The Department of Texas had a great month with the Department Oratorical Competition. We had four outstanding candidates competing for the number one spot. Katelynn Mitchell, 1st Division, Rehan Rupawalla, 2nd Division, Tanner David, 3rd Division, and Carter Moxley 4th Division gave great speeches. It was amazing to listen to their speeches. Their ideas or opinions on the Constitution of the United States was somewhat different from each other, but at the same time they were saying the same thing. In my opinion, the future of the United States looks outstanding with young adults like these. When talking to them, they all had the same opinion of the different school districts. They did not understand why civic classes were cut from one civic class each year in high school to one civic class in the four years. Could this be the reason why many adults do not know how many branches there are to the federal government or what their names are?? How do we correct this situation?? We need to encourage more young adults like these four to compete next year. We need to encourage more young adults to participate in our Children and Youth programs such as Boys State, Scouting, Junior Shooting and all the other programs.

I would like to congratulate Tanner David for being the Department of Texas’s winner and representing our great state at the national competition.

If anyone has an idea or suggestion on what we can do to fight this battle, our greatest challenge of the time, please send your suggestions to: cdrtxlegion@gmail.com.

I pray that all our veterans, families and active duty personnel are safe around the world.

This year will be based on FUN and Devotion to Mutual Helpfulness to support The Four Pillars and to support each other. Send your ideas to: cdrtxlegion@gmail.com and I will share them with the rest of the department of Texas.

Thank you for your support and ideas,
Jeff Perkins
Department Commander
Department of Texas
God Bless the United States
God Bless The American Legion Family
Chaplain’s Corner

First, I wish to thank Gerry and John Hince for their assistance in the Four Chaplain’s Memorial at Mid-Winter. Also, my gratitude goes to the Auxiliary Chaplain, S.A.L. Chaplain, and the Junior Auxiliary for their assistance. The Memorial wouldn’t have been the same without all the extra help. We are fortunate to belong to a veteran’s organization where the different members gladly pull together.

Most importantly, March 2nd is Texas Independence Day. Let us reflect on what the early Texans went through to give us this great state. Also, we give thanks that “we were born here or got here fast as we could.”

March 8th is the start of Daylight Savings Time. This creates numerous discussions throughout the year, regarding the pros and cons regarding time change.

Also, the official start of spring is March 19th at 10:49 CST. Spring is known as “a time of rebirth.” The trees and flowers come out of their dormant state and let us know that it is time for reawakening. The birds start singing, welcoming the new season. Let us keep this fact in mind. A time to get a fresh start on the past, move forward with our lives. Let us have a rebirth with our God. We can renew our commitments to The American Legion and our fellow Legionnaires. As the weather turns warmer, let us renew our fellowship with nature and families.

“May your days be filled with good things, the kindness of a warm cozy bed, the inspiration of God, the colors of a rainbow, the joy of a wild apple tree, the generosity of the sun, the whimsy of a hummingbird, the wonder of the moon and stars, the fragrance of something baking in the oven, the music of the breeze, and a little quiet time to yourself to contemplate all these things.” – Susan Branch.

March 17th is St. Patrick’s Day; my Irish friends would never forgive me if I omitted this date.

Finally, but extremely important is March 29th, National Vietnam Veteran’s Day. Make sure these vets are remembered and thanked for their service.

My email address is rlh.wings@yahoo.com and my cell phone is 713-569-0959. Do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance to you or your post.

SERVICE TO GOD AND COUNTRY
Robert L. Harvey
Department Chaplain 2019-2020
www.texaschaplains.org
Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Texas? If so, please follow these guidelines for submissions.

• Submit your text in Word format (.doc, .docx) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf) or as a PDF.

• Name your article! Create the headline and save with a proper file name so we can easily recognize it.

• Tell us who the author is, whether it’s you or if you are just forwarding it to us.

• Please attach any photos and/or artwork for articles separately (NOT embedded in your text file) as high resolution JPGs (300 dpi, or better). 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, name of the photographer, etc.

• Please 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 software.

• E-mail everything directly to times@txlegion.org by the 20th of every month, for it to appear in the following 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!
On Saturday February 22nd Earl Graham Post 159 American Legion in Bryan Texas hosted its fourth Annual Veterans Resource Fair. For the last four years the post has worked with partner groups like the Texas Veterans Commission and Workforce Solutions to provide employment opportunities, health care resources and legal aid to all veterans in the greater Bryan and College Station communities. This year more than 50 veterans and their family members visited Post 159 to gain the assistance needed. Younger veterans and family members had an opportunity to meet several employers looking to add veterans to their work force. Several interviews were scheduled, and job offers were made. Many of the senior veterans and their spouses arrived looking to answer questions related to VA health benefits. Representatives from the VA and Post 159’s Service Officer were on hand to answer any question that came their way. Other health organization were also present to discuss benefits and health care issues. One of the most important services was provided by the Brazos County Bar Association. An attorney was there to answer questions and to put veterans in touch with legal experts willing to assist in everything from criminal issues to updating wills and trusts on a pro bono basis. The Post’s First Vice attended, and several new Legion members were recruited. This event has grown each year and proves the point that the American Legion is still the premier organization in the community where the motto “Veterans serving Veterans”, hold true. Post 159 has already begun planning for next years event, and its partner organizations have expressed their intention to return next year.
To assist young ladies with displaying their total beauty, five contestants participated in the 2020 Miss Black San Antonio Scholarship Pageant held at the Carver Cultural Community Center, Feb. 1.

The winner of the contest was Seaman Apprentice Victoria Oluwakotanmi, a Navy reservist, assigned to Naval Operational Support Center (NOSC) San Antonio.

Annually the membership of the African American Community Awareness Project Group hosts it’s Miss Black San Antonio Scholarship Pageant to assist young ladies with their future endeavors,” said Glenetta Bierria, pageant coordinator. “Participants receive experienced training in personality development, modeling, speech, hair and skin-care grooming, and photo shoots.”

According to Bierria, to qualify for the pageant, ladies had to between the ages of 18 – 22 years old, single without children, enrolled in an academic or vocational school, possess a talent, have interest in runway modeling, and be free of any criminal acts.

Oluwakotanmi, who attends Northwest Vista College studying Chemical Engineering, joined the Navy Reserve in March 2019 as a logistics specialist.

“I am proud to be crowned Miss Black San Antonio and to be able to represent my community. I intend to set examples for those around me and to inspire young children,” said Oluwakotanmi. “I joined the Navy Reserve because I really love what it stands for. I was really curious about serving and the opportunities that would come from it.”

Oluwakotanmi was sponsored by Fred Brock American Legion Post No. 828 located on the city’s east side.

“I would like to thank Post 828 for their very generous sponsorship,” said Oluwakotanmi after performing a song during a Post 828 membership meeting held Feb. 18. “I look forward to future collaborations and I know that my reign will be an excellent one.”

As the winner, Oluwakotanmi will make presentations around the city and will receive opportunities for monies for scholarship assistance and one year of free beauty hair care services.

Navy Recruiting District (NRD) San Antonio’s area of responsibility includes more than 34 Navy Recruiting Stations and Navy Officer Recruiting Stations spread throughout 144,000 square miles of Central and South Texas territory. For more information about joining America’s Navy visit www.navy.com.
WE STILL NEED HELP!
by Jim Sutton

The last article we talked about needing help. Well; we still need help. The Texas Department of the American Legion (that is ALL of us) needs and must have more members; the alternative of not securing more members are 1) less programs/projects. 2) higher dues.

I attended the Mid-Winter Conference/DEC. While I did not make it to all the committee meetings, I read the reports furnished to me. I did not see nor hear of any new innovative aspect of how to pursue procuring new members. The “we always did it that way” will not work anymore. The reason that it does not work; is that we now have several new generations that have new/different communication tools, new; different ways of learning, different economic structure, and in some instances altered differences than us. I am NOT saying that all their differences are bad or good; I am saying they are different from what we are used to encountering.

I believe without some changes (not in our fundamentals) in our methods and approaches to the younger generations, we will not have a strong and vibrant Department of Texas Legion.

As you all know the mission of any District is to help any post in any legal way they can. It should be the mission of the post member to help however they can for the post.

This is not just the purview of the Officers of the Department, Division, or the District; we need help from every member of the American Legion who resides in the State of Texas.

We also must have not only new young members but retain all the old and new members.

Bottom line: we need for YOU to volunteer for your Post, your District, your Division, your Department as to HOW and WHEN we can begin our march to making the Legion greater.

Remember; there is no I in TEAM.

In the infamous words of someone we all know “GIT’ER DONE”

If you would like to subscribe/receive our 3rd District weekly tips on leadership and recruiting, please email a request to 3rddistaltx@gmail.com. If you have idea’s and/or comments you would like published; we will do so if they meet our Community/Legion standards.

Dear Post Family,

Although National has temporarily nixed NALPA/NALMA, TEXALPA is still going strong and will continue to be with everyone’s support.

Since many our Post Families work hard to promote our great organization through publications, websites and social media, they should have continuous support and be recognized for their efforts. If your Post, Unit, Squadron or Chapter is doing this already, we need you. We want you!

Membership in TEXALPA is crucial to our organization. Membership is open to those American Legion Family members in good standing and to other organizations allied with public relations, publications, and news services that are charged with communicating the American Legion’s message. Membership in TEXALPA is only $5 per year. I encourage our Post Families to join this organization so that we may continue to share our successes with our members and so that we may continue to be the voice of our Nation’s veterans, active duty military and our military families.

The 2020 TEXALPA Award submissions are due May 1, 2020. If you are a member and wish to submit and be recognized for your and/or your Post, Unit, Squadron or Chapter’s work, please see the TEXALPA Contest Rules on the TEXALPA page at txlegion.org under affiliates.

Thank you for your years of service to my American Legion Family.

If you have any questions about TEXALPA or contest submissions, please feel free to contact me at (817) 371-9762 or texalpa.president@gmail.com

For God & Country,

Rachael M. Watson
TEXALPA President

TEXALPA Update

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For God & Country,

Rachael M. Watson
TEXALPA President
Community Service

Often you hear the statement Community Service is an important part of an American Legion Post’s existence.

What does that statement mean?

First and foremost, The American Legion defines Community Service as an integral part of The American Legion founding principles included in our Preamble to the Constitution. In a nutshell that means that we, The American Legion, have made a commitment and obligation to be active member in the Communities in which Posts are established.

To be a successful American Legion Post, and meet these principles, every American Legion Post needs to be involved in their community to make it a better place to live.

How can a Post get involved?

There are countless ways a Post can be actively involved in their community.

Although not inclusive, below are some examples of how a Post can become a community partner.

- Reach out to other community based organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, the Lions Club and other Veterans Service Organizations for joint Community projects such as parades, festivals, Veteran related events, etc.
- Post Leadership can contact local Boy Scout units in the area to see where the Post can provide assistance.
- Contact local schools to establish contacts for American Legion Programs such as Oratorical, School Awards, etc.
- Contact local VA medical facilities in your area. Let them know that you are there to help our veterans and families. Provide Service Officer Support if available.
- Reach out to local Law Enforcement, fire Departments, EMTs and start an awards program to recognize these hard working Public Servants.
- If your community has a cemetery that has local Veterans interned therein, the Post should establish a Wreaths Across America Program in conjunction with local businesses to recognize those Veterans who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.
- Establish a Public Relations program with local newspapers, radio and TV stations to help “Spread the Word” on what the Post is doing in the community to assist, not only Veterans, but all residents. When participating in Community related services, always wear your Legion cover and let people know what the Legion’s role is in the activity at hand.

Education

The American Legion believes that education is a key ingredient in making our country strong. This includes our support for:

- American Legion Boy’s State which is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. It is a participatory program where each student becomes a part of the operation of his local, county, and state government. American Legion Boy’s State, participants are exposed to the rights and privileges, the duties and their responsibilities, of a franchised citizen. The training objective and practical, with city, county, and state governments operated by the students elected to various offices.
- The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship program. This program not only provides opportunities high school students from the 9th to 12th grade to earn scholarships but an opportunity to learn more about our country’s constitution and share those learnings with audiences attending the contests.
- Flag Education Classes. You can schedule Flag Education class at educational facilities on the importance of proper display and handling our Nation’s Colors. Get schools involved in Flag Day activities.
- Veterans Day Activities: Attend schools when they have Veterans Day activities. Most schools love to have Veterans come speak with them. Good way to educate our youth on what Veterans do for them and the country.

To find out more about The American Legion programs that help with Community Service Activities and Education programs, please go to the National website: Legion.org or the Department of Texas website: txlegion.org
Good day, fellow Legionnaires!

I feel deeply compelled to say thank you, every time I can, on behalf of the Texas Boys State leadership team. It is such an honor for our stalwart crew of heavy-lifting volunteers to quietly give back by means of your American Legion Texas Boys State. There is simply nothing like this program on the planet. Thank you for letting us be part of this.

We are off to a smashing year! We already have more applications at this point than in years past, at nearly 400 (as of the 26th of February)! Thank you for what you are doing out there, face-to-face, assessing exceptional youngsters to make sure we have the right, high-speed, get-your-hands-dirty-and-lead type of talent worthy of being a Texas Boys State Delegate.

Identifying the right talent is the subject of this month’s Texas Boys State submission to the Times.

Please meet Mark Mayer, scrivener of the article below, and exceptional teammate. Mark, in addition to his full-time duties as a father and lawyer, has given his heart and time to Texas Boys State for over 33 years. Think about that... over three decades and thousands of hours of his personal time quietly making Texas Boys State tick. Why? Because what we do at Texas Boys State actually matters and does great good on so many levels, for real. Your TBS program, the unbelievable number of of Delegates he has influenced, and, quite frankly, our Texas are all better because of Mark.

Warmest Regards,
Casey Z. Thomas, Chairman, American Legion Texas Boys State

The American Legion has recommended eligibility requirements for attendance at Boys State programs. What exactly do they mean, why do we have them, and who should you be looking to send to American Legion Texas Boys State?

The formal requirements are:

1. Males who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and who have at least one semester remaining at a Texas High School. (We seek students that are of, or are close to, voting age and will take the lessons home to share with classmates and community).

2. Previous participants of a Boys State competition are not allowed to attend a second session. (We want our outreach to extend far and provide as many young leaders with the Boys State experience and training as possible, and it also keeps the “playing field” even).

3. Only those who illustrate leadership, character, scholarship, loyalty and service in their schools and community should be considered. (Boys State is a rigorous program that requires dedication and an ability to act and think quickly, and to thrive in an intellectual endeavor against others with the same abilities).

In the interview and/or selection process, please keep the above requirements in mind. In the end, merit and ability are the most proper basis for evaluation. A candidate need not be perfect and meet every single of the individual qualifications outlined in #3 above. However, all characteristics and circumstances surrounding each individual Delegate candidate should be considered and explored during the process to identify the best talent.

Typically, the type of young men that thrive at Boys State have the following qualities:

a. Demonstrated leadership in their school and community, through athletics, marching band, ROTC, Boy Scouts, speech/debate, theater, and other school activities. These are the individuals best suited to return to their schools to have the ability to spread the message of civil discourse and community involvement through word and deed.

b. Demonstrated character through their community activities and their education. These are the most likely individuals to follow through and share their experiences with their classmates, the Legion Post sponsor, and their community at large.

c. Shown an aptitude in scholarship and personal intelligence. These are the best individuals to engage in active discussion of issues that affect all of Texas and the United States in general and to engage in that discussion civilly and intelligently.

d. Demonstrate loyalty by continuing to engage in the activities, clubs, and community service. These are the candidates that are most likely to continue in service after completing the Boys State program and use their new found skills.

e. Demonstrate service in their schools and community in any of these ways. These are the individuals that will spend time with others in service in their schools and communities and pass on the spirit of civil discourse and community service to those they serve with.

f. Have an understanding of the program, or after learning about the program’s goals, activities, and standards demonstrate a true desire to attend and participate in the Boys State program.

Ultimately, the Boys State program is looking for the top students in Texas from a cross-section of society to form a diverse group of individuals, experiences, and communities—making Texas Boys State profoundly exceptional and meaningful.

Mark Meyer
Wheelchairs for Warriors provides custom-fit, complex-rehab, mobility solutions to wounded veterans and first responders, so they can rejoin their lives at the highest level possible with INDEPENDENT mobility and function, offering them a better quality of life and the ability to ROLL STRONG! Wheelchairs for Warriors stands in the gap between what is provided, and what the warrior actually needs.

Co-founders Crystal Lee Laramore, Executive Director and former U.S. State Department employee, and Heidi Hansing, Director of Partnership Development and U.S. Army Officer Veteran, continue to champion this cause and inspire communities across the nation to #jointhemission and support warriors who, too often, fall thru the cracks of bureaucracy.

“A Marine Corps Sergeant who lost a leg in Iraq made a comment tonight that really stuck with me. He talked about the WAIT – Waiting on the VA to meet their needs. It is during that WAIT that depression starts to set in and you begin to lose hope – and losing that hope is what leads to so many suicides. When a group like Wheelchairs for Warriors can fill a need in weeks you realize the importance of groups like this and why donating to them not only helps out our veterans, it also may very well save their life! Less WAIT – More HOPE!” said Tim Graney, Katy Tea Party $4,500 Check Donor. (Between the five recipients present they had accumulated over 35 years of waiting!) See the video of check presentation on YouTube

The annual FUNdraiser was held at Republic Country Club, known for its patriotism and supporting warriors! Over 150 attendees were treated to an authentic Texas-style, southern fried chicken dinner as part of the ticket purchase. Jonathan T. Gilliam, Navy SEAL, Former FBI agent, Air Marshall, author and radio personality was the keynote speaker and emcee. The live auction included some killer items and the surprise host of the auction was Rico “The Bouncer”! Besides an array of guns from Athena Gun Club, including a few AR15’s, a long-shot course by former Navy SEAL Sniper Instructor Charlie Melton of Charlie Mike Precision, this year’s items also featured a flamethrower… giving one lucky Texan a new way to barbecue!

“Not only did this event successfully raise money for warriors in need, it also brought together a group of incredible Americans who care deeply about our nation and those who serve it. This was freedom the way it was meant to be, unified and strong!” said Jonathan Gilliam, Emcee for the event and Author of Sheep No More. Gilliam also hosts a radio podcast The Experts and appears on Sean Hannity out of New York. Top auctioned item went for $5,000; a suite at the Toyota Center, seating 12 and donated by Insperity.

Five Wheelchairs for Warriors recipients attended the event as guests of honor and treated as such by all in attendance, receiving several standing ovations for their bravery and sacrifice!

To learn more about Wheelchairs for Warriors, have a representative come speak to your organization about these warriors, and/or to #jointhemission, please visit: www.WheelchairsForWarriors.com or call Executive Director Crystal Lee Laramore at 936-777-4548.
Celebrating our 100th Anniversary of the American Legion of Texas

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The American Legion is celebrating our 100th Anniversary and the Department of Texas has several commemorative items available for purchase to mark this milestone!

Please see our order form on the previous page. Just fill out and mail to the Department Headquarters with your check or money order and we will send the items to you.

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American Legion Charities Inc

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Awarded to Legionnaires for recruiting “NEW” members into The American Legion. This award is based upon the total accumulative number of New Members the Recruiter has signed up into The American Legion from the inception of this award through their Legion career. The pin will be awarded starting with the #1 for the first new member and then increase in increments of 5 (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.) based upon the accumulative total of new members recruited. Once the recruiter is awarded a pin level, he/she will work for the next higher pin level and once a pin level has been achieved a duplicate pin level will not be awarded.

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- They call 9-1-1 and are admitted to the hospital

Both require:

- Medical specialists to monitor their care

Bob does not:

- Medical evacuation to a facility that is able to properly treat their condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>George's Cost</th>
<th>Bob's Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical evacuation</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel assistance to bring a loved one to their bedside</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A driver to drive their car/RV back home since they are unable to drive</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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George's Total: $0

Bob's Total: $19,300!

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Emergency Assistance Plus is an emergency medical transportation service that goes beyond health and travel insurance. It covers expenses for medical transportation, medical evacuation and travel and companion assistance — services that your insurance usually does NOT pay for. You must call **EA+** during your emergency so **EA+** can make the arrangements for you.

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