Notes from the Department Commander

Greetings Kansas American Legion!

The Department Oratorical contest is on March 13th at 9am at the Manhattan Post. I learn something new every year from these outstanding future leaders. Even though the National Contest has been cancelled, we feel that we can hold ours safely by using social distancing, wearing masks, and taking temperatures at the door. The winner of our contest will not only win the $750 scholarship from the Department, but they will also be certified for a $5,000 scholarship from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation and The American Legion!

The following weekend, March 20th, kicks off the first of the District Conventions. I intend on attending at least part of all nine Conventions, and I look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones all across the state. Speaking of District, if your post hasn’t heard anything from District about the National Commander’s Call to Action: “Operation Comeback” please reach out to them to get all of the details.

In January the Department held a Membership workshop for District and Department leadership. What was shared at that workshop is not a big secret, so I’m going to share some of it with everyone this month. My portion of the workshop centered around how to be a better leader and mentor, because frankly, people don’t want to be a part of a poorly lead organization. Having a bad boss is said to be the number one reason why someone will leave a job and volunteer organizations are no different. If you have a bad leader, they will quit. I have decided to sum my thoughts up to five main points on how to be a better leader and mentor. I know these things not because I am an amazing mentor, but because I’ve been a receptive mentee.

1. The mentor/mentee relationship is a two-way relationship. If the mentee is not receptive to learning, you aren’t going to be very successful. Keep in mind, if they aren’t willing to learn new things they are likely not going to make a good future leader. Perhaps your time would be better spend teaching someone else. This also means if you are the mentee, you should probably learn to listen and be willing to step out of your comfort zone.
2. Telling someone, “If you have any questions, just holler,” is not being an active mentor. An active mentor will answer questions before they are asked. Even now, as Department Commander, I think there are questions that I don’t even know I should be asking. Someone that is just becoming active or stepping into a new leadership role likely doesn’t know enough to know what to ask, so don’t make them. You know what they need to know to be successful.
3. Be honest, don’t under or over sell it. Don’t hoodwink someone into taking on a new responsibility. Make sure they know what they are getting into without overwhelming them. Encourage questions and ask some yourself. They might surprise you with what they know, so be willing to learn from them too.

4. If you don’t know the answer, don’t make one up. Instead, tell them you aren’t sure, but you will help them find the answer. Delayed accurate information is always better than inaccurate information. Don’t ever dismiss information that differs from what you know. things might have changed, so investigate further. “This is the way it has always been done,” is an inappropriate response to someone with fresh ideas. This tells them that they and their fresh ideas are not valued. A better response would be, “I look forward to hearing your ideas on improving what we have done previously.”

5. Be willing to learn from someone that may be younger or less experienced than you. Unfortunately, someone who is set in their ways will become obsolete regardless of how much they care. A stagnant plan is often unsuccessful. Frequently goals need to be adjusted as conditions change. Even an obtained goal can be changed by upping the ante. Don’t write yourself off as no longer useful. You would be surprised how many previously though obsolete ideas can be revitalized.

I hope these five things will give you something to think about. I know I have areas I need to improve on. Be honest with yourself and become the mentor you wish you had.

For God & Country

Marri Krupco

Department of Kansas Commander

Notes from the Department Vice-Commander and Membership Chairman

Greetings Legionnaires,

National Commander Bill Oxford sent out a call-to-action letter outlining three personal goals for us to strive for in this membership year. Goal number one is to recruit 100,000 new members into the organization. We have had about 355 new members added to our ranks in Kansas so far this year, we need to continue to reach out to veterans you may know that don’t yet belong, ask those you meet in the grocery store or out and about to bring that number up. Commander Oxford’s second goal was to attain 90% renewal rate, this will require us to make personal contact through calls, printed media, or visits now that all the renewal notices have been sent from National. We are currently renewing close to 87% of our members which puts us close to reaching the Commanders goal. Third goal of Commander Oxford’s was to achieve 100% CPR reporting. The Consolidated Post Report (CPR) is due at Department no later than June 1 of each year and can even be filled out and submitted online at mylegion.org under your post login. Every Post has a story to tell each year, and the CPR is a great way to tell that story of how much time and money was donated to your community and projects, how many veterans and their families you supported throughout the year, and what children and youth programs you supported and the youth you helped. Don’t be afraid to tell that story and brag on your Post for all the good work it does. Working membership is more than just getting dues, it’s about talking to the Members, being there when they have questions or are in need.

The Buddy Check program was launched in March 2019 as a “comradeship campaign” to encourage Posts to reach out to veterans in their areas, members, former members and others to see what The American Legion could do for them. The program was successful in its first year and potentially
lifesaving in 2020, through the COVID-19 pandemic and as winter months drew near, affecting the mental health and well-being of isolated veterans. Although it may seem the Covid numbers are going down, and the rules and restrictions are lifting there are many veterans and elderly in your community that may still need help. Continue to reach out, you may be the difference for them. Thank you all for all you do for this Country and The American Legion!

Semper Fi!

Jeremy Ehart
Department Vice-Commander
The American Legion, Department of Kansas
departmentvicecommander@kansaslegion.org

Department Adjutant's Newsletter March 2021

The following are the bills that are the Veterans bills still eligible for action in the Kansas Legislature as of 26 February 2021:

HB2020 – Allowing the KCVAO (Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office) to submit an initial application for a VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant.

SB109 – Is the Sister Bill from the Senate also allowing the KCVAO (Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office) to submit an initial application for a VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant.

HB2021 – To authorize bonds up to $ 17.5 million be issued to finance Construction of State Veterans Home Facility in one of the Five Counties – Douglas, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Shawnee or Wyandotte.

SB110 – Is the Sister Bill from the Senate to authorize bonds up to $ 17.5 million be issued to finance Construction of State Veterans Home Facility in one of the Five Counties – Douglas, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Shawnee or Wyandotte.

SB108 – To allow changes to how we receive Lottery Funding.

CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY: Applications are due March 31. This year’s dates are June 6 - 11. For applications or more information contact Department Headquarters or our website www.kansaslegion.org.

BOYS STATE: Dates have been changed to August 1 – 7, 2021. Applications are due May 31, 2021. The 2021 session marks the 84th Anniversary of this outstanding program. Boys State DVD’s are available free of charge to Posts and a video is available on the website. This twelve minute video highlights activities during the week of Boys State and features testimonials from several of the States themselves. They are both excellent recruitment tools for your Boys State Coordinator. You can order your copy or additional applications by calling the Boys State Office toll free at 866-241-9920 or online at www.kansasboysstate.org.
DISTRICT CONVENTIONS: Attend and elect good officers who will represent your District in the 2021-2022 membership year. Dates and locations for this year are: District I – Topeka Post 400, April 24; District II - Lenexa, March 27; District III – Winfield, March 26-28; District IV - Leonardville, April 24; District V – McPherson, April 10; District VI – Concordia, April 17; District VII – Great Bend, April 10; District VIII – Garden City, April 16-17; District IX – Oberlin, March 20.

POST ELECTIONS are the most important in the Legion. Elections of Post Officers must be held not more than sixty days or less than fifteen days prior to the Department Convention which begins on May 15, 2021. This year those dates are March 16 and April 30. Elect responsible and qualified leaders who will represent you and your Post. Names and addresses of those elected must be reported to Department Headquarters as soon as elected. A form is enclosed. All Posts are required to report their officers even if they haven’t changed. Send both this report and the National one which you will receive with your membership cards back to this office as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS: Legionnaires have until May 1 to be certified for “Go-Getter” and “Big Team” (10 new members and 25 new members respectively). These awards cannot be sent out correctly unless we have updated figures in this office. Certification forms are available at Department Headquarters for the “Gold Brigade” (50 or more NEW members) and the “Silver Brigade” (25 to 49 NEW members). Certification forms for the Gold and Silver Brigade are due at Department Headquarters May 1, 2021.

SPECIAL CHILDREN & YOUTH CERTIFICATE is still available to recognize a young person in your community. Any outstanding youth in any program that is available (Scouting, 4-H, or other Community service or religious group). Send Department Headquarters the name and organization in which they participate.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Tonganoxie, Perry, Highland, Winchester, Kansas City #188, Wellsville, Baldwin City, Mound City, Overland Park, Arkansas City, Dwight, Newton, Clearwater, Augusta, Marquette. Russell, Hutchinson, Pratt, Hoisington, Ellinwood, Syracuse, Norton and Hays. (As of February 26.)

DISTRICT STANDINGS AS OF FEBRUARY 26, 2021: District VIII, 807 - 97.82%; District VII, 1,505 – 97.73; District II, 3,417 - 96.20%; District VI, 1,263 - 94.89%; District IX, 948 - 92.67%; District I, 1,505 - 91.70%; District V, 2,665 - 91.61%; District III, 1,960 – 90.95% and District IV, 2,768 - 89.03%. Department Headquarters Post 58 (included in Dept. total) is 826 Total membership is 19,749. Membership last year this date was 20,957. We are BEHIND 1208 members.

IN ORDER TO AVOID RECEIVING THE NEXT RENEWAL NOTICE ALL PAID MEMBERS’ CARDS MUST BE IN THIS OFFICE BY APRIL 6, 2021.
This year’s Department Convention will again feature a dinner as a means to raise funds for the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. The dinner will be held Saturday evening, May 15 from 6:30 until 8:00 pm in the Grand Ballroom of the Ramada Hotel, 420 SE 6th St. in Topeka.

Meal choice includes: Chicken Florentine with buttered fettuccine or Pork Roast with roasted potatoes. A tossed garden salad with choice of dressing, honey glazed carrots, rolls and butter, tiramisu, water, iced tea, or coffee service. Cost is $35 per person and reservations must be received no later than Monday, May 3 in order for the Ramada to adequately prepare enough food. You must indicate Entrée preferences below.

The purpose of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is: “To contribute to the physical, mental emotional and spiritual needs of children and youth through the dissemination of knowledge about new and innovative organizations and their programs.” “To make wider, more effective use of the knowledge already possessed by well established organizations to the end that such information will benefit youth and be more adequately used by society.”

The foundation has made four grants to organizations in Kansas including two to Department Headquarters which funded the production of over five million “Don’t Do Drugs Make it Your Rule” bookmark rulers with the Pledge of Allegiance on the opposite side of the drug message.

To make reservations for the Saturday, May 15 dinner please complete and return the coupon below to Department Headquarters, 1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas 66612. Reservations must arrive by May 3; or telephone your reservations to 785-232-9315. Payment is due no later than May 3 without exception!

Name__________________________________________ Post/Unit/Squadron______________

Address________________________________________ City________________ Zip___

Number of dinners to be reserved at $35.00 each____________________________

Entrée preference:   Pork Roast _______________ Chicken Florentine _______________

Enclosed is my check in the amount of____________________________________

I cannot attend the dinner but am enclosing my tax deductible donation of _______________
Centennial Coin Raffle

Win a piece of American Legion History!

One person will win three

American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coins

1 Uncirculated $5 Gold Coin ($463 value)
1 Uncirculated Silver Dollar ($57 value)
1 Uncirculated Clad Half Dollar ($31 value)
($551 total value)

Tickets $5
5 tickets for $20
11 tickets for $40

Drawing to be held at Department of Kansas Leadership College in June 2021 (need not be present to win)

To purchase tickets online contact: Jeremy Ehart at 1-620-899-0010 or jjehart23@gmail.com; or Marri Krupco at 1-620-224-7354 or mkrupco@gmail.com
# AMERICAN LEGION

## TEAM KANSAS

## ORDER FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Post#</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Phone #</td>
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<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
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Mail orders/payments to Jeremy Ehart 10601 W Snokomo Rd Hutchinson KS 67502

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### Team Kansas T Shirt

- Youth Small
- Youth Med
- Youth Large
- Youth XL
- Adult Small
- Adult Med
- Adult Large
- Adult XL
- Adult 2X +2.00
- Adult 3X +3.00
- Adult 4X +4.00

+2.00 2x  
+3.00 3X  
+4.00 FOR 4X

**$20.00** each

### Team Kansas Polo

- Youth Small
- Youth Med
- Youth Large
- Youth XL
- Adult Small
- Adult Med
- Adult Large
- Adult XL
- Adult 2X +2.00
- Adult 3X +3.00
- Adult 4X +4.00

+2.00 2x  
+3.00 3X  
+4.00 FOR 4X

**$30.00** each

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**Total Number of Shirts**

**Total Due**

- Cash
- Check
- Credit
- Other

Checks Payable to:

- Ks Commanders Campaign Fund
WIN UP TO $1800!!

For recruiting a new member of The American Legion
It’s simple, sign up a new member and be entered to win!

Drawing Rules:
1. Every new member that joins The American Legion between February 1, 2021 and May 1, 2021 will be eligible to be entered into a drawing to win.
2. A new member is defined as any eligible Legioneer whose membership was not paid in The American Legion in 2020 that joins a Post in the Department of Kansas other than Post 58.
3. The Recruiter must be a Legionnaire, other than the new member, whose membership is paid for 2021 in a Kansas Post. If the recruiter is not listed, the coupon will not be accepted.
4. The coupon below must be included along with a membership transmittal to Kansas Department Headquarters with the National and Department portions of the new members card and the necessary dues. If the Post utilizes online transmittals at MyLegion.org, the invoice number and date of the transmittal of the new membership must also be included on the coupon and sent to Department Headquarters. All coupons must be received at Department Headquarters office by 4:00 pm on May 1, 2021, to be eligible.
5. One coupon will be drawn at The Kansas Department Convention from all entries properly received and will be designated the winner.
6. From the information contained on the winning coupon drawn, $500 will be awarded to the New Member, $500 will be awarded to the Recruiter, and $500 to the recruiters Post.
7. The Recruiter with the most New Member coupon entries will earn $100.
8. The Post with the most New Member coupon entries will receive $100.
9. The Post with the most New Member coupon entries as a percentage of that Post’s 2020 Membership Quota will be awarded $100.
10. In case of a tie the $100 will be split among those that tied.

New Member Drawing Coupon (Print Neatly)

New Members Name ____________________________________________
New Member’s Post City and Post Number __________________________
Recruiter’s Name and Membership Number _________________________
Recruiter’s Post City and Post Number _____________________________
Post Online Transmittal Number and Date ___________________________