



BADGER



LEGIONNAIRE

& WISCONSIN VOL 101 #3 | JUNE 2024



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

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

APPLETON TO HOST 105TH CONVENTION NATIONAL COMMANDER SEEHAFFER SCHEDULED TO ATTEND



Hilton Paper Valley
333 West College Avenue
Appleton, WI 54911
July 10-14, 2024

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 12, 2024 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. Only 1 registration per form, if you wish to register multiple people as once, you can do that by registering online at wilegion.org (preferred).

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 6, 2024		\$35.00	
Saturday Evening PCC/Legion Family Event: Taco Bar- 7 PM, 1/2 Barrel of Beer, Soda, cash bar and Live Entertainment-Doors open at 6:30 PM		\$25.00/person	
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: angic@wilegion.org

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 will be setup, with the Membership Committee and Wisconsin American Legion Foundation meeting in the evening. Did we mention that National Commander Daniel Seehafer will be joining us for the entire weekend?

Thursday, July 11, 2024 will begin with all Department Committees meeting throughout the morning and the Department Executive Committee meeting at 4 PM.

Friday, July 12, 2024 begins with the District Caucuses at 7:30 AM. At 9:00 AM opening ceremonies will officially kick off the 105th Department Convention. The session will include many guest speakers and awards such as our Law & Order, Firefighter, EMT and more. The session will conclude with you grabbing a bag of popcorn and enjoying the documentary Honor In the Air. It is a story of inspiration, dedication, valor and love, following the life of one soldier and those with whom he served while recognizing an entire generation. YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS! The evening will have you visiting with the candidates for office at their hospitality rooms and networking with your fellow Veterans.

Saturday, July 13, 2024 will begin with the election of new Leadership for 2024/2025. After voting join us for another exciting General Session

★ A DOCUMENTARY BY CLEAR FOCUS MEDIA LLC ★

HONOR IN THE AIR

REMEMBERING CAPTAIN SCOTT R. ALWIN
AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR SUSAN REETZ

VALOR LIKE THIS SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN
Millions have served in the U.S. military, many of them heroes. This is the story of one such hero, Captain Scott Alwin, and the heroic man from the Army's 68th Assault Helicopter Company with whom he flew during the Vietnam War. Captain Alwin earned an unprecedented 136 Air Medals, Distinguished Flying Crosses and many other medals and awards. But more than that, he is an example of integrity, dedication and honor. Learn more about Captain Alwin and those he served with at HonorInTheAir.com or facebook.com/honorintheair. To schedule a screening, contact Susan Reetz (Producer/Director/Writer) through ClearFocus.Media.

SCAN HERE!
TO REGISTER TODAY



National Commander
Daniel Seehafer

featuring our own National Commander Daniel Seehafer and other guest speakers including WDVA Secretary James Bond, and Randall Bansley of the Gaming Commission. In addition to many awards, come meet the youth winners and hear how our programs have impacted their lives. In the evening join the outgoing and incoming leadership for the Past Commander's Club party with a taco bar and live music.

Sunday, July 14, 2024 will begin with a Legion Family Memorial Service, followed by the installation of Department Officers. The weekend

will conclude with the first Department Executive Committee meeting of the newly elected officers.

For up to date information on the convention, including registration and housing, visit <https://wilegion.org/departement-convention>.

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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**
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Executive Editor
Sheri Hicks

2023-24 Department Officers
Department Commander
Karl Stuvengen

Department Vice Commanders
Jim Johnson
Harry Bauer
Gail Minks
Linda Pfeiffer

Department Adjutant
Julie Muhle

Department Chaplain
Virgil Smith

Historian
Michelle Adams

Sergeant-At-Arms
John Berg
Aimee Korger

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

District Commanders
1st – Nathan Bond
2nd – Charlie Young
3rd – Jerry Hook
4th – Steve Kohnke
5th – Craig Ellis
6th – Dave Steinert
7th – Phil Green
8th – Adam Klapperich
9th – Debbie Thomas
10th – Rita Rindahl
11th – Gerry Johnson
12th – Scott Markle

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

“Wisconsin”

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

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

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

BADGER BOYS STATE

THE SILENT LESSON OF BADGER BOYS STATE: THE RULE OF THREE

By **Zachary Dickhut**

Simply put, one learns a lot during their week at Badger Boys State. The sources of knowledge are plentiful—counselors, Legionnaires, fellow citizens, various professionals and educators, and the nightly assemblies, to name a few. The lessons range from the practical to the profound. For instance, citizens learn how to properly run a meeting using parliamentary procedure or give an effective one-minute campaign speech. They likely learn a thing or two about what career they wish to pursue in life—or at least careers they wish to avoid. Nearly every citizen learns something about themselves during the week.



Having been involved with this program for a decade, I’ve been able to observe a silent lesson that is always taught during the week. Although few ever point it out, it is perhaps the most important one the program can give. I call it the “rule of three: person, principles, and patriotism.

At the beginning of the week, every citizen has three vital things with them: a BBS shirt, a red or blue lanyard, and themselves. The fact that these are extremely obvious items makes this lesson a stealthy one. The



citizen is—first and foremost—an individual. They have the autonomy to make their own decisions about what they wish to do in life, what company they keep, and where they go. The individual citizen is the smallest decision-making body at BBS.

Also on the first day, citizens are given a red or blue lanyard. These lanyards separate the citizens into the two fictitious political parties at BBS: the Federalists and the Nationalists. Although these parties have no platforms or ideologies, the citizens develop those with each other over

the course of a few days. In the real world of course, one’s political and/or spiritual identity is shaped by their experience and worldview, not a lanyard. Yet the lesson still holds—the citizens’ principles and beliefs are vital in guiding their decisions.

Throughout the week, all 700+ citizens wear the same gray T-shirt with “Badger Boys State” printed on the front. At the first assembly, the visual is overwhelming: some of the best our state has to offer all gathered in one place wearing one thing. The shirt is a unifier. Despite

each individual and lanyard color, the citizens are all a part of one entity.

The rule of three at Badger Boys State helps citizens understand that life is made of decisions we make by ourselves, as a group, and as a nation. The trick is to find the balance between all three by having a good sense of self, strongly rooted principles, and a strong commitment to the good of the nation. This lesson rises like the eastern sun over the course of our week at Badger Boys State. As always, we invite all Legionnaires to Eau Claire to witness it—and be a part of it.

81ST SESSION OF BADGER BOYS STATE SALUTE TO VETERANS ASSEMBLY

The staff of Badger Boys State are excited to announce the Salute to Veterans assembly at the 81st session of Badger Boys State in Zorn Arena at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire on Thursday, June 13 at 6:35pm. The public is invited.

The assembly will begin with a band concert featuring the Badger Boys State band. The Veterans Salute will begin at 7:00pm and will conclude at 8:30pm.

Special guest speaker Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Ann Walsh Bradley will be in attendance

for the swearing in of the Badger Boys State Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Supreme Court.

Please join us for this exciting event!

Any questions, please contact Badger Boys State Program Coordinator, Sheri Hicks at sheri@wilegion.org or 608-745-0341.

THERE'S A NEW HIRE AT HEADQUARTERS



Loki

If you stop by The Wisconsin American Legion Headquarters in Portage, you will most likely be greeted by our new “staff member”, Loki. Loki is a Yorkie-Poo who is owned by Wisconsin American Legion’s Administrative Assistant Tammi Alexander. Tammi purchased Loki from Past SAL Detachment Commander David Fuller’s family.

Loki has been a pleasant addition to Legion Headquarters. The staff enjoy his energy and visitors to the office enjoy meeting Loki.

You can find Loki wearing a differ-

ent outfit each day, and he wears his “Legion gear” when there are meetings in the building.

Loki’s corner will be featured in the Badger Legionnaire and he will provide reminders for our Legion Family. To find the column, look for Loki’s portrait that was drawn by Program Coordinator Sheri Hicks’ niece Allyson, who recently graduated from Art School.

Feel free to stop by and meet Loki. The first Loki’s Corner column is in this edition.

CORRECTION

Correction from the April edition of The Badger Legionnaire:

In an article on page 4 titled Mount Horeb AL, VFW Host Welcome Home to 75 Vietnam Era Veterans, the Chapter 4 Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans were mistakenly referred to as the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter IV. We apologize for this error and thank the Chapter 4 Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans as they are the only State chartered Vietnam Veterans Organization. The organization was founded by Gary Wetzel, a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient from Milwaukee.

FOR THE RECORD: LEGION HISTORIANS

By Mike Pook
Detachment Historian

Every Legion Post, Unit and Squadron has an Historian position. The Historian maintains a record of the activities in a given year. The easiest way in doing so is to work in chronological order through the year. What medium does the Historian use to maintain

this record which is called “The Yearbook”? That is up to the Historian to choose. With the age of digital cameras contained within your cell phones, everyone can be a photographer. Any member can capture the moment and send their pictures to the Historian and post them onto social media platforms. The Historians can take digital pictures and download them to a

desktop publishing program that uses templates to layout page designs. Since most yearbooks are in chronological order, the yearbook layout can go rather quickly. One can work on it as pictures come in, leaving some spaces to play around with or to add text. The written words are just as important to the visual. We want to know what the picture is about and who is in them, this enhances the yearbook’s contents. Desktop publishing in general has brought massive changes in the yearbook makeup as there is no longer the need to print pictures and cut and paste things into a photo album sleeve and arrange them in a three-ring binder. Digital cameras and desktop publishing arrange the data electronically through the process and directly publishes a bond book to print.

The Detachment of Wisconsin Historian is Michael Pook from Squadron 375, Mukwonago. Pook has been the Detachment Historian for 5 years and the Squadron 375 Historian for 3 years. Pook was also the District 1 American Legion Riders Historian for 2 years, 2020-



Left to Right — Past Detachment Commander David Fuller, Detachment Historian Mike Pook holding the National Historian’s award, Detachment Commander Allen Watry.

2022. The yearbook documents the happenings year to year and provides insight into the different activities that took place.

Wisconsin Sons of the American Legion yearbooks took first and second place at the 2023 National Convention Competition. The two yearbooks scored a mere half point off from each other making the judging even more difficult. The National Convention yearbook competition has a format that each

yearbook is to follow. Each yearbook is judged on its own merit and according to the contest rules. The Detachment of Wisconsin yearbook took second place behind Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 375, and Mukwonago. Congratulations Mukwonago SAL! Best Yearbook!

Wisconsin Sons of the American Legion Yearbooks are on display in the museum at American Legion Headquarters in Portage.

WHAT IF . . . **THIS WERE YOU?**

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Legionnaire EA+ steps in to help you with more than 20 emergency and medical services ... to help you focus on your recovery and NOT on the costs (or even details like lining up second opinions or flying loved ones home).*

Plus, acting right away also helps lock in your Legionnaire members-only price.

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For more information log on to www.TheLIT.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus or call toll-free **1-888-293-4008** today to speak with a representative.

*This is only an outline of the plans services. Please review your Member Guide carefully. EA+ is not insurance.

From Your American Legion Department

JUNE 28-30, 2024

Supporting Troop & Family Support Grants & Homeless Women Veterans Grants

ROUTE

June 28th

- Superior Post 435
- Ashland Post 90
- Park Falls Post 182
- Camp
- Antigo Post 3

June 29th

- Antigo Post 3
- Clintonville Post 63
- Denmark Post 363
- Saint Nazianz Post 477
- Belgium Post 412

June 30th

- Port Washington Post 82
- Oak Creek Post 434
- Lake Geneva Post 24
- Fort Atkinson Post 166
- Orfordville Post 209

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

- Register to Ride
- Donate
- Sponsor

Scan For More



World War II Veteran Wallace “Wally” Ritterbusch marks his 100th birthday with members of Jackson American Legion Post 486.

WORLD WAR II VET MARKS 100TH BIRTHDAY

World War II Veteran Wallace “Wally” Ritterbusch recently turned 100 years old!

Born in Cedarburg in 1924, to Albert and Emma, Wally was one of four kids in the family. He remembered growing up near the nail factory, between Grafton and Cedarburg.

Wally went to high school for two years and then left to work for a farmer. It was in June 1943 when Ritterbusch was 18 that he was drafted into the U.S. Navy.

“I was a petty officer machinist and worked on the Landing Craft, Tanks (LCT),” said Wally.

Wally proudly served during WWII and was an integral part of D-Day, June 6, 1944, when the landing craft brought tanks and troops to Omaha Beach during the Normandy Invasion.

Some of his framed awards include a bronze battle star, honorable discharge medal and an award from Legion Post 486 where he has been a charter member since returning home from service in 1946.

Thank you, Wally, for your service and we all hope you have many more wonderful birthday celebrations!!

*Karl Stuvengen for
Alternate NEC*



Department Commander Karl Stuvengen is seeking support for election of the High Office of Alternate National Executive Committeeman. His eligibility for membership is 21 years in the United States Navy. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Karl Stuvengen.

*Jim Johnson for
Department Commander*



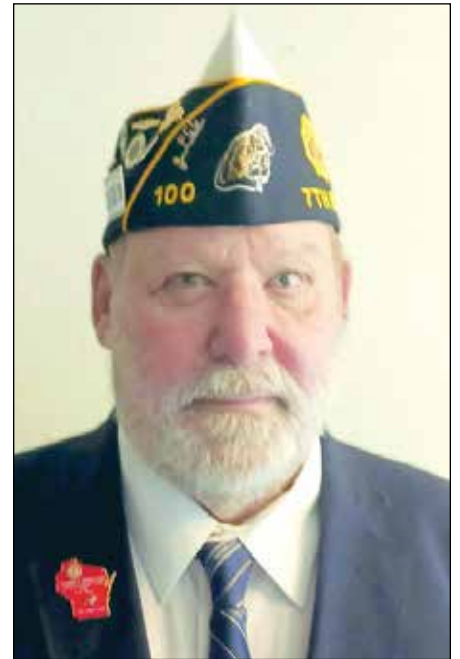
Department Vice Commander Jim Johnson is seeking support for election of the High Office of Department Commander. His eligibility for membership is 8 years of active duty with the United States Marine Corps and combat service with the 32nd MP Company WI National Guard. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Jim Johnson.

*Nathan Bond for
Vice Commander*



1st District Commander Nathan Bond is seeking support for election of the High Office of Department Vice Commander. His eligibility for membership is his 24 years of service with the United States Army. See the February 2024 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Nathan Bond.

*Phil Green for
Vice Commander*



7th District Commander Phil Green is seeking support for election of the High Office of Department Vice Commander. His eligibility for membership is his service in the U.S. Navy from 1972 to 1976. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Phil Green.

*Jerry Hook for
Vice Commander*



3rd District Commander Jerry Hook is seeking support for election of the High Office of Department Vice Commander. His eligibility for membership is his service in the United States Army from 1983 to 1987, and the Army Reserves while in college at UW La Crosse, and active duty Army from 1993 to 2008. See the February 2024 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Jerry Hook.

*Debbie Thomas for
Vice Commander*



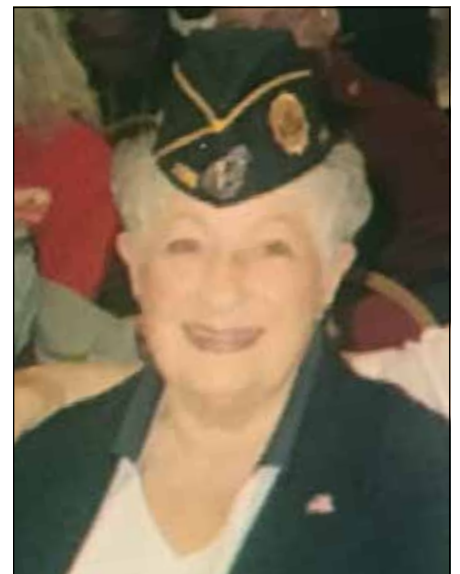
9th District Commander Debbie Thomas is seeking support for election of the High Office of Department Vice Commander. Her eligibility for membership is her 24 years of active duty service in the United States Air Force. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Debbie Thomas.

*John Berg for
Sergeant-at-Arms*



Department Sergeant-at-Arms John Berg is seeking support for election for another term as Department Sergeant-at-Arms. His eligibility for membership is his 3 years of active duty service in the United States Navy and 21 and a half years Active Reserve time. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate John Berg.

*Nellie Debaker for
Sergeant-at-Arms*



Past Department Vice Commander Nellie Debaker is seeking support for election for Department Sergeant-at-Arms. Her eligibility for membership is her service in the United States Navy from 1967 to 1969. See the December 2023 edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* for additional information on Candidate Nellie Debaker.

DISTRICT 6 ORATORICAL CONTEST



District 6 Commander Dave Steinert presenting a check to Lexi Rilling of Omro for winning the Sixth District Oratorical Contest.

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: Sheri.



WATERTOWN POST 189 BIRTHDAY BANQUET



Watertown Post 189 held their annual birthday banquet on March 9 at Lidberg's by the River. Second District Commander Charlie Young was the guest speaker. LEFT: Post Adjutant Kirk Grill was named Post 189 2023 Legionnaire of the Year. RIGHT: Watertown Police Officer Jonathan Wehner was awarded Post 189 Police Officer of the Year. All had a great time.

FIFTY-YEAR MEMBERSHIP AT POST 149



Post 149 presented a 50-year membership plaque to Dave Specht (Vietnam Veteran): (L-R) Pictured: Vice Commander Kevin Regan, Dave Specht, Membership Chairman Dan Riviers. Dave is a local businessman (Specht Motors) who has given back many times to our post as well as local fundraisers for needy causes, a true Veteran Patriot.

BLACK EARTH LEGION ENACTMENT OF WWII TRAGEDY



At a recent monthly meeting of the Black Earth American Legion Post, members were given a presentation about the Four Chaplains, who during World War II were on a ship near Europe with about 900 other military personnel when the ship was hit, ablaze and sinking. During the abandon ship procedure, it became evident that there were only enough life vests and rafts for a couple of hundred men.

As Post 313 Chaplains Bill Rettenmund and Tom Bennett, along with post members John Hientz and Dan Joyce, made their presentation/enactment we heard the story of the Four Chaplains giving up their life vests and comforting the more than 500, including themselves, who were doomed to die.

POST 382 MARKS LEGION'S 105 YEARS



Henrizi-Schneider Post 382 of Menomonee Falls celebrated the American Legion 105th Birthday on 16 March, 2024 along with 12 members of the Post's 90-plus years young club. We are blessed to have these incredible people in our Post. We respect them, we thank them, we honor them, we are proud of them. Submitted by Jeff Paige, American Legion Post 382, Menomonee Falls.



POST 313 QUILT OF VALOR

At the March monthly meeting of the Black Earth American Legion Post, a presentation of a "Quilt of Valor" was made to Post 313 Vice Commander Travis Pauley. Making the presentation was Karen Demaree of Wisconsin Quilts of Valor foundation.



POST 236 DONATES 20 FLAGS



American Legion Post 236 in Algoma donated 20 American Flags to the city of Algoma. The flags will be used by the city in Memorial Day celebrations and throughout the summer. Pictured are Algoma city Mayor Steve Lautenbauch and Post 236 Commander Mike Froelich.

SOUPS ON! POST 43 HOLDS SOUP, CHILI DINNER



Ripon American Legion Post 43 held a soup and chili dinner (noon luncheon) on April 13, 2024. Purchase a bowl and refill it as often as you want, with cheese and crackers, cake and coffee furnished. Beverages were available for purchase. The event was well received by those that attended — though the 68-degree weather kept the attendance down.

NORTHERN WISCONSIN NATIONAL CEMETERY EVENT



District 11 American Legion Riders took part in the Vietnam Veterans Day program held at the Northern Wisconsin National Cemetery March 29, 2024.

POST 501 LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR



Adjutant/Historian Morris Sadicario was voted the 2024 Post 501 Legionnaire of the Year. Cmdr. Jerry Scalissi presented the certificate at the monthly membership meeting, March 13, 2024, at the Severson-Cairns American Legion Post 501, 105 Dempsey Rd., Madison, WI 53714. This award was in recognition of outstanding Leadership and Service as a member of the American Legion benefiting our Community, State and Nation. Sadicario established and maintained the post website (wipost501.com) and created a weekly news update being emailed to post members.

POST 169 BADGER BOYS/GIRLS DELEGATES



Larson Torgerson Post 169 in Amery is pleased to announce the 2024 Badger Boys/Girls delegates. L-R: Gary Wolf, Grace Williamson, Don Fansler, David Williamson, Jim Adams, and Mark Starsky. Congratulations on being named our delegates to Badger State.

RUSK COUNTY HOSTS YGD



On April 3, the Rusk County Council of the American Legion hosted the Rusk County Youth Government Day. Legion members from Posts 64, 268 and 316 attended. 31 students and their teachers were participating. The American Legion supplied pizzas, sodas, and chips for everyone.

POST 185 RECOGNIZES 120 YEARS OF LEGION SERVICE



Membership awards were presented at a recent ceremony of Brask-Fossum-Janke Post 185, Grantsburg. Charles Wright was presented with a 65-year membership award and Russell Stone was presented for 55 years. Both are shown with Membership Chair Lloyd Anderson (right) and Post Historian Duke Tucker (rear).

PAIR EARNS 50-YEAR CERTIFICATES IN MAIDEN ROCK



Phil Klopf and Rich Johnson celebrate 50 years in the American Legion. Phil (left) has been Commander for 25-plus years and Rich (right) serves as 1st Vice. Certificates were presented by Keith Bengtson, Adjutant. Phil and Rich have served in Maiden Rock Post 158. They have been active leaders in the many Veterans functions throughout their years in service.



POST 42 DONATES \$50,000 TO PFD



Post 42 presents a \$50,000 check to the Platteville Fire Department as a donation for the construction of their new fire station.



FIFTY YEARS AND A QUILT

Commander Steven Post of American Legion Post 473, Potosi, awards Ted Bode with a 50-year membership certificate. Ted is also presented with a Quilt of Valor for his service in Vietnam with the CB's.

TEN-YEARS OF SERVICE



George McIntyre (L) received his 10 continuous year certificate from Past Post Commander Thomas Stolarczyk on April 7, 2024, at the Severson-Cairns American Legion Post 501, Madison.

POST & UNIT 48'S VETSROLL DONATION



On April 7, the American Legion West-Field Post 48 and Auxiliary Unit 48 presented a check for \$1,000 to President Mark Finnegan of Vets Roll prior to the official street renaming from Riverside Drive to VetsRoll Drive. Each year, Vets Roll takes 200 Veterans from all over the country to Washington, D.C. to view and visit the various war monuments at no cost. Presenters of the check were Commander Bobby Beamon and 1st Vice Commander Gary Witzack.

HS SCHOLARSHIPS IN OCONOMOWOC



During our April meeting, Post 91 awarded three — \$1,500 scholarships to three students from Oconomowoc High School. The winners are Molly Kerr, Ryan Sullivan, and Alex Wraalstad. In Oconomowoc there are four Veterans' organizations that join up to award a \$2,000 scholarship: American Legion Post 91 is in Oconomowoc, Post 399 is in Okauchee, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 635, and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2260. This scholarship award winner has not been selected as of this time. Pictured left to right: Commander Jerry Wendt, Ryan Sullivan, Alex Wraalstad, Molly Kerr and Dale Saeger.

POST 478 DONATION



Commander Gary Buechel of the Saint Cloud American Legion Post 478 recently presented a donation of \$500 to Mark Diedricks, director of the Holyland Food Pantry.

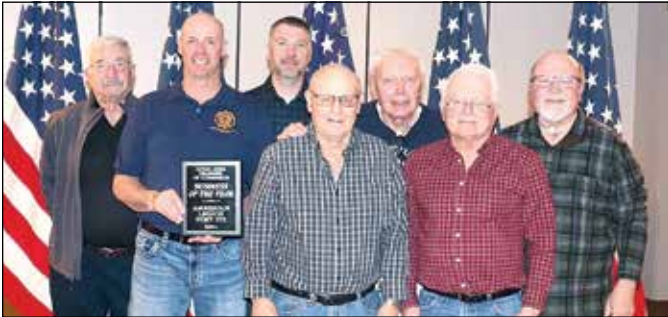
DISTRICT 11 AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS DONATE TO VETERAN CAUSES



District 11 American Legion Riders made donations to local Veterans and the food pantry. From left: Price County Veterans Service Office, Phillips food pantry, Wisconsin Veterans Fishing Camp.



LOYAL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



The Loyal American Legion Post 175 was named the Loyal Area Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year at the Chamber's annual banquet March 21 at the Legion hall. The Legion has about 110 members, and a few of those were in attendance to accept the award. Shown (front, l-r) are Commander Kevin Cook, Ken Schmidt, Roger Mielke, (back) Dave Lucht, Vice Commander Brian Duell, Pete Rinka and Bruce Hadler.



Students from the Kiel, Manitowoc, Lincoln, Mishicot, Roncalli, Two Rivers, and Valders high schools had a full day at Manitowoc County Youth Government Day. Among the many presentations, students heard from Judge Rohrer (left) and Commander Koenig (right).

MANITOWOC COUNTY HOSTS YOUTH GOVERNMENT DAY

On April 16, 107 students from throughout Manitowoc County participated in Youth Government Day at the County Court House. Students were from the Kiel, Manitowoc, Lincoln, Mishicot, Roncalli, Two Rivers, and Valders high schools while there was also representatives available from Legion Post 88 – Manitowoc, Post 165 – Two Rivers, Post 199 – Reedsville, Post 477 – St Nazianz, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 477, and Auxiliary Unit 165.

The day began with the entire group visiting the Circuit Court Branch 1 Courtroom and listening to presentations from the County Executive, Circuit Court Branch I Judge, the Clerk of Circuit Court, and the District Attorney. Next, the students rotated between the County Treasurer, the County Clerk, and the Sheriff's offices. Extra time was filled with a

Courthouse tour, sitting in on Family Court proceedings, and visiting the newly opened Courtroom #4.

The day ended with lunch, listening to Representative Paul Tittl, a chance to interact with Legion, SAL, and Auxiliary members and each student receiving a Good Citizen Citation. Mr. Tittl spoke about mental health among young people and the importance of calling the 988 number if assistance is needed. This falls directly inline with the American Legion's Be The One program which focuses on mental health among Veterans and those currently serving.

The entire American Legion Family (ALF) was pleased with the day's events, and thought it was especially great to have students from most of the high schools in the County.

POST 416 VETS GIFTED QUILTS OF VALOR



Quilts of Valor were presented by the Greendale Village Quilters to Ed King (shown at left with his wife, Jill) and Bob Zolandz (shown at right with his wife, Mary). These Veterans are from Post 416.

SHEBOYGAN POST 83 AWARDS FOUR HS SCHOLARSHIPS



Commander Randy Meyer and Legionnaire Harvey Mc-Broom from Prescott-Bayens Post 83 are presenting the first of four \$1,000 scholarships to Collin Phajit at Sheboygan North High School. Other recipients are Megan Guttman, Sheboygan Falls High School; Raymond Scholz, Sheboygan Lutheran High School; and Meghan Zielinski, Howards Grove High School.

POST 44 WABENO HONORS LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR

Henry Severson was named Legionnaire of the Year for the American Legion Sylvan Post 44 – Wabeno. Henry is very active in Post 44. He is the Membership Officer and a member of the Honor Guard. Henry also coordinates the School Flag Essay Contest by collecting, judging, and presenting awards to the winners at The Veterans Day program at Wabeno High School. He was also the Chairman of the Legion Executive Board. Henry also serves at Veterans' funerals. He volunteers at all fundraisers and is always available to help and assist.

Henry was in the Air Force for 5 years. He was an E-5 Staff Sergeant when he got out. His job was a Weapons Control Systems Technician and he spent a year in Thailand during the Vietnam War.



Commander George Richards, Henry Severson and 2nd Vice Commander Mike Huberty.

Now he loves hunting, fishing, and of course staying busy. Henry also went on the Honor Flight recently which he says was an amazing

experience. Henry loves to travel with his beautiful wife Terry. Congratulations Henry on behalf of the American Legion Sylvan Post 44.

POST 435 RECOGNIZED AT SCOUT BANQUET

The Voyager Boy Scout Council held their Annual Scout Recognition Banquet at the Northland Country Club in Duluth, MN on April 13, 2024. Pictured is Post Commander, Butch Liebaert, receiving a picture from Scoutmaster, Joe Youngberg of Troop 221, showing the Scouts after they presented a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown



Soldier during the Scout Jamboree held in Washington, D.C. during the summer of 2023. Post 435 helped the Scouts purchase the wreath by making a donation to help purchase the wreath while in Washington.

BELL TOWER MEMORIAL OF PEWAUKEE HONORS 3



The Bell Tower Memorial of Pewaukee Honored three members from Pewaukee Post 71 for their past military service. Left to right: Stefanie Rous, Dawn Bykowski and David Nevinski.



Back Row (L-R): Olivia Nelson (Cumberland HS), Alec Kramer-Ruff (Chetek-W HS), Levi Hayman (Siren HS), Michael Ferdelman (Spooner HS), Ellianna Smith (Webster HS), Emelia Dewolf (Webster HS), Chris Cihlar (Bruce HS), Maximus Elliott (Shell Lake HS), Diamond Schnacky (Rice Lake HS), Leyton Everson (Cumberland HS). Front Row (L-R): Brigadier General Harold Nevin (Retired) Allester Weidner (Rice Lake HS), Nathan Bertsinger (Gilman HS), Nathaniel Hegle (Rice Lake HS), Jack Cusick (Shell Lake HS), Daniel Girard (Spooner HS), Faith Loveland (Prairie Farm HS), Adin Treauge (Webster HS), Brooke Spindler (Prairie Farm HS), Brayden Mohr (Chetek-W HS), David Nutt (Webster HS), Samuel Spafford (Grantsburg HS).

CUMBERLAND POST 98 HOSTS HIGH SCHOOL TO HEROES BANQUET

The third High School to Heroes Banquet was hosted by the Cumberland Anderson-Thompson American Legion Post 98.

It was an evening to honor northern Wisconsin high school seniors who have committed to serving our nation in the U.S. Armed Forces were honored with a banquet. Future service members participated in the annual High School to Heroes Banquet, held at the Cumberland American Legion on Sunday, April 21. This year's banquet attracted 23 students from 12 area high schools and 150 people.

All students plus two guests were invited to attend, at no cost thanks to local sponsors. The event included a social hour, dinner, a message by guest speaker, Brigadier General Harold Nevin, Retired, introduction of the honorees, and gift bag presented to each individual.

This banquet is a great way for all the local communities to show their support to the newest members of the U.S. military. A grateful nation thanks them for their willingness to serve and for their patriotism.



ABOVE: Post 539 initiates a new member. Merritt is welcomed by Chaplain Sue Snethen and Cdr. Carol Johnson. TOP RIGHT: The annual Poppy Sale is well-staffed by (L-R) Carol, Kelli, Mickey, Maureen and Cory. AT RIGHT: Quilt of Valor awardees show off their quilts – (L-R) USMC Pat Perez, USN Carol Johnson, USAF Holly Hoppe and USA Loraine Prue.

GREEN BAY POST 539 STAYS ACTIVE



POST 55 TURNS 100 YEARS

Hammond-Schmit American Legion Post 55 is publicly celebrating their 100th Anniversary on June 22 at Commercial Park in Hortonville. You are invited! This is a huge milestone and the Post has adopted a new title going forward as they want to be known as the Hortonville "American Legion Family". The family consists of the Post, their Auxiliary Unit 55, and newly formed Sons of American Legion Squadron 55, but it does not stop there, as family also includes the communities in and around the Hortonville, Wisconsin area. The Legion family has consistently been involved in community events and it has been a rewarding and honorable 100 years in supporting their area communities at parades, schools, churches, and other civic as well as patriotic events. Their Honor Guard and Color Guards are well known for their patriotism and professionalism in honoring, both, the living and those dearly departed. Educating our youth and supporting scouting always at the forefront. At this June's event the Legion family will be hosting a community celebration of all that has been done "together". They will share their first big community goal going into the next 100 years - to build a Legion Family Community Center that will serve to hold meetings or events, one that is definitely needed in the area.



Post 55 Commander Bob Ziegert at American Legion birthday and 100 year kickoff.

30TH FREEDOM HONOR FLIGHT



30th Freedom Honor Flight held in La Crosse on Saturday, April 6. The Legion Riders welcomed Veterans and their families. Post 52 and Legion Riders form an honor cordon as the Veterans and their guardians board the airplane.

POST 184 VET GIFTED QUILT OF VALOR

Retired Marine Mac Kolar received a Quilt of Valor on April 20 in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The quilt was presented by the Patriots Triangle Chapter, Quilts of Valor Foundation. Kolar is a Vietnam Veteran and served as a Marine for more than 24 years. The University of Wisconsin-Platteville nominated him to receive the QOV in appreciation for his dedication, unwavering enthusiasm and spirit to ensure that 12 UW-Platteville Vietnam fallen are never forgotten. After months of research and writing biographies, Kolar took part in the dedication of the University's Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Veterans Day 2022. Kolar continues to serve by being a volunteer for the project known as Stories Behind the Stars (see www.storiesbehindthestars.org). He has written the biographies of the 59 UW-Platteville WW I and WW II fallen.



These biographies may be accessed from a website (see <https://www.uw-platt.edu/departments/wright-center/memorials>). Additional efforts include the 38 biographies for Fennimore's WWI, WWII and Vietnam fallen. Kolar is a Fennimore native and is a member of the Whitish Funk American Legion Post 184. He and his wife Kathi, seen in the photo giving a "quilty hug", live in Moyock, North Carolina.



LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR

Commander Merlin Limberg of the Haslee-Doebert-Schmidt Post 261 Greenbush, was selected as the 2024 2nd District Legionnaire of the Year. At 88 years young, Merlin has served the Legion for 33 years, in many capacities including adjutant, interim Commander and going above and beyond wherever needed. Congratulations Merlin, for your years of dedication serving the American Legion.



PEWAUKEE MEMBERS HELP CARRY THE LOAD



Members of Pewaukee Post 71, Pat White and Dawn Bykowski, took part in Carry The Load on May 8. Carry The Load provides active ways for Americans to connect to the sacrifices made by our military, Veterans and first responders.

DISTRICT 3 HOSTS ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE



There was a big turnout at the 3rd District Spring Conference that was held in Fennimore on April 20. 3rd District Commander Jerry Hook (at left) addressed the assemblage.

POST 483 SUPPORTS THE TROOPS



Recently the Fohl-Martin Allenton American Legion Post 483 proudly donated \$500 to LeAnn Boudwine of Support the Troops. Support the Troops is a 501(c)(3) organization that for 16 years collects, boxes and sends care packages to troops, sailors and soldiers serving overseas. The money donated will go towards shipping the packages, which cost \$22.80 per package to ship. Mark Schellinger of the Allenton Post presents a \$500 check to LeAnn Boudwine with Commander Chriss Klein-Wassink in the background.

SAL POST 454 OF MOUNT CALVARY OFFICERS SWORN IN



On April 17, the Sons of the American Legion Post 454 of Mount Calvary swore in new officers for the 2024 membership year. From left to right: former Detachment Vice Commander Jerry Lauby, Commander Mike Schmitz, Finance Officer Joe Bord, Adjutant Jeff Compton, Vice Commander Mike Mand, Sgt. of Arms Quinn Kaiser, and 2nd Sgt. of Arms Don Steffes.

POST 113 PRESENTS COLORS FOR HONOR FLIGHT



The Mount Horeb American Legion Frank E. Malone Post 113, and VFW Post 9511 had the honor of presenting the colors at the Badger Honor Flight Saturday, May 11.

NEENAH POST 33 AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP



Neenah Post 33 Commander Chase Freemark and Second Vice Commander Bob Borszich presenting St. Mary Catholic High School student Benjamin Schoeni with the American Legion Post 33 Scholarship.

IT'S A RAINY DAY BRAT FRY FOR POST 33



American Legion Post 33 holds a brat fry on a rainy day at Festival Foods.

FOUR CHAPLAINS SUNDAY IN WAUSAU



On January 23, 2024 the mayor of Wausau declared the first Sunday in February as Four Chaplains Sunday in the city of Wausau. From left: Mayor of Wausau Katie Rossenberg, Post 10 Chaplain Don Hildebrandt, 1st Vice Commander Tyler Verhassett, 2nd Vice Commander Steve Sleeter, Finance Officer George Mosher, Adjutant Dennis Borchardt. American Legion Post 10 is forever grateful and thankful for this decoration honoring the military chaplains and Veteran service organizations in the city.



Julie Muhle
Department
Adjutant

While attending the 8th District Conference, I was talking about the Wisconsin American Legion College and Nathan Coward, the Waushara County Commander, stood up and told the group he joined in June of last year but felt confident to take on the role as County Commander because he took the courses offered at Midwinter and again during the Free Spring offerings. This is an amazing testimony to our college! Our goal when we started was to provide classes to prepare our members for roles they were in and to give members who were considering roles within their post, county or district an idea of what was involved. The most recent free spring

classes had the most ever attendance, including members from other states!

WALC Dean Bob Shappell continues to update the classes to keep them current. You will see him either teaching or observing almost all the classes. The group of instructors we have is quite impressive.

The number of leaders coming up through the chairs who have taken the Wisconsin American Legion classes is increasing. This includes new and experienced members. The American Legion is a continually changing organization and it needs to be relevant.

Thank you to all who have taken the courses! Look for the Basic, Intermediate and Advance Courses to be offered again in the fall and, of course, during our Midwinter Conference.

★★★★ DEPARTMENT ★★★★★ ADJUTANT



Virgil Smith
Department
Chaplain

★★★★ DEPARTMENT ★★★★★ CHAPLAIN

FAITH VERSUS HOPE, PART TWO

We ended the first half of Faith verses Hope in the last edition of *The Badger Legionnaire* with the following statement.

“Where there is no promise there can be no faith – only hope.”

What does that mean? Well, if you invite your neighbor to dinner and they tell you that they will have to check their calendar and get back to you, and you go ahead and prepare everything without a confirmation from your neighbor, and they do not show up, all you have experienced is the hope your neighbor would show up. But on the other hand, if your neighbor tells you that they will be at your dinner, and they make a promise to come and you believe that they will keep that promise, you now have faith in their promise.

When our faith works within the promises of God, He will keep His promises. We need only to live our life as if God has already kept His promise to us. Bottom line is, if our faith

falls within the promises of God then we can be confident and sure that God will answer our prayer of faith. Where we get into trouble is when God does not work fast enough for our liking or does not give us what we have asked for. We want what we want when we want it, as a result we may become disappointed and sometimes angry and bitter with God. Charles Stanley writes:

“As children of God, we are free to ask God anything we please. And once we have asked, we can hope He will give us exactly what we have asked for. But to believe He will do something He has not promised to do is not faith, it is presumption. I fear that much of what we pass off as faith, these days is really presumption.”

That being said, let us then stand firm in the promises of God, believing that what we have asked for and promised by God, we have already received it, rather than something we hoped He would give to us. Until we meet again at the Chaplain's Corner may your God richly bless you and keep you and may His face shine down upon you.

ESHS FLAG DISPOSAL CONTAINER

Students at Eleva-Strum High School manufactured a flag disposal container for the Trempealeau County Council of the American Legion. This will be available for all organizations in the county that conduct flag disposal ceremonies.



Post 186's 50 FLAGS

American Legion Post 186 Honor Guard presented 50 flags to the City of Independence. The flags will be flown from all light poles throughout the summer months. Pictured (left) is Joe Frei presenting the flags to City Council member, Jason Ekern.

POST 296 HONORS SERVICE



Post 296 Brookfield presented a 70-year continuous membership Award to James Hepfner (center) in December. Presenting the Award are Post Member Dean Zarske (left), Post Adjutant Don Basting, and Post Commander Craig Johnson (right).

THREE GENERATIONS



Three generations of Earl J. Conley Post 268 of Bruce are (L-R) granddaughter Sydney Moore, grandfather Stanley Moore and son Doug Moore.



Paul Fisk
Legislative
Chairman

★★★★ LEGISLATIVE ★★★★★ CHAIRMAN

Year end is a time to pause and reflect on the year which is departing.

Yes, our major legislative initiatives did not succeed, but they did advance. The Disabled

Veteran Surviving Spouse Property Tax Credit Bill did not become law, however it advanced further in this legislature than it ever has.

Our legislative committee accomplished a great deal for Veteran families of Wisconsin. County and Tribal Veteran Service Officer applicants no longer have to take a Civil Service examination for the county to receive the

state grant. Veteran Spouses can be admitted to the Veteran homes prior to the Veteran. Other Veteran laws that went into effect can be found at <https://wilegion.org/legislative> and click on 2023-2024 ACTS.

This is also a time to look to the future. The legislature that is sworn in next January will be much different. Many current members have decided to run for other offices or retire. We will have another generation of leaders to educate on the issues facing Wisconsin Veterans. The meager number of Veterans in the legislature will probably decrease again. This provides us with the opportunity to provide them information from the start. We will be the first voice they hear on our concerns.



Loki

★★ LOKI'S ★★ CORNER

Loki says, "Don't forget to sign up for Department Convention being held at the Hilton Paper Valley in Appleton July 10 - 14, 2024."
Be The One!



Michelle Adams
Department
Historian

★ DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN ★

As we approach the end of the Legion year, it's difficult to envision the conclusion of my term as Department Historian. It has been an absolute honor to serve in this position. The Legion family has embraced me in ways I couldn't even imagine.

I grew up in the Wisconsin American Legion. Even as a child, I knew the American Legion Veterans were special. Their camaraderie and care for others was, and still is, truly magical. I have found that each member is so genuinely compassionate and selflessly eager to lend a hand to anyone in need.

It's also amazing how uniquely each Post, County, and District approaches achieving our goals. It's a perfect example of our individuality creating new ways to come together as a group and meet the needs of fellow Veterans and the community.

In February, we attended the DC Conference. National Commander Seehafer's "Be The One" suicide prevention training was the primary focus, followed by our visits on Capitol Hill. We learned techniques to enhance buddy checks and urged our representatives to also make eradicating Veteran suicide their number one priority.

Next, we had the Oratorical Contest at Ripon College. The four finalists did an outstanding job. It was an opportunity to see where our youth need guidance, in addition to our support. They are passionate about the Constitution and how it applies to current events. We have a duty to protect our rights in their entirety. Together we can tackle any problem.

I will now share a listing of some of the events we have in June and July: the Indy Car race at Road America, Badger Boys State, Stu's Cruise Legion Ride, the Mid-Western Rodeo, and our Department Convention.

Lastly, the Wisconsin American Legion has accomplished great things and it's been my privilege to chronicle the steps taken. Thank you so much for allowing me to serve as your historian.

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF SERVICE IN FOOTVILLE



Post 237 Footville awarded a National Certificate for 70 years of Legion service, signed by National Commander Dan Seehafer to Legionnaire John McGuire (above with Post 237 Commander Susan Knudson). At right, members of the post award the certificate to John.



MEMBERS OF CAMBRIA POST 401 GIFTED QUILTS OF VALOR



LEFT: (L-R) Cornie Katsma, Dan Nannenga, John Haima and Ben Ludtke were presented Quilts of Valor during the American Legion Birthday celebration at Cambria Post 401. RIGHT: During the recent Vietnam Vets Appreciation Ceremony, Richard Nieman and Oscar Parks were presented with a Quilt of Valor for their Purple Heart which was received from the Vietnam War. They are members of both Randolph VFW Post 9510 and Cambria Legion Post 401.



CAMP AMERICAN LEGION . . .

PROJECTS, IMPROVEMENTS ARE COMING ONLINE



Jim Klement
Camp American
Legion Director

Camp American Legion has been operating for almost 100 years and would not have achieved this without constant improvements throughout the years. There are always multiple projects and improvements happening throughout the year at Camp.

One huge improvement is our new cabin. Brillion, Little Chute and Mukwonago posts have demolished their old out-of-date cabins and are now in process of building a beautiful duplex. By the time you are reading this, the cabin should be completed and Veterans should be enjoying this wonderful addition to camp.

Our Camp store will be in operation this year after a long process thanks to the American Legion Flanagan Dorn Post 294 Auxiliary. We have a ramp being poured this spring and shelving is going up. This is a much-needed improvement that will allow more space in the main lodge.

Thanks to the Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin for our new flooring downstairs. The flooring that we had downstairs was peeling,

it was dark and looked like a dungeon. The new epoxy has protected the floor, lightened everything up. It looks nice, clean and organized. They also have donated a new lawn mower, a utility trailer and a new Kawasaki Mule to help get our Veterans around camp. What amazing donations and support that we receive from the Auxiliary!

We also have some upcoming projects for Camp American Legion. Cabins 8 and 11 are going to be doing a complete rebuild of their cabins. We are also in need of a storage building to help protect our watercraft and equipment over the long winter months. Our main lodge is in need of re-staining to the exterior. If anyone would like to help with fundraising efforts for these projects, please contact me. The American Legion Family has been supporting us for almost 100 years and with everyone's support Camp American Legion will be here to support our Veterans for another century.

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

POST 154 REMEMBERS END OF VIETNAM WAR



Observing the 51st anniversary of the official end of the Vietnam war, Veterans of that war gathered at a reception hosted by Mondovi Post 154, served by Unit 154 Auxiliary, & attended by the Buffalo County Veterans Service Officer, Felicia Decker. The group decided to meet annually for the valuable connection and camaraderie. Front row: Donald Ronnei, John Andress, Roger Larson, Felicia Decker, Fred Seyforth, Jim Hesselman, Cedric Brantner. Back row: Galen Aase, John Olson, Cal Raynes, Jim Williams, Jim VanVleet, Jim Miller, Loren Aase, William Sessions, Bob Bonesteel. Others who attended not pictured: Bill Anderson, Roger Comero, Gregg Ottinger.

ELEVENTH DISTRICT LEGION RIDERS

Legion Riders from the 11th District Posting the colors at a ceremony for the Vietnam War.



PEWAUKEE EASTER EGG HUNT

Pewaukee Post 71 and Park and Rec put on their annual Easter Egg Hunt at Village Park in Pewaukee. Despite the rainy weather there was a large turnout. The Easter Bunny (AKA Ronny the Rabbit) made an appearance to the delight of all the children.

CAMBRIA LEGION/VFW HOST VIETNAM VETS APPRECIATION

Cambria Legion Post 401 and VFW Post 9510 held a combined Vietnam Vets Appreciation event. Honored Veterans were (front row, L-R) Dale Gajdosik, David Prochnow, Daniel Wingers, LeRoy Kile, Steven Marquardt, (second row, L-R) Oscar Parks, Werner Minning, John Barstow, Terry Thompson, Charlie Henke, Harold North Sr., (third row, L-R) Terry Schraufnagel, Richard Nieman, Duane Kovalaske, Gordon Gossink, Michael Zimmerman, Richard Grieger, and Bruce Meier.



★★ DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP ★★



Julie Muhle
Department
Adjutant

As we get to the end of another membership year, now is the time to prepare for the new membership year. This doesn't mean holding on to new members! Continue to send those in. Things to get ready for in the upcoming year:

- New membership cards will be handed out in June. You will receive them from either your county or district commander. If you have not received them by the end of June, contact either of those people. Review the cards and verify the information is correct.

- Rosters accompanying the cards most likely will not include PUFs. If you use myLegion.org, you can print a membership roster after July 1 which will include them.

- Three-year renewals will continue. There are several ways to renew. This process is only online.

- a member can sign up for an account in myLegion.org and renew
- legion.org/renew
- if a member doesn't have a computer but would like to take advantage of the three-year renewal, you can help them by going to legion.org/renew and going through the process for them. You can ask them the questions and enter their responses.

- Review the Yearly Post Membership Plan and develop your monthly plans to help with your membership, both current, new and transfers.

Through your efforts, over the past two years we have increased membership. Let's continue to make the Wisconsin American Legion stronger than ever!

★★ VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER ★★



James Fialkowski
Department Veterans
Service Officer

Hello. I keep running into situations where people are unaware of how a new rule or law can change the outcome of earlier benefit decisions. Here are few recent changes and some examples to think about.

Beginning March 5, 2024, VA is making all Veterans exposed to toxins while serving our country eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for other VA benefits. This expansion of care means that all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Global War on Terror, or any other combat zone after 9/11 will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without obtaining an alternate reason to qualify, like applying for VA compensation. Additionally, Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty in the United States will also be eligible to enroll.

PACT Act- Effective date of law, August 10, 2022. For Agent Orange exposed Veterans - Two disabilities added, monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance and hypertension. The following new Agent Orange presumed exposed locations were added. Any U.S. or Royal Thai military base in Thailand from January 9, 1962, through June 30, 1976, Laos from December 1, 1965, through September 30, 1969, Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province from April 16, 1969, through April 30, 1969, Guam or American Samoa or in the territorial waters off Guam

or American Samoa from January 9, 1962, through July 31, 1980, and Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from January 1, 1972, through September 30, 1977.

For Gulf War Veterans – Over 20 new presumptive disabilities added as due to burn pits/particulate matter to include many cancers and numerous additional disabilities, most are breathing, or lung related. Permanent extension of Gulf War Illnesses, removal of 10% requirement, and definition of Persian Gulf War Veteran was expanded. There was also an expansion of locations associated with radiation exposure. Example: A Veteran lost their left ear hearing due to a non-service-related cancer. Their right ear hearing loss was service connected. This Veteran's cancer is now service connected and both ears may be rated at their level of disability, along with any other residuals from the cancer.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 extended the presumption of Agent Orange, to Veterans who served in the offshore waters (12 nautical miles) of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975. There are hundreds of situations where someone was denied for benefits in the past that now qualify. This law, along with a 1985 court case cause a powerful chain reaction for anyone who would now qualify. The nuances to this situation are too many to list here. If you or someone you know served in the waters off the shores of Vietnam, there may be monies due for claims previously submitted.

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

The Last Bugle



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

1 Germantown Russell T. Cramer Paul L. Kastner V	32 Menomonie Thomas A. Koranski V
3 Antigo Arthur Kunej K	33 Neenah David Anderson V
6 Stevens Point John A. Amann V Richard J. Novak Sr. WWII	36 West Bend David W. Wendt V Lawrence H. Wetzel K
9 Wisconsin Rapids Melvin L. Krings V	38 Appleton Tom Steinfeldt V
10 Wausau Elroy M. Ruechel K Mark Redetzke K Donald G. Tucker WWII	40 Bangor Merrick J. Beron V
11 Green Bay James E. Zima V Ronald E. Webster K Robert F. Graf K Kurt L. Miller V Ronald Fairbanks V James L. Sell V Wayne T. Price K	44 Wabeno Michael J. Vervoort V Ralph A. Klein V
13 Richland Center Frederick M. Robinson V Jack Sherman V	48 Beloit Michael R. Garvin V Ronald A. York Sr. V
14 Iola Raymond C. Stalal V David A. Leder V	49 Bayfield Gary A. Miller V
17 Arcadia Dale E. Howard V John J. Feltes V Robert E. Slaby V Eugene F. Arnold V	52 La Crosse Paul G. Druschke Jr. K Elaine A. Patterson V
25 Odanah Gerald L. White V	53 Eau Claire Robert T. Higley K Douglas W. Radke V
26 Baraboo Stephen J. Rundio III V	54 Marshfield John P. Zwaschka V John C. Wagner V Ray F. Alt Jr. K Robert Nikolay V Melvin E. Heintz V Larry Dick V Gerald Werner V Norbert J. Specht WWII
29 Kewaunee William Faller V	59 Stoughton Richard A. Amundson WWII David J. Slater V James K. Halverson V David Skavlen V Archie T. Christensen K
	60 Kimberly Michael G. Muthig V Reginald W. Ahrens WWII Eugene Stuyvenberg WWII
	67 Lake Mills Larry Clark V
	70 Oshkosh Donald R. Wolter K
	73 Neillsville Allan E. Seegers V
	75 Fond du Lac Stuart J. Blau V

77 Chippewa Falls Gene M. Haugle V Thomas Heian V Allen Simon V Robert Schneider P	146 Beaver Dam Mark A. Koch V
79 Burlington Franklyn Rogers V Donald H. Desch K Robert J. Larson V	147 Medford Rae Kohn K
80 New Richmond Charles R. Jacoby WWII Dennis M. Dehart V Robert S. Kaczmarek K	149 Sheboygan Falls Richard Kosup WWII Ambrose J. Schmitz V
82 Port Washington Patrick M. Morison PG	153 Pittsville Floyd Kumm WWII
83 Sheboygan James L. Bath V	160 Brooklyn Trygve D. Olsen Jr. V
88 Manitowoc Donald H. Knuth WWII	161 King Carl E. Ellis V Arlin C. Barden WWII
89 Minocqua Robert R. Venckunas K James Benson V Richard W. Giese V Paul J. Naumann K	166 Fort Atkinson Roger D. Dillin K Darrell R. Roddick V
90 Ashland Jeffery F. Zunker PG John F. Baregi V Paul A. Heidel G/L Skyler N. Zane GWOT Dusty Garrison GWOT	175 Loyal Jerry Tieman V Tom Davel V 180 Milwaukee Anthony Witkowski K Edward D. Wagner K
91 Oconomowoc Edward H. Martin V Kenneth J. Warzyn K James L. Dowling V	181 Durand Derald Brunner V
93 Tomahawk Patrick Heffling V Richard E. Jokela K	182 Park Falls Neil D. Hagmann V Thomas M. Schmitt V
95 Delavan Clyde J. Pence G/L	183 Genoa City Gary L. Friedrich V
98 Cumberland Louis J. Dedominces K Kenneth Barrows K	189 Watertown Albert Damrow V Roger Rowlands V Earl J. Lueck V
100 Sparta Ivan R. Short V David Schuster P	197 Brodhead Gordon Trumpy V
106 Seymour Donald Vandehei K Raymond V. Palubicki K Stephen Romenesko V Vernon J. Blohm K	200 Black River Falls Charles F. Slenczka V
112 Stanley John O. Anderson V	202 Chaseburg Claremont A. Jacobson V
114 Eagle River William S. Jones V	204 Ellsworth Leroy O. Lundgaard V Melvorn J. Janisch K Harold D. Fosmo Jr. V
116 Coon Valley Art Hendrickson K	205 Janesville Roger E. Gourley K Algene A. Krause K Mike C. Miles WWII
117 Shawano Douglas Goers WWII Florian C. Vandyck WWII	208 Rio Dennis R. Johnson V
121 River Falls Antone Bossert K James K. Larson V	216 Lodi Robert Hellenbrand K
124 New Holstein Richard J. Young V	224 Alma Allan J. Nuzum K
126 Brillion Jules H. Clausing K	230 De Pere Ardovino E. Mariucci WWII Arnie J. Baugnet K Howard D. Knudtson V Wayne Degroot V
134 Boscobel Jeffrey T. McKnight V	233 Waterloo Donald G. Vehlow V Donald G. Bonack V Norbert D. Novak V
138 Viroqua Richard E. Inman K	236 Algoma Cletus J. Conard V
139 Coloma Keith W. Iverson V	248 Cottage Grove Neil Hanson K

263 New London Ron Gagnow V	357 Bay City E.J. Harding V
264 Gilmanton David A. Gunderson V	359 Gilman Donald E. Northup V
274 Rib Lake Eugene E. Schopper K	360 Waunakee Robert A. Rancourt K
280 Coleman Russel W. Osweiler K	361 Wilmot Richard C. Jones K
288 Cedarburg James M. Turcotte V	364 Winneconne Roy A. Beyer K Leo J. Esch V
291 Augusta Richard F. Ringhand V	402 Washington Isle Alfred B. Carpenter Jr. V Donald A. Johnson V
299 Hales Corners Paul P. Cefalu WWII	409 Lake Nebagamon Donald V. Gustafson P Walter W. Olson V John Deterling K
301 Woodville Carl Anderson V	410 Fredonia Russell E. Saueressig V
305 Johnson Creek Herbert H. Harwood K	412 Belgium Ellerd J. Marshall V
313 Black Earth Richard T. Saeman V Randall J. Lescohier PG	416 Greendale David W. Bruss K
324 Osseo Seymour Larson V Eugene D. Row V	435 Superior Thomas W. Kilgore V James E. Wickstrom V
333 Sun Prairie Bernard Moy Sr. K	436 Wrightstown Cletus Feldkamp V Roland Klug K
336 Onalaska Richard R. Cagle V Al Cagle GWOT Linus J. Kujak V Alan D. Topel V Michael K. Manglitz V Bruce B. Smith V Ervin F. Dwyer WWII	439 Melrose Russell Sacia V
340 Berlin Roger A. Mekow V	440 Clinton John D. Hahn V
351 Montello Kenneth K. Kersky K	447 Viola Morris Frydenlund K
352 Cassville John P. Brinkmann V Eugene L. Willkomm V	449 Brookfield David M. Toy WWII

454 Mt. Calvary Herbert H. Pickart V Melvin Olig K	517 Dorchester James H. Ortlieb K
457 Mequon-Thiensville William Johnson K	518 Green Bay Allen J. Schaut V
459 Eleva Dennis Emerson K Norman Johnson K	524 White Lake Donald Rose K Alfred Hoffman K Michael B. Waters K
460 Belleville Arnold Rufener K Ian E. Campbell V	526 Hazel Green Clair J. Furlong V
469 Marathon Steven Stelzl V	534 McFarland Donald Lengyel V
470 Saukville Edgar Liesenberg V Dennis Reick V	544 Twin Lakes Philip L. Albers V
473 Potosi Donald J. Udelhofen V Wilbert E. Post K	546 Racine Knowledge Brown V Willie Riley K
478 St. Cloud Bernard S. Sippel V	552 Somers David M. Suminski PG David E. Suminski G/L Robert A. Robbins V
480 Presque Isle Donald G. Barber WWII	2930 Portage Donald V. Anderson WWII Donald S. Vanwoert V Thomas R. Popa V Donald H. Nelson K Gerald Wick K Larry Weidig V Richard C. Heine V Jerome Stelzl WWII Harold Ranke K
482 Bagley Richard B. Bazel V	501 Madison Roland Manthe V David W. Gill V W.C. Mettel WWII Millard C. Christianson WWII
485 Rudolph Reuben Moscicki K Kenneth J. Josiger K	516 Mason Millard E. Olson WWII
492 Rothschild Henry T. Ratenski WWII John C. Price V	
495 Sussex John C. Price V	
496 Sherwood Roland Manthe V David W. Gill V W.C. Mettel WWII Millard C. Christianson WWII	



2024 STATE TOURNAMENTS

BASEBALL
wilegion.org/legion-baseball

Class AAA
 July 30-Aug 3
 Wisconsin Rapids

Class AA
 Aug 2-6
 West Salem

Class A
 Aug 2-6
 Osseo

17U
 July 26-30
 Kimberly

16U
 July 26-30
 Baraboo

SOFTBALL
wilegion.org/legion-softball

Division 1&2
 August 2-4
 DeForest

All-Star Game
 August 11
 Milwaukee



MEMBERSHIP

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

Membership Committee:
Becky Mueller
Amy Luft

We sent out a similar suggestion in honor of Mother's Day and would like to now be able to honor the fathers that have so gallantly served our country with their service and to those fathers who sent a son or daughter off to support our country. If possible, this may be a way to honor their service!!

PAY IT FORWARD HONOR A LOVED ONE

Father's Day is soon approaching and if possible, honor those fathers that have gone off to defend our freedom or those fathers who sent a son or daughter to do the same.

Pay it Forward is an expression for describing when someone does something for you, instead of paying that person back directly, you pass it on to another person.

Our Veterans paid it forward to us by serving our country, allowing us freedom each and every day. We honor them with our membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. But what happens to a person's membership when they

HONORING OUR MEMBERS



Karen Preuter, President of ALA Unit 44, presented Marlis Richards with a certificate of appreciation. Marlis has been a member for six years and is Vice President of the Auxiliary Unit. She has been very active in helping in all Auxiliary and Legion events and fundraisers to help our Veterans and communities. Marlis also received a certificate of appreciation from the Legion Post.

experience difficulty, either physically or financially? For many, it may mean a lapse or even worse, dropping their membership altogether.

This is your chance to *Pay it Forward!* Individuals or units can assist their members who are facing hardship by paying their dues. If donors wish, they may remain anonymous and all information is kept confidential. If you

are willing to let us know that you "Paid it Forward", we would love to recognize you. However, that is up to you individually to remain anonymous or share your gift with us. If you would like to be recognized in a future unit mailing, please contact me directly.

Kindness and generosity go a long way. Thank you for making a difference.



Leah Reynolds, a graduate of Mankato State, MN, received a commission as 2nd Lt. in the U.S. Army Reserves. She has been a junior, now, senior member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 324 in Osseo, Wisconsin as well as a past delegate to ALA Badger Girls State. She will be assigned to Ft. McCoy.

2024 Membership Totals (as of May 15, 2024) - 82.32%

DIST.	GOAL %	MUSHER
12	93.12%	Baby Girl
6	87.70%	Denali
3	86.20%	Ranger
2	85.33%	Sloane
5	84.38%	Little Girl
4	84.35%	Winkle
1	82.40%	Diamond
7	82.34%	Hero
8	82.05%	Isabella
10	81.88%	Balto
9	80.62%	Percy
11	74.63%	D.O.G



DOGS2DOGTAGS



Pictured (left to right): Leanne Theis, Karen Dowd, State President Maggie Geiger, Cheryl Gyzen and Jeannie Ceckiewicz.

SAVING VETERANS ONE DOG AT A TIME

Dogs2DogTags (D2DT) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to rescue, train, and place dogs with deserving service members who have been diagnosed with post-combat stress and anxiety, all at no cost to the Veteran. President Maggie Geiger selected D2DT for her Special Project.

Land O' Lakes Unit 464 presented President Maggie

with a check for \$500 at the ALA District 11 Spring Conference. President Maggie was extremely touched by the donation, especially since Unit 464 was just chartered in June 2023.

The Land O' Lakes Unit works closely with the Legion Post to support Veterans. Keep up the great work!

ALA IN THE KNOW CONFERENCES

Register Today! Sessions are September 14, September 28, and October 5, 2024. Visit www.amlegionauxwi.org/alaintheknow for details.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Betty Stone
Department Chaplain
bjstone626@hotmail.com

Romans 1:19-20

19-They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them.

20-For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

PRAYER

Spring has Sprung
How beautiful is the Spring!
We see the trees waking up from their winter nap.
We hear the birds singing in the trees.
We smell the smells of the flowers blooming
We feel the warm sun on our faces
God made it all for us to enjoy and know
He is here among us.

Let's pray together with Thanksgiving to our living God.

Dear Lord,
Thank you for spring and all it brings to us. We can see you in the trees, birds, the flowers and the warm sun. We see you in all the beauty around us. We are so blessed to have such a loving God. In your most holy name. Amen

MUSIC

As the schools have let out for summer vacation ask your Juniors to your meetings and be in charge of the music.
Have a great summer!

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

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

May 24 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, and their families where a medical or financial need is evident. As a reminder, poppies can be distributed all year long!

The 2024 Department Convention will be held July 11-14, 2024 at the Hilton Paper Valley in Appleton. 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 6 are \$35. Please visit the department website for complete details.

The ALA National Convention is August 26-28, 2024 in New Orleans, Louisiana. 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.

Three ALA in the Know Conferences are scheduled in September and October. The reservation deadline is August 1. The reservation form was mailed to all units in April and is available on the department website under Programs > ALA in the Know.

2024 Department Convention Hilton Paper Valley, Appleton July 11-14, 2024

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS (subject to change)

Thursday, July 11, 2024

- 3:00 pm – Past Presidents Parley (PPP) Business Meeting. Any past Unit, County, or District President is eligible to join the PPP and participate in decisions about PPP dues, scholarships, and the Mentor of the Year award. Questions? Contact PPP Chairman Char Kiesling at char.kiesling@gmail.com.

Friday, July 12, 2024

- 9:15 am – Opening Processional. General Session will open immediately following the procession.
- 3:00 pm – A recognition program will be held to pay tribute to Honored PDP Florence Wasley and award district membership awards.

Saturday, July 13, 2024

- 8:00 am – General Session.
- 9:00 am – Elections of 2024-2025 Department Officers and nominees for Alternates for the 2024 National Convention.
- 2:45 pm (ish) – Installation of 2024-2025 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) must be pre-purchased by June 26 with convention registration.

Sunday, July 14, 2024

- 8:00 am – Joint Memorial Service.
- 9:15 am – Department Executive Board meeting. All members are welcome to attend.

AMERICANISM

Diane Burkhalter
Department Chair
262-284-6873
burkhalterdl@gmail.com

On June 14, 1777, the “Stars and Stripes” was designated the official national symbol of the United States. In 1885, Bernard J. Cigrand, a 19-year-old teacher in Waubeka, Wisconsin, asked his students to reflect on the meaning of this symbol and write an essay on what the flag meant to them.

In 1916, over thirty years later, President Woodrow Wilson declared June 14 as National Flag Day. In his address he stated, “My Fellow Citizens: We meet to celebrate Flag Day because this flag which we honor and under which we serve is an emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours.”

As Legion Family members, we have numerous opportunities to educate the future generations on proper flag etiquette, the manner of delivery of the pledge of allegiance to the flag, the history and symbolism of our flag, and showing respect for the flag. Partner with schools and youth groups to conduct flag folding ceremonies, give a short program on the proper handling and displaying of the flag, and how to respect the flag in various settings – such as a parade, raising and lowering, and during the national anthem.

Invite the community into your Posts for family days in which you have endless opportunities to educate young and old in exciting and fun ways. Remember Woodrow Wilson's words, “The choices are ours.”

In the next few months, we will attend parades and events that will be honoring men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice and the birth of our nation. Let us all take time to do as the students did on June 14, 1777 – reflect on the meaning of our flag.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Sandy Mack
Department Chair
smack0555@gmail.com

Auxiliary members have had a busy year giving back to their communities by volunteering thousands of hours to assist where needed.

Different projects put together by our Wisconsin units include but are not, limited to:

Assisting the 4-H	Brat Frys
Fine Arts/Craft Fair	Food Drives
Blood Drives	Library
Read to children	Makers Market
Las Vegas Night	Bingo
Greeting cards for local nursing homes	Supplied nursing facility with Easter Baskets
Assist at the Senior Center	Blessing Backpacks
Habitat for Humanity	Donated baskets for injured children
Snack Bag Program	Support orphans in Africa
Assist at homeless shelters	Recycling
Cards to Central America	Pancake Breakfast
Fish Frys	Little Dresses for Africa
Birthday Party Kits for the Food Shelf	Spaghetti Dinner/Pork Dinners/Chicken Dinners
Book Fair	Concessions for Baseball/Football games

This is just a touch of things the Auxiliary Units have been doing.

A fantastic way to keep track of your hours is to keep a calendar marking every day you provide some type of Community Service. At the end of the year, you take a form and fill it out. Totalling hours on a monthly basis would also help. It is important to record your community service hours.

On April 27, 2024, American Legion Family Day, 2nd District Ozaukee County, held a Suicide Awareness Class. This was open to all of 2nd District Legion Family members and to the community. They had a great turnout. The public that attended appreciated that the program was opened to them. If you would like a contact person to hold a class in your District, please let me know.

Let us show our communities who we are and what we do. Celebrate our rich history and show the pride we have in our organization. Reach out to a Veteran and ask them how they are doing, listen when they need to talk, and if you see them struggling, let them know help is out there. Call 988 and press one, or text 838255 or visit the VA Crisis Line website.

“Be the One” — *Together, We Can Make a Difference.*

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

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

Members helping members – that is what the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is all about. Members needing assistance through AEF hardship or disaster grants should be aware that the maximum award amount was increased to \$3,000 this year and applications can be submitted directly to the national organization to maintain confidentiality. If you need help finding the application or eligibility guidelines, please contact me at department headquarters.

In order to maintain the AEF, donations are always needed. Units can raise money in a variety of ways – 50/50 cash raffles, basket raffles, meat raffles, or food events like pancake breakfasts, brat frys, bake sales, or food/beer tents at community fairs, etc. Some units collect money from each member at their meetings such as a penny per age or Packer game score. Encourage memorial gifts for Auxiliary or Legion members be designated to AEF.

Through various fundraising efforts, Wisconsin members generously donated \$7,885 to this year's AEF. From September 1, 2023 to April 18, 2024, the national organization awarded over \$100,000 through 41 hardship grants and 15 disaster grants. Three Wisconsin members received hardship grants totaling \$4,487. Thank you for your support!

Zondra Morris for Department 2nd Vice President

I, Zondra Morris, announce my candidacy for the office of Department 2nd Vice President. I am eligible through my grandfather Harold Hall, Jr. who served in WWII and my son Allen Morris who enlisted in the Marines in 2005. I have been endorsed by the Well, Davis, Young, Neal Unit 209 in Orfordville.

I have held many positions over my 19 years. I started as historian, then Rock County President, Unit President, District 1st Vice President and currently the 1st District President.

Our unit helps with all events and programs, helped Union Grove with monetary and food donations, plus the many other VA hospitals in Wisconsin. I have been part of the returning of the VetsRoll when they come back from their 4-day trip. It is a very emotional event.

I worked in food service for 19 years. I worked in Madison at Union South as a barista and wine server. I went to UW-Whitewater where I have been for the last five years. The building that I take care of is Hyer Hall. I am one of two custodians in the building.



Zondra Morris

I enjoy being around people and getting to know them and having a good time. My passion is V.E.T.S. (Volunteers Encourage Team Spirit). For everything that our military has done for us, whether past or present or future military people, I say thank you for your service. If it were not for you, we would not be here doing all these wonderful things and helping Veterans and their families. I take pride in being a part of this organization. It would be a really nice thing to teach the younger members about the programs and what each of them do and how we work them. I have heard many times I did not know or I did not understand. I hope to help in teaching more about our programs and get younger people excited about being a member – heck maybe even get some of the seasoned members excited again.

Our preamble says it best. To promote peace and good will on earth, to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy. Thank you for your time and I would greatly appreciate your vote.

Christina Petranovich for Department 2nd Vice President

Christina Petranovich is excited to announce her candidacy for the position of Department 2nd Vice President. Christina is endorsed by District 7 ALA, Clark County ALA and her home unit of Cecil-Torney Unit 118 of Thorp.

Christina is a 20-year Paid Up For Life member and has served in many leadership roles throughout the ALA. She has been Chaplain, Secretary and President of Unit 118. She has also been the District 7 President for almost 2 terms, taking over the position when the previous President stepped down. She has been a chairman of several programs in the district including Poppy, Juniors, National Security and Public Relations.

She did not join the ALA at first, allowing her mother-in-law, Genevieve, to sign up her daughters and get them active in the American Legion Family. It was her daughters, as very active junior members, that finally convinced her to join and take an active role. She would love to see every unit in Wisconsin involve and have junior members.

Christina has attended several Department and National Conventions as well as Mission



Christina Petranovich

Trainings. She is very active in her church – Saint Bernard Saint Hedwig Catholic Church -- and her community. She has served on the Parish Council, Education Committee, and Fundraising Committee.

Christina is eligible for membership through her father, the late Roger "Frosty" Frese, who served in the Army. She has two brothers, a sister, and two sons that served. Her oldest son was a Marine in the USMC, a soldier in the Army National Guard, and recently became a member of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Christina is a Postmaster and has worked for the USPS for the past 31 years, currently on a 2+ year detail for USPS Headquarters. She has six children, one stepdaughter, four grandbabies, two step-grandbabies, and two step-great-grandbabies. She has been married to her husband Wayne for 33 years.

Christina has a passion for God and Country and feels strongly to advocate for our military, our youth, and our Veterans. Thank you for your consideration and support for Christina as Department 2nd Vice President.

Donna Jensen for Dept. Chaplain

Donna Jensen is announcing her candidacy for the office of Department Chaplain. She is a Paid-Up-For-Life, 18-year member of the ALA. Her eligibility is through her brother who served in the Air Force and her husband, Past Department Commander Wayne Jensen, who served in the Navy during the Vietnam era as well as the Navy Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve and Air Force Reserve for a total of 28 years.



Donna Jensen

Donna has been active in the ALA on many levels and served as the Department Chaplain in 2021-2022. She has been Department Chairman or served on committees including Fundraising, Children & Youth, Leadership, and Auxiliary Emergency Fund. She has also been the 4th District President, Secretary, Historian and Chaplain as well as many program

chairmanships and she is currently the Milwaukee County President. She has volunteered at ALA Badger Girls State for four years and plans to continue her involvement this year.

It has been a great honor for Donna to have attended American Legion National Conventions for the past 25 years and to have been able to volunteer at the three National Conventions held in Milwaukee in 2000, 2010 and 2022. She was asked to be the driver for the American Legion National Adjutant for one and the driver for the Auxiliary National President for two of the them. She has also attended Auxiliary National Mission Training.

Donna has been a member of St. Bernadette Catholic Church for the past 51 years and has volunteered for many fundraisers and activities as well as singing in the church choir for the past 30 years. She and Wayne have been married for 53 years and have two daughters and two granddaughters who are all members of the ALA. She is retired from Travelers Insurance where she worked for 25 years.

Family, faith and serving others have been very important to Donna and she is grateful for the ability to serve Veterans in many ways. She is asking for your support and the opportunity to serve again as the Department Chaplain for the American Legion Auxiliary.

2024 Scholarship Winners

H. S. & Angeline Lewis – (1) \$1,000 – Graduate Student
No qualified applicant

H. S. & Angeline Lewis – (5) - \$1,000
Brooklyn Danke, Greenville, Hortonville #55-9
Ava Toufar, Eleva, Eau Claire #53-10
Payton Skortz, Hatley, Rosholt #509-8
Eleanor Zgonc, Brookfield, Brookfield #449-1
Christopher Cullen, Kewaunee, Kewaunee #29-9

Past Presidents Parley – Maximum of (3) \$1,000 awards
Nursing:

Lydia LaPorte, Pewaukee, Pewaukee #71-1
Hannah Danielsen, Marshfield, Marshfield #54-8

Health Career:
Carson Welter, Mauston, Mauston #81-7

Department Presidents – (3) - \$1,000
Sandra Brierton, Junction City, Wautoma #317-8
Kendall Luzinski, Thorp, Thorp #118-7
Raegan Davis, Luck, Balsam Lake #278-12

Child Welfare – (1) - \$1,000
No qualified applicant

Van Deuren Memorial – (1) - \$1,000
Colin Berger, Wautoma, Hancock-Coloma #343-8

Merit & Memorial – (8) - \$1,000
Adalin Macauley
Adia Hardt, Chippewa Falls, Chippewa Falls #77-10

Eleanor Smith
Aleece Jandrain, Luxemburg, Casco #319-9

Pearl Behrend
Bridget Lemanczyk, Rosholt, Rosholt #509-8

Barbara Kranig
Jonah Slavik, Muskego, Muskego #356-1

Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan
Sadie Liebelt, Irma, Ettrick #354-10

Diane Duscheck
Charlotte Gunby, Mt Horeb, Madison #501-3

Harriet Hass
Ella Slusarski, Oshkosh, Oshkosh #70-6

Merit Scholarship
Ava Ahnen, Albany, Avoca #335-3

National Scholarship Nominees

Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship – Wisconsin's Nominee (\$1,000)
Katelyn Eilbes, Brownsville

Non-Traditional Student Scholarship – National Winner (Awarded \$2,000 from NHQ)
Leslie Kronstadt, Wisconsin Rapids

Spirit of Youth for Junior Members Scholarship – National Winner (Awarded \$1,000 from NHQ)
Molly Janke, Ellsworth

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship – Wisconsin's Nominee
No applicant

ALABGS Scholarships

Badger Girls State General Scholarship – (6) - \$500
Addison Bauknecht, Two Rivers
Alyssa Durrant, Waupaca
Jennifer Espinoza-Quiroz, Athens
Katie Kim, Middleton
Jade Levandoski, Westby
Josie Meister, Darlington

Eileen Knox Memorial Scholarship – (1) - \$500
Kate Fechner, La Crosse

Harry & Shirley Kuehl Foundation Scholarship – (1) - \$500
Alivya Young, Richland Center

2024 Americanism Essay Winners

"What does Freedom mean to you?"

Class I – Grades 3 & 4

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Shubhreet Kaur | King #161 |
| 2. Emily Jing | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 3. Kenneth Buck | Wauzeka #458 |
| 4. Landon Myers | Richland Center #13 |
| 5. Kaitlyn Johnson | Port Washington #82 |

Class II – Grades 5 & 6

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Jack Egan | Port Washington #82 |
| 2. Stella Schluneger | Thorp #118 |
| 3. Laylana Bakke | Plum City #365 |
| 4. Austin Seifert | Butternut #272 |
| 5. Presley Beranek | Richland Center #13 |

Class III – Grades 7 & 8

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Laila Smith | Plum City #365 |
| 2. Sonya Nikolai | Port Washington #82 |
| 3. Arabella Flegner | King #161 |
| 4. Nolen Luzinski | Thorp #118 |
| 5. Lydia Van Gelderen | Menomonee Falls #382 |

Class IV – Grades 9 & 10

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lizzie Henn | Plum City #365 |
| 2. Eric Moser | Pewaukee #71 |
| 3. Emma Sutton | Siren #132 |
| 4. Caleb Van Gelderen | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 5. Anna Schloer | Butternut #272 |

Class V – Grades 11 & 12

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. John Guarero, Jr. | Jackson #486 |
| 2. Mia McCartney | New London #263 |
| 3. Yoselin Gea | Plum City #365 |
| 4. Charity Shoultz | Menomonee Falls #382 |
| 5. Jacob Ciolkosz | Thorp #118 |

Class VI

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Josie Perez | Twin Lakes #544 |
|----------------|-----------------|

District 1

Leadership: Our district officers worked hard to come up with unique and creative ways to help our district not only learn new skills, but to support each other. Our 1st Vice created a poker run in a sense, called "Going Wild for Vets." It entailed a pamphlet with all counties being represented by a part of the world and each unit an animal from within that area. They were encouraged to travel to other units to share ideas and support their fundraising efforts. When they visited another unit, they would get a sticker of the animal that the unit represented to make it more exciting.

Our district also put together an end of the year report workshop. We passed out documents that we created with specific events that our district was doing in each narrative section as examples. This encouraged and successfully got units to feel less nervous reaching out for help. Multiple units scheduled times to complete reports together, demonstrating the District President's theme of Teamwork.

Membership: Our district worked very hard with units that needed

assistance. We also reached out to units and attended fundraisers and events to support and see if we could be of any help. This was a great way to start rebuilding connections with units that had stopped attending district events.



Zondra Morris
1st District
President

We also revitalized a unit. With the help of a Legionnaire, we obtained most documentation from the past deceased president to help new officers restart. We met with them and gave them a Unit Guidebook to help them get off on the right track. In the process, a new member signed up and became treasurer. We are still working with this unit to help them get on their feet.

Thank you to the Diamonds of the 1st District – without you this would not have been possible. You are the reason that we are Diamonds – we shine bright no matter what.

District 2

The Mighty 2nd District has been extremely busy this past year. Our 40 units are focusing on working the Auxiliary programs. All units have and still are focused on recruiting new members and maintaining existing members.



Sandy Mack
2nd District
President

I attended all County Council meetings held in both the Fall of 2023 and Spring of 2024, along with attending close to 20 unit meetings across the counties. I have met so many new members that are filled with so many great ideas!

I attended 2nd District Legion meetings, Four Chaplains Dinner, Legion revitalization meetings, held mini forums for presidents, secretaries and treasurers – discussing position descriptions in each county. We worked together in a small group and interaction was wonderful. The forum was well appreciated. I also send out a monthly newsletter and a bi-monthly Did You Know.

Donations went to Dogs2DogTags, Camp American Legion, Stars & Stripes Honor Flight, Camp Hometown Heroes, USO, MVHI, a spa day for female Veterans at Zablocki Medical Center. Donations were made to several other non-profit organizations, along with scholarships and ALA Badger Girls State, food pantries, War Memorial Center, Highground, Poppy Shop, Zablocki Christmas Gift Shop and more.

The units are knitting hats and gloves for children and adults in need, even mittens for kittens at the Humane Society, prayer shawls, school supply drive, hygiene products drive, blood banks, sewed little dresses for Africa, made cloth diapers, quilts for foster children, fish fries, shop for cops, food pantry needs, served food at music in the park, restoration of a lion head in the city park, and the list goes on.

I am so proud to be a part of the Mighty Second!

District 3

What an AMAZING year this has been! District 3 received an increase in reporting this year – it is encouraging to see units sharing their successes. Members from the Mississippi River to Wisconsin's capital and everywhere in between really poured their hearts and hands into supporting our Veterans. Unit members served 34,600 hours supporting Veterans and military families, allocating almost \$87,000 in assistance and events this year. An amazing investment by units who distributed 14,500 poppies, generating \$34,200 in poppy funds. Our group of hard-working members are also very generous with their time and resources!

Members of District 3 worked with their communities and schools through Americanism, Children & Youth, Community Service and VA&R programs. Engaging in activities such as essays, flag programs, donating gift cards for school supplies, snow pants to school kids, distributing quilts of valor, making self-care packages, parades, military Purple Up! Day events at schools, legions and military bases in April. Members fulfilled VA facility wish lists, supported Camp American Legion, sent greeting cards to facilities, and created

mail call for Honor Flights. Units distributed poppies, fundraised and collected donations for giving trees, Christmas programs and pantries. Units awarded \$15,000 in scholarships and invested over \$18,000 and 1,800 hours in Children & Youth programs! They also reported 18,900 hours of Community Service, investing \$31,000 in community activities and events. Many units report collaborating with other organizations within their communities.



Karen Runk
3rd District
President

District 3 units fundraised and collected donations for numerous causes and organizations serving Veterans, such as VetsRoll, Habitat for Humanity, Second Harvest, USO, and Dogs-2DogTags! Over 1,500 military families were impacted by our units that reported. Service to

military, Veterans and their families is certainly at the heart of what District 3 members and units have been doing this year. Thank you for your dedication – District 3 members are AMAZING!

District 4

The units in District #4 logged 20,000 hours of volunteer time. Whether our unit is large or small, the hours recorded are meaningful. Together we got to a pretty big number. The work and efforts we put into everything we do for our Veterans, their families and our community matters.



Kathy Grom
4th District
President

We've helped children's groups including the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. We held Christmas and Easter events for our Veterans' children. We also had the opportunity to hand out a National Hero Award to a child in our community. We distributed over 2,600 poppies this year and we are honored that the 2023 Department of Wisconsin Little Miss Poppy was from our district. We also help young women learn leadership and government through Badger Girls State by volunteering and sponsorship.

We celebrated birthdays with our Veterans and post members and we helped with celebration of life events when called on to do so.

We held spaghetti dinners, fish fries, pancake breakfasts, and a 'Souper Sunday'. That doesn't count the times we worked with our posts for Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans' Day events handing out hot dogs and ice cream, cooking at barbecues, and catering luncheons as well as holding food drives.

We partnered with our Legion family to do Buddy Checks and did our own Poppy Checks. We volunteered at the VA Hospital. We are proud of our partnership with our Legion, S.A.L. and Legion Riders, helping them by working bingo, selling 50/50 tickets, assisting with basket raffles and meat raffles.

We may not be able to work all of the ALA programs but the things we do are done with passion and dedication. Looking at our accomplishments, we can confidently check off everything on our mission statement as fulfilled.

Congratulations, District 4, for all you've accomplished this year.

District 5

Another year has passed since the COVID pandemic and 5th District is slowly getting back on track.

Since the Zablocki V.A. Center has given permission for the Auxiliary to come back in, one unit has been doing holiday tray favors ten times per year. That unit also still has their knitting group working on lap robes and afghans for Zablocki. This unit also sends out a yearly dues renewal statement right after Department Convention. They utilized an idea that was reported at convention and mailed a poppy with each renewal statement asking for donations. It was well worth the effort and enabled them to donate to four suggested Poppy projects.

Another unit celebrates each military birthday (Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, etc.). Post and Auxiliary members take a sheet cake to different restaurants/bars in their area and share with customers at these locations. They also take up a poppy collection during these times and have a poppy collection in May.

Two other units meet with their Post members but have been unable to work the Auxiliary programs as yet. There are plans to improve on that this coming year.

Another unit, which has gone without a president for several years, will install a president at Spring Conference. This should get their unit with some activity again. District President Linda will work alongside her to gain experience.



Linda Bartell
5th District
President

Our last unit in 5th District is the Women's Veterans. They have their Post meetings and bring up any Auxiliary business as needed.

5th District as a whole has been sending cards for Valentines, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Halloween and Christmas to the Union Grove V.A. Facility. The feedback has been the Veterans are greatly appreciative of this as they are remembered. 5th District also enjoyed the Milwaukee County functions, George Washington

Luncheon, small Christmas tree decorating, tray favors for Christmas and cards.

Things are looking up for 5th District.

2024 9-PIN TAP BOWLING TOURNAMENT RESULTS

(top 3 places in each category)

Team:

- 1st Place – (2457) Bonduel Gals 3, Unit 217 Bonduel
- 2nd Place – (2423) Betty's Foxy Bowlers, Unit 437 Mazomanie
- 3rd Place – (2359) The Wild Ones, Unit 118 Thorp

Doubles:

- 1st Place – (1303) Judy Crooks/Anna Miller, Unit 84 Monroe
- 2nd Place – (1255) Shannon Churchill/Stacey Zier, Unit 385 Verona
- 3rd Place – (1195) Mary Sawle/Stacey Sutcliffe, Unit 437 Mazomanie

Singles:

- 1st Place – (720) Jenni Syftestad, Unit 385 Verona
- 2nd Place – (706) Shannon Churchill, Unit 385 Verona
- 3rd Place – (673) Bonnie Field, Unit 84 Monroe

All Events:

- 1st Place – (1971) Kay Grosskopf, Unit 391 Fremont
- 2nd Place – (1946) Rosemary Tellock, Unit 391 Fremont
- 3rd Place – (1944) Shannon Churchill, Unit 385 Verona

District 6

By working the ALA programs, the units of District 6 have been "Enhancing the Lives of our Veterans, Military and their Families, One Day at a Time".

The 2023 Department Convention was held in Rothschild where several units received recognition. The Children & Youth "Believe & Achieve" Award went to Neenah Unit 33. A History Program Certificate of Participation was given to Patricia Katalinick of Chilton Unit 125. Two Rivers Unit 165 received an Extra-Gnome-inary Membership Award. A National Security Certificate of Recognition was also presented to Neenah Unit 33. We are very proud of Natalie Myers from Winneconne Unit 364, who was named 2023 Junior Member of the Year. Congratulations to all!

During the year, units within the district

held parties for Veterans, participated in Poppy Days, coordinated fundraisers, marched in parades, sponsored girls for ALA Badger Girls State, held special programs in area schools, participated in Veterans Day activities, and many other activities too numerous to mention!



Diane Steinert
6th District
President

The units worked hard all year long and District Impact Report numbers were impressive! Our service to Veterans & Military totaled 11,869 volunteer hours and \$38,800 spent. 20,335 poppies were distributed with \$42,937 raised. Hours of service representing

ALA in our communities was 15,252 and a total of \$9,200 was presented in scholarships. Awesome job!!

We were challenged to "Grow our Membership, Poppy Up for a Veteran." Units of the 6th District proved quite successful retaining and finding new members. As of this writing, one county and six units have reached/exceeded 100% membership. I am pleased to report 6th District is currently 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. 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 year as your District President!!

District 9

I feel humble to have worked with so many Auxiliary members and Veterans in the Noble 9th District these past two years. Units have been quite busy from hosting meat raffles, chili cook-off along with a golf scramble, going to VA hospitals, to playing Bingo with the Veterans. Units donated to Honor Flights, welcomed the Veterans home at the airport after a long memorable day, and handed out flags.



Bonnie Blink
9th District
President

Units helped schools and students by hosting socks and shoe drives, presenting how to say the pledge of allegiance, reading to classes and making healthy snack bags for school children. Units promoted the Poppy Poster and Americanism Essay contests, organized and stocked clothing for the students to get free, while also supporting teachers with needed supplies, gifts, and treats.

Units marched in parades and presented the colors at community, school and sporting events. Noble Ninth distributed over 800 flags. Several units served local Veterans, their families and the community by donating and making food and sending boxes and cards to service members overseas. Units donated a playground for all abilities. Auxiliary members dress up like condiments at their Brat Fry – way to go Ketchup, Mustard and Hot Dog!

Units helped their Posts with events and fundraisers such as a Gunless Poultry Shoot, brat fries, raffles, funeral honors, color guards, blood drives, Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts, flag retirements, and the list goes on. Units are striving to work with the Post for the betterment of the Veterans, their families, and the active members of our military.

Units have given more than 20 scholarships for a total of over \$10,000, distributed over 19,000 poppies, and raised over \$35,000 to help our Veterans. Members' cars have traveled over 674,578 miles this past year in ALA service.

I want to thank the 9th District members for their dedication. It was my honor to serve as your President these past two years.

District 7



Christina Petranovich
7th District
President

District 7 held two very successful fundraisers this year. The funds raised will be used to help Veterans, military and their families within our district. We realized the need when notified of an active soldier and his family that were displaced from their home due to severe storms that had gone through the area. Together with District 3, we were able to provide for the family's immediate needs and to point them in the right direction for further assistance. The first

fundraiser was a purse raffle and auction to "Make a Difference for Veterans" hosted by Unit 73 in Neillsville. The second fundraiser was a Designer Bag Bingo with a Kentucky Derby theme hosted by Unit 51, West Salem.

Fall workshop (Neillsville Unit 73) was held, as well as the spring conference (Sparta Unit 100). We had several newer members step up to leadership roles. The units that attended gave great reports on the events they've held and

provided ideas for other units to try.

Our district membership team traveled to several units that had been requesting assistance and provided support, guidance and leadership. They were able to aid in getting members signed up, get leadership roles filled, and give instruction on how to run a meeting. It was a very successful year and I look forward to turning over the reins into the more than capable hands of Jesse Elmhorst. She is going to rock District 7!

District 8

My third year as 8th District President has been busy. I helped several units with their summer events and made unit visits as well.

The units have been working hard on their membership. As of the time of this writing, 8th District has three units at 100% and several units are within 1-3 members to reach 100%. We also have one county that just needs one member to be a 100% County.

Everyone has been doing a fantastic job on fulfilling the mission of the ALA. From the year-end impacts reports that I received, members have volunteered over 20,000 hours for Veterans, over 3,400 hours for military families, and over 11,000 hours in our communities.

The Fall Conference was hosted by Wisconsin Rapids Post 9. Eight units were represented with 23 people in attendance. 8th District

Commander Adam Klapperich and Post 9 Commander Jerry Krofta brought greetings. Department Senior VP Becky Mueller gave greetings on behalf of Department President Maggie Geiger. Department Poppy Chairman Kay Grosskopf talked about the poppy program. Fran Bender gave the membership report. Lani Rehaber, the Executive Director of Patriot K9s, spoke about their service dog training program for



Linda Tryczak
8th District
President

Veterans with PTSI. SAL Detachment Commander Allen Watry presented the ALF Dogs Program. In the afternoon everyone participated

in a craft and made patriotic lanyards.

We held an Executive Board meeting by teleconference in late November.

The Spring conference was hosted by Stevens Point Unit 6. There were 13 units, 49 members and two guests in attendance. We had a video greeting from Mayor Mike Wiza; Sarah Stiff gave greetings for the Post Commander; and Penny Peeters gave greetings from District Commander Adam Klapperich. Sarah Stiff did a presentation on the common complaints heard at Department. Penny Alwin and Susan Reetz presented the documentary entitled, "Honor in the Air" which is about Penny's brother Cpl. Scott Alwin. The history books were judged and the winner was sent to department.

I am looking forward to both conventions and visiting units.

District 11

Eleventh District members continue "Enhancing the lives of our Veterans, Military and their Families, One Day at a Time." President Maggie spoke at our Spring Conference encouraging members with the above bolded words of her theme. Her special project, "Dogs2DogTags" sparked units and members to continue working ALA programs and events that indeed enhance the lives of many Veterans and their families.

Our little racing pup, D.O.G. (Department of Giving), while not a leader in the great membership race is hardworking and persistent. Three of our 22 units have attained 100% membership while nine units have reached over 75% so far. District members truly enhance lives as they work the ALA mission through their chosen projects. Success stories were shared at our Fall Conference at Lake Tomahawk and at the Spring Conference in Ashland.

Generous donations were made to our Nation-

al Commander's project "Be The One", the ALA Badger Girls State fund, and President Maggie's special project. Donations were raised in fun



Claudia Osero
11th District
President

ways such as basket raffles and live auctions. The Fall Conference featured Halloween dress-up, too! The 11th District gatherings mixed business with songs, fun, socializing, and joint memorial services with TAL and SAL. Guest speakers at the Fall conference were PDP Joyce Endres and PDP Linda Coppock presenting Leadership sessions. At the Spring Conference President Maggie educated us about her special project. Department 1st VPSue Hembrook spoke to us about poppies and about April being the month of children,

"Purple Up!", and the Children's Table. Linda Dunbar, a Gold Star Mother of Unit 25 Odanah, spoke about Camp Benesi founded in honor of her son, MSGT Jonathan Dunbar, killed in 2018.

This District President is proud of each unique unit. Recently, I traveled to our new Unit 464 in Land O'Lakes to witness President Maggie and PDP Linda Coppock present them the Unit of the Year award. This unit's enthusiasm, accomplishments, and 145% membership inspire us all to persist in the great dog race!

Spring flowers are blooming and poppies are being distributed. Many units are collaborating with members of the American Legion family to remind everyone about the symbolism of the remembrance poppies. Have a beautiful Memorial Day!

It has been wonderful to serve as 11th District President. I look forward to seeing many of you in July at Department Convention.

District 10

The first year of my term as 10th District President has been eventful. It began at the 2023 State Convention where I was sworn in, escorted by my husband Jerry, a 12-year Navy Veteran.



Mary Townsend
10th District
President

At the 2023 District Fall DEC Meeting, I proposed three new ventures. The first was the "Highlight Our Heroes" campaign. I asked each unit to highlight a Veteran, men and women who honorably served our country, and tell their story. These heroes would be highlighted in the district newsletter and at the conferences.

The second was the Red/White/Blue awards. I divided the 44 units into three categories. The Red Award was for units with 55 or more members, White was for units with 35 to 54 members, and Blue was for units with 34 or less members. The awards, based on something outstanding the unit did with an Auxiliary program, were awarded at the Spring Conference.

The last was the 10th Connection – a plan to connect the district staff with the county presidents and program chairmen. Email groups were set up to receive and send information.

Units have been busy with many activities – marching in parades, presenting Quilts of Valor, holiday events, Poppy drives, a Female Veterans Boutique, and much more. Some units participate in "High School to Heroes," where students are honored for entering the Armed Services. One unit is working with Habitat for Humanity to build a house for a Veteran. Units also help with Chippewa Veterans Home, Minneapolis VA, and Klein Hall by donating money, supplies, and their time.

I have enjoyed going to county and unit meetings, events, and parades. Thank you, members of the 10th District, for your support and kindness. I am very proud of every unit of this district for all the work they do serving others. You are the reason we are "The Mighty Tenth!"



Karl Stuvengen
Department
Commander

★★★★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

As this Legion year draws to a close, I have so many wonderful moments on which to look back. I am both humbled and grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as your Department Commander. The many events and meetings I have attended allowed me to see first-hand all of the great work that the Legionnaires in Wisconsin do on a daily basis. The service to our communities, state and nation is unrivaled, and makes me proud to say that I am a Wisconsin Legionnaire.

As our National Commander has stated many times, The American Legion *changes lives and saves lives*. Our members have shown that they truly embrace that ideal, and work hard everyday to **BE THE ONE**. Our drive to embrace our four pillars is truly a higher calling, and the fulfillment we receive from that work outweighs any cost we

pay to be a member of this great organization. As this is my last column for the Badger Legionnaire, I want to take a moment to recognize and thank all of my officers for joining me on this journey. They have supported me from day one and fully bought into my vision for the Wisconsin American Legion. I hope that when you see them, you will join me in thanking them for their commitment to this organization and to our brother and sister Veterans. The same can also be said for my committee chairs and all of the Department committee members. They took on the work of the Department with vigor, and showed that when we come together, we can accomplish anything. I also want to thank all of the Past Department Commanders for their wise council this year, as well as in past years. Their mentorship and the willingness to pass along their experience has been invaluable to me as I've progressed through the Legion.

Adjutant Julie and our Headquarters Team

are amazing. There is literally nothing that they won't do to advance the cause of our programs and to take care of our members. Their dedication allows our Posts to flourish. They work to remove any impediments that might crop up that would prevent us from completing the mission.

As I told the Department Executive Committee this spring, our work is not done. As we transition to new leadership at every level of the Department, I hope that those who have held office in the past will make themselves available to these new officers. Mentorship is an ongoing process, and your wealth of experience will be sorely needed as they take over our mission. If we are to continue the work of The American Legion, it will take all of us, each playing a role to make it happen. **RECRUIT THE NEXT YOU!**

The American Legion is 105 years old. That is no accident. We have endured this long, because those who came before us willed it to be so. Will the same be said of us, 105 years from now?



Maggie Geiger
Department
President

PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

As my year is coming to an end, I would like to thank all of you for your support, encouragement, kind words, laughs and of course the potlucks and desserts!

I was able to visit all 12 Districts and many units and County Councils around the state. Tweedle Bug, aka the ALA department car, along with my Huskey "Buck" drove in straight lines, on curved roads, diagonally, left to right, north to south, and I can confess sometimes in circles! But when I arrived at my destination, the warm welcomes and information that was shared was so invigorating! If every member was treated with the same respect and kind words as I have experienced, we would all have over 100% in our membership totals!

I was invited by The American Legion to attend and address members at their Fall and Spring meetings. We also have had monthly Zoom meetings with the Legion, Riders and SAL. We shared information and I know that by working together as a Legion Family we are stronger and can accomplish more things than if we try to do things by ourselves.

Commander Karl and I were able to visit all VA facilities around the state. When the opportunity presented itself, I asked to see the Volunteer Service offices, to see what kind of items units send to the facilities.

I don't get speechless very often, but wow, the number of items sent to the facilities is unbelievable. Many units work tirelessly to raise funds and add their personal finances to make sure our Veterans' needs are met. If it wasn't on the shelf today, it will be there tomorrow in triplicate!

I have experienced so many wonderful things this past year. I cannot express how grateful I am that you entrusted me to be your president for 2023-2024. As I've been reading year-end reports, know that our units and members are alive and working the ALA mission not because they have to. It's because they enjoy themselves and they know how important what we do as members, and who we work the mission for, is so important. We need to make sure that the needs of our heroes are met, because the sacrifices they made to keep us a free country, are priceless!

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity I had to serve all of you, for God and Country.



Allen Watry
SAL Detachment
Commander

★★★★ SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER ★★★★★

We call ourselves a Legion Family. So why is it important to think of ourselves as a family?

I was reminded why in late April and early May. I was fortunate enough to be able to visit my Aunt Joann (of Belgium, WI) and Uncle Phil (of Sumter, SC) the weekend of April 19. Both were in hospice; both passed away days after I visited them. Which led to attending both funerals. It was a long emotional three weeks, and I was able to get through it because of the multiple families

I have supporting me. This includes our Legion Family. Thank you for your support over these tough three weeks. I was saddened that I ended up missing several Legion events due to being at their funerals, thank you to those groups for their understanding and support.

This also reminded me of the importance of Buddy Checks. Both Aunt Joann and Uncle Phil were surrounded by family during their last weeks. But others in the facilities they were in were not. Uncle Phil told me how saddened he was that others in the facility did not have many visitors. He felt so fortunate for all the visitors he had. So please continue to do Buddy Checks

for those around you.

Finally, we are closing in on our 2024 Summer Convention. My intent, after enduring those three weeks, is to treat this Convention like a Family Reunion. We have many accomplishments to celebrate. Hopefully we can celebrate our accomplishments together as a family. So please consider attending this year's Convention in Appleton the weekend of July 12, it would be awesome to have every squadron represented and celebrating with us.

For God and Country,
Allen J. Watry
WI SAL Detachment Commander



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

★★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★★★★

Same mission through a different name. Greetings everyone, ALRA state Judge Advocate Ken "Rhino" Rynes here for director Corey.

Back in 1993, a couple of Legionnaires from Garden City, Michigan, had an idea to promote and expand their post by forming a small group of motorcycle riding Veterans into their post. With help from the Michigan state judge advocate, the "Riders" were born. They are now nationwide and 110,000 members strong.

In 2006, the Riders took on the mission of funding the "American Legion Legacy Fund". The National organization had put out the call and goal to raise 20 million dollars for this fund that would give scholarships to children who

had a parent killed in the War on Terrorism. The Riders truly answered the call. The National "Legacy Run" debuted in 2006 riding from Indianapolis to Salt Lake City, Utah. When the 300 - 400 bikes rolled into town they brought \$120,000 for the Legacy Fund. The run continued to grow each year to a point that it was bringing in over one million dollars annually right up to 1.2 million dollars in 2023.

With that great success, the goal of 20 million dollars was reached to fund the Legacy scholarships. With energy levels still high for the run, a home for the funds raised was needed, but had to follow the original path of care for Veterans and their families. That location was found in the VCF or Veterans & Children Foundation. Established in 1925, VCF has awarded millions of dollars to military families in need

and helping them traverse the winding road of applying for and receiving the funds due them from the VBA for service-connected injuries and disabilities.

Like the goal of 20 million dollars for the Legacy Fund, The American Legion has established a goal of 25 million dollars to fund the VCF in perpetuity. With this new mission and goal, the Riders are kickstands up and taking the challenge head on to take care of our fellow Vets and their families.

The Legion Family has supported the Riders at every level these past 17 years and we are asking for that continued support into the future of Veterans helping Veterans and their families. So as I stated in the beginning, same mission through a different name. Thanks in advance, Rhino.



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