



BADGER



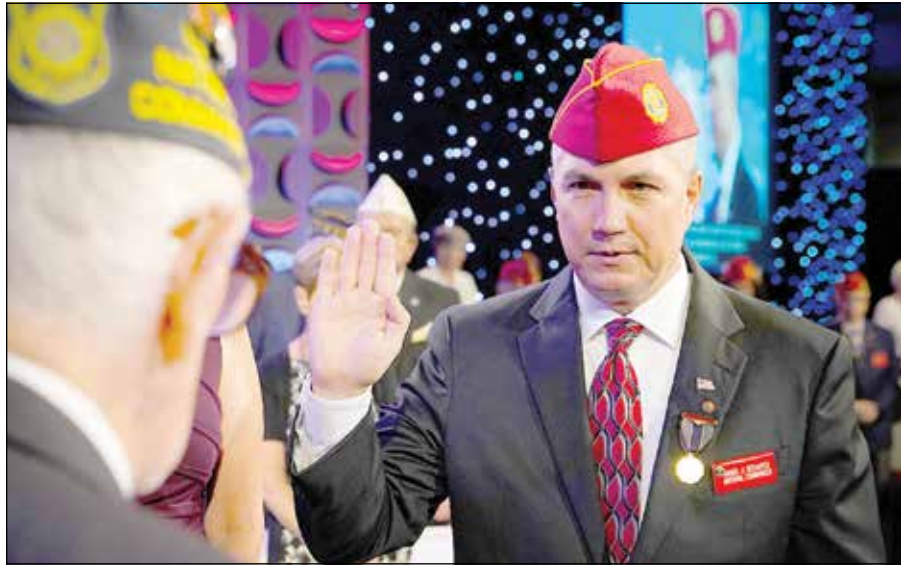
LEGIIONNAIRE

& WISCONSIN VOL 100 #5 | OCT. 2023



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY | WILEGION.ORG

THE MISSION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN IS TO PROVIDE SERVICE TO VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.



SEEHAFER ELECTED NATIONAL COMMANDER

Daniel J. Seehafer was elected national commander of the nation's largest Veterans organization on August 31, 2023, in Charlotte, N.C., during The American Legion's 104th national convention. Seehafer likes to say, "It's personal," when it comes to The American Legion's mission of serving veterans and their families. He is continuing the theme of "Be the One," to prevent veteran suicide.

An ordained minister from Wisconsin, he earned his American Legion eligibility through service in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve, where he served as a military chaplain.



SEE SEEHAFER, PAGE 11

RECRUIT THE NEXT YOU CELEBRATION IN LA CROSSE

Join us in La Crosse January 18-21, 2024, for the 100th Midwinter Conference. The Midwinter Conference is full of planning, learning and fun, and has become the can't miss event of the year.

100th Midwinter Conference slated for January 18-21, 2024

■ See Page 4 for the Midwinter Conference Registration Form, information on Housing and story on Freezin' for a Reason.

The weekend begins on Thursday, January 18 with move in and setup. The Ameri-

can Legion Foundation Meeting will be held at 5 p.m.

Friday, January 19 come and witness the work of the Department Committees and Commissions in action as they work on ways to improve the lives of Veterans, their families, and their communities. That evening, enjoy the many hospitality rooms and meet the future leaders of The American Legion.

Saturday, January 20 is the day for ALL LEGIONNAIRES. There will be a full day

of learning. Classes include some of your favorites such as Officer Courses, Funeral Honors, Service Officer training, and back by popular demand M-1 Garand.

NEW this year is American Legion Programs Spotlight and Q&A. The Americanism Committee, including the Program Chairs, will be giving overviews of The American Legion Programs and allow for panel discussions and Q&A.

Also NEW this year is Peer Mentor Train-

ing in partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin. Wondering how you can 'Be the One'? This training will educate you on how to be that 'One' for someone who is struggling and give you the resources to guide them in the right direction.

Join Commander Karl on Saturday night for the *Recruit the Next You Celebration*. Sign up your new recruit for the banquet and

SEE MIDWINTER, PAGE 4

Non Profit Org
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 Janesville, WI
 Permit 2930

The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin
 2930 American Legion Drive
 Portage, WI 53901

FREEZIN' FOR A REASON

Raise awareness for Veteran Homelessness, funds for Legion Programs

Raffles,
Silent Auction,
More

LA CROSSE POST 52
JANUARY 18 & 19, 2024
 (Thursday and Friday
 of Midwinter Conference)

Please call the Fundraising Committee
608-449-7188
 to help plan, volunteer or donate.

This event will also be
 discussed at your District Conference.
Watch the website for details.

“Badger Legionnaire”
& “Wisconsin”

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Department Adjutant
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Department Chaplain
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Historian
Michelle Adams

Sergeant-At-Arms
John Berg
Aimee Korger

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NECman - **Robert Shappell**
Alternate NECman - **Frank Kostka**
Judge Advocate - **Nicholas Lange**

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2nd – **Charlie Young**
3rd – **Jerry Hook**
4th – **Steve Kohnke**
5th – **Craig Ellis**
6th – **Dave Steinert**
7th – **Phil Green**
8th – **Adam Klapperich**
9th – **Debbie Thomas**
10th – **Rita Rindahl**
11th – **Gerry Johnson**
12th – **Scott Markle**

Subscribers: To report any upcoming changes of address, please ask your Post Adjutant to fill out a Membership Data Form and forward it to Wisconsin American Legion Headquarters. The change of address form that will be completed by the Post Adjutant should not be confused with the change of address card filled out at the Post Office. Department financial statements are available to Legionnaires in good standing upon written request through their District Commanders.

“Wisconsin”

**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Wisconsin**
2930 American Legion Drive
P.O. Box 140 • Portage, WI 53901
Bonnie Dorniak, Editor
Maggie Geiger, Department President
Bonnie Dorniak, Exec. Secretary/Treasurer

To change your address: Notify Unit Secretary
Unit Secretary: Notify Department
Headquarters on a Member Change Form

The “Wisconsin” deadline for copy is 4 weeks before publication date.

BADGER BOYS STATE

FOUR DENMARK STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT GOVERNMENT

What would happen if you gave the entire reins of state and municipal government to 700 teenage boys? For Denmark students Donovan Brady, Aiden Nelsen, Brandan Chada, and me from June 11-17, this question wasn't merely hypothetical. A few weeks ago, the four of us journeyed to Eau Claire to become citizens of Badger Boys State, an immersive government simulation run by the American Legion.

Attendees begin the week assigned to cities made up of 25 other students from across the state, before convening in counties, and eventually, statewide. Along the way, students can run for offices ranging all the way from city council member to governor. The program also offers a band, a choir, and a color guard for students to participate in.

Throughout the week, my friends and I connected with students from across the state, learned about the governmental process and got to see influential government figures such as Governor Tony Evers in person.

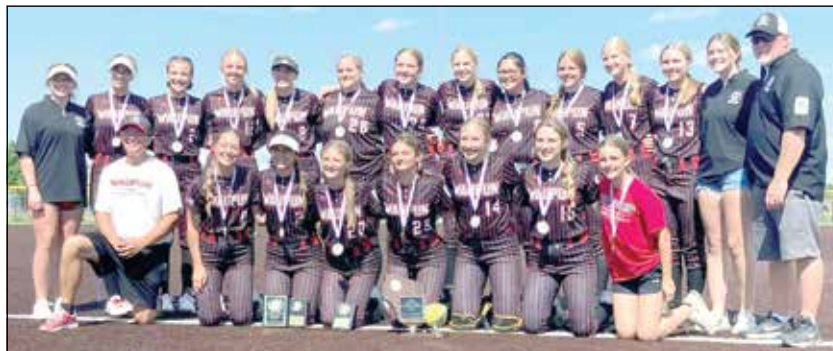


amongst our peers. This experience gave me hope. Not once did I encounter conflicts caused by a difference in political opinions. Instead, disagreements were settled in a respectful and empathetic matter, with care and consideration for the friendships we had made put first.

Boys State gave us a vision for an American future we all hope for, one of constructive bipartisanship and respect above all. By the end of the week, all of us, uncertain at first, found it difficult to bid goodbye to the state and community we had created. I was extremely honored to be one of two out of 700 attendees selected to represent Wisconsin at Boys Nation, a weeklong simulation of the United States Senate that occurs in Washington D.C. at the end of July. We would especially like to extend our gratitude to the American Legion and the legionnaires, whose dedication and commitment to developing future leaders allowed for this experience to occur.

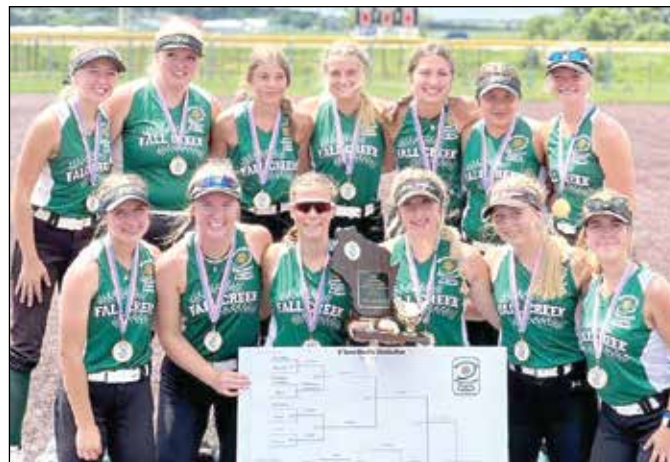
Henry Pahlow, Denmark News

DIVISION 1 SOFTBALL CHAMPS: WAUPUN



Division 1 Inaugural Year State Champs — Waupun Post 210! After dropping a 9-7 decision to Beaver Dam on Saturday, Waupun downed West Salem 12-0, then stopped BD 8-0 and 12-0 in five innings to capture the state title.

Fall Creek's American Legion softball team poses with the championship trophy and bracket after winning the D2 state title on July 30, 2023.



DIVISION 2 SOFTBALL CHAMPS: FALL CREEK

The excitement created by Legion Softball this year has been amazing. 30 teams registered for the inaugural season, giving high school girls the opportunity to represent The American Legion just as the baseball players have had for many years. The inaugural state tournaments were held at the DeForest

Athletic Complex. DeForest Post 348 did an incredible job and hosted a very high class, well organized tournament. W7 Productions streamed the Division 2 portion of the tournament and did a phenomenal job keeping the tournament fun, including keeping mics on players throughout the game as well.

LEGION SOFTBALL TEAMWORK

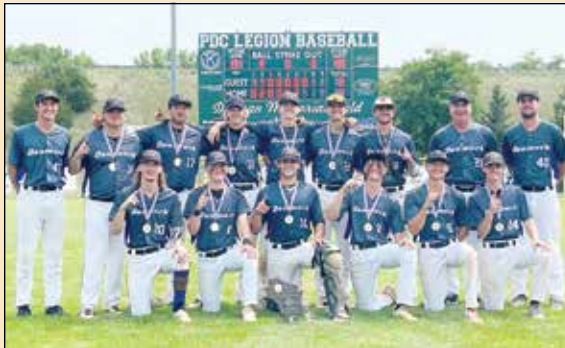


Teamwork prevails! After DeForest survived 77 mph winds the Friday night of the state tournament, Legion volunteers and players found the Division 2 field fence had been blown over by the straight-line winds. Upon their arrival to the athletic complex early Saturday morning, Division 1 team Kickapoo came to Legion Volunteers and offered to help re-stand the fence. The village staff asked them not to for fear of injury and liability. Village staff and Legion volunteers began an attempt to right the fence. Human power alone wasn't enough so the village retrieved a power vehicle to assist. The vehicle got it started but that too, wasn't enough. Seeing this while warming up in the right field area, all eleven Grantsburg players dropped their gloves and balls on the field and ran to the right field fence as a team... again with no prompting. It was their assist that completed the up-righting of the out-field fence. This is Legion Softball.



51ST ANNUAL ALL-STAR GAME

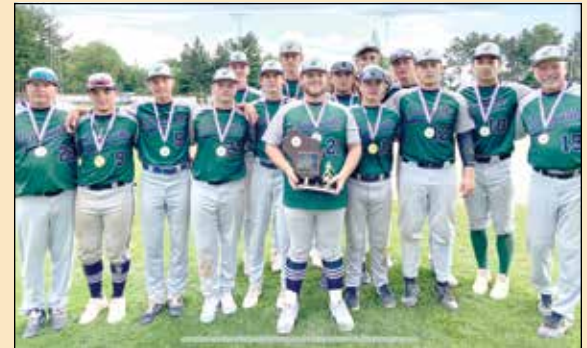
The 51st Annual All-Star game was held at American Family Field on August 6 where 48 players were able to play after the Brewers/Pirates game. Commander Stuvengen was able to throw out the first pitch for the Brewers as well! The Stars (at far left) played the Stripes (at left).



Class A Champions Denmark

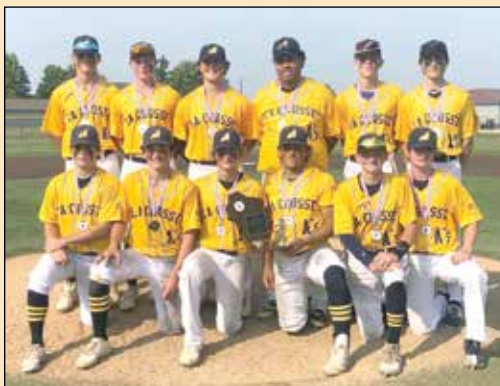


Class AA Champions Ashwaubenon

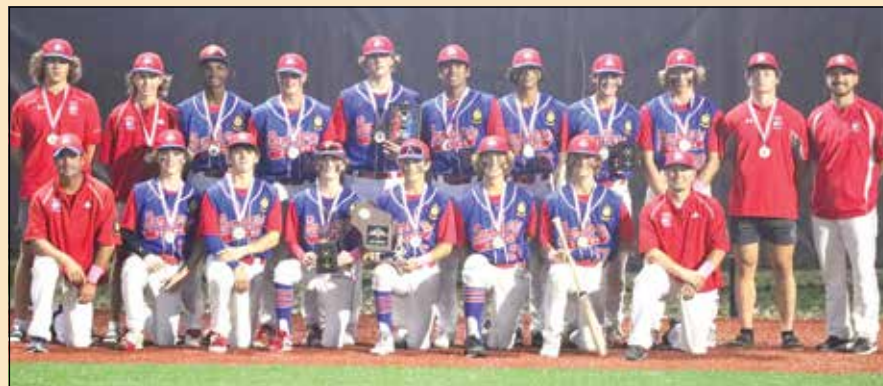


Class AAA Champions Janesville

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL CROWNS ITS 2023 CHAMPIONS IN FIVE DIVISIONS



16U Champions La Crosse A's



17U Champions Rapids Ramblers

American Legion Baseball is strong in Wisconsin. In 2023 we have over 207 teams registered in this our 97th season, and we are the 3rd largest program in the nation. This means we have over 3,100 young men wearing The American Legion Emblem on their uniforms throughout Wisconsin all summer long. And to administer the program we have over 700 volunteers, many non-Legionnaires, to ensure the experience these young men have is a memorable one.

Congratulations to our 2023 State Champs.

HIKE AND BIKE FOR VETS



Legion Post 82 and Auxiliary Unit 82, Port Washington; Post 410 & Unit 410, Fredonia and Post 412 & Unit 412, Belgium, held a Legion Family "Bridge Project" with a seven mile "Hike and Bike for Vets" from Port Washington to Belgium. At left: volunteers, hikers and a disabled Vet pose for a photo with Chuck Isaason and his service dog, Bucky. Bucky is the 5th service dog sponsored by the Port Washington Post and Auxiliary Unit. At right: Ozaukee County Commander John Jacque gives a "Ride of Honor" to the youngest walker, Lucas Mercer, age 4, after his hike.

SCARLET GUARD TO MARCH IN APPLETON

The Scarlet Guard American Legion Color Guard welcomes you to join them on a march in the 52nd Downtown Appleton Christmas Parade. This is the largest nighttime Christmas parade in the Midwest. The parade draws an estimated 80,000+ spectators and an estimated 100,000+ television viewers. This is a major exposure opportunity throughout northeast Wisconsin for the American Legion Family. That being said, we are welcoming members of any American Legion Post, any American Legion Auxiliary Unit, and any Sons of the American Legion Squadron to march with us to remind the thousands watching to remember our troops that may be serving during the holiday season and to promote peace on earth.

The parade is Tuesday, November 21, 2023. The parade route is approximately a 1-mile march. We will meet at the Appleton American Legion Post 38 (3220 W. College Ave., in Appleton) at a time to be announced. A bus ride to and from the parade route will be provided courtesy of the Scarlet Guard American Legion Color Guard.

Please share this information with other American Legion Family members that you are connected with and have them reach out to me directly to confirm their participation.

Eric Stadler
920-450-6907

estadler@trustwv.com

Follow the Scarlet Guard Color Guard on Facebook

FREEZIN' FOR A REASON AT MIDWINTER

Help Raise Awareness for Veteran Homelessness

Attention Legion Family – to support the programs of the Wisconsin American Legion, the Fundraising Committee has decided to hold a Freezin' for a Reason event at Midwinter.

What is Freezin' for a Reason? It is an event to raise awareness of veteran homelessness. Participants sleep outside in cardboard boxes. Other fundraising activities take place during this time to raise funds for Legion programs supporting veterans in need. Three SAL squadrons held this event last year

and were able to raise over \$100,000.

The event will be held at the La Crosse Post 52 on Thursday and Friday of Midwinter. There will be raffles, silent auctions and other types of fundraising activities. On the evenings of Thursday and Friday, we are asking those who are brave enough, to find cardboard boxes large enough to sleep in and spend the night outside.

More information will be shared at your District Conference. For further information or to make donations, you may contact David Fuller at 608-449-7188.

MIDWINTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

be registered for prizes. There will also be an initiation of the new recruits in attendance. This will be a nautical theme with a delicious buffet and live music.

The American Legion Auxiliary will also be holding a session on Saturday, and the Sons of The American Legion will be holding sessions on Friday and Saturday.

Sunday, January 21 join the Chaplains for a Four

Chaplains service, followed by the Department Executive Committee.

You will leave the weekend more knowledgeable of The American Legion and its many Leadership positions and programs and energized to go out and share this information with your fellow Veterans and communities.

Updated conference information can be found at wilegion.org.

MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

La Crosse, WI • January 18-21, 2024

hotel options

Radisson Hotel La Crosse
200 Harborview Plaza
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-784-6680

Directly to hotel M-F 9 am-5 pm or 800-333-3333 24 hours
ask for 'American Legion Rate'
(Cannot call and book until after October 30)

Courtyard by Marriott
500 Front Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-782-1000

Holiday Inn & Suites
200 Pearl Street
La Crosse, WI 54602
608-784-4444

2024 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

JANUARY 18-21, 2024
LA CROSSE CENTER

300 HARBORVIEW PLAZA ~ LA CROSSE, WI 54601

REGISTRATION FORM

Pre-register for The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin 2024 Midwinter Conference by returning this registration form and \$25.00 per person (1 person per registration form) to Department Headquarters by January 2, 2024, and **save \$5.00!** Registrations received after January 2, 2024, will be \$30.00 per person. Or register online at wilegion.org.

(Please type or print clearly in order for your badge to be printed correctly- List your name how you wish it to be printed on your badge)

NAME _____ MEMBER ID # _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ DISTRICT _____ POST _____ UNIT _____ SQUADRON _____

EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

ITEM	NO	PRICE	TOTAL
Registration Fee (only one per form)		\$25.00	
Reg. Fee After 1/2/24 (only one per form)		\$30.00	
Recruit the Next You Celebration Check here if you are a new recruit. <input type="checkbox"/>		\$40.00 (RSVP By January 2, 2024)	
Recruited by:			
Total Enclosed			

Make check payable to The American Legion, or Enter Credit Card Information Below

Cash Check # _____

OR

Name on Card _____ Card Type _____ Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ Sec. Code _____

Return to:

The American Legion, Department of
Wisconsin Attn: Midwinter
P.O. Box 388
Portage, WI 53901
or email to angela@wilegion.org

"My husband stepped out for some fresh air, then I heard a loud thud ..."

We were rushed to the hospital where he was diagnosed with broken bones and two spinal obstructions."

Fortunately, we had purchased the Legionnaire Emergency Assistance Plus® (EA+) plan for our travels!

We were in London, and after 2 hospitals and 39 days in a rehab facility, Michael was released to travel and EA+ coordinated our



return. They provided a nurse escort to monitor Michael on the trip home, an ambulance to the airport, then to the rehabilitation facility so Michael could continue his recovery.

Thank you, EA+! You gave me the freedom to focus on Michael and the relief of not having to make all the arrangements myself.

- Julie & Michael
North Carolina



Don't travel another mile without learning more about how EA+ can help you. Call 1-888-293-4008 today!

From Your
American
Legion
Department

PRESCOTT MEMBERSHIP EXCELLENCE

10th District Detachment Commander Gary Lubich presented two certificates to Steve Wingber of Prescott, Sons of American Legion for membership excellence for 100% and all time high membership.



Share "In the Spotlight" stories with the Legion Family by sending them to badger@wilegion.org. Please provide high-Res JPEG photos and email text or a word file. If you'd like to submit hardcopy, you may mail them to PO Box 388, Portage, WI 53901 Attn: Jen



VILLAGE OF KIMBERLY POST 60 SPONSORS BASEBALL TOTS



The William Verhagen American Legion Post 60 sponsored Village of Kimberly Recreation Department Baseball Tots, Team American Legion, just concluded an outstanding season. These 3- and 4-year-old Legion Ballplayers swung the bat, ran the bases, threw the ball and sometimes caught the ball! Village Seasonal Employee and Manager Hallie Dix said the Legion sponsorship of the T-shirts helped build a sense of teamwork and belonging as the kids got their first experience of team sports. Hallie's interview is on the American Legion Post 60 Kimberly WI Facebook page. The Post thanks everyone from the Recreation Department for making the experience happen and the families for getting our ballplayers to the field.

QUILTS OF VALOR IN HARTFORD



On behalf of the National Quilts of Valor Foundation and St. Luke Blessed Quilters, from Slinger, Laverne C. Barta on Aug. 3 was awarded by Commander Allen Schoessow Post 19 Hartford. This quilt is meant to offer comfort and to say Thank You for your sacrifice and service and to remind you that you are forever in our thoughts and hearts.

Past Commanders Meeting

October 28
Appleton Post

Meeting- 2:30
Cocktails - 4:00
Dinner - 5:00

Cost - \$20 pay for number ordered
Menu - chicken / ham, potato, dressing, lettuce salad, mixed vegetables, dessert

Contact Mike at 920-268-8005

Department Oratorical Contest

The 2024 Department Oratorical contest is scheduled for **March 23, 2024** at Ripon College.



The contest has previously been held in the month of February. Wisconsin's contest has been moved to March because the National contest, which was previously held in April, is now scheduled in May.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Department contest, please contact Sheri Hicks at sheri@wilegion.org



50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Dennis Haefke, Vietnam Veteran of Post 149, recently received his 50 Year Membership plaque from (L) Bob Roska (Post Commander) & Dan Riviers (R). Dennis has filled the positions of Post Commander, Vice Commander, Honor Guard, House Committee, Veterans Banquet Chairman, and Bar Manager with distinction since he became a member of Post 149 in 1973. His can-do spirit always finds him as the first person at the post prior to meetings as well as any Veterans function. Unfortunately, Dennis passed since receiving this plaque. God bless and keep Dennis for all that he has done for Post 149 in Sheboygan Falls.

CAMBRIA PARK DAYS

Cambria American Legion Post 401 and Auxiliary Unit 401 in parade celebrating Annual Park Days.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

POST 19 EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



On August 3, Zara Radtke was awarded Educator of the Year for her efforts to support military members. Presented by Courtney-Carr-Milner Post 19 Hartford. Pictured left to right Zara Radtke, Don Pridemore Awards Chairman and Tara Villobos Hartford Joint 1 School District Administrator.

PEWAUKEE APPRECIATION EVENT



Pewaukee Post 71 presenting the Colors on August 17, at The Ellenbecker Investment Group's Veterans Appreciation Event.



LAABS DONATE \$10,000

Laabs Family Fund recently donated \$10,000 to American Legion Post 93 in Tomahawk. Kelsey Laabs, John Laabs Jr. and Joan Laabs are pictured presenting the donation to Al Erickson, Financial Officer, and Tom Garrigan, Commander, both of Post 93.



PLYMOUTH AIR RIFLE TEAM

The Plymouth American Legion Air Rifle Team (above) had a very successful year in the State Postal Match. Kaylee Kleinhans took 2nd place and a \$750 scholarship, Ben Widder took 3rd place and a \$250 scholarship. Hunter McKnight took first place in the Junior Division and a trophy. The 2023 team trophy, which is the four highest team scores, was won by the Plymouth Team for the fourth consecutive year. Team members consisted of Kaylee Kleinhans, Ben Widder, Isabel Wieck, and Patrick McMullen lead by coach DuWayne Wieck. During these last 4 years the Plymouth kids have individually also placed in the top positions nine times, an amazing accomplishment. Thank you Sheri Hicks and the Legion Shooting sports program for providing the kids this opportunity.



POSTS 454 AND 478 SPONSOR BOY SCOUTS

Holyland Scouts BSA Troop 778, sponsored by Abler/Engel Legion Post 454 of Mt. Calvary and Blonigen Post 478 of St. Cloud, provided an update on their summer activities at a recent meeting of Post 454. The Troop spent a week at camp Ma Ka Ja Wan Scout Reservation near Pearson, WI. Also, a tour of the Epic Medical Software Development Co. Campus in Verona, WI was conducted in early summer. Pictured representing Troop 778 from left are Leader Kay Schmitz, members Zachary Will, Owen Birschbach and Brayden Schmitz.



75 YEARS OF SERVICE IN DENMARK



At our meeting on July 19, Norman Sengbusch was presented with his membership card. Norman has been a member of the American Legion for 75 years!



POST 534 TOYS FOR TOTS



140 fishing poles donated to Toys for Tots by American Legion Post 534 Mac Marland. Pictured are Legion Chaplain Dale V. Sankey and Marine Sgt. Myles Schumaker 2/24 Scout Sniper Platoon. Starting off the 2023 collection.

TWO MARSHALL 50-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS



Post 279 Marshall, WI gave out two 50-year member awards. Vernon Yelk (at left) and Bob Zickert (above) accepted their awards from Commander Scott Reltiz during a recent meeting.

DISTRICT 10 SAL HIT ALL-TIME MEMBERSHIP HIGH



Tenth District Detachment Commander Gary Lubich presented Hammond Squadron 432 with three certificates that they received at the state convention on July 22 — 100% by the Legion birthday, 100% membership and all-time high.

POST 71 PEWAUKEE PAYS TRIBUTE AT 9/11 MEMORIAL



Members from the Pewaukee Post 71 Honor Guard paying tribute to 9/11 at the Memorial at Pewaukee Lake.



POST 243 HONORED GUEST



Post 243 member Mark Degner was the honored guest at the Post's annual picnic. Mark had recently returned home from a year's deployment to Africa with the Wisconsin National Guard. He is pictured with his wife Karen, Unit 243 Auxiliary President, and State Auxiliary National Security Chair.

COMBINED 178 YEARS OF SERVICE

Three long-term American Legion Members who have served in the Legion a combined 178 years were honored. From left: Otto Tiegs (61 years), Joseph Smith (51 years) and Stanley Moore (66 years).



SEVERSON-CAIRNS POST 501 FUNDRAISER

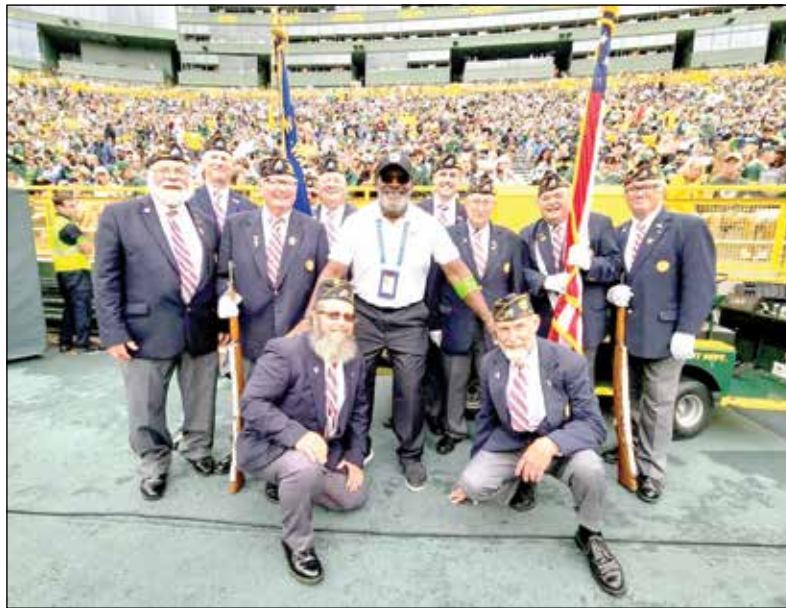


Past Post Commander Stolarczyk, Legionnaire Eldon Boehm, Legionnaire Gene Call, and Adjutant Morris Sadicario prepare to dispense brats, hot dogs and burgers to community members patronizing a Severson-Cairns Post 501 fundraiser.

PROJECT HERO MAKES PIT STOP IN WILTON



Wilton American Legion Post 508 and Auxiliary hosted approximately 40 Project Hero riders and support staff for lunch and refreshments during their stop in Wilton WI, August 24. Project Hero has built more than 200 adaptive bikes for injured Veterans, donated more than 2,500 bikes to Veterans and logged more than 30,000 bicycling miles in 30 states and 6 countries to bring hope, recovery and resilience in support of America's Healing Heroes.



POST 11 COLOR GUARD WITH GREEN AND GOLD HALL OF FAMER

Post 11's Color Guard with Green Bay Packers Hall of Famer Johnnie Gray before the final pre-season game between the Packers and the Seattle Seahawks.

NORTH FREEDOM POST 172 HONOR GUARD



North Freedom Post 172 Honor Guard rendering honors to deceased post member Carl Klein on Sept. 1. They are assisted by the Reedsburg Post 350 Honor Guard.

LEGACY STONE PLACED AT THE HIGHGROUND

On August 5, members of Abler/Engel Legion Post 454 Mt. Calvary, WI traveled to the Highground Veterans Memorial in Neillsville, WI to place a Legacy Stone dedicated to members of Post 454 and all who served. The Highground is the largest manned Veterans Park in the nation. The Legacy Stone was placed (at right) by Post 454 Member, and Purple Heart recipient, Buzz Vermillion. The National Anthem was performed (below right) by Post 454 member Tom Koenigs and opening the ceremony was signified by the tolling of the Liberty Bell replica (below left) by Post 454 Sons of the American Legion.



75 YEARS OF SERVICE AT POST 33



Department Vice Commander Gail Minks, Winnebago County Commander Chris Rosenow, and American Legion Post 33 Commander Chase Freimark presenting a 75-Year Membership Certificate to World War II Veteran Cliff Zeinert.

POST 91 BUDDY CHECK HELPS A VETERAN



Last month during a call one of our members, Randy Eske, said that he was getting ankle surgery after the beginning of September. He has four steps to get into his house and needed a ramp to get in. The caller, Ann Johnson, ran the problem up the chain and the word went out to find a ramp. One of our members said that VFW Post 2260 in Oconomowoc had a ramp. The VFW was contacted and loaned Post 91 the ramp. The ramp was assembled by members of Post 91. The Buddy Check has proved time and again to be a vital tool in keeping all of our Post members informed and a part of our Post, even if only over the phone. Pictured left to right Randy Eske, ramp recipient; Gary Latzke; Ron Woppert, Sgt.-at-Arms; John Warren; Dale Saeger, Adjutant; Jerry Wendt, Commander; Marty McFarland was taking the pictures, all members of Post 91.



BUSY SUMMER FOR POST 539

It's been quite the busy Summer for Post 539 raising funds for children and Veterans programs. ABOVE LEFT: 1st Vice CDR Michelle Kruschke accepts the All Time High Membership award from Dept. CDR Julie Muhle at Dept. convention. ABOVE RIGHT: Holly Hoppe is presented a Meritorious Service Commendation for her years of service to Post 539, State and County Veterans. AT LEFT: Inaugural brat fry with lots of helpers in July.



VIETNAM WAR VETERANS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY



As part of the national Vietnam War Veterans Commemoration Program, seven Vietnam War Era Veterans were recognized for their service and sacrifice on August 18, 2023, at a program at the Columbia County Veterans Service Office, Portage. Each of these seven Veterans served in Vietnam! Dale Gajdosik of Rio American Legion Post 208 led the event. From left to right are Assistant County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) Tammi Brueggeman; Vietnam War Era Veterans Rodney Maginnis, Ron Campbell, Bill Sommers, Randy Brandenburg, Rick Krebs, Don Williams, Bill Riddle; and Rio's Vietnam Veteran Commemoration Program Chairman Dale Gajdosik. For more information on Dale Gajdosik and his team or the Vietnam War Commemoration Program visit bit.ly/gajdosik.

ALL-FEMALE OFFICERS AT POST 539



2023-2024 officers for the all-female Veterans Post 539 were sworn in by 9th District CDR (& Post member) Deb Thomas. Left to right: CDR Carol Johnson, 1st Vice CDR Michelle Kruschke, 2nd Vice CDR Betty Gilb & Sgt-at-Arms Loraine Prue.



HONOR FLIGHT PARTICIPANT

Member Gary Delaney from Pewaukee Post 71, and accompanied by Aux member Megan Wallenfang, took part in the Honor Flight on 9/9/2023. Post 71 family turned out, to include Legion, Aux and SAL members.

POST 91 GUNG-HO AWARD

Dale Saeger, Post 91 Oconomowoc receiving the Joseph R. Meeks Gung-Ho Award.



GRAND MARSHAL FOR THE 4TH



Post 171 Historian Don "Alamo" Stone was honored to represent all local Veterans as the Grand Marshal of the Union Grove, WI 4th of July parade.

POST 350 POSTS THE COLORS



Reedsburg Post 350 posting the colors during the National Anthem at the Reedsburg Area High School home game against La Crosse Central.

SAL SQUADRON 111 RECOGNIZED AT STATE



Tenth District Detachment Commander Gary Lubich, presented Somerset, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 111, with certificates that they received from State Convention on July 22.



MEDAL OF HONOR RIDE

Commander Mark Johnson (in red) from Pewaukee Post 71, and other members of Post 71 took part in raising money for the Medal Of Honor Ride on September 9.

MANY TO THANK FOR HELPING MAKE THE 2023 STATE CONVENTION A SUCCESS

I would like to recognize the Marathon County Post members and others that were present during the planning of the 2023 State Convention in Rothschild, WI. Without all of us working together for the common goal it would have been impossible to accomplish the mission. It is with deep gratitude that I say, Thank You!

Paul Gwidt, Commander Post 492

Paul Gwidt - committee chair, Post 492
 Mike Bennett - committee co-chair, Post 492
 Bob West - Legion Riders 8th District - SAL Post 10

George Mosher - Post 10
 Ed Hable - Hatley Post 471
 Bob Weller - Wausau Post 10
 Jean Balz - Athens Post 4
 Dick Strathmann - Unity Post 358
 Linda Tryczak - Auxiliary Post 10
 Ruth Henkelman - Auxiliary Post 10
 Steve Sleeter - Post 10
 Lee Gajewski - Post 492

Deb Denissen - Post 492
 Lisa Stachoviak - Post 10
 Eunice Baumann - Auxiliary Post 10
 Gladys Beese - Auxiliary Post 10
 Tony Nardi - Post 10
 Christine Mertes - Auxiliary Post 10
 Mike Syring - Post 10
 Allen Watry - SAL Post 38, 9th District - for his willingness to share his wisdom.



The Department would like to thank Bob "Skid" Skidmore, Post 288, for the fantastic photos taken during Convention.

SEEHAFER ELECTED NATIONAL COMMANDER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AT 104TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A member of American Legion Post 157 in Horicon, Wis., Seehafer served in a number of American Legion offices at every level, including national chaplain and commander of the Department of Wisconsin.

Born and raised in Merrill, Wis., he lettered in cross-country track while in high school and later received a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry from Concordia University and a Master of Divinity at

Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. Seehafer was installed as assistant pastor of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Horicon in 1997 and continues to serve as administrative pastor of the church and its school. His American Legion post was recognized for "100 percent" and "All-Time High" in membership during his terms as commander and adjutant. Other honors include district commander's new post achievement award, silver brigade, and Post 157 Legionnaire of the Year.

In 2023, Seehafer earned an Outstanding Heroism Award for administering the Heimlich Maneuver to a choking victim at an American Legion dinner.

National Commander Seehafer and his wife, Stacey, who is a member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 157, live in Beaver Dam, Wis. Dan's son, Jacob, and daughter, Emma, are also members of the Post 157 family. Dan is the son of the late Lester Seehafer and Jean Sabatke.





Julie Muhle
Department
Adjutant

★★ DEPARTMENT ★★ ADJUTANT

Greetings from headquarters! As most of you were painfully aware, our website had been down for several weeks. Our IT team was diligently working to get it restored while we moved from one DNS server to another. Unfortunately, the complexity of the website made it almost impossible to restore. So, when you get lemons, you make lemonade!

If you haven't been to wilegion.org lately, I recommend you take a peek. You will notice a new website. We are going to be providing a more simplified site so you can get the information you need to run your post, county or district. Suggestions are always welcome!

Headquarters is looking for ways to become more involved in our community. We will be trialing a Community Coffee Hour the first Wednesday of each month starting Wednesday, October 4 from 8am to 10am. Stop in if you are in the area! We would like to have the opportunity to meet you. We are also going to participate in a Trunk or Treat on October 31 at headquarters. A sign-up genius link is available on our Wisconsin American Legion Facebook page as well as on our website for anyone who wants to participate. This is for the entire Legion family!

Thank you for all you do! You are appreciated.



James Fialkowski
Department Veterans
Service Officer

★★★★ VETERANS ★★★★★ SERVICE OFFICER

THE THREE-PIECE PUZZLE

Service connected disability compensation is the single largest benefit that your Service Office assists veterans with obtaining. Currently we are responsible for almost \$50 million a month in benefits of which over \$20 million is from Compensation. The VA benefit system can be convoluted and daunting. Most people not intimate with claims don't understand the fundamentals of the process.

Service Connection may be granted if the evidence shows a current disability is related to military service, or is secondary to a service connected disability.

Compensation is payment to Veterans in recognition of the effects of disabilities or injuries incurred or aggravated during active military service.

Do you see what I am saying? Convoluted. In reality Service Connection is easier to understand than one might think. Any Veteran who sustained a chronic condition and served under honorable conditions may be eligible for service connected disability and possibly compensation. I am talking about conditions from a Shell Fragment Wound to Flat Feet. From Cancer to Gastrointestinal Reflux Disease. Whatever the condition that you think you are eligible for, you need to understand the basis for Service Connection. It is basically a three-piece puzzle!

1st piece - You have a current chronic disabling condition.

2nd piece - Something in service to link to the condition. (I.E. Started treatment in service or an injury in service or another condition that is already service connected)

3rd piece - You need a medical opinion that your current disability is related to or was aggravated beyond normal progression by an in-service "something". (I.E. The medical professional says numbers one and two are at least as likely as not related. That's a 50/50 chance or better)

When all three of those pieces come together you have Service Connection. The degree of disability is what determines the amount of Compensation. The VA utilizes a rating schedule based on the medical examination. Normally each disability is separately rated as the criteria for each is different.

Tinnitus (ringing or whistling in the ears) for example, if service connected, currently only has one rating, 10% no more no less. A knee condition can be rated from 0% up to a non-permanent 100% based on instability, degree of flexion, and degree of extension, hospitalization, and convalescence or for knee replacement.

When service connection is established, the VA will provide treatment and medication for that disability at no charge to the Veteran. When a rating above 0% is established the VA will compensate the Veteran for that disability. A Veteran rated at 10% is compensated at \$165.92 a month. A single Veteran rated at 100% is compensated at \$3,621.95 a month. These rates are subject to cost of living (COLA) and are tied to SSA COLA adjustments. All Compensation is tax-free. Go to www.va.gov for more information.

If you think you may have a disability to claim, contact your County Veterans Service Office at 1-844-947-2876 or contact our office at 414-902-5722 and we will help you get the process started.

POST 477 RECOGNITION

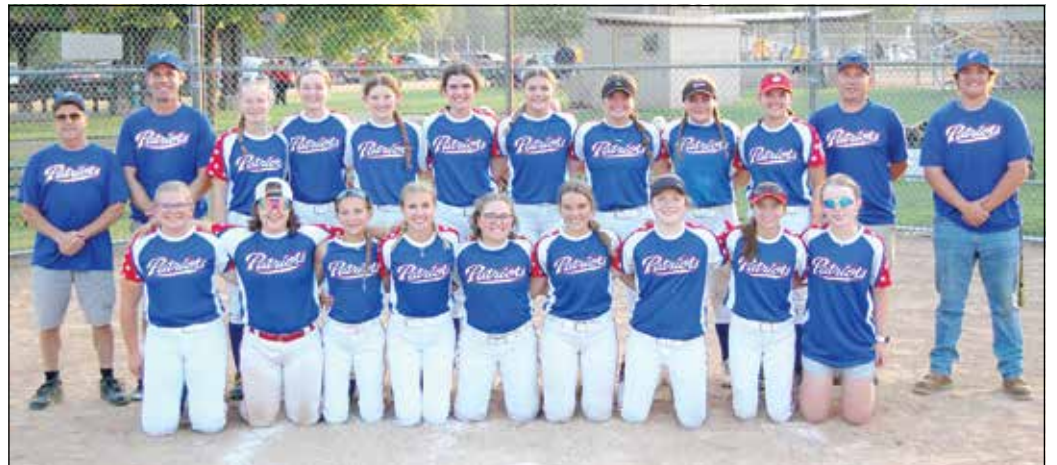
AT RIGHT: Nancy Schnell Rivera, former Post 477 Membership Coordinator, accepts the Membership award from Department Commander Julie Muhle.

BELOW LEFT: Past Post 477 Commander, Dean Koenig, accepts the Enhancing the Lives of Disabled Persons award from Department Commander Julie Muhle.

BELOW RIGHT: Sergeant Sam Koenig, WI-ARNG, pictured with his military leadership, accepts the Outstanding Enlisted NG/USAR Soldier of the Year award from Department Commander Julie Muhle.



AMERICAN LEGION SOFTBALL



The Patriots (above) and the Whittlesey Lions (below) were all smiles following a hard-fought game of American Legion Softball.





Paul Fisk
Legislative
Chair

★★ LEGISLATIVE CHAIR ★★

The American Legion legislative program starts at the post. The post membership always is seeing things they want to see changed. This may be something to do with benefits that they or a friend are not receiving or it could be something they see as needing to be done. If the idea relates to the four pillars it probably is something we need to address.

The place to start is to put pen to paper and draft a resolution. Many people can help with this task. The best resource I have seen is a booklet available on the national website titled **RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS**. In the event, you cannot find it, Jen at Headquarters has an electronic copy or I can send you an electronic copy.

After your post adopts the resolution, forward it to Department Headquarters. It will be

reviewed by the Department Policy Committee and assigned to a convention committee. The convention committee is made up of representatives for each of the twelve districts. The convention committee will send your resolution to the convention floor for action. It is at this point that your resolution becomes Department policy and we will use it to try to change state policy through proper legislation.

Just as you and your post can affect the legislative agenda and policy, you can recognize good legislators who support our goals. Your post can nominate a legislator for the **LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**. You can find all the information you need in the current Administrative Manual. See your Post Leadership.

There are less than 30 session days left in this legislature. Soon they will be running to retain their seat. Get out and talk to them about American Legion issues.



John D. Michels
Membership
Coordinator

★★ MEMBERSHIP ★★

“IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR”

As I write this, it happens to be on my one-year anniversary as Membership Coordinator for the Wisconsin American Legion, so I have now seen what goes on over that 12-month period, but don't ask me to recite it.

The influx of renewals after the beginning of fiscal year 2024 was almost overwhelming as many of your posts and squadrons got off to a strong start. In fact, as of now, Wisconsin is currently fourth nationally in both TAL and SAL 2024 membership renewals. Our goal is to be at 55% by October 18, and through 9/12 we are already at 59%. But there is more to be done. I saw this strong number last year when I first started, but I also saw a slowdown in membership renewals as we plodded along towards June 30, ending fiscal year 2023 at 94%. 100% would be so great, and with the goal for each post to add two more members above what you ended fiscal year 2023, is certainly achievable.

It has been my pleasure to assist many of your

posts and squadrons with membership questions and processing renewal transmittals. I get calls from Division Commanders all the way down to the lone member wanting to pay his/her dues. Thank you all for the invitations to attend your post functions. I plan on attending some this Fall

Driving into Cambria recently, I noted their civic organizations sign which included The American Legion emblem, and below it was information on their meeting days and time as well as location. Perhaps some of you can make this addition to your civic sign at your town or city's entrance.

My office has been ransacked by posts and squadrons looking for brochures to hand out at civic events. I still have plenty. Come and get them!

Finally, a Squadron leader is in the process of fabricating portable booths to set up at civic events in order to promote membership, and they will include television monitors to display Legion information to passersby. I will let you know once these portable structures become available.

In the meantime, have a great Fall!

DISTRICT 11 RIDE FOR PEANUT BENEFITS CAMP



District 11 American Legion Riders made a donation to Camp American Legion from the Ride for Peanut ride.

BLACK RIVER FALLS CAR SHOW



American Legion Post 200, in Black River Falls, sponsored a car show held at the Post grounds on Saturday, August 5. It was a beautiful day: sunny but not too hot. There were 82 entries, which was considered very good for the first event of this type put on by the post. American Legion Post 439 of Melrose brought their Legion Car to the event. There was a festive air throughout the show, with food and liquid refreshments available all day. The proceeds will be put towards upgrades to a new HVAC system.

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION . . .

GREAT VOLUNTEERS MADE FOR A GREAT YEAR



Jim Klement
Camp American
Legion Director

Wow, this summer has been one of the best yet for Camp American Legion!

As we come to the end of the season, I have to thank all the volunteers that have made camp such an amazing experience for our Veterans. If anyone is interested in volunteering at camp please go on to the website and fill out an application. We always need help with all aspects of camp.

As we move into fall/winter we have some new exciting opportunities. The first is the new Marshfield Post 54 Cabin. The cabin will be able to be used during the off-season and will provide Veterans with more opportunities through the long winter to come and enjoy the Northwoods beauty.

We have many other opportunities throughout the off-season. Bowhunting, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and maple syrup are just some examples of what is available or if you just want to come up and relax and enjoy the scenery at camp. All you have to do is fill out an application and send it in.

Christmas at Camp is another wonderful opportunity. Bring your family and celebrate Christmas in one of our two cabins that will be available.

Camp American Legion is always looking for new exciting ideas to help camp evolve throughout the next 100 years.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call camp.

Thank You
Jim Klement, Camp Director
715-277-2510

To learn more about the mission of Camp American Legion or to get involved with answering the call, visit wilegion.org or find us on Facebook.



“Surround yourself with good people and they will lift you up!”

OUR MISSION

Helping to Heal - those who served, continue to serve, and their families, through Wisconsin's Northwoods Experience

OUR VISION

Giving Wisconsin Veterans the pathway to quality of life

OUR VALUES

Honor and Stewardship

The Last Bugle



KEY
 WWI-World War I
 V-Vietnam
 G/L-Grenada/Lebanon
 P-Panama
 GWOT-Global War on Terrorism
 WWII-World War II
 K-Korea
 PG-Persian Gulf

1 Germantown	Joseph Luce	K
Knut F. Apitz	Howard Brining	V
3 Antigo	30 Edgerton	
Dennis Baginski	David J. Buchholz	K
6 Stevens Point	31 Milwaukee	
Anthony J. Treder	Norman P. Fellenz	V
Alex E. Berens	33 Neenah	
7 Rhinelander	Michael Coopman	V
Matthew J. Kitkowski	Glenn A. Rogers	K
Cynthia A. Pitts	Tom Radtke	V
8 Waukesha	36 West Bend	
John N. McIntyre	Thomas A. Beistle	K
9 Wisconsin Rapids	Robert Kudek	G/L
John Siewert	38 Appleton	
10 Wausau	Joseph P. Murray	V
James T. Bychinski	David E. Krueger	K
Donald B. Kiey	Elton K. Jandrey	WWII
James R. Debauche	39 Marinette	
11 Green Bay	Donald M. Wahl	V
Elmer Dotz	43 Ripon	
Robert L. Gordon Jr.	Larson Clement	V
Harold R. Hansen	Alan C. Bonsen	WWII
Lloyd C. Clark	44 Wabeno	
Cyril J. Backes	Donald F. Duca	V
Edward F. Campbell	Richard L. Johnson	V
Vincent L. Zehren	48 Beloit	
Ronald G. Neerdaels, Sr.	Edward J. Moriarty Jr.	V
Richard Gay	49 Bayfield	
Keith Harnois	Loren E. Insley	V
Joseph B. Geohagan	52 La Crosse	
12 Spooner	John A. Withers	K
Gary L. Magnus	Clyde H. Zielke	K
14 Iola	James B. Winder	V
Kenneth R. Sorenson	Paul A. Lyga Jr.	K
15 Juneau	Gilbert T. Chick	WWII
Darwin H. Bischoff	Wallace L. Anderson	WWII
Daryl Benson	Earl J. Patterson	K
17 Arcadia	Robert E. Miles	V
Paul T. Halvorsen	53 Eau Claire	
David D. Kokott	Mike Benson	V
Joseph F. Obieglo	Todd F. Benson	G/L
Earl R. Stevens	John A. Amundson	K
Thomas J. Kramer	Kaye K. Olson	G/L
Harold J. Andre	54 Marshfield	
Daniel C. Abts	Dennis A. Juncer	V
18 Milwaukee	Thomas Nikolai	
Jeff Calhoun	J.J. Larson	K
Christopher Heger	58 Hurley	
21 Kenosha	Gary W. Schlais	V
Charles W. Statkus	59 Stoughton	
24 Lake Geneva	Leo L. Ambrose	V
Gary L. Willingham	Jerry V. Green	V
Thomas L. Kehl	60 Kimberly	
26 Baraboo	Ronald C. Possell	V
Lyle W. Haire		

61 Prescott	Harley Eaton	WWII
66 Athelstane-Silvercliff	Jerome W. Armstrong	V
67 Lake Mills	Donald J. Janzen	K
Donald R. Hein	Harry G. Luetzow	WWII
70 Oshkosh	Lawrence L. Lowther	V
Eugene T. Troxell	71 Pewaukee	
Roger L. Ellis	Dan Olson	V
80 New Richmond	Louis T. Rolf	K
Dean Hansen	81 Mauston	
Harold Johnson	Dean Hansen	V
Conrad A. Garthus	82 Port Washington	
83 Sheboygan	Harold Johnson	WWII
David J. Jensen	Conrad A. Garthus	K
88 Manitowoc	83 Sheboygan	
Ronald W. Gadzinski	David J. Jensen	V
90 Ashland	88 Manitowoc	
Romolo D. Oliva	Ronald W. Gadzinski	V
Jerome J. McCarthy	90 Ashland	
91 Oconomowoc	Romolo D. Oliva	V
James F. Tavares	Jerome J. McCarthy	K
John Geisler	91 Oconomowoc	
Allen E. Hall	James F. Tavares	WWII
93 Tomahawk	John Geisler	WWII
Arne H. Andersen	Allen E. Hall	V
Myron J. Sippl	93 Tomahawk	
John W. Loka	Arne H. Andersen	V
Roland R. Hodge	Myron J. Sippl	WWII
94 Crandon	John W. Loka	WWII
Phillip F. McCorkle	Roland R. Hodge	K
Larry J. Berg Sr.	94 Crandon	
95 Delavan	Phillip F. McCorkle	V
Wayne C. Zimmermann	Larry J. Berg Sr.	WWII
Richard L. Malsch	95 Delavan	
98 Cumberland	Wayne C. Zimmermann	V
Kenneth R. Lejeune	Richard L. Malsch	V
John L. Lillie	98 Cumberland	
102 Walworth	John L. Lillie	K
Lloyd Corbin	102 Walworth	
106 Seymour	Lloyd Corbin	V
David A. Vick	106 Seymour	
Vernon C. Witthuhn	David A. Vick	V
114 Eagle River	Vernon C. Witthuhn	V
Melvin H. Carlson	114 Eagle River	
116 Coon Valley	Melvin H. Carlson	WWII
Carliss Larson	116 Coon Valley	
117 Shawano	Carliss Larson	
George F. Reif	117 Shawano	
George Tincher	George F. Reif	K
Stephen K. Boehmke	George Tincher	V
Chester W. Gooding	Stephen K. Boehmke	V
James L. Bell	Chester W. Gooding	V
121 River Falls	James L. Bell	V
Robert M. Enloe	121 River Falls	
Ronald W. Ott	Robert M. Enloe	V
Ivan C. Iverson	Ronald W. Ott	V
122 Phillips	Ivan C. Iverson	WWII
Dale Meives	122 Phillips	
123 Owen	Dale Meives	V
William G. Nelson	123 Owen	
William J. Benzschawel	William G. Nelson	V
124 New Holstein	William J. Benzschawel	K
Todd Schmidkofer	124 New Holstein	
Allen P. Schurrer	Todd Schmidkofer	P
Ricky Sloan	Allen P. Schurrer	V
126 Brillion	Ricky Sloan	V
Charles A. Bain	126 Brillion	
Martin J. Johnson	Charles A. Bain	K
Donald Baer	Martin J. Johnson	V
127 Hilbert	Donald Baer	K
Earl Stache	127 Hilbert	
Harold F. Sippel	Earl Stache	K
132 Siren	Harold F. Sippel	V
Clarence Johnson	132 Siren	

133 Camp Douglas	Claire O. Ness	K
136 Niagara	George R. Chartier	V
138 Viroqua	Roland J. Hill	K
139 Coloma	David W. Mielcarek	PG
Everett Revie	143 St. Croix Falls	
143 St. Croix Falls	Bob R. Rawlings	K
Bob R. Rawlings	James L. Gilbert	V
James L. Gilbert	148 Bloomington	
148 Bloomington	Glenn M. Horkheimer	V
Glenn M. Horkheimer	Michael D. Urfer	V
Michael D. Urfer	149 Sheboygan Falls	
149 Sheboygan Falls	Dennis R. Haefke	V
Dennis R. Haefke	Robert G. Kellner	K
Robert G. Kellner	151 Madison	
151 Madison	Charles R. Hilston	K
Charles R. Hilston	Donald J. Helfrecht	WWII
Donald J. Helfrecht	153 Pittsville	
153 Pittsville	Russell Jacobson	K
Russell Jacobson	157 Horicon	
157 Horicon	Claude H. Rex	K
Claude H. Rex	Gene R. Bertelson	V
Gene R. Bertelson	160 Brooklyn	
160 Brooklyn	Charles O. Rowland	K
Charles O. Rowland	166 Fort Atkinson	
166 Fort Atkinson	Dennis McKee	V
Dennis McKee	167 Sauk City	
167 Sauk City	James Hambrecht	V
James Hambrecht	Tom E. Luetscher	V
Tom E. Luetscher	170 Mineral Point	
170 Mineral Point	Don A. Miller Jr.	V
Don A. Miller Jr.	171 Union Grove	
171 Union Grove	Merlyn N. Olson	K
Merlyn N. Olson	Bernard C. Erspamer	K
Bernard C. Erspamer	172 North Freedom	
172 North Freedom	Donald Kennedy	V
Donald Kennedy	173 Whitewater	
173 Whitewater	Kurt Troemel	K
Kurt Troemel	175 Loyal	
175 Loyal	John A. Schultz	K
John A. Schultz	176 Weyauwega	
176 Weyauwega	Duane K. Koehler	K
Duane K. Koehler	179 Chetek	
179 Chetek	Richard Strickland	K
Richard Strickland	Daryl Clayton	V
Daryl Clayton	182 Park Falls	
182 Park Falls	Lawrence J. Johnson	K
Lawrence J. Johnson	183 Genoa City	
183 Genoa City	Christine M. Jordan	
Christine M. Jordan	186 Independence	
186 Independence	Ronald D. Stellar	V
Ronald D. Stellar	190 Reeseville	
190 Reeseville	Howard H. Rennhack	K
Howard H. Rennhack	John D. Sorenson	K
John D. Sorenson	Steven K. Lund	V
Steven K. Lund	191 Whitehall	
191 Whitehall	David J. Olson	G/L
David J. Olson	Breck Louthan	P
Breck Louthan	Jeffrey L. Stendal	V
Jeffrey L. Stendal	198 Marion	
198 Marion	John Bartelt	K
John Bartelt	200 Black River Falls	
200 Black River Falls	James M. Anderson	V
James M. Anderson	201 Tomah	
201 Tomah	Raymond Kratche	V
Raymond Kratche	Thomas D. Arrowsmith	V
Thomas D. Arrowsmith	207 Elmwood	
207 Elmwood	James R. Hague	V
James R. Hague	Steven T. Schoeder	V
Steven T. Schoeder	208 Rio	
208 Rio	John H. Atkinson	K
John H. Atkinson	209 Orfordville	
209 Orfordville	Gerald D. Lambert	K
Gerald D. Lambert	210 Waupun	
210 Waupun	Glenn M. Westra	V
Glenn M. Westra	Ronald W. Raith	V
Ronald W. Raith	Dale Vandenberg	K
Dale Vandenberg	211 Florence	
211 Florence	Robert A. Lade	V

212 Barron	Robert F. Borgen	V
216 Lodi	Henry T. Goeres	WWII
Henry T. Goeres	Calvin Cramer	WWII
Calvin Cramer	217 Bonduel	
217 Bonduel	Kenneth Natzke	K
Kenneth Natzke	220 Soldiers Grove	
220 Soldiers Grove	Albert Richter	K
Albert Richter	230 De Pere	
230 De Pere	James Baeten	K
James Baeten	Warren Haganas	K
Warren Haganas	234 Omro	
234 Omro	John T. Quigley	V
John T. Quigley	Michael A. Coleman	V
Michael A. Coleman	236 Algoma	
236 Algoma	Scott Meverden	V
Scott Meverden	242 La Valle	
242 La Valle	Charles Carpenter	K
Charles Carpenter	245 Cross Plains	
245 Cross Plains	Lorraine C. Allord	WWII
Lorraine C. Allord	248 Cottage Grove	
248 Cottage Grove	Leroy H. Franke	V
Leroy H. Franke	251 Argyle	
251 Argyle	Tim Thesing	
Tim Thesing	252 Eastman	
252 Eastman	Dale A. Check	K
Dale A. Check	Robert W. Granzow	K
Robert W. Granzow	Robert W. Chambers	K
Robert W. Chambers	253 Spring Green	
253 Spring Green	Gerald C. Kempthorne	K
Gerald C. Kempthorne	255 Luck	
255 Luck	Bill Schilling	K
Bill Schilling	Irene I. Hansen	WWII
Irene I. Hansen	Darrell D. Anderson	V
Darrell D. Anderson	Paul Bille	WWII
Paul Bille	257 Ridgeway	
257 Ridgeway	Patrick Leary	K
Patrick Leary	Roger L. Emerson	V
Roger L. Emerson	258 Little Chute	
258 Little Chute	David Knapp	V
David Knapp	Gerald A. Vander Loop	K
Gerald A. Vander Loop	Robert De Bruin	K
Robert De Bruin	260 Deerfield	
260 Deerfield	James N. Gilbertson	V
James N. Gilbertson	263 New London	
263 New London	Roger E. Knapp	V
Roger E. Knapp	Charlie N. Cochran	V
Charlie N. Cochran	Walter H. Hanson	V
Walter H. Hanson	264 Gilmanton	
264 Gilmanton	Jerome Klevgard	V
Jerome Klevgard	Robert L. Hovey Jr.	V
Robert L. Hovey Jr.	270 Theresa	
270 Theresa	Patrick J. Sharkey	V
Patrick J. Sharkey	272 Butternut	
272 Butternut	Norman G. Haegerl	WWII
Norman G. Haegerl	Cynthia E. Smith	P
Cynthia E. Smith	280 Coleman	
280 Coleman	Richard R. Voelker	V
Richard R. Voelker	283 Suring	
283 Suring	Verlyn A. Spreeman	WWII
Verlyn A. Spreeman	Marvin A. Schneider	K
Marvin A. Schneider	284 Holmen	
284 Holmen	John Frei	V
John Frei	Philip E. Smith	K
Philip E. Smith	287 Mattoon	
287 Mattoon	Earl G. Buss	WWII
Earl G. Buss	288 Cedarburg	
288 Cedarburg	Fred R. Hewitt	K
Fred R. Hewitt	291 Augusta	
291 Augusta	Dan Boyea	V
Dan Boyea	294 Hartland	
294 Hartland	John T. Schulze	
John T. Schulze	Francis J. Peters	
Francis J. Peters	Henry Clay	K
Henry Clay	295 Bloomer	
295 Bloomer	Richard M. Bohl	V
Richard M. Bohl	David R. Helin	V
David R. Helin	296 Brookfield	
296 Brookfield	Louis J. Kapfhammer	K
Louis J. Kapfhammer	299 Hales Corners	
299 Hales Corners	Gordon F. Anderson	V

300 Gillett	Lee Damkoehler	V
305 Johnson Creek	Floyd D. Sukow	K
Floyd D. Sukow	306 Green Lake	
306 Green Lake	Roy S. Strutz	PG
Roy S. Strutz	George T. Kirby	K
George T. Kirby	308 Gays Mills	
308 Gays Mills	Jesse J. Heisz	WWII
Jesse J. Heisz	George F. Geyer	V
George F. Geyer	310 Racine	
310 Racine	Robert W. Hansen	WWII
Robert W. Hansen	314 Boyceville	
314 Boyceville	Scott B. Anderson	V
Scott B. Anderson	316 Sheldon	
316 Sheldon	Louis W. Paffel	V
Louis W. Paffel	Charles Cynor	V
Charles Cynor	318 Lake Tomahawk	
318 Lake Tomahawk	David Walters	K
David Walters	Donald Metzger	V
Donald Metzger	325 Goodman	
325 Goodman	George L. Wulf	WWII
George L. Wulf	326 Boyd	
326 Boyd	Kenneth R. Naves	K
Kenneth R. Naves	336 Onalaska	
336 Onalaska	David W. Crawford	V
David W. Crawford	Harold L. Wunnecke	WWII
Harold L. Wunnecke	337 Pulaski	
337 Pulaski	Daniel Ferfecki	K
Daniel Ferfecki	340 Berlin	
340 Berlin	Charles J. Lepinski	WWII
Charles J. Lepinski	341 Birnamwood	
341 Birnamwood	Stanley W. Jablonski	V
Stanley W. Jablonski	Richard Oppor	V
Richard Oppor	Bernard Senoracki	V
Bernard Senoracki	347 Lomira	
347 Lomira	Milford A. Oestreich	K
Milford A. Oestreich	350 Reedsburg	
350 Reedsburg	Vernon Knuth	V
Vernon Knuth	Henry E. Arndt	K
Henry E. Arndt	Wayne Ballweg	V
Wayne Ballweg	351 Montello	
351 Montello	Kenneth J. Bentley	WWII
Kenneth J. Bentley	Robert Pieczynski	V
Robert Pieczynski	Paul Schwochert	K
Paul Schwochert	352 Cassville	
352 Cassville	John S. Joyce	V
John S. Joyce	356 Muskego	
356 Muskego	John E. Oconnell	WWII
John E. Oconnell	359 Gilman	
359 Gilman	Cornelius F. Micke	V
Cornelius F. Micke	363 Denmark	
363 Denmark	Brian G. Kries	K
Brian G. Kries	Gerald J. Sukowatey	V
Gerald J. Sukowatey	Gerald E. Novak	V
Gerald E. Novak	365 Plum City	
365 Plum City	Donald Kannel	V
Donald Kannel	Roger D. Castleberg	K
Roger D. Castleberg	375 Mukwonago	
375 Mukwonago	Jack H. Rudolph	K
Jack H. Rudolph	377 Elcho	
377 Elcho	Donald Jagoditsh	V
Donald Jagoditsh	379 Birchwood	
379 Birchwood	Frederick C. Peck	V
Frederick C. Peck	John V. Gargulak	WWII
John V. Gargulak	Thorvald T. Skar	V
Thorvald T. Skar	Richard L. Juelfs Sr.	K
Richard L. Juelfs Sr.	Lloyd E. Lightner	K
Lloyd E. Lightner	Edward W. Baumgarten	K
Edward W. Baumgarten	Garold T. Koel	V
Garold T. Koel	John J. Shebelski	V
John J. Shebelski	382 Menomonee Falls	
382 Menomonee Falls	Bruce Benson	V
Bruce Benson	385 Verona	
385 Verona	Larry L. Cox	V
Larry L. Cox	Richard Grimm	V
Richard Grimm	387 Franklin	
387 Franklin	Glenn L. Kerchefske	K
Glenn L. Kerchefske	390 Gresham	
390 Gresham	Robert W. Buettner	V
Robert W. Buettner	Delbert E. Hoffman	K
Delbert E. Hoffman	Harvey L. Kroening	V

391 Fremont	Kenneth H. Robinson	WW
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MEMBERSHIP

Sue Hembrook
Department Chair
genesuehem@wi.rr.com
262-945-9791

“The Great Membership Race” has begun. We are in the first segment of our race to be winners in this great race. Team Wisconsin so far is in “First Place” in the Central Division.

Our team is “Poppy up for a Veteran”, and we are in the race. The membership committee consists of: Sue Hembrook, Chair; Becky Mueller, Member; and Amy Luft, Member. We are all here equally to serve you and/or answer any questions or concerns you may have. Our information is listed below and in the Red Book. Please reach out to us as we are eagerly waiting to serve you, our members.

Let’s start racing in earnest! Get out in your communities with your branding. Invite your communities to your events. Have fun, make it interesting, and most of all work together. If it is demonstrated how much fun and excitement we have serving our Veterans, military, their families, and our communities, people will want to join in our service. It is amazing how wearing a branded piece of clothing or emblem can strike up a conversation. Have at your ready a few things to say about the projects your unit

does to serve our veterans.

Also, if you cannot get into your schools, invite your schools to you. Halloween is fast approaching and organize a Trunk or Treat event. It is a positive attraction for parents to have a one stop “safe” place to take their kiddos. Plan some entertainment or event for the kiddos and parents to partake in during the event. Pin the tail on the donkey or bobbing for apples can be done in so many ways. Use your imagination and come up with some unique things to do. Please take pictures and share them with the rest of us. Display a “table” of your activities and accomplishments - spread the word of your accomplishments!

Please let us know how we can assist:

Sue Hembrook
genesuehem@wi.rr.com
262-945-9791

Becky Mueller
clarenceandbecky@aol.com
920-833-6048

Amy Luft
amyjlufft@gmail.com
414-651-7300

2024 Membership Totals (as of 9/19/23) - 23.01%

DIST.	GOAL %	MUSHER
4	30.26%	Winkle
3	28.65%	Ranger
9	28.41%	Percy
12	26.97%	Baby Girl
5	26.25%	Little Girl
7	26.09%	Hero
2	24.96%	Sloane
6	22.87%	Denali
1	19.83%	Diamond
10	17.48%	Balto
8	17.24%	Isabella
11	10.01%	D.O.G



POPPY REMINDER!

Poppies can be distributed all year long. Veterans Day is a great time to do a distribution.

2024 Poppy Orders are due by December 15, 2023. Don't delay – order today!

IN MEMORIAM: JUNE M. BENISHEK JULY 5, 1930 - AUGUST 16, 2023

Past Department President June Marie Benishek passed away on August 16, 2023 at age 93. She was born in Dodge County and moved to Hustisford, where she graduated from high school in 1948. June then moved to Milwaukee and attended business college for two years. She worked part-time at Gimbel's for 35 years until they closed in 1996.

June married Milton in May of 1955 and they had three boys – Jeffrey, Peter and David. Because she was working, they did a lot of traveling.

June was a member of the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary for 57 years. She was Department President in 1972-1973 and was Department Secretary-Treasurer from 1987 to 2000. June was active in Federal Unit 203 and was the Finance Secretary for Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church for 11 years. During the past 15 years she found time to be a caregiver for two friends for two years each. June Benishek will be missed by many. Rest in peace, good and faithful servant.



June M. Benishek



2024 ALA DAILY SWEEPSTAKES

- 2024 Daily Sweepstakes entry forms have been mailed. If you want additional entry forms, please call department headquarters. Only original entry forms will be accepted.
- Daily prizes are \$15. Sunday prizes are \$25. One \$500 prize each month.
- The last day to enter is December 31, 2023.
- Official sweepstakes rules are posted on the department website.

Although a donation is not required, the money raised allows the ALA to maintain programs that benefit our Veterans, the military, their families, and our communities – so donations are greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU to everyone who already responded.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Betty Stone
 Department Chaplain
 bjstone626@hotmail.com

Philippians 4:6-7 — 6. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* 7. *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

PRAYER

Dear Father,

You are the Prince of Peace and the great I Am. You are my helper and my redeemer. We need your help today, for we are weak and frail and tired. Give us the strength to get through just this day and the desire to work as if we are doing it all for your glory. Help those who are carrying especially heavy burdens right now. They need your power and peace that goes beyond our understanding.

We are so grateful that we can come to you and present our requests at any time. Thank you for giving us peace and rest even in the hard times.

In the name of the Prince of Peace, Amen

MUSIC

We all know the first verse of the Star-Spangled Banner, but have you ever heard the rest of the song? The Star-Spangled Banner has four verses. Here are the words to the last verse. Note the bolded phrases.

*O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
 Between their lov'd home and the war's
 desolation!*

*Blest with vict'ry and peace may the
 heav'n rescued land*

*Praise the power that hath made and
 preserv'd us a nation!*

*Then conquer we must, when our cause
 it is just,*

And this be our motto - "In God is our trust,"

*And the star-spangled banner in triumph
 shall wave*

*O'er the land of the free and the home of
 the brave.*

Our motto is for God and Country!

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Bonnie Dorniak
 Executive Secretary/Treasurer
 608-745-0124
 deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org
 www.amlegionauxwi.org

The 2023 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention was held in Charlotte, North Carolina. Wisconsin members received several national awards as listed on page A3. Congratulations to the award winners!

Lisa Williamson of Alaska was elected National President and Wisconsin's own Dan Seehafer was elected National Commander for 2023-2024. Their focus for the year is to work as a Legion Family to promote the 'Be the One' initiative.

BE THE ONE

As Commander Seehafer said in his acceptance speech, "Nothing is more important than our effort to reduce the number of Veterans who die by suicide." Be the One... "to save one Veteran or their spouse from taking his or her own life. Be the One to raise awareness about the issue of Veteran suicide, guide resources to those in need, and eliminate the stigma sometimes associated with mental health counseling – all of which will contribute to reducing the Veteran suicide rate. Above all else, talk about it. Learn what to do when a Veteran needs help. And – above all else – Be the One." If you know someone at risk of suicide, encourage them to dial 9-8-8, the Veteran Suicide Prevention hotline for 24/7 confidential crisis support.

For more ideas on how to support the Be the One initiative, visit <https://www.legion.org/betheone>.



National Headquarters mailed the 2024 membership renewal notices in mid-September. You may have received a renewal notice even though you recently paid your dues. National pulled the mailing list in early August so things may have crossed in the mail. If you believe you received a notice in error, please contact your unit membership chairman to confirm your dues were forwarded to department headquarters for processing.

Members may pay their dues through their unit, online at www.ALA-forVeterans.org, or over the phone. You can pay for multiple family members at one time or pay for lapsed membership years if you pay by phone. Please call national headquarters at 317-569-4570, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm (Central Time) to pay by phone. Thank you to everyone who already renewed their 2024 dues!

The 2024 Sweepstakes was mailed to current ALA members at the end of August. This is the only fundraiser that ALA Wisconsin conducts and the proceeds stay in Wisconsin. Entry forms must be returned by December 31 to be eligible for the drawings. If you would like more entry forms, please contact Department Headquarters at 608-745-0124. Thank you in advance for your support!

CAROL T. ROBINSON ELECTED CDNVP

Carol T. Robinson was elected as CDNVP at the 2023 National Convention. She was born and raised in London, Ohio, and graduated from London High School. During her junior year, she attended ALA Buckeye Girls. She is a 38-year Paid Up For Life (PUFL) member of General Daniel "Chappie" James ALA Unit 776 in Riverside, OH. Her eligibility was earned through her late brother, William A. Hawkins, who served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

Carol T. has one daughter, one granddaughter, one great-granddaughter who are all ALA members, and one great-grandson. She holds a bache-

lor's degree in business management and human development and two Master's Certificates, one in Government Contracting and the other in Project Management. She retired twice – first, from the Defense Logistics Agency after serving for 32-1/2 years, and second, from the Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services after 15 years.

Carol T. has served in many positions on the unit, district, department and national levels and was National Chaplain in 2021-2022. She has also been a member of numerous other nonprofit and civic organizations.



Carol T. Robinson
 Central Division
 National Vice President

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Bob Shappell
 Department Chair
 bobshap@aol.com
 262-376-0348 (h) / 414-899-4067 (c)

Public Relations is much more than creating posters and advertising our events to the community. The function of Public Relations is to build and to maintain a positive image of your unit, your post, and the American Legion Family in your community. Your unit's reputation and image should be its greatest assets in gaining both community support and new members. People will respond favorably to what you say

and what you do if you have a good image.

In today's society, we must adopt a fresh approach to telling the stories of our units and our members. We can no longer wait for the media to come calling; instead, we must become our own media. This does not mean buying a newspaper company or TV/Radio station. It does mean using the vast array of communication channels to our advantage.

It means effective and regular internal communications with our members. It means we become visible outside the confines of the Unit/Post home. That visibility translates into a form of communication media and can be a catalyst

to recruiting new members. The way we look, act, and speak in the community creates our reputation and image. The new ALA brand mark is a great way to communicate who we are within our community. It also means smartly using all methods to communicate, from paper and voices, to personal networking, and to various social media and electronic tools.

A good starting point for your unit is to ask several questions. Does your community understand the purposes and goals of your unit? What is the reputation of your unit in the community? How do community members (especially those new to the community) find out

about the unit and its activities? If you cannot answer these questions, how would you go about finding the answers?

Your Public Relations Committee is committed to helping all units answer these questions, and much more. We will gladly visit units or districts to provide snippets of training. We also plan some virtual training. We will share good ideas from units around the Department. We will offer advice on PR activities or actions your unit is considering. We have great programs and great stories – let's make sure our communities understand who we are and what we do.

2022-2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION AWARDS

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin received the following awards or acknowledgements for the 2022-2023 administrative year during the 2023 National Convention:

AMERICANISM

Dorothy Pearl Award - Most Outstanding Unit
Americanism Program in Central Division
Port Washington Unit 82, District 2
Diane Burkhalter, Unit President

Americanism Essay Contest
Class I, Best Essay in Central Division
Ava Teclaw
Sponsored by Thorp Unit 118, District 7

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Best Department Community Service Program
in Central Division
Department of Wisconsin
Kay Grosskopf, Department Chairman

LEADERSHIP

Unit Member of the Year
Cathy Wilbur
Sponsored by Appleton Unit 38, District 9

MEMBERSHIP

Department 85% Goal Award
Reaching 85% of the 2023 Dept membership goal by 3/15/2023
Department of Wisconsin
Becky Mueller, Department Chairman

Units that reached 100% of their 2023 membership goal by 11/10/2022

Bayfield Unit 49	Two Rivers Unit 165
Mt. Hope Unit 229	Tigerton Unit 239
Cross Plains Unit 245	Coleman Unit 280
Winter Unit 303	DeForest Unit 348
Birchwood Unit 379	Adell Unit 462
Saint Nazianz Unit 477	Somers Unit 552

New Unit Award – New Unit Chartered by 7/31/2023
Wild Rose Unit 374 (District 8)
Land O' Lakes Unit 464 (District 11)

POPPY

Poppy Poster Contest, Class IV
Best Poppy Poster in Central Division
Sela Meeks
Sponsored by Port Washington Unit 82, District 2

VA&R

Most Outstanding Unit VA&R Program in Central Division
Port Washington Unit 82, District 2
Diane Burkhalter, Unit President

VAVS MEETINGS PERFECT ATTENDANCE CARD

Pat (Joyce) Flanders, Hospital Representative
Tomah VA Medical Center, Tomah, WI

Sheila Frye, Hospital Representative
Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital, Madison, WI

Helene Stein, Hospital Deputy
Tomah VA Medical Center, Tomah, WI

Anna Wender, Associate Hospital Representative
Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center, Iron Mountain, MI

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SERVICE AWARD
(for Largest Increase in Active Regularly Scheduled Volunteers & Volunteer Hours)

Bonnie Jakubczyk, Hospital Representative
Zablocki Memorial VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI

Anna Wender, Associate Hospital Representative
Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center, Iron Mountain, MI



NATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

ABOVE: Bonnie Jakubczyk with PDP Linda Coppock, receiving the Volunteer Recruitment Service Award.

BELOW: 2nd District President Sandy Mack accepting the Dorothy Pearl Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program award on behalf of Van Ells Shanen Unit 82.

TOP RIGHT: 2nd District President Sandy Mack accepting the Outstanding Unit VA&R Program award on behalf of Van Ells Shanen Unit 82.

AT RIGHT: Sela Meeks from Unit 82 in District 2 won the Best Poppy Poster in Central Division for Class IV award.



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN 2024-2025 DEPARTMENT PROGRAM INTEREST FORM

Senior Vice President Becky Mueller is considering appointments for the 2024-2025 administrative year (July 2024 to July 2025). If you are interested in a department position, please complete the information below and email it to Becky Mueller at clarencandbecky@aol.com by December 15, 2023.

Name: _____ District #: _____ Unit #: _____ Email: _____

Phone: Cell: _____ Home: _____ Best time to call: _____

Preferred Program/Position (please rank up to five choices, #1 to #5):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALA in the Know (Vice Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership (Committee) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Americanism (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership (Committee) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALA Badger Girls State (Committee, 3-yr term) | <input type="checkbox"/> National Security (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WALA State Bowling Assn (Committee, 3-yr term) | <input type="checkbox"/> Office Policy (Committee, must be PDP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children & Youth/Liaison to Child Welfare Fdn (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Poppy (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constitution & Bylaws (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations (Committee) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Rules (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance (Committee, 3-yr term; resume required) | <input type="checkbox"/> VA&R (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> VA&R-Homeless Women Veterans (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Activities (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> VA&R-Christmas Gift Shop (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Activities (Vice Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> VA&R-Christmas Gift Shop (Assistant) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership (Chair) | <input type="checkbox"/> VA&R-Service to Veterans |

Describe why you are interested or qualified for this/these position(s).
List previously held positions at the unit, county, district or department level.
List current positions you hold.

LEGISLATIVE

Linda Coppock
Department Chair
lindamae4ala@gmail.com
920-851-5811

I am excited to be your Legislative Chairman this coming year. It will force me to expand my knowledge on legislative issues and the different ways we can advocate for our Veterans, active military and their families. I have some great mentors on the national level and I am excited to share with you everything I learn from them!

Donna Dillard is the National Legislative Chairman and Cathie Goth is our Central Division Legislative Committee Chair. They both will be working with us this year as we strive to promote and advocate for The American Legion's Legislative Agenda. Cathie will be sending out monthly newsletters hoping to keep us up to date with Legislative issues! She asks that we all familiarize ourselves with the www.legion.org/legislative/agenda website and all

the information available there such as The American Legion's Legislative Agenda for the 118th Congress along with the Legislative Handbook and Advocacy Toolkit.

Remember that The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary are nonpartisan, without regard to political affiliation. As stated in the Department Red Book:

"The purpose of the Legislative program is to provide information and assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members in supporting the legislative agenda of The American Legion with elected officials at all levels of government (local, state, national). All programs are greatly dependent upon proper legislation, so the Auxiliary must be well informed.

Every unit should appoint a Legislative Chair and subscribe to The American Legion Dispatch and encourage as many members as possible to subscribe. The Dispatch is published monthly by the National American Legion and is available online at [http://](http://www.legion.org/dispatch)

www.legion.org/dispatch.

For contact information and a list of officials go to: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov>. Members of Congress can also be found at www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.

Members should write to their legislators when asked to put special emphasis on a subject and send copies of the communication and responses received from legislators to the Department Legislative Chair. Responses help the American Legion Auxiliary national headquarters determine congressional opinion on Veterans' issues.

Also, please join the ALA Legislative Facebook page for the latest updates.

Contact information for:

Donna Dillard
903-870-8770
threedtaxas@gmail.com

Cathie Goth
660-351-1816
cgoth1@charter.net

MISSION IN ACTION: PARDEEVILLE UNIT 215



The American Legion Auxiliary Harry D. Jerred Unit 215 of Pardeeville presented a check to Badger Honor Flight representatives from the Madison hub. Pictured (front row, l-r): Jennifer Larson and Bonnie Felton; (back row): Erin Salmon; Randy Gundlach, Treasurer of Badger Honor Flight; Nancy Borish; Mitzi Manthey; Bonnie Seberg; Bobbie Goodman; Unit President Mary Soderlund; and Dawn Splittgerber, Inventory Director of Badger Honor Flight.

LEADERSHIP

Joyce E. Endres
Department Chair
ljendres@charter.net
608-221-1763 (h) / 608-772-1763 (c)

"We don't need a title to lead. We just need to care. People would rather follow a leader with a heart than a leader with a title." Craig Groeschel

Who have you mentored today? Remember Senior, Junior, seasoned and new members benefit from kind and sincere mentorship from YOU, a fellow member!

What or who is a mentor? A mentor is a trusted or experienced member who steps forward to help other members, chairmen or leaders. Mentors answer questions and provide guidance, training or advice about the American Legion Auxiliary and its family. Mentors are kind, supportive, helpful and respectful.

'Components of Leadership' shared by the National Leadership Team: organizational knowledge, innovation, vision, honesty, communication, openness, collaboration, integrity, enthusiasm, and commitment.

Communication/Openness/Listen: During the 2023 ALA in the Know Sessions, Leadership breakout sessions were held. We asked various questions and asked each attendee for their input. The following is input from the September 9 session. All other input will be summarized in a document posted to the Department website. Please think about if or how this input may apply to you and your unit. Have FUN working together to encourage excitement and energy between your members and the American Legion Family while serving the ALA mission.

Question 1: What encouraged or stopped you from taking on an officer position or program chairman/committee role? **Encouraged:** Encouraged by a Past Department President or another member; Mission keeps me going,

I have a passion for the organization; Believe in supporting our Veterans and family members' service; Find your passion and run with it; Good mentors help; Dual members are a great value; Can't say no; Want to carry on the family legacy; Others see your potential and encourage you to move up; The challenge; A deep thirst for knowledge. **Stopped:** Don't want to move up; I am a follower, not a leader; I enjoy serving as Chaplain; Need time to "fit it in"; Once you're there, you're always there, please mentor and rotate leaders at least every three years; Still learning; Need to sit back and watch to learn more first; Filling big shoes can be intimidating.

Question 2: What do you wish someone would have told you early on during your leadership journey? Where to find resources and info about what to do and how to do it; Answers are out there, ask a chairman, officer or department; You don't have to do it alone; Reach out to members to ask for help; Don't tell me it is easy, when it's not; Learn to share information with entire American Legion Family; Not everyone wants to help or share; How to work around obstinate people; Conflict resolution; Realize you don't know everything; Entire Legion Family has similar issues; Be encouraged to try new things to see change and excitement; Listen to members, different views help us all do a better job.

2023-24 ALA Department President Maggie Geiger wrote, "Maybe that's why our ALA emblem is yellow or gold, our members are the threads that make up the star, single threads don't look like much, but woven together they are strong and complement each other to form the beautiful star that members wear proudly!" For God and Country.

VALUE yourself, others do. A smile can turn a person's whole day around.

Please contact me if you would like to schedule a Leadership Workshop in your unit, county or district.

MISSION IN ACTION: SPOONER UNIT 12



Spoooner Unit 12 (District 12) participated in the ALA's "Give 10 to Education" school supply drive. They collected 12 backpacks of supplies plus additional construction paper, etc. A big thank you to Education Committee Chair Tiffany Parker! Supplies were delivered to Spooner Middle School.

POPPY

Kay Grosskopf
Department Chair
kkgross44@gmail.com
715-881-1843

The poppy is the ALA symbol of sacrifice and remembrance. We remember the soldiers who sacrificed everything so we can live our lives free today. Anytime you wear a poppy, it's an opportunity to start a conversation. We need to educate those who are not aware of what the poppy stands for.

First, we need poppy makers. Encourage Veterans to make poppies. Veterans who work through the ALA Poppy Shop at Zablocki get paid for the poppies they make. Everything is provided in a kit that they assemble. Auxiliary members can also purchase poppy kits from Emblem Sales and make poppies but they can't be identified as Veteran-made. We need poppies to distribute! If you need poppies, get your order in by December 15, 2023. Due to a postage increase, if you can arrange to pick up poppies

at Midwinter Conference, it would be very helpful.

Sponsor a Poppy Poster contest. There are seven classes from second grade to 12th grade including a level for special needs. There are criteria that must be followed or the poster may be removed from competition. Poppy Posters are due to this Department Chair by March 15, 2024.

There is also a Best Overall Unit Poppy Program. A typewritten narrative is due by April 1, 2024 and should not exceed 1,000 words.

Next is the Best Poppy Usage contest. If you use your poppies for other than distribution, document how they are being used and submit a report.

The Poppy Revenue award is based on the unit's income revenue in relation to the membership numbers. Make sure you send in the Unit Poppy Profit Report on time.

The Little Miss Poppy nominations are due by March 15 but don't wait! She should be keeping a scrapbook of her activities.

It's a ways off, but make plans for National Poppy Day May 24, 2024 (always the Friday before Memorial Day). Have your city or village official sign a Poppy Proclamation.

For all of the above, document your activity and take pictures! There are more details in the Program Engagement Plan (formerly Program Action Plan) available on the department website (www.amlegionaux-wi.org), along with other resources to promote the Poppy program. The national website for poppy information is <https://legion-aux.org/poppy>. Make sure you get your award applications in on time and follow the guidelines. And always wear ALA identification – be it clothing or the badge. Let people know who we are and what we stand for.

We need each unit that distributes poppies to send in their report. Nothing is nicer than getting recognized at the Division and National levels for all the time and energy we spend helping our veterans.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Bonnie Jakubczyk
Department Chair
bon6862@yahoo.com
414-531-7890

Veterans Day is a holiday dedicated to American Veterans of all wars, and will occur on Saturday, November 11. In 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I, then known as “the Great War.” The following year in many countries it was observed as Armistice Day. November 11 became a federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day

became known as Veterans Day. This is a day set aside to remember and recognize Veterans who have served or who are currently serving to protect our freedoms.

While we should thank our Veterans every day, this Veterans Day why not make it a special day for them? Some ways to do that are by checking for and attending a Veterans Day ceremony, parade, or other event in your community. If there are none, try to host an event to honor Veterans, like a dinner at your post. In addition to attending events, there are simple things you can do to make them feel appreciated – offer to help a Veteran with household chores or yardwork. Sometimes Veterans just need someone who

will spend time and listen to them.

Beyond in-person events and volunteer activities, try giving back to Veterans through kind words and artistic projects. Educate our youth about the importance of Veterans Day. Search for craft ideas online for Veterans Day. Make crafts at your unit meeting and encourage Juniors and Sons to help. A simple thank you card will go a long way. These small acts of kindness come from the heart and should brighten their day.

Veterans Day should not be the only day we celebrate Veterans, rather, it should be a jumping-off point for us to continue to **fight and advocate** for these folks at home. Be the One – listen and thank our Veterans this Veterans Day.

HISTORY

Mary K. Petrie
Department Historian
mmrtpetrie@charter.net

The year, 1919... America was recovering from WWI, a nickel purchased a loaf of bread, a first-class stamp rose to three cents, the first Wisconsin NFL team – the Green Bay Packers was founded, women won the right to vote, new inventions produced pop-up toasters and short wave radios, The American Legion was formed, and the Women’s Auxiliary to The American Legion was born.

Stepping into the present ... America is still dealing with war and conflicts, prices have soared, the Packers are NFL champs, voters are bombarded with political choices, technology soars beyond imagination, but The American Legion Family remains dedicated to the men and women who served and continue to serve For God and Country.

History is defined as the study of change over time, and the American Legion Auxiliary is steeped in rich history. Not long ago, we celebrated a century of service, which undeniably describes the ALA mission and Service Not Self ideal. The seeds were planted by determined women long ago, ever growing to meet changing needs. Times change, but the men and women of The American Legion Family remain unwavering in their commitment to serve those who served.

History shows the road traveled, and as the journey continues, another chapter

is added. We are living history. Our story has been reported and recorded for future generations, showing the who, what, when, where and why of the organization. It is up to us to steadfastly do the same.

Whether you are an elected historian or have graciously stepped forward to write the history, encourage and remind members to provide information. While writing intimidates some, a few bullet points, a paragraph, or a jotted note on a napkin works just fine, and it doesn’t matter how small or large the project or event. It is all important!

Consider dusting off an old history or reviewing past minutes. Take a moment during a meeting to step back in time. It’s fun to reminisce, remember old friends, and relive special times ... and who knows, maybe there’s a project or event to retry!

History is much more than names and dates and could be compared to the domino effect. Tip that first domino and the rest follow suit – a chain reaction. Share pride in achievements with potential members, which will renew current membership enthusiasm, and inspire achieving goals, while strengthening and developing future leaders.

Check the next Unit Mailing and website. There’s more in store!

While Enhancing the Lives of our Veterans, Military and their Families, One Day at a Time, remember to record and report, as together we write this chapter of Wisconsin ALA history!

VA&R — HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS

Pat Smith
Department Chair
pms112ws@gmail.com
608-786-4441

A CRY FOR HELP

“I just don’t know what to do or where to turn anymore. It seems like if something is going to go wrong or happen to someone, I’m the one who gets pegged. After next week, I will have only one part-time job as the company is down-sizing. How will I pay the rent or any of the other bills? I have a doctor’s appointment in two days and I think he wants to do surgery. It is just too much. I need a break.”

This is not an uncommon set of circumstances, but there is hope and help available. The most immediate help comes in the form of the many programs available at the VA. These programs are available to all Veterans, but women Veterans have not used those programs as readily as male Veterans. The reasons are many but a major one is the issue of pride. Once the female Veteran makes a commitment to the help being offered by the VA, time becomes the enemy. The Veteran may become accepted into a program, but there is a time lapse between that acceptance and the authorization of payment.

Now ALA-Wisconsin’s Home-

less Women Veterans Grant Fund can help. We may not fix all of the problems, but we can help with some of the more urgent issues. Within a couple days of receiving an application, the committee will make a decision and inform the applicant or Veteran’s sponsor of the decision. If positive, a check is sent to a third party and the applicant can breathe a little easier. We matter in that crucial time crunch. The ALA’s Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund is the candle of hope in those desperate times. You can support this program by mailing a check to department headquarters, noting “Homeless Women Veterans” in the memo field.

VA&R — DIRECTOR OF HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

Sue Hembrook
Department Chair
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Kudos to all for your support of our Veterans in the VA Hospitals and Veterans Homes. Our volunteers, for the most part, are able to serve the Veterans in these facilities in person once again. However, they cannot fully perform their duties without your assistance. They distribute essential and nonessential items to our Veterans through your monetary and in-kind donations. The Hospital Wish

Lists are published in the October Unit Mailing. Please use these lists for collecting or purchasing needed items for these facilities. Each facility is unique and has different needs. If your Unit, Post or Squadron comes up with an idea to collect items, please contact the ALA Hospital Representative from that facility to be sure they can still use that item, especially as it gets later in our year. You all are so very generous but the storage spaces available are very limited, and when these lists are published you flood our facilities with these items. Thank you!

Please know that all of your dona-

tions, whether monetary or in-kind, are truly appreciated by our Veterans. Our Hospital Representatives and Deputies are so very grateful for your support as they then have needed items to be enjoyed by the residents of our facilities. Please know that even though some of these items may be small, they do bring a ray of sunshine to the residents.

Thank you for your support and assistance!! If you have any questions, you can contact myself or the Reps or Deps of a specific facility. All information for each facility is listed in the ALA Department of Wisconsin Red Book.

VA&R — CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP

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Department Chair
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Time has flown by again and it is time for Christmas Gift Shop season again! We are excited that we can bring this great program to our Veterans in some of the long-term care facilities once again.

For those who are not familiar with Christmas Gift Shop, this program began a long time ago. It allows Veterans in long-term care facilities to select gifts to send to their loved ones at Christmas time at no cost to them. The program has changed a lot over the years, but there is one thing that will never change – our commitment to caring for our Veterans and their families!

These past couple years, our Veterans in long-term care facilities spent many long and lonely hours with no visits from family or friends. They were over-joyed when they heard that the ALA Christmas Gift Shop would be available to them again this year. It allows them to feel connected to their loved ones and gives them something positive to focus on.

The 2023 version of Christmas Gift Shop will continue our long-standing tradition of providing gifts as we have in the past. But bringing Christmas Gift Shop to

our Veterans does take time and preparation. Many hours are spent browsing Amazon.com for gifts that can be selected for loved ones of all ages. Once our selection of available gifts is complete, items are photographed, and a “catalog” created for the Veteran to view and select their gifts. Veterans make their selections and items are ordered, sorted, and readied for our annual wrapping day. A group of dedicated Legion Family members gather to wrap the gifts and pack them for shipping. A trip to the Post Office completes this phase of the project.

Many times, we receive cards and notes from family members, telling us how excited they were to receive a gift chosen by their loved one. Family members are pleasantly surprised to receive their beautifully wrapped gifts, knowing their Veteran was able to select it especially for them. These personal notes are a wonderful reminder of how important this program is to so many.

The cost of gifts, wrapping and shipping are all totally covered by your generous donations. Our Christmas Gift Shop program may only last a couple months each year, but your unit can make it a year-round project by sending in your donations, earmarked for Christmas Gift Shop, whenever you have funds available. Thank you for supporting this great program!

VA&R — SERVICE TO VETERANS

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Department Chairman
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Service to Veterans means making a difference in the lives of Veterans, their families, their caregivers and the communities where they live. Thank you to all the volunteers in the VA facilities helping

Veterans on a regular schedule.

But not everyone can provide direct service to Veterans in a VA facility due to time or location. The Service to Veterans program focuses on direct service to any Veteran not in a VA medical center and who is not related to the member providing the service.

We have other opportunities to help Veterans by visiting with them

or helping a caregiver with their responsibilities. You could take them shopping, bring them a meal, or even just sometimes pay for their meal in a restaurant. There are many programs you can volunteer in that honor Veterans or provide items for them like Quilts of Valor. Don’t forget to share your volunteer hours with your Auxiliary unit so they can be documented and consolidated at higher levels.



Karl Stuvengen
Department
Commander

★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★

**Leadership and Mentorship:
Who's watching?**

One of the basic tenets of leadership and mentorship is to take care of your actions, because you never know who is looking to you as an example of how to act.

In Harry Chapin's hit song, *Cat's in the Hat*, the father discovers much too late that while there were planes to catch and bills to pay, his son was watching and learning from the priorities and actions of the father. The father's final realization that *my boy was just like me* is a stark reminder to all of us that we only have a limited amount of time to teach and mentor those who follow us. They will learn, one way or another and if we fail to give good mentorship, we may not like the outcome.

A mistake sometimes made by leaders is that we get so wrapped up in our own duties, that we forget that the most important part of our job is to train those that come after us. The old adage "Don't forget where you came from" should

remind Legionnaires that even though we may have moved on to higher office or our title now includes the word "Past", we still bear a great responsibility to that next generation of leaders to show them how to be successful.

We can all agree that the most important part of The American Legion is the Post. Without strong and vibrant Posts, there is nothing for higher level officers to support, and our organization as we know it, does not exist. While we may no longer be "in charge" at the Post, those that are look to past officers for guidance and help. There is no better resource for a new Post officer than those who have held that office before them. But as we learn in Chapin's song, it is our actions and deeds that will most affect that guidance. So, ask yourself questions like: "Is my Post 100+% in membership?" "Are all Post reports and documents being properly filed?" "Are our programs being carried out in the most effective manner?" "Am I doing all I can to make my Post as active and successful as it was when I was an officer?"

Remember, you didn't do it by yourself, and they can't either. So, lead from the front, always mentor, and RECRUIT THE NEXT YOU!



Allen Watry
SAL Detachment
Commander

★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★

Has it already been two months since my last article? Time is flying!! And the Wisconsin Sons of the American Legion have been very busy. I have had a busy two months traveling around to meet squadrons and participating in all the great activities you are doing. Keep up the great work!! You are amazing!!

One trip I want to highlight is National Convention. The Detachment of Wisconsin was well represented with 11 Delegates in attendance. We were presented with several awards including Detachment All Time High Membership, the Most New Squadrons for 2022-2023 (10 new squadrons), and Best Squadron History Book (Squadron 375). Also, three Wisconsin generated Resolutions were passed over the weekend. And I will never forget all the

energy around Dan Seehafer becoming the Legion National Commander. What a great Convention for Wisconsin.

I do need to touch on a couple of business related items before I close. First, Squadrons please continue to process 2024 Memberships. We are currently ranked 4th in the Nation for Membership (% of goal for 2023/2024) so we are off to a strong start. Hopefully everyone's goal is to be at or above 100% before the end of the year. Second, do not forget to update the Detachment with any changes to your Squadron Leadership, Dues, or other Squadron Information. And finally, do not hesitate to reach out to the Detachment Officers. We love to visit and participate in all the great activities Squadrons are doing. And we are here to help and support the squadrons of Wisconsin.

Until next time, for God and Country,

Allen Watry
Detachment Commander



Maggie Geiger
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"911, What's your emergency?" is a phrase we all understand and hope we never have to use. Right now, across our nation there is an epidemic that is happening that many of us have been or will be touched by, at some point in our lives.

We've all heard the statistics that there are approximately 20 Veterans that die by suicide every day, but those numbers do not include the family members or friends that cannot cope with the loss and take their own lives as well.

Those of us who have been touched with the loss of a loved one continually say to ourselves, what did I miss, I should have called more, I should have been there more ... it's the should of, and why didn't I, that remain with you.

Be The One Initiative, gives all of us the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Veterans, military, their families, and our own ALA members.

Get involved – this is another way to work the ALA mission. Call members of the TAL family that you haven't seen lately. When people are not themselves, make a point to talk with them. Perhaps the person needs to see a friendly face, a smile, someone to listen to them, or just a simple hug, can make a difference in someone's life.

The PTSD Coach app was designed for Veterans experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. You do not have to be in treatment for PTSD to use the app, but it is not a replacement for therapy. Remember, if you need to speak to someone, dial 988 and press 1 to be connected to someone who will listen and help.

The PTSD Family Coach app is for family members of people with PTSD. Both apps are free and available; <https://mobile.va.gov> or at the App store. It is time to remove the stigma associated with asking for or seeking help.

Both National Commander Dan Seehafer and National President Lisa Williamson have joined together to bring awareness to the American Legion family by embracing "Be The One" as their focus for the 2023-2024 year.

Let all of us bring awareness to our TAL families and communities, and "BE THE ONE"!



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

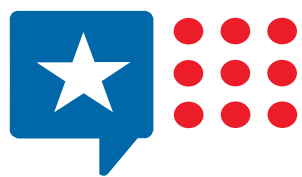
★ LEGION RIDERS ★

This past weekend was the Wisconsin Legion Riders 'Fall Ride to Camp American Legion'. This tradition was started many years ago by Ken 'Rhino' and Ann Rynes. The purpose is simple, to raise donations for Camp. This same weekend in September is the Tomahawk Fall Color Ride, which is a motorcycle rally in the northern part of the state. It is a natural draw for those of us rolling on two (or three) wheels. Why not combine with the Color Ride a reason for Legion Riders to come to camp when many are already in the Northwoods for the weekend. Two key things to remember from our purpose are: 'We are a group of American Legion Family Members who ride for a cause.' and 'To provide a social atmosphere for American Legion members who share the same interests.'

On Saturday, September 16, Legion Riders from almost all 12 districts across the state gathered at a gas station in Tomahawk, WI. Forty bikes made the trek from that gas station to Camp, if you've never seen that number of bikes rolling up the road it definitely draws attention. Saturday was no different, we didn't even get out of the parking lot and another motorcyclist walked over to ask us what was going on. Once at Camp we had lunch and then started the check presentations. All total at this writing over \$21,800 was donated for replacing one of the pontoons. Many Legion Riders also made it a long weekend and stayed at Camp. They enjoyed the peace and camaraderie that is the secret power of Camp. Campfires were one of the highlights of the day and whether too much wood was thrown on or if things got a little silly, laughs were prominent! There was sadness also, when on Friday we found out about the passing of Ann Rynes, the Matriarch of the event we were there to support. A few weeks from now we will ride another mission, a mission of Honor, to escort Ann to her final resting place. Godspeed Ann, your weary body is now at rest, and we have the watch. If you have any questions about the Wisconsin Legion Riders don't hesitate to contact me: Corey Doehrmann/State Director, cell 262-305-0305 or email at alrawi.director@gmail.com.



Ann Rynes



Veterans Crisis Line

DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

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