

JUNE 2025

Blue Cap News



Independence Day: A Reflection on Freedom, Service, and the Sons of the American Legion

As fireworks light up the skies this Fourth of July, we are reminded not only of the birth of our nation but also of the enduring values that define us: **freedom, sacrifice, and service.**

Independence Day is more than just a celebration of America's founding—it's a tribute to every generation that has defended the liberties we hold dear. From the patriots of 1776 to the men and women serving in uniform today, this day honors the courage and commitment that safeguard our nation's independence.

As members of the **Sons of the American Legion**, we are called to carry that legacy forward. Though we may not all wear the uniform, our connection to service is rooted in the sacrifices of our veteran family members. Our mission is to honor that heritage by giving back—through community involvement, youth programs, patriotic education, and supporting veterans and their families.

This July, let us reflect on the freedoms we enjoy and the responsibility we share to protect and preserve them. Whether you're volunteering at a parade, helping with a youth drone class, supporting our Post 97 rummage sale, or simply raising your flag at home, know that your service matters.

The strength of our country lies not only in its history, but in the commitment of citizens like you—sons and daughters of liberty—who choose to serve with pride, purpose, and unity.

Happy Independence Day. Let freedom ring—loud and proud.



Membership Renewals Begin Soon: Keep the Legacy Alive in Arizona

As we celebrate our nation's freedom this July, it's also time to renew one of our most important commitments — our membership in the **Sons of the American Legion**.

Whether you're a longtime member or just joined last year, your renewal keeps our mission strong across Arizona: **honoring our veterans, serving our communities, and mentoring the next generation.**

Why Renew?

Your membership directly supports local initiatives — from youth programs and patriotic events to community outreach and veteran support. Across Arizona, squadrons are making a difference, and your dues help keep that momentum going.

Renewing also means continuing the proud tradition of honoring your family's military service. Each member carries forward a legacy of dedication, patriotism, and service.

Membership Drive Ideas for Arizona Squadrons

Here are some impactful ways squadrons across the state can boost renewals and bring in new members:

- **"Renew for Freedom" Campaign:** Tie renewal to patriotic pride — offer flag pins, decals, or hold a "Freedom Breakfast" for early renewals.
- **Legacy Wall:** Feature members and their veteran relatives at your Post or online. Showcase the generational impact of military service in Arizona families.
- **Digital Outreach Blitz:** Use Facebook, email, and texts to share renewal reminders, upcoming events, and the impact of your squadron's work.
- **Renew-and-Win Raffle:** Reward renewals with entry into a local prize drawing — SAL merchandise, gift cards, or event tickets.
- **Open House Events:** Host a "Why I Serve" night and invite local sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of veterans to learn more and join on the spot.
- **Free SAL Hat or Patch for New Members:** A small thank-you item helps new recruits feel proud and connected.
- **Squadron Spirit Week:** Host themed days like "Wear SAL Gear," "Drone Demo Day," or "Bring a Buddy Night," ending with a community cookout.
- **POW/MIA Remembrance Drive (Sept 20):** Host a meaningful renewal event in honor of our nation's missing service members.

Let's Grow SAL Across Arizona

Every renewal strengthens our collective voice and impact. Every new member brings new energy and ideas. Together, Arizona squadrons are preserving patriotism, building leaders, and serving those who served.



Religion and The American Legion

The American Legion has a For God and Country Program. When our forefathers came to this land, they brought some beliefs and ideas with them. We can never sanction some of the things our forefathers did, but we can take heart in one belief they had – the belief in Almighty God. Show me a land where there is no belief in God, and you will show me a land where a lot of people hurt severely. Within our nation and to the shores where many of our citizens have gone, there has been kept alive the fact that we have people who are for God and Country.

“For God And Country” The first four words of the Preamble are “For God and Country.” Our country has spiritual foundations. If our spiritual foundations crumble in our nation so goes the nation. The American Legion recognizes that if our nation is to remain great and permanent, God must be an essential part of Americanism. God is the source of all fundamental interests. “The highest role a nation can play is to reflect God’s righteousness in national policy and to promote God’s purposes in all of life’s relationships. The greatest and most significant heritage of our country has been its spiritual heritage. Apart from faith in God, American history has no meaning. In this faith, our institutions were created, our laws enacted, and our liberties secured. Our aim must be the same as that of our Country’s Founders, ‘that religion must permeate every phase of living.’” The American Legion is continuing a nationwide effort to bring all Americans closer to the Creator, who so bountifully blessed this Country.

Our founding fathers had some wise ideas in their beliefs. The American Legion has recognized this and emphasizes the spiritual foundations upon which our nation rests. Wise Legionnaires believe God needs to be in the religious, social, economic and political life of our nation. **Without God, there is no true Americanism**

- Source – Chaplain’s How to...Manual



Jim Borgman
Americanism Chairman



Sons,

Congratulations to Commander Bryant on his year. The Detachment has made great strides under his leadership. He continued the success that began under PDC Noah McMullen and really skyrocketed under PDC Chris Balsley during his year. We are the first and only Detachment out of 55 worldwide that operates the majority of their own program. We would not be where we are today if it was not for the leadership of these

Commanders and their foresight into moving the Detachment of Arizona to be the premier Detachment that it is. We must also thank our Department leadership for allowing us the opportunity to proceed in this manner. They have put great faith in us and we are proving Arizona Sons have the right stuff. Arizona is on the leading edge of the future and proving the viability and ability to do this. Also, none of this would be possible without the outstanding SAL members and Squadrons that make up this Detachment.

I would like to thank the Area Vice Commanders, Chas Bird, Charlie Sullivan and Don Whalen, who work hard all year in their Areas to make sure the Squadrons have everything they need to operate successfully and give many hours of devoted work and guidance to each Squadron they represent. On the National front we have been so proud to have the team of National Vice Commander Dan Ashley, National Sergeant at arms Matt Griffis, NEC Joe Roberts and Alt. NEC Chris Balsley being from this great Detachment and representing us so well.

Thank you to every member of the Detachment of Arizona. You are the true core of why Arizona works! You are not just members of the Detachment of Arizona, every single one of you ARE the Detachment of Arizona and an important part of why we succeed so well at everything the Detachment of Arizona takes to task. Thank you to every single one of you!

We now look forward to next year and what Arizona will do to lead the way!

Dennis Pittman
Adjutant
Detachment of Arizona



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Prideful or Humble living

I believe that it's human nature to be prideful. Ever been so excited about a new car and had to show it off boasting of its beauty? How about a beautiful lawn that you spent endless hours getting it just right? Pride is natural, but investing hours of attention to details just may be detracting from other more important ways to spend your time, and boasting in a prideful way may lend someone to think you could be showing your superiority; this could very well be borderline sinful.

Amanda Idleman of Christianity.com recently wrote about just this subject, noting "God wants us to be open, teachable, and obedient people. When we believe we have all the answers and fail to trust God to meet our needs, his anger starts to rise against us. **One thing God will not violate is our free will, and pride essentially tells God we don't need him.** It's a choice to be independent that he cannot undo until we humbly come back to him.

This posture separates us from God, making it impossible for him to lead us as our good Father. Our way without God is always the hard way, even if, in the moment, it seems better to feel in control. God is the only one who knows all things and holds all things together. Our efforts to force his hand and manipulate our circumstances only alienate us from God because he is the only one who has the power to take care of us with all grace and knowledge.

How do we remain humble so grace can abound in our lives? Humility starts with repentance. It's a posture that recognizes that we need a Savior every day. A repentant heart is one that is dependent on God's grace to cover its insufficiencies."

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." - [James 4:10](#)

"A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor." - Proverbs 29:23

Be prideful but be sure to keep it in check!

I'd like to remind everyone that if you know of someone in need of prayers, for either condolence or illness, please keep me informed so that prayers and perhaps a card can be dispatched. I can be reached at 847-456-1843 or jaborgman9@gmail.com.

**Jim Borgman,
Detachment Chaplain**



Area A Sons have really stepped up and worked hard for their membership this year. Over 10 squadrons hit the 100% goal early, and at least 16 squadrons are at 100% before convention. It has been a pleasure to travel to various different squadrons around Arizona, and the good work really shows with Area A first to reach 100% overall.

A standout for me this year has been Squadron 97, who under the direction of Commander Meyer took their membership over 100% using an ingenious drone program that helped draw in younger members. Squadron 97 was also able to secure over \$40,000 in donations to directly help their Service Officers help Veterans.

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Legion Baseball at Kino Sports Complex with my fellow Sons and Legion family was a great highlight of one of our pillars – Youth. All teams playing expressed their gratitude to the sponsoring Posts and to the Legion for carrying on this storied tradition. In continuing the Youth theme, I had privilege to see the graduation for Boys State in their new home at UofA. The speed and the strength of the friendships that were formed during this week were amazing to see. Thank you to all the Staff for their hard work on this program, including our very own Detachment Commander, Mike Bryant!

Thank you to all the Squadrons for their effort and dedication over the past 2 years, and while I step back from Legion obligations to fill new shoes as a father, I know there are even bigger accomplishments to come that they will achieve. Never stop innovating at your Squadron and create new avenues to gain and keep the attention of new, younger members. The future lies with our youth!

For God and Country,
Chas Bird
Detachment Vice-Commander, Area A



COMMANDER'S CORNER



DETACHMENT COMMANDER BRYANT'S FINAL REPORT

At the time of my writing this report, I have five more get-ups left in my term as Detachment Commander. It is my privilege to thank each of our Detachment members for the honor of serving as your Detachment Commander. The Detachment membership has once again shown me how outstanding this organization represents the Sons of The American Legion. I'm truly at a loss for words and can't fully express my gratitude, so please accept my sincere thanks. Once again, our Detachment has grown in membership, volunteer manhours, and donations given to a multitude of deserving charities. Your support for The Four Pillars mission continues to amaze me. Keep excelling, and the Detachment will stay on track to become the nation's best. I'm hoping to see you at the State Convention this Saturday June 28th in Chandler. Your participation at the State Convention is needed as you will be electing your Detachment Officers for the 2025-2026 membership year. The voice and vote of your squadron are crucial in securing our continued progress as the Detachment of Arizona. Please reach out to me and the other officers of your Detachment and let us know what we need to improve upon, we are always striving to meet and exceed your expectations, but we cannot without your helpful suggestions. In closing, it truly has been a slice of heaven, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!!

For God and Country,

Mike Bryant
Detachment Commander

salcomander@azlegion.org

(602) 463-1828

GARY MANWELL READY TO LEAD

ARIZONA AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE GRADUATE

FORMER E BOARD SQUADRON 27

FORMER SR VICE SQUADRON 27

CURRENT NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CONSULTANT

CURRENT NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TRAINING AND
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ADVISOR

OUTREACH PROGRAM

CURRENT DETACHMENT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

SONS OF THE
 AMERICAN
LEGION

FOR
DETACHMENT COMMANDER
MEMBERSHIP YEAR
2025-26

TOGETHER WE CAN
REACH GREAT HEIGHTS!

GREAT LEADERS DON'T SET OUT TO BE A
LEADER
THEY SET OUT TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE
ROLE
IT'S THE GOAL!





 **VOTE**

Lance Bymers
Detachment of Arizona
Vice Commander Area A

CANDIDATE FOR
**DETACHMENT
VICE COMMANDER
AREA A**

(Membership Year 2025-26)

SONS OF THE

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

BE THE ONE



Current Positions:

- Squadron 36 Commander
- Detachment Awards Chairman
- Detachment Finance Committee

Prior Service:

- Squadron 36 Vice Commander
- Squadron 36 Chaplain
- Squadron 36 E-Board



Hello Fellow Sons!

As we head into the heart of summer, our communities fill with flags, parades, and celebrations. The Fourth of July reminds us not only of our independence but also of our **responsibility**—to serve, to remember, and to lead. It's in that spirit that I welcome you to this month's edition of *The Blue Cap News*.

Across Arizona, Sons of the American Legion squadrons are stepping up like never before—whether it's supporting local youth programs, volunteering at American Legion posts, or honoring our veterans through ceremonies and service. These acts may not make national headlines, but they *do* make a difference in our neighborhoods, our Posts, and our lives.

As your editor, I see the incredible passion and purpose our members bring to their squadrons. Whether you wear the blue cap or just joined last week, **you're part of something bigger**—a living legacy of service and patriotism that stretches back generations.

Let's continue to lift one another up, lead with purpose, and grow the mission of the Sons of the American Legion—not just with words, but with action.

So here's to a summer of service, connection, and pride.

Got an event or something to promote? Submit an advertisement for the Blue Cap News with just a \$5 (per month) donation to the Commander's charity — COTA (Children's Organ Transplant Association).

Send donations (made payable to SAL COTA FUND) to:

Detachment Adjutant
4701 North 19th Avenue, Suite #200
Phoenix, Arizona 85015
(make sure you put your Squadron on the memo)

Submit your stories or ad info to:

✉ squadron97sal@gmail.com

Let's keep the SAL spirit strong and share your stories with the whole Detachment!

Stay blue-capped and proud,

John "Radar" Meyer

— The Editor

The Blue Cap News