



Sons of The American Legion



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Detachment of New York

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www.sonsdny.org

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**Dates of
Special Interest:**

- Nov 2—Election Day
- Nov 11—Veterans Day
- Nov 17— 35% Membership Target Date
- Nov 25—Dec 30—Holiday Blood Drive
- Dec 7—Attack on Pearl Harbor 1941
- Dec 8th— 45% Membership Target Date
- Dec 15—Bill of Rights Day
- Jan 20th—60% Membership Target Date
- Jan 21—23—Mid-Winter Meetings Albany

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

by John Rogers

We are completing the first three months of the Legion Year as of this issue. And I will ask all, what goals have you set, and what have you accomplished as a member of this organization? Only you can respond to these questions, for within you are the answers. I hope every member will take this statement to heart.

Visitations have started, and how great it was starting them in my own neighborhood, the 2nd District. Then preparations got under way for my travel northward to unknown territories, which I know will become very familiar to me, like being at home. The 6th District was great, meeting all our legion family members. Next we were off touring the Fourth District, stopping at my second hometown, Plattsburgh Post #20. Congrats on a job well done. Then we traveled south to Lake George and onto Saratoga. A whirlwind tour in 16 days. I really would like to see a larger attendance of SONS at the Department Legion Family Visitations. Come out and meet your Department Officers.

It certainly was great visiting and talking with all, but there are some items I need to communicate



to you.

Let's start with Membership. Have you thought about target dates and how important they are? Yes, let's all work to make them. Our membership chairman and his team are there to lend a hand. So, if you as membership chairman of your squadron have a problem with any aspect of membership, please call your District Membership Chairman and ask him for help. Also, I would like to thank all for obtaining over 100% membership last year and look forward to breaking a new record this year.

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FROM THE ADJUTANT'S DESK

by Robert J. Avery

RENEWALS: Although our Detachment won an award at the National Convention this past August for having a renewal rate of over 90%, retaining members in our organization requires an ongoing effort by your Squadron's Membership "Team". The FIRST mailing of the SAL renewal postcard was mailed on September 30th to all SAL members whose record at National Headquarters shows unpaid for 2011. Over 301,000 postcards were mailed for this renewal notice. A follow up postcard mailing will be sent in January and again in April of 2011. These mailings are made in conjunction with, and subsequent to, Membership Target Dates. Therefore, please follow these membership target dates closely. Above all, transmit your membership as dues come in! Many Squadrons hold membership...which is not acceptable. Regular transmission of dues...especially prior to the renewal mailings, saves the National organization considerable dollars in postage costs. All three mailings will be made usually within a couple of days following the target in that respective month of mailings.

The Departments and Detachments of Illinois and Georgia are participating in a test of a new renewal system for the of Sons memberships. Squadron contact information is being requested from Squadrons within these two Detachments only. The purpose of this test is to obtain personal contact data such as the name and address of the person responsible for SAL membership in each Squadron. Upon receipt of this information, National will code their system accordingly to allow for the printing of this information on future renewal postcards. Recipients of these postcards will have a point of contact to mail renewals to and/or obtain information as needed. This is a test phase for Illinois and Georgia and will be ongoing for at least a year or longer. National's goal is to evaluate this system to see if it increases renewal rates of membership. If this test proves successful, all Detachments will participate.

HONORARY LIFE CODE: Honorary life is something that can be awarded by a Squadron/Post to an individual for a specific deed or act. He must be an existing SAL member and eligible for member-

ship in accordance with the established eligibility criteria as outlined in the SAL National Constitution. This is only a Squadron/Post award, where authorized. To report this information, you can submit a member data form and mark the appropriate block "Honorary Life". The record will be coded at National Headquarters. When the annual membership cards and registers are printed, a code "H" will appear on the membership register that denotes "Honorary Life". Older versions of the member data form do not contain this block. In that case, just write on the form wherever space is permitting. Squadron/Post Adjutants should sign this form to confirm this status.

Please make note of the following upcoming Membership Target

dates:	35%	Nov 17, 2010
	45%	Dec 8, 2010
	60%	Jan 20, 2011
	75%	Feb 9, 2011
	80%	Mar 9, 2011
	90%	April 13, 2011
	100%	May 11, 2011

I thank all Squadron Membership Chairmen and Team Members for all you do in support of the organization. I also thank those Squads who are transmitting in accordance with the Target Dates and are reaching their goals. Those who have not are urged to get with the program.

Congratulations! We as Sons of The American Legion have once again increased our membership and our donations of hours and dollars to our communities, other organizations and our veterans. Yes, we did improve in the number of Consolidated Report Forms that we turned in this past year; however, we are well short of where we need to be. The Consolidated Report Form is the best way that we as

an organization can promote what we do and why we do it. National Commander, David Dew has requested that we strive to achieve a 50% rate of return of the Consolidated Report Forms this year. This goal should be easy for us to accomplish; all we need to do is fill in a few blanks on a form. The hardest part is asking the membership what they do with

their time and talents and recording that information. Let's all start at our next Squadron meeting and keep a log of what we do and for whom. Then at the end of the year it will only take a few minutes to complete the form.

Damon Bradtmueller,
National Public Relations
Commission Chairman

Americanism Commission

by James Coates, Chairman

As appointed by Detachment Commander John B. Rogers, this year's Americanism Commission members are James Coates, Chairman; Christopher Birch, Oriskany; Robert Myrtle, Castleton; Arthur Maggy II, Morrisonville, Shawn Hathaway, Elmira.

Detachment Americanism programs for this year include:

Flag Etiquette and Education: Materials containing small stick flags and flag education program brochures to be given to district commanders at the Mid-Winter Conference in January. These materials are to promote the sponsorship of flag education programs for our youth throughout New York State. What better way to promote a true spirit of Americanism than through the education of our youth.

Essay Contest: IMPORTANT NOTE – Essays are to be postmarked by January 15, 2011. On the website you will be able to find information about the "What America Means to Me" Essay Contest that the Detachment of New York sponsors for Grades 1 to 5 for students of accredited schools across the state. We received 80 entries last year compared with 219 entries in 2009 and 53 entries in 2008. The 2010 winning essays are published in the 2010 Convention Liberty. This year we are moving the deadline for

the essays to be postmarked by to Jan. 15, 2011. This will ensure notification of winners and participants and distribution of prizes before school year end.

Scholarships: The Americanism Commission is responsible for judging the Michael L. Lewis Jr. Memorial Fund Scholarship and the Virginia and Rocco Cerullo Memorial Scholarship applications. The Lewis Scholarship awards two \$1,000 scholarships annually and the Cerullo Scholarship awards up to four \$500.00 scholarships annually; one new and up to three renewable scholarships to previous winners. In addition the Detachment sponsors the William P. O'Connell Memorial Veterans Rehabilitation Scholarship which awards one scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00 annually and is judged by the V A & R Commission. The rules and applications for these scholarships are available on the website, www.sonsdny.org. We have not been fully utilizing the awards available so please help to make sure that our young Son's and Junior Auxiliary members are aware of these opportunities.

Consolidated Reports: To foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism and to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy. These

are just a couple of the purposes of our association that we uphold through our Americanism, Children and Youth, and VA&R projects so please remember that all squadrons must submit a consolidated report and the deadline to submit reports is April 30th. Remember that the data collected from our consolidated reports is used to demonstrate to our legislators what kind of an organization The American Legion is and what kind of an impact we have on our community, state, and nation.

There are thirteen categories under Americanism on the Consolidated Report Form. There is a brief description of these categories and some guidance as to what should be included on the Consolidated Report forms available on the website at www.sonsdny.org.

This past year we again received 105 consolidated report forms and we reported some pretty significant numbers at our Detachment convention in Syracuse this year. I am very proud that at the National Convention in Milwaukee this year Commander Bishop had the honor of accepting the National Americanism Award on behalf of the Detachment of New York. I congratulate and thank all of our squadrons who submitted a report and made this possible. All I can say is we have 378 Squadrons in the Detachment of New York, just imagine what those numbers would be if we had 100% of Squadrons reporting.

V. A. & R. Commission

by Thomas Kurk, Chairman

Now that our Squadrons are in full swing for this year, it is now time to let our members here in the Detachment of New York know what your Detachment Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission has planned for this year. First of all let's start planning for next years "They Marched For Us, We Walk For Them" Walk-A-Thon. The walk-a-thon is scheduled for April, 16, 2011. Once again we are privileged to have the Department of New York American Legion Auxiliary partner with us as they have done for the past three years to make this a premier project across our state. All of this years information can be found on our Detachment Web-Site at www.sonsdny.org. Please remember, this not closed to the American Legion Family but we urge you go out and seek community involvement in participating in the walk-a-thon. This shows our communities that what some of the things that we Sons of The American Legion do for our veterans and also gives us the possibility of bring in more members. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our veterans as always, 100% of all pledges and donations stay right here in New York and are donated to the our VA Medical Centers, the Fisher House at the Stratton VAMC in Albany, the five New

York State Veterans Homes and other VA&R projects across the state. This commission will continue to ask our members to be active volunteers at our local VA Medical Center and to have a Son's member registered as a representative with the Voluntary Services department at each one of the thirteen VA's. We are informing our members of the problem we have not only here in New York, but across the United States with caring for our homeless Veterans. Did you know that on any given night there are 107,000 homeless veterans in the United States and that 1.5 million veterans are at risk of being homeless? This is due to poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions in overcrowded or substandard housing. We have an advantage in helping combat this crisis. We belong to an organization that is committed to assisting our veterans. This can be accomplished in many ways. We can participate in local homeless coalitions and be active in Stand Downs at our VA Medical Centers, make donations to your local Homeless Shelters and contact your elected officials. Discuss what is being done in your community for homeless veterans. We are fortunate this year that our American Legion Auxiliary Department President Nancy Kurk has selected Homeless

Veterans as her project for this year. We ask you to have your Squadrons to donate to her project as she makes her visits to our counties. National Veterans Assistance Day is scheduled for May 21, 2011. This is the fourth year of this project and we in New York have supported this project tremendously in the past as shown on our Consolidated Report Forms. Let's make this a special day to thank our veterans for there service to our country and make a special effort to help them out either by putting on a social event such as a lunch at our Post Homes or going to there homes and assisting them with chores that may need done or just visiting a veteran that may not be able to get out as much as he or she used to.

As you can see, we have just talked about a few things we can do to help our veterans. We suggest that ask any of our commission members for any thoughts or ideas as to what we can do to help with the rehabilitation of our veterans. We also can help with legislation that support our veterans. Keep yourself informed with legislative issues and contact both your local and national elected officials and urge them to support our efforts.

In closing, always remember that our Veterans are Our Greatest Resource and to quote President Calvin Coolidge "The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten."

Legislative Update

by Greg "Doc" Gibbs, Chairman

Our Legislative committee met at the Fall DEC in Brooklyn on September 11 and set the plans for the coming year. Jeff Jordan, Gary Shepard, Gary Denmon, David Perry and Greg Gibbs were present.

Keep in mind last year a bill was passed declaring September 16 as "American Legion Day". That has also passed this year as well.

The House passed HR 5822, the Department of Veterans Affairs Appropriation Bill on July 28 by a vote of 411 to 15 and its companion measure S 3615 was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 15.

Unfortunately, the full Senate

has not begun to consider S 3615. So far the full Senate has passed none of the 12 Funding bills for 2011. The House has passed only 2 of the 12 measures, they need to consider. Probably, a short term measure for a continuing resolution will occur to keep funding available if they do not act on these by October 1.

However, there are still pressing issues. The VA Medical Centers reported that many had still not yet received their funding for 2010 as late as March. This was six months into their fiscal year. We need to do all we can to stop such practices. Without prompt action on the 2011 funding bills

this is quite likely to happen again this year!

The American Legion has identified 210 resolutions that have legislative impact at their national convention. They will be following these resolutions this fall. These issues will, no doubt, form the basis for the American Legion Legislative efforts for the 112th Congress that we visit in Washington this spring. The Sons will come out with their own platform on these initiatives as the time goes on this year and we will stay on top of that and report it out to you as it evolves.

Following the American Legion's actions on the upcoming bills will get us ready for prioritizing the NY Detachment efforts for the On-the-Hill DC visit in March 2011.

National Legion Commander Jimmie Foster had much praise for the Congress in a recent address in mid October while he also outlined the work still to be accomplished.

The American Legion Commander stated that this past year has been a banner year for Veterans' legislation. The 111th Congress may be remembered for the "Veterans Health Care Budget Reform Act of 2009" which guarantees appropriations for VA health care one full year in advance.

Another significant milestone was passage of the "Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010" which increased VA funding for

fiscal 2010, the first agency budget that has exceeded \$100 billion.

The "Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010" created a program of comprehensive assistance and addressed a number of women veterans' issues. An additional bill was signed to compensate Vietnam Veterans for exposure to Agent Orange which provides \$13.4 billion in funds and a bill offering a COLA for Veterans' benefits was also signed.

There still is some work to be done including a repeal of the Disabled Veterans' Tax which penalizes retirees by reducing their pension payments if they

are receiving VA disability compensation. The Legion also supports the "Post9/11 GI Bill Education Funding" to include vocational training and distance learning opportunities.

According to Doc Gibbs, SAL Detachment of NY Legislative Chairman- When we plan our Legislative efforts for the Sons this coming spring we need to say "thank you" for the job done and concentrate on the remaining issues that will help all our deserving Veterans. Many of these remaining issues are a direct benefit for Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORT

William Lutz, Chairman

The Children and Youth commission is changing. This year, the commission members are going to focus on a specific program that support the youth of our communities and nation. These individuals will be your resource for information on their chosen area. If you have questions, ideas, insights, or just need general information, please make it a point to contact them. Those areas of focus are:

Vince Green – **Boy Scouts of America.** Vince is a former Scout Master and was involved for many years while his son Mason participated in the scouting program.

Gaither Espey – **Children's Miracle Network.** Gaither feels strongly about the work done by the CMN hospitals and very readily chose to be our resource for CMN.

Bob Ellis – **Autism.** Bob has recently become involved at the Detachment level and we are quite happy to have him. Bob has a PHD in Cognitive Development and is the Senior Psychologist at the Chautauqua County ARC. He is very dedicated to the research of the "Neuropsychology of Autism" and has presented nationally on the topic. As we all know, Autism is an area that we, as an organization, do not have a depth of expertise on, and do not, as a whole, provide a lot of

support. It is my hope that Bob can bring us up to speed and help guide us as to how we can contribute to the ongoing research and hopefully unlock some of the mysteries of this illness.

Dean Williamson – **Josh Dogs.** Dean has worked towards developing the Josh Dog program in his home county, and looks forward to working with all the Detachment members in furthering this valuable program in their home areas.

Greg Falco – **Childhood cancer.** This disease has affected Greg's family and he wants to work with the membership to gain insight into the programs that deal directly with childhood cancer, and what we can do to help them!

Myself, I will be working in various areas as well as serving as your Liason to the National Children and Youth Commission as well as Joe Gladden, National Vice Commander East.

Our big project this year will be a Harley raffle benefiting the Child Welfare Foundation. The foundation is being laid for this, with the target date of the drawing being mid-April to allow presentation of our Donation Check by the Commander at the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting in May in Indianapolis. My thought is to have the tickets/

flyers distributed by mid – December and to start selling tickets immediately after the first of the year. We are looking to sell 2000 tickets at \$20/ per ticket, in the hopes of raising upwards of \$30,000 to donate on behalf of the Detach-



ment to the CWF. The raffle is actually being run through my squadron, but the donation will be made on behalf of the Detachment. This is going to take the combined efforts of EVERY member to be successful. I am asking every Vice Commander to appoint a District Chairman in each of their districts to facilitate communication/distribution of the materials. Once you have that individual, please forward their information to me so that I may contact them.

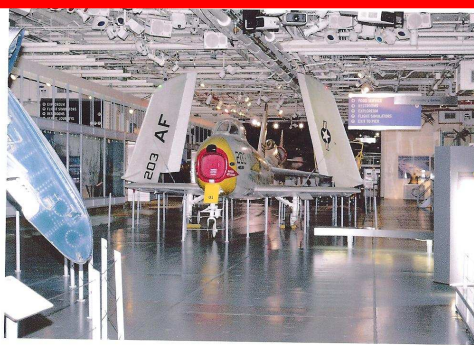
With that being said, this cannot replace the efforts on the local levels. Please keep doing what you have done and do so well, work on behalf of the Children and Youth of our communities, state and nation.

Please make sure you reach out to any and all members of the commission to assist you in your efforts for the kids.

New York County: They Did It

By: John Rogers, Cmdr.

It gives me great pleasure to announce a new Squadron. This squadron has been waiting for two years to get its name, and that is the 911 Memorial Squadron 2001. I had the greatest pleasure in presenting their charter to the Squadron Commander between visitations, at their new post home, on board the aircraft carrier USS INTREPID, anchored in New York Harbor. This squadron's members consist of those who work and live in Manhattan, and are from all professions. Helping to establish this was New York County



Adjutant Mr. Frank Gee, and our own Vice Commander John Chang, both members of the Lt. Kimlau Post and Squadron. Their meetings take place on board this ship, and now their permanent address. I was very impressed with their agenda, wherein how they intent to raise funds in support of our Veterans and their needs, both of yesterday and today. I wish them luck and success with all of their great intentions.

Top photo: Inside Post 2001

Bottom photo: New York Detachment Commander John Rogers, presents a Charter to 911 Memorial Squadron # 2001 Commander who is also a dual member.

Commander—from page 1

OK, now on with the rest of the Legion year. During my visitations to your counties, I would like to meet the Squadron/County Commanders and all members to answer some of their questions they might have, or just say hello.

Before anyone realizes, January will be here and with that comes our Mid-Winter Conference. This year will be all NEW, wherein not only will we be having our DEC and Commission meetings, but also trying a new approach. We at the Detachment are asking ALL MEMBERS OF THE SONS to come to Albany. There is going to be a new program Friday evening. One being, a District

Commander's/Vice Commander's Conference with the Detachment Commander, and guest speakers. Another, for all members of the Sons, a workshop given by our Commission Chairman. At this workshop, members will learn in depth about the programs we are involved with supporting the American Legion Family. It will be very informative and suggest you attend. Again on Saturday there will be another program which all will appreciate. I hope to get information on this out to our membership prior to the conference. Also, District Commander's remember to submit the names of your choices to attend MDT Leadership Course ASAP to the Chairman. Hope to see you there.

In the meantime, leading up to January, I will be traveling with our Department Commander and President lending encouraging words about our organization and what we would like to accomplish.

In closing, I would like to thank all the members for all the work they have done in the past and still doing for the betterment of our organization. Also, with the Holiday's approaching let me take this opportunity to wish all a Merry Christmas / Happy New Year, but most of all may God Bless you, our Veterans, Troops and the USA.

Yours for God and Country,
John Rogers, Commander



John Rogers, Detachment of NY Commander receives a certificate testifying his completion of the Detachment Commanders National Instructional Institute from Nation Commander, David Due. John received the training while attending the Fall NEC meeting October 8th to 10th in Indianapolis, IN.

Great job John!

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.

We are looking for you to brag about what is going on in your Squadron, County or District. What have you been up to, a service project, fundraiser, outstanding member or are you chartering a New Squadron? Photos tell a good story!

Please send your news articles and photos into the Commission for the Mid-Winter issue **by January 5, 2011**. Click on the link at: www.sonsdny.org to submit articles or to download current and past issues of The Liberty.

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On a personal note I want to congratulate the Detachment of NY Public Relations Commission on receiving an award from the National American Legion Press Association. The 2010 National Best Papers contest awarded "The Liberty" a 2nd place Emerson O. Mann Award. This is a huge tribute to our officers and members who supported our publication in con-



tributing articles and making "The Liberty" worthy of National recognition. Thank you!

Congratulation is also in order to Americanism Commission Chairman, James Coates for receiving Special Recognition from the New York American Legion Press Association on his article in The Liberty. Jim has been a faithful contributor to our newsletter and we proud of him for this recognition.