

Good day my fellow SAL Members!

Here's hoping everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with family and Friends!

Being thankful took on a new and different meaning for me this year. I was humbled and honored to escort my wife currently serving as the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, on her official visits to Hawaii for the **"Pearl Harbor Observances"** to respect and honor the service and sacrifices that took place 84 years ago on December 7, 1941; and to assist her and thousands of others at Arlington National Cemetery by placing wreaths on our heroes graves during **"Wreaths Across America Day"** on the 13th.

Both of these events reinforced for me once again that our freedoms came and will continue to come at a high price. As President Abraham Lincoln stated in his famous **"Bixby"** letter of which a portion is carved in stone at the National Cemetery of the Pacific, famously known as the **"Punchbowl"**, in it he stated his condolences for the loss of Mrs. Bixby's five sons and states in part... ***"The solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a Sacrifice upon the Altar of Freedom."***...

It was my honor to serve in my small way to pay tribute to our fallen service men and women.

Service, our service, is the heartbeat of the Sons of The American Legion. Whether it's volunteering at hospitals, providing flag education, supporting citizenship initiatives, or decorating graves and dropping flower petals into Pearl Harbor above the USS Arizona; every act of service strengthens our bond with the community and each other. As the membership expands, so does our capacity to do good. **"Service is not just doing for others, but doing with others."** By working side-by-side, SAL members build relationships and skills, making the experience as rewarding for the volunteers as for those they serve. Make service projects a regular part of squadron activities, inviting the broader community to participate.

And who wouldn't want to participate in the Sons of the American Legion? **According to the December 8th Membership Report, we were sitting at 53.58% with 51 Detachments at or above the 45% goal for December 10th! WAY TO GO!** On top of that all five SAL Regions were also over 45%! The only shadow in this report is that our retention numbers are way

too low sitting at 36.11% at this reporting period. We need to rededicate our efforts to get all of last year's members to renew and to do it soon!

We need these members and many more to continue our mission to assist our Veterans and our communities! The need never stops—there are always veterans to assist, flags to honor, and children to support. Having more members means more opportunities to answer these calls, ensuring our mission never stalls. When potential recruits see the SAL hard at work, they'll want to join in on the action. This week, as the Holidays are right around the corner; organize a service project or volunteer opportunity and invite everyone—members and non-members alike—to participate.

Service is our signature, and it's how we light the way for others to follow. Imagine telling future generations that you were part of the drive that made the Sons of The American Legion one of America's largest service organizations just before the country's 250th birthday. That's not just a statistic—it's a living legacy. **"Legacy is not leaving something for people. It's leaving something in people."**

Membership is an invitation to be remembered as a builder, a leader, and a steward. Whether you help grow our numbers, mentor youth, or expand service projects, your contribution matters. Together, we are writing the next chapter in the Sons of The American Legion's history of service and patriotism. Every member's unique story enriches our narrative and strengthens our organization. Encourage everyone to see their participation in SAL as a chance to shape not only this year's goals but the next 250 years of American history.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year my Friends!**

For **GOD** and Country,

Butch Ray, Chairman,  
SAL Nat'l Membership & Squadron Activities Committee

**"I'm the ONE, You're the ONE, BE the ONE!"**