Greetings Legion Family

We all look forward to shedding the masks, shaking hands, attending meetings, fellowship, and generally being together again and continuing the work of The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts. Virtual meetings have allowed many of the things we would have done personally to continue. I have a new appreciation for electronic communications.

I encourage districts and posts to use electronic means to bring in meeting participates. Some may not have the ability, or desire, to drive into a meeting. This is where something like Zoom, TEAMS, Go to Meeting, etc., will work to increase participation. Along the same lines, move your newsletter to electronic media to help save time and money. You can also use color to make your newsletter more attractive and easier to read while keeping the cost low. Having a Facebook page will also allow you to put your newsletter on-line for others to see. Use it as a recruiting tool.

Additionally, do not forget about MyLegion.org. You can put newsletters into the MyLegion system, and individual members with accounts can access the newsletters. I have read some interesting Legion Magazines back as far as March 2015 through MyLegion. It is available to all members. If you are an incoming post or district officer, I hope you have taken or are considering taking...
the Basic Training Course. The American Legion’s official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who want to expand their knowledge of the nation’s largest veterans service organization is available online. Have you already taken the old course? The American Legion Extension Institute has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam.

I hope you are taking advantage of the Legion Act by asking those veterans previously not eligible to join The American Legion. Remember that we always wanted these veterans in our ranks, and now Congress has given us the right to do so. Please ask them to join. Our programs depend upon our members. Our involvement in the community depends on our members. Our strength depends upon our numbers. And while you are at it, bring the whole family into our ranks.

With the roll out of the COVID19 vaccine, Department of Veterans Affairs Health System may be looking for alternat locations to host vaccine clinics, since the onset of this pandemic capacity in clinics have been reduced to allow for social distancing and may have a shortage of space for the vaccinations at their location. Plymouth Post 40 is currently providing their hall when needed; excellent work legionnaires, I hope to hear of more posts doing the same. This is a perfect time to step up and offer access to your post’s hall, after all this is one of our Four Pillars. What a better way for us to take care of veterans and our community.

Yours in Comradeship,

Jodie Pajak
Department Commander
Scott J. Gauthier, 61, of 441 Maple Street, died unexpectedly on February 18, 2021 in HealthAlliance Leomington Hospital.

He was born in Winchendon on May 21, 1959, son of the late Leo P. and Irene P. (Wilkinson) Gauthier. A lifelong resident, Scott graduated from Murdock High School in 1977 and later graduated from Franklin Pierce University and received his Master’s Degree from Fitchburg State College. He also held a CAG certificate.

Scott proudly served his country as a member of the United States Air Force and had been the Veterans’ Agent for the Town of Winchendon for several years. Scott dedicated many hours of service to not only the town, but also to every event over the past twenty plus years with both Veterans and Memorial Day services for the community.

He was a member and past commander of Eugene M. Connor Post #193 American Legion and was past State Sergeant of Arms for James Brehio, Dept of Mass American Legion (2005); past assistant Sergeant at Arms for Bill Barbour (2010); past District 4 (Worcester County) Commander (2012); current Service Office for Post 193 (2003 – present) and Adjutant (2012 – present).

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to a onetime scholarship fund, given to a 2nd year education major, in the name of Scott J. Gauthier, care of GFA Federal Credit Union, 185 Central Street, Winchendon, MA 01475.
Post Everlasting

Past department Executive Committeewomen
Past District Eight — Essex County Commander
Judith M. Garland

GLOUCESTER— Judith M. Garland of Nashua, NH and Gloucester, MA. Judith passed away on February 16, 2021 after a long illness. She was born in Gloucester, MA May 7, 1947 and was the daughter of the late Frances (Hinckley) Garland and Norman M. Garland Jr. She graduated from Gloucester High School and later joined the U.S. Air Force.

She is survived by her sisters, Marie Frazier and Nancy Garland-Wren and her husband Curt with whom she had been stationed with in Air Force at Kinchloe Air Force Base in Michigan. She also leaves behind her nephews and wives, Gladwyn Frazier Jr. & Denise, Michael Frazier & Paula, Ronald Frazier Sr. & Heather, and Ethan Wren. As well as their children, Luke, Amber, Travis, Tyler, Branden, Jessie, Briann, Rose, Stacey and Ronald Jr. who will miss her very much. She was predeceased by her nephew, Everett Frazier as well as her parents and a brother-in-law, Gladwyn Frazier Sr.

Judy was known for her activities in many organizations over the years, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the American Legion, Daughters of Colonial Wars, and the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants to name a few and will be greatly missed by all.
Dear American Legion Family and Friends,

As you may be aware, I have three challenges that are designed to grow and strengthen our organization:
- Recruit 100,000 new members.
- Attain 90 percent renewal rate.
- Achieve 100 percent Consolidated Post Reporting.

When we meet these challenges, we will be poised to provide the most influential voice for veteran advocacy and serve as an example of a truly unified body of selfless Americans during a critical time in our nation.

Many American Legion posts experienced periods of closure because of the ongoing global pandemic and were unable to provide face-to-face services for potential new members. With these varying degrees of COVID-19 restrictions and the personal precautionary measures of all Americans, it may be a challenge to meet the 100,000 new member goal. But by working together, we can be successful.

We have over 615,000 expired members for 2019 and 2020 – we have failed our veterans by not keeping their memberships active. Now is the perfect time to engage them, let them know we want them back in our ranks. Use the expired lists located in MyLegion.org to help supplement the traditional new recruit shortfall.

I also have a membership Call to Action between now and March 15 for 90 percent retention:
- Contact and renew expired members.
- Contact expired rosters. The latest renewal notice is in our members’ mailboxes. We need to be there for our members during this challenging period that our nation is facing.

American Legion posts also need to work the DMS lists. There are many members who join The American Legion through this program with the expectation of someone contacting them and welcoming them into the organization. Remember, there is a $5 incentive for the department when someone contacts a 2020 DMS member and gets them to transfer and renew at the local post for 2021.

We need to make working renewals our main priority. If recruiting is about having an organization worth belonging to, retention is about leadership. It is time to roll up our sleeves and put a personal touch on renewals by calling or visiting our members who have not yet renewed.

This is our way of building a Foundation for the Future for The American Legion.

James W. “Bill” Oxford
National Commander
An urgent appeal for Buddy Checks

Dear American Legion Family Members and Friends,

I hope this email finds you well, safe and warm. Many of you are being affected by the current winter storm that is wreaking havoc throughout the country.

The storm has shut down major roads, created power failures for millions and forced many to stay in their homes amid record cold temperatures.

Countless veterans are stuck in their homes. They may be facing dire situations due to the storm. They may need assistance with staying warm, getting food and water, or having a prescription delivered.

That is why I am making this urgent appeal to you to immediately launch Buddy Checks in your areas. As veterans, we cannot let our buddies down, especially in such a critical time.

Check in with veterans to see how your post can provide much-needed assistance to them during this challenging time. To assist Legionnaires, we have toolkits available for you to use. They were produced with the pandemic in mind. However, they can easily be adapted at this critical time.

Join me in reaching out to veterans, as well as friends, neighbors and relatives in your community. It’s quite likely that these check-ins will save lives.

To All American Legion Leaders,

May Meeting to be Virtual

After close consultation with my top advisors, I have made the decision to prioritize safety by eliminating mass gatherings at our upcoming spring meetings.

The National Executive Committee will meet virtually on May 5-6. The national commission meetings that traditionally occur in the days prior to the NEC meeting will also be virtual. I ask our national staff division directors to consult with their commission chairs in scheduling a time that works well for all involved.

These decisions are never easy. Camaraderie is the essence of who we are. As the distribution of vaccines grows wider, I am hopeful that the worse days of the pandemic are behind us. The coronavirus has already taken beloved members of our American Legion Family. I do not wish to lose anyone due to a lack of caution.
Dear American Legion Family Members,

The pandemic continues to create havoc throughout the world, but the skies have brightened a bit with the vaccinations beginning to increase. That being said, we are not back to normal yet, nor will we be in the foreseeable future. As we enter the month of March, virtual meetings will continue at the Auxiliary Department level. The Department Finance Committee meeting will be a Zoom meeting on March 13th.

The Past President’s Parlay luncheon, scheduled for April 24th, unfortunately, will once again be cancelled. The wonderful event highlighting visitations from the National Commanders of The American Legion and Sons of the American Legion, along with the National President, has been cancelled for April 24th, as well. The Department Executive Committee meeting will be held on April 24th, but virtually on Zoom. Any and all members can attend these virtual meetings. Information will be coming to an email near you from our Department Secretary very soon. If you do not receive one, you can contact Ann and she will be able to provide the passcode and website information. We are still monitoring the events daily and I sincerely hope that we will be able to hold a Department Convention this year. Hotels right now are limited to 10 attendees at a function, so I hope that will change within the next couple of months. The National Convention is still being planned for Phoenix. However, the National Executive Committee meeting will be zoomed. The Washington Conference was cancelled.

So, as we approach spring this month, I encourage you to continue to check on members and veterans. The pandemic has been stressful on all of us, but particularly on those who are shut in. Perhaps a short walk outdoors might be something you could do with a member. Remember to wear your mask!

Have you seen our Membership figures? Thank you to our committee, districts, units and members for paying your dues and bringing in new members. We have reached several goals as identified by the National Organization. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could reach 100% this year….more members hopefully means more hands to accomplish events and projects for veterans, their families, enlisted, and our communities.

Our Department chairmen continue to work with Units and members to promote our programs. The American Legion Auxiliary website has been redesigned for easier use. There are also a number of webcasts that are free for members. One for Junior members is coming up. There’s a review of what it means to be an ALA member on another webcast. I encourage you to check the website and register for some of these free workshops online. You’ll get a certificate, suitable for framing, upon completion.

Thanks for all you do! Hope to see you soon in person!!!

Coral May Grout, Department President
Goal achieved! That's right, as of February 15th, we were able to attain our 85% mark at the Department level. Places us in 20th place, which still is not bad. Only 25 Departments were able to make their goal and we were one of them! Nice job District Commanders. We had just one district that was a hand full of members short, however that district was at 100% last year and we are confident they can do it again.

As we all know it gets tougher from here! Our next mark is 90%, which will be on March 10th, 2021. So far we only have one District, District 9, that is at that level currently. Many other districts are at a very close second. Its time to roll up your sleeves and make those calls for renewals, make those recruitments and referrals. Don't forget the hard work that goes into providing you all with DMS/Post 462 data. Make use of them...its rewarding. Additionally, our Department has provided recent members that have not renewed their membership. Check on these veterans, as they may need our help? This is a wonderful list of past members that just need a call (Buddy-check) to find out, what's going on?

It would also be nice to know, who's doing the recruiting? How many and how is it being done. Perhaps we can all take some tips as to your success? Please share!!! I see a couple of post have recruited 20 or more new members since the first of our fiscal year. If they can do it, then we all can do it. Just think, if your post can recruit one(1) member per week/month, what would your membership look like?

I know of one Post Commander that sets his sight on one member per week and although he doesn't reach that goal, he is up to 25 new members this year. He has kept that philosophy for the past five (5) years and has doubled, perhaps tripled, his membership.

I am still thinking of our recent conversation and initiative taken by some of our leadership regarding membership as we move forward. The thought of having a round table discussion with the new Senior Vice Commander, the new Commander, the Department Vice Commanders and District Commanders for a heartfelt dialog on membership is fantastic! I would add the Dept. Adjutant and the membership Co-ordinator as well, as they work on this very important issue day to day. I am asking for all to start preparing for such a discussion, or lets call it a workshop, as we get ready for a banner year.

Thank you all a ton. I know it can be hard work, but as one successful recruiter tells me, all you have to do is ask...its a matter of building and they will come. He also told me, the American Legion sells itself, as we all know, we have proven ourselves over and over the last century. Be well and be safe.

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**Department Membership Standings (2/26/2021)**

District 9: Bristol 92.33%
District 2: Worcester 90.23%
District 5: Middlesex 90.17%
Retirement is a top membership priority for The American Legion as highlighted by National Commander Bill Oxford’s goal for a 90 percent retention rate. To achieve Oxford’s goal, a Call to Action was put forth by the national commander: for all Legionnaires to contact, engage and renew at least 90 percent of the 2019 and 2020 expirees between now and March 15.

"Leadership is being a good communicator," said Oxford during a call last month with regional and national leadership. "The secret, if we expect to get back on track, is to get our message out. We have to make the value of American Legion membership loud and clear. Our job as leaders is to create the excitement and enthusiasm and willingness to do the things necessary to retain every Legion member.

“Retention is about leadership. And leadership is about communication.”

How to meet this Call to Action:

- Access rosters for expired, non-renewed members through MyLegion.org.
- Contact and renew those expired members.
- Transmit renewal dues immediately to department/national.

National Headquarters staff conducted a Training Tuesday session in late January on retention. Watch the video presentation and access the PowerPoint slides on the Training Tuesday web page, legion.org/training/training-tuesdays.

“Something that I would like for all of us to keep in mind, regardless of the color of hat we wear or the position we may hold, is that we are first and foremost members of an American Legion post,” said Jay Bowen, Membership & Post Activities Committee chairman, during regional calls. “So it is not just (the post’s) responsibility to get membership, to get renewals. It is our responsibility to get membership and renewals.

“It’s the leadership of getting this done – to get these Legionnaires to renew.”

615,000+

This is the number of members who have not renewed from 2019 and 2020.

Ask them to renew Today!
Family members of Veterans with at least a 70% combined service-connected disability may be eligible for a stipend up to $2500 per month. The veteran must first meet the criteria for this program, as in his inability to perform some of the activities of daily living and requiring the aid of another. This financial assistance is not restricted to spouses and relatives, and can also be paid to an individual who may not be a family member. This program was developed in response to the ever increasing situation where the spouse or children of the disabled veteran have become his personnel care attendant, resulting in major changes to everyone’s life. Sometimes, the financial, physical, and emotional strain of caring for a loved one can become overbearing. In recognizing these issues, this VA program will educate and train the Caregiver applicants and certify them as such.

After applying for this program, [using VA form 10-10CG], the VA will make the final decision on approval based on the veteran’s best interest. As is true with many other VA benefits, this program’s compensation is non-taxable and the eligibility is not income-based. Information about this benefit is not only available through a service officer, but also by calling 1-855-260-3274, or at www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New CSC Page.asp

Semper Fi
Mike Whalen

The American Legion Congratulates VA Secretary

(INDIANAPOLIS, February 8, 2021) --The nation’s pre-eminent veterans organization congratulated Denis McDonough for his confirmation by the U.S. Senate to serve as the 11th secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“The honor given to you today is matched by the solemn obligation that we all have in fulfilling Lincoln’s promise to ‘care for him who shall have borne the battle’ and to equally advocate for women veterans and the families of all who have served as well,” The American Legion National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford said. “There are many great challenges today facing America’s veterans. Whether it’s the efficient distribution of COVID-19 vaccines or legislation addressing toxic exposures, the VA will always find an informed and eager ally in The American Legion. Though we have and will continue to confront VA policies when we believe they fall short, The American Legion also believes that VA is a system worth preserving for America’s veterans. Congratulations, Secretary McDonough. The American Legion is rooting for your success in enhancing the quality of life for America’s veterans.”

About The American Legion

The American Legion is the largest U.S. veterans organization with nearly 2 million members in more than 12,000 posts across the nation and in foreign countries. Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion is dedicated to the motto of “Veterans Strengthening America.” Legionnaires accomplish this through the organization’s four founding pillars of mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome community programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security and continued devotion to servicemembers and veterans.
The American Legion called on President Biden to issue an Executive Order authorizing the reinstitution of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative and reopening all USCIS field offices abroad for servicemembers and deported veterans.

“The American Legion believes that non-citizen veterans who are honorably discharged and have not been charged or convicted with felonious or heinous crimes should be guaranteed the promise they were made of citizenship,” said James W. “Bill” Oxford, national commander of The American Legion.

Current citizenship status and deportation have no impact on a veteran’s eligibility for receiving benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and veterans who have been deported remain eligible for VA services and care. However, ensuring these veterans are receiving the care they have earned through service is difficult. The American Legion recommended to the White House that VA assess barriers to care for these veterans and develop a plan to address this issue.

The American Legion’s National Executive Committee passed two resolutions in 2018 that affirmed the organization’s dedication in advocating for the rights of servicemembers who seek citizenship during their military service, as well as those of veterans who have been deported.

**Resolution No. 15: Expedited Citizenship Through Military Service**, urges Congress to implement measures within the Department of Defense to ensure the process of naturalization through honorable military service is completed prior to discharge. **Resolution No. 10: Expedited Citizenship Applications For Deported Veterans**, calls on the federal government to grant expedited citizenship applications to deported veterans who were honorably discharged and have no felony convictions.

“It is imperative that we strengthen military naturalization programs, prevent veteran deportation, and repatriate deported veterans. These policies would protect our servicemembers and veterans permanently with recognition for their honorable service to the United States,” Oxford concluded.
American Legion family and friends, for this month’s marketing campaign I would to step outside of the traditional realm of marketing, advertising and fundraising and focus on a more direct person to person program that was established by The American Legion just two short years ago in 2019 and that is The Buddy Check Program. The program is pretty self explanatory and simply involves making contact with current members, expired members and fellow veterans most of whom are potential members and asking them how they are doing. A simple phone call goes a long way towards showing these veterans that The American Legion is there for them during these trying times. The first of our four pillars is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and what better way to facilitate this is there than calling and asking these veterans in person “How are you doing? Is there anything that you need? Perhaps our post, district, department or national organization can offer you that assistance or show you how to get that assistance through one of our many programs or the government”. This personal contact shows that The American Legion is there for them and is genuinely concerned with their well being. It shows them that we as an organization genuinely care about them. Members are more likely to care about The American Legion if they know that The American Legion cares about them.

Mike Davis
Alternate National Executive Committeeman
Marketing Chairman

VELIS NAMED CHAIR OF VETERANS AND FEDERAL AFFAIRS

BOSTON – Recently, the Massachusetts State Senate announced new committee assignments for the 2021-2022 legislative session. Senator John Velis (a member of Westfield American Legion Post 124) (D-Westfield) was named the Senate chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. When asked about his new position, Senator Velis stressed the importance of delivering for those who have served our country.

“Those in our Armed Forces are selfless and courageous individuals who lay their lives on the line in defense of our great country. In turn, we need to do everything we can to make sure we are properly assisting and caring for those who serve and have served.” said Senator Velis, who is a Veteran and Major in the U.S. Army Reserves himself. “Our Veterans have their own unique needs and skillsets, and I am incredibly excited to chair the committee directly tasked with all aspects of Veteran affairs.”

Senator Velis will chair the Joint Committee alongside State Representative Paul McMurtry (D-Dedham). Senator Velis noted that he has filed several pieces of Veteran Affairs legislation on his own already and that he hopes to see several major Veterans Bills be signed by Governor Baker this session. In addition to his chairmanship, Senator Velis was also named Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery, and Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

“Both of these committees will be working on issues very near and dear to my heart,” said Senator Velis. “As someone who went through the special education system in Westfield, and as someone who has had their own struggles in recovery, I look forward to lending my personal insight to these committees as we work on legislation that will benefit residents across the Commonwealth.” Senator Velis will also be sitting on five other joint committees in the 2021-2022 legislative session, including the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government, the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security, the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight, and the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.
After a great deal of careful consideration, the Americanism Commission, in consultation with National Commander James William “Bill” Oxford, announces cancellation of the American Legion National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis on April 9th – 11th, 2021. Youth who are certified by their department as their oratorical champion will be awarded a $5,000 academic scholarship sponsored by the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation and The American Legion.

In accordance with national oratorical rules, departments must certify their oratorical winner to national headquarters by Monday, March 15th, 2021 in order for their champion to be awarded the $5,000 scholarship. Because there will be no national contest, this scholarship is available to department oratorical champions regardless of whether a department conducts its oratorical contest in a live or virtual format.

The American Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program continues to provide for the basic needs of minor children of eligible Legionnaires and military service members through cash grants. As of February 17th, TFA has assisted ten minor children of three veterans throughout the United States maintain shelter, utilities, food, and clothing with over $4,446 in cash grants during calendar year 2021. TFA grants are made possible by the support and financial generosity of Legion Family contributions, the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation, and a grant provided by the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

Fans of the documentary "Boys State" can vote for the film online as part of the 14th annual Cinema Eye Honors. "Boys State" is one of 10 documentaries nominated for the Audience Choice Award. Online voting is open through March 4. The Cinema Eye awards ceremony will take place virtually on March 9.

"Boys State" and directors/producers Amanda McBaines and Jesse Moss are also nominated for Outstanding Feature, while Jeff Gilbert was nominated for his editing of the film, which took viewers into the 2018 Texas Boys State program.

"Boys State" is also on the shortlist for Best Documentary Feature at the Academy Awards; final nominees will be announced March 15.
The American Legion joined five other veteran service organizations (VSOs) in sending a letter to the newly appointed Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough urging him to compel the department to reimburse veterans for emergency medical expenses incurred at non-VA facilities.

“Now that you have assumed your new leadership role, we hope you will put into practice the philosophy you espoused during your recent confirmation hearing,” states the letter dated Feb. 12. “Specifically, you stated that as VA Secretary ‘every decision I make will flow from two principles: Does the decision increase access for veterans and does it improve outcomes for vets?’ We hope this is certainly true when it comes to the VA’s reimbursement of emergency medical expenses by veterans at non-VA facilities.”

The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims ruled in September 2019 on Wolfe v. Wilkie. This ruling certified the case as a class action and that VA’s 2018 reimbursement regulation violates the Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2010. This act requires VA to reimburse veterans for emergency medical expenses incurred at non-VA facilities that are not covered by the veteran’s private insurance. Estimates show this ruling will require VA to pay from $1.8 billion to $6.5 billion in reimbursements to hundreds of thousands of veterans. The VA has since appealed this ruling.

“We are writing to ask that you direct the VA to voluntarily withdraw its appeal and finally pay the veterans their long overdue emergency medical expenses,” the VSOs wrote. “Withdrawing VA’s appeal and correcting the VA’s policy on reimbursement would certainly improve veterans’ outcomes in this matter.”

The American Legion has advocated for more clear policies when it comes to seeking emergency care through non-VA medical providers. Resolution No. 2: Uniform Payment Policy for Emergency Care at Non-Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center Facilities, urged VA to immediately adopt a more definitive policy on Emergency Care diversion that is consistently applied at every VA Medical Center and, that the diversion policy does not result in unfair billing of a veteran transported from a VA Medical Center to a non-VA medical facility for emergency care.

Additional resolutions were passed in 2016 and 2017. Resolution No. 182: Non-Department of Veterans Affairs Emergency Care, affirmed that the American Legion supports legislation urging VA to promptly pay non-VA providers for emergency care and that VA conduct outreach to veterans regarding the effect of delayed payments of claims for emergency medical care by non-VA medical providers. Resolution No. 76: Veterans Emergency Room or Urgent Care Facility Relief, compelled the American Legion to support legislation to amend Title 38, United States Code, to require the secretary of VA to pay reasonable costs of urgent care provided to certain veterans and that VA establish cost-sharing amounts for veterans receiving care at a VA medical center emergency room.

“Veterans needing emergency medical care, at any facility, should enjoy the same legal and financial protections as if they were being treated at a VA medical facility,” said Ralph Bozella, chairman of the American Legion Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission. “Veterans and their families should have no worry that their service-connected health-care benefits are compromised.”
# Boys State Committee

**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
Department of Massachusetts  
617-727-2966  
546-2 STATE HOUSE  
BOSTON, MA 02133

To: All Post Commanders, Adjutants and/or Boys State Chairmen  
From: Mark Avis, Chairman, Massachusetts Boys State

The 2021 Boys State Program will be held at Stonehill College, North Easton, from Saturday, June 12, 2021 to Friday, June 18, 2021. This year, the cost of sponsoring each boy will be $375.00 for the regular tuition, or $550.00 for those who pay for students by the ** handy bring** registration date of April 6, 2021 after the cost is $375.00. Please make your check payable to “The American Legion” and designate “Boys State” in the lower left corner of the check. Please use the tear-off sheet at the bottom of this notice indicating your Post Chairman, as all future correspondence will be mailed directly to them. All checks for the 2021 Boys State Session must be in the hands of Mark Avis Chairman by May 20, 2021. The first 400 applications will be accepted. We encourage you to actively seek outside co-sponsors (e.g. politicians, businesses, or banks) to help pay for these boys to attend.

Boys chosen to attend Boys State must be interviewed by the Post Chairman, and his signature attesting to this must appear on Citizen Applications. Each Post Chairman should explain Boys State in detail to the boys and their parents so that they will know what is expected of them during their stay. The Boys State website (http://www.mabost kếstate.org) contains a wealth of information, including video, photographs, program books, and program descriptions. Students and parents should be directed to this resource for information and announcements.

Beginning in January 2021, we will have applications available via email or regular mail. Please select the mail option on the tear-off sheet if that is how you would like to receive the paperwork. Once we have received payment for your 2021 Boy Stater, detailed instructions will be provided in the application packets that are sent to the Post. **FOR THE 2021 YEAR ONLY 12th GRADE STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE PROGRAM.**

Contact your District Chairmen regarding transportation.

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<td>Michael Davis</td>
<td>451 Union Ave, Framingham MA 01702</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chickenavises@yahoo.com">chickenavises@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>617-335-3241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Bruce Helye</td>
<td>49 Pleasant St, Manchester MA 01944</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bbhelye@hotmail.com">bbhelye@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>978-526-4840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Robert Hicks</td>
<td>1 Daniel Dr, N.Easton MA 02356</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rhicks1@comcast.net">rhicks1@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>508-235-4418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>David Sillars</td>
<td>4 Bliss St, West Wareham MA 02576</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sillyman505@outlook.com">sillyman505@outlook.com</a></td>
<td>508-264-3545</td>
</tr>
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## TEAR OFF SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POST</th>
<th>DISTRICT #</th>
<th>NUMBER OF BOYS</th>
<th>CHECK AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Sponsor(s) Name  
(if applicable)

Chairman:  
Telephone

Address:  
City/Zip Code

High School

High School Contact  
(if known)

___ Please send the application via email to this address:___

SEND TO: **MARK A. AVIS**  
14 SHAW STREET  
PALMER MA 01063
Strengthen the U.S. Military

For decades, the United States has generally been able to deploy forces at a time and place of its own choosing. Today, every domain is contested. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2020 requests $750 billion for national security with just over $718 billion of that amount appropriated for the Department of Defense. This will help offset the effects of seven years of sequestration, and exceeds the defense spending caps set by the Budget Control Act of 2011. In 2018, the Pentagon outlined a planned trajectory of the defense budget that will not be enough to rebuild the military and create separation between the United States and its strategic competitors; this budget goes a long way toward correcting that deficit. The American Legion supports strengthening the U.S. military in these uncertain times with both highly trained personnel and state-of-the-art supportive equipment. Our military men and women deserve no less. The administration, leaders at the Pentagon and Congress must do everything possible to ensure our nation’s citizens and allies are protected.

WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO?

» Continuing to focus on rebuilding the U.S. military to reconstitute and upgrade equipment that has supported over a decade of war and ensure our fighting force has the tools and weaponry to protect the United States and global interests against all forms of aggression.

» Consistently pass the NDAA without the need for continuing resolutions, to ensure reliable, consistent funding, and ensure that all military members, including the U.S. Coast Guard, are paid without delay.

» Increase the budget by 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent to ensure combat effectiveness for the next five years.
Despite the sometimes seemingly grim news, I work to keep my “glass half full”. I have faith in our country. I believe in God. I believe in the US Constitution. I believe in our future and that it will one day be greater than ever. But we must all work together, not as Democrats, Republicans or Independents, nor as based on race, religion, or sex, but merely as Americans.

I ask my fellow Legionnaires to remember that day when we went to the induction center and took the Oath of Enlistment. We put up our right hands and all stated: The Oath of Enlistment (for enlisted): "I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God." The Oath of Office (for officers): "I, _____ (SSAN), having been appointed an officer in the _____ (Military Branch) of the United States, as indicated above in the grade of _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; So help me God."

There are too many in this country that have not taken this oath or even read the oath. We who have taken the oath know and feel to this day the seriousness of those words and our pledge. To question our loyalty is a gross insult to all past, present and future veterans.

Let us not forget the words of the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion: "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together 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 100-percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the 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 comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

If there were ever a time that the Oath of Enlistment and the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution both ring so true, now is the time. We, The American Legion family are needed more than ever. Follow our Four Pillars: Americanism, National Security, Veterans Rehabilitation and Children & Youth. Our voices need to be heard. Reach out to your elected officials at all levels - local, state and national. Let them know your concerns. If we all contact them and continue to do so, they will start to listen. There are more elections next year and they want to keep their jobs! We must continue the good fight. Please join me in this important battle for our country.

May God Bless America, the troops who defend us and their families. Let us also not forget our first responders and health care workers.

John Lenotte, Past Commander, Post 4 Haverhill MA; Past Commander District 8 Essex County and Past Commander, Department of MA. I may be reached at jplenotte@gmail.com
Tango Alpha Lima, The American Legion’s podcast, appears each week by 9 a.m. Tuesdays. Join co-hosts Mark Seavey, Jeff Daly and Ashley Gorbulja-Maldonado as they chat about current stories of interest to the military community and welcome special guests with remarkable stories to share.

All podcasts are available in audio format, as well as a YouTube version, and can be found at https://tangoalphalima

Even better, you can subscribe for free to the Tango Alpha Lima podcast so that you never miss an episode. Here’s how:

• **Download podcasts on your iPhone app:** If you don’t already have the Podcast app on your phone, first go to the App Store on your iPhone, browse to the Podcasts app and tap the “Free” button to install.

Once the Podcast app is on your phone, open it and search for Tango Alpha Lima. Tap the logo and then hit the “Subscribe” button. When the download is complete, the most recent episode appears in the “My Podcasts” section of the Podcasts app. Tap the title to listen to it. You can also click on “See All Episodes” to download and listen to earlier episodes.

• **Download podcasts using iTunes:** Another option is to download podcasts in the iTunes app on your computer and sync them to your iPhone. Open the iTunes store on your computer, browse to the podcast you want to download and click the “Free” button to download it. Click “Subscribe” to subscribe to the podcast and automatically download all future episodes.

• **Download podcasts on an Android device:** First, choose a Podcast app you want to use and download it from an Android App Store. Once downloaded, open the app and use search to locate “Tango Alpha Lima.” From there you can subscribe to it and new episodes will be delivered automatically.

• **Use Spotify:** You can access Spotify via a cellphone or computer. Once you download the app or access the website, you can search for “Tango Alpha Lima” to listen, download and/or subscribe to Tango Alpha Lima.

Another option is to watch the podcast video. All of the Tango Alpha Lima podcasts are available in video format. Watch and listen to each episode on The American Legion’s [YouTube playlist for Tango Alpha Lima](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list= ).
As the Legion Grows it is interesting to watch the big organization map at National Headquarters as it changes from day to day. Two thousand local posts on the map already—with the number multiplying rapidly. Every state and territory in the Union represented. Reports coming in daily of enthusiastic Legion meetings held for organization purposes in every section of America. We know of no organization that has spread so spontaneously, that has been carried on with such enthusiasm. The American Legion as an immense factor in the social and economic life and development of America is established. The import of all is inspiring. It is a true index to the character and the state of mind of the men who were in service. They choose to join an organization of their own creation and which expresses their ideals of service to America. Attempts have been made to rally service men on appeals to selfishness, to ignorance, prejudice, to the worst elements in human nature. But to no avail. Doubtless, those who attempted such things thought the rumblings and grumblings of cantonment and trench truly reflected the inner men. They have raised every standard from greed to sedition but without rallying a response that would match a corporal's guard. So the Legion map spreads from day to day. Every state return swells the number of posts and members. Every branch, every service, every rank and every file of what was the Army, Navy and Marine Corps in the greatest of wars is represented in the Legion. The map at National Headquarters, read in conjunction with the temporary constitution of the American Legion, is the answer to the great question of six months ago—"What are the service men going to do when they return from service?"
American Legion District 10 Oratorical Chairman David Sillars, discusses the rules for the 2021 American Legion Oratorical Contest with three Scituate High School Students of Scituate Massachusetts held at Somerset Post 228 on February 20th. Photo by Somerset Post 228 Adjutant Lisa Borges.

Scituate High School student Molly Ryan, a sophomore, picks a number out of the hat to determine when it will be her turn to deliver her speech on the Constitution. Three students from Scituate High School competed in the American Legion Oratorical Contest for the Southeast Massachusetts. Sophomore Victor Dowker (left) and Senior Grace Scott (front) were also orator competitors. Photo by Somerset Post 228 Adjutant Lisa Borges.

Chairperson of Americanism for Department of Massachusetts Lisa McPhee, Americanism Legion Oratorical contestants Sophomore Victor Dowker, Senior Grace Scott, Sophomore Molly Ryan from Scituate High School and American Legion Post 188 Chaplain David Sillars pose after the contestant. Grace Scott (third), Molly Ryan (fourth) were selected as top finishers and will move up to compete against other Massachusetts contestants. Photo by Somerset Post 228 Adjutant Lisa Borges.
Mary Standish (left) and Jeffrey Montello (right) prepare their paperwork as volunteer timekeepers for the American Legion Southeast Massachusetts Oratorical Contest held at Somerset Post 228, on February 20th. Photo by Somerset Post 228 Adjutant Lisa Borges

Chairperson of Americanism for Department of Massachusetts Lisa McPhee congratulates the two winners, Senior Grace Scott (first left), Sophomore Molly Ryan (second from left) from Scituate High School. Both orators will move on to compete for the Department of Massachusetts title against three other finalists on March 14, 2021 at American Legion Bedford Post 221. The winner will receive a $5000 scholarship. Photo by Somerset Post 228 Adjutant Lisa Borges.

Somerset Post 228 members John and Beth Rodriguez, Navy Veterans, spent Monday night sharing their experience of their days on an aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise (CVN-65) with Girl Scout Troop 1067 on February 22nd.

The Girl Scouts had really great questions and were surprised to hear how big an aircraft carrier is and that it can hold 5,000 sailors. When serving, Beth was in a squadron VP-45 and she took the time to explain her mission as a F-14 and P-3 Orion mechanic.

John talked about the seriousness of his job, maintaining safety on the flight deck and the route to becoming a yellow shirt.

Troop Leader Tracy Rayray, expressed her excitement about the young women getting this opportunity to hear about the Rodriguez’s experience. With COVID, these kinds of things have not been able to happen even in the classroom. COVID rules were followed for the small event. (Lisa Borges and Glenn Doup, not pictured also talked about their general military experiences.)
SPECIAL NOTICE
FROM THE DEPARTMENT

NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION COMMANDER,
NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL SONS OF THE LEGION
COMMANDER, APRIL 24, 2021 BANQUET HAS
BEEN CANCELLED

The combined banquet for the National Staff coming to Massachusetts on April 24, 2021 has been canceled due to limited number of people allowed to attend gatherings. All the money for ad donations & tickets purchased will be refunded.

Milton K. Lashus
Department Adjutant
American Legion Department of MA
617 727-2966
Northeastern Division National Vice President

Dear Legion Family,

There are many questions in all of our lives right now. When will it be safe to gather? When can we get together for meetings and planning? When can we have large events again?

The committee to honor Carolyn Baranowski as the Northeastern Division National Vice President for the American Legion Auxiliary has been listening and thinking. At this point in time we feel it is prudent to postpone Carolyn's Homecoming event to the spring. Hopefully in the Spring we will be able to celebrate fully together and without fear.

So, with that in mind here are the details:

Date: May 16, 2021
Time: 12:00 cocktails - 1:00 Dinner
Place: Storrowtown Carriage House
135 Memorial Highway (Eastern States Exposition Center)
West Springfield, MA
Menu: choice of three meals (Chicken Francaise, Prime Rib, Baked Scrod)
Price - $50.00 per person

Please await further mailings regarding tickets and details. We did want to get this information out for planning purposes.

Jen Jillson Hamre
Covid-19 Vaccination Clinic
For VETERANS

Wednesday, March 10, 2021
10:00AM – 1:00PM

Mount Moriah Baptist Church
24 Pleasant Street
Brockton, MA 02301

IMPORTANT – READ BEFORE ATTENDING
• Masks and physical distancing are required.
• Clinic will be first come first serve.
• Veterans MUST BE at least 55 years old.
• Veterans MUST BE enrolled in VA Healthcare.
• Call (877) 222-8387 to enroll in VA Healthcare.
• VA Boston will be administering the Moderna Covid-19 Vaccine.
• The second dose will be scheduled for April 7, 2021.

For questions contact Kyle Toto, VA Boston Public Affairs, at kyle.toto@va.gov or 617-435-4872
As an influx of veterans seek the COVID-19 vaccine as it becomes available at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals, many want clarity on when and where they will be able to get their vaccines. Under a plan developed by VA in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and federal guidelines, VA is disseminating the vaccine through a phased plan.

According to VA, the phased plan will enable it “to do the most good for the most people” during this time. Under the current plan, VA health-care personnel, veterans living in VA long-term care facilities and veterans who are at higher risk for serious complications or death due to COVID-19 are able to get their vaccines now. These high-risk veterans include those with chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, in-patient spinal cord injuries and disorders, and those with comorbidities. Additionally, family caregivers who are enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers are eligible for vaccination when the veteran they care for becomes eligible, according to VA.

For more information and to determine if you’re eligible to receive your COVID-19 vaccine from VA, visit this web page.

Due to a larger percentage of high-risk patients within the VA health-care system compared to the general public, it may take longer for veterans not at an increased risk to receive their vaccine. In some instances, it may be faster for a veteran to receive a vaccine through their state rather than through VA.

“The American Legion has the utmost confidence in VA to balance the vaccine rollout, while prioritizing the most vulnerable veterans and health-care providers,” said Mario Marquez, director of The American Legion’s Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. “VA has assured us they will provide this balance with site-specific resources, needs, availability and local status of the pandemic.”

In order to be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through VA, a veteran must be enrolled in the VA health-care system. However, veterans attempting to enroll in VA health care for the first time who fall into category 8g, will not be eligible for the vaccine as they are also not currently eligible for VA health care. This is due to a VA change in policy from 2003 which removed 8g eligibility as these veterans do not have a service-connected disability and their income exceeds the allotted amount to qualify for VA coverage. The American Legion supports 8g reintegration into VA health care. At the 2016 National Convention, the National Executive Committee approved Resolution No. 2 that called for the reinstatement by VA. “The American Legion stands behind providing access to VA health care to veterans regardless of their economic status,” Jeff Steele, an associate in the National Legislative Division, told the House Committee on Veterans Affairs on Dec. 2, 2020.

The American Legion is also on record in recent testimony, supporting legislation that calls for standing up a bipartisan commission on veterans health-care eligibility and benefits design. As more vaccines become available, VA plans to offer free COVID-19 vaccines to all veterans receiving VA health care who want one. If you are a veteran who is not currently enrolled or receiving health care through VA, visit this web page to apply.

For additional information, contact an American Legion service officer who is specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families.
New Genomic Tool Advances Minority Vet Medical Research

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched a new genomic research tool designed to help VA researchers learn more about how conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease affect Veterans from minority backgrounds. Debuting in January, the laboratory tool, known as the Ethnic Focused genotyping array or DNA chip, will test more than 750,000 genetic variants, including over 300,000 that are more common in minority populations.

The tool was custom-built for VA’s Million Veteran Program (MVP) which studies how genes affect health. “This is potentially a game changer in medical research for Black and Hispanic Veterans and other members of minority ethnic and racial groups,” said Acting VA Under Secretary for Health Richard A. Stone, M.D. “Thanks to MVP, VA is leading the way in health research that will benefit communities that have traditionally been underserved by the health care system and underrepresented in medical research.”

A genotyping chip is a piece of glass about the size of postage stamp containing hundreds of thousands of tiny bits of synthetic DNA. These DNA probes allow researchers to identify genetic variants in the DNA of research volunteers. The probes also associate certain health traits — like increased risk for a disease or unfavorable reactions to a drug with specific genetic patterns. This can lead to new treatment approaches for patients with those gene profiles. With more than 830,000 Veteran volunteers currently enrolled, MVP is one of the largest health and genetic databases in the world and has generated dozens of influential scientific publications. Currently, over 30 ongoing studies based on MVP data are examining conditions ranging from heart disease and diabetes to post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia and suicide risk. In recent months, researchers have begun using MVP data to study the impacts of COVID-19 on Veterans.

MVP is also one of the world’s most diverse genomic databases, with about a quarter of enrollees belonging to minority groups. MVP has been successful in engaging Veterans from minority communities in part thanks to VA’s Center for Minority Veterans. The two plan to collaborate this year and beyond, to further boost the involvement of Black, Hispanic and other minority Veterans in the landmark genomic research program. Refer to https://www.mvp.va.gov/webapp/mvp-web-participant/#/public to learn more about MVP. [Source: VA News Releases | February 5, 2021++]
Department Calendar of Events

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<td>Finance Committee</td>
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<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Membership Meeting</td>
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<td>03/13/2021</td>
<td>Immediately Following Membership Meeting</td>
<td>Department Executive Committee</td>
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2021 Officers and Committee Appointments and District Rosters have been posted to or website

www.masslegion.org

2021 Membership Standing as of February 26, 2021

Target Date 3/10/2021 90%

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POSTS

Post 6 Lynn
Post 11 Brookline
Post 46 Beverly Farms
Post 50 Clinton
Post 52 Ludlow
Post 90 Melrose
Post 91 East Bridgewater
Post 117 Oliver Ames Jr.
Post 121 Berkley
Post 140 Hull
Post 144 Scituate
Post 145 Westport
Post 147 Rockland
Post 198 Mansfield
Post 199 Townsend
Post 222 Norton
Post 230 26th Yankee Division (Bourne)
Post 236 Haydenville

Post 249 Littleton
Post 254 West Stockbridge
Post 291 East Lynn
Post 298 Housatonic
Post 307 South Dartmouth
Post 308 Orleans
Post 315 Dracut
Post 327 Mission Hill
Post 350 New Marlboro
Post 351 United Forces
Post 366 East Chelmsford
Post 369 William G. Walsh
Post 397 Victor J. Quaranta
Post 399 LTJG W.M. Penny
Post 411 Millville
Post 415 Petersham
Post 425 Freetown
Post 446 Lanesboro
Post 464 Fall River
You may have noticed a refreshed look to ALA Academy. But that's not the only thing that's different — more learning opportunities are available to ALA members.

Did you miss an ALA Academy Live webinar, or would you like to rewatch one? Now you can view recordings of the webinars. You can also access all handouts and slides. In addition to the recordings, there are some features that will enhance the member experience:

- ALA 101 has been updated. This course is useful for anyone in our membership. If it's been a while since you took this course, consider retaking it as a refresher. If you have already taken this course, after logging into the Academy, you can find it in your Learning Center under the completed section.
- Read and leave reviews. You can now see what others thought of a particular course and leave your own reviews for any courses you've taken.
- Discussion forum. Do you have questions about a course or want to discuss something you learned? This is the place.
- View and edit your profile. You can now include a profile picture, personal details, and display your achievements.
- ALA branded completion certificates have been added for every course. Certificates are available once you complete the online courses.

## Auxiliary Membership as of 2/26/2021

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The Annual Detachment Convention in June will soon be upon us. At the Convention this year we will be electing the following positions: Detachment Commander, Up To Five Vice Commanders, Detachment Adjutant, Detachment Finance Officer, Detachment Chaplain, Detachment Finance Officer.

If you are interested in running for one of these positions I will need a letter of intent for the position you are seeking so I can forward this onto the Department. I draw your attention to Resolution 4 - Fall, 2019. Anyone seeking an elected position or an appointment as a Chairman to a Detachment Committee must be able to produce your eligibility in the Sons of The American Legion and upon request be able to supply that documentation to the proper authorities.

That being said I would also like to remind all of you that I will not be seeking reelection for the Office of Detachment Adjutant nor the appointed position of Detachment Finance Officer at this year's Detachment Convention in June of 2021. I am currently in the process of not only working on my personal retirement but also other life changing decisions. Because of this I do not feel at this time I could properly perform the duties and responsibilities required for the two year term of the positions I now hold.

Please send any letters to the address below.

Clifford A. Smith
Detachment Adjutant
Past National Commander
53 Messenger St., Apt C
Plainville, MA 02762

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>% of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 BERKSHIRE</td>
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<td>81.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 FRANKLIN/HAMPshire</td>
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<td>189</td>
<td>68.98%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>372</td>
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<td>67.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 WORCESTER</td>
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<td>652</td>
<td>65.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MIDDLESEX</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>72.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 NORFOLK</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>79.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 SUFFOLK</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>70.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 ESSEX</td>
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<td>263</td>
<td>59.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 BRISTOL</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>51.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 PLY/BARN/NAN/DEUK</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>75.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Hill</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5315</td>
<td>3303</td>
<td>62.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Massachusetts? If so, please follow these basic guidelines for submissions.

- Submit your text in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf). Save your file as the same name as the article, so we can easily keep track of it. Be sure to make it clear who the author is, whether it’s you or if you are just forwarding it to us.
- **WE LOVE ARTICLES WITH PHOTOS**, or any other kind of images! Include photos and/or artwork for articles separately (NOT embedded in the article) as high resolution (300 dpi, or better) JPGs. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article. Let us know in your e-mail of any corresponding captions, and/or name of the photographer if necessary.
- Spell check everything! Especially people’s names, web addresses, etc. You can help us greatly here by simply running your spell check function in your word processing program.
- **E-mail everything directly to us at fmacdonald53@comcast.net no later than the 25th of every month for it to appear in the very next issue.** This way we have plenty of time to work with in case we need to clarify anything with you.

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