



Wisconsin American Legion First District



*Serving 60,000+ veterans from the shores
of Lake Michigan to the idyllic Sugar River*

February 21, 2022

To: Department Membership Chair Jim Waltich
From: 1st District Commander Karl Stuvengen
Subj: March Madness Strategy

The 1st District plans a three-prong approach to recovering our members. We have discovered that the number of lapsed memberships in the District (those members who belonged to a 1st District American Legion Post as recently as 2020 and 2021) are of sufficient number to put the District over 100%.

I have asked the 5 County Commanders to concentrate our efforts on recovering these members to the extent that we can, and then utilize the 2930 list as needed, should a Post not have enough lapsed members to achieve 100%. That deficiency is most likely due to death or transfer.

To that end, County Leadership is now in possession of a lapsed member list for each of their Posts, as well as a 2930 list, sorted by City. I have asked that these lists be personally delivered rather than emailed. I have also asked County Leadership to discuss with the Posts the advantages of live contact (face-to-face, phone call, etc.). We have come to the realization that emailed or written invitations seldom work as they are too easily ignored.

I will ask the County Commanders to schedule Buddy Check sessions, and make those calls County-wide, rather than tasking the Posts to do this by themselves. The Posts that participate will get credit for the number of their members that we call.

What probably won't happen is that we will stay confined to the schedule promulgated by the Department. I believe there needs to be a sense of urgency about this, and I am not willing to wait for a certain date or week to work on this. We are starting now, and I have promised to cover, out of my own pocket, the prize money that a Post or County would have gotten, had we done something during the assigned time period.

I have also thrown out some other incentives that will stay within the District to the County Membership Teams that can reach 100%.

I know this is rather ambitious, but as of 2/21/2022, the District has 1,035 members that have not paid dues in 2022, having last paid in 2020 or 2021. These are veterans that have already experienced membership in a 1st District Post. I want to see us get those members back in the family, and then supplement with 2930 and new members. That is not to say that we will turn down new recruits or transfers, but I believe this is the path of least resistance when it comes to recovering our membership numbers. Personally, I think I may have made a mistake in pushing the 2930 members as hard as I have in the past, as I believe it has come at the expense of existing members. I think we may have spent too much time chasing 2930 transfers, who currently belong to The American Legion, albeit not to a local Post, and have allowed our own members to wander away. We need to rectify this oversight, and remind our members why they joined in the first place.

Numbers will be reported to headquarters as I get them.



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