

## Issue: Value of Membership

### Message Points:

- The American Legion is comprised of 55 state-level "departments" in each of the 50 states as well as the District of Columbia, France, Mexico, Philippines and Puerto Rico. There are approximately 14,000 local "posts" throughout the state level.
- Facts about membership in The American Legion, the nation's largest veterans organization.
- The 2009 current national membership tally — roughly 2.5 million — is consistent with the year-end totals for 1954 through 1986.
- The American Legion extended its service in communities across the country through the development of 72 new, revitalized posts in 2008.
- One of the newest and fastest growing activities in The American Legion, Legion Riders, raised \$540,000 by the 2009 Legacy Run to Louisville in support of The American Legion Legacy Fund—a fund which provide scholarships to the children of active duty troops who died in the war on terrorism since September 11, 2001.
- The American Legion attracts younger veterans. Active-duty members are eligible to join - and they are joining. In fact, The American Legion has over 500,000 members who joined under the War on Terrorism, Persian Gulf, Lebanon/Grenada and Panama War periods of eligibility. Today's active duty service members continue to join.
- The American Legion created a task force especially designated to assist Persian Gulf veterans and their families. The task force has helped individuals receive direct compensation and needed support through the service provided by The American Legion.
- The American Legion is "Still Serving America." This is only a part of what The American Legion did "for God and Country" in program year 2008-2009.
- Donated more than 4 million hours of service to communities.
- Post Service Officers handled more than 130,000 cases of veterans seeking benefits and just compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Devoted almost 2.3 million hours of volunteer service to Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals.

- Donated more than 88,000 pints of blood to collection centers nationwide, making The American Legion the nation's single largest blood donor.
- Annually spends nearly \$33 million on programs benefiting children and youth.
  1. Awarded more than 29,000 medals to Junior ROTC Students
  2. Sponsored almost 16,000 American Legion Boys State delegates.
  3. Sponsored more than 2,000 Scouting units serving 58,000 youngsters.
  4. Sponsored more than 2,300 American Legion Baseball teams and an additional 1,500 youth baseball squads.
  5. Awarded more than \$4 million in college scholarships to deserving students.