



Centennial Post 209

P.O. Box 15461
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JULY 1986

Fellow Legionnaires

Once again we approach a new Legion year with great expectations. Last Sunday we wrote the closing chapters of the 1985-86 year and began a new chapter in the history book for the 1986-87 year. A new slate of officers were elected at the Arvada Department Convention. The new Department Commander is John McCormack and the new Sr Vice Commander is Tillie Gorsuch. The senior Vice Commander campaign and election proved to be very exciting because there were three contenders for this office. My re-election bid for Jr Vice Commander was successful and I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Tom Bender and Big John for their splendid support at the Convention. Without you guys helping I never could have held a hospitality room. Thanks guys for everything.....

Those of you who have never attended a Department Convention should plan to attend the next one. The Convention got under way with a slowpitch softball game and Picnic on Thursday. This was preceded by a tour of the Coors plant. Friday morning was the formal opening Ceremony with the National Commander Dale Renaud in attendance. There were also several other dignitaries present including representative from many of the contenders for Congressional office in this election year. This was the highlight of the Convention when the National Commander addressed the assembly.

The normal business of the convention was conducted over the following two days. Culminating with the Memorial Service Sunday Morning. During the course of events many important things were discussed, i.e., Budget, Crunch, Nursing Homes, VA Hospital outpatient/inpatient care or lack of, Membership and many more. It became evident that we must strive diligently to increase our membership and to let our Congressional delegation know our concerns.

It becomes increasingly more apparent with each passing day that if we are to retain any of our hard earned Veteran benefits and rights we must standup and fight for them anew. We can only do this by increasing our membership.

Several of our post members received Citations of Appreciations from Nations for their efforts in support of a National survey and study of Viet Nam Veterans. These certificates will be presented at the next post meeting, Thursday, 17 July 1986.

It's dues time once again and our new membership cards are in. I would certainly like to see every member of the post have an earlybird emblem on their new membership card. You can have one if you renew your membership during the next two months. We failed to make our membership goal this past year, however we will make it this year with your help, so lets get started early.

Our Bingo is doing terrific in number of players coming out to play each week, but we are hurting for Bingo workers to accomodate them. It is very difficult to run an efficient bingo game with 6 or 7 people trying to accomodate 150 to 180 players. I know full well that each of you could at least donate 2 or 3 hours per month to assist with our only revenue producing effort Contact Dave Thomas and let him know when it's convenient for you to work.

We are approaching a point where we are once again looking at th possibility of attempting to secure land or a post home. We are in dire need of you input as to what direction we should take. Come out and offer your suggestions so you can be a part of the planning process.

We are planning our first annual post picnic for the 26th of July 1986. It is tenatively planned to held at Turkey Creek Ranch. We need to know ASAP who will be in attendance and how many. Please contact George Wood (Woody) at 574-0339 and let him know how many in your family or friends will attend. All members and guest are invited -- So come out and make this a real nice family outing and get to know your fellow Legionnaires.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

NEAL L. THOMAS, JR
Commander

MEANS TEST ADMIN PROCEDURES EYED, VETERANS' MEDICAL CARE TOP PRIORITY

Washington (ALNS) -- As new administrative procedures concerning VA medical care take effect July 1, The American Legion has vowed to monitor their implementation to protect the best interest of veterans.

On July 1, those veterans seeking VA medical care for non-service connected disabilities will be subjected to a "means test" which will try to establish the resources they have at their disposal to help pay for such care. In addition, the VA will attempt to recover from veterans' insurance policies some of the cost of the care effective Oct 1.

As the only veterans organization to oppose the mean test, The American Legion has vowed to monitor the progress of its implementation, and try to ensure that veterans deserving medical treatment are not denied it because of bureaucratic papershuffling.

In a letter to VA Administrator Thomas K. Turnage, the Legion's director of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation outlined the concerns of the nations largest veterans organization with the proposed regulations for implementing the means test.

"We accept the fact that (the means test) is now law, and feel that it is a responsibility of this organization to express our concerns," wrote Robert E. Lyngh.

Amongh the main concerns with the new law is Congressional language which, in the Legion's opinion, would provide an entitlement for health care from the VA to eligible veterans. The law says that hospital care "SHALL (emphasis added) be provided," changing from the language used heretofore, "may be provided." This subtle change could have far-reaching implications for VA provided health care.

"There is a vast difference of opinion regarding the legal interpretation of the term 'shall,'" Lyngh said. He pointed out that the leadership of the House Veterans Affairs Committee trumpeted this change as its attempt to guarantee care for deserving veterans. However, the VA's general counsel said that the change has no effect whatever, since there are no funds provided for paying for the change. Lyngh urged the VA chief to resolve the issue.

The law also requires non-service-connected veterans in VA facilities, if their incomes are over a certain level, to pay the equivalent of the Medicare deductible (currently \$492) to the VA to defray the cost of their care. No provision is made for veterans who transfer from a non-VA hospital, where the deductible may already have been paid for Medicare coverage. As it stands now, the veterans would have to pay the amount twice.

"This would be unfair to the veteran," Lyngh wrote to Turnage, "and the regulations should be amended so the inequity would not be allowed to happen."

In addition, there is no provision to reimburse a veteran for a deductible paid for treatment of a condition later determined to be service-connected. The Legion urges that this section be clarified.

VA guidelines for implementing the changes include procedures to charge veterans for simply showing up at a VA facility and filing out eligibility forms for later admission.

"A veteran should not be charged for medical care that is not given," Lyngh said. He likened the procedure to a private doctor's charging for a patient to call and make an appointment.

The agency plans to establish priorities for admission to the hospitals despite the fact that neither the House nor the Senate intended for priorities to be set. The Legion questions the VA's plans to implement the law calling for a means test. Under federal administrative procedures, changes in federal regulations have to be published in the Federal Register and interested parties have 30 days to respond.

The comment period for this law ended June 27, and the VA had until July 1 to make final decisions concerning the implementation. At the meeting of the Legion's Veterans Planning and Coordinating Committee June 10-11, here, a VA official assured that all comments would be considered and then seriously, and any changes in the rules governing the means test would be transmitted to all VA centers.

BITS AND PIECES

Those of you who have not received your initiation package or have not been sworn in and would like to do so please contact me at 574-0339.

There are still a few who have not paid their 85 dues, please check your cards and make sure your dues are current.

General Membership Meeting 17 July 1986, 7p.m. Inside Rustic Hills Mall. Plan to attend.

AUXILIARY CORNER

Ladies, I am very excited about our new members and would like to say "Welcome, Welcome!" It takes people to carry out our mission. Let us continue to grow.

Those of us who attended the Department Convention in Arvada had a great time. The meetings were very informative and new officers were elected for the 1986-87 American Legion and Auxiliary year.

Thelma Gardener from Center, Co. was elected Auxiliary President for the Department of Colorado. She is a very special lady and one who is worthy to hold that position.

Among the many gifts given to outgoing President Nellie McNeal, Unit 209 presented herewith a lovely plaque. This plaque commemorates the chartering of our unit on December 28, 1985. Commander Thomas also presented a plaque to Alt National Executive Committeeman James McNeal for the Chartering of Post 209 in 1975, when he was then the Department Commander.

Our Unit Treasurer, Margrey Johnson disbursed the votes for our Unit. I was appointed Personal Page to the Department President for the Departments Convention in Arvada and National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. I was also elected Alternate Delegate to National Convention for the Department of Colorado Auxiliary. I was also appointed Sgt-@-Arms for District 7 Auxiliary by new District 7 President Betty Andrews. Unit 209 is involved and we need everyone's help to fulfill our commitments to God and Country.

Our small unit came away from Department Convention with three certificates of award. Can you believe that? Just think of what we can do if we really get in there and try! We are working on a calendar for 1986-87 year. We would like to raffle something off once a month at Bingo. Connie Wood is starting it off with her donation of an Afgahn. Each female will be sent a calendar, whether you are in the Auxiliary or not, we will be soliciting your support. Thanking you in advance.

JUNE THOMAS
President, Unit 209