**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**2020 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE EMBASSY SUITES NASHVILLE, SE, MURFREESBORO, TN:** Saturday February 8th and Sunday February 9, 2020 will be at the Embassy Suites Nashville, SE, Murfreesboro, www.murfreesboro.embassySuites.com or call 1-800-EMBASSY. Ask for American Legion Mid-Winter Conference and give code “ALD”. Rooms may not be available at the contracted rate of $135.00 before January 8, 2020 deadline, room rate can’t be guaranteed after January 8th.

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS RESOLUTIONS:** The Department has received 28 resolutions affecting the Department Constitution and Bylaws. Also received an additional 15 resolutions amending the Department Rider’s Constitution and Bylaws. Resolutions approved by the Department Executive Committee will be published in the May edition of the Tennessee Legionnaire as well as the Department website: www.tennesseelegion.org.

**NON-DEPARTMENT CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS RESOLUTIONS:** Resolutions to be considered by the Department Executive Committee shall be in the hands of the Department Adjutant 20 days prior to the scheduled Department Executive Committee meeting, or January 17, 2020; per Department Constitution, Article V, Section 6. Send resolutions to The American Legion, Department of Tennessee, Attn: Adjutant Tuttle, 318 Donelson Pike, Nashville, TN 37214; or email to Adjutant@TNLegion.org.

**COMING SOON:** Post Adjutants can expect to see their respective Post Data Report in February. These are customized reports for each post and are not available on-line. The Post Officer Certification Form, enclosed and also available at www.tennesseelegion.org by going to the Post Forms/Resources tab. Please complete the certification form immediately following the annual Post Officer Election for the succeeding year; at least 5 days prior to the annual Department Convention. Finally, Consolidated Post Report, available today for myLegion users; with forms scheduled to arrive late February.

**CONSOLIDATED POST REPORT REPORTING:** National will no longer accept Consolidated Post Reports with zero activity and/or zero membership. Each post must report some valid activity. Commanders at all levels, you need to answer the following seven questions:

1. If a CPR is submitted with no members, why does the post exist?
2. What is the department's minimum number to retain a charter?
3. Does the district commander need to visit that post to see if they need assistance?
4. If a CPR is submitted with no activity, why does the post exist?
5. What program or programs do they support?
6. What are they doing in the community?
7. Does that post need a revitalization visit to ensure it is still relevant in the community?

**ORATORICAL CERTIFICATIONS:** must arrive at Department Headquarters by Tuesday January 10th, 2020, no exceptions. See our webpage for contest dates or contact Chairman Osterhoudt, coster7794@gmail.com.

**AMERICAN LEGION “LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR” AWARD:** Start your research for a member to be “LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR”. Discuss with your post membership as to who may be the next “Department of Tennessee Legionnaire of the year”? Please have applications to Department Headquarters by May 1, 2020.

**POST/SQUADRON ONLINE MEMBERSHIP TRANSMITTAL PROCESSING FEATURE INCLUDES:**
- Membership counts are added to the National Target Date membership report.
- Membership counts are immediately added to the MyLegion Post/District Membership reports.
- Members are immediately suppressed from any renewal notices, such as direct mail and email.
- Once post officers submit payment it prevents members from renewing online or duplicating payments.
- Posts save money by not having to pay shipping costs for a traditional transmittal to department.
- We have 91 posts of 176 posts using this process, although 5 posts haven’t since September. Additionally, 5 of 52 Squadrons are using mySAL to process their membership transmittals.

**ONLINE CREDITS:** The credit process has not changed; we ask each post to submit a traditional membership transmittal at least twice a year to use their earned credits. Earned credits carry over from year to year.

**POST CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS:** In light of the recent National and Departmental Constitution and Bylaws; we recommend every post review their current Post Constitution and Bylaws. Currently we have copies of Post Constitution and Bylaws from 131 of 176 posts in Tennessee. Of the documents we have we several that are very dated – with the oldest being August 1967, a lot has changed in 52 years – still better than no guidance at all.

**DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISING:** The Department of Tennessee relies on donations from its members to support Americanism and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation programs. Appeal items are mailed to new members and members with a donation history. If a member desires one of more of our fundraising products, i.e., labels, calendars, and/or sweepstake tickets; please contact Department Headquarters, so that we can add them to our mailing list.

**CHARITABLE SOLICITATIONS AND GAMING:** The Tennessee Nonprofit Gaming Law allows eligible 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(19) organizations to hold an annual “game of chance” fundraising event. In order to conduct such an event, an organization must file the following with the division:
- An application and all required attachments between July 1 and January 31 each year for the events to be held the following July 1 - June 30.
- A non-refundable fee.
- The division will review the application and transmit a list of all qualifying applicants to the General Assembly for its authorization.

For more information call the Division of Charitable Solicitations at (615) 741-2555 or view the “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) go to: http://sos.tn.gov/products/charitable-solicitations-and-gaming/charitable-gaming-faqs
A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE: American Legion National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford will award his national commander “A Foundation for the Future” membership incentive pin to any post, district, division, department commander or membership chairman who achieves 103% of their assigned 2020 membership goal. As of today, we have submitted 18 applications for 9 posts that have achieved or exceeded 103% of their stated goal. How close is your post?

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AFFILIATION: Resolution No. 37: Reaffirmation of The American Legion Policy Concerning Affiliation with Other Organizations. RESOLVED: The American Legion shall not be a member of, or affiliated with, any organization, committee, association, council or group whereby The American Legion might be committed to a policy contrary to that adopted by The American Legion.

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TEMPORARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Applications start at post-level. Post officers, especially Post Children and Youth officers need to become familiar with National’s Temporary Financial Assistance Program; the applicant must be either a Legionnaire or currently serving in one of the five branches of service; and have a dependent child under the age of 18, with a few exceptions. Refer questions to Children & Youth Chairman Rick Baur at rbaur@matthew25helps.com.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: is expanding commissary, military exchange, and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) retail privileges. Starting Jan. 1, 2020, access will expand to include all veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, veterans who are former prisoners of war, and individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Learn more by visiting: https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Factsheets/expanding-access-fact-sheet.pdf

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AMERICAN LEGION EAGLE SCOUT OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORMS: were mailed by Chairman Ernest Schmidt to Tennessee Eagle Scouts in November. Nomination forms need to arrive at Department Headquarters by March 1, 2020. Last year’s department winner is Brandon Burgess from Seymour, TN. This year’s Tennessee winner will receive a $3000 scholarship, and eligible applicants will receive $25.00.

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VETERANS DAY ON THE HILL: Make sure the Veteran's voice is heard in Nashville by attending Veterans Day on the Hill, 5 Feb at Cordell Hull Building, Nashville. Register on-line or contact Legislative Chairman Hensley, 423-335-2969 or email robben47@gmail.com.

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AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS: It is time to renew your Legion Riders membership for 2020. Please send $3.00 per member to Department Headquarters, 318 Donelson Pike, Nashville, TN 37214 to receive your 2020 membership cards.

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AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE: Delegates will register Sunday May 17th, 2020, however, Pass and Review as well as the Inauguration will be Friday May 22nd, 2020. Yes, the program will be cut one full day. The fee will remain at a $350.00 per delegate. The Department will mail Brochures and information in early February to each post. Delegate fees must be received at Department Headquarters by March 30, 2020. Start contacting your schools now.

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JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS: The 2019-2020 American Legion Three Position Air Rifle National Championships Postal Match officially opened November 1 and postal match registration closed December 15, 2019; we have 5 clubs registered. Please wish competitors their best as they advance from round to round. Questions? Contact Chairman Goodman, marty223@charter.net.

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VA’S BLUE WATER NAVY (BWN): COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT NOW AVAILABLE; by going to: https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/ The toolkit consists of: 1) Factsheet – A one-page overview. 2) 101 Presentation – An in-depth explanation, with examples and detailed information. 3) FAQs. 4) Poster – A printable resource to raise awareness and provide a URL address. 5) Fraud Flyer – A printable resource to inform Veterans about avoiding scams

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FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANS: Each post will complete a five-year strategic plan; your respective District Commander has a template for you to use. Please don’t look at completing your 5-year Strategic Plan template as a daunting task, work with your District leadership to answer a few straightforward questions. This document is a roadmap or plan to reach your membership penetration goal of 10% or more veteran penetration in your community. Overall, we have less than 5% of Tennessee’s eligible veteran population serving as legionnaires. Penetration statistics are on our webpage.

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POST ADJUTANTS: We continue to transfer legionnaires from the Department Transition Post, aka Post 2000 into a local post; please monitor the myLegion transfer report.

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SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION: We are approaching the 60% target date set as January 15th, please transmit your membership cards. It helps your Detachment and the Southern Region. Everyone is doing an outstanding job. Squadrons, please get your membership to Heads. SAL has achieved 53.26% of their goal as of Dec 27th.

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FEBRUARY CALENDAR CONTINUED:

9: Yellow Ribbon Reintegration - Knoxville
10: Membership Cutoff
15: East and Middle TN Divisional Oratorical Contests
17: President’s Day Department (Offices Closed)
22: West TN Division Oratorical Contest
22: Yellow Ribbon Reintegration - Millington
26: Ash Wednesday
28: Yellow Ribbon Reintegration – Nashville

MARCH CALENDAR:

1: Eagle Scout applications due to State Headquarters
7: Department Oratorical Contest, State Headquarters
8: Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Forward)
8-12: Winter Oratorical Contest - District 6
11-13: Dept Service Officer School, Washington DC
11: 90% Target Date
15-17: American Legion Birthday
17: St. Patrick’s Day
21: Second District Convention, Oliver Springs Post 112
25: Congressional Medal of Honor Day

JANUARY CALENDAR:

1: New Year Day Observation, (Offices Closed)
3: Candidates Resolutions Due for TN Legionnaire
3: Firefighter, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, Emergency Medical Technician, Employer of the Year Annual Awards Due to Department Headquarters
10: Oratorical Contest Applications Due
11: Yellow Ribbon Reintegration - Knoxville
15: American Legion Baseball Registration Opens
17: Non-constitutional Resolutions Due
18: Oratorical Contests – Districts 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9.
18-19: Yellow Ribbon Reintegration - Johnson City
20: MLK Day (Offices Closed)
24: Oratorical Contest - District 6
25: Oratorical Contests – Districts 3, 8, and 10

FEBRUARY CALENDAR:

1-28: Americanism Month
2: Four Chaplains Sunday
5: Veterans Day on the Hill - Cordell Hull Bldg.
8-9: Mid-Winter Conference at Embassy Suites

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS: a template for you to use. Please don’t look at completing your 5-year Strategic Plan template as a daunting task, work with your District leadership to answer a few straightforward questions. This document is a roadmap or plan to reach your membership penetration goal of 10% or more veteran penetration in your community. Overall, we have less than 5% of Tennessee’s eligible veteran population serving as legionnaires. Penetration statistics are on our webpage.

FLORIDA CALENDAR:

1: Eagle Scout applications due to State Headquarters
7: Department Oratorical Contest, State Headquarters
8: Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Forward)
8-12: Winter Oratorical Contest - District 6
11-13: Dept Service Officer School, Washington DC
11: 90% Target Date
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