



Up To Now!

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ENCLOSED TO ALL

Enclosed to all is National Commander Clarence Hill's incentive Pin Award criteria and a certification form to be sent to National Membership Division.

CLARENCE HILL ELECTED NATIONAL COMMANDER

Clarence Hill, a native of Martin's Ferry, Ohio, was elected National Commander of the 2.6 million-member American Legion on August 27, 2009 in Louisville, Kentucky, during the 91st National Convention of the nation's largest veterans organization.

He attended Buckeye Boys State in 1967 and was commissioned from the United States Naval Academy in 1972 having earned a Bachelor of Science Degree with a History major.

He served 19 of the next 24 years on sea duty and retired in 1996 as a Captain. His afloat commands included Officer-In-Charge of a PT boat, 1 frigate, 2 destroyers, 2 cruisers, Cruiser-Destroyer Group 12 in Mayport, Fl, and the Sixth Fleet in Gaeta, Italy. He commanded the Naval Communications Station United Kingdom in Thurso, Scotland, for three years, and the guided missile frigate USS MCINERNEY (FFG-8) for two years, including combat operations during Operation Desert Storm. Ashore, he earned two Masters Degrees, one from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Ca., and the other from the Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

A 27-year Legionnaire, National Commander Hill is a Life Member and 3-time Post Commander of American Legion Post 316 in Atlantic Beach, Fla. He is a dual member belonging to SAL Squadron 316. He attended the National American Legion College in 2000 and was an instructor in 2001. He was Department Commander for Florida from July 2002 to July 2003, achieving an all-time-high in membership. He served for three years as the National Chairman of the National and Homeland Security Commission. Commander Hill is married to the former Liz Robinson of Thurso, Scotland. They have three children and six grandchildren.

Commander Hill took the oath of office along with five other national officers. Serving as National Vice Commanders are Morris M. Bentley of Grangeville, Id.; Gordon B. Browning of Chestertown, Ma.; Mark A. Avis of Palmer, Mass.; James C. Morris of Cardington, Ohio; and Eugene Schumacher of Aberdeen, S.D.

National Historian James T. Higuera of Arcadia, Calif. and National Chaplain John L. Beaver of Mobile, Ala. were appointed to their positions by Commander Hill following the close of the National Convention.

SCHUMACHER ELECTED NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER

Eugene Schumacher of Sydney L. Smith Post 24 of Aberdeen was elected National Vice Commander, August 27, 2009, at the 91st National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

National Vice Commander Schumacher is a veteran of the United States Air Force who served on active duty from 1961-1965. He was stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California and was attached to the 39th Strategic Missile Squadron – Titan II ICBM Missile. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force as an Airman 1st Class, Missile Facility Technician, 7 level.

Vice Commander Schumacher is a 43 year, Paid-Up-For-Life member of The American Legion. He has been Post Commander, Post Adjutant, District Vice and District Commander, State Vice Commander, Department Membership Chairman, Department Finance Officer, and Department Commander in 2004-2005. He has been a Go-Getter for 33 years and 22 years of which are in the Century Go-Getter category

(having been personally responsible for the renewal/recruitment of at least 100 members each year).

Eugene has been married to his wife Sharon for 47 years, and they have two sons, Scott and Chris. Chris passed away in 2004. They have four grandchildren.

PAST DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER LAID TO REST

Past Department Finance Officer Donald F. Westerman died Saturday, August 22, 2009 at his residence.

Funeral Services were held on Friday, August 28, 2009, at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Watertown. Burial was at the Mount Hope Cemetery in Watertown with Military honors.

Don was a life member of Codington County Post 17, where he served in various positions. He served as the Department Finance Officer from 1988-1995.

Cards and memorials may be sent to Don's widow, JoAnn, at PO Box 206, Watertown, SD 57201.

NATIONAL COMMANDER'S MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE

During the 2009-2010 membership year, National Commander Clarence Hill is instituting a Post Excellence Award. An award for those Posts that show excellence in four of the main areas of concern to The American Legion. To qualify for the award the Post would be required to achieve a standard of participation in each of four areas; membership, youth activities, community service and support to currently serving troops or veterans.

Membership must be at least one member greater than the previous year with a Post officer attending District Meetings. A Post must sponsor and actively participate in at least one of the primary youth programs; Boys State, Baseball, Oratorical, Boy Scouts or Junior Shooting Sports. A Post must accomplish a community service project that involves members of The American Legion Family actively working in the community outside the Post Home. Finally a Post must accomplish a project supporting troops or veterans in the community that involves activity by Legion Family members outside the Post Home. The ranges of projects from the Family Support Network or Heroes to Hometowns to simply helping a local veteran with needed updates to the home are candidates for this category.

FALL DISTRICT CONFERENCES TO BEGIN

Fall District Conferences have been or are being scheduled by the District Commanders in accordance with the schedule outlined below.

Dist 1 – Thursday, October 1, Centerville American Legion Post Home, 6:00 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. meeting, light lunch following the meeting. Auxiliary will meet at the Senior Citizens Building (1/2 block away).

Dist 2 – Saturday, October 3, Lake Preston American Legion Post Home, social 1:00 p.m., meeting 2:00 p.m., Auxiliary will meet at the UCC Church (across the road from the Post Home).

Dist 3 – Friday, October 2, Estelline American Legion Post Home, social 7:00 p.m., meeting 7:30 p.m., coffee and bars following the meeting. Auxiliary will meet at Estelline Community Center.

Dist 4 – Friday, September 18, Britton High School, No social (VFW is 2 blocks away), dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m. American Legion will meet in the Choir Room and Auxiliary will meet in the Gym.

Dist 5 – Sunday, September 27, Wessington American Legion Post Home, social 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m. Auxiliary will meet in a Church.

Dist 6 – Sunday, September 20, Mitchell American Legion Post

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Home (they are moving so it could be 2 doors south of current location), social at 5:00 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m., meeting will commence at 7:00 p.m. All activities and meetings will be at the Post Home.

Dist 7 – Saturday, September 26, Gayville American Legion Post Home, social 12:30 p.m., meeting 1:30 p.m., light lunch following the meeting.

Dist 8 – Friday, September 25, Dallas American Legion Post Home, social 6:30 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m. light lunch with refreshments following the meeting. Legion and Auxiliary will meet at the Post Home.

Dist 9 – Thursday, September 24, Draper City Auditorium, social 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30 p.m., light lunch following the meeting. Legion and Auxiliary will meet at the City Auditorium.

Dist 10 – Sunday, September 13, Pierre American Legion Post Home, social 12:30 p.m., meeting 1:30 p.m., light lunch following the meeting. Auxiliary will meet at the VFW membership room.

Dist 11 – Saturday, September 12, Eagle Butte Cheyenne River Youth Project, meeting 3:00 p.m.

Dist 12 – Friday, September 11, Box Elder American Legion Post Home, social 4:00 p.m., meeting 5:00 p.m., dinner 7:00 p.m.

Dist 13 – Thursday, September 10, Hot Springs American Legion Post Home, social 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m., light lunch following the meeting. Auxiliary will meet at South Dakota Canyon Cabin.

Dist 14 – Saturday, September 19, Leola American Legion Post Home, social 7:00 p.m., meeting 8:00 p.m., coffee and cookies to follow. Auxiliary will meet at the Municipal Building.

RAPID CITY POST 22 ELIMINATED FROM BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

Rapid City Post 22 was eliminated from the 2009 Central Plains Regional American Legion Baseball Tournament on Friday, August 7th, by losing to the team from Dickinson, ND by a score of 8 to 1.

The loss ended the baseball season for Rapid City Post 22, who wrapped up their season with a very impressive record of 44 wins and 20 losses.

The 2009 Central Plains Regional American Baseball Tournament was held in Minnetonka, Minn., and concluded play on Monday, August 10 with the team from Festus, Mo., advancing to the American Legion World Series. The World Series was played at Newman Outdoor Field, August 14-18 in Fargo, ND. The World Series Champion was Midland, Mi., defeating Medford, Oregon, by a score of 11 to 4.

VETERANS FORUM SCHEDULE FOR 2009-2010

The American Legion Department of South Dakota will sponsor Veterans Benefits Outreach Forums again this year. All veterans' forums will have a start time of 6:30 p.m. in their respective time zone. Department Service Officer Warren Aas will conduct the veterans' forums with the assistance of several invited guest speakers. This will be the fifth year DSO Aas has been on the road conducting the veterans' forums and as of this date, The American Legion Department of South Dakota has conducted 77 veterans' forums and well over 3,100 veterans and their family members have attended to learn more about their VA benefits.

To date, we have thirteen Districts that have finalized their 2009-2010 veterans' forum. They are as follows:

District 1: Wednesday, October 28, VFW Post, Brandon, SD.

District 2: Thursday, October 29, American Legion Post Home, Arlington, SD.

District 3: Thursday, November 5, American Legion Post Home, Clark, SD.

District 4: Wednesday, November 4, Community Center, Agency Village, SD.

District 5: Wednesday, October 21, American Legion Post Home, Faulkton, SD.

District 6: Monday, September 28, American Legion Post Home, Ethan, SD.

District 7: Wednesday, September 30, American Legion Post, Menno, SD.

District 8: Tuesday, September 29, American Legion Post, Herrick, SD.

District 9: Monday, September 14, American Legion Post Home,

Philip, SD.

District 10: Tuesday, October 20, American Legion Post Home, Onida, SD.

District 11: Thursday, September 17, American Legion Post Home, Lemmon, SD.

District 12: Wednesday, September 16, American Legion Post Home, Piedmont, SD.

District 13: Tuesday, September 15, Community Center, Wall, SD.

District 14: Monday, October 19, To be announced..

All Legionnaires, their spouses and other veterans should be encouraged to attend The American Legion Department of South Dakota Veterans Benefits Outreach Forum closest to their home. This is an educational and valuable opportunity to learn about benefits you may be eligible for that you were previously unaware of.

Refreshments will be served during and after the forums and informational handout materials will be available for the attendees to take home and keep for future reference.

AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Now is the time to be planning your Post's participation in The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program. The program is an outstanding opportunity for a high school student to earn up to \$18,000 in scholarship money to help pay for a college education.

High school students, under the age of 20 on the date of the National Contest, who are citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States, are eligible to participate. The student must be presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or state accredited home school) in which the curriculum of the school is considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade nine (9) and terminating with grade twelve (12). The student must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the contest. The contestant must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the state of South Dakota to participate in the contest in South Dakota.

Each contestant presents a Prepared Oration on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States with emphasis on the duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. The Prepared Oration must be an original effort of the contestant and must not take up less than eighth (8) minutes or more than ten (10) minutes for delivery. It must be delivered in the English language.

Additionally, each contestant will also be required to speak on an Assigned Topic. The Assigned Topic discourse must not consume less than three (3) minutes or more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The Assigned Topic will be drawn from a list of four topics. All contestants will speak on the same Assigned Topic. The Assigned Topics are all selected from Articles and Sections of the Constitution of the United States.

Contest participation starts at the local school/American Legion Post level. Winners at the local level advance to the District level and winners at the District level will advance to the Area level of competition. The five first-place winners in the Area level of the contest will advance to the State Finals Contest which will be held in Oacoma, SD at the Cedar Shores Resort following the completion of the South Dakota American Legion MidWinter Conference.

Local Contests may be scheduled at any time that is convenient for those in charge of the local contest, but all local contests must be completed no later than January 10, 2010.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The 2010 membership year is off and running. Department Commander Martens reminds us that "membership is everyone's business". Membership is a team effort.

2010 membership stands at 13,736 or 56.04% of the 2010 membership goal. This total includes PUFL memberships from all Posts in the Department. The Department has 4,883 PUFL memberships as we begin this year. Keep up the good work

