



The American Legion
Department of Kansas
E-NEWSLETTER
1314 SW Topeka Blvd
Topeka, KS, 66612-1886



The Voice for Today's Veterans and Military
March 2020

Department Commander
R.C. "Chuck" Shoemaker

Department Adjutant
Jimmie L. Foster

Notes from the Department Commander

Fellow Legionnaires:

The E-Newsletter was first published on July of 2018 to provide another avenue of information flow throughout our organization. Members that receive the newsletter have provided their email addresses to National. Please take a moment to peruse the newsletter for material that may be shared with those currently not receiving the publication and let them know how they can receive an edition sent directly to them.

District Conventions will commence this month and extend into April. Elections for district officers will be held, plans discussed for future district events, reports from committees, new business, old business, all will combine for a most informative time. Show your support by attending and participating in this annual affair. It is an excellent time for voices to be heard, seeing old friends, and participating in the electoral process.

The Veterans Community Project, sponsored by Kansas American Legion 2nd District, an event designed to raise funds to battle Veterans Homelessness, was held in DeSoto, Kansas at the VFW Hall post 6654 with outstanding results. By holding a Hold'em for Heroes Texas style poker tournament, the VCP raised over \$55,346 including donations from businesses and unions in the Kansas City area. Through the efforts of area Legion post members, sponsors and patrons, the four year total has now reached \$103,246! The VCP builds tiny homes to shelter veterans in need among other services. For additional information and how you may help, access their website at veteranscommunityproject.org.

National Commander Bill Oxford has set two personal goals for this year in membership. First, increase the retention rate to 90% which, as we all know, will require personal contact through visits, calls or printed media now that renewal notices from National have been sent. And second, bringing in 100,000 new members. We are currently renewing close to 86% of our members and should put us in reaching distance of the Commanders goal. Our new member recruitment stands at 2.77% of our total membership, an area that can be improved with a dedicated membership team. As the Commander has pointed out, we need to realize the importance of what we do now and continue the work our predecessors accomplished in recruitment to build the American Legion.

It is this time of year when our posts and districts are and have been ramping up activities to ensure our youth programs in June, (Boys State for High School Juniors, and Cadet Law for High School Juniors or Seniors), are well attended and successful. The two programs this year will be running

concurrently, May 31st through June 5th, Boys State at Kansas State in Manhattan, and Cadet Law in Salina at the Highway Patrol Training Center. All Legion members are encouraged to advise youth in your area of the opportunity to attend. Members are also welcomed to visit either of these fine programs during a session. For additional information on Boys State, contact the District Boys State Chairman, the Boys State Office in Wichita at 866-241-9920 or the Boys State website, and for Cadet Law contact Department at 785-232-9315 or ksamlegion.org.

In addition to the above, our State Oratorical contest is scheduled for Saturday, March 14th at Manhattan Post #17, 114 McCall Road at 9 am. Contestants will compete for an all expenses trip to the National competition in Indianapolis. Attendance is open to all Legion Family members where these talented students will speak on the U.S. Constitution.

For those posts sponsoring a Legion Baseball team, the time for the first pitch is right around the corner. For more information on our largest participatory program, contact Steve Queen, Chairman of the Baseball Committee at 785-241-2441.

One last word about our programs, on which Commander Oxford declares,

“People make our programs work.”

Let's do our part in making our youth programs meaningful for all participants.

For God and Country,

Join the American Legion...and you join a Family!

RC "Chuck" Shoemaker
Commander
Department of Kansas
The American Legion
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Notes from the Department Vice-Commander and Membership Chairman

February was a month of significant events in my life. The National American Legion Media Department posted my "I Am The American Legion" video interview https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CuoyUspPa8&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR03ufKDFMCmN2Qzr_Ngb12ITNhEaxL5INuihobm2as8N6TkDMC3LNmR_Ss and shortly thereafter the March edition of the Legion Magazine started arriving in mailboxes across the nation; on page 12 of the magazine was the printed version of the interview. I knew this was coming but I still wasn't prepared for the hundreds of congratulations and the Facebook friend requests and messages from all over America. I cried more times than I care to admit, The American Legion is a family, we might not know everyone in our family, but we are family none the less. To my Kansas American Legion Family: Thank you for all the support you have given me the last few years and believing that I am leadership material. The interview was a privilege and an honor, there are plenty of other Legionnaires that deserve that kind of recognition more than I do and I just pray that I make them proud to be on the same team.

The release of my interview wasn't the only significant event in my life in February. Some of you may have noticed that you haven't seen much of me for a while and I feel that I owe you an explanation. Early in the month we discovered I had a health concern that resulted surgery on Valentine's Day. The issue has now been resolved and my doctor has released me to do any and

all activities and travel. There was a handful of our Kansas American Legion Family that was aware of my condition and I once again found myself in tears more times than I can count due to the love and support they showed. I learned firsthand how important Buddy Checks can be to someone that needs them.

What are Buddy Checks? Here is what National says:

As American Legion members, our most sacred responsibility is to look out for each other and our fellow veterans. As a way to reach out to members and former members who may need help, the National Executive Committee passed Resolution 18 during Spring Meetings in May 2019. The resolution calls for Buddy Checks to be conducted Legion-wide on the weeks of The American Legion's birthday, March 15, and Veterans Day. However, American Legion posts are encouraged to perform this vital function whenever it makes the most sense in their communities.

This year those weeks are March 15-21, 2020 and November 8-14, 2020 but like the explanation says this can and should be done whenever it is needed. "Working membership" is so much more than asking someone for dues money. It's about talking to our members and being there for each other when we are in need. I encourage each of you to pick up the phone and reach out to those members you haven't seen in a while, maybe they need a leg-up. If you don't have their number, go knock on their door, we veterans can be a proud group of people that won't ask for help, but we may take it if it's offered. Simply showing that you care can make a huge impact on someone's life. For God and Country,

Marri Krupco
Department Vice-Commander
The American Legion, Department of Kansas
mkrupco@gmail.com

Department Adjutant's Newsletter March 2020

The following are the bills that are the Veterans bills still eligible for action in the Kansas Legislature as of 26 February 2020:

HB2123 - Amending the Kansas national guard educational assistance act.

HB2123 would remove the requirement that an eligible Kansas National Guard member have at least one year remaining on such member's enlistment contract at the beginning of any semester for which the member receives assistance under the Kansas National Guard Educational Assistance Program (Program) to participate in the Program.

HB2353 - Providing for free license plates for purple heart recipients.

HB 2353 would allow the recipient of a Purple Heart to receive one distinctive license plate, designating them as such a recipient, without payment of the regular license fee as provided for in law to display on any vehicle such a person leases or owns.

HB2362 - Creating the Kansas military base task force.

HB 2362 would establish the Kansas Military and Veteran Task Force. The task force would advise and make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature and the Governor's Military Council regarding matters of military installations and veterans' issues in Kansas. The task force would be composed of 23 members, including four legislators, to be appointed by September 1, 2019. The Executive Director of the Governor's Military Council would serve as chair of the task force and would be required to call an organizational meeting on or before November 1, 2019. The task force

would subsequently meet on a quarterly basis prior to scheduled meeting of the Governor's Military Council. The provisions of the bill would expire on September 1, 2024.

HB2363 - Requiring inquiry about veteran status in supervised loans.

HB2363 would require any person making a supervised loan to a veteran to provide the veteran with the pamphlet "Protecting our Kansas Veterans." The pamphlet would explain veteran's rights under the uniform consumer credit code and list resources available to the veteran, including consumer credit counseling services.

HB2486 - Allowing all current national guard and reservist members an exemption from vehicle property tax. HB2363 would require any person making a supervised loan to a veteran to provide the veteran with the pamphlet "Protecting our Kansas Veterans." The pamphlet would explain veteran's rights under the uniform consumer credit code and list resources available to the veteran, including consumer credit counseling services.

HB2506 - Expanding the military spouse and service member's expedited licensure law to all applicants who have established or intend to establish residency in Kansas. HB 2506, as amended, would shorten the period of time required for various licensing bodies to issue registrations, certifications, and licenses (credentials) to allow a "military servicemember," as that term would be redefined by the bill, and a "military spouse," as that term is currently defined by law, to lawfully engage in their respective occupations in Kansas. The bill also would expedite licensing bodies' procedures for other individuals intending to live and work in Kansas.

HB2592 - Providing for the American Legion, Knights of Columbus and proud educator distinctive license plates and providing for lowered license plate commitments and costs prior to production. HB 2592, as amended, would authorize six new distinctive license plates and would amend issuance requirements for new and certain continuing distinctive license plates.

HB2707 - Allowing military service members ordered to relocate to terminate leases. HB 2707 would allow a tenant who is in the military service to terminate tenancy at any time if required by military orders. The termination notice would be effective upon written notice to the landlord. The bill would prohibit termination fees.

HB2731 - Creating the wartime veteran and first responder survivors' grant program and fund. HB2731 would create an \$350,000 annual program to provide postsecondary education grants to wartime veteran and first responder survivors.

SB283 - Authorizing sports wagering under the Kansas expanded lottery act. SB 283 as amended, would amend the Kansas Expanded Lottery Act (KELA) concerning the conducting of sports wagering operations by lottery gaming facilities. Specifically, the bill would make provisions for sports wagering operations; Kansas Lottery (Lottery) control of sports wagering; Lottery management contracts; wagering restrictions on certain sporting events; Interactive Sports Wagering Platforms (platforms); sporting facilities; minimum age to wager; prohibited wagering; cause of action for improper influence; crimes; unlawful use of electronic gaming machines; required records; limitations and self-exclusion; investigations and required reporting; security of sports wagering data; certification of certain persons; facility inspection and security measures; Horse Fair Racing Benefit Fund; Problem Gambling and Addictions Grant Fund; Sports Wagering Receipts Fund; White Collar Crime Fund; Combating White Collar Crimes and Information Technology Scholarship Fund; online lottery game guidelines; rule and regulation authority; tribal gaming compact; and other definitions.

SB383 - Providing for the American Legion, Knights of Columbus and proud educator distinctive license plates, lowered license plate commitments and costs prior to production, and personalized

plate eligibility. SB 383 would create American Legion, Knights of Columbus, and Proud Educator license plates.

CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY: Applications are due March 31. This year's dates are May 31 - June 5. For applications or more information contact Department Headquarters or our website www.ksamlegion.org.

BOYS STATE: Applications are due April 30. The 2020 session marks the 83rd Anniversary of this outstanding program. Boys State DVD's are available free of charge to Posts and a video is available on the website. This twelve minute video highlights activities during the week of Boys State and features testimonials from several of the States themselves. They are both excellent recruitment tools for your Boys State Coordinator. You can order your copy or additional applications by calling the Boys State Office toll free at 866-241-9920 or online at www.kansasboysstate.org.

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS: Attend and elect good officers who will represent your District in the 2020-2021 membership year. Dates and locations for this year are: District I – Marysville, April 18; District II - Lawrence, March 21; District III – Arkansas City, March 20-22; District IV - Manhattan, April 18; District V – Wellington, March 28; District VI - Concordia, April 4; District VII – Great POST ELECTIONS are the most important in the Legion. Elections of Post Officers must be held not more than sixty days or less than fifteen days prior to the Department Convention which begins on May 16, 2020. This year those dates are March 17 and May 1. Elect responsible and qualified leaders who will represent you and your Post. Names and addresses of those elected must be reported to Department Headquarters as soon as elected. A form is enclosed. All Posts are required to report their officers even if they haven't changed. Send both this report and the National one which you will receive with the other National Reports back to this office as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS: Legionnaires have until May 1 to be certified for "Go-Getter" and "Big Team (10 new members and 25 new members respectively). These awards cannot be sent out correctly unless we have updated figures in this office. Certification forms are available at Department Headquarters for the "Gold Brigade" (50 or more NEW members) and the "Silver Brigade" (25 to 49 NEW members). Certification forms for the Gold and Silver Brigade are due at Department Headquarters May 1, 2020.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Hiawatha, Linn, Wellsville, Lenexa, Frontenac, Saint George, Wichita #4, Marquette, Holyrood, Wilson, Hill City and Hays (As of February 21.)

DISTRICT STANDINGS AS OF FEBRUARY 21, 2020: District IX, 1,030 - 91.88%; District IV, 2,981 – 89.84%; District V, 2,899 - 89.78%; District I, 3,830 - 89.61%; District III, 2,060 - 87.14%; District VII, 1,575 - 87.11%; District II, 3,415 - 86.79%; District VI, 1,332 – 85.77% and District VIII, 831 - 84.37%. Department Headquarters Post 58 (included in Dept. total) is 896. Total membership is 20,849. Membership last year this date was 22,227. We are BEHIND 1,378 members.

IN ORDER TO AVOID RECEIVING THE NEXT RENEWAL NOTICE ALL PAID MEMBERS' CARDS MUST BE IN THIS OFFICE BY APRIL 6, 2020.

Post or District Legion events will be advertised on each midmonth Kansas Legion newsletter. Email event information or flyers to kansaslegionnewsletter@gmail.com by the 12th of the month to insure inclusion in the midmonth newsletter.

Centennial Coin Raffle

Win a piece of American Legion History!

One person will win three

American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coins

1 Uncirculated \$5 Gold Coin (\$463 value)

1 Uncirculated Silver Dollar (\$57 value)

1 Uncirculated Clad Half Dollar (\$31 value)

(\$551 total value)

Tickets \$5

5 tickets for \$20



11 tickets for \$40

Drawing to be held at Department of Kansas Leadership College on June 7, 2020 (need not be present to win)

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

AMERICAN LEGION

POST #392

BAZINE, KANSAS / 220 N. AUSTIN ST.

LAMB FRY

AND ANNUAL RAFFLE

**WITH HAM, BEANS, SCALLOP
POTATOES, COLE SLAW & MORE**

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2020

6:00 P.M. TO ?

ALL YOU CAN EAT

ADULTS \$15 / CHILD \$6 Under 12

ALL ARE WELCOME

COME AND ENJOY BRING A

FRIEND

RAFFLE TO START AROUND 7:30 p.m.

WANTED

VETERANS OF THE HEARTLAND

For inclusion in photo book including short bio and recap of service and post-military careers and activities.

Book given to those participating free of charge



Absolutely no solicitation of any kind

- ➔ Project self-funded by Kansas entrepreneur as appreciation to veterans
 - ➔ Contact must be initiated by veteran to participate
 - ➔ Additional copies will be offered on-line with proceeds, after production costs, donated to heartland honor flights
-

- ➔ A one-two hour personal visit to take pictures and gather notes for bio
 - ➔ Participants asked to approve bio and photos before publication
-

➔ If interested, contact Marshall Rimann
mrimann@gmail.com or 816-830-0705
