

**3rd DISTRICT AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY
NEWSLETTER THE INFORMER February – 2024**



Holiday Party Registration	Page 1	Template Post Mission Import	Page 8
Commanders Messages	Pages 2 - 5	Auxiliary Message	Pages 9 - 10
Blood Shortage Article	Page 6	Program Reporting Deadlines	Pages 11 - 13
Mission Impact	Pages 7	Spring Conference Invitation	Page 14

HOLIDAY PARTY REGISTRATION – DUE JANUARY 28, 2024

PLEASE GET YOUR CHECK IN THE MAIL TODAY

AND DROP JENNI AN EMAIL SAYING YOUR CHECK IS IN THE MAIL. Thank You!

syftes@chorus.net

3rd District *HOLIDAY PARTY*

Saturday, February 17, 2024

RSVP by January 28, 2024

Mason – Lindsay Post 385 | 207 Legion Street – Verona
DOORS OPEN AT 9:30

**Auxiliary will hold a meeting at 10:30am and a Leadership Presentation will follow lunch.
Legionnaires will meet following lunch.**

EAT AT NOON

Beef Tips & Gravy \ Chicken \ Mashed Potatoes \ Mixed Vegetables \ Fruit Cup
Dinner Rolls \ Dessert

Cost \$15.00 per person

Bring extra CASH 50/50 drawings throughout the day.

Check Payable to Mason-Lindsay Post 385

Mail check to Jenni Syftestad

205 Thompson Street, Verona WI 53593

Name: _____ Post/Unit _____

Name: _____ Post/Unit _____



Comrades:

Thank you to everyone who was able to make it to the Department of Wisconsin MidWinter Conference. There was awesome training, great camaraderie and meetings of the Department of Wisconsin American Legion Committees. The Peer Mentor training and the Service Officer training stood out to me. I am going to send some of the reports out so that people have them. I would love to see everyone at the next few events at the District level are the Holiday Party, Verona, 17 Feb, the District Oratorical Contest in Barneveld 25 Feb and the Spring Conference 20 April in Fennimore. This is an election year which means it is even more important to come out for the camaraderie, as well as to vote for your new District leaders.

Please continue to ask Veterans to join our great organization. While you are talking to Veterans please talk to them about the opportunities for the entire family to serve – Auxiliary, Riders, and Sons of the American Legion. Thank you to every Post that is working hard to keep the members that are Members already as well as recruiting new members. We all need to be active, relevant, and visible. We have to continue asking people to join our Legion Family.

At the Midwinter Conference Dan Wiley, who is scheduled to be named Legion Commander in August, 2025 talked to the Department Executive Committee and he reminded all of us that most of us joined the Legion because of something or someone at the local Post. Please continue to be active relevant, and visible in your communities. I received a newsletter from the Argyle American Legion Post 251 the other day and I can tell you that they are letting everyone know about all the great things they are doing at the Post, in the community, in support of Veterans and families, and for the youth in their community. So many Posts are doing great things, share them with your members, the community, facebook, etc... McFarland Post 534 has been posting all the great things they're doing on Facebook, sharing it out far and wide. Darlington Post 214 has publicized their events in the local paper sharing information about what the Post and its members are doing for the community, Veterans, youth and families. Thank you to every Post who is out there sharing our Legion story. The number of Veterans continues to decline we have to get better at providing people with a reason they should belong. Members in all of our organizations make great things happen.

Congratulations and thank you to the 3rd District Posts that have hit 100% already – Mount Horeb, Cambridge, Marshall, Black Earth, Platteville, Cassville, Potosi, Brodhead, Shullsburg, Argyle and Lone Rock. Several Posts are within just a few members to reach 100%, keep up the great work. There are so many Posts within just a few members of reaching 100%, please keep up the excellent work. We Can Do This!

Buddy Check are so important. Buddy Checks if done correctly, show our members that we care, we're not just here to ask them for their dues, building those connections is critical. For those who have already started buddy checks in your Posts, thank you. For those of you that have not please break down you

membership roster and reach out, sometimes you find out information you would not have known, most of the time the person making the call gets as much out of the call as the person receiving the call, if you do it right it is as rewarding to make the calls as it is to receive them.

Examples of things Posts can do

Good Practice #1 Public Relations Mission Impact – Posts are doing great things for their Veterans, families and youth, and their communities we need to make sure we let people know what we're doing. Please use the Mission Impact from Department and the template for the Post level and put it on your website, Facebook, Instagram, in the newspaper, village newsletter, on tv. **An example Mission Impact is attached – What does our local American Legion do? You can modify this Post Template any way you want to. Each Member should have a copy or copies to hand out to prospective members.**

Good Practice #2 Buddy Checks

Buddy Check Script:

Buddy Check call script

This call is more of a conversational call to see how the member is and if there is anything they need, listening is the most important thing we can do when we make these calls

Hello _____! This is (your name), a member of _____ Post _____. We're calling people as part of our _____ American Legion Post Buddy Checks.

- How are you today? We haven't seen you in a little while, so we wanted to make sure you're doing all right?
- I hope all is well. (Let the person talk)
- If you would like to attend a meeting or gatherings, we can have someone pick you up.
- How is your family? (Write down pertinent information about the member's family)
- Is there anything we can do for you today? (If yes, write down the information and follow up on it)
- I would like to thank you for being a member of Post _____ and I would also like to thank you for your service.

NOTE: This could also be a short text!

Hello _____. This is (your name) from Post _____. Just checking in to see how you are doing and if there is anything we can help you with. Let us know and have a great day!

If you reword things to make it feel more conversational for you that's fine.

Please recognize all the great members of your community. A great way to recognize them is to nominate them for the Of the Year Awards. <https://wilegion.org/awards/>

Upcoming Events:



- **The National Four Chaplains Day, Feb 3rd, I am encouraging all Legion Family Posts, Units, Squadrons, and Riders Units to host an event recognizing, honoring, remembering the Four Chaplains. Chaplain Virgil has the kit and is willing to come to your event.**

Who were the Four Chaplains? The four men who are known as the Four Chaplains were men of different faith who boarded the USS Dorchester to travel to their individually assigned posts in Europe. The Dorchester left New York on Jan. 23, 1943 and headed to Germany with 904 souls on board. On Feb. 3, 1943 a German submarine U-223 torpedoed the Dorchester off the coast of Newfoundland. Chaos ensued in the dark of night, many men were trapped below deck. The Four Chaplains worked together to calm and direct the sailors to life boats, abandoning the disabled ship. This cooperation was deemed extraordinary at the time due to their differences in backgrounds and beliefs. When the supply of life jackets ran out before all of the sailors had one, the chaplains removed their life jackets and gave them to others. The four chaplains could be heard singing hymns & praying to calm the sailors as they embraced their own deaths, linked arm in arm, as the Dorchester slipped below the ocean surface. The water and air temperatures were 34-36 degrees, only 230 of the 904 souls aboard were rescued that early morning.

Suggested activities: Hold a Four Chaplains Ceremony and dinner at your Post or meeting place and invite the scouts, school students and SAL/Junior members. Play the documentary movies available on line to educate the youth in our communities. Invite local pastors, priests and holy leaders to perform the Four Chaplains Ceremony, or create a play for younger students and schedule with the local school. For the adventurer, host a polar plunge (with safety measures & emergency services on hand) with appropriately aged post family members to honor the Four Chaplains. Offer soup, coffee and tea afterwards at your post or meeting space.

- Monroe Post 84 Friday night Fish Supper
- Waunakee American Legion Post 360 Fish Fries - **Second Friday of each month**
- Saturday February 3rd Darlington Post 214 will be hosting a Chili Cook-Off. Bar Opens at 10am with the Cook-Off tasting running from 11am to 3pm. If you are interested in competing in the Chili Cook-Off, call Post Commander Ron Lumaye at; 920-265-8985. Must supply at least 2 gallons of Chili to compete. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Trophies awarded, but the big prize will be your BRAGGING RIGHTS.
- Platteville Post 42 is hosting a Steak Supper on Saturday February 3rd at the Platteville Country Club. Taste some Chili at the Darlington Post then finish off your night with a delious Steak Supper in Platteville

- Darlington Post 214 will hold a Steak & Chicken Supper on Saturday February 10th. Doors open at 4pm with supper starting at 4:30pm. Come and enjoy a good meal and bring a friend.
- Verona Post 385 will have a Spaghetti Supper on Wednesday February 21st. Plan on a good meal in the Middle of the week.

Holiday Party 17 February in Verona doors open at 0930, short Legion Meeting after the lunch.

Third District Oratorical Competition 25 February at 1 PM in Barneveld.

Spring Conference – 20 April, Fennimore American Legion Post

Of the Year Awards due to District by 1 April

Department Important dates: Midwinter Conference:

- WALLECA Application dates: January 2, 2024- March 29, 2024
- Department Oratorical: March 23, 2024 at Ripon College
- Awards Due to Department: May 1st
- Americanism June 1st
- Department Spring Meetings: May 10-11, 2024
- Annual Reports: June 1st
- Badger Boys State: June 9-15, 2024 at UW Eau Claire
- Department Convention: July 10-14, 2024 in Appleton



Emergency Blood Shortage: Donors Needed to Combat Winter Weather Blood Drive Cancellations



Winter storm season has arrived with much of the country experiencing heavy snow, ice and freezing temperatures, cancelling hundreds of blood drives as the nation faces an emergency blood shortage.

Since the start of the month, approximately 370 Red Cross blood drives across 27 states have been canceled due to winter weather, causing more than 11,000 lifesaving blood and platelet donations to go uncollected. Meteorologists have warned that this extreme weather stretches from coast to coast with more impact predicted this week.

This severe weather impact comes as the Red Cross is already in the midst of an emergency blood shortage, with donations going out to hospitals faster than they are coming in. Weather related blood drive cancellations could seriously hinder efforts to rebuild the blood supply by preventing willing donors from traveling to blood drives and donation centers.

To help ensure patients continue to have access to lifesaving blood products, the Red Cross urges individuals in unaffected areas to pitch in and schedule an appointment to give blood to help meet all patient needs across the country. **Visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org), download the [Red Cross Blood Donor App](#), or call 1-800-Red Cross.**

The most important gift you can give is the gift of life through a blood donation.

Every day the Red Cross must collect approximately 12,500 blood and nearly 3,000 platelet donations for patients who are currently undergoing medical procedures and treatments, who are alone without the bedside support of loved ones, at about 2,500 hospitals and transfusion centers nationwide.

Remember to report your donation on the Consolidated Post Report (CPR)!



Mission Impact



THE AMERICAN LEGION IS THE NATION'S LARGEST VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION

45,175
MEMBERS



CAMP AMERICAN LEGION
HOSTS



1000+

VETERANS AND THEIR
FAMILIES EACH SEASON
AT NO COST TO THEM

LEGION WI SERVICE OFFICE

\$68 MILLION
MONTHLY VETERAN
COMPENSATION

EARNED BENEFITS
RECEIVED ANNUALLY
\$800 MILLION

46,000+ VETERANS SERVED

3702 VOLUNTEER HOURS
DONATIONS TOTALING
\$133K ANNUALLY
LEGION RIDERS

500 POSTS
STATEWIDE



7,809
BLOOD DRIVE
DONATIONS



AVERAGE ANNUAL
VETERAN HOSPITAL
VOLUNTEER HOURS

25.5k



65K+
STRONG



**LEGION
FAMILY**

OUR MISSION
“ To provide service to veterans, their families and their communities ”

3rd largest Legion Baseball program in the country

LEGION SOFTBALL

Over 220
Teams with
3900+ players
each season



- 30+ teams
- Low registration costs
- Community Based

8,900+
YOUTH REACHED
EACH YEAR
THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS



- BADGER BOYS STATE
- AL BASEBALL/SOFTBALL
- ORATORICAL
- SCOUTING
- COUNTY YOUTH GOVERNMENT DAY
- JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS
- LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER ACADEMY
- AMERICANISM AND GOVERNMENT TEST



**OVER \$34K IN
SCHOLARSHIPS
ANNUALLY**



FOUNDED ON 4 PILLARS

For more information, visit wilegion.org



Mission Impact

Vietnam Era Welcome Home / Recognition Dinner
75 Veterans recognized



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

XXXX SPONSORSHIPS FOR BADGER BOYS AND OR GIRLS STATE

XXXXX DONATED TO LOCAL YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Color Guards:

Parades

High School Activities

Veterans Day Program

Memorial Day Program



DONATIONS TO

BADGER HONOR FLIGHT

VETSROLL.ORG

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION

15 Funeral Honors
Our last salute for our fallen
Brothers and Sisters in Arms

140 Members

Buddy Checks
Visist with Veterans
Classroom Visits
Veterans Social Gatherings



With mid-winter behind us, we look to our District meeting on February 17th, in Verona. Your RSVP for lunch should already be in Verona. If you are not planning on lunch, but will attend the meeting... ya'll are welcome to partake! We will have a 50/50 for DogstoDogTags, the department president's project for 2023-24. Our agenda will move quickly with chairman & committee reports. Our committee chairman for D3 Standing Rules will propose changes for the good of the district. Your participation in discussing & voting on the proposals is essential. The nomination committee chairman will provide an update on the 2024 nominations for district offices. All current and past county presidents and past district officers are encouraged to nominate candidates for all offices. Please consider those members around you that have leadership qualities, talk to them about their opportunity to begin the district journey. Join us at the Verona Post 385 for the Auxiliary meeting and social event.

Grant County is hosting the 2024 Spring Conference on April 20th. Within this newsletter you will find the Lunch Reservation Form for Lunch at the Fennimore Legion Post, please have your reservation in by April 6th! The 2024 Spring Conference will be action packed with great food, fantastic guest speakers, an election and basket raffle honoring our Past Department President, Florence Wasley. Our plan is to honor Florence by contributing to her President's Project, Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund. 100% of the spring conference basket raffle earnings will go to this project. Will you help us with a basket or two? Encouraging members to attend and participate in this tribute would be the greatest expression of support!!



2024 MEMBERSHIP – GO, RANGER, GO!

RANGER is in 4th position within the Wisconsin pack!! RANGER is a happy pup with the largest number of NEW members in Wisconsin!! AMAZING! He is even more excited about all the Units who have renewed ALL of their members! What a great effort by these Units to retain their members... Well done everyone!!

Don't forget to submit member change forms for those members who have dropped or have passed away. A clean roster helps your unit goal and makes it easier to make Poppy calls.

Thanks to everyone for a continued great member race!!

MEMBERS CAN PAY THEIR DUES ONLINE OR OVER THE PHONE

Call National direct @ (317) 569-4570 (Mon. – Fri. 7:00 am – 3:30 pm)

OR go ONLINE by simply visiting the national website www.ALAforVeterans.org. Payments of multiple members should be made over the phone. Once the payment has been accepted, the member will be sent a confirmation email and a valid membership card via USPS.

SPRING CONFERENCE BASKET RAFFLE – HOMELESS FEMALE VETERANS FUND

LISA BOWEN

Hey Everyone, The Third District Officers are extremely excited about the upcoming Spring Conference. In honor of our beloved past president, Florence Wasley, we are holding a basket raffle to raise funds for the Homeless Women Veterans' Fund. Florence started this fund during her Department Presidency in 2011. Please join us in honoring Florence by making this fundraiser a big success! There is no limit to the great ideas for these baskets!

FEBRUARY EVENTS

FEBRUARY 3rd – FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY

FEBRUARY 4TH – USO BIRTHDAY

FEBRUARY 19TH – PRESIDENT'S DAY

FEBRUARY 19TH – COAST GUARD RESERVE BIRTHDAY

FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY

Who were the Four Chaplains? The four men who are known as the Four Chaplains were men of different faith who boarded the USS Dorchester to travel to their individually assigned posts in Europe. The Dorchester left New York on Jan. 23, 1943 and headed to Germany with 904 souls on board. On Feb. 3, 1943 a German submarine U-223 torpedoed the Dorchester off the coast of Newfoundland. Chaos ensued in the dark of night, many men were trapped below deck. The Four Chaplains worked together to calm and direct the sailors to life boats, abandoning the disabled ship. This cooperation was deemed extraordinary at the time due to their differences in backgrounds and beliefs. When the supply of life jackets ran out before all of the sailors had one, the chaplains removed their life jackets and gave them to others. The four chaplains could be heard singing hymns & praying to calm the sailors as they embraced their own deaths, linked arm in arm, as the Dorchester slipped below the ocean surface. The water and air temperatures were 34-36 degrees, only 230 of the 904 souls aboard were rescued that early morning.

Suggested activities: Hold a Four Chaplains Ceremony and dinner at your Post or meeting place and invite the scouts, school students and SAL/Junior members. Play the documentary movies available on line to educate the youth in our communities. Invite local pastors, priests and holy leaders to perform the Four Chaplains Ceremony, or create a play for younger students and schedule with the local school. For the adventurer, host a polar plunge (with safety measures & emergency services on hand) with appropriately aged post family members to honor the Four Chaplains. Offer soup, coffee and tea afterwards at your post or meeting space.

USO BIRTHDAY

The United Service Organizations or USO, is an ever present organization for military life for more than seven decades!! Founded in 1941, the agency is a private, not for profit organization working in cooperation with the Department of Defense (DOD). The USO has a congressional charter and receives funding through donations and corporate support. The USO is present at over 200 military bases all over the globe.

Suggested activities: One of the best ways to help celebrate the USO birthday is to attend a USO programmed or supported event at a military base, USO airport lounge, or sign up for one of their volunteer events!! An excellent way to celebrate is to go to their website to donate funds or find their “wish list” and donate the listed items for the location near you.

PRESIDENT’S DAY

Also known as an “unofficial” federal holiday and George Washington’s Birthday, Yeah, the federal government never declared this day as an official Presidents ’ Day!! It is officially declared as Washington’s Birthday! Only 24 U.S. states recognize this day as only Presidents Day, 9 recognize this day as only Washington’s Birthday and 9 states do not observe a holiday at all! The UNITED States.....Who knew?

Suggested activities: Host a colonial birthday party at schools, libraries or your Post/meeting place; hold a Patriots party or George Washington themed boot sailing at the local indoor swimming pool; organize a school play or collect George Washingtons (dollar bills) for a cause like Children Welfare Fund (CWF) or the USO! Use your revolutionary creativity to observe our First President’s birthday!

COAST GUARD RESERVE BIRTHDAY

Suggested activities: Host a nautical themed birthday party with your Post family, invite local schools to create & send mail call letters & birthday cards to Coast Guard Reserve bases with your coupons; shine a special light color on the Coast Guard part of your Veterans Memorial to highlight their service and memory; post pictures and stories of your Coast Guard Reserve veterans in local libraries, schools, newspapers or social media pages, hold a children’s book event at your local library and invite your post members or Coast Guard veterans to greet the children; host a flag ceremony with scouts, schools or libraries, host a rock painting event with the nautical or US theme to display at school flag poles, library or emergency service locations in your communities.

PROGRAM REPORTING DEADLINES & REPORTING

Essentially, the program reporting and recognition award due date dates can be summarized as follows:

- Applications for National Recognition & Reports WITH cover sheets are due March 15th to the department program chairman, including Poppy Posters, Americanism Essays, Service to Veterans Hours, etc.
- National Award Cover Sheets and Narrative Reports for Unit Outstanding Programs are due by March 15th to the department program chairman.
- Narrative Reports, without application for award or recognition are due April 15th to department
- Unit Impact Reports are due to the District President April 15th.

Important dates and deadlines are listed by program below. National cover sheets are located on the national website within their respective program plan. Please don’t hesitate to contact your district officers if you have any questions or need assistance in completing your unit reports. Units should have already received their reporting packages.

ALA BADGER GIRLS STATE

- January 31st: Reservations forms and fees due from Sponsors.
- February: Registration materials are sent to sponsor high schools.
- March: Orientation information and delegate forms are available on website (www.alabgs.org).
- April 1st: Registration deadline for Delegates and Alternates.
- April 15th: Submit ALABGS year-end Unit Narrative Report.
- April 15th: Last day to request full refund of sponsor reservation fee.
- April 16-April 30: Sponsors may request partial refund of reservation fee.
- May 1st: No refunds will be issued for cancelled reservations.
- May 15th: Last day to accept late registrations

AMERICANISM

- March 15th: Submit one winning Americanism Essay WITH cover form for each class to the Department Chairman.
- April 1st: Submit Americanism Award Cover Sheet with narrative for Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program to the Department Chairman.
- To be considered for a national award, the unit must submit their entry with a National Award Cover sheet to the Department Chairman

CHILDREN & YOUTH

- April 1st: Submit Children & Youth Award Cover Sheet with narrative for judging as Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program to the Department Chairman.
- To be considered for a national award, the unit must submit their entry with a National Award Cover sheet to the Department Chairman

JUNIORS

- March 15: Junior Member of the Year Award nominations due to Department Chairman WITH cover sheet
- April 1: Submit Most Outstanding Unit Junior Program with the National Award Cover sheet to the department program chairman.
- April 15: Purple Up! Day for Military Children
- April 15: Unit year-end reports due to Department Chairman

LEADERSHIP

- March 15: Submit Unit Member of the Year nominations to Department Chairman
- April 1: Submit Most Outstanding Unit Leadership Program with the National Award Cover sheet to the department program chairman.

LEGISLATION

- April 1st: Submit Legislative Award Cover Sheet with narrative for judging as Most Outstanding Unit Legislative Program to the Department Chairman.
- To be considered for a national award, the unit must submit their entry with a National Award Cover sheet to the Department Chairman.

NATIONAL SECURITY

- April 1: Submit Most Outstanding Unit National Security Program with National Award Cover Sheet to the department chairman.
- May 1: Submit Salute to Service Members Award to the department chairman.

PAST PRESIDENT PARLEY

- May 15th: Submit Mentor of the Year nomination to the department Past Presidents Parley Chairman.

POPPY

- March 15th: Deadline for Poppy Poster contest. Submit Posters directly to the department program chairman WITH cover sheet.

Mail Poppy Posters to: Kay Grosskopf; 5909 Grandview Road; Larsen, WI 54947

- March 15th: Deadline for Little Miss Poppy contest.
- April 1st: Deadline for Most Outstanding Unit Poppy Program for Central Division. Submit National Award Cover Sheet and Narrative report to the department program chairman.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- April 1st: Deadline for Most Outstanding Unit Public Relations Program for Central Division. Submit National Award Cover Sheet and Narrative report to the department program chairman.

VA&R

- March 15th: Submit Service to Veterans Hours Award form to award Service to Veterans pins and hour bars.
- April 1st: Submit Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Award Cover Sheet with narrative for judging as Most Outstanding Unit Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program to the Department Chairman.
- To be considered for a national award, the unit must submit their entry with a National Award Cover sheet to the Department Chairman.



ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

The American Legion Family

Third District 2024 Spring Conference

Invitation and Lunch Registration

Fennimore Memorial Building
860 Lincoln Ave., Fennimore WI 53809

Saturday, April 20, 2024

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

Breakfast items will be available for purchase

LUNCH MENU:

Turkey and Dressing/Ham Sandwiches, assorted salads, cookies, milk/coffee/water

Cost \$12.00 per person – Lunch reservation deadline: **SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2024**

Detach and mail

Lunch Reservations and money are **due April 6, 2024**. Send by mail only – please no phone calls.

Send lunch reservation and check made payable to ALA Unit 482 to:

Joanie Dickerson, PO Box 224, Bagley, WI 53801

Post/Unit Number _____ Post/Unit Name _____

Number of Lunch Reservations _____ @12.00 - \$ _____

(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.
(608) 996-2157 / jomaried@gmail.com

If questions, call Joanie Dickerson