

# THIRD DISTRICT FAMILY NEWSLETTER

# MARCH - - 2026

APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup> – SPRING CONFERENCE - DODGEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**Invitation and Lunch Reservation Form BELOW! DEADLINE – SATURDAY APRIL 3TH. DO IT NOW!  
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**ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND**

The American Legion Family

Third District 2026 Spring Conference

Invitation and Lunch Reservations

Dodgeville High School / 912 W Chapel Street / Dodgeville

**Saturday, April 25, 2026**

American Legion Conference Registration Fee \$5.00 / American Legion Auxiliary Registration Fee \$5.00

**Pay registration fee day of conference**

Conference registration 8am – 8:45am / Call to Order at 9am

Free will donation Breakfast items will be available

**LUNCH MENU:**

Roast beef, BBQ pork sandwiches, cowboy potatoes, coleslaw, dessert, water and soda.

Cost \$20.00 per person – Lunch reservation deadline: **SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 2026**

**Detach and mail**

**Lunch Reservations and money are due April 3, 2026.**

**Send lunch reservation check made payable to: The American Legion Iowa County Council.**

**And mail to: Joe Salava - 216 Cretney - Ridgeway WI 53584**

Post/Unit Number \_\_\_\_\_ Post/Unit Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Lunch Reservations \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Do not include registration fee with lunch reservations)

List American Legion Auxiliary Name (s):

List Legionnaire Name (s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pick up your lunch tickets the day of the conference at the registration table.



Dan O'Brien – 3rd District Commander

It is good to see winter in the rearview mirror and spring just ahead of us. The nice weather gets us all excited about being outside and getting things done around the house and yard. It should also be a time of getting things done for your Legion Posts. CPR's are due to Headquarters the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April. Every Post should have received their Post Data Report form. They need to be filled out right away and sent in. Make sure your Membership dues are listed correctly on the form. Post Officer Reports are due, and they must be sent to Dept. Headquarters with the correct information. This means mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. Putting down No Change is not acceptable. Take the time to fill out the report correctly.

Mailing addresses is becoming a problem. Some Posts are using a Post members home address for all the information being sent out from National and Department Headquarters. This should be changed. At a minimum, a Post should have a PO Box with two Post members having access to the PO Box. This will help avoid a Post not getting all the information being sent from National Headquarters or Department Headquarters.

We have 13 weeks to work on Membership. With the weather getting better, it is time to go out and knock on doors and talk to your Post members that have not renewed for 2026. As of last week, we have 370 members who have not renewed. It is inevitable that we are losing members to "Post Everlasting", and their names will be read at our Spring Conference. But, even with the loss of these members, we still have many members who have not renewed. Let's get them renewed in the coming weeks.

There are over 300,000 Veterans in the State of Wisconsin that do not belong to The American Legion. We need to be on the lookout for these Veterans and get them to join the Legion. When you talk to a Veteran, be prepared to talk about all the good things the American Legion is doing for Veterans and the positive things you are doing in your community. Impress them with what you know and convince them that they can be a part of continuing to support our Veterans and a big part of making an impact on the community. The information is out there with our IMPACT STATEMENT that is found at [www.wilegion.org](http://www.wilegion.org). We will be having Training on how to sign up a new member with your cell phone at our Spring Conference. No more paperwork. Just pull out your phone and sign up a Veteran on the spot. What a great tool.



Shelley Drager 3rd District President

Greetings Fighting 3<sup>rd</sup> District

Hello Fighting 3<sup>rd</sup> Members, I'd say happy spring, but I just finished cleaning out after 8 inches of snow. At least it wasn't 18 like our northern members received. Perfect time for a getaway. Hope it's sunny and warm in Gulf Shores and mostly hoping for short wait lines.

We are all busy with reports, unit events, and conferences. Please use our on-line reporting option-so easy, and you can add pictures and newspaper clippings to enhance your report and possibly your unit's chance at an award. Report, Report, and Report... our voices and numbers matter. Make your volunteer hours count.

Our district is in another membership push, let's call, text and email all our unpaid members and get them renewed. We have 12 units at 100% and 10 in the 90% club. Let's work on those 90% units and get them to 100%, and 3<sup>rd</sup> District as a whole is only 10% from 100%. That's incredible, keep it going and we can get there one membership renewal at a time. I have been contacting 3<sup>rd</sup> District's unpaid members in hopes of getting some last-minute renewals and our unit presidents and membership chairs should be doing the same. Ask what we can do to get them to retain their membership. Reach out to your post, let them know you need members. We have lots of legionnaires that have eligible members sitting on the sidelines, recruit for each other; we all do better together. We are oh so very close, don't forget new members. We need them all to achieve our goal of 100%.

Badger Girl State needs volunteers. If you can spare some time in June, I hear Oshkosh is a wonderful place to spend the week, fun and quite a learning experience. They do have flexible schedules also, let's fill the volunteer roster. If your unit doesn't have or doesn't support a badger girl, please consider donating through our Benefactor donation form. This amazing program needs all of our support, any way we can to preserve this tradition for generations to come.

**SPRING CONFERENCE IS JUST 6 WEEKS AWAY..YIKES.** I want to share a few things regarding the conference. First and foremost, we need your attendance. We hold our district meetings at these events and unfortunately our



Come to the Spring Conference to learn how to make this work for you and your Post.

**If you are trying to reach Veterans that nobody else is reaching, then you have to do something that nobody else is doing.** If your Post is struggling to renew members or bring in new members, then the Post needs to change things up. What can your Post do differently. Here are a couple of changes Posts are making.

Give a "Blue Star Banner" to a family that has a son or daughter serving in the Armed Forces. Do it at a public venue such as Memorial Day or Veterans Day. What a proud moment for the family and what a good way for your Legion Post to recognize those from your community that are serving our Country.

At your High School is there a Senior student entering the Military after graduation? At the Awards Day when they are handing out Scholarships, have your Post give that student a Scholarship just like other students receiving scholarships. At our Post we give them a scholarship stating that once they have completed Basic Training we will give them a check as they move on to further training. We also pay for and sign them up as members to our Legion Post.

Recognize the individuals in your community at public events. Firefighter of the Year, Teacher of the Year, Police Officer of the Year, Badger Boys and Girls, Oratorical students, anyone that your Post gives an award to. This shows the public that your Post is honoring individuals for their hard work and dedication to the community. Great way to show that your Post is interested and involved in the community.

These are just a few ideas, but each Post needs to find what will work for them. A Post cannot be afraid of trying something different. Doing the same old, same old is not lighting fires and we need to light fires and have a light shine on all the good, and positive things The American Legion and your Post does and is doing

Buddy Checks-Is your Post set up to make Buddy Checks to your fellow Legion Members? Are there pluses to staying in touch with Post members who are unable to attend meetings or are in ill health? Staying in touch with these members has a positive effect on both the member making the phone call or visit and the member on the receiving end. You will find that wonderful conversations will take place, and you will find that is time well spent. Once Buddy Checks get started you may find that Post retention may also improve, because the person who was not really involved with the Post will once again feel like they are not forgotten and are still a part of the Post. **Again, doing something different in your Post.**



attendance is dwindling down. Your voice matters, what your unit activities are matter, we definitely do better together and sharing our successes. Have a passion for a specific program, become a chair! Have leadership dreams, become an officer! Many committee spots open or be a co-chair share the fun.

We still have our 250 challenges out there for 3<sup>rd</sup> District, a challenge to the Auxiliary to register 250 members for our conference. A goal we can certainly achieve with a current paid membership of 2158. Get those registrations in and earn a chance for a special (bribe) basket. This basket is a registration prize and not included in the Basket Raffle you purchase tickets for. Let's shake it up a bit, for those who love to bake, make us a pie for a pie auction or raffle. I'm open to all options. Let's share and hear what our district has to offer. We want to make our meetings matter and make them more enticing to attend, Idea's welcome. Bring your unit tri-fold, county tri-fold or both, let's see what we've been up too. If you haven't heard yet, our amazing Lone Rock Unit 383 has once again filled a bus or two. With Unit 383's amazing Cabin Fever Reliever they raised over \$50,000.00 this year. Speechless.....Thank you just doesn't seem like enough, So maybe we put this Unit 383 in for a National award. Keep up the fantastic volunteering.

For our last year's membership award winners, we need to have the awards returned for Spring Conference. I'm willing to meet and pick them up, please reach out to make arrangements to get these returned.

See you all April 25<sup>th</sup> in Dodgeville, the High School will be hosting us this year, thank you Iowa County for all your help in planning this year's celebration, our Spring Conference is sure to be a success.



I want to thank every Legion Family member for all the positive things we are doing for our Veterans and in our communities. If it were not for a strong American Legion veterans would not be receiving the benefits they have earned for serving their Country. I would also like to think our local Legion Posts have impacts in our communities. Keep working hard and good things will happen.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Spring Conference Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup> at Dodgeville High School. Registration is from 8am to 8:50am. Make sure to get your reservations sent in for the lunch. The dead line for lunch reservations is April 11<sup>th</sup>, but don't wait until the last minute. Help them plan. If you have Sweepstake Tickets to turn in, please bring them.
- Spring Conference-County Commanders need to bring the list of their deceased members for the "Last Bugle" call ceremony.
- Spring Conference-We will be looking for delegates to the Department and National Conventions. Let's see volunteers to be involved in the committees of the Legion.
- Spring Meetings in Portage on May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. I will be taking Sweepstake tickets to Headquarters so get them to me before then.
- DEC Meeting Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup> at the Barneveld Legion Post. Meeting begins at 7pm
- DEC Meeting Tuesday June 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Fennimore Legion Post. Meeting begins at 7pm
- Department Convention in Appleton July 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>

COMMUNICATION-INVOLVEMENT-VISIBILITY-ACCOUNTABILITY-Make it happen at your Post.

May God Bless all Veterans, especially those serving today.



#### MEMBERSHIP *Nicole Welsh*

Hello Third District!

As we head into April, I'm excited to share that we currently have 12 units at 100% membership—what an incredible accomplishment! 🇺🇸 These units will be recognized at our District Conference in April, and we look forward to celebrating their dedication and hard work.

Our district continues to proudly represent Everglades National Park in our statewide membership theme—so let's keep welcoming "visitors" and growing our Auxiliary family! Right now, District 3 is holding strong in 3rd place in the state, and we are just 217 members away from reaching 100% of our goal. We are so close—let's keep the momentum going!

I hope to see many of you at the Spring Conference in Dodgeville. This is a great opportunity to connect and collaborate.

Thank you all for the time, energy, and heart you put into the Auxiliary. Your efforts truly make a difference in our communities.

Let's keep renewing, recruiting, and spreading our impact across District 3!

With appreciation,  
Nicole Welsh  
District 3 Membership Chair



I am seeking re-election as the SAL Third District Commander for 2026-2028. Three times the delegates to our District Spring Conference have seen fit to elect me District Commander and I know I disappointed you the last time because of my resignation. I

feared that some personal problems I was having would interfere with my duties as District Commander and I mistakenly thought my only option was to resign. Someone recently educated me that it would've been better to ask my First Vice-Commander to fill in for me until I sorted out my personal issues.

Now that I see my mistake and have learned from it, I am humbly asking for your confidence again. I was elected two years ago to restore our district after things had fallen apart. My goal then was to restore communication with the squadrons. If re-elected, my goals will be to improve communication with the squadrons, the fostering and maintenance of a closer relationship between the Squadrons and the District, helping promote the squadrons, and to institute a training program. The training will be intended to recruit and train future leaders at all levels and to educate new members, members seeking a deeper understanding of the Sons, and any nonmembers who wish to learn about the Sons of The American Legion.

In the Sons of The American Legion, there is no distinction of age. Members of all age may attend the District conferences, vote, and hold office. If you are a member in good standing of the Sons of The American Legion in a squadron within the Third District, I ask you to come to the Spring Conference on Sunday, April 19, beginning at 2 PM at the Dodgeville American Legion Post. Your squadron is authorized at least two (2) voting delegates, plus one (1) more for a membership over 99, plus current District officers of the SAL, and all past SAL District Commanders and SAL Detachment Commanders who are members of a Third District squadron. If you are a Squadron Commander or Vice-Commander, please consider attending and/or sending delegates. I do hope for your support, both on April 19 and over the next two years.

For God and Country,  
Seán Patchin  
Squadron 385  
SAL Third District Historian  
Past SAL Third District Commander  
Past SAL Detachment Vice-Commander

### Up Coming Events:

- March 28 Department Oratorical Ripon
- March 29 National Vietnam Veteran's Day
- March 31 County "Of the Year" Nominations due to District
- April 4 Squadron 501 Pancake & Sausage (8:00 – 11:00)
- April 8 Post 385 Smoked Pork Chops (4:30 – 6:30)
- April 10 Post 360 Fish Fry (4:30-7:30)
- April 11 Legion Family Testimonial
- April 25 District Spring Conference at the Dodgeville High School
- April 26 Post 84 Monroe Bingo (1PM)
- May 3-7 National Spring Meetings
- May 8-9 Spring Department Meetings
- May 13 Post 385 Beef Tips (4:30 – 6:30)
- May 25 Memorial Day
- May 26 DEC at the Barneveld Legion Post
- June 23 DEC at the Fennimore Legion Post
- July 4 America is 250 Years Old
- July 16 – 19 State Convention Appleton

## ACTIVITES AROUND THE DISTRICT



On Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup> the Third District held its American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Contest. There was two contestants Grant Kuberski who represented Argyle Post 251 and Lafayette County and Issac Gunby who represent Mount Horeb Post 113 and Dane County. According to the judges it was a close contest with Grant being the winner and Issac as the Alternate to the State competition being held at Ripon College on Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup>. For their hard work and dedication to the Oratorical Scholarship Contest Grant received a Scholarship for \$450 and Issac a Scholarship for \$300.

Pictured from left are Past National Commander Denise Rohan, Third District Commander Dan O'Brien, 1<sup>st</sup> place contestant Grant Kuberski, Alternate Issac Gunby and Third District Oratorical Chairman Peter Herman.

"The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13 members, Richland Center, WI, received a throw pillow from Donkey Mom, Sandra Kramer, for their support, generosity, participation in parades, fund raisers and nursing home/assisted living facilities, and having a good time with their mascots the mini donkeys, Miss Purdy and Nestor. Visits will begin soon!"



1<sup>st</sup> picture is of the attendees for the Crawford County Legion Birthday Celebration held on Sunday March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

2<sup>nd</sup> picture is of Crawford County Commander Lewis Knutson and 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander Dan O'Brien.

3<sup>rd</sup> picture is of American Legion 60-year members from Steuben Post 446.

From left Fritz Curtis (60-year Member), Steuben Post Commander Dick Young and Dave Dombeck (60-year member).

