

**Internal Affairs & Membership Division
Weekly Report to the National Commander
December 20, 2024
Matthew Herndon, Director – (317) 630-1406**

2024 Traditional Membership:

Membership as of the December 18th report is at **97.87%** of the 1,452,188 goal with **1,421,272** current members (new recruits, renewals and encumbered DMS transfers).

2025 Traditional Membership:

Membership as of the December 18th report is at **72.62%** of the 1,445,882 goal with **1,049,938** current members (new recruits, renewals and encumbered DMS transfers). The 80% target date is January 15, 2025, three departments have already met or exceeded this goal.

DMS New Member Acquisition:

The 2025 DMS new member acquisition program has acquired **40,227** new members since July 1. This represents about **40.15%** 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.

Conflict	Conflict Totals	Percentage:	Branch of Service	BOS Totals	Percentage:
OTHER	17,117	30.17%	USA	26,768	47.18%
GW_TERRORISM	16,375	28.86%	USN	11,080	19.53%
VIETNAM	10,190	17.96%	USAF	9,916	17.48%
PERSIAN_GULF	5,145	9.07%	USMC	6,676	11.77%
Unknown	4,849	8.55%	Unknown	1,342	2.37%
LEBANON_GRENADA	1,681	2.96%	USCG	866	1.53%
KOREA	644	1.14%	USSF	56	0.10%
PANAMA	609	1.07%	USMM	31	0.05%
WWII	118	0.27%	Total New Members:	56,735	
WWII_MM	7	0.01%			
Total New Members:	56,735				

Multi-Year Membership:

The multi-year membership option is now available to all members and can be accessed on the national website at www.legion.org/renew. To date **44,369** 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 71.19% at the traditional level. There are 48,203 department headquarters post members who are paid for 2024 that have not renewed for 2025 and 506,792 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 35,868 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 attended the Army/Navy game in Washington DC. The SAL continues to grow, and 2025 membership is also increasing steadily.

2024 SAL Membership Info.

For the week of December 18th

2024 Goal:	382,111	
Total Actual Membership:	397,005	New All-Time High
% of Year-End Goal:	103.90%	
2024 Renewal Percentage:	90.34%	
Detachments at 105%:	20	

Note: The SAL 2024 membership report has a glitch and is missing data for Dist of Col in a two - columns for and no other states from what I can tell. As a result, numbers have to manually configure data. I did make Justin aware a week or so ago but haven't heard anything back as of yet but not sure if he's waiting on Personify either. Brian

2025 SAL Membership Info.

For the week of December 18th

2025 Goal:	401,263	
Total Actual Membership:	228.896	
% of Year-End Goal:	57.04%	
2024 Renewal Percentage:	52.14%	
Detachments at 45%:	47	
Detachments at 60%:	20	(60% target date JAN 15)

The National Emergency Fund (NEF):

2024 – 105 grants (93 members/12 posts) totaling \$288,627.89

Florida (Hurricanes Debby, Helene & Milton) – 76 members/4 post

Georgia (Hurricane) – 1 member

Indiana (Tornado) – 1 post

Iowa (Flood/Tornado) – 4 members/2 posts

Louisiana (Tornado) – 1 member

New York (Microburst) – 1 post

North Carolina (Hurricane) – 1 member/1 post

Philippines (Typhoon) – 1 member

South Carolina (Hurricane) – 3 members/1 post

South Dakota (Flood) – 2 members

Tennessee (Flood) – 2 members/1 post

Texas (Devastating Storms/Hurricane) – 2 members/1 post

California's Franklin Fire is still burning communities in and around Malibu, to include threatening Pepperdine University. There are mandatory evacuations in this area of Los Angeles County. Over 4,000 acres have burned, and the fire is about 89% contained as of today. The notorious Santa Ana winds are still cause for concern in SoCal. Cause is under investigation. Governor Newsome has secured a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help ensure the availability of vital resources to suppress the fire burning in Malibu. We will be tracking.

Over the first weekend in November, severe storms, tornadoes, straight line winds and flooding caused a State of Emergency declaration in six counties in Oklahoma. Additionally, the National Weather Service damage survey teams confirmed that tornadoes hit eastern Oklahoma and Northwest Arkansas on Nov. 4. While there have been injuries, no deaths have been reported for these storms at this time.

In mid-October, at least two people have died, and hundreds have been rescued in Roswell, New Mexico, according to the New Mexico State Police, after extreme overnight rainfall brought severe flooding, stranding motorists and sweeping away cars. The New Mexico National Guard and other agencies have rescued at least 290 people, including 38 who were taken to hospitals, the agency confirmed in a [statement](#). The National Weather Service declared an overnight flash flood emergency for Roswell and nearby areas, as emergency management within Chaves County reported numerous water rescues. We are tracking.

On September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm and carved a devastating path from Florida's Gulf Coast to Tennessee. Less than two weeks later, while many communities are still reeling from the massive destruction caused by Helene, Hurricane Milton hit Florida in the Tampa Bay area and moved across central Florida toward the Atlantic Ocean. Hurricane Milton made landfall near Sarasota, Florida as a Category 3 storm, bringing up to 18 inches of rain, causing flash floods, and spurring tornadoes across south and central Florida.

Hurricane Milton death toll is at least 25 as of this date. We continue to process grants for these hurricane-stricken areas.

Hurricane Helene caused power outages for millions of individuals across several states, and thousands of homes sustained major structural damage or were destroyed, causing at least [233 confirmed fatalities](#). Extensive flooding from Helene has severely impacted western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee and multiple communities in several states, hampering the delivery of critical supplies, and FEMA has approved support for individual households in Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Relief efforts are ongoing.

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

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:

National American Legion College (NALC)

Under the leadership of Chancellor PNC Daniel Seehafer and Dean Mike Rohan, NALC continues to emphasize servant leadership as a cornerstone of its mission. This renewed focus ensures ongoing alumni engagement and the delivery of immersive, high-quality education that prepares Legion leaders for the challenges ahead.

National Regional Information Conference (NRIC) – Boston

The National Regional Information Conference will take place on February 1, 2025, in Boston, Massachusetts. Click this link to register [Registration - 2024-2025 Mission Training and National Junior Meetings- Boston, MA](#)

- Registration Update: Attendance has grown to 39 participants (+9 from 30 participants) from 11 departments.
- This strong representation includes key leaders such as National Committee Members, Department Commanders, Adjutants, Vice Commanders, and Post-level leadership, but most importantly Blue cap Legionnaires.
- Educational Sessions: Featuring a comprehensive curriculum with topics such as *Be The One*, legal updates, running effective meetings, post operations, and membership retention, providing tools and strategies to enhance leadership and program development.
- Networking Opportunities: Creating connections for leaders to exchange insights, share experiences, and build collaborative relationships.
- Best Practices: Highlighting innovative approaches and proven methods to drive organizational growth and strengthen community engagement.

Training Tuesday Update

Please note there will be no Training Tuesday session in December 2024 due to the holiday season. Sessions will resume on January 28, 2025, featuring the topic “Managing the Post.”

- This session will focus on practical strategies to enhance post operations, improve membership engagement, and support local initiatives.

UPCOMING FORM DEADLINES FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS & MEMBERSHIP:

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

We have received forms from **43** departments: AK, AR, CA, CT, DE, FL, FR, GA, ID, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, MX, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NC, ND, OH, PA, PR, SC, SD, TN, TX, VT, VA, WA, WI, WY.

2026 LEGION & SAL MEMBERSHIP CARD FORMS – JANUARY 15

We have received all three forms from **29** departments: AK, DE, FL, FR, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MT, NV, NH, NJ, NY, ND, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, WA, WI, WY.

CERTIFICATION FORM FOR POST HONOR RIBBON – JANUARY 31

CERTIFICATION FORM FOR CERTIFICATES OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE – JANUARY 31