

CONVENTION COMMISSION
Michael E. Walton, Illinois, Chairman
Bridget A. Robinson, CMP, CMM, Georgia, Director

The 102nd National Convention of The American Legion convened in Phoenix Aug. 27-Sept. 2, 2021. National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford of North Carolina, called the national convention to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 31, welcoming Legionnaires to Phoenix and thanking them for their continuing service to our country and to our veterans. The 102nd National Convention began with the opening ceremony, which included Craig Morgan, country music artist and Army veteran, who addressed nearly 6,000 American Legion Family members on Tuesday morning. Other guest speakers addressing the 102nd National Convention were Vice Adm. Yancy Lindsey, commander, Navy Installations Command; The Hon. Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs; The Hon. Doug Ducey, governor of the State of Arizona; and The Hon. Kate Gallego, mayor of the City of Phoenix. Also, Chip Ganassi, Jimmie Johnson and Tony Kanaan were in attendance.

There were many highlights during the 2021 national convention, but three events deserve special mention. On Friday, Aug. 27, the Color Guard Contest took place. Contestants and observers well attended the Color Guard Contests. Four color guards competed in three categories with Newport Harbor Post 291 of Newport Beach, Calif., being awarded National Commander’s Color Guard. There was no Band Contest. The Patriotic Memorial Service, featuring the Phoenix Boys Choir, was attended by approximately 2,000 American Legion Family members. On Tuesday, Aug. 31, the National Commander’s Banquet for Distinguished Guests was held at the Phoenix Convention Center. The banquet featured Craig Morgan as the entertainment and was attended by over 2,300 Legionnaires and guests.

CONVENTION COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

The Convention Commission conducted two regular meetings during the year. The 2021 Washington Conference and Spring Meetings were both virtual, and Fall Meetings held in person. Revisions of our request for proposal (RFP) continued in 2021. This process is extremely important as it provides an equal opportunity for all cities to be evaluated the same way during the site visit process. It is the commission's desire to continue to attract new cities that desire to host an American Legion national convention, providing "blue cap" Legionnaires and their families with varied and enjoyable conventions on an annual basis.

For the 2027 National Convention, the Convention Commission received from two departments of The American Legion a proper resolution expressing their interest in bidding on the 2027 National Convention. The two cities supported by the appropriate resolution were Kansas City, Mo., and Columbus, Ohio. Site visits were conducted after the first of the year. Following site visits and after listening to formal presentations from each city, the Convention Commission recommended to the National Executive Committee that Kansas City be awarded the 2027 National Convention for the dates of Aug. 27-Sept. 2. The National Executive Committee later approved the recommendation.

Future conventions and dates:

Milwaukee, Wisconsin	Aug. 26 – Sept. 1, 2022
Charlotte, North Carolina	Aug. 25 – 31, 2023
New Orleans, Louisiana	Aug. 23 – 29, 2024
Tampa Bay, Florida	Aug. 22 – 28, 2025
Louisville, Kentucky	Aug. 28 – Sept. 3, 2026
Kansas City, Missouri	Aug. 27 – Sept. 2, 2027