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## **Upcoming Events!**

- 2010 Spring Conference: March 19-21 - Virginia Beach Resort, Va Beach \$85
- Memorial Day 2010 : Monday May 31
- 2010 State Convention: July 8-11 - Sheraton Richmond West, Richmond \$99
- 2010 Fall Conference: October 29-31 Holiday Inn, Hampton \$74
- 2011 State Convention July 14-17 Roanoke Plaza Hotel & Holiday Inn, Roanoke

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## **Department Public Relations (PR) Committee**

Marv Rodney, Department PR Committee Chairman

Your Department Public Relations (PR) Committee in Action: Your PR Committee has been busy on several fronts as outlined below:

Committee Membership: please join me in welcoming James "Buck" Owen (104) as the Vice Chair of this Committee. He was recently appointed by our Department Commander as a backfill for the vacant Vice Chair position. Along those lines, I am also pleased to announce that Comrade Harvel Ayers (74) has agreed to be our Committee Technical Director and lead us as we utilize our Socialize networking capabilities to further enhance our programs and achieve our stated objectives. An updated Department and District PR listing will be provided at the forthcoming Department Spring Conference.

" Department Spring Conference: our PR Session for the Spring Conference is taking shape and will focus on several areas, to include: An update of the PR Committee POCs and recent activities; a briefing and discussion on the importance and need to sign-up for the Department Electronic Newsletter; a briefing on the use of social networks for more effective and efficient communications in furtherance of our programs and activities; and renewing your VALPA and NALPA 2010 membership cards. Ms. Linda



Eberharter, Web Content Manager, Public Relations from our National PR Office will be our guest speaker and talk to us about using the social media to promote Public Relations and American Legion programs objectives. She is currently involved in writing the chapter on Socialized Networking for the next edition of our PR Handbook which is due to be published in the very near future. Please plan to be there - it promises to be an extremely informative session well worth attending.

"Moving Forward: your PR Committee is here to assist you, to cross-pollinate information regarding activities and events, and to provide you guidance and support concerning PR and PR-related matters. We are not here to write your individual Post articles but can and will assist you in getting them printed and published within or outside the American Legion channels. As is our current process, your articles for internal publication, along with attendant photographs, if any, should be submitted directly to Erica Eccleston at Department Headquarters for processing, printing, and dissemination, as appropriate. Please put your PR Committee representative as an informational addressee on all submitted articles so we can keep abreast of the great things we are doing across the board. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me (cell: 703-328-3052) or any member of the Department PR Committee if you have any questions or concerns - looking forward to seeing you in Virginia Beach.

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## **American Legion Department of Virginia Eastern Region JROTC**

The Eastern Region JROTC Drill Competition was held on Saturday, 23 January 2010 in Newport News. Denbigh Post 368 was the gracious host for this year's event. In addition to providing the actual location within the Post facility, they also provided lunch to the cadets, instructors, parents and American Legion volunteers who attended. Post 368 Commander Buddy Dingle, Past Dept Vice Commander Bill Gooden (368), and Mrs. Gooden, facility manager, provided outstanding support for this event and we thank them very much.





Colonial Heights Post 284 provided the trophies for this year's competition in addition to providing manpower and morale support for first time Eastern Region JROTC Chairman Bill Feasenmyer (284). Betty Michalek, Auxiliary Unit 284, has been the head scorer for many years and as always was there to contribute her expertise and guidance. Support from across the East was evident as noted by Eastern Region Dept Vice Commander, Jim Chapman, who welcomed everyone to the competition and thanked the cadets for their dedication and hard work. Support was noted from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 11th Districts in large numbers.

Dept JROTC Chairman, Willie Ransom attended and was excited to see the three schools who competed, return to competition after an extended absence from our competitions. All the schools did exceptionally well and I believe everyone was pleasantly surprised at the high level of competition displayed by these newcomers.

Smithfield High School (Army), sponsored by Smithfield Post 49, took top honors and will represent the Eastern Region at the Department Competition at Little Creek on 19 March. Tabb High School (Navy), sponsored by Poquoson Post 273 and Denbigh High School (Army) sponsored by Denbigh Post 368 followed. All three schools did a superb job and were acknowledged for the high level of discipline, competitiveness, and military bearing displayed by each and every cadet.

Respectfully submitted

For God and Country,  
Bill Feasenmyer  
Eastern Region JROTC Chairman  
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## **Americanism in the Face of a Record Winter**

As I write this it is President's Day and one of the major Americanism events of the year has been cancelled due to the record snow storms that have hit the Commonwealth of Virginia. I am referring to the Annual George Washington Birthday Parade held by the City of Alexandria and the American Legion participation coordinated and hosted by Alexandria Post 24. Also many other posts and districts were forced to cancel their Four Chaplains Memorial Services in the interest of the safety of their members and guests.

But while the normal Americanism activities were cancelled, many of our members and posts were out there helping in our communities. Many of you were helping out our neighbors by shoveling snow for them, using four wheel drive vehicles to get folks to and from work, or the grocery store, or doctors appointments. Many also were donating blood to help those in need of emergency medical care. All of these self-less acts are part of Americanism under community service. As we get closer to the end of the year, please take the opportunity to report your volunteer hours and community service to your post. Remember that every little bit helps show the impact that our members make in our communities.



I would be remiss if I did not thank those posts, districts and regions that braved the snow and continues to schedule alternative dates to try to get contests in despite the multiple storms. I was fortunate to attend several Oratorical contests and based upon the contests that I saw, we are sure to have an exciting Department contest on Friday Night, March 19, 2010 in Virginia Beach. I hope everyone can make the Department Finals in Virginia Beach!

Additionally, we will have the Department Competition of the Junior ROTC Drill Team Competition on Friday at the Little Creek Facility. If you are able to attend, this event is always a crowd pleaser. The National Commander, David Rehbein, was very impressed last year and we hope to have an equally impressive event this year for National Commander Clarence Hill.

I want to personally thank everyone for all you do every day to support our veterans, their families, and our communities. You are the ones that make these programs happen and you are the faces of the American Legion! I look forward to seeing you at Virginia Beach!

John Kokernak  
Department Americanism Chairman.  
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## **Middle School Essay Contest Extension**

Due to the excessive amount of snow which have caused a number of students to miss school, we have extended the deadline for the submission of Middle School Essay Contest entries to the Department Americanism Chairman from March 1, 2010 to March 15, 2010.

This will allow for 2 more weeks of time to have the entries submitted and will still allow the entries to be judged at the Department of Virginia Spring Conference.

Please contact Department Americanism Committee Chairman, John Kokernak at [jkokernak@aol.com](mailto:jkokernak@aol.com) or (703) 597-2294 if there are any questions.

John Kokernak  
Americanism Committee Chairman  
Department of Virginia  
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