

**DEPARTMENT
OF**



VIRGINIA

2014-2015

Membership Plan

**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA
MEMBERSHIP PLAN
2014 – 2015**

- MEMBERSHIP GOAL:** #1 To achieve 100% membership for the Dept. of Virginia
- #2 Continue concentrations on Department achieving an all time high for the 100th anniversary
- #3 To enjoy the year and have fun achieving our goals

MEMBERSHIP THEME: *Finishing First at the Membership Stakes*

With the 2015 national convention in Baltimore, we have aligned the membership plan with horseracing at Pimlico.

DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA HORSE RACE ASSOCIATION

Track Owner: Gerald Rhoads, Department Commander

Track Announcer: Lewis Field, Department Membership Chairman

Stable Owners: Department Vice Commanders

Al Steward, Department Vice Commander Eastern Region

Robert Cardwell, Department Vice Commander Western Region

A.B. Brown, Department Vice Commander Northern Region

Trainers: District Commanders

Jockeys: Post Commanders

Throughout the year, Stable Owners, Trainers and Jockeys will be racing to goals each month, warming up for big race and gaining experience across The Commonwealth in their quest. Each Jockey will be running monthly races. As they race, trainers and stable owners will be gaining points for the end of year.

We believe that **positive communication** on a **regular basis** is a vital ingredient to a successful membership program. We have established the following plan:

The Department **Membership Chairman** will communicate with the Vice Commanders on a regular basis via email. At least once a month, following a specific award date, this communication will be verbal either in person or via phone.

The Regional **Vice Commanders**, will communicate in like manner with each District Commander in their respective Region. The Vice Commander and District Commander will recognize positive areas and identify Posts that may require assistance.

The **District Commanders** will contact each Post Commander in their District extending congratulations and appreciation to those meeting or exceeding the current goal; offering assistance and discussing a plan of action to improve those that don't. The District Membership Chair and District Vice Commanders should work closely with the District Commander. Suggestion: each District Vice Commander should be assigned posts within the District for follow-ups and continuous discussions.

The **Post Commander** should always be aware of:

Where does my Post rank within the District?

Did I achieve the current goal?

Is my Post "percent goal" achieved "greater than" or "less than" the District percentage achieved?

The Post Commander should create a plan and utilize his **membership team** to assure every Post member is personally contacted regarding renewal and status.

Assign each membership team member a specific list of members to contact

Provide recognition award to each team member that renews all on his list

Early bird Prize thought – All early bird members entered in a drawing, for example a free dinner or next year's renewal free.

Personal contact with every member regarding renewal is critical – contact those with the fewest years first, emphasizing the importance of early renewal.

We will emphasize establishing **recruiting and retention teams** in the Districts to assist Posts. Some Districts have had success with small groups assisting Posts at potential recruiting events. These small groups have more experience in how to approach potential members and how to ask questions without being overbearing. These teams have successfully taught posts members how to do this over time. Additionally, many posts should be able to implement retention teams as discussed above.

Increased festival/event attendance at all levels will be pushed. Many fairs, festivals and events occur throughout the Commonwealth. Many of these have not had American Legion attendance. We will start working with the local posts to help identify possible areas for coverage in the fall for prepping of spring festivals. Emphasis will also be placed on marketing the American Legion brand and programs at these events to keep them from becoming purely recruiting booths.

Membership will be kept in everyone's minds during meetings and other events around the Department. Weekly membership reporting will be provided and discuss observed trends. Weekly reporting will focus on retention rates among Posts. The Dept Membership Chair will create a racetrack for use at any meetings to highlight issues with membership. These will be brought out at conferences and DEC meetings along with other physical reminders during meetings.

While many posts and districts have started using mylegion.org, we will re-emphasize this action via checks on mylegion.org activity as well as assisting posts in that activity. Emphasis will be placed on direct contact via the District retention teams instead of mailings to expired members. This is a major way to bring members back into the fold.

Membership meetings beyond conferences: We will investigate possibilities of holding a meeting in mid Dec or Mid Jan as an interim meeting of the membership committee. Holding a meeting in the normal membership doldrums may have a good benefit of getting the team fired back up into the end of winter vice waiting until spring conferences

The Department of Virginia - 100% Department in traditional membership

We have an established **Department awards program** for individuals, Posts, and Districts to provide incentives to achieve the proscribed goals. We have added some additional incentives this year. Long-term awards for activity over several years have been added to the incentive programs to drive a sense of competition through the 5 year plan.

The Department of Virginia membership report, distributed weekly, will enable each Stable Owner and Trainer and membership chairs to track their developing membership jockeys ranked:

Best > Least Best.

New incentives

awarded in addition to Dept Awards Manual

For the Trainers

Trainer of the Year

A District Commander will be recognized in the winner circle and awarded “**100**” points when the District achieves its **100%** membership goal.

Each District Commander will be awarded an additional **25** points when they fulfill the following requirements by dates in the awards manual:

1. **No** goose egg Posts in their District – all posts have a renewal or new member (25 points)
2. Each time a District makes a **specified** membership target date (25 points)
3. Each Post in their District organizing a SAL Squadron (25 points per SAL Squadron)
4. Each Post in their District forming an Auxiliary Unit (25 points per Aux Unit)
5. Each District that achieves **100%** prior to Yorktown Award date will receive a bonus of **50** points.
6. An additional **75** points will be awarded to each District that charts a New American Legion Post.

At the end of the year the District Commander scoring the most points, will be recognized as the **Trainer of the Year**. This District Commander and the Department Vice Commander will each receive a **\$200** debit card.

1. **\$100** debit card for the District Commander with the greatest number of 100% Posts 3 June membership report
2. **\$100** debit card for the District Commander with the highest percentage of “Renewals” ((“2014” total members minus PUFLs) divided by (total renewals for “2015” plus online members) = % Renewals) 3 June membership report
3. **\$100** debit card for the District Commander with the highest percentage of “**New Members**” (# New Members for “2015” (divided by) “2015” Total Members) 3 June membership report
4. **100% District Commander** jacket awarded to each District Commander that reaches the Winner Circle status for “**2015**”
5. **100% Department Vice Commander** will also be awarded a jacket if he achieves **Winner Circle** status for “**2015**”.
6. **Gold, Silver and Bronze** membership medals will be awarded to the Department Vice Commanders and District Commanders according to their membership percentage by a selected deadline date.
7. 100% District Membership Chair award
 - 100% by Yorktown Award – Jacket
 - 100% by Legion Birthday – Polo
 - 100% by 3 Jun - \$25 Emblem Sales Certificate

For the Jockeys

1. Each Jockey that achieves **Winner Circle 100%** before the Yorktown Award will receive a desk pen set with clock & Eagle.
2. Each Jockey that achieves **Winner Circle 100%** by the “Legion Birthday” Goal Date will receive a desk pen set. (One award per Post Commander)
3. An add on **incentive pool** this year is for the **Posts** achieving 100% early.

A Post will receive one (1) entry for achieving 100% by a goal date and one (1) additional for each successive goal date. There will be a drawing for each category of membership (I-VI) as stated in the awards manual. The Award Check will be made to the Post with the Post determining how the funds will be spent. Each drawing is for \$50. There will be four drawings during the year from this pool of entries.

Jamestown Award date 1 Oct 2014 drawn at Fall Conference
Yorktown Award date 7 Jan 2015 drawing at Dept HQ
Legion Birthday Award date 4 Mar 2015 drawing at Spring Conference
Dan Daniel Plaque date 3 Jun report drawing at the Dept

4. **Post renewal award** presented to the Post with the highest percentage of “Renewals” ((“2014” total members minus PUFLs) divided by (total renewals for “2015” plus online members) = % Renewals) by 3 June membership report. One Post from each category based on the Dept Awards Manual. Post will receive a plaque and the Post commander will receive reimbursement for one night’s lodging at the 2015 Dept Convention.
5. **Special Department Commander award** (\$250 Debit Card) will be awarded to the Legionnaire recruiting the greatest number of new members by the gold brigade cutoff date as listed in the Department Awards Manual. Winner must recruit at least 50 new members, of any war era, and qualify for the Gold Brigade Award.

New Long Term Awards

Supporting 100th Anniversary (recommendations of awards for five year plan) Awards TBD

Post Long Term Growth Award – Post increasing membership each and every year for five years – Jul 2013 – Jun 2018. Post will receive the Award at the end of the 2018 Dept convention.

Post Long Term Award – Post with highest percentage increase between 2013 Dept convention and 2018 Dept Convention (specific date to be determined at the beginning of the 2017-2018 membership year) in each membership category (cat based on membership achieved in 2013).

Individual Long Term Awards – Cumulative total of new members recruited by a single Legionnaire, starting Jul 2014 through 3 Jun 2018.

- Recruit 100 new members by Jun 2018 – Award TBD
- Recruit 50 new members by June 2018 – Award TBD
- Recruit 25 new members by June 2018 – Award TBD

So welcome to the Membership Stakes in which Virginia plans to Finish First and achieve 100% membership. The Track Owner and Announcer look forward to seeing the races throughout the year and anticipate great competition between the Districts as they achieve the prescribed goals.

Through great communication with our communities and each other, we can push American Legion programs to achieve additional growth in the future.