



THE MIGHTY 20th DISTRICT

The American Legion

Volume 6 Issue 6

1702 BRICE AVE

June, 2008

Thoughts From The Commander

*The American Legion
20th District
Officers*

**Al B. Saunders #828
Commander**

**Joe Duarte #2
Vice Commander**

**Karen Paris #593
Adjutant**

**Jimmy Tucker #667
Treasurer**

**Irene Lineback #593
Chaplain**

**Ruby Cherry #568
Sergeant-At-Arms**

**Ronald Cherry #612
Judge Advocate**

**Norman Fox #300
Historian**

**Erasmio (Eddie) Serrata #300
Service Officer**

**Richard Holliday
V.A.V.S.**

**Gene Elliott #667
S.A.L. Advisor**

**Ernest Barnes
S.A.L. Commander**

May came in with a big bang starting our with an excellent dinner at #592 as usual. There must be some way we can all use Cajon at our own Post for fund raisers, he is one heck of a steak cook and probably anything else that he prepares. I told Commander Buckmaster that their Steak Night was a well kept secret, but no more.

Allow me to personally thank each of the Post Commanders and members for their attendance at the Boy's State Orientation at Post #2 on May 14th. We had 10 of the 18 Post represented at the meeting and a total of 37 Boys and their families in attendance. Thanks for another great program to Buddy Cooper who always does an outstanding job. For those of you that could not attend, we were able to finish some leftover business from the District Convention by presenting the plaques and pens to our Sergeant-At-Arms, Ruby Cherry and Historian Norm Fox. Thanks to the representative from Post #300, Steve Troudt who attended and accepted the award for Commander Fox.

On Friday, May 16th I traveled to Eagle Pass to attend the 3rd Division Convention which ran through Sunday the 18th. It was a good Convention, with all of our meetings held at the Lucky Eagle Casino facilities. Commander Pablo Aguillon put on a good program with speakers from the Mayors office and the State Representative for the area. Each of the Districts in the 3rd Division, 9th, 10th, 14th, 15th, 20th, and 23rd were represented by the Commander, each of which gave a report of their actions for the past year. The final action of the Convention was the election of the new 3rd Division Commander, which was Rosa Cavazos of Harlingen in the 15th District.

If anyone out there is interested the Division Commander is selected on a rotation

basis and next year will be the 10th Districts turn, followed by the 9th and next will be the Mighty 20th turn.

The main stay of The American Legion and the Mighty 20th District is membership. The Legion can do little without a solid membership base. As of this writing the District stands at 6193 renewals and new members. This is an increase of 109 members since last month and a slight improvement, however we are still 289 members short of goal, and the cutoff for membership will be Tuesday, May 27, 2008. That means that by the time you read this article, it will be too late to submit additional membership to Austin. Finally let me take this opportunity to thank the seven Posts that have made goal, great work and thanks.

Membership 2008—5/23/2008

POST	MBRS	GOAL	%
568	59	45	131.1%
485	166	127	130.7%
828	335	320	104.7%
10	147	141	104.3%
171	227	222	102.3%
579	761	761	100.0%
300	526	526	100.0%
539	207	216	95.8%
593	778	813	95.7%
667	695	729	95.3%
612	282	304	92.8%
2	930	1015	91.6%
592	544	596	91.3%
375	146	165	88.5%
443	105	120	87.5%
336	13	15	86.7%
800	83	103	80.6%
608	90	124	72.6%
399	99	140	70.7%
TOTALS	6193	6482	95.5%



Are You an Atomic Veteran?

You are if you are one of the 195,000 who participated in the occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki or one of the 210,000 confirmed as participants in U.S. atmospheric nuclear weapons tests between 1945 and 1962. Largely as a result of studies of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, exposure to radiation has been associated with a number of disorders including leukemia, various cancers and cataracts. VA provides special priority enrollment for health-care services to "atomic veterans" for radiation-related conditions. In addition, these "atomic veterans" are eligible to participate in the VA ionizing radiation registry examination program. If you are an atomic veteran or know someone who is, please contact the adjutant. We would very much like to hear your opinion about the effectiveness of these programs in the San Antonio area.

POST HAPPENINGS

Come out and support the posts of the Mighty 20th District. Here are just a few of the things that won't fit on the calendar (on page 4):

- 6-8 June—#593 Jubilee in Converse Park
- 14 June —Army Birthday
- 14 June—#593—Flag Disposal—1200
- 14 June—#667—Flag Disposal—1300
- 14 June—#485—Father's Day Dinner and Dance—6PM
- 26-29 June—Department Convention in Corpus Christi

DON'T FORGET YOUR POST CONSOLIDATED REPORTS (CPR)!!

These are due to Department by 1 June. This information is compiled and sent to National so the National Commander and staff know just how hard each post is working the programs.

This report takes 10 minutes to fill out. Don't let the Mighty 20th District down by not completing yours.

See the Adjutant if you have any questions.

***Remember: It's not what you paid to join,
It's what you paid to be eligible!!***



20th District
The American Legion

**1702 Brice Ave.
San Antonio, Texas 78220**

[JUNE 2008]

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 #399 GM-2PM	2 #800 GM 7:30	3	4 #2 GM 7:30 PM #593GM 7:30 PM	5	6 #592 Steak Night	7
8 #375 GM 2 PM #539 GM 2:00 PM #667-Breakfast	8 #485 GM 7:00 PM	10 #592 GM 7:30PM	11 20th District Mtg @579-7:30PM	12	13	14#592 Breakfast #593 Breakfast #2 Steak night Flag Day
15#443 GM 1:00PM Father's Day	16 #667 GM 7:00PM	17 #828 GM 7:00PM	18 #568 GM @ Post #2@ 5:00 PM 40/8-Post 2 @ 7PM	19 #612 GM 6:00 PM	20	21 #593 Darts7:30PM Armed Forces Day
22	23 #300 GM 7:00PM	24	25	26 Department	27 #593 Steaks 6-8 PM Convention	28 In Corpus
29 Christi	30 #579 GM 7:00 PM					

Important information from National Veterans' Benefits Seminars

In July 2007, we issued VA&R Bulletin 22-07 clarifying The American Legion's policy on attorney referrals in the event such a referral is requested by a veteran or an attorney. That bulletin provided policy that must be adhered to by accredited American Legion representatives. Accredited representatives are individuals officially recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to represent veterans and other claimants, seeking VA benefits, on behalf of The American Legion. As stated in this previous bulletin, American Legion policy does not permit accredited American Legion representatives to refer any claimant seeking VA benefits to an attorney, nor are accredited American Legion representatives permitted to make a specific referral to an attorney at any time.

As a point of clarification, accredited representatives of The American Legion receive their accreditation through the national organization and are, therefore, bound by our attorney referral policy. Although the national organization does not have direct authority to prevent Legionnaires and other individuals that are not accredited American Legion representatives from making attorney referrals, it should be understood that making such referrals is in violation of the rules of the national organization. In the past few months American Legion posts and departments have been contacted by various attorneys, law firms and other groups requesting the use of meeting space and other forms of support for their efforts to conduct veterans' benefits seminars or workshops to educate veterans and their dependents about, and provide assistance with, obtaining VA benefits. Some of these individuals and groups are providing these services free of charge while others are charging fees. Some are providing basic information and assistance free of charge but charging for more in-depth service such as actual representation before VA in an appeal.

It is in direct conflict with The American Legion's policy regarding attorney referrals for an American Legion post or an American Legion department to sponsor or participate in such events because such involvement amounts to a referral. Moreover, an American Legion post or department hosting such an event could be interpreted as endorsement of or an affiliation with these individuals or groups, which is against American Legion policy. Therefore, American Legion departments and posts **should not** host these events or otherwise do anything to imply endorsement of such individuals or groups.

The American Legion has provided free service and assistance to our nation's veterans, regardless of membership, since 1919. We will continue to provide this service. Questions or issues involving VA-related matters that cannot be properly addressed by the post service officer should be referred to the professional Department Service Officer (DSO) or National VA&R Division staff. American Legion posts that would like to host a veterans' benefits seminar or information workshop are encouraged to request the support of their department or state service officers for such events.

Please contact Steve Smithson, Deputy Director for Claims Service, VA&R, at ssmithson@legion.org or (202) 263-2985 if you have any questions or concerns.

PETER S. GAYTAN, Director
National Veterans Affairs and
Rehabilitation Commission