

NO MORE EXCUSES

Danny Smith - National Membership Committee

Over the years I have heard it all, people making excuses for not getting their squadron's membership collected, processed, and turned into Headquarters. Well I'm here to tell you that we will accept no more excuses. You should start collecting the new membership year's dues as soon as the new cards are out, usually around the end of June. Yes there are still six more months left in the current membership year, but the State and National organization work on a fiscal year that culminates with the respective levels convention. It is at that point that we need to start the collection of dues to replenish the funds of the organization. On December 31st all memberships that are not paid are delinquent and all benefits associated with the organization cease, which includes club privileges, if your Post has a club function. Therefore it is imperative that we process as many of our memberships as possible before the first of January. You will always have a small number of members that drag their feet and wait until the last minute to pay. You will also have those that are hesitant to renew their membership because they feel that it is of no benefit to them to continue their membership. The memberships that fall into these two categories are attainable you just have to work for them. Part of that is accomplished by being able to explain the purpose of the organization; the other part is just being persistent.

There is a misconception among many within this organization that it should be the National Organizations responsibility to notify members with renewal notices. It is true that the National Organization sends out renewal notices, but those are only intended as a reminder and should NOT be your primary resource for notifying your membership in the renewal process. Your membership is your responsibility and the Squadron membership team is responsible for notifying your squadron's members either by renewal notice, phone or personal contact. Whichever method you choose make your members feel that they have been and continue to be, an important part of your squadron. Encourage them to get involved, keep them informed, and educate them on the principles of this organization. Remember we are a service organization dedicated to service to the community, state and nation. This is achieved through the four pillars of service on which The American Legion was founded; veteran's affairs and rehabilitation, children and youth, Americanism and National Security.

I have computer generated renewal forms, renewal letters, recruitment letters and reinstatement letters which can be formatted to your home squadron, available for anyone who would like to use them or just see what can be done to assist in the membership process. I also have an outline on recruiting and retaining membership. If you would care for a copy of my files contact me at my e-mail ddjssmith@msn.com and I would be more than happy to send you any information I have to make your job easier. Further if you would like me to assist you personally with your squadron's membership I am willing to meet with you and help you in any way that I can. By working together we can and we will attain our membership goals.

When processing your membership remember to retain the left 2/3s, the membership card data section, of the membership card which is to be remitted with \$8.00 per member to Department Headquarters for processing. You must send in the appropriate amount with each

membership before it will be processed if you have not paid the correct amount Headquarters has been instructed to hold the membership until the correct amount has been received. It's not that difficult, one membership/ \$8.00, present the membership card itself to the member and send the left 2/3s, member data section of the card with \$8.00 per membership, to Department Headquarters Sons of The American Legion P.O. Box 5205 Lincoln, Nebraska 68505-0205.

Now you have the information and you have the offer for assistance so NO MORE EXCUSES!!!