

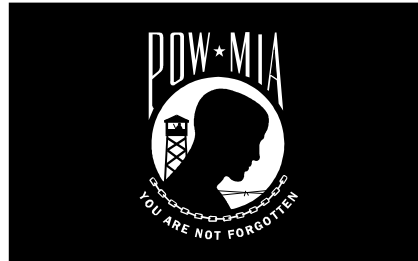


**ADJUTANT'S
NEWSLETTER**
OFFICE PHONE 856-8951
EMAIL:
ADJUTANTNH@LEGIONNH.ORG



THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE THE AMERICAN LEGION

TO MY LEGION FAMILY:



2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION

For those that may be planning on going to National Convention the July 1st deadline for getting a room is today as I write this. If you plan on going and have not reserved your room, I will be waiting until July 6th to send my listing of occupants to the hotel until that day. After the 6th it will be more difficult to get a room for convention. This year's National Convention will be held August 26 – September 1, 2016 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Department will be staying at the Hilton Cincinnati Airport Hotel, 7373 Turfway Road, Florence Kentucky. This hotel is actually across the river from the City of Cincinnati and about 15 to 20 minutes from the convention center. This will make some travel difficult but National will have buses running as they normally do.

The cost per room is 137.00 this year which includes an 11.3% tax. I have 27 rooms available right now, 3 King, 2 ADA, and 22 Queens. I recommend you get your reservation into me sooner than later. I will need one night deposit of \$137.00, along with the national convention form you need to fill out giving me the nights and accommodation requests. Additional occupants in a room will be an additional \$10.00 per person for (3-4) people. A rollaway will also be an additional \$10.00 a night. So if you have more than 2 people in your room make sure you include in your deposit that additional rate.

Parking at the hotel is also free this year which will be a plus for those planning to drive out like me.

There is a restaurant located in the hotel along with a bar/lounge. The breakfast buffet is \$16.00 or there is a full menu for lunch and dinner as well. There are also a few other chain restaurants in or around the hotel within walking distance.

National Commander's Banquet tickets are still available at \$46.00 per ticket. Banquet is Tuesday evening, August 30 at the Duke Energy Convention Center. Seating is Rounds of 10. Commander Barnett has selected Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers as the entertainment. Menu is Fresh Spring Mixed Salad, Roasted Beef Short Rib and Stuffed

Chicken Breast, Parmesan Garlic Mashed Potato Cake, Asparagus and Carrot Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting. The deadline for getting tickets for this is March 15th. National needs the count and if we wait much longer we run the chance of being split up to other tables around the banquet. The Department does not have the money this year to pay for tickets up front. I am limiting it to 30 right now so get it in to me ASAP.

I have posted more information as to what is happening at convention on the website and will continue to do so as time goes on.

Let me know if you have any questions and information will be posted to the website as I get it.

I hope everyone had a great July 4th weekend

182 Legionnaires awarded for recruiting 11,078 new members

Legionnaires who recruit 50 or more new members (transfers do not count) into The American Legion by the May membership target date qualify for enrollment in The American Legion's elite Gold Brigade.

For the 2015-16 membership years, 9,197 new American Legion members were recruited by 116 Legionnaires representing 25 departments. The members received the Gold Brigade award for their exceptional recruiting efforts.

Patricia Liddell, a member of Post 333 in Columbus, Ga., earned her 13th Gold Brigade and first Recruiter of the Year award for recruiting 818 new members.

Another 1,881 new members were recruited by 66 Legionnaires who earned the Silver Brigade award for their efforts. A Legionnaire who recruits 25-49 new members (transfers do not count) into The American Legion by the May target date qualifies for this award.

The Gold Brigade recipients will be awarded unique gifts that designate affiliation with the Gold Brigade of The American Legion. First-time Gold Brigade members will receive a Gold Brigade patch, a special Gold Brigade cap pin, a Gold Brigade certificate, and a designer jacket, polo shirt or sweater with a Gold Brigade logo. Second time/repeat Gold Brigadiers will receive a Gold Brigade patch and certificate, a hash mark for a jacket sleeve, and a designer jacket, polo shirt or sweater with a Gold Brigade logo. A Gold Brigadier who has won the award for five consecutive years is eligible for a distinctive Gold Brigade blazer. A Legionnaire may only qualify once every five years. And a Gold Brigadier who has earned the award for at least six consecutive years or more is eligible for a \$150 check and a Legion cap with the inscription "Master Recruiter."

For the Department of New Hampshire our own National Executive Committeemen Bill Roy from Sweeney Post 2 in Manchester was a Gold Brigade recipient. Additionally NEC Bill Roy was also recognized for finishing 4th over all nationally for the recruitment of members for this Department.

PDC Bill Hooley from Hooksett Post 37 is also a Gold Brigade recipient for this Department for this membership year.

Both these individuals account for almost 200 additional members for the Department and their Posts within the state. Congratulations to the both of them for their efforts and dedication.

Now the sad part. As great as it is these individuals have dedicated themselves to going the extra yard to recruit new members it is only two individuals. The National Organization is down over 30,000 members and the Department is still short approximately 800 members for the 2016 membership year and we continue to lose members as I write this article.

I cannot tell you how important it is for all of us to do our part as recruiters for the American Legion. Take some lessons from NEC Bill Roy and PDC Bill Hooley who have made it known it is not that hard to recruit members if you put forth the extra effort. I am also a Gold Brigade recipient from 2004 but have not repeated that effort since and need to take some lessons as well.

I have written numerous articles on membership over the last 5 years and since becoming Department Adjutant in 2012 this Department has lost over 3200 members in all since that time. To put this in perspective if we continue on the current trend as we have since my time in Department in 2012, we are on track to being under 15,000 members by the year 2020.

Not only does this affect the overall capability for this Department to continue to provide services to its members, but eventually some of our local Posts will have to close their doors because they do not have the membership to support themselves. Programs will have to be discontinued because of the shortage of funding. Additionally the lack of membership will be a contributing factor to the Auxiliary and SAL Detachment finding themselves struggling to maintain their own organizations and are on track for even worse results. I cannot tell you enough the big picture is not good for the future of this Department and the American Legion as a National Organization if we continue to lose this kind of membership on average year in and year out. Two people are not going to be able to sustain the recruitment and retention of this Department on their own.

There are members that refuse to hear about what is, or just continue to turn a blind eye to the lack of sustainability for our future this Department faces down the road. Never mind where we will be in five years, but based on the current loss of membership yearly, in one decade this Department is looking at a membership count of less than 8000 members. Once we get to that point this Department will no longer be able to pay a staff to maintain the Department, its programs such as the Oratorical, Boys and Girls States which depend on Post dollars will begin to fade away, not to mention continued support for our veterans through our voice politically throughout the country and on Capitol Hill.

Reality is going to set in if it has not already and it is time to wake up. This may seem harsh but it is fact and once the American Legion is gone who speaks for the veteran because other veteran organizations like the American Legion suffer the same fate.

The American Legion's success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. The organization belongs to the people it serves and the communities in which it thrives.

Be a recruiter for the veteran, for freedom, for a voice, the American Legion, and for yourself!

News of Interest to Veterans

VFW, DAV, Legion Respond to McCain Attack

WASHINGTON (June 2, 2016) — Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) attacked the nation's largest and most influential veterans' service organizations last Friday by alleging they were opposed to the Veterans Choice Program that created a new, but temporary, option for veterans to receive health care from non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers. The senator's comments specifically targeted the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Disabled American Veterans, and the American Legion during an interview on his daughter Meghan's syndicated radio program, America Now.

"Senator McCain was factually wrong when he said our organizations oppose the Choice Program, which all of us supported as part of the VA Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 to address an emergency access to care crisis," said VFW Executive Director Bob Wallace, DAV Executive Director Garry Augustine, and American Legion Executive Director Verna Jones. "The senator also appears unaware of the many reform proposals we have since offered to expand access to community care, improve quality inside the VA health care system, and strengthen accountability throughout the entire VA," they said.

"We do not oppose efforts to increase the use of community care; in fact we have offered our own plans to expand access to non-VA care by developing local networks that integrate the best community providers into the VA system," they said. "What we are against is unrealistic proposals that promise unlimited choice, which in itself is unsustainable, and in reality could force millions of veterans to lose the option to use VA health care, which could ultimately shift the financial cost of care onto every veteran.

"Grandiose proposals such as Senator McCain's plan to give every veteran a Choice Card to purchase unlimited health care in the private sector without any management could cost hundreds of billions of dollars, according to estimates by the Office of Management and Budget. This while Congress balks at spending just a few hundred million to fund critically needed VA hospitals and clinics," they said.

"Just because a veteran has a Choice Card doesn't necessarily mean private providers will see them, because they have long wait times, too, and many will not accept low government reimbursement rates," the three executive directors said. "We hope to have the opportunity to work with Senator McCain and others interested in improving veterans' health care. We want to find realistic ways to expand access by supplementing VA care whenever and wherever necessary, while maintaining VA as the premier provider of care for wounded, ill and injured veterans."

(American Legion, Post 74, Brookline, 2016, Newsletter)

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

When the initial battles in the Revolutionary War broke out in April 1775, few colonists desired complete independence from Great Britain, and those who did were considered radical. By the middle of the following year, however, many more colonists had come to favor independence, thanks to growing hostility against Britain and the spread of revolutionary sentiments such as those expressed in Thomas Paine's bestselling pamphlet "Common Sense," published in early 1776. On June 7, when the Continental Congress met at the Pennsylvania State House (later Independence Hall) in Philadelphia, the Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee introduced a motion calling for the colonies' independence. Amid heated debate, Congress postponed the vote on Lee's resolution, but appointed a five-man committee— including Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, John

Pennsylvania and Robert R. Livingston of New York—to draft a formal statement justifying the break with Great Britain.

Did You Know?

John Adams believed that July 2nd was the correct date on which to celebrate the birth of American independence, and would reportedly turn down invitations to appear at July 4th events in protest. Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826--the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

On July 2nd, the Continental Congress voted in favor of Lee’s resolution for independence in a near-unanimous vote (the New York delegation abstained, but later voted affirmatively). On that day, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail that

July 2 “will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival” and that the celebration should include “Pomp and Parade...Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other.” On July 4th, the Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence, which had been written largely by Jefferson. Though the vote for actual independence took place on July 2nd, from then on the 4th became the day that was celebrated as the birth of American independence.

EARLY FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

In the pre-Revolutionary years, colonists had held annual celebrations of the king’s birthday, which traditionally included the ringing of bells, bonfires, processions and speechmaking. By contrast, during the summer of 1776 some colonists celebrated the birth of independence by holding mock funerals for King George III, as a way of symbolizing the end of the monarchy’s hold on America and the triumph of liberty. Festivities including concerts, bonfires, parades and the firing of cannons and muskets usually accompanied the first public readings of the Declaration of Independence, beginning immediately after its adoption. Philadelphia held the first annual commemoration of independence on July 4, 1777, while Congress was still occupied with the ongoing war. Washington issued double rations of rum to all his soldiers to mark the anniversary of independence in 1778, and in 1781, several months before the key American victory at Yorktown, Massachusetts became the first state to make July 4th an official state holiday.

After the Revolutionary War, Americans continued to commemorate Independence Day every year, in celebrations that allowed the new nation’s emerging political leaders to address citizens and create a feeling of unity. By the last decade of the 18th century, the two major political parties—Federalists and Democratic-Republicans—that had arisen began holding separate Independence Day celebrations in many large cities.

JULY 4TH BECOMES A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

The tradition of patriotic celebration became even more widespread after the War, in which the United States again faced Great Britain. In 1870, the U.S. Congress made July 4th a federal holiday; in 1941, the provision was

expanded to grant a paid holiday to all federal employees. Over the years, the political importance of the holiday would decline, but Independence Day remained an important national holiday and a symbol of patriotism.

Falling in mid-summer, the Fourth of July has since the late 19th century become a major focus of leisure activities and a common occasion for family get-togethers, often involving fireworks and outdoor barbecues. The most common symbol of the holiday is the American flag, and a common musical accompaniment is “The Star-Spangled Banner,” the national anthem of the United States. (*History.com Staff, History.com, 2009, July 4th, <http://www.history.com/topics/holidays/july-4th>*)

Please Post