

Sunflower Legionnaire

The American Legion -



Today's Voice for Today's Veterans & Military

VOL LXXVII NO. 1

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

July, August, September 2023

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION ELECTION RESULTS



Randy Frank, Department Commander

Randy Frank was elected Department Commander during the closing session of the 104th Annual State Convention in Topeka on June 4th.

Commander Frank 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 four years, District IV Commander, two years as the Department Area East Vice Commander, and Department of Kansas Vice Commander. He is also a Sons of the American Legion member.

Angela Evans was elected Department Vice Commander and served in the United States Air Force from 1986-2011. She is a Kansas Department Life member and a member of the Sterling American Legion Auxiliary Unit.



Angela Evans, Department Vice Commander

Mike Jury was elected as Area West Vice Commander. Mike will be available to respond to requests for assistance from Posts in Districts V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX. He is a 21-year member currently with Post #68 in Hutchinson.

George Honn was elected Area East Vice Commander and will assist Posts in Districts I, II, III, IV, and X when called upon to do so. He is a 15-year member currently with Post #156 in Paola.



Mike Jury, Area West Vice Commander

KANSAS AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY DAY

This year Department Family Day will be on July 22nd in Hutchinson, Kansas at the American Legion Post 68. The address is 730 W 4th Street, and activities will be from 10 am until 8 pm. It will be a come and go event. This years theme is Hawaiian luau, so break out those Hawaiian shirts. Family Day was started in replacement of Department Camporama due to lack of attendance. We would like to thank Bill Simhiser, Chuck Rhinehart, and Tom Emerson for their years of support of Camporama.

We will have vehicles from the Hutchison Police and Fire Departments and the Reno County Sheriff's Department. We are pleased that National Guard in Hutchinson will be sending over a military vehicle and we welcome the Soldiers from B company, 1st Battalion, 161 Field Artillery Regiment. Registration for cornhole is at 10, with bags flying at 11. Kids activities will also kick off at 10am at the bounce house. They will also enjoy face

painting, balloon animals, water balloons, kids cornhole, and other inside and outside games and prizes.

By special request we will have a dunk tank, where you might be able to dunk your favorite American Legion officers, American Legion Auxiliary officers, Sons of the American Legion officers, a member from the Hutchison American Legion Post, as well as Past Department Commanders. Your Department Adjutant, Jimmie Foster is scheduled to take a turn in the tank. Please join the "Dunking for Dan" fundraiser as Dan Wilely pursues his run for National Commander. Please don't forget to stop by our photo booth for a selfie.

We will have a lunch of hamburgers and hotdogs by freewill donation. A special thank you going out to Chris Self, 8th District Commander and Cargill. We will have an evening meal at about 5:30. Sometime during the day when our birthday girl arrives we will have a surprise birthday party for Dorothy Wedel from Newton ALA as she is turning a big 40, please lets keep it a surprise until show time. We will wrap up the day with karaoke starting at 6 pm.

Please come join us Saturday, July 22 for our inaugural AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY DAY. You do not need to be a member of the American Legion Family to attend. If you have been in the military or have a relative who has served please join us as we celebrate.

Joe Hulse



George Honn Area East Vice Commander

COMMANDER

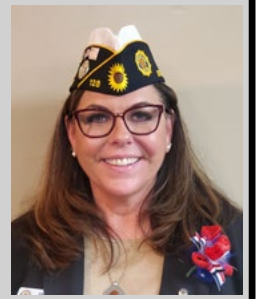
Randy Frank**(563) 419-1474**

departmentcommander@kansaslegion.org

**VICE COMMANDER**

Angela Evans**(719) 659-0837**

departmentvicecommander@kansaslegion.org



Hello, Kansas Legion Members.

We had a very successful Department Convention with Senator Moran as one of our Guest Speakers. The Leadership College Committee quickly shifted into gear and produced a great opportunity to learn not only from leadership but networking with other Legion members.

Boys State started their 2023 session as we were in Leadership College. Volunteers from across the state converged on the Kansas State campus to help young men learn about and how to run their simulated governments at all levels. There were campaigns and elections to establish the leadership and throughout the time each level was challenged to overcome obstacles.

Cadet Law jumped into action at the Kansas Highway Patrol Troop J in Salina Kansas. Cadets were welcomed to the facility as they met the Kansas Highway Patrol Officers that would lead them to their completion of Graduation. Every day they would raise and lower the flag and do physical fitness activities. During the week they drove a Highway Patrol Vehicle in simulated Traffic Stops, went to the firing range to qualify and flew in the Kansas Highway Patrol Airplane. The Cadets would spend hours in class studying numerous classroom lessons. An experience that will not be forgotten.

I was honored to be given the opportunity to place the hats on the newly elected Girls State Governor McCall Beall and Lieutenant Governor Hayley Myers. Gover-

nor Beall is a 3rd generation Kansas Girls State Governor. Her Mother and Grand Mother were also in attendance.

The Annual Legacy Run kicked off at Hays, Kansas. The American Legion Riders spent 4 days crossing western Kansas meeting veterans and visiting communities while honoring our veterans as they laid wreaths. This is an event where they raise monies to help children of fallen soldiers.

District 2 had a great event as they held their Annual Picnic which included a District Meeting. They accomplished much needed work in preparing for the next membership year. I look forward to seeing the results of these activities. At the end of the meeting a well-deserved BBQ was held. A great way to bring the team together.

The month of June has been full of activities and July will not pale in events. Just to name a few will be the 150th Annual Erie Bean Feed July 14-15. A historical event that will have free beans and a weekend of events focusing on the soldiers of the Civil War. Many Elected Officials will be in attendance and a fly over during the parade.

The Inaugural Department of Kansas Family Day will be July 22 at the Hutchinson Post.

Please check the department webpage <https://kansaslegion.org> where you will find flyers on the upcoming events. Also check out the Department calendar.

If your District or Post would like me to attend your event, please reach out to me at DepartmentCommander@kansaslegion.org

I am so humbled by all the support I have received since the Department Convention. I am very excited to represent each of you and the State of Kansas as your Department Vice-Commander. It has already been a fun and busy month. On June 5th I had the honor to visit Post 421 to install their newly elected officers. Then I traveled to Manhattan on June 7th to watch the talent show at Boys State; what a gifted group of young men. The Legion Riders completed the Kansas Legacy Run on June 25th, and I had the privilege to ride on the back of PDC Jeremy Ehart's bike for Day 3 and 4, but more importantly the riders raised \$21,943 for the Legacy Fund. I have several events scheduled in the coming months, but I would like to know what you and your Post have scheduled so I can attend as much as possible. Please email me at departmentvicecommander@kansaslegion.org or you can call me at 719-659-0837. You can see pictures of these events, and follow what the different Post's and District's are doing at the Department of Kansas American Legion Vice Commander Facebook page.

During Leadership College this year, Districts presented plans for seeking and retaining members. Each District had very detailed plans, so I have no doubt we will have a very successful membership year. Membership packets, containing the 2024 membership information were passed out to the Posts attending Leadership College. If your Post was not represented at Leadership College, contact your District Commander to get your packets. Let's start getting those 2024 PUFL cards out first and


get all those "Goose Eggs" off the membership list early. You can also save time and renew your membership on-line; this saves your Post time and money. All you need to do to renew online is go to www.kansaslegion.org. At the top of the page, go to the membership tab and in the dropdown menu press renew membership, then click on Renew Today. You will need your membership number, last name, and a form of payment. This will also prevent additional renewal notices in the mail. If you renew using postal mail, it takes much longer and you might get a renewal notice after you have already paid which is not only annoying for you, but it can also be confusing to everyone involved.

I would like to invite you all to the Vice Commander's Legion Family Homecoming on October 14, 2023, which also includes Tracy Kinnick, the American Legion Auxiliary Department Vice President and Matthew Krupco, the S.A.L. Detachment Vice Commander. We are hosting the homecoming at the Greyhound Hall of Fame, which is directly adjacent to the Eisenhower Memorial in Abilene. If you have not been to the Presidential Museum or the Greyhound Museum, then this is your chance to visit. Both are great facilities, and we hope to see you there this October. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns I am always available for you. If you would like for me to attend an event at your Post or District, please let me know. Thank you for all you do for the Legion. I look forward to this coming year and the opportunity to serve. For God and Country!

AMERICAN LEGION DAYS at the State Fair

Contact your District Commander if you're interested in volunteering to represent the American Legion at the State fair this September.

Fri, Sept. 8..... 1st District
 Sat, Sept. 9 10th District
 Sun, Sept. 10 ...2nd District
 Mon, Sept. 11 .. 6th District
 Tues Sept. 12... 9th District
 Wed, Sept. 13 .. 4th District
 Thu, Sept. 14... 5th District
 Fri, Sept. 15..... 7th District
 Sat, Sept. 16 3rd District
 Sun, Sept. 17 ... 8th District



FIRST DISTRICT COMMANDER

MIKE COLE
(913) 680-8680

Greeting 1st District! Post Commanders, Kansas will have its first National Commander in 50 years. Our very own Dan Wiley. He was given the nod to be our National Commander in 2025-2026. It takes a lot of money to run a national campaign, so I am asking that each Post donate to his campaign. I am only asking each Post to donate \$100, more if you are able, but if each Post would donate just \$100, we could raise \$2100 as a District. My Post 23 has donated \$1000 so far and are planning on tripling that amount over the next two years. It is important for the 1st District to lead by example so that I can challenge the other 9 Districts to step up and do their part to support Dan's campaign. I would like to thank all the 1st District Posts that worked so hard on membership this

last year. As you know membership is the lifeblood of the Legion, without it we will not be able to support our programs. Membership is about when the National Commander goes before a Joint session of Congress on Veteran Affairs and can say they represent 2 million members in more than 12,000 Posts. It is this part of being a member of the American Legion that is often forgotten, without it we would not have the VA, the GI Bill or most recently the PACT ACT. Please carry a new member application with you everywhere you go and have a 30 second elevator presentation ready about the American Legion to veterans you run into. Tell them what we do every day in our communities to help veterans; to help children; to help families. If you can recruit that veteran, recruit the spouse or daughter for the Auxiliary; recruit that son for the S.A.L., if we do this, I am confident we can attract younger veterans into our family.

We will be having a District meeting on July 22nd at Rossville Post 31 beginning at 10:00 am. This will be the first chance we have had to get together for a meeting this year. The 1st District will be running the booth at the State Fair this year on Friday September 8th. We will need volunteers to work the booth and these volunteers can be Legion, Auxiliary, or S.A.L. members. If you would like to volunteer, please let us know by July 22nd.

The Department of Kansas American Legion Family Day is also July 22nd in Hutchinson running from 10am to 8pm, so after the meeting head on down to Hutchinson for some great food and activities. The theme is Hawaiian Luau.

As always, if a Post member has a question or needs assistance, the District Officers are available to help anytime. My email is DistrictCommander1@kansaslegion.org. Once again, thank you for

putting your faith in me this coming year and please have a safe and happy 4th of July!



SECOND DISTRICT COMMANDER

DOUG HENSLEY
(913) 314-2306

Legionnaires, First of all, I would like to thank you all for your support and faith in electing me to lead and serve you through this coming year.

Membership- Thank you to all the Posts that drove hard on membership.

As a District we fell short of 100% but please continue to reach out to those that have not renewed through the end of June. We have a lot of information for the 2024 year that will help to reach the goals and possibly grow well beyond those goals. Everyone of us is a recruiter and we will provide the tools to make that job easier. Membership is the lifeblood of The American Legion. Let us all hit the ground running July 1! I challenge all Post Leadership to renew for the 2024 year on July 1st!

Hope to see everyone at the Department American Legion Family Day July 22. A full day of Hawaiian Luau with activities for adults, kids and grandkids.

District 2 will be running The American Legion booth at the Kansas State Fair this year on Sunday September 10th. Please reach out to a District Officer if you would like to volunteer for this fun day.

District Homecoming will be held at Post 156 in Paola on October 7th and the District Fall Conference will be at the same location on November 4th. Details coming soon on both events.

Post Commanders and Adjutants, please utilize your Department provided email.

If you need assistance, please contact D2 Adjutant Krupco.

"Buddy Checks"- Remember to do your buddy checks. Besides the possibility of better retention, it lets the member know they do matter and we do care. Buddy Checks are also a precursor to the National Commander's "Be the One" campaign. ASK, LISTEN, REACH OUT - "BE THE ONE"



THIRD DISTRICT COMMANDER

RENE CASTILLEJA
(620) 779-2476

It seems like just yesterday that we had elections and the department convention. After Leadership College and Cadet Law, the last few months have been very busy and I have learned a great deal. I would like to continue 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. These next few months, I would like to concentrate on Post membership and the establishment of various committees. I would like each Post to develop a membership plan and start looking in your Post for people that will help develop a plan for Boys State, Cadet Law, and the Oratorical program. I believe we can be successful in letting our communities know what kind of programs the American Legion has available. Either myself personally or one
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THIRD DISTRICT

(Continued from Page 3)

of the 3rd District officers will be reaching out to your Post for names and numbers for your Posts program and plan. 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. There is also a 3rd District American Legion Facebook page if you want to stay informed of events happening in the District. If you have any issues or questions, please feel free to ask and I encourage every Post to start increasing your presence in your community. If you need help establishing a partnership with the National Guard or Reserves, please let me know as I have many contacts throughout the State. I will also continue to learn and get additional certified training to be a better asset for the Kansas American Legion and the 3rd District. Once again, thank you for your continued faith and support in me as your District 3 Commander.



**FOURTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Eszter Blair
(785) 447-2577

Greetings 4th District! Since our April Conven-

tion a lot has happened within the District. First, a resolution splitting the District across the middle was passed and, with Departments approval in June, we will have 2 Districts as of July 2024. The southern portion will retain the 4th District designation and the northern portion will become the 11th District. There will be lots more on that subject coming out in the following months. Next, District Commander Roger Beckley stepped down as Commander for personal reasons. I have been moved up to take his position and DEC Clarence "Frenchie" Frye from Lebo Post has been asked to take the Vice Commander position. Finally, Danny Rausch from Lyndon Post has accepted the appointment to the vacated DEC position. Lots of changes but nothing we haven't prepared for all of our military careers! A few dates withing our District that I want to pass along: September 13th is District 4's Day at the Fair. Vice Commander Frenchie is spearheading that and will be asking for volunteers so please reach out to him if you can spare a few hours; October 7th is the 4th District Homecoming at Harold "Skinny" Spatz Post 323 in Lebo. More to come on that. Vice Commander Frenchie and I will be attending National Membership Training the end of July and will be bringing back lots of new tools in our toolbox to pass along so be prepared to roll up your sleeves for this next year. Thank you all for your support in past years. As we move forward into 2024 we will overcome challenges and continue to BE THE ONE! God Bless



**FIFTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

JOE HICKS
(316) 295-7340

Greetings 5th District! I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Legionnaires of the 5th District for electing me as your District Commander for 2023 - 2024 year. I'm sure I can speak for all my Officers in saying that we look forward to serving you this year. I would like to thank all the 5th District Posts that worked so hard on membership and the Legion programs this last year. It is important to support our programs through our membership to provide the financial and manpower support for our programs.

One thing I would like to see more of is each Post Children and Youth Chairman to work a little harder on the Children and Youth programs and complete the reporting on all that was accomplished by the Post. The children are our future. I would like to thank the Marquette Post 253 for hosting this last District V Convention and what a great dinner provided by the Lindsborg Post 140 on Friday night. It was a great experience attending the Department Convention and the Leadership College, it was an enjoyable time and looking forward to next year. I also would like to see each Post send more Officers or Members to both events as this will help strengthen our Organization.

This year the 5th District day to man the American Legion booth is Thursday, September 14th. If you are there please stop in and say hi. The 5th District Homecoming is scheduled for Saturday October 21st at Wichita Post 4. Again, I am truly honored to be able to serve as your Commander and looking forward to meeting many of you this year.



**SIXTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

JIMMY STRACHAN
(785) 483-1186

Greetings to the Sixth District, I pray everybody is doing well.

We did have a change with a few District Officers at the District Convention held at Ellsworth Post 174 on 29 April, 2023. The new are: Jimmy Strachan Commander, Jason Hicks Vice-Commander, David Kertz Adjutant, George Martin Finance Officer and Bill Mahl 3 year Executive Committee.

During our first official Executive Meeting we approved Glenn Reed District Chaplin and Tom James District Judge Advocate. We also approved the offices and who will be able to sign checks.

Jimmy Strachan, David Kertz and George Martin went to Concordia Friday June 16, to take care of the bond for the finances. We then closed out the bank accounts that was in Concordia. A new bank account was opened in Ellsworth.

During Department Post Convention Executive Meeting, there was a drawing for which Districts will be working the State Fair booth. Sixth District day is Monday, 11 September. Volunteers are needed to work the booth a couple of hours. There will be fair passes for you to enjoy the fair after your shift. If you will like to work the booth, please contact me to set up a time for your shift. I will be at the booth from open to close.

This last year membership numbers was on the decline with Members transferring to Post Everlasting. Our hearts and prayers go out to all the ef-

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SIXTH DISTRICT

(Continued from Page 4)

affected families and Posts. My number one goal for this year is to work with all the Posts in the District with membership. There are many Posts with low membership numbers and I will be reaching out to them to find out how our District officers can help.

Always remember why the American Legion was formed. Veterans setting aside the differences and coming together to help veterans, their families and communities.

27 April, 2024 will be Sixth District Convention. Convention will be held in Smith Center, location to be announced.



MIKE VONDRACEK
(620) 285-9373

**SEVENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Hello fellow Legionnaires. My name is Michael Vondracek and I am your new District 7 Commander. I look forward to doing what I can to help your Posts succeed in promoting the Four Pillars of the American Legion. I would also like to take this time to congratulate two members of District 7 on winning their elections at Department Convention. Mike Jury from Post 68 in Hutchinson was able to retain his position as our Department Area West Vice Commander. Our 2022-2023 District 7 Commander, Angela Evans from Post 128 in Sterling, ran for Department Vice Commander. She was successful in her bid and will do very well. Con-

gratulations to both of these Legionnaires, I know you will represent your Posts, our District, and the Department of Kansas American Legion well. One last thing is if you are a Post commander or adjutant and you have not set up your @kansasamericanlegion.org email yet, please let me know at district7commander@kansaslegion.org. Email will be the primary means of communication I will be using so it is very important to utilize these emails. Until next time, take care and feel free to email me any time.



CHRIS SELF
(620) 253-2651

**EIGHTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

No article submitted.



SEAN HANKIN
(785) 443-0956

**NINTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

No article submitted.

KANSAS DISTRICTS



Click map to enlarge.



PAT CAFFREY
(785) 396-4531

**TENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Greetings from the 10th District. We are having a District Meeting July 15, at Sabetha, KS. Hosted by

SWEEPSTAKES SUPPORTS KANSAS' VETERANS, YOUTH

The Spring Sweepstakes provides much needed funding for Kansas Department's state-wide Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation programs as well as Children and Youth programs.

In a partnership with the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office, the Kansas American Legion employs four Veterans Service Officers and their staff to assist veterans obtaining their earned veterans' benefits. Under this program, the American Legion maintains an office in each of the three VA hospitals in Kan-

Post 126. Time is 1:00 p.m. at Buzz Café, 820 Main St. Sabetha, Ks. Homecoming is scheduled for November 18th at Wetmore Post 282. Final date and time will be finalized at July meeting. Since we started the 10th District we are having functions on both ends of the District to get more Posts active. District 10 is manning the booth at the State Fair on Saturday September 9th from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Anyone wanting to help please contact me at 785-396-4531.

This important service is available to any Veteran, free of charge.

Sweepstakes proceeds also go to the Department Children and Youth (C&Y) fund. Department C&Y pays for the State Oratorical Contest, various scholarships, and the Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program. These worthy programs could not exist without the generous support of Kansas Legionnaires.

The drawing was held in Topeka, June 4th, during the Department Convention.

SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

- Ron Goodwin, Tonganoxie, KS \$2,500.00
- Randal Catlett, Overland Park, KS \$1,000.00
- Robert N. Jerome, Howard, KS \$500.00
- Ted Hamilton, Olathe, KS..... \$250.00
- Richard L. Hoyt, Manhattan, KS \$250.00
- Kent R. Thomas, Wichita, KS..... \$250.00
- Raynard D. Barnes, Topeka, KS \$250.00
- John B. Dowdell, Olathe, KS..... \$250.00
- Nick A. Tomasic, Kansas City, KS \$200.00
- Ronald M. Upton, Arkansas City, KS..... \$200.00
- Kenneth W. Dohm, Lake City, KS..... \$200.00
- Larry Marker, Wilson, KS..... \$200.00
- Christopher Kisner, Arkansas City, KS.... \$200.00



CHAPLAIN

Rev. Debra Muylaert
departmentchaplain@kansaslegion.org

Greetings Legion Family! Hope you are doing well! It was great to see many of you at the Department Convention and the Leadership College! I always look forward to Department and District events because I love seeing everyone! It also gives me the chance to meet new Legion family members. What an awesome family we have!

In this article, I want to share something with you I recently read that really spoke to me. It continues the theme of the message I gave during the Department Convention Memorial Service of coming alongside people in their uphill battles to "Be the One" for them. As a reminder, the Legion's "Be the One" program is designed to bring awareness to mental health issues, especially veteran suicide, and to reach out to struggling veterans with the help they need to make it through another day. What I want to share is a quotation from Thelma Wells who is a Christian writer and speaker. She states:

"The road to glory is difficult with its rocks and boulders, its strain and struggle. But if you keep on keeping on, you can make it. Things aren't always as easy as we would like. Surprises and pitfalls wait for us along the road of life. We're going to sweat and sway, we're going to wonder why things are the way they are, and we're even going to blame other people. But every road has an end. If we can just hold on and keep climbing, knowing that God is aware of how we're straining, He will bring us up and over the mountains. It's consoling to know that God is in control of every part of our journey to glory, even over

the steep mountains."

Thelma's message to us in this quotation is to stay focused on God during trials. Scripture tells us, "God is our strong refuge; He is truly our helper in times of trouble" (Psalm 46:1), and oftentimes, He helps us through other people (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). So, I encourage you to keep your focus on God and not on the storm, and to help others do likewise. Interestingly, Thelma loves bumblebees and always inspires people to "B-E-E the Best." I can think of no better way to do that than to "Be the One" for struggling Legion family members, coming alongside them in their trials to help them over their mountains. So, to "B-E-E the Best," "Be the One." Have a great summer!

BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS

Class A

State Championship
El Dorado - July 19-23

Class AA

State Championship
Concordia - July 19-23

Class AAA

State Championship
Pittsburg - July 19-23

Super State

AA vs AAA Champions
AA to Host - July 28-30

Mid-South Regionals

AL, AR, KS, MS, MO, OK
Pelham, AL - August 2-6

World Series

Shelby, NC - August 10-15



**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**

Jim Gallentine
(785) 865-8393
jim.gallentine@gmail.com



I cannot express how honored and humbled I am to have been elected as Kansas Detachment Commander.

I want to thank the Kansas Sons of the American Legion membership for support in this journey, as well as the entire Kansas American Legion Family. This is not my position, it

is our position, and I hope to represent not only the Kansas Sons of the American Legion, but everyone in The American Legion Family in a way that you will be proud of.

With our hard work, and the desire to be successful in every area, we will continue the legacy of the Sons of the American Legion.

SUPPORT AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

Baseball is alive and well in Kansas. Over the month of July, 40 Kansas American Legion Baseball teams will battle for the title of State Champion.

There are three classes of Legion Baseball in Kansas. Class A is our junior league for ages 13 to 17. Class AA is our rural senior league for ages 13 to 19. AA Teams can only recruit from a pool of high schools whose sophomore to senior enrollment totals to less than 500. Class AAA is also a senior league for ages 13 to 19. AAA can recruit from a pool of high schools whose sophomore to senior enrollment totals 7,500 students.

In mid-July, three Zone Tournaments will each send up to three finalists to the Class A State Championship in El Dorado. In the Senior leagues, AA will have four Zone Tournaments qualifying two teams each for the AA State Championship in Concordia. All seven AAA teams automatically qualify for the AAA State Cham-

pionship in Pittsburg. The AA and AAA State Champions will compete in the Super State to determine who will represent Kansas in the Mid-South Regionals in Pelham, AL.

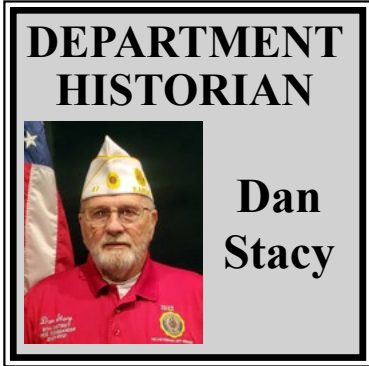
For more information about the location, participants, and dates of all the Zone Tournaments visit the Department webpage: kansaslegion.org/baseball. The website will also be updated with final scores after every game during during the State Championships.



ADJUTANT'S BRIEFS

By Department Adjutant Jimmie L. Foster

**NATIONAL
PURPLE
HEART DAY
AUGUST 7**



Greetings fellow Legionnaires. The Convention and KALC is in the history book. We had a fantastic time at KALC. I believe it was the best one that I have attended. There was one Post History Book turned in this year. I hope for more Posts to present their books for review at the next Convention. If we do not keep our history, we will have nothing for the future Legionnaires to look back on. I look forward to all the Post Historians to reach out to me soon. You can contact me by email or phone. The email is: department-historian@kansaslegion.org or my phone # 620-430-0750. Thanks to all and God bless you and God bless the American Legion.

Sincerely,
Dan Stacy

**Renew Your
Membership
Online at**
www.legion.org/renew

Now, that the 104th Department Convention is behind US, and WE have a New Slate of Department Officers to lead US into and through the 2023-2024 Membership Year it is time to keep finding Veterans that want to join Our Great Organization.

The Delegates of the Convention were given the opportunity to hear their National Leaders from ALL three Entities of The American Legion Family. National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus from North Dakota, and American Legion Auxiliary National Vice President Ann Rehbein from the Department of Iowa, Leading Candidate for S.A.L. National Commander Don "JR" Hall from the Detachment of Maryland and S.A.L. National Vice Commander Michael Kirschner from the Detachment of Colorado enlightened US with a vast amount of knowledge about their individual Organizations and thanked the Department of Kansas for their support and camaraderie.

All Our Guests stated that they looked forward to returning the Great State of Kansas, so all of you must be doing things right. Keep up the Great Work!!!

Boys State was held from 4 to 10 June at Kansas State University. Every Stators was happy to be able to attend in person this year. They were well educated and initiative-taking young Adults representing their individual Cities and Towns across the State of Kansas very well.

The Kansas American Legion College (KALC) in Concordia was also well attended and those there was eager to learn new things to help Our Organizations continue to march forward. All the presenters did a superb job of making it interesting and informational. This year it was again open to ALL entities of The American Le-

gion Family – Legion, Auxiliary and Sons!

At the D.E.C. (Department Executive Committee) Meeting many topics were on the agenda. The biggest was the presentation and approval of the Department Budgets for the Operation Year 2023-2024 by Department Finance Committee Member Eszter Blair.

The Information Letter has been mailed to those that were selected as Delegates and Alternates to the 2023 National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. National Staff has worked hard to ensure that those attending will be rewarded with informational and fun times for The American Legion. Make sure you pay close attention to the submission dates. These dates are non-negotiable by Department and National for contract purposes.

The Kansas Cadet Law Program was held from 11 to 16 June 2023 at the Kansas Highway Patrol Academy in Salina. They had a fair number of Cadets attend this year. Each year the Boy's State and Cadet Law Programs give me continued faith that some of our youths are on the right track for the betterment of Our Country!

The Erie Bean Feed is scheduled from 14 & 15 July 2023 in Erie, Kansas. This is the 150th Year for the Soldiers and Sailors Ceremonies. This will be their Sesquicentennial, and they are anticipating a huge crowd. It you have never attended be sure to put it on your calendar.

The Department Commanders Homecoming Luncheon will be held on August 12 at Arkansas City Post # 18. A clip out is on the last page of this Sunflower Legionnaire.

The Kansas State Fair is a go again this year. Each District is responsible for

staffing the Booth for a day. PLEASE contact your District Commander or District Adjutant to assist in promoting The American Legion for those attending the State Fair. It is always a fun and rewarding experience!

The State Golf Tournament will be held on 23 September at Great LIFE Golf and Fitness, Western Hills Country Club in Topeka. Gather up your Team and enjoy the fun and camaraderie.

The Department Vice Commanders Homecoming will be held in conjunction with The Eisenhower Pilgrimage in Abilene, Kansas on 14 October 2023. I understand that Incoming National President Lisa Williamson from the Department of Alaska will be make her official that day also. There is also a clip out on the last page of this Sunflower Legionnaire. PLEASE plan to attend.

The Big Red Turkey Run is scheduled to be held on 18 November 2023 and Operation North Pole is scheduled to be held on 2 December 2023 this year on Fort Riley. If you have never attended one of these events, you have deeply missed out. Both Events will literally touch your heart when the Soldiers and their families hugs you and breaks down in tears when they receive their Turkey and all the fixings or a gift for their child/children during the Christmas Holidays.

I know it is a little early but plan to attend the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference in Hutchinson, Kansas from 2 to 4 February 2024. Hutchinson is ready and waiting to show Everyone a Great Time. Plan to attend!

Until next time, continue to support the Greatest Veterans and their Families, in the Greatest Veterans Organization in The Free World, The American Legion (in my opinion).

+ TAPS +

- Barrington, Lawrence, Jr. (Vietnam).....
-Blue Rapids
- Barton, William (Vietnam)..... Derby
- Boone, Stewart (WWII).....Garden City
- Burns, Lelano (WWII)..... Gardner
- Coates, Dalmas (Vietnam) Wamego
- Cussimano, Bob (Vietnam)..... Frontenac
- Dickey, Larry (Vietnam)Colby
- Doshier, Kelsie (Korea)Wichita #424
- Dowell, Charles (Korea).....Canton
- Foster, Robert (Korea) Gardner
- Frerking, Merlin (Vietnam)..... Marysville
- Goebel, Kenneth (WWII).....Isabel
- Heidebrecht, Leland (Korea)Marion
- Higgins, William (WWII).....Marion
- Hittle, Harland, Jr. (Vietnam)..... Derby
- Ince, Donald (Grenada/Lebanon).....
- Manhattan
- Jolley, Don (WWII)Marion
- Jones, Robert (Korea) Frankfort
- Knecht, Jim (Vietnam)..... Marysville
- Knop, Eldon (WWII)Louisburg
- Koster, Dennis (Vietnam)Tescott
- Kotzman, John (Vietnam) Frontenac
- Larson, Merlyn (Vietnam)Marquette
- Legere, Clair (WWII)..... Hill City
- Lindblad, Mendle (Korea)Scandia
- Madl, Robert (WWII)Pittsburg
- Mathewson, William (Korea)..... Seneca
- Mayer, Bernard (Korea)..... Westmoreland
- Meyer, Carl (WWII) Osage City
- Meyer, Kenneth (Korea) Axtell
- Miller, Charles (Vietnam) Dwight
- Miller, Loren (Korea).....Garden City
- Milner, A.D. (Vietnam)Scandia
- Nickerson, Donald (Vietnam)Scandia
- Noble, Dwight (Vietnam)..... Garfield
- Nylund, John (Vietnam).....Scandia
- Olearnik, Clint (Gulf War) LaCrosse
- Olsen, Larry (Korea).....Scandia
- Oneil, Roger (Vietnam)..... Wellsville
- Oriez, Donald (Vietnam).....Marquette
- Peterson, Lugene (Vietnam)..... Salina
- Raymond, Mai (Korea)Garden City
- Reinke, Robert (Korea).....Marion
- Scheck, Edwin (WWII).....Russell
- Schiesser, Donald (Korea) Allen
- Segerhammar, Carl (Vietnam)Scandia
- Shepherd, Burton (Vietnam) Dwight
- Sjogren, Jon (Korea)Marquette
- Smith, Richard (Panama)Pittsburg
- Smith, William (Vietnam)..... Harper
- Stovall, Carl (Korea).....Topeka #58
- Tajchman, Marcel (Vietnam) .. McPherson
- Tollefson, A.D. (Vietnam)..... Hiawatha
- Watson, Robert (Vietnam).....Scandia
- Wilson, Clyde, Jr. (Korea)Beloit
- Wilson, William (WWII)Pittsburg

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

Dan Bartlett

(800) 574-8387 ext. 54489 2200 SW Gage
dan.bartlett@va.gov Topeka, KS 66622

An Overview of Service Officer Training at The Kansas Leadership College -

The Service Officer Training at The American Legion Leadership College this year was well attended and provided a good amount of information for the Post Service Officers. I will cover some on the highlights in this article. The Kansas Commission of Veterans Affairs (KCVA) Deputy Director Eric Rohleder presented 2 one-hour sessions. If you attended the Department Convention, you had a chance to meet Eric, he is well versed in Veteran Issues. His first session was an overview of the KCVA program and updates on legislative issues KCVA are tracking at the State Level. There was quite a bit of discussion on the new Veterans Home, that was approved for Northeast Kansas, it will be located on property near the VA Hospital in Topeka. His second session was about the Veterans Home and Cemeteries that the KCVA provides oversight and leadership. There was a lot of discussion with the attendees, this is normally a 20-minute brief – but with the robust discussion it lasted over one hour.

I facilitated the next sessions, they were “Duties of The Post Officer Service Officer” and “Tools of The Post Service Officer”. Since they were broken into two different sessions there was ample time to discuss how to collaborate with the Legions Veteran Service Representa-

tives at the two VA Hospitals and Regional Office to get assistance to their Post Members. We then covered the tools available for the Post Service Officers. Another highlight - an engaging discussion of the PACT Act that went into effect last August. This was a primer for the VA Wichita Regional Office Director’s breakout session. Donna Meyer-Hikel is the Director in Wichita VA.

The discussion during the Directors session focused on the PACT Act and the functions of the Regional Office. This session went into overtime which was great for those attending. She offered to have someone available from her staff to brief the PACT Act at Posts. You can contact me if you want set up a brief at your Post.

One of the greatest benefits of the Service Officer Training is the discussion that everyone had around the briefing topics. The format allows for the presenter to stop and answer questions along the way for the attendees. I would say that all in attendance had great questions that helped to reinforce the sessions.

If you were not able to attend The Service Officer Training, the presentations are available for you by sending an email requesting them to: leadershipcollege2@kansaslegion.org I would also encourage you to attend The Kansas Leadership College next year, you will miss a lot if you don’t.



AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Cheryl Eastep

(620) 687-3197

deptpresident@kslegionaux.org



Greetings Members,

I hope everyone is having a great summer so far, and that you have a fun and safe Independence Day.

My team and I are working together to have a successful and fun year so mark your calendars! Fall Conference will be held in Pittsburg at Post 64 on September 16, 2024, keep your eyes open for more information.

I started my year at Cadet Law where I helped to present Diplomas to the cadets. I had the honor of pinning the incoming Sunflower Girls State Governor McCall Beall.

I hope those that attended Leadership College this year enjoyed the presentations and learned a lot. If you have any recommendations for the next year please let me know. We hope to continue creating a great learning environment for the ALA at Leadership College.

I plan to be at the Legion Family Picnic in Hutchinson on July 22, 2023. I hope to see everyone there.

Until then, may God bless us, our troops, and the USA.

Be The One,
Your President, Cheryl Eastep

LEGION FAMILY HOMECOMING Saturday, August 12, 2023

**Arkansas City Post #18
115 East Washington Ave**

RSVP

Name _____

Post//Unit/Squadron _____

Guest Names _____

No. of Meals (\$15 each): _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of _____

**Please Make checks Payable to:
Randy Frank**

**Mail to:
211 Floral Dr
Hillsboro, KS 67063**

KANSAS SUNFLOWER LEGIONNAIRE

Jimmie L. Foster, Editor

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Department Headquarters:

1314 SW Topeka Blvd. Topeka, KS 66612, 785-232-9315

Department Headquarters Email Addresses:

Jimmie L. Foster: departmentadjutant@kansaslegion.org

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

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY HOMECOMING

The Homecoming Celebration for Department Commander Randy Frank, Auxiliary President Cheryl Eastep, and S.A.L. Commander Jim Gallentine will be held Saturday, August 12th at Arkansas City Post #18 located at 115 East Washington Ave.

The festivities will begin at 12:00 PM. Tickets are \$15 per person (\$17 at the

door) and include lunch. Brisket, cowboy beans, and potato salad, cole slaw, dinner roll with butter and dessert will be served.

For additional information or to RSVP, contact Randy Frank at (563) 419-1474. Or mail in the coupon to the left making checks payable to Randy Frank, and mail to address indicated on the coupon.

43rd ANNUAL

EISENHOWER PILGRIMAGE

Enclosed is our payment for a rose to be placed at the Eisenhower Memorial on Saturday, October 14, 2023.

Purchaser _____

Post - Unit - Other (Please be Specific)

No. of Roses _____ Amount Enclosed _____

(\$10 for each rose requested)

Name _____

Person Placing the Rose

_____ Please appoint an appropriate individual to place our rose.

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone (Day Time) _____

RECEPTION & DINNER

Chapman Post #240

Friday, October 13

No. of Dinner Reservations _____ Amount Enclosed _____

(\$20 per person)

MAIL TO:

KANSAS AMERICAN LEGION

EISENHOWER PILGRIMAGE

1314 SW Topeka Blvd.

Topeka, KS 66612

ABSOLUTE DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1, 2023