



The American Legion  
Third District  
Nathan Olson  
District Adjutant

**Helping Veterans Connect**

We Are on the web!  
[www.mnthunderingthird.org](http://www.mnthunderingthird.org)

## January 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday            | Friday | Saturday  |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|---------------------|--------|---|
|        |        |         |           | 1<br>New Year's Day | 2      | 3   |
| 4      | 5      | 6       | 7         | 8                   | 9      | 10  |
| 11     | 12     | 13      | 14        | 15                  | 16     | 17  |
| 18     | 19     | 20      | 21        | 22                  | 23     | 24<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> District<br>Mid-Winter<br>Conference<br>Lonsdale MN       |
| 25     | 26     | 27      | 28        | 29                  | 30     | 31<br>Joint Rally 1 <sup>st</sup><br>& 3 <sup>rd</sup> District<br>Faribault MN |

# Volume 11 Issue 5

## **The Commanders Corner**

Thundering Third, well we all made it to 2026.

Now for this New Year, I hope it brings you kindness, respect, calm mind and prosperity in all that you do. I believe that everyone is important and that our impact on this world will continue to show for generations.

In this New Year, I ask you to reflect on yourself and the impact you make on so many people lives. I know some of you are like me and question if anything you do really makes a difference. It does, even just sharing a smile with someone can be contagious. That smile could be the one thing someone needs to change their either day around because now that feel like they were seen.

As Members of the American Legion, we are look at as Mentors to so many. Mentorship is hard because we develop a personal relationship that grows and changes over time. One thing many mentors struggle with, is that as the person we have been guiding starts down their own path, it may not be our way of doing things. We need to see past the but we have always done it that way before. That doesn't mean how we have done in the past is wrong but it does mean how we doing it going forward might need to change. We need to respect how things were done in the past but also see how things can adapt and grow towards the future. We need to show understanding and support even when things are run a little different. I ask those who are on both ends of this to take a moment and reflect find patience, understand and common ground.

I look forward to the 2026 year. Please feel free to reach out to me.

Amy Larsen  
Thundering Third Commander  
612-306-4438

## **The Chaplains Corner**

Happy and Blessed New Year Thundering Third District!

As I was pondering what to write about to start this new year off, I really struggled with finding a topic. It seemed so too predictable to write about resolutions again this year (as I'm sure you've reread that article so many times now you have it memorized 😊 JK as the kids say.

And then as these things go I was working on a presentation for another organization using stars as a theme. What popped in my head was curiosity about using stars for navigation. So, I began to read and research and watch way too many You-Tube videos.

What I found was there's evidence pointing to the Babylonians using the stars as far back as 1000 BCE and the evidence for Polynesians using the stars goes back even further. Up until 2006 the U.S. Navy still taught celestial navigation as it's called. With the advent of GPS, it was considered outdated until the realization hit that what if the satellites fail or a terrorist act takes them out? In 2016 the navy went back to teaching it – sextants and all.

Then I reflected on how about 2000 and some years ago some very wise folks from the east used a bright and brilliant light to guide them to a cave in Bethlehem. Follow the star was there only guidance and yet it worked and they were successful in finding that small child they were searching for.

Which leads to that presentation I was working on about stars. With the theme of Star WORDS – notice the play on words there – I invite people to read through a list of words and spend time with them. Instead of writing resolutions that seem to go by the wayside by mid-January – what if we took time to choose a word or two to be our Guiding Star for the year ahead.

Now I invite you to look over this much shorter list of words and choose one or two. What will be your guide in the year ahead? Where do you want 2026 to take you? Who will walk with you? How will you make this word the center of your day – perhaps with your morning coffee and devotions or evening reflection at days end?

### *Star Words*

|            |              |             |
|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Joy        | Journey      | Wonder      |
| Rest       | Mercy        | Beloved     |
| Compassion | Hope         | Grace       |
| Connection | Hospitality  | Peace       |
| Comfort    | Creativity   | Discernment |
| Zeal       | Appreciation | Pray        |
| Clarity    | Listen       | Vision      |
| Patience   | Empathy      | Be          |

*This list of "star" words is not complete - it never will be.*

*What it is, is a starting point.*

*A place to begin your journey into this new year*

*Blessings! Chaplain Cindy Yanchury*

## **SAL UPDATE**

No report this month.

## **Membership Update**

Here is the membership report as of January 1, 2026.

Each District had several Posts reach **100% membership**—some smaller Posts and several larger ones as well. Outstanding work!

As of **December 28**, we are **2nd place nationally**, right behind South Dakota. Great job! We are only **1.07% out of first place**, so keep up the momentum. We are just **338 members behind last year**.

Please continue pushing **renewals**, as they will significantly improve our retention rate. We are currently at **80.56% retention**, and my goal is for the Department to reach **95%**. Keep working hard—we can get there!

Once again, please pass along the **new member membership challenge**:

Below is the information for my **New Year's Membership Challenge**, running from **January 1, 2025, through March 1, 2025**.

### **Challenge Details:**

- To qualify, you must sign up a **minimum of three (3) new members** during the challenge period.
- The **top four (4) recruiters** with the highest number of new members will each receive:
  - **Two (2) box-seat tickets to the St. Paul Saints – Department of Minnesota American Legion Night**
  - **Friday, May 22**
  - Each ticket includes **free food and refreshments**

### **Important:**

Only **new members signed up between January 1, 2025, and March 1, 2025**, will count toward this challenge.

So please—get out there and sign-up new members!

Thank you for everything you do, and let's keep this momentum going into the new year

## **Calendar of Events**

|         |  |                 |
|---------|--|-----------------|
| Jan. 1  | New Year's Day   |                 |
| Jan. 24 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> District Mid-Winter conference         | Lonsdale, MN    |
| Jan. 31 | Joint Rally 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> District | Faribault, MN   |
| Mar. 14 | Appreciation Rally                                     | Bloomington, MN |

|             |                                     |                |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| May 15 – 16 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> District Convention | New Prague, MN |
| June 27     | Commander's Testimonial             | New Prague, MN |
| July 9 – 11 | Department Convention               | Willmar, MN    |

## **Position Endorsements**

Post 594 endorses Cindy Yanchury for the position of Department of Minnesota Chaplain for 2026-2027.  
 Post 45 endorses Mark Dvorak to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.  
 Post 594 endorses Wayne Beierman for the position of Vice Commander Third District for 2026-2027.  
 Post 594 endorses Mark Doble for the position of Vice Commander Third District for 2026-2027.  
 Post 594 endorses Barrett Kirchenwitz for the position of Finance Officer Third District for 2026-2027.  
 Post 95 endorses Jim Entinger for the position of Third District Commander for 2026-2027.  
 Post 96 endorses Tim Swan for the position of 3rd District Vice Commander for 2026-2027.  
 Post 1776 endorses Joe Tappanainer to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.  
 Post 1776 endorses Carla Tappanainer to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.  
 Post 1776 endorses Carla Tappanainer for the position of Vice Commander Third District for 2026-2027.

## **What's Happening in the District**

**We have two open committee seats available and we are looking to fill both positions immediately.**

One open seat on the finance committee and one open seat on the convention committee. If anyone is interested, please contact Commander Amy at 612-306-4438.

**Diane Jankowski scheduled the District Oratorical Contest for 7 February 2026 at the St. Paul Park American Legion.**

We would love to have a lot of **volunteers**, as well as **students** participating in the contest. Please reach to any District Officers with any interest.

**Lonsdale has completed its three-year term for hosting Mid-Winter and it is time to start thinking about who wants to host it beginning next year.**

**Former Woodbury Post 501 Commander Tom Grezek and Post member Dale Johnson manning the Wall of Thanks table. The Wall of Thanks is an annual event to raise money for local charities and to honor veterans or members currently serving in the military.**



**Below is the Registration form for the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference being held at the American Legion Post 586 in Lonsdale MN on Saturday, January 24, 2026.**

The 2026 Third District Mid-Winter Conference will take place at Post 586, Lonsdale American Legion, located at 115 – 2nd Ave. NW, Lonsdale, MN 55046. The venue is one block north of the Veteran's Memorial on Main Street. The conference is scheduled for **Saturday, January 24, 2026**, and will Start at 9:30 AM.

This conference is open to all members of the Third District Family. The morning session will begin with a joint gathering.

Guest speaker Boima Freeman from the Minnesota Department of Commerce will address the conference. He will provide valuable insights into fraud and prevention.

To register for the conference, please complete the official pre-registration form. Only one registration blank should be submitted per person.

Mail completed forms to:

American Legion Post 586  
Attn: 3rd District Mid-Winter Conference  
PO Box 66  
Lonsdale, MN 55963  
Phone: 507-744-2387

---

**Checks for lunch should be payable to American Legion Post 586 Conference.**

We would appreciate receiving your registration by January 12, 2026. However, walk-ins are certainly welcome.

- Lunch cost is \$15.00
- POST \_\_\_\_\_ UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ SQUAD#\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Adress: \_\_\_\_\_

- One registration blank per person



**WE HAVE 8  
BOX SEAT  
TICKETS  
TO AWARD FOR  
LEGION NIGHT  
AT CHS FIELD!**

American Legion Night at CHS Field is Friday, May 22. Commander Linda Dvorak is tossing out the first pitch, and the New Prague Area Honor Guard is presenting the colors during the national anthem.

**THE CHALLENGE:  
TOP 4 RECRUITERS  
OF NEW MEMBERS  
BETWEEN JAN. 1 & MAR. 1  
WILL EACH RECEIVE  
2 BOX SEAT TICKETS,  
WHICH COMES WITH FREE  
FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS.**

.....

Winners will be announced March 14 at the Appreciation Rally in Bloomington.

Winners to sit with the department commander during the game.

**Minimum qualification: recruit at least 3 new members.**

To enter, submit the full names and member IDs of the new members to Membership Director Joe Bares by 5 p.m. March 12 via email at [jebares@yahoo.com](mailto:jebares@yahoo.com) or via mail to 843 Lodge Drive, Jordan, MN 55352. (Any transportation, lodging or additional expenses are not included.)

### Area 1 Mark Doble

| Post  | City          | Goal | Current | Percent of Goal |
|-------|---------------|------|---------|-----------------|
| 37    | ST. PETER     | 229  | 198     | 86.46%          |
| 55    | LE SUEUR      | 46   | 34      | 73.91%          |
| 74    | HENDERSON     | 32   | 32      | 100.00%         |
| 79    | MONTGOMERY    | 119  | 94      | 78.99%          |
| 108   | LE CENTER     | 244  | 216     | 88.52%          |
| 144   | BELLE PLAINE  | 74   | 61      | 82.43%          |
| 149   | MORRISTOWN    | 109  | 79      | 72.48%          |
| 207   | CLEVELAND     | 66   | 44      | 66.67%          |
| 311   | ELYSIAN       | 178  | 123     | 69.10%          |
| 380   | KILKENNY      | 12   | 8       | 66.67%          |
| 433   | GAYLORD       | 74   | 63      | 85.14%          |
| 510   | NICOLLET      | 104  | 95      | 91.35%          |
| 518   | NORTH MANKATO | 219  | 195     | 89.04%          |
| Total |               | 1506 | 1242    | 82.47%          |

### Area 3 Kelley Ackerman

| Post  | City             | Goal | Current | Percent of Goal |
|-------|------------------|------|---------|-----------------|
| 48    | STILLWATER       | 147  | 123     | 83.67%          |
| 65    | ROSEMOUNT        | 196  | 167     | 85.20%          |
| 98    | ST. PAUL PARK    | 382  | 339     | 88.74%          |
| 225   | FOREST LAKE      | 675  | 566     | 83.85%          |
| 424   | INVER GROVE HTS. | 60   | 48      | 80.00%          |
| 447   | PRIOR LAKE       | 72   | 61      | 84.72%          |
| 491   | BAYPORT          | 257  | 216     | 84.05%          |
| 501   | WOODBURY         | 126  | 108     | 85.71%          |
| 507   | MAHTOMEDI        | 44   | 32      | 72.73%          |
| 521   | MENDOTA HEIGHTS  | 48   | 40      | 83.33%          |
| 620   | HUGO             | 159  | 131     | 82.39%          |
| 643   | SAVAGE           | 252  | 191     | 75.79%          |
| Total |                  | 2418 | 2022    | 83.62%          |

### Area 2 Jim Entinger

| Post  | City           | Goal | Current | Percent of Goal |
|-------|----------------|------|---------|-----------------|
| 95    | GLENCOE        | 74   | 67      | 90.54%          |
| 96    | HUTCHINSON     | 418  | 353     | 84.45%          |
| 125   | STEWART        | 38   | 33      | 86.84%          |
| 141   | SILVER LAKE    | 158  | 140     | 88.61%          |
| 143   | BROWNTON       | 56   | 49      | 87.50%          |
| 226   | GIBBON         | 16   | 13      | 81.25%          |
| 250   | ARLINGTON      | 33   | 30      | 90.91%          |
| 300   | LAFAYETTE      | 45   | 36      | 80.00%          |
| 314   | WINTHROP       | 50   | 48      | 96.00%          |
| 407   | WINSTED        | 79   | 70      | 88.61%          |
| 408   | GREEN ISLE     | 32   | 25      | 78.13%          |
| 463   | LESTER PRAIRIE | 37   | 29      | 78.38%          |
| 641   | PLATO          | 19   | 15      | 78.95%          |
| Total |                | 1055 | 908     | 86.07%          |

### Area 5 Marissa Lacourt

| Post  | City         | Goal | Current | Percent of Goal |
|-------|--------------|------|---------|-----------------|
| 43    | FARIBAULT    | 324  | 280     | 86.42%          |
| 44    | LAKEVILLE    | 94   | 78      | 82.98%          |
| 47    | HASTINGS     | 286  | 235     | 82.17%          |
| 54    | RED WING     | 377  | 324     | 85.94%          |
| 78    | KENYON       | 53   | 39      | 73.58%          |
| 142   | CANNON FALLS | 119  | 107     | 89.92%          |
| 183   | ZUMBROTA     | 41   | 38      | 92.68%          |
| 184   | PINE ISLAND  | 92   | 83      | 90.22%          |
| 189   | FARMINGTON   | 115  | 74      | 80.43%          |
| 586   | LONSDALE     | 123  | 109     | 88.62%          |
| 594   | EAGAN        | 213  | 183     | 85.92%          |
| 598   | BELLECHESTER | 60   | 58      | 96.67%          |
| Total |              | 1897 | 1608    | 84.77%          |

### Area 3 Wayne Beierman

| Post  | City         | Goal | Current | Percent of Goal |
|-------|--------------|------|---------|-----------------|
| 2     | SHAKOPEE     | 143  | 121     | 84.62%          |
| 3     | JORDAN       | 57   | 59      | 103.51%         |
| 45    | NEW PRAGUE   | 195  | 168     | 86.15%          |
| 57    | CHASKA       | 240  | 204     | 85.00%          |
| 84    | NORTHFIELD   | 161  | 139     | 86.34%          |
| 121   | WATERTOWN    | 47   | 43      | 91.49%          |
| 150   | WACONIA      | 222  | 186     | 83.78%          |
| 343   | NORWOOD      | 41   | 34      | 82.93%          |
| 580   | CHANHASSEN   | 364  | 277     | 76.10%          |
| 601   | NEW GERMANY  | 36   | 35      | 97.22%          |
| 1700  | BURNSVILLE   | 58   | 34      | 58.62%          |
| 1776  | APPLE VALLEY | 786  | 655     | 83.33%          |
| 1995  | VICTORIA     | 11   | 10      | 90.91%          |
| Total |              | 2361 | 1965    | 83.23%          |

Grand Total

9251

7783

84.13%

COATES (Post at Large)

37

38

102.70%



Department of Minnesota 2026 Membership  
as of 1/1/26

*District Summary Including all HQ Transfers*

|    | District         | New        | Pufl        | Hq Renewals Tran | Totals     | Goal         | % of Goal    | Retention %        |
|----|------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 6  | MN Dist 0006 LGN | 144        | 1010        | 6485             | 68         | 7707         | 9043         | 85.226142          |
| 1  | MN Dist 0001 LGN | 93         | 740         | 4580             | 30         | 5443         | 6396         | 85.100063          |
| 2  | MN Dist 0002 LGN | 74         | 515         | 3739             | 11         | 4339         | 5104         | 85.011755          |
| 3  | MN Dist 0003 LGN | 145        | 1485        | 6084             | 69         | 7783         | 9251         | 84.131445          |
| 7  | MN Dist 0007 LGN | 47         | 572         | 3263             | 4          | 3886         | 4645         | 83.659849          |
| 4  | MN Dist 0004 LGN | 27         | 246         | 1028             | 3          | 1304         | 1568         | 83.163265          |
| 9  | MN Dist 0009 LGN | 68         | 489         | 3431             | 26         | 4014         | 4829         | 83.1228            |
| 10 | MN Dist 0010 LGN | 126        | 875         | 4614             | 55         | 5670         | 6846         | 82.822086          |
| 8  | MN Dist 0008 LGN | 61         | 284         | 1948             | 14         | 2307         | 2857         | 80.749037          |
| 5  | MN Dist 0005 LGN | 24         | 228         | 763              | 5          | 1020         | 1305         | 78.16092           |
| 11 | MN Dist 0099 LGN | 7          | 194         | 1121             | 0          | 1322         | 1751         | 75.499714          |
|    | <b>Sum:</b>      | <b>816</b> | <b>6638</b> | <b>37056</b>     | <b>285</b> | <b>44795</b> | <b>53595</b> | <b>83.572761</b>   |
|    |                  |            |             |                  |            |              |              | <b>80.56185233</b> |

Always Remember to check out additional events and happenings on our website:

[Home | American Legion MN Thundering Third District](#)

Also Included is a link to the American Legion Department website:

[The American Legion Department of Minnesota – Veterans strengthening America](#)