



**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
DETACHMENT OF NEW YORK**

**MID-WINTER D.E.C. MEETING Jan 21-22, 2023
DISTRICT REPORTS**

District 2 - Cmdr. Jesse Figueroa

1 November 2022: 2nd District meeting at the Gold Star Post on Staten Island. I introduced myself as SAL 2nd District Commander and gave my report of the District and membership. It was a great good turnout.

11 November 2022: Veterans Day Ceremony at Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn. The event was hosted by ALA Past Department President Joan Cacomio. Speakers were myself, KCSAL Commander Don Hellmers, Kings County ALA President Dorothy Schurer, KCAL Commander Charles Hall, Past KCAL Commander Russell Goeller and executive staff of the cemetery and a representative of the Brooklyn VAMC.

31 December 2022: I sustained a major accident that nearly paralyzed me from the waist down on board a B8 bus in Brooklyn. The bus driver drove me to the Brooklyn VAMC and summoned the VA Police to cart me into the Emergency Room. The bus route happens to serve as a stop at the main entrance of the Brooklyn VAMC. The ER doctor diagnosed me with back contusions and my timeframe of my recovery is 30-45 days. Upon my discharge from the hospital, I contacted Department and Detachment and requested to be excused at the midwinter conference. During my recovery, I will be undergoing physical therapy. No worries, I will be back in action quickly. Thanks for the prayers and support for me and for my dad's cancer treatment.

That concludes my report.

Thanks.

For God and Country

Jesse Figueroa
2nd District Commander
Sons of The American Legion Detachment of New York

District 3 – Cmdr. Frankie Aguado

We have been keeping busy in the third district even with the holidays that we're going on.

We held a 3rd District Meeting on January 14th. Turn out left something to be desired, so we will be making it a goal to get more involvement for our next meeting in March.

Membership currently sits at 66.43% with 1,021 members of the 1,537 goal. 5 squadrons have yet to report. North Greenbush Squadron #1489 continues assisting with Post operations. Zaloga Post Squadron #1520 is holding a fundraiser this year on April 1st to benefit legion programs.

Unfortunately, due to two family deaths, one week apart, I was not able to attend any county visitations. Jim Prime has taken my place for those visitations and has been doing a fantastic job assisting me. Looking forward to seeing you all again very soon.
God Bless,

Frank Aguado

District 4 – Cmdr. Matt Aldi

As of December 11th, 2022 membership for the district is at 41.9%, our goal is 3191, our total is 1337 and we are under by 1854.

Wreaths Across America was at Saratoga National Cemetery, District 4 donated \$500 and adds up to roughly 50 wreaths. Every stone was covered and we exceeded our goal of 15,100 wreaths. 6,076 wreaths were sponsored, 6.5% over our goal and exceeded by 976.

The District donated \$250 to Child Welfare Foundation in memory of Mr. David Downey.

Squadron 337 had a Christmas basket raffle, Thanksgiving Raffle and the funds went to shipping out over 100 care packages to troops across the globe. The Sons paid \$2055.25.

Squadron 1619 had their annual rabbit derby, baskets for Vets., and kids fishing derby. The funds went to Veterans and families of Veterans.

Fourth District officers Gaither Espey, Emil Klymkow and I marched in the Veterans Day Parade in Manhattan along side of Commander Riley.

The National Commanders dinner will be held in Saratoga, NY on April 13th.

This concludes my report.
4th District S.A.L Commander
Matthew A. Aldi

District 5 – Cmdr. Rich Abel

Commander Tim, Adjutant Bob, Officers, Fellow Sons and guests.

Since our Fall DEC meeting in October the 5th District has continued to work hard by promoting itself through their individual squadrons. Many of which have given back to support the veterans of their Post and communities. Some of the functions include holding varieties of BBQ's, breakfasts, and an assortment of different types of events and raffles. Many volunteer hours are being recorded throughout its activities.

As for membership the 5th District is at 46.95% as of the Detachment's December 15th report exceeding the 45% by 12/19. We are on our way to making our next target of 60%. Membership continues to be my focal point of the squadrons by helping them in any way that is needed. I continue to emphasize recruitment, from there retainment. Recognize the small accomplishments of the members and report them – a pat on the back and acknowledgement helps keeps the wheels turning when it comes to new members.

This past November I participated in several Veteran's Day events from marching in parades to attending several events honoring those. From having a cup of coffee or just lending an ear to listen to the stories that were told you could sense their pride. I also unfortunately attended several funeral services for all members of the Legion family.

In December we braved the elements by attending our meeting in Lewis County at Lowville Post 162. We had an excellent turnout with 4 out of 6 counties able to attend even during one of our first

snowstorms of the season. On a personal note, I helped my squadron entertain a banquet for the 5th District American Legion Baseball Champions and State Runner-ups Whitestown Post 1113 during the holiday season.

As the Oneida County Sons Chaplain, I mailed out two sympathy cards for the passing of Past Detachment Commanders Downey and Kurk over the past couple of weeks. Our thoughts and prayers were extended to their families.

As the New Year has come upon us, we within the district are going to roll up our sleeves and continue to work for the betterment of our organization, our community and ourselves. Recognize our accomplishments and celebrate the little things and that'll make a difference.

In closing I would like to reiterate my excitement to be part of this organization with the great leadership at the top to lead us. I wish that everyone has a great meeting and I look forward to opportunity to work with the different members of our leadership.

For God and Country.
Respectfully,

Rich Abel
5th District Commander

District 6 – Cmdr. Ed Hooke

Submitted membership as of December 11, 2022 was a mere 38.20 % for 2023. The most current numbers as of January 8, 2023, was 54.02%. Even though we are moving in the right direction we are very far from where we should be, and what my expectations are for our 6th district. I have emailed the squadrons that we have contact information for and will be snail mailing and attending Squadron meetings to get our membership numbers where they should be. Past Legion district commander Richie Price and I met with the squadron commander for squadron 876 to offer suggestions to correct an ongoing issue for years of memberships not being turned in as they should be. I am happy to say that the issue has been resolved, there has been a change in the person in charge of membership and currently their numbers are 118.60%.

Our district visitations were held October 17th through October 26th to our ten counties within our district. I am proud to say the district did a fantastic job for our distinguished state leadership team. It was also an honor to have our vice commander for the 5th and 6th district Shawn Mills participate in some of the visitations. We also had the 6th district national commanders' visitation on October 30th at post 80 in Binghamton where post 80 put on an excellent dinner and welcome to the national commander.

The Veterans home in Oxford held its 39th annual Christmas gift give away on December 10th to which the district made a donation of \$100 for expenses associated with the giveaway. In addition, there was many squadrons that had Christmas parties for the children and youth, and it was reported that Santa visited many of the squadrons.

Attendance at our district meetings continues to be excellent with many dual members in attendance.

Many Squadrons participated in Veterans Day parades and shows of Americanism by displaying flags along parade routes and the town's main streets.

During our last district meeting I challenged members that attended to do at the least one thing for a veteran. Some examples I offered were shoveling of snow, cutting grass, call to check on them, drive them to an appointment etc. Most important is do it because it is what the Sons of the American Legion is about and is why we are here.

Respectfully,
Edward Hooke
6'th District Commander

District 7 – Cmdr. Kevin Kirkwood

The 2023 year has started on a very sad note. We lost our Judge Advocate Thomas Kurk and Steuben County Commander Dave Starz. They were important leaders in our District and will be greatly missed. We are actively searching for more members to attend the meetings and encouraging others to accept leadership roles. The next District meeting will be held March 12 at the Daniel Goho Post# 87 in Dansville at 1pm.

The District visitations will begin January 26 and run through February 2nd. I plan to attend all eight county dinners.

I have attended the Ontario, Steuben, Livingston and Monroe County meetings. Steuben is starting to revitalize the county organization. Livingston has a new commander, Ray Henry, who is doing a great job increasing communication between the squads. Ontario and Monroe have strong organizations.

The National Commander visited the District on October 29, 2022 at Post 256 in Canandaigua. There was a tour of the Equicenter in Rush, NY. We were shown the great programs they have for our local veterans. The tour and dinner were well attended by the 7th District Legion family.

Membership – The 7th District is currently at 65%. Seven of eight counties are above the 60% goal for January. We will continue working with the squads to get their memberships and SDR forms submitted. The District leaders are working with the squads not yet transmitting their renewals via the MYLEGION platform.

C&Y - We are planning to hold our legion family children's bowling event this year. All junior members are eligible to attend the event.

Americanism - The 7th District will host a flag retirement and education event in the spring. The preparations are underway. The details will be announced in the next couple weeks.

VA/VS - The 7th District is planning to strongly support the Walk-A-Thon again this year. We are encouraging each county to plan a walk or benefit event. We hope to surpass our contribution last year. We are currently in the planning stages for a possible welcome home event. This is intended to help introduce veterans who may be unaware of all the VA has to offer them. More details will be shared as the planning committee is designated.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Kirkwood, Seventh District Commander

District 8 – Cmdr. Diman Smith

Greetings from the Mighty Eighth District of the year 2023, which is passing quickly due to all the work being done, which makes the time fly. October was focused around canvassing and acting to assure every Squadron in the 8th District had a current Squadron data report completed. Online membership has arrived and the National needs this information. I called, visited, emailed, several Squadrons, and announced at County district and Squadron meetings for both the legion and the Sons get together.

During this quarter the National Commander's visit was the highlight. I attended both the 7th and 8th District visitations and was able to honor our New York State National Commander, Vincent Jim Troiola. I was pleased to attend a tour in the 7th District where our Department Commander David Riley, during the National Commanders tour visitation, visited an Equestrian Farm. This program helps to rehabilitate and comfort veterans experiencing PTSD and other feelings of despair. Horses help to introduce

connections with others and teach strategies to cope with an ever-changing world. A program that is close to my heart.

I am a long-time member of V A and R Commission which is now joined by the V E and E committee. Several hours were spent assessing changes in operations this year as to where our funds are given. With my new program of "V I E", Veterans in Education, I am hoping to spend most of my focus this year, if approved by our group.

I attended our 8th District meeting in Leroy where I presented to the 8th District Legion a program in education and presented our membership numbers and challenges for the future. Detachment Commander Timothy Van Patten II attended his own district meeting and we discussed several topics for the Sons growth. We are blessed here in the mighty 8th to have such a great leader to keep us abreast of all the issues the Son's face at every level of our organization. Thank you, Commander.

I visited the 7th District meeting in Churchville in December. I asked to attend to discuss a new program and strategies to work together. I was well received by Commander Kevin Kirkwood. A spirited discussion with several ideas being exchanged occurred concerning a wide range of topics. The impact of Covid has made changes and consulting with our neighbors is important to future efforts. Agreements were achieved and going forward we achieved a stronger bond of the missions we have going forward.

Honor Guard had me attending three funerals honoring our fallen veterans. I'm engaged in my community acquiring a placement headstone for Nathaniel Johnson, a Revolutionary and War of 1812 veteran of the United States Army. 7th District member and our Detachment Membership Chairman has gone above and beyond his duty with helping me do this. Thank you Daryl Verstrete. Leadership by Daryl will ensure success to the future of the Sons.

Recently we lost two Past Commanders who took with them the knowledge and insight on how to operate going forward. As we grieve our loss, let us remember, past leadership is invaluable to our efforts. Let's continue to create close bonds with our comrades and cultivate friendships that will facilitate information sharing. The knowledge and friendships experienced with these people in our family is then preserved and passed on. Midwinter Conference is a good time to do this. I will see you all there. Happy New Year.

Peace and Goodwill,
8th District Commander
Diman Smith

District 9 – Cmdr. Michael Jacobs

Membership numbers in the 9th District are very good, with the District over 67% at this time. My home squadron reached 100%, along with many other squadrons. The 9th met on January 15th, and the members that attended were given information about the upcoming 2023 convention and also urges to get their Squadron Data Reports and Officer Certifications in to headquarters and they were informed again on the importance of the Consolidated Report.

In the previous few months I was invited to and attended 9th District American Legion meetings. I was also invited to attend several county meetings for the American Legion. Additionally, I was at the check presentation for the "Walk-a-Thon Boots" program to the Montrose Veteran's Hospital. I was also honored to be a judge at the 9th District Oratorical Contest last month.

The 9th District seems to have finally overcome the Covid pandemic. Many squadrons do a good job advertising on social media and I have seen everything from pancake & waffle breakfasts; steak and fish dinners; prime rib and wine dinners; every Friday night dinners; clambakes and clam jams. This has enabled the 9th District to get back to its fantastic fundraising and the ability to help the charities which they deem relevant.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Jacobs, Commander
Detachment of New York, 9th District

District 10 – Cmdr. James Connolly

First let me say as 10th District Commander, I speak for all the members of the 10th District. We share in the loss of a past District Commander, Dave Downey.

Nothing actually changed from last report. We are trying to have a 10th district meeting with the 2nd district Vice Commander, Joey Bellinger. But I know squadrons in Suffolk County are busy. We have two or three squadrons starting up. Our existing Squadrons are always busy with their legion posts. We know how involved Suffolk County got with the walkathon.

We need to get Nassau and Queens involved also.

The 10th adjutant, Christopher Cerullo is planning on talking to Nassau County. I hope everyone had a good holiday season.

Yours truly,
James Connolly, 10th District Commander