



SONS OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION



**YOUTH
HANDBOOK**

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The Sons of The American Legion was created in 1932 as an organized program within The American Legion. The S.A.L. is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion. Together, members of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion make up what is known as The Legion Family. All three organizations place high importance on preserving our American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship. Sons have always assisted Legionnaires with Legion Family programs. Our Family boasts a combined total membership of nearly 4.2 million members.

HISTORY OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Born in the midst of the Great Depression of the 1930's, and almost killed by the one-two punch of two wars, the Sons of The American Legion lives on. The idea of a junior American Legion organization was first discussed at the Legion's 3rd National Convention in 1922. Because so few Legionnaires had yet become parents, the idea had little national appeal. But by the late 1920's, Legion Posts around the nation were enrolling Sons of Legionnaires in junior organizations on their own. These groups were variously known as Legion-Heirs, the Junior Legion, Sons of American Legionnaires, and Sons of World War Veterans.

The Legion's 1930 National Convention created a committee to study the feasibility of a junior Legion. The establishment of the Sons as a non-profit, nonsectarian civilian organization was authorized by action of The American Legion's 14th National Convention in Portland, Oregon in September 1932. The 1933 National Convention officially changed the name of the organization to "The Sons of The American Legion," authorized the abbreviation "S.A.L." and set annual national membership dues at 25 cents.

The first Squadron chartered was Bruce P. Robison Post #133 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The very first membership card was issued to John P. Ragsdale; his brothers Edward and Robert were also charter members and received cards #2 and #3. John was killed in an aerial mission over Germany in 1943. In 1946, the name of the Post was changed to Robison-Ragsdale Post 133. By 1934, the S.A.L. expanded to 24 Detachments, 170 Squadrons, and 524 members. In the late 1930's, Sons were closely involved with Legionnaires in nationwide radio programs and printed a monthly national newspaper called "The Legion Heir." There were over 60,000 members in 1938 when Paramount Pictures released a film entitled "Sons of The Legion" starring Donald O'Connor, William Frawley, and Evelyn Keyes. The movie played in thousands of theaters around the country where local S.A.L. musical units furnished live entertainment.

The S.A.L. had over 70,000 members in the late 30's and was growing rapidly. But World War II erupted and most Sons marched off to war and many of them never returned. Sons who remained on the home front also did their part by working in civil defense, helping to operate aircraft warning posts, participating in war bond drives, collecting scrap metals and working in defense plants.

When Sons returned home after World War II, they found their military service had made them eligible to join the ranks of The American Legion. In the decade between 1946 and 1956, an era, which included the Korean War, millions of ex-servicemen and women, joined The American Legion. As the membership of The Legion swelled, membership in the Sons dropped to fewer than 6,000 and the organization almost became extinct.

Only through the efforts of dedicated Legion Family members did the S.A.L. membership turn around. In 1958, membership inched passed the 10,000 mark and then climbed to nearly 17,000 in the early 1960's. The Legion's 44th National Convention in October 1962 appointed a special study group to revamp the structure of the Sons. A study group met in April 1963 and recommended increasing dues to 50 cents per member, eliminated military sounding S.A.L. officer titles and designated an official S.A.L. uniform. The study group met again in January 1964 and recommended updating the S.A.L. Constitution, initiating membership awards and revising the S.A.L. handbook.

The Sons' first National S.A.L. Workshop was conducted during the Legion's 1964 National Convention in Dallas. National Workshops continued annually through 1967, and then were replaced by National Caucuses, which were held annually through 1971. All Past National Caucus Chairmen are now recognized as Past National Commanders of the S.A.L. In 1972, the Legion's National Executive Committee approved the creation of a National S.A.L. organization under the full supervision and control of the Legion's N.E.C. This opened the door for the Sons of The American Legion to hold their first National Convention in Chicago in August 1972. Robert Faust of California was elected the 1st National Commander of the Sons.

Sons celebrated their 75th Anniversary in 2007. At the S.A.L. National Convention in Reno, Nevada the Sons held a Gala Silver Anniversary Banquet. A 75th Anniversary Book and special commemorative lapel pins were issued and the movie "Sons of The Legion," produced in 1938, was shown.

In 1992, the S.A.L. National Organization began a reorganization of its commissions and committees. Various committees were placed under the oversight of one of six national commissions for the purpose of coordinating activities. Under this new structure, the S.A.L. established Squadron Americanism Awards in 1993, Scholastic Awards for Boys Nation and Junior Shooting Sports in 1994, and re-established the S.A.L. National Color Guard Award in 1996.

The Sons conducted their first Training Institute for Detachment Commanders in 1995, providing state officers with valuable leadership skills and managerial expertise. At their 1996 National Convention in Salt Lake City, Sons celebrated their Silver Anniversary National Convention. That same year, S.A.L. members nationwide contributed more than \$116,000 to the American Legion's Child Welfare Foundation, making them the largest contributor to the Foundation that year.

Every year since the establishment of the National Organization in 1972, the S.A.L. has recorded new all-time membership records. In 1990, membership in the Sons exceeded 100,000 for the first time ever. S.A.L. membership broke the 200,000 mark in 1997.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic, mutual-help, war-time veterans organization. The American Legion is a community-service organization which now has nearly 3 million members, men and women, in nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide.



The American Legion was founded in Paris on March 15-17, 1919. The U.S. Congress chartered The American Legion on September 16, 1919. The first National Convention of The American Legion was held in Minneapolis, MN, on November 10-12, 1919.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

American Legion Auxiliary, organized in 1919 to assist The American Legion, and is much more than the name implies. The organization has achieved its own unique identity while working side-by-side with the veterans who belong to The American Legion. Like the Legion, the Auxiliary's interests have broadened to encompass the entire community.



American Legion Auxiliary is the world's largest women's patriotic service organization. Through its nearly 10,500 Units located in every state and some foreign countries, the Auxiliary embodies the spirit of America that has prevailed through war and peace. Along with The American Legion, it solidly stands behind America and her ideals.

A *preamble* of an organization is a statement that explains the purposes of the Sons of The American Legion organization. This is the Preamble to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion.

PREAMBLE TO THE S.A.L. NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

Proud possessors of a priceless heritage, we male descendants of veterans of the Great Wars, associate ourselves together as “Sons of The American Legion” for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism; to preserve the memories of our former members and the associations of our members and our forefathers in the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our friendship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness; to adopt in letter and spirit all of the great principles for which The American Legion stands; and to assist in carrying on for God and Country.

THE AMERICAN’S CREED

I believe in the United States of America as a government for the people, by the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed, a democracy in a republic, a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BELONG?

Not everyone is eligible to become a member of the Sons of The American Legion. There are specific membership rules. To be eligible, you must be a male descendant (sons and grandsons including stepsons and adopted sons) of a member of The American Legion. With the growth of today’s military, sons of female veterans are eligible.

You would also be eligible to join the Sons of The American Legion if you are the male descendant of a veteran who died in service during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, or the Persian Gulf War (see specific time periods for service during these conflicts).

OR

You would also be eligible to join the Sons of The American Legion if you are the male descendant of a veteran who died subsequent to his or her honorable discharge from service in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, or the Persian Gulf War (the same eligibility periods apply as above).

ELIGIBILITY DATES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

(S.A.L. members should use these dates to see if their parents or grandparents are/were eligible for membership in The American Legion. Eligibility through veteran mothers or grandmothers is sometimes forgotten.)

World War I	April 6, 1917 - November 11, 1918
World War II	December 7, 1941 - December 31, 1946
Korean War	June 25, 1950 - January 31, 1955
Vietnam Era	February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975
Lebanon/Grenada	August 24, 1982 - July 31, 1984
Panama	December 20, 1989 - January 31, 1990
Persian Gulf	August 2, 1990 - (this eligibility period remains open)

There are many men who are members of, both, The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion. Often, these individuals started out as young members of the Sons. Then, when they were old enough to serve in the military, they also became eligible to join The American Legion. Such individuals are known within our organization as dual members.



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION EMBLEM

- The design of our emblem was taken from the emblem of our parent organization, but is oval in shape so as to be easily distinguished.
- The star in the center represents our country, and the five points of the star represent the five-point program of the Sons of The American Legion.
- The sun in the background represents The Sons of The American Legion and the rays represent the loyalty of its membership.
- The blue of the emblem, like the blue of our flag, stands for justice.
- The two stars in the blue border stand for freedom and democracy.
- The wreath below the star is in memory of our comrades, and those who willingly gave their lives for their country.
- The ten points of the emblem represent the ten ideals of every Legion son.

THE S.A.L. CAP AND UNIFORM

The S.A.L. cap should be worn at all S.A.L. and Legion Family functions. Different colored hats denote different administrative levels throughout the Sons:

- Squadron member or officer – French blue with red, white & blue piping
- District officer – French blue bottom with piping and white top
- Detachment officer – French blue with piping and gold top
- National officer – Solid gold with piping

A member of the Sons of The American Legion wearing a cap should render and respond to salutes and conduct himself in the same manner as he would if he were wearing a military uniform. If you are not wearing a S.A.L. cap, the ordinary rules of etiquette should be observed. The proper salute to the Flag in civilian clothes is to remove one's hat and hold it at the left shoulder, with right hand over your heart.

The S.A.L. cap is not to be worn during meals or while eating or while consuming alcoholic beverages.

Members of a Squadron Honor Guard should wear the S.A.L. cap in a place of worship while in marching order or standing guard. S.A.L. members who are not in formation should uncover when entering the place of worship and remain uncovered during the entire service and re-cover after leaving the place of worship.

An official uniform for S.A.L. was adopted in 1963. For several decades, Sons were encouraged to attend official functions dressed in a French blue blazer with the S.A.L. emblem embroidered on the chest pocket, dark blue pants, dark blue tie, white shirt and black shoes. Many members continue to wear this outfit today. However, members are now encouraged to wear clothing appropriate to the function or event they are attending.

"THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER"

words by Francis Scott Key

music by John Stafford Smith (1814)

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say does that star spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep.
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:
'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner! O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the Star-Spangled Banner, in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heaven-rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must when our cause it is just
And this be our motto: "In God is our Trust."
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance (*I promise to be true*)

to the flag (*to the symbol of our country*)

of the United States of America (*each state that has joined to make our country*)

and to the Republic (*a republic is a country where people choose others to make laws for them – the government is for the people*)

for which it stands (*the flag means the country*)

one Nation (*a single country*)

under God (*the people believe in a supreme being*)

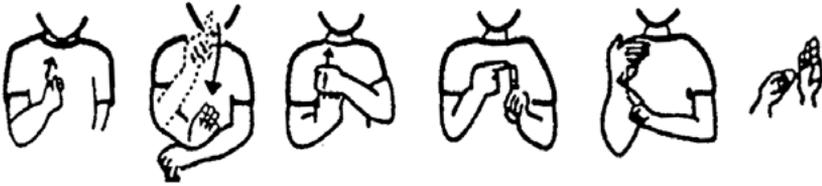
indivisible (*the country cannot be split into parts*)

with liberty and justice (*with freedom and fairness*)

for all. (*for each person in the country – you and me!*)



SIGNING THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE



"I pledge allegiance to the flag of



the United States of America and to



the Republic for which it stands, one nation under



God, indivisible, with liberty



and justice for all."

From: <http://www.flagtiquette.us/asl-pledge-of-allegiance.php>

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FLAG

Congress first approved the flag on June 14, 1777.

This date is now observed as Flag Day throughout America. It was first stated that there be a star and stripe for each state, Making thirteen of both. Over the years, the number of stars has been changed to include one star for each of the 50 states, while the stripes remained the same to represent the 13 original colonies.

Later, the colors of the flag were given special meaning. The red is for valor and zeal – white is for hope, purity, and cleanliness of life – and blue, the color of heaven, loyalty, sincerity, justice, and truth.

The name “OLD GLORY” was given to our National Flag on August 10, 1831. The flag means the spirit of liberty and human freedom.

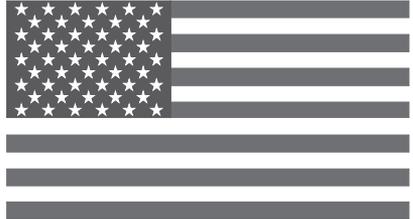
PROPER DISPLAY OF THE FLAG

- Display of the American flag is usually from sunrise to sunset.
- The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main building of every public place and during school days in or near every schoolhouse.
- Flags are flown at half-staff to show grief for lives lost. When the flag is flown at half-staff, it should be hoisted to the top for a moment, and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should then be raised to the top before it is lowered for the day.
- When two or more flags are flown from the same pole, the American flag must be on top.
- When displayed with another flag against a wall, the U.S. flag should be on its own right (left to a person facing the wall).

PROCEDURES FOR FOLDING THE FLAG

There are no Flag Code provisions which require any method, however, the following is traditional:

- (a) Straighten out the flag to full length and fold lengthwise once.
- (b) Fold it lengthwise a second time to meet the open edge, making sure that the union of stars on the blue field remains outward in full view. (A large flag may have to be folded lengthwise a third time.)
- (c) A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge
- (d) The outer point is then turned inward parallel with the open edge to form a second triangle.
- (e) The diagonal or triangular folding is continued toward the blue union until the end is reached, with only the blue showing and the form being that of a cocked (three corner) hat.



A)



B)



C)



D)



E)





THE POW/MIA FLAG

In 1971, Mrs. Michael Hoff, the wife of a U.S. military officer listed as missing in action during the Vietnam War, developed the idea for a national flag to remind every American of the U.S. service members whose fates were never accounted for during the war.

The black and white image of a gaunt silhouette, a strand of barbed wire and an ominous watchtower was designed by Newt Heisley, a former WWII pilot.

By the end of the Vietnam War, more than 2,500 service members were listed as Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. In 1979, Congress and the president proclaimed the first National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Three years later, the POW/MIA flag became the only flag other than the Stars and Stripes to fly over the White House in Washington, DC.

On August 10, 1990, Congress passed US Public Law 101-355, designating the POW/MIA flag:

“The symbol of our Nation’s concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia”.

Congress designated the third Friday of September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.



BLUE STAR SERVICE BANNERS

- The Blue Star Service Banner was designed and patented in 1917 by World War I Army Capt. Robert L. Queissner of the 5th Ohio Infantry who had two sons serving on the front line. It quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service.
- On Sept. 24, 1917, an Ohio congressman read the following into the Congressional Record: "...The mayor of Cleveland, the Chamber of Commerce and the governor of Ohio have adopted this service flag. The world should know of those who give so much for liberty. The dearest thing in all the world to a father and mother - their children."
- During World War II, the Department of War issued specifications on the manufacture of the flag as well as guidelines indicating when and by whom the Service flag could be flown or the Service Lapel button could be worn. The Department of Defense updated the guidelines on December 1, 1967 with DoD Directive 1348.1, which implemented an Act of Congress authorizing a service flag and a service lapel button (U.S.C. 179-182).
- The Blue Star Service Banner typically displayed in windows is an 8.5 by 14-inch white field with a blue star(s) sewn onto a red banner. The size may vary but should be in proportion to the size of the U.S. Flag.
- Today Blue Star Service Banners are displayed by families who have a loved one serving in the armed forces including the National Guard and Reserves of all military departments (<https://www-perscom.army.mil/tagd/tioh/FAQ/ServiceFlagFactSheet.htm>). The banner displayed in the front window of a home shows a family's pride in their loved one serving in the military, and reminds others that preserving America's freedom demands much.

- The blue star represents one family member serving in the armed forces. A banner can have up to five stars, signifying that five members of that family are currently in military uniform on active duty.
- If the individual symbolized is killed or dies while serving the star representing that individual will have superimposed on it a gold star of smaller size so that the blue forms a border. On flags displaying multiple stars, including gold stars, when the flags are suspended as against a wall, the gold star(s) will be to the right of, or above the blue star(s) a place of honor nearest the staff.
- Blue Star Mothers and Gold Star Mothers organizations were established during World War I and remain active today.
- Blue Star Service Banners, while widely used across America during World Wars I and II, were not embraced during the Korean or Vietnam wars with nearly the same enthusiasm

A Blue Star Service Banner displayed in the window of a home is an American tradition. The banner lets others know that someone in the home is proudly serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. As Americans do their best to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and the ongoing war on terror, the Blue Star Service Banner tradition reminds us all that war touches every neighborhood in our land.

MEDALS AND MEMORIALS

MEDALS



Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. Generally presented to its recipient by the President of the United States of America in the name of Congress, it is often called the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is an American decoration - the oldest military decoration in the world in present use and the first American award made available to the common soldier. It was initially created as the Badge of Military Merit by one of the world's most famed and best-loved heroes - General George Washington.



MEMORIALS

Below is a partial listing of Memorials throughout the country.

- The National World War II Memorial
- American Battle Monuments Commission
- Andersonville National Historic Site
- Buffalo Soldier Monument
- Civil War Related Sites in the National Park Service
- Gettysburg National Military Park--National Park Service
- Korean War Veterans Memorial in National Mall--National Park Service
- Records of American Battle Monuments Commission
- U.S.S. Arizona Memorial--National Park Service
- Vicksburg National Military Park--National Park Service
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial



AMERICANISM

S.A.L. members, regardless of where you live and whether you belong to an active Squadron or not can be an active member by being a good citizen and promoting Americanism in your community and your school.

Some things you can do include:

- Learn proper flag etiquette and respect for the flag
- Learn the Star Spangled Banner – all 4 verses if you can
- Participate in local Memorial Day & Veterans Day programs
- Enter an American Legion Auxiliary Essay Contest (grades 3-12)
- Participate in your local Color Guard
- Promote the Blue Star Banner to honor all who are serving our country

THE TEN IDEALS

A national award of recognition may be presented to those who have completed the Ten Ideals Programs. The Ten Ideals are: Patriotism, Health, Knowledge, Training, Honor, Faith, Helpfulness, Courtesy, Reverence, and Comradeship.

THE FIVE POINT PROGRAM OF SERVICE

The Five-Star Award, which can be presented to those S.A.L. members who show perfection in the Five Point Program of Service, is a gold plated medal bearing the S.A.L. emblem and the symbol is of the five points.



Insignia for the Five-Star Award can only be had by certification. This is the study program for older members.

The five points are:

- Patriotism – Love of Flag; love of Country
- Citizenship – Individual obligation of citizenship
- Discipline – Respect for and obedience to rules
- Leadership – Participation in group activities
- Legionism – Knowledge of The American Legion

Detailed information on the Ten Ideals and the Five-Star Program can be found in the Squadron Handbook of Sons of The American Legion.

THE AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM – A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST

The Oratorical Contest develops in high school students a deeper knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States. Competition begins at the Post level and ends at the National level in April of each year. Usually, winners at each level are awarded cash scholarships. Scholarships awarded at the National level are \$18,000; \$16,000; and \$14,000 for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishes.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

Many local American Legion Posts sponsor an American Legion Baseball team. Teams compete on the local, state and National level. Perhaps you can help ensure the success of your local American Legion team.

BOYS STATE

American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. It is a participatory program where each participant becomes a part of the operation of his local, county and state government. The American Legion has established certain qualifications for prospective Boys State citizens. Only males who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and have at least one more semester of high school remaining are considered eligible to participate.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

This program is for boys and girls from elementary to high school age. They are taught gun safety and basic marksmanship. This program also includes a National Championship where two \$1,000 scholarships are awarded by the Sons of The American Legion.

AMERICANISM YOUTH CONFERENCE

This program is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. Each year, high school students in grades 10-12 are given an opportunity to attend this 3-day weekend program in March. They interact with experts on current issues of citizenship, tour historical Philadelphia and attend leadership workshops. Application is made through the local Auxiliary Unit and includes a written essay. National Scholarships, as well as Unit and Department financial assistance are usually available.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

S.A.L. members can assist in this program by helping all children realize their full potential by instilling three basic goals: 1) to help strengthen families, 2) to serve children's physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs and 3) to support other organizations that help children and youth.

Some things you can do include:

- Participation in local Special Olympics
- Participation in children's activities in your community
- Offering scholarships to local high school seniors

AMERICAN LEGION CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION

This organization was formed in 1954 to provide other non-profit organizations with a means to educate the public about the needs of children across this nation. Since it started, millions of dollars have been awarded to organizations to assist children. The S.A.L. has joined The American Legion Family in raising funds to maintain this organization.

JOSH & THE CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK

Josh, the lovable golden retriever and his special story, "I'll Be OK" is available to all ill children. Josh faces his fear of surgery and recounts this experience in this book. Children will enjoy reading this book with Mom and Dad in preparation for a hospital stay.

A percentage of the funds from Josh purchases are donated to the Children's Miracle Network Hospital in the purchaser's area. Squadrons can purchase these items for a child they know personally or donate them to a local hospital to gift as they choose.

The American Legion Family has joined forces with Children's Miracle Network. This is our opportunity to be a part of a program that provides quality health care services to children when parents can't afford to pay, helps purchase up-to-date equipment, conducts life-saving research and implements outreach programs. Squadrons can help by participating in local telethons, hosting fundraisers, etc.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

There are many ways S.A.L. members can participate in this program. S.A.L. members are encouraged to volunteer in their community.

Some things you can do include:

- Assist at blood drives
- Participate in Adopt-a-Highway program
- Participate in “Make A Difference” day
- Organize a community food drive
- Recycle
- Tutor someone
- Collect pop tabs for Ronald McDonald Houses
 - Over 400 million pop tabs have been collected, generating over \$4 million

Pop Tab Measurement Equivalents

1 inch = 1 pop tab

1 foot = 12 pop tabs

1 meter = 40 pop tabs

1 lb = 1,267 pop tabs

1 km = 40,000 pop tabs

1 mile = 63,360 pop tabs

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

One of the key programs of the S.A.L. is Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, known more often as VA & R. S.A.L. members can volunteer by helping veterans in their own homes, in local nursing homes, in state veterans facilities and in VA hospitals.

Members have volunteered hundreds of thousands of hours in Veterans Hospitals throughout the country and raised millions of dollars that has gone directly to VA hospitals and VA homes for a variety of items including TVs, radios, medical equipment, and clothing for the patients.

Who is a Veteran? Veterans are people who served in the military (U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard) in times of war or peace.

Who do you know who is a veteran? Maybe it is your mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, grandfather, grandmother, cousin, neighbor, or teacher. You can be very proud of them. Many have given so much to keep us and our country safe.

Many people confuse Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring those who died serving their country. Memorial Day is on May 30th, however it is observed on the last Monday in May. On Veterans Day we thank and honor those who served in the military. Veterans Day is observed on November 11th. This day used to be called Armistice Day.

Ways you can participate in VA & R:

- Visit patients in a VA Medical Center or a Nursing Home
- Send a greeting card to a hospitalized veteran
- Study and learn about veterans
- Participate in the Veterans History Project
- Help with your local Auxiliary Poppy drive
- Participate in an “Adopt A Veteran” program
- Make something special for a veteran
- Learn about the service eligibility of the veteran through whom you are eligible for membership.

VOLUNTEERS

Many high school students have to complete volunteer hours before they graduate from high school. Student volunteers are an important part of every VA Medical Center's treatment team. VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) defines student volunteers as those under the age of 21. They will receive valuable experience and training which will benefit them in applying for college and jobs. Student volunteers are liaisons within their communities and provide a valuable element of caring for veterans.

The VA Voluntary Service program offers students excellent opportunities for:

- exploring health care career options;
- gaining experience in a health care environment;
- learning new skills;
- making new friends;
- qualifying to be nominated for a James H. Parke Memorial College Scholarship

There are many opportunities to explore in the Student Volunteer Program. A wide variety of assignments are available. Volunteers are selected according to the needs of the medical center, assignment preference and skills. Training is provided by Voluntary Service at each medical facility and the supervisor of the department to which volunteers are assigned. Orientation will be conducted to acquaint you with services available at the medical center where you serve.

FISHER HOUSE

Fisher House is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of our men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

Because members of the military and their families are stationed worldwide and must often travel great distances for specialized medical care, Fisher House donates "comfort homes," built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times - during the hospitalization for an unexpected illness, disease, or injury.

There is at least one Fisher House at every major military medical center to assist families in need and to ensure that they are provided with the comforts of home in a supportive environment.

HOW ELSE CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

- Attend a District or Detachment meeting
- Serve as an Officer in your Squadron
- Learn how to introduce a guest at a meeting
- Make a motion or second a motion
- Chair a special activity
- Know membership eligibility for The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion
- Know the meaning of the S.A.L. emblem
- Help with your squadron's membership drive
- Learn the S.A.L. Preamble to the Constitution
- Sign up a new member in the S.A.L.

WEB SITES AND RESOURCES

- The American Legion - <http://www.legion.org>
- American Legion Auxiliary - <http://www.legion-aux.org>
- Sons of The American Legion - <http://www.sal.legion.org>
- Children's Miracle Network - <http://www.cmn.org>
- American Legion Child Welfare Foundation - <http://www.cwf-inc.org>
- American Legion Emblem Sales - <http://emblem.legion.org>
Click on shop for Emblem Sales
- VA Kids Site – www.va.gov/kids
- McGruff Crime Dog – www.mcgruff.org/funstuff/index.html
- Legion Kids – <http://www.legionkids.org/docs/playgames.htm>
- Deployment Middle School Kids – http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/kidslink/midschool/mid_main.html
- Deployment High School Kids – http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/kidslink/highschool/hs_main.html
- White House Site for Kids – <http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/whlife/index.html>

**YOUTH
HANDBOOK**



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN