The Legion Times

Official Newspaper of The American Legion, Department of Texas

May 2011 • Volume 92, Issue 10

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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 by the 20th of every month and it will appear in the following issue.

Message from the Commander

April is winding down with all of the District Conventions being held and hopefully newly elected Commanders and Vice Commanders for the odd numbered districts as well as other positions perhaps. That means training for all of them which will occur in July at the District/Division Commander's School. May will conclude with the Division Conventions and newly elected Commanders as well. Congratulations to all of you and looking forward to seeing all of you in Odessa.

Membership although is not "new", and certainly not over, for we still have 2 months to go. At this time the Department of Texas is about 7500 members short of reaching our goal of 71,500. I urge everyone to make that last push to renew 2011 members.

Posts should be submitting their applications to Department for delegates to American Legion Boys State. This worthwhile program is second to none for providing excellent leadership skills and knowledge of political processes as how government works. Not only do the participants learn by doing, but it also provides excellent learning opportunities for citizenship and patriotism. Those experiences are once in a lifetime and lifelong friendships are also formed.

All Posts are reminded that they need to complete and mail in their Consolidated Post Reports as soon as possible. The deadline for them to be in Department in June 1, 2011. This is important because it indicates all that the American Legion is doing as a nonprofit veterans service organization. Take the time to complete this form and mail it in as soon as possible.

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William West

Editor
F.G. Adams

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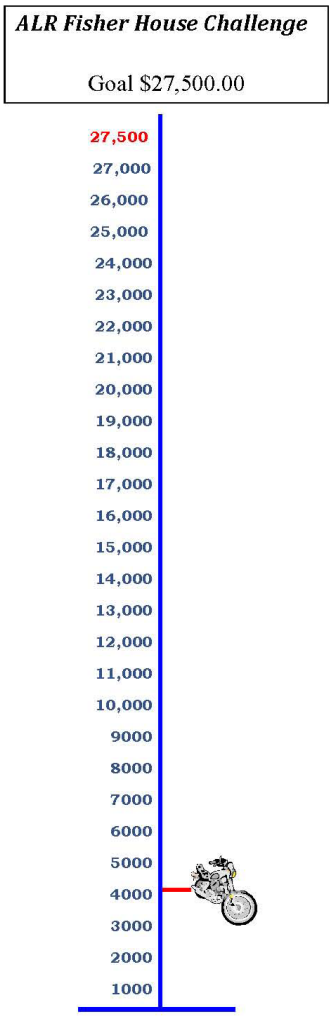
Many posts will be having election of officers in the next few weeks and it is equally important to complete the Post Certification of Officers report and mail it in to Department as soon as possible. Without your post certification of officers for 2012, the post will not receive their membership renewal cards for 2012. Don't be the last post to turn something in, it does effect membership which the Department needs so desperately to get off to a good start for the new membership year.

Lastly, don't' forget the two challenges before you, John Brieden Boys State and the ALR-Fisher House. It is still time to send in your contribution to each one of them. Keep up the efforts in supporting the various programs of the American Legion. Continue to be visible in your communities and participate in the upcoming Memorial Day events. Remember that all who have served and those who have died serving did so to protect the freedoms that we all enjoy today.

For God and Country
Ken Mueller, Commander
"A New Generation Moving Forward"



2010-2011 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Ken Mueller, Department Commander
Harry Hicks, Department Vice Commander
Jim Prendergast, National Executive Committeeman
Paul Dillard, Altemate National Executive Committeeman
William West, Department Adjutant
Harvey Klee, Department Chaplain
Walter Ivie, Department Treasurer
Daniel Corbin, Department Judge Advocate
Cyndi Miller, Department Historian
Billy Winters, Department Sergeant-at-Arms
Donald Daft, 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

Walter Starr, 1st Division Commander
John Davis, 2nd Division Commander
Joe Duarte, 3rd Division Commander
Steve Brooks, 4th Division Commander

DISTRICT COMMANDERS

Bobby Baker, 1st District Commander
Kenneth Baxter, 2nd District Commander
Linda Reed, 3rd District Commander
Robert Bunch, 4th District Commander
Bernard Aderholt, 5th District Commander
James Osborne, 6th District Commander
Bill Howell, 7th District Commander
Bryan Coleman, 8th District Commander
Tom Harlan, 9th District Commander
Bill Moore, 10th District Commander
Donald Damron, 11th District Commander
Alan Robart, 12th District Commander
Larry Vess, 13th District Commander
Walt Myers, 14th District Commander
George E Solis, 15th District Commander
Roger Folmar, 16th District Commander
Dan Dutton, 17th District Commander
Harold Lehnick, 18th District Commander
Bill Youngren, 19th District Commander
Fred Vasquez, 20th District Commander
WL Fleming, 21st District Commander
Jerry Blaylock, 22nd District Commander
Robert Hester, 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* 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

Hello Legionnaires!

The mission of Ride 2 Recovery, as many of you know, is to improve the health and wellness of injured veterans by providing a life changing experience that can impact their lives forever. That experience includes riding a bicycle. Thanks to The American Legion Family, this year's Ride 2 Recovery Texas Challenge was a huge success with members donating more than $24,000.00. This did not include in-kind donations. Thank you so much for all your hard work!

Someone mentioned to me recently that because Ride 2 Recovery now has big corporate sponsors, we are no longer needed. That is far from the truth. Ride 2 Recovery cannot continue to do what they are doing without us. We are the ground troops. Our American Legion Riders keep them safe. Our site coordinators and volunteers spend countless hours coordinating the events within our communities. It means so much to our wounded warriors to be welcomed into our communities, especially by the children. Our children need to know that anything could and should be tried in an effort to make one's life better.

The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program is one of my favorite Legion programs. The program, as you know, exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. It also presents participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Fifty-four students competed in The American Legion Oratorical competition in Indianapolis last month. Adam Nasser of Grapevine, Texas, a home school senior, competed against students from Georgia, Illinois, Mexico, Oregon, and Wyoming in the Quarter-Final contest. Adam was one of nine students who advanced and competed in the Semi-Finals. Unfortunately, he did not advance to the Finals.

Adam received a scholarship of $1,500.00 for his participation in the national contest and an additional $1,500.00 scholarship for advancing past the first round. This did not include what he won at the Post, District, and Division levels. Congratulations to Adam for his outstanding achievements.

HUD-VASH is a program that helps eligible homeless veterans find and retain stable independent housing. The program accomplishes this by partnering Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 vouchers with Veteran's Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) case management services. Case management provides ongoing support and monitoring of VASH veterans in the community. It is meant to promote and foster the veteran's growing independence, recovery, and success as they transition back to living in the community. For more information, including eligibility criteria and frequently asked questions, check out (http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ HUD-VASH.asp).

While touring the Big Spring and Amarillo VA Medical Centers last month, the Commander and I learned that they have each given more than 70 vouchers to assist homeless veterans with rent payment. This means that between these two hospitals alone, more than 140 veterans are now off the street and have somewhere to live. Isn't that wonderful!

As America remains engaged in the longest war in our country's history, our active duty service members, veterans, and their families often have needs and are not sure what help is available. The National organization saw the need and set up a Gateway to Services as a "one stop shop" to connect those in need with the resources that may meet that need. Information may be found on the National Auxiliary website (http://www.alaforveterans.org). Click on Gateway to Services at the top of the page. Services include Career, Training and Education; Family, Community and Social Services; Financial and Legal Support; and Health and Wellness.

I look forward to seeing you in May at the Division Conventions.

For God and Country,

Diana King
Department President

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.

Chaplain's Corner

In Memoriam

Last month I had the honor of officiating at the Faith Baptist Church and later, at Crestview Memorial Park in Wichita Falls, Texas for Rev. Charles E. "Chuck" Donaldson, Department Chaplain 2002-2003, 2003-2004 funeral services. Many moving testimonies were given by his family and friends during the church service, including presentations by County Judge Woodrow W. "Woody" Gossom, Jr., and the Honorable David L. Farabee, State Representative, District 69 (retired). A Post-Everlasting ceremony and U.S. Air Force military funeral honors were rendered at Crestview Memorial Park in Whichita Falls.

In addition to his serving two consecutive terms as Department Chaplain, Chuck also served as Post Chaplain, 1st Division Chaplain and 13th District Chaplain at various times during his over 25 years as a member of The American Legion. Although Chuck served in many other distinguished capacities throughout his life, it is while serving as a chaplain that he is best remembered among fellow Legion chaplains. He was the Chaplain for the North Texas Veterans Council of Wichita Falls, Texas and was honored last year when he was recognized for his humanitarian services to his community and indoctrinated into the Chapel of Four Chaplains and presented with the Legion of Honor Award. Chuck was also a charter member of the Texas Chaplains Association.

Chuck had served as Thomas Fowler Post 169 Commander for over 10 years and was presently serving as their Finance Officer. He has served in almost every Post position during his tenure with them. He also was serving on the Department's Five-Year Planning Committee at the time of his passing. He was a member of the 40 & 8 Voiture #939 of Wichita Falls were he served as Chef de Gare (Commander) and was Grande Chef de Gare (State Commander) and National Sou Aumonier (National Vice Chaplain). He was a member of VFW Post 8878 and D.A.V. Chapter 41.

For Rev. Charles E. "Chuck" Donaldson and for all who have gone on before him I offer the following prayer.

O God, of all our yesterdays, our todays, and our tomorrows, we pause here together in the quietness of remembrance to linger for a moment in thought over those of our comrades of yesterday whose names have rung out in our hearing as those who are now transferred from our ranks to the Post-Everlasting.

Short months ago, they stood before us. We laughed with them and labored and lived out a portion of our lives in a common cause. Each of them contributed, in some fashion, large or small, to what we all were when they were in our midst.

In such a moment as this, we are keenly aware of your own everlasting presence and as our only remaining link with these our former comrades, we salute you and commend them to you with trust and expectation. Whatever battle stars or ribbons they may have deservedly won, perhaps unknown to us, on the battlefields of life, you will award.

May they stand before you now, as before a beloved captain in eager readiness for whatever yet may be. Amen.

Harvey H. Klee
Department Chaplain 2010-2011

THE LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST (LIT)

Over Four Decades of Partnership for a Healthy America

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.

For fast facts on any plan, mail the postage-paid INFORMATION REQUEST on the back of the brochure!

- Fill out the card on the back of the brochure and mark the boxes to get more information on any of these products.
- Then drop the card in the mail — the postage is already paid! Or if you'd rather, call us at our toll-free number — 1-800-235-6943 or go online at www.theLIT.com

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

TO ORDER MORE ALL-PRODUCTS BROCHURES, CALL 1-800-445-3269

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.

Reply within 30 days.

You're In!

Official Notification of an exclusive

$1,000.00 NO COST TO YOU CASH BENEFIT

You pledged to support Americanism and we pledged to be of service to you. That's why your Department of The American Legion has squared away a $1,000.00 cash benefit for you.

The facts are as follows:

- ✓ All members will receive $1,000.00 of Accidental Death Insurance at NO-COST.
- ✓ All members are **GUARANTEED ACCEPTANCE** regardless of your health, age or occupation.
- ✓ This plan protects you anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day.
- ✓ Benefits are income **tax free.**
- ✓ **Full cash benefits are paid** in addition to any other coverage you may have.

Your $1,000.00 cash benefit is 100% no cost to you.
However, it's not automatic.

You must call to activate your coverage during the Special Enrollment Period. It takes just minutes over the phone to claim your benefit. During the call, you'll be given a Confirmation I.D. Number for your records. Your coverage will continue through 08/31/2016 as arranged on your behalf by your Department.

To activate your $1,000.00
NO COST to you Cash Benefit
call today toll free 1-866-271-2965

Please call within 30 days.

Plan not available in NY, IL and WA.

22785

Endorsed by
Your Department of
The American Legion

Ride 2 Recovery Texas Challenge 2011
Report from District 12

On April 3, 2011 more than 200 injured veterans on bicycles rode into Mansfield Post 624's rest stop on their last day of cycling on a 350-mile journey that started in San Antonio and ends in Arlington's Texas Rangers ballpark.

Many of the riders are recovering from brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder, back injuries or amputations and some required the creation of special bikes.

Representatives from several American Legion posts and local residents cheered on the vets, and served fruit and donated sandwiches.

The event is coordinated by the American Legion Auxiliary in Texas and most stops are at American Legion Posts across the state.

On April 3, 2011 more than 200 injured veterans on bicycles rode into Mansfield Post on their last day of a 350-mile journey that started in San Antonio and ends in Arlington Texas

In addition to American Legion Riders the escort included the USO at each rest stop, Ride to Recovery, Red Cross and several volunteer vehicles for bicycle and rider assistance along the road.

The nationwide event is sponsored by United Healthcare and the Military and Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services. The cyclists are being escorted by American Legion Riders. This is the third year for the Ride 2 Recovery event, which grew from 40 riders in 2009 to 210 this year.

Submitted by Ken Cox, District 12 Hubmaster

(L to R) Richard Stone [USO], Charlie Grimes [Post 624], Mitch Uthe [USO]

"Cost of Freedom" American Veterans Traveling Tribute & Traveling Wall

On March 30, 2011 "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" by a resolution of Congress; the AVTT Traveling Vietnam Wall and a contingent of vehicles entered Benbrook Texas escorted by dozens of American Legion Riders from Benbrook Post 297 and Patriot Guard Riders.

Thursday March 31, 2011 shortly after noon the "Wall" had been erected and booths including reception, VFW, American Legion and flag displays from the Patriot Guard were complete. The American and Texas Flags were posted by American Legion Post 297 Commander Larry Sutton and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10429 Commander Peter Kau.

Gold Star Mother Dorothy Schafernocker and Tuskegee Airman Claude R Platte presented the "Gold Star" Wreath. They were followed by MSgt Patricia Stover from the 301st Fighter Wing and former POW John Yuill LTC (ret) placing the POW/ MIA Wreath and Patrol Officer Rafe Lawrence and Capt. Jackie Hartmen of the Benbrook Police and Fire Departments placing the 911 Wreath

Friday proved another beautiful day starting with student field trips and many visitors. Colors were posting by Boy Scout Troop 95 and Police Chief James Mills and Fire Chief Tommy Davis gave a tribute to all those that perished in the 911 attack and appreciation to all who serve. Visitors came around the clock.

Saturday welcome many citizens and dignitaries to hear the Western Hills HS Choir & Cougar Band.

Western Hills High School ROTC posted the colors and speakers included Congresswoman Kay Grainger, Purple Heart Recipient Brian Flemng, Commander NAS/JRB Fort Worth, USN Captain T.D. Smyers and Mr. Gordon England, former Sec. of the Navy, Dep. Sec. of Homeland Security and Defense.

The day was filled with conversation, learning, shared and sharing experiences. The formal activities concluded with an Evening Candle Light Vigil.

Sunday was the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars appreciation and a wrap-up day.

I was particularly impressed by the daily Reveille and Taps by Roland Paquette; around the clock duty by Benbrook "Citizens On Patrol", daily volunteers from the American Legion, VFW, DAV, Patriot Guard and others. The outstanding coordination by Patty Bissey and courteous and thoughtful assistance from all the city of Benbrook folks made for an inspiring experience. Very good pictures of the wall can be found at www.AVTT.org.

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