

A holiday gift that will keep on giving

By: Dave Rehbein
Foundation President

Every year at this time, many of us are faced with the same problem. We want to give someone in our family a gift for Christmas but there isn't anything that they really need. Mom and Dad have done well and there is really nothing that they need that they can't afford or haven't already bought. Uncle Fred had a successful business for many years and is a very practical man who is happy with the life he leads with not many luxuries. Aunt Mary would rather give gifts than receive them.

So what to do? None of us feel right leaving out a family member on Christmas. Even if they say there isn't anything on their list and that we shouldn't feel bad not giving them a gift. There is one gift though that will fill the need and make Mom and Dad or Uncle Fred or Aunt Mary happy. Odds are they are the kind of people that lived their lives giving to others. You can help them keep giving to others by giving to The American Legion of Iowa Foundation in their name.

What would work to put in the gift wrapping for them? Knowing that you gave a gift to a charitable foundation in their name is worthwhile but knowing what the gift you gave in their name will do moves the gift up a step. We have brochures that list every grant that the Foundation gave this year. Putting that brochure in an envelope will give them a personal stake in those grants, a personal stake in knowing that they helped many people around the state of Iowa.

If they valued education, we gave scholarships at many colleges and universities around Iowa to veterans and their families. If they volunteered or donated in their home community, we provided grants to many community based organizations in Iowa. If they worked with young people, we provided scholarships and program funds for youth organizations both inside and outside of The American Legion family.

One last thing they should know. The gift you gave in their name, their gift, will keep on giving. The structure of The American Legion of Iowa Foundation requires that the gift be placed in trust and the interest earned by that gift be spent but the gift is never spent. It goes on earning interest and continuing to help.

With one gift, you solve many problems. You honor that hard-to-buy-for person in your life. You help that Foundation continue to grow and by growing enable many grants to be fulfilled here in Iowa. Contact Marcia at Headquarters (800-365-8387) for the brochure or just request it when you send the check (720 Lyon, Des Moines, IA 50309) for your gift. Merry Christmas and thank you for remembering the Foundation in your gift-giving.

NVC Tour and Past District Commanders' (PDC) Rally

National Vice Commander Byron Callies visited Iowa the Week of November 13. On Saturday, November 18 members of The American Legion of Iowa family showed their enthusiasm at the annual Past District Commander's (PDC) Membership Rally that was hosted by the Van Meter Post 403. Over 1000 memberships were turned in to be tallied in for the announcement of the Unity Award, which goes to the District whose combined Legion, Auxiliary and SAL membership percentage is the highest. Also, the Commander of the District in first place the day of the Rally receives a Legion watch. These awards will be presented during the Friday evening session at Mid-Winter Conference in February.

The winner of the Unity Award this year is First District and the Legion District Commander, ALA District President and the SAL District Advisor will each receive a Unity Award Plaque. The First District Commander will receive the Legion watch.

There is also an award for the District in first place and the post in the district that has reached the highest percentage of their growth goal by Veterans Day, November 11. The winner of this award will receive the Robert W. Colflesh Trophy at the Mid-Winter also. The winner of the Colflesh Trophy this year is First District and Post 494 of Douds.

Training Opportunity

The American Legion has made a digital training opportunity available to every Legionnaire that wants to know more about our organization. This course includes a section on the history of our organization, the Four Pillars of our organization; Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children & Youth, plus a final exam.

This training is not just for new Legionnaires. Members with many years of membership will also benefit from taking this online course. You will need to register on the website to take the course but that registration will be good throughout the website.

Visit the online training portal at www.legion.org/training and take the course. It is safe to say that you will be surprised at how much you didn't know about The American Legion.

Iowa American Legion Press Association

IALPA Annual Media Contest

Annually at our Department Convention the Iowa American Legion Press Association (IALPA) has recognized members of our American Legion family, who produce newsletters for their local posts/units/squadrons and manage their websites. As President of the IALPA I remind you that it is not too early to consider submitting your contest entries.

There are 4 categories and entries must be from 3 different time periods throughout the year.

1. Single sheet Newsletter
2. Multi-sheet Newsletter
3. Email Newsletter
4. Website

Our goal is to have every Post and/or Unit and/or Squadron have at least a quarterly newsletter or update the Post website every two months.

For details about the media contest go to ialeion.org and click on the link at the top of the page for the Iowa American Legion Press Association. This website provides information about the IALPA and how you can become a member.

You are Welcome to attend the IALPA meeting during the Department Mid-Winter Conference at the Des Moines Airport Holiday Inn on Friday February 9, 2018, at 2:00 pm in Room 292.

Good communication among the members of the American Legion Family and the general public is essential to our continued success.

Legion Reaffirms Support for American Way of Life

The National Executive Committee unanimously approved Resolution #1 at their recent meeting. That resolution reaffirms The American Legion's support for the American Way of Life. It goes on to express support for the government, military and law enforcement leaders who provide and orderly process to our way of life. The resolution ends with the commitment by The American Legion to use whatever means possible to promote a united nation and a united American people. The full text is available in the Legion's digital archives at www.legion.org.

Department Programs Director Position Open

The American Legion of Iowa is currently seeking candidates for the position of Department Programs Director. A detailed job description and application can be found on our website at www.ialeion.org and a position summary appears below. Interested candidates may contact the Department Adjutant John Derner at john@ialeion.org or 800-365-8387. Application and resume may be sent by email or mailed to The American Legion of Iowa, Attn: Department Adjutant, 720 Lyon Street, Des Moines, IA 50309.

Position Summary: Performs a variety of administrative and clerical duties to support and maintain State and National programs of The American Legion. Acts as a liaison between office staff, American Legion members and participants in the state and national programs, and maintains information and databases for all adult and youth related programs.

Assists the American Legion of Iowa with communications and media, both print and electronic, including the Iowa Legionnaire, The American Legion of Iowa website, electronic newsletters, and social media.

The ideal candidate will be experienced in working with various computer programs, office administration and the functions of American Legion. Must be able to work independently with little supervision. Must be well organized, flexible and enjoy the challenges of supporting American Legion programs. Must possess strong written and verbal communication skills, strong decision-making ability coupled with a strong sense for prioritizing work and attention to detail.