

## Son holds Olympic torch high

*Continued from Page 1*

Family and friends say the positive attitude he developed over the years is one reason why he was nominated and selected to carry the torch in Ft. Wayne's Olympic Torch Relay. Gary believes that carrying the torch is his chance to represent America and his community. He has represented the Sons of The American Legion for several years.

"I believe God did this for a reason," he said. "Maybe the reason is to carry the torch...I'm not handicapped. A person that's handicapped is a person who gives up on life, and I'm not that way."

Ron Swart nominated Gary to carry the torch because he said his friend continues to have a positive attitude despite the difficulties that he has encountered. When Ron first met Gary about five years ago he was apprehensive because everyone teased him about using the wheelchair. But he discovered that Gary liked to joke about the loss of his legs. He has a great sense of humor. His e-mail address is [GaryNoLegs2@aol.com](mailto:GaryNoLegs2@aol.com) and his business cards read "Indiana's Shortest District Commander."

The Fourth District and **Leo, IN Squadron 409** have been very generous to Gary. They purchased the \$400 torch he carried, along with a stand so it will be permanently displayed at Post 409. Stop in to see it when you're in the neighborhood and say hello to Gary.

## The Sons of The American Legion

P.O. Box 1055

Indianapolis, IN 46206



## Blue Star banners reappear

*Continued from Page 7*

the armed forces. A banner can have up to five stars, signifying that five members of that family are currently in military uniform on active duty.

A gold star replaces the blue star if that relative is killed or dies in service.

The American Legion is providing banners to families in communities across the nation. Free color downloads of the

banners are also available at The American Legion Internet Website: [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) and poster and static cling versions for home and automobile, as well as lapel pins, are available from The American Legion National Emblem Sales, 1-888-453-4466.

## Deadline

If you have story ideas or photos for the next issue of *National Update* they must reach us by

**June 1, 2002**

U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Non-Profit Organization  
Permit No. 431  
Indianapolis, IN



# NATIONAL UPDATE

Official Publication of The sons of The American Legion

**April 2002**



## Another Son known to be 9/11 victim

It was just too much to hope for.

The fall edition of *National Update* carried the story of two Sons killed in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on New York's World Trade Center. While grieving the loss of two comrades, there was shallow relief that only two Sons were among the thousands who perished in the cowardly terrorist attacks that day.

After that edition of the newsletter went to press, word was received that a third Son also perished. Gerald Atwood, a member of **Brooklyn, NY Squadron 1060** and a firefighter with Engine 34 - Ladder 21, was among hundreds of firemen killed after responding to the scene. As of early March, Gerald's body and the bodies of five other members of Ladder 21 still had not been recovered from the WTC rubble.

The 38 year old Atwood leaves behind two very young children and a wife who was expecting the couple's third child in March. He was an eight year veteran of the FDNY working out of "Hell's Kitchen."

## Carry the torch proudly

The Winter Olympic Torch made it's way through Indiana in January, on it's way to Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Games. The torch is considered a symbol of both peace and friendly international sports competition. The Indiana portion of the 65-day, 46-state, 13,500-mile journey began January 3<sup>rd</sup> in Ft. Wayne. Runners, traveling two-tenths-mile segments. Carrying the torch on the first day was **4<sup>th</sup> District SAL Commander Gary Gregory**. Gary didn't

"run" as the others did but he carried the torch proudly in his motorized wheelchair.

Gary, 48, lost his left leg in a 1993 automobile accident. In 1998, he lost his other leg to diabetes. Two years ago he had triple- bypass heart surgery. "When I lost my first leg, I thought I was going to kill myself," he said. "It's easy to give up and it is very hard not to." Instead of giving up, Gary said he tried to gain inner strength.

*Continued on Page 8*



## It's official - S.A.L. sets records again in 2001

For the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, Sons have posted another record membership level. Active recruiting ends each year in June, but membership records remain open until the end of the calendar year. As the clock ticked in the New Year, there were 247,179 members of the Sons of The American Legion, a 5.2% increase in membership over the previous year. All but 12 Detachments saw an increase in membership levels in 2001.

The largest Detachment continues to be **Indiana** with a membership of 32,393. Other double-digit Detachments include: **Pennsylvania (27,278)**, **Ohio (26,568)**, **New York (20,150)**, **Michigan (14,549)**, **Maryland (12,878)** and **Illinois (11,571)**.

Along the way to setting national records, 35 Detachments set new all-time high record levels last year. The Detachment of **South Carolina's 71%** leap in membership was the nation's highest. **South Dakota** increased its membership by 65%. Other large membership increases were seen in these Detachments: **France (22.9%)**, **North Dakota (17.9%)**, **Washington (17.7%)**, **Montana (15.4%)**,

*Continued on Page 3*

## Seeing things?

Maybe you should take another look at the top of the page.

The S.A.L. logo at the left side of the newsletter masthead is brand new. National Headquarters has been working to redesign The Legion, S.A.L. and Auxiliary emblems. **For more info, see Page 7.**



*Could this be divine light? Members of North Webster, IN Squadron 253 are silhouetted as they work to raise a huge flag used as a backdrop for their local Veterans Day ceremony back in November. It wasn't until the film was developed that the photographer noticed how sunlight passing through the flag fabric produced a crucifix pattern.*

## Commander's Project

by Clifford Smith  
National Commander

As National Commander I'm able to select a special Commander's project. Because of my lifelong association with The Salvation Army and the many years of support the Army has given to our veterans, I wish to join in a partnership together this year and help support Veterans Centers maintained throughout the country by The Salvation Army.

With over 247,000 members and over 5100 Squadron locations in The Sons of The American Legion, I believe this will be a most successful venture. All veterans of all wars, including those serving today, will always remember what The Salvation Army has done for them. Working together with The Sons of The American Legion for God and Country is a perfect arrangement.



The Veterans Programming booklet that The Salvation Army has produced will be sent to every Detachment. This is a very informative book and should greatly

aid with the implementation of this project. I will be personally contacting each Detachment Commander to further explain my project. I ask each Detachment to choose a center in either their State or a neighboring State to help raise funds for the veterans in that particular center. As National Commander I will have the opportunity to visit many of the States throughout

## Look at these 'Big Dawgs'

If you want to know who leads the nation in membership efforts this year, you'll have to look to foreign shores. Since last summer, the frontrunner in recruitment and retention has been the **Detachment of France**. France is made up of 32 Squadrons spread out across much of Europe. By mid-March, France had 227 members, 132% of its goal. Detachment Adjutant Bill West crowed in a recent newsletter, "The Big Dawgs are here to stay!" With a few months remaining in the membership year, France has already set a new all-time high membership record.

Half way around the world from France is the Detachment running in third place. **Hawaii** has 95 members, or 96% of its goal. The leading continental Detachments include: **Wyoming (97%), Vermont (93%), Georgia (92%), Minnesota (91%), Tennessee (91%), Alabama (90%), Delaware (90%), Alabama (90%), Arizona (89%), Louisiana (88%), Florida (88%).**

the country and I will be speaking to and encouraging our membership to support this worthy cause.

Donations can be monetary or non-monetary. Items such as clothing, food and toiletries can also help offset the cost of operating the Veterans Center. However, monetary donations may be more helpful to the Centers, as these funds can be specifically directed to the needs of the veterans in each location.

Fundraising will be done by local Squadrons, the Detachment as a whole, or on an individual member basis. Fish fries, ham suppers, spaghetti dinners, etc. may accomplish this. The type of fundraiser is up to those doing the actual fundraising. I would encourage anyone who has a function to contact the Director of the Veterans Center closest to you for help in the function.

All cash donations can be sent to the National Headquarters of The Salvation Army and will be held in a special

reserve account for the Veterans Centers. Each donor will be notified of the receipt of his or her donation. When all donations are received, they will be tabulated and a national total will be given. However, if someone wishes to make a donation to a local Center and not to the National Headquarters, this can also be done. The donation will be receipted and added to the National total. Each individual Veterans Center will send a report to the National Headquarters as to all donations received.

All non-monetary donations must be made directly to the local Salvation Army Veteran Center.

All cash donations sent to the National Headquarters of The Salvation Army will be sent back to the local Veterans Center at the end of the project. This will enable all donations to be personalized to each location.

The Salvation Army is divided into four Territories- CENTRAL, EASTERN, SOUTHERN, and WESTERN. There are 31 Veterans Centers within these territories. Each center provides a variety of services to our veterans. I hope you will join with me in supporting this worthy project. Lets show our "Devotion to Mutual Helpfulness" by helping our veterans in all of these locations.

## Mid-year member registers

Squadron Adjutants can expect to receive this year's mid-year membership registers soon. The reports were printed by National Headquarters at the end of February. They reflect all new information which has been received since last June. The reports are processed to assist Squadron Adjutants in accountability and help with renewals. The large format computer page reports contain lists of every Squadron member's address, date of birth, continuous years and last year paid. The reports have been mailed to Legion Department HQs around the country. Detachments should help distribute the reports to Squadrons in their state.

### WHERE TO SEND DONATIONS

The Salvation Army  
National Headquarters  
Community Relations/Devel Dept  
615 Slaters Lane  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1112

Make checks payable: The Salvation Army

## Flag amendment given new push

All 50 states are now on record calling upon the Congress of the United States to pass an amendment to the Constitution banning the physical desecration of the flag.

On January 10<sup>th</sup> Vermont became the 50<sup>th</sup> state to formally call upon Congress, by resolution, to adopt the flag amendment and send it to the states for ratification.

Since 1994, 142 organizations - including the Sons of The American Legion - have taken part in the legislative fight for flag protection.

"With the level of patriotism what it is today, it is inconceivable to me that the Senate will continue to thwart the will of the people," says Major General Patrick H. Brady, Chairman of the Board of the Citizens Flag Alliance. "There are few issues today that enjoy the degree of support of the flag amendment. There is no other issue on Capitol Hill that has the endorsement of 80 percent of the American people, an overwhelming majority in both the U.S. House and Senate, and 100 percent of the state legislatures."

The flag amendment, **SJ Res. 7**, is being held at the Senate desk, which means majority leader Tom Daschle, D-SD, can choose to move it straight to the floor for debate and a vote at any time. Daschle is also one of 36 Senators currently on record as opposed to the flag amendment. The measure needs 67 votes for adoption by the Senate.

For more information, go to the the Citizens Flag Alliance Home Page at [www.cfa-org](http://www.cfa-org).

## Blue Star tradition revived

The American Legion has reintroduced the tradition of hanging a Blue Star banner in the windows of families who have relatives serving in the armed forces.

"A Blue Star Service Banner displayed in the window of a home is a tradition in America," says American Legion National Commander Ric Santos. "The Banner lets others know that someone in this home is serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. As citizens steel themselves for the long and difficult 'War on Terrorism,' the Blue Star Service Banner tradition reminds us all that this new war touches every neighborhood in our land."

The tradition of hanging Blue Stars was observed during World Wars I and II, but not embraced during Korea, Vietnam or successive conflicts.

Blue Star Service Banners are displayed by families who have a loved one serving in the armed forces, including activated members of the National Guard and Reserves, whether the family member is a son, daughter, brother, sister, wife, husband, cousin, grandchild, etc. The banner displayed in the front window of a home, shows a family's pride in their loved one serving in the military, and reminds others that preserving America's freedom demands much.

The blue star represents one family member serving in

*Continued on Page 8*

## Emblem gets a facelift

The official S.A.L. emblem has been revised. Most Sons would have to do some serious study with a magnifying glass to notice the difference, but the new look carries with it several improvements.

The new emblem was designed by King Doxsee, a graphic artist recently hired by The American Legion National Headquarters.



The Legion and Auxiliary emblems have also been updated.

All of the symbolism of the Sons emblem has been preserved in the new design, yet the overall look is somewhat simpler. The new emblem is available in several electronic file versions which allows it to be easily used in a transferred electronically. The

different file types include .tif, .jpg, and .pdf. The emblem is available in black and white, color and gray scale. The various file types can be downloaded from the Sons Home Page on the Web, [www.sal.legion.org](http://www.sal.legion.org). The new emblem will soon adorn apparel and items sold through National Emblem Sales.

## Help us find these S.A.L. members

by Michael Pipher  
Editor, National Update

Hardly a week goes by that I don't receive a photo and a letter asking if this or that baby is the youngest member of the S.A.L. Well, it's kind of like a snapshot; yes, Junior may have been the youngest Son in the land at the moment that picture was taken, but a great many newborns find themselves signed up almost before they get slapped on the bottom.

Nevertheless, I've often wondered just who are some of our more distinctive Sons. If I can nail it down, I'll be happy to share that information. So let's turn it over to our readers out there. Do you know anyone who might fit one or more of the following descriptions?

- **Who is the oldest living member of the Sons?**
- **Who holds the most continuous years of membership in the Sons?**
- **What family has the most brothers who are all members of the Sons?**

To nominate someone you know, drop me a line (and a picture!) of the individuals before the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline and I'll report the findings in our next edition of the **National Update**.

## Take a quick, proud look around the world of Sons

Members of **Phoenix, AZ Squadron 41** are visible in their local schools. Not only do they provide money for student scholarships, but they co-sponsored a bicycle rodeo in the fall. Youngsters were treated to mechanical repairs, bike safety tips and 100 free helmets.

More than 450 kids got up early in order to be treated to breakfast, a Christmas toy and a photo with Santa courtesy of **LaBelle, FL Squadron 130** and some local Boy Scouts. Like so many Sons' activities, this one is an annual event. *(right)*



### Detachment of Michigan Zone 2 Commander Robert Farrell

hits the nail right on the head when he says, "We have no problem finding a cause or donating time or raising fund. But we do have a problem letting others know who we are and what we do." He goes on to offer a good challenge, "In our season of giving, remember to give to ourselves by letting others know what we are doing. Take a picture, write an article, talk to anyone who will listen. Let them know who and what are the Sons of The American Legion. If we won't who will?"



Santa often wears a french blue cap. Down in the Lone Star State, members of **Lake Whitney, TX Squadron 522** are the elves who conduct an annual toy drive. *(right)*



**Indiana's Fourth District** is well known for its exhaustive athletic competitions, such as their annual washer tournament (Why are they playing 'Hillbilly Horseshoes' on the north side of the river...?) and their indoor Putt-Putt golf outing. But you can't argue with the money they raise and the projects they sponsor as a result. Here's a look at some things financed in just one part of the District:

**Fort Wayne, IN Squadron 241** chipped in \$300 to help a handicapped youngster, \$500 for a Spina Bifida/Special Child fund raiser and \$550 for some local Boy Scout Troops. The District is also putting together a plan to purchase a cargo trailer to help haul items around the District and to the Department Conferences.



This local "Shop with a Cop Program" now gets a \$500 boost from **Fort Wayne, IN Squadron 47**. Members fry up a lot of fish each month to raise money for this worthwhile project, as well as the local Bicycle Safety Helmet Program. *(above)*

The Wayne County Vietnam Memorial needed some cleaning, so members of **Hagerstown, IN Squadron 333** threw a fish fry to help raise several hundred dollars. Sons also worked in conjunction with other Legion Family members to hold their annual benefit jamsession and dance for the Knightstown Children's Home, which is supported heavily by Legion Family money. More than \$3,000 was raised by auctioning hams and turkeys.

Yet another fish fry helped kids out in the southwest corner of the U.S. This one was run by **Camp Verde, AZ Squadron 93** and the benefactor was the Marshal's Toy ride.

**The Detachment of New Jersey** is always on the lookout for good citizenship and is ready to reward it when it's found. That's why the Detachment sponsors a project called "New Jersey's Young Citizen." A beautiful eagle statue and a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond are given to a boy or girl of high

school age who has worked in his/her community, volunteered time or done something extraordinary to help others. Interestingly, the recipient cannot be a member of The American Legion Family.



The guys in New Jersey know that lending a helping hand just comes naturally to those of us touched by the American Legion spirit.

**The National American Legion Press Association (NALPA)** is dedicated to promoting the work of The Legion Family by helping its members do a better job of communicating. They have taken that idea to heart down in Georgia where that **Department's Press Association (GALPA)** is putting

together a program to encourage writing and communicating among middle school students. Sons who assist in the publishing of printed or electronic newsletters are eligible to become members of the NALPA. For more information, visit the NALPA Home Page on the Web at [www.nalpa.legion.org](http://www.nalpa.legion.org).

Every fourth grader in the State of Kansas will be provided a "Don't Do Drugs - Make it Your Rule" ruler/bookmarker if the **Detachment of Kansas Commander Wes Wills** has his way. Another part of his annual project is to supply every fourth grade classroom with a Pledge of Allegiance poster and hand out more than 20,000 Flag Etiquette brochures.

They're singing a new tune these days at The American Legion's Department of Georgia Veterans Hospital because members of **Augusta, GA Squadron 178** has given them a new electric piano. They raised money for the piano by throwing a Super Bowl party. *(left)*



Summertime is rapidly approaching and many Sons participate in annual campouts. **Indiana's 7th District** conducts its annual officer induction ceremonies at its weekend campout each May. There are also organized games and activities with trophies for kids

and adults. Here, youngsters get a lesson in gun safety at the same time they compete for turkey shoot prizes. Meanwhile, you wouldn't be in Indiana if somebody doesn't put together a game of hoops, the state's only official religion. *(left and below)*



Sons are always busy down in the **Detachment of Louisiana.**

The Child Welfare Foundation has benefitted because **Marrero, LA Squadron 222** donated \$2,000 generated from its golf and fishing tournaments. Another several hundred dollars came from projects run by Squadrons at **Lockport 83, Chauvin 380 and Raceland 349**. How do you say, "Let da good times roll!?"

*(left)* Grandpa Frecker (that's Mike, a Legionnaire) makes sure all of his grandsons are signed up as members of **Crooksville, OH Squadron 222**. That same Squadron had a chance to show its heart this year for a fellow member whose home burned down. A benefit dance/auction raised over \$2,000. Everyone stood and sang the last song of the night together, "That's What Friends Are For."

If you have story ideas or pictures to contribute, send them to:

**National Update newsletter**  
c/o Mike Pipher, Editor  
612 S. State Road 446 #35-C  
Bloomington, IN 47401

or send via e-mail to: [mpipher@indiana.edu](mailto:mpipher@indiana.edu)

## Life goes on, Sons work on the quality of lives

**Editor's Note:** In the aftermath of the September 11 atrocities, Sons all over the country sprang into action and raised untold amounts of money to assist in relief efforts and bolster Americanism. We detailed many of those activities in our last newsletter, but reports keep coming in. Here are more stories of Sons related to 9-11.

Few Squadrons were closer to Ground Zero than **Staten Island, NY Squadron 1544**. Although they might have plenty of reason to take time off to grieve, Squadron Finance Officer John Mattera reports they are carrying on as usual in their community. For them, 'usual' means raising \$18,000 for the Seton Foundation to help mentally challenged individuals, handing out 70 turkeys and trimming to needy people at Thanksgiving, hosting a Christmas party for children complete with Santa and goodies, and hosting a Toys for Children Drive which benefits needy kids and children in nearby hospitals. The Squadron also hosts an annual bus trip to a West Point football game (complete with tailgate party and some spectacular scenery). What the 50 Sons did not expect was to meet up with a friend now attending the Academy, who brought along additional cadets and the team mascot to visit with them. Is that the mascot on the right? (above)

Not all of the nation's servicemen and women have been mobilized to fight overseas. Some are performing important duties right here at home. A good example can be found in west-central Indiana. More than 250 personnel have been assigned to the Army's Newport Depot Program and are now guarding stockpiles of deadly VX nerve gas. They will have to be there until 2006, when the gas is scheduled to be destroyed. All of those men and women are spending time away from home and their own families and we are the beneficiaries of their discomfort. That's why Sons and other members of The American Legion Family from **Cayuga, IN Post 263** and other Posts from **Indiana's 6th District** have taken it upon themselves to provide some comfort to these troops by raising



money and purchasing items to be used in the Depot's recreation room. A new TV, VCR, card games, snacks, phone cards and personal cleaning items are all being purchased through Legion Family donations. It's an ongoing project and a great way to show our support for the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Seventh District, NY Sons Commander Jerry Ketchum** and **Ontario County Sons Commander Alan Gartley** were both on hand to meet and greet New York Governor George Pataki at the dedication of the nation's first monument to the memory of victims of September 11. The monument was placed on the Trail of Remembrance at the **Canandaigua, NY American Legion Post 256**.

**Detachment of Nebraska Commander Joe Seipel** couldn't help thinking about the tragedies of September 11 while he was attending Veterans Day ceremonies that included the dedication of a new Veterans' Memorial Brick Wall and Landscaping at Ohio, NE.

Shortly after the horrible events of 9-11, **American Legion National Commander Ric Santos** established a memorial scholarship to provide college scholarships for the children of U.S. Armed Forces personnel who were killed that day.

Many Squadrons have contributed to the fund. What started out as a \$300 donation to the fund from **Concordia, KS Squadron 76** quickly grew to \$1,000 when matching dollars were added by the Legion Post and the owner of a local gas station.

In the state that suffered the horror of Ground Zero, Sons from **Katonah, NY Squadron 1575** held a dinner/dance with a patriotic theme to raise money for the Firemen's Widows and Children's Fund in NYC. With assistance from members of **Mt. Kisco, NY Squadron 136**, the evening drew more

than 200 local folks and raised over \$4,000. (left)

Promote your Home Page on the Web  
[www.sal.legion.org](http://www.sal.legion.org)

## New format is reason enough to attend NLIC

by Brian O'Hearne  
National Adjutant

There are some new things surrounding the National Leadership and Information Conferences which should lure more Sons into attendance. For starters, the name itself has changed to reflect the meeting's purpose. It used to be called the NIC, or National Information Conference. The mission of the NLIC is to "train the trainer," to inform, educate, train, motivate and share organizational objectives of our programs with current and future leaders of the Sons, as well as with other members of The Legion Family.

On the Friday night of each NLIC, both the Sons and Auxiliary will have a role to play in the opening program. The S.A.L. will have a ten minute slot in which to present information to all of The Legion Family members in attendance. We will have our S.A.L. breakout session on Saturday afternoon.

Sons young and old are encouraged to attend the NLIC in their region. Not only will they have a chance to learn about Legion programs, but they will have an opportunity to share with Legionnaires and Auxiliary members many of the good things Sons are doing to contribute.

Most NLIC's in 2002 have already taken place in a variety

## New Squadrons in 2001

Do you know how many S.A.L. Squadrons there are? Do you know how many new Squadrons were chartered last year?

There are now 5,221 S.A.L. Squadrons worldwide. Most are located in the continental U.S. but some are located overseas.

During the year 2001, a total of 147 new Squadrons were chartered. The **Detachment of Pennsylvania** accounted for 27 of those new Squadrons last year, nearly one out of every five new Squadrons chartered.

The **Detachment of Illinois** brought 15 new Squadrons into existence. The **Detachment of Georgia** accounted for eight new Squadrons. **California** had seven. The **Detachments of New York, Michigan, Minnesota and Iowa** each chartered six new Squadrons. **Indiana and Ohio** each added five. In all, 35 Detachments chartered at least one new Squadron last year, including the **Detachment of France** which opened a new Squadron in Giessen, Germany.

## Record Detachment levels

Continued from Page 1

**Iowa (14.3%), Georgia (13.3%), Nevada (12.2%), Utah (11%), Massachusetts (10.6%), Oregon (10%), Alabama (9.7%), Texas (9.6%), Pennsylvania (8.5%), California (8.4%), Florida (8%), Connecticut (7.6%), Oklahoma (7.5%), Vermont (7.3%) and New York (106.9%) and Louisiana (106.6%).**

of regions this spring, but there are a few more yet to come. Now is the time to make plans to attend:

Region 2 - Cherry Hill, NJ (April 19-21) - Hilton Cherry Hill (856) 665-6666

Region 4 - Dallas, TX (September 20-22) - Doubletree Lincoln Centre (972) 934-8400

Region 8 - Boise, ID (September 20-22) - Doubletree Hotel Boise Downtown (208) 344-7691

Many members like to carry pre-printed membership cards. But in order to have those cards printed and sent out to Detachments in time for Close of Books, there has to be a cutoff date enforced. That date is May 8<sup>th</sup>. Membership cards will be printed with members' names only if their dues and paperwork is received at National Headquarters by May 8<sup>th</sup>. That means individuals must pay their dues in time for Squadrons and Detachments to process them and get them in to the National Headquarters by May 8<sup>th</sup>.

It's never too early or too late to talk about filling out report forms. We are nearing the end of another reporting year and it's important to tabulate and tell us about all of the wonderful things your Squadron, District and Detachment have been doing for veterans, children and communities all year long. If you need report forms, contact your Detachment Headquarters. Also, almost all report forms used by the S.A.L. can be downloaded from our Home Page on the Web: [www.sal.legion.org/forms.htm](http://www.sal.legion.org/forms.htm)

Finally, here are a handful of dates/activities you might want to add to your calendar:

May 4-5 - Spring N.E.C. Meeting - Indianapolis, IN

May 8 - 100% Membership Target

July 23 - 105% Membership Target

August 23-25 - 31<sup>st</sup> National Convention - Charlotte, NC

October 5-6 - Fall N.E.C. Meeting - Indianapolis, IN

### Historical Member Renewal Rates

1993 - 77% 1996 - 84% 1999 - 87%

1994 - 84% 1997 - 85% 2000 - 86%

1995 - 84% 1998 - 85% 2001 - 87%

### Historical Membership Increases

1985 8% 1991 9% 1997 6%

1986 11% 1992 9% 1998 5%

1987 7% 1993 9% 1999 6%

1988 10% 1994 7% 2000 5%

1989 11% 1995 5% 2001 5%

1990 14% 1996 5%