



1304 PARK BLVD.

Sons of The American Legion

THE LIBERTY

Detachment of New York



TROY, NY 12180
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VOLUME 15 ISSUE 5

WWW.SONSOFTHELEGIONNY.COM

CONVENTION 2026 EDITION



COMMANDER'S MESSAGE...by Joe Guidice, Jr.

Fellow Sons,

Welcome to your 2026 Detachment Convention! As I look back over the past year, I can't believe how fast the time has gone. What an experience this year has been! I have very much enjoyed traveling across our state and visiting your counties and your posts and seeing all of you and the unique places you have taken me to. The friendship, brotherhood and hospitality have been nothing short of amazing and I will cherish the memories of this year forever. Thank you for all of your support over the course of this year.

Heading into this convention, our membership currently is at 96.14% and we are only 1,260 away from our 100% goal. I have every confidence that we will meet and exceed this goal before the end of the calendar year. I am also happy to report that our Consolidated Report numbers are up, and our total value, both in monetary donations and volunteer hours is now over \$1,000,000.00 higher than last year! I don't need to tell you just how important those num-

bers are to the overall mission of the Sons of The American Legion. Keep up the great work and let's continue to improve our reporting.

And speaking of great numbers...The final numbers are in from National, and the Detachment of New York was the second highest detachment in THE NATION for CWF donations with \$41,410.00! Only Pennsylvania was higher than us by about \$2500.00. And they have DOUBLE the membership of New York. Outstanding work by our Detachment! A very special thanks to our CWF Chairmen for all the great work!

I recently attended both the American Legion College and New York Boys State graduations. It was fantastic to see so many Sons members in attendance as college students and staff members, and several Sons on the staff at Boys State. Boys State was quite a remarkable experience as well. Seeing the enthusiasm, energy, pride, and esprit de corps of the citizen/students in attendance was amazing. It is truly encouraging



and heartwarming to see so many young men that have taken their first steps to being the next generation of leaders of our nation.

As many of you know, my project for the year was the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. T2T has a special place in my heart because the work that they do benefits not only veterans and their families, but also first responders and their families, too. I am overwhelmed by the generous support you have shown this year for this very special organization.

See Commander pg. 2 -

ADJUTANT, etc. ...by Robert J. Avery

.....*Adjutant.... ETC.....*

Welcome to all our members and guests to our 52nd Annual Detachment Convention here in Syracuse. It is nice to be downtown and sharing a hotel with our parent organization, while we close out this administrative year.

As for membership, the report currently available puts us at 95.29% of goal with 31,128 members. We need approximately 1,200 members to reach an All Time High. Your support in getting in those new members and renewals is greatly appreciated. Let's be at least 100% when we arrive in Louisville for National Convention!

Members are encouraged to attend this year's National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion in Louisville, KY from Friday, August 28th through Sunday, August

30th 2026 in Ballroom C, Main Concourse, Kentucky International Convention Center. This is National Commander William Clancy's convention, and it is hoped that we will have a good showing of members from New York to support Bill who has done a tremendous job representing the Sons of The American Legion all throughout the country this year. Congratulations on a job well done!

Please remember that your Squadron is required to submit its annual Officer Certification. This needs to be completed every year, even if your officers remain the same. This document helps the Detachment and District levels in being able to keep in contact with every Squadron, to offer assistance, answer questions and inform your Squadron of upcoming projects and events. Thank you for your cooperation.

I would like to congratulate Detachment Commander Joseph Guidice on an exceptional year leading the great Detachment of New York. Your commitment and dedication to the organization has been phenomenal. Thanks to all Detachment Officers and Committee and Commission members who have worked so hard this year moving us forward. I especially would like to thank the blue cap members who are out there all across our great state working with The American Legion to better the lives of our veterans.

I wish all members a great summer!

Robert J. Avery

National Assistant Adjutant
Detachment Adjutant
Emeritus

Commander Continued -

A representative from T2T will be on hand at our convention to receive our donation. I will reveal the final number at our pre-convention DEC Meeting.

Thank you all again for your support this year. It has been a great honor to serve as your Commander of the greatest Detachment in the Nation!!

The Service And Legacy carried on by our great organization truly defines us as exemplary. I am privileged to have been able to serve as Commander.

For God and Country,

Joe Guidice, Jr.
Detachment Commander



Having some fun at
Boys State

From the Adjutants Desk, ...by Timothy S. Van Patten II

Greetings fellow Sons!

Yet another administrative year has flown by in what seems like the blink of an eye. As a Detachment, we have been doing great things and the Consolidated Squadron Reports that we have received certainly reflect that.

So far we have recorded \$833,559.97 in Squadron Donations and 221,125 volunteer hours. The National Average for the value of a volunteer hour is \$34.79/hr. That makes the total impact of the Detachment of New York \$8,526,498.72. What incredible work you have all done!!!!

Now for the downside, out of the 383 active Squadrons in our Detachment, we have only received 103 Consolidated Report Forms. 27% of our squadrons are responsible for that 8 Million+ Dollar impact. Can you imagine what that number could be if all the Squadrons filed their paperwork?

We absolutely must get better at sending those in. That number plays such a key role not only in our public relations, but it has a huge impact in Congress. When our National American Legion Commander testifies on Capitol Hill, it's these numbers that help sway the

leaders of our Nation in supporting bills for all Veterans.

I would like to congratulate our Commander on a wonderful year. I have only heard great things from across our state on his visitations and the positive impact he has made. Way to go Joe!!!

Membership went great again this year, hitting target after target until somewhere around the 90% goal, please take the time to go after those renewals and get them transmitted by the end of December. Our new membership year began July 1st and the big push from National will be to get the renewals. It's great to bring on new members every year, but we really need to find out why so



many choose not to continue their membership.

Make those personal phone calls and ask questions, see if there is something that can draw them back in, ask about why they

signed up in the first place. We all have our "Why", why did we join?, who's service are we honoring? Share your stories, speak from the heart, and remind them of all the great programs we have and the different ways to be involved.

Finally, Thank You. This will be my last convention as your Adjutant. It's been quite some time since I've been able to sit in the audience with all of you, and I look forward to joining you all out there, not that I'm going into retirement, just shifting focus and beginning my campaign as a candidate for National Vice-Commander. Thank you for all the comradery, the mentoring that you

have given me, and most importantly your friendship and support over the years.

I look forward to representing you, this Detachment, and the entire Northeastern

Region over the coming years.

For the good of the Sons,

~Tim

Internal Affairs Commission— Dennis George

Congratulations to **Commander Joe Guidice and his team** on a job well done representing our organization during the 2025-2026 term.

There is **1 resolution** to be presented at Convention, so far. This was submitted by the Alfred J. Jurek Squadron 1672 for endorsement of Timothy S. Van Patten II for National Vice Commander.

I would like to thank the Members of the Internal Affairs Commission for their assistance and input this year: PNC Chris Cerrulo, PDC John Chang, Daryl Ver-Streate, Pete Chambrone, and Scott Hubbard.

I would also like to commend the hard work put in by the Committees and their Chairs under the IA Umbrella: Membership – Dusty Quick, MT&D – PDC Gary Denmon, and Conventions –

Rich Abel.

Serving on Commissions and Committees is an important function of our Detachment to serve our veterans, their families, and our National Organization. **Being Active** on these Commissions and Committees is important for progress in their goals and is necessary for our Detachment to move forward. Be sure to respond when the Chairman sends out a request.

The Internal Affairs Commission project for Commander Guidice is **Buddy Checks!**

There are members that have experienced health problems, family loss or other issues, and maybe other personal hardships. We can keep them involved, as part of our organization, by reaching out to them. This be done by cards, email, messaging, a phone call, even a personal visit. We need to Retain the

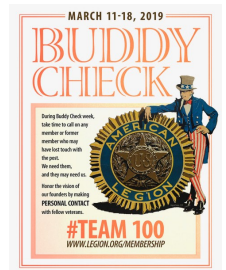
members and not have them fade away. Contact information should be available through your Squadron Adjutant.

REMEMBER YOUR WHY

- Eligibility comes from a loved one who served
- Membership honors their sacrifice
- Renewal continues their legacy
- Honor does not expire — your membership should not either

For God & Country,

Dennis
George, PDC
IA Chairman



***Celebrating National
Commander Bill Clancy's
homecoming in
New York City.***

Membership—Dusty Quick, Chairman

As of July 1, 2026 the current 2026 membership stands at 31,405 (96.11% of year end goal). We need 1,270 more 2026 renewals to reach 100%. Currently 2/10 Districts, 22/60 Counties and 183/383 Squadrons have reached their 100% membership goal. To set a new Detachment of New York Membership record (32,296) we need 891 more 2026 renewals.

2025 – 2026 year over year membership numbers. Overall we are 193 members behind where we were last year. Our renewals are roughly the same (we are 15 members behind last year). Where we are taking the hit is the number of new members we recruited this year. We

had 178 more new members at this time last year. This is an area we need re-focus on for the 2027 year.

The 2026 membership numbers won't be final until the end of the year. Reach out to your expired members and get them to renew. Last year we gained an additional 697 2025 membership renewals between the convention and the end of the year. We still have time to set a new detachment membership record, as well as reaching the 100% membership goal.

I've attached the Sons of the American Legion National Membership Target Dates for the 2027 Membership year. The target date percentages have changed this

year. National is pushing to get more of our 2027 renewals in earlier. This **starts** to get us more in line with the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary membership target date percentages.

The SAL 2027 membership cards will start getting mailed out after the Syracuse convention. You should expect to see them in the first couple of weeks in August.

Thank you for all you do as Sons of the American Legion.

Dusty L Quick,
Detachment Membership
Chairman

INDEPENDENCE DAY Celebrating the Birth of Our Nation

On July 4th, we celebrated the founding ideals that shaped the United States — liberty, equality, and the enduring promise of democracy. The American Legion Family proudly upholds these principles through service, citizenship, and community engagement.

The Sons of The American Legion continue this tradition by supporting veterans, promoting patriotism, and helping ensure that the freedoms declared in 1776 remain strong for future generations.



On July 4, 2026 Squadron 457 sponsored 28 veterans, color guard, and members to a Rochester Red Wing baseball game. Thirteen color guard members posted Colors for the opening ceremonies and National Anthem. This marks the 13th year of participation.

A great game with a Red Wing win and post game fireworks!

Americanism...by Herman Downer, Jr,

In the Liberty Newsletter 2023 Convention issue I wrote this:

"In the recent issue of The American Legion Magazine there is an article titled "Flag Wavers." According to the article, the Millennial Generation and Generation Z both view The U.S. Flag as symbol of imperialism, greed, and intolerance, unlike us from the older generations that see it for what it is, Freedom. They are being taught in classrooms that America is not better than other nations, and perhaps we are even worse. Maybe they should be looking at other countries that are waving the American Flag. Countries like Ukraine, Georgia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, to name a few.

Why is there such American Pride in the citizens of these other countries? Why do they see what these newer American Generations cannot—that America is the symbol of what this Country was built on, and that is standing up to tyranny, and that America truly is the Home of the Free. For over 250 years the United States Armed Forces have prevailed against tyranny not only for our own citizens but for other countries as well. The United States is looked up to not only for this, but the aid we give other countries in the form of food, medicine, medical assistance, and rebuilding after natural disasters or war. We may not always hear about these missions, but maybe our news outlets could and should report more about the great things that our country does."

You may ask why I am bringing this article up again after all these years. It has to do with the

FIFA World Cup and reactions to Fans taking pride in America and learning we are not as what's being portrayed in the news.

Quotes from others

"It's not like what the news portrays. You guys have beautiful scenery and people." – Unknown

A Scottish visitor staying in Boston said, "The America we are experiencing right now is the



America we were promised growing up...we were expecting to be met by ICE agents, aggressive police, and the political climate we all see on the news, and that could not be further from the truth of what we've actually experienced here... honestly, every single person we've come across has been out of this world."

"All of these things, which they think are fantastic and we take for granted, are great to be able

to brag about to the rest of the world, which is often skeptical of the U.S.," said Peter Loge, a professor of communication at George Washington University and soccer enthusiast. "A lot of people over there only know about the U.S. from TV or movies. This is public diplomacy and soft power at its best. It's also a reminder to the American people we are good people and at our best when we're together."

Between news outlets, social media and among other things the United States image has been tarnished. But it's heart warming to hear it from other people that we are the greatest Nation in the World. We as Sons of The American Legion have a responsibility to get out there and promote 100% Americanism and remind our citizens that.

Herman Downer, Jr

Detachment Americanism
Chairman



Detachment on NY Flag Education Program was presented to the Midlakes 5th grade students by Squadron 457.

Children & Youth—Wayne Ainslie

Hello fellow Sons, hope everybody had a great time celebrating this great country's 250th birthday.

In this issue, I want to give you some information on The Child Well-Being Foundation. Its purpose is to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children.

More than \$512,800 was donated during the 2025-2026 program year, with the Sons of The American Legion remaining the highest contributor with \$321,014.

This year marks their 72nd year with donations awarded 9 grants totaling \$851,542. Here are a few that I think are worth mentioning that benefit American Legion programs.

Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc was awarded

\$125,000 for its project "2026 American Legion World Series".

Comfort Crew for Military Kids was awarded \$35,000 which will create and distribute toolkits for military families facing deployments, reconnecting, injury, and loss.

Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy was awarded \$24,000 for its "Veterans Children's Scholarship Program".

The American Legion National Headquarters was awarded \$550,000 for their "Children's and Youth National programs for 2026".

Young Marines, Inc. was awarded \$50,000 for its project "American's 205th History Tour-Young

Marines".

Programs like these is why it's very important that your Squadron makes a donation to this foundation every year. National has asked for a donation of \$1 per member from every Squadron. If all of the Detachment of NY Squadrons made the \$1 per member donation our contributions would total over \$30,000 per year.

For God & Country,
Wayne C. Ainslie



**Alfred J Jurek Squadron 1672
Memorial Day Ceremony**



Let us never forget their sacrifice.

Squadrons in Action

Share The Pride-Build the Pride

Seven Hall of Famers and dozens of major and minor league baseball players honored America's heroes over Memorial Day weekend by playing the Baseball Hall of Fame Military Classic game, and the Sons of the American Legion Sq. 579 Cooperstown, NY were there raising awareness and funds at Doubleday Field.



100 American Legion Family members received their diploma from Department Commander, John Miga, Detachment Commander, Joe Guidice Jr., and Department President Maureen Morgan.



**NY American Legion
College 2026
Graduation Class,
Sunday, June 7, 2026.**

YOUR SQUADRON'S STORY MATTERS

Tell it. Share it. Celebrate it. Strong PR builds strong Squadrons — and strong Squadrons strengthen the entire American Legion Family.