DEPARTMENT COMMANDER – DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

**INTRODUCTION LETTER**

Dear Department Commander,

I know this is short notice, but I’m certain you agree nothing is more urgent to The American Legion than helping veterans who need us. As we near our 100th anniversary, I am asking you to do as our founders did for their wartime comrades. Make personal contact to understand those needs. We can call it a “buddy check.”

Veterans who have let their memberships expire may be alone, sick or doubtful that anyone cares. Or, perhaps they just forgot to renew because no one contacted them after they joined in the first place.

We won’t know until we call – until we do a “buddy check.”

I am calling on you to ask your district and post leaders to schedule what I call a “week of personal contact” with members and former members you have not seen in a while. How are they doing? Are they in need? What can The American Legion do to show them the “devotion to mutual helpfulness” that brought our organization to life and propelled it for a century?

I have recommended March 11-16, 2019 – the days leading up to The American Legion’s 100th birthday – as a “national week of personal contact.” Knowing that different posts have different activities going on this centennial year, any week around the 100th birthday would work.

But what better way is there to celebrate our first century than to personally check on those who need to be a part of our second? For those who need us, we can help. For those who forgot to renew, we can help them, too.

National staff will soon make available to your districts and posts tools they can use to do “buddy checks” in their communities. I am certain that some of these veterans are just waiting for a personal call or visit from their fellow veterans in The American Legion.

Thank you, Commander, for your leadership and service as we spring from a great legacy into a promising future in the second century of The American Legion.

Sincerely,

Brett Reistad

National Commander

The American Legion