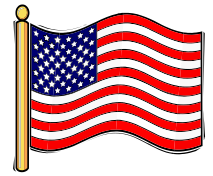


Voice of the Vets

Sidney American Legion

Post 217



NEWSLETTER

July - Aug, 2026

Sidney, OH 45365

FROM THE COMMANDER



To My Fellow Legionnaires,

I am honored, humbled, and sincerely appreciative for your support and confidence in electing me as your American Legion Post 217 Commander for the year 2026-2027. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Officers, Trustees, Executive Committee Members, the Honor Guard, our Auxiliary and Sons of American Legion, all the volunteers/staff of the Canteen, and our patrons who made this past year a successful one. We accomplished so much with your assistance. To list a few: Continued the progress of the Memorial Park project, awarded 8 Scholarships, sent 6 delegates to Buckeye Boys State, sponsored the Fourth Grade Flag Education Program to 4 participating local schools, provided the Americanism and Government testing to 2 participating local high schools, installed a handicap ramp off the patio door, restored the outside of the building, replaced the window film on exterior doors/canteen windows, and contributed \$5,000 to Gift for Yanks.

We now turn our focus to an exciting year ahead to continue growing our programs and membership, taking care of those under the charge of the four pillars on which our great organization was founded: Americanism, Children and Youth, National Security, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. My vision is to concentrate on membership retention/recruitment, programs geared towards our children and youth, and completion of our Veterans Memorial Park. We must take an active part in mentoring the youth of today as they will be the leaders of tomorrow. We are seeking members in being a part of our

Children and Youth Committee, Americanism, Buckeye Boys State, and Scholarship Committee to plan and implement programs in coordination with the local schools. Please contact me at (937) 638-9797 to become a mentor and a strong advocate for these important programs. We need great leaders such as you!

Children's Christmas Party: One of the children's events I would like for us to sponsor this year is the Children's Christmas Party. What better way to focus on our children and youth. I understand it has been many years since the last one. I am seeking volunteers to help with this event; it is time to step up and become an integral member on this committee as I know Christmas will be upon us before we know it. Please contact me at (937) 638-9797.

Welcome New Members! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to Post 217: Matthew Thompson-USAF and Julianna Thompson-USAF. The 2027 membership year begins July 1, 2026. Please renew your membership as soon as possible to help us achieve 100% by November 10, 2026.

Installation of Officers: We held our installation of 2026-2027 officers at our June 16, 2026, meeting. The following individuals were elected: Commander-Judy Johnson, 1st Vice Commander-Jerry Muhlenkamp, 2nd Vice Commander-Gary (Tiny) Stockton, Treasurer-Rick Lunsford, and 3 year Trustees Jack Curl and Patricia Hamberg. The following were appointed to their positions: Adjutant-Patricia Hamberg, Chaplain-Jack Curl, Post Service Officer-Sherrye Lamma, and Sergeant-at-Arms-Bob Shoffner. Congratulations to everyone!

Firefighter of the Year: Congratulations to Lucas Woodward selected as the 2026 National American Legion Firefighter of the Year! Lucas serves as a firefighter/paramedic with the Sidney Department of Emergency Services. He will be awarded this high honor at the National American Legion Convention in Louisville, Ky August 28-September 3, 2026.

Ohio Buckeye Boys State: Post 217 sponsored six delegates to Buckeye Boys State June 14-21, 2026, at Miami University. They were Cody Baker, Andrew Benton, Michael Faber, Alexander Goubeaux, Benjamin O'Leary, and Josiah Paul. It is "A week to change a lifetime." Serving with the County Government Staff, I had the opportunity to work closely with the delegates and was impressed with their professionalism, enthusiasm, and patriotism. I understand why Steve Peltier donated 52 years to this program. It impacts our lives as much as the delegates. Once you experience this program, you will wonder why it took you so long to volunteer! Unfortunately, some of the Senior Legionnaires are leaving the program due to several reasons. We are recruiting motivated legionnaire(s) to serve on our A&G committee and become Ohio Buckeye Boys State Staff members who have the desire, motivation, and heart to mentor the youth of tomorrow in supporting our American Legion programs. For more information, please contact Judy Johnson, (937) 638-9797.

Veterans Memorial Park Project: I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all the Trustees and volunteers for their dedication and perseverance in their continued work towards the completion of the Veterans Park honoring those who have served. We are focusing on completing the park this summer and will hold a dedication ceremony upon completion. Veteran Brick order forms are available in the canteen and on our website at <https://sidneylegionpost217.org>. More info to follow.

Calling All Members: We are faced with a growing challenge of recruiting new members and having our current membership participate in post events and activities. I am calling on our

members (if able), to please join us in our monthly meeting. We need everyone's input and suggestions on what will make this a place to frequent and bring your families. Currently, there are only a handful of members who religiously give of their time and efforts to keep us going. I sometimes hear complaints, but I don't see those members attending the meeting to voice their concerns or suggestions. I ask if you want to see improvements, don't voice them with others, come to the meeting, and share them with the members. I know times are changing and we need our younger veterans' ideas too. We are all interested in making improvements that will provide a place you would be proud to visit and bring your family.

Veteran/Civilian of the Year Nominations: Shelby County Veterans Services is now accepting nominations for Veteran and Civilian of the Year. The nomination deadline is July 3, 2026. The winner in each category will be announced at the Shelby County Fair during the Veterans Day Program. There are many individuals in our county who deserve this title. Nomination forms are available at the Sidney Veterans Center or on Shelby County Veterans Services at <https://shelbycountyveterans.org> under the tab "Applications."

2026 Hometown Hero Banner Applications: Available at <https://shelbycountyveterans.org> from July 1, 2026, through January 4, 2027. Applications are \$100 each. The individual must have served in any of the following branches of the US Armed Forces (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, National Guard or Reserves) and must also meet one of the following conditions: Currently be an Active Service Member or be an Honorably Discharged Veteran.

Upcoming Events:

July 4, 2026: Happy 4th of July

July 10-July 12, 2026: American Legion Department of Ohio Convention, Toledo, OH

July 21, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m.

July 27, 2026: Veterans Day at the Shelby County Fair

Aug 2, 2026: Invasion of Kuwait “Operation Desert Shield” 1990
Aug 4, 2026: US Coast Guard Birthday
August 5, 2026: Shelby County Council American Legion Meeting, 7 p.m. at Sidney Post 217
Aug 7, 2026: Purple Heart Day
Aug 14, 2026: V-J Day 1945
August 18, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m.
Aug 28-September 3, 2026: 107th National Convention of American Legion, Louisville, Kentucky.

“If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under.”
 ~Ronald Regan

Wishing you and your family a safe and enjoyable summer!

***Judy Johnson,
 Commander***

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FROM THE 1ST VICE COMMANDER

We are quickly approaching our nation’s 250th birthday on July 4th, 2026! This is a perfect time for everyone to celebrate our great country and to also reflect on how we as a nation began, and how we have been able to become who we are after these 250 years. We need as many veterans to band together and make our voices heard in congress in order to continue to grow the benefits of all veterans for their care, and for the care of their families. But without more veterans joining the American Legion and giving just a little of your time to promote our programs and to send a strong voice to congress, we will be left behind. We need to continue to grow our voice and keep pressure to have congress keeping our veterans first in thought when making their decisions. So PLEASE, if you know a veteran who is not a member of The American Legion have them come in and talk with us. The rules for membership have changed and now all

honorably discharged veterans are eligible to join no matter their dates of service!

WE NEED ALL VETERANS TO JOIN WITH US TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

HAPPY 250th!

***Jerry Muhlenkamp,
 1st Vice Commander***

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FROM THE TRUSTEES

Hello Veterans, Families, and Friends. Hopefully, all of you are doing well. We are off to a fun year!

The following is an update on the Trustees projects:

1. We are focusing on completing the Veterans Memorial Park in the near future. We are pursuing many ways to achieve this. Thank you to all volunteers and for financial donations. Those items needing completion are placing stones/rocks around certain areas, use of equipment to remove above the ground rocks in order to sow grass seed, watering this area twice a day, and placement of solar lights along the walkway to the Eternal Flame. We need volunteers to help water the grass seed areas throughout the summer, perhaps up to 6 people. Please let me know if you can help. Once we complete the park, a dedication ceremony will be held.
2. The outside building restoration project is completed with the exception of caulking around the door frames. Please stop by and see the improvements if you haven't already.
3. We replaced the shrubs around Gazebo. Now the next step is to

treat the Gazebo wood with a sealant.

4. We are researching possible replacements for two memorial trees that have died.
5. Considering a future project to place a perimeter fence around the property by the Memorial Park. We have noticed dogs in the neighborhood homes utilizing our park as a relieving area.
6. The outside doors, patio door and canteen windows have had window tinting replaced.
7. Nickol Monuments in Versailles have partnered with us to engrave the veteran bricks for honorably discharged veterans. The cost remains at \$50 per brick. Applications are available at the Canteen or on our website: sidneylegionpost217.org.
8. Update on the Area 11 Inflow & Infiltration project: J & J Brautigam have been approved to perform the property building drain and building sewer inspection. Pending an inspection date.

Officer elections have been completed, verified, and officers installed. It is imperative that support is provided to those elected to ensure a smooth transition into 2026-2027 year. We have the same focus and goals for betterment of our organization and to remain united. At the Board of Property Trustee meeting held on June 23, 2026, Jack Curl was elected as the Chair and Jerry Schmidt was elected as the Vice Chair.

We are open to suggestions on how to recruit younger veterans to join the American Legion going forward. They are the future of our existence!

We celebrate Lucas Woodward, National American Legion Firefighter of the Year. Now to recommend Law Enforcement of the Year, Firefighter of the Year, Educator of the Year for

the upcoming year. We have been given two names for Law Enforcement of the Year. If you know of anyone, please reach out to us. It is very honorable for our Post to recommend our fellow community members and veterans who are making a difference in our community and our country.

God Bless our Country, our Veterans, and the American Legion. If you have suggestions, please let us know so we may be able to implement them.

May God Bless our post volunteers, veterans, family, and friends.

**Jack Curl,
Chair, Board of Property Trustee**

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FROM THE POST CHAPLAIN

Hello and God Bless! Isn't it great to have a free country to live in and have family and friends be safe? We can vote and be able to choose whom we want to lead and hopefully it will be in the right direction.

God wants us to be unified for what is right when things may not be going forward in the proper way, keeping in mind not to disrupt the entire system for our own personal purposes. The betterment of the American Legion should come first for all veterans.

God's plan and the American Legion is a house of order. Our mission is to serve others as the Lord served us. We are on this earth for a season, walking down our own path.

Sometimes we need a helping hand from others to carry life's heavy load.

This is the time to lift one another higher as brothers and sisters, side by side. Not with ridicule or judgement but with compassion. We



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!



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:

- Bill Knasel
- Jerry Muhlenkamp
- Jim Neilan
- Buddy Terry
- Mickey Burress
- Jimmy Sloan

Board of Trustees:

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE - WWW.SIDNEYLEGIONPOST217.ORG