

# Department News

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY



2016–2017 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER CHERI L. STANTON

OCTOBER 2016



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

AS OF  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2016

## TOP 10 DISTRICT AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District	Commander
18	MONROE
17	NAGEL
1	FREDERICK
13	KRAUT
7	LEPINSKI
23	ROUNDS, II
8	CHAMBERS
10	RISLEY
5	DEARBONE
15	HAZZARD

Division	Commander
4	DUDLEY
2	DAVIS JR.
3	KILKENNY
5	SMITH
1	WHYTE

## Program launched to restore World War I Memorials

The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library have announced a new program to help people across the country restore and preserve local World War I memorials.

100 Cities/100 Memorials is a fund-matching program launching July 18 in which groups or individuals can:

- Identify local World War I memorials in their area.
- Put together a conservation treatment proposal for a memorial in distress.
- Submit their plan for consideration for matching grant funds.
- Have the memorial treated by an accredited conservator, with communication help and possible matching funds.

The details of the program, including guidelines and online application form, can be found at <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/100-cities-100-memorials-home.html>. The fund-matching program has been adopted by The American Legion by Resolution 19, passed in May 2016 by the National Executive Committee.

Legion posts are encouraged to apply for funds through the program, which is designed to foster a sense of heritage in local communities, recognize local stories and people who were involved in the war, and create a way for community members to participate in the National World War I Centennial.

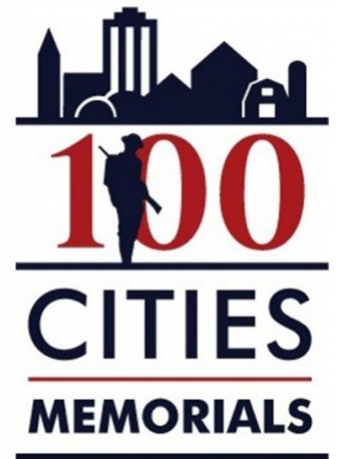
"The words 'Lest We Forget' appear on World War I memorials across the nation," said Kenneth Clarke, President and CEO of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. "Sadly, however, many of these memorials are in need of conservation and restoration, in this, their centennial year."

The 100 Cities/100 Memorials program is particularly well-suited for community service projects hosted by school groups, Scout troops, veterans groups, historical/cultural organizations, faith groups, local sports teams and others.

The sponsor organizations have teamed with the World War I Memorial Inventory Project, which is assembling a crowd-sourced, online database to document and assess the condition of the thousands of World War I memorials across the country.

Some of the 100 Cities/100 Memorials program specifics include the following:

- All submitted projects will be given communication resources to help participants publicize their work, post imagery to social media, and tell their own stories.
- Webinars and videos hosted on the Centennial Commission website will provide information about conserving memorials, researching a memorial's history, and creating a project plan for submission.
- All World War I memorial projects are eligible to be considered for this program's matching funds. However, the matching funds available per project is currently limited to \$2,000, which is likely to be most useful for smaller projects.
- In November 2016, 100 of the submitted projects will be selected by a jury to receive matching funds.
- To qualify for a matching grant, a project proposal needs to be submitted by June 15, 2017. Memorials need to be located in the 50 states or U.S. territories, and the preservation work must be completed (or have been completed) between Jan. 1, 2014, and Nov. 11, 2018.





## From The Desk of Department Commander Cheri L. Stanton



I want to thank everyone who came to my Homecoming. We set a record for the fastest DEC ever...one hour and fifteen minutes. My post went out of their way to decorate the hall and the two guys who smoked the meat for the dinner are now the newest members of my post. They liked how everyone had fun and served the veterans.

Coming up for October I hope all our Legionnaires commit to the Veteran's History Project that is being run out of Jessie Whites office. You just need to sit down and record your service information so we can let future generations know our history.

October is filled with getting members contacted to renew their membership. If the Legionnaires who attend the

post meetings take five or more names from the roster and call them to tell them you are doing a wellness check and will come by and pick up their dues and visit a few minutes with them, we could get all the renewals. We have a new award—if your post gets all their renewals by December 15, they will get \$1.00 per member. They must have at least 15 members on the books, not transfers, deceased, or new members---all the people you have on your roster from last year. If you get the renewals, the other members will come!

I am hoping to establish more communications with posts this year. I am asking all committee chairmen and commission members to get a "sub" to go for them when they have a meeting. At least they will get the information to the posts through the minutes. Our organization can't survive without communication.

We have two big membership trainings with Chad and all officers need to

attend. 1st and 2nd Divisions on October 8th, then 3rd, 4th, and 5th Divisions on October 9th. Have your district plan of action ready. We want to know what you are doing for your year.

I will leave from Bloomington to attend Fall Meetings in Indy. Again they will have lots of training for the revitalizations we are planning for this year. I hope all divisions have at least one planned to revitalize your areas.

I get to represent Illinois again at the Eisenhower Birthday and to lay a wreath at the memorial right after coming back from Indy.

Please remind everyone that the American Legion doesn't endorse any candidate. We want to make sure that you use your right to vote—many good men and women died to give you that right, it is in remembrance of them that we vote.



## From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Bob Henderson



Membership is the BIG item for this time of year. You want to get off to a good start. We have already had some 100% Posts and we got more, Tampico Post # 574, Lafayette Post # 948 and Ellsworth Post # 1244, Good going legionnaires. We all need to get out and work to get Membership, it just doesn't come knocking on our DOORS, you have to go out and get them "JUST ASK". All the Posts are not certified as of Sept 16, 2016, you need to get certified to get your cards. The District Commanders need to get out and get the Posts certified, meet Post Commanders and work with them to

get membership.

The Division Membership Retreat went well and the Division Officers were all pumped up and ready to work with their District Officers. I hope they communicate and work with their District Commanders. Membership is still the backbone of the Legion Posts, Counties, Districts, Divisions, Departments, and National. If you get Membership the programs will follow and grow.

Cheri's homecoming and DEC are coming September 16th & 17th 2016. Then on the 19th we have a Town Hall Meeting, The VA is a System Worth Saving at Argo-Summit Post #735. Then on September 24 and October 1, 2016 is the Committee and Commission Fall meetings at Department Headquarters. These Dates are mandatory.

The Big Weekend of October 8 & 9, 2016 is the District and Division Membership workshop for Division & District Commanders. The 8th is the 1st and 2nd Divisions, the 9th is the 3rd, 4th, & 5th Divisions. These dates are Mandatory Meetings.

Right after that weekend will be National Fall Committee and Commission Meetings October 10 thru 13, 2016.

We still need for you to get your revitalizations in to us so we can get them on our schedule the sooner the better. The slots are filling up fast, call Membership Director, Chad Woodburn and get something set up for your districts.

**WE STILL NEED TO WORK ON MEMBERSHIP, THANKS FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.**



## From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Luella Buske



I had the honor of attending Department Commander Cheri's Homecoming. I am so pleased that we have been allowed to serve the same year together. I got to know Cheri when we were both serving as Children and Youth Chairmen and have been friends ever since. We both have a LOVE for the American Legion Family! Thank you to the American Legion Department of Illinois for electing her as "my" Commander.

The American Legion Auxiliary has a goal of each unit reaching 103% this year. I would like to ask your help to reach this goal. Next time you sign up a new Legionnaire, please see if they have a female relative that would like to belong to the Auxiliary. With everyone working together I truly believe we can all reach our goals. Don't forget about my personal award of \$100 to the Post that signs up the most Auxiliary members. Thank You!!!!

Congratulations to Sharon Conatser, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary! You had an awesome year!!! We were well represented at National Convention. It was wonderful to see so many members attending from Illinois!



## From The Desk of Detachment Commander Phil Shipley



meetings to top the mark.

Then the unexpected happened. Just before recessing the National convention on Saturday afternoon August 27th, Commander Collier asked if anyone had donations. The usual line formed, but the amounts were unusually high. The Detachment of Arizona handed over one check for \$35,000 and challenged neighboring Nevada to match an additional \$35,000 pledge. The estate of the late Jerry "Doc" Leopold, former S.A.L. National Finance Commission Chairman, donated \$10,000. Check after check, earmarked for CWF, flowed in and totaled a whopping \$110,000, shattering the \$7 million ceiling.

Together we SONS elected a new National Commander for the coming year!

Shortly before closing their 45th National Convention on Sunday, Sons elected and installed Jeff Frain of Apache Junction, Arizona, Sq. 27 as their new National Commander.

"This year, said Frain, I want to help The American Legion grow. I want to see the Sons each sign up three brand new Legion members to help increase the size of our parent organization."

His theme this year will be "Knowledge is power." Frain wants to emphasize the importance of training S.A.L. members from the squadron level all the way up through the national level. "Together we'll be making some great strides in helping veterans and their families."

By assisting National Commander Frain in signing up three new Legion members, we can potentially gain not only new SAL members but also members for The American Legion Auxiliary!

The Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Illinois welcomes you as we enter into the cool crisp days of Autumn! I want to take just a few moments to outline some of the goals we have set for the 2016 - 2017 membership year and what was accomplished at the recent National Convention for your SONS!

I have decided to focus our energy this year towards one of the supporting pillars of The American Legion Family; Children & Youth.

The Sons of the American Legion came through again for The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. They were at the top of the list again nationally with over \$360,000 raised this past year.

Since first contributing to the Child Welfare Foundation almost 30 years ago, the S.A.L. has donated just under \$7 million to the effort. At the end of the reporting year, your Sons were only \$75,000 short of that lucky milestone and everyone assumed we would have to wait until the fall or spring N.E.C.

These funds will go a long way in support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation provides more than \$500,000 in grants each year to non-profit organizations that work to improve the lives of young people.

Our Illinois goal for this membership year is to raise 10% more than the \$8,670.00 that was raised last year. With the help of each of our 200 plus squadrons, I know we can reach this goal!



# Did You Know?

Office: 312-980-4266 Email: [Raymond.Toczec@va.gov](mailto:Raymond.Toczec@va.gov)

**DID YOU KNOW...**That our 98<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention is now history. This year there were over 400 resolutions submitted from our various Departments. I am proud to report that of those 33 were from the Department of Illinois. Yes, we were number one in that area and I am also pleased to say only two were rejected, the rest were approved. Kudos to our current chairman of the Illinois VA&R Commission, Rodger Bennett, for his leadership. Resolutions are the way our organization develops an idea from the Post level on how our veteran's benefits can be improved. These ideas are fine-tuned at the District and Division levels and then go on to our State and National Conventions for approval. If approved at that level they become part of our National Legislative Agenda. Then if we get enough support in Congress we may eventually get a law changed. As you can see this process is one way our "blue cap" legionnaires can have their voices heard and sometimes even see their ideas become law. Here are just some of the topics that were approved for possible law changes:

CREMATION PLAQUE FOR URNS .....DENTAL CARE FOR VETS... 50% OR MORE.....HOME LOAN BENEFIT PASS TO WIDOW/  
ER.....CAREGIVER ACT DATE CHANGE.....WAIVERS UNDER \$300..... FEMALES AND THE DRAFT.....BACK INTEREST ON APPEAL DECISIONS.....10% FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED HTN IF ON MEDS..ANNUAL DOG ALLOWANCE.....ENGLISH AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.....CHARITABLE MILEAGE RATE CHANGE ..... INCREASE IN RH LIFE INSURANCE.....TWO LEVELS OF RATINGS FOR TINNITUS.....ID THEFT AND THE VA .....BLUE WATER NAVY VETS AND AGENT ORANGE.....

These are just some of the many that were passed. If you wish to see the actual resolution you may go to our National website [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) where they will soon be posted. And as the year progresses if any of these resolutions become either a house or senate bill I will keep you informed.

Now that our Illinois Posts are back from their summer hiatus it would be a great time to start discussing ideas and topics for some new resolutions.

As my old mentor Paul H Kralman (former Chairman of VA&R) once said: "The only bad resolution is the one that was not submitted".

## VA NEWS Release Camp Lejeune Regs

### VA Proposes Rule to Consider Certain Diseases Associated with Exposure to Contaminants in the Water Supply at Camp Lejeune

*VA to provide presumptive service connection for related diseases*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has published proposed regulations to establish presumptions for the service connection of eight diseases affecting military members exposed to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The presumptive illnesses apply to active duty, reserve and National Guard members who served for no less than 30 days at Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987, and are diagnosed with the following conditions:

- \* **adult leukemia**
- \* **bladder cancer**
- \* **liver cancer**
- \* **non-Hodgkin's lymphoma**
- \* **aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes**
- \* **kidney cancer**
- \* **multiple myeloma**
- \* **Parkinson's disease**

"We have a responsibility to take care of those who have served our Nation and have been exposed to harm as a result of that service," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. "Establishing a presumption for service at Camp Lejeune will make it easier for those Veterans to receive the care and benefits they deserve."

Environmental health experts on VA's Technical Workgroup conducted comprehensive reviews of scientific evidence, which included analysis and research done by the Department of Health and Human Service's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Environmental Protection Agency, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the National Toxicology Program, and the National Academies of Science.

Military members with records of service showing no less than 30 days of service, either concurrent or cumulative, at Camp Lejeune during the contamination period can already be granted Veteran status for medical benefits, following passage of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012.

In the early 1980s, volatile organic compounds, trichloroethylene (TCE), a metal degreaser, and perchloroethylene, a dry cleaning agent (PCE), as well as benzene, and vinyl chloride were discovered in two on-base water supply systems at Camp Lejeune. These systems served the housing, administrative, and recreational facilities, as well as the base hospital. The contaminated wells supplying the water systems were shut down in February 1985.

VA acknowledges that current science establishes a link between exposure to certain chemicals found in the water supply at Camp Lejeune and later development of one of the proposed presumptive conditions. However, VA experts agree that there is no scientific underpinning to support a specific minimum exposure level for any of the conditions. Therefore, VA welcomes comments on the 30-day minimum exposure requirement and will consider other practical alternatives when drafting the final rule. VA also notes that the proposed 30-day requirement serves to establish eligibility for service connection on a presumptive basis; nothing in this proposed regulation prohibits consideration of service connection on a non-presumptive basis. The 30-day public comment period on the proposed rule is open until Oct.10, 2016.



# From The Desk of the Membership Director Chad J. Woodburn



Fall DEC has come and gone and membership is pushing forward. As of this writing, state wide, we are at 59.89%. When national sent out the 50% target date report, on 9/14/2016, we were in 12th place! This year is far from over, but we are moving in the right direction toward our 75% goal for November.

The results for the first Top 10 and Gold pin winners are as follows;

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 10. 7th District 60.41% | 9. 10th District 60.54% |
| 8. 23rd District 60.76% | 7. 11th District 60.93% |
| 6. 15th District 60.95% | 5. 12th District 61.08% |
| 4. 8th District 62.09%  | 3. 18th District 62.30% |
| 2. 1st District 64.99%  |                         |

And currently in 1st place, the 17th District with 65.26%.

Gold Pin winners were 1st District, 12th District, 15th District, 17th District and the 23rd District with the 4th Division being the winning Division this card cut off.

Commanders remember, per the Department Commander, if you lose your pin to another District or Division, YOU will have to pin on the new winner next time.

Keep up the strong work and keep pushing forward!

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”

--- **Phil Jackson**



## American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State

### [www.illinoisboysstate.org](http://www.illinoisboysstate.org)

At this time you should have contacted your schools and set up a table during Junior registration. You should have distributed the brochures and posters to your libraries, and possibly persuaded your library Director to add the brochure to the teen’s tab of their website. We ask that if you have not done these things, please do so as soon as you can. Also, we would like you to contact your local Chamber of Commerce to assist you in distributing the information throughout your business communities. This should help you when reaching out for sponsorships locally. All the information that you need are updated and available to you through our print shop at Department Headquarters.

We would like to challenge all of our 760 posts to participate in recruiting, fundraising and volunteering for your American Legion Premier Boys State program. Our

success will only be achieved if we have a collaborative effort from ALL of our posts throughout this state. We ask that **every** post work toward the goal of sending two more boys over last year.

During our conference in Indianapolis we were told by a member from another state that our Illinois program is Premier in name only due to several other states surpassing us in attendance and production. Let’s work together to bring our program back to the status it once was. Remember, “Sometimes you have to get knocked down lower than you have ever been, to stand up taller than you ever were.” (Unknown Author)

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to our program. Feel free to reach out for any help that you may need. **We are all in this together!**

# The 2017 American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State Brochure & Application is now available



# National Commander Charles E. Schmidt



Charles E. Schmidt was elected national commander of the 2.2 million-member American Legion on Sept. 1, 2016, in Cincinnati during the 98th national convention of America's largest veterans organization.

Schmidt enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1965 and served on active duty until his retirement in 1993. During that time he advanced from an administrative clerk to a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Officer Training School, earning a commission and assignments to Executive Support Officer positions at major headquarters. His Air Force assignments took him to Oregon, California, Montana, Nebraska, Colorado,

England, Germany, Philippines and Vietnam.

As an active-duty servicemember, Schmidt joined Story-Hardin Post 164 in Craig, Mo., in 1984. After his military retirement as a major, he was employed by the Air Force Total Quality Management Program at Lowry Technical Training Center in Denver.

He transferred his American Legion membership to Harney County Post 63 in Burns, Ore., when he moved to Oregon for a 15-year career at the Greater Oregon Federal Credit Union. He retired from the credit union as the executive vice president.

An American Legion Paid Up For Life member, Schmidt served as the Department of Oregon commander from 2004-2005, and he's served at every level of the Legion, including National Executive Committeeman from 2005-2016.

While serving in the Air Force, Schmidt earned a Bronze Star, a Defense Meritorious Service Medal, a Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, a Joint Service Commendation Medal, an Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor device and two oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three oak leaf clusters, a National Defense Service Medal with a bronze star, a Vietnam Service Medal, an Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, an Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon with two oak leaf clusters, an Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with one silver oak leaf cluster, an NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, a Small Arms Expert Marksmanship with bronze star, an Air Force Training Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, a Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, and a Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with four bronze stars.

Schmidt resides in Hines, Ore., with his wife, Linda. They have two daughters, Andria and Cori, and two sons-in-law, Peter and Anthony. They also have six grandchildren: Madeline, Alex, Adam, Raymond, Nicholas and Thomas.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Dept. Committee & Commission

Fall Mtgs.

@ Dept, HQ

October 1st

~ ~ ~

District & Division Membership

Workshop Div. & Dist. Cmdrs.

**Division 1 & 2**

@ Dept. HQ from 9 am--3pm

October 8th

~ ~ ~

District & Division Membership

Workshop Div. & Dist. Cmdrs.

**Division 3, 4 & 5**

@ Dept. HQ from 9 am--3pm

October 9th

~ ~ ~

**Columbus Day**

**October 10th**

~ ~ ~

National Fall Committee and

Commission Meetings

October 10th--13th

Indianapolis, IN

~ ~ ~

National Legion College

October 23rd--28th

Indianapolis, IN

~ ~ ~

**Halloween**

**October 31st**

~ ~ ~

**Election Day**

**November 8th**

~ ~ ~

**Veterans Day**

**Dept. Office Closed**

**November 11th**

~ ~ ~

1st 100% Post Cash Award

(1:00 PM Cut-Off)

November 14th

###



# 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Haven Jamboree

Sponsored by the:

## EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDERS

AND

## PAST PRESIDENTS CLUBS

**November 18-20, 2016**

The E.P.C.C.'s has as its main responsibility, the support and maintenance of THE HAVEN which is located on Crab Orchard Lake, off Route #13, Carbondale, Illinois. THE HAVEN is an important part of the rehabilitation work in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division. Our main sources of income are: Donations, Annual Dues, Annual Post Per Capita Assessment, Annual Jamboree Raffle, Special Projects and Poppy Money. There is no income from any government entity at any level. We are on our own. That is why your support is so important.

### JAMBOREE RAFFLE AND DONATIONS

The operation of THE HAVEN is no small undertaking. With your help, the E.P.C.C. has been able to maintain THE HAVEN since 1950. Participation in the Annual Jamboree Raffle will help support THE HAVEN for another year. Raffle tickets will be available for purchase at the Jamboree. If you would like to purchase tickets in advance contact: William J. Flanagan/Treasurer, 409 E. Oak St., New Baden, IL 62265.

### JAMBOREE HOUSING FOR 2016

We will again enjoy accommodations at the HAMPTON INN, 2175 Reed Station Parkway, Carbondale, IL 62901. Please make your own reservations by calling 1-618-549-6900. Be sure to mention The American Legion block of rooms when making your reservations coded AML for the weekend of 11/18 through 11/20. Your reservations must be received by October 28, 2016. The rate for the rooms will be \$102.00 plus tax. The location of The Hampton Inn is from Interstate 57 to Exit 54B, Route 13 West 12 miles on the right side of the road.

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18:**

- 1:00 PM Tour of the Marion Veterans Administration Medical Center
- 5:00 PM—8:00 PM Evening Steak Fry at The Haven—Cost \$15.00 per person. Reservations needed.

#### **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19:**

- 2:30 PM—4:00 PM Open house at The Haven
- 5:00 PM—6:30 PM Cocktail Hour (*Courtesy of the 5th Division American Legion*) Hampton Inn
- 7:00 PM Buffet Style Banquet at the Carterville Community Center.

Cost \$25.00 per person. Reservations are required.

The menu will be: Beef Brisket, Chicken Breast with Marsala Sauce on the side, Twice Baked Potatoes, Caesar Salad, Green Beans with bacon, mushrooms/onions, Vegetable Medley, rolls w/butter, dessert, coffee, tea, water.

Directions to the Carterville Community Center will be available at Hotel.

#### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20:**

- 9:00 AM Egyptian Past Presidents Club—Board Meeting at The Hampton Inn
- 9:30 AM Egyptian Past Presidents Meeting at The Hampton Inn
- 10:00 AM Annual Meeting of The Egyptian Past Commanders' Club at The Haven

**Send all Reservations to**

**William Flanagan 409 East Oak St., New Baden, IL 62265**

# World War I memorial effort drives centennial energy

A nationwide project to locate, assess conditions and restore World War I monuments and memorials – many of which were erected by American Legion posts – can “incite a national conversation” about the Great War and its many impacts, says Daniel Dayton, United States World War One Centennial Commission executive director. “We’re three generations out, and we can’t afford to miss this generation.”

Dayton and American Legion Past National Commander Marty Conatser, adjutant for the Legion’s Department of Illinois and its more than 750 local posts, were among the speakers at the Upper Midwest Regional Meeting of the World War One Centennial Commission last Tuesday. The Chicago event brought to the Pritzker Military Museum & Library state World War I centennial representatives from across the Midwest, including Deborah York of Tennessee, great granddaughter of Medal of Honor recipient Alvin York, a first-generation member of The American Legion. Tuesday’s meeting was streamed live online to a nationwide audience.

“If we all work together, we can build a great puzzle,” said York, who lives near Pall Mall, Tenn., home of the Sergeant Alvin C. York State Historic Park, which has undergone numerous renovations and improvements, including construction of an authentic World War I battle trench, frequent battle re-enactments, a visitor center modeled after Sgt. York’s General Store and more. “We can make something really beautiful because we come at this from so many different angles.”

“Honor and remembrance are in the DNA of The American Legion and have been since its founding nearly a century ago,” Conatser told the group. “Through the decades, The American Legion has been the official caretaker and supporter of innumerable memorials and monuments across the land and beyond our shores.”



American Legion Past National Commander Marty Conatser discusses ways to collaborate with the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission and Pritzker Military Museum & Library at a meeting that was streamed live online from Chicago on Sept. 16th.

The American Legion National Executive Committee passed a resolution in May to support and promote the **100 Cities/100 Memorials** grant program that offers matching funds of up to \$2,000 for projects to restore World War I monuments and memorials in local communities throughout the United States. To learn more about how to raise funds locally and apply for grants, go to:

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/100-cities-100-memorials-home.html>

The 100 Cities/100 Memorials grant application deadline is July 15, 2017. The Pritzker Military Museum & Library plans to publish a coffee table book to showcase the 100 chosen memorials and monuments by 2018.

“Beyond the matching—money grants that will help many Legion posts restore World War I memorials and monuments, this is an excellent opportunity to build one comprehensive inventory into a database that can be mapped and made accessible online,” Conatser said. “These monuments and memorials are no good to anyone if no one knows where they are and what they express. As years and decades go by, they deteriorate with age and are forgotten – which is not what we want.”

He said the entire American Legion Family can get involved with the effort to find and revive local memorials in honor of the centennial, whether they pursue grant money or not. American Legion Riders chapters, Sons of The American Legion Squadrons, American Legion Auxiliary units, Boy Scout troops attached to posts and others in

local communities can work together to locate and take inventory, he said. Conatser advised the centennial representatives to make contact with American Legion department adjutants to spread the word about the effort and to find opportunities to work together as the Legion draws nearer to its 100th anniversary, to be recognized between August 2018 and November 2019.

“Thousands of hometown American Legion posts were named in honor of World War I troops who gave their lives to win peace in Europe,” Conatser said. “The earliest American Legion members were dedicated to the fourth line in the Preamble to our Constitution: ‘to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars.’”





# Department of Illinois Sweepstakes

## Enter to Win.

### Mail Tickets by October 31st. Drawing November 10th.

*Need more tickets, call 309-663-0361.*



The American Legion  
Department of Illinois  
2720 E. Lincoln St.  
Bloomington, IL 61704-6010  
www.illegion.org

# SAMPLE LETTER

## Enter to WIN

*An M-15™ Carbine Rifle and other great prizes!*



*All Prizes are Proudly Made in Illinois*

Dear Fellow American Legion Member:

Once again, we are delighted to include you in our exclusive 2016 Veterans Day sweepstakes, which offers you a chance to enter to win an M-15™ Carbine Rifle or up to a \$2,000 cash prize.

As your Department Commander and on behalf of the Finance Commission, we are very proud of what we've accomplished as an organization. This is truly a unique opportunity and a great way to support our very important Department of Illinois programs at the same time!

When you return an optional donation of \$5 per ticket, \$20 for 6 tickets or \$25 for all 12 tickets – you'll carry on our time-honored tradition of service to our troops and veterans.

On Thursday, November 10, 2016, winners will be selected. You do not need to be present to win. Your help and support is truly needed, so please act today! Every single gift is vital and each gift is appreciated by all of us and by those we serve.

**Please mail your Sweepstakes Tickets as soon as possible, but no later than October 31, 2016 to be eligible to win any of these great prizes:**



**Grand Prize: An Armalite M-15™ Carbine Rifle AND a Springfield Armory 1911 Champion™ Operator® Lightweight Pistol (or \$2,000 Cash)**



**Second Prize: A Springfield Armory 1911 Mil-Spec Pistol AND an XD® Pistol with Thumb Safety (or \$1,200 Cash)**

**Third Prize: A Springfield Armory 1911 Range Officer® Pistol (or \$900 Cash)**

Your sweepstakes tickets give you a fair chance to enter to win one of these great prizes. And when you send an optional donation with your sweepstakes tickets, **your generosity will be put to work immediately to help veterans in need.**

So please, return your sweepstakes tickets as soon as possible, but no later than October 31, 2016, to be eligible to win. The tickets have been addressed for your convenience. Please be sure your name and address are correct, and include your daytime phone number on each ticket, as legibly as possible. Should you decide to make a donation, please make your check or money order payable to "The American Legion, Department of Illinois."

Thank you and God Bless America,

*Cheri L. Stanton*

Cheri L. Stanton  
Department Commander  
The American Legion, Department of Illinois

P.S. No purchase or donation is necessary to enter. A purchase or donation will not improve your chances of winning. Must be 18 years or older to participate. Good luck to all who participate and a very sincere "Thank You."

**NO LEGION CAPS WORN**



**AT POLITICAL EVENTS!**

## **NO LEGION CAPS WORN AT POLITICAL EVENTS**

Use of The American Legion's caps and/or emblem for a political endorsement is totally prohibited and can involve both the individuals involved and the department in serious legal and tax issues. This means that The American Legion does not endorse candidates. Article II, Section 2 means checking your Legion cap at the door of any political rallies, fundraisers, or conventions.

## **The Legion's role in the voting process**

Among the freedoms many Americans enjoy is the right to vote for our elected officials. This year, of course, is generating intense interest because a new president will be elected. Additionally, voters will elect every single member of the U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the U.S. Senate.

Right now we are entering a critical and exciting juncture as the two major political parties begin to hold primaries and caucuses to determine the front-runner for their nominations. Strong opinions can be found everywhere. Unfortunately, so too can some mistruths. Many political groups were created specifically to spin facts, distort reality and twist words to propel their candidates into office. The American Legion, as a nonpartisan organization, assumes a role of neutrality amid the storm of political rhetoric and images.

As individuals, we are free like anyone to vote as we wish and support the candidates we think best.

But as Legionnaires, we have **a duty to participate in the election process** and encourage others to exercise one of the most important freedoms we, and those who served in uniform before us, fought to protect: the freedom to vote.

On the local level, an American Legion post can take on a greater role in its community by organizing and hosting a political forum or debate among candidates. Remember that any such event must be open to all who are running for a particular office, and the Legion cannot promote any one candidate. When posts are using their facilities for such events, they should remove the emblem and Legion flag to avoid the impres-

sion of endorsement for any candidate. (Note that renting out hall space to a political campaign is still fair game, as long as it is not presented as an American Legion sponsored event.)

Here are some reminders from the Legion's **Get Out the Vote brochure**:

1. When hosting a voter registration drive, information and applications must be offered and available to all eligible voters.
2. Legionnaires may express partisan views, but they must do so when they are not wearing the Legion cap or other Legion attire, and without a direct connection to an American Legion post.
3. American Legion posts may coordinate forums or debates. However, posts cannot endorse or oppose a candidate, or coordinate activities with a candidate without giving his/her opponent the same opportunity.

Following these guidelines will keep the Legion above the fray without sacrificing any member's right to participate in the democratic process. It is my hope that each of you do participate in the election process individually, and posts take the lead in their communities by arranging fair debates or "meet the candidates" forums to help all of our citizens fulfill a right too often taken for granted.

**GET OUT THE VOTE**



## **Follow Rules of Nonpartisanship**

The American Legion shall remain nonpolitical and will not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor the promotion of any candidate. Failure of a post to abide by these rules may endanger its non-profit status. This does not mean that members are forbidden to show partisanship. Legionnaires may express partisan views, but they must not do so without wearing the Legion cap or other Legion attire and without a direct connection to an American Legion post.

### **DO NOT:**

**Favor a candidate.** Posts cannot endorse or oppose a candidate; coordinate activities with a candidate; contribute money, time or facilities to candidates; or manage, fund or organize a political action committee.

**Wear campaign buttons.** Volunteers working on a Legion-sponsored registration and voting drive should not wear campaign buttons or communicate their personal views about candidates, parties and issues.

Visit the Legion's Legislative Action Center at <http://legion.capwiz.com/election/home/>

# TFA: A life-changing Legion Program



A knock on Brent Wightman's front door several years ago changed his life.

The U.S. Army veteran and father of two young children lost his job due to the inability to work after multiple back surgeries from a service-connected injury. Without a job, Wightman faced the reality of losing his home to foreclosure. After hearing of Wightman's plight, Legionnaire Howard Hudson – who has since passed – visited him to offer support through The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program.

"We filled out a TFA application right there and my whole life changed after The American Legion got involved," said Wightman, a member of Post 176 in Waverly, Iowa. "If it hadn't been for the Legion, I would have been trying to figure out

how to clothe, house and feed my kids. The American Legion gave me a mission and a purpose again. They saved my life."

The Legion's TFA program has provided more than \$15,200,000 in cash grants to eligible veterans with minor children since its establishment in 1925. The grants – which benefit nearly 650 families and 1,500 children yearly – help families in financial need meet the costs of shelter, utilities, food, clothing and medical expenses.

Newly elected American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt has made it his mission during his tenure to raise \$1 million for TFA. "It is our job to take care of veterans and to take care of their families," Schmidt said. "Touching the lives of veterans and their families is who we are."

U.S. Army veteran William Henry understands the power of TFA first-hand.

Henry had difficulty finding viable work after returning home from his second deployment in 2013. With a meager weekly unemployment check, he found himself in financial strain with the possibility of losing his home and family.

"I did what a lot of folks do when they get home from deployments and are faced with financial and family hardships – I shut down, I tried to fix it with alcohol, I became a recluse," said Henry, a member of Post 329 in Plainfield, Ind. "I was in a really dark place in my life."

Henry's life positively changed once he sought mental health counseling from VA and made a plea for financial assistance on social media. "I didn't know where to turn, but I hoped someone I knew did," he said. "Luckily that was the case."

American Legion Internal Affairs Division Deputy Director David Elmore, who had deployed to Afghanistan with Henry, saw his plea and reached out. Elmore connected Henry with the Department of Indiana which assisted him with filling out a TFA application. Henry not only received a TFA grant, the connection with the Department of Indiana resulted in employment due to his experience as a public affairs specialist with the Indiana Army National Guard. He was hired as the department's communications director.

"We were so close to losing everything before Elmore contacted me; he is a great friend," said Henry, now the department's assistant adjutant. "I couldn't believe or understand how everything fell into place like it did. It was divine. I got my life back. I finally felt in control again.

"The TFA program is essential to help veterans and their families. Every day I see and hear about veterans being helped by this crucial program. The TFA program changed my life and gave our family a hand up. On top of that, the Department of Indiana gave me the chance of a lifetime to assist our great Hoosier veteran families and work within the organization."

TFA is limited to minor children (17 years or younger) whose biological parent, or legal guardian, is a veteran and is, or would have been, eligible for American Legion membership. However, Legion membership is not required. Veterans who wish to apply for a TFA grant must first contact their local Legion post.

"I've seen TFA change the lives of so many veterans and their families," said Wightman, who now assists veterans with TFA grants and educates posts throughout Iowa about the program. "When they're worried if their utilities are going to get shut off or if their kids are going to have a Christmas, I hand the (TFA) check to the veterans and see the smile on the kids' faces. That makes it all worth it."

TFA is funded through The American Legion's Endowment Fund.



# GIFTS TO THE YANKS WHO GAVE 2016 CHRISTMAS DELIVERIES



The Commission is working on 2016 Christmas for the veterans. You should have gotten order forms in the AUGUST mailing from Department. Order forms will be on line this year and you will be able to see what is in the gifts bags and other items being offered. There will be **NO sweaters this year**, a jacket will take its place. **BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTION ON LINE** [www.giftstotheyanks.org](http://www.giftstotheyanks.org). **You can put orders in starting October 1st and must be in by November 1st.**

The Commission is asking for your support again this year in helping raise the funds needed to continue giving good quality gifts to the veterans. Remember that the Poppy Funds may be donated for the GTTY program.

Contact your local nursing homes now, get to know your veterans, then you will be able to find out their needs as to a Christmas gift. It takes the Legion Family working together to make this program a success.

Gifts will be delivered to the Division Chairmen and they will notify you where you can pick up the orders in your Division. This has been a big help the last few years and saves the program lots of money on not having to ship the orders. Be sure to complete the order form, we need a contact person, name and phone number and address from Legion, Auxiliary, or SAL, don't forget your membership ID number on order form.

Looking forward to Christmas 2016 for our veterans, get in the Christmas Spirit, donate and volunteer to help. We need members to gather the orders in your area, send them in, help fill orders, pick up orders, wrap the gifts in Christmas wrap, insert the Christmas card included with the orders, and then deliver the gifts to the veterans, plan to spend a little time visiting with the veterans. YOU maybe the only visitor he/she has had in along time and the only gift they may receive.

Let the veterans know that The American Legion Family has not forgotten them and thank them for serving our Country. Thanks for supporting the Gifts To The Yanks Program.

### Your 2016-2017 Division Chairmen are:

*1st Div. Joe Hedrick, phone 847-965-1774*

*2nd Div. Jeff Cox, phone 630-553-9108 (Vice Chairman)*

*3rd Div. John Gleckler, phone 217-779-7515*

*4th Div. Ron Umdenstock, phone 309-264-6228 or 309-822-8912 (Chairman)*


*5th Div. Francis (Dutch) Jancek, phone 618-654-3867*




### REMEMBER NOVEMBER IS GIFTS TO THE YANKS WHO GAVE MONTH

Good time to have your fundraisers and send your contributions into the Department office ear marked for the GTTY program on the GTTY form.

Don't forget to support THE LEGION RIDERS on their rides for Gifts to the yanks program.



## Gifts To The Yanks Who Gave Fund



Send Donations To: Gifts To The Yanks Who Gave  
Department of Illinois  
2720 E. Lincoln St.  
Bloomington, IL 61704

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

POST# \_\_\_\_\_ DISTRICT# \_\_\_\_\_ DIVISION# \_\_\_\_\_

Information on web site  
[www.giftstotheyanks.org](http://www.giftstotheyanks.org)

(click on order information)  
there should be three pieces of  
information. Print for your use.

“Remembering our  
Comrades at Christmas”

**THANKS FOR SUPPORTING  
THE GIFTS TO THE YANKS  
PROGRAM.**

# House Passes Legion-backed VA appeals modernization bill

The House of Representatives passed the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016 Wednesday, a bipartisan legislation that would reform the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs appeals process and reduce wait time for veterans' claims.

Prior to the House vote, The American Legion co-hosted a press conference with Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., where he announced that he will introduce separate legislation in the Senate to reform the appeals process.

At the press conference, the Legion, other veterans service organizations, and 10 senators and representatives from both sides of the aisle called on Congress to pass legislation to fix the VA's broken appeals process.

"We strongly encourage Congress to pass the legislation so that our nation's heroes can get the care and support they deserve in a timely manner," said Verna Jones, executive director of The American Legion.

Disabled American Veterans Executive Director Garry Augustine said thousands of veterans are dying while waiting for their appeals to be decided.

"This is more than just about compensation. This is about access to health care, recognition of injuries and illnesses sustained or aggravated by defending this nation," Augustine said.

Blumenthal, the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said that passing appeals reform "is not just about money, but it's also not just about health care. It's about simple justice. An appeals process that delays justice, also denies it."

According to Blumenthal, more than 450,000 veterans are awaiting claim appeals decisions and 80,000 veterans have appeals that are older than five years. By 2027, that will grow to more than two million if the process is not modernized.

Rep. Ryan Zinke, R-Mont., a former Navy Seal commander, emphasized the importance of the reform as a veteran himself. He stressed veterans are not just numbers, but faces.

American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt spoke out earlier this week urging Legionnaires to reach out to Washington and ask that they "pass appeals modernization now! Tell Congress you expect both parties to work together responsibly to pass the legislation, which includes a simple and fair appeals process that provides veterans and their families their earned benefits in a timely manner."

The legislation is currently awaiting a vote in the Senate.

## ★ INSPIRED BY YOUR SERVICE.

For more than 90 years, USAA has supported the military community, and we're proud to honor the members of The American Legion. USAA is committed to stand alongside you wherever life, or the military takes you.

**1-877-699-2654 | [USAA.COM/LEGION](http://USAA.COM/LEGION)**

USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. The American Legion receives financial support for this sponsorship.  
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Recent System Worth Saving meeting, and inspection of Edward Hines, Jr. Veterans Administration hospital in Hines, IL.

### SYSTEM WORTH SAVING

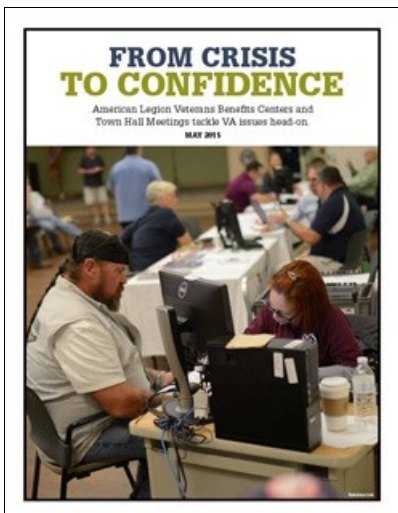
In response to a national crisis, The American Legion went to work, community to community, face to face, one veteran at a time.

Two weeks after the VA Inspector General's Office substantiated claims that as many as 40 veterans in Arizona died waiting for medical appointments, The American Legion opened the first of 11 Veterans Crisis Command Centers and Town Hall Meetings in Phoenix.

This report shares the stories of each Veterans Crisis Command Center, where local Legion officials and national staff helped more than 3,000 veterans in both rural and urban areas. On-the-spot retroactive VA benefits amounted to nearly \$1 million.

To view the Epidemic of VA Mismanagement Map go to:  
[http://www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/va\\_epidemic.pdf](http://www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/va_epidemic.pdf)

To download the From Crisis to Confidence report go to:  
<http://www.legion.org/publications/226222/crisis-confidence>



Utica American Legion Pierce Davis Post 731 Invites You to Join Us for the

## 10th Annual

VETERAN'S DAY  
PARADE & AIR SHOW

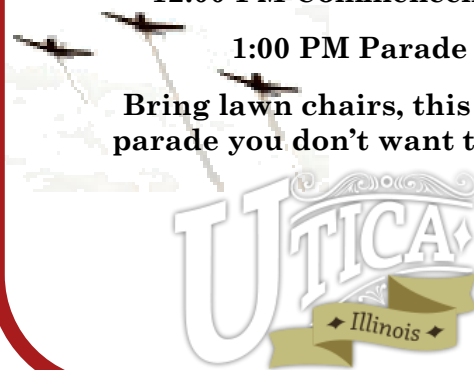
Sunday, November 6th

Downtown—Utica, Illinois

12:00 PM Commencement

1:00 PM Parade

Bring lawn chairs, this is one parade you don't want to miss!



Boggle's World

### Autumn Words

M	A	P	L	E	T	R	E	E	Z	B	J
L	W	G	P	A	V	Y	E	L	L	O	W
O	B	J	U	P	E	Y	F	H	G	S	Z
R	X	K	M	P	G	O	D	A	E	J	P
A	E	C	P	L	E	C	L	R	E	B	E
N	C	H	K	E	T	T	E	V	S	R	A
G	O	I	S	A	O	A	E	E	O	R	
E	L	L	N	E	B	B	V	S	X	W	X
K	O	L	H	R	L	E	E	T	N	N	M
V	R	Y	A	E	E	R	S	R	I	C	E
X	S	X	Y	D	S	S	C	H	O	O	L
C	S	W	E	A	T	E	R	F	A	L	L

- apple
- brown
- chilly
- colors
- fall
- geese
- harvest
- hay
- leaves
- maple tree
- October
- orange
- pear
- pumpkin
- red
- rice
- school
- sweater
- vegetables
- yellow

What animal migrates in fall?

How is the weather in fall?



## 2016—2017 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST./ DIV.	TIME	HOST POST	CITY
10/15/2016	14TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	ALEXIS COMMUNITY CENTER POST 189	ALEXIS
10/16/2016	13TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	THOMSON POST 1025	THOMSON
10/16/2016	15TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	KNOXVILLE POST 749	KNOXVILLE
10/16/2016	23RD DISTRICT	1:00 PM	BREESE POST 252	BREESE
10/16/2016	24TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	HARRISBURG POST 167	HARRISBURG
10/19/2016	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	GEORGE W. BENJAMIN POST 791	NORTHBROOK
10/21/2016	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	MCKINLOCK POST 264	LAKE FOREST
10/23/2016	4TH DIVISION	UNKNOWN	CHATSWORTH POST 613	CHATSWORTH
10/23/2016	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MURPHYSBORO POST 127	MURPHYSBORO
10/26/2016	3RD DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ILLIANA POST 220	CHICAGO
10/26/2016	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	FRANKLIN PARK POST 974	FRANKLIN PARK
10/27/2016	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	CHICAGO HEIGHTS POST 131	CHICAGO HEIGHTS
10/30/2016	2ND DIVISION	1:00 PM	LOCKPORT POST 18	LOCKPORT
11/16/2016	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	MORTON GROVE POST 134	MORTON GROVE
11/16/2016	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	IWASZUK-CETWINSKI POST 943	CHICAGO
11/17/2016	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	GLENN MAKER POST 1160	CHICAGO RIDGE
11/18/2016	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	GURNEE POST 771	GURNEE
11/23/2016	3RD DISTRICT	7:00 PM	LTC CHARLES J. BLACKWOOD SR. POST 800	CHICAGO
12/11/2016	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	OKAWVILLE POST 233	OKAWVILLE
12/21/2016	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DES PLAINES POST 36	DES PLAINES
12/28/2016	3RD DISTRICT	7:00 PM	SOUTH DEERING POST 1238	CHICAGO

**NOTE: Remember if any changes or updates regarding your District/Division meetings occur please contact Joy Wilson at 309-663-0361 or email: [joywilson@illegion.org](mailto:joywilson@illegion.org)**

# ★ **DATES TO REMEMBER** ★

- ★ **Oratorical Contest—March 4, 2017**
- ★ **Boys State--June 10th--16th, 2017**
- ★ **Illini Girls State--June 18th--24th, 2017**
- ★ **Youth Police--June 25th--30th, 2017**

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Department Editor: MARTY CONATSER

*Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag*

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Newletter articles must be at Department Headquarters by the 15th of each month for it to be in the next months issue.

Department of Illinois ~ Official Member of The National American Legion Press Association

## OCTOBER TRIVIA DID YOU KNOW?

1. What awards, founded in 1901, are funded with the help of the Bank of Sweden?
2. What country did 300,000 Chinese troops invade in February of 1979?
3. What spa town headquartered the French who collaborated with the Nazis in World War II?
4. What seductive World War I spy had a daughter named Banda who was also a spy?
5. What color were the "black boxes" on TWA Flight 800?

## ANSWERS:

1. The Nobel Prizes.
2. Vietnam.
3. Vichy.
4. Mata Hari.
5. Orange.



Visit our website!  
Scan Here

**28 Things to Do This Fall**

Carve a pumpkin **Go leaf peeping**  
**Pick Apples** Jump in a pile of leaves  
 Attend a craft show **Bake an apple pie**  
 Visit a pumpkin patch **Make a scarecrow**  
**HAVE A BONFIRE** Collect pinecones  
 Make candy apples **WATCH A FOOTBALL GAME**  
 Visit a Farmers' Market Bake a pumpkin pie  
**Read a good mystery novel** Eat Candy Corn  
 Roast pumpkin seeds **Go on a hayride**  
 Enjoy a pumpkin flavored latte **WATCH A SCARY MOVIE**  
 Make a soup from scratch **Wear your favorite sweater**  
 Plant spring bulbs **Attend Oktoberfest**  
**WEAR A COSTUME** **Make popcorn balls**

Walk through a corn maze **Drink hot apple cider**