

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF OHIO



## 2025 ANNUAL CONVENTION

July 11<sup>th</sup> – July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025



**INDEPENDENCE**

*The Heart of Cuyahoga County*



THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO



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2025-2026**



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**THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF OHIO**





## RICHARD L. WRIGHT

Department of Ohio, 13<sup>th</sup> District Commander

# Welcome!



My Fellow American Legion Family Members,

On behalf of the Thirteenth District, we extend warm greetings and welcome you to the 2025 Department of Ohio Convention.

First, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your participation in this convention. Your presence enriches our discussions and contributes to the American Legion Family community that we strive to foster.

The Department of Ohio Staff has organized an exciting lineup of speakers, committee discussions, and Buckeye American Legion classes that promise to inspire our American Legion foundation. This conference offers a unique opportunity for us to engage with each other and create lasting friendships.

As you navigate through convention sessions and engage in conversations with your peers, I invite you to embrace the spirit of inquiry, curiosity, and collaboration that defines our American Legion community.

Once again, thank you for joining us here in Independence Ohio. Your presence is instrumental in making this convention a resounding success.

With warm regards,

*Richard Wright*

American Legion Department of Ohio

13<sup>th</sup> District Commander

Commander, Adjutant and Membership Chairman for American Legion Cleveland Post 2



## DISTINGUISHED GUEST JAMES P. TRAKAS

Councilman of the City of Independence, Ohio



Jim Trakas is in his 9th term as a Member of City Council for the City of Independence, currently Chairman of the Economic Development Committee. He is a lifelong resident of Independence, graduating from Independence High School in 1983 and The Ohio State University in 1987. He has been married to Anne Kennedy Trakas since 2006.

Trakas is a Government Affairs Lobbyist before the Ohio Statehouse, owning his own firm, Ohio Policy Advocates since 2017. He also owns American Online Learning Center and Online Two Point Driving Classes; web based life improvement companies. He retired in 2024 after 11 years as a Major and Battalion Commander of the Ohio Army National Guard's 4th Civil Support and Sustainment Brigade, Ohio Military Reserve. He served as a Public Affairs Officer and Company Commander in three armories in Northern Ohio. Major Trakas was deployed during Operation Steady Resolve, the State of Ohio's pandemic response, where he earned the Ohio Commendation Medal. Jim was the Honor Graduate of his Officer Candidate School and also attended Command and General Staff School.

Jim's past roles include nine years (1996-2005) as Chairman of the Republican Party of Cuyahoga County, four terms (1999-2005) as a Member of The Ohio House of Representatives where he served two terms as House Majority Whip, and two years (2011-2013) as Executive Director of the Ohio State Board of Cosmetology.

A member of St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church Parish Council since 2000, Jim has been nominated as an Archon of the Order of Saint Andrew of the Patriarchate of Constantinople Orthodox Church in 2025 and serves on the Board of Directors of the Greek Cultural Gardens in Cleveland. He and Anne have four cats that keep them quite busy.

*Let's all give Mr. Trakas a warm Ohio Legion welcome!*







# roclamation

**Whereas:** The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It was founded on the four pillars of belief: Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth; and,

**Whereas:** The American Legion Department of Ohio and The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Ohio, are celebrating their Convention in the City of Independence at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South July 11 through July 13, 2025; and,

**Whereas:** The American Legion Department of Ohio has almost 100,000 members, which includes Sons of The American Legion, and is presently under the outstanding leadership of Commander Arnold Whatley, with Stan Oren, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, and Gary Cox, Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman, serving under him; and,

**Whereas:** The American Legion Department of Ohio Convention will be joined by members from The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, Legion Riders, and many other Distinguished Guests; and,

**Whereas:** We support the American Legion Department of Ohio and recognize them for their contributions to national security and the welfare of military veterans, their families and their communities.


**Now, Therefore,** I, Gregory P. Kurtz, Mayor of the City of Independence, Ohio, do hereby designate and proclaim July 11 through July 13, 2025, as days to recognize and honor

## The American Legion Department of Ohio

for their genuine commitment to provide services and support to the men, women, and families of those who have served and defended our country for our freedom, and for the dedication of their organization to promote patriotism and good citizenship in our communities. We are grateful for your spirit and your mission and wish you a very productive and successful convention.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of the City of Independence, Ohio to be affixed this 11<sup>th</sup> day of July in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-five.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory P. Kurtz, Mayor



## THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

Dear American Legion Department of Ohio:

Welcome to The Land. We are thrilled to be hosting your conference in Cleveland.

Attending a conference should be a memorable experience and a great way to discover a new destination. That said, you've come to the right place. A place that may become your Land for Life.

Cleveland is a foodie town, and conference attendees can expect to enjoy some of the country's best food. Our culinary scene blends influence from more than 100 ethnicities.

Our downtown hotels offer competitive rates and comfortable amenities close to conference facilities. Many of our hotels have a unique character as they are housed in beautiful turn-of-the-century buildings that have been preserved and renovated to help the city maintain its rich industrial history.

Beyond hotels, Cleveland is well-equipped to support conferences. For evening events, we have many world-class venues, such as the world's only Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse and the Cleveland Museum of Art. Cleveland is also home to Karamu House, the oldest producing African American theatre in the nation. Our recently renovated airport is connected to downtown with a train that runs every 30 minutes. Once in the city center, walking to restaurants, nightlife, and sporting events is easy, with most activities within a 5-15-minute walk of virtually every hotel.

Downtown Cleveland sits on the shore of Lake Erie and the banks of the Cuyahoga River. For attendees who enjoy a blend of city and nature even when traveling on business, there are miles of paved trails along the river and the lakefront and more than 55,000 acres of greenspace surrounding the city. For those who love America's favorite pastime, Major League Baseball's Cleveland Guardians play in the heart of downtown. The NFL's Cleveland Browns and the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers also make downtown their home.

When you visit Cleveland, you'll discover that what sets us apart is our people. Every visitor is welcomed into our community. You become part of our family. I especially encourage you to visit our friendly locals in one of our many culturally diverse neighborhoods like Ohio City, Tremont, University Circle, Shaker Square, and Gordon Square Art District.

Be assured that we'll do all we can to ensure you feel that this Land is your land.

Sincerely,

David Gilbert  
President/CEO  
Destination Cleveland









## ARNOLD 'AJ' WHATLEY

The American Legion, Department of Ohio Commander



American Legion Family,

I would like to thank you for attending the 106th Department of Ohio Convention. I am extremely proud and humble to serve as your Department of Ohio Commander 2025-2026. Thank you for all the amenities afforded me during my travel across Ohio, visiting Posts and Districts, I have witnessed professionalism and dedication.

Wow Legionnaires, time has flown by as we are about to embark on a new year with the election of new leadership on every level of the American Legion. I am asking you to continue to respect the leaders you have chosen to lead the American Legion. As new leadership comes aboard, make sure your Post's Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) and Officer Certification forms are completed before the stated deadline.

I would like to thank you and all the organizations who donated to my special project, Homelessness for Veteran Women (especially those with families). Thank you.

Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity serve as Commander American Legion Department of Ohio, truly an experience of a lifetime.

For God and Country,  
Arnold Whatley Commander  
American Legion Department of Ohio

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### SERVICES AND LOCATIONS

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## Homeless Veterans Programs and Services





## LOUISE SMERK

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Ohio President

On behalf of the Department of Ohio American Legion Auxiliary, I welcome the entire Legion Family, friends, and visitors to the 2025 Department Convention.

It has been an honor serving with Commander AJ Whatley this year. We both showed a passion for our female veterans this year with our special projects. It has also been an honor serving with Detachment Commander Tim Conway. I have enjoyed the entire year with both men. The American Legion family consists of the Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and the Riders, all doing their own part in making this family great.

Who knew that the simple symbol of the Tree of Life could evolve into something so great. It started with my 1st Vice membership pin with the tree on it and the saying "Growing from our Roots" to then my President's pin: "L.E.A.V.E.S. -Let's embrace all veterans every season." Everywhere I traveled for Auxiliary conferences, meetings and functions the Units and Districts embraced this simple tree in so many ways. While I attended Buckeye Girls State, I was honored to plant a Weeping Beech tree and will have a market dedicated to the 2025 year of BGS on the Bowling Green State University campus.

I wish all newly elected officers to embrace their upcoming year. Think outside the box, try something new. The year goes by so very fast, but truly enjoy it!!

From the Department of Ohio American Legion Auxiliary Officers, Staff, and Executive Board, have a great and successful convention. Enjoy the moment!

In the Spirit of Service, not Self,

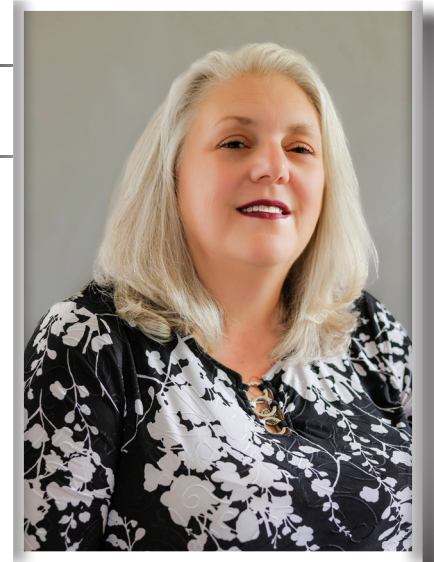
Louise Smerk  
Department President



**AMERICAN  
LEGION  
AUXILIARY**



Harper Village





## JEFFREY M. VRABEL, JR.

Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Ohio Commander

The newly elected Detachment Commander, Jeff Vrabel Jr. is a member of the Mahoning Valley Squadron 15 in Poland. He earned his eligibility in the Sons through his grandfather's service, who served in the U.S. Army, 5th Regimental Combat Team during the Korean War. Commander Vrabel is also strong a advocate for improving the lives of our state's veterans through his project, Save a Warrior. Jeff would like to welcome all attendees to the 2025 Department Convention.



### SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION ESTABLISHED IN 1932

The Sons of the American Legion (SAL) is a program of The American Legion that was established in 1932 to assist The American Legion with their programs and activities. Being a member of the Detachment of Ohio is more than just "belonging" to a club. We take great pride in the work that we do in the areas of Americanism, Veterans Aff airs and Rehabilitation, Special Olympics, Membership and last but certainly not least The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Our success in these areas is a direct refl ection of the guidance that is given us by the "Legionnaires" of our Department. All male descendants, adopted sons

and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in Service during World I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf War and the War on Terrorism, during the delimiting periods set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for Membership in the Sons of The American Legion.

Contact the Sons of The American Legion Squadron nearest you to obtain the necessary membership application form.



**SONS OF THE**  
**AMERICAN**  
**LEGION**



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IN YOUR  
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Legion Department





## JAMES A. LaCOURSIERE, JR.

National Commander of The American Legion

James A. LaCoursiere, Jr. (*La coursey air*) was elected national commander of the nation's largest veterans organization on August 29, 2024, in New Orleans, during The American Legion's 105th national convention.

An Air Force veteran, LaCoursiere has been a longtime field representative for The American Legion Department of Connecticut's Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines Fund, which assists veterans and their families.

LaCoursiere has held many leadership positions at The American Legion post, department (state) and national levels. He is a member of American Legion Post 91 in Moosup, Conn. He has also served as a national vice commander, Connecticut state commander, and chairman of the organization's national legislative commission.

LaCoursiere is married to his wife, Lisa, and has two children (Patrick and Meghan), and three stepchildren (Jason, Kaylene and the late Johnathan).

Born to a military family in Honolulu, LaCoursiere attended Montville High School where he played junior varsity football, varsity football and varsity track.

As national commander, LaCoursiere is strongly committed to raising awareness for The American Legion's "Be the One" efforts to prevent veteran suicide.

I hope that you have a productive and enjoyable convention.

For God and Country,  
James A. LaCoursiere, Jr.  
National Commander



 **AMERICAN  
LEGION  
BE THE  
ONE**



THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO



**91 American Legion Parkway  
Berea, Ohio 44017  
440-234-0091  
[www.postbythelake.com](http://www.postbythelake.com)**



**James Lockyer  
Commander**

**Ed Leopold  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr.**

**Keith Mattison  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr.**

**Mel Baher  
Finance Officer**

**George Masie  
Adjutant**

**Linda Heffren  
Chaplain**

**THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY OF POST 91 WELCOMES THE DEPARTMENT OF OHIO DELEGATION TO THE ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION BEING HELD AT THE HOLIDAY INN, ROCKSIDE ROAD, INDEPENDENCE OHIO, JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> - 13<sup>TH</sup>. PLEASE ENJOY YOUR STAY AND WE HOPE YOU ARE ABLE TO VISIT THE MANY FINE RESTARURANTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES OFFERED IN THE AREA. WE LOOK FORWARD TO EVERYONE RE-VISITING US AGAIN NEXT YEAR. CONGRATUALTIONS TO ALL OF THE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS.**



## 106<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION



### The American Legion Department of Ohio District 5 Commodore Denig Post 83

**Commander: Terry Kaufman | Finance Officer: Tom Mowles | Adjutant: Gary Mitchell**  
**3615 Hayes Avenue | Sandusky, Ohio 44870-5324 | 419.625.3274**

#### Post Meetings:

**Executive Board – 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday @ 6:00 PM**  
**General Business Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday @ 7:00 PM**

**For the Honor Guard, Contact the Post**

#### Karaoke

**Thursday & Saturday 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

#### Restaurant

**Breakfast: Sun-Sat 8:00 AM – 1: PM**  
**Breakfast Buffet – Sun 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM**  
**Lunch: Mon-Sat 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**  
**Dinner: Wed-Sat 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

#### Bar

**Mon – Sat 8:00 AM – 11:00 PM**  
**Sun: 8:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

## 2025 CONVENTION VOCALIST • DANIELLE REBON

Danielle Rebon is a singer/songwriter native to Bucyrus, Ohio, who has been creating music for most of her life. Six years ago she released her first full-length album and has since released album #2 with a new EP in the works currently. She is so thankful to be able to use her God-given gifts and talents in any way and place He opens the doors!







## DEPARTMENT STAFF

### DEPARTMENT OF OHIO HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES EMPLOYEES

#### DEPARTMENT HQ



John Robinson | Department Adjutant / SAL Liaison

Phone: 740-513-1550 | Email: [adjutant@ohiolegion.com](mailto:adjutant@ohiolegion.com)



Rebecca Corbin | Fiscal Officer / Emblem Sales

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Christie White | Americanism and Children & Youth Coordinator

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Jon Vulgamore | Media/Communications and Marketing Coordinator

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Sherry Yockey | Membership Manager / Post Activities

Phone: 740-816-7552 | Email: [syockey@ohiolegion.com](mailto:syockey@ohiolegion.com)



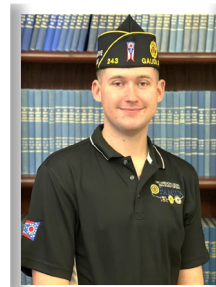
Hope Eaton | Front Desk Administrator

Phone: 740-362-7478 | Email: [heaton@ohiolegion.com](mailto:heaton@ohiolegion.com)



Cassie Lee | Fiscal Secretary

Phone: 740-513-5359 | Email: [finance@ohiolegion.com](mailto:finance@ohiolegion.com)



Jacob Brault | Legislative / National Security / VE&E Coordinator

Phone: 740-816-7579 | Email: [jbrault@ohiolegion.com](mailto:jbrault@ohiolegion.com)

THANK YOU FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES!



## DEPARTMENT STAFF

### DEPARTMENT OF OHIO HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES EMPLOYEES

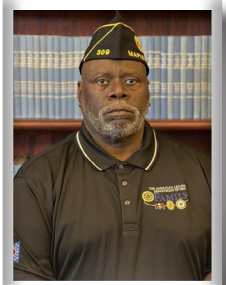
#### FIELD OFFICES



William Genochio | VA&R / VBA Coordinator | DSO, Field Office Supervisor  
Phone: 216-522-3504 ext 53746 | Email: [genochio@ohiolegion.com](mailto:genochio@ohiolegion.com)

Will Brown | Department Service Officer - Cleveland

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Tom White | Department Service Officer - Cleveland

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Michelle Jones | Department Service Officer - Cleveland

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Nicole 'Jessica' Reese | Department Service Officer - Cleveland

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Gary Felver | Department Service Officer - Dayton

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Troy Elliott | Department Service Officer - Chillicothe VAMC

Phone: 740-773-1141 ext 16252 | Email: [telliott@ohiolegion.com](mailto:telliott@ohiolegion.com)



THANK YOU FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES!





THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

## DEPARTMENT STAFF

DEPARTMENT OF OHIO HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES EMPLOYEES

### DEPARTMENT HQ



Shirley Espenshade | Charities Inc.

Phone: 740-513-1722

Email: [espenshade@ohiolegion.com](mailto:espenshade@ohiolegion.com)



### FIELD OFFICES



Darell Bishop | Department Service Officer  
Wade Park VAMC

Phone: 216-791-3800 ext 4155

Email: [dbishop@ohiolegion.com](mailto:dbishop@ohiolegion.com)



THANK YOU FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES!

# Good Luck in the New Year!

## American Legion Post 178



## Van Wert, Ohio

# From Our American Legion Family

106<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION



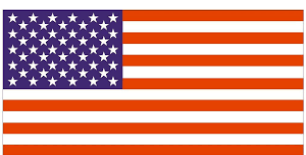
**BE <sup>THE</sup> ONE**

 **AMERICAN  
LEGION**



Here's to a successful 2025 Department Convention  
and a successful 2025 – 2026 Membership Year.

Remember to stop and see  
“The Best Little Post on the North Coast”



American Legion Post 627  
3935 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Newburgh Heights, Ohio, 44105

**BE <sup>THE</sup> ONE**





THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO



# ***Stan Oren***

**for**

**2025-2026**

**Department Commander**



## **AMERICAN LEGION POSITIONS**

Nat'l Appointee, Veterans Affairs & Rehab Council  
Dept Americanism & Oratorical Commissions  
Buckeye Boys State Staff 2021-2025  
Dept Asst Sgt-at-Arms 2018-2019  
First District Commander 2017-2018  
Past Putnam-Hancock Cnty Council Cmdr  
Finance Officer & Adjutant, Post 536 Gilboa



## **VETERAN, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Commissioner, Putnam County Veterans Commission 2020—2025  
2025 Honorary Chair, 25th Black Swamp Classic  
Current President, Port Authority of Northwest Ohio 2010-2025  
Director, Hancock-Wood Rural Electric Cooperative 1982-1985  
Whirlpool Corporation, retired Weekend Supt. in 2008 after 30 years  
Member: SAL, VFW, DAV, AMVETS, VVA and Forty & 8



**41 Year Life Member Harter-Williams Post 536 Gilboa**

Eligibility: Stan served in the U.S. Navy 1969-1971.

**BE  
=THE=  
ONE**



# LEGIONNAIRE BENEFITS

As a Member of the Legion Family, You Know How Important  
It Is to Help Protect Those in Need ...

## NOW WE CAN HELP THE LIT PLANS CAN HELP WITH

- **Hospital HELP Plan**
- **Cancer Care**
- **Accidental Death Protection**
- **On-The-Move Travel Accident**
- **Emergency Assistance Plus**
- **ID Resolve**
- **Medicare Supplement Insurance**
- **Health Insurance**
- **Dental Insurance**
- **Long-Term Care**
- **Lifeline Medical Alert Service**

**Hospital HELP Plan** — Provides benefits for hospital stays including intensive care, cardiac care, care for cancer, rehabilitative facilities, and V.A. hospitals.\*

**Cancer Care** — Provides important protection and a daily benefit if you are hospitalized due to cancer.\*

**Accidental Death** — Helps provide financial protection for you and your family. Up to \$5,000.00 LegionCare AD coverage at no cost to Legionnaires is available: (activation required).\* You can also purchase additional Accident coverage up to \$100,000.00.

**On-The-Move Travel Accident** — Provides up to \$200,000.00 coverage when fatally injured in a covered accident while traveling, plus \$500.00 per day if a covered accident lands you in the hospital.\*

**ID Resolve** — Provides 24-hour identity theft resolution that helps protect your money, your time and your financial reputation.\*

**Emergency Assistance Plus** — Provides you with 24/7 emergency medical and travel assistance services should something happen to you or your family while traveling away from home.

**Medicare Supplement Insurance** — Supplements your Medicare Coverage at group rates.

**Health & Dental Insurance** — Request a quote on various Health & Dental Insurance Plans designed with you in mind.

**Long-Term Care** — Can help provide home health care, supervised adult care, and more.

**Lifeline Medical Alert Service** — Provides fast access to help in the event of a fall or medical emergency so you can live confidently and independently.

**DeviceGuard** — A simple, comprehensive, and affordable way to protect your devices—from smartphones to laptops to digital doorbells. Flexible plans and bundles ensure that you only pay for the protection you need.



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DEPARTMENT

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## DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

**Department Commander**

Arnold Whatley  
*Centerville*

**1st Vice Commander**

Stan Oren  
*Leipsic*

**2nd Vice Commander**

Gary Cox Jr.  
*Caledonia*

**Treasurer**

Holly Lewis  
*Colliers*

**Chaplain**

Ron Distel  
*Elmore*

**Assistant Chaplain**

Robert White  
*Parma*

**Past Department Commander**

Jason Rue  
*Dupont*

**National Executive Committeeman**

Ron Chapman  
*Williamsburg*

**Alternate National Executive Committeeman**

Robert Schmitt  
*Maumee*

**Judge Advocate**

Josh Brown  
*Hilliard*

**Assistant J.A.**

Doug Russell  
*Minerva*

**Parliamentarian**

Gary Minadeo  
*Mayfield Hts.*

**Historian**

Al Beyer  
*Bellville*

**Assistant Historian**

Kevin Motter  
*Montpelier*

**Sergeant-At-Arms**

Mike Blackwell  
*Union*

**Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms**

Ken LaVoy  
*Dayton*

Brad Beatty  
*Grove City*

Bill Dittebrand  
*Willoughby*

Marty Moore  
*Amherst*

Harold Landis  
*Walbridge*

Sharon McClain  
*Cuyahoga Falls*

Robert Schmoll  
*Thurman*





## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

---

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS COMPRISED OF OHIO'S CURRENT DEPARTMENT OFFICERS,  
DISTRICT COMMANDERS, AND DISTRICT 1ST VICE COMMANDERS

---

COMMANDER Mark Mahlman	<u>FIRST DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Dean Boyers
COMMANDER James Fast	<u>SECOND DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Tim Shaw
COMMANDER Chris Emmons	<u>THIRD DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Brian Fowle
COMMANDER Robert Wilson	<u>FOURTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Champ Brown
COMMANDER Robert "Bob" Mason	<u>FIFTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Melissa Rodgers
COMMANDER Christopher Miller	<u>SIXTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER William Little
COMMANDER Johnny Conley	<u>SEVENTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Howard Conley
COMMANDER Mike Lincoln	<u>EIGHTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Scott Conn
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COMMANDER Howard Marotto	<u>TENTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Thomas Barnett
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COMMANDER Michael Higgins	<u>TWELFTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER Suzette Heller
COMMANDER Richard Wright	<u>THIRTEENTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER James Lockyer
COMMANDER Rodger Wiant	<u>FOURTEENTH DISTRICT</u>	1ST VICE COMMANDER John Life





THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

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THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

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# VOTE FOR HOLLY DEPARTMENT 2ND VICE

## My Vision

### CONNECTING

Using Post, District and Department activities as a way to reduce veteran loneliness and further our Be The One mission

### COLLABORATING

Partnering with other Posts to host and attend local events that broadcast our aims to the local community

### COMMUNITY

Strengthening our brand in the local community to ensure that everyone knows the mission of The American Legion



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## THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

### **Rules & Order of Business Amended – 2024 Department Convention Independence, Ohio**

1. Robert's Revised Rules of Order, Newly Revised (RONR) shall be the authority of parliamentary procedure, with the following modifications:
2. A delegate desiring to make a motion or address the Convention, shall rise, address the chair as "Commander" and state their name and the name and number of their Post before proceeding at the nearest microphone.
3. Debate shall be limited to three (3) minutes for each speaker.
4. Debate on any one subject presented to the Convention, shall be limited to 30 minutes, except under such special rules as the Convention shall adopt prior to debate.
5. Only two (2) Delegates from any one Post delegation shall be permitted the floor on any one subject. Where disagreement exists within a delegation, one delegate shall be permitted to speak on each side of the subject, except on a division of the question, when this rule shall be applied separately for each division.
6. The floor shall be permitted but once to any individual delegate on any one subject, except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Convention. Chairpersons of Convention Committees may speak as frequently as may be necessary in connection with the report of their committees. The presiding officer shall not entertain any motion which will curtail further debate without affording the Committee Chairperson an opportunity for rebuttal. On request of a delegate, any Resolution contained in a Committee report shall be considered separately at the conclusion of the vote on the remaining report, and after discussion voted upon at that time.
7. Any Resolutions originating on the floor of the Convention shall be in writing, then automatically and without reading, be referred to the Adjutant or Secretary of the Convention, who will refer them to the appropriate Committee for their action and report thereon prior to the end of this Convention.
8. Decisions on Rules and Debate or Parliamentary Order by the presiding officer may be subject to appeal by any two (2) delegates from two (2) different Districts under a point of order. Such an appeal shall take precedence over any pending question and shall be decided forthwith. An appeal from the decision of the Chair shall be put to the Convention on the question: "Shall the decision be sustained."
9. When the poll of any Post delegation is demanded by a delegate of any other Post, the Convention Secretary shall poll the vote without discussion of the question being voted on. When a poll of the Post is demanded, it must be made immediately upon the announcement of the vote of the delegation.
10. On roll calls, the Post delegation chairperson shall poll their delegation on the floor and announce its vote upon presenting their credentials to the person in charge of microphone.
11. Past Department Commanders shall be entitled to vote, provided they are registered as such.
12. Only delegates or their accredited alternates may be heard or given recognition on any issue or in the nomination of candidates unless he or she has two-thirds (2/3) consent of the delegation present.
13. Delegations may arrive at a vote in such a manner as they choose but shall announce it in terms of a full vote and not in terms of a fractional part of a vote. The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate shall be cast by the majority of the delegates present from his or her Post.

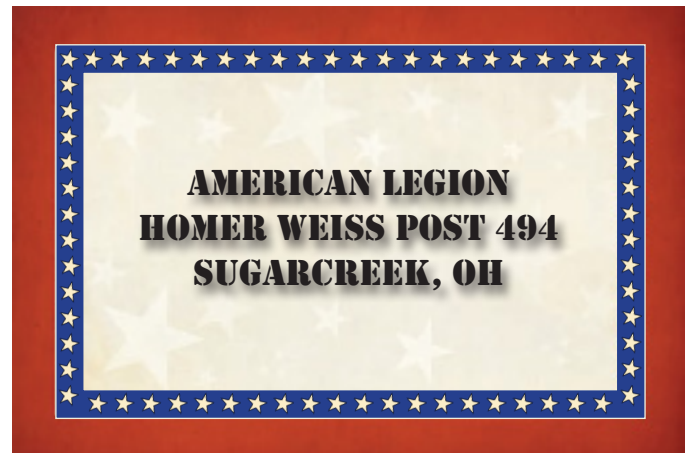


14. There shall be no unit rules of voting in this Convention.
15. Voting shall be by acclamation, except when a roll call or standing count is directed by the Commander or demanded by a Delegate of at least three (3) Posts of three (3) separate Districts. Election of Department Officers shall be by roll call, except when a candidate is unopposed, at which time the vote may be by acclamation. All roll call voting will be as follows: the delegate chairperson or designee will approach the closest microphone and cast votes from the microphone. The delegate chairperson or designee should be prepared prior to the calling of their post number to move toward the closest microphone so that their vote can be cast in a timely manner. All standing count votes will be by District with the District Commander, assisted by the 1st and 2nd Vice Commanders, polling the vote from each Post delegation chairperson. The District Commander will announce the poll to the assembly by Post from the microphone when called upon by the Commander. The registration desk will be closed at least 30 minutes prior to an expected standing count to allow the Credentials Committee to update the delegate strength for the determination of majority and 2/3 of the delegate strength for the standing count.
16. In the event a Post has not provided the method by which alternates shall be designated to serve in the place of absent delegates, the Chairperson or acting Chairperson of the delegation shall make such designation certified by the Post Commander or District Commander.
17. Prior to the election of Department Officers, the Department Commander shall appoint, subject to approval of the Convention, a chief teller of elections, and such number of tellers as the Department Commander deems necessary, provided that the total number of tellers so appointed shall be an odd number. In a contested election each candidate going to the ballot shall be entitled to one teller of the candidate's choice if the candidate so elects.
18. Nomination for Department Officers shall be from the floor. Each Post may present as many candidates as it chooses.
19. Nominating speeches for Department Officers shall be limited to five (5) minutes each. Not more than one seconding speech shall be made for any candidate, and said speech limited to two (2) minutes.
20. When more than two (2) candidates are nominated for any office, voting shall continue until one candidate receives the necessary majority of the votes cast. If on any vote taken no candidate receives the necessary majority to elect, a new vote shall be taken for the place to be filled. The candidate receiving the lowest number of votes on the preceding vote shall be disqualified. All roll call votes for officers or otherwise will begin with the next sequential Post where the last roll call vote ended. The 2023 Convention's last roll call vote ended with Post 0025. The first roll call vote of the 2024 Convention will begin with Post 27.
21. The Order of Election of Officers shall be the Department Commander, First Vice Commander, Second Vice Commander, Treasurer. In even years, we will then elect National Executive Committeeperson and Alternate National Executive Committeeperson.
22. Those recognized by the Department Commander shall be entitled to a respectful hearing, and the Chair shall have the authority to clear the gallery or the floor or have the Sergeant-At-Arms escort from the Convention anyone creating a disturbance or interfering with order of procedure.
23. None of the above rules shall be construed as preventing any member of The American Legion, Department of Ohio from serving on a Convention Committee.
24. The consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting strength of the Convention is necessary for suspension of the standing rules of the Convention.



## THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

25. The Department Commander will have the authority to appoint a Parliamentarian to assist the Judge Advocate for this Convention.
26. Any amendment originating on the floor to any resolution shall be presented in writing and transmitted to the presiding officer at the time of the introduction of such amendment. However, in the case where a word is stricken and another inserted, this change can be done by the one making the report or introducing the Resolution.







*Thank you!*

**The American Legion Department of Ohio wishes to thank all the Sponsors and Supporters that made this 2025 Convention possible.**

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*Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Ohio*

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## DISTINGUISHED GUEST SPEAKER • JOHN C. HARRIS JR.

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Director

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services

Maj. Gen. John C. Harris, Jr. (U.S. Army, retired), was sworn in as Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) on May 30, 2025 – the day he retired from a highly distinguished, 44-year military career – and assumed his new duties for the state two days later (June 1, 2025), continuing his service in the cabinet of Governor Mike DeWine.

In this role, he leads the state's efforts to advocate for Ohio's nearly 700,000 military veterans, overseeing programs and services designed to improve their quality of life, support their transition to civilian life, and ensure access to earned benefits. In becoming ODVS's sixth Director, General Harris succeeds Maj. Gen. (U.S. Army, retired) Deborah Ashenhurst, the first woman to serve as both the Adjutant General of Ohio and Director of Veterans Services.

Before assuming this post, he served as the Ohio Adjutant General from 2019-25 and was responsible for the command and oversight of the Ohio Army National Guard, Ohio Air National Guard, Ohio Military Reserve, Ohio Naval Militia, and Ohio Cyber Reserve – which equates to approximately 17,000 personnel. As the Governor's chief military adviser, he coordinated state emergency responses, oversaw federal mobilizations, and championed initiatives to modernize force structure and support the holistic needs of Ohio's service members and their families.

General Harris began his military career in 1981 as an enlisted helicopter repairer with the Ohio Army National Guard and earned his commission through Officer Candidate School in 1984. Over more than four decades of service, he rose through the ranks, holding leadership positions from platoon leader and aviation company commander to Commander of Task Force Lancer during a NATO mission in Kosovo. He also held key staff roles including Chief of Staff and Assistant Adjutant General for the Ohio Army National Guard.

His education includes a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of the State of New York. General Harris' decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Ohio Distinguished Service Medal. He is a Senior Army Aviator with experience in attack, scout, and utility aircraft.

A respected leader, mentor, and advocate, General Harris continues his legacy of service in this new role by focusing on the needs of Ohio's veterans and their families. His transition from military leadership to veteran advocacy reflects a deep, enduring commitment to those who have worn the uniform – and a belief that service does not end with retirement.







## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY • JULY 10<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

12:00 pm–6:00 pm	<b>Membership Table</b> Outside Janus
2:00 pm–4:00 pm	<b>Charities Meeting</b> Valley View
3:00 pm–5:00 pm	<b>DEC Meeting</b> Broadview Heights
6:30 pm–7:15 pm	<b>DEC Banquet Happy Hour (By Invitation Only)</b> Ballroom 1 & 2
7:30 pm–10:00 pm	<b>DEC Banquet (By Invitation Only)</b> Ballroom 1 & 2



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## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY • JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

8:00 am–6:00 pm	Headquarters Office Room 141 & 143	12:00 pm–2:00 pm MEETINGS ( <i>cont.</i> )	VA&R Broadview Heights
9:00 am–6:00 pm	Emblem Sales Outside Janus	↓	National Security Room 145
9:00 am–6:00 pm	Sponsor/Vendor Check In Outside Ballroom 1	2:00 pm–2:30 pm	Sgt-At-Arms/ Special Sgt-At-Arms Mtg.
10:00 am–6:00 pm	Registration End of Hall on Tile	2:30 pm–4:30 pm	District Caucuses ( <i>see next page</i> )
10:00 am–6:00 pm	Membership Table Outside Janus	6:00 pm–end of session	Opening Session (Joint) Ballroom 2, 3 & 4
10:00 am–6:00 pm	Sponsors/Vendors Ballroom 1	6:00 pm–9:00 pm	Credentials Mtg. Room 145
10:00 am–6:00 pm	DSO Claims Table Hallway-Christmas Tree Corner	8:00 pm–11:00 pm	Candidate Hospitality Parma, Bedford, Valley View, Brooklyn, & Brecksville Rooms
12:00 pm–2:00 pm CONVENTION COMMITTEE MEETINGS	Americanism Brooklyn  Children & Youth Brecksville  Constitution & By-Law Amendments Bedford  Legislative Valley View  Permanent Organization Maple Heights  Resolutions Parma  Rules & Order of Business Independence		





## DISTRICT CAUCUS INFORMATION

FRIDAY • JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

**1st District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Brooklyn

**2nd District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Brooklyn

**3rd District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Broadview Heights

**4th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Broadview Heights

**5th District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Bedford

**6th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Bedford

**7th District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Valley View

**8th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Valley View

**9th District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Parma

**10th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Parma

**11th District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Maple Heights

**12th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Maple Heights

**13th District Caucus**

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Brecksville

**14th District Caucus**

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Brecksville

RETAIN. RECRUIT. REINSTATE.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY • JULY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

8:00 am–12:00 pm	Buckeye American Legion College <i>Practical's Training Turn-in</i> Independence	10:00 am–30 min. prior to close of session	Registration End of Hall on Tile
8:00 am–12:00 pm	Buckeye American Legion College <i>Post Operations and Leadership</i> Maple Heights	10:00 am–12:00 pm	Charities Gaming Seminar Broadview Heights
9:00 am–11:00 am	Buckeye American Legion College (Graduate Level) - <i>Command Calm: Advanced Skills for Conflict and Difficult Conversations</i> Valley View	10:00 am–1:00 pm	SAL DEC Parma
		11:00 am–12:30 pm	PDC Lunch (Invitation Only) Slymans
9:00 am–6:00 pm	Sponsor/Vendor Check in Outside Ballroom 1	1:00 pm–4:00 pm	General Session Ballroom 2, 3 & 4
9:00 am–5:00 pm	Emblem Sales Outside Janus	4:30 pm–5:30 pm	National Appointees Meeting Independence
10:00 am–6:00 pm	Sponsors/Vendors Ballroom 1	4:30 pm–7:30 pm	Credentials Room 145
10:00 am–6:00 pm	DSO Claims Table Hallway - Christmas Tree Corner	8:00 pm–11:00 pm	Candidate Hospitality Parma, Bedford, Valley View, Brooklyn, & Brecksville Rooms
10:00 am–6:00 pm	Membership Table Outside Janus		

### Please visit our official Department Social Media Channels:



<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionDepartmentOfOhio/>



[https://www.instagram.com/ohio\\_legion/](https://www.instagram.com/ohio_legion/)



[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG5DACPf0uyfSa4ErKHOH\\_g?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG5DACPf0uyfSa4ErKHOH_g?view_as=subscriber)



[https://x.com/Ohio\\_Legion](https://x.com/Ohio_Legion)







## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY • JULY 13<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

8:00 am–1:00 pm	<b>Headquarters Office</b> Room 141 & 143
8:00 am–8:30 am	<b>Protestant Services</b> Brooklyn
8:00 am–8:30 am	<b>Catholic Mass</b> St. Michaels Catholic Church 6912 Chestnut Rd. Cleveland, OH 44131
8:30 am–1:00 pm	<b>Sponsors/Vendors</b> Ballroom 1
8:30 am–1:00 pm	<b>Emblem Sales</b> Outside Janus
9:00 am–1:00 pm	<b>General Session</b> Ballroom 2, 3 & 4
2:00 pm–3:00 pm	<b>Executive Committee Meeting</b> Broadview Heights





# GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENTION AGENDA

FRIDAY • JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

## 6:00 PM – Session Opening

- ◇ Posting of Colors – The Greater Cleveland Young Marines
- ◇ National Anthem – Danielle Rebon
- ◇ Invocation – Ron Distel, Department Chaplain
- ◇ POW/MIA Empty Chair Recognition – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander  
~ Place Cover on Empty Chair – Mike Blackwell, Department Sergeant-At-Arms
- ◇ Pledge of Allegiance – Stan Oren, First Vice Commander
- ◇ Preamble – Gary Cox Jr., Second Vice Commander
- ◇ Convention Call – John Robinson, Department Adjutant

*\*Agenda Times are tentative and subject to delays and accelerations\**

## 6:30 PM – Distinguished Guest Greetings – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

- ◇ Councilman of the City of Independence, Jim Trakas – Mayoral Proclamation

## 6:35 PM – American Legion Family Greetings – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

- ◇ Auxiliary President – Louise Smerk & Officers
- ◇ Sons of American Legion Detachment Commander – Jeffrey Vrabel Jr. & Officers

## 7:00 PM – Americanism Programs Video Greetings

## 7:30 PM – Introduction of Candidates – John Robinson, Department Adjutant

- ◇ Department Commander – Stan Oren
- ◇ Department 1st Vice Commander – Gary Cox Jr.
- ◇ Candidate(s) for Department 2nd Vice Commander:  
~ Holly Lewis
- ◇ Department Treasurer – Ken LaVoy

## 8:00 PM – Announcements – John Robinson, Department Adjutant

## 8:15 PM – Closing Comments

- ◇ Additional business – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander
- ◇ Benediction – Robert White, Assistant Chaplain
- ◇ Bell & Gavel / Salute to the Colors / RECESS





# GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENTION AGENDA

SATURDAY • JULY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

## 1:00 PM – Session Continued

- ◇ Salute the Colors – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander
- ◇ Invocation Prayer – Ron Distel, Department Chaplain
- ◇ Opening Remarks – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander
- ◇ Credentials Report – Mel Baher, Credentials Chairman
- ◇ PDC's Recognition – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

*\*Agenda Times are tentative and subject to delays and accelerations\**

## 1:30 PM – Distinguished Guest Greetings

- ◇ Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director – Maj. Gen. John C. Harris, Jr. (U.S. Army, retired)  
(keynote speaker)

## 2:05 PM – Awards:

- ◇ **Membership Awards – Department 1st Vice Commander, Stan Oren**
  - ~ Department 1st Vice Commander Award
  - ~ Department 2nd Vice Commander Award
  - ~ Grand Award
  - ~ Hugh K. Martin Award
  - ~ Big One Pin Awards
    - » Small Category
    - » Medium Category
    - » Large Category
  - ~ Anytime Post Awards
  - ~ Gold Brigade Award
  - ~ Post Quota Awards
- ◇ **Gifts For Yanks Awards – Darell Bishop & Holly Lewis, GFY Committee**
  - ~ Largest Contribution Post – Post 397, Vermillion - \$20,000.00
  - ~ Largest Contribution District – 5th District – \$88,942.00
  - ~ Largest % of goal Post – Post 397, Vermillion - 7,092.20%
  - ~ Largest % of goal District – 5th District – 1,010.45%
  - ~ **Small/Medium/Large Category** - Highest % of goal Posts & Highest Contribution Posts
  - ~ **Crystal Eagles** - Honorable Mention of Posts that had significant donations of \$5K or more
- ◇ **Post Convention Awards – Department 2nd Vice Commander, Gary Cox Jr.**
  - ~ Mickeal J. Golato
  - ~ Alice Friedman & Alice Friedman Community Service
  - ~ Reverend Father John E. Duffy
  - ~ James Cunningham
  - ~ Law and Order
  - ~ Ralph Doll Energy and Conservation
- ◇ **Buckeye American Legion College Graduates – Ken LaVoy**
  - ~ Introduction of the 2025-2026 Dean







# GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENTION AGENDA

SATURDAY (CONTINUED) • JULY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

## 4:10 PM – Convention Committee Reports & Minutes

- ◇ Permanent Organization – Dennis Dickey, Chairman
- ◇ Rules & Order of Business – Gary Minadeo, Chairman
- ◇ Children & Youth – Ken Schutz, Chairman
  - ~ Awards for Donations to Department Children & Youth Programs
    - » Category I – Post 417- \$2,500
    - » Category II – Post 196- \$5,000
    - » Category III – Post 12- \$5,500
    - » Category V – Post 196- \$5,000
- ◇ National Security – Al Buxton, Chairman
- ◇ Veteran's Affairs & Rehabilitation – Dave Cook, Chairman
- ◇ Constitution and By-Laws Amendments – Robert Klostermeier, Chairman
- ◇ Legislative – Michael White, Chairman
- ◇ Americanism – Tom Rowe, Chairman
- ◇ Resolutions – Bob Schmitt, Chairman

*\*Agenda Times are tentative and subject to delays and accelerations\**

## 5:00 PM – Department Officer & National Executive Committeeman Reports

- ◇ Department Commander – Arnold Whatley
- ◇ Department First Vice Commander – Stan Oren
- ◇ Department Second Vice Commander – Gary Cox Jr.
- ◇ Department Treasurer – Holly Lewis
- ◇ Department Judge Advocate – Josh Brown
- ◇ Department Chaplain – Ron Distel
- ◇ Department Historian – Al Beyer
- ◇ Department Adjutant – John Robinson
- ◇ NECMAN – Ronald Chapman
- ◇ Alternate NECMAN – Robert Schmitt

## 6:00 PM – District Officer Ratifications – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

- ◇ The chair will recognize Adjutant Robinson for reading the names and Post affiliations of the newly elected District Commanders, First Vice Commanders, and Second Vice Commanders

## 6:15 PM – Motion to Ratify the Newly Elected Officers – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

## 6:20 PM – Announcements – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

- ◇ The chair will recognize Adjutant Robinson for reading of upcoming event announcements

## 6:30 PM – Benediction – Robert White , Department Assistant Chaplain

## 6:35 PM – Session Recess – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander





# GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENTION AGENDA

SUNDAY • JULY 13<sup>TH</sup> 2025 • HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND SOUTH

## 9:00 AM - Session Continued

- ◇ Salute the Colors – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

*\*Agenda Times are tentative and subject to delays and accelerations\**

## 9:15 AM - Opening Comments – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

## 9:30 AM - Final Report – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

## 9:45 AM - Final Credentials Report – Mel Baher, Credentials Chairman

## 10:00 AM - Motion to accept Credentials Committee Report – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

## 10:15 AM - Reading of the Rules for the Elections of Officers – John Robinson, Department Adjutant

- ◇ Nominations and Elections Rules – John Robinson, Department Adjutant
- ◇ Reporting of Tellers, Tabulators, Chief Judge – John Robinson, Department Adjutant
- ~ Motion to accept Report – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

## 10:30 AM - Nominations, Demonstrations & Elections of Officers – Arnold Whatley, Department Commander

- ◇ Department Commander – 1st Nominator, Jason Rue – 2nd Nominator, Thom Stan
- ~ *Commander's Demonstration March*
- ◇ Department 1st Vice Commander – 1st Nominator, Roger Friend – 2nd Nominator, John Life
- ◇ Department 2nd Vice Commander – 1st Nominator, Jean L. Wilson – 2nd Nominator, Ed Long
- ◇ Department Treasurer – 1st Nominator, Lance McCartney – 2nd Nominator, Jeff Laack

## 11:30 AM - Department Commander Cap Transition Ceremony

## 11:40 AM - Installation of Department Officers – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander

- ◇ Installation of Newly-Elected Department and District Officers – PDC, Robert 'Bob' Schmitt

## 12:05 PM - Final Drawings & Closing of Convention

- ◇ Recruiter Card Drawing – Arnold Whatley, Stan Oren, and Gary Cox Jr.
- ◇ Charities Inc. Sweepstakes Drawing – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander
- ~ Drawing – Glen Hickman, Jim Morris, Jason Rue, Roger Friend, and Charles Stennis
- ◇ Announcements – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander
- ◇ Benediction – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander
- ~ Final Benediction – Robert White, Assistant Chaplain
- ◇ Closing – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander
- ~ Final Salute & Retirement of Colors
- ◇ Closing – Final Rap of Gavel – Arnold Whatley, Past Department Commander

*\*2025-2026 Department Executive Committee Meeting Immediately Following in the Broadview Heights Room. You MUST stop in the Bedford Room down the hall for your official headshot before you enter the DEC Room. Please make sure you pick up available caps, badges, and membership cards in advance.*



THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

# ★ Gary W. Cox Jr. ★

*Gary is a proud member of the following organizations...*

*Harold Bradley Post 584 (PUFL), SAL Squadron 584,  
CVMA 12-1 (LM), VFW 7201 (LM), WWP Alumni,  
Marine Corps League 1437, & ALR 254*

## *American Legion*

*22 PUFL Member Harold Bradley #584  
National Appointee of National Security Council 2023 - Present  
Member Department Bowling Committee 2022 - Present  
Past Post Vice Commander 2022 - 2024  
Past 6th District Commander 2021 - 2023  
2nd Place "Race to the Top" Small District 2021 - 2022*

## *Sons of American Legion*

*33 year Member Harold Bradley #584  
Charter Member #584 (1992)  
Past Squadron Commander 1999 - 2000  
Past 6th District Commander 2000 - 2001  
Past Detachment Asst Sgt at Arms 1997 - 1998  
Distinguished Guest 2004 SAL National Convention*



## *Personal Achievements*

*Buckeye Boys State Alumni (2000)  
Buckeye Boys State Staff (2017)  
Buckeye Boys State Trustee (2022)  
Buckeye American Legion College (2024)  
National American Legion College (2024)  
Ohio State University Alumni (2014)  
- Bachelor's in Psychology*

**FOR DEPT OF OHIO 1ST VICE COMMANDER**





## 106<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION

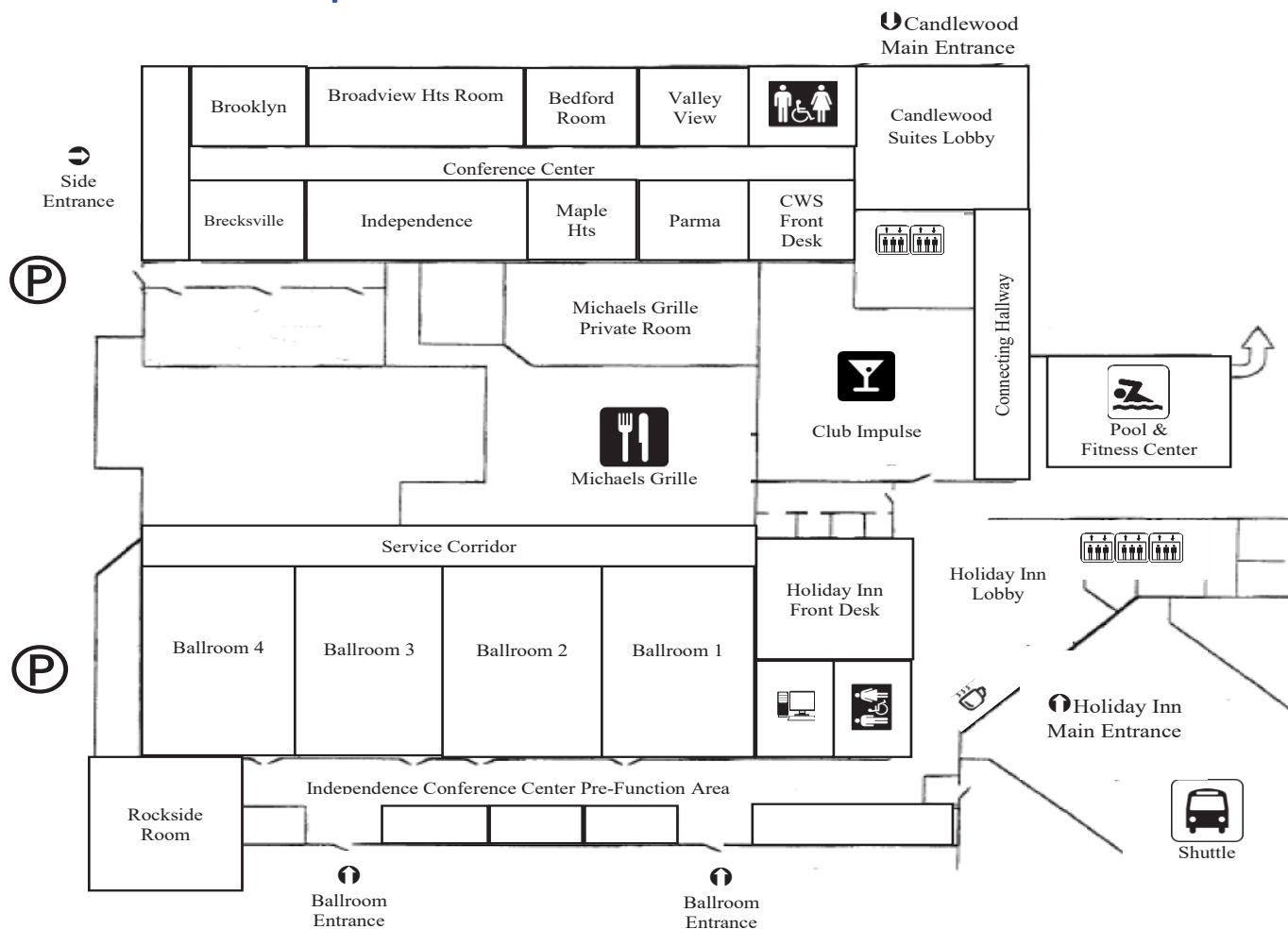
Main Housing Hotel -

HOLIDAY INN CLEVELAND-S INDEPENDENCE

6001 ROCKSIDE RD.  
INDEPENDENCE, OH 44131



**& Independence Conference Center**



Enjoy delicious meals in the hotel at

*Michael's Grille*



**Hotel Restaurant Hours:**

Breakfast 7:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Lunch 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Dinner 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Lounge Bar 5:00 PM - 2:00 AM



THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

## DEPARTMENT OF OHIO, 13TH DISTRICT

# *Welcome!*

On behalf of the 13th District, we welcome you to Cleveland and the Department of Ohio American Legion Convention. This year, the department staff has lined up a great program with opportunities to learn and spend time with your fellow Legionnaires. We encourage you to explore the many entertainment options Cleveland has to offer.



Don't forget to visit The American Legion posts in the area. Everyone in the 13th District is excited to host the convention in Cleveland and are dedicated to making this another memorable year.

106<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION



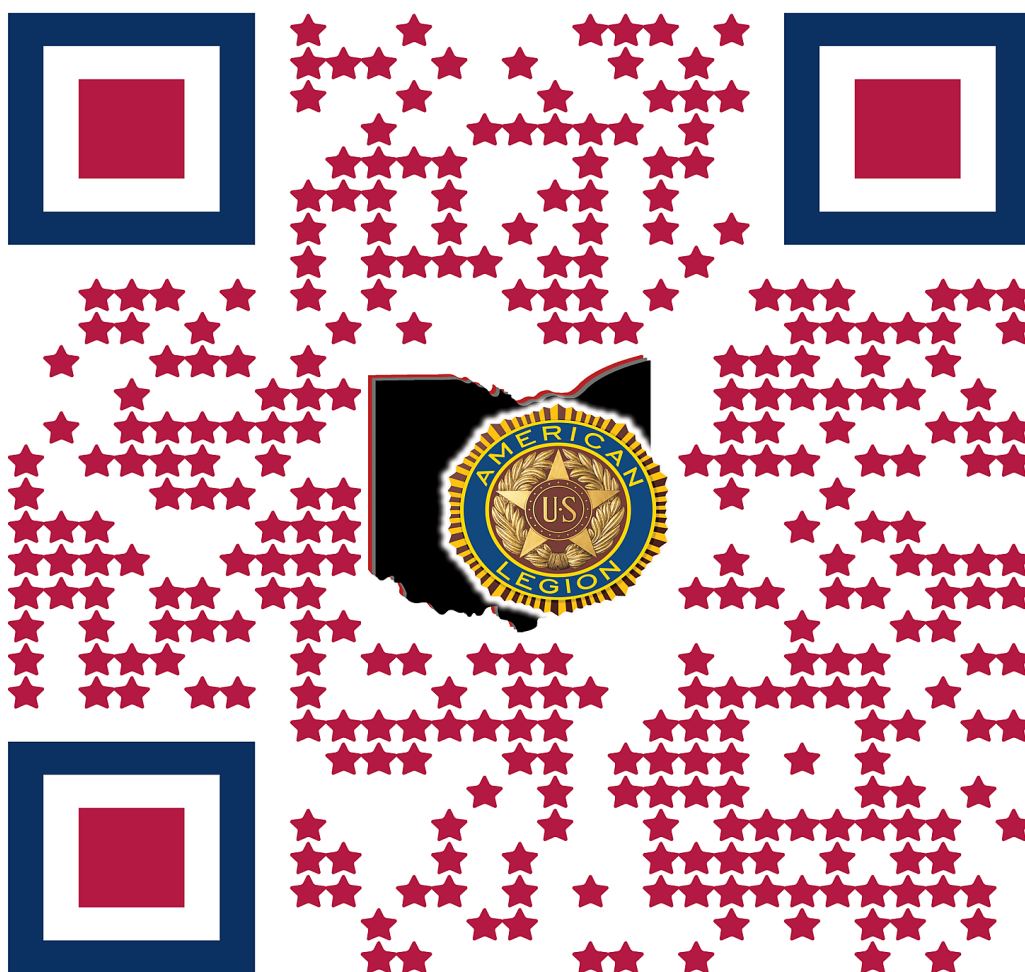
# OHIO

*Gaming*

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

*50/50 RAFFLE PROGRAM*  
*[ohiolegion.5050raffle.org](http://ohiolegion.5050raffle.org)*

# SCAN ME



SCAN ME! TO ENTER THIS MONTH'S 50/50 RAFFLE!





THE AMERICAN LEGION | DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

# THINGS TO DO IN CLEVELAND

*Cleveland*<sup>®</sup>



We're not worthy! We're not worthy! Pay homage to rock icons and see video, artifacts and memorabilia at the legendary Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Recently updated with \$15.1 million in bold renovations, the Rock Hall now has even more to gawk at.



With dining hotspots from Cleveland's own "Iron" Chef Michael Symon and other James Beard Foundation Award winners, a melting pot of ethnic restaurants, numerous microbreweries and the lone food-only public market in the nation, the culinary scene in Cleveland is simply delicious.



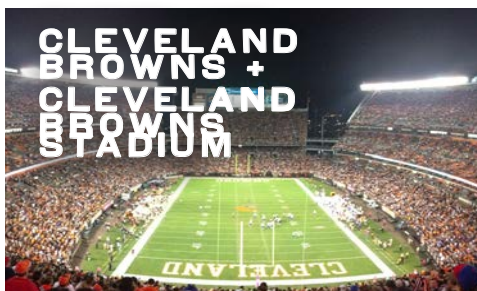
The glitz and glam of theater come to life in Playhouse Square, the largest performing arts district outside NYC. You can catch your favorite comedies, tragedies and Broadway hits in one of ten venues.



The adrenaline comes complimentary at Cedar Point Amusement Park, home to a pretty amazing collection of scream machines, including the recently opened Valravn and the new Cedar Point Shores waterpark.



Major League Baseball is exciting at Progressive Field, home of the Cleveland Guardians, giving visitors plenty of options to be entertained in a food-rich and family friendly atmosphere.



One of the nation's oldest and most storied football franchises plays its home games on the shore of Lake Erie, within a 10-minute walk of downtown hotels, restaurants and bars.



Excitement happens at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse when the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers take the court.

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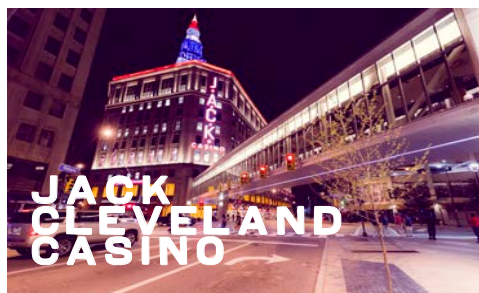
## 106<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION



Picasso, Monet, Warhol – free. Yeah, you heard us right. One of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the country offers free admission to its stunning permanent collection.



Play name-the-constellation. Wave to Lucy, the earliest known hominid. Compare smiles with a T-Rex. You can do that and more at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Feeling rather high roller-ish? The high-energy JACK Cleveland Casino features non-stop gaming action with slot machines, table games and the ROCK Bar and Lounge.



With more than 3,000 animals located throughout 165 rolling wooded acres and the two-story RainForest full of exotic creatures and striking plant life from across the globe, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and RainForest is not your typical zoo.



Whether you're a green thumb or green dumb, the Cleveland Botanical Garden offers a beautiful escape with its indoor exhibits housed in a magnificent glasshouse and 10 acres of outdoor gardens.



The Cleveland History Center showcases just about everything there is to know about Cleveland's history – complete with sports artifacts; antique, vintage and classic automobiles; ornate costumes, and the famous Euclid Beach carousel.



Hear, hear! The Cleveland Orchestra stands today among the world's most revered.



The museum itself, which opened in 2012, is a work of dramatic geometric art. MOCA provides a diverse array of innovative and flexible exhibitions, programs and art of our time.

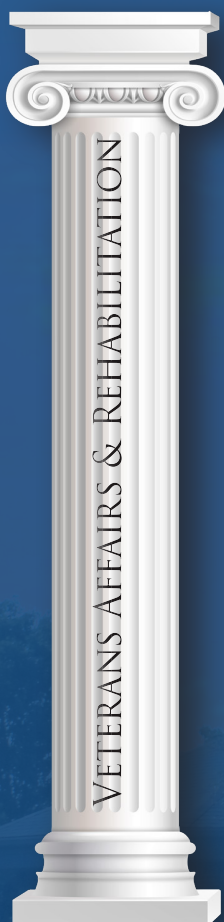


Why? Why? Why? These questions and more are answered at the Great Lakes Science Center, featuring hands-on exhibits, a digital dome theater, the Steamship William G. Mather and the NASA Glenn Visitors Center.



A weekend getaway is all about getting outside life's familiar four walls. In Cleveland, you'll find plenty of recreational opportunities on the great Lake Erie, throughout the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and within thousands of acres of green space in the Cleveland Metroparks.





The American Legion Department of Ohio is an organization dedicated to God and country, with a membership of nearly 80,000 military veterans who take deep pride in the U.S. Flag and all that it means. Since its inception nearly 100 years ago, the Legion has been a stalwart champion of patriotic values, morals, culture, and citizenship. The Legion's foundational four pillars embody its devotion to caring for veterans, supporting national law and order, educating law-abiding citizenship in our youth, and respectful observance of patriotic holidays and remembrances.

Become a member today by signing up at [mylegion.org](https://mylegion.org)







*Have a great Convention!*



Harold L Bradley  
American Legion Post 584



Marion, Ohio

*~From Our American Legion Family~*





*Welcome!*

**The American Legion  
Department of Ohio Charities, Inc.**

**Welcomes You to the 106<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Department Convention  
in Independence!**

*Flats East Bank | Entertainment District*

Glenn Hickman  
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