

Sons + Legion programs = winners!

Membership

Hartline Award (*Detach w/ most squadrons*) - Illinois

Houghton Award (*greatest % increase in membership*)

Category 1 - Montana Category 2 - Louisiana
Category 3 - Iowa Category 4 - California
Category 5 - Florida

Highest Renewal Percentage by Region

East - New Hampshire South - Louisiana
Central - Wisconsin (94.08%) Midwest - Nebraska
West - Idaho

Largest Squadron - Newport Harbor, CA, Squadron 291

First in Each Region to Reach 100%

East - Rhode Island South - Florida
Central - Iowa Midwest - Colorado
West - Arizona

Triple Nickel Award

(*105% membership - 5 new squadrons - 85% renewals*)
Iowa
Colorado

Americanism

Atwood/Beyea/York Memorial Award

Detachment - Georgia
Squadron - John B. Handte Squadron 89, Vestal, NY

National Emergency Fund

Largest Donations Per Capita in Nation - Arkansas

East - Connecticut Central - Iowa
Midwest - Nebraska West - Oregon

Child Welfare Foundation

Garland Murphy Award (*largest donation*) - Ohio

Udie Grant Award (*top Legion Family combined*) - Florida

Excellence Award (*largest per capita*) - Mississippi

Meritorious Achievement Award - North Dakota

Largest Per Capita by Region

Midwest - Colorado Central - Illinois
East - France West - Arizona

Largest Donations by Region

East - Pennsylvania West - Arizona
South - Florida Midwest - Colorado

Community Service

Scrapbook Winners

Squadron - La Plata, MD Squadron 82

Detachment - Louisiana

Children and Youth

Detachment - Georgia

District - Fourth District, Georgia

Squadron - Madison County, AL Squadron 237

Midwest - George Johns, TX Squadron 447

Central - West-Field, WI Squadron 48

East - Leonardo Memorial, NJ Squadron 338

West - Colton Squadron, CA 155

South - Arlington, FL Squadron 283

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Charles B. Rigsby Award (*Volunteer of the Year*)

Ray Edwards, Jr., Sharptown, MD Squadron 218

Kirby Kepler Award (*best squadron rehab report*)

Easton, MD Squadron 77

Earl Webster Award (*best Detach rehab report*)

Georgia

Historian

History Book Award

Squadron - Lake Plata, MD Sq 82

Detachment - Vermont

Color Guard

Stillwell Award

Detachment of California 12th District

Legislative

George B. Evans Grassroots Veterans' Advocate of the Year

Greg "Doc" Gibbs - Hamburg, NY Squadron 527



The best of the best. **Above** - Flanked by National Vice Commanders Harrell Sorrels and Mike Deutser, representatives of Iowa and Colorado accept their Triple Nickel rewards. **Right** - The nation's #1 volunteer is Ray Edwards, Jr. of Sharptown, MD.



National Update

Official Newsletter of the Sons of The American Legion

Special National Convention Issue

August 25, 2013

Sons travel deep into the heart of Texas

Nearly 900 delegates came to Houston this week to take part in the 42nd annual Sons of The American Legion National Convention.

In all, 46 Detachments were represented in activities that marked the end of another administrative year for the organization. Year-end reports were read and many awards were handed out (*see Page 4*). An almost non-stop parade of guests

took turns congratulating Sons for their efforts at raising money, raising membership and raising awareness for American Legion programs (*see Pages 2 and 3*).

This has been another banner year for Sons. Child Welfare Foundation donations exceeded expectations again and has the organization within about \$100,000 of surpassing \$6M in all-time fund raising.

If there was a dark cloud above the Houston skyline this year, it would be that this was the first time in memory that Sons didn't achieve 100% of their membership goal in time for the National Convention. In spite of that one drawback, they still arrived in Texas with another all-time high in membership.

In addition to looking back, one of the more important reasons for con-

Continued on Page 2

Gladden's Houston ride

It's more than a suntan. Think of it more as a burn of honor.

As the result of riding more than a thousand miles and helping the Legacy Run raise more that \$334,000 this past week, newly elected S.A.L. National Commander Joe Gladden is sporting a painful sunburn across his face.

But it doesn't keep him from smiling broadly.

Gladden is a 22 year member of the Sons, carries an



honorary life membership card and is also a member of The Legion Riders. He has always belonged to Overlea-Perry Hall, MD Squadron 130.

His top priority this year will be the Legacy Scholarship Fund and raise \$250,000 that will help the children of our fallen soldiers get a college education.

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Cosby shares her journey

Rita Cosby has earned many accolades during a career spanning 20 years as a television host and New York Times bestselling author. She is a three-time Emmy award-winning journalist who has interviewed more than a dozen world leaders and five U.S. Presidents.

Yet, the interviews that made the deepest impact on her life were those she conducted with her own father about a part of his life she knew nothing about until after her mother's death.

Cosby shared with Sons how her parents had divorced when she was a teen and that it wasn't until after her mother's death that she discovered, by chance, that her father had served as a Polish freedom fighter during World War II. She went looking and found him still alive. Father an daughter reconnected by collaborating on the book, "Quiet Hero" that tells the amazing story of the teenage boy who fought Nazis, was taken prisoner of war, escaped and was

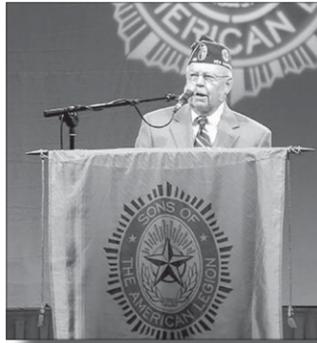


saved by American troops near the end of the war.

Cosby says she shares a kinship with Sons because they know that freedom is not free and they, too, want to carry on the legacy of their fathers.

The checklist for success

Editor's note: The following remarks were delivered during Saturday's session by George West, Chairman of The American Legion Internal Affairs Commission's S.A.L. Subcommittee



Commander Huntzinger, taking a look at the goals you set a year ago, number one on the list was to promote programs of the Sons, The Legion and the Auxiliary. You certainly have done that throughout this year. For that, *check!*

Regarding education of members, *check!*

Improved communication in our organization, *check!*

I know you wanted to institute the S.A.L. Bandwagon with target dates for membership with no rear view mirror. *Check!*

You felt that promoting technology would increase communication and you carried that thought forward. *Check!*

Your slogan of "Be Involved. Be Informed" was well carried out, really to the Nth degree. *Check!*

I know I've left some out. However, we'll give them a, *check!*

To me, leadership from the top has been very prevalent this year. All of you delegates in this hall can be proud of your year of outstanding service.

Gladden / from Page 1

He'll also put a premium on membership and has chosen as his theme, "Shooting for the Moon." That's an appropriate phrase considering his membership goal has been set at 375,000, a 6.3% increase over this year's goal. In order to reach such heights, Joe will commission each of his Vice Commanders as captains of their own space ships (regions). He'd also like to see every member of the Sons map out a family tree that starts with the first person in their family who is or was eligible to be a member of The American Legion, then list all brothers, sisters, sons, daughters and so on in an effort to identify those who are and are not currently members of each branch of The American Legion Family today.

"Of the 45 people in my own family tree, I know only about a third are members and that's something I plan to work on," says Gladden. "I'm sure others will see something similar when they try this exercise."

There's no lack of involvement in his immediate family. His wife, Bobbie, is a member of Unit 130. All three of Joe's sons are members of the S.A.L. and his oldest currently serves in the Maryland National Guard. Joe's eligibility flows from his father, an Army veteran of World War II who served in England and passed away when Joe was just 10.

In his other life, Joe owns a tax and accounting company. He's a 1982 graduate of the University of Baltimore.

Convention / from Page 1

ducting the National Convention was to elect and appointed new leaders responsible for shepherding the Sons' organization through the next year.

Attendance at S.A.L. National Conventions has become more predictable since new rules impacting pre-registration and pre-payment of delegate fees went into effect in recent years.

Perhaps one noticeable difference in this year's convention was the absence of long-time National Assistant Adjutant Harold Thompson who had to remain at home in Nebraska due to a death in the family. Taking his place this year was National Assistant Adjutant Anthony Wright. Just about the only snafu this year was the result of some sloppy handwriting on preregistration forms that required the staff to remake a number of name badges. Wright said Detachments will probably be required to type future forms to avoid similar problems.



Above - Dennis Boland, Chairman of The Legion's Children and Youth Commission presents the Detachment of Ohio with the Garland Murphy Award for the nation's largest CWF donation this year.



Above - American Legion Leading candidate Daniel Dellinger is also a 29 year member of the S.A.L. and told Sons he wants to work together as a team to build Legion Family membership this year.



Above - Legion Internal Affairs Chairman Larry Besson congratulates Commander Huntzinger for his leadership and the S.A.L.'s successes.

Below - Fr. Gary Gummersheimer, a Past National Chaplain, spoke from the floor about the ringing success of American Legion youth programs and the importance of getting more Sons involved in supporting the kinds of programs that are producing tomorrow's leaders.



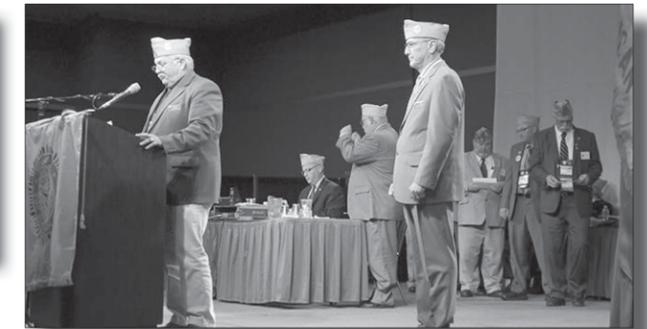
Above - Auxiliary National Junior President Amanda Washburn had high praise for the work of Sons from her own state of Nebraska.



Above - Auxiliary National President Peggy Thomas said it best, "It just goes to prove that this organization working together can accomplish anything."

Right - Country music star and S.A.L. member Michael Peterson snaps a salute on his way to the platform Saturday. He talked to Sons from the heart. He said details might divide us from time to time, but it's the heart that unites us and helps us complete our important mission.

Right - Four of The American Legion Youth Champions stopped by to say hello. With youngsters like these on the horizon, there is hope for a better world.



Above - With the year nearly ended, Sons lined up Saturday to donate an additional \$69,000 to CWF, CMN, Fisher House, Legacy Scholarship, NEF and more.



Above - Past Legion Commander Jake Comer, who will soon become a member of the S.A.L. Hall of Fame, made his 26th convention appearance and heaped praise on National Liaison John Kerestian for his work behind the scenes.

