

JUNE 2025

RIDE THE TIDE FOR VETERANS MAKE EACH WAVE COUNT

By: Tracy Kinnick, Department President

Before I say my final goodbye I want to share with you the experience I had of meeting Colonel Greg Gadson. Mr. Gadson is an actor, motivational speaker and a veteran of the United States Army. He has received the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion Merit Bronze Star (3times), Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal and Army Commendation Metal, he is even known to motivate the Giants to a Super Bowl Win!

On May 7, 2007, on his way back from attending a memorial service for 2 soldiers in his brigade, his vehicle hit a roadside bomb in Baghdad, causing him to lose both his legs, and damage to his right arm. He was one of the first to receive the next generation powered prosthetic with technology that made it possible for amputees to walk with confidence.

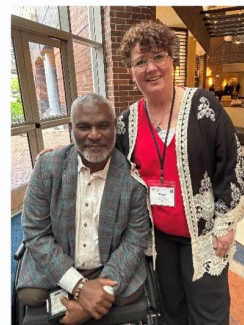
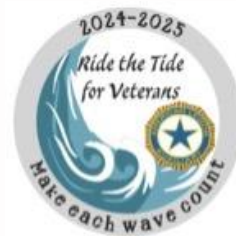
Listing to him speak, sharing his emotional story of strength, courage, and bravery with us, reminded me of why I am a member of this organization, and why our mission is so valuable to veterans, and active military. Even after his injury he remained with the Army! During his speech on leadership, he shared a few things that I wanted to share with all of you:

1. *"Leadership is about who we are", it is not about what we do, what we do as a person, it is a part of us.*
2. *"We can not hold others accountable until we hold ourselves accountable."*

These two points stood out to me, leadership is not always about what we do, rather who we are as a person, our integrity, our mentoring, being there when we are needed. It is so much more than a title.

Accountability goes both ways; we cannot hold others accountable for things if we are not holding ourselves accountable. Are we talking down about a person, when we didn't call to mentor them, or call to find out the real underlying issue of why they did what they did. We cannot be true leaders until we embrace the ability to hold ourselves accountable and have integrity.

I asked Mr. Gadson what our organization, VSO, could do to better assist military personnel in his situation. He responded that we should continue our current efforts by being present, acknowledging them, caring, and welcoming



them back. Although they may appear different, they are not different. Another member asked what we could do for the family, his response was to continue too be there for them as well, not only was his life turned upside down, the families lives were as well as they had to leave school to come to him while he was in recovery. In the end we need to continue to do what we do and to continue to grow so that we can be there for them.

Through my tears I tell you all that we do make a difference!

This time of year, can be bittersweet at the end of a term. I want to thank each of you for your membership in this great organization, your dedication, feedback, and new friends that have come along the way of my year as your Department President. Keep in mind that as I move from your President to a Past Department President, I want you to all know that I still plan to be an engaged member, and mentor to all of you, call, text, email anytime..

I look forward to the next generation of leaders and truly wish them well as we move forward together working our mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Thank you for an amazing year serving as your Department President!

Vice President



A Year of Memories

By Department Vice President Kristen Hensley

I cannot believe that it has already been a year since our membership elected me to serve you as the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Kansas Vice-President. I have thoroughly enjoyed serving alongside all of you to promote the programs to serve our Nation's military, veterans, children and youth, and the communities where they live. I have been blessed with many mentors during this past year and I pray that I served in a manner that promoted comradery, compassion, and with strong encouragement to continue to learn while mentoring others.

I pray that you give the same support and guidance to the next Vice President. None of us are perfect, and your guidance and wisdom are greatly needed as each new officer assumes their role. As we work to modernize processes, practices, and

delivery, having the history and original rationale surrounding the current methods, helps to make sure that during modernization, checks and balances to secure our resources and information is maintained, while still being modernized to cater to the next generation of leaders. When we do not evolve, we cannot thrive.

We've discussed at length in the past about the need to streamline, update, and make things more efficient for multiple reasons. One of the biggest is necessity due to the current generation's need for two full-time incomes per household. This will encourage our younger members (millennials and younger) to start stepping up and taking on leadership roles. The next generation will not step up unless things are efficient, accessible digitally vs. only available in the office, and in a manner that is both logical and simplistic. This is the era of the digital age, and we must adapt to survive as a Department.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your Vice-President this year. I am taking a year off from Department positions due to familial obligations, however I will be back if you will allow me in the next year or two. You have all touched my soul and I am forever grateful for the faith and trust that you have extended to me. God bless and thank you!

Chaplain

June Chaplain Article – Fresh Starts: Planting Seeds of Leadership
“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.”
– Robert Louis Stevenson

Leadership Begins Small

Planting the Seeds of Purpose and Growth

Like a seed, leadership doesn't always begin with bold declarations or grand gestures. More often, it starts quietly:

- With a thoughtful question
- A word of encouragement
- A decision to do the right thing, even when no one's watching

These small, consistent actions are the roots of leadership. Over time, they grow strong and steady, creating a foundation that can weather any storm.

Growing Others Alongside You

Authentic leadership isn't about standing tall alone. It's about lifting others as you rise.

- Mentor someone new
- Encourage fresh ideas
- Celebrating small wins
- Listen with intention

When we invest in others, we plant seeds that will grow long after we're gone. This is how legacy is built — not through titles, but through impact.

A Season of Growth and Reflection

As we embrace this season of renewal, take a moment to reflect:

Who are the future leaders you're cultivating within your Juniors and Units?

Look around. Who consistently steps up without being asked? Who offers a helping hand, brings forward new ideas, or quietly inspires by example? These individuals are the seeds of tomorrow's leadership. They need encouragement, mentorship, and room to grow.

But leadership doesn't grow in isolation.

Questions Worth Asking

To truly support the growth of future leaders, consider:

- Are we sharing the long-range goals of National, Department, District, and Unit levels?
- Does **every member feel heard and valued**?
- Is there a shared vision connecting everyone's work to our mission?

Without dreamers, leaders, ideas, and mentors, we risk losing the heart of our organization — our mission to serve Veterans and their families.

Let's lead with purpose. Let's plant with intention. Let's grow together.

Department of Kansas Chaplain – Cindy Ward

Email: cindy.ward2019@outlook.com – Phone (309) 222-7233

Historian

Hello auxiliary members!!!

Can you believe it is June already and a new year of Department officers are taking the reins! I am super excited for the 2025-2026 year and look forward to continuing to participate in Auxiliary events at the local, district, and department level through the upcoming year. Does your unit have big plans for Independence Day celebrations? If so, be sure to record those activities in your history books! As always, if you have questions about your unit or district histories, please reach out to the department historian for guidance. Happy History Making!!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We are nearing the end of this administrative year for the Department of Kansas. As a reminder you should have all seen the Call to Convention by now, if you have not you can find it here on our Kansas Website https://www.kansasala.org/_files/ugd/142f8e_48526650bb604ebbab03e2cab4269949.pdf

This packet contains all the information you need to know for the Department Convention!

Below are the last 2 remaining Zoom calls that we have for you this

administrative year. I highly encourage you to join in these discussions, especially the grassroots call on community service, and the C&B Brown Bag information

NO GRASSROOTS MEETING TONIGHT!!!

Topic: Convention C&B Brown Bag - open to ALL members

Join the call for a discussion on the proposed C&B changes to the Department C&B.

This is an opportunity for you to ask questions for a better understanding and clarification on the proposed changes.

Time: May 28, 2025 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83672268343?pwd=bl0YcyREyKbVp0GAqMIGnNKtDoLHQG.1>

Meeting ID: 836 7226 8343

Passcode: 392627

One tap mobile

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+12532050468,,83672268343#,,,,*392627# US

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Topic: Finance Meeting/ DEC/ Corp Board open to ALL MEMBERS

Join and listen to how finance operates, DEC issues and discussions, and voting.

Time: May 29, 2025 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89278960668?pwd=okpbElsaLoGNOw0PIEpz9K9hKexPnf.1>

Meeting ID: 892 7896 0668

Passcode: 300848

One tap mobile

+12532050468,,89278960668#,,,,*300848# US

+12532158782,,89278960668#,,,,*300848# US (Tacoma)

Convention to Feature Child Welfare Foundation Buffet Dinner

This year's Department Convention will again feature a dinner as a means to raise funds for the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. The dinner will be held Saturday evening, May 31 from 6:30 until 8:00 pm in Alcoves 5 & 6 of the Ramada Hotel, 420 SE 6th St. in Topeka.

Meal choice includes: **Chicken Piccata** (chicken breast cutlet, dredged in flour, browned, and served with a sauce of butter, lemon juice, capers, and wine sauce) or **Braised Beef Brisket** with garlic mashed potatoes, Grilled Roasted Vegetables. House Salad (romaine lettuce, spring mix lettuce, shaved carrots, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes) with honey balsamic dressing, rolls and butter, Carrot Cake. Water, iced tea, or coffee service. Cost is \$40 per person and reservations must be received no later than Wednesday, May 21 in order for the Ramada to adequately prepare enough food. **You must indicate Entrée preferences below.**

The purpose of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is: "To contribute to the physical, mental emotional and spiritual needs of children and youth through the dissemination of knowledge about new and innovative organizations and their programs." "To make wider, more effective use of the knowledge already possessed by well-established organizations to the end that such information will benefit youth and be more adequately used by society."

The foundation has made four grants to organizations in Kansas including two to Department Headquarters which funded the production of over five million "Don't Do Drugs, Make It Your Rule" bookmark rulers with the Pledge of Allegiance on the opposite side of the drug message.

To make reservations for the Saturday, May 31 dinner please complete and return the coupon below to Department Headquarters, 1314 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas 66612. Reservations must arrive by May 21 or telephone your reservations to 785-232-9315. Payment is due no later than Wednesday, May 21 without exception! **There will be NO walk-ins.**

Name _____ Post/Unit/Squadron _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Number of dinners to be reserved at \$40.00 each _____

Entrée preference: Chicken Piccata _____ Braised Beef Brisket _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of _____

I cannot attend the dinner but am enclosing my tax-deductible donation of _____



2025
87TH SESSION
JUNE 1ST - 7TH
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY |
GOODNOW HALL
1825 CLAFLIN RD
MANHATTAN, KS 66502
FOR MORE INFO WWW.KSBSTATE.ORG

LEGION NIGHT
JUNE 4, 2025 5 P.M.
KRAMER DINING CENTER
1835 CLAFLIN RD
MANHATTAN, KANSAS 66502



KANSAS AMERICAN LEGION/AUXILIARY
CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY



JUNE 15-20, 2025
FOR MORE INFO
GO TO THE
HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.
COM/GROUPS/1049954552588217
APPLICANTS MUST BE A HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR OR SENIOR WITH
A "C" AVERAGE AND BE PHYSICALLY ABLE TO PARTICIPATE
IN ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES IN THE WEEK-LONG ACADEMY. A
VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE IS REQUIRED.

click on the photo above for more info.

DEPT OFFICE EMAILS

OFFICE DIRECTOR ksaladeptoffice@gmail.com

FINANCE DIRECTOR ksaladeptfinance@gmail.com]

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