SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

BUTCH'S BULLET POINTS

VETERANS DAY: WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

Honoring Their Service Through Our Own

November 2026 | Sons of The American Legion

Fellow Sons,

November brings us one of the most meaningful observances on our calendar—Veterans Day. On November 11th, we honor the men and women who wore the uniform of our Armed Forces and answered the call to serve.

For those of us in the Sons of The American Legion, Veterans Day should be especially personal. After all, **every one of us owes our eligibility for membership to the military service of someone else.**

Their service gave us our eligibility. What we do with that eligibility is up to us.

And that brings me to something I'd like every member to think about this Veterans Day.

BULLET POINT #1: WHAT WAS YOUR PATHWAY TO SERVICE?

We all have a story. What's yours?

Maybe you grew up around an American Legion Post, attending fish fries, pancake breakfasts, and holiday celebrations. Perhaps your father took you to your first Squadron meeting, or a friend invited you to join.

And let's be truthful—some of us may have joined because the Post had a pretty good Friday night fish fry! Nothing wrong with that, as long as we eventually discovered there's more to this organization than the menu!

But somewhere along the way, something changed.

We began to understand the mission. We saw veterans who needed help, young people who needed encouragement, and communities that received help from our efforts. What began as membership became a commitment.

So, ask yourself: What brought me here? And more importantly, what keeps me here?

Understanding that pathway can help you discover your WHY.

BULLET POINT #2: SERVICE IS LOVE IN ACTION

We often hear people say they love their country, respect our veterans, and believe in helping others. Those are wonderful sentiments, but words alone don't accomplish very much.

I've always believed that **service is simply love in action.**

It's easy to say, "Thank you for your service." And we absolutely should. But what happens after we say those words?

Do we visit a lonely veteran? Help a military family facing difficult times? Support programs for children and youth? Place flags on graves or teach the next generation the meaning of service and sacrifice?

That's love in action. It's taking the gratitude we feel in our hearts and putting it to work with our hands.

And it doesn't always require a big event or a large donation. Sometimes the most meaningful service is a phone call, a handshake, or simply taking the time to listen.

We don't honor our veterans only by remembering what they did. We honor them by showing what their service continues to inspire us to do.

That's how gratitude becomes an action.

BULLET POINT #3: WHAT'S YOUR WHY? SHARE YOUR STORY!

Now, here's where I'd like you to do a little soul-searching.

Why are you a Son of The American Legion?

Not why you originally signed the application or because your dues are paid, and you have a Squadron cap hanging by the door.

I'm asking why you choose to remain involved.

What motivates you to give your time, share your talents, and occasionally spend another Saturday working at an event where you could be relaxing at home?

And don't tell me it's because you love attending meetings. I've attended enough meetings to know better!

Seriously, though, **your WHY is the reason behind your commitment.**

For some, it's honoring a father or grandfather who served. For others, it's helping veterans, working with young people, or preserving the patriotic traditions that helped shape our nation.

There is no single correct answer. But knowing your WHY gives purpose to your service, especially when the work seems endless; the volunteers are few, and the coffee has gone cold!

Here's an opportunity to share that purpose.

The American Legion has launched an initiative called **"SAL: Share Your Why,"** encouraging members to tell their stories through a short video recording.

They want to know why you joined, what makes your Squadron special, and what makes you proud to be a Son.

You don't need to be a National Commander, Detachment officer, or professional speaker. You just need a story—and every one of us has one!

Visit the official American Legion website to learn how to take part:

SAL: SHARE YOUR WHY

https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/sons/2026/february/sal-share-your-why

Take a few minutes to think about your answers, then speak from the heart. Don't worry about sounding like a professional. Sincerity means far more than a rehearsed speech.

And if you're worried about appearing on camera, remember that most of us have already survived having our pictures taken at a Squadron banquet!

Don't underestimate the power of your WHY. Someone else may need to hear it.

BULLET POINT #4: WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

We often speak about the legacy of the veterans who made our membership possible. But have you considered the legacy you're creating?

Someday, someone may look back at your years as a Son and remember the difference you made.

Will they remember someone who showed up when help was needed? Someone who welcomed new members, mentored future leaders, or made veterans feel appreciated?

Or will they simply remember that you always had an opinion about how things should be done?

Now, opinions are important. But as I've said before, **there's a big difference between being a Commander and being a demander!**

Legacy isn't measured by titles, awards, or the number of meetings we've attended. It's measured by the lives we've touched and the good we've left behind.

Our veterans gave us a legacy of service. We have the opportunity—and I believe the responsibility—to build upon it.

Their service is part of our history. Our service can become part of someone else's future.

That's a legacy worth working toward.

THE BOTTOM LINE: HONOR THEM BY HOW WE LIVE AND SERVE

This Veterans Day, I challenge every SAL member to do three things.

First, remember your veteran. If they're still with us, thank them and listen to their stories. If they've passed on, share their memories with someone else.

Second, discover and share your WHY. Think about what brought you to the Sons, what keeps you involved, and the legacy you hope to leave. Then visit the SAL website and record your story.

Third, put your gratitude into action. Find one meaningful way to serve a veteran, strengthen your Squadron, or help your community.

Our theme this year is **"Every Member Matters."** Veterans Day reminds us why.

Every member stands for a connection to military service. Every member carries a story worth telling. And every member has an opportunity to turn gratitude into something meaningful.

We didn't earn our eligibility through our own military service. We inherited that privilege through the service of others.

But we honor that privilege through the lives we lead, the people we help, and the service we give.

So, Fellow Sons, this Veterans Day, let's do more than say thank you. Let's show our veterans that their service still matters and that their legacy lives through us.

After all, **love isn't just something we say. It's something we do.**

That's *Love in Action*.

That's our WHY.

And that's what it means to be a Son of The American Legion.

Every Member Matters! Show Up! — Serve Boldly!

For God and Country,

Butch