

**The American Legion of Iowa**  
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**Kenneth R. Rochholz**  
Department Commander



This will be the last article as Department Commander. I want to say it was my honor to represent you in this position. I have been to all corners of the state and was well respected, enjoyed good food and friendship by all.

As for the membership. Many of you asked the Commander how his Post is doing. Lt. Julius L. Shryer Post #430, in Durant, was at 100% by Mid-Winter Conference, with 260 members; Sons of The American Legion Squadron has 70 members, and was at 100% for Mid-Winter Conference; the Auxiliary is also at 100 percent. I was awarded the National Commander's pin - Carry the Legacy Forward - for three new members.

On May 23, there were 123 Posts in the Department of Iowa that had made 100% of their growth goal, and one Post is as high as 121 percent. The Headquarters Post #729, of new members list, will be available sooner in the year.

In early May, before leaving for Spring meetings in Indianapolis, I was available to see part of the Department Legion Baseball tournament. Richard G. Liewer American Legion Post #728, will represent The American Legion of Iowa at the National Regionals, in Dickinson, North Dakota. Those games are scheduled August 2-6. We wish all the finalists, from all of the programs, the best of luck.

I hope to see many of you at the Department Convention in July, and encourage you to participate in the Color Guard competition there (see information below). I'll also have the opportunity to lead all of you in the Walk For Veterans at the Iowa State Fair.

### All Aboard . . . For God and Country.

#### Department Color Guard Competition

The Department Color Guard Contest will be held on Saturday at the Department Convention. Rules and entry forms are available on the Department website or by request from Department at 800-365-8387. Each entry form must be certified by the Adjutant of the unit's sponsoring Post or District. The contest entry form must be submitted to the Department before the close of the Color Guard Registration Meeting at Department Convention. Advance registration is encouraged and may be submitted to: The American Legion of Iowa, Color Guard Competition, 720 Lyon Street, Des Moines, IA 50309. Order of appearance in the contest will be in reverse order of receipt of entry form with earliest postmark.

The American Legion Department Color Guard Contest does not limit the number of units allowed to compete in the Contest from any Post, Unit or Squadron. All color guard members will be required to register for the Department Convention as a delegate, alternate or guest with The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion.

The contest has two competition classes, Military Open Class and Advancing/Retiring of Colors Class.

Military Open Class - All units must be members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family (i.e. Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants). If competing for the Commander's Color Guard, all unit members competing in this class must meet all the requirements for full American Legion membership and be over 18 years of age. The unit must be composed of seven (7) members or less including the Commanding Officer.

Advancing/Retiring of Colors Class - All units must be members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family (i.e. Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants). The unit must be composed of not less than four (4) members. If the color guard consists of only four (4) members, the American Flag bearer will give all color guard commands.

To be considered for the official Department Commander's Champion Color Guard of The American Legion, those units consisting of full Legion members must have competed in Military Open Class.



**John A. Derner**  
Department Adjutant

As your Adjutant, much of my job involves answering inquiries about the policies, programs, and positions of The American Legion. I hear both compliments and concerns about what The American Legion is doing, from the Post level to the National level. I sometimes get the feeling that some members do not believe they have a voice in the decisions of our organization.

The members of The American Legion are the organization's "stakeholders." We ALL have a voice in the direction our organization is going. It is the members who control our organization - from the local Post to National Headquarters.

I remember back to the first time I was installed as a Post officer. During the installation ceremony, the installing officer stated, "Remember there is no rank among us for we all serve as equals." The words have always stuck with me and given me the assurance that my voice in The American Legion is important. As a stakeholder in this organization, every member can participate in the process.

Each member has a voice and vote to determine the direction of the Post. Members can run for Post offices and serve on Post committees. That involvement can continue to the District, Department and National levels. How far you take the journey is up to you - but as a member - you need to know the opportunity exists. After all, the National Commander's journey in The American Legion began the same as yours - he signed up to become a member in a local Post.

If you have ideas on how to make our organization better, I encourage you to get involved. Our programs are only as good as the volunteers who run them. The positions and policies we adopt are only as good as those who propose them. The American Legion provides every member the opportunity to be involved.

One way for members and Posts to get involved is through the Resolution process. For The American Legion to take a position on any issue, The American Legion must have a controlling resolution in force establishing such a position.

For information on writing resolutions, visit our website at [www.ialegion.org/resolutions](http://www.ialegion.org/resolutions) or consult your Post Officer's Guide. Each will give you detailed instructions on how to write a resolution.

Once the resolution is written, you must work toward getting The American Legion to adopt it. The first step is to present it for passage by your Post at a Post meeting. If your Post adopts the resolution, it should then be forwarded to Department Headquarters for consideration by the Department.

On the Department level, there are two bodies which can adopt resolutions as the policy of the organization, the Department Convention and the Department Executive Committee. The Department Convention will be in session July 21-23 in Des Moines and the Department Executive Committee next meets on June 24 in Des Moines.

For a resolution to be considered at this year's Department Convention, it must be received by the Department office no later than July 7. However, I suggest you mail it to Department Headquarters immediately following its passage by your Post.

All members are encouraged to take part in the process. Attend your Post meetings and get involved with Post activities. Attend District meetings and bring the information you have learned back to your Post. Come to the Department Convention and voice your opinion on Legion issues. Submit resolutions from your Post when you see a need for change.

The American Legion is a grass-roots organization. Your Department and National headquarters offices receive their direction from you - the members.

The actions each of us takes as a stakeholder determines the success or failure of our organization. The actions we fail to take are also part of that determination. The question is, where do you want our organization to go and what can you do to help us get there?

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