2017 National Commander’s Visit

The dates of the official visit of National Commander Charles E. Schmidt to the Department of Delaware have been confirmed. Commander Schmidt will tour the department March 15-17, 2017. As the commander’s visitation schedule is developed, it will be published.

In conjunction with the visit, the department will hold a banquet to honor Commander Schmidt on Friday evening, March 17, 2017. March 17th is St. Patrick’s Day and some posts hold St. Patrick’s Day festivities which may conflict in hosting the banquet. Upon confirmation on the venue for the banquet, it will be circulated.

It is anticipated that the MainStay Suites, 201 Stover Blvd., Dover, DE 19901 will be utilized as the department headquarters hotel.

Richard J. Santos
Department Adjutant
We are the best kept secret in Delaware, that’s who we are. We are absolutely the best kept secret in Delaware however we are the largest wartime veterans’ organization not only in this state but the world. We are the greatest veterans’ organization in the world and we do more to help our veterans and communities than any other bar none. The issue, only our members and those we directly help know about us. Absolutely no random person on the street knows who we are or what we do for our veterans and communities. This is the first time as far back as anyone can remember that the Department of Delaware did not make the 55% membership goal. The post’s reasoning is people say they cannot afford us. That’s just not true! The other fraternal and nonprofit organizations all have yearly dues higher than ours. They can afford our lower dues but the only information they ever hear about the American Legion is the negative information put out by the news media. We need to make inroads with the local newspapers and other media outlets. Every newspaper has a dedicated correspondent for military and veteran articles. These correspondents would very rather do an article on us than a fluff piece their editor assigns them due to lack of news in their section. We need to stop being the best kept secret in Delaware and start tooting our own horns. Get the word out about all that we have accomplished and what we do on a daily basis! The posts with post homes all have video lottery machines and are required to donate 40%. All of that is community donations and none knows except the post officers and the lottery office. Thanks to all of the posts that did make their membership goals. We can make goal but we have to work together as a team to make that happen. Please, work to make the inroads with the media in your communities and let’s STOP BEING THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN DELAWARE!

Jeffery K. Crouser
State Commander

MaryAnna Moderhak
1st Vice Commander

I am really concerned that each post in our state did not make the small 55% in membership by the cut-off date of 9/12. OUR NEXT TARGET DATE IS OCTOBER 6TH WITH AT LEAST 60%. I would love to tell each post to make that at least 65% but only 60% is satisfactory. BUT we all need to work hard at the 3 R’s of Retention, Revitalization and Recruitment. Each post Membership Chairman cannot do this alone. Every member can play a part of maintaining their posts by helping in some way even if it’s making a few phone calls to the members who did not renew their membership in the past few years. They need to know that they are missed and we need to personally reach out to each of them to find out why they did not renew. A phone call can do it. They will know that we care about them and you may find a way your post can help in some way. I hope each District has or is seriously considering holding a Revitalization. They have worked great in the past few years and we receive so many more contacts when the National Representative comes in to help. I want to thank all the posts that turned in their Post Consolidation Reports which gave us a 100% and allowed Jim Gallaher to receive a beautiful plaque on the stage at the National Convention. Jim was handed the plaque but it was for all who worked to get the reports in.

As always, I am available to help each post in any way I can all you need to do is contact me at MaryAnna.Moderhak@Verizon.net or call at 302-373-6338.

Deadline for next Legionnaire:
December 12, 2016

THE DELAWARE LEGIONNAIRE

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At the 2016 National Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, Charles E. Schmidt, Department of Oregon, was elected National Commander of The American Legion. The National vice Commander, Northeast Region, our region, is Vincent J. Triola, Department of New York. Vice Commander Triola will be calling the district commanders and department officers. The national vice commanders are charged with developing and enhancing membership programs in their respective region. There has been interest shown by the Districts in the Department to have a revitalization effort and therefore we will be able to invite our National Vice Commander to visit us at that time. The Department will then be able to invite him to attend our Department Convention in July 2017.

At the Department Executive Committee meeting held on Saturday, September 18, 2016 I was honored to make the following presentations that were received at the National Convention to Commander Crouser who accepted on behalf of Past Department Commander James Gallagher.

- Plaque from National to Department for 100% filing of 2016 Consolidated Post Reports
- Plaque from National to Department for winning the National Emergency Fund Commander’s Challenge for donations

In addition, Charles E. Armbruster, Department Liaison for the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Delaware, accepted the Heritage Circle Gift Club bronze medallion for donations to the National Child Welfare Foundation for 2015-2016.

I wish to give a heartfelt thank you to the members who have continued to elect me to the various offices in the Department. It is an honor and a privilege that I do not take lightly to be the representative for the Department at the National Organization. Please feel free to contact me if you need assistance, I will do my utmost to help you or direct you to the correct person.

Finally, to all those who have inquired, prayed or expressed concern over my recent knee surgery I thank you. I am finished with physical therapy months ahead of schedule and am resuming normal activities.

Summer and the conventions are history and it is now time to get back to normal. Looking at the membership report, there is some work that needs to be done at a few posts. Most posts within the district are doing well and I thank them for their efforts. Their hard work is showing and it is appreciated. We will work with those posts that need a helping hand to catch up. The posts that are struggling, please know and our officers will be willing to help where needed.

The Sussex District will participate with Mountaire Farms on the Thanksgiving for Thousands Program again this year. This activity is not restricted to the Sussex District, any member of the Department of Delaware can and is encouraged to participate. The collection of the food items will take place on Saturday October 29th from 10 AM till 3 PM, and the actual packing of the boxes will take place on Monday November the 21st at the Mountaire Warehouse in Selbyville, MD at 8:30 AM. The goal this year is to pack 8,500 boxes for those in need within our communities.

Working this program, especially the packing of the boxes gives us legionnaires the opportunity to give back to the community and help those in need. When you sit down for your Thanksgiving dinner with your family and friends, it is a good feeling to know that you helped someone have a nice dinner that would not have been able to afford one.

The Sussex District calendar for the coming year is as follows: September 21, 2016 District Meeting at 7 PM, November the 6th District Meeting at 7 PM, December the 17th Christmas Party 1 till 5 PM, February 15, 2017 District Meeting at 7 PM, February 18th Fish Fry Dinner 1 PM till 5 PM, April 19th District Meeting at 7 PM, April the 22nd Fish Fry Dinner 1 PM till 5 PM, June 10th 2017 District Caucus 11 AM.

All of the above events will take place at Oak Orchard Riverdale American Legion Post 28. All members of the Department are invited to attend these events.

Please note, the Sussex District will be having a Christmas Party again this year and it will take place on December the 17th at Oak Orchard Riverdale Post 28. This party is open to all members of the DCE and Posts within the Department of Delaware. As the time gets closer flyers will be published with the details as to menu selection, cost, etc.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Lafferty
Sussex District Commander

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The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 28 had a very good representation at the 96th National Convention held in Cincinnati OH. Our Unit had five delegates (Carol Feeley, Carole Baldwin, Beth McGinn, Tina Washington and Eastern Division Vice President Helen Skelton who was unable to attend), who spent the week getting updates on Auxiliary programs, voting for National Officers and attending Joint Sessions with the American Legion to hear both Presidential Candidates – Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. During the convention our Unit received several awards to include the Eastern Division Award for both the Junior Activities Program and the Legislative Program and was cited in platform remarks for our troop packing program and our Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) donation which was the highest by a single Unit. The week at Convention was capped off by our Unit receiving one of 6 in country Unit President’s Award for Excellence. We were recognized for having 88 new members join our Unit and the support for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund and other mission programs.

The Department of Delaware and Units win Awards at National Convention.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund – Dept. of Delaware – Award for highest donation per capita. Oak Orchard-Riverdale Unit 28 – Award for % increase over previous year.

Eastern Division – Legislative Award & Junior Award – Unit 28

National President’s Award of Excellence – Unit 28

ALA National President Sharon Conatser & Unit 28 President Tina Washington

Oak Orchard Riverdale Unit 28
Millisboro, Delaware

Unit President Tina Washington

>> GOOD MORNING FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DELAWARE,
2016 SUMMER SWEEPSTAKES REPORT

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING WINNERS

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<td>Frank Beebe</td>
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<td>Brush Behringer</td>
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<td>Don Phares</td>
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<td>Stephen J Konetski</td>
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<td>Melvin Schucker</td>
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<td>Roy C Quinn</td>
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<td>Newark DE</td>
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The funds raised by Department of Delaware, The American Legion sweepstakes contests are reserved for veteran’s programs, support for their families, Boys and Girls State and Trooper Youth programs just to name a few. Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2016 Summer Fling Sweepstakes. If you haven’t supported the Department Fund raisers, please reconsider and those that have please continue. The next sweepstakes program will be the 2016 Holiday Sweepstakes.

John A Endres

Liam O’Connor, a member of Squadron 18, Boys State Governor in 2015, winner of the SamSung Scholarship for the Department of Delaware. He was also Eagle Scout of the Year in 2015 and 2016. As an Eagle Scout he was one of 13 out of 350 selected by the National Eagle Scout Association’s World Explorer’s Program to go on a trek. He is one of four who traveled to Quito, Ecuador and the Amazon Rainforest. He is a freshman at Princeton this year. This is part of the email message Liam sent to Boys State Chairman Lyman Brenner.

Mr. Brenner,

I just returned from my trip to Ecuador. This was a trip that I won through the National Eagle Scout Association’s World Explorers program during the past spring. About 350 Eagle Scouts applied nationally in March and only 13 were selected to go on a trek. I was one of four Amazon biologists. We spent two days in Quito and then seven days in the Amazon rainforest at a scientific station that was 60 miles from the nearest town doing research.

My Boys State knowledge of American democracy knowledge was very useful when touring the presidential palace (first picture) and explaining to Ecuadorians about how our government works (usually when they asked about Trump or the presidential election).

Thanks again for everything.
American Legion Auxiliary 28 Celebrates “Thank a Police Officer” Day

Members of Unit 28 adopted the Milton Police Department and delivered cookies, brownies, water, fruit & vegetables on Law Enforcement Day Sept. 16th to thank them for all they do to keep their community safe.

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Delaware Girls State Program Fundraiser - 2017

These rocking chairs (2) are a wonderful way to show your pride and support a good cause – they are crafted with 7-step finish by the Hinkle Family of Springfield, Tennessee and are a special edition to the Cracker Barrel Old Country Store.

Branch emblems available are Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Armed Forces (flag)

Ticket booklets hold 6 tickets. Each booklet is $5.00
Drawing will be May 13th, 2017 during the ALA – DEC Meeting
Tickets will be available in January 2017 for distribution
Emblem will be chosen by winner
Please see any Unit President for tickets.

SAL Squadron 28 donates to Home of the Brave II

A generous donation of $8,500 was donated to Home of the Brave II (female veteran facility) by SAL Squadron 28. Donation was from their annual Golf Benefit in honor of Gen. George (Doc) Law, a dedicated member of AL Post 28.
The Department of Delaware and The American Legion believe that there is no better way to assure the survival of our republic than to train our young people in the ideals and objectives of American government. By teaching youth to understand and appreciate the basic principles involved in the successful management of a democratic society, America can remain strong and ensure our freedom for future generations.

Boys State is a unique educational program that does not emphasize classroom lectures and textbook learning. Instead, it focuses on participation and personal experience in a model state government, complete with governing bodies and elected public officials. Boys State is designed to mirror the structure and operation of our own Delaware state government.

The program is currently conducted in 45 of the Departments of The American Legion. Hawaii does not conduct a program.

Each Boys State Program varies in content and method of procedure, but adheres to the basic concept of teaching government.

The 79th American Legion Dept. of Delaware Boys State program was held in Dover, DE from June 12 through June 16, 2016. This year there were one hundred and six boys representing forty High Schools. All boys will be seniors in High School in the fall.

In Delaware the program began on Sunday with registration. The actual program opened with formal greetings from 2016 Department 1st Vice Commander Jeffrey Crouser, Auxiliary President Aleta Krauss, SAL Past State Commander Toby Cullen, last years Boys State Governor, Liam O’Connor of Caesar Rodney High School, and National Deputy Director of Youth Programs of Boys Nation/Baseball, Mike Buss.

That evening a presentation of parliamentary procedures that evening the two parties chose their statewide candidates and selected their senators and representatives.

Monday was a busy day. They were in the Delaware Statehouse from 8AM till 2PM. At this time they learned the procedures of the actual House and Senate from both the House and Senate Secretaries as well as what a lobbyist job entails. The day culminated with the election of the following statewide officials – The Governor was Cyrus Shanishoo of Caesar Rodney; Lt-Gov. was Tajaii Fujisuh of Delaware Military Academy; the State Treasurer was Travis Crevasse of Caravel Academy; the State Auditor was Andrew Garner of Polytech; the Insurance Commissioner was Alexander Russo of Concord High School; the Supreme Court Justice was Jacob Hudson of Delaware Military Academy; The Sec of State was David Hazeln, Jr. of St. Elizabeth’s; the Sec of Finance was Trevor Harrington of Delmar; the Sec. of Education was Tam Nguyen of Cab Calloway; The DNREC Secretary was Matthew Etzrod of Archmere Academy, the Commissioner of Corrections was Aaron Spock of Brandywine High School, and the Controller General was Garrett Dorsey of Concord High School.

On Tuesday a question and answer session was held for all Boys Staters by Delaware’s Governor Jack Markell. Following this session the StateWide officials shadowed their counterparts. Prior to the question and answer session the Boys State Senators and representatives were in session and worked on, amended, and passed legislative bills.

They did this for the rest of the session (Wednesday and Thursday mornings)During the Delaware Boys State session a bill to allow Sunday hunting was passed. This Bill was actually introduced into the Delaware State Legislature, passed, and signed into law by Governor Markell.

On Tuesday evening Delaware Secretary of State, Jeffrey Bullock installed the Boys State Governor and other state wide elected officials. That afternoon the Boys State Delegates had sessions with different government officials – and then went to an American Legion Baseball Game. Post 2 of Dover roundly defeated Post 18 of Claymont.

The combination of the Boys State Color Guard, the singing of the National Anthem by Boys Staters, and the Baseball game very much impressed Mike Buss.

On Wednesday, immediately following their luncheon, the young men toured Dover Air Force Base. Thursday was the last day. Following the final session of the Senate and House the young ate a box lunch on the green before returning to legislative hall to be recognized by both the DE State House and Senate.

Delaware’s Speaker of the House, Peter Schwarzkopf had the Boys State Speaker and the Boys state House Leadership sit with their actual counterparts. The Boys Staters ran Delaware’s State House for two hours.

That evening was the Boys State graduation banquet. The most important event of the evening to the young men was the announcement of the Sam Sung Scholarship winner and the Boys Nation Delegates. William Nyrander of Middletown High School was the recipient of the $1000 scholarship. His name was sent on to national to be entered into the $20,000 national Sam Sung Scholarship pool. Finally, the Boys Nation Delegates were announced. They are Alexander Arellano of Middletown High School and Matthew Ettrold of Archmere Academy.

This program is unique among the Departments.

Delaware is small enough that, even though almost every high school in the state is represented, every young man gets to take part in the state legislative process - something many other Departments are not able to do. All of the delegates get to meet and talk to each of the speakers. The Boys State Delegates pick and choose what they ask the speaker and all questions were very relevant and pertinent to the speaker’s topic. The young men learned a great deal of self-confidence and poise, which was obvious to their parents at the graduation banquet.
Americanism Meetings at National Convention

There were two meetings that involved the Americanism programs at the National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. The second meeting, the Americanism Meeting for the Convention was the shorter of the two. It reviewed all pending resolutions, which affected the Americanism Programs. Approximately 40 were approved. They were all resolutions, which were already approved, but, because of legislative intent, had to be reapproved at this convention. Every resolution that involves Federal Legislative action must be reapproved after every federal election that establishes a new Congress – otherwise the resolution becomes non-effective to talk to the legislative body in D.C. All other resolutions were referred back to the Americanism Commission for further study or action.

The Americanism Commission Meeting was the first meeting. The two guest speakers were Joe Lusignan, Drug Demand Redecuation Resource Officer of the Young Marines of the Marine Corps League and Daniel Dayton, Executive Director of the WWIU Centennial Commission. Both were selling their programs – and both have received assistance from The American Legion. Mr. Lusignan especially likes The American Legion because it “puts its money where its mouth is”. However, the highlight of the meeting were the Youth Champions. They are Joshua Wasilewski of Belmont VT (2015 American Legion Baseball All-Academic Team Captain); Anighya Crocker of Springfield, TN (2016 Boys Nation President); Jacob Kelly of Cottage Grove, WI (2016 Eagle Scout of the Year – who was only present at the first day of the Convention as he is a Plebe at West Point); Taylor Gibson of Salem, OR. (She is the 2016 Junior Shooting Sports Precision Champion); Emma Thompson of Freeport, Ill (2016 Junior Shooting Sports Sporter Champion); and Benjamin Crosby of Burlington, WA (2016 National Oratorical Contest 1st Place Winner – and just completed the 10th grade). All are very eloquent but Crocker and Crosby were more than outstanding. These young men and women are the national equivalent of the young men and women who were at the Delaware State Convention.

2017 National Convention

The dates for the 2017 national convention are August 16 – 25, 2017. National has assigned the department its 2017 national convention hotel: Peppermill Resort Spa and Casino, 2707 South Virginia Street, Reno, Nevada. The resort is a first class facility with all the amenities that one could ask for. Peppermill’s website is https://www.peppermillreno.com/.

The housing block is eighteen (18) rooms including one two-bedroom suite for the hospitality suite. The room rate is $156.81 per night, (18) rooms including one two-bedroom suite. The room rate is $156.81 per night, subject to change. Commander Jeffrey K. Crouser and I will do a site visit in November. Following our return, more information and housing forms will be distributed.

Beyond 2017, the national conventions sites and dates are:
- Reno, Nevada August 18-24, 2017
- Minneapolis, Minnesota August 24-30, 2018
- Indianapolis, Indiana August 23-29, 2019
- Louisville, Kentucky August 25-31, 2020
- Phoenix, Arizona August 27 – September 2, 2021

Richard J. Santos
Department Adjutant

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

FIRST QUARTER 2017
(February-June-March)

The American Legion Department Service Officer will be available at the American Legion post and times indicated below. Times and dates are subject to change.

Post #28 - Oak Orchard/Riverdale, Millsboro, DE  302-945-1673
Friday, January 6, 2017 Hours: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Friday, February 3, 2017 Hours: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Friday, March 3, 2017 Hours: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Friday, March 10, 2017 Hours: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Friday, March 17, 2017 Hours: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
For further information, contact DSO Houghton at 302-998-9448 or 302-993-7255.

Joseph Houghton
Department Service Officer
Presentation of
The American Legion Outstanding Heroism Medal to Caleb Seeman

On September 12, 2016, Caleb Seeman was presented the American Legion Outstanding Heroism Medal by the Commander, Walter L. Fox Post 2. The citation reads as follows:

On May 12, 2016, Caleb was at his mother’s house where he was spending the night because it was his birthday. At 9:00 A.M., he heard a “crackling noise”, coming from the hallway. He opened the door to see that there was a fire at the end of the hallway.

Immediately putting into play his Scout training, he immediately proceeded to wake his mother and assist her in departing the burning structure. Upon making sure that his mother was safe, Caleb proceeded to return to the house to save the family dog.

Caleb is a 13-year member of Walter L. Fox Squadron No. 2, Sons of the American Legion.