



Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Maryland



"The Pride"

Editor: Bill Matoska
Co-Editor: Bill Hill

Volume 2014/2015: Issue 5
Convention Issue - June 26-28, 2015

Commander's Corner

Hello Again,

It is hard to believe the time has come for me to write my last Pride article as your Detachment Commander. I can say it has been a honor and pleasure to be able to travel and speak on behalf of such a great Detachment. I want to Thank You all for this honor and for all the work you do to make our Detachment the best. As the year started and Special Olympics was picked for the Commanders project we never set a goal. It would be unfair, it is not like everyone is just starting to support this great program so many have done this for years. We wanted to bring back more awareness to this project along with the great work everyone does. Countless volunteer hours every year goes on without much talk about it, thousands of dollars raised every year and we just keep going. I can tell you that even with more emphasis on the program this year we have shown each other and we will show our Nation what we do here, as we claim over \$100,000.00 this year in donations to Special Olympics. Great job by everyone!!! Thanks to Eddie Souder for all you did this year as Chairman.

We did not stop at picking a project, this year it was very important for the Detachment to start bringing awareness to the four pillars of The American Legion and again I say great job. Special Olympics benefited from the Children and Youth part of the Commanders Challenge, there will be many boys now going to boys state, officers and firefighters were honored all over our state, and many Vietnam Veterans were honored, along with others because of us picking up the torch and running with it to bring more awareness to the Four Pillars of our organization. The

Commanders Challenge had a great year and I want Thank PDC Tommy Deal for heading this up and helping to develop this program as we did this for the first time.

I will end by reflecting on this year briefly. I have had a great time and it was shared with so many of you. Some that shared this with me stand out, my wife Margie. She has traveled with me, had to hear every one of my thoughts and ideas, shared this time with me and I want to Thank her for being there with me to make this a great year. Our Adjutant (PNC) Bill Matoska and his family too, hours of work each year goes in to make each Commanders year special to him by Bill and he does it and just moves on. His family may get more volunteer hours then most of us punching, packing and preparing papers and packets over and over. Thank you! The officers, chairman and committee members that make sure each program gets taken care of I Thank you all for a wonderful job. This Detachment is served by six different District Commanders that work to make their Districts and our Detachment what it is, Thank you gentleman. Taking the words from a song, "I have had the time of my life and I owe it all to you". So many let and make this happen and I want to Thank everyone. You get to do this great job one time, one year as a friend told me. He said make it your best. That I have tried and I hope you have enjoyed this year too. See you at convention and we will celebrate this great Detachments accomplishments.

"Stepping up to The Challenge"

JR Hall

Commander
Detachment of Maryland
Sons of The American Legion

Adjutant's Corner

Welcome everyone to this 42nd Annual Convention of the Detachment of Maryland. It is always a challenge when re-locating to a new venue for our state convention, but the Laurel Legion Family has gone well over and beyond any task to make this transition as streamlined as possible. They have been on point eliminating any obstacles and resolving any problems we may encounter. A big thank you and right hand salute to all that have taken part in this transition especially the efforts put forth by Post Commander Luby and Southern Maryland District Commander Joe Lohman.

All of our outdoor events will take place on the Laurel Post ball field. Horseshoes will behind the left field home run fence and Korn Hole will take place just inside the fence in left field. The Super Star events will be in the center and right field areas. Once again Robert Hill from the Western Maryland District has stepped up to facilitate a complimentary cook out for everyone in attendance of these games.

Delegate registration will take place in the Concession Stand throughout the weekend which is attached to the post across from the home plate area of the ball diamond.

Please note: The city of Laurel has generously supplied us with a limo service to travel from the post home to the hotels for Friday evening. If you plan on indulging in libations at the post, please take advantage of this offer if you do not have a designated driver with your group. We have been made aware that there will be a sobriety check point in the area that evening. We have also been made aware that there is a zero

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

tolerance for driving under the influence. We would hate for anyone to miss a great convention for lack of good judgement when an alternative means of transportation is available.

Yours In Service,
Bill Matoska
Detachment Adjutant
Matoskaw@yahoo.com

"Making a Pitch for Membership"

I would like to THANK everybody! Every blue cap member, every squadron officer, every District Commander and all the Membership Team. The Detachment of Maryland has done something this year that has Not been done for a long time. We hit the 100% mark prior to our convention this year. I am so Proud of the Detachment Membership team! Great JOB! Phenomenal Job! Fantastic Job! There are not enough ways for me to say that. Our detachment and all of our members have done an excellent Job. Thank you!!!

The World Series of Baseball is having a dramatic playoff season to see who is in the World Series and to see who has won the Series. Over the last 5 weeks there have been changes to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th & 6th place teams. During the year I had a lot of fun with our weekly reports going out to the District Commanders letting them know who and where they were within the rankings and who was paying for that Crab Cake Dinner that is going on between our 2 largest Districts WMD & Southern Maryland. Both Districts have been in the all the positions but Southern I will say was never in 7th place.



There was a Class that our PNC Bill Sparwasser, taught in Ocean City and the words that he re iterated were "I WILL & I CAN" "Let me tell you WE DID!! And by the American Legion Convention in July or our National Convention in August I would love to see us sitting over the 105% in membership let's all repeat after me "I know we "Will & we Can"

As this report had be submitted prior to the last membership report of May 30th I will quickly give the results as they are

now but I know they are changing this week as I know of at least 78 runs being delivered this week which put us over the 100% mark and the positions will change yet 1 more time. As of 5/22/15 The detachment is at 99.68% and only needs 50 runs to be sent in. In 1st place is South Eastern Shore District at 101.09. 2nd Place goes to Southern Maryland at 100.52. 3rd Place goes to Western Maryland District at 100.38 4th place is North Eastern Shore District at 99.82 and 5th place goes to Mountain District at 98.41 6th place goes to Northern Central at 97.04 and rounding the bases and already just about impossible to be in the World Series is Baltimore district at 85.33%. Again I would like to say this will change and will not be the final rankings as I know changes are coming this week.

I do have one final special "Thank you" and that goes out to Mr. Karl Kibler of the North Eastern Shore district who made every single Membership Call. Thank you Karl for all of your hard work.
THANKS TO EVERYBODY!

Yours in Service

Jeffrey Seiler
Membership Chairmen
1st Vice Commander

Americanism Report

This administration year is almost over and where has time gone. You know what they say time flies when you're having fun and we have fun supporting American Legion programs. The truth is in the numbers! Looking at our consolidated reports you can see we have a great time by the amount of money we raised and all the man hours spent volunteering in these rewarding programs. I would like thank Commander Hall for giving me this opportunity to learn about these outstanding programs under Americanism. I also would like to thank my committeeman for helping with these great programs.

Let us continue to remember those who are dealing with devastation left behind by man-made and other natural disasters. It is hard for us to comprehend in these modern times the possibility of losing everything to a natural disaster. The National

Emergency Fund is set up to help Legion family members stricken by natural and man-made disasters. Millions in direct aid has been handed out since the NEF was established. Thanks to all the Squadrons who made donations.

The Detachment continues to sponsor an award to the top Squadron for Flag replacement. We've always had great support for this program. It's proud to see how each participating Squadron shows their American Patriotism when they place another flag in the community. We're looking forward to announcing the winners during convention. If you are also looking for a Flag Retirement program/ ceremony, please contact committee chair.

Boys State is among the most respected educational programs for high school students and is very rewarding for those young men who are chosen to participate. Participants are exposed to the rights and privileges and duties and responsibilities of a citizen. We are encouraging each Squadron to support your home post by providing any level of support necessary.

On May 30th we provided another luncheon to say thank you to our wounded warriors and their families. It was a great success as we fed and conversed with a good bit of our veterans and their families with Fisher House residents. Fisher House is very important to the families and military by giving them a place to stay in their time of need. It is truly a home away from home. It's a warm setting for them while their love one is being treated in one of the VA hospitals. Still keep in mind that our community Food Bank's need replenishing and also check into your local blood drives, your help is always needed.

Yours in Service,
Americanism Chairman
Jim Alexander

Flag Replacement Program:

The Flag Replacement program offers assistance to persons in your community who flag needs to be replaced because the flag is worn. I would like to thank all the squadrons

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

who participated in the program and those squadrons who purchased flags this year at the Detachment and District meetings without you the program would not have been a success. Thanks again for all of your hard work.

Awards will be given out to the top two squadrons who distributed the most flags this year at the SAL Convention in Laurel. Also, make sure you use the Flag Replacement form, in order, to keep a record of the number of flags that your squadron has distributed. The return address is on the form.

I would like to thank Commander JR Hall for the privilege of chairing this committee it has been a delight.

Yours in Service,

Gregory Taylor,
Flag Replacement Chairperson
gregohl1@verizon.net

Boys State

At the meeting held on 23 May at Post 276 many items were discussed. The latest count was 202 applications had been received by the Department of Maryland. Had 180 applications by the cutoff day that was in early May. The cities staff assignments were given to the CIC's and staff. The committee has five new members that will be in training this upcoming session. We are the largest committee in the Department but could still use more good men to help for the week. So if you're thinking about joining come to McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland and see what we do and talk to the counselors.

Dennis Renehan
Boys State Chairman

Fort City CIC

(410)-330-3003

dawgtrucker@yahoo.com

National Emergency Fund:

We are approaching the end of our 2014-2015 year and we still have many more donations needed. If your Squadron has made a donation, I Thank You and our

National Commander Thanks You as well. If your Squadron hasn't made a donation yet this year, time is running out so try your very best to get them in ASAP. Donations are very important in the need of helping our Legion Family members.

Once again NEF can only assist you if the funds are available. It is never too late, so let's get donations in. You want NEF to be there for you in the time of a disaster so all Post, Auxiliary and Squadron know what they need to get done.

Yours in Service,
Jerry Saunders,
NEF Chairman

Five-Star Program:

The Five-Star award program is for all members of The Sons of The American Legion who show dedication and knowledge in the Five-Point program of service consisting of the following: Patriotism, Citizenship, Discipline, Leadership and Legionism. If you would like to learn more about this program, please contact PNC Bill Sparwasser.

Yours in Service,

Americanism Chairman
Jim Alexander

CHILDREN & YOUTH CORNER

As the end of the year comes to an end, I want to "Thank" everyone for their outstanding support for the Commander Project and all of the remaining Children and youth programs. This year was I was surrounded by very dedicated chairmen who went above and beyond the call of duty. Anyone who still has any Special Olympics Bowling raffle tickets, please bring them to the convention. I have had a great time over the last two years serving as Chairmen of Children and Youth. As I progress up the chairs, I looking forward to working with everyone regarding membership next year.

Serving Our Future,

Ray Edwards

Children & Youth Chairman

rayjred@verizon.net

(410) 215-9354 Cell

JOSH DOG

This year we had the privilege to distribute eleven (11) Josh Dogs to children at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore. Kennedy Krieger Institute is an internationally-recognized facility dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disorders of the brain, spinal cord, and musculoskeletal system.

"These dogs will bring a smile to these ill children's faces while they are going thru a tough time." This was a statement in the last Pride article and let me tell you, the joy it brought to the children was only matched by the feeling of care and giving that it brought to those who had the opportunity to participate in giving out these Josh Dogs.

Thank you PDC Bill Stem for chairing the program this year and in participating and arranging this distribution. Thanks to those who were also blessed to participate in this great offering of care to these children; SMD Commander Joe Lohman, his wife and Legionnaire Jose Lohman, and SMD SAL member Jeff Thorne.

This was all possible by the generous donations of this Detachment. Thank you to everyone who donated a Josh Dog. Please join us all and help bring a smile to a child by purchasing a Josh Dog today. Let's triple the amount we distribute next year!

Thank you, Commander Hall, for allowing me to stand in for you! It was a great feeling and privilege.

Bill Hill (PDC)

Email: Hill1062@MSN.COM

Casey Cares Newsletter

We as a Legion Family again showed how much we care for the children of this great country, by going above and beyond, one more time in supporting the Casey Cares program.

Pajama parties, Family Fun Nights,

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

tickets to Events for the entire family, and even a pizza night for the family, so as they can enjoy a relaxing evening also. These are only a few of the things that Casey Cares did this year and these where able to take place, due to our donations to this great program. Your continued support is still needed throughout the year. This is the only way that we can make these children and parents smile.

So as we plan our summer events, let us not forget our commitment to Casey Cares!

Serving Maryland's Children
Ed Steininger Sr.
Casey Cares Chairman
edwardsteininger@yahoo.com
443-807-1495

Child Welfare Foundation

"Dedicated to the betterment of all children"

I first want to thank all those squadrons that made donations to the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) this year. The Foundation granted over \$500,000.00 in donation to various non-profit charities across this Nation. I also want to thank the participants of Douglas Henley Memorial Laps of Love. Their generosity supporting this program accounts for the single largest donation from Maryland, seeing how one third of the funds raised goes towards CWF.

Any squadron that donated \$1.00 per member or more is eligible for a 2015 CWF Per Capita Banner that can be hung on your squadron flag. Please be sure to fill out the 2015 CWF Per Capita Banner Form available at www.legion.org/sons. Then go to the tab for Child Welfare Foundation. Click on the link to go to the CWF website. The form is listed there, or go to the Maryland SAL web page.

With CWF being the project that nationally we donate the most to year

after year, and considering that we donate more than the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, I want to thank everyone who donated to CWF. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Forever in Service to our God and our Country,
Larry Ford—CWF Chairman

Legislative Alert!

This has been a very busy Legislative year with new Governor Larry Hogan, a new Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary George Owings and many local delegates and senators. I have asked for everyone to sign up for legislative alerts on the National web site and I know many have. I want to put one more push for everyone who said I will do it but never got to it. There have been a few times this year where we needed almost instant notification for a certain bill or hearing that we needed immediate action on. I hope you will consider signing up right now and when you get that alert voicing your opinion to our representatives for our Veterans. The American Legion will let you know the specific issue and where it stands on the issue. All you need to do is click on the take action and submit. We need to help take care of our Veterans, they did their duty protecting this great country and now Congress is trying to cut their pay and promised benefits that some paid the ultimate price for. Get involved, take action, stand up and be counted fighting for our Veterans. The American Legion website <http://www.legion.org/legislative> scroll down to LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER and go to the Take Action page. I will still send out e-mails when I get them but most of the time we need to act fast and e-mails are not the way to do business.

For God and Country

Tom Deal
Legislative Chairman
tom.deal@verizon.net

VAWS Variety

Visit our veterans, they need help all year round. I would like to take this time to thank all my chairmen this year, without you guys this year would

not have had the success we have had this year. Guys you did a great job. From the bottom of my heart thank you. I also need to thank everyone who donated money and their time. Bless you all

Perry Point: Chairman PDC Tom Deal Perry point will be having their annual car show on June 14 2015. They will need someone to help cook hotdogs that day. They will also need donations for this. I believe Tom told me the Ncd will be doing hamburgers. Please stop by and give us a hand. As always we are looking for donations at Perry point Hospital throughout the year. If you make donations directly please let me or Tom Deale know so that you get the proper credit. Visit your vets. If you do make donations put this and all donations for any VA programs you make throughout the year on your reports. Keep in mind and let's not forget our veterans they need help all year round.

Loch Raven: Chairman Bob Fillipi The NCD had a cook out on 5-16-15 we served hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, chips, sodas, water and deserts. Great job by all who helped too many to mention but you all know who you are. Served quite a few people that day sun was out and it was beautiful out side. Everyone seemed to enjoy their meal. As always each one of these VA centers and or hospitals can always use monetary donations. Again please take the time to visit our veterans.

Green Street: Chairman Ken Jenkins: They are always in need of any of these miscellaneous items such as large puzzles, lap robes, magnifying lenses and reading glasses of any strength. Comfort items, shaving cream, lotion, shampoo and razors, if you give razors they must be given at the nurse's station. If you need to contact Ken please call 443-204-1776

Yours in Service,

Dave Hullihen
VA&R Chairman

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

"the only Veterans Home in the state"

The Southern Maryland District continues to hold a bingo at the CHVH on the third Monday of each month. Two hundred dollars are given out to residents at each bingo. If you are interested in donating to the CHVH Bingos, send your donation to SMD Finance Officer Al Rhodes, PO Box 56521, Virginia Beach, VA 23456, earmarked for CHVH Bingo. If you are interested in volunteering your time contact PDC Buddy Mastin (our Bingo caller) or myself. Additional help is always welcome.

As the only Veterans Home in the state, the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home has been "Serving Those Who Served" since 1985. If you would like to find out more about opportunities to help, contact me or visit their website, www.charhall.org.

For God and Country,
Dave Tatman
CHVH Representative
tatman_david@comcast.net
301-645-1537

Maryland Center for Veteran's Training & Education (MCVET)

"It takes the entire community to help a veteran heal!"

Thank you to NCD for once again hosting the St. Patrick's Day luncheon. We attended and the students enjoyed the meal. MCVET just completed their 20th Annual 5k/10k Race, which was well attended.

On behalf of MCVET and the Board of Directors, we extend our appreciation to the Detachment of Maryland and the entire Maryland Legion Family for their continued support.

MCVET always has a need for basic toiletry items such as; disposal razors, small shampoo & lotion bottles. Men & Women's new socks and underwear (all sizes). These items are primarily used to support the Day-drop-in program. This

is where homeless veterans are able to come in and take showers, rest for a bit, get a hot meal.

If anyone is interested in more information or a setting up a group tour of MC VET, please contact me.



For God and Country,
Bill Hill
MCVET—Board of Directors
Chaplin's Corner

Please keep those who are home recovering in your prayers.

Let us Not forget to finish the course we have begun.. Let us keep in our Memories the passing of our comrades!

Thank you and God Bless.

Jerry Sykes
Detachment Chaplin

Commander's Project / Special Olympics Maryland

Few words can describe the appreciation expressed by the athletes, the staff, families, and volunteers of Special Olympics when they thank us for what we do.

If you are like me the response is "No, Thank You" for the inspiration, positive attitudes, and overall good feelings we get from supporting and being a part of something this great.

Our year is wrapping up and as usual the Sons have Stepped Up and supported the Commanders Project. Over \$120,000 has been donated to the project statewide and countless hours have gone into making it happen.

Our convention this year is a chance for us all to reflect on the good we do all year and make our plans for the future.

Special Olympics will always be a program close to the hearts of every SAL member and again, if you're like me, the plan is to do more next year to support this awesome group of people.

Thanks to the Membership of The Detachment of Maryland for their continued support and special thanks to

Commander Hall for choosing me as his chairman. JR, this was too easy, The Detachment just did what they always do.

"Sons Stepping up to The Challenge"

Yours in Service,
Eddie Souder
Project Chair

Time and Place Committee

We're here in Laurel for the 42nd Annual Convention! Specifically Laurel Post 60!!

We want to extend our appreciation to Laurel Post 60 Commander Lee Luby and her group for hosting our convention and supporting the Detachment. We're looking forward to another great convention!

See you back in Laurel next year for our 43rd Annual Convention. Yes this is your reminder for where next years convention will take place.

If you have a location to be considered for future conventions, please contact the Time & Place Committee.

For God and Country,
Bill Hill
Chairman

North Eastern Shore Times

Time sure flies when you're having fun. Summer and the Convention are right around the corner. Let's talk about membership. As of 5-22-2015, our District is in 4th place in the Detachment, 99.82% of goal. A right hand salute goes out to our Three Star Squadrons: 18 @ 109.09% 21 @ 100% 77 @ 103.57% 246 @ 101.49% and our Four Star Squadrons: 36 @ 161.54% 135 @ 100% 194 @ 102.67% 228 @ 115.00%

296 @ 103.39% Great job by all!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Upcoming events: Squadron 296 will be having a soft crab dinner on July 10 from 5-7 PM.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Reminder: Squadron 278 opens their Crab Palace on July 10-12 and will be open on weekends throughout the summer. Stop by and enjoy some of the best crabs on the shore.

Personal notes: Outstanding job Commander Hall for your tireless efforts and strong leadership this year. I ask that each Squadron in this District give the same commitment and support to our incoming Detachment Commander, Jeffrey Seiler and our incoming District Commander Freddie Taylor from Squadron 77.

I would like to thank all of our Squadrons and officers who have supported me for the last four years as the Commander of the North Eastern Shore District.

Sons Stepping Up To the Challenge

Karl B. Kibler
Commander: N.E.S.D.

South Eastern Shore Gazette

I want to say Thank You to all the Squadrons that have sent in membership in these last few weeks. Way to go. I couldn't be prouder of this district. On 16 June is the Sons of The American Legion Veterans Assistance Day. Help a veteran out in your community.

Don't forget about the Detachment's Convention in June the 26th to the 28th at Post 60 in Laurel Maryland. Last I want to say is Be Safe during the summer. I want to see you all back at the first district meeting in August. Take Care and Be Safe.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans

Dennis J. Renehan
Commander
South Eastern Shore District

Southern Pride

I want to thank all SAL SMD squadrons for a fantastic year. It has been a pleasure serving you as SAL SMD Commander.

We met our membership goal prior to the submission of this article. The hard

work of our blue caps once again demonstrates that we are the 'Great Southern Maryland District'.

I look forward to see you at this year's Detachment Convention on June 26-28th at Laurel Post 60.

Until next time, enjoy the warm weather and keep supporting our veterans and community.

Yours in Service,
Joe Lohman
SMD Commander

Western Maryland Glory

What an amazing year we had as a District!! We finished in 3rd place at over 100% in membership. With over 5,099 members that is an absolutely amazing accomplishment that couldn't have been completed with everybody's help.

My year as Commander has been filled with numerous memorable moments that I will cherish forever. To all of my Squadron commanders I commend you on your outstanding efforts this year and look forward to seeing you succeed in the future. To all of the bluecaps you were the heart and soul of the District's success this year and I thank you!

Remember that we are accepting membership right now for the 2015-2016 year so if anyone wants to get ahead of the game they can do so.

Just a reminder that the National Convention is coming to Baltimore in August, so if you would like to attend please get that information in as soon as possible so that you can enjoy this event.

Congratulations to Commander JR Hall and all of his Detachment officers on their outstanding efforts this year. This was one of the most memorable years I've ever had with the SAL, and that can be contributed to the outstanding leadership of this Detachment. I look forward to working with all of you all in the future.

Yours in Service to Legion Programs,

Robert Hill

WMD Commander
Cell: 240-678-8742
BigRob90@MSN.COM

Northern Central District

It is hard to believe my year as NCD Commander is about to come to a close. It has been a good year. We have raised a lot of money for our veterans and children and youth programs. Many service hours were given to accomplish our goals.

I want to congratulate all seventeen Squadrons in North Central District for the great job they have done with membership. While we are still working as a District to make Four Star, many of you have made it to either Three or Four Star. I am so proud of each and every Squadron in NCD and want to personally say thank you for all your hard work!

My Commander's Project this year was Hero Dogs. What is Hero Dogs? Hero Dogs helps those who have served our country honorably to live with dignity and independence whether they are visually impaired or have other special needs, by using guide dogs and service dogs. Hero Dogs train and supply guide dogs for the visually impaired veteran and service dogs for veterans with other disabilities. Dogs and all services are provided at no cost to the veteran!

We had a few fundraisers to support my project that were very successful. Our first fundraiser was our trip to Atlantic City on the Bob & Joyce Snukis Memorial Bus Trip. I want to thank Dave Hullihen and Bill Matoska for a wonderful job running the Bus trip. We had a ball. There was food, drink and we had a merry time. Approximately \$1,000 was raised. Our last fundraiser was the "Commander's Ride" hosted by Towson 22 Squadron and Legion Riders. I want to thank Joe Gladden and John Horner for heading up that fundraiser and Towson Post for the \$1,000.00 donation and Towson Sq. 22 for the cook-out we had afterwards. I also want to thank the 35 riders that participated. We raised \$1,686.00 that day.

Thanks to everyone who made these fundraisers so successful! Also I want to thank all the Squadrons and individuals

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

who donated time and/or money to Hero Dogs and all the other programs of the American Legion. It is greatly appreciated!

It has been great working with my officers and chairmen of my committees, and especially my adjutant Bill Matoska. Anytime I needed help or assistance they were there. Thank you for working with me so well. Also, I could not have had such a good year if it were not for my officers and the Blue Cap SAL members, who put in a lot of time for our programs, and will help anytime when asked. I thank all of you who have helped in anyway.

In the coming year, I am looking forward to working with our new SAL Commander Gene Nicholes and I know he will do a good job. Gene, I will give you any support and/or advice that you need. I know Gene will have a good year as Commander of North Central District 2015-2016.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Commander this year. It was my pleasure and my honor to serve. We are the greatest District in the state of Maryland, and in fact the greatest District in the nation!!!

Forever in Service to our God and our Country,

Larry Ford
NCD Commander
Cell: 443-413-4710
Email: laftd@comcast.net

NEC NEWS

I bring you greetings from National Commander Mike Moss. "BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE" is this year's theme by working together to enhance our organization and programs. Increasing membership and working the 4 pillars of the American Legion. Commander Mike praised every Detachment that met the 90% membership goal.

National Commanders projects are the **National Emergency Fund and American Legion Endowment Fund**. During the NEC donations came pouring in with over \$177,000, which included \$13,930 for NEF and \$14,284 for the American Legion Endowment Fund.

The National Emergency Fund, created in response to Hurricane Hugo in 1989, has provided more than \$8 million in direct financial assistance to American Legion Family members and posts. By providing this emergency funding, NEF has prevented damaged posts from closing and enabled American Legion Family members to recover from tragedy. The fund provides up to \$1,500 for qualified Legion Family members and up to \$5,000 for posts.

American Legion Endowment Fund, was formed in 1925, World War I veterans, widows and children continued to struggle to return to a regular life. The members of The American Legion, aware of the grave responsibilities entrusted to them by those who had served, knew the time had come to take action. Since those early days, tens of millions of dollars have been distributed to disabled veterans and children of those who served our great nation. More information can be found on The National American Legion and National Sons of The American Legion web sites.

Members of the Detachment traveled to Indy to attend the Spring NEC. Dave Hullihen, Ray Edwards took NMI I & II while Jeff Seiler graduated NMI III. **Congratulations Jeff**. We also attended the various commission and committee meetings. Here is a list of Resolutions that were passed during the NEC meetings

SAL Res 1 Amendment to the Rules of the NEC for the SAL

SAL Res 2 NEC Meeting call in change

SAL Res 3 & SAL Res 4 Child Welfare Foundation Donations

SAL Res 6 Re-aligning the SAL structure

to coincide with that of the American Legion

SAL Res 9 Flag Protection Amendment Endorsement

SAL Res 10 Reaffirmation of Service to God

The leading candidates for National and Vice Commanders held a luncheon on Saturday which includes our very own Bill Hill for Vice Commander East.

We surpassed the 90% goal and now working on 100%, than 105% by July 23. Congratulation to all who helped us reach and pass the 90% membership goal.

National Vice Commander Greg "Doc" Gibbs from the Detachment of New York will be attending our Detachment Convention in June. Please show Doc what Maryland hospitality is all about.

Yours in Service,

Andy Dadds

Nat'l Executive Committeeman (NEC)

Commander's Challenge

Sons Stepping up to the Challenge

Commander Hall has issued a Challenge this year to simple learn what the Four Pillars of The American Legion were. I want to ask "Have you learned what they are?" The four pillars are what the American Legion is based on and we need to make sure we are doing our part to teach more about these four pillars.

A lot of you did Step Up to the Challenge and I want to thank you for that. You each contributed to or did something for the Four Pillars which are: Children and Youth, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Americanism and National Security. I commend all Squadrons, Units and Posts for accepting this challenge and making Commander Hall proud of this project

In closing and *On behalf of Commander "JR" Hall I want to Thank You for participating in our first ever "Commanders Challenge"*

Challenge Chairman

PDC Tom Deal