

MI LEGIONNAIRE

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January 2025

Happy New Year!

FISHER HOUSE



A new Fisher House was dedicated at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center by Medical Center Director Chris W. Cauley and President of Fisher House Foundation David A. Coker. Representatives Rashida Tlaib and Debbie Dingell also shared remarks about the Fisher House located at the medical center, which is named after Dingell's deceased husband Rep. John D. Dingell.

The new Fisher House will join the other Michigan Fisher House already serving Veterans in Ann Arbor. "We are thrilled this day has come," said Cauley. "This is the result of a lot of hard work by the people in the Detroit community and the generosity of Fisher House Foundation. This home away from home will ensure families of Veterans are in good hands as we care for their loved ones."

The 13,000+ sq. ft. Fisher House will provide lodging for Veteran families at no cost, allowing them to be close to their loved ones while they receive medical care. At full occupancy, this home away from home will provide possible total savings of more than \$875,000 in lodging costs per year.

"We are so grateful to our many community partners who have come together to make this Fisher House a reality," said Coker. "I'd like to thank all our donors, including Delta Air Lines, for your generosity and commend Fisher House Michigan for galvanizing organizations and individuals to get involved to help military and veteran families."

This Fisher House is part of a network of 99 homes located across the country, in Germany, and in the United Kingdom. The 100th Fisher House in North Chicago, Illinois is due to be completed in early 2025. An additional house in Little Rock, Arkansas is under construction, as well.

The new Detroit Fisher House has 16 wheelchair-accessible suites; a spacious kitchen; large communal living, dining, and family rooms; a laundry room; and a shared patio. The home was gifted to the VA upon completion as part of the public-private partnership between Fisher House Foundation and



L-R: Department Adjutant Ron Runyan, Commander Dan Cooper, Fisher House Michigan Executive Director Kate Melcher, Auxiliary President Julie Becker, and 1st Vice President Dawn Gramza

the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Fisher House Michigan, the local fundraising organization, has supported the construction of the Ann Arbor Fisher House and this new house in Detroit. Additionally, the nonprofit rallies communities across the state to encourage volunteerism and ongoing support for the Fisher Houses.

"Michiganders are committed to supporting our Veterans and to saying 'Thank You' in a tangible way. We are honored to help raise funds and awareness for this essential resource for Veteran families, in the heart of Detroit. We appreciate everyone who supports this mission, whether with cash or caseroles. It takes a village to build and support a Fisher House, and Detroit has done it," said Kate Melcher Fisher House Michigan executive director.



National American Legion Collage Graduate Angela Jaworski, State Commander Dan Cooper' and Representative Debbie Dingell at the Fisher House Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

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Commander's Comments!



Dan Cooper
Department Commander

Happy New Year!

I hope you all celebrated these holidays with family and friends, having kept those who could not be with loved ones this year in your thoughts and prayers. I also wish each of you, your families, and our brothers & sisters-in-arms a safe, healthy, and joyful New Year.

I had the opportunity to attend several American Legion Posts during December. It is always fun to set aside the formal business for a little while and simply gather as members of The American Legion Family to celebrate the holiday season and our accomplishments from the past year.

Now, more than ever, our Nation, State, and Communities need the American Legion and our programs. We need to engage our communities and fellow veterans to carry out these programs.

With busy lives, finding time for Community Service can be tricky. However, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous. Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for you as a volunteer. By connecting with your community, you may learn new skills and make friends. Volunteering does not have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy day.

Let us spread the word in our communities about who we are and ask if they would like to join our great organization. Remember, many are unaware of who we are, and it is up to us to make them aware and encourage them to become Members. And it's time for another round of Buddy Checks. Checking on the well-being of our members we have not seen for a while ...as Legionnaires, "it's what we do."

The Oratorical Contests should be in full swing. Remember, this is a valuable tool to educate our youth about the Constitution, what it means to be an American and what their responsibilities are as citizens. District Oratorical deadlines are January 20th.

Baseball registrations opened on January 1st. Posts should have already started talking with their kids, filling out forms, and registering their teams.

The Winter Conference in Port Huron is fast approaching, and you should have already made your hotel reservations. The registration form is on the Department website. We have a jam-packed itinerary scheduled for your benefit. We will have training workshops, Committee meetings, and vendors with tons of information about veterans' benefits. National Commander James LaCoursiere will attend, and we will hold a Banquet for him on Friday night. Please make plans to attend what promises to be a great conference.

Lastly, Please Consider donating or buying a Coin for the Commanders Project.

COMMANDERS PROJECT:

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE PURCHASED A COIN AND TO THE POSTS, UNITS, SQUADRONS AND DISTRICTS THAT HAVE ALREADY DONATED. YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED, AND ARE GOING FOR A GREAT CAUSE TO SUPPORT PARALYZED VETERANS IN MICHIGAN.

Commanders Project

Supporting Paralyzed Veterans in Michigan with spinal cord injuries, and to help Veterans regain independent living.



Front \$10.00 each Back

Please see Commander for Coin or buy from the Department with a credit card

Your support will:

- Ensure year-round specialized medical care
- Support life-changing health and rehabilitation opportunities through sports and recreation
- Fight for the benefits Veterans have earned
- Fund breakthrough research in pursuit of a cure
- Provide opportunities that lead to meaningful careers
- Break barriers and advocate for access that paralyzed Veterans need to live independent lives

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MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE & AUXILIAIRE

Runyan's Ramblings Members and Membership Year!

Ron Runyan
Department Adjutant

Greetings and Happy New Year to all my American Legion family and veteran advocates! I wish you all have a healthy and prosperous new year ahead.

Today's topic I am going to cover for those adjutants and members who have questions and concerns about the way the organization does its membership. To begin, I want to include an excerpt from the National Bylaws, which we all Must follow, without exception!

Article VI: Section 4.

"A member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January 1st shall be classed as delinquent. If their dues are paid on or before February 1st, the member shall be automatically reinstated.

If the member is still delinquent after February 1st, the member shall be suspended from all privileges.

If the member is still under such suspension on June 1st of such year, their membership in The American Legion shall be forfeited.

A member so suspended or whose membership has been so forfeited may be reinstated to active membership in good standing by vote of the Post and payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs; however, the Posts, Departments and the National Organization may waive the provisions hereof, upon payment of dues for the year in which reinstatement occurs, with reference to former members who have been prevented from the payment of dues by reason of active military service."

To be clear, our membership year runs from January 1st until December 31st every year. The organization does start collecting dues for the Next Year, starting July 1st, but for the next year.

So, if a member has not paid for 2025 after July 1st, they must still pay for 2025 and may pay for their 2026 dues after July 1st, 2025, but they are not required to pay to remain in good standing until December 31st, 2026.

Many adjutants in the Legion and SAL feel that their members do not have to pay for the entire year and can sell them a membership for the next year, giving that person an 18-month membership. WRONG! When a member comes into a post, they Must provide proof of membership for the current year we are in, not for the next year. Please use this information for your current post and its officers and pass it along to your future leadership, too.

Without you officers and leaders, our organization would not be compliant, and we would be breaking our own rules. As I tell our state leaders, if you do not like the rules, then write resolutions and change the rules. Thank you for your continued support and dedication for this new year and many more to come.



STATE OFFICERS

- State Commander Dan Cooper
- State Adjutant Ron Runyan
- 1st Vice Commander Wayne Blank
- 2nd Vice Commander Jim Austin
- 1st Zone Gary DeMars
- 2nd Zone David Buist
- 3rd Zone Mike Fitzgerald
- 4th Zone Charles Bowman
- 5th Zone Tom Chernetski
- Chaplain Mike Schlaack
- Finance Officer Leo Cowdry
- Historian Robert Higley Jr.
- N.E.C Larry Money
- Judge Advocate Brett Holt
- Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Salamon
- Immediate PDC Brian Mohlman
- Alt. N.E.C Brett Holt
- VA and R Director Gary Easterling

DEADLINE DATES

February 2025 is January 10th

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HEADQUARTERS DIRECTORY

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If you have a photo you would like to submit for the Michigan Legionnaire and/or website use, E-mail it to us at media@michiganlegion.org or mail it to Department, Attn: Jim Showers.

Please keep the photo at least 200 dpi or larger. If you are submitting a hard copy photo, please note photos printed from a home printer cannot be used, nor can photos clipped from newspapers.

We look for photos showing Legion caps in action whenever possible.

Interested in placing an ad in the Michigan Legionnaire? Please Contact Jim Showers

media@michiganlegion.org

517-220-2747

Membership Report

Wayne Blank
1st Vice Commander

I certainly hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As far as our membership percentage goes, we could be doing better. If every Legionnaire got just one new member and we all renewed, our membership would be up to over 100%+.

We must work as a team, not as single members. All posts must have a membership team, each district must have a membership team, and our zone commanders must work closely with both entities as a team.

Please check michiganlegion.org/membership page and click reports and incentives drop-down to see where your post, district and zone are in membership standings. When you're on that page, scroll down and check [CPR Tracker](#), which is very helpful for next year's CPR REPORT. It is mandatory to get your Membership cards for posts. On this same page, you can see all the membership incentives. Remember, prizes for the four contests include coats, plaques, computers and paid weekend to the 2025 Convention in Sault St Marie.



Americanism Report

Jim Austin
2nd Vice Commander

I hope your holiday season was awesome and brought wonderful tidings, but now it is crunching time. A ton of our program deadlines have come and gone, and several more are approaching. Now is the time

to follow up to make our programs happen.

Always feel welcome to follow up with your post and district commanders to ensure that they are doing their part for our program's success. I can sit here and cheerlead from my high horse, but it's the Blue Caps that make the dream work.

As always, feel free to contact me or anyone at the department level to share your program success stories, as well as any ideas or recommendations to improve our programs.



Chaplains Corner

Mike Schlaack,
Department Chaplain

In the blink of a weary eye, the year 2024 has passed into history. And what a year it has been! I doubt that there will be many people mourning its passing. While we may not look back on 2024 with too many fond memories, we should take the time to assess where we are on both a personal and spiritual level. The recent drama of a contentious national election, along with continued problems at home and across the globe, should make us take an inventory of our spiritual state and decide what we can do to help raise the level of joy not only in our lives but also in the lives of those around us.

The New Year is the time for

resolutions, promises we make to ourselves intended for self-improvement. Lose weight, get in shape, clean out the garage, read more books and watch less TV. But our New Year's Resolutions are often broken before the first gym bill hits the mailbox. The new diet is quickly forgotten as well, as we settle back into the routine called "life," grabbing a snack and planting ourselves in our favorite chair to binge-watch "Friends" and "Seinfeld." The commitment to a better "me" will just have to wait until December 31, 2025.

What if, rather than focusing on changing what's on the outside, we concentrate on what's on the inside? Rather than improving our physical appearance, we should work on our spiritual, inner beauty. A spiritual makeover will require a lot of effort, but it will be cheaper than a gym membership that will hardly be used. You won't have to buy new clothes. Your spiritual transformation will not

only benefit you but the community and world where you live. The changes will be like treasures we store in a heavenly bank account that does not lose their value due to rising inflation, and there is no worry that they will spoil, get lost or stolen (Matt. 6:19-21). It will pay dividends today as well as in the future. Your local American Legion Post will provide many opportunities to put that spiritual makeover into action through activities that will help the military veterans we are committed to serving.

So, as you make your New Year's Resolutions for 2025, consider including activities that will improve your spiritual and physical beauty. Make time to participate in the religious services at your house of worship. Practice your faith at home and work. By your actions in the coming year, you will let others know you are on a true journey of self-improvement.



The 12th District

Tim 'Stubby' Walters, Commander

Greetings from the 12th District, you know..... those people who live as far north and west in the state of Michigan as you can get! Yep, that's us! We hope you're fully recovered from Thanksgiving and Christmas. We did our best to send you all plenty of snow for a "White Christmas." I hope it got

there.

We all kind of slow down for the most part up here this time of year, but we are working hard on many of the Legion

programs and getting involved within our communities, letting them know what the Legion, Auxiliary and S.A.L. are all about. The many ALR Chapters are hard at work planning and assisting with the Hell to Paradise 2 ride this coming summer.

Our Spring meeting will be in Iron Mountain at Post 50 on the 12th of April. At 8:30 a.m. (central time), we will have our elections and a training session with Department leadership to help inform and teach our Post teams what and how they need to improve their posts.

If any of our Legion family are planning trips or visiting the western U.P., please let us know, and we will ensure that we shovel a path for you to stop by and visit with us.



**2025 Membership: December 20th Goal = 55,154
Current Total: 41,250-74.79%**



AUXILIAIRE



JULIE BECKER

From the Desk of the President

January 2025



Julie Becker
Department President
2024-2025

If you have not heard, 906 Warrior Relief is my special project. The 906 Warrior Relief Project started at the American Legion Post 349 Little Lake, Michigan, in the Upper Peninsula 11 years ago, when a veteran walked into Post 349 and needed help. The Veteran did not have any heat or money to pay for propane to heat his home. He was not a member of the American Legion family, he was a Veteran. The members of the post and unit of 349 rallied and gathered enough funds to fill this Veteran's propane tank. Word traveled about what had happened, and the members of 349 discovered there was a need to help Veterans and their families in the area.

The Legion Family of 349 holds a golf outing every year to raise money to assist in the cost to help our Veterans. Last year, they were able to help 15 Veterans and their families across the U.P. Think about how many more Veterans could be assisted if even more money was raised. This is why I chose the 906 Warrior Relief Project for my special project.

With the help of the amazing, talented ladies from the

10th District who made a quilt for me to raffle for my special



project, we can raise more money for the 906 Warrior Relief. Raffle tickets are available at department headquarters. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. You can mail your check to the Department. Make it payable to the Department of Michigan American Legion Auxiliary on the memo line, put 906 Warrior Raffle. Your tickets will be mailed to you. The drawing will happen during our summer convention on Saturday, July 12, at 6:00 pm.

Together, we can all make a difference in our veterans' lives. Thank you all for your support!



This is an Article about Articles for the Auxillaire

Shannon Werner
*Executive Director,
Secretary and
Treasurer*

I hope you all enjoyed your Christmas!

I look forward to the new year and Winter Meeting 2025 in Port Huron, Michigan. There will be many opportunities to further develop your knowledge and skills on a multitude of topics, please try to attend. In that vein, I am providing specific information to grow the writing proficiency of our members and the articles supplied.

Use the Times New Roman font in 12 point and the no spacing format op-

tion for the entire article.

Please title your article. It defines the topic and gives readers a preview of what they can expect to read.

Include your name and current position.

Define your topics.

Perform research.

Write an introduction.

Insert/write your body.

Write a conclusion.

Please note: The relatively new modern writing style requires only one space after punctuation. The days of two spaces after a sentence ended many years ago. Any number under 10 is written out vs. using the number.

Do not use unnecessary capitalization, punctuation or other available characters/options. A paragraph should have a minimum of three sentences. Any pictures sent in for possible publishing must include the who (everyone in the picture), what, where, when, why and sometimes how.

I appreciate your attention this last year. Thank you for the support, advice, and feedback. It is welcomed. Your encouragement, direction and tireless support of our Veterans inspires me and makes me more passionate in achieving our shared goals. Keep Rocking 4 Our Veterans!

Music

Christine Merlington, Department Chaplain

Music is what moves us. It is part of our everyday life. Whether we are in the car driving to and from a journey or sitting at home listening. Music brings us together in Church, on the dance floor, and in a crowded room.

Listening to music soothes us and brings us relaxation if needed. Sometimes, it gets us going with a defining beat that just makes you want to dance and move around. Music gets us through our lives in good and exciting ways. Music

has been a part of life since the beginning.

Think of the "Little Drummer Boy" at the birth of Christ. Remember "Auld Lang Syne" when we are bringing in the New Year. Remember the hymns during a Memorial service. Don't forget "Happy Birthday" when, of course, we are celebrating another milestone. High School and College Fight songs fire us up when needed.

Let's all continue to do what we do and listen to the Music that moves us. The New Year will be here soon. Bring her on in with a song!

District 7

Pam Wagner, District President

As we enter the new year, I am excited about all our district has accomplished in the first part of the year and what lies ahead! As I write, our district is leading the Department of Michigan in membership! I can't tell you how proud I am of our units, their activities, support for each other and heart for our Auxiliary. Working within our communities, giving Quilts of Valor to veterans, programs at schools, appreciation dinners, scholarship donations, well, you name it, and our units have been leading the way in their communities!

Kudos to Unit 382 in St. Clair for sponsoring a community T-ball team, The Space Cowboys. They also supported Eagle Scout Lydia Stockwell's project to build a small area at a local park for young children to play "Gaga" (a form of dodgeball). Unit #8 in Port Huron was reorganized this past fall and is seeing membership growth. Their new members are eager to learn about the Auxiliary and are busy working with the post for craft shows and other fundraisers. Unit #16 in Lapeer gave the Lapeer County Young Marines a donation for new uniforms. They are also halfway through a Queen of Hearts Raffle to raise funds to help pay for the new roof at the Post. Unit #525 of Smith's Creek is working to rebuild its membership and recently hosted a wine-tasting and membership drive. This past month, six Units from our district (4, 8, 16, 351, 382, 449) supported the Chesterfield Home for Veterans for their Christmas gift shop.

Looking ahead, if the first half of the year is any indication, by Convention, this could be a banner year for donations, volunteer hours, and service to our veterans and our communities for District 7!

I look forward to seeing everyone in Port Huron in February for our Winter Conference!

Sharing is Caring

Anita Mennel, Public Relations Chair

Welcome 2025! I trust you all had a safe and joyous holiday season. I am sure many units worked hard in your ALF (American Legion Family) and your communities, sharing the joy of giving. Now is a great time to remember that giving is sharing, and "Sharing is Caring." Sharing what your unit or district has and is doing is a great example of public relations. It is one way to let our community, our Veterans, and their families know "Who we are," "What we do," and "How we are Leading the way."

It is true that, in general, we are not very good at "blowing our own horn." After all, we do it for love, care and the cause, and 'not for the applause.' However, without sharing what we do, we can't show the community who we are or why we matter.

Now is the time to write down what you, our members, have done to provide support. Keeping track now helps us to report our activities more accurately. Remember, when you do your end-of-year reports, all those questions and that documentation are compiled and "sent up." Units report to districts, districts report to departments, department reports to divisions, and division reports to national and national shares with The American Legion.

The National Commander testifies before Congress, and our massive numbers speak for themselves, and legislation is passed to help and support our veterans. It does make a difference. So, while the past couple of months are somewhat fresh in your mind, jot down some helpful reminders. Start now preparing to complete 'those pesky but instrumental' reports. Share with everybody that we are indeed "Rocking 4 our Veterans" and leading the way!

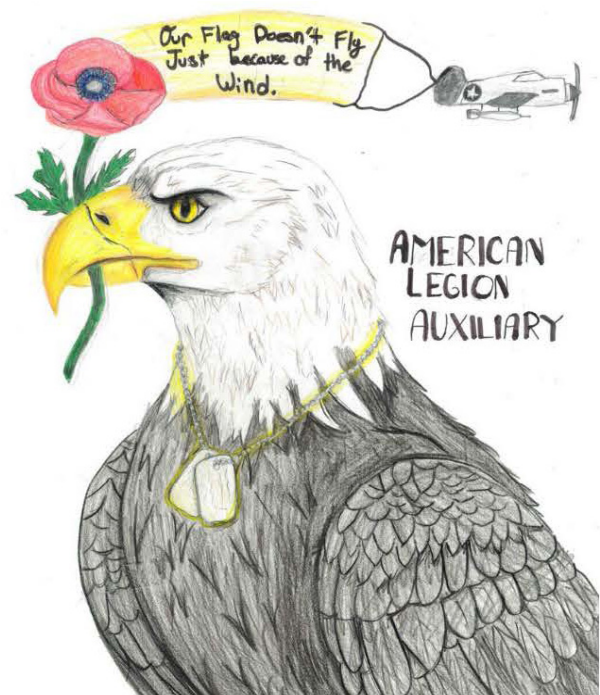
Poppy Program

Samantha Swenson, Poppy Chairperson

It's that time of year again to start thinking about getting your poppy orders in. Units should take stock of how many poppies they have remaining and how many they normally distribute to decide if they need to order any for Poppy Days this year. The order form is on the Department's website. Orders placed usually ship within two weeks of their receipt. Please make sure you account for shipping time so you receive your order before you need to distribute them.

Now is also a good time to start working on the Poppy Poster Contest. The Poppy Program Guide's last page is a Poppy Poster Contest-Teacher Kit. National winners will be posted on the National's website. The picture is Central Division's Best Overall Poppy Poster- Class III (Grades 6 and 7) from Michigan, Elle Larson. Congratulations Elle! You can check out all of last year's winners at <https://www.legion-aux.org/national-poppy-poster-contest>. Unit poppy chairs and/or unit presidents can find the Poppy Poster Contest Rules and Guidelines, as well as due dates, in the Poppy Program Guide on the Department Website at www.michalaux.org.

And.... don't forget to continue thinking about ways your unit or post can create awareness of the poppy program in your community.



Something Happening at your Unit?

Submit it to the Michigan Auxiliaire!

Send your articles and Pictures (with Cutline) to : info@michalaux.org

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Ellen Jackson, Chairperson

The AEF represents the very heart of our mission - members helping members. Established in 1969, the fund has provided critical financial assistance to eligible Auxiliary members who have faced significant financial hardships, often due to acts of nature or personal crises. These unexpected events can happen to any of us, and through our continued support we ensure no member is left without a helping hand.

This year, our goal of educating our members will be twofold, we need to ensure our members are aware of the assistance available and how to apply. Please take every opportunity to communicate this information within your districts/units and encourage needy members to apply. Applicants must have maintained an annual ALA membership for three consecutive years.

Grants may be awarded up to \$3,000 and provide the following.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE members in areas devastated by a natural disaster, such as fire, flood, hurricane, or other severe weather. The applicant must have either experienced damage to their primary residence, been displaced

from their residence or experienced basic out-of-pocket emergency expenses as a result of the disaster.

HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE during a time of financial crisis when no other source of aid is readily available to pay for past due expenses related to their primary residence or basic household utilities. For more information and the application to apply, visit <https://www.legion-aux.org/aef>.

Encourage donations to keep the AEF strong and able to support those in crisis, we need the generosity of our members. We ask for your support in spreading the word and encouraging donations. Every contribution helps carry on the legacy of service and support. Units can host fundraisers such as hot dog (or spaghetti) dinners, 50:50 raffles (where legal), craft sales etc.

Meet the 'United Unit AEF Challenge' and help us turn compassion into action. The goal is to have every unit in ALA donate to AEF. All donations count, individual, group, online, or direct. Be the change and inspire others to join the mission of 'Members Helping Members'.

Remember to send your donations to the ALA Department of Michigan marked for the AEF fund. This is very important so we can track who donated and how much. At our department convention in July, there will be an award for the Unit that donates the most to the AEF fund.

American Legion Auxiliary
MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY EXPLAINED

RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN:

- MOTHER
- DAUGHTER
- SISTER
- GRANDMOTHER
- GRANDDAUGHTER
- SELF — FEMALE VETERANS WHO HAVE SERVED
- MALE or FEMALE SPOUSE

ELIGIBILITY PERIODS: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941

TWO PATHS FOR ALA ELIGIBILITY

PATH ONE
The potential member is related to a living veteran by one of the relationships stated above and the veteran is living AND a current member of The American Legion.

If the potential member is a female veteran, she only needs to have served during the eligible time periods to be eligible for ALA membership.

PATH TWO
The potential member is related to a deceased veteran who served during the eligible time periods and was honorably discharged.

The deceased veteran did not have to be a member of The American Legion in order for the potential member to join the ALA.

For more information, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org

Chaplains Corner

Christine Merlington, Department Chaplain

As we start the new year, it is good to have reminders of our purpose & duties as we serve our units, districts and department as a chaplain. Our purpose is to express our founding principle of service to God and Country through word and action. To encourage all our Units to celebrate diversity among peoples and faiths. To provide spiritual and emotional guidance when needed or requested, always showing dignity and respect for the occasion. Our duties as chaplains at any level are the following.

1. Opening and closing prayers at meetings.
2. Reporting on any members who are ill or who have unfortunately passed away.
3. Signing and sending cards to members or a member's family, such as sympathy, get well, condolences, etc.
4. Draping the Charter and performing a memorial service.
5. Assisting with Funeral Services if requested.
6. Encouraging members to attend churches of their choice.
7. Visiting members and Veterans in nursing homes or hospitals.
8. Keeping in contact with all Gold Star Mothers and remembering them on holidays.
9. Sending cards to members and Veterans on special holidays and occasions.
10. Helping your local community by volunteering and giving of your time.
11. Make a Prayer Book for your Unit or District. Have members send you a prayer or devotional thought to include in the book.
12. SENDING at least ONE Prayer or Devotional thought to the Department Chaplain, Christine Merlington, for Department President Julie Becker's Prayer book, and with permission, will send it on to the National Chaplain for our National President's prayer Book.

Dedication to these duties and focusing on our purpose will help us provide the best service we can to our members, Legion Family, Veterans, and communities throughout the year. "Lord, make us ever proud to be Americans. Please bless our Legion Family so we may continue to help our veterans and those in need. Be with us and guide us, we pray. Amen."



Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Michigan

TODD VAN DAM

Detachment Commander 2024-2025



Legion Family, it is the season of giving! Giving thanks, gifts, donations of time and money. A firm reminder that we are not alone and that there are others in our world and our lives. Others that we can honor, respect, look out for, check on and care for. We all have a duty to serve those who serve us! I recently attended a fundraiser for Commander Cooper, President Becker, and myself. I am grateful for Post 208's hospitality while hosting the event. Everyone in attendance helped raise funds for Paralyzed Veterans of Michigan, 906 Warrior and Operation Black Sheep. These are the personal projects for all three of us this year. It proves that there are additional resources available through the American Legion and beyond for all our Veterans, their families, and the communities that we live in. As we make our way through the holidays, remain thankful for the resources we have and can help, including the American Legion! Whether you give to a charity or donate your time, take the time to help someone. I am ever thankful for The American Legion Family! As PDC Fisher said, "Be a guiding light!"

5TH ZONE

Zack Pendell, Commander

Now that a blanket of snow has covered the first Upper Peninsula fall color tour, we have time to revisit and reset ourselves for the new year approaching.

Most of you have received your 100% membership awards, and we now have 2024 stickers for your membership boards.

For those of you who still have a 0 for this year's membership, I would like to remind you that we need you to send in your dues and get your Squadrons caught up. A member in good standing is not just a paid member; his state and national dues have also been paid. The officers who head the membership for your Squadrons are responsible for getting those paid memberships to the Department and National. You cannot be lax on this.

Disasters happen across this country daily, and one of these could hit your area. Membership allows you several benefits; one is aid when a catastrophe happens. Only members in good standing are qualified for these benefits. Please ensure any paid member receives their benefits by sending in state and national dues. Not sending in their dues could come back to hurt you as well.

Take time to catch up on membership and do buddy checks on those who have not paid yet. We are a band of brothers who need to care for each other. Being good at caring for ourselves makes it easier to care for the rest of our family and our Legion Family.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday season. Never Forget! We have a priceless heritage and a devotion to mutual helpfulness. Thank you for allowing me to help you once again. I am proud of the 5th Zone and the brothers here in Michigan.



1ST ZONE UPDATE

Greg Price, Commander

Zone 1 SAL would like to recognize some very important happenings our Legion Family is enjoying. The Garden City American Legion Post recently held a Charter Renaming Ceremony. The post is now the William Kaledas Post #396. Bill served in the U.S. Air Force from 1972 to 1976 and the Michigan National Guard from 1976 to 1978. He served as the Post Commander 1983-1985 and 1990-1994. In 1993, Bill "Polka" Kaledas and Chuck "Tramp" Dare co-founded the very first American Legion Riders Chapter at the Garden City post, and served a National-Level for the American Legion Riders. That first Chapter, which started with 19 members, has grown to over 2,000 Chapters Nationwide, with more than 110,000 American Legion Riders. It was nice to see how many Legion Family Members, Politicians, and Members of the Community came out to show their support.

The deadline to enter the winners of your Post Oratorical Contest for the District Oratorical contest is January 20. Winners from your districts will compete at the 1st Zone Oratorical Contest at a date to be determined. Good luck to all the High School Contestants who will compete on their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution.

The 16th District will again host the Annual Americanism Banquet open to all of the Legion Family on Saturday, February 01. This year's banquet will be at the Livonia American Legion Post #32, 9318 Newburgh, Livonia, MI 48150. If you would like tickets to attend, please contact me at grinnerman@msn.com. I hope everyone enjoyed the Holidays and that 2025 will continue to bring you smiles, laughter, and wonderful memories.



SQUADRON 34 OF TECUMSEH CELEBRATING 11 YEARS CLEANING A TWO MILE STRETCH OF U.S. 12

First year we had 92 bags. Now we average about 10. It's been a great project for serving our Community



MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT - MICHIGAN

Gregg Price, Michigan Chairman

As we enter 2025, I would like to share with you the information that Josh Sanchez, from TV. 8, reported about the internment of seven mid-Michigan veterans who were laid to rest at Fort Custer National Cemetery on November 08, 2024.

Michelle Fox, the Chief Investigator at the office of the Medical Examiner at University Health Sparrow in Lansing, works with funeral homes and the Department of Defense. When she learns of a veteran who has passed away and is referred to as 'unaccompanied,' she and staff members try to find surviving family members of the deceased. If no one can be found or the next of kin cannot take care of the funeral arrangements, their office will contact the National Cemetery to inform them that the veteran is eligible to be interred. Their cremated remains are held for an annual ceremony. This long-standing tradition is organized by the Medical Examiner's office and Fort Custer Cemetery staff.

Seven veterans' lives were honored with prayers and military honors this year. Fellow veterans, active-duty service members, police and fire crews paid their respects as each urn was delivered to the cemetery. They were - Petty Officer 3rd Class James Morris, U.S. Navy, from Lansing, Cpl. Jerry Robinson, U.S. Marine Corps, from Lansing, Sgt. Frank Bursik, U.S. Air Force, from Owosso Township, Sgt. Lana Schaeffer, U.S. Air Force, from East Lansing, Pfc. Kenneth Blake, U.S. Army, from Lansing, Pfc. Sherry Shawley, U.S. Army, from Meridian Township and Spc. Douglas Bruce Harris, U.S. Army.

The National Sons of The American Legion Millennium Newsletter in November 2024 published more information about veterans who have passed away and have not had anyone step forward and claim them. The Missing in America Project is a massive nationwide effort that also helps to locate, identify, and inter the unclaimed remains of American veterans. According to the MIAP website, they have now visited 2,326 funeral homes, have found cremains of 19,320 individuals, have identified 4,210 veterans' cremains, and have interred 3,912 service men and women since 2006.

If you may know where unclaimed cremains may be located, and would like information on the process to help find out if they are a veteran, you can email me at grinnerman@msn.com and I will get back to you.

BUY AN AD IN THE WINTER MEETING BOOKLET



Buffalo Wild Wings

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DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

WINTER PROGRAM AD PRICES

¼ page \$35

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Ad production available at additional cost
Contact Department Headquarters for details

517-220-2747



Emmitt Brown

For

Department Science Officer

2018-2019

Welcome to Ypsilanti and the Department Winter Conference. Let this be a conference to remember. Enjoy yourselves and take the time to discover something new this weekend that will be useful at your home post. Take advantage of the many committee meetings to see what



\$30

QUARTER PAGE



The 8th District

Gene Nethaway, Commander

Our Posts have been improving on Membership for the most part since we began in July 2024, and getting ready to finalize this as we are going into 2025. Our 8th District is moving on and getting our media up soon, and I understand that it will be running in the New Year. I've talked to most of the Posts in the District personally over the past two months, and at this time, I only have six posts left to visit.

The 8th District Officers hope you had a special Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a grand New Year. Many posts hosted or supported Toys-for-Tots, and some also had special meals during the holidays for their communities or sent care packages to those serving in the military. I joined the 10th District Senior Vice Commander David Yahr at the MBS (Midland, Bay City & Saginaw) Airport to welcome active military and military veterans home for the Holidays with the PGR (Patriot Guard Riders) doing Operation Handshake. I also went to the Flint Bishop Airport and welcomed active military and veterans with PGR members there.

Many posts do military honors at funerals throughout our area. Stay warm, and don't slip on the ice. I remember Past District Commander Gary Gross, who died when he slipped and fell on ice and struck his head. Wear warm gloves, stocking hats, insulated undergarments, shoes or boots. Stay warm and safe out there.

I am requesting Donations for the Aleda Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw. Please don't forget to take the needed items to that facility. The veterans who go to that facility will need warm clothing this winter.

Third Zone Commander Mike Fitzgerald will attend our January 19 meeting in Breckenridge. That meeting will start with training at noon, a meal at 1 and the District Meeting at 2 pm. It is easy to find Post 295 because it has an F-101 Star Fighter Jet out front. The address is 220 W. Monroe Rd. Breckenridge, Mi. 48615. Start planning who from your Post will be attending.

The 1st Zone

Gary DeMars, Commander



The 1st Zone has experienced a steady increase in membership in recent years. This growth is mainly due to the Zone's strong outreach efforts, commitment to serving veterans and their families, and a large effort to transfer 225 members to local Posts.

Our Zone celebrated significant events, including renaming Post 396 on December 1. This Garden City Post, the birthplace of the American Legion Riders, was renamed in honor of William Kaledas, a founder of the Legion Riders at the Garden City Post.

The 1st District post 32 organizes a special community event each year to honor 9/11 and current first responders with a memorial service and dinner dedicated to remembering the victims of 9/11. They also celebrate the contributions of the Livonia Police and Fire Department officers. Many members of the Livonia City Council and the Mayor attend this event each year alongside honored officers from the Police and Fire Departments. Our 1st District is preparing for a change due to a proposed merger of Grosse Pointe Post 303 and Post 372.

The Jackson City area holds an exceptional memorial service on Pearl Harbor Day as part of Jackson County's Pearl Harbor Observances. This memorial, located at the Cascades Park, features segments of the USS Arizona battleship sunk at Pearl Harbor. The event was attended by citizens of the Jackson area, including the American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America.

However, the 1st Zone faces several challenges, including aging membership, member recruitment, post-leadership training, and American Legion program training. The 1st Zone actively addresses these challenges to remain a strong and vibrant organization. For the 1st Zone to continue to grow and thrive, we need to increase outreach efforts to attract new members, develop new local services to meet members' needs better and strengthen partnerships with other organizations and community leaders.

The 1st Zone is a robust and dynamic organization serving veterans and their families. While we face several challenges, we are well-positioned to overcome them and grow in the years to come.



Mark Brejcha
Boys State Director



Great Americans. It's an honor to be appointed Director of Boys State for 2025. We are "ramping up" our efforts to make this session the best one yet for our delegates. With your help, we can add to our bench strength by volunteering during that week, recruiting local high school juniors to attend, and donating funds from your Post, District, or Zone. The time is now... Recruit, Volunteer, Sponsor. Next MILegionnaire, I will introduce you to our amazing staff.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



"A Week That Shapes a Lifetime"

The American Legion Department of Michigan Winter Meeting 2025



February 6, 7, 8 and 9, 2025

BlueWater Convention Center,
800 Harker St., Port Huron, MI



On the Water - Below the BlueWater Bridge
Hosted by the Genesee County Convention Corp



REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The American Legion requires each person attending register with the corporation and be issued proper credentials to attend any meeting, session, or event in connection with the Conference.

Registration fee is \$25.00 per person.

(Please print legibly so we can correctly spell your name on your conference badge.)

Name _____ Leg Aux Sons ALR Location (# & city) _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

email address: _____ phone: _____

Additional registrants covered under same payment:

Name: _____ Leg Aux Sons ALR Location (# & city) _____

Name: _____ Leg Aux Sons ALR Location (# & city) _____

Name: _____ Leg Aux Sons ALR Location (# & city) _____

Total registrations _____ times (x) \$25.00 per person = \$ _____

Please make your check payable to: **GENESEE COUNTY CONVENTION CORP**

and mail with this form to: **AMERICAN LEGION GCCC, P. O. Box 441, Linden, MI 48451**

Confirmation of registration being received will be emailed back by dianea7171@yahoo.com

Contact: with any questions. Tim Hill at <text> or call 810-444-8644 timothy_w_hill@yahoo.com

Room reservations at hotels are your responsibility and should be made directly with them.

Reserve your room early - Limited number of hotel rooms are available at discounted rates.

Reservations will be made directly with the hotels at:

**Host Hotel attached to
Convention Center**

DoubleTree by Hilton

800 Harker St.
Port Huron

810-984-8000

Or Hotel Website

\$139 Plus 11% tax

Reference Code **GEN**

Price is only reserved until
1/ 5/ 2025 or sold out

**Approx 2.2 miles from
Convention Center**

Hampton Inn by Hilton

1655 Yeager St.
Port Huron

810-966-9000

Or Hotel Website

\$119 Plus 11% tax

Reference Code **ALD**

Includes free breakfast

Price is only reserved until
1/ 6/ 2025 or sold out

**Approx 2.2 miles from
Convention Center**

Holiday Inn Express

2021 Water St.
Port Huron

810-662-3400

Or Hotel Website

\$136 to \$176 Plus 11% tax

Reference Code **ALW**

Includes free breakfast

Price is only reserved until
12/ 3/ 2024 or sold out



Convention Center



Downtown Port Huron Area



**2025 NATIONAL COMMANDER BANQUET
RESERVATION FORM**

Friday, February 7, 2025

DoubleTree Hilton Port Huron 800 Harker Street

Cash Bar & Social: 6:00 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

NAME(s): _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

Please select type of dinner and quantity of each:

BEEF	x # of dinners	_____	x \$45	=	\$ _____
CHICKEN	x # of dinners	_____	x \$45	=	\$ _____
FISH	x # of dinners	_____	x \$45	=	\$ _____

*** No Veggie Option this year ***

TOTAL \$ _____

Make checks payable and send to: The American Legion, Department of Michigan
212 N Verlinden Ave, Lansing, MI 48915 Attn: Kim

Paypal link available at www.michiganlegion.org/banquet/

Credit Card: _____ Exp _____ CVV _____

Questions: Contact Kim at kim@michiganlegion.org or 517.220.2753

Deadline for reservations is Monday, January 13, 2025. No refunds after this date

Legislative Update

Tim Poxson
Legislative Chariman

Each year at the Department level, we are tasked with contacting our Federal Congress members. We assign a Legion Department member

to each of our 13 Congressional Representatives and 2 Congressional Senators. This year, we have four openings. If you live in one of the following districts and would like to be the contact person, email Legislative@MichiganLegion.org.

- District 5 (Rep. Walberg)
- District 6 (Rep. Dingell)
- District 9 (Rep. McClain)
- District 11 (Rep. Stevens).

If you are selected to be a contact person, your duties will include contact with the Rep. Office at least

once a month. You will be expected to attend if called by the National American Legion to Washington, D.C.. Most of your costs are paid for by National. I look forward to hearing from those interested and living in one of the open Districts.

As most of you know already, the Michigan Legislative session has ended. The veteran bills not passed or signed by the governor by December 31 have all died. We now have to start all over to get these bills, new sponsors and reintroduced. We will also have to hope to get the bill to a new committee hearing and then testify before the committee to which it is assigned. Hoping that the bill will move to a committee on the other side of the (House or Senate). When it goes to the other body, we must again testify. We were very fortunate to have had several bills introduced, some of which made it through the process of becoming law. A few that made it into lame duck were signed and will be-

come law 91 days after the Legislative session ended in 2024.

I thank all the Legislative Committee members who were assigned Congress members to stay in contact with for your hard work and dedication this year. Thanks to the staff at Department, this Committee and others could not do our work without their support. Department Commander Dan Cooper and Adjutant Runyan who have put up with my phone calls and requests this past year. And, of course, to all the Legionaries who have assisted me behind the scenes with areas of the bills I had very little knowledge about. Without everyone's involvement and support, we would not be the number-one Veteran organization in the world. Both State and Federal officials call upon us for our input on many of the veteran issues they are working on.

I hope your Christmas was great and your New Year is the best yet, with good health and wealth.



The 2nd District

Michael Greene, Commander

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and festivities of 2024. As we embark on the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of our accomplishments in 2024 and some of our goals for 2025.

The 2nd District created a team to address membership and member participation. They implemented automated calls, text messages to the unpaid members to renew, and transfers from the 225 list. This strategy helped us to reach record membership in the Second District. Holding District meetings via Zoom increased our participation by approximately 25%.

The team also reestablished monthly Executive Board meetings via Zoom. The E-board addresses posts' concerns and problems before district meetings. The team created a Female Veterans Committee to foster camaraderie and inclusivity among our female veterans. By addressing female veterans' concerns we encouraged them to be more active in the Legion. This initiative led to three appointments: Samantha Barnes, District Service Officer, Katrina Davis, District Judge Advocate, and Angela Jaworski, District Finance Officer.

Congratulations to members our District for their National appointments: Scott Nichols, National Security; James Ducey, National Oratorical; James Ellis, National Americanism Council; and a very special congratulation to Angela Jaworski, who graduated of Legion College this year.

In addition to increasing membership, in 2025, the Second District is planning several projects. The District Oratorical contests will conclude this month with James Ducey at the helm. Based on the success of the Freeland Post in Saginaw, the District is in communication with the Michigan Department of Corrections to establish a female post at the Woman's Huron Valley Correctional Facility in Washtenaw County. Our District looks forward to post-elections and looks to expand training for current and new officers before they take office so they can hit the ground running.

Thank you, Second District team for making all of this possible. Former President Ronald Reagan once said, "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."

I look forward to seeing you all in February at the Winter Conference in Port Huron.

The 1st Zone

Karl Burnett, Commander



"so much to do,... so little time!"

As district commander, I made a commitment to myself to learn the job and provide support to individual local post operations. There are 13 posts in the district, but only three have a roof over their heads! I immediately went to work, helping our local post have a place to conduct business.

We have two posts merging and are changing their name and post number. Two other posts have had discussions with me about merging as well. I treat Dissolving Posts as a last resort! Our local Posts can participate in district meetings electronically by ZOOM!

We plan training topics to encourage post officers and members to attend and participate in our district meetings. We've planned upcoming trainings like "Be the One", Legion Finance, Service Officers, Memberships, Revitalization, Legion Programs, District Strategies and more. Additionally, as a new agenda item, I am adding "Post Commanders Reports"; and news related to American Legion business in Indianapolis and Lansing.

Before the next issue of Michigan Legionnaire comes out, we will have placed much of the winter and the holiday season behind us. Looking forward to meeting and participating with everyone at our winter conference in Port Huron!

Veteran Service Office Locations

Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building

477 Michigan Ave. Rm 1231
Detroit, MI 48226
Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm
Phone: 833.648.3826 ext. 1

AL Post #257
7475 B Drive North
Battlecreek, MI 49014
Hours: Thursday 8am-4pm

AL Post 349
1835 Co. Hwy EED.
Little Lake, MI 49833
Hours: 1st & 3rd TH 8am-4pm

AL Post 412
5480 Clark Rd
Bath, MI 48808
Hours: 3rd Wed 8am-4pm

AL Post 301, 10584 N. Main St.
Rapid River, MI 49878
Hours: Wednesday 8am-4pm

AL Post 194
455 Bay St.
Petoskey, MI 49770
Hours: Tuesday 8am-4pm

AL Post 491
422 Woodworth St.
Leslie, MI 49251
Hours: 2nd Tue 6pm-10pm

AL Post 44, 700 W. Bluff St.
Marquette, MI 49855
Hours: M, Tu, F 8am-4pm

Delta County Veterans Office
2840 College Ave, Ste 2,
Escanaba, MI 49854
Hours: Thursday 8a-4pm

AL Post 76 318, N. James St.
Ludington, MI 49431
Hours: 1st & 3rd Wed 8:30am-4:30pm

Shiawassee Co. OVA
1042 N. Shiawassee St.
Corunna, MI 48817
Hours: Friday 8am-4pm

AL Post 248
1240 W. Grand River
Laingsburg, MI 48848
Hours: 1st Wed 8am-4pm

AL Post 28
700 S. Harbor Dr
Grand Haven, MI 49417
Hours: Mon, Tues 9am-2pm

AL Post 305
9548 Cherry Valley Ave SE,
Caledonia, MI 49316
Hours: 2nd & 4th Fri 8:30-4:30

VFW National Home
Eaton Rapids, MI., 48827
Hours: Monday 8am-4pm

Muskegon VA Clinic
2734 E. Apple Ave,
Muskegon, MI 49441
Hours: Thursday 9am-2pm

AL Post 297
3590 Conklin St,
Ravenna, MI 49451
Hours: Wednesday 9am-2pm

Ann Arbor VAMC
2215 Fuller Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Hours: M-F 7am-3pm

Charlevoix County OVA
301 State Street
Charlevoix, MI 49720
Hours: 2nd & 4th Wed
8:30am-4:30pm

County Office, 400 River St.
Manistee, MI 49660
Hours: 2nd 4th Thurs 8:30-4:30

Department Headquarters
212 N. Verlinden
Lansing, MI 48915
Hours: Daily 8am-4:30pm

Jackson County OVA
1715 Lansing Ave. Rm 252
Jackson, MI 49202
Hours: T,2&4W,F 8am-4pm

Kalkaska County OVA
890 Isl. Lake Rd. NW, Rm 8
Kalkaska, MI 49646
Hours: 1st & 3rd Thurs 8:30-4:30

Mackinac County OVA
100 S. Marley St.
St. Ignace, MI 49781
Hours: Tue & Fri 8am-4pm

Mecosta County Office
14330 Northland Dr.
Big Rapids, MI 49307
Hours: Fri 8:30am-4:30pm

Michigan Works Bldg
401 North Lake St.,
Suite 700
Cadillac, MI 49601
Hours: Mon 8:30am-4:30pm

Otsego County OVA
225 W. Main St, Rm 104
Gaylord, MI 49735
Hours: Wed, Thur 8am-4pm

Presque Isle County
Veterans
151 E. Huron, 3rd flr.
Rogers City, MI 49779
Hours: W 9am-4pm

Saginaw VAMC, 1500
Weiss st
Saginaw, MI 48602
Hours: M,T, W- 9am-4pm

Schoolcraft County OVA
300 Walnut St. #206B
Manistique, MI 49854
Hours: Tue & Wed 8am-4pm

Sault Ste. Marie CBOC
509 Osborn Blvd,
Ste 306
Sault Ste. Marie, MI
49783
Hours: Monday 8-4

Wyoming CBOC
5838 Metro Way SW
Wyoming, MI 49519
Hours: Thur 8-4

Downriver Community
Conference Building
15100 Northline Road
Southgate, MI 48195
Hours: T, W, Th 8am-4pm

West MI Vet Assistance Pro-
gram
620 Century Ave SW, Grand
Rapids, MI 49503
Hours: 1st & 3rd Fri 8am-4pm

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Gary Easterling Director

Our staff is dedicated to providing the very best veterans' advocacy to Michigan Veterans and their families. They can assist with Claims Preparation, Presentation and appeal counsel in Veterans' benefits services. Let us assist you and your dependents in getting the benefits that you have earned by your service to your country.



Gary Easterling, Director
Cell (313) 549-8557
geasterling@michiganlegion.org

Tripp Cantwell, Assistant Director
Office Phone (313) 964-6640
Fax (313) 964-5697

Call for a Service officer in your area:
833.648.3826 Option 1

e-mail - al.vbadet@va.gov
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Rick Wiles
Angella Barkel
Patty Breas
Phillip Babcock
Tommy Simpkins
Stacy Thill
Kieshan Counts
Courtney Thurber
Lisa Misenko

Check out all your benefits at
www.mivabenefits.org

VFW Post 5670, 54 N. Mitchell
Rd, Gwinn, MI 49841
Hours: 2nd & 3rd Thurs 8-4

Radcliff Center, 1751 Radcliff St,
Garden City, MI 48135
Hours: Monday 8am-4pm

DON'T FACE THE VA ALONE!

Find an American Legion Veteran Service Officer near you. Use an Accredited Veteran Service Officer. Here are where American Legion Department Service Officers are. If one is not near you call 833.648.3826 Option 1 and they will guide you to an accredited veteran service officer who will help you.

American Legion Riders Update

Robert Kamin, ALR Director

I hope everyone is in good health and had good holidays. I guess most chapters have elected their new officers by now. Send your updated information including new officers to skip0616@yahoo.com so we can update our department list. I have confirmed 62 chapters for Michigan, heard rumors that there are over 100.

The committee is working hard to organize our state's riders. We are the founding state and one of disorganization. So, I am reaching out to all for help so that we can get it organized. Our goal is work together and support each other. To help get organized we are working on a set of Rules of Procedure for the state. That way, we will have consistency in the way things are run.

We also are looking to start is Riders Leadership College. We are taking ideas from programs in Virginia and Florida. Both have their good points, and we will take the best of both for here in Michigan.

The two big rides this year are the Legacy Ride on June

27th and 28th and the Hell to Paradise PTSD Awareness Ride on July 25th and 26th. We hope these will be a great success. Watch for more information in this paper, on the department website, and on the department's Facebook page.



Dan Shew and his crew from Post 29 in Jackson are hard at work on this year's Legacy Ride. They have a lot of things and a great ride in the planning stage. We all know how Michigan roads are. Once the weather breaks and road conditions are checked, they will have routes and stops confirmed. This is just a reminder that the funds raised are going to the Veterans and Children's Foundation, the same as the National Legacy Ride. Scott Igo and his team are also working very diligently on their ride. I know he will be submitting articles and updates for the paper.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all on the road this riding season, whether on one or both of the big rides or just on the road.

District Meetings

First District

Meetings start at 2 pm.

TBD

Second District

Meetings start at 11 am with the SAL followed by Riders at Noon with a Lunch VSO training at 1 pm and Legion at 2 pm

January 12th, 2025

Dundee Post #72

March 9th, 2025

Milan Post # 268

April 26th, 2025 *4:00 pm

Brooklyn Post #315

May 18th, 2025

Jackson #Post 29

Third District

Lunch is at 12pm, and Business at 1:00 pm.

January 12th, 2025

Stout-Nesbit, Post 156

964 McCallum St

Montgomery

March 9th, 2025

Captain Oscar Brady, Post 298

228 N 20th St

Battle Creek

May 4th, 2025

Joseph B. Westnedge, Post 36

1920 E Kilgore Rd

Portage

Fourth District

Service officers training at 11:00 am meal at 12:30 pm Meetings at 1:30 pm.

January 5, 2025

Coloma 362

6505 Red Arrow Hwy.

March 2, 2025

Hickory Corners 484

3801 W.Hickory Rd.

May 18 2025

Dorr 127

4310 18th St.

Fifth District

Meetings are on the 2nd Thurs of every month meal @ 5:30 pm & meeting @ 7 pm.

LOCATION TBD

Sixth District

Service Officer School at 11:10 am (when scheduled), Lunch at Noon, Meetings at 1 pm

January 19th, 2025

Grand Blanc Post 413

375 E. Grand Blanc Rd,

Grand Blanc, MI

March 16th, 2025

Pinckney Memorial Post 419

9807 Whitewood Road

Pinckney, MI 48169

Phone 734-878-9522

May 18, 2025

Buck-Reasoner Post 238

1785 Cedar Street

Holt, Michigan 48842

Phone 517-699-2235

Seventh District

Lunch at 12:30 wilth meetings at 2:00 pm

January 12th, 2025

Lapeer post #16

1701 W. Genesee

Lapeer, MI 48446

March 16rd, 2025

Memphis Post 566

34330 Bordman

Memphis, MI 48041

May 18th, 2025

Lapeer post #16

1701 W. Genesee

Lapeer, MI 48446

Eighth District

Trainings will start at Noon, Dinner at 1:00pm with Legion and Auxiliary meetings immediately following

January 19th, 2025

Breckenridge, Post #295

220 w. Monroe rd.

Phone: (989) 842-5563

March 16th, 2025

Chesaning, Post #212

15053 Mckeighan Rd.

Phone: (989) 845-3300

May 18th, 2025 *Convention

Meeting*

Portland, Post #129

1324 w. Bridge St.

Phone: (517) 647-4980

Ninth District

Executive meetings are at 11:00am with Lunch at noon. Meetings at 1:00 pm

March 8th, 2025

Holton, Post 397

May 3rd, 2025

Copemish Post 531

Tenth District

All meetings will start with lunch at noon. Meetings at 1:00 pm.

January 4th, 2025

Morley Post #554

March 1st, 2025

Sandford Post #443.

May 3rd, 2025

Bay City Post 18

Eleventh District

All Meetings Start at 10 am, with Lunch to after.

TBD

Twelfth District

Coffee and Doughnuts at 9, meeting at 10 am, with a lunch and additional hour after lunch if needed.

April 12th, 2025

Iron Mountain

Sixteenth District

All meetings start at 7:30 pm

January 14th, 2025

Stitt Post 232

February 11th, 2025*

Fort Dearborn 364

March 11th, 2025

Wyandotte 217

May 13th, 2025 **

Lincoln Park Post 67

Phone: 313-388-2088

May 18th, 2025*

Trenton Post 426

June 10th, 2025 **

Garden City 396

Phone: 313-381-2245

* Service Officer School at 6:30 pm

**Memorial Service & Elections

Eighteenth District

All meetings Meeting for the District Legion and Auxiliary Convene at 2:00 pm

January 26th, 2025

Auburn Hills Post 143

95 Church St.

Auburn Hills, MI 48362 Phone:

248-852-4880

February 23rd, 2025

Milford Post 216

510 W. Commerce Rd

Milford, MI 48381 Phone: 248-

684-9919

March 23rd, 2025

Auburn Hills Post 143

95 Church St.

Auburn Hills, MI 48362 Phone:

248-852-4880

May 18th, 2025

Rochester Post 172

234 Walnut Blvd

Rochester, MI 48307 Phone:

248-651-2247

Nineteenth District

Meetings will be held at the **Gaylord Bowling Center, 1200 Gornick Ave, Gaylord, MI 49735**

Training at 10:00 am, Social Meet and Greet at 11:00 am, lunch served at noon. The both the Legion and Auxiliary will start at 1:00 pm

March 15th, 2025

May 17th, 2025

Around the State...

Post 194 Veterans Day Event



Nearly 200 Petoskey Fifth graders and members of Carl O. Weaver Post 194 Petoskey enjoy a parade to the Veterans' Memorials at Pennsylvania Park.

Toyz for Kidz



Sanford American Legion Post 443 Legion Riders 12th Annual Toyz for Kidz event raised over \$8000.00 in toys and gift cards to support Midland County schools.

Pearl Harbor Day in South Haven



South Haven Post 49 conducted a Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Ceremony, with a 3 volley salute, taps and launching of the Commemorative Wreath

Hanover Horton Post 270 annual Veterans Day potluck



The Gladwin County Post 171's Veteran's Day Open House to show off their "new home"



The event included a Jack-O-Lantern carving contest. The Jack-O Lanterns were used for our "Haunted Post" on Halloween Night.

American Legion Post 422 recently donated \$2000 to the Veterans Suicide Prevention Fund and \$2000 to the Veteran Relief Fund



L - R Sandy Denstedt-Auxiliary President, Iosco County Service Officer, Ron Whitney, and Doug Walter-Post Commander

Post 49 Thanksgiving event



Jason Turner and Jim Addressi from South Haven Post 49 helped load 363 Christmas Trees for Troops stationed in Kentucky and Mississippi.



19th Annual Larry Carlson Memorial Thanksgiving Dinner

South Haven Post 49 served its 19th Memorial Thanksgiving Dinner to approximately 250 people. Larry Carlson was a Post 49 SAL member, and the tradition lives on. Squadron Member & chief cook Ben Newton is shown on the left. Earl Lash (far right) was the packaging supervisor.



Auxiliary member Valerie McPeak personally bakes and serves most of the desserts.

Congratulations Wendy Retzloff

Sedgwick Claims Management Service's Community Champion

Recently, Wendy Retzloff was honored by her employer as a Community Champion.

For more than 10 years, she has been working to support active military members, veterans and their families. Wendy understands the mental and physical challenges many veterans face when they return home and try to reintegrate into civilian life. As part of this, she conducts home visits in her community of Sanford to check on veterans' health and welfare.

Additionally Wendy is a national representative on the Children & Youth Committee.





“I was approaching the end of my Air Force active duty career and needed to increase my education to open more opportunities in my next career. The diverse background of instructors and classmates added great value to the learning experience.”

— Patrick Austin, M.S. Organizational Leadership

Our Commitment to Serving Veterans Includes:

- » Textbooks Provided at No Cost
- » Complimentary Evaluation of Prior Education, Training and Certifications for Transfer Credit
- » Flexible Start Dates
- » Assistance with VA Benefits
- » Dedicated Veteran Support Staff
- » Department of Education’s 8 Keys to Veterans’ Success Institution
- » Math and Writing Assistance Available
- » Career Services Assistance Available
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Any time you have an accident or sudden illness while traveling away from home, Legionnaire *Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+)* provides a crucial safety net that can help pay for emergency medical transportation expenses your health or travel insurance generally will NOT cover.

- + Medical Evacuation (by air and/or ground)**
- + Transportation after Stabilization**
- + Vehicle Return Costs**
- + Return of Traveling Companion, Children or Grandchildren**

EA+ rates specially negotiated for Legionnaires and their Families. The Legionnaire *Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+)* Program is available to Legionnaires at a 35% discount off the broad market rate. A recent enhancement to *EA+* now includes escorting you home with a qualified nurse, if deemed medically necessary by *EA+* physicians, saving members anywhere from \$5,000 - \$25,000.

For more information log on to www.TheLIT.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus or call toll-free 1-888-310-1547 today to speak with a benefit representative.

*This information is only an outline of the plan’s features. The full terms, benefits and conditions of the plan are shown in your Member Benefit Guide. Please read it carefully. ©2016 Worldwide Rescue & Security 40064