

**The American Legion, Department of Iowa**

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**American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Iowa**

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**Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Iowa**

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**2017-2018 American Legion Department Officers**

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**2017-2018 District Commanders**

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**Department Service Office**

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**Department Headquarters Staff Directory**

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**Department Commander****Mike Etzel**

Greetings Iowa Legionnaires  
 Fall is fading away and

Winter is knocking, I hope everyone is ready.

We made it thru the Fall Conferences! I was able to go to five districts and I thank you for the hospitality and comradeship shown me. I had a great time attending the meetings and visiting with everyone. I am working with the District Commanders of the four districts I was unable to get to on their schedules so I can be there in the Spring.

Along with the conferences, Department, Auxiliary and Detachment members visit VA facilities. We toured the Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown, the Des Moines VA Hospital and the Iowa City VA Hospital. We are very fortunate to have these premiere facilities within Iowa, they are among the top in the nation. They also are home to some of the very best American Legion Service Officers and Volunteers around. We do our Veterans well. We will tour Omaha and Sioux Falls this Spring also.

While the membership tour with National Vice Commander Callies has not occurred as I write this, I do expect it to have been a success with many members having turned out to meet and greet him. We must keep the renewals coming in, our target/goal this year is 100% plus 1. The District Commanders are committed to this goal and are meeting to review their progress and discuss any changes they need to make as we near the end of 2017. We all know that begins our new membership year and also begins the slowdown in membership turn ins. That is why we need to push to the end of this year...and beyond.

National reported that last year we recruited 64,267 NEW traditional members nationwide, but we lost 66,000 to Post Everlasting. If you factor in the number of members who did not renew, now you can begin to see why we have dropped below the 2-million-member mark, and why we continue to ask everyone to recruit, renew and retain members.

We are beginning to put plans in place to welcome National Commander Denise Rohan in March. She will arrive March 21<sup>st</sup> and depart March 28<sup>th</sup>.

We will be in Elkader March 23<sup>rd</sup> so the town can welcome her home. Beyond that, we have a great department to proudly show her. As the visit coincides with the Spring membership tour, we will also plan on Post visits to collect memberships. I would love to inform her to expect just a few as we have made goal and these are all new members. Details will be finalized by Mid-Winter, stay tuned.

The Commanders Project is moving along nicely thanks to very generous donations by Posts and Districts, Units and Squadrons. We have passed \$10,000 in donations which was doubled by the \$10,000 matching donation we received at Convention. I do not have the total, it should be listed elsewhere in the paper, but we should be past \$22,500. That is maybe 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of what we need, but what an effort by everyone, THANK YOU!

We have so much going on at the Department and National levels that effects every one of our Legionnaires that we would need twice the space to inform you. We push it out to you thru the electronic newsletter, to the District Commanders at the conferences, to committee and commission members and to the Post Commanders thru what I just listed. I ask you to attend you Post meetings and ask the leadership questions. You need the information and we want you to have it.

I hope you had a Great Thanksgiving and wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*For God and Country*

**Department Adjutant****John Derner****Mid-Winter Conference and "The Iowa Idea"**

In the December issue of the Legion magazine, National Commander Denise Rohan remarked on "The Iowa Idea" and the role it has played in the history of The American Legion.

The fifth national convention of The American Legion was highlighted by "The Iowa Idea." Originating with the Iowa delegation, "The Iowa Idea" embodied the principle that a concrete and practical program of service to the community should be put into effect throughout all the existing 11,000 posts of The American Legion.

The Americanism Commission, in addition to its current work, was instructed to create a community and Civic Betterment Bureau, and that a compulsive national program along those lines be created.

It was suggested that such a forward-looking program would might include the "betterment of schools, recreation, park and playground facilities, furtherance of Boy Scout work and active participation in Scout Troop organization and management, medical clinics, municipal music concerts, public forums, community buildings, city planning and all forms of better citizenship monuments."

Following that fifth national convention, "The Iowa Idea" of community service became one of the dominant principles of The American Legion nationwide. And the principle of community service is still a dominant principle of The American Legion today.

At this year's Mid-Winter Conference, we hope to reinvigorate "The Iowa Idea" in our Department. In a special session on Saturday morning, we will examine The American Legion in Iowa and evaluate our execution of this guiding principle of our organization.

The goal of the exercise is to help every post find a way to become stronger in its own community. During the session, ideas for becoming more visible in your community will be discussed. Posts will share success stories to provide you with ideas and inspiration. There will also be opportunities for questions and input.

It is time for The American Legion to once again be a household name. And that can best be accomplished by a strong presence in our local communities.

## Department Programs Director Position Open

The American Legion of Iowa is currently seeking candidates for the position of Department Programs Director. A detailed job description and application can be found on our website at [www.ialegion.org](http://www.ialegion.org) and a position summary appears below. Interested candidates may contact the Department Adjutant John Derner at [john@ialegion.org](mailto:john@ialegion.org) or 800-365-8387. Application and resume may be sent by email or mailed to The American Legion of Iowa, Attn: Department Adjutant, 720 Lyon Street, Des Moines, IA 50309.

Position Summary: Performs a variety of administrative and clerical duties to support and maintain State and National programs of The American Legion. Acts as a liaison between office staff, American Legion members and participants in the state and national programs, and maintains information and databases for all adult and youth related programs.

Assists the American Legion of Iowa with communications and media, both print and electronic, including the Iowa Legionnaire, The American Legion of Iowa website, electronic newsletters, and social media.

The ideal candidate will be experienced in working with various computer programs, office administration and the functions of American Legion. Must be able to work independently with little supervision. Must be well organized, flexible and enjoy the challenges of supporting American Legion programs. Must possess strong written and verbal communication skills, strong decision-making ability coupled with a strong sense for prioritizing work and attention to detail.