



The American Legion's  
3<sup>rd</sup> District, Department of Missouri  
"Third Herd"



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**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

**1 April 2023**

Web Site Address  
[www.mo3rdherd.com](http://www.mo3rdherd.com)

Facebook Address  
[www.facebook.com/ThirdHerdMissouri](http://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.

11 Jun 2023, Post 216, Bethany ☺

That is the last scheduled meeting  
of Commander Weaverling. The  
new Commander Elect will  
schedule future meetings.

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.



**ELECTION SEASON  
IS JUST AROUND  
THE CORNER**

Elect only qualified candidates that want the job and are willing to do it to the best of their ability. Consider computer literacy as a needed talent. These jobs are not just 'notches on your belt' positions. These are working positions that must be done to the betterment of the American Legion and the local membership. (Last year, two (2) posts in the district elected Commanders that weren't even current members.)

The Department Convention is 7/13/23 – 7/16/23

The Department and District Constitutions both state that post elections should be held at least 30 days prior but not more than 60 days prior to the Department's Annual Convention. This election window would be between 5/14/23 and 6/13/23.

New officers may be installed immediately but must be installed by October 20<sup>th</sup> (Your post must submit your "Certification of Post Officials" by 9/1/2023 for inclusion in Department Directory)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> DISTRICT MEETING**

Kirby Stapleton Post 467 of Lathrop hosted the District Meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March at 1500.

Attendance was better than normal and the post-meeting meal was excellent. Quite a few legionnaires were present but only 6 of our 26 posts were represented (61 – Kansas City, 95 - Liberty, 236 – Excelsior Springs, 285 - Hamilton, 467 - Lathrop & 557 - Polo).

While we would like to have all 26 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. In the near future, training is going to be offered during the meeting to support you in your post membership retention and recruiting.

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. We have comrades filling multiple positions because we can't find interested members.

I would like to personally thank Kirby Stapleton Post 467 and Commander David Eads for hosting our March meeting.

Note: A copy of the official meeting minutes are always posted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Herd webpage following each meeting. [www.mo3rdherd.com](http://www.mo3rdherd.com)

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### **HOSTING POST(S) NEEDED**

Can your post host a district meeting? Most posts could if they wanted too. If a post is willing to host a district meeting, they will receive \$100.<sup>00</sup> from District. As host, you provide the facility, the main food course and the drinks (iced tea, water, coffee). The rest of the potluck meal is side dishes brought by meeting attendees. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of March, June, September & December at 1500. Food is served following the meeting. We still need hosts for meetings beyond our next scheduled meeting on 6/11/23. Please let me know if your post wishes to volunteer. Note: If your post has an Auxiliary Unit, the Legion Auxiliary District President will hold a meeting also.

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### **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.)

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## SUICIDE PREVENTION

As a society, we have an ongoing problem of suicide within our communities, especially amongst our veterans. Local help is available for the asking. Tony Gardner is a member of Gower Memorial Post 393 and a member of the “Missouri Veterans Suicide Prevention Team”.

**BE THE  
ONE**

The team was founded 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. Tony has sent out emails to the American Legion, DAV and VFW challenging them to host training at the district level and post level. Having him 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.



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## ONLINE TRAINING = BASIC TRAINING

On-line course consisting of 6 lesson units and 1 exam unit. 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. (History / Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation / National Security / Americanism / Children & Youth / Course Conclusion / Final Exam). As an incentive, I will buy the pin for any member that shows me that they successfully completed the course while I am District Commander.

## IMAGE, IMAGE, IMAGE . . .

Continue to work on your public image. How does the public perceive you? Do they think you're just a few 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. Hold an informal 'workshop' session at your post to brainstorm PR and recruiting ideas. Make plans and execute the best ideas.

Make your post a place a veteran would want to join regardless of their war era experience.



## **POW-MIA EMPTY CHAIR**

This quarter we honor the USS *Juneau* (CL-52), a United States Navy *Atlanta*-class light cruiser sunk at the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. In total, 687 men, including the 5 Sullivan brothers, were MIA and presumed KIA as a result of her sinking. She was torpedoed and sank on 13 November 1942, with only 10 survivors rescued after 8 days in the water. On 17 March 2018, the wreck of *Juneau* was located at a depth of about 4,200 m (13,800 ft) off the coast of the Solomon Islands. At this depth, the repatriation of their remains is impossible.

Note: Nine (9) Missourians were amongst the *Juneau* missing: SEA1 Jack B. Hafner, PHM2 Delmar C. Lipscomb, B2c Allen Zane Lokey, CQMP Glenn Owen Myers, WO William H. Robinson, FCM3 Bruce Terry Sallee, SC3 Tom Vella, SM1 Harry Joseph Vessels and MM2 Robert R. Williams.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) is continuing to pursue the identification and repatriation of our veteran dead. DNA testing takes time and progress is slow but here are some examples of their recent work:

28MAR23 Soldier Accounted for From Korean War (Carrillo, C.)

Soldier Accounted for From World War II (Slenker, L.)

28MAR23 Airman Accounted for From WWII (Ropp, J.)

Airman Accounted for From World War II (Mills, E.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 45 servicemembers this year

Source: American Legion, National Security Division's weekly report (March 27-31, 2023)

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## **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 in September and are due to be paid to the District Finance Officer by a November due date. 7 of 26 posts in our district have yet to pay this assessment!



## **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

We are all mature, fiscally responsible adults. We go through life paying our bills as they come due. However, it seems that some of our comrades don't think paying their annual dues on time is necessary. The collection of dues for 2023 started in July of 2022 and 2023 dues are supposed to be paid by January 1, 2023! If dues are not paid by Jan. 1 of each calendar year, the member becomes delinquent. Feb. 1, the member is suspended. June 30, the member is dropped from the membership rolls.

NOTE: The Department of Missouri realizes that some members are going to pay late and has set monthly goals for the posts that increase by approximately 5% per month. The 100% renewal goal date is 17MAY23.

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

Conclusion: Anybody that hasn't paid their 2022 dues is extremely late. Be responsible and get them paid! If you haven't paid your dues for 2023 yet, pay soon. All Missouri posts should be at least 95% renewed by April 19<sup>th</sup> and 100% by May 17<sup>th</sup>.

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## **RECRUITING / BUDDY CHECKS – POST 1000 MEMBERS**

Veterans love to know that someone appreciates and cares about them. Making these 'Buddy Check' calls is essential to keeping these comrades in the legion. They may have joined online to try the legion out only to feel ignored after joining. A personal call welcoming them to the legion and inviting them to transfer to a local post is the key to retaining them as members and getting them involved. If they say they don't want to join a local post, ask them why. Remind them that as a member of Post 1000, their dues go to National and the local post(s) don't receive any of the money to support youth programs on the local level. And don't be selfish . . . if the member is interested in an American Legion program your post doesn't support (i.e. baseball), help them connect with a post that is active in that program. Also, don't forget that we are a 'Legion Family'! They might have a spouse/daughter that qualifies to be an 'Auxiliary' member or a son that qualifies to be a 'Sons' member. If they are a motorcycle rider, put them in contact with the 'Riders' chapter nearest their home. Involved members doing things that interest them are the kind of members that participate and stay with the Legion.

Note: Start with the members that have their dues paid up. They will know you're not just calling for money.



## **BUDDY CHECK – POST ROSTER**

Show your older and less active members the respect they deserve. Even though they don't come to meetings anymore, let them know that their membership is still valued. Make sure you have good contact information for them so that you can keep them informed of post activities. If they don't drive anymore, consider having a member give them a ride to a meeting. Look closely at your roster. You may spot a member that has maintained a continuous membership for decades but they have suddenly fallen behind in paying their dues. **THIS IS A RED FLAG!** Show some concern. They may be having personal issues (health, financial, etc). As a post, offer help if you can. Consider offering to pay their dues for the current year so that they won't have to worry about losing their continuous membership status. If your post is well situated financially, you might consider making them a 'Life Member'. (Note: A Life member is a member that is officially adopted by the post and the post is obligated to pay their dues for the rest of their life as long as they are a post member.)

Don't let these members be forgotten! When I was a Post Commander, we had a member that had earned a "70 years Continuous Membership" certificate. I placed his certificate in a nice frame, put on my white Legion uniform and went to visit him. As a civilian, he was a retired Missouri Highway Patrolman. In military service, he was a Combat Engineer attached to Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army during WW2. Boy did he have some stories to share. I spent over two hours just listening to this gentleman. He seemed overjoyed that someone cared enough to visit him and personally present him his certificate. I assured him that it was my honor and privilege. Sadly, he passed away 2 years later and I was the only post member that had ever met him.

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## **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.

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## **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



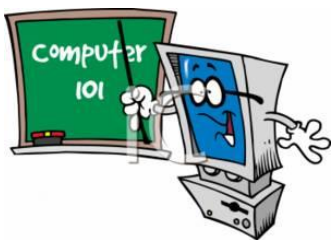
utilize military medical & commissary facilities. Any time Congress wanted to make monetary changes, it seemed like they wanted to target military retiree & veteran benefits. I found myself wanting to join an organization that would fight to maintain &/or improve my veteran rights. I found the American 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 can not ignore. However, we can't 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](http://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?!?



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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.

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### **POST ACTIVITIES (past & future)**

These would be posted here but nobody sent me any content.

I would love to post about your successes here as an example to other posts of what can be accomplished.

I would also love to promote your upcoming events to possibly add to their success.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

### April 2023

7 Good Friday – Department Headquarters Closed

11 State Youth Government Day

15 Annual Post Data Report Due

19 95% Membership Target Date

### May 2023

7-8 Truman Pilgrimage – Independence, MO

8 Truman Holiday – Department Headquarters Closed

10 2023 Membership Award forms due to Department

10-11 Spring Meetings – Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre, IN

17 100% Membership Target Date

29 Memorial Day - Department Headquarters Closed

### June 2023

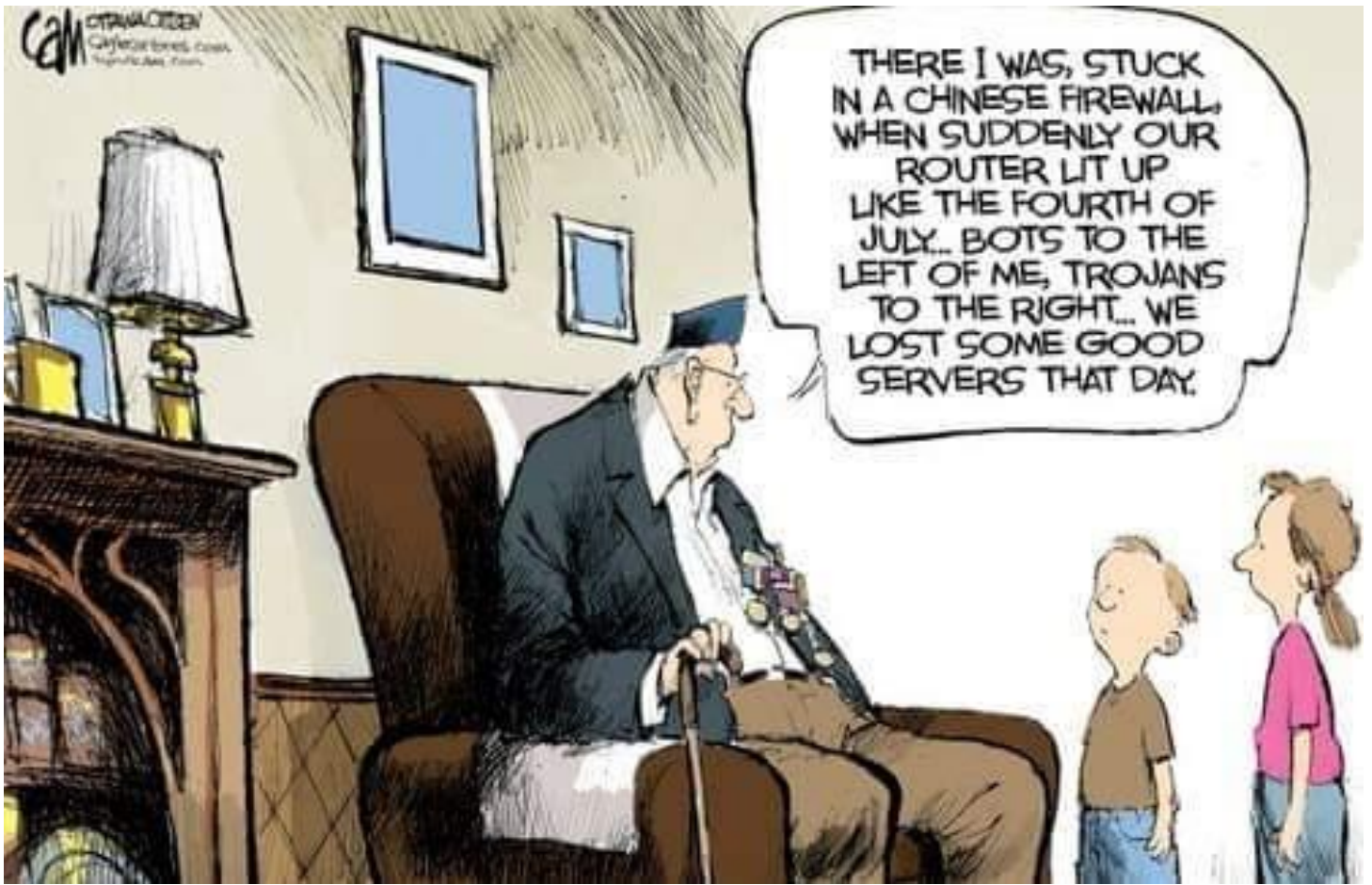
12 Cutoff for Department Convention Registration

15 Paper Copy of Consolidate Post Report due to Department

30 On-line Consolidate Post Report due to National

24 – July 1 83rd Missouri Boy State Session





SEE YA  
HAVE F  
PAINT  
I JUST  
TRANSE  
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ENGINE

WE'LL BE DEEP BEHIND ENEMY LINES.  
REMEMBER! YOU LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND.  
EVEN IF YOU WANT TO. EVEN IF, FOR  
EXAMPLE, IT'S LIEUTENANT JONES HERE.

