



The American Legion
 Third District
 Nathan Olson
 District Adjutant

Helping Veterans Connect

We Are on the web!
www.mnthunderingthird.org

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 WW II Presentation, Waconia MN	8	9
10 District and Convention Reports are Due.	11	12	13	14	15 District Convention, New Prague MN	16 District Convention, New Prague MN
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30
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Volume 11 Issue 9

The Commander's Corner

Supporting Our Graduates in Uniform & Celebrating Family and Fun in Our Community

As high school seniors across the region celebrate graduation, many are preparing to take bold new steps—some toward college, others joining the workforce, and a proud group answering the call to serve by enlisting in the United States Armed Forces. These young men and women are embarking on a life-changing journey, and they deserve to know that their community stands firmly behind them.

In response, the American Legion should be reaching out to these graduating seniors who are entering military service, gathering their or their family's contact information, and preparing to send them care packages during basic training—little boxes of comfort and goodies that they can share with fellow veterans. This effort will not only support our future veterans but also introduce a new generation to the American Legion, ensuring that their journey in service is connected to a community of care.

At the same time, the American Legion can also make a broader reach into their community this summer by encouraging full family involvement in seasonal activities. Warmer weather brings a wealth of opportunities, and the Legion Posts can help lead the way by hosting kid activity days, family events, and more. These gatherings could include outdoor games, educational workshops (how to cast a fishing pole, gun safety and many more things), and family days with entertainment, food, and fun. In addition to their own events, the American Legion can be seen participating in county fairs, parades, and other seasonal festivals—showing that they are a visible, active part of community life.

We want families to see that the American Legion is more than a veterans' organization. We're a place for veterans and their families.

As the weather warms, Posts are encouraged to keep an eye out for these upcoming events and find ways to get involved. Whether celebrating a graduate's new chapter, joining a kid's activity day, or gathering at a local fair, the American Legion is proud to serve as a cornerstone for both veterans and families. This summer, let's come together, celebrate, and build a stronger community for all.

Amy Larsen

Thundering 3rd Commander
BE THE ON

The Chaplains Corner

May 2026 Third District Newsletter

May – the month of remembering with honor those who sacrificed so much on our behalf. When I consider those who have entered military service, knowing full well that it might mean that ultimate sacrifice and yet they served (and continue to serve). Not all went willingly – I remember the years of the draft for Vietnam - those who made the ultimate sacrifice rest in our thoughts and prayers during these days of remembering.

May is the month when many, if not all of our posts, will turn our hearts to remembering. Memorial Day – that’s what it’s about isn’t it? To remember. But it’s not that simple! We remember, and we honor. We respect and we weep. We gather and we offer up thanks. We gather. After the agony of a country torn apart in a Civil War, and the horror of the First World War, the fight to free others from dictators of the Second World War and so it goes – we place flags, we recite words of remembrance, we hear the echo of taps. And we remember. We remember those who have given that last full measure of devotion.

And so, it is. And so, it goes. We remember.

Let us pray:

Holy One, hold us as we weep, hold us as we remember those who have gone before us. And then we rise up with those memories that are dear to us and we go forth to live as loved and blessed souls. May it be so, Amen

SAL UPDATE

No report this month

Membership Update

District Convention & Membership Planning

We will once again be gathering for the District Convention in just a couple of weeks. It would be outstanding to see at least one member from every Post attend. Conventions are an excellent way to stay informed, ask questions, and see firsthand what is happening at the District and Department levels.

Just as importantly, conventions are a powerful membership tool. They provide an opportunity to talk, share ideas, and network with other Posts. Those conversations can bring back new ideas and help explain to prospective and new members exactly what the District and Department do in support of our organization.

Election Season Means Planning Season

This is also the time of year when many Posts are holding elections. That makes it the perfect opportunity to discuss and put together a membership plan for the coming year.

Consider building a strategy that includes:

- Reaching **100% retention** of current members
- A revitalization plan for the **1982 list**
- New member recruiting in your community
- Follow-up plans for renewals and transfers
- Assigning membership responsibilities early

Use the Tools Available

Every Post should have received its 1982 membership list from the District Vice Commander last year. That list is one of the best tools available for reconnecting with members who have not renewed.

Every name includes an address, and many also include a phone number or email address. That means you can begin outreach immediately through:

- Mass mailings
- Personal phone calls
- Email reminders
- Home visits when appropriate
- Membership events or open houses

If your Post did not receive a list, or if you would like an updated list for the **2026–2027 membership year**, please let me know.

I will work on preparing one for every Post in the District this year and will personally mail and email them out.

Closing Thought

Success next year starts with the planning we do today. Attend the convention, build your leadership team, and create a membership strategy that puts your Post in position to grow.

Preparation now leads to stronger Posts tomorrow.

Calendar of Events

May 7 WWII Presentation, 99th Infantry Battalion Waconia, MN

May 15 – 16 3rd District Convention New Prague, MN

District Convention Agenda Attached

www.mnthunderingthird.org/event-details/third-district-convention

June 27 Commander's Testimonial New Prague, MN

www.mnlegion.org/commanders-testimonial

July 9 – 11 Department Convention Willmar, MN

www.mnlegion.org/department-convention



You're Invited...

To The Third District Convention

May 15-16, 2026

Help shape our district's work, share ideas, and connect with others committed to service, patriotism, and community. Your participation helps guide local programs, community outreach, and support for those who served.

We look forward to seeing you there!

REGISTER ONLINE

AGENDA & DETAILS



**LOCATION: NEW PRAGUE AMERICAN LEGION
Post #45 - 300 Lexington Ave S.**

Department of Minnesota Joint Testimonial Dinner

American Legion Commander Linda Dvorak

American Legion Auxiliary President Robin Dorf

Sons of the American Legion Commander Jeremy Copher



Saturday, June 27, 2026

New Prague American Legion Post

5pm Social ~ 6pm Dinner ~ 7pm Program ~ Band until 10pm

Menu will be turkey and brisket, sides, and dessert

\$25.00 per person

Purchase your tickets on the Department American Legion website OR send check to New Prague American Legion, PO Box 113, New Prague MN 56071

Reservations due by June 19, 2026

Block of rooms available at Quality Inn & Suites in New Prague.

(952)758-7300 - ask for the American Legion Block

Name _____ # of Guests _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Position Endorsements

Post 594 endorses Cindy Yanchury for the position of Department of Minnesota Chaplain for 2026-2027.

Post 594 endorses Wayne Beierman 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 Carla Tappanainer for the position of Department Vice Commander for 2026-2027.

Post 3 endorses Joe Bares for the position of Department Sargeant of Arms for 2026-2027.

Post 54 endorses Marissa LaCourt for the position of Vice Commander Third District for 2026-2027.

National Convention Endorsements

Post 45 endorses Mark Dvorak to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

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 491 endorses Pat Logan to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 311 endorses Rod Reistek to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 225 endorses Don Skow to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 225 endorses Terry Larsen to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 96 endorses Don Pankake to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 594 endorses Wayne Beierman to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

Post 594 endorses Cindy Yanchury to attend the National Convention for 2026 in Louisville KY.

What is happening in the District:

On Thursday May 7th, Waconia SAL Squadron 150 will be hosting a FREE WWII History Presentation on the 99th Infantry Battalion. The event will be held at the Waconia Middle School, begins at 7:00 PM, and includes the following speakers:

Community Introductory Speakers

Karl Swee - SAL Squadron 150 Member & Event Organizer
Richard Beckett - SAL Squadron 150 Commander
Joe Gifford - Post 150 Commander
Christina Carleton - President & CEO of Norway House
Randal Dietrich - Executive Director of the MN Military & Veterans Museum
Ross Hanson - Scandia Lodge, Sons Of Norway

Keynote Speakers

Author Dr. Kyle Ward - Minnesota State University, Mankato
Author Olaf Minge - 99th Infantry Division Foundation President

Q&A Session

Author Erik Brun - 99th Infantry Division Historian

There will also be information and historical artifacts available for viewing in the lobby before and after the event, as well as some complimentary refreshments after the event.

See the attachments or follow the below links for additional information regarding this FREE event. Please feel free to share this information across the district and I hope to see you there!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1439575641279170>

<https://www.waconiaamericanlegionpost150.com/events/sd2zx0c7144f8enc8fb463zq7ch00a>

Joe Gifford
Commander

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American Legion Post 150
4 E Main St
Waconia, MN 55387
(952) 442-5340

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](#)

Committee Reports

Legionville safety training camp is doing pretty well but we still need lots of campers and donations. Anyone can sponsor campers, Legion Family organizations, and other local organizations such as Lions, PTAs, church organizations, individuals, even parents can choose to sponsor and pay for their own children. This camp is one of a kind in the Legion, the traffic safety program together with lots of other classes such as water safety, canoeing, first aid and many more. There is also lots of time other fun stuff for the campers to do, many recreation and athletic opportunities are woven into the daily activities to keep things interesting and fun for all the campers.

The camp is for kids ages 9 to 13, it's a week-long camp Sunday through Friday beginning the second week of June. The registration fee is \$550 per camper, the registration is completed on line by the parent or guardian, for more registration information go to www.legionville.org.

There are many projects, upgrades, and improvements that are happening at the camp and they all need funding, so donations are needed to complete these, and they are so much appreciated. Thank you all for the donations and other help you have given Legionville it is much appreciated! Together we are making a difference!

For God and Country

Donny Skow

3rd District Legionville Chairman

Third District Oratorical Program 2026

The Third District Oratorical Program was held on 7 February 2026 at the Richard Dingle Post 98 in St. Paul Park.

We had two contestants this year, both worked very hard on their speeches.

Ankit Mukhopadhyay representing the Daniel R. Olson Post 594 in Eagan took first place. Ankit went on to place 3rd at the Department Contest in Anoka.

Elsa Swenson Representing the Forest Lake American Legion took second place at the District Level.

A big thank you goes out to the St. Paul Park American Legion who made every contestant and volunteer feel welcome and I appreciate your kindness. To all of the volunteers who helped to make this event happen, this event could not have happened without your help.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Jankowski – Oratorical

Membership Reports

Department of Minnesota 2026 Membership as of 4/29/26

District Summary Including all HQ Transfers

	District	New	Pufl	Renewals	Hq Tran	Totals	Goal	% of Goal	Retention %
6	MN Dist 0006 LGN	215	1012	7247	107	8581	9043	94.891076	94.08344733
10	MN Dist 0010 LGN	194	877	5253	86	6410	6846	93.631318	90.97119097
3	MN Dist 0003 LGN	221	1488	6836	114	8659	9251	93.600692	91.34921506
9	MN Dist 0009 LGN	86	489	3886	45	4506	4829	93.311245	92.66949153
2	MN Dist 0002 LGN	100	517	4124	15	4756	5104	93.181818	92.59776536
1	MN Dist 0001 LGN	133	740	5024	49	5946	6396	92.964353	92.99548096
7	MN Dist 0007 LGN	77	573	3660	8	4318	4645	92.960172	92.26242371
8	MN Dist 0008 LGN	82	285	2228	24	2619	2857	91.669583	89.23623446
4	MN Dist 0004 LGN	37	246	1119	8	1410	1568	89.923469	89.50819672
5	MN Dist 0005 LGN	32	229	893	10	1164	1305	89.195402	87.24727838
11	MN Dist 0099 LGN	11	195	1320	0	1526	1751	87.1502	86.52198744
	Sum:	1188	6651	41590	466	49895	53595	93.087687	92.3498058

Area 1 Mark Doble

Post	City	Goal	Current	Percent of Goal
37	ST. PETER	229	207	90.39%
55	LE SUEUR	46	38	82.61%
74	HENDERSON	32	34	106.25%
79	MONTGOMERY	119	100	84.03%
108	LE CENTER	244	230	94.26%
144	BELLE PLAINE	74	68	91.89%
149	MORRISTOWN	109	93	85.32%
207	CLEVELAND	66	58	87.88%
311	ELYSIAN	178	135	75.84%
380	KILKENNY	12	11	91.67%
433	GAYLORD	74	67	90.54%
510	NICOLLET	104	100	96.15%
518	NORTH MANKATO	219	212	96.80%
Total		1506	1353	89.84%

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Area 3 Kelley Ackerman

Post	City	Goal	Current	Percent of Goal
48	STILLWATER	147	126	85.71%
65	ROSEMOUNT	196	192	97.96%
98	ST. PAUL PARK	382	372	97.38%
225	FOREST LAKE	675	644	95.41%
424	INVER GROVE HTS.	60	54	90.00%
447	PRIOR LAKE	72	64	88.89%
491	BAYPORT	257	232	90.27%
501	WOODBURY	126	118	93.65%
507	MAHTOMEDI	44	35	79.55%
521	MENDOTA HEIGHTS	48	43	89.58%
620	HUGO	159	154	96.86%
643	SAVAGE	252	220	87.30%
Total		2418	2254	93.22%

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Area 2 Jim Entinger

Post	City	Goal	Current	Percent of Goal
95	GLENCOE	74	73	98.65%
96	HUTCHINSON	418	389	93.06%
125	STEWART	38	35	92.11%
141	SILVER LAKE	158	155	98.10%
143	BROWNTON	56	53	94.64%
226	GIBBON	16	15	93.75%
250	ARLINGTON	33	30	90.91%
300	LAFAYETTE	45	43	95.56%
314	WINTHROP	50	49	98.00%
407	WINSTED	79	81	102.53%
408	GREEN ISLE	32	26	81.25%
463	LESTER PRAIRIE	37	31	83.78%
641	PLATO	19	17	89.47%
Total		1055	997	94.50%

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Area 5 Marissa Lacourt

Post	City	Goal	Current	Percent of Goal
43	FARIBAULT	324	305	94.14%
44	LAKEVILLE	94	89	94.68%
47	HASTINGS	286	256	89.51%
54	RED WING	377	355	94.16%
78	KENYON	53	43	81.13%
142	CANNON FALLS	119	115	96.64%
183	ZUMBROTA	41	38	92.68%
184	PINE ISLAND	92	92	100.00%
189	FARMINGTON	115	83	90.22%
586	LONSDALE	123	128	104.07%
594	EAGAN	213	198	92.96%
598	BELLECHESTER	60	60	100.00%
Total		1897	1762	92.88%

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Area 3 Wayne Beierman

Post	City	Goal	Current	Percent of Goal
2	SHAKOPEE	143	138	96.50%
3	JORDAN	57	64	112.28%
45	NEW PRAGUE	195	186	95.38%
57	CHASKA	240	219	91.25%
84	NORTHFIELD	161	156	96.89%
121	WATERTOWN	47	44	93.62%
150	WACONIA	222	213	95.95%
343	NORWOOD	41	38	92.68%
580	CHANHASSEN	364	354	97.25%
601	NEW GERMANY	36	35	97.22%
1700	BURNSVILLE	58	46	79.31%
1776	APPLE VALLEY	786	743	94.53%
1995	VICTORIA	11	10	90.91%
Total		2361	2246	95.13%

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Grand Total **9251** **8659** **93.60%**

COATES (Post at Large) 37 47 127.03%



