

Sunflower Legionnaire

The American Legion -



Today's Voice for Today's Veterans & Military

VOL LXXVII NO. 2

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

October, November, December 2023

NATIONAL COMMANDER

Daniel J. Seehafer was elected national commander of The American Legion on Aug. 31, 2023, in Charlotte, N.C., during the 104th national convention. Seehafer likes to say, "It's personal," when it comes to The American Legion's mission of serving Veterans and their families. He is continuing the theme of "Be the One," to prevent veteran suicide.

An ordained minister from Wisconsin, he earned his American Legion eligibility through service in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve, where he served as a military chaplain. A member of American Legion Post 157 in Horicon, Wis., Seehafer served in a number of American Legion offices at every level, including national chaplain and commander of the Department of Wisconsin.

Born and raised in Merrill, Wis., he lettered in



Daniel J. Seehafer, National Commander of The American Legion

cross-country track while in high school and later received a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry from Concordia University and a Master of Divinity at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Seehafer was installed as assistant pastor of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Horicon in 1997 and continues to serve as administrative pastor of the church and its school. His American Legion Post was recognized for "100 percent" and "All-Time High" in membership during his terms as commander and adjutant. Other honors include District Commander's New Post Achievement Award, Silver Brigade, and Post 157 Legionnaire of the Year.

In 2023, Seehafer earned an Outstanding Heroism Award for administering the Heimlich maneuver to a choking victim at an American Legion dinner.

National Commander Seehafer and his wife, Stacey, who is a member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 157, live in Beaver Dam, Wis. Dan's son, Jacob, and daughter, Emma, are also Members of the Post 157 family. Dan is the son of the late Lester Seehafer and Jean Sabatke.



General Eisenhower, Courtesy of the Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene

EISENHOWER PILGRIMAGE

Eisenhower Pilgrimage this year will be at the Eisenhower Museum and Library in Abilene on Saturday, October 14. All members of the American Legion Family are encouraged to participate this event which is open the public. Saturday's program will start at approximately 10:30 AM immediately following the Presidential wreath laying ceremony.

A Homecoming luncheon following the Pilgrimage will be held at the Greyhound Hall of Fame 407 S Buckeye Ave, Abilene to honor Department Vice Commander Angela Evans, Auxiliary Department Vice President Tracy Kinnick, and S.A.L. Detachment Vice Commander Matthew Krupco. The cost for the luncheon will be \$17.00 at the door.

COMMANDER

Randy Frank
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 departmentcommander@kansaslegion.org



VICE COMMANDER

Angela Evans
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The Kansas State Fair was a success with new Members from across the Legion Family starting their journey. There was even one who was a member of Post 58 asking to be assigned to an active Post.

In September the National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer traveled across the east side of Kansas meeting Members at American Legion Posts listening to their concerns. Seehafer stressed that we should practice Servant Leadership. ‘The servant leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first.’ He said that there are three steps to accomplishing this. Being Competent is our Mission, having high Character & a Strong Commitment. He challenges all Members to his mission in growing The American Legion.

Your Department Leadership Committee met in September to discuss membership throughout the Department. They identified some challenges and learned new meth-

ods on retention. Your District Leadership will be reaching out to you to discuss them.

This is the season of District Conventions. Please attend your Districts to see what your leadership is planning and possibly help them to achieve their goals.

The Annual Eisenhower Pilgrimage will be October 14th in Abeline. If you wish to participate in the ceremony with a rose representing your Post or a wreath for your District to place, use the form on the Department webpage. After the ceremony the Vice Commanders Homecoming will occur after the event.

Please check the Department webpage <https://kansaslegion.org> where you will find flyer 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

LEGION FAMILY SUPPORTS KANSAS MILITARY FAMILIES

The Big Red ‘1’ Turkey Run will be held Saturday November 18, 2023 at Fort Riley. This event provides a turkey and fixings to the families of the Soldier Recovery Unit (formerly the Warrior Transition Battalion), and other military families in need. This year, our goal is to provide food for 600 families. Volunteers are needed to gather food as well as distribute the food at Fort Riley. A list of food items will be coming out shortly. The volunteers will be able to show the face of The American Legion when they load the food into cars for those needing assistance.

In addition to the Turkey Run, the Legion Family is

working to make Operation North Pole great as well, which is scheduled for December 9, 2023. Operation North Pole provides holiday gifts and activities for the families of deployed soldiers, and other military families in need.

Monetary donations may be sent to Department Headquarters. Please make checks payable to: Kansas Department of The American Legion. Please indicate on the check which event you are supporting; Turkey Run, ONP, or both.

For additional information please contact ALR Department Chairman Barry Maples at legionridersdirector@kansaslegion.org or (785) 410-4393.

We have started the membership year strong, and your membership team has been very busy. In July ten of us headed to the annual Membership Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. This year’s Membership Conference provided some great training and invaluable time for your team to discuss membership goals.

At the end of August your membership team was on the move again, this time to Charlotte, North Carolina for The National American Legion Convention, where we attended numerous workshops on membership. In September we were able to apply some of the ideas/concepts while “working” at the State Fair. Several new members were signed up and some members were moved from Post 58 into local Posts. Thank you to everyone who supported the fair.

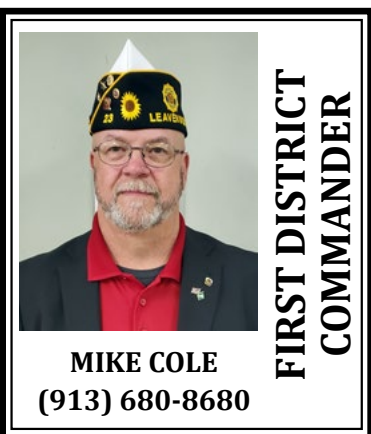
Your membership team has developed a plan to ensure those Posts that work hard are rewarded. Every Post that meets the monthly Department goal (Aug 20%, Sep 40%, Oct 60%, Nov 80%, Dec 100% of goal) will be eligible to win \$200 for each monthly drawing, for a total of \$1000. Eligible Posts will be collected each month from the Department membership list and the drawing will be held during the Second Sunday membership meetings. Congratulations to the first two Posts who were drawn for the \$200: Mayetta Post 410 and Florence Post 308.

In September the District Commanders, Vice Commanders, along with myself and the Department Commander meet for a Department Membership Workshop. We covered different

ideas such as utilizing QR codes for membership and events; Training in a Box and Training Tuesday, both located at legion.org; Active and Passive Recruitment; Retention; Post 58; transfers; Buddy Checks, and membership incentives. Your District leadership will be reaching out and scheduling a time for each District to work on membership.

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 me to attend an event at your Post or District, please let me know. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to call anytime. Thank you for all you do for the Legion. I look forward to the opportunity to serve. For God and Country.

**Veterans Day
 November 11
 2023**



**FIRST DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

**MIKE COLE
(913) 680-8680**

Greeting 1st District!
Posts should be at 60% membership by October. Hats off to the Post Commanders and Adjutants that have reached that first membership goal, keep it up. The Department is having another membership contest this year for both Posts and individuals, please contact your Post Adjutant for more information. Membership is the life blood of the American Legion, without it we will not have the clout in Washington D.C. to pass important legislation for Veterans, like the recently passed PACT ACT. We all know other Veterans that are not members, engage them and let them know all the programs that the American Legion has to offer.

Speaking about American Legion programs contact the counselor at your local school and get them the information now for Boys State, Cadet Law and Oratorical so they can recruit students for these outstanding programs. This can also help you recruit new Members to one of our family organizations.

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. Thank you to Lansing

Post and Tonganoxie Post for your donations!

1st District Meeting and Homecoming will be October 21st at Perry Post 142, meeting at 1030 followed by Homecoming which will begin at 1200. The District Christmas Party this year will be held after our December 16th meeting, which starts at 1030 followed by the party at 12 pm at Leavenworth Post 94. Keep an eye out for the flyer later in the year. I want you to know that if any of you need anything, please do not hesitate to contact me, or one of the District Officers. My email address is districtcommander1@kansaslegion.org. Make sure you are checking our Facebook page, 1st District American Legion Department of Kansas for upcoming events happening in the District, this is an incredibly good resource.

Please have a safe and happy holiday season!



**SECOND DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

**DOUG HENSLEY
(913) 314-2306**

Hello District 2!
Great showing from D2 at the Kansas State Fair Sept 10th. Thank you all that helped out. The 2024 Membership year has jumped off to a good start. The District has surpassed the 50% goal. It is not how you start a race, it is more important on how you finish it and I know that we are going to reach that 100% goal this year. Membership renewal is a great opportunity to share the 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 re-

sources 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.

The 2nd District Homecoming is at Paola Post 156 on Oct 7th immediately following the MADID2 Passport/Scavenger Hunt Ride. Please join us at 4 pm for the Homecoming. All details can be found on the District Facebook page or Contact District Adjutant Marri Krupco.

If your Post is having an event please let us know; 1) we would like to share it District wide on our social media pages, as well as sharing it on the Department pages, and 2) we would love to come and support your Post events. Mark your calendars for the Eisenhower Pilgrimage and Department Vice Commander Homecoming on October 14th; Big Red "1" Turkey Run November 14th and Operation North Pole December 9th at Fort Riley.

Department Christmas Party will be at Emporia Post December 16th. Happy and Safe Holidays to all!

Making a Difference in District 2

Thank you for all you do!



**THIRD DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

**RENE CASTILLEJA
(620) 779-2476**

Well, we finally made it through Summer 2023. We have all been busy with Conventions, State Fair, and preparing District Homecomings. I would like to continue to thank all my District Officers, past and present, and 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 58 transfers of 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. It's also not too early to start asking about new potential officers. Be mindful that you are elected to a position, not the color of your cap. Some of these leadership positions take a great deal of time and sacrifice to be successful. I believe we can be successful in letting our communities know what kind of programs the American Legion has available. 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 leave a voicemail or text me at 620-779-2476. 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. I know that some of our membership doesn't use computers or email, but technology will not be going away in the near future and I encourage every Post to offer some guidance to some of the older members. I have sent out letters to each Post and would like to get a reply so I can get a better picture of how communication works at your Post. At the end of the day, we must not forget our primary mission: Taking care of our Veterans. Please keep logs of Buddy Checks and continue to update your Consolidated Post Report to help capture all Veteran assistance you may have at your Post. I thank you for your continued faith and support in me as your District 3 Commander. I will see many of you at the 3rd District Homecoming on the 29th of October in Chanute.



**FOURTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Eszter Blair
(785) 447-2577

Happy Fall to all of 4th District. I am sure you are all very happy that the hot is behind us, I know I am. May even get some quality ride time in without the blast furnace effect! We finally received our quota for this membership year and we are currently at 57.56%. October goal is 60% so I know that is reachable. Department Incentive awards have been drawn. For August – 20%- was won by Mayetta Post 423. September – 40% - was won by Florence Post 308. Each winning Post gets \$200. So be sure you are in the running for October – 60%, November – 80% and December – 100%! Reach out to your Members, use the Buddy Check, make them feel like they are a part of a team, the American Legion Team!

We are slowly going into the holiday season. Eisenhower Pilgrimage is October 14th in Abilene. A great reason to get out, meet and mingle with fellow Legionnaires. Afterwards there is a luncheon for the Department Vice Commander, Department Auxiliary Vice President and the Detachment Vice Commander. Contact one of your District Officers if you can't find a form to send in your registration.

Next is The Big Red One Turkey Run at Fort Riley on November 18th. Always a great event, if you have never been I highly recommend at least once. This is followed by Operation North Pole on December 9th. Again, the faces on the children, the families that the American Legion touches with their actions is truly amazing.

And I know that all of you have local events you sponsor

and participate in. Halloween, Veteran's Day, Fall football, Thanksgiving and Christmas events, local nursing homes, be there for your communities. It's what we do!

And remember, use the Buddy Check, don't leave out your current Members, especially the ones you only see occasionally. Offer rides, hand them copies of your newsletters, your meeting minutes so they stay in the loop.

Thank you all for all you do! God Bless



**FIFTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

JOE HICKS
(316) 295-7340

Greetings Fellow Legionaries:

Thank you for your membership in your American Legion, where your membership matters, to your fellow Veterans, to your community, and to our Nation. (The 5th District led the way in membership last year and with your help we will do it again.)

Please check on the welfare of our fellow Veterans as the winter months and the holidays approach us, as this time of year can be very stressful. The Fifth District will be conducting a Buddy Check in November to help identify those who need a little help. Please reach out if you need a little help. You can reach me if you need to at fristks@yahoo.com or any of your District Officers.

The Legion Family is invited to 5th District Commander's Homecoming. It will be October 21st, beginning with a social hour at noon, and lunch will be served at 1:00. Post 4 will be hosting this year. Their address is 816 N Water St. Wichita (The NW corner of Main and Mardock, just west

of the new Veteran's Corner.)

Please remember to contact your local high school to promote Oratorical, Girls State, Boys State, Cadet Law, and all the opportunities for scholarships our American Legion has to offer.

Joe Hulse
5th District Vice Commander.



**SIXTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

JIMMY STRACHAN
(785) 483-1186

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

Congratulations go out to two Posts in the District that are over 100% membership quotas. They are Sylvan Grove 359 at 116.67% and Natoma 109 at 106.67% as of September 23, 2023. Good job and keep it up. The membership year just got started. With that being said after looking and the lower Post numbers, some are adding new members. A big thank-you goes out to them as well.

September 15 was the first milestone for the membership year. 75% membership quota made you eligible for Coffee Cup and Early Bird Awards Good luck to all the Posts that made 75% or above.

My number one goal for this year is to work with all the Post 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.

The Six District fair booth day was September 11. Did have four member working the booth. They were Dewayne Kalavoda Cuba 345, William Workman Natoma 109, David Kertz Natoma 109 and Jimmy Strachan Dorrance 334. We did hand out many bookmarks, registered many for the flag

drawing and even signed up a expired Member with money in hand. Did pass the information to the Post he wanted to join. Later in the day, did have a youngster come up and was asking about Cadet Law. Did the best we could with answering his questions and I looked up the Post information to the Post that was nearest to him. He did leave happy. Thanks go out to all the worked the booth, everyone did have a good time doing it.

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.



**SEVENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

MIKE VONDRACEK
(620) 285-9373

Hello District 7!

Thank you to Cassandra and Mark Stephens from Post 128 in Sterling, Eric Fox from Post 106 in Larned, District 7 Executive Committee Member Doug Ulrich from Post 103 in Greensburg, and District 7 Vice-Commander Bill Sykes for helping work the Department of Kansas American Legion Booth at the Kansas State Fair. I would also like to thank Department Commander Frank, Department Vice-Commander Evans, Department Area West Vice-Commander Jury and Department Chaplain Muylaert for joining us. We had a lot of good leads and Cassandra Stephens signed one new TAL and one Auxiliary Member to Post 128 in Sterling! Great job Cassandra!

I would briefly like to touch on social media. Like it, love
(Continued on Page 5)

SEVENTH DISTRICT

(Continued from Page 4)

it, or hate it, it is not going away and it is a tool we need to get use to using. At a minimum, each Post needs to have a Facebook account. This is also a good way to start using social media. It enables a Post to get news and events out to the public, an opportunity to cross Post with other entities such as a Posts local Chamber of Commerce, create events, and promote events on local Buy, Sale, and Trade pages which usually have a lot of Members. You can also Post on the Kansas American Legion Family group to let Legionnaires across the state know what events you have as well. I will also give a warning, do not get locked into just using Facebook or one social media platform. Facebook is now for "old people." There are way too many platforms to go into here. Managing these platforms can also be time consuming. This would also be a great job for a younger Member or potential Member to tackle and could be a recruiting tool when speaking to younger potential Members. If you are not sure of how to start and you have no Members familiar with social media, youth is your friend here. Odds are that your children or grandchildren would be able to fix you up. As always, please let me know if I can help you here as well. The only constant in life and in the American Legion is change and like using email, social media is here to stay.

would like to thank you for electing me as your 8th District Commander, and I will work to show that I deserve that honor. During the next few months, I will be making my way out to your Posts to introduce myself to those that I haven't met yet. This quarter, I would like to concentrate on getting our membership numbers up. The Department has set a goal of 103%, a goal that I sincerely believe that we can make if we all work for it. I look forward to working with each Post in our District to make this a reality. I look forward to seeing all of you in the coming months.

One challenge that I would like to give each Post in our District is this: have at least one contestant for the District Oratorical contest. The last two years, District 8 has had no contestants. I know that there is at least 1 teenager in each Post's city that could do this. We need to show them the value of this experience.

I look forward to meeting you all in the coming months. Take care of yourselves and each other, and God Bless!



CHRIS SELF
(620) 253-2651

**EIGHTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**



SEAN HANKIN
(785) 443-0956

**NINTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

No article submitted.

KANSAS DISTRICTS



Click map to enlarge.



**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**

Jim Gallentine
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jim.gallentine@gmail.com



Greetings Kansas American Legion Family!

Donald "JR" Hall was elected as National Commander for the S.A.L. at the Annual National Convention held in Charlotte, NC. Commander Hall's slogan for his term is: "Representing more than me." This slogan is something that we should all take to heart as we work for the good of the American Legion Family!

Commander Hall announced his Commander's challenge for the year: the national Four Pillar Squadron achievement. It is sim-

ple to do - \$1 a member for OCW; \$1 a member for CWF; \$1 a member for your Department's Boys State; and hold a blood drive. This is something Kansas can easily do, and directly supports what we are all about!

Kansas S.A.L. member Terry Harris was elected S.A.L. Midwest National Vice-Commander - a historic event that the Kansas American Legion Family can be very proud of!

With the strong leadership of National S.A.L. Commander Donald "JR" Hall and S.A.L. Midwest National Vice-Commander Terry Harris, the S.A.L. will have a great year!

The Kansas S.A.L. membership for the 2023-2024 year is on track - September 13th Goal 10% has been exceeded, and now pushing forward to the October 18th goal of 25%.

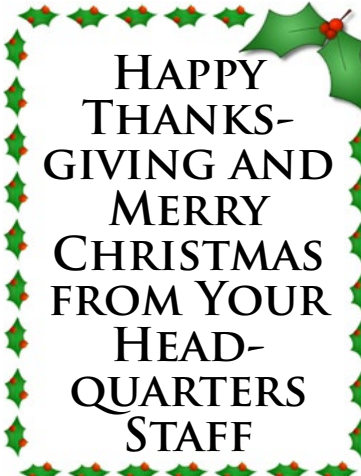
For God and Country,
Jim Gallentine
Kansas Detachment
Commander



PAT CAFFREY
(785) 396-4531

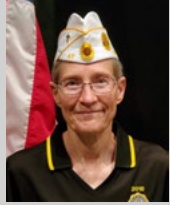
**TENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Greetings from the 10th District. District 10 hosted the American Legion booth at the Fair on Sept. 9. We signed up several new Members and renewed several others. I thought traffic was a little lighter than last year on the same day. Our Homecoming is scheduled for November 18th at Wetmore Post 282. The flyer for home coming will be coming out soon. Thank you.



**HAPPY
THANKS-
GIVING AND
MERRY
CHRISTMAS
FROM YOUR
HEAD-
QUARTERS
STAFF**

I hope that all is well. I



CHAPLAIN

Rev. Debra Muylaert

departmentchaplain@kansaslegion.org

Greetings Legion Family!

Hope you had a great summer and are doing well! God has truly been good to us. Let us not forget to thank Him for all our blessings!

In this article, I want to share an experience with you that reminded me of a story I read many years ago. I was out for my afternoon walk one day when I looked up and saw a dove perched on a streetlamp. The bird watched me as I walked by. Maybe it was the way the bird was perched, but this bird reminded me of an incident that occurred after the Yellowstone Fires of 1988. It was the summer Yellowstone National Park went up in smoke, burning over 30 percent of the Park's total acreage and coming uncomfortably close to the historic Old Faithful Inn. More than 25,000 firefighters battled the blaze, with as many as 9,500 fighting at one time. It was truly an inferno for the record books!

After the fires were out, park rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage. One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched like a statue on the ground at the base of a tree. It was an eerie sight to say the least. He took a stick and knocked the bird over. When he struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings. The loving and devoted mother, keenly aware that her babies were in danger, had carried her offspring to the base

of a tree and had gathered them under her wings. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies. When the blaze arrived and the heat singed her small body, the mother had remained steadfast, refusing to move. Because she had been willing to die, those under the cover of her wings lived.

What a beautiful picture of what Veterans do for America! Just as the bird tucked her chicks under her wings to save them from the forest fires raging around her, Veterans tuck America under their protective service, with no thought to their own safety, to save America and her allies from the raging inferno of terrorism and other world evils. Most importantly, this is a beautiful picture of what God does for all of us. He is a refuge and strong tower for us to run to as He tucks us under His wings. As stated in Psalm 91:4, "He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge." When life gets tough and we need a protective shelter, God is there bidding us to take shelter under His wings.

As we approach Veterans' Day, let us not forget that God enables Veterans to be the wings under which America and her allies may seek refuge and protection. Let us also not forget to Be the One for a struggling Veteran. We can be the wings under which they can seek safety, protection, and healing. Happy Fall and Happy Veterans' Day!

ADJUTANT'S BRIEFS

By Department Adjutant Jimmie L. Foster

Many of the District and Department Officers have already alluded to their travels to various Events around the Department and State of Kansas in their Articles.

Many Members of The American Legion Family attended the 104th National Convention held in Charlotte, North Carolina from 25 to 31 August 2023. Many of the Elected Kansas Delegates were very busy attending various Commission or Committee Meetings to partake in items that were to be voted on in those Meetings and then reported from that Commission or Commission to the Delegates on the floor of the National Convention.

Also, the Leading Candidate for National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer from Wisconsin and the Second Leading Candidate James Lacoursiere from Connecticut each sent Representatives to the Kansas Caucus. Both, Dan and Jim's Representatives, spoke to the Kansas Delegates and passed out brochures, pins, and pens to those in attendance and encouraged Our Members to support their Candidates for National Commander of The American Legion.

The Convention is not always business oriented, there is some free time to enjoy the host City and their venues. The Department of Kansas had a superb fried chicken dinner at Monsignor John F. McManus American Legion Post # 262 prepared by Popeye's due to a mix up with the Catering Company. It was a relaxing evening, complete with Members singing Karaoke, listening to the DJ, telling jokes, and with those visiting, making new friendships, and keeping some old ones going.

For those that stayed around until Thursday afternoon witnessed the National Commander take the Oath of Office on the Stage. Daniel J. Seehafer from Wisconsin swore into his position as National Commander of The American

Legion.

Dan and his Aide, Mike Rohan, have already toured the Eastern Side of the State of Kansas from 18 to 20 September 2023. National Commander Dan visited nine Posts while here in Kansas. A great turnout showed up at each location. There was food galore at each stop and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. I know that National Commander Seehafer and his Aide commented that they would be back if given the opportunity to return!

Next year's 105th National Convention will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana from 23 to 29 August 2024. I know the City of New Orleans and the Department of Louisiana promise to roll out the red carpet for this event. PLEASE start planning now to attend.

Our Very Own Regional National Vice Commander is Raymond L. Vail from the Department of Kansas. Ray will be visiting the Department from Sunday afternoon, 15 October and head home back to Arma on Thursday morning, 19 October 2023. We will again get the information to the District Commanders to deliver to each Post within their District. Ray will be visiting the Western Side of the State of Kansas, basically I-135 and West.

There will be Breakfast, Coffee Stops, Lunch and Dinner Stops. If you are interested and you have NOT already called in or e-mailed that your Post would like to host an Event, PLEASE do so NOW!

The newly elected National President of the American Legion Auxiliary is Lisa Williamson from the Department of Alaska and the newly elected Sons of The American Legion Commander is Donald L. "JR" Hall, Jr. from the Detachment of Maryland.

The 2023 Big Red One Turkey Run is back LIVE this year and scheduled for Saturday, 18 November 2023. Operation

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AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Cheryl Eastep

(620) 687-3197

deptpresident@kslegionaux.org



OCTOBER already!!! Leaves are turning, nights are cool, bonfires and sweatshirts on the ready!! The season for pumpkins, apples, and cider. After the extremely hot summer we had I am sure that everyone is ready for it!

Congratulations to our Kansas Team this year. Trish Ward as our National Vice President, Ray Vail as National Vice Commander and to our upcoming candidate for National Commander Dan Wiley! Kansas is rocking!!!

I hope that everyone got a chance to meet the National Commander Daniel Seehafer on his visit to Kansas. I know that I enjoyed visiting with him. He has a great mission!

Now we are getting ready for the District Homecomings. Congratulations to all the District Commanders and Presidents. Enjoy your day!

I am looking forward to escorting our National Presi-

dent Lisa Williamson during her visit October 12, 13, 14th. She will be the guest of honor at the Eisenhower Pilgrimage as well as the guest speaker for Vice Commanders and Vice President Homecoming. I hope many of you plan to attend. We will have the schedule for the stops for President Lisa in this month's edition of the Sunflower as well as the flyers for the District Homecomings. Please get your RSVP in as soon as possible!

Lets work very hard on getting our memberships in as early as possible this year! And sign up new Members! We want to be number One this year and cheer on incoming National President Trish Ward at National!!

We have a busy year ahead of us. I appreciate your support and remember....

TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK TO BE THE ONE! And we are ALL a TEAM!!

STATE FAIR FLAG SET GIVEAWAY

This year marks 37 years of The American Legion's participation at the State Fair in Hutchinson. By registering at Legion booth, fair

participants had a chance to win one of ten US Flag sets.

Congratulations to the following winners. Fly Old Glory with pride!

- Gregory Henne..... Hutchinson
- Honnie HeickKingsville, MO
- Stan Wright Lyons
- Charlene Jesser..... El Dorado
- Steve Bowman Hutchinson
- Debbie Zook..... Hutchinson
- Austin Woods..... Lincoln
- Alayzia Traffas..... El Dorado
- Brian Berner..... Salina
- Deanna Byers Pratt

ADJUTANT'S BRIEFS

(Continued from Page 6)


North Pole is also LIVE and scheduled to be held on 9 December 2023. In the event they get cancelled AGAIN for some weird reason, we will Post it on Facebook and the Kansas American Legion Website. These two events ensure that the Dependents of Our Active-Duty Military has a complete Turkey Dinner for Thanksgiving, and then have a toy or two under their Christmas tree for a memorable Christmas.

The Department Christmas Party is scheduled to be held at Emporia Post # 5 on 16 December 2023. More details to follow!

It is not too early to start planning to attend the 2024 Mid-Winter Forum, which will be held at Hutchison Post # 68 from 2 to 4 February 2024.

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).

DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN



Dan Stacy

Greetings fellow Legionnaires. We all are part of the history of The American Legion and continue making history every day. Ray Vail was elected National Vice Commander at the National Convention in Charlotte, NC on August 31, 2023. Dan Wiley is in the line for National Commander in 2025, if God willing, he will be Our National Commander when the Convention meets in Tampa, Florida in 2025. We will soon be getting a new National Alternate Executive Committeeman. Our current National Commander has completed his Kansas tour. He started at Haysville Derby Post 408 on Monday, September 18. There was a great turnout.

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

Dan Bartlett

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

2200 SW Gage
Topeka, KS 66622

Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures

Read about [presumptive conditions](#).

“Airborne hazard” refers to any sort of contaminant or potentially toxic substance that we are exposed to through the air we breathe. While on active duty, military service members may have been exposed to a variety of airborne hazards including:

- The smoke and fumes from open burn pits
- Sand, dust, and particulate matter
- General air pollution common in certain countries
- Fuel, aircraft exhaust, and other mechanical fumes
- Smoke from oil well fires

VA understands that many Veterans are especially concerned about exposure to the smoke and fumes generated by open burn pits.

In Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas of the Southwest Asia theater of military operations, open-air combustion of trash and other waste in burn pits was a common practice. The Department of Defense has now closed out most burn pits and is planning to close the remainder.

Depending on a variety of factors, you may experience health effects related to this exposure. Factors that may indicate you have a greater or lesser risk of short or long-term health effects

(Continued on Page 9)

+ TAPS +

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Allen, William (Vietnam)..... | Lyndon | Kenneth, Craig (Korea)..... | Hanover |
| Arnold, George (Korea)..... | Shawnee | Kenworthy, Robert (Vietnam)..... | Frankfort |
| Bargmann, Harold..... | Hanover | Kibbe, Jimmy..... | Concordia |
| Barrington, Lawrence, Jr. (Vietnam)..... | Blue Rapids | Knop, Gary (Vietnam)..... | Ellinwood |
| Belardo, Lisa (Vietnam)..... | Junction City | Koerner, Ron (Vietnam)..... | Shawnee |
| Bichet, Frederick (Korea)..... | Hutchinson | Kuchera, Paul (Korea)..... | Lincoln |
| Bishop, Brett (Vietnam)..... | Junction City | Kulich, Ernest (WWII)..... | Sylvan Grove |
| Bowen, Arnie (Vietnam)..... | Blue Rapids | Lamb, Roger (Vietnam)..... | Esbon |
| Bowman, Charles (Vietnam)..... | Baxter Springs | Lappan, James (WWII)..... | El Dorado |
| Bridges, David (Vietnam)..... | Washington | Larson, Merlyn (Vietnam)..... | Marquette |
| Bruggeman, Robert (Vietnam)..... | Sabetha | Leamons, Phillip (Vietnam)..... | Junction City |
| Bruntz, Ruben (WWII)..... | Bazine | Lesline, Larry (Vietnam)..... | Saint George |
| Byck, Stephanie (Persian Gulf)..... | Derby-Haysville | Leuszler, Tom (Vietnam)..... | Lyndon |
| Coates, Dalmas (Vietnam)..... | Wamego | Lienberger, Neil (WWII)..... | Concordia |
| Cowger, Marvin (Vietnam)..... | Corning | Link, Vincent (WWII)..... | Concordia |
| Craig, Darrell (Vietnam)..... | Manhattan | Livingston, Herbert (Vietnam)..... | Garden City |
| Crawford, Charles (Vietnam)..... | Kingman | Maddux, Phil (Vietnam)..... | Garden City |
| Cunningham, Ronald (Vietnam)..... | Ellinwood | Martin, Herschel (WWII)..... | Harper |
| Cussimano, Bob (Vietnam)..... | Frontenac | McCall, Albert (Korea)..... | Concordia |
| Davenport, Richard (Persian Gulf)..... | Leavenworth | McDowell, Irvin (Korea)..... | El Dorado |
| David, Ralph (Korea)..... | Pittsburg | McGregor, Lowell (WWII)..... | Shawnee |
| Davis, Raymond (Vietnam)..... | Medicine Lodge | Milburn, Paul (Vietnam)..... | Pittsburg |
| Dickey, Larry (Vietnam)..... | Colby | Miller, James, (Grenada/Lebanon)..... | Junction City |
| Duncan, Leroy (Korea)..... | Wamego | Monet, Drake (Korea)..... | Garfield |
| Duncan, Ray (Vietnam)..... | Colby | Mora, David (Vietnam)..... | Norton |
| Ebert, Delbert (Korea)..... | Saint George | Moulton, Robert (Vietnam)..... | Concordia |
| Escott, Robert (WWII)..... | Junction City | Musil, Dennis (Vietnam)..... | Goodland |
| Estes, Lloyd (Korea)..... | Saint John | Myers, Martin (Vietnam)..... | Hoisington |
| Fechter, Charles (WWII)..... | Wamego | Nevitt, Robert (Vietnam)..... | Gridley |
| Feek, Freddie (Vietnam)..... | Sabetha | Noble, Dwight (Vietnam)..... | Garfield |
| Fetcher, Charles (WWII)..... | Wamego | Noeller, James (Vietnam)..... | Augusta |
| Fleury, Carrol (Korea)..... | Arma | Otter, Conrad (Korea)..... | McPherson |
| Foote, Richard (Korea)..... | Andover | Patterson, Michael (Vietnam)..... | Leavenworth |
| Foster, Thomas (Vietnam)..... | Andover | Pauly, James (Vietnam)..... | Shawnee |
| Fox, Boyd, Jr. (WWII)..... | Plains | Pauly, Philip (Vietnam)..... | Junction City |
| Fracker, David (Vietnam)..... | Winchester | Phelps, Maurice (Vietnam)..... | Colby |
| Frazier, Ernest (Korea)..... | Copeland | Phoenix, John (Vietnam)..... | Sublette |
| Fyfe, Oliver (Gulf War)..... | Colby | Piatt, Clayton (Vietnam)..... | Madison |
| Geihlsler, Dean, Sr. | Colby | Purdy, David (Vietnam)..... | Pittsburg |
| George, David (Vietnam)..... | Natoma | Renfro, Steven (Vietnam)..... | El Dorado |
| Gibbs, Lois (Vietnam)..... | Topeka #1 | Rethman, John, Jr. (Korea)..... | Seneca |
| Groothuis, Ralph (Vietnam)..... | Osborne | Riddle, Ellis (Vietnam)..... | El Dorado |
| Hamm, Terrence (Vietnam)..... | Plains | Riggs, Don (Korea)..... | Hope |
| Hendrix, Dana (Persian Gulf)..... | Marquette | Robinson, Dean (Vietnam)..... | Mayetta |
| Hernandez, Russell (Korea)..... | Newton | Roe, Bruce (Vietnam)..... | Goodland |
| Hickman, Gordon (Korea)..... | El Dorado | Rutledge, Ronald (Vietnam)..... | Iola |
| Howard, Michael (Vietnam)..... | Hutchinson | Samuelson, John (WWII)..... | Newton |
| Howell, Lyle (Korea)..... | Frankfort | Schomacker, Arlen (Korea)..... | Cheney |
| Hundley, Leonard (Vietnam)..... | Atchison | Seitz, Albert (Vietnam)..... | Ottawa |
| Hyde, Rexford (WWII)..... | Osborne | Shackelford, William (Korea)..... | Baxter Springs |
| Ireland, Johnny (Vietnam)..... | Natoma | Sis, Vincent (Korea)..... | McDonald |
| Jarboe, Donald (Vietnam)..... | Derby-Haysville | Sjogren, Jon (Korea)..... | Marquette |
| Johns, James (Vietnam)..... | Arma | Smalley, Robert (WWII)..... | Newton |
| Kahle, Ivor (Korea)..... | Saint George | | |

(Continued on Page 9)

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

(Continued from Page 7)

include:

- Types of waste burned
- Proximity, amount of time, and frequency of exposure
- Wind direction and other weather-related factors
- Presence of other airborne or environmental hazards in the area

Researchers, including experts at VA, are actively studying airborne hazards like burn pits and other military environmental exposures. Ongoing research will help us better understand potential long-term health effects and provide you with better care and services.

Many health conditions related to these hazards are temporary and should disappear after the exposure ends. Other longer-term health issues may be caused by a combination of hazardous exposures, injuries, or illnesses you may have experienced during your military service including blast or noise injuries.

Presumptive Conditions for Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures

The following are presumptive conditions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Brain cancer | • Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung |
| • Gastrointestinal cancer of any type | • Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung |
| • Glioblastoma | • Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung |
| • Head cancer of any type | • Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type |
| • Kidney cancer | • Asthma that was diagnosed after service |
| • Lymphatic cancer of any type | • Chronic bronchitis |
| • Lymphoma of any type | • Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) |
| • Melanoma | • Chronic rhinitis |
| • Neck cancer | • Chronic sinusitis |
| • Pancreatic cancer | • Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis |
| • Reproductive cancer of any type | • Emphysema |
| • Squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx | • Granulomatous disease |
| • Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea | • Interstitial lung disease (ILD) |
| • Adenocarcinoma of the trachea | • Pleuritis |
| • Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea | • Pulmonary fibrosis |
| • Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung | • Sarcoidosis |
| • Large cell carcinoma of the lung | |

Article continued online at publichealth.va.gov

KANSAS SUNFLOWER LEGIONNAIRE

Jimmie L. Foster, Editor

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THE AMERICAN LEGION

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 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

+ TAPS +

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Smith, Patrick (Vietnam) | Esbon |
| Smith, Richard (Panama) | Pittsburg |
| Soldan, Robert, Jr. (WWII) | Derby-Haysville |
| Southern, Floyd (Korea) | Pittsburg |
| Spiker, David (Vietnam) | Wamego |
| Stewart, John (WWII) | Grainfield |
| Stroede, Don | Concordia |
| Sudbek, George (Vietnam) | Ellinwood |
| Thoman, Ted (WWII) | Concordia |
| Thomas, Robert (Vietnam) | Concordia |
| Travelute, Roy (Korea) | Abilene |
| Unruh, Jack (WWII) | Newton |
| Utley, Gerald | Iola |
| Valcoure, Paul (Vietnam) | Concordia |
| Vanmeerhaeghe, Andre (Vietnam) | Shawnee |
| Waelchi, John (Vietnam) | McCracken |
| Watt, Richard (WWII) | Harper |
| Watts, Ron (Vietnam) | Caney |
| Wells, Fred, Jr. (Vietnam) | Meade |
| Wentz, Michael (Vietnam) | Concordia |
| Wilson, William (WWII) | Pittsburg |
| Witt, Duane (Korea) | Oberlin |
| Wormington, Roger (Vietnam) | Baxter Springs |
| Wright, Charles (Vietnam) | Shawnee |
| Zimmerman, James (Vietnam) | Concordia |

DEPARTMENT CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 16, 2023
 Emporia Post 5
 2921 W. 12th Ave., Emporia

Social Hour - 11:00 AM

Lunch - Noon

Name _____

Number in party @ \$17.00 each _____

Children 12 and under \$5.00 each _____

Guest Names _____

Tickets may also be purchased directly from Emporia Post 5

Amount Enclosed _____ made payable to:

Mail to:
Randy Frank
211 Floral Dr.
Hillsboro, KS 67063-1324