



MILEGIONNAIRE

Michigan Legionnaire & Wolverine Auxiliaire Vol. LXXXIV No. 6

Michigan American Legion and Graymont Agree on Wilwin Lodge to Continue the Mission of Serving Military Veterans

LANSING (5 JAN 2016) – The American Legion Department of Michigan and Graymont, a global supplier of lime and limestone products, have reached an agreement on the Wilwin Lodge property in Trout Lake, Michigan. This agreement will allow the Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge Corporation to continue their mission of serving veterans and their families with a relaxing facility to help them reconnect with each other after deployments or during rehabilitation of injuries.

On December 22nd, 2015 the Michigan American Legion Wilwin Lodge Corporation and Graymont closed on a land swap and royalty agreement. The Wilwin Lodge will continue its mission on property in Custer, Michigan and receive royalties from limestone mined from the 600 acres of the Trout Lake property. The Custer property consists of 1183 acres with a 60 acre lake, wetland areas,



mont has been a great partner in working to resolve our concerns and we look forward to working with them as we transition from the Trout Lake property to the Custer property. The Custer property allows us to continue our mission with veterans and caregivers. The lake provides an added activity for the veterans and their families to enjoy.” Ron Runyan, State Adjutant, American Legion, Department of Michigan.

The agreement allows the Wilwin Corporation to continue to use the Trout Lake property for a period of time as they make additions to the Custer property to accommodate veterans and their families.

open space, and living quarters.

“The Graymont Rexton Project includes several thousand acres of land and/or mineral rights in the upper peninsula that Graymont has been acquiring to mine in order to produce lime and limestone products. The mining and processing operations that will be growing in the area would have made it more challenging for the Legion to operate the facility and achieve its mission. We have been working with Graymont for over a year on a suitable solution that would allow them to mine and for the Wilwin mission to continue.” Steve Striggow, Wilwin Corporation Chairman said.

“This deal is a win-win for both sides, Gray-



June 22 - 26, 2016

Come to the Kewadin Hotel in Sault Saint Marie for the 98th Annual State Convention

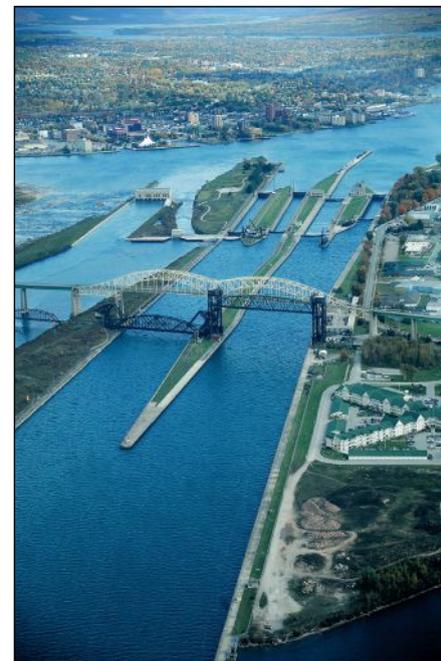


Come gather with friends and fellow Legionnaires as we conduct the business of The American Legion Department of Michigan and present awards to great citizens and businesses throughout the State of Michigan who support Americanism and Veterans.

While you are there, visit the Soo Locks June 24-25, 2016 for Engineer’s Weekend when the locks are open to the public to tour and see how the Soo Locks works. Visit the Cloverland Electric Cooperative Hydroelectric Plant, where 36 megawatts of power are generated for the local area.

Go for a walk crossing the bridge on Saturday, June 25, 2016 for the annual International Bridge Walk. To learn more about these events visit www.saultstmarie.com for details and more things to do in the surrounding area.

The Convention registration form can be found on page 13 in this issue of the MI Legionnaire. It can also be found online at www.michiganlegion.org/forms.



No Return Postage Requested

MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE & AUXILIAIRE

(USPS 010637) is published monthly except February, May, August, and December by The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Michigan, 212 N. Verlinden, Lansing, MI 48915-1297. Periodical postage paid at Lansing, MI, and additional mailing offices. Subscription \$10.00 non-members, members receive the publication as part of their dues. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Michigan Legionnaire, Department of Michigan, 212 N. Verlinden, Lansing, MI 48915-1297.

DEADLINE DATES

March 2016- February 1, 2016
Circulation: 97,687
Printed: 2-22-16 · Mailed: 2-29-16

LEGION STATE HEADQUARTERS DIRECTORY

Publisher: Ronald Runyan
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Do you have a photo you would like to submit for the Michigan Legionnaire and/or website use? E-mail it to us at news@michiganlegion.org or mail it to department attn: Roxanne Osga.

Please keep the photo at least 200 dpi or larger. If you are submitting a hard copy photo, please note photos printed from a home printer cannot be used, nor can photos clipped from newspapers.

We look for photos showing Legion caps in action whenever possible.

Interested in placing an ad in the Michigan Legionnaire? Please Contact Mark Sutton at: info@michiganlegion.org or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext 16.

Chaplain



Greetings Legion Family! I trust that you are doing well in what started out as a mild new year, compared to Michigan January's past. I am pleased to note that in our Department we continue to "preserve the memories and incidents of our association in...wars." And as part of that, to honor those who sacrificed so much for our freedom. In the past month there were two regional Four Chaplain Services, one in Grand Rapids and another in Lapeer. Both were well attend by the Legion Family and were very dignified events. I was honored to participate in Lapeer and touched by the ceremony and music. The WWII story of the Four Chaplain's of the USAT Dorchester is a true example of self sacrifice in hope to save others. I encourage you to research it or search it out on the internet. This information is also included in the American Legion Chaplain's and Prayer manuals, which are available

"Memorials and Taps"

through Emblem Sales. Hopefully your Post or Chaplain already has these documents.

As with most memorial services, Taps was played at the end of the event. I still get the chills when I hear the sound of that bugle call. I think back to the nineteen-seventies when my uncle Frank, a Korean and Vietnam Veteran, was buried outside of Hazard, Kentucky. It was a misty, hillside cemetery with willow trees. Formerly an Army Command Sergeant Major, there was a line of soldiers and a firing squad in their dress blues. Near the end of the service, up on a hill, the bugler sounded taps. I'm sure many of you have similar memories. Being active in the Legion and part of an Honor Guard it seems lately I have heard that tune too many times.

The history of "Taps" in the United States is a little sketchy. There was a French version used by the military from about 1835 to 1860, which signaled "lights out". During the Civil War, Union Army Brigadier General

Eddie Brown, State Chaplain

Daniel Butterfield arranged the current version. It caught on so fast that within months, it was used by both the Union and Confederate armies. It was officially recognized by the US Army in 1874.

The use of Taps at funerals is where the controversy comes in and the two most popular legends go back to the Union Peninsula Campaign to capture the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia in 1862. The most popular story shows the true division of our country at that time. It states that when a Union officer's Confederate son was killed during that campaign, he found the tune of "Taps" in his son's pocket. At his son's funeral and in his memory, he had Taps played. Another perhaps more verifiable story is that a Union artillery captain, during a break in the campaign action, was not allowed to perform the traditional three volley gun salute for one of his brave soldiers. So instead, he ordered that Taps be played. This quickly became a tradition. Either or both stories could be true and to me, it matters not which came first.

Words were later written for the tune. The first verse says, "Day is done, gone the sun...All is well, safely rest, God is nigh." This reminds me of Deuteronomy 4:7, "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near to us whenever we pray to Him?" As we look forward to May and our traditional Memorial Services, I encourage you to participate with your families and friends. It is part of our "Purpose." And perhaps at the end, when Taps is played, you'll remember these words and stories.

God Bless You All.

- Chaplain Eddie.

Appearance

Wanda Torres Dept. PR Chair Lady

I gather that you have all had a pleasant Holiday Season! Now it is time to start working on Public Relations! I want to speak on Appearance. Always wear The American Legion cover for a photograph or television interview. If the interview takes place at your American Legion Post, an ideal location would have The American Legion Emblem or the U.S. Flag as a backdrop, most likely in the meeting room of the post home. When appearing on a television public affairs program you should dress professionally. With modern high-definition digital equipment, few colors cause problems. The two major colors to avoid

are red and white, red will change the color temperature of your skin as it appears to a television camera. White will tend to make your face look darker. A light blue shirt or blouse will look better, and the technical crew at a television station will appreciate your thoughtfulness. All in all, solid colors work best! I hope that you keep these simple tips in mind when you're doing PR, you never know someone who sees the story or show might make a decision to join based on what our organization stands for and the professional appearance of those who represent your local post. The Department Public Relations Committee is always available if you need any help please feel free to contact us! Let's have a great year doing Public Relations!

STATE OFFICERS

State Commander.....Michael Buda	Finance Officer.....Roger Avie	Alt. National Executive Committeeman
State Adjutant..... Ron Runyan	Historian..... Ernest Berry Tom Brown
1st Zone..... David Babbage	Chaplain..... Eddie Brown	Immediate Past Commander.... Jim Wallace
2nd Zone..... Barry Wood	Sergeant-at-Arms.....Frank Flores	Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Director
3rd Zone..... Kevin Gilliam	Judge Advocate.....Elmer White Gary Easterling
4th Zone..... Richard Tracy	National Executive Committeeman	Membership Director..... Brett Holt
5th Zone..... Stan Kennedy Roger Webster	Public Relations Director.....Mark Sutton

Michael Buda, State Commander

Post Winter Update



Michael Buda
State Commander

Membership is the life blood of our Legion. We are achieving our national membership benchmarks ahead of schedule, thanks to the hard work of the Membership Chairman at each post and Legionnaires who paid their dues

sooner rather than later. I correlate this to posts having a healthy American Legion environment, where members want to invest their time and energy to veteran issues and their families. But not all Posts can boast they are providing the same atmosphere. Posts with very low membership numbers usually struggle to fulfill the requirements of normal Legion business – or they give up and stop trying to carry out all post responsibilities due to becoming burnt out or a lack of interest. Over half of our districts have one or more posts with less than 15 members, which is the number of members needed to be recognized as a post by our Department Constitution.

In January, the Department of Michigan sent a letter from me to District and Zone Commanders regarding minimum membership requirements and the options available

to help weak posts become stronger. A few suggestions included help from the Post Development Committee for a membership drive, merging two or more posts, or as a last resort, closing the post and transferring members to a post of their choice or Post 225. It was sent as a reminder that minimum standards are necessary for the well being of the individual posts and overall stability of the Department of Michigan Legion.

The 2016 Upper Peninsula Commanders' tour concluded just a few days ago. Although I had reservations in the beginning, by the end I can honestly say, I would not have missed it. Natalie and I had a good time meeting Legion and Auxiliary members while visiting posts across the Upper Peninsula and across the Canadian Border at Sault Saint Marie. Branch 25 of the Canadian Legion was a wonderful host and had an extensive collection of military artifacts under their roof. It was a great way to start our adventure on the first day. We made many new friends and listened to the concerns of Legion members. Some concerns were unique to the U.P. while others were the same as the Lower Peninsula. I want to say thank you to everyone who organized or participated in making me feel welcome while traveling in Districts 11 and 12. There are too many names for me to list and I surely don't want

to miss anyone. I do want to call out the great job State Vice Commander Stan Kennedy did as Wagon Master and his Tour Assistant, Dave Spencer. Both worked tirelessly to coordinate and execute the plans of the tour while showing their Yooper hospitality.

By the time you read this newsletter, the Winter Conference will be over. Hopefully you were able to at-

tend and brought first time attendees so they can learn more about how the American Legion operates by participating in the committees and training that were offered. In addition to all this, our National Commander Dale Barnett will be with us for dinner on Saturday night.

Yours in service,

Michael Buda

Headquarters

Ron Runyan, State Adjutant



Ron Runyan
State Adjutant

Happy Birthday American Legion. March 15th is the Birthdate of our great organization!

We have not had much of a winter in Michigan this year, but I am not complaining. It is time to renew the boat insurance, think about installing the docks and get the fishing gear ready

for spring! Even though the weather has been great this season we have been extremely busy in our Department. Membership is doing very well, programs are starting to roll and a deal has been completed with our property in the Upper Peninsula for Wilwin Lodge. On December 22, 2015 The American Legion Wilwin Lodge sold its U.P. property in Trout Lake and we have a new property in Custer, Michigan. Custer is about 15 miles east of Ludington. The new property has much more to offer our veterans that come to visit and relax. Not only did we get a much larger property, but we now have a 60 acre private

lake. Look for the entire article on the new Wilwin Lodge on the front page of this issue.

Insurance Ads in your paper and TV?

From time to time we get questions from our members on why we have ad space in our paper and TV for insurance and banking. Quite simply, The American Legion benefits from this ad space. The two main advertisements you see are for Legionnaire Insurance Trust "LIT" and for USAA. Due to the Department running at a budget deficit almost every year, we supplement our income by receiving revenue from them. Without their wiliness to help subsidize our mission we would not be able to continue to offer the benefits and programs we currently have. Both of these companies offer very competitive and valuable services that I would encourage all of you to take advantage of. For

example, LIT offers a free \$1000 - \$5000 Accidental Death Protection for just being a member in The American Legion family. There are also other services they offer, but you have no obligation to take them. USAA also has very inexpensive auto insurance for veterans and their spouse here in Michigan. They also offer banking and financial services to veterans and military currently serving. Feel free to contact them from our paper, website or contact me directly and I can assist you to the best of my ability. If you would also like the opportunity to advertise in our paper, please contact Mark Sutton or Roxanne at the Department office.

Thank you for keeping our organization strong and allowing us all to help veterans and their families across our great state!

Thank you to everyone who jointed us in Flint for our Winter Meeting.

Membership

New Years Review



Brett Holt

Delegates at the Department Convention in Sault Ste. Marie may be asked to consider passing a dues increase for Department per capita dues for the 2017 membership year.

Post's that did not plan for this increase when raising their dues when National raised dues and warnings were sounded about a probable Department increase still have an opportunity to raise their dues prior to this increase going into effect. **That opportunity will come in April when all posts will receive a form from National where the post will state their dues amount for 2017 Legion year. If you decide to raise your dues an additional three to five dollars to anticipate any Department dues increase on this form, then you will not have to do anything else.** If your post chooses to wait until after the vote at the convention, then you will need to fill out a change of dues post data form. **If the dues increase passes at the convention and you choose to wait until after convention to file a post data form for dues increase, you will still be required to pay the per capita to Department for Department and National per capita dues while this form is being processed.**

I want to thank all of you for your hard work on membership. While the Membership Team and the District and Zone Commanders put a lot of effort into seeing our membership grow it is you the blue cap Legionnaire that are the boots on the ground and put our plans into action.

Our U.P. Membership Director Gary Lane has been dealing with some health issues. We wish him a speedy recovery. I want to thank 5th Zone Commander Stan Kennedy for being willing to pick up the slack in Gary's absence. Stan is doing a wonderful job. I had the opportunity to spend some time with the 5th Zone Commander and his District Commanders while I accompanied them on part of the U.P. Tour. I thanked them and all the post we visited for their hospitality.

I also want to welcome the newest member of the Membership Committee, Catherine Buckley who is replacing Sheila Saunders as the Asst. Membership Director.

Department membership is going well. At the time of my writing this article on Feb. 9, 2016 the department is at 89.43% with a 90% target date of March 2, 2016. We are in 7th place Nationally.

Congratulations to the 72 post in the Department that are at or above 100%.

Now the hard work begins of finding those last 10%. As we all know the next four months is when renewal work needs an extra push.

Put together post membership teams, use the forms and phone scripts found on the department web page, www.michiganlegion.org. Double click the Membership tab and then click on the red Recruit, Retain & Renew Tips to find these forms. Adjutants pull the 225 forms for your area or zip code, these link can be found on MyLegion.org. Make an effort to reach out to all the 225's but any 225 that did not renew for 2016 and pays dues to your post will count as a new member for your post this year.

District Meetings 2015 - 2016

1st District

All meetings at Post 375, 19486 Sherwood, Detroit at 7PM
April 4, 2016
May 2, 2016
June 6, 2016

2nd District

Mar 13, 2016 in Tecumseh
May 15th in Jackson Post 29
Service officers school 1PM with meeting at 2PM

3rd District

March 6, 2016- Wolverine Post 360, 219 N. Main Street, Reading RSVP- 517.283.2683
May 1, 2016- Sherman-Rice-Demorest Post 157, 104 E. Chicago Street, Quincy RSVP- 517.639.3101
Please remember, the regular schedule for 3rd District Meetings; Executive Board Meeting- 11:30 AM, Dinner-Noon, and Regular Meeting at 1:00 P.M. The dinner is \$7.00. Please always RSVP so that staff will be aware of how many may be in attendance.

4th District

TBD

5th District

Thursday, March 12, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
Evan-Swanson Post #123, 14111 Ball Creek
Kent City, MI.49330
616-678-5160
Thursday, May 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
Charles A. Conklin Post #28
616-842-5310
700 S. Harbor Drive
Grand Haven, MI 49417
Thursday, July 14th, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. - Location to be determined
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS
All Executive Committee Meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. with First Vice Commander Howard Christensen presiding.
All District Executive Committee meetings will be conducted at: 2327 Wilson Ave. SW Grand Rapids, MI 49534
Neal E. Fonger Post #179 616-453-9861
April 14, 2016
June 9, 2016
PAST COMMANDERS - FRIDAY THE 13TH CLUB
March 13, 2016

6th District

Service officer School @ 11:00 AM when scheduled
Lunch @ 12:00 PM Meeting @ 1:00 PM
March 6, 2016 - Post 419 - 9807 Whitewood Rd, Pinckney
May 1, 2016 - Post 491 - 422 Woodworth St, Leslie

7th District

March 20, 2016 - Post 197 - Harbor Beach
May 15, 2015 - Post 8, Port Huron
June 2016 - Department Convention

8th District

March 6, 2016 Saginaw Post 439
May 1, 2016 Carson City Post 280
Lunch is at 1:30 meeting to follow

9th District

March 12, 2016 at Manistee Post 10
May 7, 2016 at Traverse City Post 35
Executive Board at Noon, Lunch at 1:00 p.m.,
General Membership Meeting at 2:00 p.m.
We are also attempting to have a Training Session beginning at 10:30 a.m. for interested Legionnaires.

10th District

March 5TH 2016 - OSCODA POST 274
May 14th 2016 - Wolverine Post 22, Social 11 am, Noon meet.
Lunch at noon meetings at 1pm all dates

11th District

April 9, 2016 at Post 71 in Gladstone. The meeting is at 10:00 AM edt.

12th District

April 23, 2016 at Post 21 in Stambaugh. The meeting is at 11:30 AM edt.

16th District

*Service Officer School **Memorial Service & Elections
March 8, 2016 Wayndotte 217
April 12, 2016* Trenton Post 426
May 10, 2016** Lincoln Park Post 67 313-388-2088
June 14, 2016 Garden City Post 396 313-381-2245

17th District

Meeting start at 7:00 PM
Jan 20, 2016 Northville Post 147, 100 Dunlap St., Northville, MI
March 16, 2016 Post 391 K of C 150 Fair St, Plymouth, MI
May 18, 2016 Livonia Post 32, 9318 Newburgh Rd, Livonia, MI

18th District

Meetings Convene at 2:00 PM
March 13, 2016 - Post 374, Berkley
April 17, 2016 - Post 143, Auburn Hills
(District Memorial Service 2:00 PM)
May 15, 2016 - Post 172, Rochester
(District Election of Officers for 2016-2017)
June 12, 2016 - Post 253, Royal Oak
(Meeting for District Legion Only)

19th District

Mar 13, 2016- Elk Rapids, Post 350
May 16, 2016- Wolverine, Post 122
All have an 11-12 meet & greet, noon lunch, 1:00 meeting

Every District Commander should have received an e-mail with a Direct Renewal List from Department. This is a list of all the members that receive renewal notices that have not renewed for 2015 and/or 2016. Please understand that after this list was sent to us some of the people may have renewed. None the less, this is a useful list to find those members that have dropped from our ranks. Post should be receiving their portion of the Direct Renewal List in the near future from your District Commanders if you have not received them already.

There will still be another renewal notice to go out from National in April. Notices were sent in January and February. The cutoff date to not have your members receive the April renewal notice if they have paid is April 15, 2016. National has to have received and processed your membership dues prior to that date or you will receive a renewal notice in April. If you receive a notice and have a 2016 membership card, simply disregard the notice. You do not need to pay

again. The 2017 Membership campaign will start in July 2016.

Adjutants, if you have members that have earned 10-20-30 recruiting awards for signing up new members please start sending those forms to department now. The form can be found on the department web page, www.michiganlegion.org. Go to the Headquarters tab and at the bottom of the drop down menu will be forms. Click forms for a list of forms. Select the 10-20-30 Membership Pin form link. Since some of the awards require certificates and shirts the sooner we receive the forms that better. The last day to send in the forms will be May 15, 2016.

Rest assured that the Department Membership Committee is still hard at work going out to the districts and post and working membership tables and booths at any event that is offered to us.

Thank you again for all your hard work and thank you for being a member of The American Legion. Your renewal is appreciated.



AUXILIAIRE



From the Desk of the President

2015 - 2016 Department President, Sue Verville

WE ARE A MEMBER BASED ORGANIZATION



We are a member based organization, without our members we are nothing. We each made the decision to join the American Legion Auxiliary at one time. Many of us joined for a special reason--- either to be involved in something meaningful or for personal pride factor. Many joined because they are proud of what this organization stands for, helping our Veterans. Some might have joined because they wanted to be associated with what the organization has been able to accomplish over the years for our Veterans, their families and our communities.

We need to promote who we are and what we do. We need to do this every day and everywhere we go. I can honestly say that having the emblem on my car really does make a difference. We all need to take a step forward and become more personally responsible in helping engage our members in becoming more creative, more enthusiastic and more energized when doing our auxiliary programs. We need to start informing the public of what we do, who we are and why we do it. We need to show our local community how much we as members can and will do for our Veterans, their families and our youth and our communities.

Yes we have some problems with membership in some Units, but we believe that we can fix this with everyone's help. We do not want to lose anymore members then we already have over the last few years. We need to try a little harder to keep what we have accomplished over the years with our membership at the Unit level all the way to the Department level. We need to remember how hard it was for our senior members to take a chance on joining the American

Legion Auxiliary. We need to connect with them just as much as we need to with the new members we are trying to have join us now.

We all need to be part of a team that is moving forward not backwards. We need to mentor and educate our members about our programs and help them to become our future leaders. We need to offer them guidance and some kind of school of instructions on how to be a good leader for our organization. We need to help those who are willing to give their time and knowledge as a Unit or District or Department officer, chairman or committee member. When they take on the roll as a leader they need to attend meetings and give reports. Reporting is important tool because it helps any new member learn and understand what those auxiliary programs are about. It also helps other members to reflect on past activities and helps provide our members with their wisdom and what they experienced doing that program. Also it helps them to know what they tried doing for that certain program such as what worked and what didn't at that time.

We need to keep 'Branching out as the Legion Family' with a better attitude among our members and staff. If you have chosen to be a chairman or a leader, you are accountable for the program that you are representing and for passing on any information pertaining to that program. We need to communicate more with each other. That means officers, chairman, members and staff. We really need to set goals that our department, our staff, our district and units can achieve. We need help build up our expectation and our plans for our future. We need to emphasize our need to reconnect with our members with strengths that offers both our younger and senior members what they need to stay as members of this great organization.

These are the main questions you should be asking your members and yourself. How will we reach new members and still keep the members we have? How will we serve the needs of our Veterans? How can we keep growing? How can we make a difference in our local community? How can we promote our programs and activities of our Legion Family? Where will you get the volunteers to help with our programs?

I want to thank all the volunteers who helped out at all the gift shops this year. We would not be able to do the gift shops without such wonderful volunteers. I was able to attend the gift shops at Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Battle Creek and Jacobetti's along with Commander Buda and SAL Commander Ruttkofsky, VA&R rep Janette Brockway and Earl and Bev Ruttkofsky. We all had a great time helping our Veterans shop for their gifts.

I also attended the 4th District meeting with District President Tangaline Hayes and the 6th District meeting with District President Sue Hilgris in the beginning of January. Many thanks for the food, the gifts and the donations to my special project, the Veterans Court. Keep up the good work ladies.

I also attended the Early Bird Dinner (RED FLANNEL) in Cedar Springs along with Commander Buda and SAL Commander Ruttkofsky. We were a sight to behold, but had a great time. Hope to be there next year and many thanks for all that you do.

Remember our vision is to enhance the quality of life for our Veterans, their families, our military men and women who are serving at home or aboard and our local communities. So let's all continue to meet the standards we have set for this organization, which is having strong values, helping others and not expecting anything in return, the importance of our mission and reaching out for our future.

Department Secretary/Treasurer, Bonnie Olson

2015-16 REPORT FORM WILL BE MAILED WITH UNIT MAILING



The 2015-16 Unit/District Report Form Packet is being mailed to EVERY unit along with the March Unit Mailing. The Report Form will also have the District Roster for each unit so a Unit Report Form can be mailed to the respective District Chairman. This 2015-16 report form is

intended to be used on a yearly basis. It may have small changes, or an additional question from time to time, but the intent is for it to be timeless.

The top portion of the form is the identifying portion.

1. The left portion is the identifying part: name, address, etc.

2. The center portion is UNIT REPORT portion: the person filling out the UNIT report would "X" the box for the "Unit Report". The balance of the center portion asks for information regarding that specific unit.

3. The right portion is the DISTRICT REPORT portion. The district committee chairperson

would "X" the box for the "District Report" and complete the balance of the questions of that section.

The color categories help to break down the report into more detailed subjects:

A. **Blue**--Veterans/Military Support & Advocacy Subdivided into:

1. Service to Veterans
2. Serv. for Active-Duty & Res. Military
3. Service for Military Families
4. Legislative
5. Poppy
6. National Security

B. **Green**--Youth Development Subdivided into:

1. Children & Youth
2. Girls State
3. Junior Activities

C. **Red**--Family Support Subdivided into:

1. Americanism
2. Chaplain
3. Community Service
4. Education
5. Music

D. **Yellow**--Administrative Info.

1. Auxiliary Emergency Fund
2. Constitution & By-Laws

3. Historian
4. Leadership
5. Past Presidents Parley
6. Public Relations

It is very difficult for any Unit, even a large Unit, to participate in **all** the committees... there are 18 different committees. A unit may want to take a particular color, and work the committees within that **color**. A unit may be to take **one committee from each color**.

Whatever a unit ultimately decides to participate in to work the mission of the auxiliary, the **MOST IMPORTANT PART** is that they pick **something**, and give it their best for that year.

The DEC approved report packet will be mailed to every unit (with a respective district roster of the unit) by February 23. **Bear in mind all unit reports are due to the respective district committee chairman by March 31, 2016.**

DETAILS**

Some of the questions are followed by the word "Details**" in the TOTAL area. That means that more information is needed to answer the question, rather than a "yes" a "no" or a dollar amount answer. In the report packet is a sheet called "Basic Form for Writing

a Narrative". This is intended to be a helpful layout of how to prepare your paragraph. It is not mandatory, it is a guide. Also in the packet, is "Writing a Narrative Essay" if you want more explanation and deeper points of how to prepare an essay.

^In-Kind Donations

The little carrot is only to indicate that there is an explanation as to what an "In-Kind" donation is. The explanation is on page 3 of the report form.

#-number sign--The number sign is used to save space rather than always saying--"How Many".

\$-dollar sign--The dollar sign is used to save space rather than always saying--"How Much".

The report packet contains a "Service to Veterans" Hours Report form to fill out for volunteering for **veteran service hours**, not to be confused with **hospital service hours**. If you have any questions as to what qualifies for these hours, contact the Service to Veterans Chairman listed on the sheet.

Finally, the packet also contains the awards from each committee--the parameters of how each award can be earned, and if there is a monetary award.

Deborah Williamson, Department Chaplain

The Gift of Giving



Proverbs 19:17 (ESV)

¹⁷Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.

We all know how great it feels to receive gifts. However, the joy of getting is short-lived. Our lives are richer when we share, and that great inner joy comes from helping others to better their lives. Truly giving from the heart fills your life with joy and nourishes your soul. When people are asked why they give, the readiest answers include: God wants me to; I feel better about myself; others need, I want to share; it's only right. The question I would ask is how did you feel? I imagine you felt happy inside. The act of giving kindles self-esteem and brings happiness. Giving provides an opportunity to look beyond our own world and see the

bigger picture. Helping someone because you want to is much more appreciated than helping someone because you have to. You give because you want to.

As Auxiliary members, we give to our veterans, our community and the children. That is what our organization is all about.

A few quotes to ponder:

"It is not how much we give but how much love we put into giving." Mother Teresa

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." Charles Dickens

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Winston S. Churchill

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Mahatma Gandhi

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**Nancy Sagorski,
Children & Youth Committee Member**

Children are the future of our world. When their Mothers or Fathers are deployed, we (members of the American Legion and the Legion Auxiliary) can help them to know how proud we are by their parent's enlistment. If they need help with anything, we are there to help.

April is Children and Youth Month. Take a child under your wings and mentor them. Let them know you care. Help them with School work, have a veteran go to their classroom and talk about their freedom and show them how to fold the flag and learn about the flag

Bring them to your Unit meetings and let them learn how we can help them to succeed in this world. These children need to learn that Freedom isn't free. That someone paid a price for our freedom. We need to explain that freedom didn't just happen. If we don't tell the younger people, they're not going to know.

All Units should have a Children and Youth

Committee. We should improve conditions and take care and protect the children of our veterans. Our purpose is to improve conditions for all children.

Some of our children need more. When they are hungry they need food, sometimes they are hungry for learning, and then they need someone to mentor or help them to learn. Teaching them about the constitution, the flag or the people of our great country. This can be done by our units. Some help by having their posts go with them to the schools to explain and show them all about the flag, or about why they are veterans, and what they did to give our country freedom.

Let our Children know how proud we are about their families who are serving our countries. Another way we can help is to support legislation for children in accordance with resolutions adopted by local American Legion Posts or Units. Make sure the pledge of care and protection for children of veterans is carried out through service work, through direct cash assistance to needy families from Unit funds and through the use of Dept. or National funds for temporary aid to Children of Veterans.

Membership

**Jacquelynn Boughner,
Eastern Area Membership Chairman**

With spring just around the corner it's the time of the year when we all need to focus on getting in the last straggling membership renewals for the year. Last year our Department was recognized at the National Convention for being in 5th Place amongst all 52 Departments with a 90.67% Renew/Rejoin rate. First place was the Department of Delaware at 91.60%. As you can see there was not much difference between 1st and 5th. In terms of members Michigan could have been in 1st place if we had around 300 more renewals (that's just one per unit).

We did a great job last year but I know we can do better this year!

Don't forget to include all of your members by giving them meaningful opportunities to move the American Legion Auxiliary's mission forward. To support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.

Henry Ford once said "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Congratulations to the 5 units in Michigan who received the 100% by December 31, 2015 award: Unit 139 Reese, Unit 115 Escanaba River, Unit 89 Allegan, Unit 72 Sebawaing, and Unit 415 Hartland. Each unit has received \$100 to be used for mission outreach and/or membership efforts.

Spring is also a great time of the year to plan a membership recruitment event. Now that we are not buried in piles of snow we can get out in our communities and talk to potential members about our organization; "Who We Are", "What We Do" & "Why We Matter".

Remember that membership and recruitment is not just the responsibility of your membership chairman, it is the responsibility of every member. Make sure that you are carrying membership applications with you at all times. Talk to your friends and family about the impact that we have on our local veterans and their families. Work with your unit to organize a recruitment contest. Get out into your community wearing your Auxiliary apparel and show others that what we do makes a difference.

Upcoming membership goals: March 15th 80%, April 22nd 85%.

Keep working toward those goals and if you need any support contact your membership chairman.

10 Reasons for Community Service

**Connie Kovacs,
Community Service Committee Member**

#10: It's good for you.

Volunteering provides physical and mental rewards. It:

- **Reduces stress:** Experts report that when you focus on someone other than yourself, it interrupts usual tension-producing patterns.
- **Makes you healthier:** Moods and emotions, like optimism, joy, and control over one's fate, strengthen the immune system.

#9: It saves resources.

Volunteering provides valuable community services so more money can be spent on local improvements.

#8: Volunteers gain professional experience.

#7: It brings people together.

As a volunteer you assist in:

- Uniting people from diverse backgrounds to work toward a common goal
- Building camaraderie and teamwork

#6: It promotes personal growth and self esteem.

Understanding community needs helps foster empathy and self-efficacy.

#5: Volunteering strengthens your community.

- As a volunteer you help:
- Support families
- Improve Lives of others
- Support youth (mentoring and after-school programs)
- Beautify the community

#4: You learn a lot.

Volunteers learn things like these:

- **Self:** Volunteers discover hidden talents that may change your view on your self worth.
- **Government:** Through working with local non-profit agencies, volunteers learn about the functions and operation of our government.
- **Community:** Volunteers gain knowledge of local resources available to solve community needs.

#3: You get a chance to give back.

#2: Volunteering encourages civic responsibility.

#1: You make a difference.

Every person counts!



6th District Meeting: Sue Hilgris Dist. President, Sue Ver-ville Department President, and Richard Scholtz District Commander.

2016 WinterConference DEC REPORTS

2nd Zone Barry Wood, Commander

Districts and Posts throughout Zone 2 have been working hard and are being very successful in membership. The activity has kept Zone 2 on top for several weeks. Thank you to everyone in the 2nd Zone. Visits to Posts have proved that a number of things are happening and being planned for the benefit of The American Legion throughout the Zone and Department. Plans are being made throughout the Zone to build on the Legion Family. "Together we can" is my motto and together we will be the best posts, districts and department in The American Legion. Please see what you can do within The American Legion for The American Legion. This can be done effectively at any level of the Legion and most effectively by the largest number of our members at the Post level. Be a part of the activity! Be a part of our success!

5th District Garrett Veihl, Commander

Comrades, Michigan Legionaries, and Legion Family here in the Fifth District we have been busy. Yes busy, with membership, I am proud to say, as of today 1/25/2016 the Fifth District is above 90%. We are doing our best to get to

100%. For the Post already at or above 100%, thank-you. We also have 9 Post that only need 9 or less new or renewed members to surpass 100%.

We have been busy getting into the schools signing Boys and Girls up for BOYS AND GIRLS STATE. Our goal for the Fifth District is to send 60 or more Boys this year. The STUDENT TROOPER PROGRAM is also on our radar, we are looking for Boys and Girls interested in law enforcement. These Youth Programs are some of our most important programs, we all need to promote them.

I have visited most of the Posts in my District and a few in other Districts, and I, for one, like what I see. I am so proud of the American Legion and our mission. My auto has been detailed promoting the Legion and as I travel around the state, I have had lots of interest into the Legion as people see the car. More than 15 people have taken membership apps from me, I cannot tell if they became members, but they took the first step. The more we have people talking and asking question about the Legion, the better for the American Legion. So as people ask you, be proud and tell them all the good we do. Explain how we help our Veterans, and the families of our Veterans. The programs and scholarships we have for our youth. How we support Boys and Girls Scouts. And help within our communities. So as I close, I ask each and every one of you, please ask at less one person to join our family, if you do our family will grow.

Thank you

From the Press and Guide Newspaper, published Wednesday, January 13, 2016

American Legion 16th District Supports Hospital's Tiniest Patients

Representatives of the Department of Michigan American Legion 16th District and American Legion Carl E. Stitt Post 232 visited Beaumont Hospital - Dearborn in December to see a kangaroo chair that was purchased using funds they donated earlier in the year for the neonatal intensive care unit. Their donation was made possible through the American Legion's Tabs for Tots program. They collect the pull tabs from aluminum cans of soda, juice and beer, and then sell them to a scrap metal com-

pany at premium prices.

"Our legion's fundraising efforts support children in hospitals," said 16th District Commander Archie Chappell. "We are proud to support the needs of a hospital in our community with this donation, especially to care for the smallest patients Oakwood serves."

Kangaroo chairs are specially designed recliners that support the natural skin-to-skin bonding experience known as "kangaroo care" between parents and their infants. Specialized items, such as

these chairs, are critical to meeting the complex needs of babies who are born too soon. For more information about the NICU, visit www.oakwood.org/foundation or contact Heidi LeHue at 313-982-5612.



2015 Scouting Report

This year along with our Eagle Scout of the Year we had two other exciting scouting events; the Bike American Tour in July and International Scout Rally at Wilwin Lodge in September.

Our Eagle Scout of the Year was Zachary Utecht from Falmouth, Michigan. Zachary was sponsored by American Legion Post 300 in Lake City, Michigan.

Zachary attended McBain High School where he carried a 4.0 average through the 11th grade and is number one in his class. In high school Zachary participated in band, basketball, National Honor Society and choir. Zachary has been to Germany, Canada and Hawaii with the Lion's Michigan All State Band.

Zachary was very active in scouts and went through cubs scouts, held many positions in boy scouts. He attended the Philmont National Scout Ranch in 2012. Zachary participated in many camp outs and attended two national jamborees.

Zachary was also involved in many community activities as referee soccer, Missaukee Agricultural Youth Show and church and community softball. Zachary's Eagle Scout project was to replace the large entrance sign to the Ben D Jeffs River Park in Missaukee County. It was well received by the community.

Zachary feels that scouting has really affected his life and plans to go on to college.

We congratulate Zachary on all that he has accomplished in his scouting career and wish him much success in the future. We congratulate Zachary on being chosen



the Eagle Scout of the Year for the American Legion Michigan department.

In July three boy scouts, a Vietnam vet. medic and a lady who drove the support vehicle started out from Astoria, OR on a Bike Trip American trip across America.

The purpose of their trip was to raise funds for the American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors as they traveled to the east coast. The scouts came through Michigan from July 28 - 30.

They arrived in Ludington and spent the first night, then the next day they biked on to White Cloud and our Legion Post 381 from Newago picked up the group and took them to the post for dinner, a donation and a tour of the area.

The next day they rode to Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Post 208 brought out pizza to the camp for a pizza party. Then the next day they rode to the Climax area and on the way as they

went through the Yankee Springs area they were met by Hasting post 45 and were presented with a donation.

At the camp in Climax they were greeted by Battle Creek Post 298 who provided subs, snacks and sodas. Their goal was to raise \$10,000 but by the time they reached the east coast they had raised over \$20,000. What an accomplishment.

A special thank you to our Michigan Legion Posts who supported the scouts through providing food and donations as they biked through Michigan. (see attached picture)

Then in Sept. the 29th International Scout Rally was held at our Wilwin Lodge at Trout Lake There were 617 scouts and leaders in attendance and 65 scout units. The scouts were from Northern Michigan, Wisconsin and Canada. There was boy scouts, girl scouts, explorers and rangers. The theme this year was Holidays so a lot of people were dressed in costumes. The scouts enjoyed everything from a rope bridge to light activities. Most of the activities related to scout skills.

The rally was enjoyed by all. Next year the Rally will be held again at Wilwin Lodge the week end of Sept. 16, 17 & 18. Any scout interested in joining in next year can contact Ray Schebel at (906) 484-9998

I encourage all our legion posts to get involved with scouting in your areas. Supporting scouting is a great way to build goodwill in your communities.

Some ideas on how to get involved are:

- Poppy Day sales
- Flag disposal ceremony
- Memorial Day parade
- Putting flags on veterans graves
- Helping with dinners, cook outs or clean up days at the post.
- Helping with the Flag Disposal ceremony at the post on Flag Day.
- Support Eagle Scout projects as providing flag disposal boxes.
- Conduct flag etiquette classes and flag folding classes in schools.
- Team up with scouts and have a community clean up day.

The American Legion Michigan Department charters 70 scout units in Michigan.

We have 57 legion posts that charter scout units in Michigan.

A break down of type of scout units is as follows:

- Cub scout packs 32
- Boy scout troops 30
- Crews 7
- Sea scouts 1

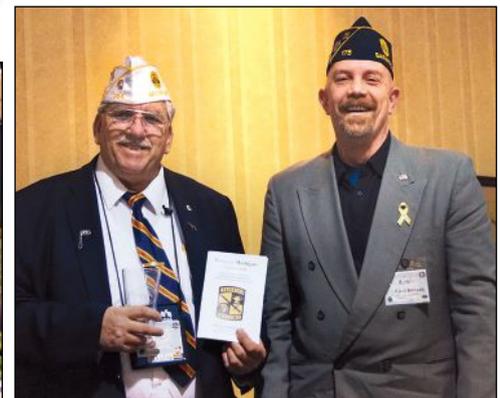
The Michigan Department lost one cub pack in the last year.

Thanks to all our Michigan Legion Posts and members for all your support to scouting in Michigan during the past year. Lets keep it up.

Its been a privilege to again support scouting in Michigan through the 2015 year. If you have a question on American Legion and scouting, please contact me at Carl Atkinson (269) 838-3491



2016 Winter Meeting



No Legion Caps at Political Events



Among the freedoms many Americans enjoy is the right to vote for our elected officials. This year, of course, is generating intense interest because a new president will be elected. Additionally, voters will elect every single member of the U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the U.S. Senate.

Right now we are entering a critical and exciting juncture as the two major political parties begin to hold primaries and caucuses to determine the front-runners for their nominations. Strong opinions can be found everywhere. Unfortunately, so too can some mistruths. Many political groups were created specifically to spin facts, distort reality and twist words to propel their candidates into office. The American Legion, as a nonpartisan organization, assumes a role of neutrality amid the storm of political rhetoric and images.

As individuals, we are free like anyone to vote as we wish and support the candidates we think best.

But as Legionnaires, we have a **duty to participate in the election process** and encourage others to exercise one of the most important freedoms we, and those who served in uniform before us, fought to protect: the freedom to vote.

On the local level, an American Legion post can take on a greater role in its community by organizing and hosting a political forum or debate among candidates. Remember that any such event must be open to all who are running for a particular office, and the Legion cannot promote any one candidate. When posts are using their facilities for such events, they should remove the emblem and Legion flag to avoid the impression of endorsement for any candidate. (Note that renting out hall space to a political campaign is still fair game, as long as it is not presented as an American Legion-sponsored event.)

Here are some reminders from the Legion's **Get Out the Vote brochure**:

1. When hosting a voter registration drive, information and applications must be offered and available to all eligible voters.
2. Legionnaires may express partisan views, but they must do so when they are not wearing the Legion cap or other Legion attire, and without a direct connection to an American Legion post.
3. American Legion posts may coordinate forums or debates. However, posts cannot endorse or oppose a candidate, or coordinate activities with a candidate without giving his/her opponent the same opportunity.

Following these guidelines will keep the Legion above the fray without sacrificing any member's right to participate in the democratic process. It is my hope that each of you do participate in the election process individually, and posts take the lead in their communities by arranging fair debates or "meet the candidates" forums to help all of our citizens fulfill a right too often taken for granted.

Boys State

Jerry Kelley Department Boys State Chairman

We are now just five months away from Boys State and looking forward to seeing the results of plans set in motion by each Post to send young men to Boys State.

Committee members and Department have been fielding questions about Boys State, attending District and Post Meetings, and promoting Boys State at every opportunity. At this point we need each Post to step up and help us provide this "National Civics Leadership Program" to any young man that wants to attend.

In the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to speak with several Boys State Alumni. One of them attended Boys State in 1948, another attended in 1985, and a third attend-

ed in 1990. All of them stated it was a tremendous experience. One of the even stated that his first full-time job was a result of attending Boys State. As we have said "Boys State: A week that last a lifetime".

Remember the mission of Boys State is to provide the highest-quality interactive educational experience possible and to help young men learn about our system of government. The lessons and memories from Boys State last a lifetime, and provide a solid foundation to further enhance leadership and teamwork. Boys State is a life-changing experience and our staff is committed to providing the best environment to encourage education and growth.

For further information email: miboysstate@michiganlegion.org or visit the Boys State website: www.michiganlegion.org/boysstate.



HELP WANTED FOR BOYS STATE

Legionnaires and Sons of the American Legion: The Boys State Committee needs your help. This will be the first year under a totally new Educational Team. If you can answer yes to one of the following questions we need your help:

- Are you an educator or a city, county, or state representative?
- Do you have experience working in government?
- Are you an attorney or judge?
- Do you have law enforcement or fire department experience?
- Do you like working with teenagers?
- Do you want to be part of Michigan's Premier Leadership Academy?

The Boys State Program is about teaching leadership skills using city, county, state government and all of the pieces in between.

Will You Help?

Your help will be greatly appreciated. For more information about helping at Boys State please contact Jerry Kelley, Boys State Director 34-434-8272 or miboysstate@michiganlegion.org.



Veteran Service

Legion: 'Judicial Board Needs to Allow for VA Accountability'

WASHINGTON (February 9, 2016) – After yet another attempt to discipline a poor performing employee was reversed by the Merit Systems Protection Board, the head of the nation's largest veterans service organization added his voice to a growing legion of critics that unelected judges are making it impossible to bring accountability to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"The burden of proof needed to discipline a VA employee, or any employee for that matter, should not be the same as what is required to send an accused murderer to death row," said American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett. "VA Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson should be commended for attempting to remove the director of the Albany, N.Y., VA Medical Center because he felt that she created an environment that was unsafe for veterans. This is just a week after the MSPB ruled that two senior VA officials in Pennsylvania and Minnesota could not be demoted, even after the VA's own IG report found that they inappropriately manipulated the agency's relocation system for personal gain. President Obama and Congress have promised to restore accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is almost impossible to do that when VA's attempts to discipline poor performers are reversed at the end of the appeals process."

Barnett says that while The American Legion supports the right of any employee to receive a fair hearing, the burden of proof should not be greater than what most taxpayers would expect from their private sector jobs.

"VA employees have been entrusted with a huge responsibility, the health and well-being of our nation's veterans," Barnett said. "By tolerating bad behavior without even allowing a slap on the wrist, the MSPB is risking the lives of veterans. The American Legion is calling on Congress, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the MSPB to work together to reform the procedures needed to finally bring accountability to a department that desperately needs it."

With a current membership of 2.2 million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 14,000 posts across the nation.

American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Our staff is dedicated to providing the very best veterans' advocacy to Michigan Veterans and their families. They can assist with Claims Preparation, Presentation and appeal counsel in Veterans' benefits services. Assist you and your Dependents in getting the Benefits that you have earned by your service to your country.

American Legion Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Mr. Gary Easterling, Director

Tripp Cantwell, Assistant Director

Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building Room 1210

477 Michigan Avenue Detroit, MI 48226

Office Phone (313) 964-6640 Fax (313) 964-5697

e-mail - al.vbadet@va.gov

Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm



Gary Easterling
Director

Call the Detroit office for Field Service Officer Schedule

Visit us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/MichiganVAR

Spotlight on Service: Bob Bianchi



Bob Bianchi (far right) joins other Furniture City Post #258 volunteers at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans' Carnival. The Carnival is held on the grounds of the home each year and allows members to enjoy a day at the fair – right in their own backyard.

Bob Bianchi has volunteered at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans longer than many current service members have been alive.

A Navy veteran who served in the Seabees in Guam from 1944 to 1946, Bob has been a member of the American Legion's Furniture City Post #258 for 53 years. He is also a lifetime member of the VFW's Old Kent Post #830 and has been a part of the Catholic War Veterans' Sacred Heart Post #1500 for 15 years.

He first started volunteering at GRHV during the 1980s when his father lived at the Home, choosing to spend time with his fellow veterans after hearing about the need for volunteers through the American Legion. Since then, he's spent more than 1,000 hours at the Home.

Volunteers from the American Legion and other service organizations are an important part of the state's two veteran's homes – GRHV and the Jacobetti Home for Veterans in Marquette. From the clothing room and the book library to euchre tournaments and guitar classes, volunteers provide a number of services that wouldn't be

available otherwise.

Bob was asked to spotlight his service and find out what it means to him to serve the men and women who live there.

Question: Why did you choose to be a part of the American Legion and other service organizations?

Bianchi: By belonging to the VSOs, it brings me closer in touch with my fellow veterans and their needs.

Question: How often do you volunteer?

Bianchi: I used to volunteer two or three times a week; however, during the past few years due to family medical situations, I can't volunteer as much as I

would like to.

Question: What activities do you do at the Home?

Bianchi: I enjoy the fruit detail, which I have been participating in for years. Once a month, we take bananas and oranges to every room in the Home and give them to members to enjoy. I also volunteer for the Bingo games and very much enjoy the annual Carnival, where I make the cotton candy.

Question: What does it mean to you to volunteer at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans?

Bianchi: It is very gratifying to help others that have served our country. We are all comrades, and I'm dedicated to helping them. I also feel a simple thank you is not enough.

Want to join Bob? Contact The American Legion at 517-371-4720 to learn how you can support the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and Jacobetti Home for Veterans through volunteer opportunities or donations.



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Making a diff, in the 5th!

Margo Forrester, 5th District President

We started our year by recruiting some brand new District Chairs. We attempted to represent as many Units as possible, in our District. They come with new ideas and energy. Their new knowledge has a "ripple effect," in that; they share their new knowledge with their Units, other members, family and friends.

After Fall Conference, we held a "Let's Learn" Workshop! New and seasoned members learned or reviewed, in brief, information about all of our Programs. They also received information on tracking of volunteer hours, applying for awards and fundraising ideas.

We tried to put our 5th Family First, by promoting our Units fundraisers, dinners and other events, in a "Share & Tell" email flyer. We also posted these on our American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of MI 5th District Facebook page. Auxiliary pictures are posted of District, Unit and GRHV activities. It was great to see Department President, Sue Verville, and all the other officers, at our Christmas Gift Shop. Sarah Brooks and her team did their usual outstanding job organizing the event!

My Special Project is to bring awareness and donations, both cash and "In Kind," to the non-profit, Community Rebuilders. This organization places homeless veterans in permanent or temporary hous-

ing, gets them jobs and job training and the benefits they are entitled to. Several Units have made cash donations through the 5th District Association and many members collectively, have given thousands of dollars' worth of "In Kind" donations. The "In Kind" donations were household items, such as, toasters, bedding, microwaves, furniture, etc., all to help these vets start anew!

Our Units are actively honoring our veterans and helping their communities! During the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays, they adopted families or donated and delivered food and fruit baskets. Cassard Unit 208 delivered Poinsettias, hand crocheted lap blankets and personalized cards signed by their new Juniors, to 90 veterans! Post Family 459 hosted their 11th annual Four Chaplains Service. Harriet Sturim and her team made it a memorable event! Several Post families held various fundraisers to help veterans, children or charities.

Everyone is invited to attend our annual Poppy Bonanza at the GRHV. It will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2016. GRHV Veterans demonstrate how they assemble the poppies and allow you to try to assemble poppies too! This is a fun event for the whole family. RSVP's are appreciated, details in our Unit Mailings.

"We Are Family" and are working hard to "make a diff in the 5th" and the world a better place!

Sixth District In the News

Susan Hilgrs, 6th District President

It has been an honor to serve as the Mighty Sixth District as their president. The units in the district have been working very hard to support the programs of the Auxiliary. They have been supporting my special project, The Auxiliary Emergency Fund that supports the women of the auxiliary in need.

We are excited to have a new unit, Hartland Unit 415, in our district. They received their charter and had their officers installed on Monday, February 2. We welcome Hartland to the Sixth District.

I have been visiting units in our district and am impressed by all that they are doing for veterans and their families in their communities. Many units have supported veterans and their families in need in their communities through community Christmas programs. Unit 158 in Clio purchased Christmas gifts and cleaning supplies for six veteran's families in their community. Many other communities have done the same.

Unit 119 in Linden is a small unit that has been very active. They greet soldiers at Flint's Bishop Airport that are arriving home to make sure that they know we appreciate them. They also were part of

a group welcoming home, Amir Hekmati, the young former Marine that had been held in an Iranian prison for several years. They also have provided a sound system to the Saginaw Veteran's Hospital. They are small but mighty.

Our other units are also very active and following the programs of the auxiliary. They collect coupons and Boxtops, send boxes to the troops and hold dinners to support programs. I am so proud of the work that they do.

The Sixth District was well represented at the Christmas gift shop at Battle Creek. We sent 333 gift to the program. We had fourteen volunteers that helped pack gifts and deliver them to the residents and patients at the hospital. It is an honor to be a part of this wonderful program.

We are working very hard on membership and encouraging all of our units to continue to meet their goal. Sometimes it seems that it cannot be accomplished but membership is not just the responsibility of the membership chairperson. It is everyone's responsibility. We will keep working.

I am very proud of our Sixth District and all of the units as they work to "Keep The Promise" for our veterans and children in our communities.

Georgia Downs Endorsed as Chaplain

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the 9th District Association, Department of Michigan, held on December 12, 2015, Georgia Downs was endorsed for the office of Department Chaplain for the year 2016 - 2017.

Georgia became eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary through the service of her deceased father, Kenneth P. Carlson, who served in World War II. Mr. Carlson enlisted in the Army when he was 16 years old and was one of the few survivors of his platoon while battling in Germany. He was a recipient of several honor ribbons.

While being a member for 19 years, she holds the office of Department Historian 2015 - 2016, Unit President (3 years) and District President for two terms. She has had the opportunity to chair many committees at both the Unit, District and Department levels: Lower Northern Membership chairman, Poppies, Americanism, V.A & R and Community Service. She has been the chairman and co-chairman for ten years for the Veterans' Dinners at Post 411. Having been chairman of several committees and has received several awards for her Unit and the Donna Bailey Citation Americanism Award for her District. Georgia strongly believes that our youth is our future, and they are our future leaders. She has a monthly fundraising dinner to raise funds for Girls State. Last year several alternates were sent to Girls State because of her fundraising.

She is a member of the 8 and 40 Salon 300 and is chairman for their Nursing Scholarship.

Georgia is an active member of her church.

She raised her family in Westerville, Ohio and moved back to Michigan in 1990. She has multiple designations and degrees in insurance and brings strong managerial skills in customer service/sales. She sat on the Boards of her local township for ten years, secretary for the Zoning Board two years and Board of Review for eight years. Georgia retired from Greenridge Real Estate in 2012 after 23 years in the industry. She has been a broker for 16 years and still maintains her own Real Estate brokerage.

We feel Georgia has the skills and our confidence to serve as Chaplain for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Michigan. We ask for your support of our endorsement.

Ruth Gott
District 9 President

Rebecca Lawrence
District 9 Secretary

WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN

Georgia Downs, Historian

Who said History can't be fun? Let's take a historical journey by recapturing the past and capturing the present. As I pondered over what to write about History this month; a review was needed to see what my predecessors had included in their histories. Let's see where we have been. How many remember "**Remembering the Future?**" It was once said "**It is very hard to remember that events now long past were once in the future?**" by Maitland. History beginning or end? "**Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending,**" by Maria Robinson. These 2 quotes are from history year 2008 - 2009, and once again recaptured in later years by two Historians. "**Celebrating Milestones**" a milestone can indicate an important event in one's history. Each of your Units

has important events. Too often if not recorded they are forgotten and become a blur of the past; History written 2010. **History Making Memories - The Gift Of Time**, what a better way is there to give the **Gift Of Time and Honor Their Service** than keeping a **History**. "Our history, what a special gift it is and what an honor it is to do it"; History 2011-2012. "**With the sky the limit let us soar to new heights and make history together!**"

Only by working with and knowing that the sky is the limit for our Veterans, their families, our communities and our members soaring to new heights in keeping a history. We will be able to save the memories of our legacy; History 2012 - 2014. More recent is "**Little Change**" and "**Big Difference for our Veterans.**" History 2014 - 2015. Our present themes are, "**Branching out as the Legion Family**" and "**Keeping the Promise.**" By reaching out to our Legion

Family, we are keeping the Promise to continue to take care of our veterans, our soldiers, their children, and their families. This is **Who we are, What we do and Why we matter**. Only by doing our jobs as Historian, can we make our memories a gift to share for many years yet to come.

The mid-year report is done and has been received by National. Special thanks to the historians who took the time to share with me significant events which have occurred. Some were absolutely enjoyable, overwhelming, inventive and amazing; I could go on and on. The best part; they were all recording a history!

It doesn't seem like 9 months have gone since I was elected as Historian. Where does time go when you're having fun? Thank you all for your support. Continue to be a member who remembers "**Keeping the Promise.**"

LEADERSHIP

Marcy Jorae, Leadership Chairman

The Leadership Committee has been busy this year promoting training and mentoring throughout the Department. You may ask "Why is this so important?" Our organization's membership numbers have been declining for several years, yet our needs to serve our Veterans, military and their families, our children and youth, and our communities have been increasing. As we look to the future of our organization, we need to feel confident that our leaders of the future will be prepared to take the lead in meeting those needs.

Our national organization is addressing this situation in the 5-Year Centennial Strategic Plan by creating Goal 3: Develop Leadership at All Levels. The Department of Michigan is also addressing this goal in our Department Strategic Plan as Goal 3: Mirror Training from Unit to District to Department. In implementing this plan, the Leadership Committee has expanded from a 3-member committee to 6 members:

a Committee Chairman and 5 Area Chairmen to work throughout the Department conducting Leadership Workshops and assisting Districts and Units.

The Leadership Committee is working together with the Strategic Planning Committee to develop a training program for leaders at all levels within the department. A training committee has been formed as a part of the Michigan Strategic Planning Committee and is currently developing a plan to provide training for Department Officers, District Presidents (including their roles as members of the DEC), and Department Chairmen. In future years, this will expand to include District and Unit Officers.

The important fact to remember in all this is that ANY MEMBER in good standing is eligible to fill a leadership role at any level in the department. Think of why you joined the ALA. What role do you want to play in ensuring that we will be able to meet our future needs?

MARY DUBAY ENDORSED AS HISTORIAN

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Seventh District Association of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Michigan held on October 18, 2015, Mary (Mrs. Richard) Dubay was endorsed for the office of Department Historian.

Mary is eligible for membership through her husband, Richard T. Dubay, a Vietnam Veteran who served in the Air Force from 1966 to 1969. She is also eligible through the service of her late father, Charles Desmet, who served in World War II.

Mary has been a member of Harry Ollrich Unit #4 for 26 years. During this time she has held most offices and chairmanships. She served as Unit President for 2 years and is currently serving as 2nd Vice President.

On the District level, Mary has held many chairmanships and offices and served as District President in 1999-2000. She is currently serving her sixth consecutive term as District Treasurer.

On the Department level, Mary has served as Americanism, Poppy, Public Relations, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Resolutions, Education and Eastern Area Membership Chairman. Mary has also served on the following as a committee member: Americanism, Poppy, and Public Relations. During

the time that she was Americanism Chairman, she won the Best Overall program in Americanism for the Central Division. As Education Chairman, she was awarded the American Legion Education Award. Mary is currently serving the Department as Community Service chairman. On the National Level, Mary is Central Division Chairman on the National Security Committee for 2015-2016.

Mary is currently employed as a Medical Secretary by Michigan Healthcare Professionals, where she has worked for the last 15 years. She and her husband, Richard, have been married for 45 years, and have 4 children and 7 grandchildren, all of which are members of the Legion family. Mary and her family are members of St. Peters Catholic Church in Mt. Clemens. Mary has been a member of Macomb County Salon #396 of the 8 & 40 for 12 years.

We, the members of the Seventh District ask for your support of our candidate, Mary Dubay, for the office of Historian for the Department of Michigan for the 2016-2017 year.

Kathleen Copeland
7th Dist. President

Susan Svacha
7th Dist. Secretary

SUPPORT YOUR MICHIGAN ALA GIRLS STATE

Beryl Robbins, Girls State Chairman

Have you seen the new school flyers about Michigan American Legion Auxiliary Girls State? The flyer was mailed to your schools and to your units in January. Please use this very important tool. Every member of the American Legion family in the State of Michigan should take a look. It is available on-line at <http://michalaux.org>. Please take the time to check it out, or ask Department to send you a copy.

This one document will answer most of your questions and includes an application and reservation form. Please share this with friends, family, co-workers, bosses and other civic organizations you belong to and ask them if they would like to make a difference in a young girl's life; then ask yourself if you would like to.

Ask if they know a young girl who is a junior in high school that would like to go. Our program is designed to change, enlighten, and encourage all to become better leaders, informed citizens and motivates them to pursue a higher education. Remember that anyone can sponsor a girl to ALA Girls State.

Thank you to everyone that supported our first raffle, the winning tickets were drawn at winter meeting. We will be sending out new raffle tickets this spring for another drawing at fall conference. You have a chance to win \$500, \$250 or \$100. Ask your leadership about obtaining a chance.

The backpacks we gave every delegate last year proved to be more valuable than we ever imagined. We were able to easily identify our group from a distance. The generous donations from our Legion Family made that possible. You can help us continue that tradition by donating funds through our go-Fund-Me account at: <https://www.gofundme.com/alagirlsstate>.

Interested in volunteering at ALA Girls State? Contact us!

UP TOUR



U.P. Conference Iron River



Little Lake# 349



Canadian Legion Branch# 25



Lake Linden Unit# 90



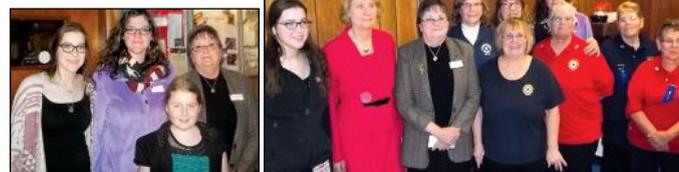
Iron Mountain Unit# 50



Greenwood Unit# 146



Rock Unit# 559



Marquette Unit# 44



Girls State Raffle at Winter Meeting with the National President, Sharon Conaster, drawing a winner.



4th District meeting: Danny Gleason SAL Dist. Commander, Dist. President Tagaline Hayes, Department President Sue Verville, and Gary Wear, District Commander



**2016 Department Convention
Registration Form**
Kewadin Casino Hotel & Convention Center
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
June 22 - June 26, 2016 Group #2253

Hotel Reservations must be made through the hotel directly. Call 1-800-539-2346 for room reservations and mention ID number 2253 for convention rates.

Regular Rooms (King bed or double Queen beds) -- \$79.00 + tax
Jacuzzi Rooms (King bed) -- \$89.00 + tax
Suites (King bed with Queen Sleeper sofa) -- \$99.00 + tax
Non-smoking and limited smoking rooms available.
Additional \$10 per person per room over 2 people.

PRINT FULL NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE AND EMAIL ADDRESS:

Name _____ (Mark the affiliation) Leg Aux SAL Leg. Rider

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Email Address*: _____
**email address is required for registration confirmation.*

FULL NAME OF ALL OTHERS WHO ARE REGISTERING:

Name _____ (Mark the affiliation) Leg Aux SAL Leg. Rider

Name _____ (Mark the affiliation) Leg Aux SAL Leg. Rider

Name _____ (Mark the affiliation) Leg Aux SAL Leg. Rider

*The American Legion requires that each person in a room must register with the Corporation.
The Registration fee is \$15.00 per person. Make checks payable to the UP Association Convention Corp.*

Enclosed find \$ _____ for _____ registrations.

Mail form and check to Ray Carlson, 19 Longyear Dr, Negaunee, MI 49866

Other Information: Free Self Parking and Valet Parking Available

There are limited camp sites available. Campers must call 906-635-4926 after May 1st for information.

MILEGIONNAIRE

YES! I would like to view the Legionnaire online at www.michiganlegion.org instead of receiving it through the mail. Please permanently remove me from the Legionnaire mailing list. This option will not effect any other Legion mailings.

Name: _____

Member ID #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zipcode: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature: _____



**American Legion Riders of Oscoda Post #274 Post...
1st Annual Department of Michigan Romp
August 5th, 6th, 7th, 2016**

Come enjoy the sunrise side of Michigan in beautiful Oscoda! The American Legion Post 274 will host this year's 1st Annual Romp. Here in Oscoda, we have endless sandy beaches, miles of scenic roads, and a quaint town that's just waiting for you.

On Saturday, August 6th we will have a guided tour of our beautiful town and surrounding area, including our adjacent National Forest and The Lumberman's Monument. Then, meeting back at our Post, located right on the shores of Lake Huron, enjoy live entertainment and refreshments.

Pre-Registration is \$40.00, and includes: A fish fry served up at our local VFW Post right next door, an event T-shirt, and camaraderie from fellow riders across the state. After June 17th, 2016, the registration fee will be \$45.00, so pre-register and use the money you save for a tank of gas!

Itinerary...

Friday August 4th, 2016/ 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Registration and Meet and Greet, Fish fry till 7:00 PM, then live entertainment and cold beverages.

Saturday August 5th, 2016 / 12:00 Noon

Ride the Au Sable River Road to Lumberman's Monument, and then enjoy time on your own, or cold beverages and fun back at the Post.

Sunday August 6th, 2016

A short ride to see the sights if interested. Lots to see!!

Accommodations: Local campgrounds within 2 miles of the Post and numerous motels and Hotels. See our Facebook page for more information.

For questions and further information, please contact Julie Easton (Jules) – Event Director here in Oscoda at 248-752-0424 or email her at jeaston@protect-allflooring.com

Legion Riders Post 274 – 349 State Street, Oscoda MI 48750



**1st Annual Department of Michigan ROMP, Oscoda, MI
August 5th-7th, 2016**

Pre-Registration Form

Registration is \$40.00 if received by **June 17, 2016**. After that date, and up to the event date itself, the registration fee will be \$45.00.

Registration includes: A specially prepared dinner at the American Legion Post 274 on Saturday afternoon, live entertainment featuring Abe Brown and his Knuckle Draggers, an event-T-shirt, access to beautiful Lake Huron located adjacent to our Legion Post, and special activities including guided rides of our famous Au Sable region and surrounding community.

Pre-Registration postmarked by June 17, 2016 - \$40.00 per person.

After June 17th, 2016 registration - \$45.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

ALR Post # _____

Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

T-shirt

Male _____ Size _____ Female _____ Size: _____ (XXL & larger + \$2.00) \$ _____

Total Due: \$ _____

Make checks payable to

American Legion Riders Post #274

Or send pre-registration forms and payment to: American Legion

349 S. State St., Oscoda MI 48750

Questions or email: Julie A. Easton jeaston-protect-allflooring.com Phone: (248)-752-0424

WILWIN AT CYGNET COVE

Bill Hafeman, PDC, Director, and Finance Officer, Chairman of Fundraising for Wilwin Lodge

Yes, Wilwin at Cygnet Cove is the official name of the new location for Wilwin, located south of Custer, Michigan. A special thank you from the Board of Directors to Adjutant Runyon, Commander, Mike Buda, Wilwin CEO, Steve Striggow, Department Finance Officer, Roger Avie, PDC and Wilwin Board member, Emeritus, Carnie Jackson, Department Judge Advocate, Elmer White, and the legal minds at Willingham and Cote, especially attorneys and Legionnaires Kimberlee Hillock and John Yeager.

Wilwin at Cygnet Cove is located at 3383 E. Hawley Road, Custer, MI 49405, approximately 15 miles southeast of Ludington in Mason County. The property consists of 1183 acres which includes a private lake.

The main house was originally built in 1918 of brick and wood, with the yard overlooking the lake. The home is an 1860 square foot restored with interior sand plaster, walnut trim and doors and refinished hardwood floors. It consists of four bedrooms, 3 full baths, kitchen, dining room, living room and brick fireplace. There is a 500 square foot wrap-around screened porch accessed via French doors off the living room, facing the lake. There will be a handicapped ramp built to the deck ASAP to accommodate veterans this spring.

Other buildings on the property consist of a 732 square foot

upper level apartment featuring 2 bedrooms with bunks, full bath, living room, kitchen, dining area and locker room foyer. The apartment sits above a 2 ½ car garage and has a stainless steel fish cleaning station, mechanical block and pulleys for hanging deer on the side of the building. The garage portion will be converted into a fully handicapped apartment this spring with the storage unit part of the garage converted to a laundry facility.

The lake house is 512 square feet with a 15' x 16' deck on the lake with water hydrant for cleaning boats and making an ice rink. The inside is finished with cedar, cement floor, changing rooms, ½ bath and recreation room with ample glass.

The guest cottage, garage, and workshop consists of a 1100 square foot cottage finished in cedar, 2 bedrooms with bunks, full bath, kitchen, dining area/mess hall, recreation room with fireplace. The attached garage and shop consists of 1764 square feet, 4 stalls with overhead doors with 2 extra large 10 foot openings.

Woodruff Lake is a pristine spring fed, all-sports, 65 acre lake, approximately 45 feet deep. It has excellent oxygen regeneration factors, well-balanced aquatic plants and temperatures, superb fishery, hard sand bottom with sandy beach, large enough to water ski; the crème de la crème of privately held lakes in the State of Michigan. **NO OUTSIDE BOATS AND EQUIPMENT WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE LAKE.** Wilwin will have plenty of

water craft and equipment available to our veterans for recreational purposes.

In addition, the property has a LP gas electrical back-up generator on site capable of running everything, 160 foot deep 5 inch well, 5 septic systems and a hook up for a motor home. There is a cement driveway, numerous ATV trails, 160 acres in deer food plots and hunting blinds. **A SECURITY SYSTEM IS IN PLACE AND IS WORKING AT ALL TIMES.** Please do not enter the property unannounced as the police will be there shortly.

The land has terrific deer, turkey, upland birds, and small game, duck & geese populations and is within the major flyway for flight birds. The property has a 400 acre marsh to the south of Woodruff Lake and is a duck marsh habitat.

There is a pontoon boat, kayaks, John Deere tractor with loader and farm equipment that was left on the property by the previous owner or was purchased and given to Wilwin by the Graymont Mining Company.

The Board of Directors believes that we have a lot more bang for our "buck" than was at the Trout Lake Property. The Board is in the process of putting together a 5-year plan which includes a small veteran's village to the East backside of the Lake.

Wilwin's mission and vision statement remains the same.

The Board also approved to move operations for our veterans to utilize Custer as soon as possible in the spring. Very few improvements will need to be made for our handicapped veterans to the property to make it viable for operations this year. Construction of a handicapped ramp will be started as soon as the weather cooperates along with construction of the fully handicapped apartment.

Graymont Mining Company gave the Board of Directors two years to utilize the Trout Lake property as long as we have veterans or scouts on the property sometime during the year. If the Board does not have anyone staying there this summer or fall, it will automatically become Graymont's property.

A "solicitation for funds" letter will be sent to all Posts, Squadrons, and Auxiliary Units shortly. Please contribute as we will need operating funds for this location just as we needed operating funds at Trout Lake.

Anyone who would like to volunteer to help move to the new location or who would like to stay at the new location this spring, summer or fall, please contact Earl or Beverly Ruttkofsky at 231-229-5030 or 231-881-0844.



American Legion Post 391 present Canton, Michigan Applebee's Restaurant a chair cover for displaying a POW/MIA table at the entrance of the restaurant. (L-R) Post Commander Johnnie Johnson, restaurant manager Kerri Sczytko, general manager Drew Siwnkiewicz, and Sr. Vice Cmdr John Lockwood.



American Legion Post 370 member Hope M. Hubbard, from Mount Clemens, Michigan was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves. She works at the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development & Engineering Center in Warren, MI. Pictured Colonel Hubbard and her husband Douglas Hubbard.



2016



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Around the State...



Zone 1 Oratorical Contest



The Four Chaplains Service by Legion Post 459. (L) Harriet Sturim Post 459 Chaplain and Rosemary Maciejewski American Legion Post 459 Auxiliary Girls State Representative stand by the Four Chaplains display. (R) A Grand Rapids District Pipe band plays at the ceremony.



It doesn't have to be Veterans Day for Dunkin' Donuts to give! The company has gifted American Legion 18th District 100 pounds of coffee as a membership incentive. The plan is to give 10 pounds of coffee to the FIRST 10 posts in the District to reach 100% in membership for the New Year. Commander Sheryl May (in the red sweater) welcomes veterans to a recent meeting where the incentive program was announced. Veterans who would like to join The American Legion, District 18, should call 248.953.3008 to speak to Commander Sheryl May.



The Deerfield Post 392 was presented a quilt made from T-shirts from all of the Testicle Festivals held at the post. It was made by Amber Pieh as a memorial to her father in law, Robert Pieh who passed away just prior to the 2015 festival from issues related to agent orange. Bob joined post 392 in 1968 upon his return from Vietnam and was a 46 year member of the post, being active all 46 years. He enjoyed the festival, perhaps the largest 1 day festival held at a post in Michigan and always was there to help.



Commander Mike Buda and wife Natalie at the Red Flannel Early Bird Dinner Glen Hill Post 287 in Cedar Springs



Lillian Larson (Greenwood) American Legion Post 114, with a generous assist from the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Unit 114, recently presented a check for \$500 to Mr. James Feliciano, VAVS representative of the Jacobetti Home for Veterans. The donation was toward purchase of a bariatric electric stand-in chair for use by veterans at that facility. Shown above, left to right, are: Steve LeClair, Howard Wood, Mike Peura, SAL Commander Dave Korpi, Tom Sharland, Commander Scott Marietti, Jim Feliciano, Bill Haupt and Erland Bickers.



Comander Mike Buda with Natalie Honorary Junior President Taylor Townes, Department President Sue Verville with Dwaine and Detachment Commander Fred Ruttkofsky with Diane



Saturday, December 19th, Snyder-Lewis-Welty, American Legion Post 454 held a Community Kids Christmas Party! Santa had the opportunity to host 110 kids throughout the community. Thanks to all the veterans and kids for making this an event very successful – Commander Smoker



PR Dept. Chair Lady Wanda Torres & Catherine Buckley PR Committee Member (Mrs. Clause) with Donna and Clark Barabski from Caledonia Legion Post giving Gifts on Christmas Day 2015 at GR Veterans Home.