

# THE AMERICAN LEGION



## IDAHO FALLS POST 56

November 2019

### Message from the Commander

Once again, I can not believe we are nearing the end of another year. Where does the time go. Soon 2019 will be a memory, but what a memory it will be.

Throughout the year, we have witnessed both historical events and amazing firsts. Not only did we celebrate the Centennial Anniversary of The American Legion, we were able to celebrate 100 years of service for Idaho Falls Post 56 as well. While our post was officially chartered on October 10, 1919, we elected to hold our birthday celebration in March. Holding true to tradition, we paid fitting tribute to the men and women who pioneered our great organization, as well as a select few who have proven themselves to be role models of our ideals and goals. If you have not had the chance to congratulate Frank Smith, please take a moment to do so. It was through his tireless efforts as a Legionnaire, as well as the extraordinary gift of mobility he has given our brothers and sisters through the Veterans Mobility Corps, that he was named Idaho Falls Post 56 Legionnaire of the Year.

While Frank stood tall among the deserving Deputy of the Year, Police Officer of the Year, State Trooper of the Year, Fireman of the Year, two Educators of the Year, and SAL Squadron Member of the Year; I would be remiss if I did not recognize the outstanding efforts of each and every member of our post. Idaho Falls Post 56 continues to prove that we are indeed a pillar in our community. With so many of our members epitomizing service to our community, state and nation in the highest degree, it has become increasingly difficult to select only one of our members to honor as Legionnaire of the Year. For this I say, "Thank You" for making the Post Executive Committee's job difficult and please feel free to make sure that this task remains difficult in the years to come.

Those in attendance at both Department and National Convention, saw first hand what the Department of Idaho has accomplished throughout the year. Thanks to the efforts of our members, we have again achieved a 100% membership goal. The American Legion Culture of Growth Award was presented to the Department of Idaho, on the main stage. Our Past Department Commander Charles "Abe" Abrahamson was named both Department Commander of the Year, plus National Recruiter of the Year for recruiting 748 new members. Plus, our very own Idaho Falls Post 56 Adjutant Allen Arnold was awarded the PNC Alan G. Lance Award of Excellence, for the 2019 Membership Year at Department Convention.

If this was not enough to show what an amazing year we had, I'll share one more accomplishment. As I am sure most of you have already heard, Idaho Falls Post 56 Bandits won the American Legion World Series. This was a historic year as the Bandits and Fargo, North Dakota battled their way to the championship game, a first for both teams. The Bandits ended their season with a record of 61-6, winning the Championship Game with a score of 5-3. While these fine young men represented our state, and our post, in a flawless manner, the Championship Title was not their only reward. Several Bandits also received scholarships and National Awards for their conduct both on and off the field.

To say that I am truly humbled by the year we have had, would be an understatement. Each and everyone of you continue to amaze me each and every day. And for this, I say "Thank You". Thank You for everything you have done and continue to do.

— Commander Darrel Homer

## Sons of the American Legion

The Sons of the American Legion is a patriotic service organization formed on September 12–15, 1932. The S.A.L. is made up of male descendants of people who served in the United States Armed Forces during times specified by the American Legion. The Sons of the American Legion's mission to serve veterans, the military and their families is carried out through its hundreds of outreach programs delivered by its members, volunteers and national headquarters. The Sons of the American Legion's national headquarters is located in Indianapolis.

All male descendants, adopted sons and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in the service during World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf War, during the delimiting periods set forth in article IV, section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion.

The Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron 56, in Idaho Falls, Idaho meeting is held on the first Monday of each month at 6PM.

The SAL Squadron 56, currently has 65 members. Currently, we are at 104.84% of meeting our Goal of 62.

Our SAL members continue to support the American Legion Post 56 memorial team that performs Military Rights and Color Guard details at various events. Have supported the annual food drive in gathering, sorting, and delivery of items to the Veterans home in Pocatello.

We are presently having a fund raiser by raffling off a Henry 45-70. The proceeds help us share costs of the American Legion events.

We are perusing the possibility of starting the American Legion Junior Shooting Program. To date we have found a location that will allow us to set up the range. We have also found personnel that will assist in being a coach and instructor. However, we must find the members who wish to participate in the program.

### 2019 AMERICAN LEGION POST 56 OFFICERS

Commander	Darrel Homer	208-403-2163
1st Vice Commander	Roy McCarthy	208-360-3089
2nd Vice Commander	Bill Robinson	208-524-3806
Finance Officer	Richard Kearsley	208-821-5746
Sgt-at-Arms	Mark Byers	208-206-9696
Chaplain	Joseph Behling	208-346-1963
Historian	Max Harrison	208-520-9255
Adjutant	Allen Arnold	208-520-4021
Service Officer	Ken Collins	208-524-1561
Executive Bd. Member	Ken Lembrich	208-313-2238
	Bill Isle	208-535-1244
	Mark Christensen	208-521-6695
Past Commander	Robert Skinner	208-757-7434

### Message from the Adjutant

The 2020 Membership Year began on July 1, 2018. Membership renewal has been good to date with 60% renewal for our 2020 goal of 509 members. THE AMERICAN LEGION speaks for all veterans at the national and state levels for benefits earned by proudly serving our nation.

Members are requested to disregard any PAST DUE notices, if you have paid your 2020 membership. National Headquarters sends dues notices about every 3 months after the July 1st start of the current membership year. Processing of membership payment can take as long as 4 weeks, during which time a past due notice may be sent to members. **Members can renew their membership on-line @ [www.mylegion.org](http://www.mylegion.org).**

Post 56 members, with 25 years or greater **continuous** membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION, will be entered in a drawing for \$250, which will be held at the birthday awards presentation held, Saturday, March 14, 2020. Membership must be current for 2020 to be eligible for the drawing.

**Veterans Information** can be found online @ [www.idahofallsveterans.org](http://www.idahofallsveterans.org).

Al Arnold - Post 56 Adjutant

# Membership Dues

Each year we are asked to renew our membership in The American Legion. As we write our check, or pay online, how often have we wondered where our money goes?

In the divine words of Past Post Commander and current National Executive Committeeman Bob Skinner, "You can do as much, or as little as you want in The American Legion". Even if you only keep your dues current from year to year, you are still supporting some great American Legion programs.

A majority of our local events are funded by proceeds from the War Bonnet Rodeo. These events include: The American Legion Birthday Dinner, the All Veterans Picnic, Veterans Day Breakfast, the All Veterans Christmas Party, and the funding of our post operation throughout the year.

Our dues can pay for a percentage of our post operation, but normally they go to funding the following programs and scholarships:

The **Samsung Scholarship** is available to Boy's State and Girl's State participants. \$10,000 and \$5,000 scholarships can be awarded (two in each region) to participants who are direct descendants of wartime veterans eligible for membership in The American Legion.

The **Legacy Scholarship** is a needs based scholarship used to fill the gap, after all federal/state grants and scholarships have been utilized. This scholarship provides up to \$20,000 and may be reapplied for up to 6 times. It is available to children of the U.S. military who died on

Active Duty on or after September 11, 2001, or a child of a Post 9/11 veteran with a combined disability of 50% or more (as determined by Department of Veteran's Affairs).

**American Legion Baseball Scholarship** in the amount of \$500 is awarded to a player in each department. Eight players will be selected (by selection committee) to receive and additional \$2,500, plus a 9th player selected as most outstanding of All Academic Team will be awarded an additional \$5,000.

**Oratorical Contest.** Starting at the Post level, contestants can literally talk their way to college. Winners from the Post Contest receive scholarship money, with the 1st place winner advancing to District Contest. The same format of scholarship awards and advancement is used through the District Contest, Area Contest and Department Contest. The 1st place winner from the Department Contest advances to National Competition, where they will be awarded a minimum of \$1,500 (National also provides airfare and hotel accommodations for the contestant and a parent or guardian). At the National Contest, each 1st place winner who advances, but does not qualify for Finals receives an additional \$1,500. The winners of the National Contest will receive \$18,000 for 1st Place, \$16,000 for 2nd Place and \$14,000 for 3rd Place. Students in grades 9th through 12th may compete each year, unless they place in the top 3 Nationally.

**Eagle Scout of the Year.** One \$10,000 scholarship is awarded, plus 3 Runner-Up Scholarships will be

awarded in the amount of \$2,500 each.

**Junior Shooting Sports.** One Precision scholarship is awarded in the amount of \$5,000, plus one Sporter scholarship is awarded in the amount of \$5,000. Additionally, one 2nd Place scholarship is awarded in each category, in the amount of \$1,000 each. Winners in both categories will receive an expense paid trip to The American Legion National Convention, where they will be honored as a part of Youth Champions Delegation.

**Children of Warriors Scholarship.** 15- \$5,000 Scholarships (3 from each of our 5 geographic regions), will be awarded to applicants in Undergraduate study, at a 4 year accredited College or University. The Applicant must be descendant of a veteran who served in the Armed Forces during Time of War and the veteran must have been eligible for membership in the American Legion.

**Non-Traditional Student.** 5- \$2,000 scholarships (1 from each geographic region) will be awarded to applicants pursuing training in certified trade, professional or technical programs, or a 2 or 4 year degree program. Applicants must be a member in good standing of the American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of American Legion, with at least 3 years of continuous membership.

And this list of programs is merely an example of where you dues are invested. They are an investment in the literal sense, as they are an investment in our future.

## Membership Minute

Each and every meeting, you hear talk of membership goals. As a matter of fact, that topic comes up in conversation quite often. We have become accustomed to hearing the term “Membership Goals” at the Post Level, Department Level and of course the National Level as well.

So why is this topic so important? Quite simply, it is not only the metric by which we measure our growth, but the strength of our voice. Each and every member has a voice. But our combined voice is where our strength truly lies.

A few years ago, Past National Commander Charles Schmidt called for change in the Veterans Administration. This change was required to transform the medical system, which lacked the ability or the accountability to properly care for our Nations Veterans. Because PNC Schmidt carried the weight of our members, our unified voice if you will, changes did take place. We saw the resignation of VA Secretary David Shulkin, the implementation of “A System Worth Saving” and the termination of several VA employees who failed to meet the demands of an evolving culture. The American Legion then made it their mission to go from community to community, identifying the immediate needs of our Veterans.

Granted, there is still work to be done. With a membership of nearly 1.8 million members, we can continue to persuade those in our Nations Capital that the goal

of improving the VA system should remain at the top of their priority list. An expanded membership, which means votes to those in office, plus The American Legion’s reputation as a leading authority will help us to effect future change.

Yes, in this case membership totals do equate to a number of votes, either for or against prospective candidates. As a national organization we hold ourselves to be unbiased when it comes to political views, but that should not be confused with voting for candidates who will uphold our values and goals for a healthier VA system.

Over the past few years, Idaho Falls Post 56 has continued to show an increase in membership. As a matter of fact, last year we surpassed the 500 membership mark. We ended our 2019 membership year with a total of 508 members. For our 2020 membership year, we have been tasked with a total membership of 509 members, and I am happy to say that we are over halfway in meeting that goal.

While we are over halfway to meeting our goal, 59.33% to be exact, please stay ever vigilant in our progress to another 100% membership. Through our continued growth we can help strengthen our voice at the National level. And more importantly, we will give our National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford tools for success, as he advocates for our benefits on Capital Hill.

## War Bonnet Roundup Rodeo Report

The War Bonnet Round Up Rodeo was a big success this year and everyone’s hard work is genuinely appreciated. The profits from the Rodeo will easily operate our post for the upcoming year and we are blessed to have this event to raise money for all our programs. This year Al and Sue Arnold were recognized as volunteers of the year along with their family. If you look at all the workers in the concessions area the Arnold’s and their friends and family, make up about half of the workforce that operates the concession stand and concession trailers. Tell them thanks if you have the chance. We are continuing to work with the City to ensure we have the opportunity to continue to raise our funds in this manner for many more years to come. The workers are getting older, but we still seem to manage to take

care of all the people who love our hamburgers, hot dogs and beer. Again, we appreciate all the help and the continued smiles as we work hard and get tired, but the American Legion sense of family and working hard for the Veterans will always be there.

Bob Skinner  
American Legion Rodeo Chairman



## From the Post Service Officer

The Appeals Modernization Act, which went into effect on February 19, 2019, has some considerations to keep in mind. If a claimant submits an Intent to File (to date protect for a future claim) and then files a 0995 Supplemental Claim Form, the VA will not grant any potential service connection or increase from that Intent to File. The effective date would be from the date the VA received the Supplemental Claim. In regard to submission of evidence, if additional evidence is submitted after a rating decision has been received and then the claimant requests a Higher Level of Review, the VA will either refuse to accept the request as a Higher Level of Review and place it in the Supplemental Claim Lane or they will disregard the evidence submitted. Along the same lines, if new evidence is submitted after a rating decision is received and then the claimant requests the Board of Veteran Appeals Lane (new Notice of Disagreement), the new evidence will be ignored by the Board of Veterans Appeals unless an evidence-only BVA Lane is chosen and the new evidence was received within 90 days of the election. Please remember, all Board of Veteran Appeals Lanes are considered “closed dockets,” so they will not continue to entertain new evidence submitted as was done in the legacy appeals system.

The Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 was signed into Law on June 25, 2019. While this legislation is different than the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals *Procopio v. Wilkie* decision, the VA has merged the two together while considering the Blue Water Vietnam Herbicide Presumptive claims. While claims are being accepted by the VA, and we urge all who may be eligible (including surviving spouses who may be eligible for Dependency Indemnity Compensation) to file the claims as soon as possible, the Secretary of the VA has ordered a stay on all of these claims until January 1, 2020. It is still uncertain what the effective dates of these claims will be once

the stay has been lifted. As a reminder, this law now grants presumption of service connection for conditions related to Agent Orange exposure to veterans who were onboard vessels operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia as defined in Public Law 116-23, between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, to veterans who served on or near the DMZ in Korea between September 1, 1967, and August 31, 1971, and grants spina bifida as a birth for children of certain Thailand service veterans.

Starting in October 2019, the VA implemented a new policy restricting smoking by patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors, and vendors at its health care facilities. The smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, any other combustion of tobacco, and non-Federal Drug Administration approved electronic nicotine delivery systems, including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens, or e-cigars.

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) announced it has added four new Emblems of Belief to be used for placement on government headstones and markers. The 4 new emblems are African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Evangelical Lutheran Church, Universalist Cross, and Faith and Prayer. For more information about VA headstones and markers please visit [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov). As a reminder, for VA headstones/markers/columbarium niches, you may only use the approved symbols on the website. You cannot use military emblems, Masonic emblems, military awards, etc.

Ken Collins  
[collken2@gmail.com](mailto:collken2@gmail.com)

**Thank You**  
  
**VETERANS**

## Building Report

Work continues on our building. I have finally found someone who will build us a flagpole that we can hook to the side of our building. I know we have been needing a flagpole for some time, but I could not find one that was rugged enough to withstand Idaho winds and weather. Finally, my brother identified a person that will construct us one out of stainless steel to the dimensions and capabilities that we desire so we will soon have a flagpole on the front of the building. We had an electrician in the building for two days working many small jobs that have needed to be done for some time. We have power now to all the monitors that are mounted and will soon be getting the ability to utilize these monitors for training, movies and whatever. More to follow! Our next project is to spruce up our entry way. We need to go through and get rid of some things, move some things, throw away some things and just do a good field day. We have the new flooring and it just like the flooring that is downstairs so it will be very nice when finished, it just takes time. Please be patient as we proceed down that path.

- Bob Skinner, Building Manager and Chairman,  
Bonneville County Veterans Memorial Commission

## National Executive Committeeman

The National Executive Committee meets twice a year to consider new resolutions and conduct the business of the American Legion. Several things are done on an ongoing basis to ensure we are protecting the benefits and rights of our Veterans. The meetings are sometimes long and detailed, but everyone has the best interest of Veterans on their minds as we proceed with the business at hand. The constitution and bylaws are in the process of being updated and should be out soon as they have needed some updating for a few years now. Although the changes are mostly updating to conform to some recent requirements, the basic scope and meanings are not changing. I enjoy serving each of you as your NEC representative. Thank you for that opportunity.

Bob Skinner, National Executive Committeeman



## Bonneville County Veterans Ceremonial Team

Legion family - It's hard to believe that it has been 3 years since I have been Chaplain for Post 56 and District 7. During that time, we have performed 277 military rites. The amount of time the Memorial team has given to make this happen has been a humbling experience for me. Especially for the days when we have had up to 4 funerals. I am so grateful for the dedication that the team had for making sure we give our fallen brothers and sisters the honor that they have earned.

One of the things I have wanted to do is to get to know our veteran community better than I do. I take the job of chaplain seriously and would love to get to know you all better. I can be reached via email at [navygm@gmail.com](mailto:navygm@gmail.com). We are also looking for veterans to join the Memorial team. You don't need to be at every funeral. So, if you can spare some time, we would love to have you as part of the team. You can email me or give me a call at 208-346-1963.

Also, we have the holiday season coming up and this is a difficult time for many. I would challenge you to look around and if you know a veteran who may not have family or be alone reach out to them and invite them in to your house and share some holiday spirit with them. If you can't bring them into your home buy them a hot meal and let them know you care. May God bless you in your efforts and I wish you a Happy Holiday season.

- Joseph Behling

PS. One last thing. We have an email distribution list that we use to send out announcements of veteran activities, events etc. If you're not getting these emails please send an email to [navygm@gmail.com](mailto:navygm@gmail.com) and we will get you added to the list.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## November 10, 2019

Veteran's Day Breakfast  
Veterans Memorial Building  
9 am - 12 pm

## November 15, 2019

Food Convoy  
Pocatello Veteran's Home  
9 am

## November 16, 2019

Food Convoy  
Boise Veteran's Home  
9 am

## December 7, 2019

All Veterans Christmas Party  
Veterans Memorial Building  
5:00 p.m. Social Hour, 6:00 p.m. Dinner

## January 9, 2020

Legislative Reception  
Red Lion Downtowner  
Boise, ID

## January 11, 2020

Post 56 Oratorical Contest  
Veterans Memorial Building

## January 16 to 19, 2020

Mid-Winter Conference  
Marriott Courtyard  
1789 S Eagle Rd  
Meridian, ID

## March 14, 2020

7th District Spring Meeting  
Post 56  
485 Constitution Way  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402

## March 14, 2020

THE AMERICAN LEGION Birthday Dinner  
Veterans Memorial Building  
5:00 p.m. Social Hour, 6:00 p.m. Dinner  
Awards presentations following dinner

## March 18, 2020

All 5th Graders Patriotic Program  
Skyline High School  
Post 56 will provide a Color Guard Detail  
All veterans are invited to attend  
Program starts at 7 pm

## May 25, 2020 -Memorial Day Activities

0800 Flag Colors Ceremony at Veterans Memorial  
0830 Ceremony at Fielding Memorial Cemetery  
0900 Ceremony at Rose Hill Cemetery  
1000 Ceremony at Ammon Cemetery  
1100 Ceremony at Lincoln Cemetery

## June 1-6, 2020

Boys State  
Nazarene Northwest University in Nampa, ID

## June 8-13, 2020

Girls State  
Nazarene Northwest University in Nampa, ID

## June 14, 2020

Flag Day Activities

## July 4, 2020

4th of July Activities

## July 9-12, 2020

American Legion, Department of Idaho Convention  
East Idaho, Place To Be Determined

## July 23, 2020

All Veterans Picnic  
Tautphaus Park Shelter 1, Beginning at 5:30 pm  
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, etc. provided by Post 56 and VFW  
Bring a salad or Dessert to share

## August 6, 7 & 8, 2020

War Bonnet Rodeo  
Concessions operated by Post 56



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
IDAHO FALLS POST 56  
P.O. Box 50275  
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO 83405-0275



### **POST MEETINGS**

Post 56 meets the  
1st and 3rd Monday each  
month at 7:00 p.m.  
Veterans Memorial  
Building  
485 Constitution Way,  
Idaho Falls, Idaho.