Notes from the Department Commander

Fellow Legionnaires:

During this unprecedented time in our country’s history and has occurred in other debilitating eras in the past, the American Legion steps up to take the point guard position in helping to provide goods and services to communities. In no other state is this more evident that in the Great State of Kansas, thanks to the dedication, ingenuity and old-fashioned work ethic of our membership. Here are a few examples of projects, among many, that posts and districts have initiated to the betterment of our citizens and veteran’s lives, even as many of our post homes have been shut down during this period.

➢ Gardner Post #19. The post has set up a COVID-19 Relief fund. Contributing to the fund were the proceeds from an Art Auction as well as other donations from individuals. A committee made up of a representative from the Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders determine the distribution of the funds which now total close to $6,000. A local organization also provided 300 Dry Meals to the post. $20 gift cards and a meal are donated to applicants in need.

➢ Hutchinson Post #68. As the kitchen has been closed since the stay-at-home order, the post donated existing food supplies to residents and needy families. They were also able to donate excess bathroom supplies. (Bet that came in ‘handy’ for recipients.)

➢ Ellinwood Post #320. The post members donated their time to help the community by providing "meals to go" from a curbside service. Many local residents took advantage of the offer as they have in the past.

➢ Derby Post #408. Conducted a pancake feed just prior to the S.A.H. order that welcomed 160 people as a fund raiser to help with financial needs of veterans. In addition, the post amassed 7,600 pounds from donations of non-perishable food which was then donated to the local food banks. Took 10 pickup trucks to make the deliveries. The post will be holding a “Get Out of Jail Fun Night” on June 6 (providing conditions allow) for people in the school district as way of building camaraderie in the community.

➢ Overland Park #370. The post was in the process of renovating the building, a large undertaking. As the area posts closed, and those salaried employees found themselves without paycheck, 370 invited those affected to join in their renovation project and for their efforts, they would receive a decent wage to help supplement lost income.

➢ Seneca Post #21. The post will be holding a curb-side hamburger feed May 2nd at 5:30 pm with proceeds going to Honor Flight, Boys and Girls State among others.
The majority of our posts are also engaged in Buddy Checks as requested by our National Commander. They are proving fruitful as we are hearing that many who are contacted appreciate the calls and are renewing memberships when appropriate.

In addition, the communication has increased by posts using social media, telephonic contact and emails to stay in touch with officers and post members, a lesson that should endure after a return to days of old.

There are many posts not mentioned here that are doing extraordinary things under difficult circumstances to keep the mission going to our veterans and those people in need.

At this writing, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 8\textsuperscript{th} and 9\textsuperscript{th} districts have held conventions, 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 9\textsuperscript{th} by teleconferencing, 8\textsuperscript{th} by Zoom and 3\textsuperscript{rd} in situ at Arkansas City. They have been very successful as all essential district business has been conducted to ensure a smooth transition after the current situation returns to “normal”. Depending on the agenda, the meetings took between 2 to 3 hours to complete.

Just a reminder that the State Convention has been rescheduled for July 31\textsuperscript{st}, August 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} in Topeka at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center. And the National Convention scheduled for the first week in September has been officially cancelled for this year. Should room reservations be of concern on these events, please take appropriate steps.

A word of appreciation to all members of the Kansas American Legion Family for what is being done in the communities and our organization to get through these unapparelled times. It appears that the governmental orders from Washington and the State will soon be changing. Please take the steps you feel are necessary to protect family, friends and ourselves.

STAY SAFE, BE WELL!

For God and Country,

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

RC "Chuck" Shoemaker
Commander
Department of Kansas
The American Legion
chuckshoemaker@sbcglobal.net

Notes from the Department Vice-Commander and Membership Chairman

April definitely presented our organization with some unusual circumstances. Most posts were trying to elect officers when they couldn’t even hold a traditional meeting. Many districts held conference call conventions; others postponed in hopes they will be able to meet in person later. It was voted to reschedule Department convention, and National convention has been cancelled. This doesn’t even mention the other events that have been cancelled, rescheduled, or modified all across our state and nation. One thing has been consistent during these trying times, and that is the willingness of local posts to step up and lend a hand to their communities. From shopping for those that were unable to leave their homes to preparing sack lunches for children, and buddy checks, all while maintaining social distancing requirements our members made a difference in the lives of others. Thank you all for continuing to serve and for being an example of what a good neighbor should be.

It is looking like May might still present us with some challenges but I’m hopeful that we will start moving towards normalcy. With that in mind, we need to keep doing Buddy Checks. This is the best way to discover if a member is in need, and you also don’t know why they haven’t renewed if you don’t ask. Make those phone calls, ask how they are doing and if there is anything they need assistance with and if appropriate ask if there is a reason they haven’t renewed. Perhaps they are upset about something, if you ask you just might learn of a problem that needs to be addressed. I know I don’t have to remind you but I’m going to anyway, when you make these call you are
representing the organization, make a good impression, no one wants to belong to an organization of jerks, so be polite and respectful.

The 2021 membership drive starts on July 1, 2020, that is only two months away. It would be wise to advise those that are just now joining or renewing for 2020 that they will be getting renewal notices in July and that it would be greatly appreciated if they went ahead and sent them right back in. Frequently, it is the same members year after year that renew late, if you could change a few of those to early renewers just think of the time you will save! Then you could use that time recruiting a new member, working a program, or even enjoying a much-deserved break. I understand that membership is not really very high on a lot of our priority lists right now, I'm just asking for it to be somewhere on the list and then maybe a little multitasking can be done. Thank you all for what you have done this year to help our organization succeed, keep it up!

For God and Country,

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

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**Department Adjutant’s Newsletter May 2020**

**THE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION** has been changed to July 31, August 1, 2, 2020 at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center, 420 SE. 6th in Topeka -- call 800-432-2424 for housing reservations and mention you are with the American Legion Family to receive the reduced Convention rate.

Saturday’s program will begin at 7:50am. Speakers will include National Vice Commander Bruce Feuerbach. The Youth Champions will also be presented. Also several reports and award presentations will be made.

The Sunday session will begin with the Memorial and Rededication Service, and also include Convention Committee reports along with other reports and presentations.

Registration is just $10.00 and pre-registration information will be mailed to all Posts.

**CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION DINNER** to be held Saturday, August 1 from 6:30 to 8:00pm at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center in Topeka. Cost is $30.00 per person and reservations must be received at Department Headquarters no later than July 29. More information and reservation forms will be sent later.

**AMERICAN LEGION LEADERSHIP COLLEGE** has been canceled.

**POST ADJUTANTS LETTER**: Post Adjutant, are you reading this newsletter at your Post’s meeting? As usual during District Conventions many people asked Headquarters Staff why the only source of information they had was the Sunflower Legionnaire. It’s great to learn so many people are reading the paper, but it is your duty to keep your membership informed by reading this monthly Adjutant’s Letter and any other mailing sent by Department Headquarters during your Post meetings. Then post the letter on your Post’s bulletin board so it can be used as reference and reminder.

**STATE GOLF TOURNAMENT** is still in the planning stages. Posters and entry forms will be sent as soon as finalized. For further information contact State Golf Chairman Lonny Cook, telephone 785-286-2134 or email kickaron01@sbcglobal.net

**BUCKLE UP, LIGHTS ON AND LIVE -- FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2020.** Information on this great traffic safety program has been mailed to all Posts. Remember this community service program costs you
nothing, just a few hours of dedication by four or five of your members. It’s a great program that will help strengthen the good will in your community while gaining some favorable publicity. Order now while supplies last.

POST CONSOLIDATED REPORTS: All Post Adjutants must complete and return their Post Consolidated Report. The report can also be completed online. They are due now and are very important.

BASEBALL ENTRY FEES are due now. The fee of $250 for Junior (“A”) and $275 per team for Senior (“AA” and “AAA”) by May 15 paid online. NO fees will be accepted after May 15.

MEMORIAL DAY IS MAY 25, 2020. All Posts should observe this special day in some manner.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Oskaloosa, Everest, Moran, Winfield, Chanute, Manhattan, Lyndon, Lebo, Augusta, Tescott, Sedgwick, Wichita #424, Macksville, Attica, Garfield, Ellinwood, Dodge City, Sublette, and Stockton for making QUOTA. (As of April 29.)

DISTRICT STANDINGS AS OF APRIL 30, 2020: District IV, 3,149 - 94.91%; District IX, 1,121 –94.20%; District I, 3,963 - 92.72%; District V, 2,990 - 92.60%; District II, 3,631 - 92.37%; District III, 2,132 - 90.19%; District VII, 1,627 - 89.99%; District VIII, 867 – 88.02% and District VI, 1,366 - 87.96%. Department Headquarters Post 58 (included in Dept. total) is 938. Total membership is 21,719. Membership last year this date was 23,262. We are BEHIND 1,543 members.

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
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