



The American Legion's
3rd District, Department of Missouri
"Third Herd"



Commander Edward A. Weaverling
101 E. Samuel St., Hamilton MO. 64644
816-805-2319 commander.third.district@gmail.com

Adjutant Robert C. Emery
16001 E 31st St., Independence MO 64055
816-313-5109 remery18@comcast.net

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

1 January 2024

Web Site Address
www.mo3rdherd.com

Facebook Address
www.facebook.com/ThirdHerdMissouri

This newsletter is available to
view on our website

Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are held Quarterly on
the second Sunday of the month
at Posts throughout the District.

03/10/24, Post 236, Excelsior Springs

06/09/24, Post 216, Bethany

09/08/24, New Commander Assigns

The Commander is the source of all
content unless otherwise noted.
Submit articles and pictures for the
Newsletter by email to the
Commander. (Subject: Newsletter)
two weeks prior to Quarterly
publishing. All submissions subject
to editing.



GOODBYE 2023
WELCOME 2024

The 2023 year is behind us as is the shortest day of the
year. Days are slowly starting to get longer and warmer.

Most of our lives are rather quiet this time of year. The
holidays are behind us and it is still cold enough to keep
us from outdoor distractions. This is the perfect time for
your post to put on a pot of coffee & hold an informal
'workshop' session to brainstorm Public Relations and
recruiting ideas. Start planning your activities for 2024.
Make plans and execute the best ideas.

Continue working on your public image. How does the public
perceive you? Do they think you are just a bunch of crotchety
old geezers that put out flags occasionally and spend the rest
of your time sitting around drinking beer and telling 'war
stories'.

Take advantage of every opportunity to present your
American Legion post to the public in a positive light.

*Make your post a place a veteran would want to join
regardless of their service era.*

3rd DISTRICT MEETING

Polo Memorial Post 557 in Polo, MO hosted the District Meeting on the 10th of December at 1500.

Attendance was sadly normal but the post-meeting meal was excellent. Sixteen legionnaires were present but only 4 of our 25 posts were represented (61 – Kansas City, 95 - Liberty, 285 - Hamilton, & 557 - Polo).

While we would like to have all 25 post Commanders and their adjutants present, anyone can attend. District meetings are not just for district staff. They are a chance for post officers to interact with District staff.

Four to five Posts have been setting the budget, approving donations, electing officers for as long as I have been attending. We need more participation on the district level. We have various committee positions we can't find anyone to fill. We have District Officer positions that we need candidates for.

As Commander, I am in my 3rd year. The district constitution says my position is a two-year term and I cannot be *elected* to succeed myself. However, no legionnaire has stepped up to take over the job of commander. As a consequence, I will remain your District Commander for the foreseeable future until my relief can be found, elected & trained to take my place.

In addition, I am now the Zone II Vice Commander covering Districts 3, 4, 5 & 7. This is a one-year term on Department Staff and I am filling this position simultaneously.

I would like to personally thank Jarchow-Schroeder Post 61 and Commander Dan Heiser for hosting our September 17th meeting.

Note: A copy of the official meeting minutes are always posted on the 3rd Herd webpage following each meeting. www.mo3rdherd.com

DÉJÀ VU

Are you seeing things? Is this the current newsletter or an old one? Didn't you see that article in the last issue? Maybe you did and maybe you didn't! Important things are worth repeating. Yes, some of the articles you have seen before. Some are similar but have been updated. Others are totally new. Do yourself and me a favor and read through it before you judge it. (NOTE: It might be more interesting if more members contributed to it.)

AMERICAN LEGION MULTIYEAR MEMBERSHIP IS HERE

Eliminate the yearly hassle of remembering to renew your American Legion membership by taking advantage of the new multiyear membership available to current and potential members. Legionnaires needing to renew 2024 or veterans joining the organization for the first time can lock in a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew or legion.org/join.

A multiyear membership was approved by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion during the organization's Spring Meeting last May. Resolution 1: Purchase of Multiple Years of Membership approves "a five-years pilot program offering the purchase of these consecutive 12-month member terms at the then current dues rate."

Here is what you need to know about the three-year membership:

- ❖ Multiyear member sign-up is only available on the national American Legion website. Current or potential members cannot renew or join for three-year membership at the post level or through MyLegion.org.
- ❖ Renew now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew.
- ❖ Join now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/join.
- ❖ Legionnaires already renewed for 2024 will soon be able to renew under the multi-year membership starting with the 2025-member year.
- ❖ Payment for the three-year membership will be upfront.
- ❖ There is not a discount rate with the three-year membership.
- ❖ Membership cards will be sent annually by Legion posts.
- ❖ Those who sign up for a multiyear membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time they have signed up for the multiyear membership.

Please note that the multiyear membership will work just like PUFL. Whatever rate the member renews at is the what the post/department/national will receive for the duration of that timeframe. Once the member renews after the three-year renewal is up, the renewal rate will adjust to the new rate. For questions, please contact Department headquarters.

NOTE: The 3-year option will lock in your dues for the period at the current rate your post charges. With 2025 dues going up \$5 at the National level, this would save you \$10 since your 2025 & 2026 dues would be at the 2024 rate.

BE THE ONE – NOT Just A One Year Program

Every year, the American Legion elects a new National Commander. Each new commander places emphasis on a program of personal interest. Our outgoing National Commander J. “Jim” Troiola put Suicide Prevention in the spotlight and named this campaign “BE THE ONE”.



Unlike previous commander's programs, BE THE ONE is going to continue indefinitely. As a society, we have an ongoing problem of suicide within our communities, especially amongst our veterans. Local help is available from the “Missouri Veterans Suicide Prevention Team” for the asking. The team is directed by Jon Sabala, Missouri Department of Mental Health Veterans Service Officer. This team of volunteers conducts suicide prevention training around the state. Currently there are only a handful of team members doing this training. They have sent out emails to the American Legion, DAV and VFW challenging them to host training at the district level and post level. Having them conduct a training session at your post would be a great public relations opportunity. You could make it a community event open to the public. After all, veterans are not the only potential suicide group. Teen suicide is also on the rise and the public could receive some much needed, potentially life-saving information. This training is free, approximately 90 min. long and designed to help prevent **ALL** potential suicides (not just veterans). (<https://dmh.mo.gov/veterans>) (<https://www.facebook.com/MOVSPT>)



ONLINE TRAINING = BASIC TRAINING

On-line course consisting of 6 lesson units and 1 exam unit. (History / Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation / National Security / Americanism / Children & Youth / Course Conclusion / Final Exam). It is self-paced. You can log out and log back in whenever you have free time. Upon successful completion, you will receive a link to a web page to print out a course completion diploma. Graduation also qualifies you for an “American Legion Education Institute” lapel/hat pin. As an incentive, I will buy the pin for any district member that shows me that they successfully completed the course while I am District Commander. (Sadly, not one legionnaire in the district has taken me up on this offer yet! ☹)

PER CAPITA DUES

What are they? Member dues go to National & Department with some staying at the post level. Per Capita Dues are the only source of income for the district. It is assessed at the rate of \$1 (one dollar) for each member on your post roster at the EOY. Billings are sent out to the posts on September 15th and are due to be paid to the District Finance Officer by a November 8th due date. If you have any questions, contact Calvin Bumgarner (913) 522-1103



POW-MIA EMPTY CHAIR

Every quarter, we feature a dedication to an individual POW-MIA. This quarter we honor a Naval Aviator lost in World War 2.

Lieutenant Commander Edward Henry “Butch” O’Hare was an American naval aviator of the United States Navy, who on February 20, 1942 became the Navy's first flying ace when he single-handedly attacked a formation of nine heavy bombers approaching his aircraft carrier.

Even though he had a limited amount of ammunition, he managed to shoot down or damage several enemy bombers. On April 21, 1942, he became the first naval recipient of the Medal of Honor in World War II.

O’Hare’s final action took place on the night of November 26, 1943, while he was leading the U.S. Navy’s first-ever nighttime fighter attack launched from an aircraft carrier. During this encounter with a group of Japanese torpedo bombers, O'Hare's Grumman F6F Hellcat was shot down; his aircraft was never found.

In 2001, the Air Classics Museum remodeled an aircraft in their collection to replicate the F4F-3 Wildcat that O'Hare flew on his Medal of Honor flight. The restored Wildcat is exhibited in terminal 2 of Chicago’s O'Hare International Airport in honor of its namesake.

Lest we forget.



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The on-time period for the collection of dues for 2024 has passed. Membership dues were supposed to be paid for 2024 by January 1st of 2024! If dues are not paid by Jan. 1 of each calendar year, the member is considered to be *delinquent*. After Feb. 1, the member is classified as *suspended*. If not paid by June 30, the member is *dropped* from the membership rolls.

If you were buying a season pass to an amusement park, you would be expected to pay for the pass before you could use it. You should treat the legion the same way. ***You should pay for the new year before the start of that year.***

How is your post doing with renewals? Go to www.missourilegion.org and look at the district report on the membership page. The three rightmost columns are the important ones.

Note: If your membership is delinquent, expired or suspended, some of the American Legion membership benefits may not be available to you.

BULLETIN: The National Convention Finance Committee recommended and the National Convention Delegates approved an increase of \$5.00 in membership dues starting with the 2025 membership year. Despite staff reductions and process improvements, the continued decline in membership and ever-increasing costs of doing business make this increase necessary. This was not an easy decision to make and could not be postponed any longer.

NOTE: The Department of Missouri does not anticipate a need to increase state dues for the foreseeable future. They have implemented many cost cutting measures to hold down their administrative costs. For example, the “Missouri Legionnaire” newsletter that was mailed to you on a quarterly basis is now posted on line. This saves the department the cost of printing & mailing a copy to every member in the state. Another example is where the District Commanders now bring the annual membership packets back from the annual convention for distribution. These packets can be quite heavy and are very costly to mail to all the posts. Hand-delivery by the District Commanders has resulted a substantial savings.

MYLEGION.ORG

The system still has issues but use it if you can. If you encounter a problem, use the ‘help’ button and click on ‘known issues’ to see if the problem has already been reported. If it hasn’t been reported, do so. The system is only going to get better if we use it and provide feedback. This system is invaluable to Post Commanders, Post Adjutants & Post Membership Chairpersons. The search functions will help you locate Post 1000 members to potentially transfer into your post and the administrative functions are designed to make the Adjutant’s job much easier.

Remember the “We want you back!” retention letters that used to exist? Well, they’re back! With just a few key strokes, you can print off letters addressed to your post members that are behind in their dues. The letters are customized with your post’s dues amount filled in and your post Commander’s name at the bottom. It has a detachable portion at the bottom with mailing instructions.

LEGISLATIVE INVOLVEMENT

When I was on active duty, I never thought about joining a veterans organization and I was never approached by one. When I retired, I felt my veteran rights were being threatened. The BRAC Commission was closing military facilities at every turn which would limit my ability to utilize military medical & commissary facilities. Any time Congress wanted to make monetary changes, it seemed like they wanted to target military retiree & veteran benefits. I found myself wanting to join an organization that would fight to maintain &/or improve my veteran rights. I found the American Legion!

The American Legion is constantly present in the halls of Congress. Some of our members are also members of Congress. The strength of our political influence depends on the volume of our membership. Our membership represents a huge voting block that Congress cannot ignore. However, we cannot sit back & rest on our laurels. We must work to keep our membership numbers strong and growing to maintain our influential status.

Besides maintaining our current benefits, the legion has been instrumental in gaining us additional benefits. The Legion helped bring about the GI Bill. They helped pressure the Veterans Administration into recognizing and providing treatment for PTSD, Agent Orange Exposure and most recently, Toxic Burn Pit Exposure. These changes didn't happen overnight. It took a lot of work from dedicated people to make these things a reality.

You can help by putting additional pressure on Congress. Go online to www.legion.org Select the 'Programs' menu, scroll down and select 'Legislative'. Click on the 'Learn More' button. On the left-hand menu, click on 'Legislative Action Center'. Here you can read about the latest issues the Legion is supporting to benefit veterans. Explore this page. From here you can sign up for email alerts. From any of the issue pages, you can have a form letter with your name on it sent to your Senator &/or Representative.

This 'Legislative Action Center' allows you to have a personal impact on veterans' issues with only a minimal amount of personal effort. Won't you help?!?

NOTE: There is a shortcut for legislative involvement. Log in at www.legion.org/action This takes you to a simplified page for rapidly voicing your views on important topics. (Less reading & more action). You can make entries here as often as you wish. Be aware that this legislative access page can be used by the public too! Have your non-veteran friends use this page to voice their concerns too!



VERSUS

“My post
small and

**BE THE
ONE**

is too
we don't

have the manpower to support both of these programs plus
membership revitalization!”

“Both of these programs are important but we can't do both!”

My answer to these excuses is “Yes, you can!”

Both programs are inner-twined!!! In both cases the mental health of the veteran is of the utmost importance. In a rural setting, you know most of the veterans in the area. In fact, many of them are on the roster of your post.

They may not drive anymore. They may not attend meetings anymore for one reason or another. They may be expired members. Regardless they are all local veterans that deserve our attention!

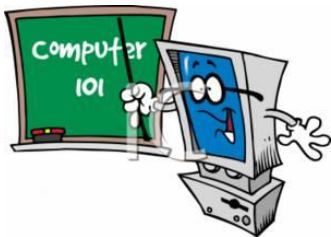
An older veteran sitting home alone could easily become depressed and depression can lead to suicide.

Engage with your roster, both current members and expired. ‘Buddy Check’ calls are wellness checks. If we take care of our fellow veterans, they will take care of us. They may join back up if they are expired. They may just speak well of us to others that may result in others joining. They may have been despondent/suicidal & may be turned around by realizing that someone still cares about them.

Design some of your post events to help your local veteran community. Host a veteran luncheon event for the veterans that do not drive at night. If they do not drive at all, consider offering to give them rides to and from. Or pack them a lunch and deliver it to them (allow time for a short visitation). Invite all local vets to attend. If you call a member that no longer attends meetings, ask them why. You might find that what ever drove them away no longer exists. This might make them want to get involved again.

Don't pressure them for dues either. If they are expired, politely ask them why they left. It might be something you can fix. If they are overdue and planning to renew, ask them to do so as soon as possible to save the legion the money it takes to send out renewal notices. If they are current members & already renewed for the coming year, thank them for their continuing support of the legion.

Do your part . . . Pick up the phone and make some calls!



Computer got you confused?!? If you are a post Commander or Adjutant, you need to get computerized to function effectively in today's American Legion. If you need help finding your way around in MyLegion and other legion websites, let me know and I will try to find you help.

POST ACTIVITIES (past & future)

Clyde Gustine Post 236 – Excelsior Springs

10/31/23 ⇒ 97th annual Bill Payne Halloween party, in which we give prizes for children and then treat everyone to hotdogs, chips, and soda for free. (To make sure they have something safe to do on Halloween.)

12/9/23 ⇒ SAL held their 2nd annual “Toys for Tots” breakfast raising approximately \$1200.00 of toys.

Wilson-Axline Post 216 – Bethany

Participated in Veterans Day activities at South Harrison RII and at Ridgeway R5 schools. We also attended a great lunch for the veterans provided by the First Baptist Church of Ridgeway. Flags were put out around Bethany to observe Veterans Day. The Post 216 Auxiliary held their annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at Miriam Cemetery December 16th at 11 a.m. American Legion Post 216 and the Auxiliary held their annual Veterans Day Soup Supper at the hall on Veterans Day. The meal was free to all veterans and their families. American Legion Post 216 had several veterans interviewed on KAAN radio for Veterans Day.

Kidder Memorial Post 140 – Kidder

We held a public Veteran's Day celebration in Kidder. Refurbished the flag poles and cannon at the Veteran's corner of the City Park.

Boutwell-Clark-Craven-Eads Post 285 – Hamilton

We rode in three parades this last quarter. The annual Missouri Star Quilt Company birthday parade, the annual “Gas & Steam Engine” power parade & the Penny High School Homecoming parade.

We put out flags on the main highway through town for Veteran's Day.

Monthly, we partner with the Second Harvest Community Food Bank to distribute food to citizens of NW Missouri that are in need. This event is held in the parking lot of the post.

These four (4) are the only post accomplishment inputs I received for publication. ☹

I didn't receive any announcements for upcoming events for publication. ☹

It is hard for our posts to support each other if we keep our activities a secret from each other.

HOT OFF THE PRESSES

Congratulations to the below listed Post Commanders, who have won the Lincoln Pilgrimage Membership challenge in their respective category as December 31, 2023.

They have each won an all-expense paid trip to the 91st Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, IL, being held February 11-12, 2024, should they choose to attend.

The trip includes admission to the Lincoln Library, A membership Challenge jacket, a reception held on Sunday February 11, where the National Commander Daniel Seehafer, Past National President Sharon Conatser (standing in for National President Lisa Williamson) and Sons National Commander Donald Hall Jr. will be present for a meet and greet.

On Monday February 12, the program includes The American Legion Family Breakfast honoring National Commander Seehafer with PNP Conatser as the Keynote Speaker. A 10:00 a.m. Pilgrimage to the Tomb, where a wreath will be placed by the Department of Missouri Leadership followed by The Lincoln Commemorative Luncheon at 12:30 p.m. -Keynote Speaker Commander Seehafer.

- **Commander Daniel Straasburg, Garden City Memorial Post 498, Garden City, MO 64747 District 6 – (Category – 1, 15-50 members –115.00%)**
- **Commander Patrick McLaughlin, John I Wilson Post 94, Troy, MO - District 9 - (Category - 2, 51-100 members – 104.00%)**
- **Commander Jack Lauck, Griffith-Skiles Post 237, Richmond, MO – District 3 - (Category - 3, 101-200 members – 95.53%)**
- **Commander Eugene Millard, Malta Bend Memorial Post 558, Malta Bend, MO – District 7 - (Category - 4, 201-500 members – 94.52%)**
- **Commander Brian Brickhaus, Moonier Reddick Post 133, Perryville, MO (Category 501+ members - 87.59%)**

2024 DATES TO REMEMBER

January 2024

- 1 New Years Day – Dept Offices Closed
- 1 **Be The One Day**
- 15 Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday – Department Office Closed
- 18 **80% Membership Target Date**
- 23 Veteran's Days at the Capitol
- 28 Coast Guard's 109th Birthday

February 2024 (Americanism Month)

- 1 **Be The One Day**
- 4 Four Chaplains Sunday
- 6 **Law & Order/Fire Fighter Nomination due to Department**
- 6 **Distinguished Legionnaire Nomination due to Department**
- 6 **Distinguished Service Nomination due to Department**
- 11-12 Lincoln Pilgrimage -Springfield, IL
- 14 Valentines Day & Ash Wednesday
- 14 **85% Membership Target Date**
- 17 **Department Executive Committee Meeting – Harry B. Pryor Post 152, 123 E. Broadway, Ashland MO 1:00 p.m.**
- 19 President's Day – Department Headquarters Closed
- 25 **Oratorical Contest – Southern Boone County High School, Ashland, MO 1:00 p.m.**
- 25 – 26 National Washington Conference

March 2024

- 1 **Be The One Day**
- 1 **Eagle Scout Application Dues to Department Headquarters**
- 6-10 **National Vice Commander Vail visit to the Department of Missouri (Schedule Pending)**
- 10 3rd District Meeting, 1500, Clyde Gustine Post 236, Excelsior Springs, MO
- 10 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 13 **90% Membership Target Date**
- 15 American Legion's 105th Birthday
- 24 Palm Sunday
- 25 **Registration For State Youth Government Day due to Department**
- 29 Vietnam War Remembrance Day
- 29 Good Friday
- 31 Easter Sunday

April 2024 (Children & Youth Month)

- 1 **Be The One Day**
- 6 15th Annual Missouri Boy State Trust Trivia Night
- 9 State Youth Government Day
- 10 **95% Membership Target Date**
- 15 Annual Post Data Report Due to Department
- 20 All Scholarship applications are due to Department
- 27 American Legion Family Day

May 2024

- 1 **Be The One Day**
- 6-9 National Spring Meetings – Indianapolis, IN
- 7-8 Truman Pilgrimage – Independence, MO
- 8 Truman Holiday - Department Headquarters Closed
- 10 2024 Membership Award forms due to Department

15 100% Membership Target Date

- 17-19 85th High School Oratorical Contest – Hillsdale College Michigan
- 18 Armed Forces Day
- 24 National Poppy Day
- 27 Memorial Day - Department Headquarters Office Closed

June 2024

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 9 Cutoff for Department Convention Registration**
- 9 3rd District Meeting, 1500, Wilson-Axline Post 216, Bethany, MO
- 10-14 Missouri Cadet Patrol Academy – Jefferson City**
- 14 Flag Day
- 14 Army's 249th Birthday
- 15 Consolidated Post Reports due to Department Headquarters if you are filing a paper form.**
- 16 Father's Day
- 19 Juneteenth Day – Department Headquarters closed
- 22-29 84th Missouri Boys State**
- 28-30 Missouri American Legion Legacy Ride
- 24 JROTC applications are due to Department Headquarters
- 25 Korean War Remembrance Day
- 30 Toot Your Horn entries due to Department**

July 2024

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 1 Consolidated Post Report due to National if you are filing an electronic report through MyLegion**
- 4 Independence Day – Department Headquarters Closed
- 7 Newsletter Competition Entries due to Department or can be hand delivered to the Department Convention office NLT than 9:00 am July 12, 2024**
- 11 -14 Department Convention - Hilton St. Louis Airport**
- 19 Cutoff for National Convention Registration**
- 25-27 National Membership Workshop- Indianapolis, IN

August 2024

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 4 USCG Birthday (1790)
- 8 -18 Missouri State Fair -Sedalia
- 15-20 97th American Legion Baseball World Series – Shelby, NC
- 18 – 22 National American Legion Legacy Run
- 23-29 105th American Legion National Convention, New Orleans, LA

September 2024 (American Legion National Disaster Preparedness)

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 2 Labor Day - Department Headquarters Closed
- 8 3rd District Meeting, 1500
- 11 Patriot Day
- 16 American Legion Day
- 16 Fall Conference -Cutoff Date for Room Reservations
- 20 POW-MIA Recognition Day
- 20-29 Combined Americanism Conference – Indianapolis, IN
- 24-28 80th Cotton Carnival Celebration – Sikeston, MO

October 2024 (National Disability/Employment Awareness Month)

- 1 Be The One Day**

- 7-10 National Fall Meetings, Indianapolis, IN
- 12 Eisenhower Pilgrimage – Abilene Kansas
- 13 Navy's 230th Birthday
- 14 Columbus Day
- 18-20 Fall Conference -Capitol Plaza**

November 2024 (Membership Retention Month)

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 3 Daylight Savings Time Ends (Clocks back an hour)
- 5 Election Day
- 10 Marine Corps' 226th Birthday
- 11 Veterans Day – Department Headquarters Closed
- 28-29 Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2024

- 1 Be The One Day**
- 7 Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Day
- 8 3rd District Meeting, 1500,
- 20 Space Force's 5th Birthday
- 31 Membership Cutoff for Lincoln Pilgrimage



