

Sunflower Legionnaire

The American Legion -



Today's Voice for Today's Veterans & Military

VOL LXXIX NO. 2 KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION October, November, December 2025

NATIONAL COMMANDER

Dan K. Wiley was elected national commander of The American Legion on August 28, 2025, in Tampa, during the 106th National Convention.

An Air Force veteran, Wiley is a retired state district court judge who raises cattle in Leavenworth, Kan. Following his Air Force service, Wiley obtained a bachelor's degree in business at the College of Great Falls in Montana. He returned to his hometown of Lawrence, Kan., and earned a law degree at the University of Kansas.

Wiley has held many leadership positions at The American Legion post, department (state) and national levels. He is a paid-up-for-life member of Byron H. Mehl American Legion Post 23 in Leavenworth and is a past department commander of Kansas. He also represented the state as a member of The American Legion's National Executive Committee.

Appointed by the Kansas governor as a district court judge in 2008, Wiley helped establish and preside over the Leavenworth County Veterans Treatment Court. He has been active in his community and is a past president of the Leavenworth / Lansing Chamber of Commerce, a past chairman of the Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade Committee and a former member of the Unified School District 453 School Board.

As national commander, Wiley is a strong advocate for The American Legion's **Be the One** mission to prevent veteran suicide. He emphasizes inclusivity in the American Legion Family through the theme, Better Together!

Wiley and his wife, Sonia, have two children, Austin and Christy, and one grandson, Noah.



Dan K. Wiley, National Commander of The American Legion

TURKEY RUN / OPERATION: NORTH POLE

The Big Red '1' Turkey Run will be held Saturday November 22, 2025 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 6, 2025. 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.

STATE FAIR FLAG SET GIVEAWAY

This year marks 39 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!

- Kevin Alton.....Smolan
- Michael Ebenkamp ... Conway Springs
- James Gable Hutchinson
- Amanda Martin Hutchinson
- Jimmy Martinez Hutchinson
- Deborah Parks.....Macksville
- Allison Reed..... Hutchinson
- Christine Sauber.....Salina
- Kris Sims..... Wichita
- Hunter Sullivan Lyons

COMMANDER

George Honn

(913) 731-5172

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VICE COMMANDER

George Pogge

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Hello Kansas Legionnaires.

Hope everyone is doing well. A lot is happening in Kansas right now. It was an honor to be able to travel with the National Commander Dan Wiley. Thanks to all the Posts that hosted Dan the hospitality was great. Everyone traveling with Dan enjoyed themselves a lot.

On September 28 in Lindsay we hosted a State membership Legion Family workshop the turnout was great hope everyone learned a lot and takes it back to teach others Legionnaires.

We are looking good on membership as of now, but there is a lot of work still to do.

We need to remember to fill

out our CPR as we go along so it will be easier in the end when they are due.

If you haven't done it yet we need to go to Legion.org next and look at what the Legion has going through Congress at this time and get emails sent to your Representatives so they know to take action.

If you haven't signed up for my legion yet please do so. There is a lot of training on there that can be done that could help with what ever you have questions about.

Again, if anyone has any events that they want me to attend send in your request. If I don't have anything on my schedule I will do my best to attend. Thank you for all your support and hope to see you all soon. God bless!

We have had a great and profitable summer here in the American Legion Department of Kansas. Five members of the Kansas ALR participated in the National Legacy run and two of the five were Road Captains on the run. That is a testament to the leadership Kansas continues to produce. The National Convention in Tampa was well attended by members of the Kansas American Legion Family, and we truly experienced a tremendous culmination as Dan K. Wiley was elected to the high office of National Commander of the American Legion by acclamation. I personally still believe the true highlight though was the excellent and well-presented nomination speech given by Mr. Jeremy Ehart. I have witnessed no more prepared and executed a speech than he gave. Truly memorable. The entire event was something to remember.

The Fall meetings in Indianapolis IN, at which Kansas again was well represented went great. I was honored to be promoted to the Interim Committee Chairman of the Committee on Youth Education. The meeting went well; we met all of our goals and requirements, and I was again honored to present the report to the Americanism Commission at its meeting Monday Morning. Hopefully this will continue. The 45th Annual Eisenhower Pilgrimage, preceded by the annual reception and dinner held at Chapman Ks Post #240 went very well. Chapman Post #240 did a great job hosting the Friday evening event. PDC and PNVC Paul Sanford did his usual excellent job manag-

ing the pilgrimage ceremony, which was changed in venue from the Eisenhower campus to the United Methodist Church in Abilene. During the event he spoke about some of Eisenhower's notable history and accomplishments which was an excellent way to tie the ceremony together. The Department Vice Commander, S.A.L. Vice Commander, and Auxiliary Vice President Homecoming at the Greyhound Museum immediately followed the Pilgrimage at the Greyhound Museum in Abilene. Cindy was well represented by Anndi Bowens, and Michael and I were truly honored by the number of Legion Family members that attended this American Legion Family event. Abilene Post #1969 did an excellent job setting everything up for the event. We were also honored to have in attendance the Vice Commander from Nebraska, the Auxiliary President from the Department of Nebraska, and the Department Adjutant from the Department of Illinois.

The 19th through the 23rd of October western Kansas will be hosting National Vice Commander (NVC) Jerry Landkamer of Nebraska. We need to give the NVC a very warm Kansas Legion Family welcome. Check the Kansas Legion Home page for his schedule and plan to attend at least one of the events and meet our Midwest Region NVC.

There are many other service opportunities throughout the fall to attend, including a number of District Homecoming events, the Big Red 1 Turkey Run, Operation North
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CHAPLAIN

Rev. Debra Muylaert

departmentchaplain@kansaslegion.org



Greetings Legion Family! Hope you're doing well and enjoying God's abundant blessings! Remember that behind every dark cloud there's a silver lining. Scripture tells us that God works all things together for good to those who love Him, to those called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). So, keep your chin up and look to the Lord! And remember to "Be the One" for a veteran in need, for we are indeed "Better Together."

For this article, I want to announce two chaplain training sessions I'll be doing in November. We've had a lot of chaplain turnover, so it's time to do training again. Here are

the dates and times for the training:

November 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. CST.

November 12, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. CST.

These training sessions will be one hour long and on Zoom, so if you want to attend, please email or text your name and email address to me and I will send you the link for the training. Both sessions are the same, so select the date and time that works best for your schedule. My email address is debramuylaert@yahoo.com. My phone number is (620) 430-6892. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. May God's favor rest on you!

**AREA VICE COMMANDER
EAST**

Ed Boring

(620) 332-9942

departmentavicecommander@kansaslegion.org



**AREA VICE COMMANDER
WEST**

Jennifer Carder

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Greeting Area East!
First and foremost, I would like to thank the Area-East membership for entrusting me as your Area-East Vice Commander. I hope everyone has had a great summer. With the new Legion year, it means we are starting again with the new membership goals. I'm sure the Districts and Posts are working hard to meet the goals. Membership is the lifeblood of our great organization. It has been a busy year already. I was able to attend the annual membership workshop in Indianapolis, the National Convention at Tampa, Florida where it was an honor to observe the election of the first National Command-

er from Kansas in 50 years, our very own Dan Wiley. Dan has a busy schedule touring the East and I will attend as many stops as possible. Another year of the Legion having a booth at the State Fair which I was able to attend. I will be at the Eisenhower Pilgrimage and Vice Commanders Homecoming and hope to see a lot of you there. At the end of the day remember to update your Consolidated Post Reports to help capture all Veteran assistance your Post does. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to call anytime. Thank you for all you do for the Legion. For God and Country.

Hello from Area West! As we begin a new membership year, it's essential to emphasize the importance of actively engaging with your membership.

Membership in The American Legion embodies a legacy of dedication, service, and purpose. However, true strength is not just found in names on a membership list; it springs from active and engaged members. This concept is what we refer to as a working membership. A working Member goes beyond merely paying their dues; they actively participate, contribute, and take responsibility for the success of their local Post and the Legion's overall mission. Active membership is vital for the success and impact of our programs. The American Legion has a proud history of supporting youth through initiatives like Boys State and the Oratorical Contest, honoring fallen heroes, advocating for veterans' healthcare, and serving communities in need. These efforts rely on dedicated members

willing to step up and say, "I'll help." When Legionnaires actively engage, through food drives, fundraisers, and community assistance, they help establish trust and visibility in the community. Residents see the American Legion as more than a veterans' club; they recognize it as a crucial part of the community that embodies honor and service.

Moreover, engaged Members inspire others to get involved, making it easier to recruit the next generation of Legionnaires. Working side by side also strengthens camaraderie and fosters lasting friendships. The future of The American Legion relies on our commitment. Our ongoing contributions will shape our legacy, so every bit of time and effort counts. If you're looking to get involved, attend a meeting, volunteer, or share your ideas. We need action, not just membership cards. Together, through active involvement, we can ensure that our Posts thrive, support our communities, and preserve our legacy.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Pat Culver

childrenandyouth1@kansaslegion.org



Today's American Legion is as focused on the welfare of our country's children and the issues facing young people as it has ever been. The structure of this organization is forever supported by the balance that our founding architects envisioned. Therefore, this pillar – Children and Youth – and its programs remain committed to serving the youth.

Members of The American Legion, and The American Legion Americanism Commission's Committee on Children and Youth have been entrusted with the awesome responsibility of upholding this pillar - the one that braces our nation's veterans by caring for their children, and our nation's children.

The purpose of the committee is to formulate, recom-

mend and implement plans, programs and activities designed to:

- Assure care and protection for the children of veterans.
- Improve conditions for all children and youth, with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home.
- Prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible.
- Maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs.

The American Legion recognizes that families of active-duty and deployed military personnel face unique difficulties and hardships. With the help of the Family
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**DEPARTMENT
HISTORIAN**

Dan Stacy



Fellow Legionnaires. I have done very little since the Convention in Tampa. My local Post and the funeral honor guard has kept me busy. My traveling has been very limited as everyone knows life sometimes gets in the way of our plans. Fall is upon us and we, at Post #47 will be hosting the Convention for the 8th District.. For the third time Kansas has had a National Commander. Dan

K. Wiley was elected to the high office of The American Legion at the National Convention in Tampa, Florida on August 28, 2025. It has been 50 years since our last Kansas served in that high office. It was a great honor to stand on the stage with the Kansas Delegation when he was elected to the high office of National Commander. May God Bless The United States and The American Legion.



**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**

Matthew Krupco

mwksal@outlook.com



HELLO, KANSAS, AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY!!!!

As Summer has come to an end and Fall is here, I want to say a few Thank Yous from the Summer. Thank you to the Post 370 Legion Family and everyone that attended Homecoming, we had a delicious meal and a great time. Thank you to everyone that traveled to Tampa to represent Kansas at National Convention, I know attending is a huge expense and commitment and I want you to know that you are appreciated. Last, thank you to all those that helped with the State Fair booth, unfortunately I could not help this year due to work commitments.

The Four Pillars are the heart and soul, the past, the present, and hopefully the future of the American Legion; they are a passion for every active member that I know. Do you advocate for "Be The One?" If you do, you are supporting VA&R. Do you contact your local, state, and National Legislators about the needs of today's military? If so, then you are doing the good work of National Security. Do you go to your local schools and teach Flag etiquette? That is in support of Americanism. Is your Post hosting a school supply drive? You are working under the Children and Youth pillar. These are some great examples of the Four pillars, but just the tip of the iceberg. I'm going to focus on two of the four pillars in this article, Children and Youth and Americanism.

Did you know your Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Kansas gives 50 cents per member to the Child Wellbeing Foundation (CWF) formally Child Welfare Foun-

dation per their constitution and bylaws? With nearly 6000 members that makes a great contribution. Did you know that Nationally, The Sons of the American Legion has been the largest contributor to CWF with over 10 million dollars since 1988? Many Legionnaires are also eligible to belong to the Sons, if you are eligible and haven't joined and became a Dual Member, please consider doing so, I would love to see this contribution grow. CWF has granted over \$21 million to youth-serving nonprofits across the nation since 1954, all thanks to the generosity of the Legion Family and our supporters.

Every year, the Detachment Commander chooses a Commander's project to raise funds for and support. This year I decided to keep it in State and assist the Kansas Cadet Law Program. Cadet Law is an amazing program co-sponsored by the Kansas Highway Patrol for high school juniors and seniors. I am challenging each Squadron, each District and the Detachment to contribute \$1 per member, which totals \$3 per member. I know this is a lofty goal, I'm hoping that this challenge will not just raise money for Cadet Law but incite Members to get interested at a higher level than Squadron. If you're interested in contributing to this program, please send your checks to the Detachment of Kansas write "Commander's Project" in the memo line, and mail to the Detachment Finance Officer Mike Saindon, 312 E. Tall Tree Rd, Derby, KS 67037.

In closing, thank you for your continued service to this great nation through the American Legion. Without the Legion the Sons would

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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 106th National Convention held in Tampa, Florida from 22 to 28 August 2025. 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, Our Own Leading Candidate for National Commander Dan Wiley from Leavenworth, Kansas and Trail Candidate Jay Bowen from the Department of Colorado, each sent Representatives to the Kansas Caucus. Both, Dan and Jay'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 Cuban Style BBQ dinner at Seminole American Legion Post # 111 prepared by Liberty Smokehouse Catering Company. It was a relaxing evening, complete with Members 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. Our Own Dan K. Wiley from Leavenworth, Kansas swore into his position as National Commander of The American Legion.

Dan and his Aide, Doug

Hensley, have already toured the Eastern Side of the State of Kansas from 21 to 24 September 2025. National Commander Dan visited thirteen 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 Wiley and his Aide commented that they are proud of the Posts and the Legion Family Members here in Kansas!

Next year's 107th National Convention will be held in Louisville, Kentucky from 28 August to 3 September 2026. I know the City of Louisville and the Department of Kentucky promise to roll out the red carpet for this event. PLEASE start planning now to attend.

Our National Vice Commander is Jerry Landkamer from the Department of Nebraska. Jerry will be visiting the Department very soon. We are trying to fine tune the details. Jerry 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 Pam Ray from the Department of Illinois, and the newly elected Sons of The American Legion Commander is Bill Clancey from the Detachment of New York.

The 2025 Big Red One Turkey Run is scheduled for Saturday, 22 November 2025. Operation North Pole is scheduled to be held on 6 December 2025. These two events ensure that the Dependents of Our Active-Duty Military has a complete Turkey Dinner for Thanksgiving and then have a

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KANSAS DISTRICTS



Click map to enlarge.

survive and keep the Post history alive.

Please make notes as to when these reports are due. Your Consolidated Post Reports can be updated daily, weekly or monthly. 1st District Homecoming is 25 October 2026 at Holton Post 44. Continue Buddy checks and let's continue making the 25-26 year the best we can.



**FIRST DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

ED GUNNELS
(913) 680-8212



**SECOND DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

MYRA JOWERS
(417) 208-6246

Hello, 1st District. We are off to a good start with membership this year, the District is at 54 percent currently. 1st District has several Posts close to that 100 percent mark. Lets keep up the good work and keep encouraging your Members to renew. Without their membership the American Legion cannot support our veterans, their families and the other programs provided by the American Legion.

This year I would like to see 1st district have a student go to the Oratorical Contest this year. If you can attend your high schools parent teacher conferences, this would be the prime opportunity to inform parents and students about Boys and Girls State as well as Cadet Law. I realize that everyone says that the Counselors get this information. I encourage you to speak with the Drama, Speech, and Government teachers as well as the counselors. The deadline for Boys and Girls state is 1 May 2026. BE THE ONE, because veteran suicide must stop. I encourage everyone to sign up for the on-line training. You could save a Veteran's life.

The American Legion Family, a family that should always work together because without each other it will be hard to

Greetings Fellow Legionnaires, I am honored to have been elected to serve as Second District Commander. I sincerely apologize for missing the opportunity to communicate via the Summer edition of the Sunflower. In an effort to catch up, I'm introducing the District elected officers as follows: Commander - Myra Jowers, Fort Scott; Vice Commander - Kevin Schasteen, Paola; Adjutant - Marri Krupco, Blue Mound; Executive Committee - Richard Sobek, Shawnee; Aaron Winkleman, Baldwin City; Rene Castilleja, Iola.

My heartfelt thanks go out to all Delegates and Alternates who attended and worked the National Convention in Tampa. What a privilege it was participate in our own Dan Wiley's "big day," election and installation as National Commander of the American Legion and all of the celebrating that followed.

Another big "thank you" to those who worked the booth at the State Fair. Your commitment is proven by your taking the time and effort to travel to Hutchinson for this annual opportunity to recruit members and enhance the American Legion image throughout the state.

Thank you, one and all, who regularly make those Buddy Check calls, checking up on our Members. Of course, membership and retention is always on our minds and this positive action is a great way to help with that. Thank you for reaching out, at every opportunity, to recruit new members, and retain the existing members, we are the life blood of our organization. Keep up the Great Work!

Veteran Suicide continues to be a huge issue, touching the lives of friends and family left behind. The ongoing Legion mission, "Be the One," enables Legion Family Members to recognize signals and intercede in helping to prevent this tragic outcome. One life lost is one too many. Training is available through both our "Be the One" program and VA's S.A.V.E. program. By learning how to talk with a veteran in crisis lives can be saved. Let's expand our preparation and action, helping fellow veterans get the emergency care they need.

Having just attended our National Commander's tour dinner, the first of thirteen stops on his Eastern Kansas tour, I am invigorated by Commander Wiley's talent, enthusiasm and commitment to The American Legion goals, especially legislative efforts. Participating in his campaigning, through the years of his attaining this high office of National Commander was remarkable and rewarding for me personally. I treasure every opportunity to be active on the District, State or National level, not just locally, as a way to serve veterans as well as our community. I believe far too many opportunities to learn and grow are missed by limiting one's self by only participating in local Posts and community events. The American Legion is full of talented, interesting, knowledgeable ladies and gentlemen willing to share and care.

For God and Country,
Myra Jowers



**THIRD DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

MARK STWALLEY
(620) 704-4738

Good Day 3rd District Legionnaires.

With autumn here and holidays around the corner KAL has many events coming up. With National Commander Dan K. Wiley's tour finishing up, KAL District Homecoming's are going East and West. Eisenhower Pilgrimage will be October 11th and Vice Commander George Pogge's Homecoming.

KAL 3rd District Homecoming will be November 8th 4PM at Girard American Legion Post 26. On that note, I will leave this for you "Be The One" WWW.kansaslegion.org

R/S Mark Stwalley
KAL 3rd District Commander
Mark W. Stwalley



**FOURTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

DANNY ROUSH
(785) 640-6511

Greetings 4th District Members,

The changing season brings not only cooler days but a renewed sense of purpose, as we reflect on recent accomplishments and look ahead to opportunities for growth. Through dedication and teamwork, we continue to make a positive impact, strengthening our bonds and ensuring a bright future for

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FOURTH DISTRICT

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all Members.

The current membership year is well on its way. As of this writing, we are sitting in the number one position. Let's keep the ball rolling and don't let up. Renewals are our bread and butter but to succeed we need new members to ensure our future as an organization. Congratulations to fellow Kansan Dan Wiley being elected to high office of National Commander.

The Fourth District Homecoming will be October 25 in Lyndon. Our Post Home is located on the south end of town in the old Community building. This will be our first event in our new location.

America will mark 250 years of Independence on 4 July 2026. The Fourth District is in the process of establishing a committee to establish events to celebrate this monumental occasion. The first Meeting will be held in Lebo at the Post Home Oct 4th, our goal is to have at least one Member of each Post to be represented. If you'd like to be a part of this please let us know.

I need to recognize the Emporia Post 5 for hosting the Wall That Heals and the members of the committee that worked hard and volunteered countless hours in making this a successful event. I hope that you had the opportunity to visit the wall.

The holiday season is fast approaching. With that in mind, remember to reach out to your Members to ensure that they are doing well. Sometimes a phone call or meeting somewhere for a cup of coffee can make a big difference.

God bless each and everyone of you and have a great holiday season.



JOE HULSE
(785) 906-0655

**FIFTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Greetings Fellow Legionnaires!

What a great State Fair! We signed up more people this year than I have signed up in the past four years combined. Thank You to everyone who helped with the booth this year.

Fifth District FAMILY Homecoming will be in Mulvane on the 25th of October with the Social starting at noon and Lunch at one. For more information, our District Facebook (5th District Kansas American Legion) page or get ahold of me.

We now have two American Legion Cruisers Chapters in our District with two more sending in their applications. I would like to see two more this winter, so we can hit this spring with six. This program is working! Not only is it bringing more members in, but it is bringing in members that want to get involved.

Have you visited your schools to discuss Boys & Girls State, Cadet Law, Oratorical contests, and all the scholarships for our youth. Use this QR code to take you right there:

We are 25% of the way through the membership year with our membership at 55% of our new goal. Our Growth Goal this year is very manageable, 1% higher than we finished with in June.

I am always here if you have any ideas, questions, thoughts about the American Legion or if you just need to talk, please don't hesitate to call, text, facetime (my Dog would love



this) or email. (785) 906 0655 or firstkks@yahoo.com

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.
Joe Hulse



JIMMY STRACHAN
(785) 483-1186

**SIXTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

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 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.

The Six District fair booth day was September 11. Did have four member working the booth: They are 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 that 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.

Jimmy Strachan Commander



BILL SYKES
(918) 916-9530

**SEVENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Good-Day all District 7 Legionnaires:

Kansas' own Dan Wiley was elected as the National Commander at the 106th (or was it the 107th) National Convention in Tampa, Florida during August. Former 7th District Commander and Department Commander Jeremy Ehart stepped up to National Executive Committeeman. Later elected by our Department Executive Committee as the Alternate NEC to replace Jeremy was Former 7th District and Department Commander Angela Evans. Congratulations to Commander Wiley and NEC Ehart along with A-NEC Evans.

3 October at Hutch Post 68 VA Claims assistance and Vet Breakfast, the Breakfast is the first Friday of every month and so far, the Claims

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SEVENTH DISTRICT

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Clinic with Jennifer Clark from the Wichita VA is going great guns. We intend to keep her busy on first Fridays for the foreseeable future.

Here is the usual list of dates to remember: 11 October is the annual Eisenhower Pilgrimage and Department Vice-Commanders' Homecoming, this is the 50th Anniversary of Former President Eisenhower's passing, so this Pilgrimage will be even more Solemn. Immediately after will be the Homecoming for Department Vice Commander George Pogge, along with Auxiliary Vice-President Cindy Ward and S.A.L. Detachment Vice-Commander Michael Weber. 19-22 October will be National Vice-Commander Jerry Landkamer of Nebraska's tour of Western Kansas; please find somewhere he will be and go see him. 22 November is the annual Big Red One Turkey Run at Fort Riley. 6 December is Operation North Pole, also at Fort Riley; the first provides goods for Holiday Meals for serving military and their families, the second is for kids of Soldiers. 13 December is the Department Christmas Party at Hutch Post 68. 30 January to 1 February at Dodge City is the Department Mid-Winter Conference. 21 March is the Seventh District Convention in Great Bend. 28 March National Commander Dan Wiley's Homecoming in Olathe. 29 May to 31 May 2026 is the Department Convention at Topeka.

As always, membership is important. The Membership Year 2026 goals are out and are VERY, VERY do-able. As of this week of 20 September, there are only two Posts in the District with all goose-eggs on the Membership Report. I'll contact you

directly. Those of you whose Post has less than 15 members need to work on your post strength; 15 is critical mass for keeping your Post viable according to National and Department. If you need help with membership, or with working the Post 58 list, please get in touch with me at williammsykes@yahoo.com or 918-916-9530, or the Vice-Commander at loxysykes@yahoo.com or 620-474-4373. She is an expert at moving people out of Post 58.

If you want us to come and help with a membership event, or even just attend any event, please email us. If you have a Post event you would like us to pass on information for let us know.



HENK RIJFKOGEL
(620) 276-3611

**EIGHTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

In our country, there is a level of hate that has perpetuated our nation, and we have seen this hate that took the life of a man that had great influence over our nation and our young people. One thing that has kept our American Legion together, is our Preamble that gave us a sense of purpose and that Our influence comes from Almighty God to do worthwhile endeavors to continue the effort of promoting peace and good will and we devote ourselves to mutual helpfulness. Today we can live out our influence, and apply the Preamble to our lives every day to change those around us and the next generation of young people. You're charged today, live out the Preamble that's who

we are!

For God and country
Henk Rijfkogel
8th District Cmdr.



SEAN HANKIN
(785) 443-0956

**NINTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Greetings Ninth District! I hope everyone enjoyed their summer and is doing well in your communities!

Our trip to the National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis was very successful. It was a good opportunity to talk with people not only from across the State, but from across the Country, to exchange ideas about keeping The American Legion an important veteran service organization.

Our next big event will be Homecoming for District 9. This day will honor the District 9 Auxiliary President Dolores Gallentine, District 9 S.A.L. Commander Monte Lewis, and myself as District 9 American Legion Commander. Homecoming will be on October 25, 2025 at the Colby American Legion Post 363, 1850 W. 4th, in Colby. A social hour will start at 11:00 am and lunch will be served at noon. We are asking \$15.00 dollars to cover the cost of the meal. A flyer to announce this day will be out soon. Please contact me if you have any questions.

I am looking forward to the fall season and to see you at Homecoming. Thank you for all you do for The American Legion!

Sean Hankin, Commander
District 9



LARRY ROKEY
(785) 285-2492

**TENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

Greetings from District 10 Busy time in the District. Vice-Commander Linn Wichman and I have been visiting Posts and attending activities in the District.

Our Posts are turning in membership and as of September 20th, we have 629 members with no goose eggs.

I will be attending the membership workshop in Lindsborg September 28th and will also be in Holton on the 22nd to attend a welcome home to National Commander Dan Wiley.

This past week, District 10 manned the booth at the State Fair. Thanks to VP Linn, President Joann and all the other District folks that spent the day there. Weather was a little rough, but we made it through.

I am excited to announce that District 10 will be doing membership/fundraiser-finance workshops. Dates and places will be set soon.

With Eisenhower Pilgrimage coming up, I am making plans to attend and will be also attending the luncheon honoring the Vice Commanders and Vice-President.

My Homecoming is set for November 15th and will be held at the Axtel Post.

Social time is 5-6pm with the meal starting a 6pm. All are welcome to attend. If you would like to join us, call me at 785-285-2492.

Holidays are almost upon us. I hope all can join us for our District Christmas celebration. We should have the

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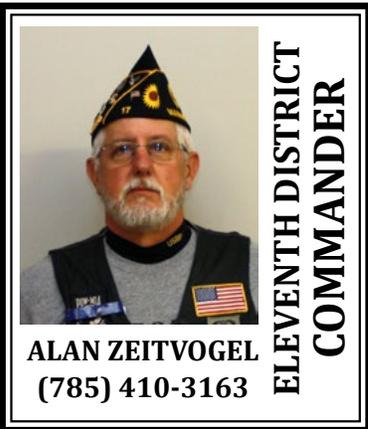
ELEVENTH DISTRICT

(Continued from Page 7)

date set soon.

As we start the harvest season, I hope all enjoyed their summer. I know I enjoyed attending all the activities throughout our District. If you would like me to attend any of your Post events or Meetings, please contact me. I would love to join you.

Larry Rokey
District 10 Commander



ALAN ZEITVOGEL
(785) 410-3163

**ELEVENTH DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

As we prepare for Veterans Day on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, I'm proud to lead 19 Posts from across the Flint Hills and in the surrounding communities with Fort Riley's legacy at our core. This message is for you, the dedicated Legion Family of the 11th District. Together, let's honor our veterans, reflect on our roles, and celebrate the unity of the American Legion Family.

Veterans Day began as Armistice Day, marking the end of World War I on November 11, 1918, at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Renamed in 1954, it honors all American veterans - living and deceased - who have served in war or peace. Unlike Memorial Day, which solemnly remembers those who gave their lives in service, Veterans Day celebrates the contributions of every veteran, from World War II heroes to

Fort Riley's "Big Red One" soldiers returning home today. Here in the Flint Hills, this day resonates deeply, surrounded by the military heritage of Fort Riley and the veterans who call our District home.

As veterans, we are pillars of our communities. In the 11th District, we mentor students in local schools, support active-duty families near Fort Riley, and advocate for better VA healthcare and mental health resources. From helping neighbors rebuild after storms to sharing stories of service at community events, we show that our commitment endures. Our presence fosters unity, teaching the next generation the values of duty and resilience that define the Flint Hills spirit.

The American Legion Family - Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion - brings our mission to life. Our Posts organize Veterans Day events, like wreath-laying ceremonies, parades, and appreciation dinners. The Auxiliary supports families with scholarships and care packages, while the Sons volunteer and raise funds for local charities. Together, we uphold the Legion's Four Pillars - Americanism, Veterans Affairs, National Security, and Children & Youth - through programs like Boys State and disaster relief efforts in our region.

This Veterans Day, let's unite to honor all who served. Join your Post for a local ceremony, volunteer at a VA facility, or invite a veteran to join our ranks. Let's show the Flint Hills - and all of Kansas - that the 11th District's Legion Family stands strong, celebrating our veterans' service and building a brighter future together.

In pride and service to Flint Hills Finest...

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

Timothy Marlar

(888) 878-6881 ext. 56814

timothy.marlar@va.gov

Understanding VA Guaranteed Life Insurance: The VALife Program:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a new and accessible life insurance program called Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife).

VALife is a guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance policy, which means that if an eligible Veteran meets the program's requirements, their application will be approved automatically, without the need for a medical exam or health questions. This is a crucial benefit for Veterans whose health conditions may have previously prevented them from qualifying for life insurance.

The program offers whole life coverage, which means the policy provides lifelong protection as long as premiums are paid on time. It also builds a cash value over time that the policyholder can access.

Key Features and Benefits:

- * **Guaranteed Acceptance:** No medical exams or health questions are required for enrollment.
- * **Whole Life Coverage:** The policy provides coverage for the rest of the Veteran's life.
- * **Cash Value:** After the initial two-year waiting period, the policy begins to build cash value that the policyholder can access.
- * **No Application Deadline (for most):** For Veterans aged 80 or younger with a VA disability rating, there is no time limit to apply after receiving their disability rating.
- * **Level Premiums:** Premiums are based on the Veteran's age at the time of enrollment and will never increase over the life of the policy.

* **Coverage Amounts:** Veterans can elect up to \$40,000 in coverage, in increments of \$10,000.

To be eligible for VALife, you must be a Veteran with a service-connected disability rating. There are two primary eligibility categories:

- * **Veterans Age 80 or Younger:** If you are age 80 or younger and have any VA service-connected disability rating (from 0% to 100%), you are eligible to apply at any time.
- * **Veterans Age 81 or Older:** If you applied for a VA disability rating before turning 81 and received your rating after you turned 81, you may be eligible. You must apply for VALife within two years of receiving the notification of your disability rating.

It is important to note that VALife does not provide coverage for spouses or dependents.

A key aspect of VALife is the two-year waiting period. The full face amount of the coverage does not take effect until two years after the date of enrollment, as long as premiums are paid during that period. If the Veteran passes away within the two-year waiting period, the beneficiary will receive all premiums paid plus interest. After the two-year waiting period, the full coverage amount of the policy is paid to the beneficiary upon the Veteran's death.

The application for VALife is a simple and convenient online process. Veterans can check their eligibility, apply, and often receive an instant decision through the VA's online portal, or by calling the VALife desk at 800-669-8477. The first premium payment is required at the time of application.

+ TAPS +

<p>Andersen, Norris (Vietnam)..... Concordia Ashmore, Danny (Vietnam)..... Salina Bach, Herbert (Korea).....Jetmore Bassett, Herbert (Vietnam)..... Salina Beamgard, Richard (Vietnam).....Atwood Beck, John (Vietnam)..... Cheney Becker, Herman (Vietnam) Osborne Beims, Ronald (Korea)Atwood Blackburn, Delma (Korea).....Ellinwood Blaske, Warren Linn Bogert, Richard (Vietnam).....Wellsville Bouray, Lawrence (Korea).....Republic Brockish, Grancis (Vietnam)..... Wamego Brychta, John (Vietnam)..... Manhattan Cohorst, Fred.....Marysville Coleman, Keith (Global War on Terror) Manhattan Cory, John..... Concordia Crossman, Norman (Vietnam) Cheney Diers, Royal (Vietnam)Mc Pherson Duggan, Gary (Vietnam).....Gardner Edgington, WAugusta Engelbrecht, Harold (Korea).....Mc Pherson Fitzgerald, James (WWII)..... Maple Hill Forrest, Stanley (Vietnam)..... Pittsburg #64 Foster, David (Vietnam).....Rossville Freeman, Edw (Korea)Augusta Gates, Larry (Korea).....Mc Pherson Gonzales, Joe (Vietnam) Linn Graves, Harry (Korea).....Cunningham Habiger, Walter (Korea)Copeland Halverson, Leonard (Vietnam)..... Andover Hannan, Rodney (Korea)Haviland Hartzog, Bob (Korea).....Oberlin Henry, Francis (WWII)..... Wetmore Herspring, Dale..... Manhattan Hill, Dwight (WWII).....Mc Pherson Hudson, James (Vietnam) Scandia Irby, Phil (Vietnam).....Junction City Johnson, Arthur (Korea)Oskaloosa Johnson, Jerome..... Concordia Johnson, Ronald (Vietnam).....Marysville</p>	<p>Jones, Larry (Vietnam).....Mc Pherson Jopp, Keith (Vietnam) Cheney Keil, Larry (Vietnam) Hays Korte, Loren (Vietnam).....Moran Krueger, Roy (Korea)..... Russell Lattin, James (Vietnam).....Mc Pherson Leclear, Donald (Korea).....Meade Lee, Stephen (Vietnam)..... Council Grove Leiker, Peter (Korea)Mc Pherson Leon, Elias (Korea)..... Manhattan Litchfield, Meredith (Korea) Manhattan Lowell, Bradley (Vietnam) Concordia Loy, Douglas (Lebanon/Grenada) ... Pittsburg #64 McAtee, Richard (Vietnam) St Paul McKee, Charles (WWII).....Lebo Miller, Gail (Korea)..... Cheney Nondorf, Burton (Vietnam) Scandia Olson, Michael (Vietnam)..... McPherson Peters, Lawrence (Vietnam)..... Andover Petersen, Jerry (Vietnam)Mc Pherson Portice, Donald (Lebanon/Grenada)..... Lansing Rausch, Michael (Vietnam).....Mc Pherson Reed, William (Vietnam)..... Winchester Reeves, Alan (Vietnam) Dodge City Rottinghaus, Lyle (Korea)Seneca Runyan, Robert (Vietnam).....Derby-Haysville Russian, James (Korea)..... Pittsburg #64 Scott, Wayne (Korea)..... Louisburg Sherman, Richard (Vietnam)Bucklin Smith, Stephen (Lebanon/Grenada)Valley Center Swartz, Robert (Vietnam)..... Macksville Townsend, Gary (Vietnam)Oberlin Walker, Troy (Vietnam)..... Yates Center Waltrip, Jerry (Vietnam) Pittsburg #64 Wassinger, Terry (Vietnam) Bazine Weaver, Darvin (Vietnam) Pittsburg #64 Wiedeman, Larry (Vietnam) La Crosse Wierman, William (Vietnam) Hays Wilgers, Wendell (Vietnam)..... Linn Williams, Charles (Korea)..... McPherson Wittman, Robert (Korea).....Meade</p>
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ADJUTANT'S BRIEFS

(Continued from Page 4)

toy or two under their Christmas tree for a memorable Christmas.

The Department Christmas Party Luncheon is scheduled to be held at Hutchinson Post # 68 on 13 December 2025. More details to follow!

It is not too early to start planning to attend the 2026 Mid-Winter Forum, which will be held at Dodge City Post # 47 from 30 January to 1 February 2026. There is a Basketball Tournament of Champions scheduled for the same time as Our Mid-Winter Forum in Dodge City. Even if You are thinking about attending, I suggest you make you make a Reservation NOW at one of the Hotels there and if Your plans change You can cancel Your Reservation. Pay a couple of dollars more when making Your Room Reservations that allow You to cancel the day before by 6 PM without any penalty.

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 VICE COMMANDER

(Continued from Page 2)

Pole as well as the many service and community focused events leading into the Christmas season. This is a great time to maximize your linkage to your local community as well as your local veteran and dependent population. These are also opportunities to attract and acquire new members for all of the Kansas American Legion Family. Get out there and perform those service activities; let the community know you are a vital part of their daily life.

Veterans Day and activities leading up to Veterans Day are often the highlight of community activity for many locations. Let's get out there and let the members of the community know who and what we stand for. Be proud and be active.

This is also the most effective time of the year to execute "Buddy Checks". We all know how important it is to reach out to those who have minimal or no family and community contact and let them know they matter; how they are doing does matter and we consider them part of our extended family.

All of these events and activities are opportunities to attract and acquire new members and to let our existing members know they really matter, and their renewal makes us stronger as a family.

God bless all of you; Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to your nuclear family and our American Legion Family, have a safe holiday season, and pray often for our county's leadership and our country.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER

(Continued from Page 4)

not exist, so thank you for allowing me to serve as your Detachment Commander. We can accomplish so much more when we work together, thank you for that opportunity. As National Commander Dan Wiley says, we are "Better Together."

For God and Country,
Matthew Krupco
Kansas Detachment Commander

CHILDREN & YOUTH

(Continued from Page 3)

Support Network, these families with children do not have to shoulder this burden alone. Legionnaires at the Post level can then aid such as performing minor household chores and repairs, completing a Temporary Financial Assistance application and connecting the family with local programs.



KANSAS SUNFLOWER LEGIONNAIRE

Jimmie L. Foster, Editor

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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

DEPARTMENT CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 13, 2025
Hutchinson Post #68
730 W 4th Ave.

Social Hour - 11:00 AM

Lunch - Noon

Name _____

Number in party @ \$15.00 each _____

Children 12 and under \$5.00 each _____

Guest Names _____

Tickets may also be purchased directly from Hutchinson Post 68

Amount Enclosed _____ made payable to:

Hutchinson Post 68

**Mail to:
Jeremy Ehart
10601 W Snokomo Rd.
Hutchinson, KS 67502**