph Cox	Wimberley	144
Twelfth Prize	\$100.00	Billy Maddox	Florence	447
Thirteenth Prize	\$100.00	Clifford Barger	Dike	243

**THE LEGION TIMES**  
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**AUGUST 2012**

**Executive Director**  
**William West**

**Editor**  
**F.G. Adams**

**Send all correspondence**  
**and submissions to:**

**The Legion Times**  
**PO Box 140527**  
**Austin, TX 78714**

**T: 512.472.4138 / F: 512.472.0603**

**E-mail: [times@txlegion.org](mailto:times@txlegion.org)**

**The Legion Times assumes no**  
**responsibility for material**  
**submitted and reserves the right to**  
**edit any submissions.**

**Editorial deadline is the 20th of every**  
**month for inclusion in the following**  
**month's issue.**

**Subscription is included in the annual**  
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**Department of Texas for extra copies,**  
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**The Legion Times**  
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**The Legion Times is published online**  
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**Legion, Department of Texas**

***The American Legion Specialty License Plate***  
***Now Available***

The application form is online at [www.dot.state.tx.us](http://www.dot.state.tx.us), but since this is what is called a "qualifying" license plate, you cannot order the American Legion license plate online.

You can place an order by using the application or by visiting your local tax office, you will be required to show proof that they you are a current paid member of The American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary or the Sons of The American Legion. This is why the license plate cannot be ordered online.

The application form for specialty license that is currently displayed online has not yet been revised to show American Legion (VTR-415 form) on the application. At this time, writing American Legion on the application in the "Special Plate Choices" area is acceptable.

The American Legion specialty license plate will be available for the following classes of vehicles:

Passenger - Less/Equal 6000 pounds, also available to be personalized.  
Passenger - more than 6000 pounds; also available to be personalized  
Truck - Less than or equal to 1 ton; also available to be personalized  
Truck - More than 1 ton; also available to be personalized  
Motorcycle; also available to be personalized  
Trailers; also available to be personalized  
Travel trailers; also available to be personalized



# 2011-2012 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Dan Corbin, Department Commander  
Lynn Sparks, Department Vice Commander  
Jim Prendergast, National Executive Committeeman  
Paul Dillard, Alternate National Executive Committeeman  
William West, Department Adjutant  
Harvey Klee, Department Chaplain  
Walter Ivie, Department Treasurer  
Bryan Coleman, Department Judge Advocate  
Cyndi Miller, Department Historian  
Jerry Tatman, Department Sergeant-at-Arms  
Donald Toohey, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms  
JG Garza, Immediate Past Department Commander  
Michael Simon, Director of Internal Affairs  
Edward Reyes, Department Service Officer  
Michael Lacy, Department Service Officer  
Rebecca Hollingsworth, Department Service Officer  
Donald Bridschge, Department Service Officer

## DIVISION COMMANDERS

Alan Robart, 1st Division Commander  
John Palasota, 2nd Division Commander  
George Solis, 3rd Division Commander  
Ruber Banks, 4th Division Commander

## DISTRICT COMMANDERS

Lerory Anderson, 1st District Commander  
Leaman Laws, 2nd District Commander  
Michael Croson, 3rd District Commander  
David Harvey, 4th District Commander  
Jeff Perkins, 5th District Commander  
John Hince, 6th District Commander  
Everett Ison, 7th District Commander  
Patrick Yancey, 8th District Commander  
Glen Moody, 9th District Commander  
Al Banzer, 10th District Commander  
John Rogers, 11th District Commander  
Walter Starr, 12th District Commander  
James Carminati, 13th District Commander  
Reno Reiley, 14th District Commander  
Noe Alvarado, 15th District Commander  
Richard Britton, 16th District Commander  
James Smith, 17th District Commander  
William Dannheim, 18th District Commander  
Bill Youngren, 19th District Commander  
Lloyd Buckmaster, 20th District Commander  
Johnnie Washburn, 21st District Commander  
John Osborne, 22nd District Commander  
Jerome Iltis, 23rd District Commander

## ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Texas? If so, please follow these basic guidelines for submissions.

- Submit your text in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf). **No ".docx" files please, as these are often problematic.** Save your file as the same name of the article, so we can easily keep track of it. And be sure to make it clear who the author is, whether it's you or if you are just forwarding it to us.
- **WE LOVE ARTICLES WITH PHOTOS**, or any other kind of images! Include photos and/or artwork for articles *separately* (NOT embedded in the article) as high resolution (300 dpi, or better) JPGs. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with

your article. Let us know in your e-mail of any corresponding captions, and/or name of the photographer if necessary.

- Spell check everything! Especially people's names, web addresses, etc. We do our best to catch typos, but sometimes they still slip by. You can help us greatly here by simply running your spell check function in your word processing program.

- **E-mail everything directly to us at [times@txlegion.org](mailto:times@txlegion.org) by the 20th of every month for it to appear in the very next issue.** This way we have plenty of time to work with in case we need to clarify anything with you.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and hope you continue to help us grow The Legion Times!



## Message from the Auxiliary President

It was wonderful to see everyone July 12 – 15 in Houston – even though the hallways were long, it gave us all a chance to be under the same roof and visit with each other while we stopped to catch our breath... If you were unable to attend the 94th annual American Legion Family Convention, you were missed and you missed a great weekend. Thank you to everyone that worked so hard to create a never-to-be forgotten event.

I am honored to have been elected to represent the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas as Department President 2012 – 2013. I look forward to a year working together with The American Legion and Commander Corbin along with the S.A.L. and Detachment Commander Jeff Alvis. I am confident we will enjoy our travels and joint ceremonies this year.

My theme is “Serving with a Song in our Hearts”. My experience has been that when you add music to any occasion, it is more meaningful; more touching and more memorable. If we serve our veterans, our military, our communities, our children and our programs with a song in our hearts we will avoid conflict and enjoy every moment – working together becomes a joy! So, I urge each of you to join the Auxiliary with a song in your heart in the post homes and at the District and Division conventions. During the ALA's installation ceremony we sang not one but two songs. A song to remember that we can't do it alone and to inspire and then the simple melody of “Sing a Song”.

The membership theme is “ALA hearts growing in Harmony”. It is my hope that we can all create an atmosphere of harmony as we work together to fulfill the pledges in our preambles and allow the communities to realize the vital role our family of organizations plays within our cities and counties in Texas. We are reminded, “It is not the price we pay to join... it is the price ‘they’ paid for our eligibility”. We thank you, Legionnaires, for that eligibility we gain through your service to our country. I urge each of you to help the ALA continue to work beside y'all – hand in hand for our veterans and military. To accomplish this task, we need our membership to grow. Please consider gifting an ALA membership to your wife, mother, sisters, daughters, granddaughters great-granddaughters and grandmothers, too. This year our National Headquarters will reward you with a lovely angel pin in return for just signing up one new ALA member – your unit President will have the form to send in. Thank you in advance for helping us as we invite veterans to join your ranks.

I have chosen Cancer Research as my special project this year. Regrettably, each of us has had someone in our family or an acquaintance that has been stricken by this dreaded disease. By continuing to donate to mdAnderson Cancer Research fellowships – we will continue to make strides to find a cure. To date, the ALA has donated in excess of \$1,250,000.00 dollars since the 1950's. The researchers that have received these scholarships have made great advances and we can take great pride in knowing that together the ALA, TAL and SAL have contributed to this progress. Please watch for details about a special dinner event during September's DEC where we can gather to share dinner and raise funds towards the Cancer Research Program. It will be an evening of music, fun and laughter to share. We will also unveil a “Cancer Research” pin you can wear to show your support.

I am grateful to NEC woman, Mary Lee Waddell, for the successful year she just completed together with your Commander Lupe Garza and SAL Commander Steve Slaughter. It was a wonderful year honoring our veterans and freedom while we rode the wave of freedom!

Serving with a Song in my Heart, in the Spirit of Service not Self  
For God and Country,  
Marty Peters  
State President 2012-2013  
American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas



## **Chaplains Corner**

It is a great honor to be re-appointed Department Chaplain by Dan Corbin, Department Commander 2012-2013. In my capacity as your Department Chaplain, I will provide a monthly Chaplain's Corner article for publication in the Legion Times.

Since all Department Officers have been either newly elected, re-elected or appointed to their positions, and all of the Division Commanders and half of the District Commanders are assuming their office beginning in the year 2012 for the first time, I offer the following prayer on their behalf.

Almighty and merciful God,

We are thankful for those whose terms of office have just ended, we thank them for a job well done and thank you for supporting them in all their endeavors on our behalf.

We pray for all those who have been newly chosen to serve in positions of responsibility on behalf of The American Legion, Department of Texas in whatever level of responsibility they now hold. May each and every one throughout their term of office, perform their duties faithfully, competently and joyfully.

Guide them in the performance of their office; bless them with the knowledge they will need. May they have tolerance toward those whose opinions may differ from their own and may all unite in the common cause of serving God and Country.

Lord, we come to you as humble children seeking guidance as we endeavor to find ways to fulfill our promise to serve You and our country. Bless all that we do and say. Make us truly instruments of Your will as we serve You and our fellow veterans through this great organization. Help us to guard well our heritage and grant that we protect our nation by our service.

Amen.

I encourage those who have been moved by an original prayer, poem or short devotional that would be applicable to our American Legion Family to send a copy to me for publication in this column.

Those of you who are not already members of the Texas Chaplains Association, I also encourage you to join. Check out our website at [www.texaschaplains.org](http://www.texaschaplains.org) for further information.

## ***Allied Memorial Remembrance Ride - Texas Ride, June 30, 2012***

Early on the Saturday morning before the United States Independence Day folks from Texas hit the road on motorcycles, trikes and other vehicles heading to Terrell Texas. With support from police and local officials the Texas portion of the International Allied Memorial Remembrance Ride arrived at the Number One British Flying Training School Museum at Terrell Texas.

The volunteers that keep the museum alive and vibrant coordinated the activity with the City of Terrell and host the reception at the Terrell Municipal Airport. After the participants from all areas arrived they regrouped while having a stretch and refresh. The police escorted the mass ride of over 100 motorcycles followed by cages and support vehicles through town to the Terrell Memorial Stadium. Traffic on US Highway 80 was stopped as the piper led the procession of about 200 across to the British Memorial at Oakland Cemetery.

Organizer George "Tank" Sherman opened the ceremony followed by a prayer and poem by John "Padre" Retos, a vintage aircraft fly-over and placing a wreath honoring fallen British Aviators and all the Allied Warriors lost, from the Past to the Present. The ceremony concluded with the Marine Corp. League of Terrell Firing a volley of three, playing of the pipes by Mike Ecklund of Terrell and playing of "Last Post", the British version of TAPS by Dale Sherman of Fort Worth, Texas.

Following the ceremony activities moved to the Holiday Inn Express where a major portion of the parking lot was blocked off for bike parking. The afternoon event was Tank and Debbie's biker wedding. About 6:00 PM a Texas style get-together started with BBQ and all the trimmings and music by Cotton Hill (third year they have Supported AMRR). Invited guests included members of the Terrell Chamber of Commerce, Marine Corp League of Terrell, the British Museum, and the Hotel in appreciation for there help and assistance.

The Texas Ride started four years ago by American Legion Riders partnering with and following the format used by the British Legion Riders. The No.1 BFTS British Flying Training School (BFTS) Museum in Terrell became a host three years ago. It was the largest of 6 Training bases in the United States and over 2,000 Pilots from the United Kingdom and the United States were trained here. As was the case in 1941 when Terrell's citizens welcomed student pilots to their community, this year again they made the AMRR visitors feel welcome.

In 2011 the activity expanded to include the Canadian Veteran Freedom Riders, going to a memorial in Ottawa; and American Legion Riders from three additional states going to memorials. This year hundreds of participants from at least thirty one American Legion Rider Post/Chapters and many friends honored veterans at several ceremonies in the United States alone.

See the following sites for further details and pictures:

AMRR main page <http://www.alliedride.org/>

No. 1 British Flying Training School Museum <http://www.bftsmuseum.org/>

The Texas Ride <http://www.kencox.us/scrapbook/20120630amrr/>





## A WORD ABOUT LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST



### **LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST**

*Over Four Decades of Partnership for a Healthy America*

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) was formed in 1966 with two primary goals: to provide Legion families with low-cost insurance protection, and to provide a source of revenue to participating Legion Departments.

The Trust has been so successful in its forty-three years that today over 2,000,000 Legionnaires in 48 participating Departments are enrolled in this unique program.

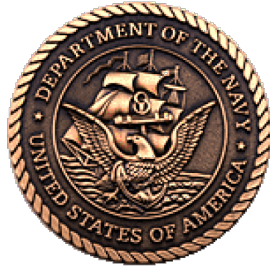
Also, in the same period of time, hundreds of millions of dollars in claim benefits have been paid to Legionnaires and their families through the LIT; and over \$52 million in allocations have been paid to participating Legion Departments.

The first Trust insurance plan to be offered was the Hospital Income Protection plan, a program designed to pay fixed dollar amounts for periods of hospital confinement. Over the years, other insurance coverage offered included: Cancer, Accidental Death, Travel Accident, Critical Illness, Disability Income, Emergency Assistance, Long Term Care, Medicare Supplement, Discount Cards, Dental, Whole Life, Auto, Homeowners, Identity Theft, and Home Health Care.

Since its creation, AGIA has worked closely with the Trust to develop insurance programs especially designed for Department members and their families. We are proud to serve you through the Trust and invite your inquiries and suggestions on any aspect of our activities.



Army



Navy



Marine Corps



Air Force

Front Side(s)



Reverse Side

Order on-line at **[www.vetcoin.us](http://www.vetcoin.us)**

The coin that honors all American Veterans

This commemorative coin should be in the hands of every American who ever donned the uniform and solemnly swore  
**“that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.....”**

## Who should own the Vetcoin?

The Vetcoin was designed to honor all American Veterans from all branches of service, both men and women, who served honorably in WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as stations, posts, bases and abroad ships around the world.

## Perfect Memento

A perfect memento for reunions, special veteran events, relatives, friends or even strangers who have served honorably. A memento like this will be a family heirloom to be passed down from generation to generation.

## Giving Back

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the Vetcoin will be used for scholarship awards to children and dependents of those veterans killed in action or permanently disabled.

## About the coin

The inscription on the reverse side is encircled with a laurel wreath representing distinction and honor and joined together with a ribbon representing those who paid the supreme sacrifice. The five stars represent the five Armed Services of the United States.

If you prefer to order by phone or mail, call 405-842-6548 or write Vetcoin, PO Box 20303, Oklahoma City, OK 73156

The Vetcoin is not authorized or endorsed by any member of the Armed Forces or any other component of the Department of Defense



# THE LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST (LIT)

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Your Single Benefits Source for  
All Department Insurance Plans

Do not buy Insurance until you learn about the  
full range of high-value plans negotiated for you by the LIT!

## LIT FAST FACTS:

- ★ Founded in 1966 to provide Legionnaires with high-quality insurance products at low group rates.
- ★ Serves 48 American Legion Departments.
- ★ Over 675,000 members enrolled.
- ★ As of 2010, paid over \$500,000,000 in claim benefits to Legionnaires and their families.
- ★ As of 2010, paid over \$55,000,000 in allocations back to participating Departments.
- ★ Your Department has its own representative called a Trust Director who actively oversees the workings of the LIT.
- ★ Managed and administered by A.G.I.A., Inc.

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\*Product specifications and availability vary by state. Specific information on all benefits and exclusions will be mailed to you along with eligibility details.

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## FEATURED PLANS:\*

- ★ **Emergency Assistance Plus** — 24-hour emergency and medical back-up plan to help Legionnaires handle almost any crisis away from home that health insurance usually will NOT cover. This includes Medical Evacuation, Medical Assistance, Travel Assistance, and Assistance for Companions.
- ★ **Hospital Indemnity** — Pays Legionnaires for hospitalization resulting from a covered injury or illness. Benefits help pay for the expenses not covered by primary insurance.
- ★ **Cancer Care** — Pays Legionnaires benefits for the treatment of cancer, including coverage for hospital room and board, chemotherapy, drugs and medicine, radiation therapy, nursing care, surgery, and much more.
- ★ **Travel Accident** — Pays death benefit for travel-related accidents. Also pays a daily benefit for hospitalization resulting from a travel-related accident.
- ★ **Accident Protection** — Pays benefits for covered accidents. You get round-the-clock protection — 24 hours a day, anywhere in the world.
- ★ **Medicare Supplement** — Pays Legionnaires age 65 and over benefits to supplement what Medicare doesn't cover, such as deductibles and co-payments.
- ★ **LifeLock** — LifeLock, the leader in identity theft protection, helps protect Legionnaires' identity — even if your information falls into the wrong hands. As a LifeLock member, if you become a victim of identity theft because of a failure in LifeLock's service, they'll help you fix it at their expense, up to \$1,000,000.
- ★ **Long Term Care** — Pays cash benefits for nursing and/or home health care. Benefits pay for skilled, intermediate or custodial care in a nursing home.
- ★ **Auto and Homeowners** — Valuable automobile coverage for all your vehicles. Choose liability limits, and receive discounts for a safe driving record, low mileage, multiple vehicle coverage, and for being over age 50.



**East Texas Area**  
**Military Community**  
**BENEFIT/OUTREACH FAIR**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2012**  
**9:00 AM – 2 PM**  
**LOCATION: GILMER CIVIC CENTER, GILMER, TX**

**Something for the Whole Family!**

Information Booths – Displays – Food – Family Activities

Veteran's Administration Representatives from Waco and Shreveport, OEF/OIF Counselors, Texas Veteran's Commission, Texas Veteran's Land Board, State Family Programs – Family Assistance, Local agencies and organizations.

Assistance with questions, claims, education, employment and counseling available

All Veterans, Spouses of Veterans, the family members of a Veteran or Active Duty, Guard or Reserve are invited

For more information contact one of the following:  
Bobby Baker – 903-720-2316 or Lori Thomas – 903-316-6478

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**DAV POST 204**  
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## **VA Exceeds 2012 Goal to Improve Online Access to Benefits Information**

### **Expanding Functions Draw Millions of Monthly Visitors**

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today that 1.67 million Veterans and Servicemembers have registered for the secure, joint VA-Department of Defense (DoD), self-service web portal, eBenefits, which provides online information and access to a wide variety of military and Veteran benefits resources.

“We know that 3 out of 4 Veterans who use VA services want to connect online, so we must to be there for them with the information they need,” said Allison Hickey, Under Secretary for Benefits. “eBenefits is clearly becoming the platform of choice for Veterans seeking access.”

The strong pace of registrations for the site since its launch in October 2009 has allowed VA to exceed its fiscal year 2012 agency priority goal of 1.65 million users, and puts it on track to meet the 2013 goal of 2.5 million users, as outlined for VA in Performance.gov.

Veterans and Servicemembers new to the Website [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) are guided through the registration process to get a full-access account, called a premier account, which allows maximum ability to update personal information and learn about benefits without having to visit a VA facility. With the premier account, one password—called a single sign-on—allows Veterans to access multiple applications on the secure portion of the website.

A premier account also allows Veterans to check the status of compensation and pension claims that they have filed with VA. This feature, the most popular within the eBenefits application, had over 700,000 visits in June alone. Overall, visits to the site have increased 60 percent over the previous year, approaching 2 million per month.

On July 1, VA introduced its 11th consecutive quarterly release of improved functionalities to the eBenefits application that includes benefits eligibility email messages to Servicemembers as they reach career milestones and a new Career Center page with employment self-assessment tools, a resume builder, and a translator that relates military expertise to civilian work skills. The Career Center, which received over 8,000 visits in its first week, has single sign-on connectivity to VA's Veteran hiring site, “VA for Vets.” Another key function added is a single sign-on capability for Veterans to transition securely between benefits information on eBenefits and health information on VA's myHealtheVet website without an additional log-on step.

VA has completed a record-breaking 1 million claims per year the last two fiscal years, and is on target to complete another 1 million claims in FY2012. Even so, too many Veterans have to wait too long to get the benefits they have earned and deserve. That is why VA is aggressively building a strong foundation for a paperless, digital disability claims system – a lasting solution that will transform how VA operates and eliminate the backlog. This plan will help VA achieve Secretary Shinseki's goal: claim completion in less than 125 days with 98 percent accuracy in 2015 – delivering faster, better decisions for Veterans.

With the most recent release, there are now 46 self-service features enabling Servicemembers and Veterans the ability to download copies of their official VA and military correspondence, including Veterans civil service preference, service verification, benefits verification letters, military records and VA home loan certificates of eligibility. Servicemembers and Veterans can also access records that directly impact their family members, like the Post-9/11 GI Bill enrollment status, VA payment history, and DoD TRICARE health insurance status.

The eBenefits application is a key component in VA's ongoing transformation to a digital environment for Veterans' benefits delivery. Additional functionality and features will continue to be added to the site throughout the coming months.





**The Legion Times**  
**PO Box 140527**  
**Austin, TX 78714**

**T: 512.472.4138**  
**F: 512.472.0603**  
**times@txlegion.org**



From The American Legion,  
Department of Texas

## Department Sponsored Insurance Programs

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been The Department of Texas's sponsored member benefits program for 7 years and continues to fulfill our members needs while being the only such program to benefit our Department.

For more information on the products and services provided by the Legionnaire Insurance Trust,

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