



## FIRST DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MN

# AUGUST 2025

### Legion Contacts

#### Commander

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#### Membership

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#### Chaplain

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### VICE—COMMANDER INFORMATION

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**Area Three** - Sy Fix  
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**Area Four** - Mary Hanson  
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### IMPORTANT DATES

August 7, 2025—  
Purple Heart Day

August 10, 2025—The  
First District Picnic—  
see page 6 for infor-  
mation.

August 22—28th,  
2025—The American  
Legion National Con-  
vention in Tampa Flori-  
da. Keep everyone  
traveling to and from in  
your thoughts and  
prayers.

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### MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AVAILIABLE

Kasson Post 333 has a over supply of medical equipment which includes hospital beds with mattresses, wheel chairs (both regular and elec-  
tric), motorized scooters and much more. If inter-  
ested please call Richard Denny at 507—259—2081  
for more information.

## Greetings Area 4,

Hello Legionnaires,

I am back as the area 4 vice commander. I will be contacting each post to set up my first visit. My goal is to make two visits this year. I look forward to hearing the great things the posts are currently doing and what is coming up in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any reason. I look forward to working with Commander Medinnus and helping him achieve the goals he has set forth for this year. Remember, everything we do, we can do together.

Mary Hanson  
Area 4 Vice Commander  
[mfhanson52@charter.net](mailto:mfhanson52@charter.net)  
507-440-3606

## IMPORTANT INFO

**The district needs your help. We need younger members to step up and accept an officer position before all the experience to help mentor them is gone.. Call Jim Kellogg for more information at 507-438-1123**

## FROM AREA ONE

Well, we have come to a new year with a new commander and most of the officers had switched positions, to make up the shortage of members not stepping up. Well, we have a new department commander as well. The message was clear we are going g back to The Basics which is a good thing that the American legion starts getting back to helping our fellow veterans and making sure that the community is in our day to day lives. Remember we are our brother's keeper, and we need to remember that we can't make it through the bad times and get things done by holding grudges. We as officers had made the choice to become officers and put the American legion first and do what is best for the legion not what is best for our personal endeavors . As the area one vice commander I will assure each and every member that if you have any questions and need finding the answers I will help find them. I also will remind you that this year we made changes to the district by laws which states the district will help solve post problems, this does not mean we will solve them for you, but we will help you going through the process you need to solve the problems. Lastly as it was many times before we will have an y bulling and we will stop picking on other members remember the members are the reason we strive. The by-laws states if you have a dd214 even if you only did basic you can join; we already have people down grading us we do not need to do it to ourselves. Thank you, God bless our troops  
Area1 Vice Commander  
Mark A Maloney

## FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Good news. We are starting a new membership campaign and membership challenge. The 1st District is off the goose egg, and we have received our first 5 points. Only 5 districts out of ten are off the goose egg. We were the first district to get all of our officer's lists in. And we surpassed 25% of memberships turned in. Well done.

As we start this new season, please do not forget to work on membership renewals for 2025. It is very important to reach the 100% goal if at all possible. When you do not reach 100% your post goal is lowered each year. That is, there are fewer and less members. Pretty soon we will cease to exist. Please do your part.

The 2025 membership reports will come out only once a month now. Once all of the districts get their goals into Misty, we will see them weekly again.

Please reach out to me with any questions you may have. I am here to serve you.  
We are better together.

Mary Hanson  
1st District Membership Director  
[mfhanson52@charter.net](mailto:mfhanson52@charter.net)



## FROM YOUR COMMANDER DESK

Good Afternoon 1st District! It's a new Legion Family year....New Leadership....New Challenges...

Changes will be happening this year.....a lot of different things are going on. Please be aware that we are trying different ideas.

We can't live on last year's success...we have to roll up our sleeves and get back at it again . What was done last year was fantastic...but to match that result we have to work that much harder this year.

It would be appreciated if we could get maximum attendance at the 1st District Event...the District Picnic at Victory Park adj Blooming Prairie HS...go down Main Street in Blooming Prairie and follow the road until see the HS...we will be located on the South End of the Park.in Blooming Prairie on August 10th at Noon...

At that time more information will be rolled out on what will be happening this upcoming year from all the District Leaders...

See you there!

Commander Brian  
1st District Legion Commander

## BE AWARE OF THIS SCAM

Good morning NE Region,

I saw something on my local news this morning, where Veterans are at risk of being scammed. My apologies if you are already aware of this, but I wanted to be sure we can spread the word for those that may not be aware

The victims are receiving e-mails, phone calls and letters that appear to be from Department of Veterans Affairs. They claim that the recipient owes money because the department overpaid some benefits by mistake and they want the victims to pay it back. If our members do or do not think they owe money to the VA they should visit the VA's website at [Manage Your VA Debt For Benefit Overpayments And Copay Bills | Veterans Affairs](#) so that they can check the status of their accounts.

## CHALAIN ADVICE FOR AUGUST

### Cultivating Hope in Uncertain Times

The world around us can sometimes feel uncertain. News headlines remind us daily of challenges—global and local, personal and collective. Yet, as people of faith (however you define that term), we are not called to despair but to hope.

Hope is not naive optimism; it is a deep-rooted conviction that light can emerge from darkness, that healing is possible, and that love endures. In August, nature itself models hope: seeds that were sown in spring have grown and flourished, and even as plants begin to slow, there is the promise of fruit, of nourishment, and of new life to come.

Take heart from this. If you are struggling, know that hope can be cultivated—even in small, quiet ways. Share kindness with a stranger. Write a note of encouragement to a friend. Pray, meditate, or simply breathe deeply and trust that, even in uncertainty, you are moving toward greater wholeness.

### August Traditions and Spiritual Practices

Many faith traditions observe special days in August, offering unique opportunities for reflection and celebration. For example, some Christian communities observe the Feast of the Transfiguration, a time to remember moments of revelation and transformation. Others may celebrate harvest festivals, gathering in gratitude for the gifts of the earth.

Whether or not you observe a specific tradition, consider creating your own rituals this month:

Take a gratitude walk, listing aloud things for which you are thankful as you go.

Gather with loved ones for a meal, blessing the food and each other.

Mark the end of a summer day with a candle, silently offering a hope or prayer for tomorrow.

Volunteer your time or resources to someone in need, embodying compassion in action.

Such practices, while simple, can become anchors in our lives, grounding us in what matters and connecting us to something greater than ourselves.

### A Blessing for August

As you move through this month, may you delight in the abundance that surrounds you. May you have the courage to face change with openness, and the wisdom to release what must pass. May hope take root in your heart, blossoming in unexpected places. And may you know, deep in your being, that you are cherished and never alone.

Let August be more than just a turning of the calendar; let it be a time of spiritual deepening, of gratitude, and of gentle transformation. Whether you are basking in summer's glow or preparing for the rhythms of fall, may you walk with grace, guided by love, and sustained by hope.

And, as always, know that I am here for you—in times of joy and challenge, in seasons of growth and waiting. If you wish to connect, to pray together, or simply to share your story, my door is open. Wishing you a blessed and beautiful August.

**HELP NEEDED - PLEASE CHECK THIS OUT AND  
VOLUNTEER IF YOU CAN**

State Legion Junior Division II Baseball Tournament in Hayfield August 8-10. Hayfield has the honor hosting the 2025 MN American Legion Junior Division II State Tournament August 8-11, The organizers would like to have a color guard for the opening ceremony of each game, as well as two Legion members to greet the players of each team as they are announced during the pre-game.

The Hayfield Post is taking care of five of time spots and would like assistance with the other seven. We are looking for a full color guard plus two members to welcome the players of each team. In appreciation, we will give each member a coupon for a free burger basket and beverage at the post,

**Times available:**

Friday, August 8th: 12:30pm, 3:00pm.

Saturday, August 9th: 11:30 am, 2:00 pm, 4:30 pm, 7:00 pm.

Sunday, August 10th: 11:00 am.

**Post 330 has these games covered:**

Friday 10:00 am, 5:30 pm (opening ceremony ceremony), 6:30

Saturday 9:00am. game

Sunday 1:30 pm championship game.

If you are able to take one of these games, please contact Vince Reynolds, Hayfield Post Commander at 507-251-6919

Thank you

Vince Reynolds, Commander  
Hayfield American Legion  
Rothie Post 330  
Cell:507-251-6919







Sunday, August 10, 2025 at 12:00 PM

The First District Picnic at Victory Park, adj Blooming Prairie High School. Go down Main Street in Blooming Prairie and follow the road until see the High School, we will be located on the South End of the Park.in Blooming Prairie. Bring a dish to pass, your eating utensils and your refreshment. This is for the entire First District Family.



## Auxiliary Contacts

### Hello Mighty 1<sup>st</sup> District

#### President

Wanda Prescher  
4826 Tee Court SW  
Rochester, MN 55902  
507-254-0304  
w.prescher1951@gmail.com

Hello to everyone as we start a new auxiliary year! I hope everyone is ready for an exciting year! I know I am!

Thank you to those members who have accepted a District Chairmanship. I am still in need of a few more. We need to get more involvement in the 1<sup>st</sup> District, if we are going to survive as a district. We need more than 5-6 members working the district. Chairmanships are not that demanding or time consuming, you can do from home and your computer, attend Mid-Winter and District Convention.

I look forward to working and visiting with our units and members this year. I want to hear of the good thing and the concerns our units and members have for this new year. Don't hesitate to call me 507-254-0304 or email [1stdistpresident@gmail.com](mailto:1stdistpresident@gmail.com)

#### Secretary

**Serving Those Who Served is my theme for 2025-2026**

**The Poppy is my symbol.**

**My project will be to raise \$5000 for a Golf Putting Green at the Preston Veterans Home.**

I will have more info to give to you from the gentleman in Lake City who is working with the Veterans Home on this project hopefully next month.

#### Membership

Karla (Sunshine) Maloney  
845 54th Ave E  
Winona, MN 55987  
507 459 5962  
928 sunshine@gmail.com

Congratulations to our Chatfield Unit 197f for sponsoring Senaa Gobena who was 1 of our 2 Minnesota Girls Nation Senators in Washington, DC for Girls Nation 2025 session.

Congratulations to our Peterson Unit 526 for sponsoring Audyn Molesky, who was the Minnesota Girls State Secretary of State. These girls did not come from 1<sup>st</sup> District, but girls that had the desire to go and could not find sponsorship. Thank you to our Chatfield and Peterson unit members for sending these young ladies to Girls State!

Congratulations to Matthew Watters from Stewartville Post 164 for being the Minnesota Boys State Samsung Scholarship finalist for 2025! Good luck on the National level!

#### Treasurer

Tonia Betterman  
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All members should be aware that dues will increase \$5.00 for the 2026-2027 year. This is due to decreasing membership and the rising cost of everything today. We are getting new members, but not fast enough to offset the members we are losing. Everyone needs to think about how they can increase or go about keeping their membership this coming year.

Don't forget our District Picnic, Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup> in Blooming Prairie at noon! We want to see some new faces from the district! Just bring a dish to pass.

**Department President Robin's Project is the North Star Honor Flight Network, her Symbol is the Poppy and her theme is Promoting our Mission by Working our Programs for 2025-2026.**

Wanda Prescher 2025-2026 1<sup>st</sup> District President

Dear 1st District Members,

I wanted to reach out one final time to thank everyone who was able to attend the Department Convention this past week. It was wonderful to see you all and connect in person.

During the convention, a vote was passed to increase the dues sent to Department from \$30 to \$35, effective with the 2027 membership year. Please note that this change does not impact the 2026 dues, but it's worth considering as you begin planning for 2027.

If you have any questions regarding this change, feel free to contact me.

Thank you all once again for your support throughout my term as District President. It has been an honor to serve, and I look forward to continuing our work together under the leadership of President Wanda Prescher and her team.

With appreciation,

Michelle Weaver

1st District President 2023-2025

## RIGHT

First District leadership for 2025-2026

American Legion Family—Commander

Brian and Auxiliary President Wanda .

Congratulations! First District American Legion Family members now need to get behind them and show our support for a successful year! Again, congratulations!







### Greetings Legion Family Members

Hello everyone, I'm Regan McElroy and I'm the First District Honorary Auxiliary Jr President. I hope everyone had a great summer. I have talked to President Wanda and she is also doing her project of the Preston Veterans Home. I am going to continue my project from last year, which is the recreational fund for the Preston Veterans Home.

On the weekend of August 8—10, 2025 I will be attending Jr Fun Weekend at Legionville. It is a shame that they almost had to cancel this event this year because of a lack of attendance. As Jr members we need to attend more of these events through out the year. There as to be more Jr's in Minnesota than show up. Let's pass the word for members to show up.

Regan McElroy—First District Honorary Jr President

### FROM YOUR HONORAY AUXILIARY



Hi, I am Regan McElroy, I am the new Honorary Junior President of the First District American Legion Auxiliary. I would like to give an introduction to the District. I am 12 years old. I live in Riceville, Iowa with my mom (Missy) my Dad (Joe), my sister (Taylor), and I also have an older sister (Melanie). I play basketball, softball and volleyball. In my spare time, I enjoy hanging out with my friends and going shopping.

My project this year in the Outdoor Recreation Activities Fund for the Preston Veterans Home. The project is to help take the veterans hunting, fishing and ect. I would like to than everyone who has donated so far. Remember that the check needs to be made out to the First District American Legion Auxiliary and in the memo line put – Honorary Jr Presidents project.

Regan McElroy - First District Auxiliary Honorary Jr President

# SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION NEWS



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## EAST SIDE VICE COMMANDER

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## WEST SIDE VICE COMMANDER

Open

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## Sgt at ARMS

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## FROM YOUR COMMANDER



Greetings District Legion Family,

I hope you are all having a great summer; it is hard to believe it is already August!

I am ecstatic to report that District 1 was one of only three districts in Minnesota to make goal for 2025 and has officially ended the 2024-25 membership year in 3rd Place! This is very commendable considering our goal of 1,743 paid members was the second highest in Detachment, and a 73-member increase from where we ended 2024.

Great job everyone and let's keep the momentum going!

Many of the 2025-26 membership packets have been handed out. If your squadron does not have theirs, they will be available at the District Legion Family Picnic in Blooming Prairie on August 10th. If you cannot make it to the picnic, or would like to get your packet before then, please reach out to Greg Lemmer, Brian Tomashek or me.

The district leadership is challenging every squadron to be off the "goose egg" by September 15th. We can do this!

That is all I have for now. Remember, if your squadron is planning an event, please let us know.

Josh Erickson  
SAL District Commander

Commander:	Josh Erickson (Winona)
East Vice-Commander:	Brian Tomashek (Winona)
West Vice-Commander:	OPEN
Finance Officer:	Gary Weaver (La Crescent)
Adjutant:	Dave Bilderback (Rochester)
Membership Director:	Greg Lemmer (Winona)
Chaplain:	Brian Tomashek (Winona)
Sargeant-at-Arms:	Greg Lemmer (Winona)
Parliamentarian:	Gary Weaver (La Crescent)
Historian:	OPEN

# SAL 1<sup>st</sup> District

## Membership Summary as of 7/28/25

The 1<sup>st</sup> District comes in at 3rd place out of 10 Districts as it pertains to 2025 membership. We did hit the 100% mark for 2025 memberships. Thanks for all the hard work from each and every squad. The bar has been raised for 2026. Are you ready, which squadron will be first to hit 100%?

### Membership goals:

Districts	2024 Results	2025 Goal	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st District	1670	1743	1745	100.11%	3
2nd District	1313	1385	1225	88.45%	9
3rd District	2184	2256	2247	99.60%	4
4th District	410	422	410	97.16%	5
5th District	349	365	318	87.12%	10
6th District	1631	1693	1632	96.40%	6
7th District	902	938	995	106.08%	1
8th District	489	509	479	94.11%	8
9th District	879	927	977	105.39%	2
10th District	1637	1699	1632	96.06%	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11464</b>	<b>11937</b>	<b>11660</b>	<b>97.68%</b>	

## Squadron Summary

Increased percentage of improvement year over year.

2023 at this same time was 88.93%

2024 at this same time was 94.65%

2025 at this same time was 97.59

2026 I am confident that we will surpass the 97.59 % by the end of May 2026. This will continue our year over year improvements.

Several membership packets have been in the hands of some squadrons for weeks. We need to get those memberships turned in. On-line is the best method if you're able to do so. There should be NO goose eggs after September 15<sup>th</sup>

## To All Squadrons of District One,

I hope this message finds each of you in good health and high spirits as we continue our collective mission of honoring our veterans, supporting our communities, and upholding the values of The American Legion Family.

Today, I'm writing to stress the critical importance of submitting membership renewals, and new applications early in the membership year. As many of you are aware, we're currently seeing what we often refer to as "goose eggs" or — zeros — next to several squadrons when it comes to renewals and new member submissions. These early returns are absolutely vital to District-level planning and the momentum we carry into the new membership year.

This isn't just about numbers; it's about setting a tone. Early membership submissions show vitality, commitment, and leadership. Our detachment and national leadership pay close attention to those initial reports, and strong early activity reflects positively on every one of us in District One.

Commander Erickson, East Vice Commander Brian Tomashek, and I all recognize and deeply appreciate the work that each squadron does. However, we are unified in emphasizing that getting memberships submitted earlier — rather than later — is more than a best practice, it's a necessity. It boosts morale, increases our visibility at the state level, and improves our ability to secure resources and support throughout the entire year.

Let's make it our shared goal to get off the goose egg as fast as possible — not just to meet quotas but to set a standard of excellence for the rest of the districts. If your squadron has renewals or new members ready to go, please prioritize sending those applications in immediately, again on line is best.

New this year, are \$100.00 awards and plaques for 1<sup>st</sup> @ goal, and highest % of increase. There will also be a random drawing and a \$100.00 award given to one squadron of all squadrons who turn in a consolidated report. The winners will also be noted in our district newsletter and the state Legionnaire paper.

I also want to remind you about the Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) Membership Program—a convenient and cost-effective option that frees you from the yearly dues cycle.

Why consider PUFL?

- **No More Annual Dues:** Pay once and never worry about renewals again.
- **One-Time Investment:** Lock in your rate and avoid future increases in dues.
- **Lifetime Recognition:** PUFL members receive a distinctive lifetime membership card and are recognized for their lasting support.
- **Continued Support:** Your PUFL status ensures uninterrupted membership and supports essential programs year-round.
- **Peace of Mind:** Should anything happen, PUFL membership guarantees your legacy of support to the organization continues without interruption.



**DIRECTOR - Wesley Halverson**  
**524 Milrose Cir**  
**Albert Lea, MN 56007**  
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**VICE DIRECTOR - CHUCK STONE**  
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**SGT at ARMS - Gene Luedke**  
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**EMAIL - gene.luedke@hotmail.com**

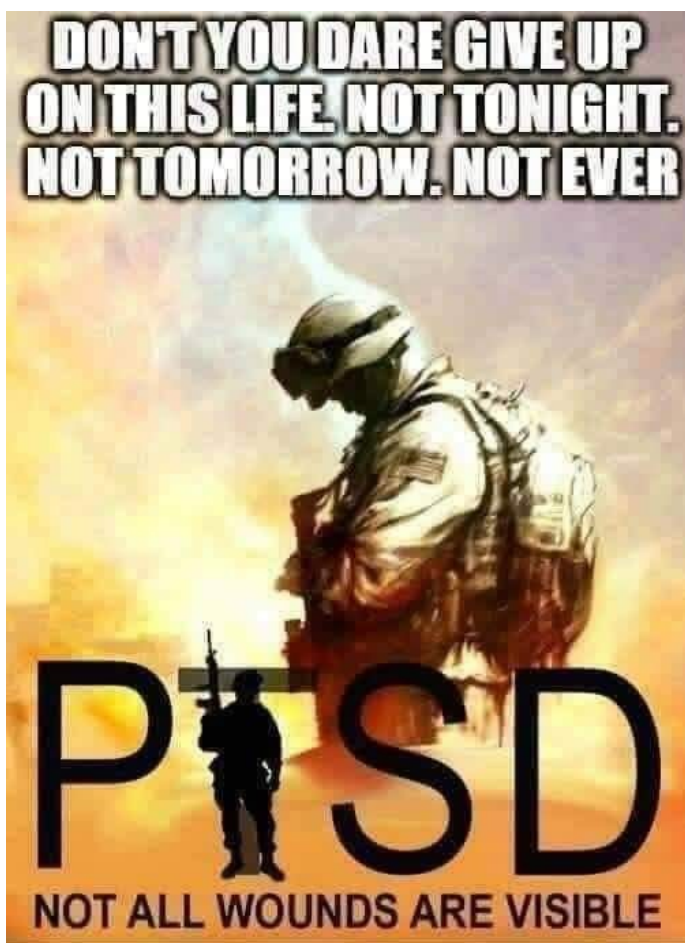
**SECRETARY - TONIA BETTERMANN**  
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**PHONE—507 —456—2315**  
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**CHAPLAIN - JILL REED**

**HISTORIAN - Karen “Sassy” Nay - Winona**





## An app for on line mental health

<https://>

[www.facebook.com/100019040483031/posts/1054342938543712/?](https://www.facebook.com/100019040483031/posts/1054342938543712/?sfnsn=mo&mibextid=LROouL)

[sfnsn=mo&mibextid=LROouL](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.kttc.com/2023/01/17/veterans-crisis-now-eligible-free-care-nationwide/%3foutputType=amp) **Veter-**  
**ans in crisis now eligible for free**  
**care nationwide** <https://>

[www.google.com/amp/s/](https://www.google.com/amp/s/)

[www.kttc.com/2023/01/17/veterans-](https://www.kttc.com/2023/01/17/veterans-crisis-now-eligible-free-care-nationwide/%3foutputType=amp)  
[crisis-now-eligible-free-care-](https://www.kttc.com/2023/01/17/veterans-crisis-now-eligible-free-care-nationwide/%3foutputType=amp)  
[nationwide/%3foutputType=amp](https://www.kttc.com/2023/01/17/veterans-crisis-now-eligible-free-care-nationwide/%3foutputType=amp)

New resources are available for American Legion Family members to use in support of the **[“Be the One” initiative](#)** to reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

The web page ([betheone.org](https://betheone.org)) has been updated with a variety of resources. Among them:

**A set of brochures available for download.** One brochure is a PDF that can be used to educate agencies with mental health services, community partners, local government leaders and others about Be the One. The other brochure is a Word document that can be downloaded and customized for posts to use at suicide awareness events. The entire back page of the trifold is intentionally left blank (other than directions, which can be deleted) so that posts can fill it with local resources.

**Branding materials:** A variety of approved American Legion Be the One promotional materials that posts can use to promote the initiative.

**Content, including the special two-part magazine series on Be the One.** The series includes stories and snippets about how American Legion members and posts are actively participating in events geared toward reducing the stigma associated with mental health counseling.

**Video links:** Vimeo playlist includes videos that can be downloaded and played while offline. They can be shared on social media, posted to the web and played at post events.

Additionally, headquarters staff has created [a QR Code](#) for the Be the One page. This can be used to direct others to find information and resources related to the campaign.

How to scan a QR code:

1. Open the Camera app on your phone.
2. Make sure you are using the rear facing camera.
3. Hold your device so the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app.
4. Once steady, your device will recognize the QR code and show a notification.
5. Tap the notification to open the link.



**Glenville  
American Legion  
Post 264**



**SAL**

**4 Person Best Shot**

**Sunday, August 10, 2025**

**1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start**

**Noon Registration • Dinner at 5:00 p.m.**

*On Course Games with Prizes*

**Open to the Public • Limited number of riding carts**

**FUNDS RAISED TO  
SUPPORT AREA COMMUNITY  
AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**



**GREEN LEA GOLF COURSE • 101 Richway Drive • Albert Lea, MN 56007 • (507) 373-1061**

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**CALL PRO SHOP TO RESERVE CARTS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Up Your 4-Some: \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry \$80 per person**

*Includes: golf, cart and dinner*

**Dinner only \$15 per person**

**IF QUESTIONS CONTACT:**

**Green Lea - 507-373-1061**

**Scott Kallberg - 507-383-6483**

**Return to Green Lea OR mail to AMERICAN LEGION, POST 264, 331 W. Main St., Glenville, MN 56036**

**Checks Payable to SAL Post 264**

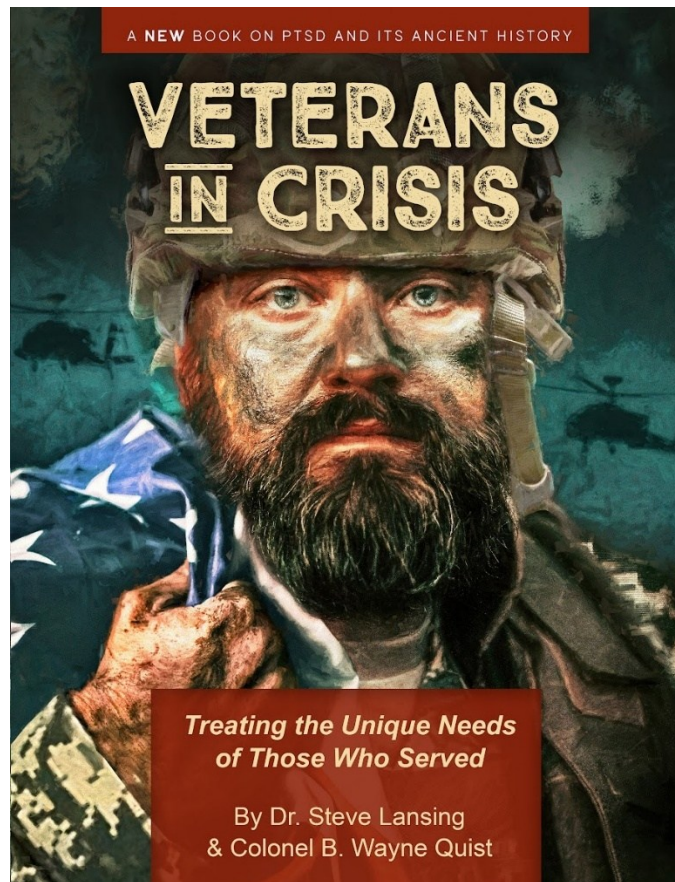




## VETERANS EMPOWERED INC.

SERVING AND SAVING VETERAN LIVES

*We provide free books and free PTSD therapy for disabled veterans in our Rochester clinical office.*



**PLEASE HELP WITH A CONTRIBUTION TO RAISE \$50,000 TO PRINT  
10,000 ADDITIONAL COPIES OF OUR BOOK**

## **LEGION RIDERS**

### **ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

FIRST SUNDAY EACH MONTH 9AM—12 PM

\$12.00 AT THE DOOR

BREAKFAST INCLUDES: EGGS, SAUSAGE, BISQUITS & GRAVY,  
COFFEE, MILK OR ORANGE JUICE AND  
ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKES

### **PROCEEDS GO TO THE VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT**

AUSTIN AMERICAN LEGION POST 91

809 12TH ST SW, AUSTIN MN

## **AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS POST 91**

### **Winona American Legion**

#### **SAL Squadron 9**

#### **2025 Chicken Q Dates**

January 4	SAL Chicken Q
February 22	UAW Veterans Group. They will sell tickets and serve the meals. SAL will grill the chicken.
March 15	Event Sponsor is Pickwick Mill Inc. They will sell tickets and serve the meals. SAL will grill the chicken.
April 5	SAL Chicken Q
September 6	SAL Chicken Q
October 4	Event Sponsor is Winona Cotter HS Speech Team. They will sell tickets and serve the meals. SAL will grill the chicken.

**All events offer dine in or carry out. We would hope you dine in, and experience the great family environment at the Winona American Legion.**

