

Legion News

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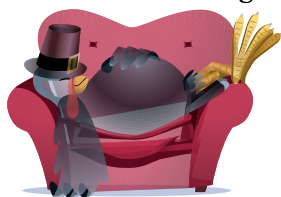
HAPPENINGS

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

NOVEMBER

- 6th Day Light Savings Time Ends
- 8th Election Day
- 11th Veterans Day
- 24th Thanksgiving

Your Staff wishes for you and yours
A Wonderful Thanksgiving



DECEMBER

- 7th Pearl Harbor Day (1941)
- 15th Bill of Rights day
- 20th Panama Operation (1989)
- 25th Christmas



Also, our best wishes for a
"Merry Christmas" and a
"Happy New Year"

A Gentleman Personified

By Steve B. Brooks
October 27, 2011

*Courtesy of American Legion
National Headquarters*

Frank Stancil has served as a department commander and Alternate National Executive Committeeman. For nearly nine years, he's been adjutant of the Department of North Carolina.

But as far as Stancil is concerned, one memory stands above all others when it comes to his 28-year involvement in The American Legion: the year he served as aide to National Commander Ray Smith from 2000-2001. Smith passed away Wednesday morning at the age of 78.

"It was a year of a lifetime," Stancil said, thinking back to his time as Smith's aide. "It really was an honor to work with him that year. There was nothing pretentious about him. He was just a genuine, good man, and he had the ability to inspire others to do much better than they thought they were capable. He was positive - he said he didn't like negative people - and I think that we had a very positive year together."

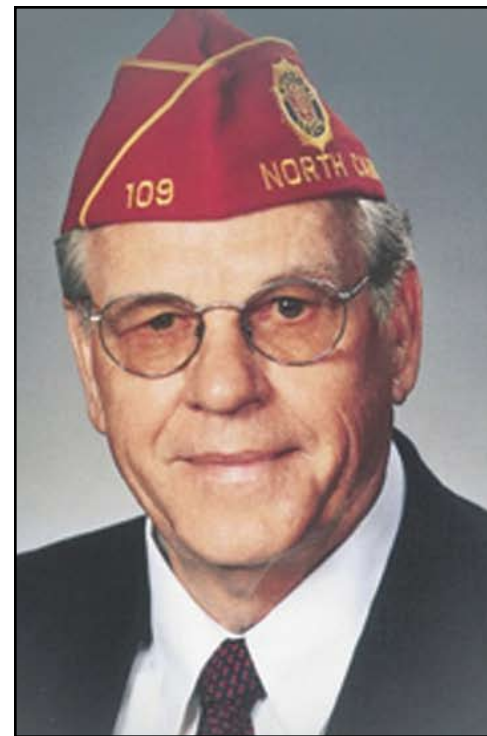
It was a year that Smith, at one time, thought wasn't going to happen. Department of New York Ad-

jutant Richard Pedro remembers Smith worrying about his age, 67 when he was elected national commander. "I told him just to hang in there and that he was going to do fine, and he certainly did," Pedro said. "He was a very good commander, and he was a great person. He was a real gentleman in every sense of the word."

Past National Commander Jake Comer, who will deliver the eulogy at Smith's funeral on Sunday, said he's received dozens of emails from friends about Smith. "The one word used to describe Ray in every email is gentleman," Comer said. "He was a gentleman personified."

"When I'd travel to Florida, he lived right off of I-95, and I'd always stop off and get coffee with he and his wife, Helen. One year I didn't get a chance to stop on the way down, so I stopped on the way back. It happened to be Easter Sunday, and when I knocked on his door, Ray was there with his entire family. He told me, 'Jake, come in here. We're just getting ready to have dessert.'"

During his tenure as national commander, Smith - a lifetime member of Banner Post 109 in Benson, N.C. - strongly advocated



Ray Smith - Former National Commander

for a constitutional amendment prohibiting flag desecration. He also fought to allow concurrent receipt of DoD pensions and VA disability compensation and end the so-called "disabled veterans tax." He called for legislation to ensure that military absentee ballots were handled uniformly and accurately across the nation.

But perhaps the biggest impact Smith made was on Legion membership. The organization's num-

See Gentleman, Page 8

New National Commander Chosen - Mr. Fang A. Wong

The national commander is the executive head of The American Legion, with full power to enforce provisions of the Legion's constitution, bylaws and resolutions of the national convention, which meets each year to govern the organization. Each national commander serves a one-year term, after which a new one is elected at the convention; five national vice commanders are also elected annually.

Fang A. Wong of East Brunswick, N.J., was elected national commander of The American Legion on Sept. 1, 2011, during the 93rd National Convention in Minneapolis.

Born in Canton, China, Wong immigrated to the United States as a 12-year-old in 1960. He attended New York City public schools and became a naturalized citizen in 1963. Wong volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1969, served 25 months in Vietnam, and retired from the Army as a chief warrant officer in 1989.

Wong earned a bachelor's degree in business administration at New York Institute of Technology in 1978 and a master's degree in management from Central Michigan University in 1981.



Following his retirement from the Army, Wong joined Lt. B.R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291 in New York. A former national vice commander and past department commander of New York, Wong has held elected and appointed offices at the post, county, district, department and national levels of the Legion.

Wong also served as a director of New York Empire Boys State and as a member of the planning committee for the creation of the New

York American Legion College. He has served on several national committees and commissions, including a term as chairman of the Legion's National Security Commission.

Through his American Legion post in Chinatown, Wong helped direct relief efforts in the aftermath of 9/11. He has been a member of the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training and Employer Outreach of the Department of Labor, and served as chairman of the Special Investigation Committee for the Chinese Community Benevolent Association (NYC) and the Office of the Attorney General, State of New York, in 2005.

In 2011, Wong retired from L-3 Communications, Command & Control Systems and Software (C2S2) Division in support of the Army Software Engineering Center at Fort Monmouth, N.J., after 20 years.

Wong is married to the former Barbara Lam. They have one son, Eric. Barbara is active with the American Legion Auxiliary and is a past district president for the Department of New York. Eric is a charter member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 1291, Detachment of New York.





**ADJUTANT'S
CALL**

FRANK STANCL
Department Adjutant



**You Can Make A Positive
Difference In Your Community,
State And Nation.**

You are important for many reasons so don't allow yesterday's failures to bankrupt tomorrow's efforts. We as Americans won't give up because we have many more positives in this than negatives. Just keep on, keeping on as long we are breathing, there is hope. Just remember, action breeds action and inaction so let's not make excuses, lets us make results. We are where we are because we choose it and we make the choices in our daily lives to where we go and what we do, so most of the time, when we say that we don't have the time to go somewhere or to do something, it really means that we choose not to go and or not to do.

Please set a goal this year to say something nice about someone each day or do something nice for someone each day. We all know a buddy that we served with and we should be proud to sign them up in our American Legion Posts. I have two buddies that are members of my post with Gary from PA and Roger from NY, so you too can ask your buddy or buddies to join The American Legion, today. You may not know, that Merchant Marines that served between 12/7/41 and 12/31/46 are eligible to be members.

The following is a quote from Theodore Roosevelt Jr before the Paris Caucus in 1919, "Afterward, at dinner, we discussed plans for a veterans' organization. All agreed on certain principles: the first was that no difference should be made between those who had served overseas and those who had not- as the desire to serve was what counted. The second, that the Legion was to be a democratic organization, in which there should be no question of rank, and the privates would get a full chance to tell the generals what they thought of them. Third and last, the organization should concern itself with policies , not partisan politics". Still true today!

Thank each of you for being a member of the largest veterans organization in the United States of America!

**New Initiatives
and Policies**

Good day Legionnaires my name is Cajun A. Comeau, your American Legion, Department of NC, Service Officer. I would like to update you on some of the new initiatives and policies concerning your VA benefits and healthcare.

Chairman Murray Passes Veterans Cost-of-Living Increase to Allow Veterans to Share in Critical Benefit Boost for the First Time in Two Years Murray's bill, which passed the Senate yesterday, would result in more money in the pockets of millions of veterans across the country SENATOR PATTY MURRAY, CHAIRMAN U.S.SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS (202) 224-9126
Republican Staff: (202) 224-2074

**Navigating the
Legion Website**

In the world in which we reside it sometimes seems as if everyone has a computer. Well, that's really not the case but it is fair to say, I think, that MOST of us have one or more in the house. The big challenge is getting what we want from it and when we're not instantly successful some of us throw up our hands and just shut the thing down.

Unfortunately, when we do that, we're just cheating ourselves! Instead of being frustrated try the Web site of The American Legion at the National level, www.legion.org Each and every day a column entitled "What are we doing for you today" is highlighted. The page con-

Please, JUST ASK!

We have been working on membership now for four months and during that time I have been talking a lot about recruiting new members. And I think we have done well in that area.

We started with a recruiting booth at the North Carolina Baseball Championship were we recruited 6 new members. Then again at the American Legion World Series in Shelby NC we signed up another 11 new members. Once more at the Hickory Post 48 American Legion Fairground we had a great week with 23 new members. Now that being said it may not sound like a big number of new members, just 40. Lets look at it this way, we had to talk to 10 or 15 times that many people to get those numbers and if we planted a seed in just 5% of those it would mean another 20 or 30 new members. We are starting 3 new posts so far this year that's at least 45 new members there.

During my Division, District and other visits I have talked to legionaries that have recruited 1, 3 or 5 new members I would put a number of about 50 more there. That brings us up to about 160 new members in just a small part of the state. Ok now if we could do that kind of recruiting all over the state, and we can, that

**COMMANDER'S
COMMENTS**

BEN LEE
Department Commander



cisely and clearly reports to you on either a Legion event or special program activity taking place the very day of your log-on! Not old news but news as it's being made!

Additionally, you can get info on The Four Pillars of The American Legion: Veteran's Affairs and Rehabilitation, Americanism, Children and Youth and National Security. Within these pillars are the numerous programs which Posts throughout our state are involved with daily. Log on to (www.nclegion.org/) These programs are aimed at

helping active duty personnel, other veterans- including those in our Veteran Homes- young people in our elementary, middle and high schools, families of active duty personnel, veterans needing assistance with V.A. claims etc. etc. I encourage you to visit our North Carolina web site and I know you'll feel prouder than ever to be a member when you see what our Posts are doing statewide.

If you're thinking about starting a web page and are having difficulty, contact Department Headquarters. Don't forget to read the other officer's columns and for sure take a minute to read the Membership Chairman's thoughts. Thanks to you, we're doing well but we have a ways to go if we plan on making our next monthly goal. We'll make it, if you just enroll that one new member we've talked about!

**MEMBERSHIP
REPORT**

JIM MAYHEW
Membership Chairman



could easily be 5000 new members this year. You just have to ASK!

Recruiting new members won't get us to our goal of 100%. In the second third of this year we will need to reinstate the members we use to have in our posts. The members that for whatever reason have not renewed. Your District Commanders have lists of those members we are calling "Leave no Legionnaire Behind", just ASK them for the names in your zip code and start calling.

Have your Adjutant or membership person look on the green bar (your Post roster) to see who did not renew last year, there will be some and the bigger your post the more there will be. Set up a calling tree and see if you can't get them back in the Legion. It's easy to work a calling tree, get 3, 4, 5, 6 or more of your post members to bring their phone to the post on a Saturday morning or whenever and divide up the list of names, both the "Leave no Legionnaire Behind" and the green bar list. Maybe order a pizza for lunch and go back to calling members in the afternoon. The hard part is getting the volunteers, maybe the pizza

will help. Try it sometime and you might see it can actually be fun. If you don't know what to say there are phone scripts you can get to help you. Just ASK me and I'll send them to you.

We held Legion High School in three Divisions in September and October, I feel it went over very well, and with a little better communications we should be able to have vast improvements next time. We held numerous classes on a Post level form, one of which was a class on membership. One of the areas we went over was working outside the box with recruiting, and one of the most talked about was Adopt-A-Veteran. Let me explain the program as it was put out in the High School. American Legion Post 48, Hickory started this program last year to adopt Veterans that are shut-ins or in rest homes. They found that some Veterans in rest homes do not have many visitors, except occasional family members. This is a shame. These men and women, who gave the most, are getting so little. This is where we as American Legion members can help. If you were to pay for a membership for a Veteran in this situation he or she could receive the American Legion Magazine, The State Newspaper and what ever correspondence your Post puts out. You could also go by to visit with your adopted Veteran from

See Members, Page 8

**LET'S TALK
REHAB**

CAJUN COMEAU
Department Service Officer



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 20, 2011 (Washington, D.C.) – Today, U.S. Senator Patty Murray, Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, announced that a bill that she sponsored to provide a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for America's veterans has passed the U.S. Senate. The COLA for veterans will match the 3.6 percent annual increase provided to Social Security recipients, which on Wednesday was announced will happen this year for the first time since 2009. The Veterans COLA would affect several important benefits, including veterans' disability

compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. It is projected that over 3.9 million veterans and survivors will receive compensation benefits in Fiscal Year 2012.

"A cost-of-living increase for our veterans is long overdue and well deserved," said Senator Murray. "Particularly in this difficult economy, our veterans deserve a boost in their benefits to help make ends meet. This is an important step for our veterans, especially on the heels of news that a COLA will be provided for the first time since 2009."

The COLA is designed to offset inflation and other factors that lead to the rising cost of living over time. The COLA rate is based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index.

About eBenefits

See Service, Page 8

**The North Carolina
Legion News**

Ben Lee
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

W. Frank Stancil
DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Articles may be submitted for consideration to be published in The North Carolina Legion News, PO Box 26657, Raleigh NC 27611-6657.

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Leroy Isracson, Carl Walker, Fred Romano, and William Sadler helping fifth graders learn to fold the flag.

Learning to Respect the American Flag

On Sept. 8, 2011 District one Commander Carl Walker, Post commander William Sadler, Adjust Richard Pallette, Treasurer James McGarigle Service officer Fred Romano, Historian Thomas Derry and Leroy Isracson, members of SM1 Raymond L. Wine Sr. American Legion Post 531 Moyock, N.C. Went to Shawboro Elementary School to teach the fifth grade class on rising, lowering, folding and respect of the American Flag. Terrie Godfrey, principal and teachers, Tara Brinkley, Patricia Huff, Judy Krauss and Sandy Reynolds were also present.



Pictured from left to right are Past Commander Mike Meeks, Athletic Director Brandon Scott and Financial Officer Mitch Floyd.

Denise Meeks Sr American Legion Post 538 Made a Visit to Bessemer City High School

Past Commander Mike Meeks and Financial Officer Mitch Floyd made a visit to Bessemer City High School to drop off a Donation of \$772.00 which brings the total this year to \$1398.00 for the Boys Varsity Basketball Team. Past Commander Meeks and Post 538 made the commitment last year to help the Varsity Basketball Team. Post 538 is planning future fundraiser.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

American Legion Post #10 Service Officer Milton Woodle discusses veterans issues with Elizabeth Goolsby, Director, Fayetteville VA Medical Center. They were attending the Brunswick County Outreach Clinic ribbon cutting ceremony. The Clinic is located in Supply, NC and is serving southeastern North Carolina Veterans.

The Families of 110 POW/MIAs Located in NC

By: Harold Davis

Our government now has family contact and DNA to identify 110 POW/MIAs from North Carolina that are missing in the Korean War. The DNA from these families will allow the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) to identify remains when they are recovered. Once identified the remains will be returned to the proper family.

I came to the Department of North Carolina three years ago with a list of soldiers with no family contacts. I ask for your help. I told you these were your neighbors and were fellow comrades that we left in Korea. The results are in and you did a superb job in finding these families. I received calls from all over the state and many led to the families. I personally called members like Frank Rose, Dale Punch and Harlan Cornell from across the state to work on specific cases and in each case they stepped forward and found the family.

When you located a family, sev-

eral things happened. The DNA was placed in a bank to be used for identification. A file for this family was made by the Casualty Office and the family was briefed on the status of their soldier.

Each family is invited to attend annual briefings that are held in many states and at this time the Casualty Office personnel meet with each family and review the case. Most families were very grateful that someone even cared about their family member that was lost over 55 years ago.

After many years most families have been located. The Casualty Offices have hired professional genealogists to complete the searches. The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command facilities in Hawaii has been enlarged. This is where the remains are identified.

We will see more remains returned to the proper family in the near future. Thanks to the legionnaires from North Carolina for assisting in



Tabman Percy Sudsbury, center, accepted the award for most pull tabs collected by a post (Post 386) in 1 year, with 2,250 lbs collected! Pictured left, Commander Ben Lee and right, PDC and Children and Youth Vice Chairman Mike Reott.

Tabman Percy Sudsbury Knows How to Collect Pull Tabs!

The "Tabman", Percy Sudsbury of American Legion Post 386 in Greensboro, made his first official "Tab Talk" presentation to the faculty and parents of Lawsonville Elementary School a couple of weeks ago. He thanks his "Tab Partner", Mrs. Susan Cole who is the AIG (Academically and Gifted Student Program) teacher and coordinator in the Rockingham Co. school system for inspiring 3 schools to get involved.

North Carolina State Veterans Cemeteries

Eligible veterans, their spouses and dependents may be buried at any of the following state veterans cemeteries: Western Carolina State Veterans Cemetery 962 Old US070 Hwy. at Black Mountain. Contact number is 828-669-0684 Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery 110 Montford Point Rd. Jacksonville Contact # 910-347-3570 Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery 400 Murchison Road Spring lake contact # 910-436-5630 To contact the National Cemeteries in New Bern, Raleigh, Salisbury, or Wilmington, please call 704-636-2661.



Honoring a Local Hero

Scott Womack, a crime-prevention officer from the Raleigh, N.C., Police Department, was lauded not only for performing his day-to-day law enforcement duties in an exemplary manner, but for the close relationship he has established with the community he serves.

Womack's community involvement extends back to his teenage years when, as an Eagle Scout, he served with the Nash County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post. After graduating from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill with a degree in history, Womack returned to Nash County as a Child Protective Services Investigative Social Worker. In that capacity, he earned certifications in child welfare, including the investigation of suspected child sexual abuse cases. He joined the Raleigh Police Department seven years ago.

While his working hours were spent on patrol duties in the city's Northwest District, Officer Womack furthered his education during his spare time and was awarded an MBA degree from Pfeiffer University several years ago. In March 2009, Womack was selected as the Northwest District's Crime Prevention Of-

ficer, a position he holds today.

A compelling speaker, Officer Womack meets regularly with residential and civic organizations, often conducting presentations for homeowners associations and scouting groups. He also manages his district's Community Watch program and established an electronic database of trespassing reports to aid the police department in taking action against neighborhood intruders. He too has created a network of retail loss prevention professionals to help guard businesses in his district.

On a wider scope, Officer Womack is credited with circumventing a major industrial catastrophe in the Raleigh area. In 2009, a well-known ice manufacturer was victimized repeatedly by thieves who siphoned off hydrated ammonia from an external storage tank to utilize in production of the psychostimulant drug commonly known as crystal meth. In the process, the criminals polluted the site with leaking ammonia. Officer Womack met with the ice company's officials and developed a multifaceted security system that has prevented further, potentially dangerous incidents.



National Commander Jimmie L. Foster presents the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award to Officer Scott P. Womack of the Raleigh, NC, Police Department at the 2011 American Legion National Convention in Minneapolis, Wednesday, Aug., 31, 2011. Scott's wife Jenny looks on. Photo by Tom Strattman

Officer Womack has received a great many thank you notes and letters from the community he serves and has been recognized for his exceptional service by the Raleigh Police Department. Last year, the Exchange Clubs of Raleigh named Womack its Police Officer of the Year. This year, it was The American Legion's Department of North

Carolina that nominated him for this current honor.

Officer Womack received The American Legion Law Officer of the Year award at the organization's 93rd annual convention in Minneapolis. The Legion honors outstanding law enforcement officers annually, consistent with its founding commitment to "Law and Order."



HUNTER BRICKHOUSE was recognized August 8 for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. American Legion Post 182 commander Bill Voliva (right) congratulated Hunter during the post's monthly meeting at Legion Beach near Columbia. Post 182 sponsors Boy Scout Troop 86, of which Hunter is a member. Legionnaire Arni Hopkins is Scoutmaster. (R. McClees photo)

From Boy Scout to Eagle Scout

Hunter Brickhouse of Boy Scout Troop 86 became the 11th Eagle Scout of Tyrrell County during a Boy Scouts National Court of Honor in Columbia July 28 with 60 people in attendance. Rob and Michelle Brickhouse, Hunter's parents, were also honored, as was his mentor, Allen Lee, one of Hunter's Scoutmasters.

Three Eagle Scouts that received their awards in Tyrrell County were in attendance: Gordon Basnight, Fred Mitchell, and Howard Swain.

Dwight Wheless, unit commissioner for the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, opened the National Court of Honor and congratulated Hunter on his accomplishments. Basnight,

the first Scout to receive the Eagle award in Tyrrell County, gave Hunter the Eagle Charge (pledge).

Hunter was presented his Eagle Medal by his Scoutmaster, Arni Hopkins, a Legionnaire.

Ed Benton of American Legion Post 182, sponsor of Troop 86, led the presentation of numerous special recognitions to Hunter: a resolution by the Town of Columbia, a letter from the Columbia Rotary Club, a certificate from the American Legion, letters and certificates from Governor Beverly Perdue and Congressman Walter Jones, and a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol in honor of Hunter achieving Eagle Scout.



Three Generations of Legionnaires

Three generations of one family are members of Post 48 in Hickory, NC. Pictured are Jeremy, Ed, and Gene DeLozier



Five reach Eagle Scout at Eagle Court of Honor for Troop 613

This is the second time in two years that Troop 613 located in Asheville had five Eagle Scouts at a time. The BSA district had five other Eagle Scout Courts of Honor on the same day within the district. This shows that Scouting is alive and well when so many young men attain this, the highest honor in scouting!



Troutman Post Has Special Guest

Troutman Post 401 had its regular meeting on September 27, 2011 with four young guests present. These guests, Chloe Winfecoff and Peyton Blankship spoke on their experiences at the Girls State program this year. Ronnie Kalodziej spoke on his experiences at Boys State. Pictured front row, Chloe Wifecoff, Peyton Blankship and Ronnie Kalodziej. Back row, Post 401 Commander Kelly Miller and District 17 Commander Philip Birchall.



In the Picture from the left: Billy W Smith, Robert Helms, Fred "Short" Simpson, Drexel Baucom, not pictured Leroy Simpson

Post 440 Honors 50 year+ Members

American Legion Post 440 Commander Ronnie Baucom presented certificates for 50 years of continuous membership in the American Legion to five of its members. Billy W. Smith a continuous member for 54 years, Drexel Baucom 54 years, Leroy Simpson 52 years, Fred "Short" Simpson 63 years, and Robert Helms 64 years. These five American Legionnaires have racked up a total of 287 years of service to the American Legion. All are members of Post 440 in New Salem, North Carolina.

Military Summit Held

Governor Beverly Perdue conducted a Military Summit at four locations throughout the state this year, each one being conducted near a large military installation. The purpose of these summits was to announce that North Carolina has fared well during the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) hearings and procedures. While many states lost installations or had them realigned, North Carolina's delegation fought hard under the leadership of Governor Perdue and actually gained ground.

That said, we haven't seen our last BRAC visitors. Governor Perdue solicited the leadership in each of the



four military communities to inform her and her staff of what obstacles we might be facing in keeping our military presence what it is.

Following the three hour open discussions and Q&A, representatives of the North Carolina Outdoors Advertisers Association (NCOAA) un-

veiled a series of billboards which are already dispersed throughout the state announcing a website and a phone number where returning veterans can seek help. Representing the NCOAA was Mr. Robert Sykes who introduced Lou Cook, Past Department Commander of The

American Legion as well as a military retiree from Seymour Johnson AFB for his remarks regarding the importance of publicizing this information to all veterans.

He went on to urge Governor Perdue to expand her use of the slogan "We want to be the most military-friendly state in the country" to include the term "the most veteran-friendly" as well.

2011 American Legion World Series Begins

The 2011 American Legion World Series kicked off Friday, August 12 at Keeter Stadium-Veterans Field located in Shelby. But before the first pitch was thrown, fallen heroes from the eight teams' regions were announced and honored. This was just one of the many ways the military and its service members were represented during the four-day event. The event was televised live on ESPN3 and included teams from across the United States.

To honor those fallen heroes, the Troop H Honor Guard was called upon to provide the colors at the opening ceremony. The Troop H Honor guard, which consisted of Troopers L.T. McCraw, T.R. Lee, K. P. Marino, K.L. Cornwell, represented the Highway Patrol proudly by displaying the colors to television viewers nationwide.

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol has always been a supporter of the American Legion. Every year the Highway Patrol conducts a one-week long American Legion Student



Trooper Program.

The week long program is designed so that young students will gain an insight into areas of curriculum they may be required to study if they choose this career path. Students were exposed to such topics as collision investigation, motor vehicle law, defensive tactics, defensive driving and gang awareness. Each morning students were required to rise at 5:00 a.m. and participated in physical fitness training. The training focused on team building skills, discipline and self confidence.

The Student Trooper Program staff is composed of members of the American Legion and the Highway Patrol Training Center staff. To qualify for admission to the program, rising seniors or recently graduated seniors must be of good moral character and demonstrate qualities of patriotism and leadership.

Any American Legion Post in North Carolina may sponsor a student by raising a tuition fee and assuming responsibility for attendance and transportation.

Congratulations Troop H Honor Guard!



Bill Richard

Department Commander Candidate

Military Service
USAF, Vietnam era

Post Experience
100% Post Commander, 2006-07, 2007-08
2nd Vice Commander, 2008-09, 2009-10
various committees

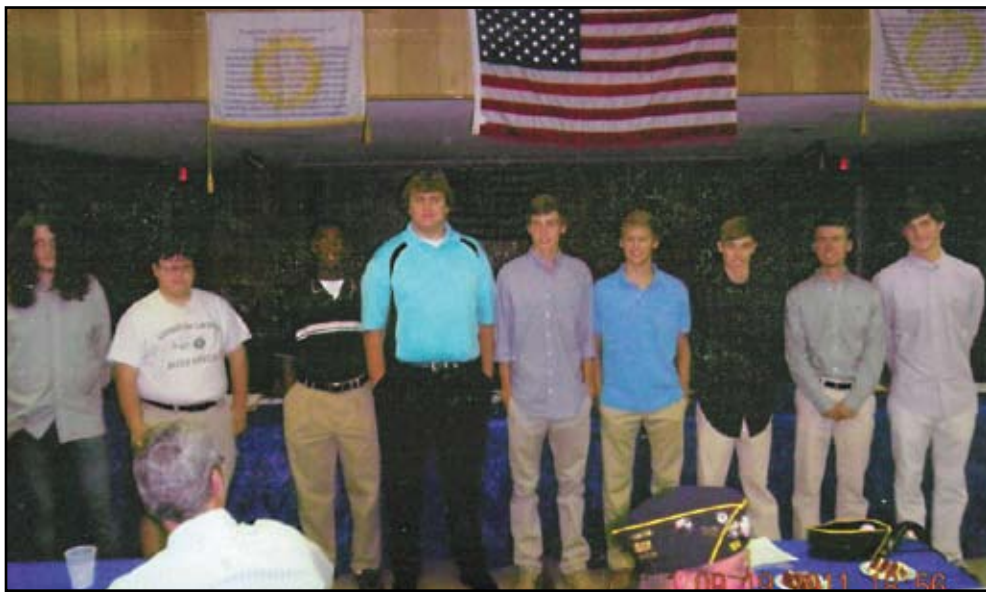
District Experience
District 22 Commander, 2008-09, 2009-10
District Delegate to National Convention 2009

Division Experience
Oratorical Chairman, 2009-10

Department Experience
Veterans Affairs and Rehab Commission, 2 years
Oratorical Committee, 3 years, vice chair, 2009-10
Rules and Credentials Committee, 2009
State Oratorical rep to National Contest, 2009

National Experience
National Foreign Relations Council, honorary member
2008-09, 2009-10
Pioneer Award, 2010
NC Parade Chairman, National Convention, 2010

Community Experience
Relay for Life, American Cancer Society, 8 years
In God we Trust Program, District 22
Past Chef de Gare, Voiture 1441
Eagle Scout
Member New Hope Baptist Church



Winston-Salem Post 55 sends 13 boys to Boys State

Winston-Salem Post 55 recognized the boys attending Boys State at Catawba College. The boys and their families were invited to attend the monthly dinner meeting on September 19. Each of the boys was given an opportunity to tell about his experiences at Boys State. Each thanked the post for the opportunity of attending and added a few comments relevant to the knowledge they gained while there. Each of the boys was presented a certificate of recognition for their attendance. Pictured left to right, Trip Barton, David Sabbage, Gaired Jordan, Bradley Sawyer, Jonathan Manthey, Dan Blau, Tripp Holder, Ryan Kelly and Wes Fagg.



American Legion Post 440 New Salem Hosts First Annual "Tailgating for the Troops"

The "Tailgating for the Troops" event was held prior to the kickoff of the Porter Ridge and Marvin Ridge football game, at Porter Ridge High School. New Salem Post 440 partnered with unioncountyhighschoolfootball.com setting up in the "Boneyard" tailgating area to collect items, cards, and letters to send to our troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Porter Ridge and Marvin Ridge fans also took the time to sign a banner, filling it up, with messages of support and thanks. The banner will be sent to Afghanistan for the service men and women to see that Union County supports their efforts. All items collected will be sent to Soldiers Angels for distribution to the troops.



"Hold Up" Very Successful

Recently the parents of Spc. Joshua Reid, a local member of the US Army deployed in Afghanistan, requested assistance from the American Legion Post 96 in Murphy. They were seeking hard to find and direly needed supplies for their son and his company at a forward operating base high in the mountains of Afghanistan, somewhere along the Pakistan border.

Thanks to the media, a lot of support from fellow veterans, and a very generous community, Post 96 was successful in fulfilling the parents request in making this fighting unit's day to day job just a little easier. There were 25 boxes filled with long sox, foot powder, baby wipes, Q-tips, deodorant, hard candy, cliff bars, etc, that were donated, packed and taken to the Post Office to be shipped to an APO number. A very successful "Hold Up" fund-raiser was held at one of the main intersections in the county to offset the cost of shipping all of these boxes.



Pictured front row, left to right, Lewis Hayden, Assistance Director, Rick Baker, Director, Lynn Angel, Patrick LeBlanc, Sgt-at-Arms. Back row, l to r, Jerry Roberson, Al Roberson, Jr., (also Post Commander), Jerry Lasher, Jim Anselmi, Road Captain, Ron Stoll, and Rick Fuller, Secretary/Treasurer.

New Legion Riders Chapter at Cone Post 386

Rick Baker of Cone Post 386 was instrumental in organizing the Legion Riders Chapter, and nine of the riders were newly recruited members to the Posts. There are currently fourteen Legion Riders in the Chapter and Rick is looking for other Legionnaires who would like to become Legion Riders. If anyone is interested, call Rick Baker, 336-549-6083, email, rbaker@bipinc.com.

Recruitment Request

RN Pamela Phillips is doing a research study at the University of South Carolina, College of Nursing to examine the basic psychosocial Process that men and women undergo in recovering from exposure to an extreme stressor or prolonged victimization. It has been estimated that some 8% of all individuals exposed to a traumatic stressor such as sexual assault or rape, military combat, child abuse, manmade and natural disasters, accidents and the like will develop PTSD.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age, English speaking and capable Of using the internet and writing on the computer. There is no payment for Participation. Please contact Pamela Phillips, RN,MSN, PHD Candidate @ PTSDrecovery@gmail.com For any questions concerning this study.

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President's Message

Our year has begun! Programs are in place and members all over the state are working hard to make this our best year ever. Committees are staffed and chairmen are involving members to better achieve their objectives and serve our veterans and their families. Together, the American Legion family can make a real difference and have a positive impact on the lives of those who served with honor and those serving currently.

Fall Conference is just around the corner. I hope to see many of you there, so please try to make plans to attend. It is a great experience to feel the enthusiasm of hundreds of dedicated members renewing acquaintances and making new friends all to work toward a common and worthwhile goal. The friends you

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SUE GOOCH
Department President



make may work with you in the future on committees and/or projects and share ideas that we can take back to our units. Conferences can revitalize an organization, boost fellowship, and stimulate creativity.

Recently we solemnly honored the tenth anniversary of the tragedy of 9-11. It was a moment riveted in our minds for all time. We will never forget where we were or what we were doing when we heard the news of that horrific event. It has deepened our resolve to continue honoring the service of those who protect us and the values of the American people. Words cannot express the debt we owe to those who serve in harm's way and stand between us and the

forces that would bring us down.

We ask that individual members alert their units to the needs of military personnel and their families in their communities. When you encounter a serviceman or servicewoman, please thank them for their service. They risk a lot on your behalf and a show of appreciation is an appropriate gesture. Seek publicity for new recruits and those about to be deployed. Let them know that America appreciates them. A little moral support can go a long way when a soldier is far from home and family and each moment is filled with uncertainty and danger.

Be alert to the needs of their families, whether it be a material need or just someone to talk to. They too, suffer. I ask you to keep all veterans, past and present in your hearts and prayers. Volunteer to serve in veterans hospitals; do whatever you can to show that you care.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

JOYCE WILLIS
Aux. Department Chaplain



Chaplain's Message

While we all may agree with and even say we believe in the statement, "all men are created equal", how many of us actually practice that idea? When we look at the world around us, sometimes we're very quick to think that some people seem to get all the breaks in life. They seem to us to be living 'charmed' lives with good health, lots of friends, great health, or professional success that brings them public accolades. On the other hand, there are some who receive awards and recognitions that we may think don't deserve them.

We yield too quickly to the sinful human side of us and think (or even say aloud) that "they're not qualified for that" or "they didn't deserve that". It's a very hard task sometimes, but we have to learn to accept all of these things in life without resentment. We have to remember that we are all God's Children, and in His sight, we truly are created equal.

We have a moral obligation to support and stand beside our brethren. In that realm of thought, let us in the American Legion Auxiliary come together and support one another as true patriot sisters for God and Country. Forget the 'what ifs' and focus on the actuality of the present time so we can build a strong future for our organization.

There is a wealth of experience in our American Legion Auxiliary to gain knowledge from, and there is no rank among us--NOT ONE of us should be considered 'better' than the next. Therefore, let's all work together for the betterment of our aims and purposes. And, as your Chaplain, I am here if you ever need me.

Please keep me aware of any troubles that may come your way. I may not be able to do anything but pray for you, but there have been mountains moved by prayer. May God Bless America and the American Legion Family.

Honor the Service

We're honoring the service of Membership Committee Member Frances Oxford's husband, James W. "Bill" Oxford. He was in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. He is our immediate Past Department Commander. The Oxford's are members of Post #29 in Lenoir.

In November we Honor their Service with Strategies. Make a "plan of action" designed to achieve our membership goals. This is being written right before our 55% Target Date. We have made wonderful progress in collecting membership "To Honor Their Service." This year, on Veteran's Day, we have a special opportunity to honor the elev-

HONOR OF SERVICE

MARY WARD
Membership Chairman



enth hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in the year 2011. Use this as a further opportunity to engage prospective members. November is a great month to invite veterans and their relatives to join us. Contact your area schools to offer "Veteran in the Classroom" Programs. Don't forget Marine Corps Day on the 10th.

In December we Honor their Service with Commitment. The most important single factor in individual success is commitment. Commitment ignites action and action leads to progress. Re-commit to our great mission

of "Service not Self." Many units and posts are already making plans to visit homeless shelters, participate in activities at North Carolina's four VAMCs, participate in community Christmas activities, and provide food baskets and gifts to veterans, service members, and their families. We can help others and encourage involvement of eligible community members. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is December 7th.

Continue to contact members for renewal. Invite and involve them in all planned activities. Ask if they know of any needs in your community. Continue to use all resources available to recruit new members and reenergize renewing members. Everyone must be very clear on the mission and vision of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The Membership Team wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year! The committee members are Frances Oxford and Brenda Brewer.



Members of American Legion Auxiliary, Raleigh Unit 1 and friends celebrated our oldest member's birthday, Grace Furman who turned 103 years young on January 26, 2011. She has been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary for 68 years. Members pictured left to right are Janet Bereznavy, Arletta Ray, Marie Tyree, Mattie West, Grace, Terry Dunn, Emily Cox and Karen Chreptak. Post 1 Legionnaire, Anthony Ray, Mike Tracy and several drop-ins celebrated with us.



First Meeting For District 6

At the first District 6 meeting held at American Legion Post 203 Newport in many years, Commander Ed Harris presides over the meeting attended by Post Commanders and Adjutants as Division II Commander Mike Braswell looks on.



Service

From Page 2

What is eBenefits?

eBenefits is a portal; a central location for Veterans, Service Members, and their families to research, find, access, and, in time, manage their benefits and personal information.

eBenefits offers:

- A personalized workspace called MyDashboard that provides quick access to eBenefits tools. Using eBenefits tools, you can complete various tasks. You can apply for benefits, download your DD 214, view your benefits status, in addition to other actions as needed. This workspace is available to you once you have created an eBenefits account
- A catalog of links to other sites that provide information about

military and Veteran benefits Accounts

- Anonymous (no need to login, very little access)
- Basic (login, limited access)
- Premium (login, unlimited access)

We're working to streamline the processes for applying and accessing your benefits

The Veterans Administration (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) are committed to improving the online experience for you, our veterans and service members. Since our inception in 2009, we have added more than 30 features that allow direct access to your benefits and personal information. Look for additional feature and process enhancements in future quarterly releases.

Tell Us About Your Experience

eBenefits is interested in your experience of the portal and the systems related to the registration process. And we offer three ways for you to share with us:

And we offer three ways for you to share with us:

- Fill out a form
- Take a survey
- Test the site for us: Join our email list of people who would like to participate in site feedback and user testing sessions. Participation can be done through your browser.

Why was eBenefits Created? The President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (Dole/Shalala) was established by Executive Order 13426 in March 2007. The Executive Order recommended the creation of a My eBenefits (aka eBenefits) web portal. The portal would serve wounded, injured, and ill Service Members, Veterans, their families, and their caregivers. It would provide a single sign-on, central access point to online benefits and related services.

provide a single sign-on, central access point to online benefits and related services.

You can access eBenefits here <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal> Please call 336-631-5471/5472 or email the DSO at Cajun.comeau@va.gov with questions concerning these and other VA issues, questions and concerns.

CURRENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

The Department Commander and Department Service Officer have conducted the annual VA Medical Center visits to receive VAMC Director briefings, talk to veterans using the facilities, tour the VAMC and present a VAVS grant check on behalf of The American Legion. The executive summary of the visits will be released in November 2011.

COLLECTION OF PULL-TABS

The purpose of collecting the pull-tabs is to help pay the rent for families of seriously ill children who stay at the Ronald McDonald House of Durham and is sponsored by your Department Children and Youth Commission.

Update: Fall Conference-2011 (3,636 LBS.)

The following contributed:

Raleigh Post 1	25 Lbs.
Lexington Post 8	43 Lbs.
Wilmington Post 10	83 Lbs.
Gastonia Post 23	95 Lbs.
New Bern Post 24	35 Lbs.
Manteo Post 26	37 Lbs.
Lincolnton Post 30	235 Lbs.
Kernersville Post 36	16 Lbs.
Greenville Post 39	20 Lbs.
Edenton Post 40	112 Lbs.
Kinston Post 43	103 Lbs.
Hickory Post 48	94 Lbs.
Greensboro Post 53	61 Lbs.
Mooreville Post 66	13 Lbs.
Asheville Post 70	3 Lbs.
Clayton Post 71	66 Lbs.

Aberdeen Post 72	16 Lbs.
Madison Post 80	8 Lbs.
Liberty Post 81	18 Lbs.
Elizabeth City Post 84	27 Lbs.
Ahoskie Post 102	36 Lbs.
Mount Olive Post 103	6 Lbs.
Sylva Post 104	2 Lbs.
Benson Post 109	117 Lbs.
Nashville Post 110	26 Lbs.
Fuquay-Varina Post 116	37 Lbs.
Apex Post 124	1 Lb.
Hertford Post 126	15 Lbs.
Boone Post 130	75 Lbs.
Belmont Post 144	44 Lbs.
Rockingham Post 147	112 Lbs.
Burgaw Post 165	41 Lbs.
Oxford Post 166	15 Lbs.
Durham Post 175	2 Lbs.
Laurinburg Post 181	2 Lbs.
Whiteville Post 233	8 Lbs.
Maiden Post 240	26 Lbs.
Stanley Post 266	67 Lbs.
Smithfield Post 270	37 Lbs.
Nashville Post 293	17 Lbs.
Burgaw Post 294	12 Lbs.
Raleigh Post 297	9 Lbs.

Salisbury Post 342	102 Lbs.
Highlands Post 370	26 Lbs.
Greensboro Post 386	781 Lbs.
New Salem Post 440	168 Lbs.
Calabash Post 503	257 Lbs.
Yadkinville Post 505	39 Lbs.
Clayton Posts 518	16 Lbs.
Fayetteville Post 525	43 Lbs.
Moyock Post 531	17 Lbs.
Washington Auxiliary Unit 15	1 Lb.
Cary Auxiliary Unit 67	11 Lbs.
Benson Auxiliary Unit 109	1 Lb.
Morganton Auxiliary Unit 322	14 Lbs.
Faith Auxiliary Unit 327	14 Lbs.
Pikeville Auxiliary Unit 541	4 Lbs.
Wilson SAL Squadron 13	12 Lbs.
Brassfield Elementary Sch	32 Lbs.
Danny Diener	1 Lb.
DAR	2 Lbs.
Millbrook Baptist Church	20 Lbs.
Rand Rd Elementary School	23 Lbs.
DENR	21 Lbs.
East Columbus High	25 Lbs.

Jean Hopkins	6 Lbs.
Sandra Manning	1 Lb.
Cindy Moeller	23 Lbs.
Oakland Presbyterian Church	14 Lbs.
Rocky Branch Church	8 Lbs.
Shepherd of the Sea Church	22 Lbs.
Kathy Watkins	5 Lbs.
Wilmington Health Center	2 Lbs.
Women's Baptist Home Youth	111 Lbs.

Members

From Page 2

time to time, giving them someone else to visit with. It's a win win win situation, the Veteran would feel appreciated, you should feel good about helping a fellow Veteran and your Post would get a new member. When Post 48 did this last year they got 30+ new members.

One final Thank You for those Posts that have achieved your 100% membership for this year, way to go!!!

Gentleman

From Page 1

bers were sliding when Smith stepped into office. Following his election, Smith pledged to end that. "The membership slide is over," Smith said. "It's time to make recruiting members fun."

He was true to his word. Under Smith's leadership, membership grew to 2.7 million members. Four departments had all-time highs in membership; another 19 hit 100 percent of their membership goal.

"People just responded well to Ray, and he was really able to rally the Legion, at all levels, around his membership plan," Comer said. "We knew he would represent the organization very well, but he really went above and beyond. He was one of our great commanders, in my estimation."

Kristine West served as the American Legion Auxiliary's national president while Smith was national commander. Smith made an impact on her. "It was an extreme pleasure, and I was very, very honored to serve with him,"

West said. "He was a very kind man, and he always gave me the ultimate respect, as I did him. And he would always speak on behalf of the Auxiliary and the importance of the Legion family."

For 26 years, Smith owned and operated Benson Electric Company, capitalizing on the skills he learned while serving four years in the Air Force during the Korean War. He also worked more than 20 years for the U.S. Postal Service, a bond he shared with longtime Department of North Carolina Executive Committeeman Jerry Hedrick, also a USPS retiree.

Hedrick said that Smith provided him with much-needed guidance when Hedrick joined the NEC in 1992. North Carolina's previous NECman had died in office, and Hedrick, in his own words, "didn't have any idea what I was doing. But Ray helped me immensely."

Sharing the views of others, Hedrick said Smith went about his business quietly. "He wasn't flashy," Hedrick said. "What you saw was what you got. But when he spoke,

people listened because they also knew Ray was going to speak the truth. And it was never self-serving. It was always for the good of his family, for The American Legion or for America's veterans."

Smith's service toward his community and veterans didn't start and stop with The American Legion. He'd spent the previous 10 years serving as chairman of the North Carolina Veterans Affairs Commission and also was involved in several youth programs, in addition to serving for years as chairman of the Legion's Americanism Commission. He was named

U. S. Postal Service Citizen of the Year in 1983 and Benson Citizen of the Year in 1988. He also served as town commissioner from 1995 until he was unable to continue due to illness.

After his year as national commander, Smith went back to Post 109 and did what he always had done - went to work recruiting new Legionnaires. A previous post commander and 20-year post ad-

jutant, he became 109's membership chairman. "Not many people have the passion for The American Legion that Ray Smith had," Stancil said. "He kept us on the straight and narrow here. Everyone listened when Ray spoke."

While Smith did a good job of mentoring those who followed him, Hedrick said a hole will now remain in the Department of North Carolina.

"You cannot replace a man of Ray Smith's stature," he said. "There's a void there, even if Ray did do a good job of mentoring people. When you lose someone like that, all you can do is try to go on. But he will be missed - both in this state and in this nation."

Condolences can be sent to Helen Smith, 322 W. Main St., Benson, NC 27504. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 109, c/o Betty Jo Young, 2550 NC Hwy 242, South, Benson, NC, 27504, or to Smyrna OFWB Church, c/o Doris Godwin, 200 Eldridge Street, Dunn, NC, 28334.