



Lincoln Legionnaire



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Jan/Feb/March 2019

Current Membership	1406	As of Feb 2019
2019 Goal	1608	87%

The voice of American Legion Post 3 and its family of veterans affiliated organizations in Lincoln, Nebraska.

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Justice

Freedom

Democracy

Loyalty

"Pledged to serve the disabled, the distressed, the widowed, and the orphaned. Devoted to the cause of service to the community, state and nation."

COMING EVENTS

MARCH

- 6 Ash Wednesday
- 10 Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 12 Post 3 / Unit 3 Meetings
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 19 Voiture 103 / Salon 832 Meetings
- 20 First Day of Spring
- 21 Legion Riders Meeting
- 21 SAL / Salon 892 Meeting
- 21 Pitch at Risky's



MAY

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| APRIL | 5 Boys State / Girls State Orientation |
| 9 Post 3 / Unit 3 Meetings | 12 Mothers' Day |
| 14 Palm Sunday | 14 Post 3 / Unit 3 Meetings |
| 16 Voiture 103 / Salon 832 Meetings | 16 Legion Riders Meeting |
| 18 SAL / Salon 892 Meetings | 16 SAL / Salon 92 Meetings |
| 18 Legion Riders Meeting | 16 Pitch at Risky's |
| 18 Pitch at Risky's | 18 Armed Forces Day |
| 21 Easter Sunday | 21 Voiture 103 / Salon 832 Meetings |
| | 27 Memorial Day Observed |



Fred Craigie (L) presents the 2018 Distinguished Service Award to Gerry Wolf.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED

Each year at its annual Christmas Party, Voiture 103 of the 40 & 8 presents a Distinguished Service Award to one of its members. It is the voiture's most prestigious award.

The recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Service Award was Gerry Wolf.

Gerry is a 37-year member of the American Legion and a 6-year member of Voiture 103. He was commissioned in the U.S. Army as a 2nd Lieutenant serving with the Corps of Engineers and was stationed in Germany 1968-1972.

Gerry has been very active with the Post #3 Honor Guard for many years. He was our District 15 Vice Commander and is currently serving as the District 15 Commander.

Congratulations, Gerry!



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Please send articles and pictures for the next issue of the *Lincoln Legionnaire* to Steve Bartos, Editor. 7441 San Mateo Lane, Lincoln, NE 68516 or email them to LB32906@windstream.net. Electronic submittals are preferred and should include reference to "*Lincoln Legionnaire*" in the subject line of your email. Materials for the next issue need to be submitted by May 10, 2019.



COMMANDER'S CALL

Fellow Legionnaires,

Luckily, I was able to skip some of our winter in Nebraska by taking a road trip to Arizona and Nevada the last few weeks. The weather was near perfect in Phoenix --- and a lot better in Las Vegas than in Lincoln.

On the suggestion of Tony Anton (VFW Honor Guard member), we found the Arizona Military Museum in Mesa, Arizona and spent an enjoyable afternoon there. We had a friendly guide, a Vietnam veteran, who showed us through the Vietnam section.

He was explaining the Huey I helicopter to two boys who wanted to know how to start it. He told them they needed the keys and said the ones he had flown in Vietnam didn't need keys --- until after an Army Private First Class Robert K. Preston, a washed out pilot who at the time was a helicopter mechanic, stole a Huey I and flew it to the White House, hovering for about six minutes over the White House before landing on the south lawn about 100 yards from the West wing. After that incident on February 17, 1974, keys were installed and all equipment was locked up.

Our guide was a very good story teller and did a nice job of explaining the other mechanized equipment and accessories. On one wall in the Vietnam section, John Kerry and Jane Fonda were prominently displayed as dissenters, who --- along with others --- helped convince our nation to get out of Vietnam.

Since the museum is on the Arizona Army National Guard post and there was training in progress, we did not spend much time looking at the heavy (TOYS), but it was a very nice display and we enjoyed it very much.

In our last newsletter, a Post 3 member, Larry Brooks from Las Vegas, called me questioning the wording in the article on the Medal of Honor by Jerry Cummings. The "Medal of Honor" is the correct way to identify it, but since it is the only military award which requires Congressional approval, it is often referred to as the Congressional Medal of Honor.

On the subject of honors, American Legion posts around the world recognized the first Sunday of February as "Four Chaplains Day." Dr. Alex Goode (Jewish rabbi), Rev. George Fox (Methodist minister), Rev. Clark Poling (Reformed Church in America minister), and Fr. John Washington (Roman Catholic priest) were the chaplains who died aboard the Dorchester sunk by German U-Boat 223 on February 3, 1943 in the North Atlantic.

On an American Legion Baseball note, Post 3 will host one State Tournament and two Area Tournaments this year --- all in July. We need to help with these, and we need to start planning.

Sincerely,

Dave Timmerman

Commander, American Legion Post #3



Following the close of the December meetings of Post 3 and Unit 3, the two groups joined together for Christmas entertainment provided by the Acafellows --- an A Cappella singing group from Pius X High School directed by Todd Krier.

SONS of the AMERICAN LEGION ...



It is my sad duty to report that our Commander, Brad King, passed away in December; and --- as First Vice Commander --- I will assume the duties of Commander to complete Brad's year. Brad King was a charter member of our Squadron 3, past Commander, past Detachment Commander and past National Executive Committeeman. He was a great Sons of the American Legion member and good friend. I shall miss him.

Best wishes to the American Legion for celebrating its 100th birthday this month. So, HAPPY BIRTHDAY to THE AMERICAN LEGION and all its members. It's not just the service they provided while they were in military service, but the continued service they've all provided to their community, state, and nation for the many years after their military service.

Since the founding of our parent organization 100 years ago, the American Legion --- and now the Sons of the American Legion --- have been provided with four simple goals for the organizations. 1 --- Care for the Veterans, 2 --- Care for the children, 3 --- Continuing support of our Americanism programs, and 4 --- Standing for a continued strong national defense.

If you get an opportunity to thank a veteran for his or her service, do so. They have provided the security for us to continue the life style we all enjoy today and will enjoy tomorrow as well.

We continue to support the programs of the "Legion Family" and recently selected our choices for candidates to attend Cornhusker Boys State and Cornhusker Girls State.

Please join us at our next meeting. We meet at 7:00 P.M. at the Lincoln Elks Lodge 80 in the Trade Center on the third Thursday of the month (March 21st, April 18th, and May 16th).

For God and Country ---



Fred Craigie,

Squadron #3 Commander



Ken Colson, a Veteran Outreach Program Specialist at the Lincoln Vet Center, spoke at the District 15 Convention in February. Ken provided information about the Vet Center and the services available there.

POST 3 MEETING

American Legion Post 3 meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month ---- except August --- at the Lincoln Elks Lodge 80. The Elks Lodge is located in the Trade Center at 5910 South 58th Street.

Meetings begin at 7:00 P.M.

Please visit the Post 3 website!

www.legionpost3.org

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY Lincoln Unit 3 News

February began with Auxiliary Unit 3 passing out cookies to veterans at the VA Medical Center. Every year during the week of Valentine's Day, VA hospitals across the country observe "National Salute to Veteran Patients Week." (February 10-16) Several organizations each took a morning during this week and handed out goodies to veterans and their families. It was a wonderful way to do a lot of visiting and "reaching out" to our veterans.

March will mark the 100th birthday of the American Legion. The Auxiliary will be serving cake, coffee, and punch during the supper hour at the Elks Lodge 80 prior to the American Legion and Auxiliary meetings on March 12th.

Auxiliary Unit 3 turned in five applications for girls to attend Cornhusker Girls State this year. Money received from Past President Diane Craigie's memorial made it possible for us to send 5 girls.

LMDOA (Lincoln Memorial Day Observance Association) meetings started up in January in preparation for Memorial Day 2019. The committee will meet the third Thursday of each month until following Memorial Day. Anyone who is interested in seeing how the committee prepares for

Memorial Day is invited to come to the meetings.

God Bless.

Rebecca Bowman,

President, ALA Lincoln Unit 3



Auxiliary Unit 3 President
Rebecca Bowman

BASIC TRAINING

Are you ready for more "Basic Training?"

The American Legion's official training program for members, officers, Legion College applicants, and those who simply want to expand their knowledge of the nation's largest veterans' service organization is now available online.

Some Legionnaires may have already taken the old course, but The American Legion Extension Institute has been rewritten, updated, streamlined, and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline, and additional features. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one --- followed by a final exam.

Course Structure. The Course is arranged into 5 major topic areas and 1 concluding section. Each section will present information about the topic via text, images, and video.

Evaluation. At the end of each topic area there is a quiz that will help gauge your understanding of the material. When you've completed each section quiz, you'll be able to take the final exam. The exam will take roughly 30 minutes to complete.

Topics include:

History & Organization. Learn why and how The American Legion came into existence after World War I.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation is the foremost pillar of American Legion service. Learn the ways in which the organization is dedicated to compassionate care, timely delivery of benefits, career development, and other areas of advocacy for those who have served in uniform.

National Security. Outlined here is The American Legion's position on a strong, well-equipped, and effectively deployed U.S. military --- including a decent quality of life for those now in uniform and retirees of the Armed Forces.

Americanism. This pillar of American Legion service is filled with respect for the nation that those in the military swore with their lives to defend, from proper treatment of the U.S. flag to voter education to youth programs that make life-changing differences.

Children & Youth. The American Legion's long-held position that "every child deserves a square deal" is explained here, to include such programs and efforts as the Child Welfare Foundation, the Family Support Network, Temporary Financial Assistance, and other initiatives that aim to help children and youth follow their dreams, no matter their circumstances.

Course Conclusion. See how all the pieces of American Legion service and advocacy fit together to best serve our nation and learn where other committees and commissions play vital roles.

Final Exam. Take an online test to see how well you understand the nation's largest veterans service organization.

For members of the American Legion, there is no cost to take this interesting and informative training online. Please visit www.legion.org/alei to register and enroll



American Legion Post 3

LEGIONNAIRE.....	SERVICE ERA	DATE
Neal Bachman	WW II	1/22/2019
George P. Becker	Korea	12/6/2018
Edward C. Binder	WW II	1/7/2019
Holbert S. Bradley, Sr.	WW II	12/28/2018
Leo O. Carr	Korea	11/16/2018
Ansel B. Chase	Korea	11/4/2018
Dwayne A. Dietze	Korea	12/24/2018
Byron W. Duff	Korea	11/19/2018
Dwaine L. Fagler	Korea	11/11/2018
Joseph K. Fischer	WWII	11/12/2018
Donals R. Grant	WW II	1/25/2019
Warren A. Hutchinson	WW II	11/25/2018
Harold Kehm	WW II	12/29/2019
Glen R. Klanecky	Korea	12/7/2018
Glenn K. Lyman	WWII	12/2/2018
Dean Magwire	Korea	12/13/2018
Gerald N. McAuliffe	Korea	11/12/2018
Robert C. McKeen	WW II	12/20/2018
Donald J. Nelson	Korea	1/23/2019
Warren R. Oppgard	Vietnam	11/2/2018
Ronald H. Ozaki	WW II	12/14/2018
Gordon L. Rippe	Korea	1/1/2019
Fred H. Roberts, Jr.	WWII	11/11/2018
David E. Scholl	Korea	12/2/2018
George F. Sullivan	WW II	12/25/2018
Clarence J. Thomas	Korea	1/24/2019
Joseph E. Wachter	Korea	11/9/2018
Walter K. Waddell	Korea	2/7/2018
Don L. Woody	Korea	12/19/2018



Alternate National Executive Committeeman Fred Craigie, a member of Post 3, attended the American Legion's annual Washington Conference in Washington, D.C in February. Pictured, L-R, attending the ANAVICUS Breakfast are Department Adjutant Dave Salak, Past Department Commander Jim Costello, Department Commander Lyle Bartels, Fred Craigie, and Past National Vice-Commander Doug Boldt. (ANAVICUS is the Army Navy Air Force Veterans in the United States and Canada.)

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS Time for a Tune-Up

Occasionally, if you own a vehicle, you know you have to take it in for tune-up or an oil change. If you are lucky, the mechanic tells you everything is okay. My luck, lately, is to get a list of things getting old that need to be replaced. Sometimes, this list is short and not too expensive. At other times, it feels like you are buying a whole new car. I'm sure my ALR members also know how this feels.

Well, just like you have to take your car in for a tune-up, sometimes life requires a tune-up. I have been the ALR Chapter Commander for Lincoln for the last 2 years, and am now starting my 3rd term. I still love this group and its members, but the last couple years have brought major changes for me. I lost 2 family members (one being my Mom just in November). No one can prepare you for this. Even being through it for 2 other family members in the last 10 years didn't prepare me for it. I will now (officially) be moving for the first time in 25 years. That's more than half my life having been in the same place. Lastly, in the last month, I had a fender bender that resulted in me having to say good-bye to my pick-up and hello to a car loan. (Yes, I cried when they took my "baby" away.)

Now, you know my current "sob story." Want to know the next chapter? This is the part where I refocus, I reorganize, and I re-energize my commitment to this organization.

I will be traveling to Washington, D.C. in early March. I am going to tour the American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation facilities, and it will be my first time staying in Washington. I will be going back in July for the very busy week of Girls Nation. I know that this will be an emotional trip. My Mom used to talk about the trip she took with her brother and my grandmother when she was younger. I know Washington has changed a lot since then, but I can't wait to see all the memorials for those who gave the greatest sacrifice for the freedoms I have today. This is part of my refocusing. I started serving on this Girls Nation committee last summer.

I recently talked to another county's Veterans Service Officer and asked why Lancaster County doesn't have a Buddy Check night. This is an informal gathering of veterans and others as a way to combat suicide. This other county has been having Buddy Checks since early 2018. They started with no one



attending and now have around 30 every month. I would love to see Lancaster County get one of their own started and going. This is part of my re-energizing.

The Lincoln ALR Chapter membership has been declining over the last number of years. I wish I could come up with a magical solution to halt it --- and even reverse it. But, if I could find that answer, every American Legion post and Auxiliary unit would want my secret to increase their numbers. Instead, I am hoping to come up with a new route to finding members. This is part of my re-organizing.

As I ponder how to find these new members, know that the ALR is still out "doing our thing." This time of the year is pretty quiet for us since those loud motorcycle mufflers are still hibernating. We did, however, help provide a flag line and escort in January for a man too young to be gone from his family.

In the upcoming months, I'm sure we'll be called up for more funeral services and escorts. Parade season will start after May, the Easter Bunny will be making appearances, and Poker Runs and ALR Romps will be attended. I know there will be a Regional ALR Romp in June and the State Romp in July. Members will be getting details as soon as our February meeting. We may even be part of another veteran escort to an event (like the one that went to Tecumseh last summer).

If you know anyone who would like to tune-up their commitment to the Legion Family and is a motorcycle owner, please get them in contact with us!!

At the December meeting, officers for 2019 were elected. They are the same as last year; but, for new folks, our officers are: Jody Schmale (Commander), Jerry Hutchison (Vice Commander), David Dietz (Treasurer), Mike Streeter (Secretary), William Smisek (Road Captain), and Ray Gilbertson (Sgt-At-Arms).

Jody Schmale
Commander



On behalf of the Post 3 Chapter of American Legion Riders, Chapter President Jody Schmale accepted a commemorative coin from District 15 Commander Gerry Wolf. The coin, presented at the District 15 Convention in February, was made in recognition of the chapter's donation of \$500 or more to the American Legion Legacy Scholarship. The coin can be affixed to a plaque previously presented in recognition of similar donations.



At the December meetings of Post 3 and Auxiliary Unit 3, a variety of items were collected to be donated to the Victory Garden Apartments on the VA Hospital campus.

 **812**

Board of Veteran Appeals cases that were decided in January with assistance from American Legion veterans disability claims specialists.

MEDAL OF HONOR

The Medal of Honor, commonly referred to as the Congressional Medal of Honor, has been awarded to more than 50 service personnel and civilians who have lived in Nebraska for at least two years. One honoree is Francis (Frank) W. Lohnes, born in Oneida County, New York. According to James E. Potter, whose writings are the source for this article, Lohnes arrived in the Nebraska Territory, Richardson County, in 1860. In 1861, he volunteered for the 1st Nebraska Regiment and served honorably in Missouri and Arkansas against guerrillas. Posted to Nebraska in 1864, the unit's mission was to secure settlers and wagon caravans against marauders such as jayhawkers and Indian bands. Lohnes was posted to Midway Station, about 70 miles west of Fort Kearny and 37 miles east of Fort Cottonwood (Fort McPherson).

On 12 May 1865, Lohnes, in charge of a wood gathering detail, came upon a skirmish near Dan Smith's ranch between about 30 Indians and eight soldiers from Gilman's Ranch east of Ft. Cottonwood. Lohnes' group joined the fray, and he was wounded in the shoulder and the thigh. His rifle stock had been shattered by an arrow; and, at one point, he was surrounded by 10 Indian warriors --- never giving ground. The Indians departed with about 20 head of Smith's cattle.

Lohnes' valor got the attention of his CG who recommended Lohnes for the Medal of Honor to the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton. On 15 August, now Corporal Lohnes was awarded the Medal of Honor at Ft. Kearny. In accepting the award, Lohnes noted he was proud and happy for the recognition but that "there are numbers of my comrades-in-arms more worthy of this great honor than I."

However, less than two months later, Lohnes learned his unit was being transferred west to the Julesburg area. He'd been away from home for four years and decided to return without permission. Desertions weren't unusual. The Army made a record of it, but didn't pursue him.

Back in the Falls City area, he married Mary Simpson and fathered two children. Farming barely supported the family, so he also operated a steam-driven threshing machine with his brother-in-law. While driving the thresher across a bridge he'd just inspected, the bridge collapsed under its weight. He was scalded to death.

Mary was initially denied soldier survivor benefits (\$12/month) because he was listed as a deserter. The issue of desertion was one which Congress considered for several years and eventually, in 1891, Corporal Lohnes' status was redeemed with an honorable discharge --- and Mary began receiving the pension. She eventually moved to Tacoma, Washington where she died in 1925.

Corporal Frank W. Lohnes is the only Nebraskan to receive the Medal of Honor for action in Nebraska. His name is included in the Nebraska Hall of Fame. The source for this article was historian James E. Potter, deceased. For a detailed account of Lohnes, access Potter's, "A Congressional Medal of Honor for a Nebraska Soldier: The Case of Pvt. Francis W. Lohnes," Nebraska History65 (Summer 1984)

Jerry Cummings

POW / MIA Liaison



FROM THE ADJUTANT

It has been another busy 3 months in the Post 3 office thanks to those who have renewed. And, we had one transfer into the post. Total membership as we near the end of February stands at 1406 paid members, 87% of our assigned goal of 1608. We can still reach the goal of being 100%, but need to work on renewing or signing up 202 more members during the next four months.

We received a nice note from Senator Julie Slama's office thanking the American Legion for showing up in support of her "American Civics" bill, LB 399. We need to keep supporting it as it moves through the legislative process this session. Currently, it is on the floor of the Nebraska Legislature for floor debate and requires 25 votes to move on to the second and third rounds before the final vote.

Another item to keep track of Governor Ricketts' request to exempt 50% of military retirement benefits from state income tax. LB153 was introduced January 11th and a Legislative Hearing was held on Thursday, February 7th. Currently, it, too, is on the floor of the Nebraska Legislature for floor debate.

Nebraska Veterans Legislative Day was held on Friday February 8th beginning at 0800 in the Warner Chamber in the Nebraska State Capitol. There was a good turnout of veterans. Thanks to all who attended to learn about the current bills that the Nebraska Veterans Coalition has requested be introduced or are backing.

A good place to keep up on current veterans-related items is by going to the Nebraska Veterans Coalition web site.

Post 3 will be reaching out to our many past members who have not renewed their Legion membership for the past four or five years trying to see if they would again renew their membership. With the deaths of many of our remaining WWII and Korean veterans, our membership rolls have been declining rapidly. If you know any of your friends or family members who have not renewed, would you please ask them if they would consider renewing their membership?

As this American Legion year winds down, we are again asking for your help in filling out our Consolidated Post Report (CPR). We ask that you report to us your volunteer hours since May 1, 2018. If you are a blood donor, we can use the number of pints that you donated during the same period. Also, if you gave donations to the VA Hospitals or Clinic, or other veterans groups, these also go on the CPR. The National Headquarters of the American Legion compiles the data from all the CPRs and reports the results when they do their annual report to Congress.

One final thought. Thanks to all who have renewed for 2019. On the chance you have renewed and still received a Past Due Notice from National, just throw it away. During the Christmas / New Year period, National was closed and did not process renewals while the computer system was mailing out the next batch of renewal notices. If you are not sure if you have renewed, give us a call in the office and we can check on line to see if National has received and credited your payment for 2019 dues. Office Phone 402-466-3958, or email: post3legionlincoln@gmail.com.

Ed Schnabel

Adjutant

DISTRICT 15 CONVENTION MINUTES

Regular Meeting of American Legion Post 3 --- District 15 Convention
Lincoln Elks Lodge #80
February 12, 2019

The colors being in place, Commander Dave Timmerman opened the February 12, 2019 meeting of American Legion Post 3 at 7:00 PM at the Lincoln Elks Lodge #80, with about 30 Legionnaires and guests present.

Commander Timmerman introduced Ken Colson, a Veteran Outreach Program Specialist with the Lincoln Vet Center. Mr. Colson discussed the Lincoln Vet Center and the services available there.

Commander Timmerman introduced the Post 3 officers and then turned the meeting over to District 15 Commander Gerry Wolf for the purpose of conducting the District 15 Convention.

Commander Wolf asked the veterans of the various war eras to stand and be recognized. He then introduced a number of visitors who were in attendance for the District 15 Convention.

Assistant Department Adjutant Brent Hagel-Pitt was called to the podium for the purpose of reading the convention call. He advised that based on current membership District 15 would be entitled to 2 delegates and alternates to the national convention.

Alternate NEC-man Fred Craigie brought greetings on behalf of the national commander and reported on national issues. He discussed items expected to be on the agenda at the up-coming Washington Conference and mentioned the resolution adopted by the National Executive Committee which proposes that Congress make a determination that December 7, 1941 establishes the beginning of an uninterrupted and continuing period of wartime service for veterans.

Senior Vice Commander Gary Wooten brought greetings on behalf of Department Commander Lyle Bartels. Gary discussed a variety of issues including the need to support the 4 Pillars of the American Legion, the importance of supporting the National Emergency Fund, the importance of turning in the Consolidated Post Report on time, several legislative priorities, and the suggestion that the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home may be looking at some future expansion.

Sons of the American Legion NEC-man George Sevick, Jr. was introduced,

and he reported on SAL activity in Nebraska.

Area C Commander Wade Graft was introduced. Wade indicated that there had been Department committee vacancies in Area C for the Department Membership Committee, Department Americanism Committee, and Department Children & Youth Committee. He announced that Steve Bartos had accepted an appointment to return to the Membership Committee after an absence of a number of years.

Commander Graft discussed the Buddy Check program being promoted by National Commander Reistad. He indicated that Post 3 / District 15 was planning an activity in that regard --- probably on a Saturday in March.

Commander Graft also commented on his year so far as Area C Commander. He reported how much he had enjoyed visiting the various posts in Area C and how much he had learned by seeing how other posts conduct and support American Legion activities in their communities.

Certificates were presented to Post 3 for Americanism and Children & Youth activities.

The District 15 Citizenship Award for 2019 was presented to Jack Sibert.

A Commemorative Coin was presented to Post 3 Legion Riders Commander Jody Schmale in recognition of the Riders' recent donation of \$500 or more to the Legacy Scholarship Fund. The coin can be attached to a plaque previously received by the Riders.

Upon proper motion and second, Fred Craigie and Steve Bartos were elected as delegates to the 2019 National Convention.

Several candidates for department office were given an opportunity to speak. Larry Mach (from Weston) discussed his candidacy for Senior Vice Commander. Gary Wooten, speaking on behalf of Doug Frahm (from Amelia), discussed Doug's candidacy for Senior Vice Commander. Gary Wooten (Wilber) then spoke on his own behalf as a candidate for Department Commander.

Vice Commander Wooten (from Wilber) reported that the theme of the Czech Days Parade in Wilber this year is going to be "100 Years of the American Legion." He indicated that National Commander Brett Reistad will be in attendance and will be the Grand Marshall of the Parade.

Department Chaplain Jackson read TAPS, and the Post 3 / District 15 Convention was closed at 8:20 P.M.

Steve Bartos
Recorder



Jack Sibert (L) is recognized by District 15 Commander Gerry Wolf as the recipient of the 2019 District American Citizenship Award. Jack received a certificate at the District 15 Convention and, along with the other district awardees, will also be recognized in June at the Department Convention.

 **11,000**

Estimated number of student veterans whose GI Bill education benefits were paid last year to ineligible, delinquent schools, according to VA Office of Inspector General audit. Maintaining integrity of the GI Bill is one of The American Legion's top legislative priorities heading into the Feb. 24-27 Washington Conference.

AMERICAN LEGION MOVES TO OPEN UP MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Membership eligibility in The American Legion is determined by Congress through the establishment of specific dates of declared hostilities in which U.S. military personnel were activated. Since its founding in 1919, membership in The American Legion has been open to veterans of World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Lebanon/Grenada, Panama and Gulf War/War on Terrorism.

There are at least 12 known combat operations that required an activated military personnel, such as the Cold War, Libyan Conflict and Persian Gulf Conflicts, and resulted in about 1,600 U.S. military men and women casualties. However, because these operations are unrecognized by the U.S. government as a period of war, those who served during these time frames are not eligible for membership in The American Legion.

The American Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution last October during its annual Fall Meetings in Indianapolis to change that.

Resolution No. 1, "Unrecognized armed hostilities recognition," called on Congress to declare that the United States has been continuously engaged in a state of war from December 7, 1941 to present, and for Congress to direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to qualify a wartime veteran as any military service personnel who served honorably under Title 10 for at least one day from December 7, 1941 to present.

Following the passing of Resolution No. 1, the NEC adopted Resolution No. 2, "Unrecognized armed hostilities membership date change," which will change membership dates for The American Legion. This resolution will only be put in motion once the actions of Resolution No. 1 are approved by Congress. Once approved, membership in The American Legion will be open to the following war periods: April 6, 1917 to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the U.S. government.

The American Legion believes that membership in the organization should be extended to all U.S. military personnel who served on active duty during the

hostile events that are not seen as a period of war.

A bill expanding membership eligibility for the American Legion was filed in February in the Senate. The Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act — also known as the LEGION Act — is a bipartisan effort introduced by Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and co-sponsored by Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.). Because the American Legion's membership periods are congressionally chartered, the organization is prevented from expanding membership eligibility without an act of Congress. The act expands membership eligibility to honorably discharged veterans who have served in unrecognized times of war since World War II.

"Nearly 1,600 brave American men and women were killed or wounded since World War II, while defending our nation during times not officially recognized as periods of war by the U.S. government," American Legion National Commander Brett P. Reistad said. "These veterans are unable to receive some of the benefits and recognition available to their counterparts who served during official wartime periods.

"Because The American Legion is congressionally chartered, we are unable to welcome many of these veterans as members of the nation's largest veterans organization. It is fitting that during the 100th anniversary of the founding of The American Legion, Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Thom Tillis are introducing the LEGION Act, bipartisan legislation that will recognize all veterans who served honorably since the start of World War II, while also fostering growth within the veteran community. Moreover, we salute Sen. Sinema for making this the first bill that she has introduced as a newly elected U.S. senator. We hope that the American people will encourage all members of Congress to support the LEGION Act. It is an appropriate 'thank you' to those who served."

"The American Legion provides critical resources to our veterans, but currently, only veterans who served during formally recognized conflicts can belong to the Legion," said Sinema, a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. "That restriction leaves out thousands of former American service members who signed up to defend our country. Our legislation rights this wrong and ensures veterans have the opportunity to join the American Legion."

PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION

During the past few months, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) has identified and returned to their families the remains of 20 US servicemen from WWII and Korea.

The breakdown by conflict and service is as follows:

WWII:

Army - 3

Navy - 11 (10 from the USS Oklahoma recovery project)

Army Air Forces: 3

Korea:

Army - 3

The remains of two Nebraska servicemen have been returned to their families during the past six months. They are Gerald L. Clayton, from Central City, and Grant C. Cook, from Cozad. Both were on the USS Oklahoma when it was sunk.

Respectfully,

Jerry Cummings

POW / MIA Liaison



Number of former American Legion Baseball players who will be in the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N.Y., following induction ceremonies on July 21. Four of the six newest honorees - Roy Halladay, Mike Mussina, Lee Smith and Harold Baines - made it to the Majors after playing Legion ball.

Remembering
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