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*FOR GOD AND COUNTRY...*

Brian S. Kern, Commander

**JANUARY**

**DANIEL B. KALLEMYN, EDITOR**

**2010**

### COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Okay...time to exhale. The frantic pace of the holiday season is over and done with and the credit card statement detailing all your holiday expenditures is not here yet (smile). The beginning of a new year is always an exciting time and it's no different at the Post. Our membership continues to do well, but could use a boost in effort to recruit new members and retain current members between now and the end of this Legion year. Several exciting events are on the horizon including a New Members Appreciation Night, Super Bowl Party, and I'm still hoping we can revive the Post Picnic later this year.

The Post Holiday Children's Party was very successful. Over 65 children participated and were treated to hot dogs, balloon tying and magic from a clown, and of course a visit from Santa Claus. It's always nice to see the smiling faces of the children as they receive their gift and picture with Santa. Special thanks to Liz White who "assists" Santa with bringing and wrapping the gifts. Thanks also to all who helped out in the kitchen getting the hot dogs ready.

The Post Adult Holiday Party was also a success with approximately 90 participants. This year we started the party a bit earlier than in past years and it seems to have been well received. Unfortunately, there were some who forgot to sign up to participate by the cut-off date and we had to turn them away. While we regret having to do so, not doing so makes it difficult to plan events and is unfair to those who meet the deadline. I hope everyone realizes that if we don't enforce deadlines, there is a high likelihood that people will sign up later and later much to the detriment of the event.

It's a bit early yet, but officer nominations for next year are not that far away. I've talked with some of you about potentially running for an office and others have asked me a question or two. It's an excellent way to get involved in the Post in particular and The American Legion in general. Don't worry if you don't have prior experience. It's your effort that will count most. As always, thanks for your continuing support, thoughts, and ideas.

In Legion Service  
Brian Kern, Commander

## **AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP**

2010 Membership is now due. New Post key cards will be issued after January 1, 2010, and only to those members showing their 2010 membership card. Senior dues are \$14.00, and Junior dues are \$4.00.

Liz White, Membership Chairman  
301-868-1612

## **CHARLOTTE HALL**

On 11 November, we held our monthly BINGO program at the home. There were 73 veterans in attendance. Thanks to the VOLUNTEERS, Bob Levendusky, Al Elmond, Rose Hoffman and Adele Williams for helping out for the evening. There were some students from Chopticon High School (jr ROTC) also. We held another BINGO on 9 Dec. The VOLUNTEERS helping me out this month were BOB Levendusky, Al Elmond, Mike Gilbert. We had some students, (jr ROTC), from Chopticon High School, there also. There were 91 (a record) veterans in attendance. Thanks to the Auxiliary for providing the snacks for both evenings. Our next BINGO will be 13 Jan. Have a merry and safe holiday!

Say THANKS to a VET  
Mike Strotkamp, 301-645-2397

## **LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.**

### **Aid and Attendance**

Regardless of our personal status, consider passing this along to all veterans, families of veterans, or individuals with veterans in their family. "Aid and Attendance" is an underutilized special monthly pension benefit offered by the Veterans Administration for veterans and surviving spouses who require in-home care, or live in nursing homes.

To qualify, a veteran (including surviving spouse) must have served at least 90 days of

active duty for military service, one day of which is during a period of war, and must be discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

The veteran's benefit is \$18,234 annually (paid monthly) and increases to \$21,615 if a veteran has one dependent.

The surviving spouse alone is \$11,715 annually.

For more information call 1-800-827-1000. Visit <http://www.va.gov> Type "Aid and Attendance" in the search block.

### **Department of Veterans Affairs to Survey Veteran Households**

The VA is launching a national survey of veterans, active duty military members, activated National Guard and reserve members, and family members and survivors to learn if they are aware of VA services. Currently, the VA is mailing out survey screening information to more than 130,000 households to identify potential survey participants. Those identified as being eligible may be asked to participate in a full length survey. This will be the 6th VA National Survey of Veterans since 1978. The data collection is expected to be finished by the end of February 2010 and a final report issued in December of 2010. Post Commander Kern encourages any Post member receiving information to complete it and return it. The importance of doing so for all fellow veterans cannot be overstated.

### **Post Member and Pearl Harbor Survivor Receives Visit**

Post 259 member and Pearl Harbor survivor, Raymond James, was recently visited by Past Department Commander Ed White and Prince Georges County Commander Robert Wilson. Mr. James shared his memories of the "day that will live in infamy". Mr. James was in the Air Corps and stationed at Hickam Field, Hawaii on the day of the attack. A tip of the hat to Mr. James and a heartfelt thanks to a member of the "greatest generation".

## **Information of Interest to Veterans Residing in Maryland**

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs provides many services for Maryland veterans. Although the following is not an entire listing, the information may be of benefit to some of our Post members or any veteran residing in Maryland:

Outreach and Advocacy Program: 16 Francis Street, Annapolis, MD 21401 866-216-7928

Veterans Service Program, Claims Assistance: 31 Hopkins Plaza, Baltimore, MD 21201 800-446-4926

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home: 29449 Charlotte Hall Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 800-522-8387

Cemetery and Memorial Programs: 1122 Sunrise Beach Road, Crownsville, MD 21032 410-987-3820

Assistance with veterans issues such as homelessness, depression, PTSD, etc. 877-770-4801 or [www.veterans.maryland.gov](http://www.veterans.maryland.gov)

You can also access information on the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs by going to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and searching for "Maryland Veterans".

## **Four Pillars of the American Legion**

In 1919, the American Legion was founded on four pillars. The four pillars are Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth. As part of Commander Kern's Legion Education efforts, this month we'll focus on the third pillar –Americanism.

It is perhaps no surprise to many of you that the foundations on which this country were founded have been under increasing attacks for many years. The American Legion's focus on Americanism is an attempt to reinforce those foundations. For example, The American Legion has been very involved in seeking to protect the U.S. Flag from desecration by those very people whose right to protest was earned by the sacrifices of veterans. Additionally, The American Legion strives to maintain the Pledge of Allegiance in the

classroom and not some abbreviated version of the pledge, but the version that contains the words "under God". Last but not least, The American Legion sponsors many programs such as Boys/Girls State, Boy Scouts, American Legion baseball, etc., all with the intent to promote a one hundred percent Americanism in the participants.

Want more information about the four pillars, go on-line to [www.legion.org/onlineupdate/2687/four-pillars-available-online](http://www.legion.org/onlineupdate/2687/four-pillars-available-online). A 24 page book is available for you to download free of charge.

## **We Asked... You Responded... National Emergency Fundraising (NEF) Going Extremely Well**

Last month we asked for your help in meeting a goal of raising \$500 through your donations to support the NEF. Well, we are well on the way to meeting if not exceeding that goal. Although current numbers are not available at the time this article is being published, we've received numerous contributions from our Post members...but let's not stop yet. If you would like to contribute, please send a check made payable to American Legion Post 259 and indicate in the check's memo section that the check is to support the NEF Fundraising Campaign. All contributions are tax deductible and 100% of your contribution goes directly to where it is needed most – to support to the families of American Legion members and Sons of the American Legion members in need.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January 2010</h1>					1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2
3	4 S.A.L 7:30 PM.	5	6 Shrimp Night 5:30 - 7:30 PM  Pinochle	7 Pizza 5:00 - 7:00 PM	8 BINGO Early Bird 7:15 PM	9
10	11 Auxiliary Unit 259	12	13 Shrimp Night 5:30 - 7:30 PM  Pinochle	14	15 BINGO Early Bird 7:15 PM	16
17	18 Executive Committee 7:30 PM	19	20 Shrimp Night 5:30 - 7:30 PM  Pinochle	21	22 BINGO Early Bird 7:15 PM	23
24	25 General Membership Dinner- 6:30 PM Meeting 7:30 PM	26	27 Shrimp Night 5:30 - 7:30 PM  Pinochle	28	29 BINGO Early Bird 7:15 PM	30
31						

# Clinton Post 259



**Auxiliary Officers**

President	Toni Carr
Vice	Vacant
President	
Secretary	Glenda Morgan
Treasurer	Mary Russell
Chaplain	Sharon Franklin
Historian	Vivian Boyd
Sgt at Arms	Wendy Harris
Executive Committee	
	Barbara Theesen
	Liz White
	Marilyn Thomas



**Post Officers**

Commander	Brian Kern
Adjutant	Robert Wilson
Asst Adjutant	Larry Hall
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice	Gary Gifford
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice	William Ward
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice	Ronald Potts
Judge Advocate	Elbert "Ed" White
Service Officer	Joseph Vlcek
Finance Officer	Jerald Thompson
Historian	Charles Lewis
Chaplain	Robert McCollum
Sgt Major	John Jackson
Sgt at Arms	Robert Ford
Executive Committee	
	Rich Barb
	Joe DeCenzo
	Matt Garofalo
	Jim Panor
	Richard Switzer



**S.A.L. Officers**

Commander	Dave Hutchinson
Adjutant	Vacant
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice	Wayne Berbig
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice	Vacant
Judge Advocate	Vacant
Finance Officer	Gary Castleman
Chaplain	Vacant
Historian	Robert Ailiff
Sgt at Arms	Richard Walsh
Executive Committee	
	Wayne Berbig
	Gary Castleman