ALAN DAVIS, SR.
National Vice Commander
Midwest Region

Alan A. (Al) Davis was elected as a national vice commander of the 2.2-million member American Legion during The American Legion’s 97th National Convention in Baltimore, Md., on September 3, 2015.

A member of American Legion Post 347 in Beroun, Minn., he completed basic training in San Diego, and served in the U.S. Navy from 1966 to 1969. He has held offices at every level of The American Legion, including 10th District Commander and Department (state) Commander of Minnesota. Davis has served the Department of Minnesota as Adjutant, Vice-chairman of Children and Youth, Oratorical Chair, and Vice Director of American Legion Baseball. At the national level, he was a member of the National Americanism Commission.

He is a graduate of Pine City High School. He has served on Curriculum Advisory Board at Indian Head Technical School.

A career IT professional, he is retired from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. He is married to Marine Corps veteran Teresa (Tess) Davis and they reside in Princeton, Minnesota.

LYNDA LANCASTER
Central Division
National Vice President

Department of West Virginia: Jackson Perks Unit 71.
Eligibility: Through late husband William F. Lancaster Jr., a Navy WWII veteran.
Offices held: Served many offices and chairmanships at unit, District and Department levels. National: NEC, vice chairman of Junior Activities and Constitution & Bylaws. Member of Education, Legislative, ALA Girls State, Children & Youth, Community Service, Junior Activities, Leadership, Membership, and National Security.

Personal/professional: Daughter of Fred Meyer and Miriam Kleintop. Graduated magna cum laude, Shepherd University, RBA and elected into Who’s Who Among American University and College Students; Northern Virginia Community College, AS, cum laude. Employed as an insurance agent with Bob Snyder’s State Farm. A member of Leesburg United Methodist Church, VFW 3522, Purple Heart, DAV, BPOE Lodge 867, F.O.E. Aerie 1167, Women of the Moose 948, Redmen Lodge, NARFE and NRA.

STEVE WARD
National Vice Commander
Midwest Region

Steve is a member of John P. Hand Squadron #250 in Louiseburg, Kansas since 1999. Steve Ward is eligible for membership in The Sons of The American Legion through the WW II service of his Father Perry O. Ward, Sr. A native of Kansas, Ward’s commitment to Veterans and their families is evident through his dedication and service to the ideals and principles of The Sons of The American Legion.

Ward has served his Squadron, District and Detachment in a variety of leadership positions as Detachment Commander of Kansas and since 2012 has served his Detachment as NEC. Steve’s passion continues to be actively developing and engaging projects that assist military children and is a welcome friend to several Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) located at Ft. Riley. Steve also raised funds and distributed more than 200 GI Josh plush gift sets to the children, and has supported Operation Military Kids (OMK) with several projects and activities.

Steve is married to wife Trish, an active member of The American Legion Auxiliary. The Ward family proudly contributes 11 very active family members to the Legion Family and believes that serving every generation of veterans is a responsibility and an honor.

2016 Kansas Legacy Run
By Terry Harris SAL/ALR Liaison

It's the time of year again where the planning has started for the 2nd annual Kansas Legacy Run, June 9 through June 12, 2016. The KLR was established in 2015 with a 1250 mile ride to not only raise money but also to raise awareness. For those of you that don't know the Legacy Scholarship Fund was established by the American Legion for the children of veterans who have passed since 9/11 to help insure that the children of these brave warriors have the chance to get an education. The 2nd annual run is still in the planning stages with several options on the table. One of the things we are trying to do differently this year is to stop and visit more American Legion Posts and local veterans memorials in the many communities that the run will be going through. We are also trying to get the Posts, Units, Squadrons, and Chapters around the state more involved as the ride approaches and comes to your community.

The Department ALR Team learned a lot on the 2015 KLR and are able to look back and change a few things to help make this event one all Legion Family members can get involved with and be proud of. We always look forward to the communities coming out to greet us and the welcomes we do receive.

The 2016 Kansas Legacy Run will start in McPherson at Post #24 and will end at Hutchinson Post #68 with 1034 miles between the two Posts. We are leaving the McPherson Post on the morning of June 9 going through Marquette, Ellsworth, Wilson, Plainville, Stockton, Osborne, Cavker City, Beloit, and then stopping in Concordia for the night. Day 2 will start in Concordia, going north to Belleville then on to Marysville where we will turn south and ride toward Manhattan. We are planning a few surprises on this leg of the route but the plans haven't been finalized yet. After leaving the Manhattan area we will ride east toward Topeka planning on a stop in our Capital City and a brief visit. Leaving Topeka we will head south toward Osage City then turn east to Ottawa for our overnight.

Day 3 will be a full day of riding with the ending destination being Arkansas City and our evening spent at Post #18. After leaving Ottawa the run will go to Pittsburg Post #64 with a stop there and a visit with Department Vice Commander Munson and members of that Post. After leaving Post #64 we are going to Independence and then on to Kansas City for the night.

Our last day of the ride will start in Arkansas City going west to Caldwell where we will turn north and meet up with Highway 44. Continuing west and winding around the southern part of the state we will go through Harper and on through Sharon, Medicine Lodge to Coldwater. Turning north at Coldwater we have a planned stop in Greensburg. We are going to spend time in Greensburg visiting the ALR memorial that was dedicated to the victims of the F-5 tornado on May 4, 2008. Hopefully we will be able to then get American Legion Family members from around the area to come help us honor those that perished on May 4, 2007. After our stop in Greensburg, it’s on to Pratt and then up 61 Highway to our event in Hutchinson.

We encourage the members that would like to ride on this run to get your registration in early. Also, you don’t have to ride the entire route. We hope that you will be able to come and ride a leg, or even between Gas Stops. Just come out and...
Greetings Kansas Legionnaires.

Where has this last year gone?? I know that it has really flown by for me. It has been a fast year but very rewarding and full of great memories. We started out a little rough but when every thing was said and done we all came together like true American Legionnaires should do, and that's working together for the betterment of our American Legion and its veterans, and I am proud of ever yone for coming together to get the job done.

This is one time I know that I do not have enough space in my letter to record every place and event my wife and I have had the pleasure to visit these last two months.

We have been on the road from border to border across this great state attending every event we could make and it has been so rewarding for us to make so many new friends and visit old friends. Everyone has been so kind and the memories will stay with us for life. It has been an honor for me to represent you and to serve you as your Department Commander.

This year we have seen a big drop in membership to the point that the Department is at a troubling low. We all must continue to be aware that membership is every one's responsibility. We have until June 30th to meet our goal of 33,500 for the year’s membership quota. We still have time for everyone to go out and make that final push to help you Post meet your membership goals. If everyone would sign up a new or delinquent member we could pull out of this slump and help our Department meet its goals.

As this is my final article for the Sunflower I would like to thank everyone for helping to make this year a successful and rewarding year. Let us not forget our service members that are still in harms way. May God bless America, God bless our troops, and may God bring down His blessings to each of you.

Joe Hicks, Don Behrens and I gently approached these families, especially those with teens and explained ourselves. You may have your own preconceived notions of home schooling, I had my own, but after spending nearly three days interacting with them, I now have a totally different perception. Nearly 15% of total students are home schooled; of that percentage, only 5% come from a religious culture. Some reasons to choose home schooling: bullying, poor assimilation in large class environments; moral values of families; distrust in the government; searching for better educational alternative opportunities.

I became aware of the quality of their children; how they interacted with adults not their parents; communication skills; well adjusted and mannered children. Most families I witnessed were large Amish, Mennonite and German Baptists who showed great love for their children’s moral compass and looking for the best opportunity to advance criteria available for their kids. The thought that the kids were segregated and isolated from other children is untrue. They simply play and work within a large and different circle than those kids in public schools.

The American Legion was invited to attend and participate in the Kansas Teacher Parent Association’s annual convention at Century II for Home Schooling.

Our intention was to get the word out to such organization and inform them what The American Legion has to offer their youth. They needed to become aware of the many programs and scholarships available; and, it was important for us to learn how they perceived us, The American Legion, but it was also important to learn about them.

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Greetings American Legion Family. As I come to the close of my year as serving as your Vice Commander, I reflect on what a great year it has been.

My foremost concern has been, and always will be, on membership. Let's continue to work diligently on getting more new members and keeping our present ones! This begins at each Post level. Strive to have more activities and make your Post more family friendly. Involve the younger members as much as possible and get your community involved as well! Our communities need to know of our great programs we have such as Cadet Law, Boys State, Girls State, Oratorical, and Legion Baseball. Use your newspapers as well as social media as much as possible. We can make it happen!!!

April has been a very busy month with District Conventions. It was sad to see that at some that their attendance was down. It has been discussed at some to make them a one day Convention. Let's do what it takes to get our District members more involved.

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Department of Veterans Affairs Opens Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Registry

Report Your Exposure

Exposure to airborne hazards such as burn pit smoke, oil-well fires, and dust storms may cause health effects. In June 2014, VA opened the “Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry” for Veterans and Service members.

Check Your Eligibility

Based on deployment information from the Department of Defense (DOD), registry participation is open to Veterans and Service members who deployed to contingency operations in the Southwest Asia theater of operations at any time on or after August 2, 1990, or Afghanistan or Djibouti on or after September 11, 2001. These regions include the following countries, bodies of water, and the airspace above these locations: Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Djibouti, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and water of the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and Red Sea.

How to Participate

The registry is a database of health information voluntarily provided by Veterans and Service Members that will help VA to collect, analyze and report on health conditions that may be related to environmental exposures experienced during deployment.

1. Set up a Premium DS Logon Level 2 Account.
3. Print the questionnaire for your records, instructions on how to schedule an evaluation are available in the fact sheets on the registry website.

The burn pit registry, and all other VA registries, are unrelated to the service-connected disability compensation rating process. While a registry note in your medical record summarizing your exposure concerns and related medical treatment may serve as evidence to support a claim, it is not a necessary document or step in the claims process.

98th ANNUAL CONVENTION
FRIDAY, MAY 20

1-6:30 pm Registration .........................................................................................Prefunction Area
All Delegates, Alternates, & Guests must register. Registration badge is ticket to Convention Floor
4:00 DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ....................................................Endeavor II
5:00 Children & Youth Meeting ...........................................................................Endeavor 1B
6:30 GOLD STAR MEMBERSHIP CLUB PARTY................................................Endeavor 1A

SATURDAY, MAY 21

6:30-9:00 am Breakfast Buffet............................................................................Grand Slam
6:30 Continental Breakfast ....................................................................................Breakfast Room
6:30 Continental Breakfast ....................................................................................Prefunction Area
7:00 am - 4pm REGISTRATION ............................................................................Prefunction Area
7:50 OPENING SESSION (Legion, Aux., & SAL) ....................................................Endeavor II
Call to Order .........................................................................................Raymond Vail, Department Commander
Advancement of Colors ...........................................................................American Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, & Jr. Color Guards
Invocation .........................................................................................Rev. Glenn Patterson, Department Chaplain
Pledge of Allegiance .......................................................................Robert Munson, Department Vice Commander
Welcome .........................................................................................John Daveline, Mayor of Hutchinson
Legion Youth Champions........................................................................DeeDee Danin, Dept. Children & Youth Director
Bryce Johnston, Boys State Governor
Jaeden Rolofson, Boy Scout of the Year
Riley Angelton, Cadet Law Academy President
Auxiliary Youth Champions ........................................................................Trish Ward, Auxiliary Children & Youth Chairwoman
Kara Fort, Girls State Governor
Jerra Garcia, Honorary Jr. Auxiliary President
Address .........................................................................................Alan Davis, American Legion National Vice Commander
Address .........................................................................................Lynda Lancaster, American Legion Auxiliary National Vice President
Address .........................................................................................Steve Ward, Sons of The American Legion National Commander
Address .........................................................................................Senator Jerry Moran
10:00 am Dismiss American Legion Auxiliary & SAL for their Conventions
Preamble to Constitution..............................................................................Raymond Vail, Department Commander
Law Officer of the Year Award ...................................................................Police Officer Jerry P. Montagne, McPherson City
Fire Fighter of the Year Award .....................................................................Capt. Robert Gardullo, Pittsburg Fire Department
Address .........................................................................................Verna Jones, Executive Director, Washington, D.C.
Address .........................................................................................Richard Keith, Director, Emblem Sales, Indianapolis
Address .........................................................................................Joseph Burks, PAO, VA Health Care System, Leavenworth
LIT ........................................................................................................Howard Bender, VP, Account Manager
USA ..............................................................Karl Morgan, USAA Account Representative
40 et 8 Presentation ...............................................................................Tom Emerson, Grand Correspondent du Kansas

RECESS FOR LUNCH

11:00-2:00 pm LUNCH BUFFET.................................................................Grand Slam
RULES COMMITTEE MEETING ........................................................................Endeavor 1A
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS LUNCHEON.................................................................Mercury Room
12:00-1:00 pm DISTRICT CAUCUSES..............................................................Endeavor II
Dist. 1- Apollo I .......................................................................................Dist. 4- Endeavor II (Front Left Corner)
Dist. 2- Apollo II .......................................................................................Dist. 7- Endeavor (Back Right Corner)
Dist. 3- Endeavor II (Front Left Corner) .......................................................Dist. 8 - Ambassador
1:30 pm RECONVENE FOR SECOND SESSION ..............................................Endeavor II
Law Officer Report ..............................................................................Larry Langhorst, Chairman Convention Rules Committee
Fourth Estate Award .............................................................................Ed DeWitte, Department Public Relations Chairman
Children & Youth Report ........................................................................DeeDee Danin, Dept. Children & Youth Director
Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation...............................................................Pat Culver, Dept. VA&R Chairwoman
Service Officers Report ........................................................................Dan Bartlett, Dept. Service Officer
KCVR Report & Update ..........................................................................Wayne Bolig, Deputy Director
Finance Report ...................................................................................Jim Buterbaugh, Dept. Finance Chairman
Membership Turn-In ............................................................................Robert Munson, Dept. Vice Commander
Membership Recognition .........................................................................Raymond Vail, Dept. Commander

ADJOURNMENT

4:00 pm Constitution & Bylaws Committee Meeting ........................................Endeavor II
History Judging and Historians Association Meeting ..................................Endeavor II
Resolutions Committee Meeting .................................................................Endeavor II
Steering & Nominating Committee Meeting ................................................Endeavor II
Convention Stage
6:30 pm CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION DINNER.................................Apollo I

SUNDAY, MAY 22

6:30-10:00 am BREAKFAST BUFFET.............................................................Grand Slam
Continental Breakfast .....................................................................................Breakfast Room
6:30-9:00 am REGISTRATION .............................................................................Prefunction Area
8:00 am MEMORIAL & REDEDICATION SERVICE ........................................Endeavor II
Rev. R. Glenn Patterson, Department Chaplain
9:00 am CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE MEETING ..............................................Endeavor 1A
8:30 am FINAL SESSION ....................................................................................Endeavor II
SAL Introductions ....................................................................................Richard Strothman, past Detachment Commander
American Legion Introductions .....................................................................Raymond Vail, Dept. Commander
American Legion Auxiliary Introductions ......................................................Jeanne Haas, Dept. President
Sweepstakes Drawing ...............................................................................Raymond Vail, Dept. Commander
VA Health Care Provider of the Year .................................................................Pat Culver, Dept. VA & R Chairwoman

Auxiliary to Depart for their Final Session
FIRST DISTRICT COMMANDER
GARY JACKMAN
304 NE Mimosa Lane
Topeka 66617
785-220-2392
VICE CMDR.
JAMES SNYDER
10899 Blue Spruce Dr.
Ozawikie 66070
785-865-8393

Comrades, thanks for having me as your First District Commander for the past year. I enjoyed visiting Posts all over the District.

The First District Convention was held at Topeka Post 400, and was very enjoyable. The new District officers for 2016-17 are as follows: Commander, A. C. Byrd; Vice Commander, James Snyder; Adjutant, Clint Vawter; Executive Committee, Don Wentling, Rod Ziemer, and Dave Wichman. I hope you will have a great year in all you do for the Legion.

Keep signing up new and re-instated members. We are not at goal yet, so keep working.

Denise Farmer is President of the Ladies Auxiliary for First District. Donie Wichman is Commander for the Sons of the American Legion.

SECOND DISTRICT COMMANDER
CHARLES GRIECO
7933 Oakview Dr.
Lenexa 66215
913-208-8734
VICE CMDR.
SCOTT WILLIAMS
6634 Noland
Shawnee 66216
913-322-1968

Greetings fellow Legionnaires. A big Thanks to all the Posts that achieved 100% this year for a job well done. We also appreciate the time and effort put forth by the entire District to meet our assigned goal. We came up a little short but your dedication to our #1 priority is recognized.

The State Convention in Hutchinson is May 20-22. Get your plans in place to attend this annual event, many good sessions and the election of Department Officers for 2016-2017. I would like to see all our Posts represented at this year’s Convention to get the information first hand and be present to vote.

We held our District Convention at Olathe Post 153 April 2nd. Eleven of our 25 Posts were in attendance that’s only 44%. It is difficult to understand how 14 of our Posts were not even represented by their Commander or Vice Commander. I think when you accept an office you should serve the needs of your membership. It is time for some rededication to your Legion. I’m looking forward to seeing you in Hutchinson.

The officers elected for the Second District for 2016-2017: Commander, Scott Williams; Post 327; Vice Commander, Rick Miller; Post 153; Adjutant, Tim Russell; Post 228; One Year Executive Committee, Marri Krupco; Post 279; Two Year Executive Committee, Harry DuPrey; Post 48; Three Year Executive Committee, Jeff Barber; Post 19. Congratulations to our new Officers I know they will do an excellent job for our District.

This will be my last article for the Sunflower as my term in office expires. I would like to thank my District Officers, all the members of the Second District, Post Officers, S.A.L., Riders, and Auxiliary for your help and support this past year.

THIRD DISTRICT COMMANDER
CLINT WILLIARD
25134 52nd Road
Atlantic 67008
620-243-2700
VICE CMDR.
LARRY LANGHORST
704 S. D St.
Arkansas City 67005
620-442-0426

My fellow veterans, the 2015-2016 year is almost over and the new administration will be in control after the Department Convention, May 20-22 in Hutchinson. I really hope to see a lot of attendance from the 3rd District to support and be a part of the Convention. Each Post has a certain number of delegates that are able to vote at the Convention for your Department Officers.

I want to thank everyone for all their hard work on membership. We are currently in 2nd place of all eight Districts. However, the percentage of Posts that are at 100% or higher is only 16%. Several Posts need only 10 members or less to reach 100%. Other Posts need a lot of renewals and new members to reach 100%. One idea to help this is to have the Post or someone in the Post to cover the renewals and get those individuals in the Post, involved with what the Post is doing and maybe they will pay the cost of the membership back.

The new District Commander Larry Langhorst will do a fantastic job as Commander and I hope that everyone will give him your help and support, as you have for me. I sincerely hope that each Post, and the administration of those Posts, will have a great year.

It’s been an eventful and a great learning experience, and I am glad to have been your District Commander. My only hope is that for the Posts that needed a little help that I was able to point them in the right direction.

May God bless this great nation, all those who are in harms way and protecting this country, our veterans and their families. THANK YOU!!!

We still have a couple more months before this Legion year closes so please go out and talk to your non-renewed members for 2015, and 2014 as well. Let’s see if we can do one more membership sweep, give them one more chance to change their minds and help out our fellow veterans, our soldiers and their families. God bless and God bless America.

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.

When I was a child I thought nap-time was punishment, now it’s like a mini-vacation!

SIXTH DISTRICT COMMANDER
CHAD LOWELL
1811 N. 132nd Road
Concordia 66041
785-262-7141
VICE CMDR.
PAT HEWITT
595 D St.
Phillipsburg 67661
785-543-7668

It has been my honor to serve you as your District Commander this past year, and I’m very grateful for the faith shown by those attending the District Convention last month in electing me to another term. Likewise the delegates re-elected Pat Hewitt as your Vice Commander and together we look forward to representing our District on the Department Executive Committee.

We have a new Adjutant in Rick Simpson, Bill Valsoure will serve as Finance Officer, Sgt. At Arms is Paul Valsoure, and the District Executive Committee are Monte Lewis (1 yr), Lee Axtel (2 yr), and David Becker (3 yr). We had a good convention and I would like to thank Colby for serving as a gracious host.

We are behind in membership and need to reach out to younger veterans to join our ranks in protecting every veteran’s benefits and to continue supporting our Youth programs like American Legion Baseball, Boys State, Cadet Law Enforcement, scholarships, Oratorical Contest and those unique to our community. We also need to reach out to those members who have forgotten to pay their dues in the past; some haven’t renewed for more than a year.

A strong American Legion results in strong communities when veterans come together to forge bonds of shared values and experiences. The result is continued service to our community, state and nation which serves an example for all to follow. So please reach out to

FIFTH DISTRICT COMMANDER
TERRY MARR
6131 S. Ellis St.
Wichita 67216
316-640-4633
VICE CMDR.
RICK LOWERY
2201 S. Anna St., #3
Wichita 67209
316-990-1003

Thank you all for supporting me as your 5th District Commander. I have announced my candidacy for your Department Vice Commander for 2016-2017 and hope for everyone’s support.

The District is in first place at 94% membership. Posts need to transmit renewals until June 30, don’t hold onto renewals for the new membership year! Each Post below 90% needs to contact each member personally and ask them to renew.

Post Consolidated Reports information should be used to compile a news article and submit it to your local newspaper, TV or radio stations. Let the public know how much we do for our communities and Veterans.

The Department Oratorical contest was held in Manhattan and was won by the 5th District winner, Trey Duran from El Dorado, who will represent Kansas at the National Contest.

I had the pleasure of attending 7 of the 8 District Conventions. I learned a lot from attending, and spoke to people I had not seen in awhile! May 20-22 is the Department Convention in Hutchinson. I look forward to seeing everyone at Convention and serving the Department at a higher level of support. If you have never attended a Department Convention, make this year the one you attend! Conventions are full of information, camaraderie and fun!

FOURTH DISTRICT COMMANDER
ESZTER BLAIR
403 Dixon Ave.
Green 67447
785-447-2577
VICE CMDR.
TOM TSCHANTZ
209 Miami St.,
Burlington 66839
620-803-2320

By the time this is printed in the Sunflower a new District Commander will have been elected. We will be on our way to shortly electing a new Department Commander and his or her officers and the cycle is renewed.

There were a lot of bumps in the road this year; we lost a lot of good Legionnaires and Legion Family members, and we also lost many Legionnaires for about the cost of a cup of coffee each month, and I don’t mean Starbucks. The increases at Department and at National hurt, but not renewing your membership hurts the Legion even more.
in membership. Jeremy Ehart was elected to the Executive Board to replace outgoing Bruce Branson. “Thank You” to everyone who has helped me this past year. Our District Seven Team is ready for our new year.

Our District Seven Convention is over. I was told it was one of the best District Conventions that we have ever had. I am humbled and want to make sure that our members understand it is not the work of any one person, it is the work and dedication of the individual members that make up the District. My congratulations to all of you.

The District approved a resolution to raise Department Post #58 dues to $50 in an effort to shrink Post #58 and get those members to sign up with a Post. The resolution will be presented and voted on in the Department Convention by the delegates in May. If you haven’t made plans to attend you need to do so quickly. The Legion is only as good as the activity of the members. Membership continues to be a drag on our Department. Unless we can turn this membership decline around, we are going to be in for a rough ride in the next few years.

District Seven members voted to keep the same officers for another year as it was felt the District had moved out of last place and is currently in 4th place. Our goal for next year, as a District, is to be in the top three Districts

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, at all 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.theLT.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.

State American Legion Golf Tournament 2016

Make your plans now to play in this year tournament

The tournament will be held on July 16th, and 17th, at Concordia American Legion Golf Course, 600 W. 13th, Concordia KS. The tournament is a 36 hole stroke play tournament with 18 holes being played both days. Registration desk will be open at 7:00a.m. and the starting time is a shotgun start both days at 8:00a.m.

The tournament is for all American Legion Members, SAL, ALR, that are of 21 years of age and are in good standing. (Everyone must provide a paid up membership card at time of registration.) All New as well as Experience Golfers Welcome.

The entry fee is $115.00 for the tournament. The entry fee covers all green fees and cart fees. With your entry fee you will receive a golf cap and ball when you register on Saturday.

This is a flighted tournament and the number of flights will depend on the number of participants. There will be a separate flight for seniors if enough seniors declare before Saturdays round. (Senior 70 and older)

On Saturday if players so desire they can enter a 2-man Handicapped Best Ball Tournament that is played in conjunction with the stroke play tournament. The entry fee for this is $10.00 per team and this is a 100% pay out.

All trophies and cash prizes will be handed out at the conclusion of the tournament.

The deadline for entering this year tournament is July 9, 2016. All entries should be mailed to Carroll Peppersack, 805 N. Kansas Ave. Frankfort KS. 66427. If there are any questions you may contact him Phone #: 785-292-4665 or email him at lefthandsden@netzero.net

As I write this final message as President of the Department of Kansas, I wish to thank the American Legion Family of this Department for working “Hand in Hand, Together” this past year. By joining together, the Family was able to promote the programs and strengthen the bonds of this great organization. I look forward to seeing Units and Posts, District and Department leadership continue to enhance the growth of the mission of The American Legion Auxiliary.

I hope you have made arrangements to attend the 96th Annual Department Convention in Hutchinson on May 20, 21 and 22nd. The Atium is the Hotel and Convention Center where all events will be held. The Convention will honor the “Hand in Hand, Together We Stand” work Units across Kansas have completed during this leadership year. Come and meet our Central Division Vice President, Lynda Lancaster, who will be our special guest for the weekend.

This Department has been “Fishing for Membership” and now is time to cast your lines out again to all those who have not renewed. Make that personal contact and ask them to continue with their membership in our organization. Engage with new members the activities your American Legion Family is involved in and ask them to play a part in these programs.

To those who have been elected to leadership roles in their respective Districts, best wishes in the successful year in promoting the programs of The American Legion Auxiliary with the Legion Family. See you in Hutchinson!!

The Sunflower Legionnaire May/June, 2016 Page 5
Harold Scheaffer for Department Vice Commander

Fellow Legionnaires:
I would like to announce that I will be running for the position of Vice-Commander for the Department of Kansas for 2016-2017. I earned my eligibility for The American Legion by serving in the United States Air Force from 1960 to 1965. I currently serve as your Master-At-Arms, and I am the Post Commander of Post 406, Andover. I served as Fifth District Commander, having moved up the positions in the prescribed manner.

Throughout this year, I have attended and/or participated in nearly every Legion Department function and as many state-wide District functions as my schedule would allow. I have attended ALLC Leadership College for 10 years. As the office of Vice Commander primarily concerns membership, I concentrated on membership functions, learning as much as possible about how membership is worked across the state. It is exciting to me to help Posts and Districts increase their membership. I truly enjoy meeting and working with all of you in your revitalizations. Getting to know you and how your Posts operate and see how you work membership is priceless experience for me. If elected as your Vice Commander, I will be very involved in helping you reach your membership goals.

I have also participated in the Eisenhower Pilgrimage, Big Red One Turkey Run, Operation North Pole, several District Homecomings, Department Christmas Party, VA Gift Shops, and Department Legislative Party. I have attended National Convention, representing Kansas for the past five years.

I have the support of my Post, and I am the Post Commander of Post 153 of the American Legion in Andover, Kansas.

My goals as Department Vice Commander are to increase public awareness and community knowledge of The American Legion and its programs, increase membership and help achieve our Department goal of 45,000 members by 2019.

I am passionate about The American Legion, I am committed to our Principles and programs, and I am willing to take on the responsibilities as your Department Vice Commander.

I have the support of my Post, and I am the Post Commander of Post 153 of the American Legion in Andover, Kansas.

The eight 2016 District Conventions are now completed and I hope that Everyone is looking forward to attending the 2016 Department Convention to be held at the Atrium Hotel and Conference Center located at 1400 N. Lorraine Street in Hutchinson, Kansas from 20 to 22 May 2016. If you haven’t reserved your Room, you need to do so ASAP. The unused Rooms in our block will be released to the general public real soon!

We have many Candidates running for different Department Offices at this Department Convention. These offices range from the position of National Executive Committee to Master-at-Arms. This is your Post’s opportunity to caucus your Members, and vote at the Department Convention on the prospective Candidate that you believe will move the Department of Kansas in the right direction and into the future.

We have many Guest Speakers that will address the Delegates in attendance. American Legion Central Region National Vice Commander Alan Davis from the Department of Minnesota; National Executive Director Verna Jones from The American Legion Washington, D.C. Office; National Emblem Sales Director Richard Keith from Indianapolis, Indiana; Joseph Burks, the Public Affairs Office of the Leavenworth Region Veterans Administration Office and many other Youth Award Winners of Our Legion Programs will be in attendance. This is your opportunity to meet and greet them.

The Delegates and Alternates will also be selected to represent the Department of Kansas at the 2016 National Convention being held in Cincinnati, Ohio from 26 August to 1 September 2016. Registration and Housing forms and informational packets will be distributed to those planning on attending. Mark your calendar and plan to attend so you do not miss out on these great opportunities.

The Department Oratorical Contest that was held at Manhattan Post #17 on 19 March 2016 was a huge success. Many American Legion Family Members attended and supported the eight contestants that competed. Congratulations to Trey Duran, the ultimate Winner. Trey went on to compete at the National Level in Indianapolis, Indiana from 15 to 17 April 2016. I believe that ALL eight Contestants are Winners. The top four contestants will receive scholarship in amounts of $750.00 for first place down to $100.00 for fourth place. This program continues to restore my faith in the Youth of Our Country, and that what we do for them is not in vain.

In the last edition of the Sunflower Legionnaire, we requested that a Post step forward and agree to hold the 2017 Mid-Winter Forum. Olathe Post # 153 has agreed to do just that. We appreciate to their agreeing to be the Host and we look forward to a prosperous and productive Mid-Winter Forum next February.

I just returned from the Legionnaire Trust Directors Meeting in Laguna Miguel, California. This is the 50th year of the L.I.T. Program that supplies The American Legion Family with a great venue of Insurance products at a very reasonable rate. Our Department receives a Revenue Enhancement from those products that ALL Members of The American Family of Kansas purchases throughout the year. They also provide the Accidental Death Protection Insurance Coverage for you, as a Member. A minimum of $1,000.00, and if you are on Official Legion Business, it can be $5,000.00, for your surviving dependents. Be sure to check the information within this edition of the Sunflower, and if you have NOT registered at: www.thelit.com, PLEASE do so at your earliest convenience. You MUST be registered to receive this FREE coverage!

The Harry W. Colmery Memorial Park in Topeka, Kansas, is in the FINAL stages and the Dedication Ceremony will be held on 22 June 2016 at 2:00 P.M. on Kansas Avenue between 9th and 10th Streets in Topeka, Kansas. Governor Brownback has declared 22 June 2016 as "Harry W. Colmery Day" within the State of Kansas. This date is the day that the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act (commonly known as the G.I. Bill) of 1944 was signed into law. Colmery authored this piece of work of elegance in longhand on hotel stationary inside of Room 570 of the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. This has been described by many as the one piece of legislation that changed the world for Veterans and their Families and for those to follow. Colmery served as National Commander of The American Legion in 1936 – 1937.

PLEASE plan to attend this Ceremony to pay tribute to one of Our Own Kansas Legionnaires.

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).

Terry Marr for Department Vice Commander

My name is Terrence (Terry) Marr and I am announcing my candidacy for The American Legion Department of Kansas Vice Commander for 2016-2017.

I am a life member of Post 408 Derby-Haysville, Sons of the American Legion member, and Legion Rider. I have been a member of The American Legion for the past 15 years. I earned my eligibility in The American Legion by serving in the US Air Force from 1976 to 2000, and retiring after 24 years of active duty service.

I served during the Iran Hostage Rescue Attempt and the invasion of Panama, and Lebanon/Grenada. I am a Gulf War veteran and deployed during Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Desert Calm, and the liberation of Kuwait.

I am currently the 5th District Commander and previously served as a Post Finance Officer, Adjutant, Commander, District Executive Committee, and District Vice Commander. I have served the Department of Kansas on the Land Committee, Centennial Membership Committee, and have served at the National level on the National Security Commission, and the Aerospace Committee for the past 4 years.

My goals as Department Vice Commander are to increase public awareness and community knowledge of The American Legion and its programs, increase membership and help achieve our Department goal of 45,000 members by 2019.

I am passionate about The American Legion, I am committed to our principles and programs, and I am willing to take on the responsibilities as your Department Vice Commander.

I have the support of my wife, my four children, and my Post. I would greatly appreciate your support as well. Please vote for me as your Department Vice Commander at our Convention in Hutchinson in May.

The Department ALR team will be getting more information out on the gas stops and memorials that we will be visiting as the pre-run is done and things are then finalized. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Department ALR Chairman, Don Behrens @ 620-245-4252 or visit: kansasalr.com for all the registration and motel information. Hope to see you along the route of this year's Department of Kansas American Legion Riders Legacy Run.

"Please, Always Remember the Mission."

2016 Kansas Legacy Run
(Continued from Page 1)
Unit Cohesion

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is; for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1

Many of our readers will recognize the term “unit cohesion”. There may have been some of our readers who have served in such units during their military service.

The concept of “unit cohesion” comes from a young 1LT Maxwell Thurman, US Army back in 1950. The objective was to develop a unit with close bonds between every element of command. The idea was to establish a single unit of “esprit de corps”.

When I look across our nation called America; I believe we need to develop a unity with one another. Remember the old saying, “All for one – One for All”! The Holy Bible is such a book that unites a community and a land to become a nation. It is therefore, the duty of every member of a society to unite in the support of a sacred trust.

As citizens of this nation, veterans of the armed forces; it is our task to help develop integrity and discipline for our nation. This requires not only discipline and devotion; it also requires dedication to the unit; called the United States of America.

Unit cohesion is the development of mutual trust, understanding and leadership. Within the unit called, The American Legion; we who have served have agreed to such unity for which we are called.

The Preamble to Constitution of, The American Legion says that: “For God and Country we associate ourselves together...to perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism...by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.” This is Unit Cohesion! Don’t sign on unless you are willing to sign in.

COLONY DONATIONS

Following is a list of donations received since the March/April issue of the Sunflower Legionnaire for the Harry W. Colmery memorial. Sister Diane Steele, SCL, Ph.D., Leavenworth; Patrick Michaelis, Topeka; Robert & Jan Maxwell, Topeka; Clark Cummins, Leavenworth; Kansas American Auxiliary; Sandra Patzman, Overland Park; Parrish Management Corp., Topeka; John Mimnick, Topeka; Capt., & Mrs. Adam Firestone, Buellton, CA; Jimmie & Rehta Foster, Topeka; Bill Knight, Leavenworth; Military Officers Assn. of America, Leavenworth; Gerald Marlin, LaCrosse; AL District 1; Steven Palmer, Kansas City, MO; Dr. Tom & Kathy Holder, Prairie Village; Federal Home Loan Bank, Topeka; and Paul & Jennifer Lohmeyer, Dayton, OH.

CLINT WATTERS CANDIDATE FOR DEPARTMENT MASTER-AT-ARMS

Clint earned his eligibility by serving in the U.S. Army and the Kansas Army National Guard for a combined total of 22 years of service, during the period from 1963 to 1985. He served a tour in Vietnam. During his military service he served as a company/battery clerk, engine equipment operator, supply sergeant, mess sergeant, Infantry Platoon Sergeant, and Infantry First Sergeant. He earned several awards while serving. He is a service connected disabled veteran.

He first joined The American Legion in 1968 by joining Post 23. He later joined Post 400 where he is a life member. Clint has served as Master-At-Arms, Vice Commander, and Post Commander with Post 400. He has been on the Post 400 Executive Board for many years. He served on the Funeral Honor Detail with Post 400. Clint has served on the District Executive Committee, and is currently serving as District Adjutant.

In addition to his service with The American Legion, Clint is also a life member of Post 1650 VFW, a life member of The Disabled American Veterans. He also works with several volunteer organizations near his home.

Clint Watters has the endorsement of Post 400 and this year for the District for Department Master-At-Arms.
HISTORIAN

JOE JOHNSTON

The first issue of “The American Legion Weekly” was published on July 4, 1919 in New York City. Soon a printers’ strike caused the magazine to move to Washington, D.C. in early October 1919.

The first issue urged Legionnaires to enroll new members, organize Posts in the states, hold State Conventions, and elect delegates to the National Convention. Members were reminded that the Legion should be presented to the American People in its proper light. Also, keep local Posts free of partisan politics.

The front cover of the first issue was a reproduction of General John J. Pershing’s congratulatory telegram to the Legion.

Originally, “The Weekly” was not part of the membership but was sold separately, but later was made part of the membership dues. Although more copies were printed with each issue, 12,000 the first run to 300,000 before the end of the first year the magazine was losing money.

In 1926, the magazine began publishing once a month and was called “The American Legion Monthly.” Ten years later the name was changed to “The American Legion.”

Don’t forget to mention our magazine to a prospective member. Be sure to point out that it comes as part of their dues.

Leadership College
June 3-5

This year’s American Legion Leadership College will take place at Cloud County Community College in Concordia June 3-5. There is another event going on during the time of the ALLC, so please contact Department NOW if you need housing other than what is available at the college.

This year National is offering Leadership Education And Development, (LEAD) which is a one day training session designed to provide professional development training for members at any and all levels. Every member who attends the LEAD sessions will receive a special pin from National Headquarters.

A representative from National will present an overview regarding Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. A special presentation on Public Relations will also be included.

Internal Affairs & Membership will delve into the finer points of Post Operations. The process for developing effective Post membership teams will also be addressed.

The American Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL members over the age of 21 are invited to attend the College. An enrollment coupon is provided below for your convenience. Cost of the College is the same as it has been for years, $40.00 per person which includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch, and Bar-b-que dinner at Concordia Post 76, and Sunday breakfast. In addition the enrollment fee includes air conditioned dorm housing at the College—attendees must bring their own sheets, pillow, pillow case, blanket, bath soap, towels and personal items.

Check in for the College begins at 3pm on Friday, June 3. Dinner will be available from 5 until 6pm followed by a meeting of the Department Executive Committee. Sessions for all attendees will commence at 8:15am Saturday and 9:00am Sunday, June 4 and 5 with a break for lunch on Saturday and conclusion of the College on Sunday no later than noon.

Dan Bartlett, Department Service Officer, will hold a refresher course Saturday on the eight most frequently used VA forms.

Of course the annual migration of the O-Poop-Pah-Doo will gather at the local Pizza Hut for its evening of fun immediately following the DEC meeting Friday.

Please check the appropriate box in the registration below regarding housing. We cannot guarantee housing will be provided if you do not check the box indicating your need for housing at the College.

LEADERSHIP COLLEGE REGISTRATION
ENCLOSED IS MY $40 REGISTRATION FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION LEADERSHIP COLLEGE JUNE 3-5

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Member of ____________________________

Post, Squadron, Unit (circle one)

Post Service Officer Training ________ Yes or No

[ ] YES, I will need housing at the College

[ ] NO, I will not need housing at the College

Mail to: Department Headquarters

1314 SW Topeka, Topeka, KS 66612

David O. Warnken for National Executive Committeeman

I am announcing my intent to run for another term as National Executive Committeeman (NEC), representing the Kansas American Legion. I have had the honor of serving the great state of Kansas in this position since 2004.

In addition to serving as NEC, I have been appointed as Chairman of the NEC Resolutions Subcommittee, Chairman of the NEC National Finance Liaison Committee, Director of Soldiers Wish Charity, member of Citizens Flag Alliance Committee, member of 100th Anniversary Celebration Committee, Vice Chairman of the Department Advisory Committee, member of the Past Department Commanders Club Executive Committee, and lead trainer of the new NEC classes. I truly enjoy the work I do on behalf of The American Legion and our veterans of this great Nation.

I gained my eligibility to belong to The American Legion by my service in the U.S. Navy (Seabees) from 1966-1972. I served as a Construction Mechanic 2nd Class with Mobile Construction Battalion Eleven during two deployments to Vietnam. I am now employed part time with the local John Deere dealership. I have the support of my wife Lorraine. I have the endorsement of my Post #68 of Hutchinson, and the endorsement of the Seventh District Executive Committee to seek this office.

Flag Day
June 14
2016