

## The Iowa Legionnaire - District News

Summer 2017



**First District  
Commander  
Alvin Miller**

Spring conferences are over with, which also means new personnel will soon be taking office in areas such as District Commander, especially for the 1<sup>st</sup> District! It has been a very wonderful, 3 months shy of 3 years.



**Second District  
Commander  
Dick Hogan**

District Spring Conferences are done. Elections have been held. I am proud to be your District Commander for another year. See what happens when several of you don't show up for these conferences!

We had a good conference in Cedar Rapids. Wish more people would have come though. Had five of six counties and many posts represented. Why is it posts from the far reaches of a district manage to send representatives while suburb posts don't show?



**Third District  
Commander  
Bob Wenger**

Greetings to the Third District Legion Family.

Spring Conference was hosted by Denver Post #653 American Legion and Auxiliary Unit on April 8. A huge thank you goes out to them for getting the conference set up and hosting an excellent event on short notice. It was very rewarding to see the scout troop involved at the banquet.



**Fourth District  
Commander  
Ed Fontes**

The year is almost over; we have just a few weeks left, and it has gone very fast!

I want to thank all the people who helped me over the past two years. I want to thank the Vice Commanders, Brandon Parcel, Dan Boberg, and Mike Smock for doing

Now it is time to step behind our new commander, Robert (Bob) Waugh, from Douds American Legion. Bob has had a very successful tenure as Post commander and will serve us quite well in his new position. Our 'Hats are off' to you Bob, to have a really super and successful year/s!

This past month saw several 1<sup>st</sup> District officers hold an open house in Williamsburg to assist the

It was good to see some new faces at the conference. A couple stepped forward to get involved, either for an office or to attend Leadership School to help prepare themselves for future Legion positions of responsibility.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> District did well in 2017 membership, but unfortunately not as well as two or three other districts. One of those was aided by a revitalization effort, but that should not be an excuse for other districts to finish behind them. Rather, it should be an incentive to show what you can do without extra outside help. The Great 2<sup>nd</sup> is not pleased at finishing where it did for membership totals.

Let us right the ship and sail back

Mark your calendar for Sunday, June 25. This is the date set for a fundraiser for Nicole Clapp, candidate for National Auxiliary President. Events for the day include a 5-county Freedom Rock Tour. Ride is sponsored by American Legion Riders Chapter from Post #46, in Marshalltown, and Post #166 in Shellsburg, and is open to all 2, 3, and 4-wheel motorcycles or vehicles. Cost is \$15 per vehicle with all proceeds going to Nicole. Registration is 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Spanky's in Gladbrook, and the ride ends at American Legion Post #46

their jobs so well, and Vice Commander Dan Boberg for representing me in areas I could not attend because of other commitments.

Bob and Dee Onken, Brandon Parcel, Ed and Jeannie Parcel, and the District 4 Auxiliary did a wonderful job of hosting and running the conference at Osage on April 1, especially Dee for baking the rolls at 11pm so they would be ready for the morning coffee!



**Fifth District  
Commander  
Gary Smith**

Hello to the great 5<sup>th</sup> District, I am very proud of what the 5<sup>th</sup> District has accomplished this year. Once again, we had a State Oratorical Champion, Caleb Gipple, from New Sharon. He was sponsored by the Coffin-Miller American Legion Post #446 New Sharon. Caleb went on to the National Competition in Indianapolis in mid-April, where he

local post in picking up some new members, and that is what we were able to accomplish. We have several wonderful new members that have a heart to see Williamsburg continue to grow and succeed.

As I say good-bye in my tenure as District Commander, I extend a very hearty thank you to all that stepped up to run programs and committees in the great 1st,

into first place in the coming year. We have the potential. We just need to get off our duffs more and do it. Some posts in the district did not turn in a single member in the last five months – and some of them were within one or two of goal. We need to sign more younger members. A lot of us are getting on in years and we need some younger people with more energy and perhaps better ideas. Younger veterans are the Legion's future. I think a lot of us are also overlooking female veterans. There are probably more of them out there than you think. They can be a great asset to posts.

Some very good news happened in April. A Post was saved. Camanche Post representatives

in Marshalltown. Adult beverages and meal will be at end of ride. Ride will be to Freedom Rocks only -- no alcoholic refreshment stops.

Department Convention is fast approaching and I hope many have made plans to attend. The dates are July 21-23, at the Airport Holiday Inn and Conference Center in Des Moines. Reservations can be made by calling 515-287-2400.

On Monday, August 14, the Department of Iowa American Legion will host the Walk for Veterans at the Iowa State Fair. Please check the website at

Thanks also to Jim Meyer for membership and liaison support in attending the special meetings and providing excellent reports, to Richard Witt and his team for post and membership liquidation, to Dennis Soppe and his oratorical team for doing a fantastic job with those young people, to Jake Blitsch and team with Boys State, to Harlan Backhaus with Children & Youth, and Richard Barnes for Community Service.

a phone call to members who have not paid or renewed. Let's all work just a little harder and get this done.

Department Leadership School will be held in Des Moines, June 2-4. Check [www.ialegion.org](http://www.ialegion.org) for additional information.

The Department Convention will be held July 21-23, at the Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines. I cannot wait to see old friends and meet new friends. I hope for a good turnout and to see you all there. As some of you all know my time as the 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander is winding down. I want to thank each

assisted in answering my many questions that I directed to knowledgeable leaders of the past. This is what is so great about the members of The American Legion: Wonderful mentoring provided by past and present leadership.

We were privileged to have the Department Commander hail from our great 1<sup>st</sup> District this past year. Thank You Ken (Rocky) Rochholz, for your expertise in leadership for

contacted me and said they had scheduled a special meeting and asked that I come. They said they were going to propose closing the Post and maybe merge with another Post, perhaps Clinton. They cited lack of interest among the 30+ membership. They only needed about another dozen to reach goal. The meeting date arrived and District Vice Commander Neal Riede, myself and Department's Revitalization officer were there. We were all set to give the 15 Camanche members pep talks or whatever it took to convince them to remain viable.

We didn't have to do that. Apparently some behind the scenes talks had happened because right

[www.ialegion.org](http://www.ialegion.org) for more information.

National Convention in Reno is fast approaching. Dates are August 18-24. I will have delegate and alternate registration packets available until early June, after that you will need to contact Department Office in Des Moines. My cell is 319-270-3441 or [rvw0599@gmail.com](mailto:rvw0599@gmail.com).

On April 12, I attended the 63rd Annual Tama County Government Day. It is believed to be the only Government Day program that still exists within Iowa. An excellent program for high school students in

Thanks to Bob Onken for being Master of Ceremonies and Convention Commissioner and Post 101 in Mason City for being a host for National Executive Committeemen. Thanks to Jim Perry and his team for their work on the Freedom Rock. And without our Special Sparkplug, District Adjutant Arthur Sullivan, doing all the paperwork, we could not function! During these two years I have met so many wonderful post

us this past year. Thank You for the many miles you put behind yourself in making visits criss-crossing this great State of Iowa!

Thank You for the sacrifices your family endured with having you "on the road for days at a time."

Thank You, Rocky! It has been a great year but I am very glad to hand off the gavel to Bob Waugh, and take a step back for a year.

away it was moved that the Post remain open. The motion passed unanimously, much to our delight. However, the situation is still tenuous. From what was said, it appeared that the adjutant's agreeing to stay active was important. The adjutant stated the attendance that day was the most he's seen in ages. He added that the Post needs to continue and that the things for vets, community and youth – or he will step down.

Hopefully the renewed effort will catch fire and the Post will flourish in the future. See you at Department Convention in July. I hope you have a great summer! For God and Country.

Tama County, and an outstanding job by Tama County Legion and Auxiliary.

Fall Conference will be hosted by Post #681 in Conrad. The dates and times will be available at Department Convention.

Have a safe Memorial Day weekend. For the Legion family, the weekend is about paying respect to our departed comrades and loved ones.

Take a few moments to remember our brothers and sisters now serving and protecting our freedom in this great country.

commanders and members who make our family a great family to help our veterans and ourselves. And especially for the Honor Guards in attendance for funerals through all kinds of weather, giving honor to our fallen comrades.

I will see all at Department Convention on July 21-23, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport.

"FREEDOM IS A TEAM EFFORT"

of 5<sup>th</sup> District Vice Commanders, all District officers and District Committee chairs for all your hard work.

On April 22, we held our District Spring Conference in Grinnell. We had a pretty good turnout at that conference. I believe we had 27 Legionnaires in attendance and I want to thank the Department Staff and 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander Don Swan and Scott Moline for attending. We elected a new incoming 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander. He is Darrin Alderson from Oskaalosa, Post #34. I know

Darrin will do a fine job as District Commander and bring great input to the 5<sup>th</sup> District. Thanks 5<sup>th</sup> District, the Department Staff, every American Legion member, SAL member, Auxiliary member and American Legion Riders for all that you do. I will always appreciate the experience I have had as 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander. Before I end, the National Convention in Reno, Nevada will be held August 18-24. I look forward to seeing many friends and meeting new Legionnaires. Have a blessed Memorial Day!