

WISCONSIN



alawi@amlegionauxwi.org

The official publication of the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary

American Legion Auxiliary
P.O. Box 140
Portage, WI 53901

www.amlegionauxwi.org

MEMBERSHIP

Becky Mueller
Department Chair
clarenceandbecky@aol.com
920-833-6048

GNOMES INVADE GREEN BAY! It was wonderful to see so many of you at the Mid-winter Conference in Green Bay. It was so nice to talk and visit with the entire Legion family. Thank you for your participation. Our Auxiliary sessions had good attendance – so good that we didn't get to all the questions – please contact the membership team directly for those answers. Share your successes and great ideas with us also. The best part of Midwinter is hearing all the extraordinary accomplishments being done by our members working together with their units, counties and districts. You are making a difference. Be the One!

Keep up the great work – 391 new members have been recruited so far this year! Many, many units are above the national average for membership percentage. Congratulations! I don't have a count of rejoins but hear many stories of members coming back to our organization. Continue to make all



members feel welcomed and valued. Listen as they share fresh ways of looking at things and bring energy and excitement. The projects you are working on are amazing and are the catalyst for new and old members to

get excited and makes them want to be part of our family. Focus on our mission and vision – and remember – each one of us is part of our mission and vision and helping each other, supporting each other, and welcoming

each other is fulfilling our mission. We are all part of a Veteran's or service member's family and community.

Some reminders – send in your renewals, rejoins and recruits on a regular basis. Contact your unit members on a regular basis. Check your address list for any corrections and updates. Don't forget to send in those address changes for our snowbirds – they need to be kept in touch with and receive communications on a regular basis.

Did you know – your membership card is your entry into Legion family functions everywhere? When traveling, stop by and visit other Posts, Units and Squadrons to find new approaches and lend your support. What a great way to meet great people and have fun.

Membership is the key to opening the door to new adventures and meeting new people. Hold open that door – swing it wide open – as you invite others to be part of this journey to making a difference in someone's life. All of us have a role to play in continuing to support our Veterans, military, their (our) families and communities. BELIEVE you can make a difference! BELIEVE you are the one! Get excited and let's go!

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: ALA UNIT 469



HELP WANTED!

ALA Badger Girls State Counselors & Nurses
Sunday, June 18 – Friday, June 23
UW-Oshkosh Campus

Counselors and nurses are still needed!

If you can volunteer the whole week or just a couple days, please submit an application
www.alabgs.org/alabgs-volunteer-info)
or contact ALABGS Chairman Dany Thompson
for more information at alabgs.chairman@gmail.com.

ALA Unit 469 in Marathon City is honored to recognize two members of their Unit: Margaret Shidell (right), age 102 and her younger sister, Norma Socha (left), age 100. Margaret has been a member of the Auxiliary for 32 years and Norma for 59 years. Margaret's husband Joseph and Norma's husband Leo both served during World War II. They are proud Americans that understand the sacrifice of freedom and the building of camaraderie.

Both women have been matriarchs to the Auxiliary and their community and have a long history of goodwill. They are compassionate, faithful, ambitious, and loving women who put others first. Auxiliary members know them best as the Unit Poppy Chairpersons. For years they organized the unit's poppy distributions. Upon the completion of the shift or shifts, the sisters invited the volunteers into their home to tally the collections. Their hospitality included coffee, homemade baked goods, and great conversations. The love they have for others, the community, and country radiated through. They make others feel important, appreciated, and proud to be part of the Auxiliary.

The members of ALA Unit 469 are blessed to know Margaret and Norma and are grateful for their inspiration.

*Story submitted by Betty Blume,
Unit Vice President.*



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Linda Kostka
Department Chaplain
lkostka@ymail.com
715-209-8135

WHAT IS YOUR CALLING?

Whatever our gifts, education or backgrounds, our calling is to do God's work here on earth. Showing a smile, putting out a helping hand or words of God's love for His people. Pray and be thankful for each and every day. As we walk onward knowing we fall short of God's love, we compare ourselves to other earthly beings. The Lord says you are forgiven and miracles happen every day. Thrust yourself into God's plans for the world which are beyond our ability to comprehend or accomplish on our own. Plead with the Lord, "Use me and give me the understanding to do your will." And be thankful for all the grace we have received from Him. AMEN

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

We are in the middle of winter and soon the Easter season will be here. We will also be ordering seeds for our gardens and praying to have an enormous harvest. Please reach out to those members who haven't been attending meetings and get them excited about our programs again. Please continue your commitment to our Veterans through wonderful acts of kindness. AMEN

WANTED: A Member for the Department Finance Committee



Per Department Bylaws, any member with appropriate experience may serve on the **Department Finance Committee**. Each year, the Department Vice Presidents will appoint one member from qualified applicants to serve for a three-year term.

Candidates should submit a resume highlighting their skills in accounting, finance, budgeting, auditing or other relevant experience by **April 15, 2023** to deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org.

Upon receipt of all resumes, candidates will be scheduled for a telephone interview with the appointment committee.

GREETINGS FROM HEADQUARTERS

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

Can you believe it is February already?!? What happened to 2022? I hope everyone had a good holiday season and are having a safe Wisconsin winter.

National President Vickie Koutz made her official visit to Wisconsin at The American Legion's Midwinter Conference in Green Bay. During her visit, the ALA held a Parade of Checks to support her special project – supporting companions of Veterans selected to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. "Sometimes, companions can't afford to pay for a meal plan," she said. "This broke my heart. The one person who is a constant in the Veteran's life couldn't stay with them during meals." Vickie's project for companions is triple tiered — money for a meal plan, travel, and/or a separate hotel room if needed for non-family member companions. Through the generosity of Wisconsin's members and units, the Parade of Checks raised

\$2,820.00!!! Thank you to everyone who participated.

The national organization mailed final dues renewal notices on February 1. If you received a notice but think your dues were paid, please verify with your Unit Membership Chairman that your payment was transmitted to department headquarters. Members who have not paid their 2023 dues are now delinquent and lost all benefits of membership – including the right to hold office, vote on unit matters, qualify for financial assistance through the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, have an American Legion Auxiliary memorial service or grave marker, or bowl in the annual 9-pin tap bowling tournament (oh no!!!). Members may reinstate their membership by paying their dues to their unit, department headquarters, by phone (National HQ: 317-569-4570), or online at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Unit presidents are reminded to submit Unit Year-End Reports by April 15. Members should report their activities to their unit president by April 1 so they can be included in the unit report. New this year is the Unit Narrative Summary Sheet. Units should mark the programs they worked during the past year and

submit a detailed Program Narrative Report for those programs only. If a unit did not participate in any Auxiliary programs, simply mark "no" for each program and return the summary sheet. This information is used by the department chairmen in their annual reports to the national organization. The Unit Impact Report is a numeric report that details direct support to our Veterans, the military, and their families and is presented to Congress to prove the value of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Mark your calendars! Department Convention will be held at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild (Wausau area) from July 20-23, 2023.

Per Department Bylaws, the American Legion Auxiliary will NOT be holding district caucuses at convention. Therefore, alternates for National Convention should be nominated at the district level – possibly at their spring conference or by executive action. Anyone who would like to attend National Convention in Charlotte, NC from August 26-31, should contact their District President and ask to be nominated as an alternate. Names of nominees must be submitted to Department no later than July 1.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT VICKIE KOUTZ VISITS WISCONSIN



National President Vickie Koutz (center) conducted her official visit during The American Legion's Midwinter Conference. She is pictured with Department President Linda Coppock and Membership Chairman Becky Mueller at the Auxiliary's membership information table.



President Vickie also enjoyed a brief visit to Lambeau Field where she was overwhelmed by the popularity of the famous Wisconsin Cheesehead!

CANDIDATES FOR DEPARTMENT OFFICE

Candidates for Department office must email their announcement (300-350 words) with a head/shoulder photo to **Executive Secretary-Treasurer Bonnie Dorniak** (deptsec@amlegionauxwi.org)

by **Monday, March 20, 2023** for publication in the *Wisconsin*.

Department Standing Rule: Any member may run for any office as a right of membership. While each experience as an officer or chairman helps to prepare the member for higher office, members have the right to pursue any office that is personally fulfilling without obligation to seek other offices.

SAVE THE DATE!

DISTRICT SPRING CONFERENCES

1st District	May 6, 2023
2nd District	April 29, 2023
3rd District	April 22, 2023
4th District	May 13, 2023
5th District	No Info
6th District	April 29, 2023
7th District	No Info
8th District	April 22, 2023
9th District	April 1, 2023
10th District	April 29, 2023
11th District	No Info
12th District	No Info

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Lindsay Stiff Honorary Department Junior President

Are you wondering who the current Honorary Department Junior President is? Let me introduce myself! My name is Lindsay Stiff, from Berens Scribner Unit 6 in Stevens Point. I am in 7th grade, and I have been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary since I was born.

One of the reasons I like being a member of the ALA is that I like helping Veterans and their families. My favorite event to help with is my unit's annual fundraiser, Bowling for Veterans. I have also served as Junior Poppy Princess and was even the Department Junior Poppy Princess several years ago.

My interests outside of the ALA include art and music, as well as competitive swimming and running. I serve on the Student Council at my junior high school, and I play percussion in my school band. I take musical Theater dance classes and will be in an upcoming performance of Mary Poppins.

For my special project this year, I would like to support the Veterans Creative Arts Festival and encourage Veterans to try art. I am



**Lindsay Stiff
Honorary Department Junior President**

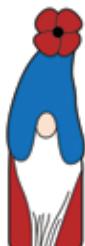
currently planning a painting workshop in the spring to raise money to help Veterans participate in the Veterans Creative Arts Festival. We promise to get that information to units as soon as possible. I hope you can join us.



GOT POPPIES?

The Poppy Shop still has a limited supply of poppies available. Place an order today while supplies last.

Poppy order form is available on the department website or by calling Linda Cason at HQ (608-745-0124).



2023 GNOME ONE AWARD

New Member Award Entry Form

Sign up a NEW 2023 Senior or Junior Auxiliary member and receive a GNOME pin. Only one entry per recruiter.

Entry forms must be received at Department PRIOR to May 26, 2023.

TAL and SAL members that recruit a NEW 2023 AUXILIARY member are also eligible.

Recruiter: _____ Unit # _____ District # _____

Recruiter's Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

NAME OF NEW 2023 MEMBER - Senior or Junior Auxiliary member

Transferring and rejoining members DO NOT count.

Entry forms must be received at Department PRIOR to May 26, 2023.

Submit this completed form to: American Legion Auxiliary
PO Box 140
Portage, WI 53901
Fax: 608-745-1947 / Email: alawi@amlegionauxwi.org

This form is available on the department website (www.amlegionauxwi.org).

LEADERSHIP

Joyce Endres Dept. Chairman ljendres@charter.net 608-221-1763

another may be the answer. Life and the ALA constantly change, so the more open we are to thoughtful change the happier and successful we will be.

Task / Where are we going? Before a leader "goes the way," define action steps to get a new idea and ask your team where they want to go. Challenge the status quo.

Action / How are we going to get there?

Before a leader "shows the way," define desired end-results (e.g. goals, benchmarks, accomplishments, etc.).

Results / How do we know we are there?

Have you met the end results defined? If yes, you will see your hard work pay-off. If not, WHY? Redefine and start anew.

A leader:

- Understands the ALA Constitution, By-laws and Standing Rules are governing documents, but can be challenged, if needed
- Encourages involvement, input and does not make decisions alone
- Uses teachable moments to mentor and inspire others
- Keeps meetings interesting and short
- Adds education or member involvement in planning, meetings and joint projects
- Works with the American Legion Family to support WHY we joined the ALA

Strategic planning is important to leadership, because it raises awareness and gets input about unit functions and activities to effectively move the unit and its members in the same direction to reach agreed upon destinations. BELIEVE you will enjoy the experience!

MISSION IN ACTION



Cindy Giese, #154 VP/Wish Tree Coordinator, Jeff Frenette and Colin Severson.

MONDOVI LEGION FAMILY GRANTS CHRISTMAS WISHES

Mondovi Post 154 Legion and Auxiliary members and volunteers distributed gifts fulfilling wishes for children of families in need during the holidays. Hosted for more than sixty years, the Legion Family in Mondovi presented gifts donated by Buffalo County businesses, organizations and individuals to 79 children from 29 families for Christmas 2022. The Wish Tree is an amazing community-building event in the region each year!

AMERICANISM

Sue Hembrook
Department Chairman
genesuehem@wi.rr.com
262-945-9791

Let us all make a valiant effort to offer our children the wonderful opportunity to compete in the Americanism Essay Contest so they can show everyone their patriotism. The theme this year is "What does patriotism mean to you?" What an excellent way for our youth to be able to tell us what it means to them to be able to experience the freedoms allotted to them. Freedoms that were given by the valiant, courageous actions of many service men and women who are currently serving and our many Veterans that served years ago and are no longer with us.

It is increasingly difficult to get into our schools so be creative – talk to your neighbors, reach out to school boards, school administration, teachers, private schools, and home-schooled children in your communities. Children with special needs are also included and their disabilities need not stand in their way for they too have a voice. We

want our department to have entrants from every classification listed on the submission form.

Promote the "Star-Spangled Kids" program by having a unit or district patriotism program or trivia of our Constitution. Keep in mind the age of the children that would be addressed and invite the kiddos to your units to promote our "love of country." We can open our unit/post homes to such programs and therefore not disrupt the classrooms.

Support your local oratorical competitions and, if possible, attend the Department Oratorical. The participants would greatly appreciate your support. You will leave the competition with a renewed, energized respect for the young people of our land. They truly are dedicated to the ideals that our country has fought for.

If I can help you with any of the submission forms or you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please ensure that the submission forms are completed accurately and send me pictures of your post/unit Americanism activities so I can forward them to our National Headquarters.



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST 2023 SUBMISSION FORM



Essay Title: "What does patriotism mean to you?"

Department: 1st place winning entry in each class will receive \$50 from Department and will be forwarded to Central Division for further competition. 2nd place winning entry in each class will receive \$25 from Department and 3rd thru 5th place winning entries in each class will receive \$10.

National: One award in each of the six classes will be presented in each division. Winners will receive \$50 and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship fund. National winners will be posted at www.ALforVeterans.org at the start of September.

Materials and Guidelines: The contest shall include six classes.

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level.

Essay Checklist:

- Class competing in _____
- Sponsoring ALA Unit _____
- Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word requirement for class
- Completed essay coversheet as first page of essay
- Word count of essay _____
- Due date for student to return to ALA Unit _____

To be completed by the Student/Parent (print clearly):

Student name: _____

Grade level: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Word Count: _____

School Name: _____

School city/state: _____

Teacher's name: _____

Teacher's signature: _____

Auxiliary Use Only (Must be completed for entry to be considered):

Sponsoring Unit City location & number: _____

Signature of Unit Americanism Chairman: _____

Unit Winner due to Department on April 1, 2023

Department: WI Signature of Department Chairman: _____

Send to: Sue Hembrook, 24215 60th Street, Salem WI 53168

Department winner due to National Americanism Division Chairman by April 15, 2023

MISSION IN ACTION



UNIT 401 PRESENTS YOUTH HERO AWARDS

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 401 presented Youth Hero Awards to students at Cambria-Friesland High School for saving their teacher's life. According to Business/Information Technology Teacher Lorri Arnce, she and the FBLA students were having a lunch meeting when she started choking on a piece of food. She knew she was in trouble when, despite several attempts, she was unable to cough and dislodge the food from her throat. When the students realized her distress, they each took immediate action – Keightlyn started the Heimlich maneuver, Clara called 911, Sam went to the administrative office for additional assistance, and Taryn completed Heimlich thrusts until the food cleared the teacher's airway.

Ms. Arnce stated, "I commend each of the students who jumped to help. I am blessed to work in a wonderful community with students who are bright, thoughtful, and budding leaders."

The American Legion Auxiliary recognizes these heroic efforts and encourages other units to look for opportunities to present Good Deed and Youth Hero awards. Questions about this program should be directed to Children & Youth Chairman Mary Petrie at mmrtpetrie@charter.net.

CHIPPEWA FALLS VETERANS HOME

The Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls' Recreation Committee, Inc is in the later stages of raising more than \$233,000 to help pay for an outdoor courtyard for Veterans Home members and their families. The Committee will achieve this goal through the support of multiple Veterans organizations, including the Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary.

Numerous American Legion and Auxiliary members, plus other Veterans service organizations, attended a special check presentation. The Veterans Home outdoor courtyard is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2023.



Department President Linda Coppock also presented a check for \$2,000 from ALA Wisconsin to Harry Bauer and Nancy Randen to purchase sound equipment for the new gazebo.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 1, 2023

The American Legion Auxiliary offers more than **\$25,000 in scholarships** at the state and national levels. Encourage eligible college students to apply for a scholarship today!

**Applications are available
on the department website.**

Students must submit completed applications to a local unit by **March 1**. Unit presidents must review applications, sign and forward them to Education Chairman Sandra Garlie by **March 15**. Incomplete applications will be disqualified.

Questions?

Please contact **Sandra Garlie** at sraegarlie@gmail.com.

PDP Diane Weggen selected the Court-yard as her special project, with a personal goal of raising \$50,000. She surpassed this with a total donation of more than \$62,000, which included a \$10,000 grant from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

"I want to thank the Department of WI American Legion Family members for donating to the Chippewa Veterans Home courtyard project. Once again proving that Veterans and their families continue to give of themselves to improve the quality of life for Veterans in need," said PDP Diane Weggen.

ALA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

2023 ALA-Wisconsin Department Convention RESOLUTIONS INSTRUCTIONS

A resolution is a main motion, offered as a resolution either because of its importance or because of its length or complexity. Resolutions for this reason should always be prepared in writing.

Resolutions usually are comprised of two parts, the preamble and the resolved clause(s). However, a preamble is not required for a resolution to be proper. The preamble explains the reasons for the motion, and each idea or reason therein begins with "Whereas." The "resolved" clause is the motion itself and should be written as a motion.

The Bylaws of ALA-Wisconsin (Article II, Section 1, subsection 4) require that:

a. Resolutions presented by an individual member must be approved by the Unit or District to which the member belongs. Resolutions must be received at Department by June 1. Copies of these resolutions shall be transmitted to Units not less than 30 days before Department Convention.

b. Any resolution not approved by a Unit or District, or when the district conference is held after June 1, must be approved by the appropriate Department Chair of the program to which the resolution pertains. The Department Chair will submit approved resolutions to the Resolutions Committee for consideration.

c. The Resolutions Committee will forward any approved resolutions with a financial impact to the Finance Committee for their approval.

Once the Resolutions Committee and other appropriate chairs/committees have acted on all resolutions, the Resolutions Chair will report recommendations to the convention delegates.

	American Legion Auxiliary-Department of Wisconsin 2023 American Legion Auxiliary Convention	
RESOLUTION		

Submitted by: Unit Name: _____ City: _____ Unit #: _____ Dist. #: _____ Contact Name: _____ Phone # (_____) _____ Subject: _____ Date: _____ ***** Resolution #: _____ Program: _____		
Signature of UNIT President/Secretary: _____ Date: _____ Signature of DISTRICT President/Secretary: _____ Date: _____ FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY: Committee Chair Name & Signature Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Revised Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Revised Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Revised		
Convention Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected Date: _____		

**Wisconsin ALA State Bowling Association
Annual Tournament**

April 15 & 16

Schwoegler's Park Towne Lanes
444 Grand Canyon Drive
Madison, WI 53719

Singles/Doubles
Saturday, 11:00 am or 2:00 pm
Teams Sunday, 9:00 am

Entry forms due March 15

For more information, contact Tournament Director Jenni Syftestad (syftes@chorus.net)

EDUCATION

Sandra Garlie
Department Chairman
218-348-2515
sraegarlie@gmail.com

One of the main objectives of the ALA Education Program is to promote the many unit, department, and national scholarships that are available. Now is when many students are applying for scholarships, so it is a good time to follow up with schools to ensure they know these resources are available.

Here are a few things to remember:

- Deadlines:
 - March 1 – Student applications must be submitted to Units.
 - On or before March 15 – Units certify and forward applications to Department Education Chairman.
 - Scholarships cannot be accepted after deadlines.
- Unit Presidents/Chairmen: Verify the applications are complete and all required materials are included. Please be sure to sign the applications.
- Units may certify multiple applications for Department scholarships but can only certify one application for National scholarships. Applicants may apply for each scholarship for which they are eligible.
- Some department scholarships can be awarded to current college students or graduate students.
- Technical College students may also apply depending on scholarship rules.

Scholarship forms and other information are available on the department website at www.amlegionauxwi.org. For more information and frequently asked questions about national scholarships awarded by the ALA, visit www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships or contact me to obtain any of the needed documents. I look forward to receiving a great number of applications!

I would also like to remind units to apply for the Unit Education Awards. Award entries and year-end reports are due in May. I look forward to hearing from all of you!

Don't forget to make sure that you let your area teachers know how much we appreciate them. Teacher Appreciation week is May 8-12, 2023. I would love to hear and see what units do for the teachers throughout Wisconsin.

M. LOUISE WILSON EDUCATION LOAN FUND

Joan Chwala
Dept. Chairman
jvchwala@gmail.com
715-668-5661

UNIQUE LOAN FUND PROGRAM MEETS WISCONSIN'S MISSION

More than ninety years ago, a lady named M. Louise Wilson had a vision. She wanted to assist women who required financial support in order to further their education. Because the American Legion Auxiliary made this vision a reality, the lives of unit members have been enhanced as we use these loans to further educate our own members.

Q. What makes this loan so unique?

A. It is so simple to apply for the loan. Applicants must contact the program chairman to indicate their interest in a loan. The chairman then sends all necessary information to the applicant. There is no interest on this loan unless the student fails to pay it back. Six months after graduation, payments of \$50 per month will be due.

Q. What are the requirements?

A. The applicant must be a current female member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She must submit a copy of the DD214 document for the veteran that made her eligible to belong. She must send a transcript of her high school grades. She must include three letters of recommendation. A responsible adult must co-sign the promissory note. She must be approved by the program chairman. (Most correspondence can be done through emails.)

Q. What is the amount of the loan?

A. If approved, the applicant can borrow up to \$800 per year for five years. One year from the date of the first loan, the applicant can get an additional \$800 by sending a copy of college grades and being a current member of the American Legion Auxiliary. If approved, she may continue to borrow until the amount reaches \$4,000 or she graduates from college or withdraws from full-time student status.

Q. Why do you ask for donations?

A. By donating, you and your unit ensure that future generations will be able to take advantage of this program. Your unit president has a copy of the donation sheets and it is on the Department website. Spread the word about the loans and the need for additional funding.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP



Diana Sirovina
Department Chairman

Bringing the Christmas Gift Shop to our Veterans takes time and preparation. October seemed a little early to be thinking of Christmas, but in order to reach out to the long-term care facilities where our Veterans reside, the dates on the calendar really didn't mean all that much. All that really mattered was that our wonderful Veterans were able to select Christmas gifts for their family members.

Once it was determined that we would not be able to personally visit the various facilities, we moved forward with planning for another year of working our program remotely. Hospital staff assisted us by taking orders and gifts were again shipped directly to the Veterans' families. This year we were pleased to see a good increase in the number of Veterans we reached, as well as the number of gifts selected.

A group of very dedicated and talented volunteers came together one rainy Sunday morning to take on the task of wrapping the 412 gifts the Veterans selected for their loved ones. Their enthusiasm was contagious, and the job was done in record time! The beautifully wrapped packages were packed into shipping boxes and were dropped at the post office that very same day. All the packages arrived at their destinations well before Christmas.

This program means so much to the Veterans in long-term care facilities. Over the past couple years, these Veterans spent many long and lonely hours without visits from loved ones and friends and were overjoyed when they heard that they would be able to choose gifts for their families again this year. It allowed them to feel connected to their loved ones and gave them something positive to focus on.

It is important to note here that this great program would not be possible without the generous support from units all across Wisconsin. Our Christmas Gift Shop program may only last a couple months each year, but your unit can make it a year-round project by sending in your donations, earmarked for Christmas Gift Shop, whenever you have funds available. Thank you for remembering our hospitalized Veterans and their families at Christmas!



Linda Coppock
Department
President

Hello members, it's me again! If you did not have the opportunity to attend The American Legion Midwinter Conference this past January in Green Bay, you missed a great time – no snow, no sleet, no freezing rain or below zero weather to contend with!!! Not to mention you missed the visit of our ALA National President Vickie Koutz and the Central Division SAL National Vice Commander David Mennel. Two fantastic people working hard to bring awareness to the needs and benefits of our organizations as well as advocating for our Veterans, active military, their families, and our communities!

ALA NP Vickie had her first visit to Lambeau Field and enjoyed a great meal at 1919 Kitchen & Tap! She was amazed at the size of the Lombardi Trophy on display there. And all the Cheesehead hats – she didn't know which one to try on first!!!

Vickie enjoyed meeting the Wisconsin members in attendance and stayed to the very end of the banquet dinner/Luau celebration. You should have seen all the grass skirts and Hawaiian shirts! Ooo La La! Daddy D's provided the entertainment for the evening and NP Vickie was so impressed with them, she stayed until the end of their show. (I think she might want them to be the entertainment at her State's Dinner! Shhhh, mum's the word!)



Randy Timms
State Secretary
American Legion
Riders Association

This is the Mission Statement for the American Legion Riders – "To participate in parades and other ceremonies that are in keeping with the aims and purposes of the American Legion. To promote motorcycle safety. To provide a social atmosphere for American Legion members who share the same interests. To use our association to promote and support the programs of the American Legion, the community and other motorcycle organizations."

By now, most of our 718 members throughout Wisconsin are sitting at home watching weather reports and hoping next week will bring sunshine, dry roads and 70-degree weather! Unfortunately, we'll have to wait a bit for winter to release its grip on our State. But in the meantime, that hasn't deterred Legion Riders from its mission. Some are taking Accident Scene Management classes, some perhaps CPR, others are reading great maintenance tips on keeping their motorcycles in tip-top shape and insuring they'll be out at the first possibility. And, most importantly, some are actively involved in raising funds for Veterans through the many opportunities that come to our attention.

During 2022, although some Districts have yet to report their activities, I was able to provide the following information to the Department for inclusion in their Consolidated Reports. In volunteer hours, the Legion Riders dedicated 5,005 hours to various causes. In monetary donations, they raised \$95,493.00.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My favorite part of her trip was the drive across the road to and from the airport. She laughed when we told her we were going "just across the road," and was shocked to see, we went "just across the road!" We had a good laugh.

Well, here we are, halfway through the year. Has the Department President visited your unit yet? If not, you better send her an invitation, time is running out! Really, I would love to come visit during a regular unit meeting and meet your unit members. But, before you know it, we will be hosting Spring Conferences!

February is Americanism month. What is your special project for Americanism? It is also the month to remember the Four Chaplains.

March is Community Service month. Do you have a special project to promote within your community? Also remember to help celebrate the birthday of The American Legion!

Congratulations to all the units that have worked so hard to get their units to 100% or more! You deserve a big Gnome Hug! I'll be sure to let Gnome Norm know he has a lot of hugging to do at convention.

I wonder what Mr. Groundhog has in store for us? Will he be as good at predicting membership goals as he is the weather? And will March greet us as a lion or a lamb? Will your unit be roaring for dues to be paid or bleating success? I guess we shall have to wait and see.

★★★ LEGION RIDERS ★★

These are the men and women of the Legion Riders who have made a difference in the lives of many and continue to do so year after year. And I'd be remiss if I didn't add Iroc's Badger Run to these figures. Roughly 70 souls joined us for the 3-day ride, raising funds for The Highground. As I've reported before, we can add \$38,300.00 to funds raised and roughly 1680 hours of volunteer time.

I hope Riders use this down-time to get more involved in their Posts. It's a great time to attend membership meetings and spread the word about the impact Riders have on a total community. Perhaps meet with local officials and explain who we are and how we can help with public celebrations and activities. Maybe a safety meeting with high schoolers to keep them safe on their motorcycles? Maybe speaking with local civic organizations about joining with us for local Veterans events?

Maybe – we can all recruit riders to come with us during the July **Back To Basics Tour**!

I look forward to raising funds for Camp this year and pray we're able to provide enough funding for the completion of the Interior Renovation of the Recreation Building! And who knows, just maybe we'll raise enough to help with other projects too! Please consider joining us July 17-19, 2023. We'll end our ride at Department Convention in Wausau. What a great place to finish!

For more information about the Legion Riders, or to get more details about becoming a Rider, contact either: Ray "Godfather" Pasbrig, President, at rpasbrig3@wi.rr.com or at 262-853-4929, or, Randy "Music Man" Timms, Secretary, at rtimms@twc.com or at 262-441-1692.



Julie Muhle
Department
Commander

We have just finished another successful Midwinter. For those who attended, it was difficult to find time in the day to fit the classes you wanted to take! Many of the classes were larger than expected and that is definitely a problem we are willing to have. I hope the classes were what were expected and you went away with newer knowledge and understandings. The Be The One walk was a success and can be found on the legion.org website as well as on YouTube and the Department Facebook page. I also hoped those who attended the luau had a great time. The band was amazing! So was the talent, kind of.

We now have six months under our belts for this membership year. I am very pleased with the progress we have made so far and the work everyone has done to make this year successful so far. Our membership continues to hover at 4th place amongst all Departments within the Legion. We have achieved the 80% goal for January and are working on the 85% goal for February. I ask that we don't end our Buddy checks now. In fact, Buddy checks become even more invaluable in the latter part of our membership year. Winter typically brings the doldrums of not being able to get out of the house due to cold, the holidays leave an empty place when everyone

★ DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ★

returns home and can cause stress and depression. Making sure our members are doing well is what the Buddy checks and the Be The One program is all about. When our members feel as though we care about them all the time rather than the one time per year for dues, it makes a difference in membership.

Another thing I would like all of our members to remember is that The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin, and all districts, counties and posts within are businesses. It doesn't matter if you have a bar or restaurant. Each entity has money coming in and out, some have investments, all need to complete IRS 990s or other taxes, there are regulatory issues to follow and we negotiate contracts. As a business, we have responsibilities to our customers – our members, Veterans, their families and our communities. We need to run a good business to avoid bad publicity. Many times, people just don't know what they don't know. This is why we created classes and continue to teach our members – so we can bridge the knowledge gap.

Again, I want to thank everyone for the work they have done so far this year. I also want to thank those who have gone above and beyond by helping struggling posts succeed and by taking on leadership positions for the same purpose. It is starting to show and the winners are the Veterans, their families and the communities.



David Fuller
SAL Detachment
Commander

★★★ SAL DETACHMENT ★★ COMMANDER

Hello Gentlemen,
I hope that you have survived the holidays and are doing well in the new year. Along with the new year comes membership, if you have not paid it at this

time, you are no longer a member in good standing. If your membership has lapsed you are no longer able to officially be active in the Legion Riders through the Sons. You are going to renew anyway, so why not do it today? Your Squadron, District and Detachment Officers work very hard to get membership done every year, so help them out and let's get to 105% early. Last year we missed the National Award for membership by two days, we can't let that happen again. At this time the Detachment of Wisconsin is in first place in the Central Region and in seventh place for all 55 Detachments. Because of the hard work of the District and Detachment Officers we are experiencing record growth at the Detachment level with the prospects of 14 new Squadrons. I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of these Officers for the effort that they put into this organization.

At this point we have exceeded the target point for January and are in first place in the Central Region and seventh place Nationally. Believe me the Sons of Wisconsin are being noticed for their efforts and they are talking about us.

It is also time to be putting together all of the numbers for what you have accomplished as a Squadron. All your fundraisers, meetings, community events and donations should be reported in your Consolidated Squadron Report. Many members don't realize that the combined report of all the Squadrons in the country ends up being shown to congress. These reports show the unity and strength of our Squadrons and that we matter. Last year we had 32 of 112 Squadrons file this report. That is NOT acceptable, we need the reports from ALL Squadrons. With only 32 reporting last year we still had an economic impact of \$1,404,363, if we had everyone reporting we could easily be over \$4,000,000; now that's a BIG number.

Be PROUD of who you are. Be PROUD of what you do. Be PROUD of the Wisconsin Sons of The American Legion, because I am PROUD of you.



Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1