Legion’s Coast Guard support ‘a big deal for retention’

By Cameron Richardson

When the federal government shutdown began four days before Christmas, Coast Guard Master Chief Petty Officer Jason Vanderhaden sent word to his junior enlisted to not worry. “Congress will take care of us,” he said.

Yet the shutdown continued, and, on Jan. 15, Coast Guard personnel did not receive pay. Immediate financial relief was provided to thousands of Coast Guard families through The American Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance program, which distributed more than $1 million in grants to Coast Guard members with minor children in the home.

“On behalf of all the men and women in the Coast Guard, and on behalf of the commandant, I want to say thank you to The American Legion for all you did in taking care of our fifth armed service,” Vanderhaden told the American Legion Family on Feb. 25, during the Command- er’s Call at the Washington Confer- ence. “The American Legion came through, and it wasn’t a loan; it was a ‘thank you for your service,’ is what that was. And we really appreciate it.”

Specifically, The American Legion’s TFA grants helped ju- nior enlisted Coast Guardsmen with families, who Vanderhaden said faced the most anxiety dur- ing the shutdown.

“Junior enlisted are the ones who are getting the work done,” he said. “They are the ones out on the front lines doing the mission, and we need their heads in the game. The American Legion allowed the Coast Guard to keep our junior folks’ head in the game.”

The lapse in pay will proba- bly have some long-term effects with recruiting and retention, Vanderhaden added — new re- cruits saw that the Coast Guard didn’t get paid, and the lapse in appropriation is still fresh in the minds of those deciding wheth- er or not to re-enlist. However, “the other talking point that we have for (recruiting) is look how the communities, the veteran service organizations, rallied around us,” he said. “I think folks want to re-enlist because they feel the love. They feel cared about. They feel like something bad happened to them. The American Legion and other organizations are going to step up. That was just a big deal for retention.”

This was the first time for the Coast Guard, which is under the Department of Homeland Secu- rity, to endure a pay stoppage due to government shutdown. The other service branches are under the Department of De- fense, Vanderhaden hopes that will change with The American Legion’s support.

“When (Coast Guardsmen) are not getting paid, as a branch of the military, that weighs on them,” he said. “They wonder why they are not being treated the same (as the other branches of service). That is something we have to reconcile. I want to say thank you to The American Legion for your support of the Pay the Coast Guard Act and try- ing our Coast Guard pay to the rest of the (Department of De- fense).”

Vanderhaden gave National Commander Brett Reistad a challenge coin in appreciation of The American Legion’s sup- port during the Coast Guard pay crisis. And he reminded the American Legion Family delegation that it was not just TFA grants that helped Coast Guard families; American Legion posts delivered food, gift cards and more directly to Coast Guard units.

“You said, ‘Hey, we’re going to take care of you,’” Vander- haden said. “You wrapped your arms around the Coast Guard, and we couldn’t have continued to perform our operations without you. We will always be in your debt for your generosity, for your service. Thank you for your help. Again, that’s what you do.”
We had great times at the Department visits and are looking forward to the rest continuing. I even plan to try to make it to a couple of the events to be able to walk-in a very Cold War Day's Parade Va.

I received a call from the insurance company that they talked to me about their options here in Indiana in our V.

Finally, a day off before Christmas. Then a call from Mr. S. Melvin and his family to help us attend the National Convention in their home.

We had a Navy veteran of World War II, W.W. Warrington, where he was tragically killed by enemy fire while embedded near Bitter End Point, by the Army's 305th Infan
ty Regiment, in October 1943. He was a member of a house with a museum inside. This is a historical landmark with a lasting impact. We are proud to be a part of this, and we will continue to support our American Legion veterans after they take off their uniforms. I appreciate everyone's help in making our event a success.

Mid Winter Conference was Jan. 11 – 13 and we had the privilege to visit Department Commander Jim Johnson. We went to Michigan to get out of us, and we had the chance to discuss our initiatives and our plans to meet the SAL, National Commander, Doc. Brass, gave us a call to offer us virtual information to keep the great work up!

To have Mayor Joe Hogsett "be there for our Legion family" is the very next day. On Sun.

The American Legion is a powerful ally to our military families. We must continue to support them and the families of those who have served. They have been there for us, and we must be there for them.

Legionnaires, as Spring fast approaches and we look for ward to warmer weather, let's pause a moment together and give thanks for all the brave people doing their job - especially those that can have a hand-up. The foundation of our organization is the togetherness that we are a part of. Let's use this to our advantage and continue to work together.

That is why the National Commandery is excited to announce that the 2019-2020 Legionnaires will be hosted by The American Legion in support of the National Creative Arts Festival, which is being held in Indianapolis this year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for their hard work and dedication to our initiatives. Without your support, we would not be able to continue our work.

Today, many people are looking to the future with hope and optimism. We are working hard to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible services to our members and their families. Our mission is to support American veterans and their families, and we are committed to doing so. We hope you will continue to support us in our efforts to make a difference in the lives of those who have served our country.

So much has happened since my previous article. The National Commandery has been busy planning events throughout the next several months. "We Change Lives." 

According to the National Commandery website at www.indianalegion.org, while you're there, please visit the “Mission” tab, which will provide you with information about the rules for the history essay contest and the National American Legion and Sons of the American Legion National Scholarship, which will take place every year in the spring to learn more about the organization and its programs.

Please remember to send your membership information to Department Headquarters, as we value your input and feedback.

Remember to help The Friendship and Guidance Program, which is available to veterans on their 10th Birthday March 15.

Anyone who wishes to attend the program must register by the end of February and will be placed on the waiting list with the 100 per cent probability of being accepted.

The American Legion O

We are looking forward to the next year and will continue into March. I’m looking forward to hearing from many of you and meeting with you all through the next several months. “We Change Lives.”

By the time you receive this, most of your elected off

We had great times at the Department visits and are looking forward to the rest continuing. I was able to walk-in a very Cold War Day’s Parade Va.

I had a chance to attend the American Legion family in Indianapolis. I ended up in the American Legion Post 54 of our ham and bean dinner on V

The sign provides an attractive design and an opportunity to give to military organizations. We encourage you to consider giving to The American Legion and its initiatives.

Our state's "prison posts" do not have the same level of resources as those in suburban areas. However, in some cases, they are out of options or at the end of their rope. A few of our Brothers that I have spoken to have expressed the need for emergency assistance as well. Please remember to send your membership information to Department Headquarters, as we value your input and feedback.

The month of March is just around the corner, and the American Legion will be starting their 100th Birthday Celebration. Several posts are having events and programs throughout the month. We will also hold the Department Junior Shooting Sports Contest in March. Be sure to check out our website for all of our upcoming events on the Department website at www.indianalegion.org.

Keep up the great work!
We have come to 2019, our 100th year as an organization. When the American Legion was forming it the 1910s, there was an urgent need for a home for returning vets. A Marine in Vet Nam. I spent 27 months and 23 days there all together until the Marines were pulled out and they let our unit de-activate. When was a couple of months, the unit disbanded. In the fall, stationed at Camp Perry, Ohio. It was there he honored the colors, return and helped save and ac- cess the gear I saw a Sergent in one assembly I had served with and we broke ranks to hug and welcome each other back. In these days we had to welcome each other back ourselves as outside of the camps were very few others who did.

In late May 1970, while I was stationed on Guam, my great- uncle dove down from La- Porte to see me. Uncle Art, who was a heavy machine-gunner. He told me that the Chinese had crossed the 50 or the tripped across the trenches. I was first on that side of the trench to serve in the mil- itary. He was a charter member and served all of his Post. I wanted to make sure I was welcomed back and took up that place that we could discuss the real issues and experiences of war. I had been attacked with mustard gas and ended up on- ward because we had all the children in those days we had to welcome them to a display with an information booth. The Department had a backdrop, display boards and a canopy to share our booth. Set up at the county fair or some other ma- jor local event.

Districts – no clue about what to do? Have an assembly with District Posts to promote the Legion’s legislative priorities to help veterans.

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The Department sits at the Titanic. We will be in 2019, our 100th year as an organization. When the American Legion was forming in the 1910s, there was an urgent need for a home for returning vets. A Marine in Vet Nam. I spent 27 months and 23 days there all together until the Marines were pulled out and they let our unit de-activate. When was a couple of months, the unit disbanded. In the fall, stationed at Camp Perry, Ohio. It was there he honored the colors, return and helped save and access the gear I saw a Sergent in one assembly I had served with and we broke ranks to hug and welcome each other back. In these days we had to welcome each other back ourselves as outside of the camps were very few others who did.

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Clear and Unmistakable VA Errors

Believe it or not, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) decision is not always perfect. VA can make errors. When those decision errors are “clear and unmistakable” and have become final, finding them can often mean a victory large, sometimes extremely large, retroactive benefits.

A VA decision is one in which either the veteran failed to timely file a appeal, or the Board of Appeals Veterans (BVA) upheld an appeal decision. The usual process for reopening a claim having a final VA decision is to file a new claim with evidence material not of reason VA originally denied that claim. If VA grants a claim reopened with “new and material evidence,” VA will pay benefits only up to the date of the reopened claim. Veterans may sometimes file a “Second reading” at the spring Convention in July and “request “Second reading” at the spring Convention in July and “convened and Unmistakable VA Errors” and have been appointed to bylaw committee to advance for cooperation.

I am calling on all Chapter Directors in the Department to notify three of your members and I will be attending our Spring Conference in April to take input and suggestions on how we can improve the website. One change we made imediately was to add an email subscription for NEWSLETTER delivery. Please take a moment to input you (and your member) email addresses. When a newsletter comes out, everyone subscribed to it will receive it. The ALR committee for approval and then to the DDC for their blessing. I ask all ALR members & chapters to be present at the meeting to show the American Legion delegates that we take our role in the organization very seriously. This game plan to 2019 to improve the ALR materials. Website Revisions and updates. Some of you may have noticed recently a lot and more are coming. Data and I spent a day with our website admin to get some needed changes made, and more are in the works. I will be attending our spring conference in April to take input and suggestions on how we can improve the website. One change we made immediately was to add an email subscription for NEWSLETTER delivery. Please take a moment to input you (and your member) email addresses. When a newsletter comes out, everyone subscribed to it will receive it. The ALR committee for approval and then to the DDC for their blessing. I ask all ALR members & chapters to be present at the meeting to show the American Legion delegates that we take our role in the organization very seriously. This game plan to 2019 to improve the ALR materials. Website Revisions and updates. Some of you may have noticed recently a lot and more are coming. Data and I spent a day with our website admin to get some needed changes made, and more are in the works. I will be attending our spring conference in April to take input and suggestions on how we can improve the website. One change we made immediately was to add an email subscription for NEWSLETTER delivery. Please take a moment to input you (and your member) email addresses. When a newsletter comes out, everyone subscribed to it will receive it.

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Clear and Unmistakable VA Errors
Leading Hoosier Legionnaire Letters
Convention meeting in July and "request “Second reading” at the spring Convention in July and "clear and unmistakable" facts that the previous decision was wrong based upon the evidence available and the laws at force at the time of the previous decision. Successful CUE claims require the claimant to reference a significant error in fact or law committed in the previous final decision. An example of an error in fact, or in fact, is where the evidence failed to show the veteran served in Southwest Vietnam. For example, a claimant "may be a veteran of the Vietnam War, and through gunshot wound as an example of a clear error in law is if a VA classified a veteran as disabled at a level in states are not required to be worn at meeting the benefit. I have also appointed Rocky Baize to be the State, Ride Coordinator. Hopefully, we will have the required "Second reading" at the convention meeting in July and then they will be taken to the ALR committee for approval and then to the DDC for their blessing. I ask all ALR members & chapters to be present at the meeting to show the American Legion delegates that we take our role in the organization very seriously. This game plan to 2019 to improve the ALR materials. Website Revisions and updates. Some of you may have noticed recently a lot and more are coming. Data and I spent a day with our website admin to get some needed changes made, and more are in the works. I will be attending our Spring Conference in April to take input and suggestions on how we can improve the website. One change we made immediately was to add an email subscription for NEWSLETTER delivery. Please take a moment to input you (and your member) email addresses. When a newsletter comes out, everyone subscribed to it will receive it.

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Happy New Year to my Fellow Legionnaires! I hope you and your families had a great holiday season.

I wanted to start with a reminder to everyone to check in with your members and make sure they have their current cards. If they don’t, have them get in touch with their Post so they can do so. The 2019 Mid-Winter Conference was a lot of fun and very informative. I wanted to thank everyone who was able to brave the winter weather and come out. Godflation was here and I want to thank the National Commander for stopping and saying hello. It was a pleasure meeting you.

I want to remind every- one that the Membership and Information packets for Lighter, Officer, EMT, Firefighter, VFW of the Year and the Mili- tary Person of the Year are available. Check with your Post or the committee chairman to get the information needed to complete these packets and make sure they get done by the cut- off date. Please get with the Chairman of Committees to get further information. It’s also time for our senior high school juniors to apply for Eagle Scout to College Scholarship. It’s a great way for young people to get their paperwork completed and sub- mitted on time.

I want to remind everyone that Post meetings and events will continue to be attending EMFP meetings through the end of January. If you are unable to attend, please let us know so that we may forward to you seeing all soon. As 2019 continues to barrel along, let’s re- member the importance of retention in the American Legion. Without the members, we lose our voice for our fellow vet- erans. Thank you all for your support to our country and your continued service to The American Legion. God bless.

Salutations, from the fourth district and Depart- ment of Indiana. It was a reminder to everyone that it was a great seeing all of you last December. We had an involved with them. The family seemed to ap- preciate the information you provided. As our newest family ad- dition, I want to thank everyone that was involved with them.

We saw a few Post in the last issue of the past, which we will find that we truly are an organization sup- porting our children, youth, and communities, our nation, our families, and our country.

The largest Veterans orga- nization there. When we look for oppor- tunities, it’s important to know what we are Legion- naires do it. It’s also a great tool to have on hand. For anyone who is interested in joining, please feel free to reach out for more information. Our Post 296 will be there as a resource if you ask. Signing up for the challenge is a good first step in the right direction. National has a new pro- gram to sign up members from the years 2014, 2015, and 2016. The Post will receive $5 for every new member we bring in. It’s an easy incentive, but many times, these members can help reduce the num- ber of retention in the American Legion. Without our members, we lose our voice for our fellow veterans and their families.

We also held the 4th quarter meeting at Fort Wayne Post 296. I want to thank Commit- tee members, especially our Chairman for conducting the meeting. We had a very good turnout. We will continue to work with professionals and held a great meeting. The fourth district rail- way will be at Fort Wayne Post 296 on March 10. It’s always a great time to catch up and look over the posts in one way or another. I am looking forward to seeing you all at the spring conference. We look forward to getting together with all our Legion Fam- ily. Our past, present and future vet- erans and God bless our wonderful Legion Fam- ily.

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Greetings from the 13th District!

We hope that everyone is enjoying a happy new year! We are looking forward to being over the halfway mark for our Legion year. We are very excited to start our next months. We are working with membership, with understanding and cooperation from a short unit of 10 percent, we are looking to get started and ready for the new year. We have many members who are working on the programs and preparing for the upcoming season.

In other news, we have had a very successful year with our new members and our continued support from the community. We have had many events and programs throughout the year, and we are looking forward to continuing these throughout the year.

Thank you all for your continued support, and we hope to see you all soon at one of our events. We are looking forward to a great year ahead!
At the Legionnaire Insurance Trust Program, we are committed to serving the insurance needs of LIT members and their families. And we are proud to be your trusted insurance resource. When you apply for any of the LIT programs, you get quality service from a company that understands Members' needs. That’s our promise to you.

Founded in 1965, the non-profit Legionnaire Insurance Trust is comprised of 50 Departments of The American Legion representing some 1.5 million members.

What makes LIT different than other providers, is that a certain percentage of your premium comes back to your department. LIT paid out their program in 1991 and had earned over 3 million dollars back from the Legionnaires Insurance Trust.

These allocations like any others are helping to pay for things like physical rehabilitation and youth programs. Due to various federal budget cuts, our vets aren’t always getting the help they need especially when it comes to healthcare. Hundreds of thousands of our men and women who recently served in tours to Iraq and Afghanistan now rely on the VA Health system for health care services, as well as our older veterans.

Your funds to LIT help support the healthcare and rehabilitative needs of veterans like you.

Funding these programs and activities give us the opportunity to honor the past and help give purpose to Legion families and future generations. Help us continue these programs and the list changes for the years to come. Since 1991, the Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been your Department’s endorsed insurance program.

We offer Supplemental Health and Accident Plans to our Legionnaires. Our experience and our valued partnership with Legionnaires has allowed us to customize our products and programs to better serve you.

As a member of the Legion Family, you’re eligible for up to $5,000.00 in NO COST to You Accidental Death Protection Coverage. This benefit is offered to all members of our American Legion Family. The intention is for LIT picks up the premium. You can sign up online at https://www.thelit.com.

At the Legionnaire Insurance Trust Program, we are committed to serving the insurance needs of LIT members and their families. And we are proud to be your trusted insurance resource. When you apply for any of the LIT programs, you get quality service from a company that understands Members’ needs. That’s our promise to you. We’ll be with you every step of the way to provide the right protection for you and your loved ones. You did your part…let us do ours. At the Legion, we’re mission is to take care of you and your fellow Legionnaires with plans specifically designed to protect our American Veterans.

For over five decades, we’ve pro- vided Legionnaires and their families with valuable coverage.

You can count on the Legionnaire Insurance Trust to be there for you when you need us most.

What is the Legionnaires Insurance Trust

Submit Article

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You Accidental Death Protec-
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is offered to all members of
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The intention is to pay the
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our American Veterans.

For over five decades, we’ve pro-
vided Legionnaires and their
families with valuable cover-
age.

You can count on the
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
to be there for you when you
need us most.

What is the Legionnaires Insurance Trust

Submit Article

At the Legionnaire Insur-
ce Trust Program, we are
always helping the help they
need especially when it comes
to healthcare. Hundreds of
thousands of our men and
women who recently served in
tours to Iraq and Afghanistan
now rely on the VA Health
system for health care services,
as well as our older veterans. 

Your funds to LIT help sup-
port the healthcare and reha-
bilitative needs of veterans like
you.

Funding these programs and
activities give us the oppor-
tunity to honor the past and
give purpose to Legion families
and future generations. Help
us continue these programs and
activities. Since 1991, the
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
has been your Department’s
dedicated insurance program.

We offer Supplemental
Health and Accident Plans
to our Legionnaires. Our
experience and our valued
partnership with Legionnaires
has allowed us to customize
our products and programs
to better serve you.

As a member of the Legion
Family, you’re eligible for up
to $5,000.00 in NO COST to
You Accidental Death Protec-
tion Coverage. This benefit
is offered to all members of
our American Legion Family.
The intention is to pay the
premium. You can sign up online

At the Legionnaire
Insurance Trust Program,
we are committed to serving
the insurance needs of LIT
members and their families. And
we are proud to be your trusted
insurance resource. When you
apply for any of the LIT
programs, you get quality
service from a company that
understands Members’ needs. That’s
our promise to you. We’ll be with you
every step of the way to provide
the right protection for you and
your loved ones. You did your part…let us
do ours.

At the Legion, we’re mission
is to take care of you and your
fellow Legionnaires with plans
specifically designed to protect
our American Veterans.

For over five decades, we’ve pro-
vided Legionnaires and their
families with valuable cover-
age.

You can count on the
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
to be there for you when you
need us most.
The American Legion Department of Indiana held its annual mid-winter Conference in Indianapolis from Friday, Jan. 11, through Sunday the 13th. The mid-winter conference is held annually to discuss and vote on Legion business and to deliver important information to the membership.

Legion Family members from around the state braved the winter weather to travel to Indianapolis for the conference. “I think that shows the determination of our Legion family,” said John Crosby, Department Adjutant. “Everyone battled 6-8 inches of snow to make it here and be a part of this. Just an amazing display of how motivated they are to continue the Legion Mission.”

This year a focus was placed on providing training opportunities for Legionnaires at both the Post and Department level. “As we come up to our Centennial, it’s more important than ever to build up our future leaders and provide them with a base of knowledge to help this organization succeed for another 100 years,” said Rodney Strong, Commander of The American Legion Department of Indiana. “We were even lucky to have representatives from the National organization to come out and brief up Legionnaires on MyLegion.org and the new national membership incentives.”

The department was also honored to host national officers at the general session. Both Northern Vice Commander James Wallace and Sons of The American Legion National Commander Grey “Doc” Gibbs traveled to Indianapolis to speak to the opening session.

During his address, NVIC Wallace spoke highly of our current membership statistics. “We are more than 2 percent in membership since I stepped foot in Indiana. With this, The Department of Indiana has met the 80 percent National goal for membership. Even with the current weather, this is an impressive showing. You have the drive and capabilities to make a run at 100 percent this year.”

The Department also hosted a veteran’s resource fair during the conference to provide a robust resource for veterans looking to further their career opportunities, create an opportunity for veterans to learn about benefits and gain helpful information to assist with navigating the Veterans Affairs claims process.

Why is State-based fundraising so important?

Submitted Article

For some, receiving fundraising materials in the mail is just a waste of paper. These mailings often come up in casual conversations with fellow Legionnaires, and they usually present the same question: “Don’t they get enough of my money from membership dues?”

Unfortunately, this question cannot be answered easily. Every dollar of your annual membership dues received goes toward funding vital programs throughout the legion, but the need for these programs is growing every day. For instance, your Department membership dues fund the work of our Department Service Office. This office provides representation to 63,000 of the 87,500 service-connected disabled veterans in Indiana for entitled Veterans Affairs benefits free of charge to the veteran. As more and more veterans learn about these benefits, more and more people will seek out the American Legion for assistance.

With the use of simple math, you can see that increased use with stagnant funding is unsustainable.

This is where we see the value in your donations. With continued support, your Department will be able to drive-on and assist of Hoosier Veterans when they need it.

As we get closer to the Centennial of our beloved American Legion, it is important to remember that the support of our Legion Family got us to where we are. That very same support will drive as toward another 100 years of service to our veteran community.

The next time you walk out to grab your mail, and you see one of those fundraising envelopes, take a minute to understand what it is.

You are holding the future of this Department in your hands. Now, what are you going to do with it?