

**Internal Affairs & Membership Division  
Weekly Report to the National Commander  
January 24, 2025  
Matthew Herndon, Director – (317) 630-1406**

**2025 Traditional Membership:**

Membership as of the January 23<sup>rd</sup> report is at **80.74%** of the 1,445,882 goal with **1,167,452** current members (new recruits, renewals and encumbered DMS transfers). The 85% target date is February 12, 2025, **three** departments have already met or exceeded this goal.

**DMS New Member Acquisition:**

The 2025 DMS new member acquisition program has acquired **43,248** new members since July 1. This represents about **43.25%** of the projected 100,000 for 2025.

**New Members by Branch of Service and Conflict:**

This chart shows the branch of service and war era for new members brought in at the post level and DMS for 2025.

<b>Conflict</b>	<b>Conflict Totals</b>	<b>Percentage:</b>	<b>Branch of Service</b>	<b>BOS Totals</b>	<b>Percentage:</b>
GW_TERRORISM	19,196	29.75%	USA	30,345	47.02%
OTHER	18,289	28.34%	USN	12,659	19.62%
VIETNAM	11,690	18.12%	USAF	11,245	17.43%
PERSIAN_GULF	6,047	9.37%	USMC	7,613	11.80%
Unknown	5,733	8.88%	Unknown	1,562	2.42%
LEBANON_GRENADA	1,960	3.04%	USCG	1,007	1.56%
KOREA	753	1.17%	USSF	65	0.10%
PANAMA	715	1.11%	USMM	36	0.06%
WWII	142	0.22%	<b>Total New Members:</b>	<b>64,532</b>	
WWII MM	7	0.01%			
<b>Total New Members:</b>	<b>64,532</b>				

**Multi-Year Membership:**

The multi-year membership option can only be accessed on the national website at [www.legion.org/renew](http://www.legion.org/renew). To date **46,514** members have taken advantage of this option. We encourage departments to put information out in emails and newsletters informing and encouraging members to use this option.

**National Commander LaCoursiere's Membership Goals:**

Commander LaCoursiere's focus is on retaining the members. He worked with the M&PA Committee on creating the Department Retention Award. His expectation is to engage current members on a regular basis. Whether it is through Buddy Checks or contacting members about their membership dues, members need to feel wanted and valued.

**Retention:**

As an organization, Commander LaCoursiere set a goal of 90% for retention. A column has been added to the daily, weekly, and target date membership reports for each department.

**Our current retention rate is 78.27% at the traditional level. There are 41,929 department headquarters post members who are paid for 2024 that have not renewed for 2025 and 404,118 at the post level and who have not renewed for 2025.**

As we see from above, there is a large pool of members within the posts and departments. There is the capability to immediately identify and start the engagement process to contact the member to renew their membership.

### **Recruiting:**

National Commander LaCoursiere set a goal of 75,000 new traditional members for the 2025 membership year. **To date we have recruited 41,571 new members into the organization at the local post level.**

### **New Member Video:**

Former American Legion Membership & Post Activities Committee Chairman Matt Jabaut hosted a new-member orientation video that provides a clear understanding of the nation's largest veterans organization and what the Legion does to strengthen America.

The video is ideal for new member orientations at local posts or to show to potential members. You can also email it to new members. You can find the video at this link on the Legion's Vimeo channel <https://vimeo.com/americanlegion>.

### **Membership Excellence "Be the One" Dog Tag Coin:**

To qualify one will need to recruit three new members into The American Legion. A new member is defined as any eligible veteran joining for the 2025 membership year who was not a member during the 2024 membership year. You can find the form at:

<https://www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/national-commanders-incentive-program>

### **Sons of The American Legion (SAL)**

National Commander Navarreté and National Adjutant Wright attended the presidential inauguration in Washington, D.C. NVC Lawrence was in Ohio, NVC Ray was in Wisconsin, NVC Monserud was in GA, NVC Ashley was in LA, and NVC Manzo was in VT. They were all attending the mid-winter conferences. The SAL membership is already at **72%** of the goal!

### **2025 SAL Membership Info.** As of: January 20, 2025

2025 Goal:	<b>401,263</b>	
Total Actual Membership:	<b>292,808</b>	
% of Year-End Goal:	<b>72.97%</b>	
2025 Renewal Percentage:	<b>66.94%</b>	
Detachments at 60%:	<b>46</b>	
Detachments at 75%:	<b>14</b>	<b>(75% target date is February 12<sup>th</sup>)</b>

### **The National Emergency Fund (NEF):**

**2025 – 20 grants (14 members/6 posts) totaling \$83,151.81**

Florida (Hurricanes Helene & Milton) – 14 members/6 posts

There are numerous fires in Southern California, and we expect to see many NEF grants in the future due to these fires. The following pertains:

- Firefighters fought to maintain the upper hand on a huge and rapidly moving wildfire that swept through rugged mountains [north of Los Angeles](#) and resulted in more than 50,000 people being put under evacuation orders or warnings.
- The Hughes Fire broke out late Wednesday morning and in less than a day had charred nearly 16 square miles (41 square kilometers) of trees and brush near Castaic Lake, a popular recreation area about 40 miles (64 kilometers) from the devastating [Eaton and Palisades fires](#) that are burning for a third week.
- Though the region was under a red flag warning for critical fire risk, winds were not as fast as they had been when those fires broke out, allowing for firefighting aircraft to dump tens of thousands of gallons of fire retardant on the latest blaze. By Wednesday night, about 14% of the Hughes Fire had been contained.
- American Legion Palisades Post 283 has launched an online [Palisades Fire Resource Hub](#) to provide critical support and information to those affected in the area. Post 283 invites residents, organizations, and businesses to assist in recovery efforts. For more information, updates, or questions, contact Post 283 at [HQ@Post283.com](mailto:HQ@Post283.com).
- [President Biden, Jr. approved a major Disaster Declaration for California](#). An e-mail went to the California leadership regarding the National Emergency Fund. We will be tracking.

We are still accepting grant applications for Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the flooding in New Mexico, and the wildfires in California.

A webinar was conducted by Florida staff after Hurricane Helene and every department was invited. This meeting was recorded, and you can find it at this link (fast forward to the 24:15 minute mark for the start of the meeting):

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/R1ZqkXs39Wq9EG65YUnACWVmNOjHcFJBrSNSAGJuaFNIQZ\\_eUZYSRtwaofO3AjHL.iXcq8ZM1JNDKbGcT?startTime=1727886943000](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/R1ZqkXs39Wq9EG65YUnACWVmNOjHcFJBrSNSAGJuaFNIQZ_eUZYSRtwaofO3AjHL.iXcq8ZM1JNDKbGcT?startTime=1727886943000)

They along with NEF and TFA national staff provided important information and resources to attendees and the meeting was recorded and will be sent out to all Legion leadership. We started processing NEF grants for Florida thus far departments.

It's been a grim year of deadly hurricanes, wildfires, flooding, tornadoes, and other severe weather events facing our country. We are engaging with those departments affected and NEF staff sent out an e-mail recently to all department and national leadership regarding the NEF Program.

The two links below provide important information about NEF. First is the PowerPoint of how to complete an NEF application:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYTPVnmrsh0>

This link is to the newly launched website about NEF, grants, and donations:

[Request Assistance | The American Legion](#)

The second is Illinois Department Adjutant and PNC Marty Conatser on how they set up disaster teams within Illinois following a massive tornado disaster a few years ago and which could help other departments with setting up their own disaster relief teams.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5ZlecXviD8>

## **Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW):**

Over 3,100 servicemembers, veterans, and their families were directly impacted by Operation Comfort Warriors in 2023, either by participating in an OCW-sponsored event or receiving care at a grant-receiving facility.

2024 – 9 Grants totaling \$89,639.57

Completed: 9

Grants to servicemembers – 2

Grants to facility – 7

Grants pending – 0

With the passage of Resolution 20 during last month's Fall Meetings, Operation Comfort Warriors has an updated policy manual to address grant requests. Additionally, the OCW landing pages on the National Website have been updated to reflect the changes that were made. It will be incumbent upon the Requestor to provide the information necessary to facilitate grant approval.

## **Training:**

### **Communication is Key: Change the Narrative**

We often hear from members that they don't know about training events like NRIC or Training Tuesday.

**Here's the challenge:** If our communication isn't being heard, it's not about what we say—it's about how it's received. Let's fix this:

- Simplify the message.
- Share widely—this information isn't a secret!
- Invite **EVERYONE**. All Legionnaires deserve to know and participate in these opportunities.

Leadership is about inclusion, and that starts with clear, effective communication. If you're not sure how to reach someone, ask for help. Together, we can change the narrative and strengthen The American Legion!

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### **National Regional Information Conference (NRIC) – Boston**

Registration is now at 67 attendees from 13 departments, with leaders from Post Commanders to National Chairs. Each attendee adds to the event's impact by fostering more connections and actionable strategies. Keep sharing—your outreach makes a difference!

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### **National American Legion College (NALC) Stakeholder Input Survey**

The survey closes tomorrow, and we need more responses, especially from district and county leaders. Their feedback shapes a curriculum focused on real-world challenges and servant leadership. Encourage participation now—it's their chance to influence the future of NALC!

[Take the Survey Here](#)

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### **Training Tuesday: How to Run a Post**

When: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 | Time: 7:00 PM ET

[REGISTER](#)

**UPCOMING FORM DEADLINES FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS & MEMBERSHIP:**

**2025 LEGION/SAL BULK SHIPMENT FORM – NOVEMBER 30 \*\*PAST DUE**

We have not received forms from the following departments: Alabama, Arizona, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Nebraska and West Virginia.

**2026 LEGION & SAL MEMBERSHIP CARD FORMS – JANUARY 15 \*\*PAST DUE**

We are missing all three forms from the following departments: District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi and Philippines.

**CERTIFICATION FORM FOR POST HONOR RIBBON – JANUARY 31**

**CERTIFICATION FORM FOR CERTIFICATES OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE – JANUARY 31**