

Udie / from Page 1

American Legion, he spent 38 years as National Executive Committeeman from Kansas.

Sons will forever be indebted to "Udie" because of what transpired while he was running the Child Welfare Foundation. In 1985, the Detachment of Kansas presented the CWF with a check for \$1,500.

"The donation and its size shocked Udie," remembers Kansas Legion Department Adjutant and dual member Charles Yunker. "He said that, to the best of his knowledge, it was the first ever S.A.L. contribution to the CWF. He quickly realized and appreciated the potential of the S.A.L., not only in contributions to the Child Welfare Foundation, but to The American Legion Family as a whole. During many of our discussions over the

years, Udie and I agreed the Sons grew and matured both internally and externally within The Legion Family thanks in large part to its participation in the CWF. Our involvement in the CWF has opened many Legion doors for the S.A.L., gained us new respect within the Family, and has helped change many people's opinion of the Sons."

Yunker also recalls, "Two decades ago many viewed the S.A.L. as a 'bunch of kids.' Udie recognized the folly of that view and became one of our staunchest supporters and promoters."

It wasn't long after the Kansas donation in 1985 that the S.A.L. began its longstanding tradition of contributing more money to the Child Welfare Foundation than the rest of the Family, a fact "Udie" never hesitated to point out to The Legion and others.

The Sons of The American Legion

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www.sal.legion.org

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Music City gathering Another record year for CWF

Sons from around the country and around the world will gather in Nashville, TN later this month for the

33rd National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion. National Commander Neal Warnken will gavel the three-day convention to order at 6:00pm

on Friday, August 27th in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel Governor's Ballrooms A, B & E.

The National Convention is the governing body of the S.A.L. In addition to considering resolutions and By-Laws changes that set policy for the Sons, delegates to the convention will elect new national officers, including a new National Commander, five National Vice Commanders and the National Chaplain. There will also be a steady stream of distinguished guests and special speakers at the podium.

Delegate registration will start on Thursday afternoon, August 26th, in the S.A.L. National Convention office located in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel's Ryman Hall C-2, Lower Level. Each Detachment is responsible for registering all of its delegates, alternates and guests. Individuals may not register themselves as delegates or alternates. The registration fee for delegates, alternates and guests is \$15. Official convention badges will be required for entry to the Sons' and

The Legion's convention floors as well as into the National Emblem Sales exhibit hall.



There is no official dress code for most delegates, although a coat and tie is recommended, especially when receiving an award on stage. Delegates are

discouraged from wearing shorts,

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Sons bid farewell to a good friend

Sons lost a good friend a few weeks ago with the passing of U.S. "Udie" Grant. He was born on July 4, 1923 and lived much of his life in a small town in Kansas, very much in the heart of the nation. His service in the U.S. Navy during World War II was the key to his love of country and his lifelong devotion to veterans' issues. He was a commissioner on the Kansas



Commission on Veterans Affairs, and as a Life Member of The

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Leaders of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation have a great deal to celebrate this year. Not only is the organization celebrating its golden anniversary, but record amounts of money were raised in the just-completed fiscal year.

Sons have played a key role in the CWF's successes again this year. Just under \$314,000 was raised by members of the S.A.L. before the administrative year ended on May 31. That's the most money ever raised in a year by Sons and the most money raised this year by any single branch of The American Legion Family. The \$314,000 was also a 15% increase over last year's S.A.L. contributions total.

S.A.L. National CWF Chairman Harold Trombley told Sons in a year-end memo, "Your untiring efforts and fundraising is superb. Through your efforts we will again provide for grants through The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation."

The Detachment that raised the most money for Child Welfare this year was Ohio, with contributions totaling nearly \$53,000. Other major Detachment contributors included Pennsylvania - \$29,000, Indiana - \$25,000 and a very pleasant surprise from

the Detachment of Alabama of more than \$22,000. Alabama

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Putting together a Squadron Membership Team

by Neal Warnken
National Commander

Membership is a team effort. It's in that spirit of teamwork that I want you and your squadron to consider creating a new Squadron Membership Team.

This local Membership Team would be a little different than committees that seek out new members. It would be made up of just two or three highly motivated squadron members whose only job is to focus exclusively on membership renewals. They would not be expected to sign up new members, just track down those who are not yet renewed and make sure they remain members of the Sons.

More than 30,000 members from last year did not renew with a 2004 card. Nobody ever said it's easy to maintain a 100% renewal rate. Some members pass away, move away or transfer to other squadrons. But



National Commander Warnken and wife, Patti, were given an escorted tour of enlisted men's quarters for the U.S. Army 3rd Infantry Regiment. Members of "The Old Guard" are best known for their oversight of the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery.

every squadron should strive to attain at least a 90% rate.

Team members should be ready to organize postcard campaigns, make phone calls, or even knock on doors to contact non-renewed members. Earlier this year, **Bloomington, IN Squadron 18** sent postcards to

160 former members and invited them to renew. The response was huge: 90 reinstated Sons.

Find a few highly motivated squadron members, create a Squadron Membership Team and turn them loose. The goal: do as much as possible to reach a 90% renewal rate.

Membership's new king of the hill

Don't look now but there's a new King of the Hill when it comes to membership inside the Sons of The American Legion. Following several years of chasing and runner-up status, Pennsylvania has dethroned Indiana as "The World's Largest Detachment." As of early July, Pennsylvania boasted 35,699 members (105% of their goal), compared to Indiana's 34,758 (100%). Two important factors have led to Pennsylvania's success in membership, the most important one involves expanding the number of squadrons in Pennsylvania. They have led the nation, by far, in the number of new squadrons chartered in recent years. Last year, more than 25 new squadrons were chartered in Pennsylvania. So far this year, Sons in that state have added another 14.

Another key element for the Keystone State has been member retention. Pennsylvania's member renewal rate has consistently been higher than the national average. So far this year, 86% of last year's Pennsylvania Sons have renewed their memberships.

Other Detachment doing well with renewals include: Nebraska - 89%, Maryland - 89%, Wisconsin - 88%, Delaware - 88%, Idaho - 88%, New Hampshire - 88%, Michigan - 88%, Kansas - 87% and Virginia - 87%. The national renewal average is 83%.

Although its grip on the top of the hill has been loosened, the Detachment of Indiana still managed to set a new all-time high in membership this year. So far, nearly half of all Detachments in the country

have attained a new all-time high in membership. Detachments with high percentages include South Dakota (418 - 135%), Delaware (1,507 - 114%), Arkansas (327 - 111%), Idaho (629 - 110%), California (6,768 - 108%), District of Columbia (89 - 107%), Arizona (4,105 - 107%), Virginia (3,515 - 105%), Wisconsin (2,561 - 104%), Florida (9,650 - 103%), Wyoming (937 - 103%), Michigan (16,826 - 102%) and Kansas (4,834 - 102%), the home of National Commander Neal Warnken.

New 2005 membership cards are now in the hands of all Detachments and a new membership year is underway. Nevertheless, 2004 membership will remain open for additional renewals until the end of December.

Convention / from Page 1

tank tops and flip-flops on the convention floor.

National Executive Committee members will conduct a pre-convention meeting at 3:00pm in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel Governor's Ballroom A, B & E. Convention Committee meetings will be held at 4:00pm on Friday, August 27th, also in the Governor's Ballrooms. On Saturday, August 28th, the convention will reconvene at 9:00am. Area caucuses will be held following Saturday's recess. Election of officers will take place Sunday, August 29th. The convention will convene from 8:30am until the 11:00am Joint Memorial

Service, then reconvene at 12:30pm. Following the close of the National Convention, a post-convention N.E.C. meeting will be conducted in the convention hall. The American Legion National Convention Parade will step off at 4:00pm.

Any resolutions a Detachment wishes to have considered at the National Convention must be in the hands of the National Adjutant no later than July 28th.

Nashville is the capitol of the great State of Tennessee, a city rich with history and entertainment. Sons and their families won't have to look very hard to find attractions, sights and sounds.

One event that is beginning to become a tradition is a Saturday evening banquet for Sons and their guests. **Nashville, TN Squadron 82** will host this year's "Music City Banquet" at the Madison Elks Lodge located at 208 Williams Avenue in Madison, TN (just six miles from the convention center). Reservations required by August 15th and limited to the first 150. The cost of \$25 per

person includes dinner, dessert, entertainment and a drink. Contact Joel Mattern at marjd754@aol.com.

Sons who arrive in Nashville early are also invited to play in a Friday morning golf scramble at the Two Rivers Golf Course. A \$50 entry fee covers course fees, refreshments and luncheon. Profits benefit CWF. Entry



This bronze Hank Williams will forever welcome visitors to the Ryman Auditorium

deadline is August 13th. Contact Ed Wallace at (615) 228-5133. Additional information is available at www.sal.legion.org.

This year's National Color Guard Contest will be held on Saturday morning, August 28th at 7:00am in the Delta Ballroom, level 2, of the Gaylord Opryland Hotel.

Nashville is considered Mecca by country music fans. Those who love pickin' and grinnin' won't have far to look because the world famous Grand Ole Opry House is located next door to the convention. Also nearby is Valley Park amusement park. Downtown Nashville is where one will find the Ryman Auditorium, legendary site of the Grand Ole Opry. The Country Music Hall of Fame is just down the street. Downtown Nashville is also famous for its nightlife, offering such notables as the Wildhorse Saloon, Hard Rock Café, a handful of brewpubs, the famously naughty Printer's Alley

and a lot more. Shoppers will have no trouble spending hours in The Arcade, a European style indoor shopping area in the heart of downtown. Those with time on their hands might enjoy The Nashville Toy Museum, the Nashville Zoo or The Parthenon. Those willing to travel out of town will find The Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson, Nashville Shores water park, or even Elvis Presley's Graceland in Memphis. Much more information is available from the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau Web site found at www.nashvillecvb.com/.

Oratorical / from Page 3

School Oratorical Contest. The purpose of the contest is to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States on the part of high school students. Other objectives of the contest include development of leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and the preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Sons can help their Legion post Oratorical Chairman contact schools and home-schooled students to effectively promote the contest. It takes time for students to write their speeches and prepare themselves for competition. The National Finals of the Oratorical contest will take place in April of 2005, but qualifying rounds that lead up to state finals and the National Finals will begin yet this fall.

Since it was started in 1938, The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest has put millions of dollars into the pockets of deserving students and built thousands of better citizens.

Squadron News

Nobody could ever accuse Sons of being slackers. There was an extra day during the month of February this year, so members of **Wauconda, IL Squadron 911** used the extra time to host a bingo party for one ward at the North Chicago VA Medical Center. All told, 38 patients played for two hours and pocketed \$300 in canteen books. Our guys even provided home-made cookies and fresh fruit punch. **(Below)**



You gotta admit, this is certainly one way of increasing membership. That's **Past Honorary National Junior President Katie Jenkins Glorioso** holding her newborn son, Joseph Dickie Glorioso. "J.D." is the youngest member of **Covington, LA Squadron 16**. Oh, the guy on the left is just Detachment Adjutant and Squadron 16 Commander Robert DeDual, who's happy to see the increase in membership. **(Below)**



Here are two of the best from West, by God, Virginia. **David Riley** was presented the S.A.L. Member of the Year award at the Detachment's Mid-Winter Conference. David was chosen from over 3,000 members because of a very long list of Legion, school and community activities to which he's contributed time and effort. The Detachment also presented **Kenneth Loy** with the Ralph Moore, Sr. Advisor of the Year award for his untiring efforts assisting the Sons and his work organizing **New Martinsville, WV Squadron 28**.

First the bad news: Ohio has lost a member. The good news: West Virginia has not only gained a member, but also a whole new squadron. Past National Historian and Past National Sergeant at Arms Roy Turner moved across the river and helped convince **Braxton County, WV Post 33** it needed an S.A.L. squadron.

If you find yourself in northern Minnesota on the first Saturday of the month (between September and May), be sure to stop in and have dinner with the guys in **Virginia, MN Squadron 239**. Money they've raised with the dinners has supported some terrific community projects as well as the local veterans' home and various Legion projects.



Sons from **Spotswood, NJ Squadron 253** hosted a veterans' appreciation luncheon. Of the 100 who attended, some came from the Menlo Park VA Home, reservists from nearby U.S. Army and Coast Guard stations, local Legion and VFW members and some Legion Department officers who made a presentation of World War II surrender papers. **(Above)**

Christmas in July? Nope, just images from last yule when Sons from **Fort Myers Beach, FL Squadron 274** held a Christmas party for the kids. That's the Squadron Commander Jimmy Baker and his wife in the background. Santa-on-his-Harley was played by Post 274 Service Officer Gary Hettrick. **(Below)**

It's a familiar story; a once-thriving squadron falls into disrepair and fades into the background. Peter Trimarco was Commander of **Brooklyn, NY Squadron 1060** back in 1968 when that post was the largest in Kings County. It's now 35 years later and Peter's once again the Commander of this 75 member squadron. They've gone on baseball outings, run a BBQ, sponsored a Boy Scout Troop and a put on a dance. Sounds like their on the right track.



Design contest for 75th logo



Are you a member of the Sons with a flair for artwork or design? If so, here's an opportunity to win a trip to the S.A.L.'s 2007 National Convention in Reno, NV. That's the year the S.A.L. celebrates its 75th anniversary. To help commemorate the celebration, the S.A.L.'s 75th Anniversary Committee has authorized a design contest to produce a special logo. Here are the rules:

- **This contest is open to all members of the Sons of The American Legion (except National officers, Anniversary Committee members and National HQ staff)**
- **The logo shall include, but not be limited to, the Sons of The American Legion emblem**
- **The logo shall include, but not be limited to, an expression of a diamond shape**
- **The logo shall include, but not be limited to the numerical "75" designation**
- **Submissions must be sent to:**
75th Anniversary Logo Contest
ATTN: S.A.L. National Liaison
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
- **Submissions must be received at the National Headquarters by April 1, 2005**
- **The winning entry will be selected by the S.A.L.'s 75th Anniversary Committee**
- **The S.A.L.'s 75th Anniversary Committee reserves the right to alter final prep work on the winning logo**
- **The creator of the winning logo shall receive one (1) round trip airline ticket and two (2) nights lodging at the National Convention to be held in Reno, NV in August 2007.**

In the days following 9-11, there was a rush to display flags just about everywhere. Since then, many of those once-proud flags have been allowed to fall into disrepair, or worse, fall into the mud. Mike Morris lives on New York's Long Island but keeps his membership in **Greenwood, IN Squadron 253**. He has been collecting piles of flags **(Right)** that he finds along the roadside and he recently disposed of them at a VFW flag retirement ceremony.



Make an IMPACT on America

No organization should have a more manifest interest in this year's elections than the Sons of The American Legion. We hold membership in this organization because our forefathers and mothers fought, and in some cases even died, to preserve democracy. It is our legacy to pass along in word and deed our right to elect those who serve at all levels of government. Regardless of a member's personal politics, Sons should do all they can to promote participation in the 2004 election process.

The American Legion has undertaken a program called "Impact 2004: Military & Veterans Vote Campaign." Noting that just a few hundred votes have frequently determined the outcome of many elections, Legion Family members are encouraged to mobilize and help elect those who would support programs important to members of the military and veterans.

A newly printed tri-fold pamphlet points out, "Congress is almost evenly divided between the two major political parties. Your vote and the votes of your fellow veterans and military personnel will determine the future of VA health care, the disabled veterans tax, national defense, homeland security, the flag protection amendment and many other issues of vital importance."

The goals of "Impact 2004" include:

- To emphasize the importance of voting and encourage all military personnel, veterans and their families to vote either at the polls in November or by absentee ballot
- To educate veterans and those serving now to ask the right questions of their candidates about issues of direct concern to them, and cast informed, responsible ballots in the November general election
- To encourage American Legion posts to actively participate in the 2004 general election as a community clearinghouse for pre-election forums or debates and to drive voter turnout
- To direct military personnel to the federal registration site (ssl.capwiz.com/congressorg/e4/nvra) so they can register in time for the November election
- To influence candidates to understand and commit themselves to the interests of veterans and military personnel between now and the election

Since September 11, 2001, America has been at war against a ruthless and determined enemy. The American Legion is nonpartisan and its constitution prohibits the organization from endorsing political candidates. There is no prohibition, however, from organizing events where the various candidates can present their views.

Go on line for more information at www.impact04.legion.org.



Join the Sons and start saving \$\$

There is a selling tool Sons are neglecting to fully utilize when promoting membership in our organization. Benefits. Tangible benefits.

As members of The American Legion Family, Sons are entitled to virtually all of the same discounts available to any member of our parent organization. The list is pretty impressive and includes such things as: discount prescriptions, health products, eyewear, hotels/condos, moving discounts, home/business security, wireless services, roadside assistance, computer discounts, cruise discounts and discounts on internet services. The full list is available on line at www.legion.org/benefits.

It's easy for a member of the S.A.L. to save far more than the cost of his annual membership simply by taking advantage of discounts offered to Legion Family members.

One new opportunity for savings requires an awful lot of fun. Sons can take advantage of discounts offered by **Royal Caribbean** cruise lines, with over 150 ports of call around the world. Other new discount programs available to Sons and their families:

Coach-Net - services include all facets of emergency roadside assistance for autos and RV's throughout the U.S. and Canada. Brinks Home Security - a trusted name in the security industry for over 143 years

Cole Managed Vision - eye exams and eyewear available at such locations as: Sears Optical, Pearle Vision, Target Optical, JCPenney Optical and independent doctors of optometry.

Importance of a good address

by Brian O'Hearne
National Adjutant

One of the biggest problems we face today in the Sons of The American Legion is keeping the current and correct mailing addresses of our members. I'm not being redundant in saying that. Not only do we need to have updated addresses on file, but those addresses need to be accurate. A misspelled street name or a transposed zip code number can make all the difference in whether or not a member receives his newsletter (mailed three times each year - March, July and November) and other important mail from headquarters. If you know someone who is not receiving his *National Update* newsletter, the first thing to be done is double-check his mailing address with the squadron adjutant.

We need your help convincing all members to submit address changes when they occur. All squadron

Warning issued Oratorical finals over fundraiser not so far away

Squadrons around the country do such a fine job of contributing to veterans' programs, it is sometimes necessary for National Headquarters to issue an alert when some fundraising organizations overstep their boundaries.

John Querfeld, Director of Internal Affairs for The Legion has issued an alert about a group calling itself "American Veterans Coalition" that is claiming to help homeless veterans. The group, apparently based in Gig Harbor, WA, has been calling homes and requesting credit card donations. It is not an official VA-recognized service organization.

adjutants and membership chairmen should carefully note the addresses of new members and check the addresses of renewed members against the computer-printed membership register supplied to all squadrons. Many squadron adjutants require renewing members to fill out a new membership application each year in an effort to collect their most up to date information.

Members can change their address on line by going to our National Web Home Page and following the appropriate links to membership. Another way to change a person's address is to have your squadron adjutant fill out and send in a Member Data Form. It's even possible to change your address by sending a postcard to the National Headquarters (P.O. Box 1055 Indianapolis, IN 46206), although it's best to notify the squadron adjutant so his and the Detachment's records can be kept updated.

Help us keep addresses current and up to date!

The dog days of summer make it far too easy to sit back in an air conditioned atmosphere and wait for cooler autumn breezes. Now is actually a good time to become active and get involved in planning events for the next several months. The new school term, autumn festivals, Halloween and Thanksgiving aren't that far away. Even the Christmas season is closer than you think.

Now is the time to begin laying groundwork for this year's American Legion National High

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CWF/ from Page 1

contributions were an astounding 1,140% of their goal for the year and equaled an average contribution of \$11.40 per Detachment member. Other Detachments that registered high average contributions included Colorado - \$4.94, Vermont - \$4.65, New York - \$4.11 and Wyoming - \$3.94. Nationally, S.A.L. giving amounted to an average contribution of \$1.12 per member of the Sons.

Looking ahead, Trombley notes, "We have not only achieved an 'All-Time High' in donations, but we are also closing in on the \$3 million mark since we began raising funds for this vital program."

Sons contribute \$2.4M to CWF

1988	\$ 39,949
1989	\$ 51,470
1990	\$ 50,342
1991	\$ 37,459
1992	\$ 50,949
1993	\$ 67,105
1994	\$ 78,363
1995	\$ 87,712
1996	\$116,027
1997	\$148,445
1998	\$167,474
1999	\$181,807
2000	\$230,594
2001	\$246,993
2002	\$268,020
2003	\$274,077
2004	\$313,930

Total \$2,410,716