On June 5 up to 50 young Kansans will gather for the 46th annual Cadet Law Enforcement Academy session at the Highway Patrol Training Center in Salina. Sponsored by The American Legion, Legion Auxiliary and KS Highway Patrol, the Academy provides high school students an opportunity to learn methods employed to enforce city, county, state, and federal statues with the goal of instilling a better appreciation for those who enforce those laws.

The Academy is not a recruitment program for law enforcement. Students attending past sessions have had a wide variety of backgrounds, interests, and career plans. However, many students considering careers in law enforcement, as attorneys, and government service have attended as a means to solidify their plans to pursue such careers.

Open to both male and females, all applicants must be high school juniors, or equivalent, with at least a C+ average scholastically and be physically capable of fully participating in all activities during the week-long program. Instruction includes firearms and firing range safety, personal defense, law enforcement history and techniques, pursuit driving on a skid-pan under controlled conditions, practical emergency medical procedures, aircraft use in law enforcement (weather permitting), and the responsibilities of citizens regardless of age.

Primarily classes are conducted by Highway Patrol personnel however representatives of other agencies such as the FBI, KBI, Wildlife and Parks, city and county officials augment the instruction provided throughout the week. Parents and families are encouraged to attend graduation ceremonies on Friday evening, June 10.

Students are encouraged to apply early. Completed applications must include endorsements by a doctor (attesting to the applicant’s physical condition), their high school principal or superintendent, their local American Legion Post Commander or Auxiliary Unit President, and a local law enforcement officer. A sponsorship fee of $300.00 includes housing, meals and supplies needed during the session must also accompany the application and can come from any source (Post, Unit, Squadron, Chapter, a local merchant, parents, etc.). Applications must be received by March 31.

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The 69th Annual American Legion Bowling Tournament will be held at Seneca Bowl in Wichita. The dates for the tournament are January 9-10, 16-17, and 23-24, 2016. Reserved entries close at Midnight, November 20, 2015. Regular entries close at midnight, December 10, 2015. The tournament features singles, doubles, and team competition. Doubles and singles will compete on Saturdays at 1:00 PM, and 5:00 PM. Team competition will be held on Sundays at 9:00 AM and 12:30 PM.

All entrants must be 18 years of age or older. Employees and staff of The American Legion, Department of Kansas or the officers and staff of BBH Graphics, their spouses, children and immediate family members are ineligible.

Past Department Commander, Gene Heiman, joined Post Everlasting on December 13.

Gene was a 62 year member of Harry H. Renick Post #9 in Garden City. He served in many Post positions including Second Vice Commander, First Vice Commander, three years on the Executive Committee, two years as Post Commander. He also served as District Commander and District Commander. Gene was the Department Commander from 1992-1993.

He was also a member of Voiture #455 of the 40/8, Veterans of the Vietnam War Post #2, Knights of Columbus Council #2795, and BPOE Elks Lodge #1404. Finace Council of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City, and has served on the Finney County Fair Board. Gene was a native of Garden City and was a farmer and cattleman.

Department Oratorical Chairman Mike Oppy has set the State Oratorical Scholarship Contest for 9 AM, Saturday, March 19 at American Legion Post #17 in Manhattan. Rules and contestant entry forms are available online at www.ksal legion.org.

Listed below is each District’s Chairman, their address and phone number along with the date, time and location of their District contest:

**District I**
Chairman A. C. Byrd, 14187 Nottingham Dr., Leavenworth, 66048, 913-727-1472; TBA.

**District II**
Chairman Rick Miller, 1709 E. Sheridan Bridge Lane, Olathe 66062, 913-393-1474; Saturday, February 13, 10 AM, Shawnee Post #327, 6521 Nieman Road, Shawnee.

**District III**
Chairman Everett Wilnerd, PO Box 162, Howard, 67349, 620-374-2318;

**District IV**
Chairman Eszter Blair, 403 Dixon Ave., Green 67447, 785-447-2577; Saturday, February 13, 10 AM, Junction City Post #45, 201 E. 4th St., Junction City.

**District V**
Chairman Dee Dee Danin, 3032 N. Tee Time, Wichita, 67205, 316-773-2341; Sunday, February 21, 1 PM, St. Vincent DePaul, 123 N. Andover Road, Andover.

**District VI**
Chairman Everett Miller, 430 W. 17th St., Concordia, 66901, 785-243-1920; Sunday, February 21, 1 PM, Concordia Post #76, 506 Washington, Concordia.

**District VII**
Chairman Max Alber, PO Box 261, Little River, 67457, 620-897-6225; TBA

**District VIII**
Chairman Alvin Schugart, 13777 BB Road, Baseine, 67516, 785-398-2307; TBA.
Kansas Legionnaires,

I hope everyone had a good Christmas and A Happy New Year. Now we have 2016 ahead of us I hope you all have your new years resolutions made and they come true for you. We were busy the last two months for 2015. Kansas welcomed Midwest Region National Vice Commander Alan Davis Sr., he is a member of Post #347 in Beroun, Minnesota. We escorted him around mostly in the western portion of the state so he could see the wide open spaces of Kansas. He really liked Dodge City where he was made an Honorary Marshal of Dodge City. He asked me to relay his many thanks to all who he met and helped make his visit fun and memorable.

I received a letter from National Commander Barnett asking that each Department help in funding the National Emergency Fund by having each Department by generating an amount that would equal $.50 for each member of that Department. If your Post or District would like to have a fund raiser to help I’m sure it would help many veterans who will be needing help from the natural disasters which went thru the South and Midwest at the end of December 2015.

Some of the events that Linda and I had the pleasure to go to in November and December all across Kansas were the Veterans gift shops in Leavenworth, Ft.Dodge, Wichita, Topeka, and Winfield. You can not imagine all the gifts that the Ladies Auxiliary collects for these gift shops until you visit one and see for yourself. The ladies do amazing things and I thank them for every thing they do.

Some of the other events which we attended were a luncheon at Yates Center with Post #13 and presented a 70 year pin to one of their members. We also had a great Holiday lunch with Moran Post #385, and we met our friends from Second District at the Paola Post #156 for a great lunch and membership rally. We visited First District at the Rossville Post #31 and had fun with their white elephant gift exchange, they are always fun seeing who will end up with what gift. We also had a great dinner at Mound City Post #248 with another white elephant gift exchange, played Bingo, which was a lot of fun. Of course with my luck, I was one of the last to Bingo.

I was honored to be asked to speak and help dedicate the Veterans Memorial at Linn Valley. It is a very nice memorial to recognize veterans living there. They do not have a Post but I have two great-nephews living there who are Army veterans, and they want to get a Post started some time in the future.

The Department Christmas Party was held at the Hutchinson Post #68 and from what everyone has said they had a very good time. I want to thank all who attended and made it fun for all. We had an auction and made $1,100. The funds will be divided between the Legion and Auxiliary Emergency Funds.

The Big Red Turkey Run was another wonderful success this year. The entire Legion Family can be very proud of this event it was great to see how the service members and their families reacted when they saw why we were there and what we wanted to do for them. Don Behrens and the Legion Riders, as usual, did an amazing job. I thank you Don, and your Legion Riders, for what you do for the service members and their families here in Kansas. Operation Toy Run or North Pole was another success story for our Legion Family thanks to all who helped. I heard there were many happy kids and tired Santas.

With the coming new year we will start planning for the District Conventions but do not over look our membership goals. We still have a long way to go to meet those goals for this year. There are many Posts under the percentage goal for this time of the year that still need help and/or guidance.

In the December Adjutant’s letter he listed four areas which will help everyone in getting their membership up. All Post Adjutants get this letter each month and is to be read at their meetings or make it available to all to read. If the Adjutant is not doing that, then he needs to be asked to start, for it contains information on what is happening around the state and at our Department that will help every one and answer many of your questions.

Our Department is doing real well, and I thank everyone for what you do for our American Legion. May God bless you all and keep our troops safe this coming year.

It’s a new year...2016! I am praying this reaches everyone with New Year’s blessings and hoping each and every one of you had a very Merry Christmas.

We are very busy this fall with all the District Revitalizations. A very big thank you to all who participated. We appreciate all your hard work. Let’s get out there and get those memberships in!

The Department Christmas Party was held in Hutchinson this year. Ray and Linda did a great job as did the Hutchinson Post. The food was very good as was the entertainment. We are looking forward to returning to Hutchinson for the State Convention.

Recently I had the honor of placing a wreath representing the Navy at the National Cemetery in Fort Scott for Wreaths Across America. Kevin Wagner and the Legion Riders did an amazing job. What a sight to see! Keep up the great work!!!

I have received a letter from a lifetime member of our Pittsburg Post, Carl Otto. Carl now lives in Leroy, Kansas and has informed me that the Masonic Lodge of Leroy recently presented a check for over $41,000 to the Veterans Honor Flight. One Legionnaire from Yates Center, Francis Jackson, helped by selling over $1,200 in tickets. Francis is also blind. Wow! Great job!

February 5-7 is the Mid-Winter Forum. I am looking forward to seeing everyone there.

I am hoping to see 2016 to be a very productive year. Let’s get out there and get the memberships! I really would like to see our membership goal from National met! We can do it!!! Teamwork!

Thank you to the State Auxiliary President, Jeanne Haas, for attending our Post Christmas Party. It is always an honor to have you come visit. We are promoting that we, as a Legion family, and we certainly are making progress!

It was a great pleasure in attending the Veterans Day ceremony at Spring Hill. Post #350 did an outstanding job.

On November 11, Jimmie Foster and I picked up National Vice Commander Alan Davis from the airport in Wichita and was hosted to a Veterans Day dinner and program in Newton. Again, great food and a great program. Thank you to Post #2 for your hospitality.

God bless our veterans, God bless our troops, and God bless our country!

REMININDERS FOR JANUARY TO MARCH:
- November 2015: Big Red Turkey Run: Wow!! $13,000 from the WTB fund and donations from all Posts/Districts accounting for over $30,000 was spent in providing 600 families their well-deserved Thanksgiving dinners. 266 volunteers with over 2,500 hours donated.
- December 12th: Topeka Toys R Us, shopping spree, cookie/crayon collections: volunteers donated 630 hours.
- December 18 & 19, 2015: Ft Riley Polar Express: $25,000 and countless other donations from the Auxiliary and unnamed Posts.
- March: Send Cadet Lawman Academy fees in.
- March: Final preparations for District Oratorical contest; followed by Department.
- Reconnect once more with the school authorities to sponsor Oratorical Contest, County Government Day, prospective sponsors for Boys State, Cadet Law and offer assistance in sponsoring American Education Week.

CHILDREN & YOUTH
DeeDee Danin
dddanin@hotmail.com

CHILDREN & YOUTH (Continued)
- February 5-7 2016: Mid-Winter Forum, Donations needed for the CWF/C&Y auction.

As you can see there is much to be done and that has already been done! With simply requiring signatures of rosters showing American Legion affiliation at events you CAN show your support!

Last year I demanded more accountability from the District Officers in collecting the information that we need to show Congress what The American Legion is all about! I will demand it this coming year also.

I will soon be working with each District and all of their Post Adjutants or Historians to aid them in completing the special reports we need for Department and National. January will be starting a new year and I am now ready to do whatever I need to do to get our numbers up. There is no reason we are not in better ranking, we need just REPORT!
VA Makes Changes to Veterans Choice Program
Changes Remove Barriers and Expand Access to Care

As of December 2015 the VA announced a number of changes to make participation in the Veterans Choice Program easier and more convenient for Veterans who need to use it. The move, which streamlines eligibility requirements, follows feedback from Veterans along with organizations working on their behalf.

“As we implement the Veterans Choice Program, we are learning from our stakeholders what works and what needs to be refined,” said VA Secretary Bob McDonald. “It is our goal to do all we can to remove barriers that separate Veterans from the care they deserve.” To date, more than 400,000 medical appointments have been scheduled since the Veterans Choice Program went into effect on November 5, 2014.

Under the old policy, a Veteran was eligible for the Veterans Choice Program if he or she met the following criteria:

- Enrolled in VA health care by 8/1/14 or able to enroll as a combat Veteran to be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program;
- Experienced unusual or excessive burden eligibility determined by geographical challenges, environmental factors or a medical condition impacting the Veteran’s ability to travel;
- Determined eligible based on the Veteran’s current residence being more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility.

Under the updated eligibility requirements, a Veteran is eligible for the Veterans Choice Program if he or she is enrolled in the VA health care system and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Told by his or her local VA medical facility that they will not be able to schedule an appointment for care within 30 days of the date the Veteran’s physician determines he/she needs to be seen or within 30 days of the date the Veteran wishes to be seen if there is no specific date from his or her physician;
- Lives more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility with a full-time primary care physician;
- Needs to travel by air, boat or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to his/her home;
- Faces an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to the closest VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, a medical condition, the nature or simplicity or frequency of the care needed and whether an attendant is needed. Staff at the Veteran’s local VA medical facility will work with him or her to determine if the Veteran is eligible for any of these reasons; or
- Lives in a State or Territory without a full-service VA medical facility which includes: Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire (Note: this excludes New Hampshire Veterans who live within 20 miles of the White River Junction VAMC) and the United States Territories (excluding Puerto Rico, which has a full service VA medical facility).

Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program or wanting to know more about it, can call 1-866-606-8198 to confirm their eligibility and to schedule an appointment. For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA’s progress, visit: www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

PAST DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT ADJUTANT RALPH SNYDER JOINS POST EVERLASTING

Past Department Assistant Adjutant Ralph Snyder joined Post Everlasting on November 5. He was a 56 year Life Member of the Earl C. Gormley Post #45 in Junction City.

Ralph began his Legion service by managing the Junction City American Legion Baseball team from 1960-69. Throughout his involvement with The American Legion Ralph was dedicated to The American Legion Baseball Program.

He was also the Post Commander in 1969, followed by Fourth District Vice Commander in 1970, and District Commander in 1971. Ralph later served as District Commander for a second time in 2009. He was the District Baseball Chairman for six years, District Bowling Chairman for 12 years, and Department Bowling Chairman and Tournament Director for nine years.

Ralph became the Department Assistant Adjutant in 1990 and retired in 1998. He returned to serve in the same capacity in 2001 until his second retirement in 2007. Ralph was called upon to be the Assistant Adjutant in 2010 after the passing of then Assistant Adjutant Jerry Holley. Ralph retired for the third and final time in 2013.

Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter of the Year

The American Legion gives its National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award and National Firefighter of the Year award to well-rounded individuals who have exceeded the duty requirements expected in their positions. The recipients also must have demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service, coupled with professional achievement. These awards, which especially take into account heroic acts, are presented annually at The American Legion’s National Convention.

The Cadet Law Enforcement Academy Committee is accepting nominees for these awards. Nominees must be sent to Department Headquarters by January 31. Criteria for the National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award: Nominees must be U.S. citizens and living, active, full-time and paid, sworn law enforcement officers entrusted with full authority and the powers of arrest and must be assigned to or fully recognized by municipal, county, district, or state police; highway patrol; sheriff’s office or as a sworn federal law enforcement officer (FBI, Secret Service agent, U.S. Marshal, National Park Police, U.S. Capitol Police, etc.). Military police officers or investigators are eligible if they are state law enforcement certified. Nominees must also reside and be assigned or attached for duty in the nominating Department.

The Fire Fighter of the Year Award: Nominees must be active firefighters and U.S. citizens. Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are eligible only if they are certified firefighters. Nominees must also reside and be assigned within their nominating Department’s state. Posthumous awards for both the Law Enforcement Officer and Fire Fighter will be acceptable only if the nominee’s death occurs after the Department’s selection.

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

HISTORIAN
JOE JOHNSTON

The problems in the Veterans Administration are nothing new, there were problems from the get go. The Veterans Bureau, which was the forerunner of the VA was launched during the Warren G. Harding administration. Harding, I believe, was an honest person but many of his associates were not altar boys. The President appointed Charles R. Forbes head the new Veterans Bureau. Shortly after Forbes was replaced he was sent to prison for theft while in office.

I believe there should be some prison sentences handed out in the present VA scandal.

I was invited to a very moving Veterans Day Celebration, in November. It was held at Overland Trail Elementary in Overland Park where three of my granddaughters attend. We all pledged allegiance to the Flag, and the National Anthem. We veterans, about 50 total, all sat in one section and were introduced one by one. One of the veterans gave a very nice speech, and a poem and thank you letters were read by students.

It was well worth the 500 miles there and back. I worry about the lack of patriotism in some of our young people. I don’t need to be concerned about the students at Overland Trail Elementary.
Having a wonderful Christmas and I wish the best for each and every one of you in this New Year.

We met the Department goal of 75% by Dec 31st. Each Post below 75% needs to contact each member personally and ask them to renew. Dues in the past year have increased $10 by Department of Kansas and National Headquarters.

Adjuants, take your membership cards for those who have not renewed to your next meeting. Pass several of them out to each member present and ask them to personally contact those individuals to renew. Use the American Legion member discounts as a selling point for renewing members and for recruiting new members. The discounts add up! Membership is EVERYONE's responsibility!

The District Oratorical Contest will be held in Andover, by Post 406 on Sunday Feb 21, at 1:00pm At St Vincent DePaul Catholic Church. Please attend to volunteer or spectate. Our youth are spectacular!

District Convention is coming up in April in Wellington. Conventions are full of fun, camaraderie and information… come and see! Contact me any time if you’d like me to attend a meeting, or attend a function at your Post. I’d be happy to attend either.

As I look back on my life, I realize that every time I thought I was being rejected from something good, I was actually being re-directed to something better!
Greeting Legionnaires. We are off to a new and exciting year. January comes with the opportunity to have initiation ceremonies.

A community service survey will reveal areas where additional effort is needed. It is also a good month to get into our schools and present the Legion DVD on Flag codes and Flag etiquette. It is just not being taught in our schools and it is up to us to teach it.

February is Americanism month. Why not invite a VA representative to give a talk for one of your meetings? Or show an American Legion DVD?

Make a goal this year to improve your Post so other veterans will want to join because you are serving the other veterans and your community. On a personal note, why not make your goal to become more active and help your Post succeed? Retaining members is getting tougher and bringing new members presents special challenges.

The new veteran is very tech savvy but at the same time is a veteran who will keep The American Legion a viable organization. I know a lot of you are set against smart phones and computers. Why not make an effort in 2016 to at least try out a few new gadgets. The IPAD or Smart Phone are very effective ways to stay in touch. Like it or not, the new technology is here to stay and reaching the new veteran will require us leaving behind the old way of communicating.

God bless you all.

Greetings to all of our Legionnaires in the Eighth District.

I want to thank all of our members who have volunteered to serve in the District Honor Guard. The Honor Guard has been busy this late summer and fall with funeral services. Most of the Honor Guard members have a new uniform for these duties. They have received several cards of thanks from the families we have served.

I want to thank the Legion members who have made cash donations to the Eighth District for the Honor Guard to help with equipment and to help with the travel expenses. We do travel anywhere in the District to cover the funerals of our veterans. If you would like to make a donation you may mail your checks to Dan Stacy, Commander 8th District, P.O. Box 359, Dodge City, KS 67801.

As you all know the dues will be increased by $5.00 for national dues, effective after January 1, 2016. Please keep up your work on the membership in your Posts. We will need to work even harder to achieve 100% by Convention time. The District Convention is scheduled for April 15, 16, and 17th at Garden City Post #9. There will be a meeting of the D.E.C. in January to lay out the plans and set the agenda.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and a great Christmas. I want to thank you for all that you do to serve our veterans and The American Legion. God bless you all and The American Legion, and may God bless America.

(Continued Page 6)
Fall/Winter Sweepstakes

Once again thirteen lucky members of the Kansas American Legion Family will share over $7,000 in prizes with each having the opportunity of increasing their prize award by $200.* Ticket packets are scheduled to be mailed to all Kansas Legionnaires this month for the Fall/Winter Sweepstakes. Members of the Sons of The American Legion and Auxiliary are welcome to enter the Sweepstakes by requesting tickets from Department Headquarters, 1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, KS 66612.

Although a donation of $5 for one ticket, $10 for three, $15 for six or $20 for all twelve tickets is suggested, no purchase or contribution is required to enter the Sweepstakes. The revenue from the Sweepstakes will help fund the Department’s Veterans Affairs and Children and Youth Programs.

The following prizes will be awarded in the form of certified checks: 1st Prize-$2,500; 2nd Prize-$1,000; 3rd Prize-$500; five (5) prizes @ $250 each; and five (5) prizes @ $200 each. All taxes are the sole responsibility of the prize winner.

All prizes will be awarded. The chance of winning a prize depends upon the number of entries received and cannot be predetermined prior to the deadline.

Winners will be selected in a random drawing by the Mid-Winter Forum in Hays on Sunday, February 7, 2016. Winners need not be present to win and will be notified by certified mail. If a winner is present during the drawing they will be awarded a $200 bonus.*

Should a winner be unable to be contacted by certified mail, or fails to claim their prize within 30 days of receipt of notice, that winner will forfeit their prize and an alternate winner will be selected in the same selection and notification process.

All prizes will be awarded. The odds of winning a prize depends upon the number of entries received by the deadlines of 10AM Friday, January 30, 2016 at Department Headquarters or 9AM Sunday, February 7, 2016 at the Mid-Winter Forum at Hays Post 173. Prize winners assume sole responsibility for all taxes.

All entrants must be 18 years of age or older. Employees and staff of The American Legion Department of Kansas and the officers and staff of BBH Graphics, their spouses, children and immediate family members are ineligible.

LegionCare: $5,000.00 Accidental Death Benefit at NO COST To You

Your Department of The American Legion works hard to provide the most comprehensive benefits to you and its members, and as a Legionnaire in good standing, you are eligible for LegionCare. All dues-paying Department members have the opportunity to enroll in LegionCare; a complimentary NO COST accidental death benefit provided to members of your Department. Take advantage of $5,000.00 of Accidental Death Insurance if a covered accident occurs while traveling on Official American Legion Business, or $1,000.00 for all other covered accidents, all at NO COST to you.

Your Department is committed to protecting Legionnaires and their families, so they’ve worked with the Legionnaire Insurance Trust to arrange this benefit for you.

Don’t pass up your opportunity to activate LegionCare! You are guaranteed this NO COST benefit with no health questions, no hidden qualifications ... and no reason to pass up your opportunity for this important benefit.

Although coverage is available at NO COST to you and paid for by the American Legion, you must enroll to receive the benefit. Visit www.thelIT.com or call toll-free at 1-800-235-6943 today to activate up to $5,000.00 in protection at NO COST to you. *For purposes of the Legionnaire Insurance Trust, a member of The American Legion, with current year’s dues paid, could be eligible for the $5,000.00 Accidental Death benefit if he/she is traveling to, attending, or returning from an official function at which the Legionnaire represents his/her Post, District, Department, or National Organization in an official capacity.

American Legion Boys State
(Continued from Page 5)

to represent Kansas as Senators during Boys’ Nation held at Marymount University in Washington, DC this July. Staters who are the sons or grandsons of a veteran may apply for a Samsung scholarship.

Application and information packets for this year’s June 5-10 session have been mailed to every Kansas high school, every Post, and to past sponsors including private individuals, and civic organizations. Fees for the week long course is $275 per Stater to be paid by the sponsor(s) plus a $50 fee paid by the student’s parents or the Stater himself.

Applicants must be a high school Junior (will be a Senior this fall), be a self starter, involved in extracurricular activities in their school or community, and rank within the top half of their class scholastically. Completed applications must be received by March 31, 2016; Staters and sponsors are encouraged to apply early.

Legionnaires are asked to seek out potential Staters by visiting their local high schools and assist in locating sponsors and co-sponsors for each student. Additional information can be obtained of The American Legion Boys’ State website at www.ksbstate.org, or by calling toll free 1-866-241-9920.

American Legion

By Department Adjutant Jimmie L. Foster

As the year of 2015 comes to a close, it has been a good one! Many American Legion Family Members have stepped forward and shown their true colors by donating to the Big Red “1” Turkey Run and the Christmas Toy Program for Wounded Warriors, and those Service members needing a jump start during the Holiday Season.

The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion, and more specifically, the American Legion Riders went overboard on both occasions to ensure that America’s Fighting Warriors and their loved ones had a full course Thanksgiving meal either picked up or delivered to them, and they had gifts for everyone in their Family that came forward and asked for Our assistance to help them realize that there are those out there that really do care.

The tour with Alan Davis, Sr., the Midwest Region National Vice Commander, was a very rewarding one. All the Posts that he visited in Western Side of Kansas rolled out the red carpet for him and the traveling entourage. Whether it was a Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner or a simple Meet and Greet occasion, again the American Legion Family made sure that no one went away hungry or unwelcome. Al send a note wanting US to thank each of you that played a part in his wonderful visit. He may reappear at a later date. During the tour, he was made a Special Deputy United States Marshal in Dodge City, and he wants to bring his wife, Tess, back to Kansas and have her arrested. That’s what he said, Just sayin’!

The Mid-Winter Forum will be held in Hays, Kansas from 5 to 7 February 2016. Post #173 plans to show us a great time at their Post. Enclosed within this edition of the Kansas Legionnaire is the Agenda, the Hotels that have agreed to give the American Legion Family a great rate, and the meals being offered for everyone to enjoy. They have a great chef that really puts his best foot forward in preparing meals. We witnessed his finished products first hand during the Tour with the National Vice Commander.

Leading Candidate for National Commander of The American Legion Charles Schmidt from the Department of Oregon will be Our Guest. Charlie is looking forward to visiting with All Kansas American Legion Family Members.

We will also have Joe Gallagher, the Deputy Director of Information and Technology, from the National Headquarters, in attendance. Joe will be presenting an Informational Workshop on the Legion and the S.A.L. portals of myLegion.org and is open to everyone in attendance. Hopefully, mother nature will cooperate and everyone that plans to attend will be able to arrive in Hays safe and sound. Keep your fingers or toes crossed.

Thank each and every one of you for doing what you do every day in ensuring that The American Legion Family continues to grow and help support our Members, Active Duty Service Personnel and their Families. You are truly the Best, and in the Best Veterans Organization in the Free World (in my opinion).

Legion to Congress: Preserve Pershing Hall History, Artifacts

Nearly 100 years ago, The American Legion fought for the dedication of a memorial building in Paris, France, to recognize the service and sacrifices of the members of the American Expeditionary Forces and General of the Armies John J. Pershing in 1927. The memorial building was a townhouse in the heart of Paris that would become known as Pershing Hall. This memorial was authorized by resolution passed at the 1927 American Legion national convention in Paris. Eight years later, in 1935, Congress authorized funds to perpetuate the memorial and transfer the building to the United States government. In 1991, the building was transferred to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Pershing Hall enabled The American Legion to facilitate (Continued Page 7)
There is lots of “dooom and gloom” spoken about in our world. I want to change that “dooom and gloom” to gladness. It is because there is a “hope” that is not wishful thinking. The hope that I speak about, the hope that lives in my own life, is a hope that is sure and certain. In the Book of Psalm 39:7 David spoke of a hope that is sure and certain.

In the Christian calendar we are Celebrating the Season of Epiphany. The church has moved beyond the Season of Christmas, the birth of God’s only Son, Jesus Christ. We are now looking forward in “longing” to the return of God’s Son Jesus Christ to earth. It is a blessed hope that can be none other than “our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope.” I Timothy 1:1

To those who believe; we have a hope which is actively alive. Our hope, by grace is assured through Jesus Christ. It is a glorious hope, the kind of hope that can anchor the soul throughout the entire year 2016.

Following is a listing of donations received since the November/December issue of the Sunflower Legionnaire for the Harry W. Colmery memorial.

James and Linda Slattery, McLean, Virginia; Kansas Motor Carriers Association, Topeka; Thomas Holder, M.D., Prairie Village; Wichita Post #422, National Guard Association of Kansas, Topeka; Gary Gilbert, Topeka; Ed Bozar Chevetto, Topeka; Patrick Michaelis, Topeka; John and Janet Frieden, Topeka; Gaylord and Janelle Sanneman, Topeka; Newt;CoreFirst Bank & Trust; Edward & Ann Matheny, Jr., Kansas City, MO; and Jerry and Betty Banaka, Maryland Heights, MO.

LEGION TO CONGRESS: PRESERVE PERSHING HALL HISTORY, ARTIFACTS

(Continued from Page 6)

The building would pave the way for the American veterans residing in France and extended help to countless Americans—particularly veterans—who became destitute in Europe.

“It has been a refuge for many destitute families, and has been a haven for American orphan children, and has supported for years as high as two hundred orphan children,” said Howard Trace, the Legion’s Library and Museum Division director. Trace quoted the Paris Memorial Building Committee Chairman Paul Herbert’s address to the National Executive Committee during the Legion’s 1935 Spring Meetings, “It has maintained for years a school for American children in France and has afforded the only opportunity to instruct these children in the English language and the traditions of Americanism.”

Trace testified before the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health Dec. 8 during a hearing that examined pending legislation regarding the use of several properties. The main focus of the director’s testimony centered around Pershing Hall and its historical significance.

“Even today, if you walk down the street in Paris, you can see above the door to this building quite distinctly the emblem of The American Legion marking what once was a center of remembrance of the American sacrifices in the first world war,” he said.

When The American Legion asked the government to pay off and assume control of the building, it was never imagined that the building would be used for any purpose other than as a memorial and space for Paris for those who had served in the First World War and subsequent wars.

Current pending legislation would pave the way for the building to be sold.

KANSAS SUNFLOWER LEGIONNAIRE
Jimmie L. Foster, Editor
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DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN
Glenn Patterson

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NEWSPAPER NEWSLINE
Deadline is the 15th of each month for the next issue.

THE AMERICAN LEGION VA HOSPITAL SERVICE OFFICERS
Robert J. Doyle Regional VA Medical Center, Wichita ........................................... 888-878-6810 Ext. 56814
Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center, Leavenworth ......................... 913-755-4297
Colmery-O’Neill VA Medical Center ................................................................. 785-350-4489

The Sunflower Legionnaire January, 2016 Page 7
HAYS GEARED UP AS MID-WINTER HOST

Hays Post #173, 1305 Canterbury, will serve as host for the Mid-Winter Forum February 5-7. Registration for both the Legion and SAL will be at the Post Home beginning Friday evening from 4 until 7pm. This year’s Forum will feature Joe Gallagher, Deputy Director of Information and Technology, from the National Headquarters. Joe will be presenting an Information Workshop on the Legion and the S.A.L. portals of mylegion.org and is open to everyone in attendance.

Everyone is encouraged to arrive on Friday evening in time for registration beginning at 4pm at the Post Home. At 6pm on Friday, Post #173 will offer a buffet for $10.00 featuring lasagna, chicken Alfredo, garlic bread, and tossed salad.

On Saturday and Sunday an $8.00 breakfast buffet of scrambled eggs, sausage links, biscuits and gravy, hash brown, orange juice, and coffee will be available at the Post. Registration will open at 7:30am and the Forum will begin at 8:00am. Registration is $8 per person and includes Sunday morning’s breakfast. Auxiliary members who register with the Auxiliary may purchase breakfast tickets for $8.00.

Saturday lunch will be $13.00 which includes roast beef, grilled chicken breasts, vegetables, mashed potatoes, and dessert. The Forum will conclude with the Sweepstakes drawing (see article on page 1). Following are the Headquarters Hotels for the Forum. Be sure to tell them you wish to reserve a room in The American Legion block in order to receive the reduced rate.

Fairfield Inn, 377 W. Mopar Drive, 785-625-3344, rate is $94; and the Holiday Inn Express, 4650 Roth Ave., 785-625-8000, rate is $114. Be sure to tell them you are a part of the Kansas American Legion room block in order to receive the reduced rates per room per night.

2016 MID-WINTER FORUM
HAYS, KANSAS

Friday, February 5
4-7:00 pm Registration ............................................. Post Home
6:00-9:00pm Dinner ..................................................... Post Home

Saturday, February 6
7:30am-4:00pm Registration .............................................. Post Home
OPENING SESSION
8:00am Call to Order .................................................. Raymond Vail
Opening Ceremony ..................................................... Raymond Vail
Welcome & Introduction ................................................... Post Commander
Welcome ................................................................. Mayor of Hays
Dept. Centennial Celebration Committee ..................... Gaylord Senneman
National Commander Candidate .................................
SAL & Auxiliary Depart for their meetings
8:30am Public Relations ................................................. Ed DeWitt
10:30am Americanism ..................................................
ADJOURN FOR LUNCH AT POST HOME
1:00pm Call to Order .................................................... Raymond Vail
Door Prize Drawing ..................................................... Jimmie Foster
Children & Youth ........................................................ Dee Dee Danin
Membership Awards & Prizes ....................................... Raymond Vail
Special Children & Youth Certificates ....................... Jimmie Foster
Legion Membership Turn-in ...................................... Robert Munson
Americanism ..........................................................
Post Commander
Raymond Vail
Sweepstakes Drawing
American Legion Introductions ................................. Raymond Vail

Sunday, February 7
7:00-8:00am Registration ............................................. Post Home
6:30-8:00am Breakfast .................................................. Post Home
8:00am Call To Order .................................................... Raymond Vail
Four Chaplains Service .............................................. Rev. R. Glenn Patterson
8:30 am Pledge of Allegiance ...................................... Robert Munson
Legion Membership Turn-In ...................................... Robert Munson
Child Welfare Foundation Auction .......................... Dee Dee Danin & Keith Melick
Cadet Law Enforcement Academy ............................... Elgin Wahlborg
Boys’ State ............................................................. Chuck Shoemaker
Oratorical ............................................................... Mike Oppy
Baseball ................................................................. Steve Queen
Scholarships ............................................................ Mike Oppy
School Awards & County Government Day ............ Dan Wiley
Eisenhower ............................................................... John Meyeres
SAL Introductions .................................................... Doug Evans
Auxiliary Introductions ............................................. Jeanne Haas
American Legion Introductions ................................. Raymond Vail
Sweepstakes Drawing

TO REPORT A CHANGE OF ADDRESS
PLEASE CUT THIS FORM, ALONG WITH THE ABOVE ADDRESS LABEL AND SEND IT TO HEADQUARTERS. LIST YOUR NEW ADDRESS BELOW

Mail changes of Address to:
THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS
1314 SW TOPEKA BLVD., TOPEKA, KS 66612-1886

2016 Legislative Reception

The reception will be held at the Capital Plaza Hotel, 1717 SW Topeka Ave. in Topeka on Wednesday February 10. The reception will begin with a brief session at 5pm and followed by the reception until 8pm.

Legislative Reception

Yes, I plan to attend The American Legion Legislative Reception, Feb. 10, 2016 in Topeka. Enclosed is $_____ ($20 per person). Note: please list the name of each attendee.

No, I am unable to attend. Enclosed is my donation of $____ to help make this American Legion function a success.

Name
Address
City Zip

Mail to: Dept. Headquarters
1314 SW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66612

Cost of attending the reception is $20.00 per person and includes cocktails and hors’d oeuvres. Please use the coupon below to let Headquarters and the hotel how many to prepare for.

Friday, February 5
4-7:00 pm Registration ............................................. Post Home
6:00-9:00pm Dinner ..................................................... Post Home

Saturday, February 6
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