



**NOVEMBER 2024, Issue 5**  
**NEVADA AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY NEWS**





# AMERICAN LEGION

Department Commander

Greetings fellow Legionnaires,

I believe I actually had time to breathe this month. Lol. It doesn't mean that I wasn't busy though.

I attended the VFW 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Elko.

I continued to teach my fitness classes at the Sr Center. I was asked to be a guest speaker for the TOPS Convention on October 5<sup>th</sup> on the importance of exercising over the age of 50.

On October 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> I attended the Fall Meetings in Indianapolis. They stressed the importance of sharing information with other Legionnaires.

So here is some of what was presented: Four Rules of an American Legion Program:

Rule 1: Leadership-All elected and appointed leaders must be confirmed by the parent organization after each election, or as needed.

Rule 2: Rules-All bylaws, amendments and/or standing rules must be presented to the parent organization for confirmation and approval prior to use.

Rule 3: Reports-The program will provide to the parent organization: (1) monthly activities report; (b) quarterly financial reports, (c) an annual financial statement; and (d) any additional reports(s) requested by the parent organization.

Rule 4: Controls-The parent organization may provide the program with the employer identification number (EIN) and the tax-exempt status with the necessary financial controls over their usage. All program financial accounts must have a minimum of two parental signatories appointed by the parent organizations.

Parent Organization denotes an American Legion organization level as it relates to the program at the Post, District, Department and /or the National Organization.

There was so much information that was put out. I have pages of notes.

The rest of the month was filled with zoom meetings: with NDVS, Commanders Convening, Quarterly National Security updates, Department NBS which contained updates to the website, my monthly zoom meeting with District Commanders, a Post meeting and Auxiliary meeting. Not to mention continuing physical therapy several times a week.

District Commanders please send me your monthly reports on the activities within your District that pertains to Veterans related events so I can present a report for the Commanders Convening.

October stresses child safety and Buddy Checks. I hope to see all of you at the DEC next month.

Always in service.

Brenda Horton

Department Commander

“Every Voice Matters”

American Legion Family Members,

October has been a very busy month. Our very 1<sup>st</sup> male Auxiliary Department President, Mike Rassmussen, Utah reached out to me. He coordinated a 4 State Veteran Food Drive in conjunction with RC Willey Stores from now until November 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is happening at all RC Willey Locations in 4 States: Utah (4), Nevada (3), Idaho (1) and California (2). Each RC Willey Store has a food donation box. How outstanding is that! If this goes well, RC Willey has committed to doing this yearly, so, let's make it count! I am still coordinating where Southern Nevada donations will be going to. At this writing, I believe it will go to Share Village. Perhaps you could have a donation bin in your Post as well. If you do, contact me so that I may arrange a pickup. Please donate and spread the word. Thank you, President Mike! You are truly and amazing Auxiliary Department President and I couldn't be more excited. You bring new meaning to the vision we both have: American Legion Family – Be the Team!

October 13<sup>th</sup>, I spoke at Post 149 and had the honor of Installing 4 new Auxiliary Officers. Congratulations ALA Unit 149 President, Allison Urclay, Unit 149 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Anna Reynolds, Unit 149 Treasurer Melynda Flaggard and Unit 149 Sgt. At Arms, Maria Moss.

Congratulations! I know you all will do a fantastic job.

October 20<sup>th</sup>, I was invited to attend NASCAR with Mary & Steve Fisher. Thank you both for a wonderful day at NASCAR. I brought an Airforce Veteran to attend with me. I met Veteran Mary Fisher at the Department Convention in June. Let me tell you a little about this amazing Navy Veteran who moved to Nevada this year from California. She and her husband are Post 40 Legionnaire new members. For 2016-2017 Mary earned The National American Legion's Silver Brigade award for recruiting 28 new members. For the 2016-2017 membership year, she stepped up her recruiting efforts and earned the National Gold Brigade award for recruiting 136 new members. She also was named the Department of California's Recruiter of the Year.

She is a National Certified Veteran Advocate and Veterans Benefit Advisor and a Certified Be The One Trainer. She will add Be The One training information in future Newsletters. The State of Nevada is blessed to have this Navy Veteran in our State and she is someone you should know.

Speaking of NASCAR, imagine my surprise when I saw The American Legion Be The One Booth on the Midway. As Department President, I had no clue. This is what I have been advocating for: Proper communication for the State of Nevada American Legion Family. We really dropped the ball on this one. However, thank you Post 149 and Post 40 for stepping up and volunteering. The Be The One Booth was also at and also at MCON on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Thank you again Post 149 for stepping up and volunteering.

Moving forward, we must have better communication and I'm working on a new email list for all Officers of the AL Family. When Events of this magnitude happen from National, no member should be in the dark.

Last month, I was notified by Dennis Christenson that Post 76 received 2 awards 2024 from National. One was for 1<sup>st</sup> place Social Media to Roger Henning, Posts over 750. The other to Dennis Christensen, 1<sup>st</sup> Place Website, Posts over 750. Congratulations Post 76!!!

The Website award is near and dear to my heart. I created this Website for Post 76 and Dennis has done an outstanding job as Post 76 Webmaster.

ALA Department NEC Dr. Courtney Burns notified me that there are 2 Governor appointed Nevada Boards & Commissions vacancy's for the Northern Nevada Veterans' Cemetery Commission and Southern Nevada Veterans' Cemetery Commission. The applicant must be a member of a nationally recognized Veterans' organization. Here's the link to the vacancy's lists, which includes the application: <https://gov.nv.gov/Boards/Board-Vacancies/>

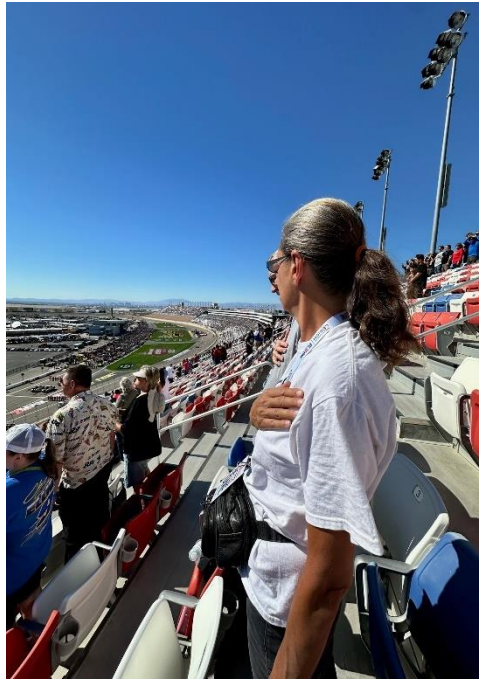
Finally, I want to thank all of our Veterans for their Service. Wishing you all a Happy and Safe Veterans Day! Also, wishing everyone an abundant Thanksgiving.

For God and Country,  
Charmaine Meana  
ALA Department President  
*American Legion Family – Be The Team!*

*NASCAR Fun!*



Steve & Mary Fisher



Hello Members,

November is a very special month for all Veterans of our great country. It is a time when we need to reflect on our service and our accomplishments. While we are recognized this month with the observance of **Veterans Day**, we should also take the time to recognize others who have served our nation. We should recognize and support our first responders as well. Their service and sacrifice is as important as our service in the military. Shake the hand of every veteran and first responder you meet and thank them for their service. If someone is thoughtful enough to thank you for your service, make sure you respond and tell them thank you for caring.

However, **Veteran's Day** did not start out as a salute to all veterans. It was first known as **Armistice Day**, a day to commemorate and remember the end of the First World War on the eleventh day of the eleventh month at 11 a.m. in 1918. While the following years were observed as **Armistice Day** on November 11th, the United States Congress did not pass the congressional act to make **Armistice Day** a legal holiday until 1938. With the conclusion of World War II and the Korean War, there was a push to recognize all service men and women that had served. So in 1954, Congress passed a bill replacing "**Armistice**" with the term "**Veterans**" to honor all veterans that have served all of our armed services.

November is also a time for us to take time out of our busy schedule and vote. On Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, we have a chance to make a difference in our political system. Regardless of your political affiliation, your lot in life, your economic condition, or your personal convictions, voting is your right and responsibility. We, as Americans, have a moral responsibility to select representatives of our local, state, and federal governments to make decisions on our behalf. The real meaning of this process is that at each political cycle we can change our minds on those candidates if these representatives have failed our trust. So, go and Vote! It is your Right!

Always in Service,

*Jim Stewart*

National Executive Committee  
Past Department Commander  
Department of Nevada



Greetings Members,

I recently had the pleasure of meeting fellow Legionnaire Robert Luna. He was walking across America to bring awareness of Veterans in crisis. I met him when he spoke at our Post in Laughlin.

He is a 28-year Veteran of the Coast Guard and when he retired, he started having experience with PTSD. He attempted to kill himself and because of this he started having mental health treatment. He realized that he needed to let other veterans know that help is available and that they have greater avenues of help available and that suicide should not be one of their options.

I was blown away by his sincerity and heartfelt need to let others know what he went through and that they do not need to be alone in times of crisis. I saw grown men cry and give him hugs to thank him for sharing his journey across America sharing with anyone he met along the way. He conveyed that there is hope and that life is worth living.

He started walking across America in May and completed his journey to the Coast Guard station in California last week. Because his journey was so long, and he only requested that if possible, lodging be provided as his journey was mostly by tent, I agreed to be his assistant going forward from Laughlin. I began to contact other Legions along his journey to see if it was possible for him to speak at their posts and was very successful in AZ. Unfortunately, in California I was unable to get a response from their Department Adjutant or from Posts along his route.

I wish they had been more responsive as this is our mandate in our mission to Be The One and this is certainly his message. I let everyone on his route know that he is a PUFL and that I highly encouraged them to hear his message. I speak about this as I know moving forward into the holiday season suicide rates go up and we must ensure that we as fellow Veterans have ALL Veterans backs. I wish all of you a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving with your families!!

For God and Country,  
Pam Walker, Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice



## DEPARTMENT OF NEVADA

### DISTRICT 1

**District 1's Post members have a new opportunity to be a Compassionate Contact Corps Volunteer, they will be are part of a network of family, friends, social service/health professionals and other concerned individuals who provide comfort and assistance to homebound Veterans. Compassionate Contact Corps Volunteers will play an important role in this network of volunteers.**

**District 1 Posts members will be participating in the Nevada Day and Veterans Day parades.**

**District 1 Posts members are planning and preparing presenters for the annual JROTC programs award ceremonies.**

**Dat-So-La-Lee Post 12 members are assisting the Department of Nevada's Auxiliary with an event that RC Willey has been very generous in allowing them to partner with in collecting food for Veterans Food Banks in Utah, Nevada and California. The event will run from October 14th to November 23rd. RC Willey will be providing boxes for food donations to be collected. There will be a large banner inside the front entrance to each RC Willey showroom. Donations will be collected and be transferred to Will Call for American Legion Family volunteers to collect. All food items collected will be distributed to the Veterans Guest House.**

**Duby Reid Post 30 will be hosting the Department of Nevada's Executive Committee meeting at their post home on Saturday, November 16, 2024. They are sponsoring a dinner that evening and will have some fellow veterans from the Northern Nevada Veterans home attending.**



## DISTRICT 2

At the last District meeting, we talked about having a District 2 table at the VA Hospital BBQ, and people said YES and raised their hands. Well, now I need to know who can man the table for a while. I will have someone bring the flags and table coverings, but we need some manning. Flyer was in last emails that I sent out

Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> @ The VA Hospital North Pecos. The hours are 10am-2pm and Setup is from 8:30am-9:30am. We need to show prior to 10am

I hope to have enough people that you can just rotate and not be there very long. Please send me names and post numbers.

The District Oratorical is coming up soon. We could use a little more in the account for the Oratorical to help cover awards and if we have expenses for the location. Anything over will stay allocated for the future Oratorical. I'm working on location but nothing is solid yet. The date is Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Well, the Holidays are coming and it seems that everything is going much faster and time is running out. I would say the biggest thing to remember this holiday time is family. Reach out to your family members and reconnect to see how they are doing. If you don't see your kids regularly, take that extra time to bring the family together during Thanksgiving and make the most of it. Next is your military family, reach out to those buddies you haven't seen in some time to see how they are. Do your personnel buddy checks. Some people have a tough time this time of year, so "Be The One". Be that friendly voice saying hey, how are you doing. You just could be that light in their dark world. For the posts, try to get your buddy checks going to check on your members.

American Legion National is also passing that thought. Recently they reached out to support a display they were doing at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. They were looking for some local legion members to staff it and get the word out. I sent out the request and I want to thank the people that came out and helped out. We had overall 11 local Post and Auxiliary members help out Post 10, Post 27, Post 40 - 3, and Post 149 - 6. Joe Meyer was our service officer on duty and he stayed busy all three days answering questions and helping veterans. Overall, it was a great weekend and a rewarding one.

Just the other day the Honor Flight of Southern Nevada returned from Mission #22. You can see more pictures on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HonorFlightSouthernNevada.org> Honor Flight Southern Nevada is a non-profit organization whose mission is to escort WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans to Washington D. C. to see their memorials and honor the sacrifices they have made for our freedoms. They returned on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> to a hero's welcome at Harry Reid International

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for all their efforts throughout the year. Each day, just one good deed, it all adds up.

Be safe,  
Robert Bencsko  
Commander, District 2, Dept. of Nevada  
ALNVDIST2@amcben.com  
[www.nevadalegiond2.org](http://www.nevadalegiond2.org)



# NASCAR Weekend AL Be The One Booth

# District 2, cont.



# NASCAR Weekend AL Be The One Booth

## District 2, cont.





DEPARTMENT OF NEVADA

DISTRICT 4

**On September 21st District 4 had its meeting in Fernley. Department Commander Horton installed the officers for 2024-25. Department Adjutant Motta and SAL Detachment Commander Horton were also in attendance.**

**All District Posts conducted their monthly meetings.**

**Post 37 along with Post 1 retired 4-5K flags.**

**John J. Hansen, MBA, Ed.S  
2lt, USA, Retired**



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**BE THE ONE**

## Sons of the American Legion – Detachment Commander



There is big news for the month, on October 6, the American Legion CWF board of directors changed the name of the foundation to the Child Well-Being Foundation to better encompass the overall needs of the whole child and their entire wellbeing. Please keep this in mind when asking for donations as it might be confusing until the name change is more broadly known.

The Detachment is in 32<sup>nd</sup> place in the nation with 27.14% membership, with almost all being renewals. Please continue to focus on renewals as we can't be losing those who are already dedicating their time and efforts to the SAL. It is significantly harder to recruit someone new than it is to keep the members we have. If you know of someone on the fence about renewal, please, reach out to our membership chair, Pip Valentin, me, or any of the other officers for suggestions.

For the Department Commander's Program, we will be donating time, money, and products to the Fisher House in District 2 and the Veteran's Guest House in the other Districts. Please, keep track of any work or donations you do on behalf of this Program as we can send it to National to show how effective The American Legion Family can be when it comes to helping Veterans.

The Detachment Commander's Program of sending birthday cards to all Post members will be morphing; to keep costs in line, we will be sending virtual cards instead. We will run a report on the members without email accounts and determine if it is cost effective to send cards in the mail. There are ways to save money on postage, but the cost will still be more than the Detachment has allocated. I appreciate the patience shown for this endeavor.

More information about the Wild Willie's Western Rendezvous (WWWR) is coming soon, keep the end of January open!

As hinted last month, there are a few cost-effective programs available for mass emailing to members. These programs require verified user lists but have better delivery than typical email providers and generally don't get marked as spam when sending large batches of emails.

Squadron 7 uses Brevo, which allows 300 emails/day for free but is limited to 1 member and minimal reporting. Most of these limitations are not difficult to live with. More comprehensive plans are available for just over \$8/month or more.

<https://www.brevo.com/pricing/>

The other option is sendgrid Marketing, this allows up to 6000 emails/month but is limited to 100 members in your contact list. More extensive plans are available for \$15/month or more.

[https://sendgrid.com/en-us/pricing?tab=1\\_2](https://sendgrid.com/en-us/pricing?tab=1_2)

Veterans Day is coming along with the holidays. This time of year is especially difficult for veterans and the time should be used to Be The One and take some time to talk to your veterans, even non-members. Help make their holidays better by being there and letting them know that they matter.

Detachment EC meetings will be the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 via Teams (when it cooperates).

Teams Meeting ID 272 911 810 647

Passcode D3p5ib

Phone in – 775-393-9964

Conference ID 796 285 50#

Please join us if you can.

It was my pleasure to be your Detachment Commander for the 2023-2024 year and don't forget your buddy checks and watch out for our entire Legion Family.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Horton  
Commander, Detachment of Nevada  
#SALStrong  
#BeTheOne



## 2025 SAL Membership Report as of: October 21, 2024

#	DETACHMENT	2025 DET. YEAR END GOAL	NEEDED TO MEET 35% TARGET 11/14/2024	2025 ACTUAL MBSHP	% OF YEAR END GOAL	2025 RENEWAL %
1	HAWAII	134	-50	97	72.39%	70.45
2	WISCONSIN	4,772	-769	2,439	51.11%	47.90
3	FRANCE	179	-23	86	48.04%	44.25
4	GEORGIA	5,018	-651	2,407	47.97%	44.30
5	LOUISIANA	1,869	-192	846	45.26%	43.02
6	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,985	-133	828	41.71%	38.34
7	ALABAMA	2,170	-145	904	41.66%	37.95
8	NORTH CAROLINA	2,904	-187	1,203	41.43%	35.72
9	ILLINOIS	14,244	-756	5,741	40.30%	38.35
10	IDAHO	720	-36	288	40.00%	32.68
11	MISSISSIPPI	791	-33	310	39.19%	37.23
12	IOWA	5,264	-204	2,046	38.87%	37.03
13	TEXAS	6,089	-157	2,288	37.58%	31.87
14	TENNESSEE	1,852	-34	682	36.83%	30.50
15	NORTH DAKOTA	1,128	-14	409	36.26%	34.23
16	MONTANA	1,060	-9	380	35.85%	34.11
17	WYOMING	1,289	3	448	34.76%	31.06
18	SOUTH CAROLINA	1,716	9	592	34.50%	28.95
19	MISSOURI	3,287	84	1,066	32.43%	29.46
20	OKLAHOMA	1,303	43	413	31.70%	25.93
21	KANSAS	6,127	219	1,925	31.42%	29.26
22	PUERTO RICO	180	7	56	31.11%	29.94
23	MARYLAND	17,777	762	5,460	30.71%	27.29
24	FLORIDA	25,736	1,213	7,795	30.29%	24.89
25	LATIN AMERICA	40	2	12	30.00%	15.38
26	OREGON	1,683	94	495	29.41%	22.74
27	ARKANSAS	396	25	114	28.79%	27.15
28	VIRGINIA	4,558	298	1,297	28.46%	23.25
29	INDIANA	38,183	2,633	10,731	28.10%	25.33
30	ALASKA	1,856	135	515	27.75%	24.55
31	NEW JERSEY	10,203	780	2,791	27.35%	25.26
32	NEVADA	339	27	92	27.14%	24.47
33	NEW HAMPSHIRE	6,467	529	1,734	26.81%	24.32
34	NEBRASKA	7,080	598	1,880	26.55%	25.67
35	CALIFORNIA	11,696	1,106	2,988	25.55%	21.84
36	OHIO	32,881	3,123	8,385	25.50%	22.67
37	VERMONT	4,051	389	1,029	25.40%	23.50
38	MINNESOTA	11,821	1,166	2,971	25.13%	23.37
39	CONNECTICUT	2,027	210	499	24.62%	21.54
40	NEW YORK	32,363	3,563	7,764	23.99%	22.20
41	COLORADO	3,095	367	716	23.13%	20.35
42	WASHINGTON	2,876	392	615	21.38%	16.29
43	MASSACHUSETTS	5,758	804	1,211	21.03%	19.67
44	MICHIGAN	28,189	4,048	5,818	20.64%	17.16
45	DELAWARE	2,708	390	558	20.61%	16.75
46	ARIZONA	9,643	1,433	1,942	20.14%	15.64
47	UTAH	465	72	91	19.57%	15.56
48	PENNSYLVANIA	64,916	11,197	11,524	17.75%	15.89
49	MAINE	2,888	544	467	16.17%	14.40
50	WEST VIRGINIA	2,728	564	391	14.33%	10.17
51	KENTUCKY	2,250	478	310	13.78%	11.57
52	RHODE ISLAND	373	81	50	13.40%	13.35
53	NEW MEXICO	1,986	429	266	13.39%	10.44
54	DIST OF COL	102	25	11	10.78%	1.96
55	PHILIPPINES	48	16	1	2.08%	2.13
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>401,263</b>	<b>34,465</b>	<b>105,977</b>	<b>26.41%</b>	<b>23.52</b>

# AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

## American Legion Riders

Please send me your events so we can get them online for others to see.



We need more engagement from the riders, it is well known that the Legion Riders events can be great membership opportunities. Always carry a packet of membership forms with you for the Legion, SAL, and Auxiliary, you never know when they might be handy.

Please send feedback, what would you like to see in future newsletter articles? What would you like to see done differently by the Legion Riders?

I can always be reached via email ([commander@nevadasal.org](mailto:commander@nevadasal.org)) or phone (720-394-5965), just leave a message if I don't answer.

Sincerely,

Shawn Horton  
Commander, Detachment of Nevada  
American Legion Riders Department of Nevada Liaison

Event Schedule		
Date	Where	What



## American Legionnaire Passing

Hello Members,

James Dancy (also known as Tiny) has passed on to Post Everlasting. Before being unable to attend because of his disabilities, he was a Chaplain for many of the veterans' organizations as well as for many of the funerals at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery for those who were being interred without friends or family. He had been a member of various American Legion Posts in the past, Post 149, Post 76, and finally a member of Post 8.

You may have already received information about the funeral service for Rev. James Dancy, but if you did not, here is:

Rev. James Dancy  
Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery Chapel  
1900 Veterans Memorial Dr., Boulder City, NV 89005  
Phone: (702) 486-5920

12:40 pm  
14 November 2024

**Roger J. Henning, PhD**  
**Communications Officer**  
American Legion Nevada Post 76  
[nvpost76@gmail.com](mailto:nvpost76@gmail.com)

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Hello Members,

Novi, Tiny's wife, has asked if it is possible to get a group of ALR to meet her at their house and escort her out to the Boulder City Cemetery as a final send off. Contact me for information.

Glynis Morris  
[GlynisLVAux@yahoo.com](mailto:GlynisLVAux@yahoo.com)



Greetings Legionnaires,

As we wrap up another polarizing election cycle, I would like to remind everyone of the American Legion's Motto:

***"The American Legion strengthens our communities, states and nation with programs and services for our veterans, the military and their families."***

We all have more in common than differences, and we all work towards the same goals. We may not agree on which road to take, but all roads lead to Rome. Democracy is diversity with consensus, and the result will achieve a greater good for all.

The American Legion supports bills which benefit veterans, the military, and the country. They are not partisan. They become partisan because one party will not support a bill which another party sponsors. The way to overcome this, is by contacting your legislators, and encouraging those around you to contact their legislators.

Politicians do and say what they think will get them elected. If they don't believe that veteran issues will affect their election, then veteran issues won't be a priority to them. We need members from both parties and independents to be engaged. The Speaker of the House, and the Senate Majority Leader decide which bills will be voted on, and this is why it's so important that our legislators co-sponsor veteran bills.

In Nevada, Representative Lee co-sponsors the most veteran legislation, followed by Representative Titus. Representatives Horsford and Amodei sponsor very few bills. Senator Rosen co-sponsors a fair amount of veteran legislation while Senator Cortez-Masto does not. They all have room for improvement.

I encourage everyone to double their engagement efforts with their legislators, and to also engage the congressional leadership.

We do not currently have a Legislative Council Member for Nevada's 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. I would encourage anyone who would like to take their political engagement to the next level to volunteer. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn how the system works, while serving the Legion Members.

Have a Great Veteran's Day!

Manny Garcia  
Chair, Nevada Delegation  
National Legislative Council



Congratulations Post 76!!!



Media &  
Communications

2024 Annual Contest

First Place

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**Social Media**

Posts over 750

Presented to:

**Roger Henning**

Post 76 in Las Vegas, Nev.



Media &  
Communications

2024 Annual Contest

First Place

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**Website**

Posts over 750

Presented to:

**Roger Henning**

Post 76 in Las Vegas, Nev.

**Dennis Christiansen**  
NV Post 76 Spirit of Freedom  
Webmaster

I received an email from Jeff Spencer from National who runs the BE THE ONE trailer. He said to me that he needed help with the trailer at the MCON event, the two people he had had to fly out. I made a few phone calls and we ended up with 5 total members from Post 149 attending to support. I also had Post 76 and 51 Commanders stop by for a while.

Near the end of MCON we had the organizers of MCON and Military Times come by and presented a Certificate of Recognition to the BE THE ONE trailer and the people supporting it. We had a good flow of people through the display and Post 149 Service Officer, Joe Meyer, was busy the entire time helping veterans. We had many attendees take the BE THE ONE pledge to be aware and help fellow veterans in their time of need.

Some of our members also were in attendance when the Southern Nevada Honor Flight returned home at the airport to show our support.

*Robert "Bob" Bencsko*  
Commander, District 2, Dept Nevada  
[ALNVDIST2@amcben.com](mailto:ALNVDIST2@amcben.com)  
[www.nevadalegiond2.org](http://www.nevadalegiond2.org)





# Southern Nevada Honor Flight Welcome Home

Post 149, cont.



## Veterans Day 2024 Observances

November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918, was a day of celebration throughout the free world. A conflict without precedent was ending. An armistice stopping the “Great War,” was signed. Advances in the use of artillery, chemical weapons and machine guns led to more than nine million military deaths and an estimated eight million civilian deaths during the war that devastated large swaths of Europe, as well as parts of the Middle East, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. World War I was so horrific that many referred to it as the “war to end all wars.” Unfortunately, the optimism was short-lived.

A generation later, a second world war would follow, which was even deadlier than the first. Even so, The American Legion never wavered on the significance of the 1918 armistice. The nation’s largest Veterans organization had been advocating for “Armistice Day,” to be observed as a national holiday since 1920.

In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, The American Legion led an “all Veterans Day” celebration in Emporia, Kansas, which was seen as the spark that lit the movement for November 11<sup>th</sup> to be a day to honor every American who honorably served in our nation’s military since the Revolutionary War.

The advocacy paid off. On October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed a proclamation officially changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In its “Suggested Talk for American Legion Speakers,” which was released to mark the first official Veterans Day observance seventy years ago, our organization spelled out its vision for the new national holiday.

Quote – “Veterans Day...like the Armistice Day of before...will ever remain a day of remembrance ...remembrance for those who have placed their love of God and country, their devotion to liberty and freedom, above even life itself. But also, it should be a day of rejoicing... rejoicing that American manhood and womanhood always have measured up to our responsibilities.” – unquote.

While those responsibilities may have shifted and evolved with each subsequent generation, the love for this country is a common thread that bonds veterans from the earliest days of our nation’s founding to those serving today.

One responsibility that all Americans should carry is the remembrance of those who have made our freedom possible. By virtue of your attendance here, you have shown an appreciation for veterans. The people here are veterans, friends of veterans, family of veterans, co-workers of veterans and neighbors of veterans. It is up to us to ensure that every veteran believes that his or her service to this country is respected by their fellow Americans. There are many tangible ways that we can acknowledge their sacrifice, but the easiest is to simply say, “Thank you for your service to our country.”

Winston Churchill was speaking of the Royal Air Force’s defense of Britain when he delivered his famous “Never was so much owed by so many to so few” speech in 1940. The same could be said of American veterans in 2024.

In 1980, about 18 percent of U.S. adults were veterans. Today, it is approximately 5 percent. Active-duty servicemembers comprise less than one-half of one percent of the U.S. population.

Yet when Hurricanes Helene and Milton wreaked havoc on the southeastern United States, thousands of active-duty, Reserve and National Guard servicemembers mobilized to provide life-saving relief and recovery operations.

An estimated 43,000 U.S. troops and a dozen warships are deployed in the Middle East. Marine Corps detachments provide security at U.S. embassies worldwide.

## Veterans Day 2024 Observances, cont.

Members of the Coast Guard perform an average of 42 search and rescue missions daily and facilitate the movement of \$15.6 billion dollars of goods and commodities through our maritime transportation system every day.

**ALL** Americans benefit from the service of this small and distinguished group of volunteers who currently comprise the U.S. Armed Forces.

Every year America loses distinguished veterans who were eyewitnesses to events that shaped our world. Two notable veterans lost in 2024 were Lou Conter and Roger Donlon. One served in World War II, the other Vietnam. They each had different definitions of heroism.

Conter was the sole survivor of the attack on the *U.S.S. Arizona* when he passed away at age 102 on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

“People call us heroes,” Conter said at the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. “We’re not the heroes. The 1,177 who went down with the ship are the heroes. You have to remember we got to go home, get married, have children and grandchildren, and we’ve lived a good life. Those who didn’t get to do that should be called the heroes.” – unquote.

Conter’s humility was not uncommon among veterans who forever remember those who never made it home. But Donlon, who made it home from Vietnam, fits every definition one could have of a hero.

Donlon was a captain with the Army 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group when a Viet Cong battalion launched a predawn attack on his camp in 1964. During the five-hour battle, he endured multiple and severe wounds, while valiantly fighting back and directing the camp’s defense. He continuously exposed himself to great danger, administering first aid and saving the lives of fellow soldiers. His actions resulted in the successful defense of his camp and inspired not just his own soldiers but Vietnamese allies.

Donlon’s bravery was recognized by President Lyndon B. Johnson, who presented him with a Medal of Honor for his actions.

An online obituary posted this year quoted Donlon’s definition of heroism. “In my situation and every other situation that leads to the Medal of Honor, there is absolutely no input from the recipient. It’s all done by observers,” Donlon said. “Heroism is a product of what other people see.” -Unquote.

Donlon remained in the Army and retired as a colonel in 1988. We see and remember your heroism, Colonel Donlon, along with that of so many other veterans.

On this Veterans Day, we honor not an armistice, but the men and women who have served and continue to serve in the greatest military the world has ever known.

Our message to America’s veterans – past and present – is simple. We will never forget you.

Thank you for being here. God bless America.

VA



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Southern Nevada Healthcare System

# Media Release

6900 N. Pecos Road  
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89086  
[www.lasvegas.va.gov](http://www.lasvegas.va.gov)

**RELEASE 24-10-03**

**October 29, 2024**

**VASNHS completing operating room upgrades Nov. 12-Dec. 22**

**NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV**

VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System will temporarily close its operating rooms between Nov. 12 to Dec. 22 for minor construction and to remove and replace operating room equipment that is nearing the end of its service life.

The required closure was scheduled during this time to minimize impact on Veteran patients as historically, this is the slowest time of the year for routine and elective surgical cases. During this timeframe, special procedures that can be performed outside the operating rooms will be expanded, and urgent and emergent surgical care will be facilitated for Veterans outside the facility. Additionally, surgery staff have expanded their clinic schedules and will use the non-surgery time for additional patient appointments and pre-surgery consults in preparation for reopening the operating rooms.

While a small number of routine and elective surgeries were previously scheduled for during this timeframe prior to the final closure decision, none were cancelled due to this event. VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System has contacted all affected Veterans, and all were given the option to either move up their surgery or reschedule following the closure.

“VA is committed to updating and modernizing its infrastructure whenever possible to ensure we have the latest technology and equipment available to meet the needs of Veterans who seek care locally,” said Michael Kiefer, VASNHS’ acting executive director. “As part of this commitment, there are times we need to make short-term adjustments to our day-to-day operations to support long range goals and outcomes. We have worked diligently to mitigate the impact to our Veterans and apologize for any inconvenience this temporary closure may cause.”

Veterans who have any questions or concerns about how this closure may affect their individual situation should contact their surgical team.

**ATTENTION MEDIA:** For queries or more information regarding this release, please email [vhalaspao@va.gov](mailto:vhalaspao@va.gov) or call VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System Public Affairs at (702) 791-9000 extensions 18999 or 19004.

## Supreme Court hears arguments on Veterans' benefits appeals rules

By [Leo Shane III](#), Wednesday, Oct 16, 2024

[The Supreme Court](#) heard oral arguments Wednesday in a veterans benefits case which could have wide-ranging impact on applicants' options to appeal decisions denying them payouts.

Justices likely won't rule on the case — [Bufkin v. McDonough](#) — for months. But the issues involved are being closely monitored by veterans advocates and Department of Veterans Affairs leaders, given the potential changes mandated by the eventual decision.

At issue is how the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and other judicial review boards must interpret the "benefit of the doubt" rule regarding [veterans disability claims](#). Under federal statute, VA adjudicators are required to rule in favor of veterans applying for benefits support "when there is an approximate balance of positive and negative evidence."

Advocates have long argued that VA does not follow that standard, requiring veterans to prove their injuries and eligibility beyond doubt to receive payouts.

The Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in favor of a veteran who wanted to use both his Post-9/11 GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

In 2002, Congress passed legislation requiring the Veterans Appeals Court to ensure the "benefit of the doubt" rule was followed properly in the disability claims process. But court officials have argued that only applies in cases of clear errors and does not mandate a full review of the case evidence.

The case before the Supreme Court centers on two veterans: Joshua Bufkin, who served in the Air Force from 2005 and 2006, and Norman Thornton, who served in the Army from 1988 to 1991. Both men applied for disability benefits related to injuries they say occurred while serving.

Bufkin was denied a claim for post-traumatic stress disorder, while Thornton was granted a 10% rating for the same condition. Both appealed the decisions and lost.

Lawyers for the men said that subsequent judicial reviews did not conduct a full review of the case, to include whether the "benefit of the doubt" standard was followed. A federal appeals court ruled two years ago that such a move was not needed.

In arguments before the Supreme Court Tuesday, Melanie Bostwick, counsel for the plaintiffs, said that the language adopted by Congress clearly mandates that an appeals panel "has to do a check and make sure that the decisions that it is about to affirm complied with the law."

But lawyers for the government argued that requiring a full additional review of evidence would be duplicative and inefficient.

In a supporting brief filed ahead of Wednesday's arguments, officials from the National Veterans Legal Services Program lamented that federal officials' current practices "have ensured that it is the agency that gets the benefit of the doubt, not veterans ... it exacerbates the very problems Congress sought to solve through its [legislation]."

Similarly, officials from Disabled American Veterans offered support for the plaintiffs and said the case "presents a question that is important to the nation's disabled veterans and their families," calling the current review procedures "troubling."

A final decision on the case is expected from the Supreme Court next spring.

About [Leo Shane III](#) Leo covers Congress, Veterans Affairs and the White House for Military Times.





## CONCERNED VETERANS *for* AMERICA FOUNDATION®

Hi,

I hope you're having a wonderful day!

In partnership with the Southern Nevada Veteran Chamber of Commerce (SNVCC), Concerned Veterans for America Foundation (CVAF) invites you to join us for a morning of golf, networking, and action. Together, we'll explore ways CVAF is empowering our nation's heroes to take meaningful steps in improving their lives and communities.

This event is an opportunity for you to connect with like-minded individuals, learn how CVAF is impacting Southern Nevada, and collaborate with leaders and veterans committed to positive change. Enjoy a fun-filled morning, pick up some awesome swag, and help us continue our mission of veteran empowerment.

I would like to invite you to a golfing event at Atomic Golf on November 16, 2024, from 10 AM to 1 PM. The address is 1850 South Main Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101. This will be a great opportunity for us to meet and connect.

Food and drinks will be provided, so all you need to do is show up and enjoy! Please register ahead of time using the link below:

<https://cvafoundation.actcentr.com/Events/golfing-and-networking-with-cva-foundation>

If you have any questions or issues, feel free to reach out to me. I'm looking forward to seeing you there!

Best,

LeRoy Hudson Grassroots Engagement Director – CVA HQ Las Vegas NV  
Direct Phone Number 725-324-3488

Please RSVP to secure your bay and be part of this exciting event. Your involvement will help us continue our efforts to serve those who have served us. We look forward to seeing you there!

Hello Members,

American Legion Family Paradise 149 donated to the kid's night out event at the Aviators Baseball game. As a thank you, we received 2 tickets that Unit 149 gifted to a Marine Rider. He took his son and they had a great time. They even caught a foul ball!



ALA Post/Unit 149 also hosted a Bingo game at the Boulder City Veterans Home. Commander Bob Bencsko was the Bingo caller. Myself, Penelope Juoni, Michael Juoni and Maria Moss also helped out at the event. The residents really enjoyed themselves.

For God and Country,  
Allison Urcelay  
Unit 149 President





Veterans and Children Foundation

## AT WORK FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND KIDS IN NEED

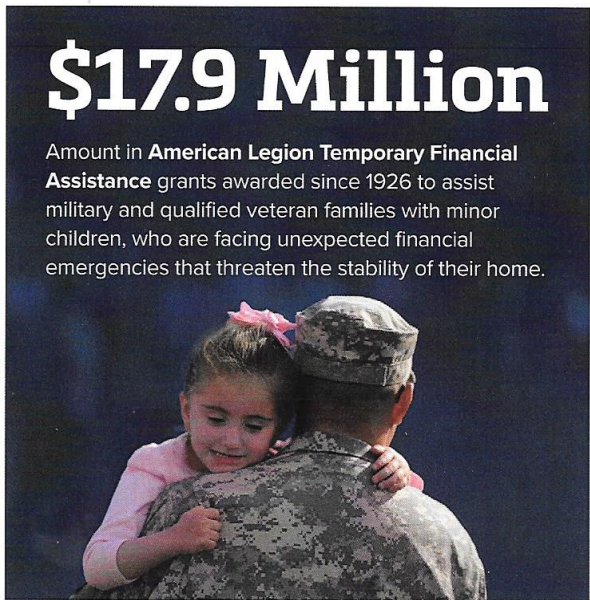
# \$15.55 Billion

VA disability benefits secured for veterans with free assistance from accredited **American Legion service officers** between October 2023 and June 2024.



# \$17.9 Million

Amount in **American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance** grants awarded since 1926 to assist military and qualified veteran families with minor children, who are facing unexpected financial emergencies that threaten the stability of their home.



# \$54.2 Million

Eight-month total of benefits secured by **American Legion national appeals reps**, free of charge, for veterans disputing earlier incorrect rulings on their VA claims, October 2023 – July 2024. More than **1,900** veterans received retroactive compensation during that time.



**"Saving Lives and Changing Lives"**



Scan the QR code to learn more about the **Veterans & Children Foundation**

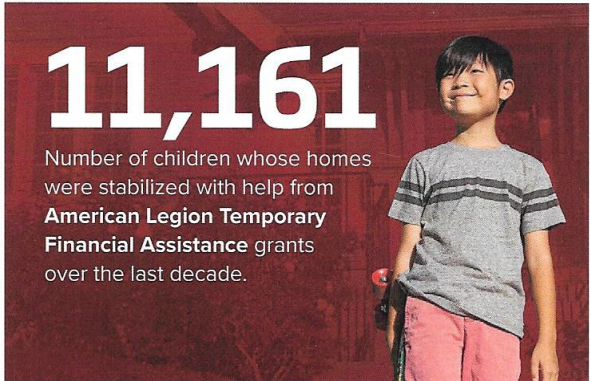
## Service officer training

October 2023 – July 2024

Beginner 101-level course graduates	295
Intermediate 201-level course graduates	236
Participants in suicide-awareness module	531
Accreditation applications processed	513

# 11,161

Number of children whose homes were stabilized with help from **American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance** grants over the last decade.





## Junior Shooting Sports

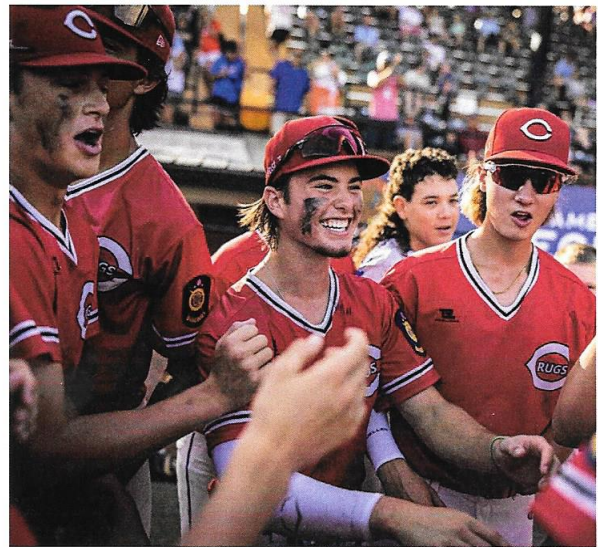
More than **2,300** American Legion clubs worldwide impart the values of discipline, gun safety and sportsmanship each year to nearly **12,000** competitors, who strive to be the very best and earn college scholarships.



**18,547**  
American Legion School Award medals presented in 2022-23 to students graduating from elementary school, junior high, high school or college who exemplify six qualities of character: courage, honor, leadership, patriotism, scholarship and service.



**11,811**  
American Legion Junior Shooting Sports competitors in 2022-23.



## Baseball

American Legion Baseball is much more than a game. It is an oath to work hard, dedicate oneself to fitness, good sportsmanship, community service and responsible citizenship. Nearly **50,000** athletes play on approximately **3,000** American Legion Baseball teams each year.



**7,583**  
Participants in American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement programs in 2022-23.



**\$622,500** | **\$2,014,236**  
Amount in American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year scholarships awarded since 1983. | Amount American Legion posts donated to local Scouting units in 2022-23.

# AMERICAN LEGION ON YOUTH

## CHANGING LIVES – SAVING LIVES

American Legion youth programs instill values, develop responsible citizens and inspire future U.S. leaders.

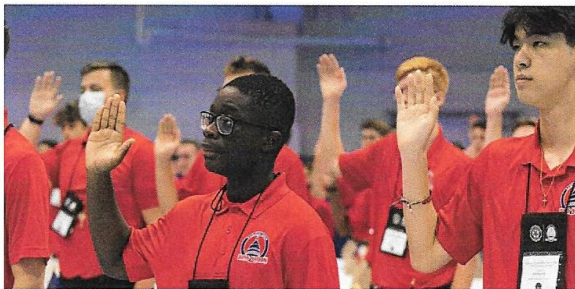
Youth mentorship is one prominent way former members of the U.S. Armed Forces in The American Legion live up to the motto, “Veterans Strengthening America.” Around the

world, they passionately provide structure, guidance, education and opportunity for young people to better understand their nation, contribute to it and achieve their dreams.

Today, more than ever, donation-funded American Legion youth programs brighten the future by showing young men and women what

it means to live, compete, serve and lead in a free nation.

Your charitable gift will help The American Legion continue its mission, one community at a time, through youth programs that have made life-changing differences for nearly a century. No other organization has the same kind of impact for so many young Americans.

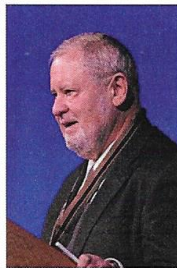


### Boys State and Boys Nation

Each year, more than **16,000** young men learn firsthand how state and federal government function in a democracy.

“The first step in studying and understanding the Constitution is that it is meant to empower as well as protect us. We are responsible for it. I urge you to learn everything you can about it, which I know you do, because I went to Boys State.”

- Hillsdale College President  
Larry P. Arnn, 2021



### Oratorical Contests

Nearly **2,500** teens a year learn the U.S. Constitution and how to speak fluently about it, with the opportunity to win hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships at the local, state and national levels.

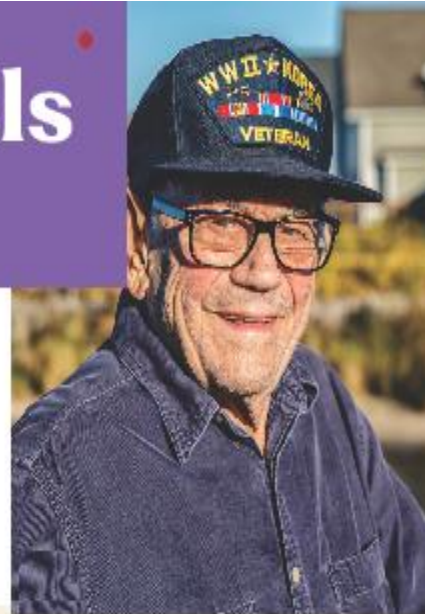


“This contest achieved something that many classrooms and schools across America simply cannot achieve. It has taught thousands, myself included, how to become stronger as a person and how to use that strength to protect the ideals of the Constitution.”

- 2019 National American Legion Oratorical Contest winner Patrick Junker, Waukee, Iowa

# Support Renewals and Growth

Grouper is excited to announce its partnership with The American Legion, which will empower posts and departments to enhance member engagement and provide valuable benefits to eligible Legionnaires!



## LEGIONNAIRES 65+ WITH AN ELIGIBLE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE OR SUPPLEMENT PLAN RECEIVE:

- ✔ \$50 initial payment upon confirming eligibility
- ✔ \$20 every 3 months of reported post activities



## Lead Your Members

Visit our website now to easily download or request printed materials that will **help you promote the Grouper benefit** to your posts and Legionnaires—make a difference today!

- Flyer & FAQs
- Member Email Templates
- Newsletter Templates
- Website Content
- Social Media Content

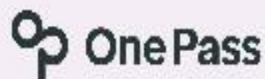
Interested in promoting this at your Post? Scan Now to Get Started



[GrouperGroups.com/Legion](https://GrouperGroups.com/Legion)



GROUPER IS PROUD TO BE INCLUDED IN:



# Grouper

Call (833) 906-1700 Email [info@hellogrouper.com](mailto:info@hellogrouper.com)



## The American Legion Buddy Check Program

In the first four years after The American Legion launched Buddy Checks as an official program, more than **1 million** veterans have been reached and assisted

The number of local American Legion posts conducting Buddy Check operations in those first four years **has grown from 3,683 to 4,456**

Buddy Checks are **not membership or fundraising calls**; they are simple check-ins with veterans in the community to **see how they are doing and to learn if the local post can help** with anything

The MyLegion.org web platform contains contact information of American Legion members and former members

The Department of Veterans Affairs launched its own **National Buddy Check Week** in 2023 and invites involvement from local American Legion posts

While Buddy Checks can be conducted year round, American Legion posts are strongly encouraged, by resolution, to make Buddy Check calls during **Veterans Week (mid-November)** and **American Legion Birthday Week (mid-March)**

Many American Legion posts have assembled Buddy Check teams that make calls monthly or even more frequently

Buddy Check teams are urged to have at their fingertips a list of local resources available if needed. These may be American Legion service officers, Vet Centers, VA health-care facilities, or others who can help

Veterans may be reminded of the **988 Crisis Line** in case they know of someone who needs urgent assistance, or if they need it themselves

**SHARE THE STORY OF YOUR BUDDY CHECK PROGRAM** at [legiontown.org/buddychecks](https://legiontown.org/buddychecks)