

**Americanism and Children & Youth**  
Weekly Report to the National Commander  
December 20, 2007  
Marty Justis, Director – (317) 630-1203

**Blue Star Salute.** Now is the time to begin planning a "Blue Star Salute - an Armed Forces Day Celebration" in your community. On May 17, 2008 communities across the nation will be thanking members of our Armed Forces and their families for their service.

**Legacy Scholarship.** As a part of the Blue Star Salute activities, raising awareness and donations to the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund is important. One way to raise money is utilizing the Legacy Card Kit. Collection cans are available from Emblem Sales \$3.95 plus shipping and handling #740.401. For more information about the program or the kits visit the Legion's web site (see Public Relations click on "event planning") or contact Bob Caudell, Assistant Director at 317-630-1212 or by e-mail at rcaudell@legion.org.

**Coalition to Salute America's Heroes Grant -- Progress Report - 12/12/07.** To date, the VA&R Division (through their national network of service officers) has qualified and submitted 148 names of OIF/OEF veterans to receive \$500 grants. One hundred fifty checks and 130 Legion membership cards (20 veterans were already 2008 members) were mailed to the appropriate Departments for delivery to the veterans. One hundred eleven checks have been received from Finance and are awaiting membership cards before mailing to Departments. Check requests for 187 checks have been approved and are in Finance for processing. Signed checks are due back this week and will be mailed to the appropriate Department Adjutants for delivery to the veterans. Accompanying the check will be a membership card, local media kit and cover letter from the National Adjutant.

**Boys State/Girls State.** Additional copies of the new American Legion Boys State and Auxiliary Girls State DVD will be shipped to Departments in January.

**Baseball.** The American Legion Baseball program will set up an information booth at the annual Baseball Coaches Association convention in Philadelphia, January 3-7, 2008. The USA Baseball Board of Directors will conduct their annual meeting. The American Legion is represented and has had staff serve as chairman of the USA National Youth Committee for the past 12 years.

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS WEEKLY STATUS INPUT**  
**Jack Querfeld, Director, Internal Affairs**  
(317) 630-1330  
**December 20, 2007**

**MEMBERSHIP**

We are at 1,993,780, which is 76.6%. As compared to this time last year, we are 59,495 members behind in total renewals and 6,149 in traditional new members.

As far as 2008 DMS, we are on target to meet objective. We are running slightly ahead of the same time last year.

Next Target Date is January 9, 2008, which is 80% Target Date.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION**

**December 21, 2007**

**Weekly Report to National Commander**

**Joe March, Director**

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1. **Salute America's Heroes**

Kudos to Depts and service officers and VA&R, PR and Americanism staffs for handling calls from veterans and processing grant applications so quickly and of course sincere thanks to posts for personal delivery of checks to these American heroes. PR has drafts of news releases ready to roll based on reaching the 1000 milestone or receiving another grant package from the Salute America's Heroes organization.

2. **Operation Outreach Video**

PR has scheduled video crew to tape the Dept. of Oklahoma project in Oklahoma City this Sunday with the state National Guard and their families. Tapes will be integrated into the Operation Outreach DVD production slated for completion mid-January.

3. **Operation Landstuhl**

More than \$320,000 has been raised for Operation Landstuhl and money continues to come in. Fullerton, Calif., realtor Jackie Orzechowski agreed to match American Legion Post 142's contribution for a total of \$4,375. Most of the comfort items have already been delivered to wounded warriors recovering at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

**Breaking Stories During the Week:**

- The AP reported, "Congress approved \$70 billion Wednesday for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, a bitter finish for majority Democrats who tried to force a change in President Bush's war policy."
- Gen. Peake was sworn in as Secretary of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs this week. The White House issued talking points quoting you, "American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser: "He seems uniquely qualified to lead the department." ("Legion Pleased Peake Tapped to Lead Veterans Affairs," Press Release, 10/30/07)"
- **National Guard (In Federal Status) and Reserve Mobilized as of Dec. 19, 2007** - This week the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps announced a decrease, while the Army and Coast Guard announced an increase. The net collective result is 2,333 more reservists mobilized than last week. At any given time, services may mobilize some units and individuals while demobilizing others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease. The total number currently on active duty in support of the partial mobilization of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 74,321; Navy Reserve, 5,170; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 6,260; Marine Corps Reserve, 8,379; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 357. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel who have been mobilized to 94,487, including both units and individual augmentees.