

THIRD DISTRICT FAMILY NEWSLETTER APRIL – MAY - 2026



Dan O'Brien – 3rd District Commander



Welcome to Wisconsin weather. Some days in the 70's and then some in the 50's and the wind is always blowing. Spring is dragging its feet.

We just finished our 3rd District Spring Conference last Saturday in Dodgeville. I want to thank all those who made it to the conference. We had seven Legion members who are running for Higher Offices within the Legion come and speak to us. It was good to see that many dedicated Legion Members spend some time with us. In total we there were 54 Legion members from our District present which is a little below average. Out of our 61 Posts in the District only 24 were represented. Only 24 Posts represented is disappointing. I would think that we would be able to get one person from each Post to come to a conference. Meetings are not very exciting, but we had a chance to hear from two people that will be our next Dept. Commanders and several that were running for Vice Commanders. We need to hear from our future leaders.

We also had training on how to use your cell phone to sign up a new member and how to use your cell phone to access American Legion Information. This was training to make it easier to sign up a veteran to the Legion on the spot and not lose them because you did not have a Legion application on you.

This year we awarded only two "Of the Year" awards in our District. One went to Lin Gunderson for Law Enforcement Officer of the year submitted by Mazomanie Post 437 and the other went to Charlene Chopin for Educator of the Year submitted by De Forest Post 348. They will both be sent on to the State level for judging. Oregon-Brooklyn Post 160 also submitted a teacher for Educator of the Year

. At the conference I pointed out that these Awards were a great opportunity for our Legion Posts to get involved with our communities. Why are we not using these awards and recognizing all the other wonderful volunteers and professionals in our towns and cities? It is a simple way of us as a Legion Post to say thank you to others who are valuable to their community. I know of a Post that uses these awards to recognize these individuals at their Memorial Day Ceremony (EMT, Firefighter, Policeman, Educator of the Year, Guard/Reservist of the Year, Oratorical contestant, and Blue Star Families). This Post is saying to their community that we



Shelley Drager 3rd District President



Hello to all in the Fighting 3rd District.

Our Spring Conference was held this past weekend; I want to thank the Iowa County Council for all their help in organizing this event for our legion family. Thank you Harold, Joe, Peggy and her amazing group of Iowa county members for all their hard work and especially Bill Wasley for having an answer to our every need. The food was delicious, the company was great, and we just needed more members to join us at these events. Joanie Dickerson invited an incredible speaker for us to enjoy, Raquel Durden, an army veteran serving 25 years for our country. She promoted her book relating to how we all need to take a mental break from our world. Her book was sold out at the conference, and I want to thank you all for supporting her. The book Dial Down is available on Amazon.com.

This was an election year for us at the 3rd District, and I want to welcome all the new officers and committee chairs; you are much appreciated. We would also like to thank those that have served so diligently to make the Fighting 3rd a top-notch addition to our American Legion Family. Let's keep their devotion front and center and carry on the good works this group has put in before us.

Our goal in the Auxiliary is to promote and support our American Legion, promote and support our Programs, and entice our members to join us at events. Our attendance has been waning in the past few years and we as a family must find a remedy for this. We have a large district with 7 counties and 45 units. It is my hope that we can visit all these units. I, our 1st Vice President and membership chair Nicole Welsh and 2nd Vice President Audra Johnson will get together and try to come up with a plan and schedule. We will see you all soon. We are here to listen, we would love to help with fundraising ideas, membership drives and Branding.

Branding is being visible in our community, in our schools, and joining other local organizations in promoting their events. Branding, being seen, wear your auxiliary attire to the



recognize the hard work and dedication of everyone in our community and they are doing it in front of the whole community. What an easy way to say that we as a Legion Post care about all of you. They have done something different and it is working for them. As I continue to say, **“IF YOU WANT TO REACH PEOPLE NOBODY ELSE IS REACHING, THEN YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING NOBODY ELSE IS DOING”**. We have all these awards, but we are failing to take advantage of the great opportunity they give us. I would like to challenge each Post for next year to submit at least one application for an “Of the Year” for next year’s Spring Conference. Once you submit one, then it only becomes easier to submit another one the next year. Be Involved.

Membership is what makes our National and State Legions strong, but they are not strong if the local Posts are not strong. Everything about the American Legion starts at the Post level. Having a strong Post starts with having good communication within the Post. The Post membership needs to know what is going on and what direction the Post is headed. As we all know every Post is different and operates in different ways, but every Post should be finding a way to involve its members with what the Post is doing. A strong Post will have the rest of the Legion Family (Auxiliary, SAL and Legion Riders) working with them. We should all be talking and working together for the same end goal. To have a strong and viable presence in our community. Being active together as a Legion Family will get the attention of the community and it will give a good impression to veterans who are looking to join a Legion Post. Good communication will lead to more involvement. Let us finish our Membership year strong. Work to sign up the members who have not renewed, look for veterans who are not a part of the Legion Family (over 300,000 in Wisconsin) and look to bring into your Posts those Legion Members that are on the Headquarters 2930 list.

COMMUNICATION-INVOLVEMENT-VISIBILITY-
ACCOUNTABILITY-Be the one to make it happen at your Post.

May God Bless all of you and May God Bless all those serving our Country today.



store, the gym, restaurants, school events, Be Seen. Brag yes, Brag about your unit, your post, your sons and riders. People want to know who we are, what we do, and where does the money go? Be transparent, show them what you donate to, how we support our veterans, our community, our schools, and our state and nation. We deserve notoriety for all we do. So Go Brand, Go Brag and Be Seen.

Our Legion Family, let's plan an event involving all the moving parts of our family. Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, Riders and Junior members, plan an event to involve them all. A yearly event you can build on and expand, an event the community plans to come to year after year. It takes just one event, start small and grow.

We as a country are celebrating our 250th Birthday as a free nation, July 4th. Let's come together and plan a family event for this monumental occasion, we the United States of America is the only country, or nation that can make the claim of celebrating 250 years of a continued democracy. A Semiquincentennial the only one in the world, Let us all join together to celebrate our great nation. Do it big, join a neighboring Legion family to make the celebration even bigger. Happy Birthday, America! Thank you Veterans, and our Military Family's for making this celebration possible.

March snow brought April Flowers; my entire Memorial Day Garden is done blooming. No mow May, um no mow April maybe. Enjoy and Embrace the craziness of it all.

A special shout out to Shannon and Jenni for their past years as officers of the fighting 3rd, your service for all these years is so appreciated. I'm sure the incoming officers could use your mentoring so don't go on vacation. We know you'll be asked to serve again, and you will devotedly step up like you have so many times. Again, thank you.

This is April and May informer, Please send any Memorial Day or May events to our 3rd District social media guru's Nicole Welsh and Suzi Mickelson.

Nicole email (nicolewelsh1026@gmail.com)

Suzi email (unitaulliry437@gmail.com)

Happy May Day, Happy Mother's Day, wear your poppy proud month, and always remember why we honor Memorial Day and Our Fallen, God Bless.



See the ALA In the Know registration form at the end of this newsletter. On September 26th it will be held at the Post in Verona.

Deadline August 12, 2026



MEMBERSHIP

Units 100% thirty days before conference were given awards: Stoughton, DeForest, Barneveld, Linden, Dane, Shullsburg, Mt Horeb, Mt Hope, Ridgeway, Gay Mills, Avoca, Beetown and Hazel Green.

Traveling Awards were awarded as such: Avoca received the Tea Set, Shullsburg received the Gavel and Mt. Hope received the Bell.

ACTIVITES AROUND THE DISTRICT



Educator of the Year Award

Teacher-Lenore Hatton

Location-8th grade teacher at Oregon Middle School

She was also given the award for Green County

In picture left to right: Rhonda Waldvogel, Lenore Hatton, Kellie Waldvogel(nominator)

On 7 March 2026, the Lone Rock American Legion Auxiliary and Post 383 held the 12th Annual Beat the Cabin Fever Dance. We raised \$50,448 for the Vets Roll Program. That covers the cost of the trip for 59 veterans.

This picture was taken a few days later when Mark Finnegan, the Vets Roll co-founder, came up to Lone Rock. Members of the Post and Auxiliary presented him the check.



Educator of the Year – Charlene Ulichny Chopin Nominated by DeForest Post 348



The Third District Educator of the Year is no stranger to the American Legion Family; both her parents were very active in the Legion. She became involved with Post 348 about 3-years ago when she purposed a patriotic event for students in grades 4 – 6. Shown are PNC Denise Rohan, Charlene Ulichny and 3rd District Commander Dan O'Brien.

Law and Order Award – Sergeant Lin Gunderson Nominated by Post 437 Mazomanie

Our Third District Law Enforcement Officer of the Year is with the Iowa County Sheriff's Office he could not be with us today due to other commitments.

However, Chaplain Virgil Smith accepted the award in his place. The award and certificate will be sent to Sgt Gunderson.

Shown are PNC Denise Rohan, Chaplain Smith and 3rd District Commander Dan O'Brien.



SCAMS:

AM I BEING SCAMMED?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

JOIN US FOR AN
INFORMATIONAL
SESSION

SHULLSBURG VFW POST 10533/MCCANN-
RICHARDS AMERICAN LEGION POST 105

322 WI - 11

SHULLSBURG, WI 53586

MAY 14, 2026 AT 3:00 PM



PRESENTATIONS BY:

- SHULLSBURG POLICE DEPT
- LAFAYETTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT
- SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
- ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES



IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT

Dan Wedige

608-482-2448



Black Earth American Legion

Post 313

Steak Dinner



Saturday, May 16 4:30-7:00pm at the Black Earth Fire Hall.

\$22.00 to support local Legion programs.

**Tickets at The Shack, Gary Ballweg, Dennis Wood, Mike Helmenstine or
at the door if any tickets are left.**

Up Coming Events:

- 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 UP COMING EVENTS
- I sent out an email this morning about the Cross Plains-Middleton Legion Baseball Team being honored this Saturday May 2nd. Please read the email for all the information
- Monroe Post 84-Friday Night Fish Suppers. Good food and come see the re-modeling they have done.
- Black Earth Post 313-Sunday May 3rd is hosting a Meat Raffle from 2pm to 4pm to benefit the Post and their Youth Programs
- Black Earth Post 313 is hosting a Steak Supper on May 16th from 4:30 to 7pm
- 250th Anniversary year for the United States of America-Is your Post planning anything?
- Tuesday May 26th-DEC at the Barneveld Legion Post-All Legion Members are welcome
- Memorial Day is fast approaching-This is a great opportunity to be out in the forefront of your community.
- DEC at the Fennimore Legion Post on Tuesday June 23rd
- Lone Rock Legion Post 383-4th of July Parade-All Veteran Groups are welcome to participate
- State Convention in Appleton July 16th to 19th. Get Registered now.
- 3rd District Golf Outing on Sunday July 26th at Deer Valley. Get your registration early. Last year they had to turn teams away. Please help support the Golf Outing, it is the only Fundraiser the 3rd District has throughout the Year. Become a \$50 Sponsor for a hole. More information to follow.
- Second Saturday of September-September Relay sponsored by the Sons of American Legion Detachment of Wisconsin. The theme this year is "Any is too Many". More information to follow.



American Legion Third District Golf Scramble

Sunday, July 26, 2026

Register by July 13th

Deer Valley Golf Course Barneveld WI

8:00 AM Registration

9:00 AM Shotgun Start

Cost is \$75.00 per person \$300.00 per team

Send team listing and payment to:

American Legion Post 313

P O Box 283

Black Earth WI 53515-0283

Players age 70 and older may tee off from the green tee markers

A lunch (included) following golf, will be held at the Barneveld Legion Hall 102 Wood Street, Barneveld WI 53507

Contact Dennis J Wood at 608-767-3665 or denniswood1808@gmail.com with questions/concerns.

You may also contact Todd King, Head Pro at Deer Valley Golf Course if interested:

608-924-3033

I do not golf but would help with registration, prizes, or contests on the course.

Name _____ email/phone _____

\$300.00 enclosed

My 4 person team _____ Captain Phone or email _____

I do not have a team – Please place me with a team \$75.00

Name _____ email/phone _____

If individuals, teams, or businesses would like to sponsor a hole the fee is \$50.00

AMERICAN LEGION 3RD DISTRICT GOLF SCRAMBLE

HOLE SPONSORSHIP

I pledge \$50.00 to sponsor one hole at the July 26, 2026 outing at Deer Valley Golf Course.

Name of sponsor _____

One hole \$50.00

Thank you for your sponsorship which will help make this event successful.

Dennis J Wood 608-767-3665

Check payable to:

American Legion Post 313

Mail to:

American Legion Post 313

P O Box 283

Black Earth WI 53515-0283



2026 REGISTRATION FORM



DEADLINE:
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12TH
(Please submit one form per person)

Don't miss out on this year's exciting program! Register early to reserve your spot, as space is limited!

Session is \$25/person and includes morning refreshments, a light lunch, and program materials. Sessions will include information on a variety of topics and Auxiliary programs. New topics will be covered, so come out and join the fun!

Attendees will learn:

- How to effectively run a meeting
- Simplify your reporting efforts
- Updating your guidelines
- How to deal with unit conflict

Plus much more!

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please print clearly.

District #: Unit #: Unit City:

First Name: Last Name:

Email: Phone:

Are you a first-time attendee? Yes No

Are you a newly elected (less than 2 years) officer? Yes No

8:00 am – 9:00 am - Registration/Morning Refreshments
9:00 am – 3:30 pm - Informative presentation, lunch break, interactive program session, Q&A

SELECT ONE:

- | DATE: | LOCATION: |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, September 12 |→ New Life United Methodist Church Unit 106
721 Pleasant Way, Seymour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, September 19 |→ Eau American Legion Post Unit 53
634 Water St, Eau Claire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, September 26 |→ Mason-Lindsay Legion Post Unit 385
207 Legion St, Verona |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, October 3 |→ Dirrigl-Sawales Legion Post Unit 182
274 N 3rd Ave, Park Falls |

Mail check payable to ALA-Wisconsin:
ALA Wisconsin
 P. O. Box 140
 Portage, WI 53901-0140

Registrations received after capacity is reached, will be returned. No reservations will be accepted on site. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for any returned checks.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (\$25/PERSON):	<input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
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