

YEAR END REPORT
Sons of The American Legion
2018 – 2019

Good afternoon. As this year draws to a close, it's time for me to inform this delegation of the accomplishments of the Sons of The American Legion.

Membership: We finished fiscal year 2018, at the #6 spot in the Nation with a 106.8%. Then something bad happened.....2019! We started off pretty good, then things started to really slow down. Next thing you know, we're down at the bottom of the list. There were many reasons for this: but first and foremost, as the Commander, it was ultimately my responsibility and I fell short. We only missed our target dates by one month. When we needed to be at 70%, we just got to 60%, when we needed to be at 80%, we just got to 70%, etc..... We felt that we were going to come into this Convention at approx. 94%, which isn't terrible, but short of expectations none the less. Then something great happened! On June 3rd, I received a series of messages from Adjutant Akers informing me that while at Boys State, a membership push took place and the Legion left Tuscaloosa with approx. 160 brand new SAL Members from Boys State! Needless to say, myself and my membership Chairman were pretty excited about this news. We had a little membership push of our own going on at the same time, So, when the dust settled, we combined the two, and it gives me great pleasure to inform this delegation that as of the start of this Convention, the SAL is currently sitting at #9 in the Nation, at 103.5%. And we still have until December 31st to get all of our outstanding renewals taken care of. I'm confident that at the end of fiscal 2019, we'll be one of the top 2 or 3 in the Nation. I'd like to thank Adjutant Akers for the work he did on behalf of the SAL at Boys State, and also throw out a thank you to Mr. Gillespie for all the times he dropped what he was doing to try and figure out a few hiccups we had along the way.

Veterans Retreat: The Retreat was once again a success. This year the SAL changed up a bit and brought in a Celebrity Chef to prepare a 5 Star meal for our veterans. The meal was great! A good time was had by all. The SAL assisted the Auxiliary with their Friday night Southern Boil, and then the Auxiliary turned around and helped us with the great meal Saturday. My 2 years as Commander saw an increased level of teamwork between the SAL and the Auxiliary. I'm confident that will continue. The SAL was involved with more of the Retreat than just a good meal. PDC Gibson took care of the registration of everyone, while Mike Little and Aaron Phillips were weekend long fishing guides. Aaron was also the karaoke DJ after the meal Saturday. They took advantage of my Naval experience and had me peel potatoes for about 2 hours! Thank you to Willie and Greyson for helping me with that. Coach Carl and Willie lended their expertise to the Auxiliary for their Southern Boil. So you see, the SAL was a big part of the Retreat last year, and will be again this year.

Junior Leadership Camp: I had the privalegde to attend the Junior Leadership Camp in July. It was a good time. SAL Vice Commander Terry Robinsky performed his magic show that weekend and it was a hit! Thank you Terry.

I made 2 trips to the National Cemetary in Montavello this past year. The first one was the Spirit of '45 Ceremony, with a nice reenactment of the flag raising at Iwo Jima. The second trip would be the Wreaths Across America Ceremony in December. It was nice to see Commander Harry, President Sharon, ALR Director Rocky and myself all there. I think its a good visual to the community to see ALL factions of the American Legion represented at certain events.

This year, Alabama had the pleasure of hosting the American Legion National Commander, The National Auxiliary President, and this weekend, we have the SAL National Commander. I'm not sure if that's ever happened before, but I'm glad it happened this year.

In October, myself and 2 other SAL members attended the Post Installation of Officers Banquet for Post 1948. The SAL made a very nice donation to the Post, and once again Aaron Phillips provided entertainment for the evening.

In November, we attended the Veterans Day Banquet and Parade in Birmingham. The Parade was a total washout with storms, but the sidewalks were lined with folks

In December I had the honor of participating in the Christmas Caravan at the Birmingham VA Hospital. What an incredible experience! It was good to see other SAL Caps walking the hallways of the hospital handing out gifts that night.

This last year brought me to a couple VA Homes/Hospitals. I'd like to thank NEC Frasier for the tour of the Tuscaloosa Facility. What an incredible facility.

I attended a handful of 100 Year Celebration Banquets, and made several District meetings throughout the State. I'd like to thank all the District Commanders that welcomed me to their meeting and allowed me to say a few things. I was treated well everywhere I went. I'd especially like to thank District 33, my District, for the generosity they showed me in donating to my National Vice Commander campaign. Thank you very much Matt and JD. The 33rd District also hosted what I hope is an annual event. We had a golf outing the end of March. It was a beautiful day of fun, ruined by a round of golf, where no Legion business was conducted. Just a lot of fun. However, at the end of the day, there were some tired folks that did a lot of work to make this thing happen, and I'm pleased to announce that the outing took in approx. \$14,000.00!!! The profits were split between various SAL and Legion projects. Including the War Memorial and The ALR Legacy Scholarship. Thank you so much Aaron and JD, and everyone else that was a part of this.

Myself and a handful of SAL members travelled the State handing out boxes of board games donated by Operation Supply Drop. We gave large boxes of games to: National Guard Bases, VA Facilities, The Veterans Retreat, Airport USO Facilities, and Post 1948 in Montgomery, to name a few.

We did manage to Charter a new Squadron this year. Thank you to Tony Berenotto and John Burke for allowing me to be a part of this, and for all your hard work. I wish your new Post much success.

I'd like to go back and touch on the Christmas Caravan in Bham for a minute. I want you to know just how much it means to me to hear someone from your parent organization to say "Thank You" Overall, this was a very moving experience for me. From the trip to the hospital, to the correspondance received later on. You'll never know how appreciated this is. To all of us at the SAL!

Well, as you can see, the SAL is an organization that actually does quite a bit in support of our Veterans, and our organization. It has been a pleasure to be the Commander for the last 2 years. I leave this office, and will be installed as the next National Vice Commander during the Convention in Indy. I'd like to thank all of you that had a hand in helping make this a reality. From your fiscal contributions, to your endorsements, to your kind words of encouragement, I assure you that I will be the best National Vice Commander that's ever represented the Great State of Alabama. Again, thank you so much.

Commander, with nothing further, this concludes my Annual Report of the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Alabama.

>>>>Original Signed On File<<<<
For God and Country
Blair Miles
Commander, Sons of The American Legion
Detachment of Alabama