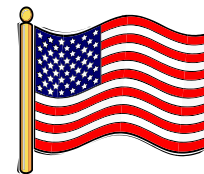


Voice of the Vets

Sidney American Legion

Post 217



NEWSLETTER

Sept - Oct, 2026

Sidney, OH 45365

FROM THE COMMANDER



To My Fellow Legionnaires,

A Heartfelt Thank You:

As Commander of American Legion Post 217, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to **everyone who helped make the Veterans Memorial Park Dedication Ceremony on August 15 such a meaningful and memorable occasion.**

An event of this magnitude does not happen because of the efforts of one person or one organization. It happens because people come together with a common purpose—to honor those who served, remember those who sacrificed, and ensure that their legacy is never forgotten.

To our Legionnaires, VFW members, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, Honor Guard, volunteers, community partners, local officials, law enforcement, participants, donors, and everyone who worked behind the scenes—**thank you.** Whether you helped set up chairs, prepared refreshments, directed traffic, welcomed guests, participated in the ceremony, provided equipment or supplies, helped with the Memorial Park itself, or simply stepped forward and asked, “*What can I do?*”—you were an important part of this day.

To everyone who contributed your time, talents, resources, prayers, encouragement, and support, please know how deeply grateful

I am. I could not be prouder of what we accomplished together.

For those who were unable to attend—or for those who would simply like to experience this special day again, a video of the Veterans Memorial Park Dedication Ceremony is available through the Shelby County Veterans Service Office Facebook page. May this park forever remind those who visit that freedom has a price, service has meaning, and **their legacy lives here.**

Veteran Brick order forms are available for \$50 each in the canteen and on our website at <https://sidneylegionpost217.org>. Bricks may be purchased to honor both living and deceased veterans.

† **In Remembrance:** The following Comrades of Post 217 have been transferred to Post Everlasting: **Roy Bulle-USA Korea, Donald Fair-USAF Vietnam, Philip Huecker-USAF Vietnam, John Marsh-USA Vietnam, Jack Wilson-USMC Vietnam.** Please take a moment to remember our Legionnaires and their families.

Welcome New Members! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to Post 217: **Adrian Castellanos-USMC, Tammy Egbert-USA, Richard Hunt, Sr-USA, Don Layman, Brian Muhlenkamp-USAF, Mike Rucker, Chad Sharp-USAF, Scott Van Horn-USN.**

American Legion membership for 2026-2027 is underway since July 1, 2026. Please don't wait to receive your renewal notice, you can renew now. Membership renewal can be completed easily and safely through your www.mylegion.org account or on www.legion.org. Or you may pay at the Veterans Center Canteen or mail to American Legion Post 217, PO Box 297, Sidney, OH 45365. Please renew your membership as soon as possible to help us achieve 100% by November 10, 2026.

Veteran's and Guest Appreciation Meal and Membership Drive: Saturday, November 7, 2026, 2:00–5:00 PM, Sidney Veterans Center Hall. We are pleased to invite our members to join us for an afternoon of good food, fellowship, and appreciation as we recognize the members who continue to support our organizations and the veterans we serve.

The Veteran Members & Guest Appreciation Complimentary Meal is open to 2026–2027 members of The American Legion Post 217, VFW Post 4239, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 217, and Sons of The American Legion Squadron 217, along with one guest. Veterans who have not yet renewed are encouraged to attend and may renew their 2026–2027 membership at the event. Veterans interested in becoming members are welcome to join that day as well.

A current 2026–2027 membership card is required for admission and will be verified at the door. Please RSVP by October 23, 2026. Call the Sidney Veterans Center at (937) 492-6410 so we can prepare enough food for everyone.

Volunteers Needed — Many Hands Make this Mission Possible! A successful Veterans Members & Guest Appreciation Meal takes more than good food—it takes good people willing to lend a hand!

We are asking members of The American Legion, VFW, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion to volunteer on Saturday, November 7, to help make this special afternoon possible.

Volunteers will be needed to assist with meal preparation, setup, serving, membership/card verification, greeting our guests, and cleanup. Whether you can give us an hour or stay for the entire event, your help will be greatly appreciated. This is an opportunity for all of our Veterans Family organizations to work side by side, enjoy some fellowship, and show our members how much we appreciate their continued support.

If you are willing to volunteer, please contact the Sidney Veterans Center at (937) 492-6410. It takes a team to accomplish the mission—and we would be honored to have you on ours.

Children's Christmas Party: Save the Date! Sunday, December 13, 2026. Christmas will be here before we know it, and we are beginning plans for our Children's Christmas Party! We want to make this a special and memorable celebration for the children and families of our members, filled with the joy and spirit of the Christmas season.

Volunteers Needed for the Planning Committee

We are looking for members who would like to serve on the Children's Christmas Party Planning Committee and help us bring this special event together. If you enjoy planning, decorating, organizing activities, helping with refreshments, or simply have some good ideas to share, we would love to have you join us! This is a wonderful opportunity for members of The American Legion, VFW, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion to work together to create a Christmas celebration our children will remember. More information about the party will be coming soon! For now,

please save the date — December 13, 2026 — and consider joining our planning committee. If you are interested in helping, please contact Judy Johnson, by phone or text at (937) 638-9797 or email at judyjohnson148@gmail.com. Together, we can make Christmas a little brighter for our members and their families!

Youth and Children: Post 217 is sponsoring once more the “**4th Grade Flag Education Program**” which consists of working in coordination with 4th grade teachers in our local schools. With this program, the students are provided with a comic book “Flag of Our Country.” After an opportunity to read and study the book, they will take a test. The following schools will be contacted to participate: Christian Academy, Fairlawn, Hardin-Houston, Holy Angels, and Northwood. We will grade the tests and the top boy and girl earning the highest scores will receive an award and advance to County Competition, if top score there will advance to 2nd District. Last year we had one individual win at District Level. I need additional veterans who are interested in sharing their expertise to join me in this educational opportunity for our children. After all, they are the future of our country! Please contact me at (937) 638-9797 to make this a successful Post 217 Flag Education Program.

Americanism and Government: The time is quickly approaching for Post 217 to offer grades 9-12 the opportunity to test their knowledge about our government. Steve Peltier excelled in managing this program and to continue his legacy, I need volunteers to serve on this committee. In the past, Post 217 had several winners from local schools who advanced to the Department of Ohio and went to Washington D.C. to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We must continue this tradition! What better way to show our schools and community American Legion Post 217 stands strong and united in support of these

programs. I cannot do this alone and truly need volunteers to help continue this important program. Please search your heart for guidance. For more information, please contact me at (937) 638-9797.

Calling All Members: As our Post continues to serve our veterans, members, and community, we also need to ensure that the responsibilities of our organization are shared and that others have the opportunity to gain experience in important leadership roles. We are currently seeking members who would be willing to serve as Assistant Treasurer and an Assistant Membership Chair.

These positions are intended to provide additional support to our current officers and chairpersons while giving interested members the opportunity to learn the responsibilities of the position, work alongside an experienced member, and become more involved in the operation of our Post.

You do not need to know everything before volunteering. We will teach you and work with you. What we need most is someone who is dependable, willing to learn, and interested in helping our Post remain strong for the future. Sharing these responsibilities not only lightens the workload—it also helps us develop the next generation of Post leadership and ensures that valuable knowledge is passed along.

If you are interested in learning more about either position, please speak with Commander Judy Johnson. **Every strong organization prepares someone to carry the mission forward.**

2026 Hometown Hero Banner Applications:

Available @ <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.

Canteen Reminder: For the protection of our gaming privileges, participation in **e-machines and pull tabs is limited to current members of The American Legion, VFW, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion.** Members may be asked to present a **current membership card** when participating. **Not currently a member? If you are eligible, we invite you to ask about membership in one of our Veterans Organizations.** Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us maintain responsible canteen operations.

Upcoming Events:

Aug 28-September 3, 2026: 107th National Convention of American Legion, Louisville, Kentucky.

September 1, 2026: American Legion National Disaster Preparedness Month

September 7, 2026: Labor Day

September 11, 2026: Patriot Day remembering those who died during terrorist attacks in New York City, the Pentagon, and United Flight 93.

September 15, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m.

September 16, 2026: American Legion Day

September 18, 2026: National POW/MIA Recognition Day-Please take a moment to pause and reflect on the sacrifices of the men and women who were or are imprisoned or unaccounted for as a result of their military service.

September 18, 2026: Air Force Birthday, Happy Birthday to all our Air Force Veterans

September 23, 2026: Silent Watch, Call (937) 498-7282 to volunteer to Stand Watch

September 28, 2026: Gold Star Mother's Day

October 7, 2026: Shelby County Council American Legion Meeting, 7 p.m., Jackson Center Post 493

October 11, 2026: 2nd District Fall Conference, Jackson Center Post 493, 9 a.m.

October 12, 2026: Columbus Day

October 13, 2026: Navy's Birthday, Happy Birthday to our Navy Veterans

October 20, 2026: American Legion Post 217 Meeting, 6 p.m.

November 7, 2026: SAVE THE DATE: Veterans Appreciation Meal and Membership Drive, 2-5 p.m. Veterans Center Hall

"A nation reveals its character by how it honors those who served, remembers those who sacrificed, and preserves their legacy for generations to come."

Thank you for your membership, your service, your friendship, and for continuing to stand beside one another. It is an honor to serve with you.

***Judy Johnson,
Commander***

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FROM THE 1ST VICE COMMANDER

Welcome fellow veterans! Another summer is rapidly coming to an end and it won't be long and we will be seeing the leaves on the trees changing color. Kids are back in school, baseball is winding down and football has started. Many things take place as the seasons change and that is all good as it breaks up the dull routines and gives us a chance for a little change in pace.

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who was able to come to the veterans' center for the official dedication of our Veteran's Memorial Park! It was a wonderful ceremony and the rain took a brief timeout to allow people to walk out to the park and check things out. This became possible through the ideas, work, and support of many people. We had some very interesting bricks purchased for veterans. To name just a few: We have multiple veteran's who served during the Civil War, we have one veteran who served during the Revolutionary war, we have a civil war veteran who was a survivor as a prisoner of war at Andersonville Prison in Georgia, we have a family who directly served 7 consecutive Presidents of the United States in the White House during their time in service, and we had one veteran who served as a body guard for George Washington! I am sure we have many more veterans with interesting service histories in their past and we would love to hear about them and have them honored in our Memorial Park.

A few questions came up during the celebration and I would like to let everyone know that you do not need to be, nor does your veteran need to be, a member of Post 217, or any other veteran organization, the veteran only needs to be a veteran. Additional forms for purchasing a brick for \$50 are still available if you know of a veteran who you or your family would like to honor. Forms are available at the bar in the canteen or contact one of the Post 217 officers

and we can get you as many forms as you will need. Also, we were asked if a living veteran could have a brick engraved and placed in the park and the answer is absolutely! We want all veterans who would like to be represented in the park to be included. We are very proud of our park and the opportunity to share with the

communities a remembrance of all veterans and the sacrifices made to provide the freedoms we all are blessed to enjoy!

Our membership drive for 2027 has begun and our goal for the year is 459 members which includes the 66 Paid Up For Life members. Every year we are losing many more members, for various reasons, than new members joining. Our voice is strong in Congress and we need to keep that strong voice for support for all veterans and veteran families to receive the benefits they so deserve. So please encourage any veteran to join if they are not members to help our fellow veterans and to help us be able to keep a beautify facility in good repair and offer some social times to veterans and to the public during dining hours.

To close, I would like to congratulate our American Legion Post 217 Baseball program. We sponsored 3 teams this year (2 teams 17 and under and 1 Senior team) and we are so proud of our baseball committee, and our coaches, our players , and their parents who were all so instrumental in making this season one of the most successful seasons ever for Post 217 baseball. Our senior team again qualified for the American Legion State Tournament, (I may be wrong but I know I am close in saying the senior teams have qualified for the State American Legion Tournament 5 out of the last 6 tournaments!) and both of our junior teams also qualified for the State

tournament with one of the junior teams finishing State Runner-up! Congratulations and thank you all! Stop by the canteen and see these big, beautiful trophies!

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

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FROM THE TRUSTEES

WOW!!! What a wonderful accomplishment!

First, I would like to thank our veterans, members, families, friends, guests, volunteers, donors, and everyone who helped make the Veterans Memorial Park Dedication such a great success. It truly took a village, with so many people giving their time, talents, and support. It was great to see so many people come together, and I am proud of each and every one of you.

There are far too many people to name individually, and I would hate to unintentionally leave someone out. Please know that your hard work did not go unnoticed. **Thank you to everyone who had a part in making this possible. God bless you all!**

Trustee & Building Updates

The Trustees continue to work on maintaining and improving our building and property. There are several projects needing our attention, and we will continue tackling them as time, manpower, and resources allow.

At the Veterans Memorial Park, we are still researching a numbering system for the brick rows to help visitors identify the location of a veteran's brick. The Deuce-and-a-Half may also have an interested party willing to restore the vehicle. And, of course, we continue sowing additional grass seed. Thank you to those who came in at 6:30 a.m. to help with the project. At least they got to see the deer and skunks!

The Trustees voted to replace the old shed because the roof was falling apart, especially during high winds, creating a safety concern. Plans are for a storage container similar to the current one to be delivered on August 26, 2026.

Work is also planned for the parking lot, including cleaning, crack sealing, and striping, weather permitting. **The facility will be closed**

September 14 and the morning of September 15 to allow this work to be completed. It will reopen for the Blood Drive on Tuesday, September 15, even though painting of the parking lot stripes may still be underway. We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation as we work to protect and maintain our property.

We are also continuing to clean and organize areas around the building, including our storage areas. We may even consider holding a garage sale to find new homes for items we no longer need.

The Infiltration and Inflow Project inspection has been completed by J & J Brautigam. We are awaiting the results of their inspection to determine whether further services are required.

The wrought iron canopy on the patio has reached the end of its serviceable life. It has also become home to hornets, wasps, and whatever else has sought refuge there! The canopy will be removed and scrapped.

The Outside Building Restoration Project is complete. What a wonderful place we have!

Our goal is simple: to have a building and property that our members, veterans, and guests can be proud to visit.

Thank You to Our Honor Guard!

A special thank you goes to all of our Honor Guard members. Through thick and thin, they continue to answer the call and provide a meaningful final tribute to our veterans and their families.

Your dedication and service are greatly appreciated. Thank you for being there when you are needed and for representing our veterans and our organization with honor.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

If you notice something around the building or grounds that needs attention—whether it needs repaired, painted, cleaned, or improved—please let one of the Trustees know. We cannot always see everything, and your suggestions can help us make our facility better.

We have accomplished a great deal, but there is always more we can do. By working together, sharing ideas, and respecting one another, we can continue moving forward.

We may not always agree, and none of us is perfect. But ridicule and division do not help our Legion. We should remember not to judge one another too quickly and instead concentrate on what brings us together: our veterans, our members, and the future of our organization.

God bless you all, and prayers for continued good health.

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

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FROM THE POST CHAPLAIN

Greetings Veterans, Families, and Friends,

God bless each of you for all the service you provide to others.

As you look at your membership card, take a moment to notice the words “**Be the One.**” Those few words carry an important message for all of us.

Be the One to listen. Be the One to reach out.

When a veteran is struggling or simply needs someone to talk to, sometimes the greatest thing we can offer is our time and a listening ear. People don't usually care how much you know until they know how much you really care.

Each of us can perform one small act of service every day. It may not seem like much, but it could change someone's life—and it may change your life as well.

You don't always need to tell others what you did. In fact, sometimes it is better if no one knows. We don't serve others for recognition or praise; we do it because helping someone is the right thing to do.

God doesn't need us to receive the credit. He asks us to represent Him through our actions and to make life a little easier for others whenever we can. Sometimes people may never understand or even realize what you have done for them. That's okay. You are still better for having done it, and perhaps they are better because someone cared enough to reach out. We should never judge another person; God will handle it.

So today, and every day, remember:

Be the One. Listen. Reach Out. Let someone know they matter.

God bless you, and prayers for good health.

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

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The Veterans Dinner is on Saturday November 7, 1926, 2pm- 5pm. Auxiliary members are all welcome to attend.

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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!**



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