



# BADGER



# LEGIONNAIRE

& WISCONSIN VOL 101 #4 | AUG. 2024



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.

## INTRODUCING THE WISCONSIN 2024-2025 DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP



The 105th Wisconsin American Legion's Department Convention was held July 10 – 14, 2024 in Appleton. Department level elections were held. Jim Johnson was elected our new Department Commander along with 4 new Department Vice Commanders and other department officers. Commander Johnson will serve until the end of the 2025 Department Convention.

**Seated left to right:** NEC Robert Shappell, Historian Michelle Adams, Judge Advocate Nicholas Lange, Chaplain Dennis Jaeger, Commander Jim Johnson, Vice Commander Phil Green, Vice Commander Jerry Hook, Vice Commander Debbie Thomas, Vice Commander Nathan Bond

**Standing left to right:** Sergeant-at-Arms Aimee Korger, Department Adjutant Julie Muhle, 12th District Commander Scott Markle, 11th District Commander Gerry Johnson, 10th District Commander Rita Rindahl, 9th District Commander Terry McNulty, 8th District Commander Adam Klapperich, 7th District 1st Vice Commander Ben VanHorn, 1st District Commander Candace Rothering, 3rd District Commander Dan O'Brien, 6th District Commander Dave Steinert, 4th District Commander Steve Kohnke, 5th District Commander Craig Ellis, 2nd District Commander Charles Young, Sergeant-at-Arms John Berg.

## IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR!

The WI Legion Riders-Cruise for a Cause, 'Stu's Cruise-24' was a huge success. How do we rate success: Safety-All participants safely made their way from Superior, WI to Orfordville, WI. Family Participation-The event included members from all facets of the American Legion in Wisconsin. Money raised-The ride raised over \$62,000 to be split between two great programs: The WI American Legion, Troop & Family



Legion Rider Director Corey Doehrmann, Legion Rider Assistant Director Brad Heller and Department Auxiliary President Maggie Geiger laying a wreath at Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery.



Department Commander Karl Stuvengen, Detachment Commander Allen Watry and Legion Rider Assistant Director Brad Heller laying a wreath at Northwoods National Cemetery.

Support Fund and the WI American Legion Auxiliary, Women's Homeless Veterans Grant Fund.

Participants traveled from their homes to the northernmost part of the state only to end the ride in the southernmost part of the state with one mission, to raise the money needed for these programs. We kicked off Friday riding in rain so hard you couldn't see the beautiful scenery all around. Saturday the rain cleared, and the sun started peeking through while we lined up. It got hot later in the day and riding by Lake Michigan didn't do its trick for a change. Finally, on the last day we had the best weather for the whole event, mild temperatures and wonderful sunshine all day.

This event is successful because of how the American Legion Family



across the state comes together. It could be a post that our route is not going near sending in a donation or a post on our route providing rest & refreshment along the way. We stopped at 14 locations during the ride.

SEE FAMILY AFFAIR, PAGE 5

Non Profit Org  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Janesville, WI  
Permit 2930



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



“Badger Legionnaire”  
& “Wisconsin”

The Badger Legionnaire & Wisconsin are the official publications of the Wisconsin American Legion Family and are published six times annually, by the American Legion,

Department of Wisconsin

Post Master: Send address changes to Badger Legionnaire and Wisconsin, P.O. Box 388, Portage, WI 53901

“Badger Legionnaire”

**The American Legion,  
Department of Wisconsin**  
2930 American Legion Drive  
P.O. Box 388 • Portage, WI 53901  
Phone: 608-745-1090  
Email: badger@wilegion.org

Executive Editor  
**Sheri Hicks**

**2024-25 Department Officers**  
Department Commander  
**Jim Johnson**

Department Vice Commanders  
**Nathan Bond  
Phil Green  
Jerry Hook  
Debbie Thomas**

Department Adjutant  
**Julie Muhle**

Department Chaplain  
**Dennis Jaeger**

Historian  
**Michelle Adams**

Sergeant-at-Arms  
**John Berg  
Aimee Korger**

Service Officer - **James Fialkowski**  
NECman - **Robert Shappell**  
Alternate NECman - **Frank Kostka**  
Judge Advocate - **Nicholas Lange**

District Commanders  
**1st – Candace Rothering**  
**2nd – Charlie Young**  
**3rd – Dan O'Brien**  
**4th – Steve Kohnke**  
**5th – Craig Ellis**  
**6th – Dave Steinert**  
**7th – Chet Faith**  
**8th – Adam Klapperich**  
**9th – Terry McNulty**  
**10th – Rita Rindah**  
**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**  
**Becky Mueller, 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**

**REFLECTIONS ON A WHIRLWIND BADGER BOYS STATE**

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
**BBS GOVERNOR JON ORTH**

The curtain has fallen on the 81st session of Badger Boys State. As always, it was a riveting week of learning, comradery, listening, and memory-making that only a program like Badger Boys State can foster. Citizens take so much away from the week that volunteers—many of whom are Legionnaires—take time and care to craft. I caught up with our newly elected governor of BBS, Jon Orth, who is an incoming senior at The Prairie School in Racine.



Unlike many of his fellow Boys Staters, Jon’s roots ran deep in the program before he even arrived. His father attended BBS in 1987, and his grandfather attended in 1964. “I was lucky enough to come into the program knowing how unique of an experience it was, which definitely makes me appreciate it more than most.”

“Going into Boys State, I had



**BBS Governor Jon Orth addressed his fellow Badger Boys Staters from the podium at the 81st session.**

little to no ambition in running for any offices” said Orth of his expectations going into the week. “I am lucky enough to be a relatively self-confident young man, and I told myself that I wouldn’t change who I was for votes.” The governor speaks to a hallmark of BBS: giving citizens an opportunity to put themselves out

there and take a chance.

“The program has taught me how unique and intricate the American government system is... designed with intentional checks and balances to limit individual and group power. Like life, in order to get things done, you need to collaborate, communicate, and critically think.” The governor continued,

“BBS taught me how important those values are and strengthened my love for America and the values it stands for.” Governor Orth speaks for many citizens at BBS who gain a deeper knowledge and appreciation for the America’s yet-unfolding experiment, which is a cornerstone of BBS as an Americanism program.

Jon’s experience, like every other citizen’s, was not limited to learning about our local, state, and federal government. The program also gives citizens an opportunity to learn about themselves, and how to become better men for their families and communities. “The ‘Man in the box’ was by far the highlight of my week. When the Legion member (Bob Shappell) spoke about his father and his son, there was not a dry eye in the room. It taught me that there is no mold that men need to fit into, rather, there are values and principles we should stand for and act according to. It was a powerful moment.”

And so, the citizens return to their hometowns and the volunteers return to their regular lives, but they carry with them the memories from a successful session of BBS at UW-Eau Claire. As anticipation grows for the 82nd session, we invite all Legionnaires who wish to volunteer or simply pay our program a visit to do so. This program renews our faith in America time and time again.

**HOW TO ENGAGE WITH THE BADGER BOYS STATE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Each June, between six hundred and a thousand rising seniors attend a life-changing week at Badger Boys State. This program, the American Legion Department of Wisconsin’s Boys State program, falls under the Legion’s Americanism Commission and Pillar. Wisconsin’s program is among the premier in our country, and celebrated its 81st Session in 2024! This means there are in excess of fifty-five thousand alumni, including each generation from the Builders, through Generation Z. In upcoming years, BBS will welcome members of Generation Alpha as well.

Badger Boys State alumni have gone on to leave a mark in each corner of the world and society. Prominent alumni of Wisconsin’s program alone include U.S. Attorneys, school principals and superintendents, state Governors, state and federal Senators and Representatives, CEOs, PhDs, Emmy-winning entertainers, NASA scientists, published authors, Grammy-winning musicians, Presidential secretary nominees, entrepreneurs, teachers, lawyers, doctors, active duty military, lobbyists, professional athletes, civil servants



of all types, and more!

Boys State alumni nationwide include names such as former President Bill Clinton (AR), NBA star Michael Jordan (NC), Carolina Panthers head coach Ron Rivera (CA), past National Commander Robert Turner (GA), Pulitzer prize winner Roger Ebert (IL), and more!

If YOU attended Badger Boys State and want to be connected to the Alumni Association, reach out to [INFO@BBSALUMNI.ORG](mailto:INFO@BBSALUMNI.ORG). It is a resource for professional networking and support, staying updated on the Badger Boys State program and its

Americanism mission, and connecting more broadly with the Legion Family.

If you want to sign up to volunteer at Badger Boys State 2025, it is vital that we have Veterans participate actively in our program. The direct impact on the young men who attend is immeasurable and lifelong, from just a few days

of your time volunteering on campus. We would love to have you!

Thank you Legionnaires for your service! Badger Boys are Great!

God Bless,

Amon O’Connor  
President

Badger Boys State Alumni Association





# MONROE COUNTY WRITER NETS NATIONAL AWARD FOR ARTICLE ABOUT 'KINDNESS IN HOSTILE LAND'

Monroe County Herald writer John Gessner received the 1st place writers award from the National American Legion for his July 10, 2023, article in the Monroe County Herald titled, "An act of kindness in hostile land." The story was about a 101st Division soldier that procured a dress for a concentration camp girl that he had encountered who was dressed in rags. Sergeant Harry Hendersin escorted the young teenager, Maria Lipstadt, into a German dress shop, had her pick out a dress and walked out without paying. 65 years later, Phil Green (Sparta) discovered a letter written to the British press by Maria attempting to locate her soldier. Finding Maria through the internet, Phil and Fort McCoy officials set up a Skype session between Harry and Maria. During the session, they reconnected between the United States and Belgium. At the end of the call, they both placed their hands on the screen, symbolically touching each other across the ocean. Harry died three weeks later and was buried in Leon, Wisconsin, among honors from the 101st Airborne Division.



Monroe County Herald writer John Gessner, member of American Legion Post 100, receives a 1st place writers award from the National American Legion for his previous article in the Herald. The award was presented by Phil Green, Commander of the Wisconsin American Legion 7th District. Herald photo from the John Gessner collection.

# POLITICS, VOTING, AND THE AMERICAN LEGION

This fall we will be conducting both state and federal elections, and we all have candidates that we support. Each of us has a right and a responsibility to participate in the campaign process and the election – it is one of the foundations of our political process. As members of The American Legion, we have no restrictions on our individual participation in these activities. However we choose to participate, it is an individual choice and we must never make it appear as if we are speaking for The American Legion or that The American Legion is supporting a candidate or party.

Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of the American Legion declares that "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment." More importantly, the National Charter, approved by Congress, stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is never to help or endorse a candidate. Nonpolitical means nonpartisan.

You should not wear your American Legion cap or any American Legion branded clothing to a political event. Your cap, or any clothing with The American Legion emblem visible, or other items that identify you as a Legion member, must be removed so as not to imply any endorsement by The American Legion.

Some posts hold candidate forums to educate the post members and the public on the issues. This is permissible as long as all candidates for an office are invited

or presented equal opportunity to use the facilities on the same terms and conditions as other competing candidates. When using post facilities, the post must remove American Legion emblems and flags to avoid the appearance of endorsement. Some posts provide transportation to the polls for citizens. This is permissible as long as it is not done to favor any one candidate.

Posts cannot accept political donations. If financial contributions are offered by candidates for political office, campaigns, political action committees or political parties, your post should politely decline. Again, The American Legion must avoid any perception of supporting any candidate or political party at all times.

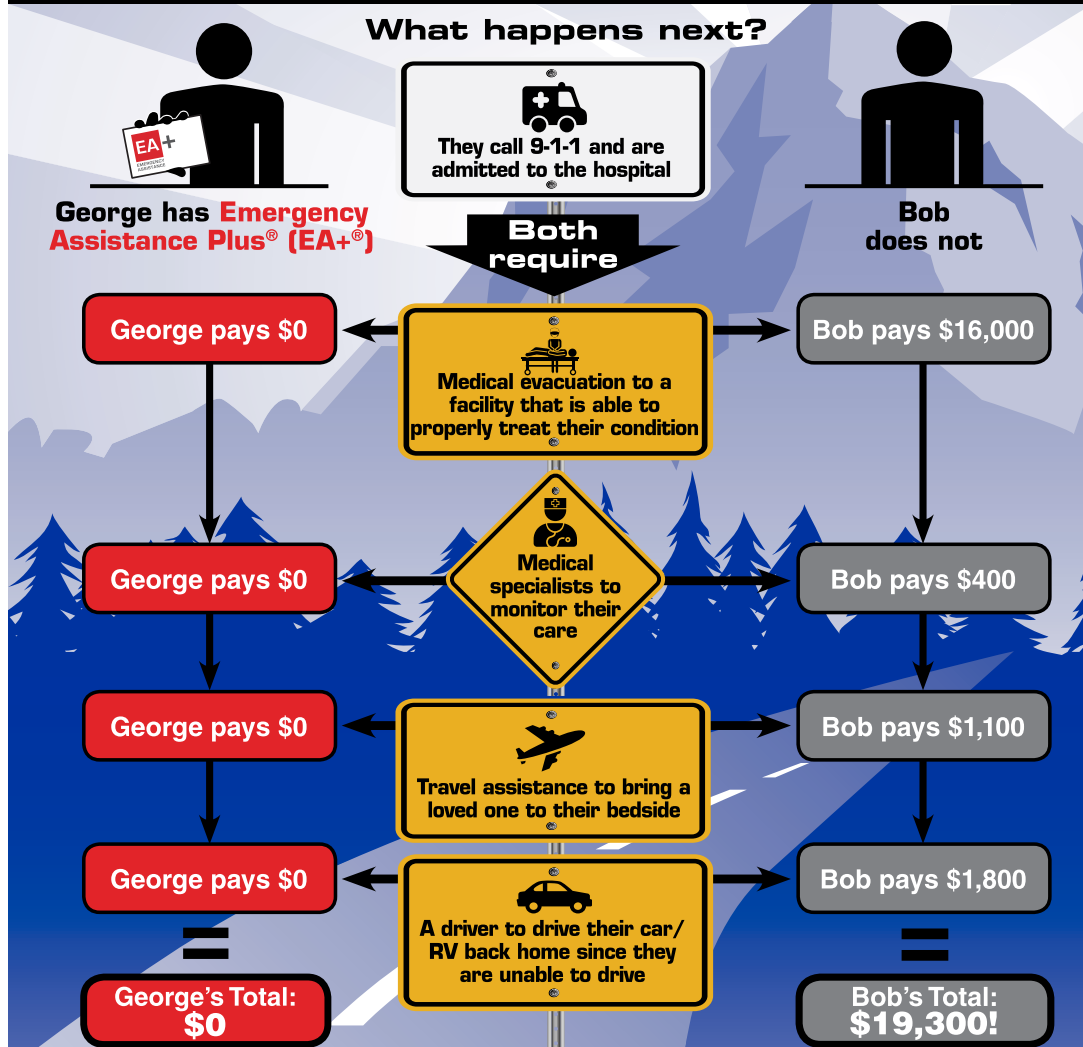
The American Legion, by legal definition, is nonpartisan and supports "or opposes as necessary" only issues which impact the Four Pillars. The American Legion does not endorse any party or candidate. We do not donate to political campaigns as an organization and that includes our individual posts. The independence and effectiveness of The American Legion are best maintained by neutrality as to candidates or political parties.

During this campaign season, as we are fulfilling our responsibilities as citizens of this great nation by supporting the candidates we favor and voting, be mindful that we also have responsibilities to The American Legion, which we can fulfill by following these rules.

This article was authored by Legislative Chair Paul Fisk and Department Judge Advocate Nicholas Lange.

## What if you were Bob?

George and Bob both go on a solo fishing trip to a beautiful, but remote, town in Alaska every summer. While enjoying the idyllic scenery, they both notice chest pains — they are having a heart attack!



Emergency Assistance Plus is an emergency medical transportation service that goes beyond health and travel insurance. It coordinates and provides services for medical transportation, medical evacuation, and travel and companion assistance — services that your medical insurance usually does NOT pay for. You must call EA+ during your emergency so EA+ can make the arrangements for you.

\*\*This is only an outline of the plan's features. Please read your Member Guide carefully to understand all the services available to you, as well as any rules and regulations. Washington state residents must be traveling more than 100 miles away from Home to be eligible for EA+ services.

Learn more about how you can be protected by EA+. Call today to speak with a customer service representative at 1-888-293-4008. Or to apply online, visit [www.thelc.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus](http://www.thelc.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus)



43263

**Annual Patriots Car Show**

Honoring those who served and continue to serve

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2024**  
**REGISTRATION 7 AM**  
**SHOW 8 AM-4 PM**

**LEGION HEADQUARTERS**  
**2930 AMERICAN LEGION DR.**  
**PORTAGE, WI 53901**

**CLASSES**

- Best Pre-War Stock Car or Truck (pre-1949)
- Best Hot Rod or Pre-War Modified Car or Truck (pre-1949)
- Best 1950's Car or Truck (1950-1959)
- Best 1960's Car or Truck (1960-1969)
- Best 1970's Car or Truck (1970-1979)
- Best 1980's Car or Truck (1980-1989)
- Best Special Interest (any year any vehicle, Tractors, go carts, anything)
- Best Muscle Car- 1964-PRESENT
- Best Rat Rod (any year)
- Best Motorcycle (any year)
- Spectators Choice\*
- Commander's Favorite
- Adjutant's Favorite
- Mayor's Favorite

**MORE INFORMATION**



## PAIR 'DO 50 MILES IN UNDER 20 HOURS' TO EARN GO RUCK STAR COURSE PATCH

On April 26, 2024, Matt Koch, of Manitowoc, and American Legion Post 477 – St Nazianz, set off to complete a 50-mile ruck with his friend and fellow Marine Corps Veteran, Donnie Hamilton of Whiteville, NC. Matt and Donnie served together with the USMC 1st Combat Engineer Battalion/Mobility Assault Route Clearance Company/2d Platoon/1st Squad/2d Fire Team in Helmand Province in 2009.

Matt and Donnie were both injured while on a dismounted patrol when the vehicle trailing behind them was hit by a directional charge on July 4, 2009. And, on July 7, they each were more seriously injured when their vehicle was hit with 150 pounds of homemade explosives. Matt was medevac'd, but returned to duty and continued to serve through 2012.

In September 2023, Matt and Donnie decided to take on the challenge of the Go



ABOVE: Matt Koch (standing far right) with 1st Squad.

AT RIGHT: Matt (center) and Donnie (left) received their Ruck Challenge Star Event Patch.



The Go Ruck Star Course Patch.

Ruck 50 Miler Star Course in Atlanta. This event finds its roots in an executive order to members of the military by Teddy Roosevelt and later echoed by JFK: "Do 50 miles in under 20 hours."

Matt trained for the march over seven months, beginning with 20 pounds in his rucksack and incrementally increasing the weight to 100 pounds. He and his dog did

hikes varying in length from 2-5 miles three to four times a week. His employment also helped as it requires heavy lifting. 30 days prior to the Go Ruck event, the pair completed a 25-mile overnight ruck to train their bodies to stay awake and moving for an extended period of time.

Their team, named Dumb and Dumber, 'stepped off' at 9 p.m. on

April 26 completing the 50-mile route in 19 hours and 10 minutes and were quite satisfied with their time, which qualified them to receive the Ruck Challenge Star Event patch.

When asked why he did the ruck, Matt responded, "to humble myself a bit." Will they do another event? The team is currently working up to a Go Ruck Challenge held in Milwaukee

this July and potentially another ruck march next spring, although Matt added, "just the 26 miler next time."

Matt has been a Legionnaire a year and stated that the Legion has positively impacted his life and helped him quite a bit. He appreciates the inclusion of young Veterans within Post 477, folks reaching out to check on him, and the overall support of his fellow Legionnaires.



LEFT: Legion Family group. RIGHT: Wisconsin Elks Club President Pat Moran and his wife Pam as they donated \$4,000. In the photo is: 1st District Commander Nathan Bond, Steve Conto, Sue Ward (Terrence Sund's sister) Pat Moran, Pam Moran, Bill Fitters, Candace Rothering, District 1 Commander Elect Randy Timms.



## NO NEXT OF KIN RIDE COLLECTS OVER \$20,000 FOR TERRENCE SUND FUND

On June 1 of this year, the District 1 Legion Family came together and raised awareness and much needed funding for the Unclaimed Veterans Cremated Remains Fund (Terrence Sund Fund) at Department. The name we chose was intentionally peculiar to draw attention to it. The NNOK Ride (pronounced "knock") stood for No Next Of Kin. Our tag line was "No Veteran Should Take Their Final Journey Alone". The name and tag garnered attention and provided us a unique opportunity to explain what this was all about.

At times this was a challenging endeavor but it was always rewarding to see the support of so many. The challenge was speaking with people about the subject matter. Not everyone is comfortable with it. But it was rewarding to see the outpouring of support from all corners of the Legion Family.

Steve Conto has operated this fund on the generosity of donors from its inception. He and Suzanne Lane have done a brilliant job of sorting through the legal issues, the historical documents and coordination to care for every unclaimed Veteran that has been

presented to them. At times, they have reached deep into their own pockets simply because funding wasn't sufficient.

Bill Fitters, my co-chair, and I were truly blessed at the NNOK Ride's success. We created a scavenger hunt for information that drew the participants to a wide variety of Veteran locations throughout the District. We had basket raffles and silent auctions. Our thanks to District 1 Commander Nathan Bond and Auxiliary President Zondra Morris as well as her First Vice President Crystal Shaw for their support, encouragement and involvement for truly making this a District 1 Legion Family affair. And we would not have had such an easy day had it not been for the efforts of Deb Fredlund, Michelle Adams, Crystal Shaw and Pamela Peters. They made life easy for Bill and me. A thank you goes out to Julie Banaszak and Eric Remmick. Even though they had their own event on the same day, they went out of their way to make 3 generous donations and offered loads of advice. We appreciated their guidance immensely.

At the end of the day, we tallied up total donations and have

reached \$21,931 as of this writing.

Discussions have already begun for next year, but I'd challenge every Legion Family Post, Squadron and Unit to consider having your own "NNOK Ride". Funds will always be needed as we care for those unclaimed Veterans from Wisconsin. If you wish some help getting organized, give Bill or me a call or email. We'll be thrilled to help you get started.

Thank you to each and every individual that helped us exceed our expectations. Whether you donated funds, made and delivered baskets for raffles or provided items for auction or worked all day at the event; without your support this never would have happened. God Bless you all!

Randy Timms

District 1 SAL Commander, Assistant Detachment Adjutant

Bill Fitters

District 1 Legion Rider Director, Commander Elect, Post 209





Garnering Post 197 awards were (from left) Officer Tylor Hoard, Policeman of the Year; Fireman Shane Nehls, Fireman of the Year; and EMT Bambi Pryce, EMT of the Year.

## POST 197 PRESENTS AWARDS

Policeman of the Year — Officer Tylor Hoard has been selected as this year's Policeman of the Year for American Legion Post 197 in Brodhead. Officer Hoard has played an instrumental role in helping to train new officers. He has helped new officers and mentored the experienced officers from other agencies coming into Brodhead's department.

Officer Hoard has been training to handle administrative tasks such as reviewing reports, procession court citations, being the court officer and helping to oversee investigations and training for the department.

Fireman of the Year — Shane Nehls has been a fireman for 17 years with the Brodhead Fire Department. Shane's interest in the fire service started when he was a young boy, he would come to the station with his dad who was a member of the Brodhead Fire Department. Once in high school, he joined the Explorer program for several years until he was old enough to join the department in November 2007.

Shane continues to be one of the top responders to fire and first response calls in the department.

EMT of the Year — Bambi Pryce has been selected as the EMT of the Year for Brodhead. Bambi has been in the department for over two years. Bambi is a lifelong resident of the Brodhead area and became interested in being an EMT during the summer of 2021 when she learned from a co-worker that the EMS needed more EMTs, she immediately enrolled in the fall semester course. In January 2022 she received her state license as an EMT. Bambi is now currently enrolled in the Advanced EMT program.

Like all members of the EMT service, Bambi has made donating her time a normal part of her weekly routine by spending numerous hours at the EMS building to be available to respond to a call.

All three recipients advanced to the Green County Board with Shane and Bambi being selected to advance to District 3. District 3 selected Bambi to advance to the next level and those results will not be available until the middle of June.

Congratulations to Tylor, Shane and Bambi for being selected for these awards.

Share "In the Spotlight" stories with the Legion Family by sending them to [badger@wilegion.org](mailto:badger@wilegion.org). Please provide high-Res JPG 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: Sheri.



## MEMORIAL DAY TIMES SEVEN FOR POST 283

Suring Legion Post 283 members participated in Memorial Day ceremonies at seven different area cemeteries.

## CUB SCOUTS DONATE TO POST 171

Post 171 Commander Frank Konieska was proud to accept a \$564 donation from representatives of Union Grove Cub Pack 373. The money was earned by the Cub Scouts through a bake sale, with all proceeds going to help local Veterans.



## FAMILY AFFAIR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The excitement and enthusiasm was breathtaking. While the focus was on the mission of raising money for these programs, fun was had by all. Legion Department Commander Karl, Auxiliary Department President Maggie, S.A.L. Detachment Commander Allen & Department Legion Rider Director Corey participated in all 3 days of the ride. Chat with them when you see them about their experiences, and I think that despite some of the challenges (like weather on Friday) they will share feelings of awe on how the WI Legion Family came together to support the cause.

Last but certainly not least. Success is honoring the American Legion principle of 'To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars'. During the ride the WI leadership laid wreaths at the Northwoods National Cemetery & Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in honor of American Legion Rider of WI members and all Veterans buried at each location.

Mark your calendar for June 27-29, 2025, we hope to see you along the route.

## POST 336 'RAMPS' UP SUPPORT FOR VETERAN



The American Legion Post 336, Habitat for Humanity and Home Depot all were involved in building a ramp for a Veteran.

Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility

## There's Plenty You Can Do to Save a Life!

### Four Critical Questions

1. Do you know how to recognize the signs of distress?
2. Do you know how to initiate a conversation with someone exhibiting Signs of distress or depression?
3. Would you be able to ask someone about their suicidal thoughts?
4. Do you know how to help someone who is contemplating death by suicide?

If you answered "No" to any of these questions, the free online **R.A.C.E. Suicide Prevention Training** is for you!

Next Series Begins

August 6

Two Time Options:

11:30 am to 6:00 pm U.S. Central Time

- Get Informed
- Get Involved
- Save a Life

The **R.A.C.E.** Suicide Prevention training is three one-hour sessions delivered on three consecutive Tuesdays starting 6 August 2024. The training is applicable for anyone, including you! The training prepares you to **Recognize** the often subtle signs of distress. You will learn how to **Ask** the person about any suicidal thoughts, demonstrate that you **Care** and ways to offer Hope that can help the person to choose life versus death. The last step in the **R.A.C.E.** model is learning different **Escort** options so the person receives professional care. Let's work together to Save Lives – One Life at a Time!

Register Today at [www.RACESuicidePrevention.us](http://www.RACESuicidePrevention.us)



In Partnership With







## POST 416 HONOR GUARD



Greendale Post 416 – Honor Guard served at Arlington Park Cemetery on June 06. From right: Capt. Bob Zolandz, Jim Cook, Bob Clemen, Rob Hamby, 2nd Lt. Ed King, Steve Sahs, Jerry White, Bill Haschker and 1st Lt. Bob Vanselow.

## POST 19 ANNUAL FLAG DISPOSAL



On June 6, Courtney-Carr-Milner American Legion Post 19 of Hartford held their annual flag disposal. Under direction of Commander Allen Schoessow with members of Honor Guard for the disposal of old colors.

## SQUADRON 522 HOSTS 9-PIN TAP TOURNAMENT



The Goetz-St. Louis Squadron 522 (Hubertus) was proud to host its 2nd annual 9-Pin Tap Bowling Tournament on Saturday, April 20, at Pioneer Bowl in Richfield, WI. The Squadron welcomed 89 bowlers who enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship, along with raffles, and, of course, bowling! Thanks to the support of the community, the Squadron was able to raise over \$11,500 to support local Veterans' organizations. Many thanks to all those who participated, and the Squadron looks forward to doing it again in 2025!

## POST 435 BASEBALL DONATION, SCHOLARSHIP



Post 435 recently donated \$2,000 to the American Legion Reds baseball team for the 2024 year. Pictured left to right is Butch Liebaert, Post Commander, Ben Rhodes, Reds baseball representative, and Glen Erickson, Post 1st Vice Commander.



Post 435 gave a scholarship for \$1,000 to Halley Jacobson at its June Meeting. She graduated from Superior Senior High School and will be attending the University of Wisconsin in Superior, WI. Pictured is (from left) Halley's mother Annette Jacobson, recipient Halley Jacobson, and Post 435 Commander Butch Liebaert of the Scholarship Committee.

## POST 435 SWEARS IN OFFICERS FOR 2024-2025



At the monthly meeting on May 14, Post 435 had their election and swearing in of Officers for the ensuing year. The new officers are Charlie Klotz, Public Relations Officer; Butch Liebaert, Post Commander; Ben Anderson, 1st Vice Commander; Dick Smith, Chaplain; Bob Simonson, 2nd Vice Commander; Randy Freeman, Sgt.-at-Arms; and Randy Meade, Judge Advocate. Scott Markle, 12th District Commander, gave the oath to the newly elected Officers.

## POST 93, SCOUTS CLEAN UP HWY. S



Recently Post 93, along with Boy Scout Troop 548 of Tomahawk, did roadside cleanup on Hwy S south of town. Pictured is Gerry Johnson from Post 93 and Scouts and leaders from the Troop.



## POST 147 HONORS COUNTY'S LAST WWII VETERAN



American Legion Post 147 Medford honored John McMurray, 102 years old, and Taylor County's last WWII Veteran. Also, John McMurray has 64 years continuous membership in The American Legion. Left to right is 1st Vice Commander Jack Johnson, Vern Mueller, Dave Nelson, Roger Neubauer.



## POST 208 HONORS VIETNAM VETS



As part of the national Vietnam War Veterans Commemoration Program, the service and sacrifice of two Vietnam War Era Veterans and their families was recognized May 11, 2024, at a program at the Rio American Francis Cuff Legion Post. Dale Gajdosik of Rio American Legion Post 208 led the very patriotic and heartwarming event, with family members and friends present. Jerry Gollhofer (d. 1980) served in Turkey as a member of the U.S. Air Force, and Lloyd Lampman served two tours in Vietnam as member of the U.S. Marine Corps. From viewer's left are son Jeff Gollhofer, daughter Lisa (Gollhofer) Hebl, Rio American Legion Commander Terry Schraufnagel, Nancy (Gollhofer) Lampman, veteran Lloyd Lampman and Rio American Legion Vietnam Commemoration Program Chair Dale Gajdosik.



## FIRST-EVER FLAG CEREMONY HELD IN ALLENTON

The Allenton American Legion Post 483 Auxiliary and Legion members hosted their Inaugural Flag Day event on Saturday, June 15 at their post in Allenton. The program not only included the honoring of "Old Glory," it included honoring the 35 Legion members and eight Auxiliary members that had passed away in the past five years. In addition, there was a special recognition of their WWII Veteran Don Kurer and the town of Addison oldest resident at 100 years and seven months, Mary Jane Sternant.

Approximately 200 people attend including 20 students from Allenton Elementary that sang four



songs for those in attendance.

Following the program there was food, refreshments and dessert available. According to chairperson

Sue Melichar, "We were honored to host a very meaningful event for all involved and look forward to doing a similar program next year."

## POST 185 SWEARS IN NEW COMMANDER

Michelle Marek will be the new Commander of Brask-Fossum-Janke Post 185, Grantsburg, being the first woman in the Post's history to hold that position. She is shown welcoming new members Rick Lindberg and Blake Jensen. All three are U.S. Marines Veterans.



## POST 268 TRIO HONORED FOR 50 YEARS



Post 268 in Bruce celebrated three members who reached 50 years of membership in The American Legion. From left are Ronald Conrad, Art Ryall and Gary Benson.



## TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE AT POST 147

Medford Post 147 honored Brian Clarkson for 20 continuous years of service. Presenting is Commander Bruce Emmerich of Post 147 Medford.



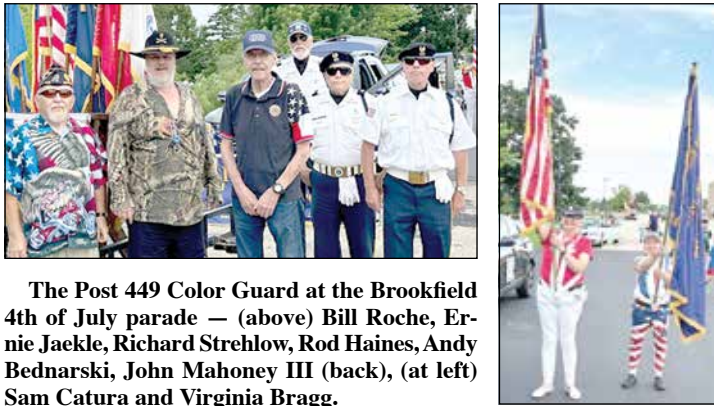


## LAFAYETTE COUNTY FAIR STAND



Eight Legion members from around Lafayette County joined VSO Sam Fuller for the annual fair concession stand cleanup.

## POST 449 AT BROOKFIELD FOURTH



The Post 449 Color Guard at the Brookfield 4th of July parade — (above) Bill Roche, Ernie Jaekle, Richard Strehlow, Rod Haines, Andy Bednarski, John Mahoney III (back), (at left) Sam Catura and Virginia Bragg.

## BRACKETT LEGION FAMILY MEETING NIGHT



Brackett American Legion Family celebrated our July 9 meeting night in a different way: Two SAL members, Micah Zweifelhofer and Treylin Thorson, shared their experiences from Badger Boys State; retiring a flag with the 13 folds ceremony; Micah played Reveille; remembering a donated flag flown over Kuwait and now over Brackett American Legion, honoring the Brummond Family; and remembering and celebrating the life of 58-year member Connie Wathke, who will remain in our hearts forever.

## POST 395 COLOR GUARD AT MARKESAN GAME



Post 395 Color Guard served at a Markesan American Legion baseball game in July. Photo submitted by Derek Kohn.



ABOVE: La Crosse County Commander Brad Heller giving County Legionnaire of the Year Award to Mike Schaller of Post 51 West Salem. BELOW: La Crosse County Commander Brad Heller Congratulating Mike Schaller of Post 51 on his selection as County Legionnaire of the Year.

## LA CROSSE COUNTY NAMES LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR

Mike Schaller of Berg-Hemker-Olson Post 51 in West Salem was this year's recipient of La Crosse County Legionnaire of the Year. Mike was pivotal in revitalizing the Post's Children & Youth program and outreach into the school system of West Salem. He is also head of both the Post's Honor Guard and the County Honor Guard Chair as well. Mike is always diligent in ensuring our Veterans receive their final honors with dignity and grace. Mike was chosen from 5 nominees across the Posts of the County. Congratulations, Mike!



## POST 91 OCONOMOWOC PRESENTS BLUE STAR BANNERS

American Legion Post 91 Oconomowoc presented Blue Star Banners to the families of the ten Oconomowoc High School students who joined the military after graduation. Four of the families were able to attend Post 91's meeting to be presented the Blue Star Banner, the others will have their banners delivered.

out this was the third member of their family to join the military, and the fourth will graduate next year and is planning to join. This caused us to order a 3-star banner for them.

During our conversation with one of the parents, we found

We have 33 total Blue Star families with 37 members in the service, and they are members of Post 91. This has been a great recruiting tool plus a solid presence with the High School.

## POST 189 AWARDS FOUR QUILTS OF VALOR TO VETERANS



LEFT: Vietnam Navy Veteran Michael Schilling is honored with a Quilt of Valor presented by Mary Rollert of Quilter on the Rock. Standing are Larry Schultz and Ward Genz of American Legion Post 189. LEFT CENTER: Vietnam era Army Veteran Thomas Finnel is honored with a Quilt of Valor presented by Mary Rollert of Quilters on the Rock. Standing are Mary along with Larry Schultz & Ward Genz of American Legion Post 189. RIGHT CENTER: Vietnam era Marine Veteran Richard "Red" Walter is honored with a Quilt of Valor presented by Mary Rollert of Quilters on the Rock. Standing left to right are Sue Walter, Red, Mary Rollert and Mary Pat Schandor of American Legion Post 189. RIGHT: Paul Risen, Larry Schultz & Ward Genz of Post 189.



## VETERANS RECOGNIZED FOR 70 YEARS



Manitowoc Post 88 presenting WWII Veteran Paul Marquardt's recognition for 70 years of continuous membership.



Clem Nelson of Post 158 was presented a 70-year certificate by Keith Bengtson, Post Adjutant. Clem has been an active member holding posts of Commander and Finance Officer for many years.



Gene Cowan of Watertown Post 189 received his 70 years of membership certificate at the June 6 Post meeting.

## POST 477 HOSTS TEE IT UP 'FORE' TROOPS GOLF OUTING

American Legion Post 477 – St. Nazianz hosted their 2nd annual Armed Forces Day Tee It Up 'Fore' Troops (TUFT) golf outing on May 16 at the Autumn Ridge Golf Course near St. Nazianz. All proceeds of TUFT were designated for Old Glory Honor Flight and the Post's goal was to raise the funds to support the 68 Manitowoc County Veterans who were on the waitlist for Old Glory Honor Flight as of January 2024.

172 golfers from throughout NE Wisconsin participated in the golf outing to include more than 110 Veterans and currently serving Military members, nearly all of whom were sponsored by local businesses, organizations or community members. The community also generously donated hole, beverage cart, chipping and putting challenge sponsorships, along with cash and in-kind donations.

The golf outing began with an opening ceremony consisting of a flag raising and the playing of our national anthem. After a day of golf, the group shared a meal, had some fun with raffle items and a live auction, and the presentation of awards and prizes.

On Friday, June 21, Post members were humbled and excited to present Diane and Drew MacDonald, Founders of Old Glory Honor Flight, a \$36,212 donation. \$1,000 of that amount were the proceeds from the Post's Flight for Flights dart tourney and the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 477 hot dog sales, the remaining amount was directly from the golf outing. \$36,000 represents 72 Veterans flying o D.C. on their Honor Flight, meaning



that the Post exceeded their goal!

Post 477 – St. Nazianz is very grateful for their sponsors, donors, golfers and volunteers and the entire community which rallied around them! Their 3rd annual Tee It Up 'Fore' Troops golf outing is already scheduled for May 15, 2025.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## POST 169 MARKS 105 YEARS



Members of the Larson - Torgerson Post 169 gather to commemorate their 105th Anniversary in Amery. Chartered by Dr. Perry Gentz and four other WWI Veterans in July 1919, as the Larson Post 169, in honor of WWI Pvt. George Larson, who lost his life in France during WWI. The post was rechartered in 1947 to include the name of Lt. Stanley Torgerson, who lost his life in North Africa in WWII. The longest serving member, Ross Smith, front row, 2nd from right, has been a member for 79 years and remains active at all Legion functions.

*Submitted by Mark Starsky, Commander Amery American Legion Post 169.*

## FALL RIVERS CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



Tenth District Vice Commander Gary Lubich 2023 River Falls Citizen of the Year. He threw out the first pitch (left) of the American Legion baseball game between River Falls Post 121 and Hudson Post 50 on July 11 and (right) served as Grand Marshal for the 50th anniversary of River Falls Days 2024.

## MOUNT HOREB HS WALL OF REMEMBRANCE



The 3rd District Executive Committee met at Mount Horeb High School June 25. The school has a Wall of Remembrance that continues down the hallway with over 400 Veterans pictures, names, branches of service, and the dates of service are included for each Veteran.





## CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

Post 382 Ray Gramz was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal.



## 4TH DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP



4th District Commander Steve Kohnke receives a plaque from National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer in recognition of his and the Mighty 4th District membership efforts in that, by May 15, the District exceeded the total membership of 2023. This is something that had not happened in the last 25 years.

## POST 236 FUNDRAISER IS A SUCCESS



Algoma Post 236 held a very successful fundraiser July 11 at Algoma Concert in the Park. The team grilled burgers, brats, dogs and all the fixin's. Pictured are Post Commander Mike Froelich, member Jason Palazzo and Auxiliary member Dixie Breamer.

# POST 386 AT CASCADE MEMORIAL DAY



Memorial Day 2024 ceremonies were held at American Legion Post 386 Cascade. LEFT: Attendees include (from left) Dave Treibense, Mike Hughes, Commander Gene Perronne, guest speaker Officer Jason Liermann, Pastor Richard Bedinger and Lions member Gina Desmidt. RIGHT: The Post 386 Honor Guard performed a 21-rifle salute.

## POST 147 HONORS VETERANS FOR CONTINUOUS SERVICE MILESTONES



LEFT: Post 147 Medford honored Roger Emmerich for 45 continuous years of service. Presenting the award are (L to R) Commander Bruce Emmerich, Roger Emmerich and 1st Vice Commander Jack Johnson. RIGHT: Post 147 Medford honors Marvin Newman for 10 continuous years. Marvin never misses a meeting or honor guard service. Marvin (left) with Commander Bruce Emmerich of Post 147 Medford.



## POST 91 GUNG HO AWARD



Post 91's Tom Strey was awarded the Joseph Meeks Gung Ho award at the 105th Wisconsin American Legion Department Convention. He is pictured here with Department Commander Karl Stuvengen.

## POST 71 BIKE AND BUGGY PARADE



Pewaukee Post 71 put on their annual Bike and Buggy Parade at Village Park on the 4th of July.

## POST 122 HAD 115% MEMBERSHIP

Post 122 Phillips Post commander Douglas Rasmussen receives a 115% membership award at the state Legion convention. Presenting the award is District 11 Commander Gerry Johnson.



## NNOK EVENT

Department Commander Stuvengen and Department Vice Commander Johnson at a No Next of Kin (NNOK) Fundraising event in Mukwonago.



## BLACK EARTH QUILT OF VALOR



Black Earth Mickelsons-Martin American Legion Post 313 was at Heartland Country Village in Black Earth on Memorial Day. After a program for the residents put on by a dozen Post 313 family members, Post 313 Chaplain Bill Rettenmund conducted a Quilt of Valor presentation for 10 year American Legion member Myron Norslien, an Army Veteran, who served in Vietnam. Assisting with the award (L-R) were Post Commander Dennis Wood and Post Adjutant Gary Ballweg.

## POST 171 EXTENDS APPRECIATION



Union Grove Bixby-Hansen Post 171 Commander Frank Konieska, ably assisted by 50-year member Buster Henningfield, presents a certificate of appreciation to Glen Miller of Miller-Reesman Funeral Home in Union Grove for his continued support of Post 171.



**Dennis Jaeger**  
Department  
Chaplain

## ★★★ DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN ★★★

### HOW DID I GET TO THIS PLACE?

Greetings American Legion Family! My name is Dennis Jaeger, your newly appointed Department Chaplain. I've been a member for 69 years at St. John Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Grafton, WI where I worship every Sunday.

When we think of the people God raised up to touch the world, the great apostles whom He used to start the church, we tend to see them in stained glass. And though God powerfully used them, they weren't superhuman. They were ordinary men whom God used to touch their world.

One thing is clear in Scripture: It seems as though God intentionally goes out of His way to find individuals who didn't necessarily look like they would amount to much. He chose people who, at first glance, didn't appear to even have what it took.

If we want to be used by God in any capacity, what must be foremost in our minds and hearts is not obligation, mere duty, or guilt. Rather, we must have a God-given compassion for people.

## SIXTY YEARS IN RIPON



Ripon Legion Post 43 member Ed Ott proudly shows us his "Certificate of Continuous Membership" for 60 years in The American Legion.

## HABITAT VETERAN BUILD



American Legion Post/Unit 121 family members attended the ceremonial groundbreaking for a St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity Veteran build and met the Veteran (Shea Moyer) who will now call River Falls home. Legion members Gary Hetrick, Monte Hansen and Commander Larry Larson and Auxiliary members Kate Koosmann, Pam Nelson and President Margaret Larson with Shea Moyer new home owner!



**Julie Muhle**  
Department  
Adjutant

## ★★ DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT ★★

Hello!

As I look back on this year, I have to say that I am very proud of the movement forward we are taking as a Department. First, this is the second year in a row that our membership is increasing. From 2015 to 2022, our membership had been declining. 2023 and 2024 show an upward trajectory. How did this happen? In 2023, on our way back from the National Membership Workshop, we developed the Yearly Post Membership Plan. While not quite widely used amongst posts, leadership is encouraging the steps we put into the plan and they are making a difference. We recommend Buddy Checks not just twice per year but monthly for smaller posts and quarterly for the larger posts. These Buddy Checks then feed into the Be The One program by checking on our members to see if they are OK.

Next, we have leaders stepping into positions unknown to them and are doing wonderful things. How do they feel confident to do so? Many have taken our Wisconsin American Legion College Courses to include the Basic, Intermediate and Advance Courses as well as taking advantage of our free courses offered in March and April. Our Wisconsin American Legion College is one of the best amongst all Legion Colleges. If you haven't taken our courses, we encourage you to do so!



**James Fialkowski**  
Department Veterans  
Service Officer

## ★★ VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER ★★

Last article I wrote about changing rules concerning Veteran benefits. I want to impress your importance in changes made and I want to inform people they may qualify again for a lost benefit.

Let us start with the lost and regained healthcare covering military 9/11 first responders to the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. If this describes you or you know one, please let them know they may qualify again for healthcare. Last December, a bill was passed returning access to healthcare. According to renew911health.org, the bill will "ensure that all 9/11 responders to the Pentagon and Shanksville who were active-duty DOD military, soldiers and sailors as well as civilians, along with other Federal employees, will be able to join the program. Currently, some responders to the Pentagon and Shanksville sites are prevented from joining."

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has added three new cancer types in the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to military environmental exposure under the PACT Act. This was done with a sub-regulatory policy letter published to the Federal Register. The three cancer types are: Male breast cancer, Urethral cancer, and Cancer of the paraurethral glands.

This policy establishes presumptions of service connection for eligible Gulf War and post-9/11 Presumptive service connection means VA automatically assumes service connection for the disease and provides benefits to eligible Veterans who have submitted claims with evidence of a diagnosis.

This change happened because the PACT Act allows the VA secretary to add presumptive illnesses to the registry when data suggest the illness has a strong enough causal relationship or that a population has an incident rate that is suggestive. This is why it is important to provide data to the VA by utilizing the environmental Health Registry Evaluation for Veterans. Per the VA, "The VA's health registry evaluation is a free, voluntary medical assessment for Veterans who may have been exposed to certain environmental hazards during military service. This data could lead to other illnesses being added to the registry. The evaluations alert Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to exposure to specific environmental hazards during their military service. VA has established several health registries to track and monitor the health of specific groups of Veterans. You may be eligible to participate in one or more of these health registries: Agent Orange Registry, Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry, Gulf War Registry (includes Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn), Ionizing Radiation Registry, Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program, and Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center." Other exposures should be explained to your primary care provider, such as jet fuels and firefighting foam.

The VA has proposed other changes. One of which is how tinnitus will be evaluated. If this change happens, tinnitus may lose the 10% compensable rating. This may stop Veterans from gaining access to VA healthcare. Submit your claims before the rule possibly changes.

For added information or assistance, contact your local CVSO at 844-947-2876 or our office at 414-902-5722.

Throughout Scripture and the history of the church, we find that God has done unexpected things with unexpected people. He has done extraordinary things through ordinary people. And the Bible tells us, "The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT).

Notice this doesn't say that God is looking for strong people; it says that He is looking for people on whose behalf He can be strong. God is not looking for ability as much as He is looking for availability.

Being available! When we are asked to help the Legion family, isn't this what we are supposed to do? When (now) Department Commander Jim Johnson asked me if I would consider being his Chaplain, it didn't take long for me to say YES. I look forward to working with Commander Johnson's team at Department Wisconsin for 2024 - 2025.

Would you be willing to say, "Lord, I don't have much to offer. But what I have, Lord, I offer to You"? If you are willing to say that, then watch what God will do. God's Blessings to our American Legion Family.





**James Bond**  
WDVA  
Secretary

★ **WDVA SECRETARY** ★

Greetings Legionnaires and Auxiliaries! It was wonderful to spend time with so many of you at the state convention in Appleton last month. I'm going to repeat something I said that morning during my remarks. No one can do this alone, and we're more successful when we work together. The 105th Anniversary of the American Legion is a testament to the power of people working together. On behalf of Wisconsin's Veterans and their families, I say congratulations and here's to another 105 years.

One of the things that the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs is tasked with doing is preserving and showcasing the stories of Wisconsinites who served in the armed forces. We strive to honor and affirm the role of all Wisconsin Veterans at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum across from the Capitol in Madison. In June, the Museum received the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)'s Award of Excellence for its exhibit "Souvenirs of Service: The Things They Kept." This award is one of the most prestigious recognitions for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

We all are so proud of the museum's staff, who consistently produce engaging, compassionate, and unexpected stories. Currently, in addition to "Souvenirs of Service" there are two newer displays for visitors to check out—one commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day, and another called "In Her Boots," a display of art created by Wisconsin women Veterans that conveys what their service means to them. We're lucky to have such excellent and talented stewards of history working on behalf of our state's Veterans.

I wanted to let you know that WDVA is moving ahead with plans to purchase the building that houses the Museum, which we have been leasing for over 30 years. It's the first step in our plan to construct a new Museum that will preserve Wisconsin's Veterans legacy for future generations. I look forward to seeing the 105-year history of the American Legion highlighted in that new space.

Thank you to all of you involved with the American Legion and the Auxiliary, thank you for being such steadfast partners, helping us all fulfill our shared commitment to serving Veterans.

Yours in Service,

*James Bond*  
Secretary-designee  
Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

**OSSEO LEGION BASEBALL HONORS 107-YEAR-OLD MERCHANT MARINE**



Osseo Legion Post 324 Baseball honors a Veteran at home games. On July 14, they honored Merchant Marine Reynolds Tomter, age 107, who had returned recently from the Normandy 80th anniversary. Both teams, coaches and umpires posed with Mr. Tomter. Osseo beat Tomah Post 201, 4-3, in 10 innings.



**POST 122  
HOSTS FLAG  
DISPOSAL  
CEREMONY ON  
FLAG DAY**

Post 122 Phillips along with the Boy Scouts and VFW post conducted a flag disposal program Flag Day June 14, 2024.

**CAMP AMERICAN LEGION . . .**

**CAMP AMERICAN LEGION – THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**



*"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*



**Jim Klement**  
Camp American  
Legion Director

Camp American Legion operates at a high level serving our Veterans and families only because of the great volunteers that help. There is one person that has the job to make sure that we have the right volunteers for camp.

Monica, our Recreation and Volunteer Coordinator, has the enormous task of scheduling and recruiting our volunteer force. She is amazing at her job and camp has what I believe to be the best volunteer force that we have ever had.

It all starts with our volunteer recruitment day. We bring in all the current and potential volunteers for a meet and greet. I explain the operations of camp and expectations of our volunteers. Then we all sit down together and have a nice relaxing lunch. After lunch, we take the opportunity to have some CPR training since we do have a lot of water activities. This



Darryn Laitinen from Lomira Post 347 along with 2 volunteers from Mercury Marine, Scott Oleszek, Army Veteran and Ben Mavis, traveled to Camp American Legion to perform Spring maintenance on seven pontoon boats.

is provided free of charge thanks to a fellow Legionnaire, Sue Sternberg, from Marshfield Post 54. She does an amazing job and covers all aspects

of CPR and AED. Thank You Sue!

Once the camp season starts, Monica has all weeks scheduled with our volunteers. She lays out each week's

schedule with who is doing what and at what time, so every volunteer knows where to be. The volunteers are the backbone to Camp American Legion's success and Monica has done a great job ensuring that Camp is able to provide the best experience for our Veterans.

Unfortunately, Monica has decided to finally retire and enjoy her summers in her garden and relax with her dog. So that means that Camp is now looking for her replacement for the 2025 season. If anyone is interested or knows someone that you feel would be a great fit for this position, please give us a call at Camp. Monica will continue until the end of the camp season in her role but still plans on coming back as a volunteer in the future.

Thank You Monica for everything you have done for Camp American Legion, the volunteers and ultimately our Veterans.

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](http://wilegion.org) or find us on Facebook.*



## THE POST 71 AL FAMILY MARCH ON MEMORIAL DAY



Members of American Legion Pewaukee Post 71, Aux Unit 71 and SAL Squadron 71 took part in the Memorial Day Parade in Pewaukee this year.

## SEVENTY YEARS OF SERVICE



Post 433's 2024 Memorial Day service honoring Fred Theobald for 70 years continuous service.

## POST 149 QUILT OF VALOR



Post 149 member Dan Riviers (middle) was presented with a Veterans Quilt for all his efforts as the post membership chairman, pub manager, and local park board member (spearheaded post donation of a new flagpole/plaque) by Adjutant Chuck Stelzner (left) and Post Commander Bob Roska.

## POST 283 IN SURING HOLDS FLAG DISPOSAL CEREMONY



Members of Post 283 in Suring conducted flag disposal ceremony for unserviceable flags collected throughout the year.

## POST 149 DEDICATES FLAGPOLE, PLAQUE 'IN MEMORY OF ALL VETERANS'



Post 149, Sheboygan Falls dignitaries, Veterans and park workers dedicated a new flagpole and brass plaque the Post donated in River Park "In Memory of All Veterans". LEFT: The Post Honor Guard is assembled at the base of the flag as this dedication took place. RIGHT: Jim Sabel, an honor guard member, was a large donor towards the cost of the flagpole and plaque. Not shown are post members Frank Sterzen and Mike Eberhardy, who also donated to this effort.



Loki

## ★★ LOKI'S CORNER

Loki says "Come see me at the Patriots Car Show at Legion Headquarters, 2930 American Legion Drive, Portage on September 7, 2024 from 8am - 4pm. Sign up to volunteer with me at this link: <https://wilegion.org/its-happening>" See you there!

Be The One!



Julie Muhle  
Department  
Adjutant

## ★★ DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP

The 2024-2025 membership year is now upon us! We are anticipating our membership numbers to continue to increase as they have in the past two years. How awesome is it that the Wisconsin American Legion has grown over the past two years?! This is due to the work posts are doing to reach out to their members. What happens when you reach out to members? You make them feel valued. Valued members tend to stay members. What else happens? You have just completed a Buddy Check. Maybe the member needs assistance and you put them in contact with the County Veterans Service Officer. Maybe you called the member on one of the worst days they have had and you were a sounding board and were able to direct them to call 988 #1. You were just a part of Be The One for that member.

In the example above, one call had four possible outcomes. This year, we need to adopt a "work smarter and not harder" philosophy. Contacting our members is one way. Another way is to develop an "elevator" speech for when you come across Veterans who are not in the Wisconsin American Legion. By being ready to talk about the organization and the positive aspects you are familiar with, we can bring in new members.

As always, the Wisconsin American Legion headquarters team looks forward to assisting you and any questions you may have.



Michelle Adams  
Department  
Historian

## ★★ DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN

In the textbook by George E. Sweet, "The Wisconsin American Legion: A History 1919-1992," two excerpts are of timely significance. The first is found on page 202, "Membership in Wisconsin rose during 1984 to 72,176 and it would continue to rise into the next decade. One significant area in which the Department fell short was in the recruitment of female Veterans. A Veterans Administration study in 1984 estimated that more than 20,000 female Veterans lived in Wisconsin. Only a few hundred of these women were members of the Legion and very few of these were able to achieve positions of authority. One exception was Barbara (Bobbe) Stuvengen of Orfordville, appointed Department Historian by Commander Chapin in 1984. Except for one year, 1985-86, when David Korth of Marshfield held the post, Stuvengen would remain Historian into the 1990s and be the most visible woman in the Wisconsin Department. In 1991, Stuvengen became the first woman to receive the Department's endorsement for national office. Although Ethel Matuschka was named National Historian in 1985, she achieved that high office largely on her own efforts. Stuvengen, the Department's choice for National Historian in 1991, became the first woman endorsed by Department for any National Office." The second is on page 207, "The same Appleton Convention that elected Commander Zukowski also elected another woman for the office of Department Vice Commander. Gladys Hritsko of Ripon became only the fourth woman so honored. Another woman, Department Historian Barbara Stuvengen, was instrumental in securing approval for the commissioning of a Departmental History. The Appleton Convention provided the green light for the study you are now reading." This legacy played a large role in outgoing Department Commander Karl Stuvengen's success. His familial pride and dedication were ever present.

At the very start of the 2024-2025 year, newly elected Department Commander Johnson delivered an impassioned and awe-inspiring speech at the convention in Appleton, WI. It left the impression that his leadership will become legendary. It is fitting that one of his first scheduled events is the Wisconsin American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy. WALLECA fosters excellence, dedication, and exemplary conduct as the standard. He clearly epitomizes these qualities.



Barbara Stuvengen



# 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

<b>1 Germantown</b>	Mark B. Niemi	PG
Nick Podushak	WWII	
<b>7 Rhinelander</b>	Mark Whitefoot	V
William Hoppe	PG	
<b>8 Waukesha</b>	Clifford J. Engels Jr.	K
William Hazel	V	
Matt Dejanovich	WWII	
Carl H. Wolff	WWII	
<b>10 Wausau</b>	Thomas Burton	V
Kenneth H. Kraimer	K	
Ralph D. Sanders	K	
<b>11 Green Bay</b>	Robert Ganzel	K
Thomas D. Duffek	WWII	
Ronald Wesoloski	V	
George F. Vanderzanden	V	
<b>12 Spooner</b>	Christopher Lewis	K
David Larson	V	
Gary Haines	V	
Robert T. Jetto Sr.	K	
Larry Meier	V	
<b>17 Arcadia</b>	John Samuelson	K
David M. Hoesley	V	
<b>19 Harford</b>	Herb Volker	K
Otto J. Quandt	V	
Floyd E. Theis	WWII	
Roland H. Greuel	V	
<b>21 Kenosha</b>	Richard De Haan	WWII
John Cable	V	
<b>26 Baraboo</b>	51 West Salem	G/L
John L. Luther	K	
Donald A. Evenson	V	
Donald W. Vangor	V	
<b>27 South Milwaukee</b>	52 La Crosse	PG
Anthony H. Borkowski	K	
Frank Magestro	V	
<b>29 Kewaunee</b>	53 Eau Claire	V
Gary Hedquist	V	
<b>30 Edgerton</b>	Gary Thompson	V
Richard S. Wahl	V	
Wilbur F. Schoff	V	
<b>32 Menomonie</b>	Darrel W. Gibson	K
Douglas J. Gundlach	V	
<b>33 Neenah</b>	John A. Bowman	K
Eugene J. King	V	
Clifford Zeinert	WWII	
Don McPherson	V	
<b>36 West Bend</b>	Craig L. Heabler	V
Thomas Dobberstein	V	
<b>38 Appleton</b>	Mary Ann A. Christopherson	PG
Donald D. Meulemans	V	
Norman J. Frenzel	K	
Jeffery S. Wierichs	V	
Richard D. Unser	K	
Lloyd N. Femal	K	

Steven W. Radke	V	
<b>80 New Richmond</b>	171 Union Grove	WWII
Dennis M. Taylor	V	
Paul N. Mack	K	
<b>82 Port Washington</b>	Ross M. Danielson	WWII
Robert A. Noll	K	
<b>83 Sheboygan</b>	Kenneth W. Szafasz	K
Roger E. Gering	V	
James R. Jagler	WWII	
<b>84 Monroe</b>	James H. Harris	K
Keith Anderson	V	
David O. Blum	V	
Eugene G. Ellingson	V	
Bonnie Moser	GWOT	
<b>85 Muscoda</b>	Dennis F. Welter	V
Dennis Brown	V	
<b>89 Minocqua</b>	173 Whitewater	K
Samuel C. Patterson	V	
Robert B. Kliesmet	K	
<b>90 Ashland</b>	Donald J. Jacobs	K
Earl A. Colver III	V	
Eric T. Lukaszewicz	GWOT	
<b>91 Oconomowoc</b>	175 Loyal	PG
Dennis P. Daggett	V	
Richard W. Schlieve	V	
Earl Eppler	V	
Ervin H. Thierfelder Jr.	WWII	
Brian E. Waldeck	V	
<b>93 Tomahawk</b>	176 Weyauwega	WWII
Paul M. Closser	V	
<b>94 Crandon</b>	180 Milwaukee	V
Gary Kochenderfer	V	
Jesse Morrell	V	
<b>95 Delavan</b>	Ronald A. Schoenrock	V
Lawrence A. Lindloff	V	
<b>96 Webster</b>	Bernard F. Danzinger	K
B. F. Connor	V	
Charles H. Lehman	K	
<b>102 Walworth</b>	Fred H. Caturia	K
James J. Cermak	V	
<b>106 Seymour</b>	186 Independence	V
David J. Katch	V	
<b>111 Somerset</b>	Dominic J. Puchalla	V
James Carufel	V	
Darrell Folie	V	
Maurice L. Leverty	V	
<b>115 Elroy</b>	187 Wisconsin Dells	V
Mark T. Lesko	V	
<b>116 Coon Valley</b>	Maurice Delmore Jr.	V
Donald McCormick	K	
<b>121 River Falls</b>	Norman D. Lien	K
Richard J. Jensen	V	
Jerry P. Sather	V	
Gordon E. Schaar	V	
Richard V. Alexander	K	
<b>124 New Holstein</b>	Gene L. Jones	V
Orland W. Wagner	V	
Kenneth W. Dederig	WWII	
<b>125 Chilton</b>	189 Watertown	V
Carlton F. Haese	K	
<b>134 Boscobel</b>	Richard A. Stenson	V
Robert A. Blanchard Sr.	V	
<b>137 Turtle Lake</b>	Richard A. Hoeft	V
Allen D. Carlson	K	
Wayne N. Wegan	V	
<b>144 Albany</b>	William A. Hertel	K
Wayne A. Nipple	V	
<b>151 Madison</b>	Roger L. Block	V
Frederick A. Halverson	K	
<b>157 Horicon</b>	Richard E. Lindemann	K
Dennis R. Michael	V	
<b>159 Cadott</b>	Gerald L. Hepp	V
William A. Lecleir	K	
Delvin L. Meyer	K	
<b>163 Dakota</b>	Robert L. Lischka	K
Delmar A. Meyer	V	
<b>165 Two Rivers</b>	191 Whitehall	V
Ken Legreve	V	

Donald R. Schaffner	WWII	
Steven M. Campbell	V	
Dennis O. Lee	V	
Ronald R. Childs	V	
<b>238 Greenwood</b>	237 Footville	WWII
William A. Sonderegger Sr.	V	
Peter J. Dejno	V	
<b>242 LaValle</b>	239 Racine	V
James Starin	V	
<b>243 Plymouth</b>	Walter S. Bazan	V
Ruben A. Rabe Jr.	V	
<b>245 Cross Plains</b>	Charles Kamakian	K
Eugene Kostecki	K	
Warren L. Knaub	V	
<b>250 Adams</b>	Thomas A. Robertson	V
Thomas A. Robertson	V	
<b>256 Monticello</b>	318 Lake Tomahawk	V
John J. Zuber	K	
<b>257 Ridgeway</b>	Gerald A. Richter	V
Gerald E. Hubbard	V	
<b>258 Little Chute</b>	320 Humbird	V
James Van De Voort	V	
<b>262 Luxemburg</b>	Laverne C. Lagaisse	V
Noris Jadin	V	
<b>263 New London</b>	331 Shorewood	V
Eldor J. Sommer	K	
<b>268 Bruce</b>	Clyde Buhrow	V
Larry D. Matteis	V	
<b>279 Marshall</b>	332 Black Creek	V
Michael Moe	V	
<b>280 Coleman</b>	Joseph Hilgers	V
Robert W. Blackburn	K	
<b>283 Suring</b>	333 Sun Prairie	V
Loren R. Burrack	V	
<b>287 Mattoon</b>	Vernon Suchomel	K
William B. Marten	WWII	
Jack Norem	V	
<b>288 Cedarburg</b>	336 Onalaska	V
F. Jerry Wanty	K	
Wallace R. Olson	V	
<b>294 Hartland</b>	James A. Strasser	V
Gary L. Phelps	G/L	
Victor J. Evenson	K	
Harold Schuster	V	
<b>301 Woodville</b>	337 Pulaski	V
Charles J. Langer	K	
<b>305 Johnson Creek</b>	James J. Stocki	V
Jerome Shaffer	V	
<b>306 Green Lake</b>	Jerry Prosek	K
Bill Bannasch	V	
<b>308 Gays Mills</b>	Marvin J. Waeghe	K
John R. Johnson	K	
Roger Vanriper	WWII	
John E. Swanson	V	
<b>309 Kendall</b>	342 Lena	V
John C. Elsing	V	
	Walter R. Arndt	V
	346 Cenuria	V
	Glen N. Christensen	G/L
	350 Reedsburg	V
	Leon Sturdevant	K
	355 Grafton	V
	Robert Hubacek	K
	Jay F. Jorgensen	V
	Erwin A. Schmidt	WWII
	Harold W. Schmidt	WWII
	357 Bay City	V
	Donald Timm	WWII
	Donald A. Stogdill	V
	358 Unity	V
	Roger Wellman	V
	364 Winneconne	V
	Leslie Romberg	V
	Richard R. Sharratt	V
	Mike Wicinsky	V
	David Kotowicz	V
	372 Forestville	V
	Ervin L. Cornette	V
	Walter Karnopp	K
	375 Mukwonago	V
	Douglas C. Silkworth	V
	David H. Gilliland	V
	383 Lone Rock	V
	Elvin Busjahn	K
	384 Kewaskum	V
	John Donley	WWII
	Robert Staehler	K
	385 Verona	V
	Charles L. Rishel	WWII

Clement F. Wagner	K	
<b>391 Fremont</b>	Gerry Miller	V
<b>395 Kingston</b>	Robert Luedke	V
<b>396 Indian Creek</b>	William A. Schmidt	K
<b>400 Wauwatosa</b>	Thomas M. Plantenberg	GWOT
<b>401 Cambria</b>	Robert Wiersma	WWII
<b>402 Washington Island</b>	Leo E. Derrico	V
<b>404 Emerald</b>	Merwyn H. Schillinger	K
<b>409 Lake Nebagamon</b>	Eugene L. Hoeffling	WWII
<b>413 Crivitz</b>	James J. Stocki	V
<b>415 Milwaukee</b>	Jerome L. Kleppin	G/L
<b>416 Greendale</b>	Donald Kutz	K
<b>423 Neshkoro</b>	Gary Plath	V
<b>426 Milwaukee</b>	Rudy J. Rudolf	V
<b>431 Three Lakes</b>	Thomas R. Bruss	V
<b>434 Oak Creek</b>	Donald Wolff	WWII
<b>435 Superior</b>	Leroy R. Hall	V
<b>436 Wrightstown</b>	Ray L. Bosserman	V
<b>437 Mazomanie</b>	Wilmer S. Dock	K
<b>442 Wisconsin Rapids</b>	Norbert Vanderlinden	V
<b>447 Viola</b>	Red Willems	V
<b>449 Brookfield</b>	Claudia Martin	V
<b>452 Spirit</b>	Ronald A. Weyers	V
<b>457 Mequon-Thiensville</b>	Donald C. Williams	K
<b>460 Belleville</b>	Robert Schultz	K
	Larry J. Campbell	V
	Kenneth J. Marien	WWII
	Dennis Lind	V
	Richard M. Olson	V
	Kenneth Swanson	V
	David G. Delahunt	V
	William D. Butts	V
	John C. Smith	V
	<b>468 Milladore</b>	V
	Myron T. Federwitz	K
	John B. Hollar	K
	James L. Hollar	G/L
	<b>469 Marathon</b>	V
	Gerald L. Gage	WWII
	<b>470 Saukville</b>	V
	Philip N. Watry	V
	<b>477 St. Nazianz</b>	V
	Erv Madson	K
	<b>481 Madison</b>	V
	John J. Reis	V
	<b>483 Allenton</b>	K
	Gilbert J. Strupp	K
	<b>491 Cazenovia</b>	V
	Stephen P. Soltwedel	V
	<b>494 Caledonia</b>	K
	Robert L. Pavwoski	K
	<b>499 Gordon</b>	K
	Herbert D. Love	K
	<b>518 Green Bay</b>	V
	Christopher Raymaker	V
	Timothy A. Witter	V
	Michael K. Marlow	V
	<b>521 Fox Lake</b>	V
	Arthur J. Boeck	V
	<b>524 White Lake</b>	K
	Gordon D. Hams	K
	Edward Sellers	V
	<b>527 Sister Bay</b>	V
	James D. Tyndall	V
	<b>534 McFarland</b>	K
	Paul E. Lisney Sr.	K
	<b>537 Milwaukee</b>	K
	Donald W. Schwede	K
	<b>539 Green Bay</b>	PG
	Carol Johnson	PG
	<b>546 Racine</b>	V
	Richard Vallin	V
	<b>555 Sheboygan</b>	V
	Michael Hiebing	V
	<b>2930 Portage</b>	V
	Thomas P. Cusick	V
	Milton H. Hamilton	V
	Vernon R. Verjinsky	K
	Eugene Griffith	V
	Michael Wray	V
	Robert L. Schouten	V
	Richard Murray	K
	Allen J. Lafave	V
	Joel A. Jones	V
	Robert Zeimetz	V
	Michael Mars	V
	James Weber	V
	Jeffery R. Ehmke	V





# WISCONSIN



August 2024

American Legion Auxiliary  
P.O. Box 140  
Portage, WI 53901

alawi@amlegionauxwi.org

The official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary

www.amlegionauxwi.org

## 2024 ALA-WISCONSIN CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



AT LEFT: President Maggie Geiger, escorted by husband Brian, during opening ceremonies of the 103rd ALA-Wisconsin Department Convention.

ABOVE LEFT: President Maggie Geiger was surrounded by friends and supporters of District 2.

ABOVE RIGHT: President Maggie Geiger recognized the ALA Hospital Representatives and Deputies and thanked everyone who volunteers at a VA medical facility, veterans home, or CBOC.



The American Legion Riders raised over \$57,000 during Stu's Cruise and split the proceeds between The American Legion's Troop & Family Support and the American Legion Auxiliary's Homeless Women Veterans Grant funds. Thank you, Corey Doehrmann and American Legion Riders!



2024-2025 Department Officers (front row): Historian Betty Stone, 2nd VP Christina Petranovich, Sr VP Sue Hembrook, Department President Becky Mueller, 1st VP Amy Luft, Chaplain Donna Jensen; (back row): Sgt-at-Arms Diane Zwiers, Secretary-Treasurer Bonnie Dorniak, NEC Bonnie Jakubczyk, Alternate NEC Maggie Geiger, Sgt-at-Arms Linda Kostka.



2024-2025 District Presidents (front row): 1st District Crystal Shaw, 2nd District Sandy Mack, 3rd District Noreen Schmidt, Department President Becky Mueller, 4th District Kathy Grom, 6th District Diane Steinert; (back row): 7th District Jesse Elmhurst, 8th District Linda Tryczak, 9th District Sue Keyzers, 10th District Mary Townsend; 11th District Theresa Schindler, 12th District Barb McDaniel. Not pictured: 5th District Linda Bartell.

## MEMBERSHIP



~ Serving Our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts ~

Can you feel the love? Our new membership year is upon us and this is the year of growth for the Department of Wisconsin!

Department President Becky's theme of *Serving our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts* will be highlighted throughout the membership program. Our department membership goal is 100% and together we can get there!

Membership is a team event and your department membership team is here to assist with all of your membership efforts. But creating a team is not only a department thing; having a team is effective on every level – unit, county and district. Teamwork makes the work easier and more fun!

Speaking of fun...there are some great incentives to help you along the way! Take a look at this year's awards. Note: 2024-2025 Unit Officer form must be submitted and listed officers must be paid to qualify for any awards.

### CHECKING OUR PULSE:

Units that reach the membership percentage by the goal date will be placed into a random drawing to win \$100.

- 75% - September 15
- 85% - October 15
- 95% - November 15
- 100% - December 15

### THE BEAT GOES ON:

Recruit a NEW or rejoin an EXPIRED member for 2025 and receive a Membership pin.

### PULSATION PASS:

Units reaching 100% by December 31 will receive two entries (one entry if 100% by January 31). One lucky winner will win an all-access *Department Convention Pass* which includes:

- Two (2) unit members' paid convention registrations
- Hotel accommodations (one room for two nights)
- Unit recognition from stage at convention



- Two free passes to the Commanders' Party

Memberships can easily be renewed online at *My Auxiliary Member Portal* located on the National website at [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org) or call National Headquarters at 317-569-4570. And make sure to "Like" the Department Facebook (Wisconsin ALA Membership Group)...even if you are your one and only friend!

### DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Amy Luft Chair amyjlufft@gmail.com 414-651-7300	Teresa Steinke Committee Member teresa.steinke_cmx@yahoo.com 715-828-7462
--	--

Diane Zwiers Committee Member dzwiers7280@gmail.com 920-378-1786	Andrea Stoltz Program Coordinator alawi@amlegionauxwi.org 608-745-0124
---	---



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

**Donna Jensen**  
 Department Chaplain  
 djensen20@gmail.com  
 414-303-6186

*Psalms 118:1*

*Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

*Psalms 147:7*

*Sing to the LORD with grateful praise; make music to our God on the harp.*

It is by being thankful to God that we can adapt an "Attitude of Gratitude." When looking at life and some of the challenging situations that happen, it is helpful to look at the good things and be grateful and not only look at the bad or challenging things that cross our path. It can be very difficult to be grateful during the bad times in our lives but this is when it is most beneficial.

What do you have to be grateful for? Are you thankful for your family? Are you thankful for your health? Are you thankful for a friend? How do you show your gratitude and thanks? It is through actions, words, both?

Give Thanks (With A Grateful Heart)  
*EPHESIANS 5:19-20 ~ Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord...*

It is through gratitude and thanksgiving that we can praise the Lord. Keep your heart open to accept the gifts God sends to us and be grateful.

### Music

#### "Thank you for Being a Friend"

by Andrew Gold  
 – (sung by James Taylor)

"Thank you for being a friend  
 Traveled down the road and back again  
 Your heart is true, you're a pal and a confidant."

## THANK YOU!!

PDP Maggie Geiger  
 donated to the ALA  
 Badger Girls State program  
 in honor of the  
 2023-2024  
 Department Officers  
 and Program Chairman  
 for all their hard work  
 during the past year.

## GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

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

Congratulations to Maggie Geiger on a successful year as Department President!

President Maggie Geiger presented twelve Department President's Awards for Excellence at the 103<sup>rd</sup> ALA Department Convention in Appleton. Other convention highlights included reports from department program chairs; a tribute to Honored PDP Florence Wasley (2010-2011); recognition of Unit Member of the Year Terry Giles of Grantsburg, Junior Member of the Year Rylee Turowski, ALA Badger Girls State Governor Alexis Wilson, and the ALA's hospital representatives and deputies; introduction of SAL NVC Terry Harris and Leading Candidate for SAL National

Commander Joseph Navarrete; a generous donation from the American Legion Riders to the ALA Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund; special presentations from Dan Buttery of the War Memorial Center and Torre Willadsen of Dogs2DogTags; and an ice cream social. If you weren't there, you missed a great time!

A special thanks goes out to SuAnn Pangel-Rast of Almond Unit 339 for her expertise in creating the PowerPoint slide show for all the program reports.

Past Department President Maggie's year concluded with the installation of 2024-2025 Department President Becky Mueller, the 2024-2025 department officers and district presidents.

Newly elected Department President Becky Mueller's theme for the upcoming year is "Serving our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts." She has two special projects for the year: raising awareness

of Wisconsin's POWs/MIA's and raising funds for the national Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

Although we are still collecting dues for the 2024 membership year, 2025 membership cards and rosters have been mailed to the units. Any unit that has not received their membership packet should contact Andrea Stoltz at department headquarters immediately.

2025 renewal notices will be mailed by the national organization in mid-September, but you don't have to wait until then to renew your dues. To expedite processing, you can pay your dues online ([www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org)) or call the national organization during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 3:30 pm Central Time). Members who pay for multiple people can take care of everyone's dues with one simple phone call to 317-569-4570! New members for 2025 can be processed after September 1.

## MISSION IN ACTION: BARABOO UNIT 26

### BARABOO 4TH GRADERS LEARN ABOUT THE "RED POPPY"

Mary Spink, Auxiliary member of Unit 26 in Baraboo and a retired school teacher, encouraged unit members to go into the schools to present to 4th graders the significance of the "red poppy" and Memorial Day. Enthusiasm among the members grew and the goal became to make a presentation to all 4th graders, about 250 students, in the Baraboo School District by Memorial Day.

The 4th grade teachers assisted by sending home a letter asking students to write down the name of a Veteran who was no longer living and their branch of service. The unit's presentation was brief, about one-half hour. They engaged the students by passing around a WWI uniform, helmet, and backpack for a hands-on experience, quizzed the students, and enlightened them on the significance of the red poppy.

To finalize the presentation, students wrote the name of their Veteran and branch of service on a white card and glued a red paper poppy in the center. The "poppies" were collected and used to create posters. The posters were completed by Auxiliary members and taken to the schools to be displayed. Later, the unit moved the posters to downtown Baraboo business windows for display until Memorial Day. On Memorial Day, the posters were displayed at Walnut Hill Cemetery during the Memorial Day Program presented by the military organizations in Baraboo.

This is the second successful year thanks to the Baraboo Schools allowing the unit to make a presentation, members of Unit 26 who provided input to create the presentation, and members who volunteered their time and talents in the classroom! If you would like to start a similar effort in your community, please contact Unit 26 President Kim Shanks at 608-402-0016.





## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY BADGER GIRLS STATE

**Danyelle Thompson**  
**Chair**  
 alabgs.chairman@gmail.com

ALA Badger Girls State celebrated its 79th session this past June, with much success! Approximately 500 delegates from all over the State of Wisconsin joined 63 volunteer counselors at UW-Oshkosh. The delegates spent the week creating the mythical 51st State of Badger, where they ran for office, created political parties, and passed legislation.

ALABGS's mission is to prepare the next generation of women to be engaged citizens. We focused on public service, running for office, participating in local government, and how to engage in civil dialogue with people you don't agree with. We also concentrated on flag etiquette, service to Veterans, and embracing patriotism. We were also very excited to have ALA National President Lisa Williamson join us on Thursday for our Inaugural Ceremony, where we were also joined by Governor Evers, Justice Jill Karofsky, and State Treas-



urer John Leiber.

I want to thank all the Legion Family sponsors that were able to send delegates. Without the delegates and the support of the Legion Family, this program would not be possible. I would also like to thank all the

volunteer counselors. Our program runs almost 100% on volunteers, so without those willing to give up a few days or an entire week, it would be very difficult to provide the best experience we can. We look forward to what we can accomplish in 2025!



### ALABGS: BATTLE OF THE QUILT



Claudia Osero and members of 11th District made an ALA Badger Girls State quilt from old ALABGS shirts that was auctioned off during the ALA Wisconsin Department Convention. Chairman Danyelle Thompson was in a heated bidding war but lost to ALABGS Head Nurse Christine Johnsen. However, in a generous act of Service Not Self, Christine gave the quilt to Danyelle! Proceeds benefitted the ALABGS program.

### THANK YOU: DOGS2DOGTAGS

Thank you to everyone who supported my special project, Dogs2DogTags. Through your generous donations, ALA-Wisconsin contributed almost \$72,000!!! Thank you ~ PDP Maggie Geiger

### CHILDREN & YOUTH GOOD DEED AWARD

(Article and photo courtesy of Berlin Journal Newspapers)

Presley Putzke, a student at All Saints Regional Catholic School in Berlin, recently received an American Legion Auxiliary Good Deed Award.

In October 2023, an accident made it difficult for a staff member to be in the lunchroom every day to clean. Seeing a need for help, Presley became the self-appointed cleanup crew – sweeping, mopping, wiping down tables and putting up chairs – all without being asked. He regularly skipped recess outside so the lunchroom would be clean for everyone the next day. "I didn't really think a lot about helping out. I just did it because it was the right thing to do and I was happy to help," he said.

A small article in the church bulletin led members of Berlin's American Legion Auxiliary to nominate Presley for a Good Deed Award. Presley was presented the award in June during the opening Berlin Farmers & Artists Market where he was once again volunteering his time



working in the market's food booth.

Congratulations, Presley, for being an example we can all look up to. Our future is in good hands!

### JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

**Christine Johnsen**  
**Department Chairman**  
 cmj102@aol.com  
 715-203-2015

**Morgan Johnsen**  
**Department Vice Chairman**

Juniors are the FUTURE of the American Legion Auxiliary and NOW is the time to inspire all Juniors to actively participate in ALA activities. With an aging membership and dwindling number of brand-new members, it is imperative that all Juniors know they are a valued part of the American Legion Family. As units begin planning activities for the 2024-25 administrative year, please make every effort to include these very

important Junior members in community projects, whenever possible.

Regardless of where they live, all Juniors can learn about the mission of the ALA through the Junior patch program. Did you know that there is a new purple patch level for Juniors aged 3 to kindergarten? Let's engage our youngest members now, so they will be motivated to continue their ALA membership as adults.

To kick off an exciting new year of Junior activities, please SAVE THE DATE for the Department of Wisconsin Junior Fall Conference on Saturday, October 12, 2024, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. It will be held at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, N2665 County Rd QQ, King, WI 54946. In the spirit of *Serving*

*Veterans, the Military, and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts*, we will have several exciting activities that will be fun for all ages! The tentative schedule will include a business meeting (including election of Honorary Department Junior Officers), lunch, and an interactive event with residents of the King Veterans Home. Watch the department website for more information and a registration form ([www.amlegionauxwi.org](http://www.amlegionauxwi.org)) > Programs > Junior Activities).

The Juniors Program Engagement Plan for 2024-25 will be available on the Department website in September. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions (or ideas!) about Junior activities. It's going to be a GREAT year!



## DISTINGUISHED GUESTS RECAP

### Sue Keyzers Department Chairman

Being the Distinguished Guests Chairman for the Department of Wisconsin has been a wonderful experience. Our first outing was with Central Division National Vice President Carol Robinson. We were able to be a part of Diva Day at Zablocki VA where Carol spent time with the women Veterans and learned about their concerns. Then we treated Carol to a traditional Wisconsin fish fry at Post 434. We finished with a District 4 meeting where Carol spent time with the members and made tray favors.

Our second tour was with National President Lisa Williamson. We started at the Poppy Shop at the War Memorial Center in Milwaukee where we received a tour from Sean Clark, the Program Director. Lisa was very impressed by the design and the new MIA/POW display. After the tour, Sue Hembrook told us about the ALA Poppy Shop and poppy makers. The next day we started our trip to Camp American Legion. We stopped at Lambeau Field/Titletown District to take a quick look around. Lisa is a Harley rider, so we went to Doc's Harley-Davidson and Timeline Saloon BBQ where we had lunch and looked at the old and new motorcycles. We arrived at Camp American Legion just in time for a quick tour of the facilities and then ate supper with the women Veterans staying there. Over the next day and a half, National President Lisa talked to the women Veterans about *Be The One*. Many of the women there approached Lisa with questions. We were able to get a pontoon boat ride that ended up as a rescue mission as the engine in the boat ahead of us died and we had to pull it halfway across the lake back to Camp. That night the Camp had a barbeque with burgers, brats and all the fixings. We even had smores. Lisa again had time to talk to the lady Veterans. The next morning, we headed to UW-Oshkosh for ALA Badger Girls State. We got there just in time for a lunch of state fair food, including cream puffs. Lisa spoke briefly to the girls about how they could be part of *Be The One*.

And now it is on to Department Convention. Florence Wasley was Department President in 2010/2011 and was the Honored Guest during the recognition program on Friday, July 12 at 3:00 pm. We escorted her and other distinguished guests throughout convention.

I would truly like to thank President Maggie for asking me to be the Distinguished Guests Chairman for 2023-2024. It was an amazing experience.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH HERO AWARD

An eighth-grader is being hailed as a hero after grabbing hold of the wheel of his school bus after the driver lost consciousness. His heroics earned him an American Legion Auxiliary Youth Hero Award, presented by PDP Diana Sirovina.

Acie Holland III understood something wasn't right when the driver began to appear dizzy. Soon after, her head dropped, but the bus continued to accelerate past a turn on the route. "She turned the corner and there's another street that we usually turn on. She pressed the gas and went past the corner, and I looked up," Holland said. Coming to the front, he found the driver unresponsive and the bus veering into oncoming traffic.

In what he later described as a fight or flight situation, Holland moved the driver aside, took the wheel and safely



parked the bus on the side of the road, calling 911 after it had come to a halt and telling each student to call their parents.

The driver had suffered a medical emergency. At first, Holland's father, Acie Holland II, wasn't sure if his son was telling the truth, but when it did eventually become clear, Holland Sr. said he wasn't surprised. "He's always been a person where he's real quick on his feet. That's one of my things that I know he's capable of, not on the school bus, but just in general, being able to help someone in need. I am proud of what he did," said Holland Sr.

Mr. Holland II owns a garage, and Holland III says it's around the shop that he had grown accustomed to the functions of automobiles enough to feel confident grabbing the wheel of that bus. The school said that Holland's leadership and compassion is something they witness daily, but the incident in April took it to the 'next level.'

## EDUCATION / M. LOUISE WILSON EDUCATIONAL LOANS

### Diane Weggen Department Chair dsweggen@gmail.com 715-644-2668

It's "Back to School" time already, or at least time for units and members to be planning the Education program for the year. The **purpose** of the ALA Education Program is to promote quality education for children, especially military children, and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion, support of education beyond high school and the M. Louise Wilson Educational Loan Fund which provides interest-free loans to assist female members of the ALA pursuing higher education.

The ALA Education Program encourages units and members to participate and get involved in the following components which demonstrate the **relevance** of educating community youth and citizens throughout the state:

- ALA's Give 10 to Education
- American Education Week, November 18 – 22, 2024
- Month of the Military Child, April 2025
- Purple Up! Day, April 15, 2025
- Teachers Appreciation Week, May 5 – 9, 2025
- Veterans in Community Schools
- The American Legion Family scholarships at the national, department, and local levels
- Legislation that establishes new scholarship opportunities

For a wide variety of what can be done to

participate in any or all of these components, go to the department and national websites ([www.amlegionauxwi.org](http://www.amlegionauxwi.org) and [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)) or read the Unit Mailings which are published every other month.

Download scholarship applications when they are available and distribute them to incoming high school seniors. This will allow time for applicants to familiarize themselves with the eligibility requirements and prepare their applications for submission by March 1, 2025.

Application forms and requirements will be posted on the department website. Click on *Programs* then *Education*.

The M. LOUISE WILSON EDUCATIONAL LOAN FUND was established in 1925 to promote the ALA mission and is funded through donations. ALA members who require financial support in order to further their education can apply for interest-free loans by contacting this chairman. Applicants may attend a technical, two or four-year college/university. If approved, the applicant can borrow up to \$800 per year for five years. One year from the date of the first loan, the applicant can request an additional \$800 by sending a copy of college grades and maintaining membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. If approved, the applicant may continue to borrow annually until the amount reaches \$4,000 or they are no longer a full-time student.

This program has been successful due to The American Legion Family members providing donations and ALA applicants honoring their responsibility to repay the loan.

## BE THE ONE

Article submitted by  
Carol Szudrowitz  
2nd District Ozaukee County President

Following The American Legion's 2023-2024 theme of BE THE ONE, the ALA Ozaukee County Council in Cedarburg presented a program on suicide prevention on Legion Family Day. Suicide has impacted so many... Veterans, adults of all ages, teens, and even children. Second District President Sandy Mack invited not only the 2nd District American Legion Family but also the public. This has become a high priority in communities, schools, and families. As National Commander Dan Seehafer says, "It's Personal."

Curtiss Peck, a member of the American Association of Suicidology, presented a R.A.C.E. Suicide Prevention Program at Cedarburg Post 288. It was attended by members of the Cedarburg community, Ozaukee County Units, and 2nd District Auxiliary members. The program was very well received.

R. A. C. E. stands for:

- **R**ecognizing signs of distress
- **A**sking the person about what they are thinking or feeling without judgement
- **C**aring for person while actively listening
- **E**scorting the person for help based on needs

The R.A.C.E. suicide prevention model



has been used by the U.S. Marine Corps. If interested, please contact Curtiss as he presents the R.A.C.E. training on Zoom (three consecutive Tuesdays). Sign up at <http://www.racesuicideprevention.us>. If interested in a free group in-person program, again please contact Curtiss at the same website.

Curtiss Peck is an Air Force Veteran who belongs to the Harley-Davidson American Legion Riders. His background includes a BA in social welfare and justice with graduate studies (PhD) in Industrial & Organizational Psychology. He is the former Executive Director of Fisher House Wisconsin.



## Department of Wisconsin 2024 State Convention Citations

### President's Award for Excellence – Maggie Geiger, Department President

12 – Awarded to Mukwonago Unit 375, District 1; Eunice Seering of Unit 69, District 2; Crawford County, District 3; Oak Creek Unit 434, District 4; St. Nazianz Unit 477, District 6; Northfield Unit 541, District 7; Wonewoc Unit 206, District 7; Marathon Unit 469, District 8; Abrams Unit 523, District 9; River Falls Unit 121, District 10; Land O' Lakes Unit 464, District 11; Webster Unit 96, District 12.

### Americanism – Diane Burkhalter, Department Chairman

4 – Certificates of Recognition - Awarded to Green Lake Unit 306, District 6; King Unit 161, District 8; New London Unit 263, District 8; and Mercer Unit 424, District 11.

### Community Service – Sandy Mack, Department Chairman

3 – Certificates of Participation – Awarded to Cambria Unit 401, District 2; River Falls Unit 121, District 10; Richland Center Unit 13, District 3.

### Education – Diane Weggen, Department Chairman

7 – Certificates of Recognition – Awarded to Spooner Unit 12, District 12; Pewaukee Unit 71, District 1; Sparta Unit 100, District 7; Alma Unit 224, District 10; Rome Unit 65, District 7; Gordon Unit 499, District 12; Grafton Unit 355, District 2.

### History – Mary Petrie, Department Historian

1 – Best Overall (District) Certificate of Merit – awarded to District 7, Vickie Dux, Historian.  
1 – Best Overall (Unit) Certificate of Merit – awarded to Thorp Unit 118, Alyssa Fraser, Historian.  
1 – Runner Up (Unit) Certificate of Merit – awarded to River Falls Unit 121, Kate Koosmann, Historian.  
3 – Certificates of Participation – awarded to Watertown 189, Sue Christian; Historian; Chilton Unit 125, Patricia Katalinik, Historian; Fremont Unit 391, Jennifer Schilling, Historian.

### Leadership – Joyce Endres, Department Chairman

1 – Unit Member of the Year – awarded to Terry Giles of Grantsburg Unit 185, District 12.  
6 – Unit Member of the Year Nominees - awarded to Eunice Seering of Mayville Unit 69, District 2; Vickie Dux of Neillsville Unit 73, District 7; JoAnn DeWart of Delavan Unit 95, District 1; Linda Maurer-Garbe of Wautoma Unit 317, District 8; Shirley Kubiak of Waunakee Unit 360, District 3; Mary Davitz of Caledonia Unit 494, District 1.  
13 – Certificates of Recognition – Cross Plains Unit 245, District 3; Caledonia Unit 494, District 1; St. Nazianz Unit 477, District 6; District 1; District 2 / Columbia County; Dane County Council; Waukesha County; Belgium Unit 412, Port Washington Unit 82, Fredonia Unit 410, Grafton Unit 355, Cedarburg Unit 288, District 2.

### Junior Activities – Laura Calteux and Char Kiesling, Department Co-Chairmen

1 – Junior Member of the Year – awarded to Rylee Turowski, Grafton Unit 355, District 2  
1 – Junior Unit of the Year – awarded to Pewaukee Unit 71, District 1

### Legislative – Linda Coppock, Department Chairman

1 – Best Overall Unit Report – awarded to New London Unit 263, District 8.  
6 – Certificates of Participation – awarded to Pewaukee Unit 71, District 1; Okauchee Unit 399, District 1; Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Beaver Dam Unit 146, District 2; Theresa Unit 270, District 2; Neenah Unit 33, District 6.

### Membership – Sue Hembrook, Department Chairman

30 – Over 100% Certificates & Ribbons – awarded to Kenosha Unit 21, Edgerton Unit 30, Hartland Unit 294, Mukwonago Unit 375, Clinton Unit 440 of District 1; Rio Unit 208, Poynette 271 of District 2; Stoughton Unit 59, Mt. Hope Unit 229, Argyle Unit 251, DeForest Unit 248, McFarland Unit 534 of District 3; Milwaukee Unit 448 of District 5; St. Nazianz Unit 477 of District 6; Rome Unit 65, Holmen Unit 284 of District 7; Tigerton Unit 239, Wild Rose Unit 370 of District 8; Hortonville Unit 55 of District 9; River Falls Unit 121, Independence Unit 186, Osseo Unit 324, Cornell Unit 353, Eleva Unit 459, Brackett Unit 550 of District 10; Fifield Unit 532, Lublin Unit 547 of District 11; Spooner Unit 12, Hayward Unit 218, Birchwood Unit 379 of District 12.

### National Security – Karen Runk, Department Chairman

4 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Omro Unit 234, District 6; Grafton Unit 355, District 2; Waunakee Unit 360, District 3; Okauchee Unit 399, District 1.

### Poppy – Kay Grosskopf, Department Chairman

1 – Best Overall (Unit) Poppy Program – awarded to New London Unit 263, District 8, Audrey Stuczynski (chm)  
8 – Poppy Poster Awards – awarded to Zara Eichelt (Class I), sponsored by Thorp Unit 118, District 7; Easton Knorr (Class II), sponsored by Shiocton Unit 512, District 9; Tenlee Van Straten (Class III), sponsored by Shiocton Unit 512, District 9; tie between Kiann Rabuck (Class IV), sponsored by Thorp Unit 118, District 7 & Angelina Ellefson (Class IV) sponsored by Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Frankie Hoffeller (Class V), sponsored by Athelstane-Silver Cliff Unit 66, District 9; Dawson Dietrich (Class VI), sponsored by Thorp Unit 118, District 7; Natalie Myers (Class VII), sponsored by Fond du Lac Unit 75, District 6.

### Public Relations – Bob Shappell, Department Chairman

1 – Certificate of Recognition – awarded to Mary Petrie of Watertown Unit 189, District 2.

### Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation – Bonnie Jakubczyk, Department Chairman

6 – Best Overall (Unit) Report – awarded to Port Washington Unit 82, District 2.

## MISSION IN ACTION: PLYMOUTH UNIT 243

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 243 of Plymouth invested in the future of Plymouth High School students in need of free clothing, shoes, coats, school supplies and other items to aid in the students' success. Students can "shop" the Panther 'Fits Sharing & Career Closet for personal needs and proper attire for job interviews. A donation of \$250 was presented by Unit President Linda Johnson to Grace Wascher.



## MISSION IN ACTION: JACKSON UNIT 486



Two Junior members helped sell raffle tickets for S/SGT. Henry F. Gumm Unit 486 in Jackson at their annual picnic. Pictured: Brookelynn and Kherington Bodden with Mary Rogge.



Kherington Bodden also distributed poppies with two of her friends.

## UNIT 243 IN PLYMOUTH MARKS MEMORIAL DAY



ALA Unit 243 in Plymouth celebrated Memorial Day by serving breakfast to the Honor Guard before traveling to the local cemeteries to honor deceased Veterans. This was followed by a parade and brat fry at the Post, which was a success despite the drizzly day. Eleven Auxiliary members served approximately 150 people through dine-in and takeout orders. The unit also made efforts to recruit new members and had raffle baskets and sold baked goods. They will donate the funds raised to support Veterans and local community causes.





**Jim Johnson**  
Department  
Commander

★★★★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

Legionnaires,  
I am truly humbled by the level of support I have received from the Wisconsin American Legion Family, thank you!

The 2023-2024 Leadership team from Wisconsin Posts, Counties, Districts, and Department has provided a healthy membership that we can continue to grow. I extend my sincere appreciation to PDC Stuvengen for his mentorship and leadership this past year.

Legionnaires are doing great things throughout Wisconsin being visible, relevant and promoting The American Legion's values and principles. Our viability requires us to excel at every level, to be accountable to ourselves, to

work together, and give strength to the pride of The American Legion.

We must continue to be engaged with Be the One. The American Legion will continue to change lives and save lives. Through our personal commitment to our mission, we will make sure that we are Legion Strong!

Strength is increased when we get outside of our posts to engage with the community, this provides visibility to our mission. Veterans need to see us to want to join us! Once they fully engage with The American Legion, they will find friends and feel at home in our Family!

Let them see your passion and pride in being a Legionnaire!

You have selected strong experienced leaders to serve as your 2024-2025 Depart-

ment Vice Commanders: Nathan Bond, Jerry Hook, Phil Green, and Debbie Thomas. This team will help to make Wisconsin Legion Strong! None of us can succeed without all of us working together towards a common goal.

Our programs, ceremonies, and service to the community give us relevance, visibility, and help drive membership.

Our Legion Strength is increased through the Commitment and Service of the Legion Family, our Sons, our Riders, and our Auxiliary.

Together as a family we are Legion Strong!

Jim Johnson  
Commander

*P.S. Please take time today to give a buddy check.*



**Becky Mueller**  
2024-2025  
Department  
President

PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE

Thank you to all for a great beginning to my term of office. I look forward to working with the American Legion Family to further our mission and vision.

My theme this year is "Serving our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts." What I envision for us this year is that we tap into the love we hold in the very depths of our hearts and release it for action towards those who mean the most to us. Our organization is built on the desire to serve, protect, and advocate for our Veterans of military service, those currently serving in the military, their family members, and their communities. We are all family members. Our services should include each other.

I have two projects I want us to focus on. First, I want us to bring awareness to the 1,800 MIA/POWs that are still missing from our state. The UW MIA Recovery and Identification Project is working to find and identify missing U.S. military personnel in conjunction with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. The names of the missing are available. I would like us to reach out to those family members still waiting for closure, loving them, caring for them, from the depths of our hearts.

Secondly, I would like to challenge each member of The American Legion Family, especially the Auxiliary, to donate to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. My goal is to raise \$1 per member.

I look forward to visiting with you and your units, posts, and squadrons as you invite me. A form is available on the department website for your use. I want to know what you are accomplishing and achieving so I can celebrate with you.

I thank God for all of you being part of my family and life. I thank God for your faith and patriotism. I thank God for your heart for service. Now let's roll up our sleeves and get to work in Service to our Veterans, Military and Each Other from the Depths of our Hearts.



**Allen Watry**  
SAL Detachment  
Commander

★★★★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

Greetings Wisconsin Legion Family,

What a great 12 months for the Wisconsin Sons of The American Legion. Through the 57 CSRs turned in, the Wisconsin SAL reported \$32,000 in donations and 73,000

Volunteer Hours for an Economic Impact of over \$2.7 million. This is a 46% Increase from the previous year. Great Job!! We are providing a much-needed positive impact in our Communities, State, and Nation!

We also had a very successful membership year, achieving Triple Nickel Status. Membership grew over 9% (goal of a 5% increase) to

over almost 4,700 members, we added 5 new Squadrons (goal of 5), and our renewal rate was 91.5% (goal of 85%). This is not an easy task and took a lot of effort. Thank you for all your efforts to achieve Triple Nickel Status. So what is in store for membership for 2024-2025? Can we keep the momentum and growth going? Can we hit 5,000 in 2025?

One way we can help keep increasing our membership is by being visible and relevant in our communities. We do this by living out our Preamble and executing programs/activities focused on the 4 Pillars of the American Legion. Demonstrating to our communities, through our actions, what it means to have an Americanism Spirit. Teaching and helping the Youth in our communities, who

are our future. Contacting our government representatives to tell them they need to be aligned with the focuses and priorities of the American Legion. And last, but not least, supporting our Veterans, Active Military, and their Families.

This is our mission; this is the Mission of the entire Legion Family. Thank you to the entire Legion Family for your efforts in 2023-2024. We are making a difference; our country needs us to be successful. I look forward to working with the entire Legion Family to make 2024-2025 even more successful than 2023-2024. Please keep up the great work!!

For God and Country,  
Allen Watry



**Corey Doehrmann**  
State Director  
American Legion  
Riders Association

★★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★★★

Unfortunately, good Wisconsin riding weather is rapidly coming to an end for the year. In just over a month the Legion Riders will have our annual Fall Ride to Camp bringing donations from across the

state to support the mission of Camp American Legion. Riders will enjoy the camaraderie that is a significant part of why many people join the American Legion Family. If you are a Legion Rider and have not been to the Fall Color Ride in Tomahawk nor the Fall Ride to Camp, I would strongly encourage you to join in this year and see

what it is all about. You can stay at Camp American Legion all week if you'd like. If that does not fit into your schedule, join us on Saturday, September 14, at the gas station (1727 E Somo Ave, Tomahawk, WI) as we ride into Camp American Legion as a group. We depart at 11:00 am with lunch at noon with donations to follow.

I hear often about the fundraising capability of the American Legion Riders. This distinction is very well deserved as I know Legion Riders across Wisconsin and the Nation for that matter do raise a significant amount of money for American Legion programs. I've had a lot of time to consider this over the last few years. I believe that the Legion Riders are so adept at raising funds because the Riders

organization is made of members from the Legion, Auxiliary & SAL I would support this by pointing out the many American Legion posts that are doing very well: they also have very vibrant and family-oriented relationships among their Legion Family. Working together for the common goal of supporting veterans and their families. If you can improve the relationship among your post's family, I think you will really reap the benefits.

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. Our next meeting after the publication of this will be November 2 at Weiske-Farrell Post 351 in Montello, WI.

Veterans Crisis Line



**DIAL 988**  
then **PRESS 1**



**County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin**

**EVERY COUNTY AND TRIBE IN WISCONSIN STANDS READY TO SERVE ALL THOSE WHO SERVED AT NO COST TO YOU.**

*Your local Veteran Advocates, serving you since 1935*

