

PROCEEDINGS

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF

THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Fall Meeting

Sheraton Hotel
Indianapolis, Indiana

October 7 - 8, 2017

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...At 8:30 a.m., Saturday, October 7, 2017, the Fall Meeting of the National Executive Committee was called to order, National Commander Smith presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: The colors of our country being in place, join me in a hand salute: One, two.

I now call on National Chaplain Jim Noble to lead us in the blessing. Please uncover.

Invocation

James Noble, National Chaplain, New Jersey

Before we begin, let us observe a moment of silence for those involved with the hurricanes and the senseless act of violence in Las Vegas.

...The National Executive Committee observed a moment of silence.

Dear Lord, as we begin our new service, we thank You for the past accomplishments. As we gather today for this meeting, give us the gift of peace and understanding, that we approach matters with handle and sincere to our hearts. For the betterment of our organization, keep us true to the foundation upon which The Sons of The American Legion has been founded. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Chaplain.

In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all veterans, let us stand in a moment of silence.

...The National Executive Committee observed a moment of silence.

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: To maintain our awareness that a constant vigil should be maintained so that no POW or MIA will be left unaccounted for, The Sons of The American Legion designate a POW/MIA empty chair at all meetings. This is a physical symbol

of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for, as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please place the POW/MIA flag on the empty chair.

...The Sergeant-at-Arms placed the POW/MIA flag on the empty chair.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: National Vice Commander Mark Cannito will lead us in the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of Allegiance

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You may recover.

National Vice Commander Joseph Navarrete will lead us in recital of the preamble to our constitution.

Recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion

...The National Executive Committee recited the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Serving as a constant reminder that servicemen and women on a daily basis are putting themselves at risk to ensure our freedoms, The Sons of The American Legion display a corporate Blue Star Banner at all meetings to serve as a symbol of our support of all of the military personnel still serving this great country. Let us never forget that every day these individuals are protecting our liberty. The Blue Star service banner is in place.

At this time, I'd call on National Adjutant Anthony Wright who will read the call to this fall NEC meeting and also will conduct a roll call of the National Executive Committee.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Pursuant to Section 2, Article 7 of the National Constitution of The Sons of The American Legion, the national commander of The Sons of The American Legion hereby calls for a meeting of the National Executive Committee of The Sons of The American Legion to be held October 7th and 8th, 2007, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Roll call of officers.

Roll Call

...National Adjutant Wright called the roll of the National Executive Committee as follows:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander
Danny J. Smith, Nebraska

National Vice Commanders
East: Kenneth P. Warner, Pennsylvania
South: Mark A. Cannito, South Carolina
Central: Jay E. Marsden, Missouri
Midwest: Joseph R. Navarrete, New Mexico
West: Donald Ramirez, California

National Adjutant
Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutants
Harold E. Thompson, Nebraska (Emeritus) - EXCUSED
James "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida
Robert J. Avery, New York
David M. Ridenour, Indiana
Scott Williams, Virginia
Scott Thornton, Ohio
Jeff Hicks, New Jersey

National Chaplain
James Noble, New Jersey

National Historian
Jerry Cole, Nebraska

National Judge Advocate
Joseph Paviglianti, New York

National Sergeant-at-Arms
George B. Sevick, Jr., Nebraska

National Assistant Sergeants-at-Arms
Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania
Lyle G. Larson, Kansas
Raymond Giehl, III, Indiana
Matt Chebro, Georgia
Gregory A. Falco, New York

National Commander's Aide
David L. Rippe, Nebraska

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

Robert McBride, South Carolina
J.R. Stillwell, Illinois
Charles E. Gannon, Maryland
David P. Stephens, Indiana
Christopher R. Cerullo, New York
Douglas Bible, Minnesota
Eugene L. Sacco, California - EXCUSED
Roland D. Matteson, Arizona
Joseph M. Mayne, Wisconsin
John T. Dietz, Ohio
William E. Matoska, Maryland
Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana - EXCUSED
Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma
Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas
Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
Steve C. Laws, North Carolina
Neal C. Warnken, Kansas
Michael Deacon, Iowa
William L. Sparwasser, Maryland
Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Michigan
Raymond P. Giehl, Jr., Indiana
Thomas Cisna, Illinois
Mark E. Arneson, Georgia
James K. Roberts, III, Florida - EXCUSED

Christopher J. Huntzinger, Pennsylvania
 Joseph Gladden, Maryland
 Michael Moss, Colorado
 Kevin Collier, Alaska

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMEN

Alabama (B), Alaska (N), Arizona (B), California (B), Colorado (N), Connecticut (B), Delaware (N), Florida (B), Georgia (B), Idaho (N), Illinois (N), Indiana (B), Iowa (N), Kansas (B), Kentucky (A), Louisiana (N), Maine (B), Maryland (B), Massachusetts (B), Michigan (B), Minnesota (B), Mississippi (N), Missouri (N), Montana (N), Nebraska (B), Nevada (B), New Hampshire (B), New Jersey (B), New Mexico (B), New York (B), North Carolina (N), Ohio (B), Oklahoma (B), Oregon (N), Pennsylvania (B), Texas (B), Vermont (N), Virginia (N), Wisconsin (N), Wyoming (B)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Mr. Commander, that completes roll call. You have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I now declare this 2017 fall meeting of the National Executive Committee regularly convened.

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed and published. If there is no objection, the minutes will be accepted as published.

NECMAN BLAIR (TX): NEC Blair, Texas. There are some corrections.

On page 5.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Make sure you speak in the microphone.

NECMAN BLAIR: Page 5, it says, "The National Constitution of The Sons of The American Legion are hereby called by the Commander." Instead of "constitution," it should be "convention."

And then on page 16, right under Child Welfare, it says, "compared to last year's," they put an extra zero in there. It should be 360,299.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Please repeat that last page.

NECMAN BLAIR: 16, right under "Child Welfare." The correction should be 360,299. It should be \$360,299.13.

And then on page 24, right under "Constitution and Bylaws Committee," "Mr. Jennings, Florida, reported there was," it should be "were no."

Then page 29, the fourth paragraph down --

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Let's hold it down. If you guys want to visit, go outside the room.

NECMAN BLAIR: The "Following completion of roll call, National Adjutant O'Hearne announced the five nominations." It says Tom Skully, it should be Skelley, with a S-K-E-L-L-E-Y.

That's all I have.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: That's enough.

Any other corrections?

NECMAN DADDS (MD): Mr. Commander, NEC Dadds from Maryland.

On page 3 it's listed "Convention NEC," it should be "Convention delegates" to the convention.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Which sentence is that?

NECMAN DADDS: On the first day of the convention, I think it was page 3. It should read, "Convention delegate attendance" instead of the NECs.

Also I have one more.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: They're still looking for that one.

NECMAN DADDS: On page 21 under "Veterans Employment and Education Commission," it listed Bear Weinzirl as vice chair; he's the chairman.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Restate that last one for me.

NECMAN DADDS: Under the "Veterans Employee and Education Commission," they have Weinzirl as vice chair; he's the chairman.

That's all I have, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Okay. I'll take note of the changes.

Any other corrections?

If there are no further corrections, the minutes of the previous meeting will be accepted as published and corrected.

At this time I would like to introduce any first-time attendees to our NEC meeting and welcome you to Indianapolis. If you'd please rise, first-time attendees.

(Applause)

Great, thank you. Once again, welcome, and definitely come back.

I'd also like to recognize a group that are within us and that I highly respect, that's those dual members. And my family surely does appreciate what you folks have done in service to this country and the United States military. And gentlemen, I'd like to tell you thank you, God bless you, and welcome home. My family surely does appreciate that.

If you'd all please rise real quick and be recognized for your service.

(Applause)

I don't know that we can ever thank you folks enough.

Opening Remarks

Danny J. Smith
National Commander, Nebraska

Hopefully, by now you've all read an email or some type of a publication and are aware of the fact that I've selected the theme of Pioneering Spirit as our membership theme. But I very well could have adopted that theme for our year, or we could adopt that very theme for our theme of life in general. If you look at that theme, I reference forwards courage, strength, teamwork, and perseverance.

I kind of used the early prairie pioneers as the logo, but we could reference any pioneers, whether it's pioneers in flight, pioneers in technology, pioneers in space exploration. But I'm sure all of those pioneers, whatever field they are in, possess those four traits and characteristics.

And if we use those four characteristics as we move forward, we surely will be successful. So what does it mean to be a pioneer? The New Webster's Dictionary defines a pioneer as one who originates anything or prepares the way for others. To open a way; to originate.

So with this in mind, we can easily say that to possess a pioneering spirit, we must lead the way, establish or initiate new ideas, and forge ahead, and prepare for the future.

And that's exactly what the Strategic Planning Committee is attempting to do. And I think with our help and their vision, we can definitely move this organization forward, and we need to continue that effort. But sometimes that most difficult step to take is the first step.

The fear of unknown, to me, is one of the most challenging obstacles to overcome, and we must possess the courage necessary to step outside of our comfort zones and have the courage required to face the challenges and the issues that we face, and the courage to make the changes that are necessary to achieve our goals that will benefit this organization.

Now, we have experienced a multitude of change these past few months, and we talked about that last night, if you happened to attend that meeting. And yes, that was another shock to many, the way the meeting format was changed this weekend. And I know there are those that resist change, and sometimes the older we get, the harder it is to accept change. But you know what? Change is good, and change will help us, and change certainly does cause us heartburn at times, but change will move us forward.

Now, I understand that many of you may be confused, upset, and maybe even downright mad with some of the changes that we've experienced these last few months. But gentlemen, getting mad serves no purpose, and it doesn't help this organization one bit and it does not move us forward. You know, what's done is done and we cannot change the past and we can only look to the future. And both John Kerestan and Brian O'Hearne contributed immensely to this organization, and those contributions surely are appreciated. But it was time for a change, and I believe as time passes, you will realize this.

I must tell you, these past couple of months, working with our new national liaison, Paul Brown, and our new national adjutant, Anthony Wright, has been fantastic. We have worked together, sharing ideas, communicating, and confronting some of the challenges that we face. And I want to point out that the keyword here is "together." This has been a group effort. This isn't one individual taking charge; this is coming together as a team, working together to work through our problems.

These two gentlemen will definitely help forge the future of our organization. They're here to serve us and they will hopefully be here for many years to come. They are both open to suggestions, receptive, and communicate at a level much higher than we are accustomed to. And best of all, they bring the enthusiasm of youth, or at least a younger mindset.

Last weekend I attended a corporate meeting and they referenced their vision of performance with these five words: Excellence, integrity, well-being, growth, and trust. I want you to stop and think about those words for just a minute.

If we would operate with that very vision of performance, just think of what we could be in a few years. Now, here's the deal. We cannot adopt that vision of performance without change, and we're going to have to deal with change, and it's going to take some time, and we need to give both National Liaison Paul and National Adjutant Anthony, you know, give them a little time to adjust. There's a learning curve and, unfortunately, that's pretty steep right now. They don't have time to really work into this at a slow pace. So give them a little time and we'll get through it.

We cannot move into the future while focusing on the past. We must maintain a positive attitude and we must focus on the future, all the while remembering who we are and what we do.

We are proud possessors of a priceless heritage. We are sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and stepsons of veterans of the great wars. We are brothers in this organization and, as brothers, we need to come together for the greater good of The Sons of The American Legion.

So I ask you, do you have the courage necessary? The faith in our leadership? Are you willing to work as a team? And do you have the determination to succeed? I believe you do. Now you just need to convince yourselves and you need to take that first step.

Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

We do have a couple of action items that we need to look at this morning.

Joseph Kaiser was originally nominated as an appointment to serve on the VA&R. He never accepted that appointment as he was the NEC and chose to serve his detachment in that capacity.

We also had another individual, Gary Winters, that was appointed and approved to MT&D. He asked to resign, with family issues with his grandson, and I surely would remember to keep him in your prayers as we press forward, his family.

At this time, I'd like to appoint Steve Gower to VA&R, and MT&D appointment to replace Gary we would present tomorrow.

I have one other item. The Ad Hoc will be replacing Greg "Doc" Gibbs with Clint Bolt.

What's your pleasure? We'd be looking for a motion to accept the resignation and move forward with the appointments.

NECMAN GLANDER (AL): Mr. Commander, Tom Glander, NEC, Alabama. I make a motion that we approve the appointments.

NECMAN PIPHER (IN): Mr. Commander, Mike Pipher, NEC, Indiana. Second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Are we accepting the resignation also in that motion?

NECMAN GLANDER: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: A motion has been made to accept the resignation of Gary Winters and accept the appointments and duly seconded.

Any discussion?

Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

At this time, I would like to call your new national liaison, Mr. Paul Brown, to the podium for remarks.

(Standing ovation)

PAUL BROWN

National SAL Staff Liaison, Indiana

Okay, I'm going to give you a demonstration what speaking into the microphone means. This is me speaking into the microphone. This, as you can tell, is not speaking into the microphone; right? Okay.

Please do us a favor and help Janine out by slowing down and making sure she knows where you're from, such as, "I am Paul Brown, the national staff liaison," so that she can know exactly who you are. Because unlike me, she doesn't know everyone in the room by first name.

(Laughter)

I'm glad you got the humor in that.

Also, I owe a few of you some apologies for some of the rooms that got screwed up along the way. I've talked it over with Brian and we figured out the ways that we're going to rectify it for next year so those issues will not be repeated. So I'm off to a great start anyway.

(Laughter)

In some ways I really do miss John already.

Also, one more housekeeping item: I've been instructed to inform you and to beg you tomorrow to check out of your rooms, if you're leaving tomorrow, to check out of your rooms before you go to your meetings, that way they have a chance to clean the rooms and get them

ready. There is always a huge slam turnaround from the SAL NEC going into The American Legion NEC meeting.

So just be cognizant of that, think of that, make sure that we create a solution. Because otherwise -- we like using this facility, but we have to turn around quickly using it. So if I could get a little bit of north and south on that, I'd greatly appreciate it.

Normally you're going to find my opportunity to address this group as brief and, frankly, they're going to be boring. I will come up here, because protocol demands it, and I will tell you that I'm glad to be here and proud to be part of the team. I will then congratulate you on your efforts and say something like thanking you all for being fine Americans, and then I will exit the stage and get out of your way so you can conduct your affairs.

Today is going to be different, though. It's not that I'm unhappy to be here. To be honest with you, I'm very fired up to take on the challenges of my role as national staff liaison. I believe I'm the right agent at the right time to coordinate with the other division national headquarters, and create opportunities for the SAL which are necessary to create functionality for this program.

It's not that I'm not proud to be part of this team. I am proud of the team I see before me. I'm especially appreciative of the professionalism and dedication already demonstrated to me by the National Commander Danny Smith and by the National Adjutant Tony Wright in the short time they've held their roles. They've been there for me, quickly responding. Anytime I had a question, we were able to get to the bottom of it very quickly. I appreciate their professionalism, and I think we have the right people at the right time in the right roles.

I look forward to deepening the relationships with everyone in this room and gain your trust, as someone who can administer this program without controlling it and as someone who will ensure an environment where your vision can be developed and nurtured.

It's also not that I don't think your efforts are not worthy of praise. For example, I look at this sheet here, which is the accomplishments in 2017, and I'm amazed at what you guys can accomplish. If we can get 400,000 Legionnaires to accomplish the same amount that you guys accomplish every single year, I don't think there's anything that would hold this organization back.

It's not that I don't think you're all fine Americans; I believe you to be some of the finest, but that's neither here nor there. But just the fact that you're taking time out of your lives to make this program better, says it all.

Today is different. The length of my response to you is different because of the change we're experiencing, as Danny mentioned. It's across the board, and especially in key leadership positions.

In your packets, you may see something that talks about change. It's about four, five, six pages. It starts out talking about that change is normal, change is expected, and honestly, without change, you will die. Heck, this is change and I don't like it, but hopefully I'll live through it.

But it also goes on to talk about the different phases of an organization, how an organization starts out where everything is new and exciting but no one really knows what's going on, there's not a lot of function; then you go into when you gain function; then you have this kind of area that they call prime; then you have this kind of decay phase; and then it goes into dying. If you don't get back to prime, guess what happens? You die.

But the only way to get back to prime is to reevaluate on your mission and get back through change to what really values you and your participation in the organization.

So I don't want to get into a lot of details, but I want you to read that and kind of get to know it. If you have questions about it, you've got my email in that brand-new fancy directory I put out.

I believe what you read there will entertain, inspire, and possibly scare the crap out of you. Because I found that that document was actually written 15 years ago, and the fact that I think there's things that you can apply to The American Legion, I think it's things that you can apply to The Sons of The American Legion, and to any organization that you're a part of. And the fact of the matter is, is you're going to laugh because some of the things that it talks about are things that I know that each and every one of you have experienced at least one time in this room.

At convention I asked the attendees at the post-convention NEC meeting to stand if they are committed to improving The Sons of The American Legion and to look around the room and remember that moment throughout the year as you made decisions. I was honored that a past national commander approached me in the elevator and said, "Hey, by the way, I appreciate you saying that, and you actually motivated me to call someone and to put some things to rest that need to be put to rest." You know what? That's exactly why that was said and that's exactly the direction we need to be moving.

This is a year of change. We already talked about the change in leadership so I'm not going to talk about that, but there's also going to be a change in functionality. I'm going to give you some commitments in the fact that I am going to be working very hard this year to bring you guys things that have not been available, such as online dues renewal, the ability to join the

SAL online, being able to take a consolidated squadroning course and be able to submit them online.

But it's also going to be a change I'd like to see as far as unity. And throughout this change, I, too, went to a recent seminar. In the seminar, it taught me that, for a strategic plan to work, it needs to challenge, it means it can't be easy. If it's too easy, it's not worth doing. It needs to inspire, it needs to engage the members, and it needs, most importantly, to generate action. Everyone in the room needs to own it.

These changes that are coming up, you need to get involved, you need to become informed so you're not just looking at it as, "Oh, that's something the ad hoc committee came up with," but it's something that you can own and you can implement in your detachments.

You know, it's also a year, you guys are wondering, why the heck is he holding this? It's a year for us to put down some swords and shields. There's been some battles going on. I'm just going to call it like I see it. For anyone that knows me, I don't kind of -- I might choose my words well but I'm pretty direct, I guess would probably be the best way to describe me. But this is a year to put down swords and it's a year to start new, it's a year to start fresh.

I think I'm going to make my point best by reading a Native American proverb I found. It goes a little something like this. It says an old Cherokee was teaching his grandson about life and he said, "A fight is going on inside of me, son. It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil. The evil wolf is angry, is envious, has sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other wolf is good. He is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going inside of you right now, son, and inside every one of us."

The grandson thought about this for a while, and he finally asked his grandfather, "Well, which wolf will win?"

The grandfather replies to him, "The one you feed."

So I think we kind of need to think about that as we move forward. We are going to become the organization that we focus on in our actions.

Really quickly, when I was in the military, I was taught something that made a lot of sense, and it's called "Warrior Ethos." It's something I took with me and apply to my day-to-day life, and you might see that I apply it to my job and my role working for internal affairs now. The Warrior Ethos is as follows:

"I will never accept defeat. I will never quit. I will never leave a fallen comrade."

I challenge everyone here to feed your awesome wolf and to be warriors for SAL. And so if we do have need to pick up these swords again, let's do it as brothers united and let's have a collective vision that will inspire and embolden our members. And when we fight, let's fight together.

Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Before we get into the donations portions, we do have another individual here I'd like to recognize: The representative from the Philippines, would you please rise and be recognized?

Good morning, sir.

(Applause)

Although this individual is not the NEC or alternate, I would grant him voice during these meetings, if he so chooses. So he'll have voice but no vote.

We have another guest this morning, no stranger to this organization, a dear friend not only to me but I believe to a lot of you in this room. Please join me in a warm welcome with our dear friend from the Child Welfare Foundation, Board of Directors President Dennis Boland.

(Standing ovation)

Dennis Boland

Child Welfare Foundation Board of Directors President, Florida

Good morning.

Wouldn't feel right without it.

(Applause)

As I got up this morning, I was wondering what I would talk about. After hearing your commander speak, reminds me, I belong to a Yahoo group from my class of 1960 high school. We have a liberal called the LT60, then we have no politics called LT60 Cafe, and then we have the conservative people which is the Lion's Den.

We live in a termless world, and recently, our president, when it came to talking about the American flag, voiced his opinion. And my group got up there and said that the President of the United States should not talk about the American flag in the NFL. I felt, as a veteran, that was totally wrong.

In my years, 75 years in this great country, I have seen a lot of things go by the wayside: prayer in our schools, Pledge of Allegiance in our schools, Pledge of Allegiance at assemblies; transgender people, which I never even knew of when I was growing up; atheists.

That is not the world that I grew up in. I grew up in a world that, when I served, we had a saying that was posted in our hall of our barracks of the 101st Airborne. And whenever you

left the building, you hit that saying. It was from the president that I served under, John F. Kennedy. "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

As I stand here today, I want to ensure you that you epitomize that saying. Think of what you've done and think of what the president said and what you have given to our country. It is amazing. Your program continuously outshines -- probably get fired from my job --

(Laughter)

-- as always, outshines The American Legion. You know, you look at the Child Welfare Foundation, \$886,000 and some change last year. Sorry to say, the auxiliary only had 80,000, the Legion only 170,000, and of course you all had 500-and-some thousand dollars.

(Applause)

Because of that, tomorrow night when your board of directors meet for the Child Welfare Foundation, we'll be able to possibly give \$800,000 out to children's organizations. Doesn't necessarily mean that we're going to give that amount out, but that amount is available. We can go over it or we can go below it.

But what you have done for this great organization has outshined many organizations. They call the animal organizations, they have usually one program that they're good at. You don't have one program that you're good at. Every one of your programs: Children's Miracle Network, Special Olympics, Child Welfare, you name it. You cannot be beaten.

You are, to me, the greatest organization that I am fortunate enough to belong to, and I thank you for -- well, I thank my father for giving me the opportunity to become a Sons of The American Legion member, and I thank you for what you do. May God bless you. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: So while we have Dennis on stage, we'll call for donations. And I'd also ask that if you know of any donations that have come in with my call to action for NEF or the Endowment Fund within the last two months, and that donation has already been made, feel free to come up here and let us know what you folks did. That's just as important as bringing that check here.

I asked you folks to step up, and step up indeed you did. That call to action was overwhelming. While I heard some of the donations that were given by some of the detachments, it almost brought a tear to my eye. It is greatly appreciated by me and the organization that it serves.

Please, if you made a donation and it has been submitted to national within the last two months, join in with us and let everybody know what you did. So at this time we'll take donations for The American Legion programs. You'll line up on this side of the stage.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CANNITO (SC): If I could take a moment, Mark Cannito, vice commander, triplet member of Post 186, Squadron 186. Even though our heart is near and dear to CWF, with the recent devastation and tragedies that we have faced, we present a check to the NEF in the amount of \$500 from The Sons of The American Legion Squadron 186. Thank you.

(Applause)

ALTERNATE NECMAN STEWART (NV): Commander, as you know, we just had a little party out in Reno, Nevada, and I happened to be the convention chair for that little soiree. Well, everybody remembers me out there selling convention pins and we had a nice little dinner on Friday night, and I mentioned that all the proceeds for both of those things were going to go

to Child Welfare Fund. And so I'm honored to be able to present to the Child Welfare Fund \$8,000 from all the proceeds from that convention.

(Applause)

COMMANDER DAVIS (MN): Shawn Davis, commander, Detachment of Minnesota. At our first joint family membership rally, the Harvest Rally held last month, I put on a challenge to all the squadrons to attend and make a donation to NEF in recognition of the hurricanes and the challenges our members are going to be facing.

It escalated, shall we say, and after all the challenges, the back and forth, how the Legion got involved, and when everything finally ended up and everything got paid off, our final total was \$250 for TFA, \$2,958 for NEF for a total of \$3,208.

(Applause)

NECMAN ELLWEIN (MT): I'm Dick Ellwein from the Detachment of Montana. A check for CWF for \$500 and a check for NEF for \$500.

(Applause)

NECMAN TOLBERT (MI): Rodney Tolbert, Detachment of Michigan NEC. From the Detachment of Michigan, \$1,500 to the NEF.

(Applause)

NECMAN KEARNS (NE): I'm Keith Kearns, Detachment of Nebraska. We have several donations here: From our detachment commander, Karl Frederickson, \$125 to the NEF. From the Detachment of Nebraska, \$1,000 to the National Emergency Fund. From The American Legion Post Sons of The American Legion Squadron 32, \$1,000 to the National Emergency Fund. From Squadron 331, \$1,000 to the National Emergency Fund. From the

Squadron 308 in Weston, \$250 for the National Emergency Fund. From Squadron 193, \$100 for the National Emergency Fund and \$100 for Child Welfare. Thank you.

(Applause)

I guess I didn't dig deep enough, guys. We have from the American Legion Beamer Squadron 159, \$1,500 for National Emergency Fund, and \$40 cash.

(Applause)

NECMAN JOHNSON (MA): Good morning. Dave Johnson, NEC, Detachment of Massachusetts. I have a check for the Child Welfare Foundation from the Detachment of Massachusetts for \$2,500, and from the Detachment of Massachusetts for the National Emergency Fund, \$2,000, and from Sharon Squadron 106 for the National Emergency Fund, \$500.

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN MENNEL (MI): Good morning, Dave Mennel from the Detachment of Michigan. I have a few checks here this morning. I have a check for NEF from Grand Haven, Michigan, in the amount of \$1,500. A check from Buchanan, Michigan, for NEF for \$250. A check from Squadron 14 in Troy, Michigan, for \$50 for the NEF. Also I have a check that was submitted prior to from the 18th District for \$100. And also we have from the 18th District a check for \$100 that went towards our department commander. He had family down in Texas that lost everything during the hurricane, so that was another one of our donations. Thank you.

(Applause)

COMMANDER CLANCY (NY): Good morning. My name is Bill Clancy from the Empire State, the Great State of New York. I have two donations this morning: The first to the Child Welfare Foundation which is, of course, dear to our hearts, for \$2,500; and the second,

for the NEF, which again, in New York, as the detachment commander, I was just on a tour of the shoreline of Queens and Suffolk County which borders the ocean, and we're still recovering from Hurricane Sandy, buildings are still being rebuilt. So New York really felt special about giving something this year to the NEF. So I'm presenting a check for \$11,500 to the NEF.

(Cheers and applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MOSS (CO): Good morning. Past National Commander Mike Moss from the Detachment of Colorado. Okay. We had some fundraisers for the NEF. Squadron 21 of Golden, Colorado, donated \$1,000 to NEF. Post 21 of Golden, Colorado, \$1,000 for NEF. Unit 21, Golden, Colorado, \$500. Unit 111 of Louisville, \$100 for NEF; \$100 from Louisville for the Endowment Fund.

Now, these checks were sent to the Department of Texas, attention Bill West, for the veterans down there in Texas. So thank you very much. So there you go, Mr. Commander.

(Applause)

NECMAN FLASINSKI (PA): Good morning, everybody. George Flasiński, Detachment of Pennsylvania. I have several checks here today: One for the National Emergency Fund from the Detachment of Pennsylvania for \$500. For Operation Comfort Warrior, we have \$276 from Post 42 in Towanda; Post 413 in Pocono Lakes, \$500; 641 in Baden, \$100; Post 730 in Harrisburg, \$250; and the 15th District from our 2017 convention, \$250, for a total of \$1,376.

And for the Child Welfare Fund, we have \$60 from Post 593 in Curtisville; 517 gave us \$350, and that's Mercersburg; cash from the 2017 convention was \$310; 15th District from the 2017 convention was \$500. Some people couldn't turn their phones off for convention, that was \$30.

(Laughter)

673 from Ashley, PA, was 500 -- or 264. We budget in our budget \$500. Cash from the 2017 convention DEC was 150. 504 in Herndon, PA was 180; Dickson City 665 was 500; and the 12th District from our 2017 DEC was 250, for a total of \$3,094 for Child Welfare.

(Applause)

NECMAN LeJEUNE (LA): Camille LeJeune, NEC, Louisiana. Commander's Project is our Endowment Fund, \$100.

(Applause)

NECMAN COOK (NH): Good morning. My name is Phillip Cook, I'm the NEC from the Detachment of New Hampshire. Today I have a donation here from Squadron 14 of \$122.28, putting in less than \$30 from \$1 per member.

(Applause)

NECMAN MOORE (VA): I'm Linwood Moore from the Detachment of Virginia, the NEC. Right now we do not have a total for what we've done for the NEC. We're still taking collections at this moment. The call to action was \$1 per member; we're well over \$2 per member right now. We have a conference coming up in two weeks and I'm sure we'll have more donations coming in then. Thank you.

(Applause)

NECMAN PIPHER (IN): Commander, I'm pleased to let you know that Indiana Squadron 500, Speedway, Indiana, recently sent in a check for \$500 for NEF, and this afternoon at our DEC, the detachment will be authorizing a check for \$2,500 for NEF as well. I can assure you this is just the first shot across the bow, the battle has not yet begun.

(Applause)

COMMANDER HAYSE (IL): Good morning. Paul Hayse, Detachment of Illinois. At our fall DEC we had checks totaling \$3,000 for Child Welfare Foundation.

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN WAITE (NH): Good morning. The National Children and Youth Committee this year, we've decided to do a personal challenge with the Commander's Challenge going. As everybody knows, the commander's coins always for those who go above and beyond. So we put out a challenge for \$50 a coin. To date, we're turning in \$1,500.

These are available all weekend and throughout the year. If anybody wants one, please see me. Remember, it's for going above and beyond for veterans and their children. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: We're checking, there may be another check or two from Nebraska. I'll let you folks know.

I don't know whether they want it announced, but Harold Thompson, Jr. had to stop on the way to Indianapolis this weekend and have emergency gallbladder surgery. He's doing well, but he did have some checks and we think they may be up in the office.

To date, at this point without those checks: NEF, \$26,333; Operation Comfort Warrior, \$1,376; Child Welfare Foundation, \$17,316.28; TFA, \$250; and the Endowment Fund, \$40.

Thank you all very much. I'll tell you what, every dollar, every cent makes a difference in someone's life. You guys and gals, seeing there are some ladies amongst us, I know they do a lot of work too, you just continue to amaze me. I'll tell you what, I am so proud to be a part of this organization and call you my brothers and sisters. Keep up the great work, it's greatly appreciated.

(Applause)

Okay. There's a correction on the endowment: \$420.

Dennis, thank you again. It's always a pleasure to have you on our stage and bring us remarks. Keep up the great work. I know all our members will keep up the great work for your organization that you represent.

(Standing ovation)

Are there any announcements at this time? Are you guys having a caucus?

COMMISSION MEMBER LEE (NY): Commander, David Lee from the Detachment of New York. I'd like to announce that our leading candidate for national commander from the Great Detachment of New York, Greg "Doc" Gibbs, and the national leading candidates for vice commander will be having a luncheon be running from 11 to 2. Come on over and taste the Great State of New York's food. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER WARNER: Mr. Commander, Kenneth Warner, national vice commander. Eastern Region Caucus, my right rear corner.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Did you catch that? Eastern Region Caucus, back by Mr. Tansel, where he's standing.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CANNITO: Mr. Commander, national vice commander, Southern. Since Ken took my spot, we're going to meet over in that corner.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Southern Region, up front.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CANNITO: Just a reminder, I did send an email to the Southern Region. We have our social tonight; first show is at 4:30, second is at 5:30.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you.

Mr. Ramirez.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER RAMIREZ: Commander, first, I want to apologize to everybody for being late, I overslept. Second, our caucus will be in this corner here, the Western Region. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you. Western region up in this corner.

Mr. Navarrete.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER NAVARRETE: Mr. Commander, National Vice Commander Joseph Navarrete for the Midwest Region. We'll be meeting in the back left corner.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Midwest, back rear corner.

Well, Central, what do you have to say?

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER MARSDEN: Well, since we're the Central, we'll take right here in the central.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Any other announcements?

Any other announcements?

If there are none, I'd just like to remind everyone that the religious service will be held tomorrow morning beginning at 6:45 in this room. I would ask that you please join us. These national chaplains put a lot of effort in putting these religious services together, and the least we can do is come up and take part in that. So, please, remember that in the morning, stop by, they only last 15, 20 minutes. It will do your soul good.

Detachment Commanders will meet in this room. Commission and Committee Forum will meet across the hall at 10:00. We probably will continue that this afternoon.

Any other announcements?

With the colors of our country remaining in place, join me in a hand salute: One, two.

We now stand in recess until tomorrow morning at 8:45 a.m.

*...At 9:36 a.m., Saturday, October 7, 2017, the National Executive Committee recessed,
to reconvene at 8:45 a.m., Sunday, October 8, 2017.*

SECOND DAY

Sunday, October 8, 2017

...At 8:45 a.m., the National Executive Committee reconvened, National Commander Smith presiding.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: The colors of our country in place, join me in a hand salute: One, two.

The national chaplain will give the blessing of God. Please uncover.

Invocation

James Noble, National Chaplain, New Jersey

O Lord, thank You for this wonderful day You have given us. As we do our work in this meeting, we ask for Your guiding hand in all our programs. Let us serve side by side for the good of The Sons of The American Legion and the entire American Legion family. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: National Vice Commander Ken Warner will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance, please.

Pledge of Allegiance

...The National Executive Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: National Vice Commander Jay Marsden will lead us in reciting the preamble. Please recover.

Recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion

...The National Executive Committee recited the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now conduct the roll.

Roll Call

...National Adjutant Wright called the roll of the National Executive Committee as

follows:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander

Danny J. Smith, Nebraska

National Vice Commanders

East: Kenneth P. Warner, Pennsylvania

South: Mark A. Cannito, South Carolina

Central: Jay E. Marsden, Missouri

Midwest: Joseph R. Navarrete, New Mexico

West: Donald Ramirez, California

National Adjutant

Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutants

Harold E. Thompson, Nebraska (Emeritus) - Excused

James "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida

Robert J. Avery, New York

David M. Ridenour, Indiana

Scott Williams, Virginia

Scott Thornton, Ohio

Jeff Hicks, New Jersey

National Chaplain

James Noble, New Jersey

National Historian

Jerry Cole, Nebraska

National Judge Advocate

Joseph Paviglianti, New York

National Sergeant-at-Arms

George B. Sevick, Jr., Nebraska

National Assistant Sergeants-at-Arms

Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania

Lyle G. Larson, Kansas

Raymond Giehll, III, Indiana

Matt Chebro, Georgia
 Gregory A. Falco, New York

National Commander's Aide
 David L. Rippe, Nebraska

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

Michael Seaton, California
 Robert McBride, South Carolina
 J.R. Stillwell, Illinois
 Charles E. Gannon, Maryland
 David P. Stephens, Indiana
 Christopher R. Cerullo, New York
 Douglas Bible, Minnesota
 Eugene L. Sacco, California - EXCUSED
 Roland D. Matteson, Arizona
 Joseph M. Mayne, Wisconsin
 John T. Dietz, Ohio
 William E. Matoska, Maryland
 Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana - EXCUSED
 Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma
 Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas
 Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
 Steve C. Laws, North Carolina - EXCUSED
 Neal C. Warnken, Kansas
 Michael Deacon, Iowa
 William L. Sparwasser, Maryland
 Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Michigan
 Raymond P. Giehl, Jr., Indiana
 Thomas Cisna, Illinois
 Mark E. Arneson, Georgia
 James K. Roberts, III, Florida - EXCUSED
 Joseph Gladden, Maryland
 Michael Moss, Colorado
 Kevin Collier, Alaska

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMEN

Alabama (B), Alaska (N), Arizona (B), California (A), Colorado (N), Connecticut (B),
 Delaware (N), Florida (B), Georgia (B), Idaho (N), Illinois (N), Indiana (N), Iowa (N), Kansas
 (B), Kentucky (A), Louisiana (N), Maine (B), Maryland (B), Massachusetts (B), Michigan (B),
 Minnesota (B), Mississippi (N), Missouri (N), Montana (N), Nebraska (B), Nevada (B), New
 Hampshire (B), New Jersey (B), New Mexico (B), New York (B), North Carolina (N), Ohio
 (B), Oklahoma (B), Oregon (N), Pennsylvania (B), Texas (B), Vermont (N), Virginia (N),
 Washington (N), Wisconsin (A), Wyoming (N)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Commander, that completes roll call. We have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I call this Sunday session to order.

One housekeeping item that we need to do first thing this morning, we'd like action on the changes to the minutes that we did not do yesterday. So at this time we're looking for a motion to accept those changes or whatever your pleasure may be, gentlemen.

NECMAN BROWN (GA): Bob Brown, NEC, I make a motion we accept the changes in the minutes.

NECMAN KEISER (NV): Joseph Keiser, NEC, Detachment of Nevada, second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been moved and duly seconded to accept the changes that were discussed on the floor yesterday.

Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Once again, we have our stenographer here recording, so please use the microphone, gentlemen. Just a reminder, state your name and your detachment.

Moving forward, is our distinguished guest here yet? We'll get to them when they show up.

At this time I'll call on Gerald Hammerschmidt, the Americanism Commission, for their report. Joining Gerald will be Children and Youth chairman John Waite, Child Welfare Foundation, Chris Carlton.

Gentlemen, make your way to the stage and start your report.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN HAMMERSCHMIDT (KS): Good morning. I will let John start Children and Youth, I will let him do his report first.

Oral Report of Children and Youth Committee

John Waite, Chairman, Vermont

Good morning. I won't go through the entire report. As everybody knows, we didn't have a meeting, but the Children and Youth Committee has had two conference calls and we will have another October 19th, so it will be the third Wednesday of every month. Anybody is welcome to attend those conference calls. The number will be published on our Facebook page. It's (218)339-7800. The access code is 1904710. Please, anybody that wants to join that, you're more than welcome; we welcome all ideas.

Recently, we were a presenter at The American Legion Children and Youth Conference in Indianapolis on September 15th through the 17th. It was well attended, there was 11 detachments, which is an increase of three from last year. We had 19 members present from The Sons of The American Legion.

If anybody wants the information, I urge you to go to legion.org/cyconference. All of those presentations from that weekend are on that. I encourage every detachment to use please those, they're very informational.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Next year's Children and Youth conference is September 14th through the 16th, right here in the Sheraton in Indianapolis.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WAITE (NH): So I urge you to go back to your detachments, and please get a representative to come to the Children and Youth conference. It's very educational. It's for the entire American Legion family, and I promise you that you'll get a lot out of it.

As everybody knows, yesterday I announced that the Children and Youth Committee this year will be doing a fundraiser. It's using Commander Smith's Challenge coin, it's \$50 per coin. I do have another \$900 that we were able to sell yesterday that I'll be giving the adjutant. See me any time before I leave today or email me at waitejohn@comcast.net and I'll get your coin to you.

Also, so everybody knows, in the packets, for those that don't open them, if you open them, there's actually a flyer in there and it's about the fundraiser. It's also in the website under my picture on the committee page.

Our committee is made up of John Mejia from the West, and he'll be taking care of the West as well as Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming. Joe Korba is taking care of the East. John Lawrence will be taking care of the South and Texas and Oklahoma. Greg Price will be taking care of the Central, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. If you need anything, please contact those gentlemen. They will be contacting you.

We do have the list thanks to the adjutants of the detachment chairmen. We will be contacting them and getting reports out to them.

We will attend all the regional calls, with permission from each vice commander. I have been on a few of them and will continue to try to get on as many as possible.

Again, we have the Children and Youth Facebook page; I urge you to go there and like that. We try to put any information on there and it's for you guys, it's not for the committee. So you're welcome to use it, it's monitored daily. Please use that tool.

That's my report. Thank you.

...Committee Chairman Waite submitted the report of the Children and Youth Committee.

The Committee did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	John Waite (VT)	Member	John Lawrence (LA)
Secretary:	<u>Robert Avery (NY)</u> National Assistant Adjutant	s:	<u>Gregory R. Price (MI)</u> <u>John Mejia (CA)</u> <u>Joseph A. Korba (NJ)</u>

Chairman's Report:

The mission of the Sons of The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth is to formulate, recommend and implement plans, programs, and activities of The American Legion. The Committee's responsibility is to promote the care and protection of the children of veterans; improve conditions for all children and youth with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home; prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible, utilizing services and cooperating with sound organizations and agencies for children and youth; maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs; and such other purposes as maybe assigned to it by The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee; and to assist The American Legion Children and Youth Program in carrying on for God and Country.

We were just recently a presenter at the American Legion Children & Youth Conference in Indianapolis, IN. We had 11 detachments represented. We continue to increase the numbers every year. We encourage each detachment to send their C&Y chairman or a representative. You will not be disappointed; it is extremely educational. Next year's conference is September 14-16 at the Sheraton in Indy.

Topics this year were:

- [Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth Presentation](#) (Randy Goodman)
- [American Legion Auxiliary Children & Youth Programs](#) (Kathy Daudistel)
- [Bethany Christian Services](#) CWF
- [Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#) CWF
- [Troop and Family Support](#) (Bruce Drake)
- [Sons of The American Legion Children & Youth Programs](#) (John Waite)
- [Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth](#) (Randy Goodman)
- [Temporary Financial Assistance Presentation](#) (Meagen Sweet)
- [Temporary Financial Assistance](#) (Meagen Sweet)

All the presentations can be found at <https://legion.org/cyconference>.

With National Commander Danny Smith having a goal of \$0.50 per member for The American Legion Endowment Fund, the Committee has come up with a personal challenge using the Commander's Coin. As those coins are typically meant for those who go above and beyond, we are asking for a \$50 donation, although we still want detachments and squadrons

to hold an extra event to achieve their \$0.50 per member. We are going to be working with VA&R as this falls under their commission as well.

Regional / Detachment assignments this year:

- John Mejia (CA) – West, plus Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming
- Joe Korba (NJ) – East
- John Lawrence (LA) – South, plus Texas and Oklahoma
- Greg Price (MI) – Central, plus Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota

I will be attending all the regional calls with our five National Vice Commanders and I encourage each member of the Committee to attend as well. If there are questions feel free to contact me at (802) 384-0088 or waitejohn@comcast.net.

Our Committee has had two conference calls so far and will hold the next one on October 18th at 7:00 pm Eastern time. Anyone is welcome to join us; the call-in number is (218) 339-7800, and the access code is 1904710.

The C&Y Committee has a Facebook page: “[Sons of The American Legion Children & Youth Page](#)” (@SonsofTheAmericanLegionChildrenandYouthCommittee). We monitor the site daily and encourage all to use it.

The Committee discussed if we all use the tools we are given (publications, social media, our national officers, NECs, public relations) then there is nothing we can’t do.

We will be creating quarterly (electronic only) newsletters again this year with the first one to be sent out following the Fall NEC. The second edition will be in February, the third edition in May, and the fourth edition in August. If your detachment would like to add anything please send it to me at waitejohn@comcast.net.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN HAMMERSCHMIDT: Thanks, John. Now we'll go to Chris Carlton with Child Welfare.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: I believe our distinguished guest has arrived, so we're going to pause here with the reports and bring forward an outstanding individual that not only represents The American Legion but, in my opinion, she represents us, as we are a program of the American Legion.

Our theme for the year is Making History Following Their Footsteps, and we surely made history in Reno when this lady was elected national commander of The American Legion.

My good friend from Wisconsin, National Commander of The American Legion, Denise Rohan.

(Standing ovation)

Denise Rohan

American Legion National Commander, Wisconsin

Thank you. I was accused of not pounding the hammer loud enough at the post-convention NEC, so I'm practicing. Someday the head's going to come flying off.

(Laughter)

Commander, officers, guests, my fellow Legion family members, what an honor to be here this morning. Again, it is so humbling to be your national commander. My theme, as you all know, is Family First, and it really is about a family. The American Legion, our American Legion Auxiliary, our Sons of the Legion, and our Legion Riders. Together, we make fantastic things happen across this nation.

As a family, the last five weeks, ever since we left Reno, there have been a lot of things happening across this nation. There's been terrible hurricanes, Texas and Florida, Department of Puerto Rico. Then we have earthquakes in Mexico and our department down there is being affected by that as well. And then the terrible tragedy that happened in Nevada. Our prayers continue to go out to all of those departments that are involved.

But since we are such a great, great family, it has done my heart so well to see how family members from across the nation have stepped up to send supplies, national emergency funds, all of that support to our family members who are hurting across the nation. So I thank you for all of that because The Sons of The American Legion continues to be an integral part of our family.

Now, when I addressed you at convention in Reno, I talked a little bit about some of my incentives. Some of the main things I want to talk about and remind everyone of is, this year, as in the last couple of years, our American Legion family, some of the things that I'm looking for from our departments, our posts, our units, our squadrons across the nation is we have 100 percent family ribbon once again. That 100 percent family ribbon is given to each post, unit, squadron, and riders group if all of the family is 100 percent, you will each receive a ribbon for your flags. So I encourage you, once again, to work as a family as you work on your membership goals.

The other thing is The American Legion Extension Institute, which has been renamed "Basic Training." The online course is now free. I know that you have your five stars and your ten ideal programs to learn more about The Sons of The American Legion, but I'm also encouraging all of our family members to please take that basic training as well so you can learn more about The American Legion family and where our history is and where we are going in the future.

But most importantly, I'm asking all posts, units, squadrons, to invite the community into their post homes or wherever it is that you have your meetings on Veterans Day. I know that a lot of you have parades on Veterans Day, a lot of you open your posts already to your members on Veterans Day. But the only way we are going to help our communities change that conception that they have about our great organization is to actually invite them in and let them see the work that we are doing each and every day.

Because together, we are changing lives. Through our programs, we're taking care of our veterans and their families, we're taking care of our military personnel and their families, through our Children and Youth programs and our Americanism programs. In reality, The

American Legion family is taking care of our entire nation's families, and we're doing it together. We're doing that together. And we need to make our community aware of what we do. And the only way I can see of doing that is to invite them into our homes, invite them in and let them be part of it.

Now, as part of that invitation of inviting people into our post homes on Veterans Day and anytime you want to invite them in, I ask you to please post on social media. There is a media package out on legion.org under the media section. It's got a whole platform and media layout of what to do.

But especially, on Veterans Day, as you're inviting veterans into your home as well as their families, military personnel, military recruiters, Gold Star families, Blue Star families, anyone that you can think of to invite into the community, but especially your newspapers, your city councils, your school people. As you're inviting those folks in, the goal is not only to help them understand what we do, but as we prepare for the 100th anniversary, I'm hoping that as you invite the community in, we're going to find alumni from some of our programs. And by finding alumni of our programs and having them in our post homes, we are going to find out whose lives we really did change in your community and what a difference we make each and every day across this nation.

So as I end all of my discussions with the entire Legion family, I need to start by saying thank you for the person or persons who planted a seed in each and every one of you to care enough about this organization to be here this weekend, and to be at your posts and your units and your squadrons pretty much every week.

I know whoever planted that seed, it's not a one-day thing a month or once a week, you are doing something for this family each and every day. Someone very special taught you about

that, and I hope that you are taking that little seed that was planted in you as it grew, and pass it on to someone else, because that is the only way this organization is going to strive and is going to grow, is by each of us carrying on our legacy of whoever taught us and passing it on to someone else. And as that seed grows and is nurtured in that person by the training, by your mentoring, we are going to continue to grow.

Every moment that you spend on American Legion family activities is a statement of faith that you believe in our organization and that you believe in what we stand for. Together we make a difference in this country.

I say God bless each and every one of you. I hope the rest of your meetings are great. But I really want to say thank you for always, always putting our nation's families first. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Please sit down for a second.

Commander, on behalf of all our representatives from our detachments across this country, I want you to know that we are on board with your Family First theme.

I sent out a call earlier, a call to action. I was overwhelmed with the support that these detachments showed, supporting my call to action, supporting your theme, putting our family first. And the donations for the NEF and the endowment are rolling in, and we'll have those numbers for you later this weekend. But I'm very proud for what these gentlemen have done for the organization, and I want you to know that you should be proud of the work they're doing.

We remind you that we are here to serve you and we want to help you make history this year, we want to help however we can. We wish you well and thank you for coming down and sharing your words of wisdom with us this morning.

We know you have a busy schedule, so we'll go ahead and let you get on with what you have to do. Thank you once again, and we look forward to serving you and the organization this year as we continue to follow in your footsteps and make history.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: We'll get back to our reports. Is our other distinguished guest here? Are we losing our microphone again?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yes.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: We'll talk louder. We'll get back to our reports.

Oral Report of Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Christopher Carlton, Chairman, Indiana

Good morning. Over the weekend, we heard a lot about change. Commander, I'm sorry to say, as far as the CWF, there is one thing that will not change.

As I was saying, there's one thing that will not change about the CWF, and that's raising money. As a matter of fact, the one thing that will change, hopefully, is how much we raise. For those of you that this is your first time and for those of you that were not able to be at national convention, we did an amazing job last year. The national organization raised almost \$600,000. The final CWF report recorded \$590,413.91.

(Applause)

Are you excited about that? Because I am. Because The Sons of The American Legion does such an awesome job raising money for Child Welfare Foundation, The American Legion gives us an opportunity to suggest different applications for grants for nonprofit organizations like ourselves.

I'm proud to say that, once again this year, the CWF Committee was all on page. We all decided pretty much a lot of the same ones, and I'd like to share with you the selections that we suggested to the board of directors.

American Legion National Youth Program scholarships, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance program, the Hope Flight Foundation, Angels of American Fallen, St. Francis Community Services, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Kansas Braille Transcript Institute, National Safe Place Network, Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, Building Better Days.

And because we did such an outstanding job last year, we decided to kind of push the envelope and we picked two more just to see. Those two were MP Kids d/b/a Mission Possible Kids, and the other was CJ Candles.

Our committee would have loved to have suggested a program from each and every detachment, but that's just not possible. The grant selection is probably one of the hardest jobs, I think, for our committee because, you see, anyone can give away money; deciding who receives it is the challenge.

We had a record year last year and we can do it again. There's no debate, we will reach \$8 million. We set a new goal, we set it last year. And here's a couple suggestions or maybe ideas, because we all want you to be rock stars this year.

One way to be a rock star is going to be a dollar per member. The Sons of The American Legion have a membership of 340,000 plus, reaching 360,000. Well, that's half of what we did last year. And then if each detachment would just do one or two special events, fundraisers to raise a little bit more money, we could do what we did last year. It is not

impossible. I know that there are a lot of worthy programs out there to give money, but this is kind of ours that we have taken ownership for.

In closing, a man by the name of William Arthur Ward once wrote -- I've rearranged it a little bit to fit me -- "Do more than forgive: forget. Do more than be fair: be kind. Do more than believe: practice. Do more than care: help. Do more than dream: work. And finally, do more than belong: participate."

Would you believe that there are still some squadrons and district zones and even a few detachments that doesn't give anything to the CWF? We can change that and we can change that this year. Our committee would like to see 100 percent participation. I don't care if you've never given anything in the past. If you give a dollar, that's a dollar more than we had. And why? Everybody knows why. You've heard me say it before. I raised money.

...The NEC replied, "I raised money."

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: That's weak.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARLTON: I raised money.

...The NEC replied, "I raised money."

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARLTON: You raised money.

...The NEC replied, "You raised money."

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARLTON: We raised money.

...The NEC replied, "We raised money."

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARLTON: And what do we raise it for?

Man, I was doing so good.

What do we raise it for?

...The NEC replied, "CWF."

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CARLTON: That's right, we have to be excited.

Commander?

...Committee Chairman Carlton submitted the report of the Child Welfare Foundation

Committee.

The Committee did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Christopher A. Carlton (IN)	Member	Lyle D. Chapman (GA)
		s:	
Secretary:	<u>Scott Williams (VA)</u>		<u>Larry Ford (MD)</u>
	National Assistant Adjutant		<u>George K. Fleming, Jr. (PA)</u>
			<u>Jon Coakley, II (OH)</u>

Chairman's Report:

The Committee had conference calls since the National Convention.

Committee assignments are as follows:

East Region – George Fleming Jr.
 South Region – Lyle Chapman
 Central Region – Jon W. Coakley II
 Mid-West Region – Larry Ford
 West Region – Chris Carlton

The \$1.00 per member banner program will continue for CWF.

The second conference call was to determine the SAL CWF Grant Recommendations.

The CWF Grant recommendations were as follows plus two honorable mentions:

1. American Legion National Youth Programs Scholarships
2. American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance Program
3. Hope Flight Foundation
4. Angels of America's Fallen
5. Saint Francis Community Services Inc.
6. Muscular Dystrophy Association
7. Kansas Braille Transcript Institute
8. National Sage place Network
9. Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund
10. Building Better Days

Honorable mentions:

1. MpKids DBA Mission Possible Kids
2. CJ First Candles

Future calls will plan out the rest of the year.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Gerald, I'm glad you're enthusiastic.

(Laughter)

Before we get on to the next of the Americanism report, our next distinguished guest has arrived.

No stranger to this room, a good friend of mine and also I hope a good friend of yours, an individual that has just retired and I hope is enjoying some of that retirement time, taking advantage of maybe sleeping in, having an extra cup of coffee, and enjoying a day off.

Please ask me in joining the past national liaison for The Sons of The American Legion, John Kerestan.

(Applause)

I told John that if he didn't rap the gavel, you guys could stand the entire meeting for Helm.

PAST NATIONAL LIAISON KERESTAN: We won't do that. Have a seat, have a seat.

John Kerestan

Past National Liaison

Well, after that round of applause, it was really, really touching, and I thank all of you.

I was planning on skipping this meeting. As you know, as he just said, I retired and I'm at home doing all kinds of things that I've been trying to do for 20 years.

I'd just like to take a few minutes to express my deepest thanks to all of you and all of your predecessors who came before you who made this past 30 years, and I was your liaison for the past 30 years, absolutely a great venture.

Working with you the past 30 years has been rewarding for me, and especially, especially for your friendship during the process. I don't consider myself doing anything special, but during those 30 years, I just wanted to open as many doors as I could to you and provide you the necessary tools to make The Sons grow and become a strong member of the Legion family.

You did this, and I thank you for this great experience. I even thank those few that seem to make a lot of unnecessary waves. There's a few of you out there. I even thank you guys, too.

(Laughter)

For without you, The Sons would not be challenged to do the many great things you have accomplished. I'm just glad to be a part of it.

You know, I can go back 30 years and remember my first NEC meeting. Some of you folks who have been here for that long will remember, should remember some of this, and some of you will be absolutely amazed. My first NEC meeting was in 1987, 30 years ago, and we were in a small, dinky, run-down hotel out by the airport. We only used that hotel once because after we left that hotel, I said, "If I'm going to be the liaison, we're not coming back to a place like this."

I think the total NEC meeting was about 65 or 70 meeting, everybody. The meeting started on Saturday at 9:00 in the morning. They met for about 45 minutes, then they recessed and went into committee and commission meetings. And then about 12:30, they all came back, only about an hour and a half, for a meeting, and then they all came back to the general session

on that Saturday afternoon around 1:00, read their reports. And there was nothing written, everything was done orally except for resolutions, and everybody was done on Saturday at 2:00 and that was it. There was no session on Sunday. So the entire NEC meeting was about five hours from start to finish. And that's the way it was back in 1987.

For those of you that go on prior to that, in the '70s and early '80s, I'm not sure what you did in NEC meetings. Maybe you met around a roundtable or something, I don't know. But a lot has changed since then and it's all been for the good.

Also, when I first started as your liaison, I basically was fresh meat. I didn't know anything. I don't know that much more now.

(Laughter)

Basically, I was at the mercy of the entire NEC. There were two people that I would especially like to single out that kind of took me under their wing as a real close friend, and that was Past National Adjutant Woody Mudge from Colorado. He was also past national commander; now he's deceased. And also Doug Bible. And Doug Bible is still with us, I just saw him a few minutes ago. Thank you, Doug.

Those guys kind of took me under their wing and made sure and they explained things to me and went through the process of many things to really help me so that I could, in turn, help you. I definitely want to thank those two for all that they did for me those years.

Now I ask you, the NECmen, to give my replacement, Paul Brown, the same courtesy as you gave me and work with him as he transitions to this job.

As I said, for this meeting I thought I would skip, it was the first meeting I missed in 30 years, but they got me, they found me over the weekend and here I am. But I will be at your future meetings; I plan on being here for your spring meetings and your fall meetings.

Now I'm not a national staff member, I can provide you much assistance, having 30 years of experience with The Sons and on the Legion side of the house, and I can help anyone who asks, separate fact from fiction. And believe me, there's a lot of fiction out there on both sides, Legion and SAL.

(Laughter)

Kind of works like membership, just ask.

So I hope to see you all again in the spring. And again, I want to thank all of you for a great 30-year experience. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: John, I think they would stand and applaud you all day if I let them. We truly appreciate all that you've done. I'd like to give you my Commander pin. I think it's appropriate because you definitely helped us make history in this organization. Thank you for everything you've done, sir, and I wish you well in your retirement.

PAST NATIONAL LIAISON KERESTAN: Thank you, Commander.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIEHLL: Mr. Commander, I've been sitting next to the mike so I was going to yell.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Chair recognizes Past National Commander Raymond Giehll, Jr.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIEHLL: Past National Commander Raymond Giehll, Jr. We'd like permission for the members of Indianapolis Squadron 495 to approach the podium for a presentation.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: So granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIEHLL: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Kerestan, from being from the Department of Indiana, and there was much debate on this. But our squadron got the win because you live closest to us. After your retirement, you're going to have a lot of extra time on your hands, and we wanted to make you finally an SAL member. Here is your cap, sir. It is an honor to have you on a part of our squadron, Squadron 495, and the whole Detachment of Indiana is proud. We thank you for your service.

PAST NATIONAL LIAISON KERESTAN: Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

Thank you. Please be seated.

I'm very proud to wear this cap. My father was a World War II veteran who served 1943 and, in his memory, and as Ray said, I'm closest to 495 and I've been there several times, and I'm going to be proud to be their newest volunteer. Thank you.

(Laughter and applause)

NECMAN BROWN (GA): Commander, Bob Brown, NEC from Georgia, requests permission to approach the podium for the purposes of a presentation.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Permission granted.

NECMAN BROWN: Thank you, sir.

Gentlemen, for some of you that don't or weren't around some, I don't know, five, six, seven years ago, in one of his presentations here, John mentioned an incident that happened in the parking deck where some people had their covers on. He made a comment that touched us all and everybody had a good laugh. He knew it wasn't Georgia because he wasn't invited.

(Laughter)

Well, John, if you will remove your cover, I will remove mine. You've now been invited, sir.

PAST NATIONAL LIAISON KERESTAN: Okay.

(Applause)

There's a story that goes with this, and I need to tell you this little story. It's only going to take a minute.

During one of the NEC meetings, a staff official or an official came to me and said there was a bunch of people out in the parking garage here drinking something out of Mason jars, and I says, "No. It must be the other group."

(Laughter)

They said, "Well, they all had blue caps on."

And I said, "Well, let me check into it." Finally I told the Legion official, I said, "Hey, that's part of the hotel. These people are over 21 and they can do whatever they want to do. If they want to drink out of Mason jars, that's fine with me."

So I came down and addressed this to the session. I said, "Look, it doesn't bother me that you're having a drink out of a Mason jar. But if you're going to do that in a parking garage, please remove your cap."

(Laughter)

That's the only thing I asked. Everybody got a kick out of that.

I thank you for this, and I will use this wisely.

(Laughter and applause)

NATIONAL STAFF LIAISON BROWN: Commander, if you can keep the distinguished guest onstage there for a little longer, Paul Brown, Indiana Squadron 249, I have a brief presentation to give.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Permission granted.

NATIONAL STAFF LIAISON BROWN: Well, for anyone who has ever had the adventure of stepping into John's office, you know that he collected a lot of things that were of a lot of use to a lot of people over a long period of time. For anyone that's been there since, it's looks a little different now. I found a place and a home for most everything that I found that was of use to me from John.

But there was a lot of stuff that, John, I think you were trying to bribe me because you left money in the drawer, for one and some other stuff that I just have to give back to you because I have absolutely no use for a Steelers cup, so there you go.

(Applause)

Believe me, if anyone misses him in this room, it's me.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Once again, John, thank you for your years of service and all your guidance and mentoring that you provided over the years to probably most of us in this room. Enjoy your retirement.

(Standing ovation)

We'll get back to the Americanism report. That will be followed up by the Finance Commission, Mr. Hill; and Internal Affairs will follow Finance, which will include convention, MT&D, and Membership, so you guys kind of prepare yourself.

Oral Report of Americanism Commission

Gerald Hammerschmidt, Chairman, Kansas

Good morning again. I want to start by announcing who my commission members are and what regions they will be assigned to this year. Ernie Laberge is assigned to the Midwest, Gary Lang to the south, Jim Borgman to the central, Scott Merrill to the west, and Don Allisot

to the east. If you're not getting information from them, let me know, ghammers@eaglecom.net, so we can get you the information and I can find out why they're not getting you the information.

We are going to be sending out articles again this year plus whatever the commander sends out and the adjutant sends out, we will be sending that out to all NECs, adjutants, detachment commanders, so you can disseminate it to your squadrons and trickle it down so everybody gets the information.

I know last year we did a fairly good job. I think we missed a few, but this year I'm going to try and clean that up and make sure all the information gets sent out. So if you're not getting information, let me know so we can get it out to you.

Some of the articles we're going to have this year are going to be on oratorical, Boys State, scouting, flag education, American Legion Baseball, cadet law, Five Star/Ten Ideals, and we will be sending out a consolidated report form, which you can do, again, in May or June. So it will help you fill out your consolidated report forms.

We are going to have conference calls this year. Our next conference call is November 21st. I will be getting that information out to you also. I'm going to use Michael Fox, the Media and Publications, again this year. So I will send it to him and he will send it out to all of you. He's a whole lot smarter in getting that stuff out than I am. I'm going to use him again this year, you'll be getting the information from Michael.

It worked really well last year, so Mike, thank you. I'm looking forward to working with you again this year.

So with the conference calls, same way. I'll get the information to him this week and then he'll get it sent out to you. So if anybody wants to join the conference calls, we're right

now going to have them every other month. Like I said, our next one is going to be November 21st at 7:30 Central time. So I'm hoping we get a lot of interest to join our conference calls.

Commander, that's my report. Thank you.

(Applause)

...Commission Chairman Hammerschmidt submitted the report of the Americanism

Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Gerald Hammerschmidt (KS)	Member	Ernest Laberge (MA)
		s:	
Vice	James Borgman (IL)		Gary Lang (OH)
Chairman:			
Secretary:	Jeffrey E. Hicks (NJ)		Donald Allisot (ME)
	National Assistant Adjutant		Scott Merrill (NH)

Chairman's Report:

The Commission met via conference call at 7:30 pm CDT on September 19, 2017 with all members present except Gary Lang (OH). National Commander Danny Smith (NE) joined the call as a guest.

National Commander Smith's theme for the year is, "Following Their Footsteps... Making History."

Regional assignments this year:

- Ernie Laberge (LA) – Midwest – NVC Joseph Navarrete (NM)
- Gary Lang (OH) – South – NVC Mark Cannito (SC)
- Jim Borgman (IL) – Central – NVC Jay Marsden (MO)
- Scott Merrill (NH) – West – NVC Don Ramirez (CA)
- Don Allisot (ME) – East – NVC Ken Warner (PA)

Program assignments this year:

- Jim Borgman – Oratorical Contest; Cadet Law
- Ernie Laberge – Boys State; 5-Star / 10-Ideals
- Scott Merrill – Scouting
- Gary Lang – Scouting
- Don Allisot – Flag Education; American Legion Baseball
- Gerald Hammerschmidt – Welcome to Americanism; Consolidated Report Form

Monthly article assignments this year:

- September – Welcome to Americanism
- October – Oratorical Contest
- November – Boys State
- December – Scouting (Gary Lang)
- January – Flag Education
- February – American Legion Baseball
- March – Scouting (Scott Merrill)
- April – Cadet Law
- May – 5-Star / 10-Ideals
- June – Consolidated Report Form

National Commander Smith talked about the Americanism Commission carrying the torch forward for the 2017-18 year as previous years have done. He also talked about getting good information out to all the Blue Cappers. He wants the Commission to stay focused with a positive attitude going forward for the 2017-18 year. He also talked about the new forum at the Fall NEC, to improve the service to all. The Commander also discussed developing a training PowerPoint presentation that explains the Americanism pillar of service, programs, how Americanism relates to these programs and ways to promote Americanism.

We talked about Commission members being involved with the National Vice Commanders' conference calls, and reporting about the calls.

We talked about getting the articles out to the National Vice Commanders and members distribution lists.

Jim Borgman talked about how to make a distribution list for member distribution and sent out list to all from last year to help the new Commission members.

Don Allisot talked about the Eastern Vice Commander's conference call. He updated them on what the Americanism Commission is doing for the 2017-18 year.

Ernie Laberge updated the Commission on his mother's illness. His mother was ill on the night of the Midwestern Vice Commander's call.

Scott Merrill talked about his conference call with the Western Vice Commander. He told them of what we are wanting to accomplish for the 2017-18 year.

Jim Borgman said he had not heard from his Central Vice Commander to join a call. He is going to pursue the Commander so he can join the next call.

We talked about articles for the *National Update* by October 1.

Chairman Hammerschmidt asked all to send pictures and information about events for Facebook and video at National Convention.

The meeting ended at 8:40 pm CDT.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Americanism Commission report which includes the Children and Youth Committee and the Child Welfare Foundation Committee. What's your pleasure?

NECMAN COOK (OK): Chris Cook, NEC, Oklahoma. I make a motion that we accept the reports.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been moved to accept the report. Is there a second?

NECMAN HUNTER (IL): Jimmy Hunter, Illinois, second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Illinois seconds. It's been moved to accept the report and duly seconded. Any discussion?

All in favor of accepting the report, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Before we get into the next report, we do have one other housekeeping to clear up from yesterday.

Jim Stewart will be the appointment for the Member Training & Development that we talked about yesterday that did not get announced.

Yes, I'm patiently awaiting, they're catching on.

NECMAN GLANDER (AL): Mr. Commander, NEC Alabama, Tom Glander. I make a motion we accept the appointment.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: A motion to accept the appointment.

NECMAN KEARNS (NE): Keith Kearns, NEC Nebraska, second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Keith Kearns from Nebraska seconds.

The motion is to accept Jim Stewart as the appointment for Member Training & Development, it's been seconded. Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

One other comment, gentlemen, before we continue. This country grants you the right to freedom of speech. If you feel the need to exercise that outside of the podium or in pertinent discussions at the microphones, I would appreciate if you exercise that right out in the hallway, and when you get done exercising that right, come back in; okay? I know there's people in the back that like to hear what's going on, so we need to keep these side conversations and side bars down to a minimum.

With that, Finance Commission. On deck, just to remind you, Internal Affairs.

Oral Report of Finance Commission

Bill Hill, Chairman, Maryland

Good morning. Now for the most stimulating report of the entire day.

(Laughter)

Numbers. I don't know how we can get any more excited than this. Here it is, basically.

Finance Committee met yesterday at noon. We had two items of old business to cover. The two items were a reconciliation of the 2017 budget through August 31, it's also in the back of your packages. That reconciliation was conducted and a motion was passed and carried to move that forward.

Our second item of old business is the finalization of the 2018 budget. Good discussions on it. We have also worked prior to this meeting with all the commission and committees prior to this. Good discussions we had. It's already in the NEC packages that we had. There was \$20,000, potentially, of unallocated expenditures. That line item was to be moved under operating programs, so there was \$20,000 of unallocated at this time. That discussion was also moved and passed for that. Sorry, that was the new business.

Under old business, we had one resolution that was submitted, forwarded to the Finance Commission as a pre-NEC for convention. It was for SAL Resolution No. 4. The Finance Commission reviewed that resolution. Our only purpose at that time was for reviewing it for potential funds.

The review was conducted, potential funds, and again the word, potential funds are available for that. We reviewed it at that time and passed that. That resolution has been now moved to Internal Affairs for their final reviews and discussions at that point.

There was no other new business at that time. The meeting and motion was concluded.

Before I conclude this, I want to also mention all the members of the Finance Commission, the vice chair of this is Dennis Blue from Minnesota; Bob Rosenboom from Iowa; Keith Murdough from New Hampshire, Steve Honigfort from Ohio; and Robert Thompson from South Carolina. I want to thank all of them for the job they do.

And again, one reminder, they're going to hit me if I don't tell you this, when you come in the spring and you come down to do your vouchers, bring your receipts. If you don't bring your receipts, basically, you're not getting reimbursed. They want me to remind you. That was our public service awareness announcement.

At this time, Commander, that is our report.

...Commission Chairman Hill submitted the report of the Finance Commission.

Opening:

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM on October 7, 2017 in the Circle East Room of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel by Chairman William G. Hill (MD).

Roll Call:

Chairman:	William G. Hill (MD)	Member	Robert W. Rosenboom (IA)
		s:	
Vice Chairman:	Dennis M. Blue (MN)		Keith Murdough (NH)
Secretary:	Robert Avery (NY) National Assistant Adjutant		Steven R. Honigfort (OH) Robert E. Thompson (SC)
Liaison:	None Past National Commander		
Guests:	Gary Nelson (NJ), PNC Rick Cook (OK), Jay Cook (OK), Kayden Cook (OK), George Flasiniski (PA), Mike Boughner (MI), Ned Fox (CA), Ron Roberts (MS).		

The attendees stood and saluted our Nation's Flag and then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Old Business:

Chairman Hill and the Commission reviewed the current 2017 year to date budget. A motion was made by Keith Murdough and seconded by Dennis Blue to accept the year to date report. The motion was carried.

The Commission discussed S.A.L. Resolution 4 – Pre-Convention NEC 2017 – “National Convention Travel Reimbursement for National Executive Committeemen of the Sons of The American Legion”. Funds are available for this expense. After further discussion a motion was made by Robert Rosenboom and seconded by Steve Honigfort to approve the funding availability for this resolution. The motion was carried.

New Business:

The proposed 2018 Budget was discussed by the Commission. There was a re-alignment of \$20,000 from unallocated funds to program operations. A motion was made by Robert Rosenboom to accept the 2018 Budget. Robert Thompson seconded the motion which was then carried.

Closing:

A motion made by Steve Honigfort and seconded by Keith Murdough to adjourn was carried.
 With no further business to consider, Chairman William G. Hill (MD) adjourned the meeting

at 12:20
PM

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you, Chairman Hill. We truly do appreciate all the work that you folks do on site.

What's your pleasure?

NECMAN COOK (OK): Mr. Commander, I do have a correction for the guest attending. Guest attending is Kaycen, K-A-Y-C-E-N, Cook, from Oklahoma. Just change the D to a C. That's all I have.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: So noted.

NECMAN JENNINGS (FL): Commander, John Jennings, NEC Florida, makes a motion to approve Finance with the correction.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It has been moved to accept Finance report with the corrections noted.

NECMAN COOK (OK): Chris Cook, NEC, Oklahoma seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: The motion is to accept the Finance report with the corrections. Is there any further discussion?

All in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Internal Affairs, Mark Tansel, chairman, including Convention Committee, Member Training & Development, Membership, with Legislative on deck.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TANSEL: I was going to say, this is about three or four times this morning already.

Good morning, NEC. How's Sunday morning? You all have witnessed this weekend a change, haven't you? That change is not complete yet. We're just now starting beginning that change, beginning that process. I'll highlight those in a few moments.

But with the first report for the Internal Affairs Commission, I'd like to call on Shawn Davis from the Detachment of Minnesota to give the convention report. Shawn?

Oral Report of Convention Committee

Shawn Davis, Chairman, Minnesota

Good morning, Commander, officers, NEC, alternates, and American Legion family.

The Detachment of Minnesota and the Department of Minnesota as well is working jointly to have a fun-filled centennial for the Legion and an enjoyable SAL convention as well.

Everything I'll be talking here, if you've planned anything, you know things are in flux. We are working on confirming. Our project plan says we should be firming up locations, times, prices probably in the next 30 to 60 days or so. Finalized information will be sent out once it's available.

But at this time we are looking at the following events for the 2018 SAL convention: Thursday we're looking at a golf outing probably at Theo Wirth Golf Course, which is just off of downtown Minneapolis near the convention center hotels, very convenient location. Last

time we had the convention in Minneapolis, we had a golf outing there, rather successful. We're going to try to do the same thing there.

On Friday, the party. We are currently working on a riverboat cruise and dinner likely along the Mississippi. We're looking at possibly having some music there as well. But our menu, price, and transportation there is all, again, in flux, currently negotiating with a couple different riverboat companies that are available.

Our convention pin. We will be firming up a design for the convention pin at our fall conference at the end of this month, around October 27, 28, and then we'll start researching costs of the pin and volume. Currently I am thinking of two pins: One celebrating the centennial Legion, recognizing that we are, as it says, in their footsteps, we are proud possessors, recognizing their centennial. And then another one representing our own convention itself. This obviously, the prices and availability to be determined once we finalize the design.

Something I do need to bring up is asking all of you to bring your colors. Squadrons, districts, counties, detachments. If you bring your colors to the parade at the national convention, register them with your department prior to the parade. You will then receive a special centennial ribbon for participating in the parade, to attach to your color.

We are also thinking of two additional items: A Christmas ornament. Design, place, availability is in flux. Possibility of doing again a commemorative joint family for the centennial and a SAL ornament separately.

Lastly, we have a plot of land up in northern Minnesota off Long Lake called Legionville. It is where we, The American Legion family, hold School Patrol Safety camp and School Bus Safety Patrol camps in conjunction with the Minnesota State Patrol and AAA. It is

- Looking at a riverboat cruise and dinner, likely on the Mississippi
- Music a possibility
- Menu TBD
- Price TBD
- Transportation TBD
- Convention Pin
 - Looking to firm up designs by Detachment of MN Fall Conference (October 27-28)
 - Costs after that
 - Thinking of 2 pins
 - One for the SAL recognizing The American Legion Centennial
 - One for the SAL convention
 - Prices TBD
 - Available TBD
- Parade Ribbon
 - Every Post, Unit, Squadron, or Chapter, that has its colors registered with their department, and in the parade, will receive a Centennial ribbon.
 - So bring your colors and fly them in the parade!
- SAL Christmas Ornament
 - Design being developed
 - Price TBD
 - Availability TBD
- Centennial Paver
 - Available for purchase by individuals or Squadron through Detachment
 - A paver in celebration of The American Legion Centennial
 - Cost \$100
 - Available TBD

He also presented a slideshow of the information so far.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

None.

Resolutions:

None.

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion:

National Commander Danny Smith (NE) addressed the Committee.

Leading Candidate for National Commander Greg “Doc” Gibbs (NY) addressed the Committee.

Closing:

With no further business to consider,
 at 7:10 PM .

Chairman Shawn Davis (MN)

adjourned the meeting

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TANSEL: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Shawn.

The second report comes from Chuck Treat, our national Member Training & Development director. Chuck?

Oral Report of Member Training & Development Committee

Charles Treat, Chairman, Arizona

First off, I'd like to introduce the committee members. Our newest member is Jim Stewart. Will Jim Stewart please stand as well as the MTD committee members. Gary is over here, okay. This is my committee and I'm very happy to have them. I think I had a good pick, I feel very fortunate.

They come up with great ideas. There's change in the future, but the change will not happen until MTD has brought it to the Internal Affairs and they bring it to you.

There have been rumors. They're only rumors. Until you see it here, it won't happen. We will bring all changes forward, they will be debated, and we will discuss it before they're implemented.

The NMI class started late yesterday because the meeting in the morning started late, and we finished an hour early. From what I understand, that's unusual. It wasn't anything I did; it was our presenters just moved it right along. So I thank Mr. Gladden and Mr. Deacon for their expertise in moving that and keeping it on time.

The minutes are in your packet. My committee has reviewed them. They found them absent of error and they are absent of omission. Please read that, that has the remaining information. Thank you.

Let me correct that. NMI -- detachment commanders, and there were a total of 44 in attendance, 38 of which were actual detachment commanders, and I thank you for attending.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Just so it goes down right in the minutes, he meant to say detachment commanders training and not NMI. So we just want to make sure that's recorded correctly.

...Committee Chairman Treat submitted the report of the Member Training & Development Committee.

Opening:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on October 6, 2017 in the Circle East Room of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel at the Chairman Charles E. Treat, II (AZ).

Roll Call:

Chairman:	Charles E. Treat, II (AZ)	Member	Gary W. Denmon (NY)
		s:	
Secretary:	Scott J. Thornton (OH) National Assistant Adjutant		Joseph Schultis (IN) Matt Parsons (CA)
Liaison:	Past National Commander		Gary Winters (TX) – Excused

Guests: George Flasiniski (PA); Mike Kane (PA); Doug Hancock (OH); Michael Lawler (WI); Kevin Ivery (PA); David Johnson (MA); Mark McCue (MA); Carl Alber, Jr. (NJ); Lucas Herring (VT); Mike Boughner (MI); Andy Newman (PA); Don Culver (KS); Bob Rosenboom (IA); Mark Tansel (IN); PNC Mike Deacon (IA); PNC Joe Gladden (MD); PNC David Stephens (IN); PNC Joe Mayne (MN); Bob Turner (CT); John Wright (CT).

Reading of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the Spring, 2017 meeting were approved as published.

Reports of Members:

Chairman Treat welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all the members for their efforts so far. The Committee is ready to go for tomorrow's Detachment Commanders Conference. He recognized PNC Mike Deacon and PNC Joe Gladden as this year's instructors.

Old Business:

Ron Roberts (MS) previously addressed the Committee about a PowerPoint presentation he is developing on resolutions. He will provide a copy to the Committee for review. Previous Chairman Mike Sawicki said that the Committee will then present it to Internal Affairs for approval and future use. Chairman Treat announced there has been no feedback on this and will follow-up with Mr. Roberts.

Jeff Hicks (NJ) asked about plans to resume the Adjutants Conference along with the Commanders Conference. I/A Vice Chairman Culver reported that the Committee needs to provide the content and justification to Liaison John Kerestan. Sandy Lipman (MI) suggested publishing some materials for use by the regional detachment meetings. Previous Chairman Mike Sawicki replied that the Committee will work on this. Mr. Culver reminded everyone of the need to publish material in read-only formats to protect the integrity of the Legion / S.A.L. brand. Chairman Treat reported the Adjutants Conference is still under review. He also stated that the Committee will ensure all documents are published in PDF format.

New Business:

Chairman Treat opened the floor for questions.

George Flasinski (PA) asked about developing new modules for individual training courses. Chairman Treat replied that this is being considered and the Committee will entertain all ideas for them.

Bob Rosenboom (IA) asked about the Chaplain's course that was developed previously and the possibility of similar courses. This was provided to the Americanism Commission and they are responsible for its publication. Chairman Treat said that there are ideas for creating them for other officers and he is working with the Strategic Planning Committee on suggestions.

Chairman Treat reminded the other commission and committee members present of the times their chairman is scheduled to appear at tomorrow's Detachment Commanders Conference.

Internal Affairs Vice Chairman Don Culver (KS) asked everyone present to remind their NECman to submit candidates for the NMI sessions to him by the beginning of the calendar year at the latest. Sooner is strongly encouraged. There are 20 seats in NMI-1 and he already has 8 requests.

Resolutions:

None.

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion:

Internal Affairs Chairman Mark Tansel (IN) commended the Committee for all the work they've done in the last seven weeks to prepare all the materials for the Detachment Commanders Conference.

He also mentioned that the Internal Affairs Commission has a couple of projects in the works this year, such as developing a SAL Trophies and Awards Manual to explain the background and qualifications for the various awards we have.

Chairman Treat recognized PNC David Stephens and PNC Joe Mayne as previous NMI instructors.

Closing:

With no further business to consider,
at 7:20 PM .

Chairman Charles E. Treat, II (AZ) _____ adjourned the meeting

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TANSEL: Thank you, Chuck.

The third report comes from our Membership chairman, and with that, our Membership chairman, Seth Rippe, from Nebraska.

Seth?

Oral Report of Membership Committee

Seth Rippe, Chairman, Nebraska

Commander Smith, past national commanders, NECmen, detachment commanders, and dual members, good morning.

I'd like to start by introducing my membership committee for the 2017-2018 year. Myself and they have been attending your regional calls, but it sometimes help to put a face with the name. So gentlemen, as I read your name, please stand.

From the Eastern region, Mark Nave. From the Southern region, Raymond Rollins. From the Central region, Brian Kessler. From the Midwest Region, Charlie Keith. And from the Western region, Joseph Roberts. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

These gentlemen, along with your national vice commanders, are part of your membership team. But all of you make up the rest of that team. All of you and all of our members back home. Why? Because membership is everyone's business. Membership is the lifeblood of this organization. It makes all of our other programs possible.

Our membership theme for the year is Pioneering Spirit: Courage, Faith, Teamwork, Perseverance. The early pioneers faced opposition in many forms, but these four nouns allowed them to overcome adversity. We will have challenges, but it's how we respond to those challenges that matters most.

You're going to hear about how these four words drives our membership throughout the year. Our goals for the upcoming year: Reach 400,000 total members. How are we going to do this? By renewing 95 percent of our members, by recruiting 50,000 new members. Does that seem like a tall task? It's not, gentlemen.

We can do it by filling our toolbox full of membership tools. You will see at least one tool every month from the committee. I'm asking you to go home and share these tools with your detachments.

Our first tool in the toolbox that we talked about last month was our individual recruitment award. This is an incentive tool. As in years past, we're going to recognize the recruiting efforts of anyone who signs up five new members to The Sons. The individual recruitment award is available on our website and has been mailed out to you. Your regional committeemen and national vice commanders have that form. If you have not seen it, reach out to them, get it, and send it on down. All the way to the squadron level, gentlemen. There's a lot of great work being done and we're not capturing it.

This year we have retooled the form; thanks to Joe Roberts for creating a fillable PDF that you can now use on your computer. You can now type in the information, use the embedded hyperlinks, and email it to your regional committeeman, thus eliminating your handwriting, postage, and time. Of course, we'll still be accepting the handwritten form as well.

No matter how we receive the form, though, we're going to be publishing an honor roll, if you will, throughout the year. We want to make sure that we're recognizing the individuals who receive the award. I'd love to see more than a hundred members on this by the end of the year.

Of course, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't discuss our numbers. September 13th marked our first target date of 10 percent. I'm happy to report that we met it, gentlemen, 11.9 percent. Congratulations. Thank you.

(Applause)

However, we slowed down a bit since then. We're now approximately 4,700 members behind where we were the same time last year. I don't have the answers. I don't know what's going on, but I'm asking for your help. Let us know what we can do to help you, what tools we can provide you with to make sure we meet these goals.

I'm going to ask you to go home and think about our membership theme, focusing on that last word, "perseverance." The continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failures, or opposition.

Our next target date is already this next week, October 12th. Are we going to meet the goal? I guess it depends on our perseverance.

This concludes my report.

...Committee Chairman Rippe submitted the report of the Membership Committee.

Opening:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on October 6, 2017 in the Meridian Ballroom of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel. Chairman Seth A. Rippe (NE).

Roll Call:

Chairman:	Seth A. Rippe (NE)	Member	Mark Nave (PA)
		s:	
Secretary:	David Ridenour (IN) National Assistant Adjutant		Raymond Rollins (GA) Brian Kessler (IA) ABS
Liaison:	Past National Commander		Charles R. Keith (WY) Joseph E. Roberts (AZ)
	National Vice Commanders:	East:	Kenneth P. Warner (PA)
		South:	Mark A. Cannito (SC)
		Central:	Jay E. Marsden (MO)
		Midwest:	Joseph R. Navarrete (NM)
		West:	Donald S. Ramirez (CA)
Guests:	Derek Abron (GA), Willy Williams (OR), W.L. Foster (AZ), Robert (Bud) Neel (NE), Joe Roberts (AZ), Phillip Cook (NH), Charles Keith (WY), Brad Dudley (PA), Chris Cook (OK), Marvin P Nay (MA), Ernie Laberge (MA), Michael Saindon (KS), Cliff Boyer (PA), Bob Manzo (MD), Evan Mahlman (OH), Kevin I. Ivery (PA), David Rippe (NE), Danny Smith (NE), David Lee (NY), Jamey Holloway (GA), Joseph Keiser (NV), David Van Duisen (WA), Matt Griffis (AZ), Steve England (VT), Alan Kennedy (CT), Rich Kilby (CT), Dale Andersen (OH), Scott Marrin (NH), Thomas Glover (AL), Eugene Olswold (MN), Harold Trombley (VT), Howard P. Fruhwirth, Jr. (AK), Gary Swanland (WY), Richard C. Pond, Jr. (NH), David Dieckgraff (AK), Jim A. Mariner (NM)		

Chairman Seth Rippe (NE) Opened the meeting with a salute to the colors, prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, POW/MIA Empty Chair and Preamble to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, Blue Star Banner and Roll Call of Members.

Reading of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the Spring, 2017 meeting were approved as published.

Reports of Members:

Chairman Seth Rippe (NE) Good evening Gentlemen! Thanked the members for joining him tonight and thanks for making not only this organization a priority but membership! Membership is the life blood of any organization but also makes all the programs and good works of the Sons and our parent organization, the Legion, possible. Membership is not just the business of this committee it is everyone's business.

Our membership theme for this year is...

Pioneering Spirit: Courage, Faith, Teamwork, Perseverance

The early pioneers faced opposition in many forms but these four nouns allowed them to overcome adversity. We will have challenges but how we respond to those challenges is what matters most. You are going to hear more about how these four words drives our membership throughout the year!

Our goals for the upcoming year are as follows...

- Reach 400,000 Total Members
- Achieve a Renewal Rate of 95%
- Recruit 50,000 New Members

How are we going to do this? We had detachments every year that make that 95% mark. We have for the last several years have been hovering around that 89% retention rate nationally. Which means that every year we are losing about 36,000 members. Put that in perspective, almost the entire detachment of Indiana we lose every year. 50,000 members sounds like a lot but we are not even trying and signing up 40,000 new members. Just think what a little effort will do. How are we going to do this? By filling our tool box with tools to build membership! Just like the early pioneers, we are going to do this by hand. You will have tools that are going to help us. You will see at least a tool every month from this committee, he is asking you to share them with your detachments. Some of them may be a good fit but some of them won't... all of us need different tools for the job. You have to figure out what tools will work in your area. Communication that is the most important tool. If we are communicating with each other with what is working and what is not working. Then we can take that idea and run with it. We do not have to reinvent the wheel every single year. Many of you probably remember our previous Membership Chairman George Flasiński (PA) use to use a tool in the Eastern region called the membership drive. Detachments like New Jersey would drive across their entire state in two days and visit EVERY squadron. Being from the Midwest I was amazed that this was possible. Ask Texas if they could drive across their state in two days... much less stop at every squadron. Clearly a tool that would not work for them, but does not mean that they cannot learn from that tool. Maybe a state like Pennsylvania could divide it up into smaller sections like each side of the mountain. Or have four people doing membership all in the same weekend hitting the same squadrons. Maybe someone like New Jersey can teach someone like Pennsylvania how to do this. Some states will see membership slow through the harvest. Some states won't see membership pick up until the snowbirds arrive. We all have different membership... **KNOW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

The first tool we put in our tool box this year was for recruiting. Our individual recruitment award, or IRA, for signing up 5 new members to the Sons has been updated. There is a lot of great work happening surrounding recruiting every year and it's not being captured. They say they do not want the credit for it or do not want to be recognized we appreciate that, we are a humble group, a modest group. But by you showing off the recruitment pin you are encouraging others to do it. So, wear that pin proudly. We need your help so that we are recognizing those members. What is the process for achieving an IRA? Recruit five new members to the Sons... Fill out the IRA form and send it to your Regional Committeeman... Your Committeeman will validate the members and send you a pin to wear proudly!

I mentioned that this tool has undergone an update recently... in previous years you would print off a PDF form and fill it out by hand and then mail it via USPS to your regional committeeman who would then have to use their secret decoder ring to decipher your handwriting. We have joined the 21st century gentlemen... thanks to Joe Roberts for creating a fillable PDF that you can now use your computer or handheld device to fill out the form electronically and then email to your regional committeeman using the embedded hyperlinks in the document to your committeeman. This eliminates your terrible handwriting, postage, and time!

For those of you who don't trust this new age "magic" we still have and will accept the forms handwritten and in the mail!

No matter how we receive the form...throughout the year we will be publishing an honor roll, if you will, of the individuals who achieve the IRA. I would love to see more than 100 individuals on the honor roll by the end of the year!

Membership Report

There are lots of ways to measure success but numbers are the most obvious. September 13th marked our first target date of 10%. I'm happy to report that Nationally we were at 11.902%. Four regions and thirty-two detachments met the goal. However, we have slowed down a bit and are now +4700 members behind where we were last year. We have some work to do... so I'm going to ask you all to go home think about our membership and focus on that last word Perseverance. Go back to your Detachment, go back to your squadrons and find out where the membership is sitting. Our next target date is rapidly approaching next week at 25% and we are only at 16%. He is not sure a miracle is possible at this late date, but please go back and make it a priority to find out where the membership is sitting.

Chairman Rippe (NE) Called on the National Vice Commanders to report on membership in their region...

Mark Nave / NVC Kenneth Warner (East)

NVC Kenneth Warner (PA) (East) We are starting off a little slow but he would like to congratulate the detachments that are over 90% Delaware, France, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. They achieved over the 90% mark. One that works in their region is He went with Delaware on a Membership Roundup, they pulled in over 400 cards in two days. He took that back to his detachment of Pennsylvania and sent two members on one side of the mountain and he stayed on the other and in two days pulled in over 480 cards, they also delivered them to headquarters that Sunday night. He recommends utilizing your officers and do these roundups two or three times a year. He had a tool to add to the tool kit. He knows a lot of squadrons are mailing renewal letters to their members and not getting anything back. Try to send a trifold card with all the benefits of the SAL with your letter asking them to send in their dues for the year. Benefits like hearing aids, auto discounts, auto rentals, Wyndham Hotel discounts, CVS, Office Max and Office Depot. He has over 400 cards to give to anyone here tonight.

Mark Nave (PA) East He is very appreciative to serve as Eastern Region Membership Chairman. He believes his job is to communicate not just the information of membership but also to share communication about the different techniques that the detachments use. He mentioned about the membership roundup, they piggy back their membership drive with the legion and invite everybody to join them, serve food and have a great time. He is also asking everyone in the eastern region to share what they do and he will share the information he knows with them.

Raymond Rollins / NVC Mark Cannito (South)

NVC Mark Cannito (SC) (South) Congratulated everyone in the southern region for the great work that they are doing. They have over four detachments over 95%. He said that he made Commander Smith a commitment to reach an all-time high. and said he would work hard to achieve this.

Raymond Rollins (GA) (South) He said he been a little slow getting started but now knows what's going on. He asked about pins Chairman Rippe (NE) said he has them. Raymond said he has requested the pins and will get them out. He asked that everyone should have his contact number and email address and if there is anything he can do please get a hold of him.

Brian Kessler / NVC Jay Marsden (Central)

NVC Jay Marsden (MO) (Central) Has 3 detachments with at the 25% goal already. Last week he personally called all the Detachment Commanders. He was not able to get a hold of all of them but had a very good conversation with the ones he got ahold of. What can I do to help you? What can I not do to help? Sometimes we are our biggest hindrance. Keep the communication going back and forth. One thing his detachment did was all the Executive Board sat down, got all the squadrons that had zero membership they called each one from that room. You be surprised what they found out is each other thought the other one was doing it. They asked who should be doing it, got ahold of the adjutant and he said he would take care of it. They turned out to be 100%. Sometimes they just do not know what they should be doing and when they find out they get going. National sends out renewals, some people get them, put them on the refrigerator under a magnet and look at them. They do not know when to pay the dues. So, if you send them a personal letter from your squadron with a note saying they are glad they are with the squadron and hope to see them again. Show them know that they are appreciated. Let them know you're here. Let them know what you do. Let them know that membership is important to us. If they have any questions, if anything he can do, let him know.

Charles Keith / NVC Joseph Navarrete (Midwest)

NVC Joseph Navarrete (NM) (Midwest) Mentioned that in the earlier forum meeting that to embrace change. If we continue to do things we have always done and expect a different outcome we are not going to get anywhere. We need to change, we need to do things differently. We need to shake it up. Adding tools to our tool kit to help. There are some great

ideas that are coming around from different detachments. A lot of the vice commanders have been on each other's conference calls and shared information. He mentions that Chairman Rippe (NE) said something about membership drives, just a personal note he has sat down with his department adjutant and a couple post commanders what is was that they did for membership and how they did it. They mentioned back in the old days when they had membership drives, they use to get out there and meet them and go out together and go out to the members touch face to face and bring them back in. Figure out what they were doing, what was going on and why they were doing it. Another great idea that came out of there region involving younger members, we have a perfect opportunity with the programs we have. For instance, Boys State a huge program that almost all our states have. Where we have individuals some of them qualify to be members because they have applied for the Samsung Scholarship, we have everything we need to bring them in right there and right then. Also, we have Junior Shooting, Baseball, Oratorical Contests where these are already in place today where all we must do is to reach out to them. The majority is ready to grab on and join up. They appreciate the programs we run, they appreciate the involvement and are ready to help serve.

Charlie Keith (WY) (Midwest) There are already three detachments that have already made the goal for next week they are Montana, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Colorado, South Dakota, and Wyoming are close at 20.68% and we are ahead of last year. NVC Navarrete mentioned Boys State and he said that Oklahoma uses Boys State as one of their recruiting tools. They brought in 57 kids last year. He said look for his phone call early next week to see how they are doing.

Joseph Roberts / NVC Donald Ramirez (West)

NVC Donald Ramirez (CA) (West) He has ten detachments half are over the 20% membership. Idaho, Utah are over 20%. He has Alaska and Washington that needs help and he is trying to help them.

Joseph Roberts (AZ) (West) There are no zeros. Tools he picked up from the American Legion NVC from the Western Region mentioned about the Basic Training that the American Legion puts out online. He sat down and started to take this course. He got to the second module and realized this needs to be a tool. We think we know a lot about this organization. He is sitting there taking this test and he is learning things that he did not know and he has been a member for 45 years. There were things he did not know about this organization. We need to teach them why they should keep their membership. We need to take this back and push in our detachments this Basic Training Technique that is out there. Give it to all members, there is a fee for non-members. Put in your membership number you will get in and start going through these modules. They say it takes two hours it may take a little longer but you can take it at your own pace. Your will learn things. Like they took female veterans under their wings before they even had a right to vote. It's amazing the things that the American Legion provides for its members and they know nothing about. We need to have this in our tool kit.

Chairman Rippe (NE) asked that everyone take these tools back to your detachments and share them. It does not do us any good if we keep them to ourselves and just use them for ourselves.

Communication that is the most important tool. Next target date is in six days October 12th 25% target date.

Old Business:

S.A.L. Resolution 8 – Convention, 2015 – “Membership Resolution” – We have been holding this resolution in the Committee since the 2015 Convention. California and Minnesota presented it. They are being asked to present a plan. Joe Roberts (AZ), original committee was set up to refer to committee. We need to have proof it works. Trace the membership. The Legion will not stop mailing the renewal post cards. Still holding no report yet.

S.A.L. Resolution 11 – Spring, 2017 – “Creation of Triple Nickel Ribbon” – referred to the Committee in Spring, 2017.

Detachment of Louisiana had problems with reports on the MYSAL.org application. Department Adjutants had access to reports that the Detachment Adjutant did not. At the spring NEC it was said that all the problem has been corrected.

Mr. Cook had problems with the downloads in MYSAL but he took them directly to the IT Department and they corrected the problem. He said if the adjutant is still having the problem please take the problem to IT and add it to the list.

NVC Mike Lawler (WI) made a motion to pursue to use online membership investigation of having renewals. NVC Bill Kelly (FL) second Robert Turner (CT). You need to be able to go into MYSAL.org and find what the local dues are and report them to national. For now, only the committee can approve this, then it goes to the American Legion for approval. Internal Affairs suggested to make this an action item to add to strategic planning committee and they did and are waiting for further instruction from them now.

New Business:

None.

Resolutions:

S.A.L. Resolution 8 – Convention, 2015

Title: Membership Resolution

Action: Chairman Rippe (NE) said one of the biggest challenges in 2015 was not having emails. Last year that changed and we are known collecting emails and getting more of them. He asked if Minnesota or California had any to add now and if not to research and get back to us at the spring NEC and update this resolution.

California stated that they do not know anything about this resolution now but will go back and find some information to come back with at the Spring NEC per NEC Mark Severance.

S.A.L. Resolution 11 – Spring, 2017

Title: Creation of Triple Nickel Ribbon

Action: Came out of the Detachment of Iowa. It was move forward to the National Convention NEC and approved then moved to go to the American Legion which he believes approved it.

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion:

It was mentioned that National is not keying date of birth on the MYSAL.org website. National also said that you cannot write a 2017 card on a 2018 card.

Asked to recognize the members who have recruited 30 members or more for the Blue Brigade. Chairman Rippe (NE) just received last week all the members and will get them out.

National Commander Danny Smith (NE) addressed the Committee. He said cards are to be mailed out. They are working on an online renewal online at the highest rate and may happen next year. What tools can we give you to help you. Can we format a personal letter that is from the National Commander to help you?

Mr. Cook asked to have the dues label opened to accept two different dues rates.

Closing:

With no further business to consider,
at 8:07pm .

Chairman Seth A. Rippe (NE) _____ adjourned the meeting

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TANSEL: Thank you, Seth. Appreciate that.

Oral Report of Internal Affairs Commission

Mark Tansel, Chairman, Indiana

As you can see in your report, our commission met via conference call September 27th. Out of the six members that we had, five were present, one was excused. The committee did receive a resolution prior to our conference call, and we took action on that resolution during the conference call. The resolution was from Peter J. Sierminski from Colorado for national vice commander. Motion was made to receive and file, and it was carried.

This year, our Internal Affairs Commission has been tasked with working alongside of the Children and Youth Committee, the Americanism Commission, and the VA&R Commission. What we're doing this year is we're working together to modernize the

consolidated squadron report form. As many of you know, and as a lot of you squadron detachment adjutants know, there are a lot of boxes on that CSR. Those boxes were simplified a few years ago, but there was also some additional simplification that has been requested, more so from Americanism Commission than from Children and Youth and VA&R.

So what we're doing is that we're working together, something we have not done in the past, at the request of Commander Smith. We decided that this was the time, this was the place. So this weekend, we met together as three separate commissions and one committee with the chairmen, just the chairmen together, to kind of discuss and talk about it preliminarily, where we're going from here.

Each of the commissions and the committee of their own respective commissions and committees are actually going to work out their own details. Then we're going to get back together with a set target date of March 15th of 2018. At that time we're going to put together our own findings as to what we believe and what we think moving this forward. We're going to hopefully have that rough draft ready for presentation to the NEC come May of 2018.

Another action item that we're working on, and this was something that began at the convention in Reno, is to develop an awards and ceremonial manual. The American Legion calls it the Trophies, Awards and Ceremonial Manual. The manual itself is already out there for The American Legion, but there's no manual out there for The Sons.

So I received a phone call back in, I believe, July, early part of July about it. So we have the resolution; of course, the resolution was presented to the pre-convention NEC meeting to develop this manual. That's what we're going to be working on this winter, as we were tasked to do, with a draft manual to be presented again to the NEC by the spring meeting in May of 2018.

We attended the Commander's Forum on Friday, the Internal Affairs Commission chairman, myself, and Vice Chairman Don Culver. Our part of the forum was the CSR modernization, issues that had been placed into the black hole. Everybody knows in this room what the black hole is all about.

Well, that black hole is ending. So if there is things in the black hole someplace, we're finding it, resurrecting it, and bringing it to action because it's time. It is past time that this happens, and we're hoping to get anything that's in that black hole resolved, working with the national adjutant and those individuals that we need to work with in order to get that done.

Also, the development of new processes for material and existing material for approval and distribution.

Yesterday afternoon, I presented the Internal Affairs portion to the detachment commanders training. Well received. Spent about five minutes in here yesterday talking to them. There were a couple of good questions that came back out of that.

One question that came up was, again, was paid-up-for-life. There were a couple of questions that came out of that, a couple of individuals asking those direct questions. Of course, we told them that we would get back with them at a later time and let them know what we find out.

Yesterday afternoon, I was contacted and called by four of my commission members that are in attendance this weekend: Vice Chairman Culver and two other commission members, J.R. Hall and Jay Cook. We had to take action regarding SAL Resolution 4 from the pre-convention NEC meeting. It came over to us from Finance.

So at that meeting it was discussed as to what we were going to do with it. So it was recommended that we just begin a discovery phase at this time to evaluate the resolution and to make recommendation again at the spring 2018 NEC.

I'd like to recognize my commission members that are on the commission this year: Vice Chairman Don Culver. I believe Don left the room, I don't see him back there anywhere. Don J.R. Hall from Maryland; Mike Kirschner from Colorado, Mike is not with us this weekend. Jay Cook from Oklahoma. I know Jay was here, I don't know if Jay's still in the room or not. And finally, Gary Gummersheimer from Illinois who is our newest member of our commission.

Mr. Commander, that concludes the Internal Affairs report minus the resolution.

...Commission Chairman submitted the report of the Internal Affairs Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Mark Tansel (IN)	Member	Donald "J.R." Hall (MD)
	<hr/>	s:	<hr/>
Vice Chairman:	Don Culver (KS)		Michael L. Kirschner (CO)
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Secretary:	Robert Avery (NY)		Jay Cook (OK)
	National Assistant Adjutant		Fr. Gary Gummersheimer (IL)
			<hr/>

Chairman's Report:

The Commission met via conference call at 8:00 pm EDT on September 27, 2017 with all members present except Fr. Gary Gummersheimer (IL) – excused.

The following guests attended the call:

- National Commander Danny Smith (NE)
- National Convention Committee Chairman Shawn Davis (MN)
- National Member Training and Development Committee Chairman Chuck Treat (AZ)
- National Membership Committee Chairman Seth Rippe (NE)
- National Member Training and Development Committee Member Gary Denmon (NY)
- Past National Commander Rick Cook (OK), Advisor/Liaison to the Commission

The Commission received greetings from National Commander Danny Smith (NE). Commander Smith discussed the upcoming Fall NEC meeting and the forum and reformat of

the weekend. As the National Commander had another call to attend, he asked to be excused and wished us well as we conduct our business.

Reports to the Commission:

Shawn Davis (MN), National Convention Committee Chairman, gave an update on the 2018 National Convention in Minneapolis.

Chuck Treat (AZ), National Member Training and Development Committee Chairman, gave an update on the upcoming Detachment Commanders Training at Fall NEC and will be working on NMI material following Fall NEC. He also recognized Gary Denmon (NY), MT&D Committeeman, for his work in the recent transition as he was the sole member returning to the Committee.

Seth Rippe (NE), National Membership Committee Chairman, gave an update on the National Membership Committee and commented he had attended all five regional conference calls. He also spoke on the Individual Recruitment Award form and it is now a fillable form thanks to Joe Roberts (AZ).

Resolutions:

The Commission received one resolution to consider.

S.A.L. Resolution 1 – Fall 2017

Title: Endorsement of Peter J. Sierminski (CO) for National Vice Commander

Action: A motion to receive and file the resolution was made by Donald Hall (MD), seconded by Jay Cook (OK). The motion carried.

Old Business:

The Membership Committee at the Spring, 2017 NEC meeting talked about online renewals. Membership is holding this until the Committee receives a green light from the Strategic Planning Committee.

New Business:

The Commission discussed the call-in for the Fall NEC and plans are that five of the Commission members will be attending; three will be attending on their own funds.

The Commission also discussed the upcoming Sons of The American Legion Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Manual. A copy of the manual from the American Legion was received from Paul Brown at National Convention and a tentative date to produce a draft manual for our organization is by May 1, 2018 before the 2018 Spring NEC meeting.

For the Good of the Commission:

The Commission discussed the inter-working of the National Vice Commanders and the Regional Membership Committeemen.

It also discussed communication to ensure our information is being passed down from the NEC to the Detachment Adjutant or other designee and working with Public and Media Communications Chairman Michael Fox (CA) to update the Excel spreadsheet developed last year.

Chairman Tansel thanked all of the Committee Chairmen and MT&D Committeeman Denmon for attending the conference call and offered assistance to any of the committees that may need our help.

With no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Donald Hall (MD) to adjourn, seconded by Donald Culver (KS). The motion carried.

Chairman Tansel adjourned the conference call at 9:32 pm EDT.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the report, and whatever action is taken from the body, I would prefer that that is made minus the resolution, and we'll act on that separately. We'll keep the resolution separate.

Is there any action from the body on the report? Come on, guys, it moves a lot faster if you help us along.

NECMAN HENKEMEYER (MN): Dennis Henkemeyer, Detachment of Minnesota NEC, I move for the adoption of the report minus the resolution.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Minnesota NEC moves to accept the report minus the resolution.

NECMAN MOORE (VA): NEC Virginia, Linwood Moore, second the motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Motion has been seconded. The motion is to accept the report minus the resolution. Any further discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

J.J., resolutions.

...Resolutions Subcommittee Chairman Jennings read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of male descendants of Veterans; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion requires that candidates for national elective office in the Sons of The American Legion be presented to the National body by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Peter J. Sierminski has distinguished himself as capable and willing to represent the Detachment of Colorado as elected national officer by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of the American Legion Family; now therefore let it be

RESOLVED, That the Sons of The American Legion in National Executive Committee assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 7-8, 2017, That the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Colorado hereby endorses Peter J. Sierminski for the high office of National Vice Commander at such future time and year as may become available; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the above resolution was endorsed by the Detachment of Colorado and the Department of Colorado with indicated National action submitted for the local resolving clause. The signatures of the Detachment Adjutant Scott Garrett and Department Adjutant Pat Smith are on the submitted resolution.

RESOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JENNINGS: Subcommittee on Resolutions met, reviewed, and as NEC for the Detachment of Florida, I make a motion that this resolution be received and filed.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: There has been a motion to receive and file the nomination of Peter Sierminski for National Vice Commander, Midwest. And I know we had an issue probably coming up. Is there a second? Is there a second to receive and file this resolution?

NECMAN COOK (OK): There's no need, but Chris Cook, NEC, Oklahoma, will second that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: If you want to bring it before the body for discussion, we need to do that.

It's been moved and seconded to receive and file the resolution. Now the discussion, Mr. Roberts from Mississippi.

NECMAN ROBERTS (MS): Mr. Commander, point of order. First sentence, "Whereas, The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion comprised of descendants." I thought it was restricted to male descendants. Therefore, this resolution would be out of order.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Would you like to amend it and insert "male"? Just a suggestion.

NECMAN ROBERTS: I have no authority to amend a resolution. That's the resolution body.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Technically, you are correct. I will make my ruling on that.

NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE PAVIGLIANTI: Ron, of course you are correct. Having said that, it is still the choice of this body to accept it as presented and, in fact, it being received and filed and presented from a detachment and a department. While that aspect of adding the word "male" for clarification and designation is correct, it certainly can still be accepted even with that slight four-letter omission. So it is the choice of this body to make that decision.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: So the motion is on the floor and has been duly seconded. Maybe we need to make sure we get that change in the future.

Any further discussion?

All in favor of receiving the resolution and filing it, signify by saying aye.

Those opposed, no.

Motion carried. It will be filed and hopefully, we'll make that correction in the future.

Yes, we approved your report.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN TANSEL: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Legislative Commission, Will Kelly, chairman.

Public & Media on deck.

Oral Report of Legislative Commission

William Kelly, Jr., Chairman, Florida

Good morning. If you take a look, you'll see that we did not have a meeting of the commission, the Legislative Commission. My name is Bill Kelly, by the way. We have had conference calls. They are working diligently.

Did you get a copy of the legislative agenda? Well, you have a copy of the legislative agenda of the NECs. You will be getting a copy of it electronically. We wanted to place a copy in your hand, a hard copy, especially for the commanders who are coming in and the NECmen to take home. Please share them.

We have a lot of information in here. It's very important that you look it over and take care of it.

One of the things that I do want to go over with you on the agenda is, we would like to have a Legislative Commission in every detachment. We talked to the commanders yesterday. Those who do not have a legislative chairman in their detachment will be appointing one at their fall conference or at their spring conference before we get back here. So it's important that that is taken care of.

The other thing is, we're going to take the Legislative Commission out of the loop. For years we've been providing the information to you on important legislation. Well, The American Legion Washington branch Legislative Affairs has an update. The information is right in there; I'm not going to go over it with you right now. I'd like you to put into either your phone or your home computer so you get these updates right available to you, so it doesn't have to go from the Legislative chairman to the NECs, from the NECs down to the squadron level.

We're going to take everybody out and you're going to get it directly. So it's a very important step. We'd like to have 300,000 legislative advocates of The Sons of The American Legion this year, so spread the information out, please, NECmen.

The next thing is the Washington conference. The Washington conference is going to be an even bigger thing this year because you can come along and accompany our National Commander Danny Smith when he presents wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Korean War Memorial, and at the World War II Memorial.

We have increased the bus size. There have been problems in previous years with not enough bus space. We have now 112 seats; please fill them. If we don't fill them this year, we probably will not have 112 seats next year. So go home. The application is in your hands. You should have that application with the legislative packet that we gave you this time.

Last but not least, over the last few years we have not received very many George B. Evans Grassroots Veterans Advocate of the Year Award. We would like every detachment adjutant to consider placing an application with their paperwork. The paperwork will be due 30 days before national convention so we may judge it. Please, even if you have just a Legislative chairman, submit an application for the award.

And last but not least, I'd just like to say thank you to the commission. Like I said, we've been working hard for the last 40 days to get this agenda ready for you. I'd like to especially thank Paul Brown, our new liaison, and Brian Compton at headquarters staff for printing this up for us and making sure that we all have a copy of it and available to us.

And of course, I couldn't do it without the commission. And Vice Commander Tom Deal, if you're in the room, please stand up; David Lee from New York; Richard Pipher from Indiana; Bernie Kessler from Ohio; and Zee Debrow from Georgia, I know Zee's not here. Thank you very much for everything you're doing for the Legislative Commission and for The Sons of The American Legion. Thank you very much for your time. Have a good day.

(Applause)

...Commission Chairman Kelly submitted the report of the Legislative Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	William D. Kelly, Jr. (FL)	Member	David W. Lee (NY)
		s:	
Vice	<u>Thomas Deal (MD)</u>		<u>Richard M. Pfeiffer (IN)</u>
Chairman:			
Secretary:	<u>David Ridenour (IN)</u>		<u>Bernie Kessler (OH)</u>
	National Assistant Adjutant		<u>Zeste C. Debro (GA)</u>

Chairman's Report:

National Legislative Agenda

1st To continue to supply Legislative Information to our Detachment's and Membership. To increase the number of Detachments with Active Legislative Commissions with Chairman reporting to the National Legislative Commission.

2nd To sign up as many as 300,000+ Sons of the American Legion for The American Legion Updates, at your computer, capwiz.com/legion/home/ or from your cell phone, mobile.Legion.org/takeaction by asking you to spread the word. That's simply by entering their email address, then they may automatically receive updates and with a click, send our American Legion concerns to Congress by partnering with TAL Legislative Commission.

3rd To prepare our organization for TAL Washington Conference by organizing thru our Liaison Paul Brown, DOD, U.S. Park Service, Flower Shop, Bus Company, Box Lunch

Provider, NEC, Legislative Commission and asking you to send a Detachment Chairman or member.

4th To promote and receive an application from every Detachment for the George B. Evans GRASSROOTS VETERANS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR AWARD by asking you to search out and send in an application from your Detachment.

Following Their Footsteps...Making History,

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Legislative Commission report. What's your pleasure?

NECMAN KEARNS (NE): Keith Kearns, NEC, Nebraska, moves to accept the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Nebraska NEC has moved to accept the report.

NECMAN KEISER (NV): Joseph Keiser, NEC Nevada, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Nevada seconds.

It has been moved to accept the Legislative Commission report and duly seconded. Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Public & Media Communications up, Michael Fox chairman. VA&R, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Butch Ray on deck.

Oral Report of Public & Media Communications Commission

Michael Fox, Chairman, California

Good morning, everybody. Public & Media Communications has got to be one of the most important tools that our organization has to get our message out to our members and to the nonmembers.

Your commission are agents of change. We have stepped up to the plate, working alongside Commander and all of the committees and commissions, and we're here to support you in any role we possibly can.

If you guys were at national convention in Reno, you would have seen a couple ideas that your commission has on how Public & Media Communications can implement some of those changes with those videos. If you guys have any other ideas that you'd like to share with us, we'd be happy to sit down and talk with you and see what we can work out, see how we can move forward.

I'd like to thank MT&D for their assistance this weekend with Public & Media Communications. We put together two videos. First video is the preamble, set to music, nice black-and-white tone. The second video we put together is meant to be inspirational, to inspire not only ourselves to work harder and to be motivated, but also to inspire future leaders in our organization that may not even belong yet.

If you haven't liked me on Facebook yet or sent me a friend request, send it to me. Keep a lookout on the national Facebook page and national website because hopefully, by tomorrow, with all the work that MT&D did, along with Public & Media Communications, we're ready to share those videos with you.

In doing that, I'd like to give a special thanks to some past national commanders that assisted us with getting this project done. Past National Commander Smith, Past National Commander Giehl, Past National Commander Ruttkofsky, Past National Commander Seaton, Past National Commander Mayne, Past National Commander Gladden, Past National Commander Stephens, and Past National Commander Deacon, thank you, guys, very much for

helping us with this project. Without all of you guys coming together, it wouldn't have gotten done, so thank you, guys, for helping us.

Keep in mind, as everybody keeps talking about change, embrace it. As Commander Smith has asked to move forward, to do what we can to better the organization, your commission that you so diligently put me in charge of, we're on board. So please, come to us with any ideas you have. We look forward to working with all the chairmen this year.

Commander, that completes my report.

...Commission Chairman Fox submitted the report of the Public & Media

Communications Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Michael C. Fox (CA)	Member	Mark B. McCue (MA)
		s:	
Vice Chairman:	Damon Bradtmueller (IN)		Casey D. Lenort (MN)
Secretary:	Scott J. Thornton (OH)		Brandon Roberts (GA)
	National Assistant Adjutant		Doug Evans (KS)

Chairman's Report:

The Commission met via conference call on September 4, 2017 with all members present except Doug Evans (KS) – excused.

Chairman Fox welcomed everyone returning to the Commission and the new members.

The Commission discussed communication with the Strategic Initiatives Ad-Hoc Committee about changes to the Commission.

There was a recap on the National Convention in Reno.

Old Business:

Vice Chairman Damon Bradtmueller is taking the lead on putting together some social media guidelines for possible presentation at the NEC.

New Business:

With Sandy Lipman's (MI) departure from the Commission we are in need of a new Snapshots of Service Chairman. Vice Chairman Bradtmueller has agreed to take the lead and will work with the Commission members to re-work the guidelines for this program.

The Commission discussed bringing the *National Update* newsletter and the S.A.L. national website / social media functions under the Commission. There was unanimous agreement for Chairman Fox to draft two separate resolutions to present at the NEC.

Regional assignments this year:

- Damon Bradtmueller (IN) – Midwest
- Casey Lenort (MN) – Central
- Mark McCue (MA) – South
- Doug Evans (KS) – East
- Brandon Roberts (GA) – West

Chairman Fox informed the Commission members that he will supply the necessary contact information to them when it is available.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Public & Media

Communications Commission report. What's your pleasure?

ALTERNATE NECMAN PARSONS (CA): Matt Harsons, alternate NEC, California, we make a motion to accept the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: California moves to accept the report.

NECMAN Moore (VA): Linwood Moore, NEC from Virginia, seconds the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Linwood Moore from Virginia seconds.

The motion has been made to accept the report and duly seconded. Is there any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, chairman Harl "Butch" Ray. Veterans Employment & Education Commission up on deck.

Oral Report of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Harl "Butch" Ray, Chairman, Illinois

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN RAY: Commander Smith, national officers, NEC members, guests, good morning. Can everybody hear me okay? Okay, good.

As you heard, my name is Harl "Butch" Ray. I'm part of the change you've been experiencing this weekend. This is my first year as VA&R chairman, and I accept the challenge and hope I make you all proud.

First I'd like to introduce members of my commission that are still here: Mr. Doug Murphy from Georgia, my vice chairman in the back of the room there; Daniel O'Rourke from New Mexico here in front; Steve Tansel from Indiana; Steve Gower from Virginia; and I have one member who is out of the country and he's been excused, Gabe, and I cannot pronounce his last name correctly yet, that's how new I am.

Did you know that The American Legion is older than the VA? In fact, it took the first 20 years of The American Legion's existence to convince the federal government that we needed a Veterans Administration. It wasn't created until 1930. And because of The American Legion, it was made into a cabinet-level position in the 1980s. So that shows you a little bit of what we, as The American Legion family, as advocates for our veterans, can do.

Since that time, The American Legion has worked tirelessly to make sure that the VA lives up to its motto, "To care for those who have borne the battle, his widow and orphan."

In the decades that followed, The American Legion family has established itself as the premier advocate for veterans that they care for and they have earned these rights but not always received.

The SAL VA&R Commission will make history by following in the footsteps laid out for us by our past leadership. We will continue to work to reach out and reach the goal of having an SAL representative or deputy representative in each one of the 155 VA hospitals and clinics in the country.

I challenge the NEC to go back home, go on to our website, legion.org/sons, under the committee and commissions tab, find the VA&R Commission, and under there you'll see the VAVS Handbook. You'll find the application in there that you need to register a representative or a deputy representative.

I urge you to find someone in your detachment to cover all of those VA hospitals and VA clinics. We currently have 39 representatives nationwide. That's important, it's very important. We have to keep 25 members or more in order to reserve our spot on the National Advisory Council of which we are a member.

So I urge each and every one of you to find that one volunteer that makes all the extra time to go the VA clinics and hospitals, and make them a representative or a deputy representative to help our numbers.

I also challenge the NEC to go back to your states and find that one volunteer, that one blue cap member who spends hours and hours and hours each week at their local VA, and submit his name for the Charles Rigsby VAVS Volunteer of the Year Award. I would really like at the next national convention in Minneapolis to spend many hours debating who is going to be the winner.

But we have a special treat here today. With the Commander's permission, I ask Past National Vice Commander Bill Kelly and the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort forward Mr. Jeffrey

Gibson from the Detachment of Alabama. He, gentlemen, is your Rigsby winner for this past year.

(Standing ovation)

It is my honor and privilege to present Mr. Gibson, our volunteer of the year, with his cap that he has earned by his efforts.

(Applause)

ALTERNATE NECMAN GIBSON (AL): I want to thank y'all so much. My name is Jeff Gibson, Detachment of Alabama. Alabama know me for motivation. I'm going to talk to y'all for a few minutes. You know what, you got to listen to the veteran's story.

Freedom isn't free; somebody paid the ultimate price. You know what I'm saying, when you go to the nursing home and nobody goes to visit these guys. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be here today. That's why I do what I do.

I like to thank God for giving me the strength, my father for serving in the war and so I'm eligible to be a member of The Sons, and most of all my wife of 42 years. Because without a family's support, you're not able to do nothing without their support because it can be rough.

But when you look at the big picture, it ain't about me. It's about The Sons of The American Legion. I do what I do for the young men sitting in the back. We have to mentor them and let them know they're our future.

(Applause)

A lot of times people don't see what The Sons do. Wherever I go, I represent the hat. Last year y'all seen me in a sky blue jacket. People say that, "Hey, that jacket sure is kind of bright." But on that front pocket, "The Sons of The American Legion." Because you might not

remember my name, but you'll always remember that I wear the cap that I wear, states The Sons of The American Legion.

So it ain't about me; it's about us doing. In Alabama I told them, The Sons lead the way. Without us it's impossible sometimes because we have to pick up for everybody else.

But I want to take y'all on a journey real quick before I go to my seat. I want y'all to picture me coming down the aisle with my Smoky the Bear hat on, my campaign hat, a hundred-some pounds lighter. Y'all just got off the bus for basic training for The Sons of The American Legion. I'm about ready to motivate you and take you and give you enthusiasm. If you never remember Jeff Gibson again, I want you to remember I tell you that motivation and enthusiasm can mean a lot. But it's a poem that keeps me going that I learned when I was in college years ago. It goes like this:

"See It Through" by Edgar Albert Guest.

"When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

"Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worst is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

"Even hope may seem futile,
When with trouble you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.

You may fail, but fall still fighting;
 Don't give up, whatever you do.
 Eyes front, head high to the finish.
 See it through!"

(Standing ovation)

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN RAY: Well, Commander and NEC, there's no way in the world I can top that.

(Laughter)

My report's in your packet, gentlemen. That concludes my report.

(Applause)

...Commission Chairman Ray submitted the report of the Veterans Affairs &

Rehabilitation Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Harl D. "Butch" Ray (IL)	Member	Daniel M. O'Rourke (NM)
		s:	
Vice Chairman:	Douglas E. Murphy (GA)		Gabriel Cinquegrana (NY)
Secretary:	Scott Williams (VA) National Assistant Adjutant		Steve Tansel (IN) [vacant]

Chairman's Report:

The Commission met via conference call at 7:00 pm CDT on September 27, 2017 with Chairman Harl Ray (IL), Vice Chairman Doug Murphy (GA) and member Steve Tansel (IN) present. Member Gabe Cinquegrana (NY) was excused. There is one vacancy on the Commission to be filled at the Fall NEC. National Commander Danny Smith (NE) joined the call as a guest.

National Commander Smith spoke and reminded all on the call that VA & R is near and dear to his heart. He too has volunteered many hours at his local VA facility and wants us to continue to champion the cause to serve our veterans utilizing all of the tools available to us and to share that with all of our members down to the squadron level. Commander Smith then excused himself to participate in another conference call and said he is looking forward to seeing as many of us as possible at the upcoming NEC the first weekend in October in Indianapolis.

Goals of the Commission

- VA & R Informational PowerPoint presentation
- VAVS Volunteer Representatives and Deputies PowerPoint presentation
 - o It was discussed that the development of these two presentations were presented to this Commission as goals to achieve this year. Rough drafts of these presentations are in the works and will be shared with the Commission soon.
- Ways to Increase VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives
 - o An ongoing goal for this Commission is to increase the number of SAL Reps and Deps in the approximately 155 VA facilities nationwide. Currently according to VA's records we have 37 which allows us to keep our spot on the VAVS NAC (Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service National Advisory Council).
- NEF Donations
 - o Another goal for this Commission is to promote donations to the NEF to the tune of at least \$0.50 per member. We are working alongside of the Children & Youth Committee to achieve this goal!

Modifications to the Consolidated Squadron Report Form

Based on a past Americanism Commission decision, an updated Consolidated Squadron Report Form is needed to show all current American Legion programs and to find some way to make the form easier to fill out and to shorten its length. This will be discussed in more detail at the upcoming Fall NEC.

National Veterans Assistance Day

No report.

Operation Comfort Warriors

No report.

Fisher House Foundation

We will be urging all SAL members to continue to support this important program.

Charles Rigsby VA Volunteer of the Year Award

- Our 2017 Rigsby Award winner will be submitted for the VAVS Male Volunteer of the Year Award.
- We are also challenging all detachments to submit a Rigsby Application for the 2017-2018 membership year.

National Convention Awards

- Kirby E. Kepler Memorial Award (Squadron)
- Allen I. O'Brien Memorial Award (District)
- Earl A. Webster Memorial Award (Detachment)
 - o Articles to raise awareness of these awards will be written and submitted to the *National Update* and national website to be published and posted.

VAVS James H. Parke Youth VA Volunteer Scholarship

Articles to raise awareness of this award will also be written and submitted to the *National Update* and national website to be published and posted.

General Discussion

- Fall NEC
 - o It was discussed that Chairman Ray, Vice Chairman Murphy, and member Tansel will be in attendance at the Fall NEC.
- Commission Assignments
 - o Specific assignments will be emailed out after the Fall NEC when we will have a new member appointed to the Commission to fill the vacancy of Joe Keiser (NV).

Next Conference Call

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Oh, man. That was awesome.

I hope Commanders Advisory was in the room and were paying attention, maybe a little potential there.

You've heard the report. What's your pleasure?

NECMAN GLANDER (AL): Tom Glander, NEC, Alabama, moves to accept the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Alabama has moved to accept the report the VA&R report.

NECMAN BROWN (GA): Bob Brown, NEC, Georgia, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Georgia seconds.

This has been moved to accept the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation report and duly seconded. Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Those opposed, no.

Motion carried.

I thought a little more enthusiasm would come with that.

(Laughter)

Veterans Employment & Education Commission, Bear, followed up by Subcommittee on Resolutions, Mr. Jennings.

Oral Report of Veterans Employment and Education Commission

Larry "Bear" Weinzirl, Chairman, Maryland

Good morning. As you can see in the published minutes. The national Veterans Employment & Education Commission did not meet here at the NEC. The published minutes reflect our most recent conference call held on September 21. In attendance on that call were Chairman Larry "Bear" Weinzirl of Maryland; Vice Chairman Jeff Evans, Virginia; and commission members Scott Garrett, Colorado; Marvin Nay, Massachusetts; and David Swafford from Utah. Blair Miles from Alabama was excused due to a family emergency.

Our mission statement was reiterated, which is to assist The American Legion in ensuring that American's veterans have the opportunity to provide, with honor and dignity, the economic necessities of life for themselves and their families.

Our commission is utilizing the national vice commanders, NECs, and detachment adjutants once again this year to distribute dates and locations of Hiring Our Hero job fairs nationwide to the detachments where they're being held. It is our hope that the detachments are then distributing this info down to their districts and squadrons who are sharing it with their posts and the veterans that need this employment. Sons are also providing volunteer assistance as these fairs as it is requested. Our commission has already distributed out information at over 180 of these job fairs and are continuing to do so.

Many states also offer veterans education benefits and programs of their own in addition to or as an alternative to federal GI Bill benefits. Our commission is concentrating on getting this information out to our veterans as well.

Another focus of our commission once again this year will be military to civilian credentialing. It's a scary job market out there right now, but the training and experience that our veterans received in the military makes them highly marketable.

The Department of Defense provides some of the best vocational training in the nation for its military personnel, and there are many occupational career fields in the armed forces that can easily translate to a civilian counterpart. However, there are many occupations in the civilian workforce that require a license or certification.

Every year, skilled service members leave the armed forces, leaving the armed forces, miss out on the chance to quickly move into good, high-paying jobs because they must undergo lengthy and expensive retraining in order to meet civilian licensure requirements. The national VE&E Commission is continuing to actively investigate and, with the assistance of the Legislative Commission, support credentialing initiatives in the individual states.

Another major focus of our commission this year once again will be ending veterans' homelessness. I hope many of you were in attendance at the national convention in Reno and had the opportunity to view the PowerPoint program that I presented, outlining some suggestions on how detachments, district, and squadrons can assist us with this initiative. We received some very positive feedback on this presentation as well as requests from various individuals to make it available for use back in their detachments.

We now have this PowerPoint available for download in two locations on the SAL national website. You can find it on the Commissions and Committees page under my beautiful

picture, no comments, please, and as well as on the Commissions and Committee Reports page. Please consider downloading this PowerPoint and presenting it at your detachment, district, and squadron meetings, and assist us in ending veterans' homelessness.

Please remember also that in the same two locations on the national website, we have placed a brochure created by the VA for first responders. These emergency workers are many times in contact with homeless veterans on a daily basis. This brochure gives these first responders information that they can provide to these down-on-their-luck veterans, including a 24-hour phone number which offers them assistance.

I personally printed out some of these brochures and approached the local fire and police departments in my hometown. Not only did they agree to put these brochures in all of their police, fire, and EMS vehicles, but we received front-page coverage in our local county newspaper for them doing so. This is an excellent PR for our organization, and please consider trying this in your hometown.

We are also continuing to encourage every detachment to form its own VE&E commission or committee. Each of our commission members has been assigned a region again this year and they are participating in their assigned region's conference calls to push these initiatives. A breakdown of those region assignments is in your published minutes.

Yesterday I addressed the detachment commanders conference and, while there, we distributed a questionnaire from our commission requesting each detachment to update their status in forming these VE&E commissions and committees. For those that have already done so, we request the contact information for their detachment VE&E chairman. For those that have not, we ask the detachment to accomplish this in the future, and in lieu of a VE&E chairman, we request the contact information for their VA&R chairman.

This morning we have provided each NECman with a copy of this questionnaire, and I'd like to request that you please follow up with your individual detachments and make sure that this form is completed and returned to me by November 1st. These completed questionnaires will assist us in updating our contact list of those individuals who can assist us in getting out valuable information to our veterans, as well as provide our commission with the data we need to evaluate how successful this initiative has been thus far and identify where we need to further concentrate our actions.

If your detachment has not done so yet, please consider forming your own VE&E commission or committee and then encourage your squadrons and districts to do the same.

Our commission is also currently looking into the possibility of adding an additional program this year that we can throw our support behind.

In closing, we thank you for your support over these last two years and ask for your continued support as the SAL national Veterans Employment & Education Commission attempts to ensure that no veteran is ever unemployed or homeless.

Mr. Commander, that's my report. Thank you.

...Commission Chairman Weinzirl submitted the report of the Veterans Employment and Educating Commission.

The Commission did not meet during the Fall, 2017 session of the National Executive Committee.

Chairman:	Larry C. "Bear" Weinzirl (MD)	Member	Blair M. Miles (AL)
		s:	
Vice Chairman:	Jeffrey C. Evans (VA)		David L. Swafford (UT)
Secretary:	Ed Sheubrooks (FL) National Assistant Adjutant		J. Scott Garrett (CO) Marvin Nay (MA)

Chairman's Report:

The Commission met via conference call at 8:00 pm EDT on September 21, 2017 with all members present except Blair Miles (AL) – excused (family emergency).

Chairman Weinzirl opened the call by congratulating all members on their appointments and welcomed new member Marvin Nay to the Commission.

Regional assignments this year:

- Jeff Evans (VA) – Central – NVC Jay Marsden (MO)
- Marvin Nay (MA) – East – NVC Ken Warner (PA)
- Blair Miles (AL) – South – NVC Mark Cannito (SC)
- Scott Garrett (CO) – Midwest – NVC Joe Navarrete (NM)
- Dave Swafford (UT) – West – NVC Don Ramirez (CA)

Chairman Weinzirl requested that all members participate in their respective NVC’s conference calls again this year to update the regions on VE&E initiatives and to request their assistance.

He requested members continue to push for ALL detachments to form their own VE&E Commissions / Committees.

Chairman Weinzirl will send out emails to all members with their conference call dates, times and call in numbers.

VE&E Conference Call Schedule

Chairman Weinzirl led discussion on the best dates and times for this year’s VE&E conference calls. It was agreed to continue with the same schedule as last year.

- 4th Thursday (every other month) at 8:00 pm Eastern Time
- Call-in number: +1 (641) 715-3580
- Access code: 878191

Chairman Weinzirl stated that he wants to have a call again in October (on the 26th) and then every other month after that. He stated that additional calls may be scheduled on an as-needed basis. Chairman Weinzirl will email all members the schedule through August, 2018.

Old Business

Chairman Weinzirl updated the Commission on the initiatives already established: Job Fairs, Benefits Available, Credentialing, Ending Veterans Homelessness and pushing formation of Detachment VE&E Commissions/Committees.

He thanked everyone for the amount of information they distributed last year and requested all to continue this year.

Discussion was held on the “Ending Veterans Homelessness” PowerPoint presented by Chairman Weinzirl at National Convention in Reno. Members stated that they received much positive feedback. Chairman Weinzirl announced that this presentation is now available on the national website for all detachments and others to utilize.

New Business

Chairman Weinzirl stated he expects members to continue with the initiatives already established as discussed under Old Business. He also requested that members give some thought as to another initiative that we can add this year.

Chairman Weinzirl then updated the Commission on the upcoming Fall NEC. Only he and Vice Chairman Evans will receive a call-in. Discussion as to which Commission members will be attending. Chairman

Weinzirl stated that the Commission will not be holding a meeting at this NEC and updated the members on the new format and the commission/committee forums to be held along with times. He requested that all members traveling to Indy plan to attend these forums and come prepared to participate.

Chairman Weinzirl also stated that he will be addressing the Detachment Commanders Conference and that he has already submitted our VE&E slide for the PowerPoint. He then requested that Vice

Chairman Evans also make plans to attend to assist in distributing a questionnaire that he is creating for the commanders.

Chairman Weinzirl then stated that he will be addressing the NEC on Sunday per usual.

Closing

Chairman Weinzirl thanked all members for their participation on the call and for all that they do for our veterans. He then reminded everyone that the next VE&E conference call will be on held on Thursday, October 26th at 8:00 pm Eastern Time.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Veterans Employment & Education Commission report.

NECMAN BLAIR (TX): NEC Blair, Texas, makes a motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Texas has moved to accept the report, Blair.

NECMAN HENKEMEYER (MN): Dennis Henkemeyer, NEC, Minnesota, seconds that.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Minnesota seconds.

It's been moved and duly seconded to accept the Veterans Employment & Education Commission report. Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

One thing I want to say now, there was an addition to the agenda that was not in the script. So we're going to hold off on resolutions and stay by the agenda, and go with the Strategic Initiatives Ad Hoc Committee report by Past National Commander Bill Sparwasser.

Oral Report of Strategic Initiatives Ad Hoc Committee

Bill Sparwasser, Past National Commander, Maryland

Good morning. Just a little bit of housekeeping before we get into the nuts and bolts of the report.

Commander Danny talked about change yesterday. There's going to be a lot of change. Some we may like, some we may not like. But if we don't at least pursue change in one direction or the other, this organization will die. We're just on a course that needs to be modified greatly. And through the modification process, we, the Ad Hoc Committee, have been requesting the support of every committee and commission, from Commanders Advisory on down, for their help.

I've heard a lot of rumors and I want to dispel the rumors. Training is not stopping. It will be modified to be for the best interests of the organization, but it's going to continue; okay? The Ad Hoc Committee is not trying to run the national organization; that's your job. All we're trying to do is give you the tools to better manage our organization and take us into the future in such a way that we will all benefit from it.

Is everybody clear with that? There's no misconceptions of what we're trying to do?
Yes? No? All right.

That being said, we had an extremely productive weekend. We are now at a point where we're reaching the crossroads. All the SOPs have been, for the most part, solidified and prepared now for the official documentation of the SOPs for all comm-comms, with a couple of exceptions. We still have to fine tune, and you can imagine the fine-tuning of Commanders Advisory and commissions and committees and Internal Affairs are ongoing, developing, and growing procedure.

So we need to work on those a little bit more before we can at least put them in a book. I assure you, by the spring NEC 2018, as directed under our resolution, we're going to put forth a pattern, a plan, and a recommendation to the NEC to take this organization into the next 100 years. We have much to do yet.

Could I take just a second of personal privilege and ask the Ad Hoc Committee to stand for a moment?

These are the guys that have been sitting in rooms here at the NECs for, on average, 16 hours through a weekend. We start early in the morning and we go until late in the afternoon, and they do phenomenal things and work through phenomenal concerns and issues. Thank you, guys, on behalf of the NEC for all you're doing. Thank you.

(Applause)

One of the things that we came across very early, and it was in a conference call that we had prior to the convention, I just made it an assumption that our national Membership chairman had access to mySAL nationally. Well, it was determined that that doesn't happen. I spoke to Internal Affairs and that will happen, that is going to happen. Your Membership chairman needs access to give our vice commander some clear direction, very timely direction, and very quickly.

So as one of the first recommendations, the national chairman will have access to mySAL. We're already in the process of getting it completed. By Monday morning, Mr. Rippe will have access to support our vice commanders in the national membership team on moving things forward in a faster manner and clearer manner.

We also took on the challenge of a realignment. This report is less resolution. When the resolution comes through, I'm sure you'll have some questions. But bottom line was, we had two committees that were operating without oversight and direction that should fall under PR. One was web page, the other was the update.

The committee went back and forth for countless hours, trying to ascertain the complete direction and the proper direction to kind of bring these two gentlemen and two committees under the purview of PR and multimedia communications. We believe that that is, again, one of the best steps to go in with regard to how our future communications are going to be enveloped, how paper is certainly becoming less and digital is becoming more, and we believe they needed some control. So we did spend a lot of time going over the PR side of how do we bring these two committees underneath the PR commission.

We have reviewed all standard operating procedures less three committees and a commission. We have moved to put them in solid format for presentation to you folks in the spring and, ultimately, Internal Affairs. It needs to go without statement that it's going to be a long NEC, I'm going to say it this way: We're still working on how we're going to properly do this in the spring, because you just can't do it in a 15-minute setting like we have right here. You need to understand what is about to take place with regards to the national organization.

So we're going to work on that process through IA on how we're going to present this. I'm thinking it's almost going to be a process whereby it's going to hit in a couple of modules.

By spring NEC, I think we're going to come out with the strongest as we can with what is the most important stuff. You'll get a report, it will be printed, we're going to want to talk about it. Once you approve it, I'll go across the street and present it as best as we can to Internal Affairs.

We have invited Internal Affairs to come in and sit here on Sunday so we can spend time with PowerPoint and the necessary tools we need to present the package so they understand it as well as you do. So as we move forward, then we can develop the implementation schedule.

We are also now in the final phases of developing, and I know our Internal Affairs chairman, Mr. Tansel, is working on or is thinking about a resolution that would support developing an awards and ceremonial manual. We have all these awards that we give out, but the problem is that we don't know really why we give them out, when they started to happen. We need to put life behind them.

So we're in the process of taking all these awards, they're kind of buried in the administrative manual, put them into one book now. So that, very easily, we can look at these awards and see, are we giving them out correctly? Do we need to modify the resolution that supports the award? Do we have enough money allocated for that award? Do we have to add more money? We're putting in place some recommendations for some tools that are going to really move us forward.

Membership tools. We are developing, working in conjunction with Paul Brown to work towards online renewal, online membership, new membership applications.

There was an extensive discussion regarding PUFL. I can tell you that PUFL is probably going to take us a rather long time to settle, because there are a lot of areas of issues that we

have identified in the discussions yesterday with PUFL, things like that there are certain detachments that probably have a PUFL. How many detachments have a PUFL?

The problem we're going to run into, and this is something that we have got to talk to you folks about it, if we put up a national PUFL, they're going to require the detachment PUFL go away because it's going to have to be managed by the national PUFL guidelines. What does this mean? Dollars and cents. Dollars and cents.

So we need to talk to you detachments that have PUFLs so that we can get a better understanding of the impact to your side of the house, as well as really, what is it going to mean to the national organization when we make recommendation for PUFL.

We also sent a lot of time with MT&D. Again, I want to talk about training for just a moment. The training is large at any minor recommendation to community, or this NEC. We see training is going to have to happen in a very, very different way. We still need to train out here, but we need to train in a way that the result of our training is the grooming process for future leaders. And that at the detachment level, the department level, the training that is the result there brings those guys up to here, and so that the national level doesn't become the bearers of burden for all training across the country.

We can set the pace and set the stage, but we need to push some of this training down to the blue cap level. Mr. Treat and the committee and Paul Brown and I have had extensive discussions. It's probably going to be the biggest task we have set forth before us, but we will very much succeed.

We also talked with the Finance Commission about budgets. When you start talking about changing the way we do business, obviously, there's going to be a financial impact to the business. There are going to be probably areas that we're not spending money that either we

need to determine whether we're going to continue to earmark it to spend it or reallocate it in other areas that are more useful, if there's dollars.

We also talked about what happens when we start promoting and developing stronger and better operational committees. If we need to grow a committee, if we need to add a committee, if we need to develop a committee, we need to go through that process and we need to understand, before we start talking about the final version of a strategic plan is, if we make a financial change, if we make a recommendation that's going to impact Finance, we need to make sure it's in front of Finance with duly seconded full detail with ROI attached, so that we can convince the folks above, if we need to ask for more money, in fact, how do we get it.

The last thing that we talked about extensively on Friday evening was, we've been at \$2 a member forever, almost, out here at national. Quite honestly, I don't know how we've survived to do all the things that we do for \$2 a member. With all the other things that are going on in the background and all the procedural processing we're doing, all the planning for the future that we're doing, it became clear to me in the spring of last year that we can't continue to do what we do at \$2 a member. So be prepared, we're probably going to come with recommendation. We're going to have to look at that recommendation very seriously.

Because it's not about just raising money for programs. Here's the hard part for everybody to get. We have no paid staff out here at national. We have no support out here at national, other than what Brian Compton does and what Paul Brown does, which is an amazing amount of work. And prior to that, what John Kerestan and his people did, was an amazing amount of work.

We're almost 362,000 members strong. If we have sights on 500,000 members, do you think we can still do that with volunteers or folks that are allocated by national to do a specific job for The American Legion and, if they have time, to do it for us? No. No.

What we need to do is develop a process by which we say to national, "We need bodies. We're going to have to pay for them. They do our work first, they do our job first. You know what, Mr. American Legion? If there's time left over, I don't really care what you do with that body, as long as our work is No. 1."

That's how we have to look at that, fellows. We have to make sure that if we ask for a dues increase and we allocate it, we spend it, we don't put it in a black hole. This organization puts a lot of money in the black hole and we do it prematurely sometimes. And unfortunately, it's just not the way we should be doing business.

At this point, I don't have really much more to brief you on other than we are in the cargo bay to launch 2016 spring. I have to finalize how we're going to do it, figure out the best way to do it. It's going to take some time to do it so that you NEC understand exactly what we're talking about when we put this final strategic plan together. All I can say is, it's going to have to be in components, not only as we present it, but also as we implement it. It's a big, big plan and it's all the good of the organization that this plan come together.

Mr. Commander, that's my report minus the resolution.

...PNC Sparwasser submitted the report of the Strategic Initiatives Ad Hoc Committee.

**Sons of The American Legion
Fall NEC Meeting
October 6-8, 2017
Indianapolis, Indiana**

Summary Report Less the re-alignment resolution

- ⇒ Discussion and clarification for the need for the National Membership Chairmen have access to MySAL.org for the purpose of supporting and managing the membership efforts for the Sons of The American Legion.
- ⇒ Confirmation that Jack Querfeld confirmed that I provide him with the membership number and his address and contact details he will see that Seth Rippe has the access he needs to better support our membership teams with the information details we can obtain from MySAL.org membership database.
- ⇒ Discussion and re-write of the re-alignment resolution to place the National UPDATE and the Website and all multi-media tools under the responsibility of the National Public Media & Communications Commission. Sole purposes are to provide additional support and more structure and a direct channel of communication to the Public Media & Communications Commission. (See resolution for specific details).
- ⇒ Review of all Standards Operating Procedures was conducted, it was determined that all SOP's with the exception of Commanders Advisory, Committee on Committee and Commissions. And Internal Affairs be identified as incomplete as we are currently working towards completion within the next 30 days. The SOP's will now be assigned SOP final titles and SOP numbers in preparation to be submitted as a part of the Strategic Plan to be offered in the Spring 2018.
- ⇒ Review and discussion was had regarding an "Awards and Ceremonial Manual", this manual much like The American Legion Manual contain all supported documents that were used to create the award and all back up tools used to bring life the award and pay for the award;
 - example;
 - Award Name
 - Award Description
 - Vender producing the award
 - Cost of Award
 - Resolution Number
 - Any supportive information about the award
 - Date

The final version of this document now requires that any and all communications required to maintain life of the award be included within this document. This shall be completed no later than November to allow time for the resolution to be generated and compiled to be submitted by the Fall NEC

- ⇒ Membership development tools and processes were discussed
 - Online renewal
 - Online "NEW" membership applications
 - Extensive discussion was had on a PUFL and how it might come to life for the S.A.L.
 - All Pro's and Con's have been discussed in review of all elements and or requirements of a PUFL
 - More study needs to be done to provide a clear direction

- ⇒ Future MTD development strategies for revamping the National level training as well as how we may be able to provide trainers that have been retrained to take us into the next level.
 - Re-branding and re-building of the current National Management Institute I-II-III with the introduction of a revised version of NMI
 - Discussion was had on how to better train and improve the training for for NEC's, COM/COM, Ambassadors and all other related training. With a real focus and commitment on "Training the Trainer"

- ⇒ Extensive discussions was had regarding how all major commissions and committees need training and support, preliminary discussions have begun on how to effectively train and retrain our leadership as we move forward.

- ⇒ Very extensive review of the current budget for the annual National Convention was performed and the review of the how to improve and re-develop our conventions. Discussion was also had about how the budget will be affected by any change. More discussion with the past chairmen now needs to be engaged to develop a more focused and stream line process. This committee needs to be rebuilt to allow for a more effective means operate. Resolutions will be required to reconstruct the committee to.
 - The number of members needs to be increased to allow for a more effective ways to conduct a convention and engage our members. This committee also will need to work in tandem with PR and Media communications as well as the National Liaisons office.

- ⇒ Constitutional/By-law matters were discussed and reviewed with our national Judge Advocate regarding timing issues and other training and related timing changes.

Goals and objective are being set for the November-thru May 2018

Respectively Submitted,

Bill Sparwasser, PNC
Strategic AD-HOC Planning Committee, Chairman

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Strategic Initiatives Ad Hoc Committee report less the resolution. What's your pleasure?

NECMAN COOK (OK): Chris Cook, NEC, Oklahoma. I make a motion that we accept the oral report as given, minus the resolution that was presented.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the motion. Is there a second?

NECMAN BLAIR (TX): NEC Blair, Texas.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: NEC Blair from Texas seconds.

It's been duly moved to accept the oral report minus the resolution and duly seconded.

Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Subcommittee on Resolutions.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JENNINGS: Good morning again. In your packet you'll find the resolution, SAL Resolution 2 - Fall 2017.

...Resolutions Subcommittee Chairman Jennings read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the National UPDATE and Website/Social Media tools are currently not under the responsibility of any committee/commission, and,

WHEREAS, it is desirable to re-align the National UPDATE and Website/Social Media Tools, to provide a path of accountability and reporting status and,

WHEREAS, our National UPDATE and Webmaster/ Social Media updater is solely done by individual members and,

WHEREAS, the National Sons of The American Legion, Public and Media Communication Commission is responsible for all National publications and communications to our members and the public and,

WHEREAS, this re-alignment will focus to improve and enhance the level of quality and timely publications and the most current information made available to our members through our current web-page, now therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, That the National UPDATE and Website and all Social Media tools be officially re-aligned under the responsibility of the National Sons of The American Legion, Public and Media Communication Commission; and be it finally,

RESOLVED, That this re-alignment becomes effective during the Fall National Executive Committee Meetings held on October 7-8, 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

As a delegate to this NEC from the Detachment of Florida, I move for acceptance of this resolution.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: NEC Jennings from Florida moved to accept the resolution.

NECMAN PIPHER (IN): Mr. Commander, Mike Pipher, NEC, Indiana, seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Indiana seconds.

It's been duly moved to accept the resolutions and seconded. Any discussion?

NECMAN COOK (OK): Yes. There needs to be a correction made on the very last line as read, October 6th through the 8th. It states at the top we met the 7th through the 8th. Please correct that.

NECMAN SIERMINSKI (CO): And down under the signatures --

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: The NEC from Colorado?

NECMAN SIERMINSKI: Yeah, Pete Sierminski, NEC, Colorado.

Under the commission and committee chairman name and signature, it says, "Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Commission." I believe it's a committee.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Correct, it is a committee.

You've heard the corrections. All in favor of accepting the resolution as read, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Now I call on Subcommittee Resolutions chairman, John Jennings, for the Resolutions report.

Oral Report of Subcommittee on Resolutions

John Jennings, Chairman, Florida

Good morning. I'm going to make this short and sweet so we can get out of here. I've got an airplane, hopefully I can get to Atlanta, Georgia, and get back to Florida.

But I do want to recognize Pete Sierminski, please stand up; Bob Brown out of Georgia; Andy Dadds out of Maryland; and Travis Cummins out of Missouri.

Guys, this is your committee for Subcommittee on Resolutions, these are our members. Thank you, gentlemen, for your participation.

We did meet yesterday. We did go over the two resolutions, and the recommendations were for approval, which you have heard on the floor.

I did address the commanders' forum yesterday. I did take about 45 minutes, which was a little under the time that I told Commander I needed. But I needed to say some stuff, and I think that y'all that attended heard a clear message from what the stance for Subcommittee on Resolutions is. We're here to help you do your job to make the good quality decisions that you need to make to move our organization in the direction that you're wanting it to go.

So if you need our help, please get with us; we're not going to bug you. We're going to give you the best tools that we can possibly give you.

And that concludes my report.

(Applause)

...Committee Chairman Jennings submitted the report of the Subcommittee on

Resolutions.

Opening:

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM on October 7, 2017 in the Board Room of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel at the Chairman John T. Jennings (FL).

Roll Call:

Chairman:	John T. Jennings (FL)	Member	Peter Sierminski (CO)
Secretary:	Scott J. Thornton (OH) National Assistant Adjutant	s:	Robert S. Brown (GA) B. Andy Dadds, Jr. (MD)
Liaison:	(none assigned) Past National Commander		Doyle T. "Travis" Cummins (MO)
Guests:	National Adjutant Anthony Wright (PA); Bill Sutterlin (OH); David Blair (TX); Doyle T. Cummins (MO); Brandon K. Curry (KY); Robert Avery (NY); David Ridenour (IN); Jeffrey Hicks (NJ); Nat'l Liaison Paul Brown (CA).		

Reading of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the Spring, 2017 meeting were approved as published.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Chairman Jennings reported that he will work with National Liaison Paul Brown on publishing some of his information from today's forum to the national website.

Pete Sierminski (CO) asked about the disposition of the resolutions from the National Convention in Reno. National Adjutant Anthony Wright replied that he will be including copies of them in the National Commander's report to the Legion Internal Affairs Commission on Monday.

Resolutions:

The members reviewed the resolutions submitted.

S.A.L. Resolution 1 – Fall, 2017

Title: Endorsement of Peter J. Sierminski (CO) for National Vice Commander

Action: Bob Brown (GA) made a motion to receive and file the resolution. Andy Dadds (MD) seconded the motion. The motion carried.

S.A.L. Resolution 2 – Fall, 2017

Title: Re-Alignment National UPDATE and Website/Social Media Tools

Action: Andy Dadds (MD) made a motion to approve the resolution. Bob Brown (GA) seconded the motion. The motion carried.

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion:

National Adjutant Wright will contact the national chairmen and encourage them to work with the national assistant adjutant assigned to their commission or committee to submit resolutions as soon as possible for consideration.

Closing:

With no further business to consider,
at 1:15 PM .

Chairman John Jennings (FL) _____ adjourned the meeting

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You've heard the Subcommittee on Resolutions report by John Jennings, chairman. Is there any action on this report?

Mr. Sierminski from Colorado, NEC.

NECMAN SIERMINSKI (CO): Pete Sierminski, NEC, Colorado, makes a motion to accept the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's been moved to accept the Subcommittee on Resolutions report by Colorado.

ALTERNATE NECMAN CURRY (KY): Mr. Commander, Brandon Curry, alternate NEC, Kentucky, seconds the motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Kentucky seconds.

It's been moved to accept the report and duly seconded. Any discussion?

All in favor, signify by aye.

Opposed, no.

Motion carried.

Just to clarify some things that have been going on, I was just notified by our judge advocate that here a few years back, there was action taken to allow the national adjutant to correct minor clerical errors such as punctuation, maybe spellings or words that do not change the intent or the subject matter on the resolutions. So some of these things are minor changes and we can do those, according to the judge advocate.

Moving on to unfinished business, is there any unfinished business?

NECMAN KEARNS (NE): Commander, Keith Kearns, NEC, Nebraska.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Nebraska is recognized.

NECMAN KEARNS: We've located the contributions of Harold Thompson, national assistant adjutant emeritus, and wanted to submit it yesterday.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Very quickly then, under unfinished business, are there any other donations? Please bring them forward and get lined up real quick, and we'll take those as unfinished business.

A couple of other things while they're coming forward. I'd like to thank all those national officers and staff and committee and commission chairmen that took their time to get their picture taken for the web page. That has helped us out immensely. If you have not had a picture taken, please see our national historian Mr. Jay Cole, standing in the center of the room here.

I just want to remind our historian, you, too, also need to have your picture taken. So maybe Michael Cane can help you out with that.

NATIONAL HISTORIAN COLE: I had it done.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Oh, you've got it done. Thank you, sir.

Donations.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CANNITO: NVC Mark Cannito from the southern region. I felt terribly bad yesterday, I didn't have anything yesterday for CWF. I know right now we're all concentrating on NEF. So from the southern region, on our social dinner ride back home, we got \$261 for CWF.

(Applause)

NECMAN KEARNS (NE): Keith Kearns, Detachment of Nebraska. From the Norfolk Squadron 16, they had \$200 for the National Endowment Fund, \$350 for the Child Welfare Foundation, and \$500 for the NEF. And we also have National Commander Smith from Nebraska's personal contribution of \$50 for The American Legion Endowment. Thank you.

(Applause)

ALTERNATE NECMAN FREE (NJ): Good morning, gentlemen. My name is Len Free. I'm from the Detachment of New Jersey, I'm an ANEC.

I have a few checks to present. Murray-Troutt Squadron 262, \$300. Squadron 455, New Egypt, New Jersey, \$200. \$20 was from a loose donation. Ocean County Executive Board, \$500. Squadron 19, Bayonne, New Jersey, \$250.

I wanted to save this last one from someone that you all know. He couldn't be here today, this is only the third NEC that he's missed, and that's our Past National Vice Commander of the East and Past National Historian Thomas Marsden who has been dispatched, he's a communications contractor. During these natural disasters that we've had, his company has dispatched him to locations of Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and now just recently, St. Croix.

He said that what we've been seeing on television doesn't even come close to what is actually going on there. He says many nights he's slept on the floor. There's no power, spotty

phone service, probably none at all. He said that they have to use a satellite phone, which comes to about \$15 a minute.

He regrets not being here today but he's needed there more. Him and his wife have donated a personal check for \$500 for NEF, bringing our total to \$1,770. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

VICE CHAIRMAN DEAL (MD): Tom Deal, Detachment of Maryland. As most of you know, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Last night we raffled off a shirt donated by Mike Bowser. It was a Breast Cancer Awareness shirt, it raised \$435. Then we have the Ta-Ta drive. How many of you here have ta-tas? Show them.

All these gentlemen and ladies came in, donated \$20 or more, and we raised a total of \$1,830 for Breast Cancer Awareness. Thank you all.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you all once again for all your contributions and support for all these great programs. Our need marches on, so continue to send those in.

Any other unfinished business? Unfinished business?

Now is there any new business?

Is there any new business?

Any new business?

Hearing none, for the good of The Sons of The American Legion --

NECMAN GLANDER (AL): Mr. Commander, NEC, Alabama, Tom Glander. We noticed it yesterday in our caucus, but I wanted to make sure that everybody here had an

opportunity to be part of it. Alabama this year has decided, besides the fact we've sent trucks to both Texas and this week Florida, we have decided we can't take a truck to Puerto Rico, but we felt it was important that our brothers in Puerto Rico remain eligible for NEF funds. So the Detachment of Alabama is providing a check to pay the dues for the Detachment of Puerto Rico.

We've raised a little bit more money than obviously what it would cost, so we're opening up fundraising to help pay all the dues for the Legion members from the Department of Puerto Rico as well, and all the southern region, some of the detachments of the southern region wanted to be involved in that. So we're going to leave that open to anybody or any detachment that wants to help out with that endeavor, to contact either me or Blair Miles, our detachment commander in Alabama.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Thank you very much. Let's give them a round of applause, absolutely.

(Applause)

Those folks have been doing outstanding work down there, and I'm sharing their stories. I'm really amazed and quite humbled from what you're doing. Keep up the great work, we appreciate it.

NECMAN PIPHER (IN): Commander, Mike Pipher, Indiana. It's a wonderful thing to see the commissions and committees working outside of the months of October and May now, to do the good work of the NEC. Thankfully, some of us have lived long enough to see that happen, because it wasn't always the case. It's great, love that it's happening.

But I do want to offer a gentle reminder that a year ago, this body, the NEC, adopted a policy which requires, not requests, but requires the chairman of the committees that are

holding meetings outside of these months to provide us with some kind of report, some kind of executive summary, something to let us know what's taking place at those meetings, so that we don't have to wait until we get here six months later and try to catch up all in one day or one weekend. So just a gentle reminder. Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: It's noted. I'll tell you this, some of that communication was held up with the change in administration down at headquarters, trying to get that new update list of the NECs compiled. I believe that's been put together, so hopefully, that information starts to get out.

Mr. Ramirez, national vice commander from California, representing the West.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER RAMIREZ: Thank you, Commander. I would request to meet with my region real quick after the meeting. I have some stuff to hand out.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Mr. Ramirez, our national vice commander from the West, has requested a quick caucus with his region up front on this side of the room to distribute some information. Thank you.

Anything else for the good of The Sons of the American Legion?

Mr. Blair from Texas.

NECMAN BLAIR (TX): I just want to say, on behalf of Texas, I'd like to thank all those who helped us, support with hurricanes and everything. It was very much appreciated, and your good thoughts are taken sincerely. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: Absolutely. On behalf of this body, I will say we are happy and proud to do that.

(Applause)

Any other comments for the good of The Sons of The American Legion?

Anything for the good of The Sons of The American Legion?

If not, we'll move on to the benediction and we'll have national chaplain, Mr. Noble, come forward. Please rise and uncover.

Benediction

James Noble, National Chaplain, New Jersey

Taking a moment of personal pleasure, I'd like to acknowledge several men:

Past National Chaplain Larry Ford for his selection this morning on the religious service at 6:45; also Past National Chaplain Dick Ellwein for his scripture reading; and also Past National Chaplain Harl "Butch" Ray for prayers of healing.

With bowed heads, may the Lord bless us and keep us. As we prepare for our journey home, guide us and protect us. Let us each take the information gathered here and use it to better serve our organization.

We thank you, Lord, for the times we shared together as The American Legion family. Guide and protect our Commander Danny and his officers in their travels. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER SMITH: You may recover.

Until we meet again, let us remember that our obligation to our country can only be fulfilled by the faithful performance of all our duties of citizenship, that service to the community, state, and nation be ever a main objective of The Sons of The American Legion. Let us ever be watchful of the honor of our country, The American Legion, our organization, and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice, freedom, loyalty, and democracy.

With the colors being in place, hand salute: One, two.

I declare this meeting of the fall 2017 National Executive Committee adjourned.

...At 11:06 a.m., Sunday, October 8, 2017, the National Executive Committee meeting of The Sons of The American Legion was adjourned sine die.

ADDENDUM B*Internal Affairs Commission Report to**National Executive Committee**The American Legion**October 11-12, 2017*

Disposition of Action of

Sons of The American Legion

In compliance with Resolution 21 “entitled”, “Establish Procedure for Handling Matters Originating from SAL National Conventions and SAL National Executive Committees”, adopted by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion at its meeting April 30-May 1, 1973, this is to report disposition made by the Internal Affairs Commission of SAL actions taken at the National Executive Committee October 11-12, 2017

	TITLE	ACTION
SAL Res. 1-17 PRE-CONV NEC	Sons of The American Legion Trophy and Awards Manual and Review Authority	Approved
SAL Res. 3-17 PRE-CONV NEC	Creation of Triple Nickel Ribbon	Approved
SAL Res. 1-17 CONV NEC	Bestow Upon Brian J. O’Hearne the Title of Past National Commander	Approved
SAL NEC 1-F17	Endorsement of Peter J. Sierminski (CO) for National Vice Commander	Received and Filed
SAL NEC 2-F17	Re-Alignment of National UPDATE and Website/Social Media Tools	Approved


 George W. West (NH), Chairman
 SAL Sub-Committee