

Centennial Cooperation...Departments of Arkansas and Connecticut working together to promote Legion Awareness

By Keith Dover, PR Chairman
Department of Arkansas



Lamar Billboard located at N. Rodney Parham and Hinson Rd. in West Little Rock, Ark.

Thanks to the original efforts of Bob Murray, past Department of Connecticut Commander and current Connecticut Alternate NEC, who came up with a concept of using billboards as a means of promoting brand awareness of The American Legion to help gain new members in the process, The American Legion Department of Arkansas has followed suit where a huge promotional push is now underway to do just that!

As Murray said, *"If people in every town know where we are and are proud to have us there, we'll be regarded as a community asset."* He also added, *"And hopefully veterans will see the advantages of membership and association and will want to be a part of (the Legion)."*

With this in mind, Department of Arkansas Public Relations Chairman Keith Dover contacted the Department of Connecticut in order to "piggy-back" on Murray's original idea to use billboards as a public relations and membership recruitment tool and obtained copies of Murray's design in order to create a special design for the State of Arkansas.

Dover, who has served as PR Chairman for the Department of Arkansas for over 20 years, then began designing an electronic billboard from the Connecticut design. Although Dover also has a degree in marketing and technical writing, he also sought assistance from Shane Ross, a graphic artist and rescued survivor of the May 2011 Joplin, Missouri tornado...who just happens to be his son-in-law. Dover then used his PR and marketing skills to make contact with Lamar Advertising, who graciously offered to run the design on three of its largest electronic billboards in high traffic areas at no absolutely no charge. In addition, Lamar also offered placement on regular billboard signage not already being used state-wide once funds could be raised through corporate and private donations for the project.

After the electronic signage went live, Dover then contacted another advertising company, Ashby St. Outdoor Advertising in Fayetteville, Arkansas, who also offered to run the design on four of their major "high-traffic" electronic billboards at no charge just as Lamar had done. And as of the time of this article being produced, over 14-thousand spots with this public awareness campaign have been posted electronically across the State of Arkansas!



Ashby St. Outdoor Advertising Billboard located 78W/Sunset Avenue in Springdale, Ark.

The Department of Arkansas now has a means of brand awareness with electronic billboards "free of charge," which will help to promote The American Legion and its Centennial Celebration state-wide, and hopefully recruit more new members into the ranks...and maybe more billboards by other media outlets as well.

"We [Department of Arkansas] have discussed doing this type of promotion for some time, and the 100th Anniversary of our organization was the perfect time to implement this strategy," says Dover. "We now plan to follow suit as the Department of Connecticut has done in using ad space in local newspapers and magazines, as well as using banners at community and public events. In addition, Dover is working on public service announcements (PSAs) tailored locally to fit the various markets for which they will run and plans to create and distribute those PSAs out to radio and TV stations state-wide.

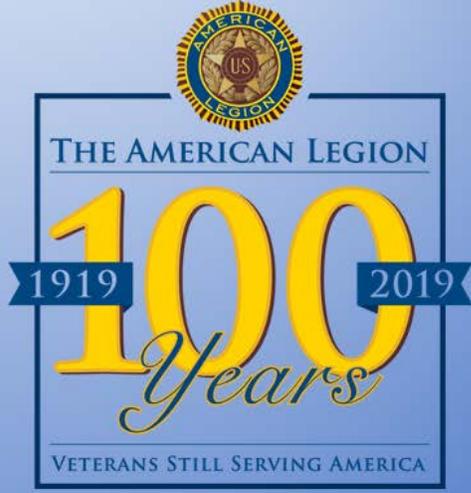
A special web page announcing Centennial Celebration events across the state has been created on the Department of Arkansas website at: www.arlegion.org, including a signed Proclamation by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson honoring the organization and its 100 years of service to the State of Arkansas.

*** NOTE – for any Posts or anyone wishing to help us promote The American Legion's 100th Birthday in Arkansas, the artwork design is provided below and cannot be altered without permission from the Department Headquarters; however, if you are an American Legion Post outside the State of Arkansas and need more information on this project, please contact PR Chairman Keith Dover at: MajorD91101@gmail.com.**



When one mission ends,
another one begins...

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IN THE AMERICAN LEGION!



Visit: www.arlegion.org for more info.