



Sons of The American Legion



Suite 1300  
112 State Street

# THE LIBERTY

## Detachment of New York

Albany, New York 12207  
(518) 463-2215

Volume 3 Issue 31

[www.sonsdny.org](http://www.sonsdny.org)

Post Convention Issue 2008

### *Dates of Special Interest:*

- Aug 22—26 82nd AL Baseball World Series
- August 22nd—23rd 37th National Convention; Phoenix, AZ
- Sept 10th— 10% Membership Target Date
- September 11th Patriot Day Battle of Plattsburgh 1814
- Sept 13th Fall DEC Meeting; Endicott, NY
- Sept 17th- Citizenship Day
- Sept 19th—POW-MIA Recognition Day
- Oct 8th- 25% Membership target date
- October 11—12th SAL Fall NEC meeting; Indianapolis

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## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

by Gary Denmon

Fellow SONS Members,

I would like to thank all the members of the Great Detachment of New York for your faith and support in electing me as your Commander. I would be remiss if I did not congratulate Commander Ketchum on a great year. He has gone above and beyond and represented us all superbly. I look forward to starting my travels in August going to National Convention in Phoenix. When I return I will be attending the NY Mets game on September 6, 2008 and making visits to Kings, Queens and Richmond Counties. Listening to Ken Kratzer talk about the Mets game I believe it will truly be a moving and rewarding experience.

At this years convention we had some very good reports, all of our Squadrons donated extremely well and we all should be proud of ourselves and be congratulated on a job well done. On the down side though there were many squadrons who did not report, I would like to see us increase the amount of reports to 100%. I know this a lofty goal but I believe we can achieve it if we communicate with one another and document our time and money when we do it instead of



Detachment Commander Gary Denmon

putting it off until the last minute.

As of the writing of this newsletter we have not made our 100% in membership we are still short 663 members, hopefully these have already been transmitted and we will reach that 100%. Everyone has done a great job at recruiting new members but we must not forget about our current members, we need to personally send them a card reminding them to renew or even better a phone call. Our renewal rate is 86% with these tuff economic times we may be losing continued on page 11...

# **FROM THE ADJUTANT'S DESK**

*by Robert J. Avery*

Gentlemen,

## **As we begin our 2009 Administrative Year.....LET'S TALK MEMBERSHIP!**

As you know, we are still trying to obtain our 100%, for 2008 and we need 808 members.....that is twice as many members that we needed to reach goal compared to last year at this time We are in 44<sup>th</sup> place overall (same position as last year at this time) and are in 11<sup>th</sup> place out of the 14 Detachments in the Eastern Region. Our Renewal Rate is 85.44% which is 17<sup>th</sup> place out of the 55 Detachments but LAST PLACE amongst the Big 4 Detachments.

I will keep saying that we **need to concentrate greatly upon membership again next year!** The 2009 cards are already out to the Squads that

have submitted an OCF for 2009.....an easier task than ever thanks to our on line submittal option at the website. As we think about next year...remember the next Target date is on September 10<sup>th</sup> when you should be at 10% of goal.

Just a point to all membership chairmen....if you simply wait around to collect your membership based on responses from the National renewal postcard mailings....**you are not doing your job.** You need to send out your own squadron dues notice early on.... in August. Let's rev things up a bit and concentrate greatly on our growth potential next year. I thank all of our counties that did make their 100% (27 to be exact). Keep up the great work in 2009....and for you other Counties....please give great attention to mem-

bership as we move into the next year... **without membership growth, we cannot assist our veterans as much as we could, and that is really the only reason why we are all members.**

Members are reminded that our Detachment website is constantly evolving and you are invited to stop by the site anytime at [www.sonsdny.org](http://www.sonsdny.org). Many thanks to the official Webmaster John Walpole for all of his hard work on site development and maintenance! Members are asked to provide input and suggestions at any time.

In closing, I want to thank Detachment Commander Jerry who represented us in excellent fashion as he traveled all throughout this great Empire State this past year. But especially, my hat is off to all of you BLUE CAPPERS on a fine job....and I wish you all continued successes in 2009!

For The Legion Family

## **An opportunity to honor our NY National Guard!**

### **2008 American Legion—NY Mets Saturday September 6th**

Come to the NY Met - Philadelphia Phillies game on Saturday, Sept. 6th at 3:55 PM.

We will be honoring the NY National Guard at the game, with a scoreboard video produced in Afghanistan. It will be a Fox game, nationally televised so our pre-game ceremony could get a lot of attention.

Four people are planning to drive down from Buffalo for the event, Dave Bishop is working on a group from the Albany area. Paul Peach is working on a group from Queens, John Wolpole has already organized a group from Long Island.

We can use a few more groups to be formed. We can also use donations to pay for tickets to be given to the military members. Ticket ordering Info:

Group orders of 25 or more tickets at \$25 and disabled seating can be obtained by calling Tom Dissette

of the Mets' Ticket Dept. at (718) 559-3034. Individual tickets at \$30 can be purchased by contacting David Acocella of Squadron 50 at [davidacocella@Yahoo.com](mailto:davidacocella@Yahoo.com) or 914-355-0953.



**The Convention Golf Tournament** raises \$1377 for CWF. This years annual CWF golf outing attracted fourteen team (56 players), the most ever, including SAL National Commander, Ray Giehl and leading

National Commander candidate, Tom Cisna. Tournament chairman, Dean Williamson was grateful for the largest turnout and for the 25 hole sponsorships. Lunch was provided by Half Moon Squadron 1830.



TOURNAMENT WINNER'S

National Sons of The American Legion Commander, Raymond Giehl addressed the membership of the Detachment of New York "it is great to be here in New York State. I have to commend you on all of your reports; you are doing a great job". He asks our membership to make a difference with our Veterans, our children and our communities. Nationally the Sons of The American Legion raised over \$332,000 for CWF this year?



National Commander Raymond Giehl Jr.

We need to keep working on membership, this is how we will survive and continue doing the things that we do. We need to let the community know what we are doing. We are all guilty of not telling people what we are doing for our Veterans, Children and our communities. Let our new members know also and it will be easier to keep them.

He ask that we work with our youth and teach flag education. "When these kids grows up in a

few years they will be voters, then we could get the Flag Amendment passed".

Veteran's assistance day came from a blue cap member. It was successful and will be continued again next year.



Department Commander Bill Burnett is presented a plaque of appreciation from Commander Jerry

**Photo's from Detachment Convention**



Department President, Carol Johnson with VA&R Chairwoman, Nancy Kurk accepts a \$12,000 check and an award for their participating in the "They Marched For Us, We Walk For Them" Walk-A-Thon from Detachment Commander, Jerry Ketchum and VA&R Chairman, Tom Kurk.



Department President, Carol Johnson brings greetings to the Detachment of New York membership

## Americanism Commission by James Coats, Chairman

The Americanism Commission is pleased to announce that it had a very successful year. The committee helped to distribute thousands of Flag Education Program pamphlets, and over 2,500 small American flags. One of the projects that went over exceedingly well was our "What America Means To Me" Essay Contest. We receive 53 entries. Our winners are, for the first through third grade, Kaylie Simone, from Ms. Swiderski's Third Grade at the Berkley Elementary School in Amsterdam, NY, and, from the Fourth and Fifth Grade, Dean Brooks, from Mr. Cetnar's Fifth Grade at the Marie Curie Institute in Amsterdam, NY. We had a tough job judging these entries and awarded all of our participants with a "Light of Liberty" comic book.

The Americanism Commission has received and judged the applications for the Lt. Michael L. Lewis, Jr. Memorial and the Cerullo Memorial Scholarships. The winners are as follows.

Cerullo Memorial Scholarship of \$500.00:

Darrin French; Philmont, NY from Joseph E. Zaloga Squadron 1520, Albany County.

There were no renewal applications for the Cerullo Scholarship.

Lt. Michael L. Lewis, Jr. Memorial Scholarship (Two scholarships of \$1000.00 each).

Darrin French: Philmont, NY  
Joseph E. Zaloga Squadron 1520, Albany County

Evan M. Wolberg; Greenbush, NY  
Melvin Roads Squadron 1231, Rensselaer County.

The awards for these scholarships were handed out at Detachment Convention.

The Commission received 45 consolidated reports this year. This is a far cry from the number of actual Squadrons in our great Detachment, but those who did send in their reports showed that we as an organization are working hard to promote Americanism throughout our communities. With only 45 reports, we distributed nearly 17,785 American flags and had over 44,163 hours of community service and over \$108,924 in Squadron donations. Imagine the hours we would have if every Squadron reported?

The Commission would like to announce the winners of this year's Detachment Americanism Awards.

Squadrons with 149 members or less are as follows:

1st Place—John B Handte Squadron # 89 from Vestal, Broome County in the 6th District.

2nd Place—Montgomery Squadron # 429 from Rinebeck, Dutchess County, in the 9th District.

3rd Place—Squadron # 54 from Munnsville, Madison County in the 6th District.

For Squadrons with 150 or more members the winners were:

1st Place—Charles E. Westcott Squadron # 173 from Bath, Steuben County in the 7th District.

2nd Place—Cassadaga Memorial Squadron # 1280 from Cassadaga, Chautauqua County in the 8th District

3rd Place—Seeley B. Parish Squadron # 457 from Phelps, Ontario County in the 7th District

The Americanism Commission would like to congratulate these Squadrons on their accomplishments. Let's not forget that, as the Detachment of New York, we are all winners. By promoting the Americanism programs, we are making our citizens young and old, aware of what our forefathers had set up to make this country so great.

I would like to thank all of the Americanism Commission members; Robert Ganga, William Ryan, Boyd Shaffer, Robert Myrtle, and Larry Montello for their help this year.

God Bless America



# V. A. & R. Commission

## by Thomas Kurk, Chairman

This year the VA&R Commission brought forward three different projects that reflected our commitment to our veterans. The first one was kicking off the William P. O'Connell Memorial Scholarship. Our commission received four applications, geographically they were submitted from all four corners of the state. All the applicants were very good candidates and it was a tough task to select a winner. The first time recipient of the William P. O'Connell Memorial Scholarship went to Michael Lawrence of Downsville, NY, Delaware County. Michael attended Boys State last year and is a member of Downsville Squadron # 167. Michael will start attending classes at SUNY Brockport this fall.

Many of you have asked how much money we raised during our "They Marched For Us, We Walk For Them" Walk-A-Thon. At the time that the vouchers were submitted the total was \$24,040. Our goal was \$100,000 but we are very pleased with this amount of pledges and donations. Many thanks go out to the Department of New York American Legion Auxiliary. The ladies made a tremendous effort to make the walk-a-thon a success. Walks were held in Jamestown, Canandaigua, Arkport, Bath, Candor and Albany. The members of the VA&R Commission want to thank all the local coordinators and individuals who gave personal donations or solicited donations for giving up their time and volunteering to take on this project. The monies were divided up as such:

\$12,000 was given to the Department of New York American Legion Auxiliary. The commission decided to give the American Legion Auxiliary half of the donations to go toward their Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation programs. The re-

maining was divided up between the VA Hospitals, the 5 New York State Veterans Homes and the Fisher House here in Albany. Each one of these facilities received a check for \$631. There are some funds left over. We used \$24,000 as a round figure so not to have to mess around with pennies. The remaining funds in the account will be used for next years walk. After the vouchers were distributed an additional \$1230 came in for a final total of **\$25,270**. We thank you for a job well done and the Walk-A-thon will continue next year and the American Legion Auxiliary will once again partner with us to help make life easier for our hospitalized veterans and there families.

Now it is time to announce the winners of this years Consolidated Reports. We received reports from 46 Squadrons and 1 District for a total of 47 Consolidated Reports. The quality of the reports was very good in some areas:

140 visits to Veterans Homes

1,113 total hours spent at Veterans Homes

Cash donations at Veterans homes totaled \$7,626

Number of Visits to VA Hospitals totaled 1,841

Total hours at VA hospitals was 10,788

Dollar amount donated to the VA's was \$11,343

Support For The Troops hours donated were 1.605

Cost of our efforts for Support The Troops came to \$4,219

Other VA&R Projects total hours donated totaled 19,514 hours

Total cost of Other VA&R Projects \$12,125

### NATIONAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE DAY

- 149 veterans were helped
- 849 hours donated

\$1,520 was spent on National Veterans Assistance Day

One area the commission felt that was a little weak in was the Fisher House. Only 113 hours were given to the Fisher House and only \$1,108.00 was sent to the Fisher House that was reported. We feel with a little effort these figures can increase substantially.

*This year winners for Squadrons with 149 members or less are:*

**3RD Place - Francis M. Dalton Squadron # 282**

**2ND Place - John B. Handte Squadron # 89**

**1ST Place - Continental Squadron #1424**

*This year winners for Squadrons with 150 members or more are:*

**3RD Place - Mohawk Squadron # 1450**

**2ND Place - Joseph E. Zaloga Squadron # 1520**

**1ST Place - Seeley B. Parrish Squadron # 457**

A special note of interest that all of you should be aware of is that once again North Albany Squadron # 1610 again raised over \$12,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project.

Congratulations to all of the winners but most importantly thank you to members of our Detachment who worked so very hard to ensure that our veterans are living a more comfortable life either at home, in nursing homes or one of the many VA's in New York State.

# MEMBERSHIP

by Ross Polson, Chairman

Membership is a vital part of our organization. Without our membership being strong, we are unable to support all of The American Legion programs.

It is easy to point fingers as to who is responsible for making sure our membership grows and who makes sure our retention rate is maintained. We have membership committees, co-operation from our Detachment officers and others, but ultimately the responsibility is goes to us, the Squadron members.

Have our Squadrons asked, "Where are the members we have lost? Who hasn't been around for a while? Did we introduce them to our American Legion family members? Are we asking him what he would like to be involved with?"

We all have to understand that our Detachment membership committee and officers are here to lead and guide our Squadrons, but it's up to everyone to solve the problems. Once again it is everyone's responsibility.

We all have to take time to go the extra mile to assist in making our organization grow and retain our current members. Working together as a team, everyone involved can make a difference.

Knowing that everyone is experiencing economic challenges, we all can come up with ways to make our organization exciting and get the word out that this is the organization to belong to. Knowing that we support our veterans, the community, and our children and youth is very exciting. With more and more people staying closer to home, now is the chance to organ-

ize those family picnics and golf tournaments to get those that don't usually come around a chance to see what we really do and where our monies go.

There is still time to get the final transmittals in so our Detachment can make our 100% goal. We are only 948 members away as of 7/3/08 compared to last year about the same time we were 479 members from our goal. Now is the time to check up on those loose ends.

Our other major consideration is that we must have the squadrons send in their OCFs. This is very important so the squadrons can receive their new membership cards. It is also a link of communication to Detachment.

As of July 3, 2008, we had 166 squadrons that have made 100%. Congratulations to all of those Squadrons who have achieved their goal plus. Now it's time to change into our racing competition. It was an exciting year for our car owners. Although they have all worked hard to try to achieve the checkered flag, there is only one winner. It is now my privilege to announce our winners, based on the latest report. First place goes to Paul Peach with 106.49% for Districts 2&10. Second place goes to Frank Gee with 101.08% for Districts 1&9. Third place goes to Dean Williams with 100.97% for Districts 5&6. Fourth place goes to David Caldwell with 95.06% for Districts 7&8. And fifth place goes to David Bishop with 92.91% for District 3&4 and he is also the winner of the Pink Cap.

## Membership Awards for 2007

### Recruiter of the year award:

**1st Place**—Robert Phenes from Seeley B. Parish Squadron #457; Ontario County with 30 members

### Largest Squadron:

**1st Place**—Charles E. Wescott Squadron #73 from Bath; Steuben Co. with 449 members

**2nd Place**—Winnik Squadron #396 from Geneva; Ontario County with 391 members.

**3rd Place**—Samuel L. Derby Squadron #556 in Chautauqua County with 360 members

### Most new members:

**1st Place**—New Hartford Squadron #1376 in the 5th District with 44 new members.

**2nd Place**—Joseph P. Mangan Squadron #1194 from the 6th District with 38 new members

**3rd Place Tie**—Greece Squadron #468 from the 7th District with 36 new members and Joseph E. Zaloga Squadron 1520 from the 3rd District with 36 new members.

### **Greatest % over prior year**

Floral Park Squadron #334 in the 10 District - 225%

Homing-Foumier Squadron #418 in the 5th District 233%

Leo Laders Squadron #130 in the 9th District—196%

Canarsie Squadron #573-193% Henry & Stanley Cichon Squadron #1578 - 182% Cummings Brothers Squadron #1436 - 164% in the 2nd District

## Attention Race fans and fellow Sons of The American Legion

**The Racin' ain't over yet!**  
So back off of the trailers and get back on the track. Contact all your officers, call your squadrons, get the rosters out, get on the phones and bring in those renewals.

We still have a few days before the convention and we're gonna race to the end.

### It's the "Eleventh Hour Shootout"

for 2008 Renewals

Your Vice Commanders  
have put up a \$250.00

## Bounty

**\$250.00** will be donated to the Child Welfare Foundation in the name of the Detachment with the highest number of 2008 renewals turned in to National Headquarters starting August 1<sup>st</sup> and running to August, 22<sup>nd</sup>. In the case of a tie, the donation will be split between the Detachments that are tied.

**Note:** Renewals must be transmitted to Headquarters in time to be posted on the August 22 membership report. The winner will be determined by subtracting actual membership as of 8/1/08 membership report from actual membership as of 8/22/08 report.

So Let's go racin'



## WEBMASTERS CORNER

by John Walpole Jr.

Gentleman,

I have been busy lately working on some site updates. On the home page under the section title of HOME you will see a news ticker displaying upcoming Detachment Events. I have also added a FAQ page. I have also been adding squadron addresses to our database from OCF's turned in as well as email contacts.

To let you all know, if your cur-

rent OCF doesn't contain an email address and you had one last year, it will be removed from the Database. The reason being is, I don't know who these old emails belong to and sometimes that person is no longer involved, so remember to fill in the email addresses.

Let me know what you guys think. Have you been able to easily find what you are looking for? What features of the site do you find useful? Some of

you have already voiced your opinions and I thank you. A membership application is now available online under FORMS, for those of you who may need one.

That is all for now.

John Walpole Jr.  
Detachment of New York Webmaster  
[Detachment of NY Website](http://www.sonsdny.org)

[www.sonsdny.org](http://www.sonsdny.org)

# CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORT

**Gaither E. Espey, Chairman**

Can you believe the year is over already? It seems like I was just standing up here a week ago doing last years report. I would like to thank all the members of the C&Y commission for their work during the year. Most of all, I need to thank all the squadrons and members for all the work that has been done for our children.

I have to tell you we are down on consolidated reports compared to last year. We as a group, need to stress the importance of the consolidated report to squadrons we know do not send one in.

We need to thank Dave Downey and David Lee for the Bills/Jets challenge, Commander Jerry for his ponytail challenge. Both of these helped raise money towards CWF.

During the mid-winter conference I attended the Legion children & youth seminar. At this seminar, a representative

from CMN, spoke on the different fundraising programs they offer. They range from this little hand key ring, the little rubber bracelet kids and adults are wearing or selling paper cutouts people can put their name on. We have nine CMN hospitals in N.Y.. They are located in Albany, Buffalo, Elmira, New Hyde Park, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Watertown and Valhalla. If you get on the CMN web page, you can link from our national site, the hospital names are listed by state. Every hospital has a CMN representative that will help you with your efforts.

Now the consolidated report has changed since it went to a national form. I will give you a few group totals, but most of our dollars and hours were listed under Other projects. CWF- \$9525 with 109hrs, CMN- \$3886 with 130hrs. Our total donations under Children & Youth totals \$76,651 with a

total of 6,842 hrs.

Our winners for the year are as follows:

For squadrons under 150 members:

3<sup>rd</sup> Place John W. McConnell, Squadron #47, Columbia County, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place John B. Handte, Squadron #89, Broome County, in the 6<sup>th</sup> District.  
1<sup>st</sup> Place Walter T. Conley, Squadron #1107, Cayuga County, in the 7<sup>th</sup> District.

For squadrons over 150 members:

We have a tie for 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Seeley B. Parish, Squadron #457, Ontario County, in the 7<sup>th</sup> District.  
Mohawk, Squadron #1450, Saratoga County, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place Cassadaga Memorial, Squadron #1280, Chautauqua County, in the 8<sup>th</sup> District.  
1<sup>st</sup> Place Charles F. Wescott, Squadron #173, Steuben County, in the 7<sup>th</sup> District

Once again, I would like to thank you all for supporting the Children & Youth Commission.

## JETS / BILLS Challenge

CWF was the winner after David Lee and Dave Downey challenged the Detachment membership to make a donation to CWF with a vote for the Jets or the Bills. The loser of the contest had to wear the opponents team jersey. When the counting neared completion past National Vice



Commander Thomas Smolcom stepped forward with a \$1000 donation split between the two teams. Toms donation gave each team \$2000 creating a tie and required both Dave's to wear the others jersey.

**Great job guys!**

# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

**Doc Gibbs, Chairman**

I would like to personally thank the Legislative Committee members: Jeff Jordan, Dan Sellingham, Gerald Shepard, David Perry, and Al Deichler for their involvement this past year. I also need to say a special thank you to all those who helped our legislative efforts this year at the "On-the-Hill Day" in April including: Commander Jerry Ketchum, Adjutant Robert Avery, NEC Dave Downey, Alt. NEC John Bogart, Judge Advocate Randy Lewis, SAL National Legislative Vice Chair David Lee, Vice Commander David Bishop, Normandy Anniversary Committee Chair Ken Kraetzer, and District 5 Commander Vince Green. Without the work of these dedicated and talented individuals our legislative voice would be mute.

As an annual summary - some elements of the following were reported out at the January Mid-Winter SAL Convention Meeting:

*Disclaimer: the Bills referred to in this report were current as of the report in mid -July 2008 but are literally still in the process of change. Some may have been passed or vetoed by the time this is actually in print.*

The SAL Legislative priorities have been obviously to support the 235 Resolution-based issues the Legion had determined as their priorities in their 2007 year; but we (SAL) have focused on 12 general areas of support within these resolutions:

1. Establishing a flag protection amendment
2. Protecting the Pledge of Allegiance through an amendment
3. To reduce the backlog of VA

claims with the Dept. of Veterans Affairs

4. To support long term care for veterans
5. To obtain prescription drug assistance for veterans
6. To reduce the age of retired pay to 55
7. To prohibit concurrent deployment in combat zones for both spouses
8. To amend the prisoner of war time frames
9. To amend health care funding to establish standards of care
10. To provide Medicare reimbursement
11. To prevent and prosecute crimes of violence against children
12. To require public disclosure of information on child abuse/neglect that involve deaths or near deaths

The biggest single current issue: President Bush vetoed (December 2007) the National Defense Authorization Bill (NDAA) HR1585. This contained numerous positive measures to enhance veteran's education benefits. This was unexpected and Congress and the President need to work through the details.

**Official Legion recommendations have included the following elements:**

1. Education benefits
2. Vocational rehabilitation & employment
3. Transition assistance
4. Licensure and certification

5. Work opportunity tax credit
6. VA home loan guarantee
7. Homeless veterans
8. Employment rights/Veterans preference
9. Service disabled veteran owned businesses
10. Federal procurement

HR4253 was passed. This bill sets up a program of SBA loans for veterans through business outreach centers. Creates major opportunities for Veterans who wish to be small business owners.

The Wounded Warriors Act S2400 was left hanging when the Congress adjourned in December but is expected back on the docket this month for approval and on to the President.

Bills S2426 and HR4959 are also back in focus. The original bill was presented by H. Clinton (NY) and compels administration to send any long-term agreements made with the government of Iraq to the Senate as a treaty.

There are literally hundreds of bills before this year's Congress. The American Legion supports some, opposes some, and monitors others for future action. Some of the pieces of legislation (31) are currently being supported by the American Legion and are presented for SAL support as well:

To begin to keep up with Legion Legislative issues and their support or opposition to Bills it is suggested that you continue to go directly to these key internet resources: Key in on line at: [www.legion.org/veterans/news](http://www.legion.org/veterans/news) Veterans News and Updates, then click "Legislative"; click "Issues and Legislation". At this site all the Bills that the Legion is engaged with and a brief description of the Legion's position.

## Fundraiser for departed SAL member raises \$15,750.

The Skaneateles Sons of the American Legion Squadron #239 sponsored a fund raiser to help the family of departed member, Wayne McDonald. Wayne left behind his wife Cheryl and three sons (the youngest only 5 weeks old).

On Saturday, July 26, 2008 the Sons put on a pig roast assisted by many of Cheryl's friends and family who held a silent auction.



Picture of Squadron #239 Commander, CJ Horan presenting a check to Cheryl for \$15,750. Also in the picture are 1st Vice Commander Bob Cox, and Cheryl's sons Jarrett and Zachery. The monies raised were from ticket sales, a silent auction and donations.

## Golden Age games coming to Indianapolis in August

The 22nd National Veterans Golden Age Games for competitors 55 and older will be in Indianapolis Aug. 20-24. This event is the largest military veterans sports and recreation competition in the world, featuring more than 700 athletes, families, coaches and officials. Co-sponsored by VA, Help Hospitalized Veterans and the Veterans Canteen Service, the event has also received generous funding from the Lilly Endowment Fund.

Hosted this year by the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center, the event includes competition in 14 sports, including swimming, bicycling, discus, shuffleboard, bowling and golf. The games are open to all U.S. veterans 55 and older who are currently receiving care at any VA medical facil-

ity. The oldest veteran competing in the Games this year is 97 years young.

The 2008 Games is a qualifier for eight events at the 2009 National Senior Games, which is a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee. This year marks the fourth time that veterans have had the opportunity to compete at higher levels.

The Games bring together veterans from all branches of military service who served during war and peacetime. Participants compete in open, wheelchair and visually impaired divisions in specific age groups. Although many competitors served in World War II and the Korean War, Vietnam War veterans are increasingly represented in this annual competition.

The majority of the Golden Age Games events, including opening and closing ceremonies, will be at the Indiana Convention Center. The opening ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 20, with music, a color guard, a parade of flags from each participating state, and a ceremonial lighting of the torch.

The competition begins at Coffin Golf Course at 8 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 21, . Closing ceremonies will be at the convention center at 7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 24.

For more information on the Golden Age Games, call Jenny Tankersley Ballou, National Veterans Golden Age Games public affairs coordinator, at (757) 728-3450 or (757) 254-6058 or [veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov).



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Commander—from page 1

members due to financial problems, but we can help them. A thought would be for the squadron to only collect the per-capita from that member instead of the full amount charged and keep him active and involved instead of losing him. This would go a long way also in letting that member know you want him and not just his money. I will be looking for the Vice Commanders to keep a close eye on the membership in their area and communicate with the mem-

bership committee to achieve that 100% renewal goal.

I am looking forward to meeting with all the members of the Detachment of New York during my visits to your area. Be sure to get the message out to all of our squadrons when the visitations are being held, don't keep it just to yourself communicate this information to everyone.

My project for this year will be the National Emergency Fund. This is a project that I know first hand does great things for

our members in a time of need. So when I am visiting your county please step forward and present a check for this project.

### Commander's Project

The American Legion National Emergency Fund

You may present your check directly to Commander Denmon when he visits your County, or you may wish to mail your contribution to:  
DETACHMENT OF NY  
SUITE 1300, 112 STATE ST.  
ALBANY, NY 12207

### American Red Cross honors SAL member as donor of the decade.

Dedicated to donation of one's blood. Story by Ronald Kuczenski

The beginning of my blood donation was tied to "Operation Desert Storm". On August 8, 1990, Iraq annexed Kuwait. Two weeks later, on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, President Bush called up reserves. Iraq had the largest ground forces in the free world. It would take a great ground force to dislodge Iraqi troops from Kuwait. By January 30, 2001 there was 500,000+ US troops in the Gulf.

A prolonged ground battle would cause a vast amount of injuries and the American Red Cross set out to obtain as many new donors as possible. I signed up as a potential donor. On January 16<sup>th</sup>, the air war began. After intense bom-

bardment from the air and sea, Marine, Army and Arab forces moved into Kuwaiti and Iraq on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Six days later a cease fire was declared and total casualties were minimal along with the need for blood on the battlefield.

The Red Cross had all these names, including mine, and they began contacting potential donors for home use. I was contacted in the spring of 1991. I made my first donation in May of that year. Since I began my first donation in May, I only had time to complete 5 donations in 1991. The following year I delayed two of my donations so I could donate at Vac Air and once again only made 5 donations in '92. In order to make 6 donations per year, you have to donate almost every 8 weeks. It's possi-

ble to donate six pints one year and seven the next, but you have very little time to spare. In all, it took me approximately 16 years and 2 months to complete my goal.

Since 1992, I have donated 6 pints in a year 13 times and 7 pints twice. I've also been recognized as a "Donator of the Decade" for donating a minimum of 6 pints a year for 10 consecutive years.

My blood donation ties into my interest in the Son's of The American Legion. Currently, I am Commander elect of my Squadron, Chautauqua County Commander and a 8<sup>th</sup> District Vice-Commander for the Detachment of New York. I am also completing my first year of a three year term for the Detachment's Veterans Administration & Rehabilitation committee.





Newly elected Detachment Commander Gary Denmon presides over his first meeting in Albany, NY on July 19, 2008.

### Detachment of New York

elected officers for the 2008—2009 year.

- Gary Denmon - Commander
- Kenneth Kraetzer - Vice Commander  
Districts 1 & 9
- John Rodgers — Vice Commander  
Districts 2 & 10
- Gaither Espey- Vice Commander  
Districts 3 & 4
- Dean Williamson- Vice Commander  
Districts 5 & 6
- David Caldwell — Vice Commander  
Districts 7 & 8
- Christopher Burtch- Chaplain
- William Lutz - Historian
- Fred Merscher— Master Sgt-at-Arms
- John Bogart— N.E.C.
- Raymond Jarvis—A.N.E.C.
- Randal Lewis— Judge Advacote

## Public Relations Commission

The Detachment Public Relations Commission would like to thank every member for their contributions and support. Our goal to report all newsworthy items, to educate ourselves and others of the activities and programs of The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion.

Please send your news articles into the Commission for the Fall issue **by October 5, 2008**

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The New York Legion Press Association at their annual banquet honored our Detachment Newsletter "The Liberty" with a 1st place award in the SAL publication category. This award is attributed to the hard work of this commission and the membership of the great Detachment of New York, Thank you.

## Convention Parade Results

### Sons Color Guard

**1st Place**—Seeley B. Parish  
Squadron # 457; Phelps, NY

**2nd Place** – Endicott-Union  
Squadron # 82; Endicott, NY

### Newsletter schedule for 2008—2009 year:

Fall Issue	October 5th
Mid-Winter Issue	January 5th
Spring Issue	April 5th
Convention Issue	June 15th
Post Convention Issue	August 5th

**All** Detachment officers, Commission Chairman and District Commanders are asked to participate in providing news stories for the newsletter. It is your obligation to report what your District or Committee is doing to our membership. Please have articles into the commission by the dates listed above. Any member can and is welcomed to submit news stories and photo to the committee for publication.