

From the desk of Detachment Commander Ray

It is my sincere hope that everyone enjoyed the Thanksgiving Holiday and that the blessing of freedom we all share was not lost amongst the Turkey, Dressing, and Pumpkin Pie!

In my travels across the state I have had the opportunity to hand out many of my membership pins to the members of The American Legion Family I meet. Many have then asked what the different elements of the pin stand for, so I thought I would share this with you.

The Pin is in the shape of our great state of Illinois. It shows the obvious pride we share in our state, but also to those who receive my pin from other states, it lets them know right away where it came from.

The Sons Emblem was placed in the location of Lake Michigan, one of the Great Lakes! What better way to showcase the **“Great”** emblem of the Sons of The American Legion.

Across the top portion of the state you find the words...**“Proud Processors of a Priceless Heritage...”** the beginning of the preamble of the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion and a reminder that all SONS owe their eligibility to be a member of The American Legion Family to the **“Heritage”** of our ancestors who served in the US Armed Forces.

Along the right side of the pin you find a lighthouse in which you will find my theme **“Guided by Tradition”** in the light’s beam. Lighthouses have been used as a warning beacon and as guideposts to avoid danger for centuries. A lighthouse also represents a familiar, friendly and comforting beacon of hope; a symbol of the safety that awaits all (including the members of our armed services) who travel far from home. It also represents placing a light on the **Traditions** of our past as a way to **Guide** us into our future.

Under the lighthouse’s beam you will find the logos of the two programs I have decided to support this year. **“The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation”** and **“Ride 2 Recovery”**.

In the base of the lighthouse you will find the words **“John 8:12”**. This represents one of my favorite bible verses which through the years, has been represented by the symbol of a lighthouse. It also serves as a reminder that everything The American Legion Family does is... **“For God and Country”**.

The overall color theme for the pin was set as **“Red, White & Blue”** as a patriotic reference to our sincere belief in Americanism.

As we prepare to celebrate the coming Holiday season, may our service to those who serve be the guiding light for those who will follow in our footsteps.

I wish you all, the greatest joy and happiness this season can bring! **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**