



**102<sup>nd</sup> Department Convention Meeting Minutes**  
**June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**Canyonville Oregon**  
**09:21 P.M.**

**Call to order**  
**Salute to Colors**  
**Opening Prayer**

**Department Commander Steve Adams**

**POW/MIA Ceremony**  
**Pledge of Allegiance**  
**Preamble**  
**Roll Call      Quorum present**  
**Reading of the previous minutes**  
**Reading of the Department Standing Rules**  
**Introductions of Department Officers**  
**Reports**

Flynn Phillips:

102nd Convention, Canyonville, Thursday, June 24

Steve Adams:

Facing the flag of our country, hand salute. Two. All members and guests in attendance shall remain standing with their cap removed and placed over the heart from the opening prayer through the Pledge of Allegiance and concluding with POW MIA ceremony. The chaplain will offer prayer.

Steve Shollenburg:

Heavenly Father, we come to you this morning to invite you to our meeting. We have a lot of stuff to go over this week and we just ask you to be here with our deliberations, keep us wise. Let us get through these deliberations according to your will, Father. I just ask you to bless every person that's here today. May we be healthy, safe during this week. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Crowd:

Amen.

Steve Adams:

Department Sergeant-at-Arms will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Phyllis York:

Ladies & Gentlemen, facing the flag of our country, we all say together,

Crowd:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Steve Adams:

Per Resolution 288, Adopted at the 67th National Convention, calls for a POW MIA empty chair to be placed at all official meetings of the American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW MIA still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. This is a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity to repatriation to the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor. Will you please follow with me Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion.

Crowd:

For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Steve Adams:

Cover

Steve Adams:

The adjutant will call the roll of living Past Department Commanders.

Flynn Phillips:

Robert D. Scott, Post 51, 1982-83.

Patsy Nestor, Post 158, 1986-87.

Richard A. Schenfeld, Post 5, 1993-94.

Robert D. Liebenow, Post 6, 1996-97.

Don Epperson, Post 61, 1997-98.

George "Toby" Potter, Post 12, 2002-03.

Charlie Schmidt, Post 63, 2004-05.

Charlie Schmidt:

Present.

Flynn Phillips:

Sid Carter, Post 29, 2005-2006.

Bernie Healy, Post 158, 2006-07.

Kevin Owens, Post 34, 2008-09.

Jackie Collison, Post 34, 2010-11.

Jon Marsh, Post 43, 2011-12.

Jon Marsh:

Here

Flynn Phillips:

Robert Huff, Post 192, 2012-13.

Robert Huff:

Present.

Flynn Phillips:

Mike Morris, Post 21, 2013-14.

Andy Millar, Post 24, 2014-15.

Mike Jones, Post 67, 2015-16.

Eugene Hellickson, Post 86, 2017-18.

Eugene Hellickson:

Here.

Flynn Phillips:

Tom Harris, Post 119, 2018-19.

Tom Harris:

Here.

Steve Adams:

Thank you, Flynn.

I would like to now announce we have a special guest with us today Dean Kessel, National Marketing Director from National, about to give us a presentation this morning. Going to be a very [inaudible 00:06:03] presentation for everybody.

Past National Commander Charles Schmidt.

Past National Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Owens.

Past Aide to the National Commander Don Weber.

Steve Adams:

I have a couple of announcements to make.

Steve Adams:

Rob Liebenow, National Vice Commander.

Sorry, Rob!

Put your red hat on, Rob!

Robert D. Liebenow:

Thanks for the reminder

Bob Huff:

Don't feel bad, Rob. It happens to all of us.

Steve Adams:

Got a couple of announcements to make. Will the District Commanders, don't do it right now, but pick up their box with the membership cards that are out in the hallway?

Announcements:

Box lunches will be delivered at 1130 in the auxiliary meeting room.

District raffle baskets are on display in the hallway. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

The Americanism lunch is next door in the Juniper room.

I don't know why this is... Minors are not allowed on the casino floor-

Flynn Phillips:

Because...

Steve Adams:

Lou, you cannot go in the casino.

I would now like to introduce, Charlie Schmidt, Past National Commander, to introduce our special guest.

Charlie Schmidt:

Good morning, all Legionnaires!

Crowd:

Good morning!

Charlie Schmidt:

Is it great to be here or not?

Crowd:

Absolutely!

Charlie Schmidt:

You know I think it's like déjà vu. Do you know where you were 10 years ago today? Right here.

Charlie Schmidt:

In the Seven Feathers 2011 Department Convention and, in that convention, believe it or not, history was made. For it was at that convention 10 years ago, that you made a decision that Oregon would have its first National Commander candidate and, I got to say, I was humbled to be that candidate for you. So, it is déjà vu, at least for me. So, we had a great time and again, I can't tell you what an honor it was to represent you, Oregon, & the 50 departments traveling around the world. So thank you very much.

At this time, it is my pleasure to introduce a guest from our national headquarters. You know, we've been kind of shy about having guests from our national headquarters. But those folks, as I mentioned to them at National last year, Y'all need to come on out and see us and visit the departments because this is where it all happens in these posts and in these departments of what the American Legion does.

So we're honored today to have the director of our National Marketing and also our National Media and Communications Divisions, Dean Kessel. And Dean is no stranger to marketing and media communications. He has vast experience in the corporate world. And, of course, in our world in the American Legion family, marketing and media communications is vital, particularly now, as we work on membership because those two programs help us brand the American Legion because there's a lot of people in the public and, believe it or not, there's a lot of people in our American Legion family that don't know a lot about our organization.

Dean is going to present some information to us that our two commissions at National are working on. And I tell you what... They're really going after the marketing and the media in communications, to brand us and get us out there at a time where there are veterans that still need our legion. So, at this time, Commander, I think we're going to move some boards over here. We're going to have a presentation so, those on the podium might want to move out and get a seat.

So, Dean, take a bow. Welcome!

Steve Adams:

I'll have Don Weber read the resolution that was passed at Pre DEC

Timing was off.

Phyllis York:

Sorry timing. Timing! Timing is everything.

Don Weber:

Thank you. This is a special resolution. So, the American Legion Department of Oregon, Monday, June 14, 2021:

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God, the Great Commander to summon to the immortal agents our beloved comrade Jim Willis;

And, whereas, we humbly bow to the will of divine providence, while ever cherishing in our hearts the memory of distinguished service to our country and outstanding contributions to the American Legion comradeship;

Now therefore be it resolved that the American Legion Department of Oregon and Santiam Post 51, does mourn the passing of our comrade, Jim Willis, that we commend to all the works for the American Legion, and to guide the spirit, he had the community state and nation.

And be it further resolved that a token of our common grief, a copy of this resolution transferring Jim Willis to post everlasting, the American Legion be presented to the family.

And it's signed by Steve Adams, Department Commander, and S. Flynn Phillips, Department Adjutant.

Thank you.

Dean Kessel:

[inaudible 00:14:17] Under my purview at the organization is with marketing, is media in communication or what I call "content."

I also have the membership group that now reports into my organization, and then also all of our fundraising efforts. So, basically if it touches the American Legion brand, it runs through our office now so it's about 60 people 60-70 people in Indianapolis and I also have a media relations team in Washington, DC, as well, so we are talking to the media, working with legislators on those type of things that all works. The purpose of doing that is to have one voice, and one talking point that goes throughout the organization so, having that all in one place, is terrific. As Charlie mentioned, my background is in corporate America so, just to give you a little bit about where I come from, I started at RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company, back in the mid early 90s and worked on a thing called Winston Cup. We got any racing fans in here?

Dean Kessel:

Any NASCAR fans?

Dean Kessel:

So I worked on Winston Cup for a number of years and then I went to Lowe's and ran all of their sports marketing. So, if you remember Charlotte Motor Speedway being called Lowe's Motor Speedway, that was my team doing that. Then I hired this kid named Jimmie Johnson, who did pretty well for Lowe's back in the NASCAR days, and now he and I have been reunited again with what we're doing with the American Legion. I then worked for ESPN for about five years, ran a company that they acquired down in Alabama. It was an organization called Bass, if we've got any anglers here in the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society.

So Bass was acquired by ESPN in the mid 2000's. They wanted to turn that into the next NASCAR. Couldn't quite get it over the hump, but it was a good organization, very much like the American Legion, frankly, a volunteer type organization. So I have some experience with that type of thing. And then, prior to coming to the Legion I worked back in the NASCAR world again and ran the Sprint Cup series when Sprint and Nextel merged. So I ran all the marketing, all the communications, all of our technology efforts at every racetrack across the country. It was about \$100 million sponsorship a year that we had our name on so I know a little bit about branding and that type of thing.

If you could, go to the next slide, please, sir.

What I want to talk to you about today is some things that we're doing from a national perspective so I know some of you have seen the new marketing brand logo that we've got out there, which I just want to, for the record, say, that that does not replace the emblem, okay? I know there's been some confusion in the marketplace out there but what it does do is allow us to do some different things from a marketing perspective, kind of refreshes it a little bit, gives it a different look and feel to it, and I'll take you through that in a second.



I also want to give you an update on our sponsorship and IndyCar, which has been a terrific addition to what we're doing here and I'll take you through why we're doing it, what it's doing for the organization, and how we're going to measure its success.

And then finally I'll give you a little bit of an update on VCF, the Veterans and Children's Foundation and what we're doing with that as well.

So, next slide please, sir.

Here's the new look and feel, right? It's very much from a marketing perspective. This is what we have on the number 48 and then this is what we're doing - some merchandise and things of that nature.

If you could, go to the next slide please.

So, again, as I said, does not replace the emblem. So you think in two different terms, what we're going to do that's 102 years' worth of equity with the emblem. We're not looking to change that at all. But what we are trying to do is sort of refresh things a little bit, attract a different audience to our brand and to our organization, gives it sort of a new voice, a new sort of a feel and look to it, sort of a contemporary look to it. As you can see, a little bit of a nod to the flag there at the bottom. It gives the logo, a little bit of motion as well so it works very well on a race car works very well on apparel, and it will work very well what we're doing for communication.

You'll still see the emblem on official status documents so, think in terms of legal documents, financial documents, annual reports, on your caps, those type of things. We're not looking to replace it. We're just looking to evolve. Every organization does this over time. I can't think of one from Disney to General Motors, you think of the most historic brands in America, they've all evolved how they look and feel over time and that's what we're doing at this point, and you'll see how it kind of plays into everything else we're doing here as well.

Next slide, please.

If you're wondering sort of what the precedent was for this, every branch of the military has a marketing brand to it, okay? So you look what the Army has... and, sorry, it's a little bit blurry here, but they have their official seal, and then they have the US Army marketing brand. Same thing with the Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and even the Space Force as a marketing look to it. So what we're doing is very translatable from what happens in the military side of the equation. And what we're doing with the American Legion brand as well so not stepping way out of bounds in what we're doing here just sort of following the tradition that's been set for us.

Next slide, please, sir.

At the end, I'm going to try to play some videos for you. I'm not going to do it right now. It's going to require changing a couple things from an AV standpoint but, if I have the opportunity, there's a five-minute video we put together that sort of talks about the brand, talks about the behind-the-scenes of two commercials that we shot that we're running on national television right now.

Those are much different, very different from PSA's, public service announcements, which you've seen before. We can ask for things inside a commercial. When you're buying commercial inventory, which we're doing on NBC, you can ask for people to join your organization and you can ask people to donate to your organization. You cannot do that in a public service announcement. You can only say who you are, you can't ask for anything so, in these spots, we ask for the "order" if you will, to use a sales term. We're going to ask for it. We want you to donate or want you to join.

So, we'll show you both those. One of them is called "More Than What You've Heard," and it just sort of talks about the size and scope of the American Legion, and the other one is "When They Came Home." And the "When They Came Home" commercial talks about the biggest issue facing veterans today, this generation of veterans, which is veteran suicide, and it talks about that and I'll go into more detail on how the American Legion is sort of going to tackle that issue as well.

Next slide, please.

So here's the IndyCar update. The gentleman on the left is Tony Kanaan. He won the 2013 Indianapolis 500 and he also was a series champion as well. The guy on the right is Jimmie Johnson, 7-time NASCAR champion and a rookie in IndyCar this year and doing something that is unprecedented in motorsports, going from NASCAR into IndyCar as a rookie and trying to compete at that level.

Now, I've gotten some emails from some Legionnaires and folks are saying why are we doing this with Jimmie Johnson, the guy can't run up front, he's struggling, he finishes 23rd, 22nd. It's okay. We didn't get into this because of what Jimmie can do on Sunday in the race. We got into it because what he can do to talk about the American Legion and the audience and the following that he has. Jimmie has over 4 million followers on all his social media platforms. So he has reached the level of celebrity and fame that all these other guys in IndyCar are trying to get to. He's already there so we have the opportunity to ride his coattails, if you will, and he can talk about our messaging and speak to a very, very targeted audience.

Tony Kanaan is running all the oval tracks so, you saw during the Indy 500, we had the American Legion on there. And then Jimmie is running all the street races, so he'll be here in Oregon during the 20th anniversary of 9/11, which takes place this year, so he'll be doing that. I'll talk about that in a second, what we're going to do here in Portland. But Jimmie is a great spokesperson for the organization. I worked with him at Lowe's for 17 years.

I can tell you that Lowe's spent... We have a significant investment in what we're doing with this, right? So I don't take that lightly. But I will tell you it works. Motorsports works as a platform and as a marketing endeavor. 17 years at Lowe's, the company spent close to half a billion dollars just on the sponsorship. That's not one race ticket. That's not one commercial. That's not one suite at an event. There's no hospitality. That is just what they spent to sponsor that car. And I can tell you Lowe's wouldn't have spent that kind of money if they didn't get the return on it and that's kind of what we're looking for from our relationship as well.

Next slide, please.

So, from a marketing standpoint, right? Marketing is very simple. I'll boil it down to two things: What are you selling and who are you selling it to? That's your 101 lesson for marketing. That's the theory, in general. I can give you a lot of buzzwords around it but that's exactly it. So if you're going to go after a customer or a potential membership, you want to fish where the fish are, if you will. IndyCar has that opportunity for us. We have the ability. Motorsports and veterans, motorsports and military people, are hand-in-hand. We're in an area where we know that there's a target-rich environment for us to attract membership. That's what that slide talks about.

Next slide, please.

Then when you overlay our membership, right? And you look at it from a national perspective of where all these races are, there's almost 660,000 members that this could impact based on the current track schedule there. And if you look how the demographic lines up. TAL members under 55 at 52% and over 55 at 47% and in departments with almost 660,000 members, so it's a good fit for us. We did the research on it. It's not something that we thought of passingly, "Hey, let's just spend some money on a racecar and put our logo on it, even though the Legion had done something like that in the past but not at this level, not with a Chip Ganassi racing, who's won 20 IndyCar championships, won the Indy 500, The Daytona 500, Le Mans, the 24-hour event. We are with a world-class organization and they're doing amazing work for us.

Next slide, please, sir.

So this is how I look at sponsorship, right? I call it a hub and spoke, right? So, put the sponsorship in the middle. So my friends from Coca Cola, when I used to work with Coca Cola, back in the NASCAR day, they would call the sponsorship, the toy. You're buying the toy. You have to put the money in the batteries to make the toy work, so this is what we're doing. These are the batteries that we're putting in place.

So if you think in terms of how it's going to create business development and sponsorship with us. There's a tremendous amount of loyalty in motorsports. They know that, not only fans, but other corporations know that the sport doesn't exist without sponsorship and, as a result, they give their dollars to those companies that support those type of things. I'm going to show you at the end here one thing we did at the end of last year when we announced it, that delivered incredible results for us and speaks to that loyalty amongst race fans and how they want to participate.

So if you look at a development standpoint, you look at membership and growth, growing our donor base, content - it's providing a lot of content to us, corporate donations, staff engagement - you can get something exciting. We had 300,000 employees at Lowe's. Everybody wore a '48' cap. It was something to rally around. We want to see people doing watch parties and things of that nature at their posts. So that's something that you can really get excited about. We're starting to sell merchandise at Emblem Sales. And then it also increases sort of the brand relevance of our organization.

So when I pitched this opportunity to the NEC and with what we wanted to do and how we'd do it. I said, "If we don't get one new member, if we don't get one new corporate partnership out of it, and

if we don't get one new donation, our investment will net us probably close to \$20 million worth of exposure on just national television." Not just NBC. We've been featured on ESPN, CNN, every broadcast that takes place inside the IndyCar system and Carvana, who's the primary sponsor for this, is spending millions of dollars on advertising, not just in IndyCar but also in NASCAR. And when they show the Carvana car, we're on that as well so we're getting that residual effect, also.

So we'll likely get anywhere from \$15 to \$20 million worth of exposure on a very incremental investment that we couldn't ordinarily afford to do. So this is a very efficient media buy, if we do nothing else.

Next slide, please.

So here's some of the updates that we're doing, right? So we're on the car, all year long. We have the "primary delivery," what it's called, the paint scheme. This is interesting. We had it for the Indianapolis 500 and then we also had it in Texas, but for you race fans that know the name Chip Ganassi, right? Been in motorsports for decades. Chip is so enamored with his partnership with the American Legion that he has now given us three opportunities with another car, which is Alex Palou, is part of the Chip Ganassi IndyCar team. He has four teams. He's put us on that car, free of charge for three races, okay? And one of them was in Indianapolis, two of them were in Detroit, and we could continue to get that. Now he had the opportunity to do it, could have potentially sold it to somebody else but said, "I love what you guys are all about. I love you being a part of my organization. Here's three free paint schemes." That's about a million dollars a race, when you tally it up. So it's not an insignificant thing that he's done.

And then, additionally, we made an announcement in Indianapolis, about veteran suicide in American Legions. We'll take that on. Following that announcement, Chip... I had lunch with him and he was like, "What else can I do for American Legion?" He said, "I want to buy tickets for Legionnaires at every racetrack that we go to for the rest of the year." So he's giving us, out of his own pocket, 50 to 100 tickets per race. So we're going to use those here in Portland at the end of the year to bring Legionnaires out to the racetrack.

So, my point is that he didn't have... He doesn't have to do any of that. We're already paying him a sponsorship fee but, because he loves what we're doing and who we are and who you people are in this room and what you're doing on a local level, on a week-to-week basis for veterans, he wants to be a part of that. It's a testament to that relationship that we've talked about.

Next slide please.

So here's our media strategy, okay? We're buying national inventory on NBC and NBC Sports and on Peacock as well, which is their streaming service. We have at least one spot in every race. The other thing that we have two which I think gets even more exposure because of Jimmie Johnson is we have an in-car camera with the American Legion logo on every race that takes place. So because Jimmie is the story, every race he goes to, because of what he's doing, again, we get to tag along with that so

we're getting incredible exposure for that as well. And then we're using the [legion.org/give48](https://legion.org/give48) as a way to measure donations and things of that nature.

Next slide please

So, as I said before, at the Indianapolis 500, we launched a program called "Race to End Veteran Suicide." Let me give you a little bit of context on that, right? So, and I think, I've talked to a number of you today and last night about membership. Where are we going with membership and what's happening from that perspective and how are we going to be able to grow, right? Yeah, you're right. It is going the wrong way. It is 100%. Chuck Krupa on my team who does the DMS, and I'll just share these numbers with you, he brings in 123 to 125,000 new members a year. We are losing 200,000 a year. That math doesn't work so we have got to do some things to shake it up a little bit, okay? If we keep doing the same thing over and over again and expect different results, I think we all know what the definition of that is, correct?

So, I've been with the Legion for a year now. And when I look at that sort of the size and scope of the organization and 102-year history of the organization, here's some things that I think will resonate with everybody in this room. So if you look at what the World War One American Legion veteran did for the World War Two veteran, created the GI Bill, right? Essentially created the VA as well. Huge, huge thing create entire middle class. You can still get an education on the government. A dollar down for a mortgage, all of those types of things, right? That was that era's legacy.

You look at the World War Two Legionnaire, what they did for the Vietnam veterans that came home, all the care and compensation around Agent Orange. We were the leading force behind that. If you look at the different eras, now, this new, post-911 era veteran, the biggest issue facing them is suicide, bar-none. 22, depending on who you listen to, anywhere from 18 to 22 veterans a day take their lives.

Now, the American Legion, we're not mental health experts, but we know how to get stuff done. There is no organization that has the political clout on Capitol Hill, with the White House, with the DOD, with the VA, and with Congress than the American Legion to do this. This is going to be a tremendously heavy lift to get done, but we have the ability to do it. We have the voice to do it. We have the expertise to pull those people together, and I think, from what you all do at the post level, we have the peer-to-peer perspective that nobody else has. The footprint of veterans that we have across the country to open our doors up and invite veterans in just to talk. If you're having problem, talk. We can work with you on that.

So you're going to see more and more about that. You're going to hear every National Commander moving forward talk about veteran suicide as the issue. It is going to be that galvanizing problem that the American Legion is going to help solve. It's not going to be done in a year, two years, three years, four years. This is a decade-long situation that we're going to have to get behind, but I don't think there's an organization that's more poised to do it than the American Legion.

So, around that, we launched this initiative at the Indy 500 and then we also announced a \$2 million donation from Veterans United which is a home mortgage loan organization into VCF, because that's where we'll take the funds out to do veteran suicide prevention around Veterans & Children's Foundation.

Next slide, please.

So the Grand Prix in Portland coming up in September, again, the 20th anniversary of 9/11, we're working with NBC to do a feature on that as well, around the American Legion during that timeframe. We will have tickets available for that as well. I just came from Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, last weekend, where we had the Department of Wisconsin come out and they were able to set up booths at the race track, working to talk to veterans that were at the track that day, trying to recruit membership trying to recruit donations, really just sort of create awareness. So we are working... My team is working with every racetrack on the circuit to work with every department on the circuit now that doors are opening back up and people are able to go to events, to be able to do those type of things here in Portland as well.

Next slide please.

So just look... These are just some metrics, right? Everybody says, "Well, we're spending this money on the program, what are we getting out of it, right?" Sorry for that pie-chart slide here but the big number here I want you to take away is sort of our little over \$2 million worth of media value just on that event alone, just on that event alone. So we're clicking along. Our reach on that was about 216 million social media. We're doing really great on that as well. So, my point of this slide is, it's working. Things are coming together for us on this platform.

Next slide, please.

So I mentioned a minute ago how we, when we launched this program, the power of sort of putting a marketing plan in place and how everything could come together. So we announced the program on December 1 which this year was Giving Tuesday, which is a nationwide program for people to donate to charities and that nature. So we did, this year, we had the announcement of the race team. We had Jimmie Johnson on Fox & Friends that morning talking about his relationship, and we had a \$48 challenge that we put out to people. We want everybody on GivingTuesday to give \$48. So, this is the important thing, right? All the earned media was great, listening value of 3 million, audience value of 117,000. This is the number I want you to pay attention to: In 2019, we've got \$17,000 on Giving Tuesday. In 2020, \$119,000. The only difference was the racing program and a concerted effort by our content group, our media group, our fundraising group, and the racing program to go in one area and push everything out at one time. And that's how you deliver results like that. So again, that's the way to do it.

Next slide, please.

So, any questions that I can take on the racing program or the logo or anything like that, before I just have a couple more slides on VCF but I didn't know if anybody had anything on that.

Okay, Veterans & Children's Foundation update.

Next slide please

So, the organization has a five-year plan to raise \$25 million over the next five years. That's a lofty, lofty goal to try and reach that quickly. But we've got a lot of things in place to do that. So we've got a giving wall that's been installed in National Headquarters, got the 1919 Society, which is different levels on that wall as well. We raised \$120,000 on that. We're spending a million dollars this year. Excuse me. We're doing four separate mailings on VCF that we think will deliver over \$2 million to us but that's what that reference is there on our acquisitions.

Next slide please

100 miles For hope, I hope everybody's participating in that as well. This is the 2.0 version. Last year we raised \$140,000. This year, our goal is to raise \$300,000 and through May, we're up to \$132,000 as well, towards that goal. And we've also got Tony Kanaan helping us spread the word as well as is the National Commander as well, everywhere he goes.

Also, as Charlie pointed out, you know the VCF program is very important. A lot of the funding from that goes to obviously veterans and children but the big thing, about 60% of the funding there goes towards service officers and getting them paid, and growing that pool of service officers as well. So it's hugely important for us. Service Officers last year, out of the VA&R, of what takes place out of Washington, DC, the American Legion was responsible on appeal, for getting veterans \$3.6 billion in benefits last year. That's a big number. And that's something that, we need to make a bigger deal out of, talking about getting the word out there. Very important program to the organization so you'll see more on VCF, and you'll see more on what we're doing with veteran suicide as well.

I think that's the last slide. Happy to take any questions. I'll be here all day today.

Thank you. This is my first department convention. So I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I missed the national convention last year so I'm looking forward to seeing how that all operates. But thank you for your time and attention. Charlie, thank you for inviting me out here. I really, really do appreciate it. Happy to take any questions or move on to other business.

{claps}

Let me see if I can get this to play one video that I think y'all will enjoy. Come on and help me out here! Let's see if I can do this. Close this up. There you go. Close this out. Let's see. Pop this out. Never mind! It is but the video is not... There we go!

I had a question real quick. What does it cost to buy a 30-second spot on NBC, and it completely depends on what race it is and which network. So if it's NBC, it's one price. If it's NBC Sports, it's another. I can tell you, the Indy 500, which is the biggest race of the year, it's close to \$70,000 just for that spot. For a race like last weekend at Elkhart Lake, where it was on NBC Sports, it's about anywhere from \$15 to \$20,000. That's what it costs us each time we run one of those spots.

All right so what I've got here. This is a sort of a behind-the-scenes spot on how we made the commercial around veterans suicide but it also goes into the brand and sort of the thinking behind the new look and feel to that marketing emblem or not emblem but mark.

Let's see if you guys can hear this okay. It should've just started playing.

It's amazing.

Person voice:

Sir?

Dean Kessel:

Yes sir.

Person voice:

You mentioned in your presentation, you listed an example of Lowe's that they spent, I believe you said over half a billion dollars over 17 years and they wouldn't have done that unless they had a measurable return. How did they measure that return?

Dean Kessel:



Store traffic is one way to do it and then launching other brands. Are you guys familiar with Kobalt Brand?

Person voice:

Yes

Dean Kessel:

So, they used the racing program to launch the Kobalt brand as well. Also, they used it a lot for internal purposes. So they used the racing program a ton for store associates. So think in terms of district managers and regional vice-presidents. If you met certain marks, you got to do certain things with the racing program. They started externally looking at it. The big thing in that market, especially in NASCAR, is fans support companies that support their pastime. I sat in focus group after focus group saying, "I'm coming to Lowe's because you support NASCAR." It's a big deal.

Person voice:

So in translating that to the American Legion, how well do the American Legion see a return for their investments?

Dean Kessel:

Right. So there's 3 things that I'm looking for from an ROI standpoint.

Person voice:

We can't hear him.

Dean Kessel:

Okay I'm sorry. Thank you. The question was that I mentioned Lowe's spending half a billion dollars and what was their return? Right? What were some of those metrics that they got back on that? And how are we spending our dollars and what will our return be?

Our return will be 3 things. Our return will be exposure, in getting the brand out there. As I said, we'll probably get close to \$20 billion worth of just pure American Legion brand exposure, based on Jimmie and based on what we're doing with the sport in general.

The second one will be partnerships with other organizations. So, for example, I've got a meeting next week with McDonald's, because McDonald's is a partner with Chip Ganassi on the NASCAR side. So what we're talking to them about is, around Veterans Day, could they put together a special meal that's just for veterans and a portion of the proceeds for that come to the American Legion. So we wouldn't necessarily have relationship without... And when we talked to other folks in the NASCAR

ecosystem, we're talking to the CEO's of the company. We're not talking to the regional vice president of this market. We're talking to the national folks about it. That's kind of the entree.

So, it's exposure, it's partnerships that drive revenue to the organization, I believe, it will help us drive donations because of the Give48 that we're doing as well, like I talked about early on. And I think it's going to help with membership. I think it is... I'm not sure I can directly translate it to that but this is changing the conversation for the American Legion. This is the biggest sponsorship, the biggest thing I know of that the American Legion has done from the marketing standpoint.

So it's got a lot of people talking about us. Creating that different conversation leads to more investigation right so from a, when you look at a sales funnel perspective, the top of the funnel, where you want people to come into is awareness so they have to know more about the American Legion and this is, sort of, helping us do that. Then they'll have to find out more about it, inquire more about it, and then hopefully they'll join.

So, I think that, coupled with what we're doing from a mission standpoint on veteran suicide, those two things together I think will be of huge value to us.

That help?

Okay. We're not going to get it to work. So, that's all I have.

Person voice:

Good stuff.

Dean Kessel:

Thank you.

Person voice:

You're welcome.

**Bob Huff:**

Yeah, because, Commander, once I start talking, they ain't getting... Once I start talking, they're going to... because I have to read every posted in the state. So...

Bob Huff:

Okay before we get started on the committee, before we do that, we're going to take a very short 10-minute break, because everybody's been drinking coffee. Okay, back in 10 minutes, please!