

Moose Legion Breakfast Address  
Anaheim Conference – 2011  
Robert A. Neff, Director  
Friday, July 1, 2011



Welcome everyone to this general session of our Moose Legion Conference here in Anaheim, California. Thank you all for coming and for all the good you all do - day in and day - out all year long. I started out last year's comments saying:

“There is much work ahead of us – but there will be much good ahead of us and there will be great celebrations of our progress and our achievements as well – provided that the actions of our deeds in fact speak louder and more clearly than our words.”

Well it has been a very interesting year just completed. Our department has seen changes and accepted additional responsibilities. More work?

Perhaps. But what it really amounts to is more opportunities.

More Opportunities – what? – You think I have gone nuts? - Well maybe I have – but it is in a good way. You see these additional opportunities fit into the agenda and can become part of the roadmap that leads us to the destination of our goals.

While overseeing the Fellowship Degree process and conferral and serving as Ceremonial Director of the Pilgrim Degree conferral are additional responsibilities and do require additional time and effort – they still fit. Why – Because no one attains either degree without first being a Moose Legionnaire.

Overseeing the Councils of Higher Degrees is truly an opportunity to help make a difference in the entire fraternity. Just look at the job that we collectively did at the end of last year when we put out the call to contact members in arrears and encourage them to renew their memberships.

The lodges and chapters both benefited from that call to action. The councils helped, as did so many of our Moose Legionnaires, who answered that same call. You might remember us informing you that the Moose Legion was down at the beginning of April about 4600 active members on the year. But look at the job you did!

By the end of April we were still down 804 members but think about what that means in way of accomplishment. It means we recovered around 3800 members in ONE MONTH! I assure you those were not all new enrollments – the vast majority were

members in arrears who were contacted and encouraged to renew their membership by paying their dues.

And it was more than just the Moose Legion who benefited in contacting expired Moose Legionnaires – Keep in mind many of them had to pay both the Lodge and Moose Legion dues to return to active status. We were helping the Lodges right along with helping ourselves and we thank those of you who got on that bandwagon with us and made those calls and drove to those homes to pick up those payments. It did matter and it did make a difference!

But we did not achieve an increase in active members. That does not make it a failed attempt. It in fact was a success when you look at what we accomplished in such a short time. Now – think about what we could have done with that kind of effort all year long and where we might have ended up.

But alas – that year is over. So what can we do now? We can fail to plan for this year – or we can plan a program that includes retention efforts all year long – coupled with sponsorship campaigns and this year we can engineer a positive outcome. We proved we could make the calls and contact the members and share information and encourage them to stay the course. What we must do is keep that up all year long.

And you should recognize and reward your members who do make the calls and collect the dues. They are providing a tremendous service to your Moose Legion and to your lodges and in the case of Councils of Higher Degrees that would also include the Women of the Moose Chapters. Our Moose Legions should be embracing and working with the Councils and together working retention programs across this fraternity.

I assure you that the Councils of Higher Degrees are being encouraged to live up to their by-laws first stated purpose – that being: “To be actively involved in the retention of Lodge, Chapter and Moose Legion members.”

We need the Moose Legions to work with the Councils and welcome them in working with us in these efforts. It is a winning combination that can only benefit the various units themselves and our overall philanthropic efforts of caring for children and seniors, bringing our communities closer together and celebrating life.

Brother Jr Past President – this effort is very largely in your hands as the jurisdiction Retention Committee Chairman. You need to select the committee members and make sure the Secretary provides the arrearage lists and follow up with lodge representatives on working those lists.

Pride and Leadership are great principles of the Degree of Service. We need those principles exemplified in working Retention. Whether you use the Power of One Retention Program or something else in your efforts – Moose Legionnaires who step forward and work to retain members who have slipped into arrears in their dues are invaluable to our effort. We say a sincere thank you to them and you should too!

But retention should start before the member is ever in arrears with their dues. It should start with welcoming them into the Degree with a properly conducted conferral ceremony - put on by a properly prepared ritual staff - performing during a properly organized and run celebration (or mini-celebration) of the jurisdiction.

It should begin with making the new member feel a genuine sense of welcome from the time his sponsor convinces him to advance, through the entire process of becoming a member and then following up after the initial conferral and not just forgetting him.

I would suggest we get back to the basics of fraternalism and start being there for the brothers we already have as members in our lodges and Moose Legions. Lets be there when they need us. Lets not just say we care – lets get to work and call the sick, visit those in distress, go to the funeral home for the wake of departed members and perform the Service of Tribute and offer assistance to the extent we are able - and truly be of fraternal inclination - as we say we are.

We say that we care about our members. But do we? Do we demonstrate that we care? Do we send a card or call when things are tough? Do we reach out to our Moose Legion members anytime other than when the dues the due? We certainly should. If we did show them we care – we might not be chasing their dues so often.

We must build from the bottom up. That means we must put more effort into our establishment of active, meaningful and truly functioning Lodge Moose Legion Committees. How many Governors are in the room this morning? (pause)

How many of you have appointed a Lodge Moose Legion Committee Chairman? You should realize it is required by the General Laws of this Order that you do so. This committee, properly functioning, is a true asset in many many lodges. It could be a valuable component in every lodge. It should be a priority of every Governor's administration to assure this committee is in place.

At the same time – Brother Moose Legion Secretary – the Code of Rules requires that you appoint an Assistant Secretary for each lodge in the jurisdiction. Have you done your part in completing this package? He is to be the primary correspondent between the lodge and the jurisdiction and the primary person sharing information back and forth. Don't complain no one at the lodge will respond if you have not done your part in appointing someone or in replacing them as may be required.

Lodge Moose Legion Committees are not just required – but they are vital to the level of our success in both the Moose Legion and in the lodges. It is an effort that will pay dividends.

Last year I talked to you about having Creative Committee Idea Sessions and called them CCIS's. I had no idea at the time the theme for this year would be CIS – Create Some Interest. None-the-less, it strikes along the same chords. We must be creative in our thinking and planning and we must create interest in the program we have to offer if we desire members to want to be involved in it.

I challenge each of you to work together with the Board of Directors and with the Lodge committees and the Lodge Board of Officers to plan and build the program that will create interest and will work to move along a positive path to build our membership so that we can continue to fulfill and exceed our philanthropic obligations of caring for the residents at both Mooseheart and Moosehaven.

Let us call to mind the oath we freely accepted upon our advancement to the Moose Legion, and for those that hold the Fellowship and Pilgrim Degrees – we took even further pledges. Pledges that as leaders, we must set an example and live of up to!

Brother Moose Legion jurisdiction President – an awful lot rides on your leadership. You are a key focal point this year and that provides you many opportunities to shine as a leader. I implore you to make the best of it. I encourage you to think outside the box that the jurisdiction has been operating in and explore varied opportunities to really excel this year.

As the jurisdiction President, your personal future reputation relies partly on your service and your leadership this year. What will the history books say about your year as President? How will you be remembered? Lets rally the Board of Directors as the positive mentoring nucleus to develop and grow yours, to be not just a good but rather a great jurisdiction! Together working in harmony with each other we can all prosper.

All Moose Legionnaires, I challenge you get on the move, I challenge you to assist in developing programs and activities in your Lodge and Moose Legion that will create some interest. Your Lodge Moose Legion Committee can only grow and prosper with involved members participating. That then leads to a stronger jurisdiction support base. Your Board of Directors needs your involvement and support.

The power of each of you to help build successful units lies with in yourself. Each of us individually, perhaps only makes a small difference – but collectively, the differences we make for the students at Mooseheart and the seniors at Moosehaven and for those we reach out to - and lend a kind word to - or perform some good deed for, is really larger than we sometimes realize.

The Moose Legion has such great potential – we just have to roll up our sleeves and LEAD BY EXAMPLE as we show our Pride in membership and Service to this fraternity. I am Proud to be a Moose Legionnaire – I hope you are too!

**Thank you for your attention!**

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## INVITE LADIES TO ENTER ROOM

### Presentation to President and wife



President Berger you have worked hard for the Moose Legion for many years, prior to and since coming aboard the Moose Legion Council. Much has transpired since then. You were a valuable asset to the Moose Legion Department – especially this past year and we thank you sincerely.

The Moose Legion has been inspired by your efforts, by the visitations where you have left indelible marks on many Moose Legionnaires and their families and as you and Donna made numerous fraternal friends along the way.

Bruce we are grateful for your contributions to this Degree of Service. It is our pleasure to present you with some small tokens of our appreciation at this time. Would you and Donna please join me at this podium?

Please remove the International Moose Legion President's medallion you have worn this past year. It is my distinct honor to invest you with your Past International Moose Legion President medallion for you to wear this year and for evermore.

We also have a Past International Moose Legion President Ring for you to wear with pride.

Additionally, we would like you have this watch so that you may always know that it is time to Create Some Interest and to serve this Order further.

Donna, We also wish to say thanks to you for all we know you did and all you put up with as Bruce was running to meetings and visitations, sitting on conference calls and reading and replying to e-mails - And just in case Bruce forgets to look at his watch – We have a matching ladies version for you as a remembrance of this past year as the First Lady of the Moose Legion.

Bruce, You truly did a fantastic job as International President - Please accept our sincere thanks for all you have done in service to the Moose Legion!

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### Introduction of New M L Council member, VP, And President



As with the conclusion of this Moose Legion Conference and the International Convention we will be saying good bye to one of our long time friends as a Moose Legion Council member – although he will continue to be involved as an Area Manager and advisor – from Texas – we would like to recognize our outgoing Jr Past International Moose Legion President Mike Roach. Mike was not able to be with us today but he and Karen send their best wishes to all present.

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And now the time has come to Create Some Interest in announcing the newest member to join this Moose Legion Council team. He has held a number of positions within his lodge Moose Legion and State Association. He is a member of the Moose 25 Club and has sponsored at least 80 Lodge brothers into Lodge membership.

He is a multi member of Lodges 822 & 1685 and is a member of Nodak Moose Legion No 42. He served through the chairs of his lodge and is a Past Governor. He served through the chairs of his Moose Legion and is a Past President. He is also a Past President by service of the Dakota Moose Association. He served as International Credentials Committee Chairman and most recently served on the International Loss Prevention Committee. He received the Fellowship Degree of Honor in 2007.

We know he will bring vitality, experience, new depth and perspective to the Moose Legion Council. He likes to fly airplanes and ride motorcycles. Would you please welcome our newest member, from Minot, North Dakota: Incoming Moose Legion Councilmen Michael L. Hauf (and his wife: Colleen)



Present Moose Legion Councilman medallion and name badge to: Michael L. Hauf

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Moving from the position of Moose Legion Councilmen to International Moose Legion Vice President will be a Past Governor of the Order and a Past North Moose of his Moose Legion. He joined the Moose in 1970 and the Moose Legion later that same year. He is a past District President and Past State President by service. He served his association as Deputy Grand North Moose (today known as Moose Legion Ambassador) as well as serving as Deputy Director of Conservation.

He is a 175-division member of the 25 Club (w/ at least 191 credits) and has sponsored 19 individual Moose Legion applicants. He received the Fellowship Degree in 1978 and the Pilgrim Degree of Merit in 1990.



He always brings ideas to the table of the Moose Legion Council meetings. It is my pleasure to introduce the next International Moose Legion Vice President - he hails from the state of California and the California/Nevada Moose Association. It is my pleasure to introduce the incoming International Moose Legion Vice President: Mark L. Klein (and his life partner: Donna Ridout)

Present VP medallion and name badge to: Mark Klein.

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And then there is one more to announce. The next individual is a Past Governor of the Order and a Past Moose Legion President of his jurisdiction who has truly made an impact on the projects and annual fund raising efforts of the Moose Legion. He formerly was the fundraising chairman and Treasurer for his state association, served as Deputy Supreme Governor and on both the state and International Government Relations Committees.

He is a 100-division member of the 25 Club, (w/ at least 112 credits to date) and has 34 Moose Legion membership credits for 31 individual applicants. He received the Fellowship Degree in 1991 and the Pilgrim Degree of Merit in 1996. He has provided fund raising reports and follow up to our jurisdictions like perhaps no one in recent history on this council had done.

He has been a true asset to the Moose Legion Council since coming onboard in 2005. It is my pleasure to introduce the next International Moose Legion President - he hails from the state of Washington, and I think is probably Bonnie's favorite husband,



Mr. Paul Curtis, who will serve as our incoming International Moose Legion President for the ensuing year.

And our new first lady of the Moose Legion, Bonnie Curtis –

<Present President's medallion and name badge to> Paul Curtis.

Paul, We yield the podium to you for comments.....

Paul will close meeting