



BADGER



LEGIIONNAIRE

& WISCONSIN VOL 100 #3 | JUNE 2023



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

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

DEPARTMENT TO HOST 104TH CONVENTION

Register Today for Rothschild



ALL Legion Family members are encouraged to attend the 104th Department Convention REGISTER TODAY!

■ Please see Page 4 for the Convention Registration Form and information on Housing, Page 5 for Candidate bios.

Convention will kick off on Wednesday when we welcome the Legion Riders to Bull Falls Harley-Davidson for the Post-Back to Basic Tour Party featuring live music, food trucks and drinks.

On Thursday the Department Standing Committees will meet, followed by the Department Executive Committee. The gavel will drop Friday morning to officially start the 104th Department Convention.

Friday will feature speakers from other Veterans Service Organizations, awards, special presentations and will conclude with the Convention Committees to vote on resolutions.



MSG Brian Eisch is the keynote speaker at the 104th Department Convention. A Wisconsin native with 20 years in the United States Army, Eisch will discuss resiliency and perseverance through humor and inspiration.

Friday evening join the candidates for hospitality poolside at the Holiday Inn.

Saturday will begin with voting in the 2023/2024 Department Officers and then join our dynamic speakers and award winners at the General Session. The day will wrap up with the PCC/Department party featuring live

music, a Taco Bar, drinks and introduction of the New Legion Family Officers.

Sunday will begin with a Memorial Service, followed by the installation of Officers. Posts: Delegate forms are mailed 30 days prior to convention (June 21, 2023) per the Department Constitution and Bylaws.

Can't Miss Speaker Lineup

The panel of speakers this year will be educational, inspiring and entertaining. We will hear from Randall Bansley of the Office of Charitable Gaming. Randal will educate you on how to properly and successfully raise funds for your Post, County and District. You will hear from and meet the WDVA's new Secretary James Bond. Christopher Kolakowski from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum will be joining us with some Wisconsin Veterans History. His programs are always entertaining and educational. Also joining us is the 2024/2025 National Commander Candidate Jim LaCoursiere from Connecticut.

The highlight keynote speaker is MSG Brian Eisch. Brian will talk about **Resiliency and perseverance through humor and inspiration. Brian, a Wisconsin native, will share about his 20 years in the United States Army where he was shot three times in Afghanistan while trying to rescue an Afghan National Police Officer who was severely wounded in an ambush. In 2015, his family suffered a devastating loss when their beloved Joey, age 12, was riding his bicycle near their home when he was hit by a truck and did not survive. He will share how to cope through so much devastation and come out on top. He was also highlighted in the NETFLIX documentary Father Soldier Son. You do not want to miss this inspirational speech!**

Posts please visit bit.ly/preconvention-requirements for the 2023 Preconvention Requirements.

DEPARTMENT TAPS MUHLE AS LEGION'S NEW ADJUTANT

The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin is happy to announce that the Hiring Committee has made a decision regarding the next Department Adjutant. This decision was ratified by the Department Executive Committee at the Department Spring Meeting on May 13, 2023. Please join the Headquarters Team, Service Office Team and the Camp American Legion Team in welcoming Julie Muhle as the new Department Adjutant.

Commander Julie will complete her term as Department Commander, however will join the Headquarters Team full-time starting the week of June 19, 2023. She will serve as a consultant until the close of the 2023 Department Convention on July 23, 2023.

Any questions regarding the hiring of the Department Adjutant can be directed to the Hiring Committee Chair Ken Rynes at ken.rynes@gmail.com.

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
Jen Swenson

2022-23 Department Officers
Department Commander
Julie Muhle

Department Vice Commanders
Jeffery Zwiers
Karl Stuvengen
John Polzin
Harold Rihn

Department Chaplain
John Gessner

Sergeant-At-Arms
Jeremy Nordie
John Berg

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

District Commanders
1st - Nathan Bond
2nd - Jim Johnson
3rd - Jerry Hook
4th - Linda Pfeiffer
5th - Craig Ellis
6th - Gail Minks
7th - Phil Green
8th - Adam Klapperich
9th - Debbie Thomas
10th - Larry Larson
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
Linda Coppock, 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

YEAR-AROUND SERVICE: BADGER BOYS STATE AT 80!

By **Thomas A. Skrenes**

The 80th session of Badger Boys State occurs June 11th to 17th at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus. One hundred and fifty volunteers make this Americanism program of the American Legion work each year. Some of the volunteers are present on campus during the week and have assigned roles for just the session week. Behind the scenes is a group of people who work literally twelve months a year to make the program a success. Today let’s meet four volunteers who contribute much to the program:



Ryan Ramsden is a Navy Veteran, a graduate of the ROTC program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Deployed to the Mid-East he helped to dispose of explosive ordinance. A banker these days in Richmond Virginia, Ryan has 12 years on the Boys State staff. Ryan was a 2001 citizen of BBS and helps today administer both the citizen orientation program and transportation. “I keep coming back to Boys State,”



he says, “because of the opportunity to catalyze important growth in Wisconsin’s youth.”

Jacob Stollfus from Sun Prairie was a 2001 citizen and for 23 years has been a counselor and a staff member at BBS. Employed by a large retailer, he manages technical computer services. He does planning and administrating for

this youth program. As Assistant Director of Government Simulation and Curriculum he oversees general assembly’s putting in countless hours on curriculum and schedules. Jacob’s job is to make BBS deliver a quality up to date program for our 800 citizens.

Austin Evans was a citizen at Boys State in 2000 and will have

13 years in the program this June. A Corporate Attorney in San Diego, Austin is building the BBS University program which will in 2024 provide college level credit to Boys State citizens. He also works at BBS to coordinate the program parts and make it run as a unified effort.” He writes, “I love getting to know our amazing citizens. I have worked with several graduates of our program as they have begun their careers as lawyers.”

Chad Plenge has streamlined the registration process and implemented many programs that support the “back of the house” BBS operations. A graduate of West Point, Chad was a 2006 Boys State citizen and has 16 years on the BBS staff. Today Chad is a consultant in the Midwest but recalls helping out with Boys State administrative details on his off duty time while deployed to Afghanistan with the Army. Chad sums up what these and the other volunteers think about this American Legion program when he says, “What brings me back each year is the impact the program makes on the citizens. We may see them for a week, but the seeds we plant grow throughout their lifetime.”

These four men are typical of the quality people (150 strong) that volunteer every year in this American Legion youth program. Badger Boys State is in very good hands.

COON VALLEY FLAGS



Coon Valley Village President Karl Henrichsen, L, accepts a \$500 check from **Coon Valley American Legion Post 116 Commander Wes Guy** for the flags on Main St. Project in the Village of Coon Valley. The funds were raised at a pancake breakfast put on by the Post.

Submitted by *Post 116 Historian Frank Mathison.*

FLAG ETIQUETTE TAUGHT AT 6 SCHOOLS



A presentation on addressing the U.S. Flag during the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem was recently presented to students at six Holyland Elementary schools near Abler/Engel Legion Post 454 Mt. Calvary. The presentation was conducted by members of the Sons of American Legion Post 454 Mt. Calvary along with assistance from members of Abler/Engel Legion Post 454. The presentation also included a demonstration of the ceremonial folding of the U.S. Flag including the meaning of each of the thirteen folds.

Pictured left to right: SAL Commander Mike Schmitz, SAL Member Michael Mand, SAL Member Steve King (white shirt), SAL Member Mark Schneider, Legion 454 Member Gary Hass and SAL Member Earl Freund.

POST 91 OCONOMOWOC FLAGS IN CLASSROOMS



One of Post 91’s goals is to have a serviceable United States Flag in each classroom in the Oconomowoc area. St. Matthew’s Lutheran School was blessed to build 4 new classrooms to handle their continuing expanding enrollment. Post 91 was happy to provide the Flags.

Pictured left to right presenting the flags to the school are: **Ken Lemke** of Post 91; **Tom Plitzuweit**, Principal of St. Matthew’s School; **Dylan Lemke**, member of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 91; and a **St. Matthew’s student; Jerry Wendt**, Post 91 Commander.

THE FUN I HAD: 18 YEARS WITH THE WISCONSIN LEGION RIDERS

My family and I moved to Wisconsin in 1993 from St. Louis. After moving, rumor had it that in order to file your State taxes as a “resident” you had to own a Harley and at least three pieces of Packers memorabilia. I considered joining the Harley family but told myself to get real, I was over 50 years old and hadn’t ridden a bike in 30 years. Not too long thereafter I read about Rolling Thunder and their Memorial Day ceremonies for 500,000+ Veteran bikers for a great cause, POW/MIAs. I REALLY wanted to be a part of this. Accordingly, I went out and bought a Harley (2003 100th anniversary, silver and black. Sweet). One of my first rides was the Milwaukee “Support the Troops” annual ride on Armed Forces Day. During the ride I noted we were being led by a significant number of bikes carrying American flags. Very cool. When we parked at our destination I went to the head of the line and walked up behind a gentleman who had a patch on the back

of his vest that said “American Legion Rider”... “Whoa, what is this? I’m a Legionnaire and I ride. What’s going?” I introduced myself, was filled in on the Riders and joined on the spot. One of the best decisions I’ve ever made.

During the next 18 years I got to: lead my hometown parade; ride in the Veterans Day Parade with my son (a SAL member) right behind me; pace a falcon at eye level on the highway; participate in literally 100s of parades; had the honor to perform funeral escorts for Veterans, and participate in literally dozens of other fun, unique and patriotic events. But, best of all, was the lifetime friends I made with other Riders. I’m 77 and retired from the Riders now, but wouldn’t have missed these days for the world. For a more detailed description of my days as a Rider please see bit.ly/riders-alamo

*Don “Alamo” Stone
American Legion*



2023 STATE TOURNAMENTS

BASEBALL
wilegion.org/legion-baseball

Class AAA
July 25-29
Marinette

Class AA
July 28-Aug 1
Ashwaubenon

Class A
July 28-Aug 1
Prairie du Chien

17U
July 21-25
Wisconsin Rapids

16U
July 21-25
Waupun

SOFTBALL
wilegion.org/legion-baseball

Division 1
July 28-30
DeForest

AllStar Game
August 6
Milwaukee

SYLVAN POST 44 LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR



George Richards, Roger Vandenlangenberg and Bob Tegen.

Commander George Richards and 1st Vice Commander Bob Tegen presented Legionnaire of the Year to Roger Vandenlangenberg.

Roger is a Veteran of the United States Coast Guard and a 4-year member of the American Legion. He was very instrumental in putting together the six major war memorials at the Veterans War Memorial Park in Wabeno. He also installed the dedication bench honoring Jerry Guert from Suring, WI (Vietnam prisoner for 5 ½ years).

Roger has made several presentations at Wabeno High School and speeches at several Legion ceremonies. He is an Honor Guard Member, volunteers at many Legion fundraisers, volunteers at the Veterans War Memorial Park by doing maintenance and is a driver for the military vehicles.

Roger enjoys spending time with his lovely wife, Bonnie, and his family. Roger is witty and always brings joy and laughter with him wherever he goes.

PATRIOT RIDERS AND VETERANS DAY APPRECIATION IN VILLAGE OF MARIBEL

On May 3, Post 165, in coordination with the Patriot Riders, presented certificates of appreciation to students of St. John's Lutheran School in the Village of Maribel. The students, Anya Hochmuth, Caleb Lukasek, and Laney Neuser honored Veterans during their schools Veterans Day Appreciation.

Back Row from Left: Legion members Jack Siewert, PJ Stephens, John Gomez, Howard C. Havlichek, Jenny Matte (Patriot Riders), Post Commander Kurt Carlson, and Bruce Krueger. Front Row from Left: students Anya Hochmuth, Laney Neuser, and Caleb Lukasek.



POST 435 DONATES TO THE SUPERIOR REDS

The Richard I. Bong Post 435 recently gave the Superior Reds Baseball Team a donation for \$2,000 to help with team expenses for 2023. Left to right is Post 1st Vice Commander Glen Erickson, Ben Rhodes, Superior Reds Team Manager, receiving the check from Post Commander Butch Liebaert. The team is made up with players aged 16 to 19 years old. They have players from all around the Superior area and play up to 25 games during the season. They usually play six or seven home games at Superior Senior High School field.



2023 Department
CONVENTION
July 19-23, 2023 ~ Rothschild, WI

CONVENTION HOUSING

Bantr
805 Creske Avenue
Rothschild, WI 54474
715-241-6300

Studio: Thurs. \$109 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$139 plus tax
 Suite: Thurs. \$119 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$149 plus tax
 Lofts: Thurs. \$129 plus tax, Friday-Saturday \$159 plus tax
 All have 2 Queens and price based on 4 people per room.
Group Block: American Legion RB 2023
Cut Off: June 20, 2023

Other options may open up at a later date.

 **Veterans Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1

2023-2024

**DEPARTMENT
COMMANDER**

*Recruit
the next you!*

Vote

**Karl
STUVENGEN**



BE THE ONE WALK TO HELP PREVENT SUICIDE AMONG VETS

We all know that the No. 1 issue facing the Veteran community is suicide. It is estimated that between 17 and 22 Veterans take their lives each and every day. The American Legion encourages Veterans through the Be the One program to:

- Talk with others about how we are feeling.
- Ask for help when we know we need it.
- Know there are millions of people ready to help us and know that we are not alone in our struggles.
- Most importantly we need to remember our family, our American




Legion Family and our Friends care about us.

Please consider joining us on Wednesday, July 19, at 3pm for a Be the One 2.2 mile walk for the twenty-two at the Holiday Inn as we kick off the Department Convention. There is an online registration to carry the American Flag, the Be the One flag, and to carry one of the twenty-two stones during the walk.

Interested parties can visit the website: Wilegion.org/be-the-one.

We had a great time during the 2.2 for the 22 Be the One walk at Midwinter, this walk should be warmer.

104th Annual Department Convention
Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center
10101 Market Street
Rothschild, WI 54474
July 19-23, 2023



This is your registration form only; this is **NOT YOUR DELEGATE FORM**. Delegate Forms are mailed to the Post **30 Days prior to Convention, June 21, 2023** per the Department Constitution and Bylaws. It is advised however, to **register prior to this date**.

Remember **all Legionnaires are encouraged to attend** the Department Convention, not just Delegates and Alternates. You can also register online at wilegion.org.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Member ID #: _____ District Number: _____

AL Post #: _____ Auxiliary Unit #: _____ SAL Squadron #: _____

ITEM	NUMBER	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Registration Fee		\$30.00	
Registration Fee after July 15, 2023		\$35.00	
Saturday Evening PCC/Legion Family Event: Taco Bar, ½ Barrel of Beer, Soda, Cash Bar and Live Entertainment		\$25.00 each	
Total Enclosed:			

Make checks payable to The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin

Check #: _____

OR enter credit card information below

Card Type: _____ Card #: _____

Expiration date: ___/___ Security Code: _____

Return with payment to:
 The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin
 Attn: Convention
 P.O. Box 388, Portage, WI 53901
 Or email to: angela@wilegion.org

Karl Stuvengen for Department Commander



My theme is “Recruit the next you”. This encompasses what I believe is needed to maintain our position as the pre-eminent Veterans Service Organization.

Our new or newly active members are our future dedicated Legionnaires, regardless of age or war era. We must continue to develop these members through education and mentorship.

I will continue to promote the benefits of our Department’s college. It is a national model,

and we should take advantage of it. Today’s leadership must teach and mentor all of our members in our customs, traditions, programs and successes.

Retention is key. We must build a culture of “why”, and show fellow Veterans the value of belonging to The American Legion. If our members see value in what they do, you won’t ever have to ask them for their dues.

We have been given a great legacy, and I for one am excited to pass that on.

Jim Johnson for Department Vice Commander



Legionnaires, I’m seeking your support in my candidacy for Department Vice Commander of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin. Together we can continue to improve the lives of our Veterans and their families.

During Midwinter we learned more about how we can “Be the One”. Through the time spent together on the “Be the One” walk, to the classes and camaraderie we experienced, we became stronger and more

resilient as Veterans and as The American Legion Family. I truly appreciate all the kind words of encouragement many of you expressed to me.

Our American Legion Family, does so much to make our Legion Stronger, our communities Stronger, and our Nation Stronger. Your continued selfless service is an inspiration, thank you for what you do every day for Veterans!

I ask for your support as we make Wisconsin #LegionStrong!

Harry P. Bauer for Department Vice Commander

Past Department Vice Commander Harry P. Bauer, respectfully requests your support in announcement of his candidacy for the high office of Department Vice Commander 2023-2024. He has the support from his Post, Chippewa County and the Mighty Tenth District. Harry has the support of his wife, Patsy, son Robert, daughter Patricia and two grandkids Brendan and Jax.

He is a Veteran of the U.S. Air Force. Retired as a Master Sergeant. An American Legion annual member for 10 Continuous years and a member of Post 77. He served as a Commander at the Post, County and District

Levels and is a Past Department Vice Commander. Served on the Department Membership Committee and as DEC Liaison on the Department VA & R Committee. Currently serves as the Vice Chairman on the Department Hospital Committee. He is a graduate of the Wisconsin American Legion College (WALC), current President of the WALC Alumni Association. He is a WALC Instructor and acts as a mentor. Harry is the Past Chairman of the Chippewa Veterans Home Recreation Committee, Inc. Harry is an active member of the Chippewa Falls Patriotic Council and currently serves as the Honor Guard



Commander. “It’s not about me, it’s about we.”

Gail Minks for Department Vice Commander



Sixth District Commander Gail Minks has announced his candidacy for Department Vice Commander at the Department Convention July of 2023.

Eligibility for the American Legion is from four years active duty U.S. Air Force 1961-1965. Member Post 33, Neenah, 41 years, 18 years as a PUFL.

I have held various offices at the post, county and district level. I was 100% Post Commander in 2013.

I have been a delegate to the Department Convention every

year since 2009 and was a delegate to the National Convention, in Milwaukee, in 2022.

Member of Funeral Honors Team Post 33. Graduate of Wisconsin American Legion College.

Married to my wife Margaret for 56 years. One son and one daughter. Wife and daughter are members of Auxiliary Unit 33. Son was a member of SAL until his passing from COVID in 2022.

Fellow Legionnaires, I would appreciate your vote at the Department Convention.

Linda Pfeiffer for Department Vice Commander



Running for Department Vice Commander is Linda Pfeiffer, 4th District Commander.

I have the endorsement of Willey-Herda Post 192, Milwaukee Fourth District and the Milwaukee County Council.

My eligibility is through the Women's Army Corps from 1965-68.

I have held various offices at the Post and District Level in the 4th District.

I believe in serving our Veterans and my goal is to continue

to serve. Working with Veterans and hearing their stories, as a DAV Dispatcher, I know that at some point, we make a difference in the life of a Veteran by listening to them and helping them. Wherever I can help the Department of Wisconsin and the members of the American Legion to strengthen support our Four Pillars, I will be here to do so. We need to work on communication, education, protecting our Veterans and their families. We need to “Be the One” to help.

Aimee Korger for Sgt-at-Arms



Hello Wisconsin, I am looking forward to the next Department Convention, I hope you are too. As you plan your days while you are there make sure you give yourselves enough time to get in your vote. We have a lot of GREAT candidates and I am also hoping for your vote as Department Sergeant At Arms so that I may support the new officers and the Department staff with the needs behind the scenes. Thank you for your support. Aimee Korger



Back to Basics Tour July 16-19, 2023

The Back to Basics Tour is raising funds for the Recreation Hall renovations at Camp American Legion. Camp is a place for Wisconsin Veterans, Military and their families to come together in a safe place. A place where others may have shared life experiences. Camp American Legion offers an abundance of opportunities to unwind, relax, and rejuvenate. Register today at alrawis.org/B2B/index.html





Share "In the Spotlight" stories with the Legion Family by sending them to 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: Jen

YELLOW RIBBONS OF REMEMBRANCE



As Hospital Representative at the Wm. S. Middleton Veterans Hospital at Madison on Wednesday, March 29 I put three yellow ribbons on a Vietnam Remembrance tree situated in the lobby at the hospital. The three ribbons were for area soldiers killed in Vietnam during the war. Alan Royston from Mazomanie, Duane Olson from Arena, and Dale Farhney from Spring Green never returned. March 29 is the day set aside to remember the last returning soldiers from Vietnam.

WISCONSIN WREATH AT ABRAHAM LINCOLN MEMORIAL TOMB



LEFT: Commander James Woody, Dept. Vice Commander Jeff Zwiers and Wife Diane placing the WISCONSIN wreath at the Tomb of our 16th President Abraham Lincoln during the February 12 presentation. RIGHT: Commander James Woody, Dept. Vice Commander Jeff Zwiers and wife Diane at an Awards Presentation at the Lincoln Motel.

FALL RIVERS GIRL SCOUT COOKIES

The Girl Scouts of Troop 58138 in River Falls went over and above this year in selling cookies. For remarkable sales they were rewarded 20 additional cases of free cookies. This year they chose to give the Veterans of River Falls the extra cookies.



MILES-HAGEN AMERICAN LEGION POST 200 CHILI CONTEST AND EUCHRE TOURNAMENT



It was a perfect way to spend a blustery wintry Saturday at the first-ever Post 200 Chili Contest and Euchre Tournament. With eight chili entrants and 20 Euchre players, it was considered a successful event. For a free-will donation, the public was able to test the chilis and vote for their favorite. First place went to Dan Wilke, member of Post 200. Trophies were presented to the top three finishers, but everybody went away a winner! The card players had an enjoyable afternoon, letting their chili digest while listening to music and downing a cold beverage or two. The general consensus was that it was going to be hard to wait for next year to do it all again!

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM



As part of the National Vietnam War Veterans Commemoration Program, five Vietnam War era Veterans and their families were recognized for their service and sacrifice on March 26 at a program at Rio American Legion Post 208. Three Veterans, Rodney Burmeister, Marcus Lenius, and Delmar Burndt, Jr., who were at the last minute unable to attend, were recognized at separate private presentations with their families. Pictured from left are Veteran Francis Lapacek and spouse Diane Lapacek; Veteran Robert Lenz; Rio Post 208 Chairperson Dale Gajdosik; spouse Kathy Peterson and Veteran Dale Peterson; spouse Diane See and Veteran William See; spouse Linda Hartley and Veteran Robert Hartley; and Rio Post 208 Commander Terry Schraufnagel.



DONATIONS FOR WINDOWS RECOGNIZED BY POST 149



From left: Kevin Regan (Post member), Dale Preder (Marine Veteran), Mrs. Phylis Preder (mother of the three Preder siblings), Wendy Preder Jones, Alan Preder, and Post 149 Commander Robert Roska.

The Preder family of Sheboygan Falls donated \$4,000 for replacing hall windows at Post 149 in Sheboygan Falls in honor of six family members from WWII through Desert Storm. In addition to this a post member, Kevin Regan, received a certificate for donating \$1,200 towards the final cost of the windows. The men listed on the plaque starting from the top were Ralph DeSmith (Army Air Forces), Harold Preder (Army), Wayland Preder (Air Force), Merlin Preder (Army), Norman Preder (Army) and Dale Preder (Marine Corps).



DISTRICT 11 LEGION RIDERS AT NORTHWOODS NATIONAL VETERANS CEMETERY



District 11 American Legion Riders took part in the March 29 Vietnam War Day ceremony. It was held at the Northwoods National Veterans Cemetery in Harshaw.

DAUGHTERS OF THE WAR OF 1812 HONOR VIETNAM ERA VETS



The Daughters of the War of 1812 were on hand at Cross Plains-Middleton Post 245 at their April Legion, Auxiliary, SAL monthly meeting to present pins and certificates to Vietnam Era Veterans along with a thank you and Welcome Home message. They, along with three Dane County Veterans Service personnel were treated to a fine meal and local hospitality.

Submitted by Joe Hodgson, Post Service Officer.

POST 71 AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

American Legion Pewaukee Post 71 announced its 2023 scholarship winners.

From left: Bonnie Gluth, scholarship chair, with the two recipients, Alexandria Thieneman and Olivia Bowe.



LONG-SERVING MEMBERS IN MONDOVI



Mondovi's Post 154 has just one remaining World War II Veteran and less than a handful of Korean War Veteran members. Two are: Duane (Pete) Klopp (WWII; 97 years; 65 years of membership) and Ed Mahlum (Korean War; 93 years; 70 years of membership). The best news? Both Veterans remain resolute in their commitment to the American Legion and Auxiliary, remembering, reflecting, and repeating the value of involvement in their lives and the lives of their families! They attend Legion and Auxiliary events as they can, and both particularly like the Memorial Day parade and lakeside ceremony honoring Veterans in Mondovi each year.

POST 122 PHILLIPS VETERANS DAY DONATION

Post 122 Phillips Veterans Day dinner was well attended. It was sponsored by Compumold Tool & Design and The Phillips Lanes. The post thanks them with a certificate of appreciation.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



POST 473 QUILT OF VALOR

Wilbert (Bill) Post, a Korean War Veteran, receives a Quilt of Valor on his 92nd birthday. Bill, a longtime member of Post 473 in Potosi, is surrounded by three of his nieces.

70 YEARS OF SERVICE

Commander David Lefeber of Abler/Engel American Legion Post 454 Mt. Calvary recently honored Ralph Birsbach, Past Commander of Legion Post 454, for 70 years as a member of Abler/Engel Post 454.



CENTENARIAN WITH 75 YEARS OF SERVICE



Ninth District Commander Deborah Thomas presents Arden Nelson, 100 years old, with a 75-year certificate of continuous service. Arden is a WWII Army Veteran and member of Peshtigo Post 312.

POST 200, POST 368 HELP HONOR UNCLAIMED CREMAINS



Members of American Legion Posts 368 (Hixton-Taylor) and 200 (Black River Falls) took the unclaimed cremains of a Naval Veteran from Black River Falls to the Wisconsin State Veterans Cemetery in Spooner, Wisconsin. Pastor Elden Simonson of Post 368 performed the short but touching service and afterward Randy Bjerke of Post 200 played Taps. A surprise was that a friend of the deceased who heard about the service attended and was presented with the flag. Folding and presenting the flag were a Naval Officer and a sailor from the Twin Cities. The Spooner Cemetery is a beautiful place to be interred, surrounded by Veteran comrades. This is the second Veteran who was taken to Spooner by Simonson and Bjerke. Pastor Simonson is retired from the Air Force and Bjerke is a retired Marine.

PHILLIPS STUDENTS DONATE TO NEVER FORGOTTEN HONOR FLIGHT



Students at the Phillips Middle School collected \$1,000 for the Never Forgotten Honor Flight. The check was presented to Jim Campbell from Never Forgotten Honor Flight out of Wausau. Three Veterans from Phillips went on the Honor Flight May 15.

QUILTS PRESENTED BY HARTFORD POST 19



Hartford Post 19 presented their second and third quilts of 2023. On April 6, the second quilt was presented to Carla Wright (left). On May 4, the third went to Kayleen Reetz (right). Commander Allen Schoessow presented the quilts at Hartford Post 19 meetings. Quilts were made by Quilters of St. Luke Lutheran Church of Slinger, Wisconsin.

POST 91 DONATES TO OCONOMOWOC FOOD PANTRY, AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS



LEFT: Edwin L. Jones American Legion Post 91 donated \$1,500 to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry. The Oconomowoc Food Pantry serves about 60 families each week, with the beginning of the month when they see the most need. RIGHT: Post 91 gave out three \$1,500, scholarships to area seniors, two to the public and one to a private high school.

'A PATRIOT' THANKS A VETERAN

Peter Storch and five friends and family have their meal paid for by a stranger along with a note on a napkin. In honor of my family: wife, children and grandchildren, I would like to say thank you for your service and your family's sacrifice. God has graced our country with men like you. Thank you, A Patriot.



WE LOST A NATIONAL TREASURE



National Treasure, 99-year-old Anita Powers, WWII Veteran, original WAVE and 67-year member of American Legion Madelyn LaCanne Post 539. We lost Anita on April 20.

SHEBOYGAN AREA PAY IT FORWARD



The American Legion Prescott-Bayens Post 83 donated \$500 to Sheboygan Area Pay it Forward. Pay it Forward is established to aid homeless individuals and families in the Sheboygan area with basic essentials and help with employment and housing searches. Knowing that they rely on the generosity of the community, Post 83 was delighted to be able to assist in such a worthwhile cause. Pictured from the left - Legionnaires Harvey McBroom and Crystal Wendler; Pay it Forward Founders Scott and Kathleen LaBonte.

POST 187 VETERAN MARKS 99TH BIRTHDAY



Jim Reidelbach celebrates his 99th birthday with Wisconsin Dells Post 187 friends.

POST 71 EASTER EGG HUNT



The 2023 American Legion Pewaukee Post 71's annual Easter Egg Hunt was held at the Village Park in Pewaukee. Hundreds turned out for this special family event, which started promptly at 10 a.m. and was over before 10:02am. Fun was had by all!



POPPY SALE BENEFITS REHAB FUND



The annual poppy sale brought in a record amount for the Veterans Rehab Fund.

QUILT OF VALOR AND 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Kelli Carroll received a Quilt of Valor in May for 20 years of Naval service and continued Legion service.



NATIONAL COMMANDERS MEMBERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARD

Deb Thomas was awarded the National Commanders Membership Excellence Award.

POST 171 FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE



Pictured (l-r) is Bixby-Hansen Post 171, Union Grove, WI Commander Frank Konieska presenting Ed "Buster" Henningfield his certificate honoring 50 years of continuous service to our Post and to the American Legion. Thank you for your service, Buster!

MARKLE RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE



Twelfth District Commander Scott Markle was awarded with a plaque for all the hard work, time and dedication he placed into all his posts within the 12th District of Wisconsin. For his service and devotion, along with the backing support from all his District, County, and Post Officers within the 12th District. They hit and maintained the #1 spot for American Legion Membership in 2022.



Paul Fisk
Legislative
Chair

★ ★ ★ LEGISLATIVE CHAIR ★ ★ ★

VETERANS DAY DRAWS 260 TO CAPITOL

On April 26 more than 260 Veterans participated in Veterans Day at the Capitol. This event was organized by The American Legion, DAV and VFW. Attendees met at Monona Terrace, then proceeded to Capitol where a Rally was held with guest speakers including Governor Evers and Wisconsin De-

partment of Veterans Affairs Secretary-Designee James Bond among others. After the rally Veterans and supporters visited their legislators to show support for The UW Missing-in-Action Recovery and Identification Project and Lowering the Threshold for the Disabled Veteran Property Tax Credit.



CAMP AMERICAN LEGION . . .

DONATIONS, SUPPORT HAVE CAMP READY FOR SEASON



Jim Klement
Camp American
Legion Director

This is going to be a wonderful season for Camp American Legion!

We have a beautiful new cabin that Marshfield Post 54 put up at Camp. This shows the dedication that Post 54 has for Camp American Legion as we progress into the next one hundred years of camp.

We have a beautiful new tractor that the 40 et 8 donated that will help with all the maintenance for camp year-round. All the implements for the tractor were donated by the Belgium Post 412 and the Belgium Friends of Camp.

We have fully stocked shelves of canned goods and meat thanks to Whitewater Post 173. We have eggs, chicken and cheese thanks to Sons of the American Legion Detachment Commander Dave Fuller. We have bread thanks to Bimbo bread.

The amount of donations that we have received this year is amazing

and there are so many more organizations and individuals that I cannot name them all. Thank You All!

This year's camp schedule is a busy one. Not only do we have our Veteran and Family weeks we also have different program weeks. Most weeks are full and have waiting lists but we are still accepting applications as we do normally get some cancelations throughout the year.

We still do have openings for volunteers. Please come join us for our open house on June 16 at 1 p.m. You can learn about the history of Camp and how you can become a part of our great family of volunteers. There would not be a Camp American Legion if it were not for our volunteers.

Please contact Camp if you have any questions on how you can become involved in Camp American Legion.

Thank You.

Jim Klement, Camp Director
715-277-2510



"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

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

WISCONSIN RIVER POWER COMPANY



(WRPCO) is proud to host their annual deer hunt for hunters with disabilities the weekend of October 13-15. The hunt provides people with disabilities a quality hunting experience that demonstrates the social and environmental integrity of WRPCO's corporation and employees. For information or to fill out an application, please check out the webpage.

WISCONSINRIVERPOWER.COM/HUNT

DISCOUNTED TOURS!

FABULOUS AFRICA

departs July 30 - 16 days

visiting Chobe park in Botswana, Zambia/Zimbabwe Victoria Falls, Krueger National Park, 7 safari drives, Port Elizabeth, the Garden Route of South Africa (whales), and Cape town (Penguin Colony), visit Stellenbosch Wineries. All inclusive. **Free domestic airfare into Newark.**

SICILY & ITALY

departs October 17 - 16 days

All inclusive. Great hotels, many meals, all admissions, great professional guide.

If you choose to do just Italy - **deduct \$1,000.**
Call for group discount (for 6 or more)

**Vi Ranney - Yankton, SD
Independent Tour Designs**

35 years of tour escorting

Call: 605-665-3596

E-mail:

viranney@vyn.midco.net



Show your support for

2023 ★ 2024



AMERICAN LEGION

Daniel J. Seehafer

CANDIDATE FOR NATIONAL COMMANDER
2023-2024



The American Legion takes the selection of its National Commander very seriously and considers many factors, such as the candidate's experience, leadership skills, and dedication to the organization's values and mission. The National Commander is expected to be an advocate for Veterans' issues and a unifying force within the organization. The National Commander's leadership and advocacy for Veterans' issues are critical in ensuring that the organization continues serving its members and fulfilling its mission.

Wisconsin has found yet another candidate for national commander in Daniel J. Seehafer, who is a proven leader and believes fully in our mission and values. Dan's two-year campaign is coming to a close as we prepare to travel to Charlotte, North Carolina, for the National Convention in August. Dan continues to travel nationwide to learn more about The American Legion and meet local Legionnaires. You can check out his website to see where he's been and where he is headed next (and if interested, make donations to his campaign) at: <https://danieljseehafer.com/>

If you have traveled since COVID, you know flights are much more expensive and less predictable. Dan has been dealing with costly flights, early flights, delays, and cancellations. His flight to Kansas was one of those trips when nothing seemed to be going right, and everything seemed to be against him. He thought about canceling the visit altogether, but something pushed him forward. Dan's (almost canceled) visit to Kansas was undoubtedly influenced by his faith and his leadership and resulted



National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola presented Dan Seehafer with an American Legion Outstanding Heroism Award during the National Commander's Banquet on May 10 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

in saving the life of one of our family members.

According to a testimonial received at National Headquarters from Kansas Past Department Commander Marri Krupco, something significant happened at their Department's Midwinter Forum. During dinner on February 3, Commander Krupco, her father, Tom Bradley, and her stepmother Judy Philis Bradley, were enjoying the Post's great cheeseburgers.

Suddenly, Judy started coughing. When asked if she was ok, she shook her head "no." Tom began thumping her back, but that did not help. Marri asked if she needed the Heimlich Maneuver, and Judy, a retired nurse, nodded yes. Marri attempted the maneuver but did not have the strength to dislodge the food. The situation was grim, and

Judy was close to passing out.

Marri called out for help, and the only person in the room to come to her aid was Reverend Dan Seehafer. Dan immediately came to Judy's aid and again attempted the Heimlich Maneuver. After about 15 powerful thrusts, the food was dislodged.

Marri described Reverend Dan's reaction as quick and calm. Despite sore ribs for a few days, Judy fully recovered. Now, Marri is very close to Judy but affectionately calls Judy her "evil stepmother." She thanked the good Reverend for his quick actions. But – in reference to her "evil stepmother" nickname – Reverend Dan didn't miss a beat when he responded, "Should I not have?" In all seriousness, this was a memorable incident that could have easily turned to tragedy if not for the decisive action of Reverend Seehafer. Thankfully, Dan paid attention to the voice that took him to Kansas that weekend.

For his actions, National Commander Troiola presented Dan with an American Legion Outstanding Heroism Award during the National Commander's Banquet on May 10 in Indianapolis, Indiana. For God and Country, Wisconsin has definitely selected the right person to lead our American Legion Family.

The 2024 black Membership Shirt (designed to Dan's specifications) is now available for the entire American Legion Family at <https://emblem.legion.org> search for **2024 Membership**. This is just one more way to support our candidate. I hope to see you in Charlotte.

Daniel J. Seehafer — Candidate for National Commander

Dan, I support your campaign for National Commander. To help you get over the top in your campaign for National Commander, I have enclosed my special gift of:

\$20 \$40 \$60 \$100 \$500 Other \$ _____

Please charge my gift to: Check Visa MasterCard American Express

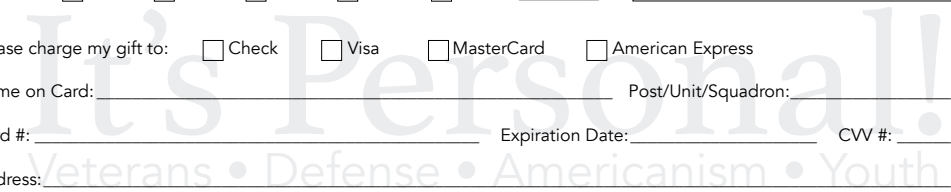
Name on Card: _____ Post/Unit/Squadron: _____

Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ CVV #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable and mail to:
Daniel J. Seehafer for National Commander
W7550 Shady Lane
Beaver Dam, WI 53916



Thank you for your support!



WAUPACA COUNTY YOUTH GOVERNMENT DAY

County Youth Government Day with New London High School students. Since 1960, local American Legion posts and county employees have sponsored Waupaca County Youth Government Day. 98 local high school students from four area high schools – New London, Weyauwega-Fremont, Waupaca, and Iola-Scandinavia, attended this year's program on April 28.

PIERCE COUNTY HOSTS 61ST YOUTH GOVERNMENT DAY

The 61st annual Pierce County Youth Government Day, sponsored by the Pierce County Council of the American Legion and Auxiliary took place Wednesday, April 26th at the Pierce County Courthouse.

Forty-two middle school and high school students from the six school districts in the county participated in the engaging and interactive day. The day began promptly at 9 a.m. in the courtroom where the elected officials were introduced and Judge Rohl had a very engaging and interactive session with the students.

The students then had the opportunity to visit offices in the courthouse to learn what services are provided for county residents.

Pierce County Sheriff Koranda speaking to the group before taking their tours of the facility.



James Fialkowski
Department Veterans
Service Officer

★★★ VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER ★★★

NEW BENEFIT CHANGES ALERT: VETERANS AUTO AND EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

As your service officer, I do my best to keep you informed of benefit changes to the Veteran community. As always, our office and your local County Veterans Service Offices are here to assist with benefits. Below I describe a new law that was recently passed.

The Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022, Public Law 117-333 was enacted on January 5, 2023. The law expands benefits in several ways, especially in emer-

gent situations.

There are changes of automobile and special adaptive equipment grants.

Non-articulating trailers are now included as a category of approved automobile adaptive equipment. Note – The Veterans Hospital Administration will prescribe the trailer based on the type of mobility devices required by the eligible Veteran.

The act allows an additional automobile allowance to aid in attaining a specially equipped vehicle to eligible persons if 30

years have elapsed since their most recent receipt of automobile allowance. Additionally, ten years after enactment of the bill, eligible persons become entitled to an additional automobile allowance if ten years have elapsed since their most recent receipt of automobile allowance and can be reused thereafter once every ten years. The law applies to both Veterans and Servicemembers. A Veteran or Service member must have one of the following disabilities to qualify for the automobile grant:

- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both

- feet
- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both hands
- Permanent vision impairment in both eyes to a certain degree
- Severe burn injury that precludes effective operation of an automobile
- Diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

The additional use of the automobile allowance is incredible! Before the passing of this Act, the allowance was only available once during the life of the eligible person. Any subsequent vehicle purchase was entirely out of pocket. FYI – The current automobile allowance is \$24,115.12.

Note: Though having ankylosis of one or both knees or one or both hips does not qualify for the Automobile allowance, it does qualify for adaptive equipment for the automobile.

Most of the expansions to educational assistance benefits require a qualifying emergency. Some items covered are the extension of certain stipends, extension of certain education assistance bill eligibility time periods, and an effective restart of benefit eligibility in certain emergent circumstances. There are also changes affecting apprenticeship or on-job training requirements, approval of certain study-abroad programs, and Post 9/11 Educational Assistance eligibility of certain individuals who received sole survivorship discharges.

The law also makes changes to a military member's spouse residence for tax purposes, allowing them to elect between the residence of the servicemember, the residence of the spouse, or the permanent duty station of the servicemember. Another change allows portability of professional licenses of members of the uniformed services and their spouses that relocate because of military orders for military service to a location that is not in the jurisdiction of the licensing authority that issued the covered license.

There is too much information about this Act to cover in this article. For more information, contact our Service Office or your County Veterans Service Office. Thanks again for your continued service.

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!

What happens next?

George has Emergency Assistance Plus® (EA+®)

Bob does not

Both require

- Medical evacuation to a facility that is able to properly treat their condition
- Medical specialists to monitor their care
- Travel assistance to bring a loved one to their bedside
- A driver to drive their car/ RV back home since they are unable to drive

George's Total: \$0

Bob's Total: \$19,300!

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.thelit.com/ Emergency-Assistance-Plus

From Your American Legion Department

©2018 Worldwide Rescue & Security 43406



DISTRICT 2 HONORS EMT OF THE YEAR

On April 29 at the 2nd District Spring Conference in Addison Town Hall in Allenton, Benjamin M. Hoffmann of Hartford Fire & Rescue was awarded the EMT of the Year.

ST. NAZIANZ TRIO TAKES OLD GLORY HONOR FLIGHT

Three members of the Wagner-Eberle-Sukowaty Post 477 - St. Nazianz flew to Washington D.C. on April 19 aboard Mission 61 of Old Glory Honor Flight. Wayne Petersen, and Gloria and John Reis had a great time in DC, but their personal highlights include the 'mail call' on the flight back and then the 'homecoming' at Appleton Airport. Members of Post and Auxiliary Unit 477 took part in the homecoming celebration.



AT LEFT: Wayne, Gloria and John in D.C. ABOVE LEFT: John and Gloria during the homecoming parade. ABOVE RIGHT: Post members, Chuck Augustine and Nancy Rivera, with Wayne during their return to the airport.

QUILT OF VALOR FOR VETERAN WITH 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Commander Paul Loumos and Post 273 celebrates 50 years membership for Dean R. Zink. Zink was also awarded the Quilt of Valor April 18 at Snyder-Richardson American Legion Post 273 Grand Marsh, WI with Commander Paul Loumos presenting.



John D. Michels
Membership
Coordinator

★ MEMBERSHIP ★

WE CAN TOOL ALL OF THE LEGION ALL OF THE TIME

I often receive inquiries from posts on ways to increase membership, specifically by attracting new members. On the Wisconsin Legion site (wi-legion.org) under "Members" there is a site to click on entitled "Public Relations Kit." On the site there are an array of resources to promote your post, and you are able to edit and customize them to meet the specific needs and culture of your local post.

But don't rely only on this, instead use your imagination, creativity, and research to also assist you. Last Fall, Alma Post 224 created its own "Member Handbook" which was an impressive marketing tool. The post had held a discussion in one of its monthly meetings last year when new members came on board. New members were introduced and spoke about themselves to their fellow Veterans. But no real document was given to the new members to introduce them to the American Legion family.

Merlyn Klebig and John Hadley, members of Alma's post membership committee, decided to look into a membership handbook to be given to new members. They searched the National American Legion website for suggestions and ideas, but wanted something more. They then searched the internet and found examples of member handbooks developed from local legion posts on the East and West coasts. Post 224 then put together the best ideas from the membership handbooks and developed a customized, updated manual for the American Legion Post in Alma, Wisconsin. They presented to membership the final handbook and it was approved to go to a local printer and then to be distributed to future members. The handbook contains a welcome page from Post 224, a short history of the post, information on uniforms and governance and the officers' roles, post goals, the preamble, and a list of locally sponsored programs and fundraising events. If you want to see a copy of it, let me know.

So, we have sources for you and you have peers you can turn to for ideas. And know that I am here for you as well. Let's be more than fishermen, but become fishers of all Veterans!



POST 71 HELPS 'CARRY THE LOAD'

Two Pewaukee Post 71 American Legion members took part in a fundraiser for Veterans.

Stefanie Rous and Dawn Bykowski took part in "CARRY THE LOAD".

Carry the Load is a Veterans charity that helps support and Honor our Heroes.



James Bond
WDVA
Secretary-designee

★★★★ WDVA SECRETARY ★★★★★

Greetings Legionnaires,

You may recall that in my last column, I shared that Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers' 2023-25 biennial budget outlined significant investments in continuing to deliver benefits, and services, and protecting the well-being of those Veterans who need help the most.

As the Governor has declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health in Wisconsin, I was excited to see the expansion of our Veteran Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP) become a reality this Spring with an increase from 11 to 16 outreach coordinators. The expansion of this was a direct result of the recommendations provided by the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity given to the Governor's office last year. Simply put, this expansion means more access to lifesaving services for Veterans by having more dedicated, caring individuals on our team. WDVA has hired three of the five new positions, and we anticipate having all these positions filled by the end of summer.

In May, we rolled out the first in a series of Veteran Mental Health Grants. The first is for community-based nonprofit organizations that promote and engage in positive mental health through activities, programs, and services that enhance the emotional, psychological, and social happiness of Wisconsin Veterans. These grants are part of a \$4 million investment in the well-being and

health of Wisconsin Veterans and families. We hope to announce the next open period of grant applications soon, so please stay tuned to the WDVA website and our social media pages for when that is happening.

As we welcome more servicemembers transitioning from active duty to civilian life this year in Wisconsin, these Veterans need our collective community more than ever. The American Legion and its members are an important link in this transition period to help gauge their mental health needs in addition to assisting them in finding rewarding careers, homes, and a community to live in.

I would also like to take a moment to thank those of you who joined WDVA, as well as Veterans and families across our state and our nation, this past Memorial Day to recognize the men and women of our military who served our country and died in defense of our nation. Our department held three Memorial Day ceremonies at our Veteran memorial cemeteries in King, Spooner, and Union Grove. I am grateful to all who attended these or participated in the ceremonies. We must always remember and honor the memory of every Wisconsinite who died protecting our freedom and our nation.

As a proud Marine Corps Veteran, I say thank you, especially to all our state's Veterans, and to our Veteran community around the nation for your service and sacrifice for our nation.

Yours in Service,

James Bond, Secretary-designee
Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

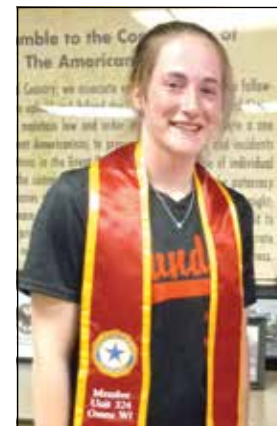


MEMBERSHIP

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

The calendar says the year is only half over but my year as your membership chairman is rapidly ending. It has been an interesting year to say the least. Along my journey this year, I have had the opportunity to meet with many of you – via email, phone and in person. I had the privilege of laughing with you and sometimes crying with you. It has been the highlight of the year.

I have discovered over and over that we are family. It has been like a reunion of sorts. We are all sizes, shapes, and ages. Some live close together; others must travel from distant places to meet. It doesn't matter – we all have a connection with each other. I have met the overachievers and go-getters that get things organized and keep them on track. I have met the willing and able hands and feet of the family that make the programs work. I have met the prayer warriors who provide moral and spiritual support. I have even met some of the 'black sheep' who keep us on our toes, but we love anyway. Together we form a family that needs and supports each other. That's what family does.



LEFT: UNIT 477 CELEBRATES MEMBERS – Wagner-Eberle-Sukowaty ALA Unit 477 in St. Nazianz recognized Marion Lenz for 70 years of continuous Auxiliary membership at a special event they recently organized. **CENTER: FROM JUNIOR TO SENIOR MEMBER** – Lindsay Wippermann joined the St. Nazianz Unit as a junior member and is now a senior member. Through her encouragement, her mother Noel joined the ALA as the unit's first dual (TAL/ALA) member and Tim Wippermann joined as the unit's first male spouse. This American Legion Auxiliary Unit is truly a family affair! Pictured: Lindsay, Noel, and Tim Wippermann. **RIGHT: UNIT 324 HONORS JUNIOR MEMBER** – Taylor Gunderson, an ALA member of five years, received a membership stole in honor of her graduation from Osseo Fairchild High School. Congratulations, Taylor, and all the ALA members who graduated from high school or college this year!

Thank you for showing me your uniqueness as units and counties. Members bring so much to their units based on their background, training, and experiences. Programs and projects take on a special flavor and variety based on the unit. I have visited many conferences and while the programs have the same

name – Poppy, Americanism, Education, VA&R, etc. – the way their goals were accomplished differed vastly. Not right or wrong – just different. The results are much to cheer about.

As I write this, we are short of our department membership goal for the year – but I believe we were a success.

Thousands of Veterans, military members and their families were assisted in countless ways. Thousands of dollars were raised for programs and projects. Thousands of dollars were given in scholarships for our future leaders.

Membership is about members – and you did our department proud. We are

still accepting 2023 membership dues until Dec. 31, 2023. Continue to send those renewals and new memberships in. Let's keep doing what we do best – Service, Not Self for our Veterans, military, their (our) families and communities.

On behalf of the entire team: Thank you for the privilege to serve you.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Kay Grosskopf
Department Chairman
kkgros44@gmail.com

Well, how's it going? You know – the New Year's resolution. The one I asked you to make to dedicate yourself to Community Service back in December? Those little acts of kindness that you do at Christmas to continue through the year. *Believe* and you can make this a daily or weekly act.

While speaking to groups, I'm amazed when members find out how easy this can be. That ride you gave to a neighbor for a doctor's appointment, shopping or picking up a scrip. Or the errand you ran for them because they can't get out? What about the meal you made for the new parents or person who just lost a spouse? This is Community Service.

There are the projects we work on...community plantings and maintaining them, Adopt a Highway, placing and removing flags at the cemetery, Memorial Day services and luncheons. These are the events that bring us together to work as a group. Have fun when you help. Build friendships and camaraderie.

Build networks as you perform Community Service. Work with other groups; there is strength in numbers and so much more can be accomplished. Bring young people along to teach them service (hello, Juniors?). They may have a different perspective on doing things. Listen to them for new fresh ideas and ingrain in them the benefit of the project.

You responded to the December article as I have over 150 reports summarized. There are a few words that came to me as I think ahead to the presentation at department convention. Humble. Proud. Change. Danger. And FOOD. I would like to touch on two of them now.

Food: So much of what we do revolves around food. Why not? It is universal. I looked up food quotes and two stood out. *"If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him - the people who give you their food give you their heart."* ~ Cesar Chavez. *"People who love to eat are always the best people."* ~ Julia Child. Think about those statements. I believe this summarizes who we are. We love our food and the people we share it with so we are willing to help them, do for them, and do with them.

Danger: Without it being stated, the reports gave me a sense that our group is aging. We need to bring in younger people to see the good that we do. They need to feel the gratification when they participate in a deed or project. It could be that person patting them on the back, or clasping their hand and saying thank you, that makes them believe what you did was worth it. They may come back for more.

Believe in the ALA and **Get New & Old Members** Excited about what we do, why we do it, and why we matter in Community Service.

In the spirit of service, not self, we advocate for our veterans, active military and their families.

BOWLING

Jenni Syftestad
Chairman and
Tournament Manager
syftes@chorus.net

It was a great weekend for our 9-Pin bowling tournament! We hope every bowler had a good time and enjoyed their travels to Madison. Thank you, Waunakee Unit 360, for hosting this year's tournament.

The competition between the President and Secretary's teams was won by Bonnie's team (1891 vs 1531 total pins). This competition is always fun.

Next year's tournament will be in Medford on April 6 & 7 and April 13 & 14, 2024. We will go back to our two-weekend tournament hoping for more teams to show up since some could not make the date for the one-weekend tournament this year.

Do you bowl? Can you find other members in your unit to bowl? Our teams are made up of four members. Look around at other units and see if they have members to help you form a team and join us in 2024 for more fun!

To consider hosting a bowling tournament in the future, we request 16 lanes and a list of motels in the area. Please contact Chairman Jenni Syftestad for details.

2023 9-PIN TAP BOWLING TOURNAMENT RESULTS (top 3 places in each category)

Team:

- 1st – (2738) Bonduel Gals 1, Unit 217 Bonduel
- 2nd – (2593) Fab Four, Unit 385 Verona
- 3rd – (2500) High Maintenance, Unit 360 Waunakee

Doubles:

- 1st – (1338) Angela Bahr/Taylor Welcing, Unit 217 Bonduel
- 2nd – (1336) Linda Yakich/Carol Gehrke, Unit 391 Fremont
- 3rd – (1310) Lucinda Fritchen/Janet Frazier, Unit 360 Waunakee

Singles:

- 1st – (770) Janet Frazier, Unit 360 Waunakee
- 2nd – (753) Heather Geiser, Unit 125 Chilton
- 3rd – (737) Anna Flury, Unit 375 Mukwonago

All Events:

- 1st – (2343) Janet Frazier, Unit 360 Waunakee
- 2nd – (2130) Anna Flury, Unit 375 Mukwonago
- 3rd – (2085) Heidi LaVallee, Unit 360 Waunakee

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Linda Kostka
 Department Chaplain
 lkostka@ymail.com
 715-209-8135

*Ephesians 3:20 ~ Now glory be to God!
 By his mighty power at work within us, he
 is able to accomplish infinitely more than
 we would desire to ask or hope.*

The American Legion organizations are for God and Country and you almighty God have provided us this great and bountiful land for us to use. We humbly ask you Lord, that we always be mindful of the blessings you bestowed on us and our country and also of the freedoms and liberties you have provided us through the forefathers of America. We should always keep our hearts, minds and prayers on the men and women who serve in our armed forces, who volunteered to keep us safe and free.

We pray for peace and praise you God, for we know you can untangle all the snarls in our souls, our country and the world. So, banish our doubts and transform us into a habit of being thankful and conscious of how others feel around us, as we do share this world with unbelievers. We pray that we might be a source of light and hope to all who see us, by displaying love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, in all we do. We give thanks for all things, as the hours and days pass closer to our sunsets. We rejoice, that you provide far more than we need or ask for and acknowledge that your power is at work within us. This all we pray to you Lord God, Amen!

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

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

May 26 was officially National Poppy Day. Units and posts that completed poppy distributions are reminded to submit their 20% poppy profit report to department headquarters as soon as possible. The report form can be obtained from the department website or by contacting Linda Cason at Auxiliary Headquarters. The remaining proceeds must be used for the welfare of Veterans, active-duty military, or family members in their household where a medical or financial need is evident. As a reminder, poppies can be distributed all year long!

The 2023 Department Convention will be held July 20-23, 2023 at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the Auxiliary, visit with old friends, and meet new ones. Registration is \$30, payable to The American Legion; registrations received after July 15 are \$35. Please visit the department website for complete details, but some highlights are in the box to the right.



The ALA National Convention is August 26 to August 31, 2023 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Details from the national organization will be posted on the department website when they become available (usually mid-June). Members interested in attending should contact Department Secretary Bonnie Dorniak at deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org to request a registration packet. All

2023 Department Convention • July 20-23, 2023 Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild

Thursday, July 20, 2023

- 4:00 pm – Past Presidents Parley (PPP) Business Meeting. Are you a Past Unit, County, or District President? If so, you are eligible to join the PPP and participate in decisions about PPP dues, scholarships, and the Mentor of the Year award. Questions? Contact PPP Chairman Bonnie Jakubczyk at 414-764-6752 or bon6862@yahoo.com.

Friday, July 21, 2023

- Reminder: The ALA no longer holds district caucuses at convention.
- 9:15 am – Opening Processional with all Past National Officers, Past Department Presidents, 2022-2023 Department Officers, and 2022-2023 District Presidents. General Session will open immediately following the procession.
- 3:00 pm – A recognition program will be held to pay tribute to Honored PDP Sue Vorwald and award district membership awards.

Saturday, July 22, 2023

- 8:00 am – General Session
- 9:00 am – Elections of 2023-2024 Department Officers and nominees for Alternates for the 2023 National Convention
- 2:45 pm (ish) – Installation of 2022-2023 Department Officers and District Presidents
- 7:00 pm – All Legion Family members are invited to a fun event with live entertainment, a taco bar, and cocktails. Admission ticket (\$25) can be pre-purchased with convention registration.

Sunday, July 23, 2023

- 8:00 am – Joint Legion Family Memorial Service
- 9:30 am – 2023-2024 Post-Convention Department Executive Board meeting. All members are welcome to attend.

Wisconsin attendees are invited to celebrate with 2023-2024 Candidate for National Commander Dan Seehafer on Thursday, August 31, 2023 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm at the JW Marriott Hotel.

Three ALA in the Know Conferences are scheduled in September. The reservation deadline is August 1. Please see registration form on page A3 or visit the department website for details.

Linda Kostka for Department Chaplain

My name is Linda Kostka, PUFL member of Kelly Johnson Unit 90 in Ashland, and Past District 11 President. Both my unit and district have endorsed me for the position of Department Chaplain. I served as Chaplain for District 11, VFW District 10, and ALA-Wisconsin Department Chaplain in 2022-23. I served on department committees for Bowling, Membership, Public Relations, Fundraising Chairman, and Sergeant-at-Arms and Corsage Chairman at National Convention 2022. I am a member of Grace Bible Fellowship Church, Red Hat Society, VFW Auxiliary, and The Monday Club whose focus is beautification and maintaining gardens in the community. My husband and I have enjoyed attending many department and national conventions. I had an amazing year as your Department Chaplain and would like your consideration to allow me to continue serving God, country and our Auxiliary.



My eligibility is through my father, husband and son. I joined Unit 90 in 2002. Thank you to everyone for mentoring me. With their willing hearts and great wisdom, I learned how our Auxiliary programs help our youth and Veterans alike.

Traveling for all 20 years of Frank's Air Force career brought me to another level of understanding as to why spouses are important to our Veterans. Living in another country was an exciting experience and gave us an appreciation of our U.S. citizenship with its freedoms

of speech, religion, property ownership, and a process to elect our leaders without fear of death. We have four children, 15 grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, and two great-grandsons on the way.

I'm a proud American and ALA member and if you elect me as your Department Chaplain again, I will do my very best to continue representing our organization. Thank you for your consideration. May God bless you and our country.

Editor's Note: Please see the April issue of the Wisconsin publication for other candidates' announcements.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bonnie Jakubczyk
 ALA NEC
bon6862@yahoo.com

The National Executive committee (NEC) adopts the national organization's annual budget, policies and standing rules, along with other items that will help the ALA remain feasible for years to come. Along with the financial responsibilities, we still need to focus on membership. Weekly updates from our National Executive Director were replaced with monthly ALA Today newsletters. These newsletters keep us informed of the National President's travels, along with national and staff updates.

My highlight this year was being able to attend the Washington D.C. conference. My first session was on Camp Lejeune, where the Bergmann & Moore Firm shared valuable information and how we should ask our elected officials to stop letting lawyers take advantage of those who may have been affected by drinking water contamination. The Veterans Employment Education Commission kept us entertained and informed. At the end there was an open

forum on Veteran homelessness. Tuesday was the Hill Walk, where we discussed the Legion's Legislative agenda. Congressman Bryan Steil's aide took our questions and thoughts. The Congressman did follow up with an email on what he is doing for our Veterans. On March 16, he was at the Greendale Post to announce legislation to honor a Wisconsin family who contacted his office about an unfair VA (national) policy. This policy made a family member pay back her mother's survivor's benefits for the month that she passed away but the money had already been used for her monthly bills. The Survivors Benefit Act seeks to undo this policy by ensuring that the VA cannot demand the families of beneficiaries to pay back their monthly benefit in the event of a surviving spouse's death. Every member should sign up for the Legion's Legislative alerts. Contact your senators and representatives when asked and help make a difference for our Veterans.

Thank you for this opportunity to represent the Department of Wisconsin to make sound decisions that will keep our organization running.

AMERICANISM

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

June 14 is a day set aside to fly and honor the symbol of our country, the American flag. It was adopted as the symbol of our country on June 14, 1777 by the Second Continental Congress.

It is imperative that the flag be properly displayed and also be reverently disposed of after it has finished its glorious time of flying high. As many are aware, the flag should be flown during daylight hours, unless it is illuminated. All other flags should be below it on the same flag pole or on a slightly lower pole. It is the center of all flags being flown. It would be exceptional if individuals or groups held some sort of flag raising or lowering ceremony to show our loyalty to our country.

Guidelines for flying and handling the flag are found in the Federal Flag Code, Public Law 94-344, or by googling flag etiquette on the internet. In 1989 the Flag Protection Act was enacted by Congress. It provides that anyone who knowingly desecrates the flag may be fined and/or imprisoned for up to one year. However, this was challenged in 1990 that this act violated the First Amendment free speech protections. Many people dislike the use of the flag symbolisms on clothing and the like and this 1990 challenge protects that usage.

Americans should always be respectful of the flag and what it represents by standing at attention with their right hand over their hearts or saluting, if entitled to, while the flag is being raised or lowered. This practice should also be followed when the flag passes in review during a parade. All should stand and be respectful of the flag during the national anthem, also. These are signs of our many freedoms that were earned for us through the sacrifice of those who have served and are still serving.

It should be an honor to teach our children proper respect for our flag by our example. How will they learn how to handle and respect the flag if we do not lead the way? If

2023 AMERICAN ESSAY WINNERS

Essay Title: "What does patriotism mean to you?"

Class I – Grades 3 & 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Giada Johnson | Richland Center #13 |
| 2. Emily Jing | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 3. Gabriel Peterson | Plum City #365 |
| 4. Amaya Edwards | Siren #132 |
| 5. Abram Olson | New London #263 |

Class II – Grades 5 & 6

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Bryce Kohlstedt | Richland Center #13 |
| 2. Aubrie Bartheidel | Siren #132 |
| 3. Carson Fletcher | King #161 |
| 4. Allison Bark | Bagley #482 |
| 5. Faith Kohn | Pulaski #337 |

Class III – Grades 7 & 8

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lucian Hamblin | Richland Center #13 |
| 2. Seth Huempfer | Mt. Calvary #454 |
| 3. Ava Hoepfer | Bagley #482 |
| 4. Ellie Murphy | Pulaski #337 |
| 5. Taylor Melton | Menomonee Falls #382 |

Class IV – Grades 9 & 10

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Adalie Hatlestad | Lublin #547 |
| 2. Samantha Andrea | Siren #132 |
| 3. Elana Lynch | Butternut #272 |
| 4. Hannah Becker | Milwaukee #537 |
| 5. Jackelynn McGraw | Menomonee Falls #382 |

Class V – Grades 11 & 12

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Cassidy Schmidt | Milwaukee #537 |
| 2. Paris Ackerman | Lublin #547 |
| 3. Sydney Miller | Siren #132 |
| 4. Bridgette Becker | Milwaukee #537 |
| 5. Melody Hilderman | Menomonee Falls #382 |

Class VI –

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ava Teclaw | Thorp #118 |
| 2. Axel Sheire | Richland Center #13 |

possible, ask your local schools to put on a flag ceremony and or a brief talk on how to handle and respect the flag. It is up to each and every one of us to lead by example in our respect for our country's symbol of democracy.

Let us all fly our flag with honor!!!



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
ALA IN THE KNOW (Important Info for Every Member)



2023 REGISTRATION FORM

DEADLINE: AUGUST 1, 2023
(Please submit one form per person)

Members are encouraged to register early--space is limited! Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registrations received after capacity is reached, will be returned. **No reservations will be accepted on site. Reservation deadline for all sessions is AUGUST 1.**

Session is \$25/person and includes morning refreshments, a light lunch, and program materials. Sessions will include information on a variety of topics and Auxiliary programs. New topics will be covered, so come out and join the fun!

Schedule for all conferences:

7:45 am – 8:15 am Registration/Morning Refreshments
 8:15 am – 2:30 pm Informative presentation, lunch break, interactive program session, Q&A

Reservation deadline for ALL sessions: August 1, 2023

Please print clearly:

District #: _____ Unit #: _____ Unit City: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: home cell: _____

Select One:

	DATE	LOCATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/09/2023	American Legion Post #360 417 East Main Street, Waunakee, WI 53597
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/16/2023	Tigerton Community Center 221 Birch St, Tigerton, WI 54486 Parking in Back / Use Back Door
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday, 09/30/2023	Fletcher Pechacek American Legion #121 701 N Main St, River Falls, WI 54022

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (\$25/person): \$ _____

Mail check, payable to ALA-Wisconsin, by August 1 to:
ALA Wisconsin, P. O. Box 140, Portage, WI 53901-0140.

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for any check returned by the bank.

Please share one (1) question you would like addressed during the session: _____

LEGISLATIVE

Diane Weggen
Department Chairman
dsweggen@gmail.com

Anyone wanting to go on a roller coaster ride just has to try to keep up with the legislative actions of the U.S. Congress from week to week. Just when it looks like the Basic Allowances for Housing is going to pass, along comes the GOP Debt Ceiling Plan.

The 2023 Limit, Save and Grow Act to steeply cut federal domestic spending in exchange for raising the debt ceiling passed in the House on a 217-215 vote. If passed into law, there would be an over 20% reduction in federal spending for FY24 (when costs continue to climb), plus it would limit spending growth to 1% a year for a decade. This won't pass because, according to the Appropriations Committee, non-discretionary spending (SS, Medicare) and Department of Defense take up the majority of the federal budget. That leaves too few dollars for Veterans' benefits, education, border security, healthcare, policing across the country, etc.

After another ride, the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act remains a stand-alone bill: S.141. The American Legion (TAL) urges everyone to contact their legislators in support

of this bill. This demonstrates the need for as many voices as possible to speak up advocating for Veterans, responding to Action Alerts, calling and emailing, or visiting face-to-face with legislators. Join TAL family members and friends. Sign up for Action Alerts at www.amlegionauxwi.org and Legislative Updates at www.legion.org/legislative; take an active role in support.

Summer months bring community festivals and parades. Frequently, especially in election years, candidates are out greeting people in their area. This is the perfect time to get to know your legislators and to address Veterans' issues. Take every chance you get to interact with leaders at local, state and national levels of government.

FYI: Wisconsin legislators are working to pass the UW MIA Identification and Recovery Program Funding Bill and the Disabled Veteran Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit Bill. Both bills have the support of the Governor.

Thanks to ALA members who took an active role in legislation affecting Veterans and the military by writing letters/emails, making phone calls, personally contacting legislators, participating in Town Halls, attending debates, and voting. They **Believe** participating in the legislative program makes a difference.



LEFT: Green Lake American Legion Auxiliary President Alice Bartow explains that a folded American flag at a military funeral is presented to the Veteran's family. Traditionally, it is displayed in a wooden case. RIGHT: There are 13 folds in the American flag-folding ceremony, and Girl Scouts count off as Auxiliary members Alice Bartow and Patti Westpfahl explain what each fold signifies.

GREEN LAKE UNIT 306 TEACHES FLAG ETIQUETTE

Local Girl Scouts received a lesson in American flag etiquette from Green Lake ALA Unit 306. The scouts watched an information video on the flag and how it is used respectfully, especially at Veterans' funerals.

Unit President Alice Bartow and member Patti Westpfahl taught how to display the flag, demonstrated how to fold it, and

explained the respectful way to dispose of American flags that are tattered and torn after being flown in worthy service. After learning how to fold the flag, the Girl Scouts folded pocket flags and received a patch for taking part in the workshop. This is the first time Unit 306 conducted such a workshop.

**1ST DISTRICT
Zondra Morris
District President**



It seems like just yesterday we held elections and I became the 1st District President. It started out slow but then we got to business helping in Union Grove with meals and donations. We got in touch with units that needed help. It breaks my heart that we disbanded two units but we hope one may be coming back.

The members of 1st District came together and worked on programs that each unit does, which is a lot for some the smaller units, so I am very pleased with all of them. Fall Conference in October was held at Orfordville Unit 209. All the units helped make this an amazing day as the theme was Pink Roundup Rodeo. We made pool noodle horses as a team-building exercise. I think everyone had fun.

Units held events all year – Veterans Day for their communities, fundraising, and Wreaths Across America in December at Union Grove. It was a cold day, but we got it done. Commander Julie and Vice Commander Karl were there to place some wreaths, along with other dignitaries.

We went to Union Grove for a Christmas party with Veterans and played Jukebox bingo, which was a blast. We served a meal and visited with them, then took a small break for Christmas with our families.

The next few months flew by and then all of sudden it was Spring Conference. The theme was Queen for the Day. Everyone dressed up and it was a great time. It was held at Unit 171 in Union Grove and they did a great job. All units helped make this event an amazing day.

This has been a year of learning and growing and watching each unit do so many things. I am so very proud of these units and their members. They all go above and beyond. When I started getting the year-end reports, they made me even more proud of this district. I was blown away by what I read. They all do wonderful things and I hope that this year I can get to more of the units. I want to see them in action as it will be an exciting year.

My hope is for our district to keep moving up in membership. I know we will do the best we can. I would like to thank you all for a wonderful first year. For without all of you we cannot do the things we do for Veterans and their families.

**2ND DISTRICT
Amy Luft
District President**



When you *Believe*, great things can happen and that's true in the 2nd District! We held strong in 4th place in membership with nine units joining the 100% Club

which included: Rio, Poynette, Theresa, Lomira, Port Washington, Belgium, Plymouth, Adell, and West Bend. We continue to grow as a District with 2,374 members and counting. Recruitment is one of the strengths of 2nd District with 100 new members joining and 47 Gnome One pins distributed.

District Year-End Impact Reports reflected members volunteering 35,092 hours towards our Veterans/military and 44,752 hours of community service. All 43 units completed a Year-End Impact Report. Units and Counties worked on their constitution, bylaws and standing rules, keeping them up-to-date in order to operate efficiently.

Revitalization took place with two units and a county council. There were several members who stepped up to learn the ropes as a leader. Others who continued in their positions were not only Daydream Believers but mentors who encouraged and assisted their teammates.

Some might say It's Only Make Believe that 2nd District produced

12-monthly District newsletters and 12 mid-month communications called, The Scoop. Both productions helped to keep members informed on the latest news and highlights. Two educational Zoom meetings were held – one on reporting and the other

on Service to Veterans. Plus, we had one fun Happy Hour Zoom with our own Department President! Units and members utilized monthly newsletters and social media such as Facebook to advertise and communicate with their members. In addition, many events were posted on the 2nd District Facebook page allowing others to see their events and accomplishments.

Do You Believe in Magic? 2nd District did, with not only one but two very successful District projects: A car show that raised over \$2,000 for Dan Seehar's national campaign and a VA&R project for the Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative called, Pamper Our Female Veterans.

We all came together to celebrate our success at the 101st 2nd District Spring Conference in Germantown which had record-breaking attendance!

It's true that the members of 2nd District Don't Stop Believing when it comes to our Veterans, military, their families and our community. Congratulations 2nd District on a job well done!

**3RD DISTRICT
Karen Runk, District President**



Before telling you about the amazing members in District 3, allow me to thank our district officers and chairs, and District Commander Jerry Hook, for their steadfast support of our Auxiliary. I am so grateful to be surrounded with such talented and supportive team members.

District program chairs provided relevant information to members that suggested activities and contact information to partner with organizations. Units could choose the information that best suited their members and activities. Units also continued the tried and true events and activities that they have perfected over the years. Blending tradition with relevant needs of today is a necessity for the future of our organization.

District 3 units are doing amazing events and activities! How exciting to see their success at our 2023 spring conference. Units worked the Americanism program through essays, flag programs, parades and honoring our heroes in cemeteries across the district. The Children and Youth programs were strong across the district. Dane County units coordinated with schools and military families to support and recognize military children by celebrating Purple Up! Day in April. Units in Richland, Grant, Dane and Iowa coun-

ties assisted youth in poppy posters, parades, fundraisers, caring trees, Christmas programs and so much more. In addition to offering \$9,000 in scholarships, units invested over \$25,000 and 1,300 hours in Children & Youth programs!

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program also prospered. Units reported a diversified effort to support our Legion Veterans and Veterans outside our Post fami-

lies. Members from the Mississippi River to Wisconsin's capital and everywhere in between really poured their hearts and hands into supporting our Veterans. Units made meals, dedicated memorials, fulfilled VA facility wish lists, Camp American Legion wish lists, fundraised and collected donations for Legion families and numerous organizations benefitting Veterans – VetsRoll, Operation Not Alone, Second Harvest, Custom Canines, and the USO to name a few! Over \$50,000 and almost 32,000 hours were committed to our Veterans. This is an amazing effort! There are so many wonderful events and activities that were reported, too many to capture in this article. Well done members of District 3, well done!

I pray that our 2023-24 ALA year brings more members together and even more FUN and success! Strengthen your Post families by finding common ground and working together with TAL, SAL and Riders. For God and Country.

**4TH DISTRICT
Laura Calteux, District President**



BELIEVE – to accept something as true. American Legion Auxiliary members of the 4th District *Believe* in our mission and are letting their communities know it!

The main statement in our mission statement is “to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our Veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.” Our members are doing that every day as they work alongside their Legion Families at fish fries, pancake breakfasts, honor flights, and other events throughout the year.

Honoring those who sacrificed is what we do every day by being a member of the American Legion Auxiliary and promoting membership in our great organization. Our units have membership tables at their functions to show the community what they do for our Veterans, military, and our communities. There are applications, pamphlets, and pictures to show what our units do to honor the Veteran(s) in their lives. **Getting New and Old Members Excited** has brought District 4, 28 new members this year!

As a district, we have been working on updating our constitution and bylaws so that we are all in compliance with the national organization. Most of the units

and the district are still working on getting that completed and one unit found out that they don't have one on file, so we are going to continue to work on them and get all updated.

These past two years have shown the district that it's time to make some changes to how we do things in the district. We want to get more participation and information out to the members. They are asking for ideas on how to work the programs, and our chairmen are going to be there with those ideas with a larger fall meeting and less meetings in between that and the spring conference. Making those other meetings a project meeting might just get more members involved, so watch to see what is happening in the 4th District!

We continue to support the Veterans at Zablocki VA Medical Center, Dayton House and Union Grove with items on the wish lists. One unit held a book drive for the Soldiers Home, purchased heart pillows, items for the Zablocki baby shower, along with volunteers, volunteers to dance at Dayton House for Valentine's Day, having Veterans come to their Post for bingo and lunch and so much more!

As the 4th District continues to **BELIEVE** in our organization, they will continue to do good things and honor and support the American Legion Auxiliary and its mission every day.

**5TH DISTRICT
Linda Bartell, District President**



ALA 5th District is comprised of six units. We are still struggling to get back to having unit meetings. Half of our district has been successful. Age and health are part of the other half but we are slowly coming back and will be at full strength. Our members still have their passion for this organization.

One of the areas being most worked on is Service to Veterans. Zablocki VA has begun to take tray favors again and some units have been continuing to make afghans, lap robes and baby af-

ghans for them.

Another unit had been concentrating on working with disabled Veterans in helping them with cleaning up their yard, garage and gardening. Middle school teens also were involved in this endeavor.

Another unit has been able to support more of their Post's events.

Poppy distributions have begun again. One unit was able to sponsor a Badger Girl.

Membership has been increased for a couple of our units. To date, 5th District has moved up from 12th place in the rankings. This is very good.

Like Spring, Fifth District will blossom again.

6TH DISTRICT

Diane Steinert, District President

Two years ago, when I was elected President of the 6th District, I was wondering what I got myself into. It is hard to believe that the two years are almost over and what a wonderful experience this has been! I am so glad I accepted this position.

I attended the state convention in Green Bay where several units received recognition. A President's Award for Excellence was presented to St. Nazianz Unit 477 and Junior Unit of the Year went to Neenah Unit 33. Poppy Program awards were given to St. Nazianz Unit 477 and New Holstein Unit 124. The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation "Anchored in Service" awards were also presented to St. Nazianz Unit 477 and New Holstein Unit 124. Impressive!

Linda Coppock was installed as our Department President. Her theme was to "Believe" in the ALA and all the programs we support. She also challenged us to "Get New & Old Members Excited". Units in 6th District took that challenge to heart.



The units worked hard all year long and district impact report numbers were impressive. Our service to Veterans and military totaled 9,642 volunteer hours and \$25,180 spent. 17,602 poppies were distributed and \$36,971 raised. Hours of service representing ALA in our communities was 13,836 and a total of \$6,320 was presented in scholarships. Awesome job!!

Units proved quite successful retaining and finding new members. As of this writing, one county and six units have reached or exceeded 100% membership. There are several units which only need three members or less to get to 100%. I am pleased to report 6th District is currently ranked in 2nd place. Great job everyone! Keep up the good work!

Thank you for the invitations to your unit/county meetings, special events and installation of officers. Remember to "Believe" in the American Legion Auxiliary mission and "Believe" in yourselves. Your dedication and willingness to serve our Veterans, military and their families and our communities is truly appreciated. I am looking forward to another remarkable two years as your District President!!

**7TH DISTRICT
Christina Petranovich
District President**

The units of District 7 truly do "Believe" in the American Legion Auxiliary and what we can do and do do for our Veterans, military, their families, and the community. I am proud to report on the many volunteer hours and dollars given from the heart of our members to those in need.

Several units have used creative and fun ways to raise funds to support our many

programs. Some units have been pairing up with Culver's. Some have had "wine walks" and bingo nights, fish fries and dinners along with bake sales.

District 7 held a successful Spring Conference in April at Humbird Unit 320. Unit 320 is a perfect example of a small unit doing great things. With just a handful of members, they have been able to host several events that honor and help Veterans, youth, and their community.



And let me tell you, they put on an amazing meal, too!

If you have never attended a spring or fall conference, an ALA in the Know Conference, or convention, I encourage you to do so. The amount of knowledge you will receive is astounding. These are great places to hear different ideas on what other units are doing to maybe add that spark back into your own unit and maybe get some junior members involved too!

**8TH DISTRICT
Linda Tryczak, District President**

My second year as 8th District President has been busy. I have been contacting units and made several visits throughout the District.

This year the units having been working hard on G. N. O. M. E. (Getting New and Old Members Excited). As of this month, 8th District has four units and one county at 100% and several units are within two or three members to be 100%.

Everyone has been doing a great job on fulfilling the mission of the ALA. From the Year-End Impact Reports that I received, members have volunteered over 16,000 hours for Veterans, over 2,500 hours for military families, and almost 9,000 hours in our communities.

The Fall Conference was hosted by Wausau Montgomery-Plant-Dudley Unit 10. Thirteen units were represented with 39 people in attendance. Post 10 Bob Weller, 8th District Commander Adam Klapperich, and Wausau Chamber of Commerce CEO Dave Eckmann gave greetings. American Legion Rider Bob West gave a presentation about Wreaths Across America. Department Community Service Chairman Kay Grosskopf spoke about the program and presented several ideas



and activities that can be used for community service. Kay emphasized the importance of wearing American Legion Auxiliary branded apparel in your community. The VA&R Anchored in Service award was given to Norris Spencer Unit 263 New London and the VA&R Outstanding Service to Veterans award was given to District 8. Congratulations to both! President Linda Coppock and Sons of the American Legion Al Watry gave greetings in the afternoon.

We held an Executive Board meeting by teleconference in early December but we did not have a quorum so the voting was done by email.

The Spring Conference was hosted by Vesper Unit 520. There were 12 Units, 34 members and 2 guests for a total of 36 in attendance. We had greetings from Village Board President Daniel Vollert and Vesper Post 520 Commander Gary Jensen. American Legion Rider Association Pat Kulas spoke to us about their programs and objectives. Department 1st Vice President Becky Mueller spoke on the importance of membership. Department Historian Sue Turowski gave greetings in the afternoon. The poppy posters and history books were judged and sent to department.

I look forward to working with all the 8th District units in the coming year.

**10TH DISTRICT
Margaret Larson, District President**

As I sit here writing my last Year-In-Review, I look back at what the units accomplished this past year. Twenty-seven (27) units reported their impact numbers and they were impressive. Service hours to Veterans and military totaled 15,741 with \$23,336 spent. Poppy distribution of 8,000 poppies raised \$13,499. Military family volunteer hours were 1,256, with \$5,980 spent on 46 military families. Our Children & Youth service spent \$10,870 sending many girls to ALA Badger Girls State. Community hours totaled 11,143 with \$9,829 spent. Twenty-three (23) scholarships were presented in the amount of \$6,900, with \$950 donated to department scholarships. 32,280 miles were driven by members, proving that 10th District "gits er done!"

As for me, I want to thank all the units, members and most of all the department officers for keeping me on my toes. Serving with my husband for the Mighty 10th helped me participate in many functions. He



was my chauffeur to all my DEC call-ins in Portage, department conventions, Midwinter and spring conferences, and flying with me to national convention. I traveled to units to get members to play nice and get along! I attended deceased members' visitations, a testimonial dinner, awarded many certificates, and partook in many unit functions with some great meals, hence the extra 20 pounds!!

My most rewarding accomplishments were joining the Legion family for our open ceremonies and reading the Preamble to the Constitution with each sector reading their own part. I also started having our deceased members' names announced at our memorial services at our spring conferences. Larry and I also traveled many times to Portage and once to West Allis to pick up a trailer full of Kimberly Clark products for Veterans and their families. We want to continue this service after our 10th District reign is over as long as the product is available.

Thank you again to the Mighty 10 for the last two years of the most extraordinary service to our Veterans, military, their families and our communities.

9TH DISTRICT

Bonnie Blink, District President

The Noble Ninth District has been a very busy district. Many of the 39 units have stepped up and beyond assisting with the many needs of the Veterans' homes and Veterans' homeless shelters. So many unit members have been sharing their time and talents with and for the Veterans.

I'm so happy to report some of the activities – including a golf tournament, soup luncheons, brat fries, helping The American Legion with distributing poppies, marching in events and parades, and some units taking their Poppy Princess to local events – congrats to Unit and Post 236. Units have kept their presence in the community by helping with local functions, along with staying connected with the school in their area.

9th District has two VA facilities close to their heart: King Veterans Home and Iron Mountain VA, but all of the Veterans facilities in the state and in Minneapolis are supported by our generous members.

Six units have gone over the top with 100% reached in membership so congrats to Green Bay, Wabeno, Coleman, Gillett, Abrams, and Hortonville. Another six are close on their heels at over 90%: Amberg, Appleton, Luxemburg, Little Chute, Forestville, and Shiocton.

9th District reported 21,000 hours volunteered and distributed 18,300 poppies raising \$32,250 in poppy funds. I'm sure many hours and poppy distributions went unreported.



AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

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

The national Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) program is all about "members helping members" by making donations to the AEF fund. These funds are used to provide grants to individual members in good standing who suffered a financial loss to their primary residence due to a natural disaster such as fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, other severe weather or another personal crisis.

This fund was established in 1969 by a bequest from the estate of Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisconsin, who was an Auxiliary member.

Auxiliary units and members have been "Getting New & Old Members Excited" by raising funds and contributing to the AEF in order to help members who experienced a loss to "Believe" in a better and brighter future due to the generosity of their fellow Auxiliary members.

Thank you to all the individuals, units, counties, and districts who contributed to the AEF this year. You are all living "service, not self."

Sweepstakes winners are posted at amlegionauxwi.org under the "More" tab.



Julie Muhle
Department
Commander

★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★

Hello! How wonderful it is that the weather is getting warmer and we are able to enjoy the outdoors more. We held Spring Conferences at Camp American Legion and Mother Nature was very kind to us. It was great to see so many new people to Camp! I want to encourage posts, counties and districts to rent a van or a bus and take a day trip up to Camp to see its beauty. Once you are there, you will want to return to volunteer, to stay or get a friend up to visit.

As my year is winding down, I want to thank everyone for making it the great year it was. I enjoyed my travels and getting to see new posts and members. I appreciate all that I have been able to learn, see and

do. It will help me as I move into my new role after convention.

This year there will be about 3,500 members who won't have renewed for 2023. Some went to Post Everlasting and some have found reasons not to renew. Talk with those choosing to not renew and ask how we can keep them as members. Is there something the post can do that they like? Do they need rides to meetings? Can our Department Veterans Service Office assist them with claims, benefits or other needs? Make those calls or personal visits. Help them to feel like they belong. And remember, those calls or personal visits can lead into being the one to help someone on their darkest day.

We are a family. Brothers and sisters. At the end of the day, let's come together and sit at the family table and enjoy each other's company.



Linda Coppock
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Can you "Believe" this is my last presidential article? Well, this past year has gone so fast that I did not get to do everything I originally thought I could! But that is okay as it leaves me with options to look forward to!

Many wonderful events have taken place this past year. I was invited to visit Camp Hometown Heroes and saw what an awe-inspiring camp it is. Campers are the children of fallen soldiers since 9/11, and they are amazing kids! Thank you, Sue Turowski, for the invitation and wonderful tour of the facility. I also developed a love/hate relationship with the ALA department car. She needed a new air conditioner belt a week after I took her home. National Convention in Milwaukee was a great event, until we wanted to go home and the car battery was dead. After a new battery was installed, Becky Mueller and I were finally on our way home!

I visited many units and was honored to initiate new members and install new officers. A few visits happened to celebrate unit members' birthdays as well – cake is always good before the ride home!

The morning I left to attend a Fall Conference, a neighbor's dog decided to attack the ALA car and put a nice dent in the driver's door. And everyone says to watch for deer when I leave an event...

Commander Julie and I had the privilege of walking side by side in two holiday parades and visiting a few VA facilities. On one occasion, the ALA car would not start, dead battery, so I took my car. The next VA visit, Commander Julie drove! I think you are getting the

drift of my love/hate relationship the car?!!

I was invited to attend a deployment event in Milwaukee and helped hand out Kimberly Clark products to the soldiers and family members alongside the SAL who passed out ALF dogs to the children of the soldiers. I helped wrap presents at the Christmas Gift Shop event. Maggie Geiger and I did a road trip to attend spring conferences in Waunakee and at Camp American Legion. ALA State Bowling, ALA Badger Girls State, Mission Training, and ALA in the Know Conferences are regular annual events for me because I enjoy them all.

While traveling to Zablocki VA to attend a baby shower for women Veterans with Sue Hembrook and Bonnie Jakubczyk, I had car troubles. She got the best of me, or I of her. She was replaced, I have recovered, and soon will be passing on the keys for the new car to your next Department President. Thank you all for the get well wishes and prayers.

In my travels this year, I saw how units worked the ALA mission together as a family. I really enjoyed getting to know unit members on a one-on-one basis. I still "Believe" in what you do for our Veterans. I see that members are eager to be mentored and learn more about our programs and the good the ALA does for our Veterans, the active military, their families and our communities. Your reports confirm that.

Continue to "Believe" in our mission, in the good we do, but most of all, continue to "Believe" in yourself and that you **do** make a difference. I saw what you can do. I will always "Believe" in you!

Thank you for a great year...



David Fuller
SAL Detachment
Commander

★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★

Once again, I find myself searching for the proper words for what will be my last article in which I will address the Sons of The American Legion for the Detachment of Wisconsin. As I reflect on the past two years, I find that I owe many thank-yous to those that have helped me while I have served as the Detachment Commander. First, I have to mention Steve Champany,

Chris Sherman and Karl Stuvengen for showing and proving to me what it takes to be a leader. I have learned more from these people than I had realized until now. They have not only been mentors but true friends. Next, I need to thank Chris, Steve, Allen and Gary you will not find a better group of Vice Commanders anywhere. Much of the success of the Detachment comes from their dedication and willingness to help all that come to the Detachment for help. I must mention the Sgt. At Arms that are always willing to help out with last-minute problem solving and assisting to keep everything moving smoothly. Rick and Ray have served me well. Next in line would have to be the Adjutant and Assistant Adjutant, these two put together the meetings and provide all of the information needed to make them effective. These two have done an OUTSTANDING job. Believe me, making me look like I know what I'm doing isn't easy. All of the Committee Chairman that have a passion for their respective committees, I applaud you for you have done well. Also, I have to mention the Historian Mike Pook. He has done a great job and it shows in his books. No one in the Legion Family could be effective or successful without the help of the team at headquarters. From getting mailing addresses to publishing this article to one of Angie's events, this team is what makes EVERYTHING go. The length of this article prevents me from continuing. However, please know that I am thankful to each and every one of you. May God bless you and our Legion Family.



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

★ LEGION RIDERS ★

I hope that by the time you read this, summer has actually arrived and that everyone is able to get out to enjoy the outdoors. My name is Corey Doehrmann and I have the distinct honor of recently being elected director to represent the just over 700 members of the American Legion Riders Association of Wisconsin. I am humbled by the trust my fellow Riders have placed in me, I will work diligently to guide the overall team to success.

Our purpose is: *To participate in parades and other ceremonies that are in keeping with the aims and purposes of the American Legion. To promote motorcycle safety. To provide a social atmosphere for American Legion members who share the same interests. To use our group to promote and support the programs of The American Legion, the community and other motorcycle organizations. We are not a motorcycle club. We are a group of American Legion Family Members who ride for a cause.*

Over the last several years I have spent time visiting almost all the rider districts to hear from them on what they are doing in their communities to make the American Legion proud. Let me tell you, this organization is doing some amazing things throughout the state. Just to list a few: too many parades throughout the year to even begin to list, funeral escort missions for those whose watch has ended, standing flag lines at 4 a.m. or 10 p.m. for Honor Flights, or providing picnics for National Guard Armories on their family day events.

This work and so much more gets done each year silently without much publicity that it's even going on. Legion Riders are divided into district to coincide with the Legion family districts, so my challenge to all of you is to reach out and find the Legion Rider Director for your district. Ask them for help with programs and activities you are doing and ask them if you can get involved with the programs and activities they are doing. This American Legion Family is the strongest when all four pieces of the family work together toward a common goal. To find these contacts go to <http://www.alrawis.org/index.html> and click on 'Contact Us' then 'District Contacts' or you can email me at alrawi.director@gmail.com.

HEY VETERANS!

Let us help you **SAVE 25%** a month on your **AT&T Unlimited Mobile Plan!**



From Legion Member to Legion Member
"I will come directly to your HOME or BUSINESS to assist you directly."

Call Rhett Boesen at 715-771-3535
Rhett.Boesen@Btussel.com



AT&T
Authorized Retailer



Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**