



**Sons of The American Legion  
 Midwest Region**

National Vice Commander Ward • Conference Call  
 December 6, 2015 (8pm (EDT); 7pm (CDT); 6pm (MDT); 5pm (PDT))

**I. Call to Order**

NVC Ward called the November conference call for the SAL-Midwest Region administrative year 2015-2016 to order at 7:02pm (CDT).

**II. Roll Call**

The following members were present:

- George Flasiniski (Chairman, National Membership) (PA)
- Michael Lawler (National Chaplain) (WI)
- Jim Noble (National Children & Youth Committee) (NJ)
- Mark Tansel (Chairman, Internal Affairs Commission) (IN)
- Steve Ward (National Vice Commander-Midwest) (KS)
- Doug Evans (KS)
- Neal Warnken (KS)
- Wes Wills (KS)
- Seth Rippe (NE)
- Dave Rippe (NE)
- Danny Smith (NE)
- Chris Cook (OK)
- Rick Cook (OK)
- Ken Yanke (CO)
- Jim Gaddis (CO)
- Charlie Keith (WY)

**Midwest Region Detachments**

**Represented**

- Colorado
- Kansas
- Oklahoma
- Nebraska
- Wyoming

**Absent:**

- Montana
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Texas

**III. Jim Noble – Children and Youth**

Guest attendance by SAL National Jim Noble Children and Youth Committee who addressed the team

- National Children and Youth Committee just put out their 2015 newsletter (winter issue) that is available on the national website (<http://www.legion.org/sons/commissionreports>)
- The National Commander’s Goal for the American Legion endowment fund is \$.25 per member and is a very realistic goal. As of last year The American Legion has given us tools to help encourage contributions to CWF and we now have two national awards from the American Legion:
  - Overall percentage per capita detachment award
  - Overall percentage of contributions from the detachment.
- The team would like to feature information and activities by squadrons and detachments. Please forward any items for consideration to NVC Ward by 12/24/15. All items will then be forwarded to Jim Noble for possible inclusion in the next national newsletter.

#### IV Mark Tansel – Internal Affairs

Chairman of Internal Affairs Mark Tansel introduced himself and congratulated the Midwest Region on great work so far. At this time, Chairman Tansel had no information to report to the team.

#### V. George Flasinski - Membership

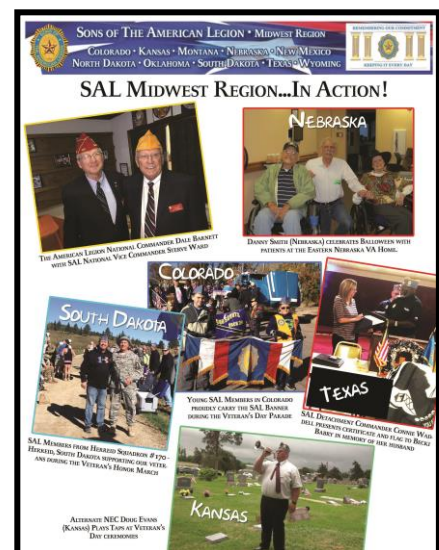
Good job to the team for working hard on membership. Currently the Midwest Region is standing at 44%. Great job Wyoming who is now at 53% and Kansas at 61.91%. The following comments were shared:

**Nebraska**- Additional membership for Nebraska has been transmitted and should be to national shortly so the printed percentage is under reported.

**Colorado** – Question asked regarding the required number of members to charter a new squadron. It was clarified that there must be ten new members (transfers do not count)

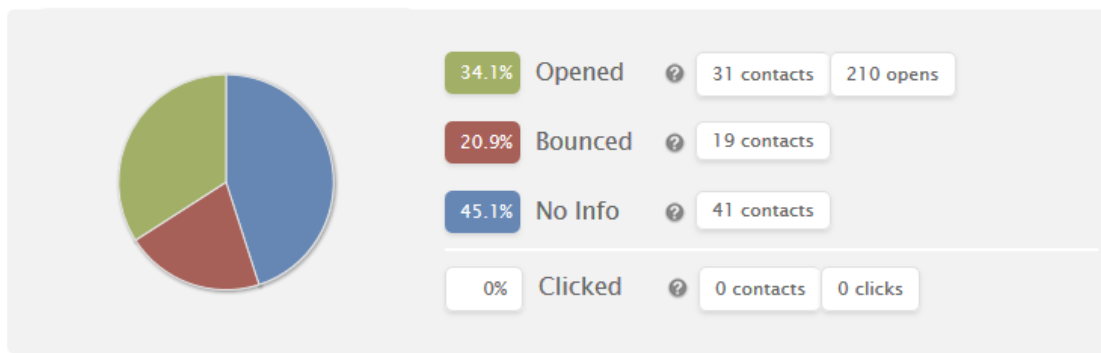
#### VI NVC Ward Discussion and Program Overview:

- NVC Ward gave an overview of the **Child Welfare Foundation** and the importance of supporting this fundamental program. He encouraged all those attending the call to reiterate the core mission of the foundation to members and focus on developing a fundraiser in 2016.
- **Operation Comfort Warrior** – reiterated the important note that OCW is an American Legion program that assists our needy Veterans. 100% of donations to OCW goes to the veterans. Encourage squadrons to consider this worthy program when considering donations in 2016
- **National Emergency Fund** – The primary fundraising effort for National Commander, Kevin Collier. Commander Collier’s goal is to raise \$1 million plus for NEF in the administrative year. Please consider NEF for donations in 2016.
- An overview was given regarding the importance of the **Veterans Employment and Education Commission (VE&E)** and the importance of supporting this core commission. Their mission is to provide, with honor and dignity, the economic necessities of life for veterans and their families. Squadron members can help by creating local VE&E committees to assist in support of the mission and to help identify veterans who could benefit through the national commission.
- **Facebook pages and websites** – Several online websites and facebook pages are out of date. Please review your social media sites and websites and make sure the information is current and relevant. If your team does not have the resources to keep the site current, consider engaging a volunteer or put an “under construction” banner up to let everyone know the site is in update.
- **Send Photos** – It is important that the Midwest Team and national organization receive good quality photos of SAL members engaging in the mission. Remember these important points when taking photos of your members in action:
  - Keep alcohol and alcohol symbols out of the photo
  - “Stand and Smiles” are great...but “action photos” that tell the message are best
  - Always wear SAL branding clothing and your cover whenever possible!
  - Put the US Flag front and center in your photo
  - Encourage youth, citizens and community members to get in your shot
  - Tell the story without words!



- **Marketing Blast** – NVC Ward is currently in development of using iContact for Midwest Region marketing blasts. The first in a series of one per month was sent in November. The benefit of using this service is it allows photos and messages to immediately populate in the recipient’s email. Also data analytics are available regarding who and how many viewed and opened the email. For the first blast in November, 91 contacts received the email blast, 79 have fully subscribed and can see the blast, 12 are pending confirmation to opt in. If you received the “opt in” message, please click through to receive NVC Ward’s blast mail through iContact. As you can see from the below chart, we are still hammering through the data and analytics for the blast. Please help us out by making sure to read the messages and opting in to receiving email.

#### Email Impact



- **A great story:** NVC Ward wore his commemorative honor button containing a photo of his father a WWII veteran. While shopping at Sam’s Club, a lady in the meat market commented on the button. It was discovered that she is eligible for the American Legion Auxiliary and her brother is eligible for the SAL. The woman and her family were directed to the American Legion Post in Joplin, Missouri. When opportunities like this present themselves, it is important to not only share information, but to also retrieve information. Make sure to gather information from all interested parties and then follow up to make sure they have the info they need and are going to join. Ask to help in anyway and be a resource for information and helpful friend to our new members.
- **Membership:** Remember the three “Rs” – Recruit, Renew and Re-Instate SAL Members. Remember to ask eligible members if they belong. Work on renewals. Overall our national renewal rate was only 85.98% last year and be sure to reinstate members who have not renewed. Knock on their door, look them in the eye and urge them to rejoin.



#### VI. Announcements

- Chairman Flasinski shared that on November 8, 2015 at the Veteran’s Parade in Philadelphia. They were pleased and honored to have an SAL member from the Detachment of Colorado attend. He and the team very much appreciated the support and urged SAL members everywhere to attend and support fellow detachment’s events.

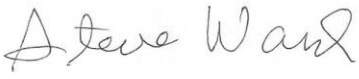
- NVC Ward urged everyone to have a great holiday and to be sure to record activities and take photos to share with the team and to use on his next blast.

### **VII. Next Midwest Region Conference Call**

The next conference call will be held on Sunday, February 7, 2016 at (8pm (EDT); 7pm (CDT); 6pm (MDT); 5pm (PDT). Please be sure to attend this important call as the team will be reviewing action items related to the Washington Conference, an update on membership and review of upcoming deadlines and critical timelines. There will not be a conference call in January. NVC Ward is always available and appreciates any and all input and feedback. The conference call info is always: Dial In: 712-432-1212, Meeting ID: 548-188-290

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Adjourned at 7:41 (CST) pm; December 6, 2015

Minutes prepared by:	 _____	12/10/15 _____
	Steve Ward National Vice Commander Midwest Region Sons of The American Legion	Date