

*Swansea Community Post 2007
American Legion
Department of Illinois
P.O. Box 20093
Swansea, IL 62226*

Our next meeting is scheduled at 7:00 P.M. 23 April 2012 at the Swansea Improvement Association Hall, located at 301 Service St. in Swansea. The Executive Board will meet at 6:30 P.M. All members are welcome to attend. The SAL will meet at 6:00 P.M.

There are still a few of you out there who have not as yet paid your 20120 dues. Are you one of those few? Check your membership card. If the membership year does not indicate 2012, you are. PLEASE REMIT \$25.00 ASAP.

I'm sure you're as tired of hearing 'Membership, Membership' as I am. However, membership is the life of any organization.

When the American Legion and the other Veterans organizations lobby Congress, numbers count. It took numbers to get the original GI Bill through Congress, and it took numbers to push the various updates thru Congress. It was a Legion paid for study that was one of the main reasons Congress finally got off their duff and recognized that Agent Orange was a contributing factor for a lot of the problems that Vietnam Vets were, and still are, having. The politicians like to talk the talk about how they are supporting the Veterans, but they'll only walk the walk when prodded. The higher the number, the larger the prod. It's been that way forever.

That's why we're always looking for new/more members. You'd be surprised how many of your family, friends and neighbors are veterans and who have not been invited to join.

For years the American Legion has had an official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who simply want to expand their knowledge of the nation's largest veteran's organization. Originally it was available in booklet form. It has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhance with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided in to six sections with a pop quiz at the end of each section and a final exam. The sections closely follow the Legions Four Pillars of service. They include History & Organization, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth. If desired, you can take a final online exam. If you pass this exam you'll receive a digital certificate of recognition; a lapel/cap pin will also be delivered to those who successfully complete the course. The online course is \$4.95 for members of The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion. If you want to know the American Legion, this program is well worth the time and the cost. If interested the web site is www.legion.org/alel. There could be a lot of traffic, so don't give up. If at first, you don't succeed, etc.

On a different subject, don't forget the upcoming 'Celtic Fest'. We have arranged to have several of the top Celtic Bands in the country perform. Among them is the 'Highland Reign' which completed a tour of Scotland and Ireland in March. We'll have the usual food and refreshment stands, a few things for the kiddies to amuse themselves with and possibly a few ethnic craft stands. We're looking for sponsors and individuals or organizations interested in taking part or specially helping. The local Hibernians have joined us in this project. The 'Celtic Fest' is scheduled to be held on Friday and Saturday June 15 and 16, 2012 at the Mel Price Park on Caseyville Ave. in Swansea. On Friday the 15th the hours will be 3:00 P.M. til 10:00 P.M. The Saturday hours will be from noon until 10:00 P.M. For more information Contact Bill Meister at (618) 401-0531.

As mention in the last newsletter, each year the National American Legion submits a Consolidated Report to Congress. This report chronicles the many ways in which the American Legion performed at the national level in 2011. From its network of accredited service officers to the more than \$600,000 raised to provide college money to the children of military personnel killed on duty since 9/22, the Legion reached out and fulfilled the purposed behind its four pillars of service.

The American Legion Consolidated National Report for 2011 offers a snapshot off activities performed, as well as support services to the organization such as communications, membership management and information technology.

The report also provides a listing of training materials, workshops, conferences and other events designed to help members better understand the Legions programs and services. You can view the report at www.legion.org/american-legion-consolidated-national-report-2011.

As reported in previous newsletters, your post won an award at the 2011 Department Convention for its Community Service Report. This was for Posts with less than 100 members. Now we have 100 members, or at least we did at the end of the year, and the competition is tougher. We would like to win it again and you can help. Keep track of the time, money you donate to any type of community service plus the mileage involved and let us know about them.

Sadly, we lost a Post member in March due to an auto accident. David Casson was a Charter Member.

A question for your friend and acquaintances –

ARE YOU A VETERAN? DO YOU BELONG TO THE AMERICAN LEGION? HOW ABOUT JOINING?

JUST ASK! IT WORKS!

Have you checked out our Web-site? You can take a look at it at www.swanseapost2007.com. You will find pictures of some of our past activities, a Post Calendar and much more.

Attend meetings. We keep them short so that we have time to visit