



01 DECEMBER 2025



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 501 WOODBURY, MN

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Post 501 Leadership

Commander: Bob Dolan
Vice Commander: JoAnne Kramer
Finance: Teresa Skinner
Service Officer: Paul Lindahl
Membership: Bruce Nettleton
Sergeant at Arms: Tim Crear
Chaplain: Mike Zerr

At this time of year, I like to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. It is really easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season this time of year and miss the chance to celebrate the gifts of hope, peace, and joy. This Christmas season, I want to send each of you serenity, peace in your home, and peace in your hearts, especially when it feels like the world all around us spins out of control. I hope you can find this inner serenity and be awed by the miracle of the Gift of Christmas.

I wish you and your loved one's good health, a very Merry Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Membership Update:

As of today, we have 95 renewals for the 2026 membership year. Based on this year's goal of 126 we are at 75.4%. We are slightly ahead of the renewal rate set by MN Department.

As a reminder your annual dues helps us fund the various activities and local charities that we support such as the local High School Legion baseball, Boys State participation, Christian Cupboard, Big Marine Veteran Camp, AF JROTC scholarships and many more activities within the Woodbury Area.

Let's continue to support all of these great activities by renewing your membership. It's fast & easy by going to www.legion.org. Do not wait until the last minute to do it.



Toys for Tots

This is the third year the Legion Post 501 has partnered with Talamore Senior Living on collecting toys for the Marine Corps sponsored Toys for Tots. This year we will be starting collections on 12 Nov to increase the number of toys collected from last year. In addition to Talamore we are glad to have the Valley Creek Mall as another collection point this year. I will ask the Chamber to get assistance from the Woodbury businesses.

At our Nov Post meeting members brought a number of toys to start off our collection drive. Let's show a lot of Christmas spirit this year.



AMERICAN LEGION SCHOLARSHIP



It is not too soon to talk about college scholarships. Being a member of the American Legion gives you access to the American Legion Scholarship. The purpose of this scholarship, sponsored by The Minnesota American Legion Foundation, is to provide financial assistance to students to further their education in any Minnesota University, College, Vocational school, or other accredited institutions of higher education, or in states with a Minnesota reciprocity agreement. The main qualification for this scholarship is to be a legal descendent of a member of the American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary. The application deadline is 15 March 2026 and must be send to your Legion Post for review and forwarding to Department.

For more information/application on the American Legion Scholarship go to mnlegion.org/scholarships. Take advantage of your Legion benefits.

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Veterans Day

We had a busy few days attending the Woodbury High School, Talamore & St Therese Senior Living facilities and a short Veterans Day program at the Woodbury Veterans Memorial.

Students at St Ambrose Catholic School again created around 150 handmade cards thanking veterans for their Service. The students were very creative in showing their gratitude to veterans who have and are currently serving our country. American Legion Woodbury Post 501 handed out the cards to veterans at all of the Veterans Day events and to veterans that reside at all of the Woodbury and Oakdale Senior Centers to enjoy.



Wall of Thanks

We will be doing the Wall of Thanks at the Valley Creek Mall. The event starts the weekend after Thanksgiving, 29/30 Nov, and lasts until the weekend prior to Christmas, 20/21 Dec (Sat/Sun only). The Wall of Thanks is our annual event to raise money for local charities and to honor veterans or members currently serving in the military.

The booth will be located inside the Valley Creek Mall across from Keys Cafe. Visitors will be able to donate money that will benefit local charities. Additionally, they will be able to post the name of a veteran or a family member currently serving in the military, on a placard and affix it to the Wall of Thanks. If you would like to volunteer a few hours let me know as soon as you can.

This is a great outreach to the local community to let them know that what our Post does within Woodbury.



Upcoming Events

- **18 December – Woodbury Post 501 Monthly Meeting:** The Posts December meeting will be held at the Woodbury City Hall in the Ash North (main floor) conference room at 6:30 PM.
- **22 January – Woodbury Post 501 Monthly Meeting:** The Posts January meeting will be held at the Woodbury City Hall in the Ash North (main floor) conference room at 6:30 PM.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – CHRISTMAS IN MILITARY HISTORY

Every Christmas Day, many Americans spend time relaxing with family, but for some of our troops, it's a day marked by sacrifice and hardship. Throughout U.S. history, several major military events have taken place on December 25. Here are four noteworthy ones.

1. **1776: Washington's Famous Crossing of the Delaware:** In 1776, General George Washington led his famous crossing of the Delaware. That winter had been rough for the Continental Army, with a string of defeats forcing them out of New York and New Jersey into Pennsylvania, leaving morale at rock bottom. Determined to reignite hope, Washington planned a surprise attack on the Hessians — German soldiers hired by the British — figuring they'd be sluggish after Christmas celebrations and unready for battle, especially with a fierce winter storm in play. Late that night, Washington's troops braved the icy Delaware River, and at dawn on December 26, about 2,400 frozen Continentals stormed Trenton. The Hessians were caught off guard and surrendered within 90 minutes. The victory, known as the Battle of Trenton, was a turning point, lifting spirits and reviving the colonists' belief in the fight for independence.
2. **1864: The First Battle of Fort Fisher:** North Carolina's Fort Fisher had seen little action during the Civil War—until Christmas, when the Union set its sights on capturing the Confederacy's last Atlantic port. Things went badly from the start. First, they tried to blow up the fort's walls by packing a warship with explosives, but it only destroyed their own vessel and tipped off the Confederates. On Christmas Eve, they bombarded the fort, but most shots missed or fell short. The next morning, Union forces shelled north of the fort to land troops, only to find its heavy artillery untouched, forcing a retreat. The first battle was a fiasco, but in mid-January 1865, Union troops finally took the fort, cutting the Confederacy off from global trade and supplies. The Civil War ended three months later.

3. **1972: Operation Linebacker II in North Vietnam:** In 1972, during the Christmas season, American forces launched Operation Linebacker II in North Vietnam, the largest bombing mission in military history. Ordered by President Richard Nixon on December 18 after North Vietnamese delegates abandoned peace talks, the "11 Days of Christmas" campaign saw B-52 Stratofortress bombers fly in from Guam for 11 straight days of raids, pausing only on Christmas for a 36-hour ceasefire. When the North Vietnamese refused to return to negotiations, the bombings resumed until December 29, when they finally agreed to resume talks. Over the course of the operation, 15,000 tons of bombs were dropped in 729 sorties involving about 12,000 airmen, destroying or damaging 1,600 structures, 500 rail targets, 10 airfields, and 80% of the country's power capacity. Fifteen U.S. B-52s were lost, with 35 crew members killed and nearly 40 captured. The renewed talks led to the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973, marking the end of U.S. involvement in the war, though the last American troops didn't leave for another two years.
4. **1896: "Stars and Stripes Forever" is Written:** While this wasn't exactly a military action, it's definitely a symbol of America's military might. John Philip Sousa, who grew up during the Civil War, was a talented musician who became a long-time director of the U.S. Marine Band. Known as the "March King," he was a rock star of his time, eventually starting his own band in 1892. On Christmas Day 1896, while crossing the Atlantic on his way home from a European vacation, Sousa's lasting legacy came to him. He said the notes for "Stars and Stripes Forever" were born out of homesickness and fond memories of his time as the Marine Band's leader. The iconic song officially became America's national march in 1987.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS



This activity supports the U.S. military and its veterans; however, it is not officially connected to or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Defense or any of its branches.