

Sunflower Legionnaire

The American Legion -



Today's Voice for Today's Veterans & Military

VOL LXXVI NO. 4

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

April, May, June 2023

ORATORICAL CONTEST WINNERS

The State Oratorical Contest sponsored by the Kansas American Legion was held on Saturday, March 11 at Pearce-Keller Post #17 in Manhattan. The four finalists representing their District were required to give an 8-10 minute prepared oration on the United States Constitution. The contestants were required to give their presentation without any notes, podium, papers, or microphones. They were judged by a panel of five prominent citizens from the Manhattan area. The contestants were judged on several aspects of their presentation including originality, skill in selecting examples, logic, knowledge of subject matter, voice and diction, word selection, and body action and eye contact.

After their prepared remarks the contestants were required to speak on one of four assigned topics selected by National Headquarters. One topic is chosen by drawing from the four choices and each contestant speaks on the same subject. The contestants were required to speak three to five minutes on the assigned topic. This year's assigned topic was the Eighth Amendment of the

Constitution.

All contestants recited their orations with skill and enthusiasm. The Judges had the difficult task of choosing the top contestants that would receive top honors and money for college.

The 2023 State Champion is Ian Fahncke from Bucyrus representing Second District. Ian will represent Kansas during the National contest in Indianapolis April 21-23. He will receive a \$1,000 scholarship from Kansas Department, plus additional scholarship money from National depending on his performance in the National Contest.

The second place award of a \$500 scholarship went to Xavier Billings from McPherson, representing Fifth District. The third place finisher was Marshall Gibson from Topeka, representing First District. He will receive a \$250 scholarship. The fourth place award of a \$150 scholarship went to Molly McClendon from Severy, representing Third District. In addition, Emporia State University and Tabor College also offer scholarships to the first four winners in this year's contest.

Department Convention Topeka - June 2-4

The Ramada Hotel & Convention Center, in Topeka will serve as the site of the 104th Annual Convention of The American Legion Department of Kansas. Joining the Legion in Convention will be the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion who will hold their own independent Conventions in addition to two joint sessions involving all three groups.

Now is the time to make housing reservations by calling the Ramada at 785-234-8042. Room rates for the Convention are \$91.00 and includes a full breakfast buffet.

The Convention is expected to feature a number of speakers including American Legion National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus from North Dakota and Auxiliary Divisional National Vice President Ann Rehbein from Iowa and S.A.L. Leading Candidate Don "Jr" Hall from Maryland, several of

this year's Youth Champions, and Kansas' Fire and Policeman of the Year.

Various awards for Americanism, Children & Youth, Post Histories, Post Service Officers will also be presented. A highlight of the Convention will be the drawing for this Spring's Sweepstakes with special prizes available should any of the thirteen winners be present during the drawing on Sunday.

The Convention will conclude on Sunday with a Memorial Service followed by the election of Department Officers for the 2023-2024 Legionnaires are encouraged to attend the Convention as a delegate, alternate, or guest. Post Adjutants will be mailed pre-registration materials on May 1 (pre-registration is preferred, however "walk-ins" are always welcomed). To attend as a delegate or alternate contact your Post Adjutant to inform them you wish to represent your Post.



Oratorical Contestants from left to right: Molly McClendon, Marshall Gibson, Xavier Billings, Ian Fahncke.

COMMANDER

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VICE COMMANDER

Randy Frank
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District Convention Time is here! I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and talking with the new leadership about their plans for the next year. I plan to attend all 10 District conventions and always have a great time meeting and talking to your members at each one.

This is also the time of year that reports are due to District, Department and National, these reports are essential to our organization. Each year every Post is required to submit five reports. Those reports are the Notification of Post and Squadron Commanders and Adjutants which is due to Department by June 1st, the Service Officers Report due to Department by March 1st, the Children & Youth report due to the District Chairman prior to District Convention, the Post Data Form due to Department by April 15th, and the Consolidated Post Report or CPR due to Department or submitted on MyLegion.org by May 1st. If these reports aren't turned in on time our databases will not have the current leadership on file, preventing Post leadership access to department information and mailings, membership database and membership tools on mylegion.org, it could also result in renewal notices being sent out with incorrect dues amounts or an incorrect address on them. Turning these reports in late or not at all will cause inaccurate numbers to be reported to Congress when leadership and staff are lobbying for the items on our legislative agenda. The legislators in our State Capital and Washington

DC need to know how much of an impact our organization makes in our communities, state, and nation.

Speaking about making an impact, you can help by going to votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home and contact your representatives directly about the issues our organization is fighting for. Go to legion.org/legislative/agenda to find the current issues that our National leadership is lobbying for. The American Legion plays such an important role in the passing of veteran's legislation and even though our National Officers and staff do a phenomenal job in DC, they can always use our support here at home as well. Many other useful tools can be found at legion.org/legislative to assist you in understanding more about this critical part of the American Legion's mission.

I am forever grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Department Commander for the last year across this great State of Kansas. My wife, Kristy, and I have enjoyed meeting and getting to know so many of you throughout the State. I have enjoyed and appreciate your kindness and hospitality and if I have not made it to your Post or to an event hosted by your Post, please contact me, and I will be there in the future. I will be around a long time supporting The American Legion Family after my term is done!

As always, I am here to listen and serve anyway I can. Thank you all for what you do for The Kansas American Legion! Semper Fi!

Jeremy Ehart

Spring has Sprung Legionnaires! Now is the time to reach out to those that you have not visited with over the winter.

Take a moment and think about why you joined The American Legion. Was it because you were looking for a way to continue your service to other Veterans or maybe looking for a way to help your community in Public Service or maybe you just wanted to have a place to go with like minded veterans. No matter what your reason The American Legion services the needs of our countries Veterans.

Have you ever been asked that question by others, what is in it for me?

Create a Toolkit of answers when a veteran or family member asks about The American Legion. Tell them

about the camaraderie at all levels of the organization. Provide information about the programs we participate in.

Reach out to our Legislative Committee to find out what our State and National elected officials are doing for us (they are listed on the Department Website). Let's not forget what our National Commander is doing not only in Washington DC but across the Country. Our members and prospective members need to know that there is more to The American Legion than just Post meetings.

These tools will help in the retention of current members and recruitment of new members.

No Veteran is a Nobody, EVER VETERAN IS A SOMEBODY!

RANDY FRANK FOR DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Randy Frank, Hillsboro Post 366 is announcing his candidacy for Department Commander during the 2023 – 2024 year.

He has the support of his Post 366, District IV Leadership and most importantly his wife, Keeley.

Randy has earned his eligibility in The American Legion by honorably serving in the United States Army 1980-1994. He has been a member of the American Legion for 18 years and is a Paid Up for Life (PUFL) member. Some of the positions he has filled are Post Commander for 4 years, a District IV Commander and 2 years as the Department Area East Vice Commander and currently the Department of Kansas Vice Commander. He

is also a Sons of the American Legion member.

He serves on the Department of Kansas American Legion Leadership College and Membership Committees and a member of the National Legislative Committee and a graduate from the 2018 National American Legion College.

He is excited about the opportunity to continue to serve the Legionnaires in Kansas. He will continue to focus his passion on engaging membership retention and growth while building leadership through education.

He will be appreciative of your support at the 2023 Department Convention as we move forward together helping the Department of Kansas American Legion Grow!

ANGELA EVANS FOR DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER

My name is Angela Evans, from Arden H. McKee Sterling Post #128 and I am announcing my candidacy for the office of Department Vice Commander for 2023-2024.

I earned my eligibility by service in the United States Air Force from 1986- 2011. I am a Kansas Department Life member of The American Legion, and a member of the Sterling American Legion Auxiliary Unit.

I have served in various positions in the Post, including Adjutant and Commander and still stay active by serving Post 128 as Commander. I serve on various committees within the Post. I have served as the 7th District Vice-Commander, and Commander for two years and still serve on several committees for the District. I am currently serving the Department as the Chairman for the Shooting Sports Committee and I am a graduate of the 2022 National American Legion College.

Moving forward I am committed to continue working

with the Posts, Districts, and the entire Legion Family, using time and resources as Vice Commander to promote the mission of the Kansas American Legion. I am dedicated to continuing my travels across the state, improving communication, meeting members and listening to your ideas on improving and advancing The American Legion. I will also work hard to continue promoting past improvements and advancements while working with current Department Officers on implementing new thoughts and ideas throughout the Department.

I have the support of my family, the support and endorsement of Post 128, and the support and endorsement of the 7th District DEC. I am asking for your support and vote at the Department Convention held in Topeka June 2-4, 2023 for the office of Department Vice Commander.

For God and Country,
Angela Evans
719-659-08367

EDWARD BORING, SR FOR DEPARTMENT MASTER-AT-ARMS

Edward Boring, SR., Chanutte Post 170, announces his candidacy for the office of Department Master at Arms for 2023-2024.

Ed earned his eligibility by service in the United States Marine Corps from 1971 – 1976. Ed then joined the Kansas Army National Guard before retiring after 35 years of service at the rank of Command Sergeant Major. He is a member of the Sons of The American Legion Squadron #170, Charter member and Director for the past 5 years of American Legion Riders Chapter #139, and a National paid up for life member of Chanutte Post 170 and continuous member for 40 years.

Ed is currently serving as Post 170 Adjutant for the

past 5 years, and has worked hard over the past several years to promote membership and Post comradery. Ed has served as District 3 Vice Commander and 2 years as District 3 Commander, as well as several Post positions such as Adjutant, Sgt of Arms, and Executive Board Member. Ed has served on several District and Department Committees. Ed has served proudly on different National Committees while attending the National Conventions since 2021.

Ed has the support of his wife of 45 years, Twilla, the endorsement of his Post, and the endorsement of the 3rd District Executive Committee. He asks for your support and vote at the Department Convention in June.

BARRY MAPLES FOR DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER

My name is Barry Maples, and I would like to announce my candidacy for Department Vice Commander for 2023-2024. I earned my eligibility for the American Legion in the United States Army from September 1978 – October 1998 and achieving the rank Sergeant First Class. I'm a paid up for life member of Post 17 Manhattan as well as a member of the Sons of the American Legion, and American Legion Riders.

I have held multiple

MATTHEW BURANY FOR DEPARTMENT MASTER-AT-ARMS

Matthew Burany, Manhattan Post #17, announces his candidacy for the office of Department Master at Arms for 2023-2024.

Matthew earned his eligibility by service in the United States Army from 1996-2012. He is a member of the Sons of The American Legion, and an American Legion national paid up for life member. Matthew is also a life member of Lee Pierson VFW Post 1786 Manhattan, Kansas.

Matthew has held numerous positions within 4th District and has worked hard over the past several years to promote membership. Matthew has served as

positions at the Post and District levels. I have performed the duties of the Chairman of the ALR. I continue to remain active on committees from Post to Department level.

I have the support of my wife, family, the endorsement of my Post, and the endorsement of the 4th District. I'm seeking your support and vote at the Department Convention for the office of Department Vice Commander.

Thank you.
Barry Maples

District Commander, District Vice Commander and on the District Executive Board. At Post 17 Matthew has served as the Commander, 2nd Vice-Commander, Adjutant for 2 years, and Executive Board Member. Matthew has served on several District and Department Committees. Matthew is currently serving as Post 17's Service Officer.

Matthew has the support of his wife, Rene, the endorsement of his Post, and the endorsement of the 4th District. He is seeking your support and vote at the Department Convention for the office of Department Master at Arms.

GARY FOOS FOR DEPARTMENT MASTER-AT-ARMS

My name is Gary F. Foos, from Bazine American Legion Post #392 and I am announcing my candidacy for the office of Department Master of Arms for 2023-2024.

I earned my eligibility serving in the United States Army Reserves, 89th Div., Co. B, 3rd Bn., 1st BDE.,

Dodge City, KS., earning the Rank of Sergeant First Class. I'm a member of Post #392 for the past 25 years and serving as Post Commander since 2007. I'm an American Legion National Paid Up for Life member for four years.

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GEORGE HONN FOR AREA EAST VICE COMMANDER

I am announcing my candidacy for Department Area East Vice Commander. I served US Navy from 1979 to 1987. I have been Riders director for 7 years, District executive committee, Dis-

trict Vice Commander, and District Commander. I have been a Post Vice Commander, currently area director for the Legion Riders and currently Area East Vice Commander.

MIKE JURY FOR AREA WEST VICE COMMANDER

Mike Jury is Announcing his candidacy for Department Area West Vice Commander for the year 2023-2024.

Mike earned his eligibility in The American Legion by serving in the United States Army from 1984 to 1994 and the Army Reserves 1995 to 2005.

Mike has been a member of the American Legion for 21 years with membership in Post 308 in Florence KS, and Post 68, Hutchinson KS.

Mike has served as your Area West Vice Commander for the 2022-2023 membership

year, 1st Vice Commander at Post 68, Hutchinson KS. Mike has served as District sgt-at-arms, Vice Commander and 2 year as District Commander.

Mike is also a member of the American Legion Riders and has held the position of Asst. Director in Chapter 68.

Mike has attended National Convention the last 2 years and all Department functions. Mike has the support of His Post 68, and 7th District. He now asks for your support and vote at Department Convention in Topeka KS June 5th, 2023.

Bowling Tournament

The 77th Annual American Legion Bowling Tournament will be held at Gage Bowl in Topeka for 2024. The dates for the tournament are January 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, so reserve your dates now. The tournament features singles, doubles, and team competition. One of the changes this year is that Auxiliary members will be allowed to bowl in the tournament along with the Legion and S.A.L. members. The host motel is the Endeavor Inn & Suites, rooms will be \$87 per night. The Hotel offers FREE hot breakfast buffet (served dai-

ly); FREE evening Manager's Reception, receive 2 complimentary beverages per guest (Monday – Saturday, 5PM-7PM); FREE 24-hour coffee and tea served in the lobby; FREE high-speed internet; 24-hour Fitness Room and an Indoor whirlpool. The 2024 entry forms will be going out the first part of May with all the details. Please follow us on our Facebook Page at - Dept of Kansas American Legion Bowling Tournament. If you have any questions, contact Michael Cole at bowling2@kansaslegion.org or 913-680-8680.

SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

- Dean Kennedy of Andover, KS..... \$2,000.00
- Allen Whitaker of Overland Park, KS \$1,000.00
- William Lewis of Emporia, KS..... \$500.00
- Marvin Allen of Kansas City, KS \$250.00
- Jay Templin of Overland Park, KS \$250.00
- Ronnie Curtis of Overland Park, KS..... \$200.00
- Jerry Thomas of Topeka, KS..... \$200.00
- Anthony Meier of Topeka, KS \$100.00
- Donald Cooper of Manhattan, KS \$100.00

**FIRST DISTRICT
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918 Josela Ct.
Leavenworth, KS
66048
VICE CMDR.
GEORGE POGGE
16718 13th St.
Lawrence, KS 66044
(703) 597-9385**

Greeting First District, Spring has finally arrived, well sort of! The First District Convention will be held on April 15, 2023, at Byron H. Mehl Post #23 in Leavenworth (VFW Post 56). We are hoping for a good turnout for the convention. Other upcoming events include the Department Cornhole Tournament May 13th at Post 256, Wichita; Department Convention in Topeka June 2-4; Boy's State June 4-10 at Kansas State University; Leadership College June 9-11 in Concordia; and Cadet Law Enforcement Academy to be held in Salina June 11-16, 2023.

Please continue to work on membership. There are many members that still need to renew their membership and let's not forget the many veterans out there that are eligible to join. We encourage everybody to continue to work on that 100% or better goal. Spread the good works of your Posts if they know what you do for veterans, families and the community your membership will grow.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your Commander this year. If there is anything the District can do to help your Post, please contact any Officer who will be happy to help. As I have said before, the local Posts are the backbone of the American Legion, the District, Department, and Na-

tional Officers are there to help the Posts. Please take care this spring, stay safe, and hope to see you at the Conventions!

Thank you for your service,
Michael D. Cole
First District Commander

**SECOND DISTRICT
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VICE CMDR.
CARL "DOUG" HENSLEY
509 Pacific Ave
Osawatome, KS 66064
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No article submitted.

**THIRD DISTRICT
COMMANDER
RENE' CASTILLEJA
703 Cherokee St.
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(620) 779-2476
VICE CMDR.
MELVIN EUBANKS
1616 S. Malcom Ave.
Chanute, KS 66720
(620) 688-1425**

After a very hectic and productive weekend, I just wanted to say thank you all for supporting me as your re-elected Third District Commander. I hope that having a year experience, I can continue to help every American Legion in our District. I would also like to thank all of my District Officers, past and present, all of the members of the Third District, Post Officers, Sons of the American Legion, the Legion Riders, and the Auxiliary for your help and support while I serve as your District 3 Commander. One focus I have is having each Post work with the other families

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THIRD DISTRICT

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of their Legion to become a visible, educational, and community-based organization. I would also like to see our District 3 American Legions create committees of Americanism, Children and Youth, and the Awards and Scholarship programs. I believe we can be successful in letting our communities be informed on what we do for Veterans, Active Duty Military, Retired Service members and their families. I understand that each one of your American Legions is unique in their own special way and if you have any questions, please feel free to call or text me at 620-779-2476 or message me at my Post170 Boerstler-May Facebook page. I also check my email almost daily at districtcommander3@kansaslegion.org and reneCASTILLEJA71@gmail.com. I look forward to this year and since I retired from Active Duty Army on March 1, I will have more time to devote to do my best to help your Post any way possible. Once again, thank you for your continued faith and support in me as your District 3 Commander.

**FOURTH DISTRICT
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**VICE CMDR.
ESZTER BLAIR**
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Greeting to the Comrades of the "Mighty IV District" I hope this article finds you busy with spring time activities both with your fami-

lies and your Legion family members. Spring is a busy time as we get ready for summer activities and the continued energy to grow the presence of the American Legion in our Communities with the things we help with throughout the year.

Things coming in the very near future that you should mark on your calendars that are important to the growth and health of our District and first and foremost is the IV District Convention to be held 15 April at Post 45 in Junction City. Post 45 has also scheduled a German Food night in the kitchen for those that arrive on Friday evening. Department Convention 2-4 June in Topeka, Boys State 4-10 June which I encourage all to attend on Wednesday evening for Legion night, 9-11 June Leadership College in Concordia, Cadet Law 11-16 June in Salina and also your own Memorial Day Programs you conduct each and every year.

Lastly, membership as that is the lifeblood of Our Organization and as we begin the stretch drive to the finish line the District has continued our steady climb to the top of the Leader board and are currently sitting in second place as a District in Department on 17 March at 85.77 % to quota with 4 Posts already reaching 100%, so Salute to the following Posts 12 Herington, 124 Madison, 308 Florence, 1969 Abilene. Post 1969 is the newest Post in the Department and also has the highest percent to quota in Department at 140%. Thanks to each and everyone of you for your Service to Our Country and continued service in the American Legion.

For God and Country
Roger Beckley
Commander

**FIFTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER
PAUL SANFORD**
109 Southport Ct.
Newton, KS 67112
(620) 353-3708
**VICE CMDR.
FRANK "JOE" HICKS**
1143 S. Yale St.
Wichita, KS 67218
(316) 295-7340

The Fifth District has enjoyed the last month being in first place in membership. I know this doesn't always last but thanks to all the members for working so hard to bring our numbers up. I also want to thank everyone for the support the past four years as Vice Commander and Commander. April 1 will be our Convention in Marquette, we will have some new officers to lead the Fifth District. Lindsborg will host March 31 in the evening with food and a social time. I want to thank my current officers and Executive Officers as well as committee chairs for all the work they have done. Many have spent time visiting Posts throughout the District. It is great when District Officers visit Posts and activities. We have two Posts in the District that have Veteran story nights. Newton Post 2 does this on the second Tuesday of each month and McPherson is on the third Tuesday. Both offer food and great camaraderie. Newton program has food from 5 to 6 and the program at 6 pm. McPherson food is at 6 with the program at 7 pm.

Thanks for a great time as being your Commander. I will still be around to support our new officers.

Paul O. Sanford,
District Five Commander

**SIXTH DISTRICT
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PO BOX 227
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**VICE CMDR.
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Concordia, KS 66901
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I hope the nice Kansas weather is treating you well.

Its Election season. Post, District and Department. Remember, Post elections need to be reported to Department ASAP after your elections. You should already have the paperwork to do such. Congratulations to all your New and existing Officers. We should remember, as Officers, it's our duty, to train new people to take the reins as Officers. It might not be what you want but no one should have a lifetime appointment to an Office, let the future take over and maybe they'll be the spark that's needed to grow your Post and the American Legion in general. Please, make plans to attend your District Convention and vote for your next year's Officers. Besides elections, District Conventions are a good way to catch upcoming information for the year, including Department Convention and Department Leadership College, which you should also try to attend if possible.

We all hate the fact that time and remoteness is catching up with us, it's a crisis all VSO's (Veterans Service Organizations) are facing. Low recruitment numbers and our youth leaving home and not returning is a common occurrence these days. Our Legionnaires are unfortunately

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SIXTH DISTRICT

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getting older, and our Posts are getting smaller. We don't like talking about it but it's something that must be addressed, for the survival of our smaller Posts.

Last year, I personally collected Rifles from two Posts here in Central Kansas. I expect that to happen again in 2023, probably more than we'd all like to see. So here's the question, what does a Post do when it can't handle their Rifles OR their Post gets so low on membership, their thinking of packing it in? The first thing you should do, is meet with your membership, have a frank, honest discussion, about the state of your Posts affairs. It's not dishonorable to have to do hard things to survive the future. Canvas all your members, not just locals. Maybe one of the members not in the area will have some ideas on how to solve your problems. Contact your District leadership. We have training on how to help guide things like this. We can also get leadership at the Department involved, help revitalize a Post, hold membership calls, your Department and District Leaders are here to help. If your Post decides its time to call it a day, don't feel ashamed. Don't feel bad. At the end of the day, a few people can't be expected to handle everything. It's just the natural order of things. If its "Time", again, contact your entire membership roster. Vote on it, via a meeting and by mail. If its voted to give up your charter, inform the Department Adjutant and your District Commander. We will get the ball rolling. District leadership will get together with you, the Department and the Area West/East Vice Com-

mander and we will walk you through this. There are many ways to handle this, the easiest is transferring your membership to other Posts in the area or merge your Post with another. We will be with you through the whole process. If you're willing to hang on but don't want your Rifles any longer, contact your District leadership and we will come and collect your rifles and do the paperwork.

We all hope to never have to close a Post. But if we need to, after all options are exhausted, rest assured, you won't be alone.

Semper Fi,
Commander Jason Hicks

**SEVENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER
ANGELA EVANS
720 W Commercial St.
Lyons, KS 67554
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VICE CMDR.
MIKE VONDERACEK
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Greeting Seventh District, this year is flying by! The Seventh District Convention will be April 1, 2023 at Arden H. McKee Post 128 in Sterling. We are hoping for a great turn-out for the convention. Other upcoming events include the Department Convention from June in Topeka June 2-4, 2023, Boy's State June 4-10, 2023 at Kansas State University, Leadership College June 9-11, 2023 in Concordia, and Cadet Law Enforcement Academy to be held in Salina June 11-16, 2023. Please continue to seek out applicants for Boys State and Cadet Law. There are plenty of scholarship opportunities to help off-set the cost of each of these programs, please contact myself or Vice Commander Vondracek for more

information.

As the 2022-2023 membership year ends, I wanted to thank you for all your hard work. We must never forget that our members are the foundation of the American Legion. Let's not forget the many veterans out there that are eligible to join; there are several members that still need to renew their membership. We encourage everybody to continue to work your Post goal. There is still a little to be done before the end of June so don't stop now. Membership renewal is a great opportunity to share the new initiative of "Be the One" and to incorporate "Buddy Checks". "Be the One" is a multifaceted approach in dealing with veteran suicides. We all need to provide peer-to-peer support, create a safe space for veterans to be open about their struggles and share local resources for our veterans and their families. It will take all of us to make the pledge to "Be the One" to help end veteran suicide.

We do some amazing things here in the Seventh District and we should be proud of what we do in support of veterans, active duty, and youth.

It has been a pleasure serving as your District Commander this year and thank you for your continued support when I announced my candidacy for Department Vice Commander. Please do not hesitate to call or email myself or Michael with any questions, comments, or concerns. Aim High, Fly-Fight-Win!!

KANSAS DISTRICTS



Click map to enlarge.

**EIGHTH DISTRICT
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VICE CMDR.
CHRISTOPHER SELF
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(620) 253-2651**

Greetings from District Eight. Our District Convention will be held at Dodge City this year on Saturday April 22nd, and small get together on Friday for those wishing to attend.

Debra Muylaert will start us off Saturday with a Chaplain's service then we will to into our sessions. Hope to see you there.

With the help of you; our fellow Veterans, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and Legion Riders, I wish to thank you for making our American Legion as strong as it is by helping the Veterans and Children and Youth and all the other programs that we have to offer.

Our District Vice Commander Chris Self has done a marvelous job as your Vice Commander, I have high hopes for him going up the ladder.

Until then, May God Bless

District Eight Commander
John Meyeres

**NINTH DISTRICT
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No article submitted.

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PHIL THOMAS
206 3rd St
Home, KS 66438
(785) 927-0283**

Greeting from the 10th District. Just a reminder that we have our District Convention April 29th and 30th in Greenleaf, KS. We are looking for a good turnout. Hope to see lots of hope to have a good turnout. Call to convention was sent out on Monday the 20th. If anyone has any questions or didn't get a packet give me a call at 785-396-4531. Thank you.

Pat Caffrey
Commander 10th District

GARY FOOS

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I have served in other positions within the 8th District, starting as Sargeant of Arms (1 yr.), Dist. Vice Commander (1 yr.) District Commander (3 yrs.) and currently District Finance Officer. I also served as Department Area West Vice Commander four years (2018/19, 19/20, 21/22 and 22/23). I am also serving on the Department Scholarship Committee, Music Committee and the American Legion National Security Council.

I have the Support of Bazine American Legion Post #392, support of the 8th District and my family. I'm asking for Legionnaires vote at the Department Convention (2023) for the office of Master of Arms.

For God and Country
Gary F. Foos

ADJUTANT'S BRIEFS

By Department Adjutant Jimmie L. Foster

The Membership year of 2022-2023 is coming to an end very rapidly!

WE, as a Department, are well behind last year's numbers. A concerted effort to either make personal telephone calls to those Members that has not renewed or at a last resort going out and knocking on their door to find out if they are sick, down, and out, or have forgotten to renew their Membership needs to happen.

Department First Vice Commander Randy Frank and ALL Ten District Commanders and District Vice Commanders are available to assist, all you have to do is ASK!

The 2023 Mid-Winter Forum was well attended. Manhattan Post 17 did an excellent job in hosting the venue.

The 2023 Department Oratorical Contest was held at Manhattan Post 17 on 11 March 2023 and the four orators were ALL Winners!

Ian Fahncke from Bucyrus, Kansas representing the Second District was selected as the ultimate winner and will represent the Department of Kansas at the National Contest in Indianapolis, Indiana from 21 to 23 April 2023. Hopefully, he will be able to advance to the Championship Round and win himself additional Scholarship monies. Congratulations, Ian!

The Department Convention of Kansas American Legion will be held from 2 to 4 June 2023 in Topeka, Kansas at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center. National Vice Commander Glenn Wabus from the Department of North Dakota will be the Legion National Guest. Ann Rehbein, the Central Divisional National Vice President of The American Legion Auxiliary from the Department of Iowa will also be in attendance. Also, Sons of The American Legion Lead-

ing Candidate for S.A.L. National Commander Don "JR" Hall from the Department of Maryland will join us.

Kansas Boys State is also scheduled to be held from 4 to 10 June 2023 at Kansas State University. PLEASE check the Kansas Boys State of Kansas Website for the most up-to-date information.

The 2023 American Legion Leadership College will take place in Concordia at Cloud County Community College from 9 to 11 June 2023. The cost for all meals and two nights stay in the Dorm are \$ 85.00. To stay in the Dorm for two nights is \$40.00 total. All meals are \$45.00 total. As with everything else, the price for room and board has also increased at the College.

The Cadet Law Enforcement Academy Program is scheduled to be held from 11 to 16 June 2023 at the Kansas Highway Patrol Training Academy in Salina, Kansas. PLEASE check the Department Website for the up-to-date details. I know that the Junior and Seniors are looking forward to attending this program.

Remember that the Kansas Sunflower Legionnaire is now published quarterly. If you are required to submit articles, PLEASE adjust your thought process to the quarterly mode. Articles are due on 15 March, 15 June, 15 September, and 15 December for the following quarterly edition.

If anyone has any questions pertaining to Membership or any of the fine programs within The American Legion, PLEASE do NOT hesitate to call the Department Headquarters for guidance or clarification.

Thank you for being a Member of The Greatest Veterans Organization in the Free World, The American Legion (in my opinion).

**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP ONLINE**
www.legion.org/renew



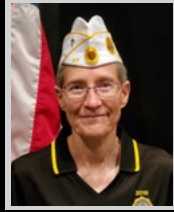
HISTORIAN

DAN STACY
departmenthistorian@kansaslegion.org

Thanks to the District Historians that have been in contact with me this past quarter.

Anyone wishing to contact me may do so through my department email address. Please work on your Post history books for submission at the Department Convention in June. We will review them and send them on to National for consid-

eration in the national history book contest. I want to thank everyone for the photos that have been posted to Facebook. If you want any of my photos, they are on my Google drive. I'm looking forward to the Department Convention, the Department Picnic, and the Erie Bean Feed. Thank you for your continuing support and participation.



CHAPLAIN

Rev. Debra Muylaert
 departmentchaplain@kansaslegion.org

Greetings Legion Family! Hope you are doing well! I don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to a lush, green lawn again. Because of the drought and the winter months, my lawn has been brown for a very long time. When I moved back to Kansas after completing my missionary work last summer, the first thing I noticed was how brown everything looked. Last month during Spring Break; however, I traveled to San Antonio, Texas and saw something I haven't seen in quite some time – green grass! Everything was green!

The contrast between the brown and green grass reminds me of how vital it is that we receive encouragement. The brown grass is so dreary and lifeless, but the green grass is so uplifting and full of life. The water that turns grass from brown to green is like encouragement. Without encouragement, our lives and faith can

be almost lifeless. But with the life-giving “waters” of encouragement, we are refreshed and restored. The Scriptures also speak about water – God is the “fountain of living waters” (Jeremiah 2:13) and eternal life in Christ is symbolized by “living water” (John 4:10).

Who can't use a little encouragement these days? The Legion's “Be the One” program is designed to address veteran suicide. The basic premise of the program is to pull veterans back from the brink of suicide by letting them know that someone cares that they live and not die. When we help veterans choose to live, what an encouragement it must be to them that someone took the time to care! So “Be the One” for someone today. A kind word, a good deed, or a loving smile may be the encouragement someone needs to keep their lives from withering and help them bloom and grow. Happy Spring!

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

Dan Bartlett

(800) 574-8387 ext. 54489
 dan.bartlett@va.gov

2200 SW Gage
 Topeka, KS 66622

VA lowers interest rates, makes housing more affordable for Native American Veterans

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it has lowered the interest rate for VA Native American Direct Loans from 6% to 2.5%, making access to housing loans more affordable for Native American Veterans.

Through the VA Native American Direct Loan program, VA provides direct loans to Native American Veterans — and to Veterans who are married to Native American non-Veterans —

to help buy, build or improve a home on trust land. These loans give Native American Veterans the opportunity to obtain housing with no down payments, limited closing costs, and no monthly mortgage-insurance costs.

By law, VA is only authorized to provide direct loans through the NADL program — meaning that VA can only provide this decreased interest rate to Native American Veterans or to Veterans who marry Native American non-Veterans. However, VA is able to help all eligible Veterans obtain housing through

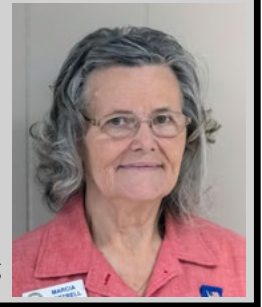
(Continued on Page 10)



AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Marcia Cottrell
 1225 Adams
 Lyndon, KS 66451
 (785) 817-7591

deptpresident@kslegionaux.org



Hello Kansas American Legion Family!

Sadly, this will be my last article for the Kansas Sunflower Legion newsletter for my term as your Department President! It's really hard to believe it is here already. The time has simply flown by and what a wonderful journey it has been for me. I have had the privilege of meeting and getting to know so many of you that I would never have met. I appreciate everyone's support, kindness and generosity that has been shown me. That has made my year even more extra special.

A Special Thank You to those of you who have been there for me during the past 18 months and have supported me wholeheartedly. I truly appreciate your support.

The opportunities I have had in helping with being the Hostess for Sunflower Girls State, attending Eisenhower Pilgrimage, Big Red 1 Turkey

Run, Operation North Pole, Lincoln Pilgrimage, Truman Days. Plus attending all of the District Homecomings and Conventions during the past 18 months have been outstanding. Some of them I would never have had the opportunity to participate in were it not for the honor of being your Department of Kansas President. Thank you so much for your faith in me and our wonderful Department of Kansas Legion Family.

I know each of you will continue to support and work our various Missions for our Veterans, Active-Duty Service Members and their Families.

Let us be kind and respectful of everyone and continue to work together to accomplish what we must for our Veterans.

Let us continue our daily support of our Veterans and our Mission of “Service Not Self.”

Thank you,
 Marcia Cottrell

BUCKLE UP, LIGHTS ON & LIVE

The Kansas American Legion, in cooperation with the Kansas Department of Transportation and the Governor's Office will make an effort to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities over the Memorial Day weekend. This year's program is scheduled for Friday, May 26.

This endeavor is in conjunction with the beginning of Memorial Day Weekend, and the theme is “Ditch the distractions, not the car! Just Drive.” The goal is to remind motorists to use their seat belts and headlights throughout the weekend. Observation of all traffic laws, take plenty of rest stops on long trips, watch out for other motorists and motorcyclists, and to drive safely are also stressed.

Complete information for

this NO COST program has been mailed to every Post and is available from Department Headquarters. Legion Family members are asked to spend an hour or two at major intersections on May 26 to hand a brochure describing the reasons to drive safely to each motorist as they stop for a signal light or stop sign. Some Posts choose to place the brochures in service stations, rest areas, convenience stores, and super markets, etc. All efforts are to be coordinated with local and area law enforcement officials.

A coupon for ordering a supply of brochures is located on page 10 for your convenience. All requests must be ordered by the Post Commander or Adjutant, Unit President or Secretary, or Squadron Commander or Adjutant.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

Pat Culver
childrenandyouth1@kansaslegion.org

The American Legion has been a strong advocate for children and youth since its inception. This steadfast dedication has never wavered and continues to be a driving force on behalf of children across the country today.

If you have a youth looking for a Youth Programs here are a few with web link and information:

Boy Scouts of America
www.scouting.org

The National Council of the Boy Scouts of America supports more than 300 local councils that provide quality youth programs promoting leadership and teaching decision-making and teamwork skills. The national council provides programs and publications, promotes training, and houses a media center.

Campfire USA
www.campfireusa.org

Camp Fire USA's mission is to build caring, confident youth and future leaders through national development programs delivered to 120 local councils across the nation. Core programs include leadership development, service learning, and mentoring opportunities.

Youth Crime Watch of America

www.ycwa.org

YCWA enables youth to become resources for preventing crime, drug use, and violence in their schools and communities. Youth take ownership for their own programs in schools, neighborhoods, public housing sites, recreational centers, or parks. Youth led programs encourage crime reporting, mentoring and mediation.

Girl Scouts of the USA
www.girlscouts.org

Girl Scouts of the USA

provides research, programs, and resources that help young girls build leadership, decision-making, and teamwork skills. Through advocacy efforts, Girl Scouts informs and educates key representatives of the government about issues important to girls and scouting.

National 4-H Council
www.fourhcouncil.edu

The National 4-H Council provides grants, establishes programs and initiatives, designs and publishes curriculum and reference materials, and creates linkages fostering innovation and shared learning to advance the 4-H youth development movement, building a world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.

National Family Partnership
www.nfp.org

The National Family Partnership shares tools, strategies, and resources to support families and communities in their effort to promote safe, drug-free youth, NEP also sponsors Red Ribbon Week.

National Youth Leadership Council
www.nylc.org

The National Youth Leadership Council's mission is to build vital, just communities through service learning. NYLC is at the forefront of efforts to reform education and guide youth-oriented public policy.

Street Law, Inc.
www.streetlaw.org

Street Law, Inc. provides young people with information about law, democracy, and human rights and provides youth leadership programs in communities and schools nationally and internationally.

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION DINNER

This year's Department Convention will feature a dinner as a means to raise funds for the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. The dinner will be held Saturday evening, June 3 from 6:30 until 8:00 pm in the Grand Ballroom of the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center, 420 S.E. 6th Street, Topeka.

Meal choice includes: boneless chicken breast with a creamy white cheese sauce or beef tenderloin with garlic mashed potatoes. A tossed garden salad with choice of dressing, honey glazed carrots, rolls and butter, coconut cream pie, water, iced tea, or coffee service. Cost is \$40 per person and reservations must be received no later than Monday, May 22.

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."

To make reservations for the Saturday, June 3 dinner please complete and return the coupon on this page to Department Headquarters, 1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas 66612. Reservations must arrive by May 22; or telephone your reservations to 785-232-9315. Payment is due no later than May 22 without exception.

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION DINNER

JUNE 3, 2023
RAMADA, TOPEKA, KS

Name _____ Post/Unit/Squadron # _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Number of dinners to be reserved at \$40.00 each _____

Beef Tenderloin _____ Chicken Breast _____

Enclosed is check in the amount of _____

Mail to: Kansas American Legion
1314 SW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66612

DEADLINE of: 22 May 2023

VA LOWERS INTEREST RATES

(Continued from Page 8)

VA-backed loans.

Veterans who close their NADL loans on or after March 13 will automatically receive the 2.5% interest rate for the life of the loan. Veterans who currently have an NADL loan with an interest rate of 3.5% or higher will be able to refinance the loan to take advantage of the lower rate.

“Native American Veterans are now able to more affordably buy, build and improve homes on trust land,” said Executive Director of VA Loan Guaranty Service John Bell III. “We at VA are laser-focused on serving Native American Veterans as well as they’ve served our country, and that’s what this decreased interest rate is all about.”

The 2.5% interest rate is effective as of March 13 and will be available for no more than 24 months. This rate reduction is a part of VA’s comprehensive efforts to deliver valuable benefits to Native American Veterans. VA also continues to work toward publication of a final rule in the Federal Register that would waive certain copayments for eligible American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. Under the proposed rule, VA would reimburse eligible Veterans for certain copayments paid on or after January 5, 2022.

Native American Veterans who are interested in the NADL program can contact an NADL coordinator by emailing NADL@va.gov or by calling 888-349-7541. For homes outside of trust land, the VA-Guaranteed Home Loan program is available to Native American Veterans.

Renew Your Membership Online at

www.legion.org/renew

+ TAPS +

Altenhofen, Joe (Korea).....Seneca Aslatt, Dean (Korea)..... Hutchinson Atherton, John (WWII)..... Emporia Baker, Gary (Vietnam).....Harper Barber, Jeffrey (Persian Gulf).....Gardner Belden, Donald (Korea)..... Wichita #424 Bolt, Edward (Korea)..... Hutchinson Bontrager, Gary (Vietnam)..... Hutchinson Bowman, George (Vietnam) Junction City Bowman, Howard (Vietnam) .. Hutchinson Brecheisen, William (WWII)..... Moran Brian, James (Vietnam)..... Topeka #421 Briggs, Glen (Vietnam)..... Junction City Brown, Bernard (Korea) Dodge City Brown, Robert (Korea) Shawnee Brown, Willie, Jr. (Vietnam)Arkansas City Bruning, Jere (Korea).....Hiawatha Bush, Donald (Korea) Emporia Byard, Dennis (Vietnam) Hutchinson Carlson, Larry (Vietnam)..... Topeka #400 Cavillo, Pete (Korea) Hutchinson Christopher, David (Vietnam)..... Bucklin Clifford, James (Korea)..... Hutchinson Clifton, Gary, Sr. (Vietnam).....McPherson Danford, Richard (Vietnam) ... Hutchinson Debeeld, Randall (Persian Gulf) Baxter Springs Debey, Gary (Vietnam)Cawker City Denham, Barbie (Vietnam) .. Junction City Devault, Garry (Vietnam) Hutchinson Dewitte, Edward (Vietnam) Shawnee Durbin, Billy (Korea)..... Hutchinson Ediger, Lewis (Korea)..... Hutchinson Elliot, Vernon (Korea).....Sublette Essells, Gary (Vietnam) Hutchinson Farmer, Theodore (WWII)..... El Dorado Flesher, Paul (Vietnam).....Cawker City Fobian, Lee (Vietnam)Caney Fuller, RichardOverland Park Furguson, Alvin (Korea) Junction City George, Phillip (WWII)Lebo Greene, Kenneth (WWII)..... Tescott Greenwood, Billy (Korea) Madison Griffen, David (Vietnam)..... Hutchinson Guffey, John (Vietnam).....McPherson Hansen, Earl (WWII)..... Tescott Henry, Paul (WWII).....Seneca Hill, Larry (Vietnam) Hutchinson Hinz, Myron (Korea) Lebo Hubbard, Galen (Vietnam).....Mayetta Humiston, Richard (Korea)..... Hutchinson Johnson, Dennis (Korea).....Bazine Johnson, Earl (Vietnam).....Derby Johnson, Lee (Vietnam) Atchison Jordan, Larry (Korea)..... Hutchinson Kane, John (Korea) Shawnee Kathka, Elmer (WWII)Oberlin Klein, Donald (Korea) Sterling Leckrone, Gene (Korea)..... Shawnee	Leiker, Arthur (Korea) Garden City Leslie, Rodney (Vietnam)Manhattan Light, Larry (Vietnam)..... El Dorado Lindeen, Charles (Korea).....Marysville Litchfield, Tom (Vietnam)..... Hutchinson Maiserouille, Charles (Vietnam).. Pittsburg Marietta, Allen (Vietnam)Oberlin McCreary, J. B., Jr. (Vietnam)Lebo McGregor, Ronald (Korea) Baxter Springs McIber, James (Korea)..... Hutchinson Miller, Dale (Korea)..... Haddam Murphy, Carlos (Korea)..... Hutchinson Murphy, Willie (Vietnam).... Junction City Neff, Donald (Korea)Oberlin Nelson, Wayne (Vietnam) Garden City Newman, Cecil (Vietnam) Isabel Oberhelman, Gail (Vietnam)..... Ness City Palmer, Irvin (WWII)..... Wichita #256 Petersen, Thomas (Vietnam) ..Cawker City Pettus, Gary (Vietnam)..... Frontenac Pfortmiller, David (Vietnam) .Cawker City Plute, Virgil (Korea)..... Wichita #424 Price, Max (WWII) Hutchinson Remer, Floyd (Vietnam) Newton Robl, Martin (Korea) Sterling Rodney, Apps Hutchinson Rose, Steven (Vietnam) Agra Schoonover, Dave (Lebanon/Grenada)..... Hutchinson Schuetz, David (Vietnam) ... Arkansas City Sears, Harold (WWII)..... Topeka #421 Seeley, Earl (Vietnam) Pittsburg Senn, Jim (Vietnam)..... Newton Skeens, Donald (WWII)..... Shawnee Skoch, Gerald (Vietnam) Axtell Smith, Leonard (Vietnam) Shawnee Sneath, Lloyd (WWII) Meade Stoff, William (Korea) Emporia Stoppel, Harold (Korea)..... Sterling Strauss, William (Korea)..... Junction City Taylor, William (Korea)..... Pittsburg Thomas, William (Vietnam)..... Allen Touchton, Elijah (Vietnam)..... Pittsburg Ubben, Donald (Korea)..... Blue Rapids Ufford, Calvin (WWII)Oberlin Wabaunsee, Paul (Vietnam)Mayetta Wade, Waylan (Korea)..... Valley Center Wallace, Michael, Sr. (Vietnam) Hutchinson Walters, Leroy (Korea) Junction City Webb, Larry (Korea) Tescott Wehling, Glen (Vietnam) Isabel Weibe, John (WWII) Newton West, Oliver, Jr. (Vietnam)....Leavenworth White, MarvinMarysville White, Wayne (Korea) Junction City Williams, Donald (Vietnam) Emporia Woodruff, Glen (Korea) Meade Woody, Jim (Vietnam) Hutchinson
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**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**

James Snyder

10899 Blue Spruce Dr.
Ozawkie, KS 66070

(785) 865-8393



Well it has been a great two years serving you. I have enjoyed my travels to your Squadrons and events. We have hit our goal for April of 90%, but still have a difficult road ahead to meet the 100%. Keep inviting your friends and family to join, the ben-

efits are well worth it to be-
ing a member.

Remember, if you need anything, just reach out to your District Officers or your Detachment Officers. We are here for you.

James Snyder
Commander
Detachment of Kansas

“BUCKLE UP, LIGHTS ON & LIVE”

Please send _____ fact sheets to:

Post/Unit/Squadron: _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Mail to:

Department Headquarters

1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, KS 66612

KANSAS SUNFLOWER LEGIONNAIRE

Jimmie L. Foster, Editor

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Jeff Bond:departmentassistantadjutant@kansaslegion.org

Michelle Johnston:membership@kansaslegion.org

News deadline is the 15th of March, June, September and December for the next issue.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

VA HOSPITAL SERVICE OFFICERS

Robert J. Dole Regional VA Medical Center, Wichita

Local: 316-688-6814, Toll Free: 888-878-6881 Ext. 56814

Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center, Leavenworth

Local: 913-758-4297, Toll Free: 800-952-8387 Ext. 54297

Colmery-O’Neil VA Medical Center, Topeka

Local: 785-350-4489, Toll Free: 800-574-8387 Ext. 54489

LEGION COLLEGE

This year’s Kansas American Legion College will take place at Cloud County Community College in Concordia June 9-11.

This year there will be a Hands-On Class dealing with mylegion.org being taught by a member of the KALC Committee. If you are a Post Commander or Post Adjutant this is a prime opportunity to actually input and make changes to Members of your Post. PLEASE ensure you bring your laptop or iPad to get the full effect of the training.

There will be a Representative from the Gaming Commission and the Alcohol Beverage Control Board to update us on the new laws and regulations dealing with pull tabs and liquor sells within your Posts. An uniformed Post is not a good situation.

We are working on Post Commander and Post Adjutant modules that hopefully be available by KALC time. We will try and incorporate them with the training that the committee will be conducting.

Hopefully, we will have another VA Roundtable or Symposium. Everyone really enjoyed being able to ask a pinpoint question to the person that is the expert of that partic-

ular Division of The Veterans Hospital/Administration out of the Dole V.A. Medical Center and Veterans Service Center in Wichita.

The American Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL members over the age of 21 are invited to attend the College. An enrollment coupon is provided below for your convenience. Cost of the College this year is \$85.00 per person which includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner at Concordia Post 76, and Sunday breakfast. In addition the enrollment fee includes air conditioned dorm housing at the College—attendees must bring their own sheets, pillow, pillow case, blanket, bath soap, towels and personal items. Those needing only meals will be \$45 total.

Check in for the College begins at 3:00 PM on Friday, June 4. Dinner will be available from 5:00 PM until 6:00 PM followed by a meeting of the Department Executive Committee. Sessions for all attendees will commence at 8:15 AM Saturday and 9:00 AM Sunday, June 10 and 11 with a break for lunch on Saturday and conclusion of the College on Sunday no later than noon.

LEGION COLLEGE REGISTRATION

ENCLOSED IS MY \$85 REGISTRATION FOR THE
KANSAS AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE

JUNE 9 - 11

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Member of _____

Post, Squadron, Unit (circle one)

Post Service Officer Training _____ Yes or No

YES, I will need housing at the College

NO, I will not need housing at the College

Mail to: Department Headquarters
1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, KS 66612