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

2026-27 DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN LEADERSHIP TEAM

Introducing the 2026-2027 Department of Wisconsin Leadership team.

Back row: John Argust, Jr., Morris Sadicario, David Bretl, Terry Quatsoe, Greg Eirich, Scott Klassy, Jim Johnson, Andrew Minch, Ben VanHorn, Ken Flock, Nathan Bond, Felicia Decker, Robert Smith, Tom Visintainer, Sr., Joe Leone, Aimee Korger

Sitting: Penny Peeters, Karl Stuvengen, Chet Faith, Candace Rothering, Department Commander Steve Kohnke, Deb Thomas, Scott Markle, Dan Workenaour, Department Adjutant Julie Muhle



PAST COMMANDER LUNCHEON AT THE 107TH CONVENTION

The Past Department Commander Luncheon held at the 107th Department Convention in Appleton was well attended this year.

Attendees: First row left to right: Al Richards, Dan Seehafer, Denise Rohan, Nathan Bond, Leo Endres, Jim Chapin, Ted DeMicchi, Dale Oatman, Julie Muhle, Frank Kostka

2ns row left to right: Bob Batty, Bob Shappell, Karl Stuvengen, Roger Mathison, Greg Eirich, Ken Rynes, David Wischer, Steve Krueger, Wayne Jensen.



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Sheri Hicks

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Department Vice Commanders
**Candace Rothering
Chet Faith
Scott Markle
Deb Thomas**

Department Adjutant
Julie Muhle

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Historian
Morris Sadicario

Sergeant-at-Arms
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Aimee Korger**

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NECman - **Karl Stuvengen**
Alternate NECman - **Nathan Bond**
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2nd – Joe Leone
3rd – Scott Klassy
4th – Andrew Minch
6th – Ken Flock
7th – Ben Van Horn
8th – Penny Peeters
9th – Terry Quatsoe
10th – Felicia Decker
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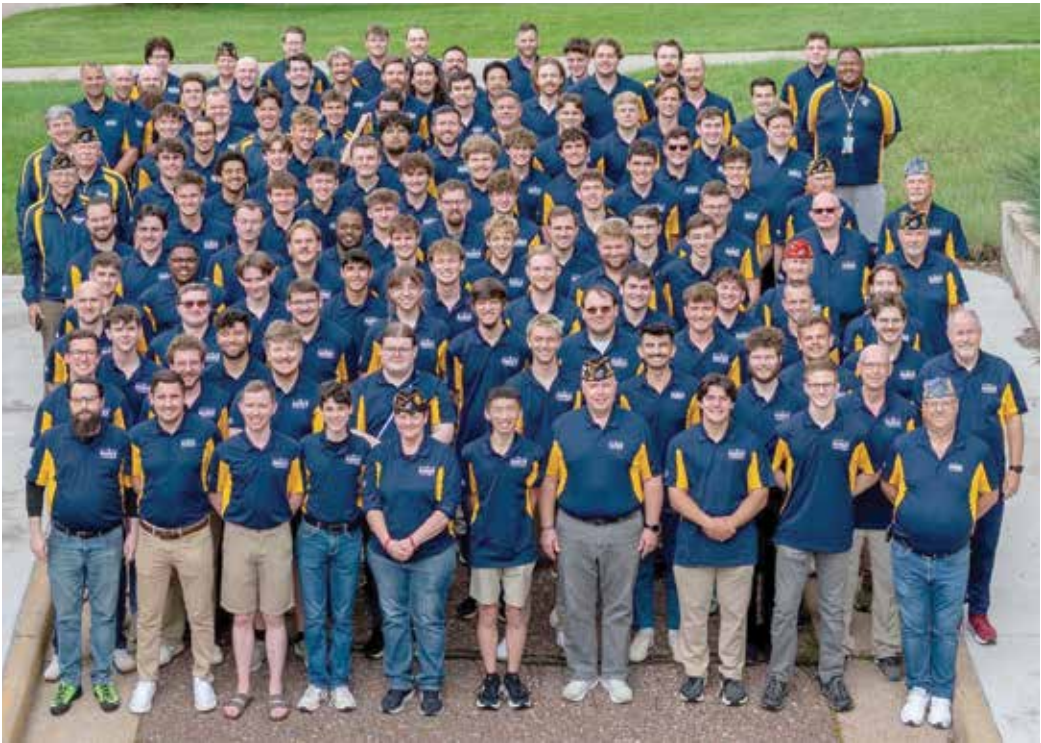
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**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Wisconsin**
2930 American Legion Drive
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**Bonnie Dorniak, Editor
Amy Luft, Department President
Bonnie Dorniak, Exec. Secretary/Treasurer**

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.



STAFF MAKES BBS POSSIBLE!

Thank you to our volunteer staff who make every session of Badger Boys State possible! The Badger Boys State staff for the 83rd Session, June 14-20, 2026 at UW Eau Claire was nearly 150 people, including former Badger Boys State citizens and Wisconsin American Legion members. Congrats on a successful 83rd Session!



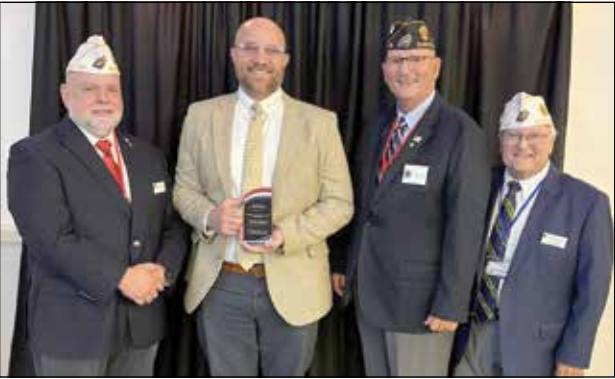
UW MIA-RIP RECEIVED MARTHA MARLOWE DISTINGUISHED HISTORIAN AWARD

Charles Konsitzke of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Missing in Action Recovery Identification Program received this award



at the 107th
Department
of Wisconsin
Convention.
From left,
Commander
Nathan Bond,
Charles Kon-
sitzke, PDC

and President of the Wisconsin Historians Association Greg Eirich, and Department Historian Morris Sadicario. July 17, 2017, Appleton, WI.



CENTENARIAN MARKS HIS
BIRTHDAY IN FREDONIA

Warren Kane Post 410 Fredonia, Members are Celebrating with the Post's oldest Member, Virgil Weinreich. He is Celebrating his 100th Birthday. Virgil was an Ordinance Depot Truck Driver in Japan and the Philippines in 1945 – 1947. It was Great Day for Virgil and Post 410.



MESSAGE FROM 2025-2026
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
NATHAN BOND

Members of The Wisconsin American Legion Family,

As my year as your Department Commander closes, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your support, trust, and friendship. Serving as your commander has been one of the greatest privileges of my life.

Over the past year, I have witnessed the very best of who we are as Legionnaires: your unwavering devotion to



Nathan Bond
2025-2026
Department
Commander

veterans, your tireless efforts for our military families, and your steadfast commitment to our communities. Your passion for “Veterans Strengthening America” has inspired me every step of the way.

My most sincere thanks, to Department President Hembrook and Detachment Commander Dannemann. You were great teammates! I am also very grateful for the guidance and cooperation of our officers, committee members, and Past Department Commanders. Your dedication made it possible for us to face challenges, seize opportunities, and advance our shared mission. Any success of this year belongs not to me, but to all of you who serve quietly and faithfully every day.

Thank you for the honor of representing you, for your patience as we worked through difficult issues, and for your continued belief in the values and purposes of The American Legion. I leave this office deeply humbled, profoundly grateful, and more confident than ever in the future of our Department.

I look forward to continuing to serve alongside you—as a fellow Legionnaire—supporting our veterans, our youth, and our communities throughout Wisconsin.

With deepest respect and gratitude,
Nathan Morgan Bond
2025-2026 Department Commander
The American Legion,
Department of Wisconsin

PAST COMMANDERS CLUB
MEETING AND DINNER

**October 31, 2026
Appleton Post 38**

Halloween theme!

Meeting starts at 3 p.m.
Social time 5 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 p.m.

All are welcome.

Please RSVP to

PCC Adjutant

Steven Dubois

at **sdubois188@aol.com**
or text to 715-554-0666



9TH WALLECA HELD AT FT. MCCOY

WALLECA 2027 APPLICATIONS
TO BE AVAILABLE IN JANUARY

The 9th Wisconsin American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (WALLECA) was held July 6-10, 2026, at the Wisconsin State Patrol Academy at Ft. McCoy. The academy was a great success. The 10th WALLECA is scheduled June 21-25, 2027. Applications will be made available in January 2027.

DUTCH HISTORIAN HONORS LITTLE CHUTE VETERAN PVT JACOB J. COPPUS

By Debra Wenzel
with assistance from ChatGPT

A shared heritage and a century-old sacrifice have united a Dutch historian and an American soldier across continents and generations.

Sjoerd van der Ven, a 37-year-old World War I historian from Vught, Netherlands, has devoted years of research and remembrance to Pvt. Jacob John Coppus, an American soldier buried at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. Pvt. Coppus served with Company M, 353rd Regiment, 89th Division and was killed during the final days of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in 1918.

Van der Ven's interest in World War I began during family vacations in France's Argonne region, where his



parents own a home in Tailly. At age 18, he discovered that Tailly had been liberated on November 2, 1918, by the American Expeditionary Forces'





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**Drawing at 7:30pm, July 24, 2027
at Department Convention in Madison**

1 st - \$15,000		
2 nd - \$6,000	5 th - \$2,000	8 th - \$600
3 rd - \$4,000	6 th - \$1,000	9 th - \$400
4 th - \$3,000	7 th - \$800	10 th - \$200

**For Tickets: Contact your local American Legion Post or
Email rosanna.bogle@outlook.com or amlegionman@gmail.com**

89th Division. That finding inspired a lifelong commitment to preserving the division's history. In 2018, he led his first public battlefield tour, using original maps, photographs, aerial imagery, and personal stories to bring the division's history to life.

In August 2023, Van der Ven came across a Facebook post announcing the replacement of Pvt. Coppus's headstone at the Meuse-Argonne Cemetery. While researching the soldier, he

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discovered that Coppus had been born in Gemert, Netherlands, only a short distance from his own hometown.

Further research revealed Coppus's original battlefield burial site near Bois de Bantheville and documented Company M's advance during the final offensive on November 1, 1918. Van der Ven also uncovered photographs of Pvt. Coppus and of his mother, Maria Allegonda Coppus, during her Gold Star pilgrimage to France in the 1920s to visit her son's grave.

In July 2025, Van der Ven shared Coppus's story during an 89th Division battlefield tour for The Lost Battalion Tours. Standing with his tour group at Coppus's grave, he reflected on the sacrifice of what he calls "a Dutch Doughboy" who "died for a greater cause."

Today, every visit Van der Ven makes to the Meuse-Argonne Cemetery includes placing flowers at Pvt. Coppus's grave, a tradition he has maintained since discovering his story.

After learning about American Legion Post 258, Van der Ven shared his research and personal connection, helping ensure that Pvt. Jacob John Coppus's legacy continues to be remembered and honored on both sides of the Atlantic. As Van der Ven wrote, "He truly is a hero who died for a greater cause."



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.

Fundraising challenge for the Second District from your District Commander

Legion Family,

Over the last 30 years we have seen tremendous growth and addition to our amazing American Legion programs. That growth has strengthened our relevance in communities across Wisconsin. As our membership has steadily declined since 1992 our funds get stretched thinner each year. Thanks to strong management from our Adjutant, we have kept things moving forward, now is time for us to act together.

To prevent long-term damage from the decline of dues paying members, I'm issuing a challenge to the Mighty Second District: Please recruit the next you- or consider donating \$20.00 to our department. If we take this challenge seriously at our district level, the impact will be felt across our entire Legion Family. Members in Wisconsin participate in this challenge, our programs will be funded for a generation.

When sending your check, please write "Challenge" in the memo line.

Send to:

Wisconsin American Legion
P.O. Box 388
Portage, WI 53901

Thank you for all you have done-- and all you are about to do.

Joe Leone
2nd District Commander



POST 63 MURAL

Clintonville Post 63 Commander James Carmody saw a blank canvas and decided to create a mural to honor service. He worked on it as the weather permitted.

POST 21 FAMILY HONORS KENOSHA MILITARY ACADEMY

The Post 21 family was honored to present awards at the Kenosha Military Academy awards ceremony and changing of command at Indian Trail High School and Academy. KMA began at the school in 2002, and offers a rigorous four-year Junior ROTC program, including Leadership, Education and Training sponsored by the U.S. Army. These classes are meant to provide students with the qualities of teamwork, leadership skills, character building, physical fitness and citizenship.

Students were presented with awards for scholastic achievement, conduct, attendance and ROTC performance. Graduating Seniors handed down command duties to deserving Juniors. Post 21 is proud to be invited to celebrate KMA each May.



ABOVE: The Post 21 Family — Tim O'Brien, Ronnie Dulin, Matt Christensen, Carol Ratliff, Amy Visintainer, Tom Visintainer.

BELOW: Indian Trail High School Kenosha Military Academy Color Guard.



POST 364 MARKS 100 YEARS

The Giles-Luce American Legion Post 364 in Winneconne recently celebrated a century of service to veterans and the local community by welcoming the public to a celebration on Flag Day. The event began with a memorial brick walkway dedication, followed by music from local artist Franki Moscato with complimentary food and beverages.

The post received its official charter on October 23rd, 1925, with 48 original charter members and was incorporated on March 12, 1940 as the "Arthur E. Giles Post 364."

On March 7, 1947, the Post name was changed to "Giles-Luce Post 364", commemorating Staff Sergeant William E. Luce.

The Post building was originally the Legion Bar, which was located in the current site of the Village Pub. The current clubhouse was built between 1987 and 1989, with the frame erected by Roger Konkell, finish interior work done by Post members.

It is a long name, Giles-Luce American Legion Post 364, but we feel it important to acknowledge the ultimate sacrifice paid by these specific service members.

Private First Class Arthur E. Giles was born on December 31, 1893 in Winneconne. He served with honor in the US



Army and fought in World War I. On September 29, 1918, he was killed in action. PFC Giles was part of the 32nd Division, 107th Ammunition Trains.

He received the Purple Heart and is buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, in France.

Staff Sergeant William E. Luce, a Winneconne native who served his country with honor in the United States Army Air Forces.

SSG Luce was attached to the 13th Air Force, 307th Bombardment Group, 372nd Bomber Squadron in World War II and was reported missing and

ultimately declared dead on March 20, 1944. He had flown 44 combat missions as an assistant radio operator aerial gunner. The plane he was flying in was lost and, to this day, the wreckage has not yet been found.

Post Public Information Officer Drew Jaeger shared

"100 years of something continuing in any town is a significant achievement. Most businesses do not survive that long. May it be a place of healing, comradeship, and service for the next 100 years".

Veteran attendees were gifted 100th anniversary challenge coins.



Back row, standing (L-R) are 21 MHS Varsity baseball players; Katrina McKee, Post 245 Auxiliary President; John Edelblute IV, Department Scouting Chairman and 4th District Adjutant. **Front row, kneeling (L-R)** are Steve Kohnke, Department VC; Nathan Bond, Department Commander; Rita Rindahl, Department Vice Commander; Gary Itten, Post 245 Adjutant; Steve Zanon, Post 245 Commander; Kathy Statz, Post 245 Auxiliary; Bill Statz, Post 245 Legion Baseball Chair; Matt Cash, Post 245 SAL; and Tim McKee, Post 245 SAL.

LEGION APPRECIATION EVENT HONORS POST 245

On May 2, Middleton Cross Plains American Legion Post 245 was honored with a "Legion Appreciation" event. It was hosted by the Middleton HS Baseball coaches and players, held at a regular MHS Varsity Baseball game. It was quite an honor to be so recognized, for all we do at Post 245 for MHS, especially Legion Baseball, but also all the other programs like scholarships, Badger Boys and Badger Girls state, color guards, etc. Also, Post 245 and Legion Baseball have strong support at Legion Department (State) headquarters in Portage. There were 4 honored special guests from Department who come to town for the

event! See photo.

Note: The team in the photo is the MHS Varsity team. Most of these varsity players, and the players from the other MHS JV teams, and community, also play on the 3 MHS/Legion Baseball summer teams. Post 245 sponsors all 3 MHS/Legion Baseball teams at levels: SR/19U, 17U, and JR/16U. The Legion Baseball regular season runs from June 6 - July 15. Regional championship tournaments for each of the 3 levels are July 16 - July 25. State championship tournaments are July 26 - August 1st. Last summer, the SR/19U team was Legion Baseball 2025 AAA State Champions!

POST 32 MENOMONIE DONATES TO RIVERS OF RECOVERY



From left: Program Guide Jean Rogalski, Program Guide Margaret Hafemann, Program Coordinator Brenda Falk, Post 32 Cmdr. Jon Brutlag and Post 32 Adj. John Miller.

The American Legion, Hosford-Chase Post 32 of Menomonie donated \$1,000 to the Wisconsin Women's Veterans group Rivers of Recovery.

The northwestern Wisconsin chapter of Rivers of Recovery is a women veterans' program conducted by women veterans, which provides a safe and supportive retreat environment for military women veterans who are healing from the physical and psychological traumas of their military service. The program is a free retreat-based program that uses drift boats and instruction by fellow women veterans in teaching the fundamentals and techniques of fly-fishing.

Watch their video on YouTube: [Rivers of Recovery: Wisconsin Women Veterans Retreats](#). Contact Brenda Falk, Wisconsin Women's Coordinator, at 715-317-0562 or womenriversofrecovery@gmail.com

Submitted by John W. Miller, Adjutant of Post 32, Menomonie.



SAL 121 SCHOLARSHIPS



On May 13, Squadron 121 of River Falls Commander Gary Lubich presented two scholarships worth \$1,000 dollars each two River Falls Senior high school students from left to right Austin Stellrecht, Squadron Commander Gary Lubich and Nathalie Rotsatert.



FLANAGAN-DORN POST 294 HARTLAND MARK MEMORIAL DAY

ABOVE LEFT: Post 294 Memorial Day Speakers: (L-R) Ron Schell, honored Legion member of Korean War era; Kenny Pettitt, UW Madison student who read "In Flanders Fields"; Ryder Hanson, grandson of ex-post American Legion Cmdr., Ken Zilisch, who read "Gettysburg Address"; main speaker of the day, retired Air Force Brigadier General William Walker; and John Kraft, Adj. Post 294 and host, emcee of day's events.

ABOVE RIGHT: Three students were each awarded \$1,000 in the Legion and VFW Joint Scholarship. (L-R) Tom Lay, Commander of American Legion Post 294; Lindsey Christman and Will Hoffman, award recipients (award winner Allison Nitz absent); and Dale Hansen, American Legion member and Commander of Marshall-Johnson Post 5158 of the Hartland VFW.

AT RIGHT: Post 294 Memorial Day Firing at 11:00 a.m.



Post 21 Commander John Argust, Post 21 member and team sponsor Milt Dean, Head coach Steve Grzesziewicz, his wife Laura, Monte Culbertson, Shane Nighbor, Andrew Spangler, John Stockwell, and Daron Terfhen.



POST 435 AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP

Superior Post 435 awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Amber Smith, a graduating senior from Superior Senior High School, at their meeting on May 12. She is the first of two Scholarships winners this year. Amber will be attending the University of Wisconsin Stout in Menomonie this fall and will major in Education. Scholarship Committee Members pictured with Amber are (L-R) John Vaski, Del Kansas, Amber Smith (Scholarship recipient), Commander Butch Liebaert, and Randy Freeman. Ryan Jost was absent when the photo was taken.



SEVEN RIVER FALLS GRADS ENLIST IN ARMED FORCES

Seven graduating students from the River Falls School District who have enlisted in the Armed Forces were recognized and honored at a Patriotic Honor Cord Ceremony, in collaboration with the American Legion Post 121. Post 121 Commander Larry Larson and Unit President Rhonda Klink along with The American Legion Color Guard was also present. This ceremony is a graduation related event that recognizes students who have enlisted in the Armed Forces. These cords are worn during commencement to signify their service, dedication, and patriotism. The female students are going into the Air Force, Army ROTC and Army. The male student joined the Navy.

POST 21 SPONSORS LITTLE LEAGUERS

American Legion Post 21 Paul Herrick of Kenosha was entertained this spring/summer with a 9-10-year-old little league team sponsored by a post member. Little League Baseball has been in existence in Kenosha for 73 years. The league is made up of 36 teams of boys and girls from Ages 7-12. The complex consists of 4 astro turf fields and is named after De. James L. Santarelli who is the commissioner of the league. Post 21 member Milt Dean has sponsored the team over the past 3 seasons with encouragement from both the Legion Post and Dr. Santarelli. His plans are to continue supporting this team each season of play.

The coach of the team is Steve Grzeszkiewicz. He and his coaching staff, which includes his wife, have put their hearts into the team's progress.

This is one of many accomplishments Post 21 does in support of the community. The pride of the Post is advertised on the backs of the youngster's jerseys "American Legion Post 21."



BRUCE BLUE HILLS FEST



On July 12, the Bruce American Legion, Earl J. Conley Post 268 Honor Guard led the 2026 Bruce Blue Hills Fest parade.



WINNEBAGO COUNTY OFFICERS



New Winnebago County Officers: (L-R) Sgt.-at-Arms Chris Rosenow, Chaplain Bob Borszich, Adjutant/Finance Officer Jim Barkholtz, Vice Commander Chase Freimark, and Commander Shelly Hoffman.

BLACK EARTH QUILTS OF VALOR



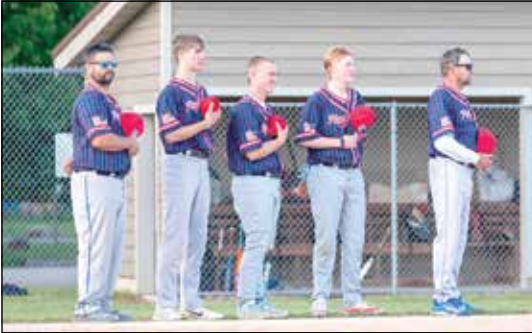
Black Earth American Legion Post 313 Quilt of Valor awards July 13. L-R Post Commander Gary Ballweg, 2nd Vice Commander Nick Roberson, and Chaplain Tom Bennett.



ALMA POST, SQUADRON 224 INSTALL OFFICERS

Alma American Legion Post 224 and Sons Of The American Legion Squadron 224 installed their Officers Thursday evening June 18, that will serve for two-year terms, starting July 1. LEFT: The Alma Legion Post 224 Officers sworn in were (R-L) Commander Richard Mueller, First Vice Commander Scott Smolen, Adjutant and Chaplain Daniel Schultz, Finance Officer John Hadley, Service Officer Lori Smolen and Sergeant-At-Arms Orlyn Hokscho. Not pictured were 2nd Vice Commander Amber Huber, Historian David Bautch, and Sergeant-At-Arms-Adrian Morchinek. All Legion Members at Alma appreciate the continuing support given to our Community Military Veterans and their Families! CENTER: The following Officers were sworn in The Sons of The American Legion were the five Officers who attended in person (R-L) Commander Bret Purrington, First Vice Commander Brian Michaels, Finance Officer Barry Purrington, Sergeant-At-Arms-Thomas Lorenz (JR), and Sergeant-At-Arms-Brad Purrington. RIGHT: The Installing Officer was Chuck Michaels. Not pictured were Officers attending via Zoom were: Adjutant Monti Schreiber, Chaplain Kerry Michaels, 2nd Vice Commander Brady Michaels, and Historian Jeffrey Pank.

THREE LAKES FIELDS FIRST LEGION TEAM



Three Lakes American Legion Post 431 is proud to announce its first-ever boys baseball team. The Northwoods Legion Baseball Team already has the support of the community as the bleachers have been filled with cheering fans! Photos by @shootingmemoriesupnorth



POST 395 KINGSTON GIVES TWO HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS



Matthew Bartz (left) and Madelynn Quade (right) were presented scholarships from Kingston Post 395 by Commander Derek Kohn. Matthew, a Markesan High School graduate, will attend Ripon College in the Fall. Madelynn will be attending college in Madison to become a dental hygienist.



BLACK EARTH POST 313 SWEARS IN NEW OFFICERS



Black Earth American Legion Post 313, swearing in of officers on July 13, 2026. L-R: 1st Vice Commander Jim Connors, 2nd Vice Commander Nick Roberson, Sgt. At Arms Dick Handel, Vice Commander John Heintz, Chaplain Bill Rettenmund, Commander Gary Ballweg, Historian Dennis Wood, Service Officer David Barsness, Finance Officer David Cooper and administering the oath is Dane County Commander Virgil Smith.

POST 20 HELPS RUN IT UP THE NEW FLAGPOLE



On June 14, members of Essman-Schroeder American Legion Post 20 Waterford helped business owners Chuck and Theresa Torosian dedicate a new flagpole at the River City Lanes in Waterford. Pictured are members of Post 20 along with the Torosians and several of their employees.

WILTON POST 508 QUILTS



The Wilton American Legion Post 508 and the Wilton American Legion Auxiliary conducted a fundraiser for its Scholarship Fund. The first prize was a quilt, valued at \$800, made and donated by Auxiliary member Pam Brandau. Vern Tranberg, a member of the West Salem American Legion was the happy winner of the quilt. Pictured from left to right, is Pam Brandau, Commander, Steven Brandau Sr. and Vern Tranberg.

ADAMS RED CLOUD POST 250 MEMBERS ASSISTED POST 129 BLACK RIVER FALLS AT EVENT



(L to R) Cmdr Al Arndt, Vice Cmdr. Dean Gleason, Adjutant Rushell Moyer and Wil Resch assisted Post 129 Carry in Military Crest flags at the Annual Pow Wow at Black River Falls during the Memorial Day Event.



CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM BRINGS ST. NAZIANZ TOGETHER FOR AMERICA'S 250TH AT HISTORIC MEEME LIBERTY POLE

The St. Nazianz American Legion Post 477 Family celebrated two significant milestones with community members on July 4, 2026: America's 250th Birthday and the dedication of a new secondary flagpole at the historic Meeme Liberty Pole site.

The Celebration of Freedom began with a welcome from Post Commander Kevin Nett, who introduced Master of Ceremonies Dean Koenig. Post Chaplain Tim Wippermann delivered the opening prayer, followed by Wendy Jacobs singing the National Anthem. Nancy Schnell Rivera narrated the 13 Folds of the Flag while members of the Post Honor Guard conducted the ceremonial folding.

Koenig shared the history of the Meeme Liberty Pole, including the story of Norbert, a young boy who

attended the Liberty Pole's 1922 dedication. Years later, he served during World War II, earning both the Purple Heart and the Silver Star with Valor for his heroism during the Normandy Invasion.

Guest speaker Faye Billman, a retired Kiel High School teacher, opened her remarks with "Happy Birthday, America!" before reflecting on the nation's 250 years. She reminded attendees that, "History is one of the few things everyone shares."

The ceremony also featured America the Beautiful, performed by Mrs. Jacobs, and a six-flag honor line featuring the United States, the POW/MIA, The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion, and the America 250 flags. The program concluded with a ceremonial

three-volley salute by the Post Honor Guard.

Designated a Wisconsin State Historic Landmark in 1974, the Meeme Liberty Pole has been a gathering place for patriotic celebrations for more than a century. However, after 104 years of service and exposure to the elements, it could no longer safely support a large American flag.

To preserve the landmark while ensuring the Stars and Stripes continues to fly over the site, American Legion Post 477 launched a capital campaign with a goal of raising \$25,000. Thanks to generous support from veterans, residents, businesses, and community organizations, the goal was reached in less than six months.

The new 60-foot commercial-grade flagpole now proudly



displays a 12-by-18-foot American flag. The historic Meeme Liberty Pole remains the centerpiece of the site, where the America 250 flag will fly through the remainder of 2026. Beginning in 2027, the Liberty Pole will once again display a smaller American flag on patriotic holidays, preserving its historic significance for future generations.



POST 508 MOWER DONATION



The Wilton American Legion Post 508, Wilton, submitted a request through the Toro Equipment Donation Program. Through Toro's generosity, the Wilton American Legion received a 48-inch Z Master riding lawn mower. The Toro Equipment Donation Program will allow the Wilton Legion to maintain its property for years to come. Pictured are Dennis Grange from Granges LLC, who delivered the mower, and Steve Brandau, Commander, Wilton American Legion Post 508.

MATTOON MEMORIAL DAY PARADE WITH JOHN OWEN AMERICAN LEGION POST 287

It's never too late to learn, the Post members question if they are making a difference in their communities since we are a small group. It was decided this would be the last year for Post 287 having a float or even marching the Mattoon Veterans Kids in the parade. How wrong we were in even thinking this, for Memorial Day is to remember and honor those that gave the ultimate sacrifice. The Post's float had 20 figures ranging up to 6 ft. tall hand painted moments in military history. The Flag of Iwo Jima, the Three Soldiers Vietnam Memorial, Native American Vietnam Soldier holding feathered spear, Black American pilots of World War II to Amelia Earhart, Johnny Shiloh and Nurses and Medics saving lives... So many that not all could be honored on the float. The Mattoon Veterans Kids didn't just dress up to have fun, but to honor and show the freedoms taking part in the dreams by those



that gave the ultimate sacrifice now passed on to them. Our Mattoon Veterans Kids Civil War Officer who is 14 years old, gave honor to his grandfather who served in the European and African Theatre in World War II by playing his grandpa's original trumpet from World



War II. Robert Inman, alongside with Post 287 Bugler James Williams, played "Taps" in Woodlawn Cemetery Ceremony. At the Mattoon Fire Department picnic, Post 287 gave out three donations to the community. \$1,000 to the Mattoon Fire and Rescue, \$2,500 to the



Mattoon Shepherd Watch Academy and \$2,250 to the Mattoon Fourth of July Fire Works. The Mattoon Veterans Kids are already planning for next year's Memorial Day Parade, as our 14-year-old trumpet player plans on giving honor once more. It's never too late to learn.



On June 13, the Bruce American Legion, Earl J. Conley Post 268 hosted a Rusk County wide flag disposal ceremony. The ceremony included representatives from various county veteran organizations, auxiliaries and Bruce Scouts.

POST 268 FLAG DISPOSAL



POST 501 PROVIDES FAMILY STYLE FEAST

In this 14th Annual "Loop the Lake Benefit Bike Ride" event, thousands of Madison cyclists pedaled around Lake Monona. Event proceeds will support Clean Lakes Alliance's work to protect and improve our lakes through on-the-ground projects, educational programs, and water quality monitoring. This event took place on June 20 in Madison.



WELCOME HOME!



Army Soldier Chris Leahr, who was welcomed home from being overseas in Kuwait and Jordan for over a year, at D&H Industries in Oconomowoc. Back row left to right: Steve Proell, Dave Dabbinski, Sam Gerrits, Garry Bierel, Marilyn Lovejoy. Sitting on the bench, which was a gift from D&H Industries to welcome Chris home: Chris Leahr, Oconomowoc Post 91 American Legion Commander Tamara Key and her service dog Drax. D&H Industries had the whole shift come in. They provided food and drinks along with the ceremony. Post 91 Commander Tamara Key presented Chris with a certificate, Post coin, and a one-year membership.

PDC ENDRES, PDP ENDRES



Past Department Commander Leo Endres and Past Department President Joyce Endres pictured here with Nathan Bond at the 107th Department Convention in Appleton.

MUSIC (AND BURGERS) IN THE PARK



Algoma American Legion Post 236 Commander Mike Froelich (right), and pitmasters Randy Remiker (left) and Jeff Ferris (center), along with other Legion members, served burgers and brats during Algoma Music in the Park July 2. Kevin Naze photo.



REEDSBURG CANON

Reedsburg Mayor Dave Estes acted as the Master of Ceremonies at the Webb Park Canon Dedication. This was a three-year project of the Reedsburg American Legion Post 350. Rep. Tony Kurtz was the guest speaker for the dedication. The Reedsburg American Legion Post 350 Honor and Color Guard performed the dedication ceremony. Post 350 member Charles Bakeberg was a special guest. He helped dedicate the canon in 1958 when it was first placed in Webb Park as a member of the WI National Guard Honor Guard.

BE THE ONE WALK HELD

A Be The One walk was held prior to Department of Convention to bring attention to the American Legion's mission to prevent veteran suicide.

Alternate NEC Karl Stuvengen, DVC Candace Rothering, Rosanna Bogle, Mike Van Heeswyk, Karen Argust, DVC Steven Kohnke, 1st Dist Cdr John Argust, CDR Nathan Bond, Larry Bogle, Tom Visintainer, Larry Bogle, DVC Rita Rindahl, Mary Kohnke.



POST 33 HONOR GUARD

Neenah Post 33 Honor Guard at a local baseball game.



DANE COUNTY INSTALLATION

PNC Denise Rohan (not in photo) presided at the installation of the Dane County Council officers for 2026-2027. From left are Commander Virgil Smith, 1VC Gary Ballweg, 2VC Seán Patchin, 3VC Scott Relitz, SAA Phil Haas, Unit President Jane Cree (Executive Committee Member), Legion Riders Chair David Barman (Executive Committee Member), Finance Chairman Dennis Riley, and Historian Morris Sadicario. June 25, 2026, at Otis Sampson Stoughton Post 59.



POST 171 FACILITY GETS RECOGNITION

The Bixby-Hanson Post 171 facility was recognized by the Greater Union Grove Area Chamber of Commerce with a plaque marking the historic significance of their building in Union Grove. Post 171 and Unit 171 Auxiliary Board Members were honored to accept this award and attach it to the building in a place of prominence.



POST 60 SUPPORTS YOUTH BASEBALL

Kimberly Verhagen Post 60 supports Kimberly Rec youth baseball. Two teams show off the team shirts provided by Post 60.

POST 21 AT THE KENOSHA POPS BAND



The Paul Herrick Post 21 Color Guard presented colors for the Kenosha Pops band. They have a long tradition of being tied to the American Legion.

ST. NAZIANZ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



St. Nazianz Commander Kevin Nett recently presented scholarships to two deserving recipients: Ava Rothe, a 2026 graduate of Kiel High School, and U.S. Army Veteran Steve Manring. Rothe (at left with her parents and Nett) will attend Mississippi Christian University, where she will pursue a degree in Occupational Therapy while continuing her volleyball career as a student-athlete. Manring (at right with Nett) is attending American Military University and working toward a degree in Cyber Security.

MADISON POST 501 OFFICER INSTALLATION



Madison Post 501's officers at the installation closing prayer. From front to back are CDR Jerry Scalissi, IVC Phil Ingwell, Finance Officer PDVC Keith Lovell, Judge Advocate Jesse Garza, 2nd Vice Commander Harvey Phillips, Executive Committee Member (ECM) Paul Reilly, Service Officer Joshua Binstock, ECM Christine Robbins, Chaplain/3VC Darrel "AJ" Feucht, ECM William Robbins, and SAA Eldon Boehm. Department Historian Morris Sadicario (not shown) presided.

POST 21, SQUADRON 21 MEMBERS SHOW RESPECT



Members of Post and Squadron 21 in Kenosha show respect for fallen Legionnaire Gene Ellison on June 29.

ALF POST 201 HONORS JROTC CADET

On March 20, The American Legion Family of Tomah Post 201, of District 7, members Amy Campbell and Billy Williams had the honor of presenting the Academic Excellence Leadership Award to



Cadet Marshall Reiman of the Timber Wolf Battalion, Tomah High School JROTC.

AMVETS Post 1776 and Riders Chapter 1776 also had the honor of presenting Recognition of Outstanding Academic Achievement and Exemplary Leadership.

Cadet Marshall Reiman Graduated with the Class of 2026 from Tomah High School has Enlisted in the United States Army to become a Chaplains Assistant; we the members of The American Legion Family and The Amvets Organization are proud to recognize his accomplishments.

Written by Billy Williams, American Legion Post 201.

MADISON POST 501 FUNDRAISER



From left, Virginia and Eldon Boehm, Gerry Henrikson, Keith Lovell, Jerry Scalissi, Sarah Paterson (East Side Club), Phil Ingwell, Jesse Garza, and Tom Stolarczyk set up a fundraiser for Madison Post 501 at the East Side Club.

KINGSTON POST 395 IN THE MARQUETTE 4TH



Kingston Post 395 participated in the July 4th parade in Marquette.

NEW WAUNAKEE POST 360 OFFICERS



AT LEFT: New Post 360 Commander. BELOW: Department Commander Scott Klassy installed new Waunakee Post 360 Officers: Jim Steffenhagen, Chaplain; Jim Bush, Finance Officer; Dave Ripp, Commander; Kevin Murtha, Adjutant; and Dave Barman, Sgt.-at-Arms.



BADGER BOYS DONATION



Blystones Towing and Repair is the U-Haul agent in Portage. Badger Boys State rents a U-Haul van every year to haul supplies to and from UW-Eau Claire for the session. This year, Craig Blystone donated the costs of the van rental. Pictured here is Norm Bednarek, Badger Boys State Board member and retired Portage High School Auto Shop teacher, and Craig Blystone. Craig was one of Norm's students when he was teaching.

UNION GROVE 4TH OF JULY



The Union Grove Bixby-Hanson Post 171 Honor Guard leads the Union Grove 2026 4th of July Parade.

WAUKESHA COUNTY COMMANDER



Marty McFarland (Past Oconomowoc Post 91 CDR) is installed as Waukesha County Commander by "Tomar" Tom Strey, who is a past 1st Vice Commander at the Department level. This took place June 27 at Post 91 in Oconomowoc.

American Legion Years of Continuous Service



60 YEARS — During their Memorial Day ceremonies, La Valle Post 242 presented member Clinton Mihlbauer with a certificate acknowledging his 60 years Legion membership. Presenting the certificate is Post First Vice Commander Ben Dvorak (foreground).



80 YEARS — Post 245 in Middleton/Cross Plains celebrated the 80 years continuous membership of WWII veteran Keith Faust seen here with his daughters.



70 YEARS — Onalaska Post 336 Commander Paul Roraff Sr. presents his father, Post 336 Member Philip J. Roraff Sr., with a Certificate of Continuous Membership, pin, and coin for 70 continuous years at their 2026 Past Commanders and Past Presidents Banquet.



60 YEARS — WWII veteran Cecile Coats, 99 years old, (seated on right) received a 60-year Continuous Service certificate as a member of American Legion Post 6 in Stevens Point from Post 6 Commander Dave Strelke (seated on left). Coats was a long-time leader of the Post 6 Rifle Squad. Post 6 members (standing L-R) are Dennis Kaminski, David Dietsche, Barbara McCloy, Mark Mysocki, Stan Kostka and John Adamski. Unfortunately, Cecil passed away on June 16. May he rest in peace.



50 YEARS — Post 245 in Middleton/Cross Plains celebrated the 50 years continuous membership of Jay Moretti and Orville Kerl.

ABOVE: Post 245 Post 245 Commander Steve Zanon with Jay Moretti and his 50 continuous years of service certificate.

BELOW: Post 245 Post 245 Commander Steve Zanon with Orville Kerl and his certificate for 50 years of continuous service.



60 YEARS — American Legion Post 336 in Onalaska held their 2026 Past Commanders and Past Presidents Banquet. Continuous Membership awards were presented. LEFT: Post 336 1st Vice Commander Howard Horman Jr. presents his father, Post 336 Member Howard Horman Sr. a Certificate of Continuous Membership and coin for 60 continuous years. RIGHT: Post 336 Commander Paul Roraff Sr. Presents Post 336 Member Clarence Newberry Jr., a Certificate of Continuous Membership and coin for 60 continuous years.



60 YEARS — Bay City Legion Post 357 recently recognized Gerald Sprick and Steve Funk for 60 years of Legion Membership and dedication to service. Left to right, Gerald Sprick, Steve Funk, Post Commander Dave Johnson.



50 YEARS — Algoma Post 236 member Wayne Klemik received his 50 year continuous membership certificate from National Vice Commander Steve Weissmann from Tennessee. Also pictured is Algoma Post 236 Commander Mike Froelich.



40 YEARS — Black Earth American Legion Post 313 at May monthly meeting. L-R Post Judge Advocate Ken Meigs is congratulated by Post Commander Gary Ballweg for his 40 years of membership.



50 YEARS — Post 360 Commander Betsy Mulcahy presented the 50-year membership award to Jim Bush.



POST 83 SHEBOYGAN RECOGNIZES BASEBALL PLAYERS

Post 83 in Sheboygan formally recognized the top players from their baseball team from the 2025 season. From left to right Post Commander Randy Meyer, Top Hitter Kyle Heling, Top Pitcher Rhett Albright, Coach Weston Jurk receiving the Top Fielder award for Sean Allen, and Post Baseball Chairman Kerk Evans presenting. 1st Vice Commander Mark Winkel looking on. Congratulations to all the award winners.



ELEVA BROILER FEST PARADE

Members of Brackett Post/Squadron 550 with Department Vice Commander Rita Rindahl standing in front of Dan Schillings 1940 Buick (Betty) prior to the Eleva Broiler Fest parade on May 31.

NEW AUBURN AREA VETERANS MEMORIAL



The New Auburn Slining-Caulkins American Legion Post 267 was extremely proud to dedicate the New Auburn Area Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day this year. WI State Rep. Rob Summerfield gave the key note speech.

WAUNAKEE POST 360 HONORS LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR HONORED



Past Post 360 Commander Sandy Johnson presented the 2026 Legionnaire of the Year to Jim Steffenhagen.



DARLINGTON DONATION

Four members of the Darlington High Girls Basketball program will be participating in the Division 4 Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association All-Star game on June 24. The players are Sadie Goebel and Maddison Gratz and the coaches are Michael Flanagan and Kelly Rose. One of the Four Pillars of The American Legion is Children and Youth and Darlington American Legion Post 214 decided to support Sadie and Maddison for all their hard work and dedication to the Basketball program by donating a check for \$200. Pictured are Post 214 Legion member Dan O'Brien and coach Michael Flanagan.

POST 410 AWARDS TWO SCHOLARSHIPS



The Warren Kane Post 410 in Fredonia attended the Seniors Awards Night at Ozaukee High School, the Post awarded two scholarships. LEFT: Joe Schneider, Post Adjutant, and Rick Nelson, Post Commander, present the Post Scholarship to Nolan Aberle. He will be attending UW-Whitewater to major in finance. RIGHT: Auxiliary Present Ellen Liska presents the Legion scholarship to Chloe Dybul. She will be attending Concordia University majoring in nursing.



PORTAGE POST 47 AT DELLS RACEWAY



Portage American Legion Post 47 presented the colors at the opening ceremonies at Dells Raceway. The Wisconsin American Legion car was the honorary pace car.

POST 120 WEST ALLIS RAISES FUNDS



West Allis Tanner-Paull Post 120 was proud to help raise over \$3,000 for the West Allis Police Department and West Allis Fire Department through the Dunk Tank at West Allis A La Carte! A huge thank you to everyone who stopped by, donated, took a turn throwing a ball, or volunteered their time. Your generosity and community spirit made this event a tremendous success. A special shout out to Christy Schultz, Randy Dynek, Gary Mirr and Bruce Lawson for volunteering! We are grateful for the opportunity to support the dedicated first responders who serve our community every day. Thank you, West Allis, for coming out and making a difference!

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT



Julie Muhle
Department
Adjutant

One of the more common questions I get these days pertains to Post finances. Here are some of those questions pertaining to the subject:

- **Our finance officer won't give us a documented report.** This is a red flag. If they don't know how to use a computer, they can at least handwrite what money came in and went out since the last meeting. If this happens at your post, you should do an immediate audit. If you suspect improprieties, contact your local police department to make an initial report pending the outcome of your audit.
- **Our bar manager won't give us a documented report.** Same as above. As members, anyone handling money owes you a report of activity since the last meeting – unless the bar is being rented from an independent entity separate from the post. In this case, you do not have a right to know their business.
- **We have a new finance officer and the previous one will not return the books.** Anything you use for Post, County or District business (keys, documents, etc.) is that of the entity. It is NOT personal property and is considered theft of property if not returned.
- **How often should we do an audit?** Annually is good for everyone. If your post is small, get a couple of people not on the finance committee to review the books with the bank statements. If you have a lot of money, a bar or other business, you should to get a CPA to do the books.
- **We lost our non-profit status due to not filing a 990 for more than three years.** Please contact me if this happened! We have solidified a process to help you get it back and can send you the paperwork to get it started. Not sure if you lost your non-profit status? You can go to apps.irs.gov/app/eos/ and enter your EIN or select organization name.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

THE EVER-CHANGING BENEFIT LANDSCAPE



James Fialkowski
Department Veterans
Service Officer

Being the Department Service Officer, I have had to learn to understand the many changes to the benefits over the years. Be it, Veterans Affairs (VA) implemented regulation changes, precedential court cases, or laws passed, we must adapt to and be able to work with them. Over the years I have written articles to assist others in knowing about, understanding, and navigating these changes.

I wrote about the radiation exposure compensation act, Camp Lejeune toxic water, Blue Water Veterans for Agent Orange exposure, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), and multiple articles explaining the PACT Act when it was passed.

I feel compelled to write about the latest bill under consideration is the Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA), as I have been approached with questions of concern. TCAVA is a massive, bipartisan legislative package combining over 60 veterans' bills.

If TCAVA passes it would expand suicide prevention programs, caregiver support, and through the Major Richard Star Act eliminate the offset between disability and retirement pay for combat-injured veterans.

This sounds good, but some are concerned about the changes to how the VA compensates for sleep apnea and tinnitus. Some are worried that their current rating may be changed and some worry about those who apply for benefits in the future.

To answer these questions, I will go over the changes. The new rating removes the separate compensable disability rating of 10% for tinnitus unless it is diagnosed as associated with a non-compensable service-connected hearing loss. The rating for sleep apnea currently affords a 50 percent disability rating for requiring the use of a breathing assistance device such as continuous airway pressure machine (commonly referred to as a CPAP). The rating change is based on post treatment that would allow the following. A zero percent disability for asymptomatic sleep apnea syndrome. A 10 percent disability for sleep apnea syndrome when treatment yields incomplete relief. 50 percent shall be assigned for sleep apnea syndrome when treatment is either ineffective, or the veteran is unable to use the prescribed treatment due to comorbid conditions and there is no end-organ damage. A disability of 100 percent shall be assigned for sleep apnea syndrome only if there is also end-organ damage.

If passed, these new ratings will be implemented from the passage date of the act and will not change anything to those already rated. Also, those with existing claims or intent to files (ITF) will benefit from either rule by getting the greater benefit provided. Example, a veteran files a claim for sleep apnea March 2026 and TCAVA passes August 2026. If the veteran successfully gets service connected for their sleep apnea, the VA will use the schedule of rating prior to the law change to create the rating from March to August. The VA will then use both the prior schedule and the new schedule of ratings to grant the higher of the two evaluations in comparison.

Please contact your local CVSO or our Service Office with added questions.

“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

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION: 2026 SEASON CLOSING WORK

Jim Klement
Camp American Legion Director

Camp American Legion is on the final stretch of the 2026 Season. Another great season was had by our veterans and volunteers. There still is a lot of work ahead with closing of camp.

All of our cabin sponsors will be coming up in October to get their camp winterized. Cabins will have to be stripped of linens, cleaning and paper products. Pontoons will have the lower unit drained and filled, kayaks and paddle boats will need to be tarped and stored. All water will need to be turned off and water heaters drained

That is just small fraction of what needs to happen in a short amount of time. Lucky, camp has some of the greatest volunteers.

Melvin Webster Post 412 from Belgium has been a huge part of camp opening and closing. They have been doing this for over 60 years. The water crew will handle all cabins with turning off the water and draining all water heaters. While the rest of their group will be working on cleaning, organizing and what ever else camp needs. The last couple years they have gone through multiple sheds and our maintenance building. The maintenance building has never looked so good.

We still are always in need of volunteers to help get camp ready for the long winter. If you are interested in helping please give camp a call at 715-277-2510.

Thank You,
Jim Klement, Camp Director

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

DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN

The months preceding and following July 4th lent themselves naturally to celebrations and commemorations. The Hmong-Lao Veterans Day Commemoration in mid-May was highlighted by the unveiling of a new monument. Also in May, Diane Carlson Evans, instrumental in installing the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C., passed away after a long and courageous battle against cancer. For her efforts, she received The American Legion's Patriot Award and Distinguished Service Medal. PNC Denise Rohan agreed to accept the medal in her place. Flag Day once again showed how well the City of Appleton and Appleton Post 38 turned out for this celebratory parade. Badger Boys State was held at UW-Eau Claire. The American Legion Riders brought June to a close with their 2026 ALRA Cruise for a Cause. July 4th celebrations were held throughout the state. A synchronized world-wide reading of the Declaration of Independence took place on July 8 in Madison.

The 107th Annual Department Convention in Appleton began with the "Be the One" hike. The following day, at the first session, several awards were presented, including those for Wisconsin Employers of Veterans (Mars Petcare, Vortex and Sysco). In a major presentation, Dr. Jeff Whittle, M.D., of Milwaukee's Clement Zablocki Medical Center informed us about new approaches to reducing veteran suicides. The techniques were developed by the VA and evaluated with the cooperation of several Milwaukee-area American Legion Posts. The Martha Marlowe Distinguished Historian Award was presented to Team Leader Charles Konsitzke for his work with the "UW Missing-in-Action Recovery and Identification Program." Many Legionnaires, Unit and Squadron members were recognized for their work in Americanism, Children and Youth, and other Legion Programs. Our Educator of the Year was Charlene Ulichny Chopin. Chris Kowalkowski of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and Chair of the America250 Commission spoke on Wisconsin's role in the American revolution, and informed us that we had an Army, Navy and Marines before The United States of America became a nation.

We congratulated Department Commander-elect Steven Kohnke, and Department Vice-Commanders-elect Candace Rothering (Districts 1, 2, 4), Chet Faith (3, 7, 10), Scott Markle (11, 12), and Deb Thomas (6, 8, 9), and John Argust (SAA). Karl Stuvengen (NEC) and Nathan Bond (Alt-NEC) were nominated for their posts and will be confirmed at the National Convention in Louisville, KY.

Convention photos can be seen at <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCZ9bi>

NATIONAL & HOMELAND SECURITY

TROOP & FAMILY SUPPORT FUND

Dave Wischer
National and Homeland Security Committee Chair

Hello everyone and Thank You for your contributions to the T&FS fund. The raffle for the 65" TV at the Department Convention was a success, money was raised to help our fellow veterans and their families in need of assistance.

But "Our" mission continues, as our Department Service office continually receives requests from our brothers and sisters.

The funds that are provided have a direct impact on their lives. This program makes a difference. Please consider donating or have your Post or District contribute from a fundraising event. I also want to thank everyone that donated blood, not only at Department Convention, but during the entire year. You have a direct effect in saving lives. Don't forget to start looking for individuals eligible for the Public Safety awards. It takes time to put together a proper application, so now is a good time to start. Applications are on the Department website.

ABOVE LEFT: Kenosha County Law Day essay finalists, Kenosha Deputy Friendly, teachers and the Post 21 Family. ABOVE RIGHT: Law Day Essay Winner Rylee Staples with State Representative Amanda Nedweski. BELOW: Post 21 family representatives Karen O'Brien, John Argust, Tom Visintainer and Carol Ratliff really enjoyed the bus ride to Madison.

POST 21 TAKES LAW DAY TO MADISON

Kenosha County Law Day in Madison is a special event. The American Legion Post 21 family and Kenosha Sheriff's Department Deputy Friendly, Casey Rude were once again honored to host essay finalists at the State Capitol in Madison on May 13.

Kenosha schools included All Saints Catholic School, Randall, Trevor-Wilmot, Wheatland, Salem, Brighton, Bristol and Lakewood.

Essay topic was "The Rule of Law and the American Dream." Congratulations to the winner, Rylee Staples of Trevor-Wilmot. Great job!

The group toured the Capitol and sat in on a live State Assembly session. We visited the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and enjoyed lunch at Culver's.

What a great day to take a ride on a school bus and make new friends! Thank you Deputy Friendly, State Representative Amanda Nedweski, and the teachers who make this happen!

POST 499 HOLDS MEET AND GREET

Post 499 in Gordon held a meet and greet on May 16.

LEFT: Post members planning strategies.

CENTER: Mike Bessler joins Post 499 watched by mother Cyndi and Post Commander John Stoczynski.

RIGHT: Coast Guard shipmates reunited at Gordon's meet and greet, Tom Visocky and Kirk Walters joined!



DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

Dan Workenaour
Department
Chaplain

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight". Proverbs 3: 5-6 It means relying entirely on God's perfect wisdom and timing instead of trying to figure everything out on your own. I have learned the hard way but once you let Him into your heart and mind, you will feel relaxed and able to accomplish your task. There is nothing like it; feeling the energy grow within you and knowing He has given you opportunities to "make your day".

As your newly appointed Department Chaplain, there is nothing greater than supporting the many vets and their families of the American Legion. I am hoping that you use the programs that the Legion provides. They are there for you and your Post Chaplain is there to help you when they can. I am there for your Post, County, and District Chaplains. But that does not mean you cannot contact me, but please use your help chain. Your Chaplain is there for you not just as a friend, but as your spiritual leader. Anything you say to them will always be treated as private and confidential.

To all my fellow Post, County, and District Chaplains. This past June, we had a Chaplains retreat at Camp American Legion. It was a wonderful time of camaraderie, sitting around the campfire, going fishing, taking a great ride on the pontoon boat to a nearby town, and some training and guest speakers. You missed a wonderful time. But next year is just around the corner. Save the Date: June 7 through the 11, 2027. Sometime in January or early February, visit the Wisconsin American Legion website and select the Camp American Legion link. There should be a document available for the Chaplain's retreat. If not, contact your District Chaplain. I am hoping to also share the Chaplain's Retreat form with them.

Speaking of forms, if you have the desire to be on the Religious Emphasis Committee, the Wisconsin American Legion website has the form to fill out. You will need to write on the form which committee you wish to join (i.e. Religious Emphasis Committee). We are always looking for candidates. The form is called Department Standing Committee Application. Once you fill it out, the District Commander will need to review it. It is their responsibility to forward the application. Peace be with you.



Jerry Hook
Membership
Chair

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP

We're off to a great start to the 2027 membership drive. Please keep up the great work.

As I write this, we are in the middle of the 107th American Legion Department of Wisconsin Convention. I love coming to Department

Convention and Midwinter for several reasons, one of the biggest is the ability to talk to people across the Department. Connecting and building bonds with others from the American Legion Family, listening to them talk about all the great things their Post, Squadron, Unit, and Chapter is doing to serve Veterans / Service Members and their families, youth and families, and their community.

I had so many conversations this weekend about all the great things going on in Oak Creek, Rhinelander, Fall River, Saint Nazianz, Merrill, Suring, Mount Hope, etc... People talked about how their Post is engaged in their community.

I encourage every Post to develop a plan. Membership cannot be a passive wait for things to happen kind of activity, **membership (recruiting and retaining members) takes action.** Please utilize the tools on wilegion.org under Membership Tools and Forms, especially the Post Membership Annual Plan which includes best practices, and suggestions for monthly activities.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 434 AWARDS 2026 JOHN SAGAN SCHOLARSHIP

Oak Creek American Legion Post 434 recently awarded the 2026 John Sagan Scholarship to Oak Creek High School senior Ava Turlais, honoring both an outstanding student and the legacy of community service that John Sagan continues to represent.

The scholarship recognizes students who demonstrate the values that have guided John's life: hard work, leadership, integrity, and dedication to others.

John Sagan grew up in Oak Creek as one of fourteen children born to Polish immigrant parents on an 80-acre farm. He left school after ninth grade to help support his family while his older brothers served during World War II. Shortly after turning 20, John was drafted into the Army and served in the Korean War, fighting in battles including Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and T-Bone Hill.



After returning home, John continued serving his community as one of Oak Creek's first police officers. Later, he and his wife Lois owned the Cozy Inn, where John remains active in the community by helping provide meals to veterans and seniors every Wednesday alongside his daughter Joyce.

This year's scholarship recipient, Ava Turlais, has excelled in academics, athletics, leadership, and service. A graduating senior

from Oak Creek High School, Ava has earned a 4.1 GPA while completing advanced placement coursework and is a member of the National Honor Society.

Ava has also distinguished herself as a leader on the volleyball court, serving as team captain, earning MVP honors, and receiving All-Conference recognition. Her achievements have earned her the opportunity to continue her academic and athletic career at Drake University, where she will compete in Division I volleyball.

Ava is also an award-winning artist. She is the granddaughter of Vietnam Veteran Bud Schulz and the daughter of Air Force veteran Nicole Turlais, continuing a proud family tradition of service.

American Legion Post 434 congratulates Ava Turlais and wishes her continued success as she begins this exciting next chapter.



KENOSHA KINGFISH SUPPORT KENOSHA AMERICAN LEGION POST 21

Kenosha's Northwoods League collegiate baseball team – The "Kingfish" have not only been a favorite past-time for Kenoshans but have opened their doors to the American Legion Post 21 Family.

Three games this year have been dedicated to Veterans in June and July. Tim O'Brien and Tim Green of Post 21 have been honored as Veterans of the game. The Post has also conducted 50/50 raffles

at all three games and presented the colors during the National Anthem.

The Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons all work together to make these games memorable for our great city of Kenosha.

DELANVAN RINGS FREEDOM BELLS

American Legion Post 95 in Delavan presented a Freedom Bells program for the public on the 4th of July. Freedom Bells is a program that was developed by the Military Order of the World Wars. The Military Order was chartered by Congress in 1919. It is a Veterans Service Organization dedicated



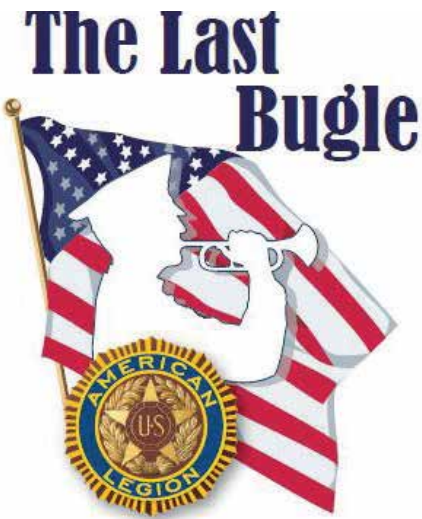
to a strong America. The Military Order has many chapters across the nation, so the Freedom Bells program was presented across the country by individuals and organizations who sponsored it. American Legion Post 95 was proud to sponsor Freedom Bells in Delavan. The program featured songs and marches from the Revolutionary War, speakers, and the signature moment for the program which was joining participants from across the nation in a countdown to noon at which time the Freedom Bell was tolled. The bell was tolled 13 times to signify the Original 13 Colonies and to recognize and honor their sacrifice for our liberty and our freedom.

Presenters for the Freedom Bells program were Post 95 Historian Doug Faltinson whose speech on the Revolutionary War included what it meant for the Colonists, what it means for us today and what it means for us as a nation going forward and Post 95 Adjutant Len Hahn who played the part of Patrick Henry and delivered his famous "give me liberty or give me death" speech. At the conclusion of the program America 250 goody bags provided by Post 95, were handed out to all the children in attendance by none other than Patrick Henry.



POST 151 HONORS

On June 17 Post 151 Madison recognized individuals with certificates of appreciation. TOP: Chris Ogden and Joe Yogerst presenting certificate of appreciation to Jan Ogden; MIDDLE: Chris Ogden and Joe Yogerst presenting certificate of appreciation to Maggie Schmelzer. BOTTOM: Jenn Herron, Chris Ogden, Parkis Waterbury, Jim Sawchuk, and Joe Yogerst at West Side Memorial Post 151 Officer installation. Presentation was at Blackhawk Country Club, Madison.



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

1 Germantown		35 Evansville	
Henry A. Eder	K	Curtis W. Hartzler	V
4 Athens		36 West Bend	
Norbert Novitzke	WWII	James J. Miller	K
6 Stevens Point		38 Appleton	
Cecil J. Coats	K	Redlin C. Beyer	K
Gilbert P. Olski	K	Guy Martinek	V
7 Rhinelander		Kenneth L. Fritsch	V
Eldyn G. Dorst	V	39 Marinette	
8 Waukesha		James Lemay	V
Donald V. Medler	K	41 Kaukauna	
9 Wisconsin Rapids		Alvin W. Rauchholz	
Charles R. Lester	K	42 Platteville	
10 Wausau		Michael D. Myers	V
Roger A. Eisenman	WWII	45 Elkhorn	
Donald D. Zamzow	V	Richard R. Bichsel	K
Mark E. Lyon	V	Glenn E. Boyd	WWII
Peter A. Philipp	V	47 Portage	
Manfred Bernhardt	V	Kenneth E. Olson	K
William R. Clark	K	Ronald W. Wagner	V
Wilbert L. Bantes	K	John A. Baldwin	V
Richard D. Roloff	V	52 La Crosse	
John E. Bobinski	V	Larry W. Powers	K
11 Green Bay		53 Eau Claire	
Bernard H. Jones	WWII	Pamela A. McEvoy	V
Louis Lecalsey	GWOT	William Rolland	V
Ted Herrmann	V	Richard Porn	V
Dean J. Collard	K	Mark R. Hartman	
Coleman Lablanc	GWOT	54 Marshfield	
12 Spooner		Jerold F. Weis	V
John Kiminski	G/L	Mitchell W. Voelker	V
13 Richland Center		55 Hortonville	
Tim Dobson	G/L	William Fischer	V
15 Juneau		Walter W. Krueger	V
Howard C. Haase	WWII	59 Stoughton	
Dennis L. Lisko	V	Rodney Brickson	K
Russel E. Selchert	K	Llewellyn A. Torngren	K
Melvin W. Klug	K	Douglas J. Bar	
Wyman Peterson	K	60 Kimberly	
17 Arcadia		Donald J. Schmidt	K
Cyril J. Pehler	V	62 Columbus	
James L. Ziegeweid	V	Stuart R. Snow	V
18 Milwaukee		63 Clintonville	
Frederick R. Luedke	V	James A. Krause	V
21 Kenosha		67 Lake Mills	
Donald F. Collins	K	Donald L. Nachreiner	V
Paul D. Anderson	V	Richard J. Neuendorff	V
Gene A. Ellison		Leroy A. Korban	K
Peter Beining	V	69 Mayville	
24 Lake Geneva		Donald H. Hillard	V
Reed C. Ridge	V	70 Oshkosh	
27 South Milwaukee		Wilmer A. Ulrich	WWII
Michael Tobiasz	V	David W. Ziegenhagen	V
29 Kewaunee		Rodney Measure	V
William J. Olson	V	74 Oconto	
Glenn K. Teske	V	William H. Olson	K

Michael R. Dembroski	GL	159 Cadott	
77 Chippewa Falls		Tom Bourget	V
Calvin G. Myrman	K	160 Brooklyn	
James E. Hunt	V	Gene Wackett	K
Donald A. Cardinal	K	161 King	
80 New Richland		Mark J. Zeppelin	V
John R. Peirson	V	165 Two Rivers	
Harold J. Christensen	V	Dorothy E. Ramsey	PG
William Maloney	V	166 Fort Atkinson	P
Rhonda J. Rimarcik	PG	Paul G. Reed	K
Douglas Soderquist	K	168 Glenwood City	
John Jacobson	K	Allen A. Willert	
82 Port Washington		Duane R. Kostman	
David E. Koslakiewicz	P	169 Amery	
83 Sheboygan		Wayne L. Petersen	K
William Guterwill	K	170 Mineral Point	
84 Monroe		Gary Hamilton	V
Delbert Butts	K	171 Union Grove	
87 Rice Lake		Paul Cinko	V
Leon M. Zawacki	G/L	184 Fennimore	
89 Minocqua		Stanley Novinska	K
Thomas K. Plewa	V	189 Watertown	
Mike Burrell	V	Thomas H. Voigt	K
90 Ashland		196 Delafield	
George A. Koval	V	Donald Lurtsema	V
Thomas S. Dunn	V	Jerry A. Christenson	V
Bruce Gilles	V	197 Brodhead	
John F. Radloff	V	Thomas G. Carney	V
91 Oconomowoc		202 Chaseburg	
Gary A. Broege	V	Dennis W. Peterson	V
Donald R. Schmitt		207 Elmwood	
Steven L. Rhadans	V	Keith Traynor	V
Donald Wolter	V	209 Orfordville	
93 Tomahawk		Fred Goodsir	K
Charles B. Grigg	V	214 Darlington	
Derrell A. Lang	V	Lawrence Wedig	V
John J. Voermans	V	Rodney R. Skattum	PG
94 Crandon		John Hastie	
Thomas M. Kniess	V	215 Pardeeville	
95 Delavan		Steven J. Thompson	V
Ronald Grair	V	218 Hayward	
Allan Prokop	V	Fred M. Huwe	V
Daniel L. Colburn	V	Ronald J. Trampush	K
Leland Schauer	WWII	Anthony J. Kerner	K
98 Cumberland		Lee A. Peterson	V
Stewart A. Flom	K	Fredrick E. Poppe	V
Bill Suech		Harold D. Tiffany	K
102 Walworth		John J. Williams	V
Robert J. Dacy	V	234 Omro	
Steven S. Janke	PG	Robert A. Schultz	V
104 Hazel Green		Raymond G. Fraleigh	
James S. Kueper	V	Larry R. Stumpner	V
108 Clear Lake		239 Tigerton	
Raymond R. Cahow	WWII	Ray O. Faehling	V
Richard L. Lambert	K	242 La Valle	
117 Shawano		Rinold R. Nowack	K
Nicholas J. Little	V	356 Cross Plains	
123 Withee		Russell N. Bradford	V
James Laski	K	Robert K. Nelson	V
Norbert Pabich	K	248 Cottage Grove	
Dennis R. Henke	V	Dean L. Thunstrom	V
Eugene Zawadzki	K	249 Frederic	
125 Chilton		Stuart C. Daniels	V
Larry J. Schisel	V	Dean L. Daniels	K
126 Brillion		250 Adams	
Erick R. Paschen	V	Michael G. Moran	V
129 Black River Falls		258 Little Chute	
Arlene M. Shegonee-Elwort	V	Steven J. Sanders	V
144 Albany		Ronald W. Wittman	K
Eugene L. Schneeberger	V	262 Luxemburg	
146 Beaver Dam		Vincent J. Kinnard	K
Andre M. Mills	V	James A. Blemke	V
147 Medford		263 New London	
John A. McMurry	WWII	William C. Muskevitsch	V
Fred W. Miller	K	Jerry F. Werbelow	V
149 Sheboygan Falls		264 Gilmanton	
Michael C. Wirth	V	Randolph W. Schultz	V
153 Pittsvoile		279 Marshall	
Donald Woiaak	V	Daniel B. Myers	V
154 Mondovi		280 Coleman	
Luther Larson	V	Russel Albert	K
Clifford A. Buchholz	K	282 Markesan	
158 Maiden Rock		Loren E. Shaw	K
Larry Gilbertson	V		

283 Suring		415 Milwaukee	
Joseph J. Trever	V	Frederick G. Haas	V
284 Holmen		416 Greendale	
Donald J. Staff	V	William L. Goralski	V
288 Cedarburg		Craig W. Chapleau	WWII
Edmund L. Eldredge Jr.	K	417 La Crosse	
Joan E. Neuswanger	K	Alexander Winslow	V
Lewis G. Holtsclaw	V	420 Hustisford	
291 Augusta		Timothy J. Crimmings	V
Harry E. Hicks	V	428 Amberg	
294 Hartfield		Denis L. Dejardin	V
Thaddeus Stawicki	K	431 Three Lakes	
295 Bloomer		Salvatore M. Giammo	K
Donald Nielsen	K	433 Barneveld	
296 Brookfield		Leo A. Clerkin	K
Jerome R. Wolff	K	Jerry F. Schlimgen	V
301 Woodville		Roland M. Dyreson	V
Lawrence E. Larson	K	434 Oak Creek	
Gerald L. McDougal Jr.	G/L	Michael A. Tobiasz	V
303 Winter		436 Wrightstown	
Rodney J. Brenner	V	Maurice H. Lamers	V
Sigurd J. Grindheim	K	437 Mazomanie	
313 Black Earth		Raymond J. Tierney	V
Karsten W. Mickelson	V	439 Melrose	
William J. Pulvermacher	GL	Duane R. Steien	V
318 Lake Tomahawk		449 Brookfield	
Jim D. Finch	K	Lyle W. Larcheid	K
319 Casco		Harold D. Gehrke	V
Dale L. Ferron	P	James F. Young	V
331 Shorewood		Donald R. Wenzel	K
Donald J. Hoeller	WWII	Lyle Larcheid	K
335 Avoca		452 Brantwood	
Lionel E. Baxter	WWII	Harry W. Blasel	K
336 Onalaska		454 Fond du Lac	
Don M. Duerwachter	V	Clarence Bindert	K
George F. Walinski	WWII	455 Milwaukee	
John R. Hammond	K	James Donald	K
Michael Mattison	V	457 Mequon	
Roderick Ostrem	V	Robert I. Sametz	WWII
William Berryman	V	Francis A. Lubinski	V
337 Pulaski		470 Saukville	
Benjamin Otis	V	Randall W. Theusch	G/L
Myron J. Karcz	V	480 Presque Isle	
339 Almond		Terry W. Prust	V
John F. Doyle	V	485 Wisconsin Rapids	
340 Berlin		Nicole A. Johnson	PG
Robert F. Markofski		486 Jackson	
343 Hancock		Gary W. Koch	V
Ray R. Burrows	V	Keith Heidtke	V
345 Waldo		Lute Owrey	V
Fred J. Werner		492 Rothschild	
348 DeForest		Norman Chack	V
Edward A. Busse	K	501 Madison	
Gary L. Lay	V	Lawrence D. Jensen	V
353 Cornell		508 Wilton	
Frank Rivas	WWII	Richard Brandau	V
356 Muskego		518 Green Bay	
Richard C. Brodek	K	Ronald L. Bunge	V
359 Gilman		519 Medford	
Dale L. Seng	V	Gordon Bach	V
363 Denmark		521 Fox Lake	
Daniel Kuehn	V	Wilford B. Zeamer	V
364 Winneconne		523 Abrams	
Lawrence L. Eckstein	WWII	Gerald J. Bardouche	WWII
Peter J. Hennes	V	Ron J. Kippenhan	K
375 Mukwonago		531 Port Wing	
Robert Knox	V	Allan Pribnow	PG
382 Menomonee Falls		534 McFarland	
Ronald D. Johnson	V	Ed Brost	K
384 Kewaskum		537 Milwaukee	
William J. Kulas	V	Walter B. Bonnett	V
Norman J. Gudex	K	538 Two Rivers	
Lester L. Menzel	K	Dennis J. Raisleger	K
394 Loretta		546 Racine	
David G. Crisman	V	Eugene F. Breidel	V
398 Plain		2930 Portage	
Elmer Kilian	K	William H. Porath	V
Felix Ring	WWII	James Westenberger	V
402 Washington Island		Louis W. Golembiewski	K
Bruce A. Atkins	V	Roger A. Kubis	
403 Danbury		Charles M. Cook	
James D. Klatt	V	Roy F. Drake	
		Robert G. Moulton	V

FLAGS AT CALVARY CEMETERY



On May 14, American Legion Post 93 Tomahawk members: Robin Gray, Richard McCarthy, Bill Jelinek, Gerry Johnson 11th District. Commander, Alvin Erickson, Bruce Pfingstein, and Janet Erickson not shown, placing flags on over 300 Veterans graves at Calvary Cemetery in Tomahawk.

UNION GROVE HONORS GUARD



The Union Grove Bixby-Hanson Post 171 honor guard presenting honors at one of our local cemeteries on Memorial Day. This was just one of several local cemeteries the Post was proud to present honors for on this day.

POST 126 BRILLION



American Legion Post 126 in Brillion promotes and fundraises for Veterans programs in their community. Above is a Post 126 float, below is the Post 126 Honor Guard.





BADGER LEGIONNAIRE & WISCONSIN
Official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Family

OPT OUT OF NEWSPAPER

Do you receive too many papers in your mail?
Would you like to help Department save money?

If so, opt out of receiving the hard copy of the Badger Legionnaire/Wisconsin at <https://wilegion.org/badger-legionnaire>.
An electronic version of each issue is posted on the department website before hard copies are mailed.

2026 ALA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



LEFT: American Legion Riders raised money on the 2026 Cruise for a Cause Ride and presented a donation of \$18,000 for ALA Badger Girls State. **CENTER:** Diana Sirovina was recognized as the Honored Past Department President (2012-2013). **RIGHT:** ALABGS Executive Director Joanie Dickerson presented President Sue Hembrook with a proclamation from the ALABGS Senate, Assembly and Governor in appreciation for the American Legion Auxiliary's sponsorship of the ALABGS program.

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT SUE HEMBROOK PRESENTED FIVE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE:



Hawley Dieckhoff Unit 33,
Neenah, District 6



Haugen Richmond Unit 73,
Neillsville, District 7



Peter Wollner Unit 288,
Cedarburg, District 2



Olson Grinde Unit 348,
DeForest, District 3



Andrew Van Ells-Robert L. Schanen
Unit 82, Port Washington, District 2



LEFT: Sam Catura of Unit 294, District 1 received the Mentor of the Year Award. **CENTER LEFT:** Christine Van Ryzin of Unit 38, District 9, received the Unit Member of the Year Award. **CENTER RIGHT:** Sergeant First Class Jessica Starks received the Service Member of the Year Award. She was nominated by Rio Unit 208, District 2. **RIGHT:** Maggie Geiger was elected as Wisconsin's nominee for 2027-2028 Central Division National Vice President. **BELOW:** Second District celebrated the election of their own Amy Luft as 2026-2027 Department President.



Several actions were approved by the convention delegates:

A dues increase was approved, effective with the 2028 membership year. In 2028, senior dues will increase by \$6.00 and junior dues will increase by \$0.25 for the department's portion of dues.

A resolution for the Membership Committee was approved. This resolution will add an additional member to the committee and allow members of the Department Executive Board to be eligible for

appointment to the Membership Committee. The Department 1st Vice President will continue to serve as Membership Chairman.

All proposed changes to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules were approved as presented. These can be viewed on the department website under Department Convention.

A resolution to dissolve the Resolutions Committee effective immediately and refer future proposed changes to the Constitution & Bylaws or Standing Rules Committee for review was approved.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Donna Jensen
Department Chaplain

Philippians 2:3-4: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

Lord, please bless all those reading this article and their families. Give all of us your strength and blessings to navigate all the challenges before us today and in the future. Help us keep in mind the meaning behind why we are members of the American Legion Family.

“Service, not self,” is a phrase often used by American Legion Auxiliary members and these three words carry a big message. It is the basis of much of what we do as Legion Family members. It helps us to remember the meaning and mission and why we are passionate about what we can do to make the lives of active-duty military, veterans and their families better.

As we celebrate 250 years of freedom, keep in mind all those who fought and made sacrifices for those freedoms, and their families. Many brave heroes did not return home and many who returned home were forever changed, physically, mentally and emotionally, by their experience. May we show our gratitude for their sacrifices.

Music: “America the Beautiful”
– Lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates – 1893
Music by: Samuel Ward
(Original lyrics-inspired by a trip up Pike’s Peak by covered wagon and mules.)

O beautiful for halcyon skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the enameled plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
Till souls wax fair as earth and air
And music-hearted sea!

Asking for help: Please help me put together a “prayer book” for President Amy Luft that can be presented to her during her convention in July of 2027. Send prayers, poems and pieces that inspire you. They can be original or from another source. Please include the author of the piece along with the sender’s name, Unit and District. They can be sent to me by email (djensen20@gmail.com) or mailed to: Donna Jensen, 6936 N 86th St., Milwaukee, WI 53224.

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

Congratulations to Sue Hembrook on a successful year as Department President. President Sue’s year wrapped up at the 2026 Department Convention. See page 1 for convention highlights. A special thanks goes out to Bethany Fredericks, SuAnn Pagel-Rast, Dany Thompson, and the headquarters staff for creating a positive and fun event.

Department Convention concluded with the installation of 2026-2027 department officers and

district presidents. Newly elected Department President Amy Luft’s theme for the upcoming year is “Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight.” Her special project is Honor Flight. There are five Honor Flight hubs across Wisconsin and ALA members are asked to help veterans apply for an Honor Flight, especially veterans of color.

President Amy also encourages members to purchase raffle tickets to win an ALA Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) membership. Tickets cost \$20 each and the winner will be drawn at the 2027 Department Convention in Middleton. Tickets may be purchased from any district president or at department headquarters.

Although we are still collecting dues for the 2026 membership year, 2027 membership

cards and rosters have been sent to all the units. Any unit that has not received their membership packet should contact Andrea Stoltz at department headquarters immediately.

2027 renewal notices will be mailed from the national organization in mid-September, but you don’t have to wait to renew your dues. To expedite processing, you may pay your dues online (www.ALAforVeterans.org) or call the national organization during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 pm Central Time). Members who pay for multiple people can take care of everyone’s dues with one simple phone call to 317-569-4570! New members for 2027 can be processed after September 1.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE

The 2026 ALA Badger Girls State (AL-ABGS) session was a phenomenal success! 481 citizens from across Wisconsin gathered at UW Oshkosh to learn about running for office, serving veterans, and civic duty. It was a great week where we hope all the delegates learned a lot, laughed a lot, and made lots of friends.

We were once again blessed with many special guests this session. These guests took time out of their lives to meet with our citizens and help them understand their roles in society. We had county sheriffs, county executives, assembly people, and lobbyists. At Inaugural we were honored the Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Governor Evers, and Chief Justice Jill Karofsky joined us to swear in their ALABGS counterparts.

Our most talked about event was the Oshkosh Post presenting a flag disposal ceremony and answering the MANY questions the delegates had. The Department Commander helped President Sue Hembrook hand out Blue Star Banners to delegates who had family serving.

This week would not be possible without a few groups. First, is the dedicated group of counselors who give up their vacation, retirement, and other obligations to come to UW Oshkosh, live in a dorm, and work 18-hour days for a week straight. Without them, this program could not happen. The support the sponsors provide are also just as important. Whether it was sending delegates, raising coins for penny wars, or even offering other services, this is truly a family effort. On behalf of the AL-ABGS Committee, I thank all of you and hope for an even better 2027!



AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

PAID UP FOR LIFE
Raffle

ONE TICKET. A LIFETIME OF MEMBERSHIP.

You could be the lucky winner of a
PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) MEMBERSHIP
★★★★ in the American Legion Auxiliary! ★★★★★

\$20 PER TICKET

★ AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY ★

PAID UP FOR LIFE RAFFLE

WIN AN ALA PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) MEMBERSHIP

TICKET COST: \$20.00

WINNER DRAWN JULY 2027



RAFFLE TIMELINE:

Raffle runs through July 2027. Drawing at 2027 Department Convention.



WHO CAN PARTICIPATE:

Open to the entire American Legion Family – American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, and Legion Riders. Purchase a ticket for yourself or a special American Legion Auxiliary member.



HOW TO GET YOUR TICKET:

Each district president has been provided a bundle of tickets to sell to units within their district. To purchase a ticket, contact your District President or Department President, Amy Luft, directly! (amyluft@gmail.com)

THE BENEFITS OF A PUFL MEMBERSHIP:

- ✓ Forever in “good standing” status to receive benefits
- ✓ Never pay annual dues again
- ✓ Locked in – never increases in price
- ✓ No worrying about dues reminders
- ✓ Continued support of our mission
- ✓ Peace of mind for you & your family

★★★★ **SUPPORT OUR MISSION. WIN A LIFETIME.** ★★★★★

★ **2026-2027** ★

NATIONAL PRESIDENT VISITS WISCONSIN

Coral M. Grout, 2026-2027 National President will conduct her official visit to the Department of Wisconsin in October.

She will participate at the **Stars & Stripes Honor Flight** on **Saturday, October 10, 2026** at the Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport.

All American Legion Family members are invited to meet her and the returning veterans during the

★ **Welcome Home Ceremony** ★

MEMBERSHIP: The ALA Airlines Welcomes You!

Betty Stone
Department Chairman
608-738-9542
bstone.wiALA@gmail.com

**Wings of Honor –
Helping our Heroes take Flight**



GET MEMBERSHIP OFF THE GROUND AND FLY HIGH!

This is a start of a new year, new membership program and awards, new President and Membership Chairmen. Let me introduce our crew:

- Pilot – President Amy Luft
- Co-Pilot – Membership Chairman Betty Stone
- Chief Crewmembers – Mary Townsend and Nicole Welsh
- Crewmen – District Presidents
- Passengers – Unit Members

Our goal for 2026-27 is 100% passengers by December 31, 2026. We can do it! By working together as we sign up new members and renewals with the joy of being an important part of this group of dedicated volunteers helping Veterans and their families.

This is how we get started one step at a time.

Step 1 – Unit Officers, please fill out 2026-2027 Unit Officers form. It is important that every Unit complete the form for 2026-27 and have all

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION UPDATE!

The NEC approved a change to Standing Rule XI-Units, as follows:

Section 6. Membership eligibility through the service of a living veteran may be established by presentation of a current The American Legion membership card. Membership eligibility through the service of a deceased veteran may be established by certification of the deceased veteran's proof of military service by the post adjutant or other post officer or by the unit secretary or other unit officer.

What does this change mean? **The unit secretary or other unit officer may verify the eligibility of a potential member and sign the application.** By expanding the options for who may review and sign membership applications, we are removing barriers and assume this responsibility. If a unit wishes to continue to work through their Legion post, they may do so.

officers paid by September 30, 2026 to be eligible for membership awards. This form is used by department and chairmen. For us to serve you in every way, we need the most current information.

Step 2 – Those members in which National has your email address will receive an email renewal reminder. The first mailed renewal notice will be sent out September 15, 2026. Help save our organization the expense of sending out that notice by sending your dues in early. The less they spend on collecting dues the more can go to veterans.

I am so excited to see each and every one of you at one of the ALA In The Know conferences, so sign up now!

Your fellow member and Membership Chairman, Betty Stone.



YOUTH HERO AWARDS



ALA Unit 201 in Tomah recently awarded two Youth Hero Awards. Nolan and Jack, both 14 years old, noticed a child who appeared lost and alone. They promptly called 911, stayed with the child while waiting for help to arrive, and ultimately connected with a family member who was searching nearby. Their quick thinking, initiative, and care played a direct role in the positive outcome of this situation. Pictured (l-r): Nolan, Unit President Helene Stein, and Jack.

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

Bonnie Dorniak
Department HQ
deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org

What is the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)? AEF is a national grant initiative available to eligible ALA members who have endured a significant financial setback because of a natural disaster or other personal crisis. AEF applicants must be ALA members who have maintained annual ALA membership for three consecutive years and have paid the current year's dues. Grants may be awarded up to \$3,000.

Disaster Grants must be received within three months of the disaster and are used to provide emergency assistance when the member's primary residence has been devastated by disaster. Applications require photos as documentation or receipts for reimbursable expenses for temporary shelter, temporary structure repairs, purchase of alternative power sources, or groceries needed due to being displaced. Receipts dated the day of the disaster or up to three weeks after the disaster may be considered. Assistance will not be granted for damages to a secondary or seasonal residence or expenses that occurred before the disaster or after the three-week time limit.

Hardship Grants will consider funding only for overdue expenses related to primary residence, basic household utility expenses,

and/or loss of income due to medical and/or employment reasons within the last six months. Requests for payment of medical-related expenses, taxes, general loans, insurances, credit cards, cellular/TV services, animal care, car payments, or home/vehicle maintenance are not eligible for funding. All documentation (utility bills, invoices, mortgage/rent statements, etc.) should be in the name of the ALA member and/or their spouse.

Only applications on the ALA website at www.ALAForVeterans.org/AEF will be accepted for processing. Applications must be submitted electronically or mailed directly to the national organization to maintain confidentiality. If applications are complete and contain all of the required documentation, a decision can be made in approximately 14 business days. All decisions by the national AEF Review Committee are final.

How can you help the AEF program? When disaster strikes or an ALA member is experiencing a personal crisis, please make them aware of the AEF benefit. Start a fundraiser with donations specifically designated to AEF. Members may donate online (one-time donation or monthly donations) at www.ALAForVeterans.org/donate or mail donations to department headquarters, marked "AEF." Donations cannot be earmarked for a specific individual or disaster area.



**A community of
volunteers serving
veterans, military,
their families, and
our communities**

Mission Statement

In the spirit of service, not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.

For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN 2025-2026 STATISTICS

Statistics are current as of May 31, 2026 and are based on the annual year-end reports from 207 of Wisconsin's 339 Units.

Wisconsin has over 14,400 members – grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, daughters, and granddaughters of veterans.

OUR SERVICE FOR VETERANS AND MILITARY:

- * Number of Veterans/Military assisted: 54,120
- * Hours volunteered: 252,528
- * Dollars spent: \$427,905
- * Dollar value of in-kind donations: \$66,529
- * Number of poppies purchased for distribution in WI: 193,100
- * Poppy dollars raised to support veterans: \$326,597
- * Number of veterans who made poppies: 19

OUR SERVICE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES:

- * Number of military families served: 8,306
- * Hours volunteered: 30,765
- * Dollars spent: \$137,408

OUR SERVICE FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH:

- * Number of children & youth served: 17,055
- * Hours volunteered for Legion Family youth activities: 14,986
- * Dollars spent on children & youth: \$45,152

OUR SERVICE THRU ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE:

- * Hours volunteered: 6,183
- * Dollars spent: \$300,394
- * Number of ALA Badger Girls State delegates in 2025: 498

SCHOLARSHIPS:

- * Number of scholarships awarded: 209
- * Dollar amount of local scholarships: \$92,605
- * Dollar amount of Department scholarships: \$24,000

OUR SERVICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES:

- * Hours volunteered: 206,527
- * Dollars spent: \$348,866

To learn more about the American Legion Auxiliary, visit www.ALAForVeterans.org or www.amlegionauxwi.org

NATIONAL SECURITY

Natalia Genovesi King
National Security Chair
kinggenovesi@gmail.com

Stars, Stripes, and Service:
A Year of Purpose and Participation

As we begin the 2026-27 American Legion Auxiliary year, the National Security Program invites every Wisconsin unit to join in a shared mission through our theme, *Stars, Stripes, and Service*. This year focuses on honoring those who serve, remembering those who sacrificed, supporting military families, and strengthening our communities through meaningful action.

No matter the size of your unit, every member can make a difference. Our goal is simple: participation, visibility, and impact. By working together at the unit, county, district, and department levels, we can ensure every Auxiliary member has an opportunity to contribute to our National Security mission.

Throughout the year, units are encouraged to participate in activities that support military members, veterans, and their families while promoting awareness and appreciation within their communities. As we move into the fall, units can focus on promoting POW/MIA awareness and planning observances that educate both members and the public. During the holiday season, attention turns to Blue Star and Gold Star families through banner presentations, recognition events, and outreach efforts that remind military families they are valued and remembered.

Winter and early spring provide opportunities to recognize the next generation of service by partnering with local schools, JROTC programs, and community organizations to honor students who have chosen military service. This is also an excellent time to identify and nominate deserving enlisted service members for the Salute to Servicemembers Award.

Throughout the year, units are encouraged to support community safety and preparedness initiatives, collaborate with first responders, participate in blood drives, and engage in activities that strengthen national security at the local level. Equally important is sharing your stories, photos, and accomplishments so Wisconsin can showcase the incredible work being done across our state.

To stay informed and inspired, units are encouraged to follow the ALA National Security Facebook page, *ALA National Security*. This resource provides program updates, project ideas, success stories, and helpful reminders that can assist units in planning meaningful activities and achieving their National Security goals.

Together, through *Stars, Stripes, and Service*, Wisconsin Auxiliary members can honor our military, support our communities, and ensure every unit plays a role in advancing the mission of National Security. Let us make this a year of service, remembrance, recognition, and pride!



Department of Wisconsin
2026 State Convention Citations

President's Award for Excellence – Sue Hembrook, Department President

5 – awarded to Neenah Unit 33, District 6; Neillsville Unit 73, District 7; Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Cedarburg Unit 288, District 2; DeForest Unit 348, District 3

Americanism – Deanna Farley, Department Chairman

2 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Berlin Unit 340, District 6; Marathon Unit 469, District 8.
1 – Best Unit Prayer Book – awarded to Grafton Unit 355, District 2

Chaplain – Sandy Mack, Department Chaplain

1 – Certificate of Recognition – awarded to Grantsburg Unit 185, District 12

Children & Youth – Mary Petrie, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Caledonia Unit 494, District 1; Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; DeForest Unit 348, District 3; New London Unit 263, District 8; River Falls Unit 121, District 10

Community Service – Linda Tryczak, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Port Washington Unit 82, District 2; Grantsburg Unit 185, District 12; Banger Unit 40, District 7; Loyal Unit 175, District 7; Marathon Unit 469, District 8

Education/M. Louise Wilson Loan Fund – Delores Woolf, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Linda Zamrow of Beaver Dam Unit 146, District 2; Susan Turowski of Grafton Unit 355, District 2; Lisa Bowen of Lone Rock Unit 383, District 3; Sarah Stiff of Stevens Point Unit 6, District 8; Jeannine Conradt of Shiocton Unit 512, District 9

Historian – Christine Johnsen, Department Chairman

1 - Outstanding Unit History – awarded to Unit 201, District 7, Bonnie Owen, Historian
2 - Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Unit 355, District 2, Ria Marien/Judy Kuta, Historian; District 7, Vickie Dux, Historian

Leadership – Betty Stone, Department Chairman

1 – Unit Member of the Year – awarded to Christine Van Ryzin of Appleton Unit 38, District 9

Legislative – Becky Mueller, Department Chairman

2 – Wisconsin 250 Challenge: awarded to District 6 (Char Kiesling, Chairman); District 10 (Mary Townsend, Chairman)
3 – Certificates of Recognition – Neenah Unit 33, District 6 (Char Kiesling, Chairman); Thorp Unit 118, District 7 (Diane Weggen, Chairman); River Falls Unit 121, District 11 (Margaret Larsen, Chairman).

Membership – Christina Petranovich, Department Chairman

5 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Crandon Unit 94, District 9 (244.44%); Hazel Green Unit 526, District 3 (200%); Land O' Lakes Unit 464, District 11 (188.24%); Montello Unit 351, District 6 (158.33%); Osceola Unit 221, District 12 (150%)
68 – Certificates of Achievement – Units over 100% by January 31, 2026
• District 1: Edgerton #30, Beloit #48, Burlington #79, Delavan #95, Walworth #102, East Troy #188, Delafield #196
• District 2: Pt. Washington #82, Sheboygan #83, Sheboygan Falls #149, Rio #208; Poynette #271, Cambria #401, Fredonia #410, Adell #462, Hubertus #522
• District 3: Stoughton #59, Mt. Hope #229, Ridgeway #257, Gays Mills #308, DeForest #348, Mazomanie #437, Dane #503, Hazel Green #526, Beetown #551
• District 5: Milwaukee #1, Milwaukee #455
• District 6: Brillion #126; Stockbridge #128, Campbellsport #222, Berlin #340, Montello #351, Mt. Calvary #454, St. Cloud #478
• District 7: Bangor #40, Rome #65, Owen #123, Black River Falls #129; Wonewoc #206, Humbird #320, Northfield #541
• District 8: Mosinee #107, Vesper #520
• District 9: Kewaunee #29, Hortonville #55, Crandon #94, Little Chute #258, Coleman #280, Washington Island #402
• District 10: Arcadia #17, Turtle Lake #137, Glenwood City #168, Durand #181, Prairie Farm #259, New Auburn #267.
• District 11: Odanah #25, Park Falls #182, Rib Lake #274, Kennan #362, Mercer #424, Boulder Junction #451, Land O' Lakes #464, Lublin #547.
• District 12: Bayfield #49, St. Croix Falls #143, Milltown #254, Webb Lake #403, Cable #487

National Security – Bob Shappell, Department Chairman

4 – Certificates of Recognition – awarded to Waterloo Unit 233, District 2; Plymouth Unit 243, District 2; Cross Plains Unit 245, District 3; Winneconne Unit 364, District 6
1 – Program of the Year – awarded to Cedarburg Unit 288, District 2

Past Presidents Parley – Diane Weggen, Department Chairman

1 – Mentor of the Year – awarded to Anita (Sam) Catura of Hartland Unit 294, District 1
2 – Certificate of Recognition – awarded to Char Kiesling of Neenah Unit 33, District 6; Carol Swenson of River Falls Unit 121, District 10

Poppy – Kathy Grom, Department Chairman

7 – Poppy Poster Awards – awarded to Hadley Richards, District 3 (Class I); Lady First, District 4 (Class II); Bluebell Gremminger, District 2 (Class III); Whitney Schall, District 9 (Class IV); Abigail Marose, District 6 (Class V); Dakotah Burkman, District 12 (Class VI); Gavin Aubart, District 7 (Class VII)

Public Relations – Natalia Genovesi-King, Department Chairman

2 – Certificates of Appreciation – awarded to Shelley Drager of Mazomanie Unit 437, District 3; Linda Lefky of Two Rivers Unit 165, District 6

CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH



AT LEFT AND ABOVE LEFT: Forestville Unit 372 celebrated America’s 250th Birthday by hosting a food drive. They donated the items collected to a food pantry in Maplewood. Unit 372 also placed 250 red, white and blue pinwheels at the Forestville Town Hall in Maplewood. The display serves as a visual tribute to the nation’s 250th birthday and a reminder of the community spirit behind the ALA. ABOVE RIGHT: President Cynthia Saylor of Unit 87 in Rice Lake displayed 250 ribbons, honoring each year of the 250th Birthday Celebration.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

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

Julianne Hyma
Vice Chairman

Good afternoon passengers. This is the pre-boarding announcement for flight 1024 to King, Wisconsin. We are now inviting those passengers with children, and any passengers with a special interest in Junior Activities, to begin boarding at this time!

To kick off an exciting new year of Junior activities, our Department of Wisconsin **Junior Fall Conference** will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, N2665

County Rd QQ, King, WI 54946. In the spirit of *Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight*, we will have several exciting activities that will be fun for all passengers! All Juniors and young SAL are invited to attend. The tentative itinerary will include a business meeting, lunch, and an activity with residents of the King Veteran’s Home. Make sure to return the registration form by October 3, 2026, to receive your boarding pass.

We’ll be at cruising altitude before you know it, so it’s time to start thinking about attending a **National Junior Meeting!** If your Junior is 8 years old or older, we want to see them at a national Junior meeting! We’re going to meet new friends, do a service project for caregivers, and have tons of fun! The meetings are on a Saturday, one in each ALA division, and held in conjunction with Mission Training for seniors. The event closest to Wisconsin will be held on

January 30, 2026, in Springfield, Illinois. We can’t wait to see your Juniors there!

As units begin planning activities for the 2026-27 administrative year, please make every effort to **involve our First Class Junior members** in community projects, whenever possible.

The **Wisconsin Juniors Flight Plan (PEP)** for 2026-27 will be available on the Department website in September (www.amlegionauxwi.org > Programs > Junior Activities). Please reach out to me if you have any questions (or ideas!) about Junior activities. **LET’S FLY!**



DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
FALL JUNIOR CONFERENCE
Wisconsin Veterans Home at King
N2665 County Rd QQ
King, WI 54946



Saturday, October 24, 2026, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

The Junior Activities Fall Conference will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, Moses Hall. In the spirit of *Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight*, we will have several exciting activities that will be fun for all passengers! This will include a business meeting, a Patch project, an activity with residents of the King Veterans Home, and a project in support of Honor Flight.

Registration, including lunch, is \$10, and Junior T-shirts can be ordered for \$10 each.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Johnsen at 715-203-2015 or cmj102@aol.com.

2026 JUNIOR AUXILIARY FALL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
Reservation must be received by October 3, 2026

Form submitted by (please print clearly):

Name: _____ District #: _____ Unit #: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

NAME / UNIT #	Grade	First time attendee? (Yes/No)	Junior member	Senior member	Registration & Lunch \$10	Youth Size S, M, L, XL \$10	Adult Size S, M, L, 2XL, 3XL \$10	Total per person
Totals					\$	\$	\$	\$

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Please send reservation form with check payable to American Legion Auxiliary to:
Christine Johnsen 159991 Granite Rd., Wausau, WI 54403

JUNIORS SUPPORT CAMP AMERICAN LEGION



Junior members raised money and received a grant from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation to purchase four kayaks, paddles and life jackets for Camp American Legion. This gift was donated to Camp Director Jim Klement during the Junior Spring Conference at Camp.



Steven Kohnke
Department
Commander

It is truly an honor and privilege to have been selected as your 2026–2027 Department Commander. I am deeply grateful for the confidence and trust you have placed in me to serve the Department of Wisconsin. I accept this responsibility with humility, enthusiasm, and a steadfast commitment to serving our veterans, our military, our youth, and our communities.

Before looking ahead to the year before us, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to the many people who supported me throughout this journey. I could not have reached this point without the encouragement, guidance, friendship, and support of so many members of our Legion Family. To those who believed in me, encouraged me, stood beside me, and helped me along the way,

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

GREETINGS TO THE ENTIRE DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

please know how deeply grateful I am. Your support has meant more to me than I can adequately express.

I am especially thankful to my fellow Legion Family members who took the time to support my campaign and share their confidence in me. I am also grateful to my family, my post, and all those who offered their time, advice, and encouragement. Every conversation, every kind word, and every act of support helped make this journey possible. I will carry that support with me as I begin this year of service.

Together, as one Legion Family, we will continue building a stronger American Legion by supporting our posts, growing our membership, strengthening our Legion Family, and ensuring that every veteran knows they have a place in our organization.

Through programs such as Wisconsin Legion College, we become **Smarter**. With that knowledge, we become **Stronger** and better prepared to serve our

members, our veterans, and their families in communities throughout Wisconsin. When you see someone wearing a veteran's shirt or hat, don't hesitate to ask, "Are you a Legion Member Yet?" or "How can I help you?" A simple question can open the door to a lifelong connection with The American Legion.

I encourage each of you to remain engaged, recruit new members, and take an active role in the initiatives and programs that will help move our Department forward. Your participation, ideas, and dedication to fulfilling our Legion Family missions and advancing the Four Pillars of The American Legion are essential to our success. Together, we can make a tremendous difference in recruiting new members and strengthening the future of our organization.

I look forward to working alongside each of you as we carry forward our proud tradition of **service above self**.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



President Amy Luft
2026-2027

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Department President. I look forward to working with each and every one of you as we strive to support the aims and purposes of The American Legion. I pledge to do my very best in representing you and the American Legion Auxiliary.

My special project for this year is **Honor Flight**, with the theme "Wings of Honor: Helping Our Heroes Take Flight." The phrase "take flight" represents so much more than the incredible experience of an Honor Flight journey—it is a reflection of who we are as an organization. Through the dedication of our members and the work of our programs, the American Legion Auxiliary provides the support, recognition, and gratitude that allows our veterans to soar.

This year, my goal is to help raise funds for Wisconsin's Honor Flight hubs and additionally, reach out to veterans who have not yet had the opportunity to experience this life-changing journey and assist them with the process of signing up to take their flight. The ALA's Memorandum of Understanding with Honor Network allows ALA units and departments to donate funds generated from the distribution of our poppy.

The poppy program, as with all our programs, would not be possible without our members. A growing membership allows us to expand our programs, increase our impact and preserve the legacy of those who came before us. This year, to help assist with your recruiting and renewing efforts, there are new exciting department membership awards which are available to the entire American Legion Family. Plus, larger cash prizes!

As we move forward this year, I want to encourage every member to embrace our organization's vision statement, especially our commitment to being **the premier service organization in every community**. Our vision is the foundation that will guide our future and ensure that the American Legion Auxiliary continues to thrive as a meaningful and impactful service organization for generations to come. Together, through our mission, our programs, and our dedication to our veterans, we will continue to spread our wings and help our heroes take flight.



Jeremy Mason
SAL Detachment
Commander

It is with great humility and gratitude that I accept the honor of serving as the **Detachment Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin**. Thank you to the delegates and members who have placed their confidence in me. I am committed to serving our Detachment with integrity, respect, and a steadfast dedication to our mission.

My journey in the American Legion Family began when I was sponsored by my local American Legion Post to attend **Badger Boys State**. That experience ignited a passion for leadership, citizenship, and ser-

SAL DETACHMENT COMMANDER

vice that has guided me ever since. I have also been inspired by the military service of my grandfather, whose example reminds me daily of the sacrifices made by those who have defended our nation and the responsibility we share to honor their legacy.

It has been my privilege to serve as Commander of **Squadron 15, District 2 Commander, and Detachment Vice Commander for Districts 2, 6, and 9**. Those experiences have reinforced my belief that the strength of our organization comes from dedicated volunteers serving together with a common purpose.

As I begin this new chapter, my focus is on **Tradition and Traction**.

Our traditions are the foundation of the Sons of The American Legion. They connect us to the vision

of The American Legion, preserve the sacrifices of our veterans, and remind us why we serve. At the same time, we must create traction by strengthening our squadrons, developing future leaders, growing membership through meaningful engagement, and expanding our service to veterans, military families, and our communities.

I look forward to working alongside our Squadron, District, and Detachment leaders, as well as our partners in **The American Legion Family**. Together, we will continue to build an organization that honors its past while embracing opportunities to better serve today and tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I am excited for what we will accomplish together.



Corey Doehrmann
State Director
American Legion
Riders Association

Greetings Wisconsin Legion Family. Like many of you I've just returned from the 107th American Legion Department of Wisconsin convention in Appleton, WI. What an awesome weekend! Every year when I come home I am more energized than ever to push the family's mission forward. I would like to congratulate Steve Kohnke, Amy Luft and Jeremy Mason on being elected to lead their respective parts of the Wisconsin family. I look forward to working with you in the coming year. To all of you reading, I encourage you to fit next year's convention into your busy schedules, July 21-25, 2027, in Madison, you won't regret it.

We continue to have a lot of interest in joining the Legion Riders when we are up at convention. To assist with this, we have a form to fill out so we can connect potential members to the appropriate district. Use this QR code to get to the form and fill it out if you are interested in being a Legion Rider.

Wisconsin Legion Riders – Cruise for a Cause, 'Family First – 26' update. As I

LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR



shared on all three convention floors, every time I give a total someone gives me more donations. The 2026 ride is now closed and the total raised (drumroll...) was \$92,274.77. This breaks down to \$70,819.82 to the Veterans & Children Foundation, \$18,454.95 for Badger Girls and \$3,000 for Operation A.L.F. THANK YOU to all the Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, Sons Squadrons, Rider Districts, local businesses and individuals who made this incredible achievement possible. The Riders facilitate but it is you who get involved that make this happen.

Coming up in September we have our annual Fall Ride to Camp American Legion. Camp will be busting at the seams with Legion Riders who are eligible to stay the week of the 14th. The week culminates with our ride in to camp for lunch and donations on Saturday September 19th. Our project this year is to refinish the concrete lodge floor. This is co-sponsored with the Wisconsin Legion Auxiliary.

If you have any questions about the Wisconsin Legion Riders don't hesitate to contact me: Corey Doehrmann/State Director, cell 262-305-0305 or email at alra-wi.director@gmail.com. Our next meeting/event after this publication will be our November 7 meeting at the Fremont Legion.



County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin

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

Your local Veteran Advocates, serving you since 1935

