

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. 28 February 2011 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.

WARNING TO VETERANS. THIS WARNING IS FORWARDED BY KEVIN SECOR, VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.(VAS) IS PROVIDING BENEFIT AND GENERAL INFORMATION ON VA AND GATHERING PERSONAL INFORMATION ON VETERANS. THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE VA IN ANY WAY. WEBSITES WITH THE NAME **'VASERVICES'** IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE "WWW" **ARE NOT** PART OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, THE US GOVERNMENT AGENCY. **DO NOT** GO TO THEM IF APPROACHED OR CALLED, DO NOT GIVE THEM ANY INFO CONCERNING YOURSELF OR DATA ON OTHER VETERANS. KEEP IN MIND THAT THE REAL VA WEBSITE ENDS IN **.GOV.** KEEP IN MIND THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DOES NOT CALL VETERANS RANDOMLY, NOR DOES IT ASK VETERANS FOR INFORMATION WHICH IT DOES NOT ALREADY HAVE—LIKE SSN'S IN PARTICULAR. IF YOU HAVE NOT DEALT WITH THE VA PREVIOUSLY—**AND IN PERSON**—AND ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU RECEIVE A CALL FROM SOMEONE SAYING THEY ARE FROM THE VA OR SOMETHING SIMILAR SOUNDING, HANG UP THE PHONE. ALSO, DO NOT RESPOND TO E-MAILS WHICH SUGGEST THEY ARE FROM THE VA. THE VA NEVER CONDUCTS OFFICIAL BUSINESS NOR ASKS FOR PERSONNAL INFO. BY E-MAIL VAS MAY BE GAINING ACCESS TO MILITARY PERSONNEL THROUGH THEIR CLOSE RESEMBLANCE TO THE VA NAME AND SEAL. THIS INFORMATION CAME FROM MICHAEL G. DAUGHERTY, STAFF ATTORNEY, DEPT. OF VA, OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL.

We had 10 members at our January meeting. Everyone else was smart enough to stay home. The meeting lasted 25 minutes

As I write this, (Saturday February 12, 2011), Channel 2 is broadcasting a 30 minute 'Jaco Report' which details the problems at the John Cochran VA Hospital. That place is a disaster. If you didn't see the program, and would like to see it, go to Channel 2s' website and search for the 'Jaco Report'.

Jr. Vice-Commander Page reported that the first shipment of 'Goodies' has been shipped to the troops in Afghanistan. A total of seven boxes were sent. Total weight of the boxes was 130 pounds. He also wants to remind everyone that the Sons of the American Legion Squadron meet at 6 PM on the last Monday of the month (same night and location as the Post meeting). This program is open to male descendants (natural, step or adopted) of any Legionnaire, or deceased veteran who was eligible to belong to the American Legion.

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ALERT: (Sounds like Fox News) Poppy days are getting closer. The first date has been confirmed. Mark your calendars for May 21. We'll be working the Schnucks Super Market in Swansea on N. Illinois St. We are still waiting for confirmation for 13 August 2011 at Dierbergs in Shiloh, and October 29, 2011 at the Wal-Mart in Belleville.

Clyde Minish, our 'Boys State' chairman reminds us that the Illinois Premier Boys State will be in session June 11 -17 2011. This Post sponsored two boys last year, and members of the post sponsored four additional boys for a total of six. The sponsorship fee is \$225.00. We are looking for boys who will become seniors in high school in August 2011, although we will consider boys who will become juniors in August 2011. We are also looking for Sponsors and/or contributions toward sponsorships. Any organization, Association, Union, Business, Club, or individual can sponsor or contribute. For more information contact Clyde thru this Post at the address on the letterhead. Contributions can be sent to the same address.

Boys State has been a program of the American Legion since 1935 when it was organized to counter the Fascist inspired Young Pioneer Camps. The program was the idea of two Illinois Legionnaires, Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card.

At Boys State, participants are exposed to the rights and privileges, the duties and responsibilities of a franchised citizen. The training is objective and practical with city, county and state governments operated by the students elected to the various offices. Activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies, bands, and recreational programs. The Illinois Boys State also includes a State Police and Militia program.

Quite a few posts have web sites wherein they present themselves, their programs and the American Legion to the public. There is a great site at www.legionsites.com that can be used and modified to fit the individual posts. For the most part its' like a fill in the blanks site. Trouble is it costs \$250.00 per year to use. I like the style but not the cost. There are other sites that can be used to create a website that don't cost anything but I don't have the necessary expertise. Do we have anyone out there who has the expertise, or knows someone who does, to create such a site?

Check your Membership Card. If it does not indicate '2011' at the center top of the card you have not paid your 2011 dues. There are only six who have not renewed at this time. If you should be one of the six, we would appreciate it very much if you would send your dues (\$25.00) to the address on the letterhead. If all six renew, we would have 100 members.

You might be saying "Why should I stay a member of the American Legion?" If you think about it, the answer might be that all veterans have been touched by the American Legion. The GI Bill provides for schooling, Veterans home loans, medical care through the VA. The American Legion has been pivotal in making sure those programs exist. On a national level, membership in the American Legion gives all veterans a voice in our government. We are constantly lobbying congress on behalf of the veterans. The original bill was written by the Legion. The 'Greatest Generation' can probably be traced back to that bill.

Our March 2011 meeting is scheduled at 7:00 P.M. on the 28th at the Swansea Improvement Association Hall. Bring a friend. As usual 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.

Attend Meetings – We keep them short so that we have time to visit