



Voice of the Vets

Sidney American Legion

Post 217



NEWSLETTER

March - April, 2026

Sidney, OH 45365

FROM THE COMMANDER



To My Fellow Legionnaires,

Now that the first two months of the year are behind us, there is nothing lovelier than looking forward to springtime. Once the days get longer, the weather warms up, and colorful flowers start popping up, we are definitely ready to go outside and enjoy the glory of the season. The promise of Spring's arrival is enough to get us through the next two months! Don't forget on March 8, 2026 to spring forward an hour for Daylight Savings Time!

† **In Remembrance:** The following Comrades of Post 217 have been transferred to Post Everlasting: **George Ginter-USA, Vietnam, Glen Hicks-USA, WWII, Norbert Platfoot-USA, Vietnam, Austin Snowden, Jr.-USAF, Korea, James Swiger-USA, Korea.** Please take a moment to remember our Legionnaires and their family.

Membership: Please see 1st Vice Commander Muhlenkamp's entry regarding important information. According to our Membership Chair, Gary Bonnoront, we are currently at 89.41% renewal; thank you to all who submitted your renewal to help us attain this percentage. We still have 50

members from 2025 to renew to reach our goal of 100%. District 2 fell to 2nd place at 90.71%, District 11 is now in 1st place at 91.95%. A roster of members who have expired membership is posted on the bulletin board in the entrance to the canteen. All posts achieving 100% quota by April 1, 2026 will split \$3,000 from the department and be given \$50 from District 2. Remember, your 2025 membership benefits expired on December 31, 2025. If you have any questions, please reach out to either 1st Vice Commander Jerry Muhlenkamp or Membership Chair Gary Bonnoront.

For those still needing to renew, you can submit your \$45 membership renewal to Gary Bonnoront at: American Legion Post 217, PO Box 297, Sidney, OH 45365. You can also renew online at <https://www.legion.org/renew>, click on "Renew membership online" or <https://mylegion.org>. You can reach me at (937) 638-9797 if you need any assistance. Let us work together to reach the 100% goal.

Veterans Honor Guard Update: Unfortunately we have had to suspend our Veterans Honor Guard services until April 1, 2026 as several members are out of state until first of April. Other members have had medical issues

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which have prevented them from participating at this time. This was a difficult and heartbreaking decision. Will you please search your heart to become a member of this honorable team? We definitely need more volunteers to help us continue to render military honors at veteran funerals and community functions. Memorial Day is approaching quickly; we need the support of all who can join the Sidney Veterans Honor Guard to honor those who have gone before us. We continue to pray for those recovering from medical challenges. For more information, please contact Commander Johnson at (937) 638-9797.

Americanism & Government Testing:

We are pleased to announce that two of The Department of Ohio Americanism and Government test winners were sponsored by Post 217. They were Emmalee Carter, 12th Grade, Christian Academy and Brooke Voress, 10th Grade, Sidney High School. Both students will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. with the highlight of the trip being a Wreath Laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery. 2nd District is currently grading the 4th Grade Flag Education Program tests. The winners will be announced in our next newsletter. Thank you to Hardin-Houston, Christian Academy, Holy Angels, and Northwood Schools for their participation in this program.

American Legion Buckeye Boys State:

We continue collaborating with the local schools to obtain names of eligible candidates to attend Buckeye Boys State at Miami University, Oxford,

Ohio, June 14-21, 2026. We have three delegates who have shown interest in attending, 2 from Sidney High School, 1 from Lehman Catholic. If you know of an eligible high school junior, please encourage them to apply. If you have any questions, interested in participating in the interview process, or have interest in being on Staff with Buckeye Boys State, please reach out to me.

Gifts for Yanks Program: This program is completely dependent on the Legion Family fundraising efforts. We continue to accept donations throughout the year to reach our annual goal of \$5,000. We hope to raise more donations for 2026 as this program benefits all veterans, even those from our region. Will you please consider donating? You can also mail your donation to Sidney American Legion Post 217, P.O. Box 297, Sidney, OH 45365. Any monetary contribution makes the life of a veteran just a little bit better. Thank you in advance for your donation.

Election of Officers: Election of Officers for 2026-2027 is quickly approaching. The Executive Committee is comprising a Slate of Officers for nomination at our March 17, 2026 meeting. Please see First Vice Commander Jerry Muhlenkamp's entry for further information regarding this process. The positions seeking election are Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, and Treasurer. If you are interested in applying for one of these positions, please reach out to 1st Vice Muhlenkamp or me. It is especially important this year as several officers will be stepping down and positions

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must be filled to continue our Charter. Please mark your calendars for our April 21, 2026 meeting, 6-7:30 p.m. to stop by and cast your vote for the candidates seeking these positions. I cannot stress enough the importance of these elections.

Treasurer and Membership

Assistants: Are you looking for a way to serve? Exciting opportunities with shared responsibilities? We are looking for two motivated individuals to be our Treasurer and Membership assistants. One would work closely with our Treasurer, Rick Lunsford, and the other with our Membership Chair Gary Bonnoront to learn the ins and outs of their roles. This would be valuable to ensure continuity should someone be on vacation or extended leave. It does not require a lot of time, just a desire to serve your fellow veterans. Please call me at (937) 638-9797 or reach out to either Rick or Gary for further information.

American Legion Post Scholarships:

Our scholarship chairman, Dale Peterson has been working closely with the local schools to promote our Scholarship Program. If you know of a High School Senior, please have them speak with their school counselor or go to our website at sidneylegionpost217.org to obtain a scholarship application. The submission due date is March 16, 2026.

Upcoming Events:

March 8, 2026: Daylight Savings Time-Spring forward one hour at 2 a.m.

March 8, 2026: Second District Spring Conference, 9 a.m. at Ft. Recovery Post 355

March 17, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m. Nomination of Officers

March 29, 2026: Vietnam Veterans Day

April 1, 2026: Shelby County Council American Legion Meeting, 7 p.m. at Anna Post 446

April 21, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m. Election of Officers

In closing, "Though no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new ending." —Carl Bard

**Judy Johnson,
Commander**

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FROM THE 1ST VICE COMMANDER

Membership Goal = 472
Members Paid = 422
89.41% to goal
50 members have not paid their dues yet for 2025.

These need to be paid BEFORE April 1st, 2026 or you will be losing your American Legion benefits, time as a Legion member and access to the canteen. Please check your membership cards to see if you are paid or not paid. Contact Gary Bonnoront or Judy Johnson if you have questions about your membership. There are some really good benefits to being an American Legion member. Your

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membership helps to give The American Legion a strong voice to Congress to keep improving the benefits for veterans, and especially health care for veterans. These past few years have seen many changes to VA benefits and we have to give many of our thanks to our strong membership voice to Congress who budgets the funding for our health care. This is one of many often-unseen benefits we enjoy just by renewing our annual membership. So, you can see, everyone, no matter their involvement in our local American Legion, is contributing to make benefits to all veterans improve.

We are closing in on our annual election of officers for Post 217. We will be entertaining nominations to our elected positions during our monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 17th, starting at 6:00 pm in the Legion meeting room. You must be nominated at this meeting to get on the ballots so if you are interested you want to have someone present to make the nomination and then have someone else second the nomination. I am hoping we get enough members present that we have to move into the hall to accommodate everyone. I would like to improve our elections by having more than just one person nominated to every position. Here are the positions that will be voted on During our April 21st monthly meeting from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

Commander: So far, we have 2 people interested in running

1st Vice-Commander: So far, we have 1 person interested in running

2nd Vice-Commander: So far, we have 1 person interested in running

Post Treasurer: so far, we have 1 person interested in running

Property Trustees: 3-year term, 2 people to be elected: So far, we have 6 people interested in running for these 2 positions.

If you are interested in running for any of the above officer positions, or you know of someone who is interested, please let one of the current officers know BEFORE the March monthly meeting: Jerry Muhlenkamp, Tiny Stockton, Rick Lunsford, Patricia Hamberg, Judy Johnson, Jim Neilan, Jack Curl, Phil Wogoman, Buddy Terry, Bill Knasel.

Also keep in mind that there are many other positions that get filled by appointment of the Commander. As you can see there are many opportunities to become involved with the operations of our post and we are always wanting to get new, fresh ideas on board so we do not get stagnant and boring. We want our Post to grow and become a post that meets the needs and desires of our membership and that can only happen when people become involved and share their thoughts and ideas.

Please keep checking the bulletin board just inside the entrance to the canteen for updates and information on the election of officers.

**Jerry Muhlenkamp,
1st Vice Commander**

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FROM THE TRUSTEES

Hello Fellow Veterans, Auxiliary, Sons of American Legion Family and Friends,

Hopefully, Spring is on its way and this

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letter finds our Veterans, Family, and Friends in fairly great health. We usually don't have many projects going on during winter months, however, we have been thinking of items that need our attention.

Our outside building is in need of restorative and maintenance upkeep. We received 5 bids from various contractors and selected one to perform the work. They will possibly start April 1, 2026 or as soon as the weather permits. They will repair the damaged stucco on the building, redo the gutters, down spouts, and entrance doors in addition to painting the building and outside utility units.

The following is an update on the Trustees projects:

1. Smitty's Bicycle and Locksmith Shop rekeyed the entrance doors to the building and three inside offices. This process streamlined and reduced the number of keys required to access the facility. Now my Trustee's key ring is much lighter! Anyone who has old keys to the building, please turn them into Gary Bonnoront, Tiffany Olding, or me. The keys to the offices in the Hall and the Arms room remain the same.
2. As the weather improves, we will focus on completing the Veterans Memorial Park. We are working with Nichols Monuments in Versailles for etching of veteran bricks. More information to follow.

3. Anyone desiring to purchase an outside bench with a plaque, please let us know. 1/3 Bench is \$300, 1/2 Bench is \$400, and one complete Bench is \$750. This includes the cost of the plaque. Ideally, we would like to purchase two more benches to place on either side of the entrance doors to the Canteen and Banquet Hall.
4. We still have granite pavers available to purchase for those wanting to make a donation. These pavers line the entrance walkway to the Memorial Flame.
5. Handicap ramp installed outside the patio room door with the handrails to be installed as soon as the weather permits.
6. Thank you to Fred Meiring who helped in repairing the metal floor strip at the base of the Canteen's handicap ramp, installed doorstops, and placed a light on the Legion Baseball display above Tiffany's office. Thank you for all your support!
7. Thank you to Bill Knasel for repairing chairs in the small meeting room before someone was injured.

We are so thankful for all of our Volunteers and our Honor Guard. We have been challenged in having enough volunteers for the Honor Guard. We have five volunteers with medical or family issues. Please keep them in your

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prayers. Prayers for those who are currently out of state that they will return safely. Please let us know if you are interested in becoming a member of the Honor Guard. You do not need to be present for every event.

We can only keep the American Legion prospering and marching forward if we ALL work together. We strive to have our younger veterans join and be active alongside our current members for it will be them who carry the torch into the future.

If you have something that may need attention, please contact the Trustees. We will give our full attention to addressing your concerns and try to be of assistance.

May God Bless your service to others and your family.

***On Behalf of the Trustees,
God Bless All and Prayers,***

***Jack Curl, Head
Trustee***

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FROM THE POST CHAPLAIN

Hello Fellow Veterans, Family, and Friends! Hopefully, all of you are doing great!

We have some members with health issues and need cheering up. Please pray for them. I didn't want to mention their names in case I overlooked someone. When you pray, ask God to

watch over them, He will know who they are and what they need.

I am researching a time to establish visits to our fellow veterans in Extended Care Facilities. Things have been a little challenging for me at present time, but I am always thinking of how to better serve our veterans and their families. I currently call or text veterans that I am aware of and are in need, if not every day, within a two week time. We all need to show we care! Simple kindness will go a long way. Just a phone call or text helps so many who are hurting or have issues. We have some who lost loved ones. Always keep them in your prayers.

I know a young lady who faithfully brought her husband into the Canteen. He passed away, she is feeling lonely, however, doesn't feel like she belongs in the Canteen, not in the Auxiliary. Maybe I am wrong, but to me she is still family. Please keep them in your prayers.

May God Bless and ease your pain. May He Bless you with happiness even when you are hurting.

Prayers for Peace,

***God Bless All, Jack Curl
Chaplain, Post 217***

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FROM THE SONS of AMERICAN LEGION

The SAL members are thawing out from the winter freeze and resume meetings the third monday of odd months (Jan,

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March, May, July, Sept, Nov) starting March 16th. Meetings begin at 7pm at Post 217. All members and prospective members are welcome!

The \$500 annual scholarship application is now available and published on the homepage of the Post 217 website (<https://sidneylegionpost217.org>)

This Scholarship is available to a college or trade school bound high school senior from Sidney HS, Lehman HS, Chirstian Academy or Fairlawn HS. A special "Thanks" to Post 217 member, Dave DeVelvis, for revising and posting the application on the website.

Also, please consider recommending a SAL's membership to any eligible individuals you may know and feel free to contact the SALS commander for any information at (419) 235-9607.

**Your SAL Commander,
Michael Humphrey**

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FROM THE LEGION AUXILIARY



We have definitely had a cold and snowy past few months. This has limited our Auxiliary activities.

We do, however, have a blood drive scheduled on Tuesday, March 17, 2026. We will supply a lunch and snacks for blood donors and helpers.

Please remember scholarship forms are due by March 6th. They can be picked up and dropped off at the American Legion canteen.

Our next meeting will be March 11, 2026, at 1:00 pm. I hope you all can attend.

**Linda Limbert,
Post 217 Auxiliary President**

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Wednesday Bid Euchre Night

*All Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and
SAL members are eligible to
join in the fun!*

Spouses are welcome.

A Special
“Thank You!”
to our volunteers
who help out
at our Post and
in our Canteen!

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT
THE CANTEEN AND SHARE SOME
GOOD TIMES WITH YOUR FRIENDS!

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

Post Officers:

- Judy Johnson, Commander
- Jerry Muhlenkamp, 1st Vice Commander
- Gary "Tiny" Stockton, 2nd Vice Commander
- Patricia Hamberg, Adjutant
- Eric Lunsford, Treasurer
- Jack Curl, Chaplain
- Sherrye Lamma, Post Service Officer

Executive Committee:

- Phil Wogoman
- Bill Knasel
- Jerry Muhlenkamp
- Jim Neilan
- Buddy Terry

Board of Trustees:

- Jack Curl
- Patricia Hamberg
- Bill Knasel
- Brian Mantor
- Jerry Schmidt
- Gary "Tiny" Stockton

VISIT OUR WEBSITE - WWW.SIDNEYLEGIONPOST217.ORG