



**Cecil Cox Post 147**

**Clovis, California**

**Handbook**

# Cecil Cox Post 147 Handbook

508 Fourth Street, Clovis, CA 93612

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## OUR POST

Welcome and Congratulations on your membership in The American Legion and Our Post. You now belong to our Legion family of over 4 million members! The American Legion is a powerful force in our nation. We hope your involvement will be a rewarding experience.

The American Legion began in 1919. It is the nation's largest and most influential veterans service organization. All our American Legion Family, from The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and our American Legion Riders work together as patriotic Americans to serve America and her veterans.

Since our very first meeting in Paris, France The American Legion has maintained a vision for a Strong America. Our four pillars of service are: Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.

To the extent you are able, we hope you find ways to contribute to the proud future of Our Post. Our Post's future will be defined in our service to our veterans, their families, our local communities, state and our great Nation. The future of our Post will be stronger and more rewarding because of your involvement.

As you become more involved in Our Post, you may have questions about The American Legion or Our Post. Just bring your questions to a Post officer, we will do our best to help you. We are devoted to "Mutual Helpfulness."

## POST MEETINGS

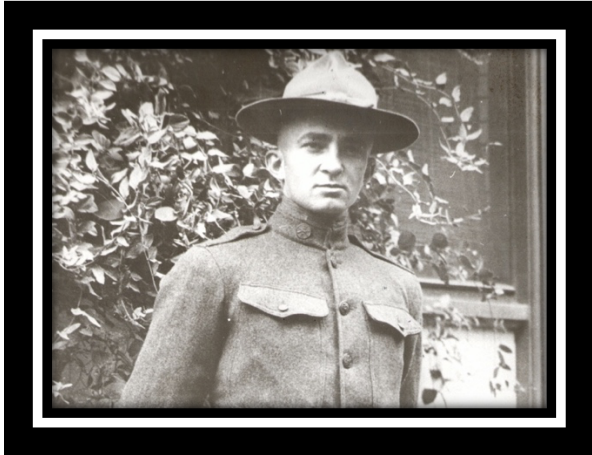
- Executive Committee Meeting: First Wednesday @ 5 p.m.
- Social & Dinner: Second Wednesday @ 5:30 p.m. (*Prior to Member Meetings.*)
- **Member Meeting: Second Wednesday @ 7 p.m.**
- Facebook Page: ( <https://www.facebook.com/clovislegion> )
- Webpage: <https://www.clovislegion.org>



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## A Short History



Our Post in Clovis, California received its permanent charter by The American Legion on March 3, 1921, with 26 charter members. Under our "Temporary Charter" our first election of Officers was held in December 1919. The original 1921 charter of our Post is framed and hangs on the wall in our Legion clubhouse, it lists the names of our charter members. Our Post is named after John "Cecil" Cox, the first Clovis resident killed in action on June 7, 1918 at the Battle of Belleau Wood in France during WW I.

Our Post is over 470 members strong and growing. We are an integral part of the greater Clovis community and a proud advocate for veterans on the local, state, and national level. Our local membership extends throughout the county.

### **LEGION UNIFORM** What is the official uniform of The American Legion?

*"A Legionnaire is in uniform if wearing an official American Legion Cap."*



**Why wearing your Legion Uniform in public?** Legionnaires like us, seen in uniform doing the good work of The American Legion creates a positive image. This helps our community "see" The American Legion as an organization they want to support. It is a very important element of our public relations and marketing efforts.

There is no benefit to Legionnaires being invisible to the public as we do the good work of the Legion, so please expose yourself to the community as proud members of The American Legion, by wearing your uniform cap.

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## LEGION LANGUAGE AND Protocols

New Legionnaires often find the following information helpful:

- **MEETING CONDUCT.** Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, governs the conduct of Post meetings
- **CEREMONY DIGNITY.** The ceremonial services of The American Legion are conducted with the solemnity befitting the dignity of this organization.
- **POW/MIA EMPTY CHAIR.** "A POW/MIA empty chair is placed at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America."
- **GAVEL.** A chair's gavel is a symbol of authority & ensures orderly meetings.
  - One tap is a message to the members:
    - \* To be seated following the opening ceremony
    - \* The completion of a business item, or
    - \* Following the announcement of adjournment
  - Two taps of the gavel call the meeting to order.
  - Three taps of the gavel are the signal for members to stand on the third tap.
  - A series of sharp taps is used to restore order at a meeting.
- **SILENT TRIBUTE.** Legionnaires standing in silent tribute in memory of departed comrades during meetings or ceremonies will face the U.S. Flag with Legion cap or hand held over their heart.
- **THE HAND CLAP.** This long held Legion tradition is a slow and rhythmic clapping of hands, much like the slow beat of a drum. The hand clap is used to welcome new members and guests when they are brought forward to be introduced and when leaving the lectern. This demonstrates respect for the individual being recognized.
- **PUFL** stands for Paid-Up-For-Life membership.
- **TRANSFERRED TO POST EVERLASTING** - refers to a Legionnaire who has died and transferred to the Post Everlasting.
- **VOLUNTEERS ARE SUPER! THEY ARE!**  
*Your Volunteer Time Has Value:* Volunteer time is now estimated to be worth over \$24 per hour! Legionnaire volunteer time is even more valuable.



**WE ARE A LEGION OF SUPER VOLUNTEERS!**

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## OUR POST FAMILY

Our Post, as the parent organization, has three other important units in our local Legion family. They are:



### AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY (ALA) UNIT

Founded in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary is the oldest member of the Legion Family of units and the most independent. The Auxiliary is a separate organization with their own legal and corporate identity. Every Spring the Auxiliary promotes the red poppy as a symbol of the sacrifices our military have made, a symbol to open people's hearts and inspire them to donate to this important fundraising program.



**Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.**

### OUR POST PROGRAMS

Our post offers many outstanding programs that serve our community, veterans and youth. The Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Riders are both programs in Our Post that operate as subordinate units with their own leadership.

### SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (SAL) SQUADRON 147

Founded in 1932, Sons of The American Legion (SAL) squadron consists of boys and men of all ages whose grandparents or parents served in the U.S. Armed Forces. **Meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 5:00 p.m.**



### AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS (ALR) CHAPTER 147

The American Legion Riders (ALR) are Legionnaires, who are also motorcycle enthusiasts. They all belong to the Legion, the Legion Auxiliary or the Sons of the American Legion. Legion Riders are well known for their charitable work. **Meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.**



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## **TRAINING** <https://www.legion.org/training>

Effective training is important to the success of our Legion. Quality training improves our ability to succeed by improving member involvement and operational performance. Training also helps teach organizational values and identify future post leaders. Conversely, the lack of effective training can lead to losing our focus on success and can limit our operational performance.



Many who accept leadership roles in The American Legion are often self-motivated by a desire to serve others and seek out training because they want to become stronger, better-informed leaders. Here are a few currently available training vehicles, most Legionnaires find helpful.

- **“THIS IS THE AMERICAN LEGION”** - is an excellent short video every member of our Legion Family should watch. This video is available on YouTube, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfIQaYvsB8c>
- **BASIC TRAINING** - is the new official training program of The American Legion for officers and members. To take the course, visit <https://www.legion.org/alei>
- **LEGION COLLEGE** - The American Legion National College enhances knowledge and appreciation of The American Legion. It teaches the core values and contributions of the organization, its Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and many subordinate programs.
- **LEGION PUBLICATIONS** - Legion publications can be an excellent training resource for those who are self-motivated. The Publications page of The American Legion web site is a good place to find most of them. Here are a few key publications many find helpful.
- (<https://www.legion.org/publications>)
  - [Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies](#)
  - [Post Operations Manual and Post Building Guide](#)
  - [The American Legion Positions and Programs](#)
  - [The American Legion Membership Public Relations Guide](#)
  - [Why You Should Belong](#)



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## Member Information (MyLegion.org)

Accurate and up-to-date member information is important for any organization. We are very fortunate in The American Legion that **every member** can take an active role in keeping their information accurate and up to date, using the myLegion.org members-only web portal. This requires a Member Account be established in MyLegion.org. To establish the member account, visit the home page of The American Legion web site ([legion.org](http://legion.org)) and click on the MYLEGION.ORG link at the very top of the home page.



Once your personal Member Account is established in MyLegion.org, select the "MY PROFILE" option to update your information or print a copy of your membership card.

In addition to updating your personal profile information you can also:

- Subscribe to electronic newsletters
- View past editions of the Legion Magazine
- Make donations in the "Giving Made Easy" option
- Find out about special offers available to Legionnaires, and
- Select dues renewal options



In the dues Renewal Options, we highly recommend the automatic payment option for annual dues. It is an easy and smart way to keep your dues current.

*I want to setup automatic payments for future annual membership renewals.*



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## Post Governance

### Our Post By-Laws state,

*“The administration, governance and management of this Post is entrusted to the Executive Committee.”*

Good post governance is an essential duty of post leaders and it includes a variety of elements. It is realized in the long-term success of our post.



### Executive Committee - THE ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR POST IS ENTRUSTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

In many posts the Executive Committee members are: Commander, First Vice Commander, Second Vice Commander, Adjutant, Finance Officer and Executive Committee Members-at-large. **VISION OF SUCCESS:**

“Our Post excels in service to fellow veterans, their families, and our community, while consistently operating as a model of quality post operations.”



### KEY POST GOALS:

- Quality service to veterans, their families and community
- Sustained membership growth
- Financial solvency and stability
- Excellent leadership development
- Successful Programs

**MISSION STATEMENT:** “Our Post exists to support fellow veterans, their families, and our community.”

**CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS:** The Constitution & By-Laws are two of the most important documents in our post operation. They define the complete responsibilities of all Post officers and they are available from the post Adjutant.

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## POST LEADERSHIP

In The American Legion and Our Post leadership is provided by volunteer members, like you. Post leaders are fundamentally responsible for the success of Our Post. These volunteers serve in many different leadership roles as Post officers, committee members, chairmen and mentors to new members. Good Post leaders have the

initiative to provide honorable and noteworthy service to our veterans, their families and the communities we serve.

Many believe leadership is not something you are born with and it cannot be awarded or appointed. True leadership for many, is something learned and earned through the hard work of service to others. Legion leaders must have stellar character and transparent integrity. Good post leaders must give an adequate commitment of time, sufficient personal energy and must communicate effectively, to give our posts strong roots in the communities where we serve our veterans.



### NO PARTISAN POLITICS

The American Legion is a 501 (c) (19) non-profit corporation and is **absolutely non-partisan**. Policies, Not Partisan Politics, is our guiding principle.

## Summary Post Leader Duties

Post leaders are responsible for the post's success. Our Post Constitution and By-Laws are the ultimate reference on post leader duties. The following descriptions are intended as a generic overview of what many consider key responsibilities of post leaders.

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The post Commander, Finance Officer and Adjutant, are “required” officers in the annual Certification of *Eligibility of American Legion Post Officers*. This is one of the forms our post must submit each year, to maintain our charter.

**Post Commander** (Elected) "First among equals." is a good way to look at the relationship of the Post Commander to other post members. The Commander ensures the post's vision of success is completed and keeps the post family together in the process. The Post Commander traditionally serves as the President of the Board of Directors for incorporated posts. The Post Commander is also the voice of the post, within the post and at meetings beyond the post. Post Commanders also work with and through other leaders to complete the post business, as they cultivate and guide them for future leadership roles.



**Finance Officer** (Elected) Much of the Post Finance Officer's work is defined and determined by standard accounting practices and the needs of the post. The Post Finance Officer is the person of integrity that helps develop a post budget and administers the post book of accounts. Finance Officers also advise post leaders on the formulating and administering of financial policies, including the annual Post budget.



**Adjutant** (Elected) Whether seen as a Post 'First Sergeant' or a Continuity Officer, the Adjutant's role is critical in the long-term success of our post. Adjutants are responsible for keeping official records of our post business, minutes of meetings and many key administrative compliance duties.



**Executive Committee Members** (Elected) The Executive Committee Members are advocates for the general membership, assist post officers in directing post business and act as post representatives in the absence of post officers.

**First Vice-Commander** (Elected) The American Legion "Officer's Guide" states this about the First Vice Commander, "In the majority of posts, a first and second vice commander are elected, with membership the primary concern of the first vice commander." In too many posts, the First Vice Commander serves as a Membership Committee of one. A post, even a small post, should have a true Membership Committee to help with recruitment, transferring members from department

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administrative posts, member renewals, member retention and with ensuring the post routinely has personal (by phone or in person) contact, with every member of the post. A Membership Committee of two (or more), is far more effective than the committee of just one.

**Second Vice-Commander** (Elected) In our Post the Second Vice Commander is the designated liaison to other veteran organizations, coordinates new member orientation and shall oversee Post morale to include entertainment and special programs, and other duties as directed by the Post.

**Sgt-at-Arms** (Elected) shall preserve order at all meetings, ensures members are properly greeted at the door, makes new members welcome, and oversees flag etiquette/disposal, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Post. Often the first of four steps in the journey to becoming Post Commander.



## **POST OPERATING COMMITTEES**

To help advise the Commander and Executive Committee the Post may establish and define the work of Post committees.

With the Commander's consent, each chairperson selects at least two other members to serve on each committee and they will serve for an indefinite term at the discretion of the chairperson.



Through work on committees, our members provide the hard work needed for our Post's success as they plan, organize, communicate and implement the programs of our Post and The American Legion.

The Post Operating Committees are critical to increasing active membership. Committees within Our Post create a forum for members to pursue personal interests. They allow for the strengths and dedication of our members to shine. Post members, like you, serving on committees can grow as productive post members and leaders. Committee work also functions as a very important training ground to develop the leadership skills and knowledge of the Legion; future Post leaders need to succeed.

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## COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

**Americanism Committee(s)** - seeks to inspire love of country and good citizenship through patriotic observances, flag etiquette, civic instruction in schools, community service, and youth activities such as Boys State, Boy Scouts, Oratorical Contest and School Award Medals.



**Membership Committee** - has charge of all matters pertaining to membership eligibility, growth, acceptance, retention, and renewals. Guidance is provided by the First Vice Commander.

**Finance Committee** - supervises the financial duties of the Post, prepare the annual budget and advise the Executive Committee on financial matters.

**Ways & Means Committee** - develops fund-raising projects to support post programs. Once approved they are responsible for the project's completion and success. The Annual Clovis Rodeo is our PRIMARY FUNDRAISER. Our Legion Family and friends of Our Post give their financial support to this important event to help fund The American Legion programs we conduct.



**Facilities Committee** - handles the operation and upkeep of our Post facility.

**Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Committee** -

is responsible for bringing to the attention of members and their dependents the rights and benefits granted them by law. They shall assist veterans in the pursuance of claims and in obtaining other veteran's rights and benefits; to visit comrades who are sick or disabled; to visit and comfort members of their families of sick or bereaved.



**Medias & Communications Committee** –oversees print and digital media communications and channels delivered from Our Post. The committee also has oversight of Our Post's media outreach program. It also provides support for key marketing initiatives of Our Post.

**Golf Committee** – oversees the planning, organize and conduct of our Annual Veterans Memorial Day Golf Tournament. Ensures all proceeds are distributed to Veteran Support Organizations.

**Rodeo Committee** – oversees the planning, organization and conduct of our annual fund-raising event at the Clovis Rodeo. Proceeds go towards the operating expenses of the Post.

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## THE AMERICAN LEGION PREAMBLE "For God and Country"

*Although the Preamble of The American Legion Constitution is printed on the back of our membership cards, having it available in larger text, is helpful to many Legionnaires. We recite the Preamble before each meeting, as it is the written essence of who we are.*



## THE PREAMBLE:

***For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:***

- To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
- To maintain law and order;
- To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
- To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;
- To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
- To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
- To make right the master of might;
- To promote peace and goodwill on earth;
- To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
- To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness

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## Annual Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament

Throughout the year members of our post support our fellow veterans, youth and youth programs and our community. This past May we held our 6<sup>th</sup> annual Veterans Memorial Day Golf Tournament at the Belview Country Club. The American Legion partnered with the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) Post 3225, AmVets Post 2011 and the Clovis Veterans Memorial District to raise \$35,000 with \$25,000 going to support various Voluntary Service Programs at the VA. Below is a list of some of the programs and services supported by our donations:

- Recreational Mental Health Programs
- Veteran Transportation
- Caregiver Support
- Walk of Honor
- Veteran Outreach Services
- Chaplain Services
- Homeless Veterans
- Wheelchair Games
- Creative Arts Festival (Mental Health)
- Winter Sports Clinic
- Golden Age Games
- Christmas Activities
- Women's Veteran Programs



The remaining \$10,000 was donated to various Veterans Support Organizations benefiting Central Valley Veterans. We have donated these funds to the following Veteran Support Organizations:

- \$1,000 to Assoc. of the United States Army
- \$1,000 to Heart of the Horse Foundation
- \$1,000 to Central Valley Veterans Foundation
- \$1,000 to the Fischer House Foundation
- \$1,000 to Central Valley Veterans Home
- \$2,500 to Honor Flight
- \$2,500 to Blue Star Moms

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## Honor Guard- Honoring Those Who Served:



Our Post has an extremely active and professional Honor Guard. A military funeral is a burial rite given to all members who served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Upon the family's request, all eligible Veterans can be honored with a bugler to play Taps, a flag folding detail and a rifle team. A rifle team normally consists of 8 members, 7 rifles and an Officer in Charge of the detail. The rifle team begins the Military Honors by firing 3 volleys representing Duty, Honor and Selfless Service. At the conclusion of the volleys the Bugler plays Taps. After Taps, the flag detail removes the flag covering the Veteran's coffin and folds the flag into its unique and distinctive triangle shape. The flag is then presented to the designated family member along with 3 spent casings from the rifle team's volleys.

**Our Debt to the Heroic Men and Valiant Women in the Service of our Country can Never be Repaid. They have Earned our Undying Gratitude. America will Never Forget Their Sacrifices.**

*President Harry S Truman*

**Note:** These honors should not be confused with a 21-Gun Salute. A gun is an Artillery piece and are fired one at a time. The number of guns fired is dependent on the level of the individual being honor. A "21-Gun" Salute is normally reserved for the President of the United States, Chief of States and Foreign Dignitaries.



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## Our Annual Events

**Post Oratorical Contest** – High School students compete with 8-10 minute oral speeches on an assigned topic dealing certain aspects of the U.S. Constitution and a 3-5 minute speech on an assigned Amendment. The winners advance to the District level, Area level, Department and National.

**Sweethearts Dance** – Local Veteran and Community Service Organizations sponsors 1940's – 1950's Big Band Dance with proceeds benefiting local charities.

**Awards & Birthday Banquet** – Formally recognize our Police Officer and Fire Fighter of the Year, Present Quilts of Valor to local Veterans and recognize our Post Members with various awards to include our Post Legionnaire of the Year.

**Big Hat Days** – Community event held the first weekend in April. The Post cooks and serves a lunch and has recently included a community Blood Drive.

**Clovis Rodeo** – One of the largest Rodeo on the West Coast, this event is held the last week of April and is a major fund raiser for the Post.

**Patriots Dinner** – Held at Clovis Veterans memorial District to recognize and honor Clovis High Students enlisting or attending a military academy.

**Boys State** – The sponsors Clovis High School students to attend a full week in Sacramento and participate in the formation of a mock government.

**Annual Golf Tournament** – Event to raise funds for the Voluntary Services at the Fresno VA and other local Veteran Support Organization.

**Avenue of Flags & Memorial Ceremony** – Involves the placement of over 600 large flags lining the Avenues of the Clovis Cemetery; a Ceremony and placement of individual flags on each Veterans Grave. Currently there are over 3,800 laid to rest.

**Flag Day** – Community event held in downtown Clovis.

**Central Valley Fallen Heroes Car Show** – Fund raising event to honor our Valley Heroes (First Responders & Military) held at the Sierra Vista Mall.

**Clovis Fest** - Community event held the first weekend in October. The Post cooks and serves a lunch and has recently included a community Blood Drive.

**Spooktacular** – Community event held at Clovis Veterans Memorial District to provide a safe "Trick-or-Treat" venue for kids.

**Veterans Day Activities** – All day event held at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District.

**Bell Ringing for Salvation Army** – The Post man's several locations on our assigned day to ring the Bell. The proceeds go to benefit our local Clovis Salvation Army.

**Wreaths Across America** – The Post participates in this National event done in conjunction with the event at Arlington National Cemetery and a wreath is laid on each Veteran's headstone at the Clovis Cemetery.

**Christmas Dinner** – Fun event held with our local VFW and AmVets Posts.

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## **THIS IS HALLOWED GROUND WHY YOU DON'T WALK BETWEEN THE COLORS**

Between these flags that proudly fly Let no man dare  
to stand. For here our fallen comrades lie, we call it  
Hallowed Ground. A symbol, yes, but mark it well.  
Here let us ever humbly pause In Memory of the lads  
who fell in fighting for our sacred cause.

On sea or land these buddies died. Some lie beneath a  
foreign sod in graves caressed by wind and tide, In  
spots unknown to all but God. And so, this place is  
Hallowed Ground, and it shall be forever blessed. As  
though it were a grassy mound Beneath which gallant  
heroes rest.

Be ever watchful, Legionnaire, of those two flags  
which signify That we should guard this spot with  
care, where our departed comrades lie. And, if a man  
should dare to tread This spot where lie our gallant  
brave, He desecrates those noble dead. As tho' he  
walked upon their grave.



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John "Cecil" Cox



Cecil Cox Post 147 - Built Circa 1919

## Cecil Cox Post 147

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