



THE LEGION TIMES

Official Newspaper of The American Legion, Department of Texas

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Do you have an article or announcement for The Legion Times?

If so, please send all submissions to times@txlegion.org by the 20th of every month and it will appear in the following issue

Message from the Commander

Greetings,

February is here already. How time flies when you are busy. Our Mid-Winter Conference is a memory and we are marching forward into the second month of 2015.

During the Mid-Winter Conference we had Dale Barnett, the leading candidate for National Commander 2015 – 2016 spend a couple of days with us. He was able to sit in on some of the commission meetings and address the DEC on Sunday morning. We enjoyed having him visit our great state and are looking forward to working with him next year.



Mike Helm, National Commander 2014-2015 arrived Sunday afternoon after the DEC in Austin. On Monday we took him to Post 76 in Austin and then gave him a tour of our Headquarters Building. Afterwards we drove to Killeen and he visited Post 317 in Jerrell, Post 223 in Killeen and Post 573 in Harker Heights. Tuesday we were given a VIP tour of Fort Hood. It was very interesting and all of us were impressed. That evening we took the Commander to Post 55 in Belton. Wednesday we toured the VA Hospitals in Waco and Temple. Both tours went smoothly and were impressive. The Commander also visited Post 133 in Temple. You can see he had a full schedule while visiting us. He is very concerned, as all of are, with our membership this year. Our numbers are decreasing from year to year. All of us need to get on the bandwagon and call the expired members. We have been give the tools to bring these members back. Now we need to utilize them. A simple phone call in many cases will do the trick. Please take a few minutes and call three expired members. You will be amazed how that will improve our membership.

Our Department Oratorical contest is this month in Denton. If you get an opportunity to attend please do so. These students are the "cream of the crop" having already won at Post, District and Division levels. It is interesting to hear the different interpretations of our Constitution.

Boys State packets are in the mail. We have additional room available to us this year. So please let's fill up that dorm at UT. This is another one of our remarkable programs.

I am looking forward to our upcoming spring conventions. I hope to see you there!

For God and Country,
Lynn

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Executive Director
William West

Editor
F.G. Adams

**Send all correspondence
and submissions to:**
The Legion Times
PO Box 140527
Austin, TX 78714
T: 512.472.4138 / F: 512.472.0603

E-mail: times@txlegion.org

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HINTS FROM HINCE

The Super Bowl is over...but is it really a SUPER BOWL if the Steelers or the Cowboys are not in it?...

If you are like me, you cannot believe it is February and the Legion year is half over. January was one for the books in the State of Texas. The National Commander traveled the Lone Star State and left with glowing reports...and a new pair of boots! Special thanks to the Legion Family who welcomed the tourists...you all did us proud.

Oratorical will be over by the time you all read this. I got to attend several competitions and the quality continues to increase along with the number. Saw more home school students this year which means our Posts are really getting into the grassroots of our communities.

HINT: Even if your participant did not win, do a press release. Also write a note to those involved thanking them for their participation. This includes your fellow Legion family. A little thank you goes a long way.

This is the time of year we are looking at Boys State applications and sponsorships. It continues to be one of our flagships. Do not hesitate to ask your community for financial help. You will be surprised how many leaders went to Boys State themselves!

HINT: Form a Boys State Team and work to really get folks as excited as you are about this endeavor. Use past participants to pass the word and involve all local school entities to include home school students.

School Awards should be ordered now and again, get a brain trust together to work the project.
Hint: This recognition goes a long way in making a name for the Legion in communities. Make sure you do a press release.

If you need help, ask. I am at hince57@msn.com or 979 778-1835

God bless,
Gerry Hince

So where can you ride a tactical vehicle and participate in night exercises in Afghanistan, observe veterans legally blind working computers and being training in technical machines that most of us sighted cannot handle and be briefed by the 3 Star of III Corps... all in a 24 hour period?

That is exactly what the National Commander Mike Helm and our own Commander Lynn Sparks did this past month.

As part of his windshield tour of the states, our 2015 Commander and his aide joined an entourage of 8 Texas Legionnaires visiting Posts in Jarrell, Austin, Killeen, Hawker Heights and Belton in addition to Fort Hood, the WACO VA Center and Temple VA.

While at Hood, the visitors also had the honor of seeing 5 soldiers on active duty with the Corps become citizens. In addition, our National Commander was able to visit two of his children and their spouses while in Austin and then his son and daughter-in-law joined in the fun at Fort Hood, their current duty station.

2014-2015 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Lynn Sparks, Department Commander
Fred Rogers, Department Vice Commander
Jim Prendergast, National Executive Committeeman
C. W. Sparks, Alternate National Executive Committeeman
William West, Department Adjutant
Cheryl Williams, Department Chaplain
Walter Ivie, Department Treasurer
Steve Watkins, Department Judge Advocate
Cyndi Miller, Department Historian
Terry Bigley, Department Sergeant-at-Arms
Glen Scott, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
James Fleming, Immediate Past Department Commander
Michael Simon, Director of Internal Affairs
Edward Reyes, Department Service Officer
Michael Lacy, Department Service Officer
Renee Monczynski, Department Service Officer
Donald Brideschge, Department Service Officer

DIVISION COMMANDERS

Tom Kelly, 1st Division Commander
John Hince, 2nd Division Commander
Lloyd Buckmaster, 3rd Division Commander
Roger Folmar, 4th Division Commander

DISTRICT COMMANDERS

Lerory Anderson, 1st District Commander
Glenda Simon, 2nd District Commander
John Brewer, 3rd District Commander
Terry Cloninger, 4th District Commander
Gary Smith, 5th District Commander
Billy Winter, 6th District Commander
Ed Jarvis, 7th District Commander
Joey Garamillo, 8th District Commander
Jerry Kubala, 9th District Commander
Steve Miller, 10th District Commander
Sandy Kousman, 11th District Commander
Joe Page, 12th District Commander
Ken Horn, 13th District Commander
Ricardo Hankerson, 14th District Commander
Harlan Lucas, 15th District Commander
Phillip Westerman, 16th District Commander
Bret Watson, 17th District Commander
John Overton, 18th District Commander
Ralph Langley, 19th District Commander
Robert Masten, 20th District Commander
Charlie Baker, 21st District Commander
Juan Torres, Jr., 22nd District Commander
Jerome Iltis, 23rd District Commander

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Texas? If so, please follow these simple guidelines for submissions.

- Submit your text in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf). **Save your file as the name of the article, so we can keep track of it.** And be sure to make it clear who the author is, whether it's you or if you are just forwarding it to us.
- Please include any photos and/or artwork for articles *separately* (NOT embedded in your text file) as high resolution (300 dpi, or better) JPGs. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article. Let us know in your e-mail of any corresponding captions, name of the photographer, etc.

- Please spell check everything! Especially people's names, web addresses, etc. We do our best to catch typos, but sometimes they still slip by. You can help us greatly here by simply running your spell check function in your word processing program.

- **E-mail everything directly to us at times@txlegion.org by the 20th of every month for it to appear in the following issue.** This way we have plenty of time to work with in case we need to clarify anything with you.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and hope you continue to help us grow The Legion Times!

Fred's Focus

Message from the Vice Commander

The expression “Sell The Sizzle – Not The Steak”, might be the most famous piece of sales and marketing advice ever. The originator of the phrase was Elmer Wheeler who is well known as the master of persuasion during the depression days of the 1930's. His philosophy behind the expression is simple...”don't think so much about what you want to say as about what the prospects want to hear – then the response you will get will more often be the one you are aiming for.”

One statement that is often heard when discussing membership growth and our responsibility to recruit new members is “I'm just not a salesperson”. The answer, of course, is “yes, you are a “salesperson” you just don't recognize it by that name”. Every one of us is involved in plausible persuasion and that is nothing more than sales. Consider these examples, every parent is a “salesperson” when they convince their children to do the right thing. At work we are a “salesperson” when we want to convince our boss that we need an increase in pay. We are a “salesperson” when we try to convince our spouse that we want to do something, of which they are not in agreement.

To recruit new members we don't need to be a professional “salesperson”...we just need to be willing to share with others about this great organization that we love and belong to and why it will be to their benefit to join.

So, what are some of the advantages and benefits of membership that we can use to “Sell The Sizzle” about membership in The American Legion? To find the answer let's go to our Mission Statement.

- We are a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness.
- We are the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth and sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members, veterans and their families.
- Hundreds of local American Legion programs and activities strengthen the nation one community at a time. American Legion Baseball is one of the nation's most successful amateur athletic programs, educating young people about the importance of sportsmanship, citizenship and fitness. The Operation Comfort Warriors program supports recovering wounded warriors and their families, providing them with “comfort items” and the kind of support that makes a hospital feel a little bit more like home. The Legion also raises millions of dollars in donations to help veterans and their families during times of need and to provide college scholarship opportunities.
- We are a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization with great political influence perpetuated by its grass-roots involvement in the legislation process from local districts to Capitol Hill.
- Legionnaires' sense of obligation to community, state and nation drives an honest advocacy for veterans in Washington. The Legion stands behind the issues most important to the nation's veteran's community, backed by resolutions passed by volunteer leadership.
- The American Legion's success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. The organization belongs to the people it serves and the communities in which it thrives.

“Selling The Sizzle - Not The Steak” is just one example of a classic sales and marketing technique. And it is a classic for a reason – it works! Veterans today want to belong to an organization that provides help in the community. We just need to ask them to join.

Don't you agree...we have a lot of sizzle to share with others that will help grow our membership?

“Let's Lead The Way”

The Texas American Legion 2015 Midwinter Conference Sweepstakes Winners

The Midwinter Conference Sweepstakes drawing was held on January 16, 2015 at the Austin Southpark Hotel in Austin, Texas.

Congratulations' to the following winners:

Prize	Amount	Name	City	Post
Grand Prize	\$10,000.00	James Andrews	College Station	159
Second Prize	\$5000.00	Earl Arnold	Texarkana	25
Third Prize	\$2500.00	Roy Cuevas	Lakehills	410
Fourth Prize	\$1500.00	James Roberts	Garden Ridge	2
Fifth Prize	\$1000.00	Charles Verret Sr	Hemphill	197
Sixth Prize	\$500.00	Alfred Brosseau	San Antonio	345
Seventh Prize	\$500.00	John Horgan	San Antonio	2
Eighth Prize	\$100.00	John Valles	Allen	345
Ninth Prize	\$100.00	Charles Robinson	Beaumont	817
Tenth Prize	\$100.00	David Andretti	San Antonio	336
Eleventh Prize	\$100.00	Gary Terry	Hurst	379
Twelfth Prize	\$100.00	Greg Cole	Fluvanna	181
Thirteenth Prize	\$100.00	Ivan Reaves	Willis	618

Winners are posted in the February and August monthly issue of the Legion Times immediately after the drawing and can be found at www.txlegion.org.



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ADJUTANT....the sound of the word is impressive and for anyone who has ever been one in a Post, they know how important that job is and how much work is involved.

At the recent DEC, the ADJUTANT OF THE YEAR FOR TEXAS was announced and Julie Rhoden of Post 491 in Granbury took home the honors.

Nominated by Jack Sides, the Commander of the Post, Julie is part of District 6 with a membership goal of 467. Commander Sides says with great pride that Julie is the go-to person at the Post and well deserving of the honor. Her tenure as Adjutant includes the period of time when 491 was not only hit by a tornado but served as a triage center for the community.

- Gerry Hince

TEXAS LONE STAR RECRUITER PIN

Have you earn yours??



Awarded to Legionnaires for recruiting "NEW" members into The American Legion. This award is based upon the total accumulative number of New Members the Recruiter has signed up into The American Legion from the inception of this award through their Legion career. The pin will be awarded starting with the #1 for the first new member and then increase in increments of 5 (5, 10, 15, 20, etc.) based upon the accumulative total of new members recruited. Once the recruiter is awarded a pin level, he/she will work for the next higher pin level and once a pin level has been achieved a duplicate pin level will not be awarded.

CONTACT YOUR POST ADJUTANT TO GET YOURS!

Renew your membership online

Please continue to support your fellow veterans, troops, their families, youth and our nation.



Your annual dues help support programs in your community and across the nation. American Legion programs and services include: Troop Support, Child Welfare Foundation, Heroes to Hometowns, American Legion Baseball, Department Service Officers, Family Support Network, Flag Advocacy & Etiquette, Junior ROTC & ROTC, Operation Comfort Warriors, Scholarships, Veterans Job Fairs, and many others.

Thank you for ensuring that The American Legion remains the most powerful voice in America on behalf of veterans, servicemembers, their families, and communities across the nation.

Go to www.legion.org/renew

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- ★ **Medicare Supplement** — Pays Legionnaires age 65 and over benefits to supplement what Medicare doesn't cover, such as deductibles and co-payments.
- ★ **LifeLock** — LifeLock, the leader in identity theft protection, helps protect Legionnaires' identity — even if your information falls into the wrong hands. As a LifeLock member, if you become a victim of identity theft because of a failure in LifeLock's service, they'll help you fix it at their expense, up to \$1,000,000.
- ★ **Long Term Care** — Pays cash benefits for nursing and/or home health care. Benefits pay for skilled, intermediate or custodial care in a nursing home.
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The Legion Times
PO Box 140527
Austin, TX 78714

T: 512.472.4138
F: 512.472.0603
times@txlegion.org



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