The American Legion Department of Michigan

Supporting Youth and Strengthening America through Legion Programs!

This is our heritage.
The activities of The American Legion Department of Michigan Americanism Committee acknowledge and preserve that heritage, recognizing inalienable rights of all.

Baseball
American Legion baseball teaches youth good sportsmanship, loyalty, respect for rules and decisions rendered, physical fitness, fair play, courage and citizenship.

Scouting
The American Legion officially recognized scouting as a positive youth program at its first National Convention in 1919. Support has remained constant since then, with local posts chartering over 2400 scout troops and providing other forms of support.

Annually, an Eagle Scout is recognized as the American Legion Eagle Scout of the year and is awarded a $10,000 college scholarship. Scholarships of $2,500 each are awarded to three runners-ups.

Student Trooper
The mission of the youth cadet law enforcement program is educating high school students about law enforcement, providing a day in the life of a trooper in training, and instilling respect for law officials.

Junior Shooting
The American Legion junior shooting sports program is recognized as one of the Premier amateur shooting elites in the country, teaching students under 18 years old (for high school seniors no older than 20) gun safety and marksmanship while fostering healthy competition.

Shooters are trained to use a .177 air rifle and skill levels vary from beginners learning safety basics to regional camps competing shoulder to shoulder in The American Legion's three position air rifle national championship, held at the U.S. Olympic training center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Boys State
Since 1938 Michigan American Legion Boys State has been one of the states most revered and selective government instruction programs, teaching high school students about the operation of local, county and state governments.

At Michigan American Legion Boys State, young men learn about the rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of a franchise citizen.

Program Dates and Application DEADLINES

November 13, 2020 - Oratorical Registration deadline
January 1, 2021 - Baseball registration opens on baseball.legion.org
January 4 - Brewer and Wilson Scholarship submission deadline.
January 10 - All District Oratorical Contests deadline
January 11 - Law Officer of the Year submission deadline
January 11 - Firefighter of the Year submission deadline
February 14 - All Zone Oratorical Contests must be completed before this date.
March 6 - Oratorical State Contest at location TBD
March 20 - Eagle Scout of the Year Award submission deadline (applications available November 1, 2020)
April 3 - Teacher of the Year submission deadline
April 9-11 - National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis, IN
May 3 - Boys State Application submission deadline
May 15 - Baseball insurance purchase deadline
May 17 - Student Trooper Application submission deadline
June 1 - Final day for Baseball teams to register
June 13-19 - Boys State Program at Grand Valley University-Allendale Campus
July 1 - Robert Turner Baseball Scholarship submission deadline
July 18-23 - Student Trooper Program
TBD - Class AA Baseball State Tournament in Midland
TBD - Class A Baseball State Tournament in Marquette
(baseball dates will be established in December 2020)

Get more information at www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships or by calling 517-220-2754 or email legion@michiganlegion.org.
Do you know a high school junior that gets excited about politics?

Do you know a high school junior who is a political junkie?

Who has questions about the election and political process?

Then check out Michigan Boys State/Girls State

What is Boys & Girls State?

Every year the Michigan American Legion creates the 51st State of the Union, and delegates to the program become a part of the process. The State needs positions from the top rank of Governor, House of Representatives, Senate, down to eight different cities, and every position in between. Delegates can become a candidate for one of those positions and ask their fellow delegates to vote for them.

Delegates will learn, by their active participation, how representative government works. Delegates will learn leadership; delegates make friends that last a lifetime, and some of delegates will gain confidence that will propel them to a fantastic career, like famous alumni of the past programs.

Former attendees include; NBC News Anchor Tom Brokaw, Radio Host Rush Limbaugh, the 42nd U.S. President Bill Clinton, U.S. Senator (MI) Gary Peters (1975), U.S. Senator (MI) Debbie Stabenow (attended Michigan Girls State), U.S. Senate candidate John James (1998 Boys State Governor), NBA star Michael Jordan, and Actor Mark Walberg, to name a few.

Learn how your high school junior can become a delegate today!

www.michiganboysstate.org

How much does it cost to attend?

Boys State is $375 per delegate, plus a $25 non-refundable registration fee. The fee includes meals and lodging.

Potential delegates are encouraged to visit their local American Legion Post and ask them to sponsor a delegate to the program. Many local Posts will sponsor high school juniors to the program. Other organizations may sponsor them or the parent may sponsor them.

If you have questions about sponsorships or the registration please contact Ashley at (517) 220-2754.

Are high school seniors allowed to attend?

Yes, the program is open to high school juniors, however, for the 2021 program, an exception is being made for high school seniors to attend in a limited number due to the cancellation of the 2020 Boys State program. Note: the seniors will not be considered for the Boys Nation delegates or the Samsung Scholarship.

Check out “Boys State”
The movie can be seen on Apple TV. (subscription required)

Contact:

Jerry Kelley at (734) 434-8272, jkelley2136@sbcglobal.net or State Headquarters at (517) 220-2754 legion@michiganlegion.org.

Participants in Boys State, who are direct descendants of a wartime era veteran have the opportunity to win a $1000 scholarship and up to a $20,000 scholarship from the Samsung Corporation.

www.michiganboysstate.org

NOTE: COVID precautions will be implemented per rules of the campus and State of Michigan regulations, that are in effect at the time of this event.
**New Youth Protection Requirements Apply to Post Up Through State Level**

Ron Runyan
Department Adjutant

February 2018 Public Law 115-126 was signed which is “An act to prevent the sexual abuse of minors and amateur athletes by requiring the prompt reporting of sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities, and for other purposes.”

The citizens of Michigan have heard in the news and media too often about sexual abuse and youth protection problems from colleges, high schools and other places within the state. It is unsettling that there are people out there who take advantage of young people when they are most vulnerable.

The good news is we are planning on holding all our youth programs currently for 2020 -2021.

With that, I wanted to provide you with some important information regarding your 2020-2021 youth programs. Our National organization has updated their requirements when it comes to programs and legion member background checks & abuse awareness training to comply with Public Law 115-126.

Boys State and Baseball have had to require background checks for all their Legion volunteers and coaching staff for the last several years. This will now be required for all our youth program Legion volunteers/staff for 2021. Along with background checks, each volunteer/staff member will also have to complete abuse awareness training through Protect Youth Sports Averty website and pay the fees. Teams will still need to turn in their $12 per person background check payment with their team information in June 2021. All teams will be updated on the new fee at the beginning of the 2021 season.

- All coaching staff & Legion volunteers will need to complete the “Abuse Awareness Training” through USA Baseball. Once they have completed the abuse awareness training, a copy of their certificate will need to be provided to the department. This is the same as what was required for the 2020 season and teams will be informed of this procedure as well.

- All committee members will also need to complete the training and background checks since you will be around players at your Zone playoffs and State tournaments.

**Boys State:**

- All legion volunteers, education staff, counselors, and committee members (who intend on being at Boys State) need to complete a background check, same as in previous years. In addition, all will be required to complete the “Abuse Awareness Training” and forward a copy of their certificate to the department.

- Cost per background check is $12 and will have to be completed prior to the start of the program in June 2021.

**Junior Shooting Sports:**

- Considering that this program is handled primarily by National, department has no involvement when it comes to background checks and abuse awareness training for JSSP teams. Background check and abuse awareness training will be initiated during the team registration process on national browser.

- Each person that is deemed a “designated individual” (coaches/volunteers that are 18yrs or older) will be required to complete a background screening and abuses awareness training at their own expense or teams’ expense. Team coaches will be responsible for making sure any of their volunteers/other coaching staff complete background checks and abuse awareness training.

- There is a new risk management manual for JSSP which covers all this information in more detail.

**Scouting:**

- The only event that would require legion volunteers and committee members to complete the required training and background checks is the Scouting Camporee at Wilwin.

- If you are a Legion member and involved with the Troop or Pack you can have your background check done with BSA.

**Student Trooper:**

- This program is held at the Michigan State Police headquarters by MSP officers, there is no additional background check/training required at this time.

- MSP handles all aspect of this program and no legion volunteers are included at any time during the program.

Thank you to Ashley our Programs Coordinator that organizes and implements these programs on behalf of the department committees. If you have any questions or concerns on our youth programs please feel free to contact her at legion@michiganlegion.org or (517) 220-2754.

**The MVAA Shows Dedication to Veterans Every Day**

**Meet Michael Kuta**

This month I’d like to focus on our recent interaction with Gulf War veteran Michael Kuta – an interaction that truly reflects what the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency is all about.

Early this year, Kuta was working security at music festivals across the country and loving his job. Then, on March 10, the coronavirus pandemic shut down public gatherings and put the former active duty Marine out of the position he had held for three years.

The 51-year-old Southfield man, armed with a communications degree from the University of Michigan-Dearborn and years of experience in marketing and security, tried unsuccessfully for more than four months to find a good job with benefits in the pandemic-ravaged economy.

Feeling somewhat desperate, and with his unemployment benefits running out, Kuta called the MVAA's 1-800-MICH-VET hotline on Monday, July 27. Two days later, on Wednesday, July 29, Kuta had a managerial job, with benefits, as a road supervisor for Detroit-based City Shield Security Services.

“My first shift was that Friday,” Kuta tells us. “It was a good week.” Kuta’s “good week” highlights what the MVAA is all about. As the state-run coordinating agency for Michigan’s 550,000 veterans and their families, the MVAA often gets confused with the federal VA. But unlike the VA, the MVAA does not directly provide veteran benefits. Instead, the agency was set up by state leaders in 2013 as a one-stop resource center to help veterans navigate the labyrinth of veteran-centric organizations and ultimately get connected to benefits they earned for their service.

We can’t always help get a veteran a job in two days, but we promise to do our best to help every veteran with their needs – whether that’s in employment, education, health care, disability benefits, emergency assistance, or other quality-of-life areas.

**Continued on page 9.**
LET’S STAY TOGETHER

Barry Wood
Department Commander

Hello, again, Department Legionnaires. If you are like me, this pandemic is wearing, and I can hardly wait for a solution to come along and put an end to all this frustration. I can tell you that business is still getting done in your Department. Plans are being made for next year’s programs. Committees are meeting, via Zoom and other media, Department staff is working, members are coming in, resolutions are being written and sent through committee, DEC meetings are being held, and necessary items are being voted on. Necessary visits are being conducted with appropriate protection and distancing.

Please respond to the dues notices as soon as possible. This will allow the processing of membership early, so attention can be directed toward other business. While you are paying your dues, bring another veteran along to join. When doing this explain to the veteran what your post does and why it is important. Know what your post does well and where it might need additional assistance. That veteran you are talking to just might be the one to help in those areas where needed most. Serving veterans, their families, and our communities never get old.

How do we best accomplish the Four Pillars? We need to STAY TOGETHER. Things are different right now, but if we work together, we will get through this. I know we are becoming frustrated over the situation where we find ourselves. Many of us have gone through any number of tough situations in our lives and come out all the better for the experience. Let’s use this situation as a tool to discover new ways of doing things. Let’s find new ways of surviving. Now is the time to lock arms and face this situation together. We can gather in different size groups depending upon the region you are in. Let’s use this rule for Executive Committees or leaders of different family groups to meet and discuss our situations and solutions. Work together as an entire Legion Family. It is easier to bear our cares when we do it together.

I attended two memorials this past weekend. One for a Korean War veteran that died at 20-years of age while serving in Korea in 1950. He did not make it home until Saturday, 70 years after his death. It was a moving ceremony. The second was on Sunday for a Vietnam veteran that did come home after his war experiences. He was a different person upon his return and struggled through out the remainder of his life. This was evidenced in a letter he wrote and left behind. His daughter read the letter aloud, and I could hear the nightmares and troubles he experienced due to his service. This was a reminder to me that we must do everything we can to care for our veterans and their families. It is hard to know the challenges these individuals are going through; however, if we are there, we have the opportunity to be a part of their solutions. Please be alert to the needs of these veterans and their dependents.

Be safe out there.

CHAPLAIN

It Was the Worst And Best Of Times!

Larry Vollink
Department Chaplain

“‘When he came home, he felt lonely, without his core of friends. Riding in his car, he felt very nervous, as when he would run over a piece of trash. Before, he kept his emotions in check, but now, people said he was withdrawn. Before, he shared common goals with his troops, but when he returned home, it all disappeared, and he noticed people’s dishonesty and hypocrisy. He had trouble making decisions when he came home. When on the battlefield, it was life and death decisions, but when he returned, he saw people worrying about non-significant matters. It was a very tough thing for him to return back to his family and friends and as a pastor of his church.

What is the best thing in all of this? He appreciated the overwhelming support from the American people who cared with their letters, care packages, and being present when they returned and saying prayers for their safety, both while serving on the battlefield or at home. They have asked us to show our patience in understanding their returning to ‘normalcy.’ Maybe, to sit down, and have some quiet conversations with them, they would speak volumes as you show you care! Awesome words from an Army Chaplain who has been there!

Legionnaires, WE STILL HAVE A MISSION, DON’T WE?”

MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE & AUXILIARY

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Michigan Legionnaire? Please Contact
Mark Sutton
kim@michiganlegion.org

Do you have a photo you would like to submit for the Michigan Legionnaire and/or website use? E-mail it to us at info@michiganlegion.org or mail it to department attn: Mark Sutton.

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
info@michiganlegion.org
517-220-2747.
There are many ways to help a veteran in need. Below are a few suggestions.

Reach out to a Veteran’s Service Organization. Knowing where to begin can be challenging. The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), The American Legion, and the Sons of the American Legion are actively involved in veteran causes. They offer Community through memberships, organize and give your time to local veteran volunteer events, and accept monetary donations. As a first step, visit the websites of each organization and look for a unit or post close to you.

Tie your passion to your actions. We all have passions that motivate us. There are many ways to give back while helping the veterans in need. Do you like to spend time outdoors? A large number of organizations host volunteer activities like cleaning the veteran’s memorial, placing of wreaths on the veteran’s graves in your area. If you prefer to be around, people give your time to a local veterans’ facility to connect with a resident in need of company.

Donate a day of service. Everyday life can get messy with full-time jobs and commitments. One way to identify free time for charitable activities is to use a day of engaging in community service. Use your Memorial Day to help the ALA distribute handmade poppies that support veterans in local hospitals, visit a veteran’s facility, or deliver a care package.

Give a gift during the giving season. The holiday season is a time to reflect on what you have and to appreciate your loved ones. This is also the time to share with others who are less fortunate. Extend your thankfulness by a monetary donation to an organization that dedicates its efforts in helping veterans. A donation can make a big difference in the life of a veteran and their family.

We may not be allowed a physical presence in the facilities, but we can send packages and cards and letters. Information provided by alaforveterans.org

GIVING WAYS

During this unprecedented time of dealing with the Pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, there are still ways of reaching out to our Veterans. Although many of us have chosen to be self-quarantined during this time, others have chosen to continue to be active with practicing safe distancing.

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Membership

Anita L. Mennel, Membership Chair

CONGRATULATIONS Dept. of Michigan!!! Because of all your hard work, 1st place in the Central Division!!! YOU ROCKED IT!!! A huge THANK YOU to all who worked so hard on membership. While we didn’t make the goal, we topped our Division with 95.91, and we won the challenge with Kansas!!! While we are excited about this, I have some National numbers to share – (for those who are number people) 2019-20 membership year: 10 new units, seven reinstated units to share – (for those who are number people) 2019-20 year (2019-20), the American Legion gave us a wonderful gift, there are still many untouched potential members. They offered this gift, there are still many untouched potential members, ready for the asking. Think back on how you joined. Was it to honor a veteran? Was it to support a veteran? Was it because of something you saw and wanted to be a part of? Ask yourself: What am I doing to bring in members just like me?

Promoting our ALA often starts with a simple question, ‘join us and be a part of working our mission.’ When we all work together for good, think how amazing we can be. Make 2020-21 the year YOU bring in “new blood.”

A WHOLE NEW YEAR--ARE YOU READY?

Yes, it is a new membership year, and the question is, are you ready? We have experienced many changes this 2020 year, and our ALA has proven our Mission numerous times. My hope is that you are ready to make this the best membership year yet!

We must all work together for the good of our great organization to be successful. As you should recall, last year (2019-20), the American Legion gave us a wonderful gift with the change in the membership eligibility. That opened the opportunities immensely. While many utilized this gift, there are still many untouched potential members, ready for the asking.

Today more than ever, it is very important to support our mission: “protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families.” These young people can soar into the future with our help. We will have to be more creative because large gatherings are not being permitted, by policies prescribed by our government (understanding government, lesson # 1. September 17th is Constitution Day; we can take pocket Constitutions to local schools for distribution if they accept them. There is a lot of things in the news the children may be hearing. Explain to them the upcoming voting process and have a fake election.

Remember to support “Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2)”. Locate the children and write to them with permission. Let them know you are here to help support them when needed. You can work with other groups in the community as a resource.

I want to add that in the absence of a fall conference, your guide is still your best resource to make your Children & Youth program the best for our children, their future, their families, and our country. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Legion Family is grateful for all that you do for our youth.

DEPARTMENT GIVING TUESDAY CHALLENGE

The ALA Foundation is hosting a #GivingTuesday Department Challenge!

From now until #GivingTuesday, December 1, 2020, we will be accepting donations to the ALA Foundation via this link: https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/QDSQ9AAB#c.

After December 1st, we will be tallying up how many donations came from each department, and the department with the most donors, (number of unique donors, not dollar amount) will be crowned the #GivingTuesday Department of the Year!

The winner will be announced on ALA National Headquarters social media.

Now its up to you! Spread the word among your units and members in your department. Remember, only donations made through this link: https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/QDSQ9AAB#c, or made via check to the ALA National Headquarters, marked for #GivingTuesday will count towards your total.

Thank you for your participation, and remember, 100% of every gift given to the ALA Foundation goes directly to supporting veterans, military, and their families.

Thank you for all you do for our nation’s heroes.

Best,

Nancy Brown-Park, ALA Foundation Board Member
Battle Creek VAMC Report
Chris Reed, VA&R Representative

Hello from the Battle Creek VAMC! I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during these difficult times.

Sadly, this has been a very unfortunate year for our Veterans. With the current pandemic underway, all volunteer activities at the VA have been cancelled. We were unable to host our annual PGA Golf Tournament and the upcoming Carnival that was scheduled for October 14 has also been cancelled. I just learned this morning that Christmas Gift Shop has now been cancelled and our annual New Year’s Day Pizza Party will likely be cancelled as well.

Although Christmas Gift Shop is being cancelled, we would still welcome monetary donations to help with next year’s expenses. We nearly depleted our inventory of Gift Shop items last year and will need to purchase several items for next year’s activity. If your Unit would like to make a monetary donation, please send your check to:
American Legion Auxiliary – Dept. of Michigan
212 N. Verlinden, Apt. B
Lansing, MI 48915

*Please be sure to earmark your check to the Battle Creek VAMC Christmas Gift Shop*

I continue to be in close contact with the Chief of Community and Volunteer services and he is keeping me posted with updates on activities. Currently, there are no volunteer activities taking place either inside or outside the VA campus. Sadly, family members are even unable to visit their loved one at the VA. They are still accepting donations and the VA staff members are doing all they can to keep activities ongoing. We recently sent a donation on behalf of the ALA Department of Michigan in the amount of $1,400 to help with their Substance Abuse Treatment Unit Fund and the Domiciliary Fund. If your Unit is interested in making a donation, here is the information you need:
Checks should be made payable to: Battle Creek VA Medical Center Community and Volunteer Service (135)
5500 Armstrong Road
Battle Creek, MI 49037

They are also accepting in-kind donations (new items only) and those can still be dropped off to Building 10 – Community and Volunteer Services. When entering the VA campus, you will first be stopped at a security checkpoint and asked some standard Covid questions. A mask will also be required (they will provide one, if needed). From there you will be directed to Building 10.

We continue to support our Veterans as best as we can during these difficult times. I thank my Deputies – Barb Parks and Carol Parks for all their support. We all hope to be back soon to our local VA facilities and once again continue our parties, Bingos, special events and simply visiting with our Veterans. If you have any questions regarding the Battle Creek VAMC, please don’t hesitate to send me an email at ckhud@mei.net, or you can call my cell at (269) 420-1488.

Thank you ladies – hoping you all stay safe and healthy!
In Service To Our Veterans.

Attention Membership

10X10 Awards are due to Department no later than Monday, November 9th, 2020

R/R5 Awards are due to Department no later than Monday, December 7, 2020

Forms can be found on michalaux.org

Legislative
Mary Dubay, Chairman

This will be an exciting and active year in the political arena. Some may follow local elections more than national. Some may have closer contact with their local officials and may have a better opportunity to discuss their ideas and concerns.

In this election year, the American Legion Legislative Committee wants us to remind members that we are a non-partisan organization and we do not support or endorse one candidate or party over another.

Please remember that social media postings are viewed as an expression of your personal beliefs, and as citizens of this great democracy, we are entitled to question our elected leaders (or candidates), BUT please remember that you are a member of the American Legion Auxiliary! If your personal social media account contains information that states you are an American Legion Auxiliary member, or even a member of the American Legion Family, be respectful of the fact that each of us may have different views. Respect our differences, and do not denigrate anyone for whatever candidate or viewpoint they support. The same holds true when you are wearing your American Legion Auxiliary attire. What you say and do can negatively affect our organization and our membership. Please use caution about what you say and post.

As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we support the Legislative priorities of the American Legion. One way is to become an active advocate to Congress, and to sign up for the Legislative alerts at http://capwiz.com/legion/mlm or http://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home. You will be notified of important, pending legislation coming up for a vote and have the opportunity to state your opinion to your Legislators. The American Legion uses this form of communication as the advocacy platform to connect members of the American Legion family with members of Congress.

This is one way that we can continue to work the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary during the pandemic.

If the Legislative committee can be of any help, please contact us. Our information is available through Department and in the Legislative Guide.

“Help Is Needed to Support the Auxiliary Emergency Fund”

Linda Wallace, Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairman

As a reminder, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund is a designed National Grant Assistance Program set up to provide temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have suffered a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or a personal crisis.

Financial help may be granted up to a maximum of $2400 to be used for emergency shelter, food or utilities. All grant applications are reviewed by the National “AEF” Grant Committee on a case-by-case basis. This committee maintains strict confidentiality of all applicants. All units should have on hand grant application forms for any member who may request one.

Temporary assistance consists of:
* A financial crisis
* A Natural disaster
* Educational training in extreme circumstances

Consult your “AEF” 2020-2021 Guide on the Department website for eligibility requirements and application forms. www.info@michalaux.org

Please ask your units and members to consider donating this year to the “AEF”. All donations are welcome! “NO CONTRIBUTION IS TOO SMALL”. Fundraisers are a great way to support this program. Place “AEF” canisters throughout your post home for members and guests to donate to. Some members may wish to make a $50 donation or more which entitles them to receive an “AEF” pin. Come up with creative ways for your unit to support this program!

Units can also apply for Department Awards which are listed in the “AEF” Guide.

Send checks to Department earmarked “AEF” on the memo line along with your Unit #.

“Always remember that we never know when a fellow member or you may need assistance during a crisis. We are here to help and support!”
**Membership News**

**Recognize the Greatest Generation**

**Brian Mohlman**  
Membership Director

Congratulations to all Posts in the Department of Michigan who hit the 50% & 55% target dates! We are well on our way to a thriving membership year. This year brings unique challenges to all of us, but creativity, getting back to basics, training, and just plain hard work will ensure solid growth for your post.

There are several tools available to your Post’s Membership Team that I encourage you to take advantage of. One such tool is MyLegion, the online Membership Application. This one-stop Membership Tool can help grow your post in several ways. Renewals, New Member Applications, and Paying Post Transfers can be quickly accomplished through MyLegion’s Membership Processing application. All transactions processed through MyLegion have an immediate effect on your Post’s Membership numbers. There’s no need to submit the card stubs, no need to write a check, and no need to make that trip to the post office; everything’s entered and paid online, saving your Post valuable time & resources.

Also, within MyLegion, is a very powerful reporting tool that can actually help you grow your post’s membership. Reports available under Revitalization enable you to gain valuable contact information about headquaters post 225 Members in your neighborhood who would love to support their local post. All you have to do is ask! I’ve run into several multi-year headquarters post members who have told me that I was the first person who’s ever called them! They’re out there waiting for your call, email, letter, or knock on their door!

Don’t hesitate for a moment to invite headquarters post 225 members into your post just because they live outside your town; yours may be the only post that has contacted them!

Starting September 23, online membership Training sessions will begin. Using zoom meetings, your Department Membership Committee will provide your post’s membership team with the same training tools that our National Headquarters provided to your district leadership. Don’t miss your opportunity to learn all the ins & outs of membership to help your post become a valuable asset to your community!

Finally, as our Nation’s Greatest Generation reaches its’ twilight, it is important to honor the remaining few whom we are blessed to have with us. Post’s across the nation are saying “Thank You” to these noble warriors, recognizing their birthdays in special ways, and even paying their American Legion membership dues. Several posts have even reached out to their community for donations to help fund their annual dues with great success. This special way of recognizing these deserving Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coasties, and Merchant Mariners will undoubtedly get the community involved in building your post’s membership.

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**Membership News**

**District Meetings**

1st District  
Zoom meetings

2nd District  
Jan. 10, 2021, Post 514, Ida  
Apr. 17, 2021, Memorial Svc. TBA  
May 16, 2021, Post 278, Milan

3rd District  
Nov. 8, Post 298, Battle Creek  
Jan. 10, 2021, via ZOOM  
Mar. 7, Post 257, Battle Creek  
May 2, Post 196, Union City  
Executive Board at 11:30 am, Meeting at 1 pm

4th District  
Nov. 01, Post 49, South Haven  
Jan. 03, 2021, Post 89, Allegan  
Mar. 07, 2021, Post 73, Sturgis  
May 02, 2021, Post 45, Hastings  
All meetings are subject to being revised to Zoom meetings, depending on the Governor’s EOs. 1 pm

5th District  
Nov. 12, Post 154, Wyoming  
Jan 14, 2021, Post 179, Grandville  
Mar. 11, 2021, Post 6, Holland*  
May 13, 2021, Post 28, Grand Haven  
All Post District Meetings and E Board Meetings are at 7 pm  
*Nomination of officers

6th District  
Nov. 8, 2020  
Jan. 10, 2021  
Mar. 7, 2021

7th District  
Oct. 11, Post 293, Sebewaing  
Jan. 10, 2021, Post 16, Lapeer  
Mar. 14, 2021, Post 7, Caro  
May 16, 2021, Post 4, Mt. Clemens 1:00pm Eboard - 2:00pm District Meeting  
Department Convention - TBD

8th District  
Due to the restrictions within the counties all meetings will be held on the second Sunday of the month at 2:00 pm via ZOOM Video Conference  
Nov. 8  
Jan. 10  
Mar. 14, (nomination of officers)  
May 9th

9th District

10th District  
Nov. 7, Post 558, Farwell  
Jan. 9, 2021, Post 274, Oscoda  
Mar. 6, 2021, Post 245, Fruedenville  
May 1, 2021, Post 239, Linwood

11th District

12th District  
Oct. 24, Post 144, L’anse at 10:30 am  
(Est)  
Lunch will follow the meeting, and training will begin after lunch.

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**continued from page 1.**

From the technicians who handle the calls to our hotline, to the analysts who work with employers, universities, health care providers, and other organizations, to the accredited Veteran Service Officers who help veterans file for benefits, our entire team is committed to serving veterans and their families.

Perhaps Dave Dunkel, the MVAA analyst who worked with Kuta and City Shield, puts it best:

“Saying you support veterans is one thing, but actually supporting veterans is something completely different. Our agency shows this dedication to veterans every day. The teamwork we have within the MVAA and the relationships we’ve built around the state is a testament to this mission.”

It all starts with a call to 1-800-MICH-VET.

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**2020 Fall Sweepstakes Winners**

Grand Prize—Ernest Stark; Higgins Lake  
2nd —Mary Ann Schwartz; APO, AP  
3rd -Anthony Yager; Mount Pleasant  
4th -Walter Riedel Jr.; Bay City  
5th -Gerald Johnston; Grand Rapids  
6th —Vincent Forbes; Holt  
7th -Timothy Jacobs; Roseville  
8th -Albert Pruss; Midland  
9th -Alan Potier; Rapid River  
10th -Phil Rudlaff (SAL); Buchanan  
11th -Kendall Probst; Northport  
12th -Duane Dillard; Harrisville  
13th -Alfred Hendra; Marquette  
14th -Dwight Royale; Owosso  
15th -Andrew Reichert; Eben Junction  
16th -Martin Walsh; Dexter  
17th -Jean Eckerberg; Atlantic Mine  
18th —William Bruinsma; Middleville  
19th -Thomas Bunce; Hesperia

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**2021 Membership Goal:** 62,500  September 28 Total: 35,426 56.68%
**Alfred Erickson American Legion Post 186, Hancock, Receives Grant from Home Depot Just in Time**

Alfred Erickson American Legion Post 186 recently installed a new commercial refrigerator compliments of a $3,000 Home Depot Grant. Post 186 thanks Home Depot of Iron Mountain and the Home Depot Foundation for the award. The grant was applied for as part of their on-going Capital Campaign for post improvements.

According to Commander Rod Guilbault: “The post is extremely grateful to receive this much-needed kitchen upgrade just in time for our Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on September 27th. This Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser is very important as we were unable to hold our dinner last spring. This is our main fundraiser – it helps us to continue to serve veterans, their families, and community programs.”

**The Alfred Erickson American Legion Post 186 Honors Members and the Community**

**Picture top right:**
Phil Verville, chair of the Honorary Life Membership Committee, presented Honorary Life Membership Certificates to Paul Nelson and Frank Taucher on September 2. Members are given this award for their exceptional service and accomplishments.

**Picture bottom right:**
Post 186 also presented certificates of appreciation to community members. The awards were in recognition of their generous donations of support to the post.

Certificates of Appreciation went to the following:
- Scott Lampinen, owner of Portage Lake Construction, donated time, labor, equipment and material for a much-needed sewer repair project at the post.
- Tim Seaton was recognized for serving as the bugler at Memorial Day services for many years.
- Graham Jaehnig of the Daily Mining Gazette was thanked for his outstanding media coverage of Post 186.
- Phi Kappa Tau, was recognized for their help with the semi-annual post spaghetti dinner fundraiser and also for their assistance with a grant application.

**Stars & Stripes Post 1111**

Members of the Stars & Stripes American Legion Post 1111, in Walker, were presented a proclamation from City Mayor Gary Carey, Jr. proclaiming September 16, 2020, American Legion Day. September 16, 1919, is the day The American Legion received its official Charter for the U.S. Congress.

**NOVEMBER 3 – ELECTION DAY**

We fought for our country for the freedoms we hold dear. One of those freedoms is to vote for the person we want as President of the United States, and those we want to represent us. Make sure you vote. REGISTER, and then show up, or apply for an absentee ballot, but if you are worried about your ballot, take it directly to your local clerk’s office.
New Leadership Staff at Michigan Freedom Center

The Michigan Armed Forces Hospitality Center – a.k.a. Michigan Freedom Center at Detroit Metro Airport at the two MEPS centers in Lansing and Troy – announced that Bernard J. Girardot as its new Executive Director – and Tom Lang will be the Community Outreach Director.

A volunteer for two years, Bernie has worked both the McNamara and North Terminals as well as the last two golf outings.

In addition to the Freedom Center, he has been the past president of the Canton Michigan Lions Club and a member of the Knights of Columbus, Msgr. Kern Chapter.

Bernie has recently retired from a 30-plus-year career with Ford Motor Company, where he worked in the IT department as a Business Relationship Manager, Portfolio Manager, Innovation Manager, Communications Manager, and Development and Deployment Manager.

Bernie’s initial goals include working with the fantastic volunteers and staff of the Freedom Center to ensure the safety and well-being of our workers and guests in the Covid-19 environment and to get our lounges up to full operational capacity as soon as possible.

Bernie has been married to his bride, Lori, for 33 years, and the newlywed couple has two grown children, Cosette, a Media Specialist for VW, and Michon, an Army Lieutenant stationed at Fort Sam Houston. Bernie and Lori reside in Canton, MI.

Tom’s daughter currently serves in the U.S. Navy and entered the military through the Military Entrance Processing Station in Troy, one of the four locations the Freedom Center offers hospitality to our active military.

He is a member of the Board of Directors for FIRST Robotics in Michigan and is editor and publisher of the Michigan Golf Journal, a monthly digital magazine.

Tom’s career has been focused in the areas of journalism (28 years freelance for the Detroit Free Press), marketing, media relations, and fund-raising -- the latter for 2.5 years at Wedgwood Christian Youth and Family Services, which provides treatment for youth with abuse and mental health needs.

As one could imagine with his magazine, Tom loves golf. He’s had the honor of covering 3 Masters tournaments in Augusta, plus Ryder Cups and other golf majors. When the Ford Senior Players Championship was played in Dearborn, he was the media manager for eight years. Prior he worked in Ford Motorsports.

His wife, Dayna, is a high school teacher in Plymouth-Canton, and their son, Andrew, is a computer programmer. They currently live in Livonia.

Both Bernie and Tom would love to visit any American Legion in the coming months if you need a guest speaker. Contact Tom at Tom@mifreedomcenter.org, or call (734) 812-2922.

Support Scouting and Receive a Special Commanders Coin

YES! I want to Support Scouting at Wilwin

Please send me _______ at each $20 donation to the following address:
Name: _________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________
City: _____________________  St: _____  Zip: ________________
Phone: ________________________________________________
Email: _________________________________________________

Enclosed is my check/money order for qty: _________ x $20 donation

Total: ____________

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Make check to Michigan American Legion Memo; Commanders Coin. Send to Michigan American Legion Attn: Commanders Coin 212 N. Verlinden Ave. Lansing, MI 48915
Price includes shipping/handling/taxes
visit www.michigan legion.org to order online through PayPal
Call Mark Sutton at 517-220-2747 for questions

Remember the tree?

The daughter of H. James Hay, the sculptor of the Tree of America that sits at department headquarters, Tonya, sent us these pictures from the day it was dedicated. Tonya's sister Robin is the little girl being held up by her father, James.
How to Avoid VA Overpayments

What is a VA Overpayment?

A VA overpayment is when a Veteran receives more VA benefits than he or she is entitled to and therefore must pay that extra money back to the Department of Veteran Affairs. Often this may happen if a Veteran is delayed in submitting paperwork or forgets to update records. When discovered, those funds are owed to VA, and may result in a deduction of your future monthly benefit amount until the debt is repaid.

It is important to keep an accurate and timely record of any change that could impact your benefits. Make any necessary changes through https://www.va.gov/ or by calling 1-800-827-1000 immediately before an overpayment occurs.

Some common overpayment situations are:

- A Veteran in the Reserves may be called up for active duty and still be receiving VA benefits
- A Veteran receiving education benefits does not complete the course requirements
- A Veteran has a change in marital status and does not notify VA
- A Veteran does not report that a school-age child has married
- He or she experiences the death of a dependent and does not notify VA
- A Veteran receives care at a VA medical facility and does not pay a required co-pay
- A Veteran or beneficiary is incarcerated but still receives benefits during the period of incarceration
- A Veteran or beneficiary receiving an income-based pension doesn’t report a change in income
- The Vocational Rehabilitation program purchased a service or tools for a Veteran, who then leaves the program without a valid reason.

If you have questions call 313-964-6641.
**Public Relations**

J. Barbara Hoaglund, Public Relations Chairman

Our mission has certainly been stressed under the current health crises. But it has opened new ways to use social media platforms. We can hold meetings by “Zoom”, “Facetime”, etc. Our websites (password protected) allow continued communication between our members, recruiting new members, Legion Family and the public. Be proud to share what is happening within your Unit. "Sell" your fundraising ideas/events locally and state-wide by “click-send” to our ALA Michigan Department website. Show your volunteers (can be non-members) in action. Always convey a good clean platform. Convey not what we think is good, but what is.

Even though Fall Conference did not occur Department Guides are updated and tools available for posters, banners, flyers, the Legion Family logo, etc. in the 2020 Branding Guide under Public Relations www.ALAforVeterans.org.

National is emphasizing the use of our “brand” (emblem and name) be used correctly universally so the public will recognize our trademark, i.e. Disney, Coca-Cola, etc. It is recommended that we use our emblem, name and full address at the top of our stationery and the “wave” at the bottom. Colors, fonts, etc. are stated/shown in the Branding Guide. Remember, use the full name, American Legion Auxiliary, when communicating with the public. All communication identifying the ALA should reflect our mission and values. Unit Public Relations Chairman and committee members should incorporate the Branding Guide into their program.

Serving Veterans is a topic most news sites believe their readers will care about, along with Children and Youth. If it is not printed/viewed on TV/radio aired the first time, continue to submit ideas. A simple message plus a photo conveys a great story.

Looking ahead to American Education Week. I doubt that we can visit the schools, but individual certificates would remind them how much they are appreciated – especially now. If several members are working on them, they would be done in no time!

We are all responsible to get our news to the public for all we do – that is effective Public Relations! It never stops! There is always an event or holiday!

**Our Education Mission Goes Beyond the ABC’s**

Education Program

Carol Burke, Chairman

Education is defined in different ways. By some, it’s learning to read and write, and by others, it learning to think and reason. The Auxiliary’s role in education goes far beyond supplying school supplies and scholarships. The goals of our Education Program is defined in the American Legion Auxiliary official Mission Statement:

In the spirit of Service, Not Self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is 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. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

Our Education Program is integrated into all 12 Auxiliary Programs, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism and good citizenship. We support our Mission by teaching flag etiquette, the history of the poppy, helping get out the vote and contacting our legislators, just to name a few. More and more of our youth need mentors, to encourage the discussion and the decision making process which includes a reflection on the values of our country’s Constitution and Bill of Rights. And as a veterans organization, we always, actively support the education of our veterans and their dependents and we need to educate and advocate that our communities to do the same.

With our membership eligibility and privilege, come a responsibility. We cannot leave promoting patriotism and good citizenship to our teachers and parents alone. It is our duty as members of The American Legion Auxiliary accept this responsibility and fulfill our mission.
ALNA NATIONAL PRESIDENT VISITS THE DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

The Department of Michigan had the honor of hosting Auxiliary National President, Nicole Clapp.

President Nicole hails from the great state of Iowa! She has been an Auxiliary member since she was four years old. She’s held many positions in the organization since that time.

President Nicole’s visit kicked off with a visit to Wilwin Lodge at Cygnet Cove, where she joined Legion Family members for the fundraiser held there Saturday, September 12th. She enjoyed visiting the Michigan Heroes Museum in Frankenmuth, as well as a trip to world famous Bronner’s and the Bavarian Inn. Monday, September 14th President Nicole laid wreaths at the Great Lakes National Cemetery, Michigan War Dog Memorial, and the White Chapel Memorial Cemetery. Her time in Michigan rounded out with a visit to Selfridge Air Force Base on September 15th, before leaving to visit the Department of Ohio September 16th.

The Department of Michigan is thrilled to have had the opportunity to show President Nicole around our amazing state.

To learn more about ALA National President, Nicole Clapp, visit the National website https://www.alaforveterans.org/About/National-President-Bio/

Follow President Nicole and her adventures with Cornelius on her Facebook page: American Legion Auxiliary National President.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE
Brandy A. Nelson
Executive Director / Secretary / Treasurer

Summer is coming to a close, and with that, it’s time for us to ramp up for membership season!

Send those transmittals in!

Please be cautious when filling out your checks.

Make checks out to American Legion Auxiliary Department of Michigan.

If checks are submitted to us incorrectly, we will have to mail them back to you with your paperwork to resubmit.

We kindly ask that you double-check your paperwork, check your numbers, and your totals before sending it to us. This will reduce errors and delays in processing membership.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETE FOR DEPARTMENT TO PROCESS!

Sadly, we also have to return new applications if they are not completed in full. Please also double-check these before mailing to the department.

We have resources for member eligibility criteria, how to complete paperwork, and printable documents, including transmittals on our website www.michalaux.org.

If you have any questions concerning membership, please contact our Membership Coordinator Carol at membership@michalaux.org

COVID UPDATE
Brandy and Carol are working in the Department office; however, we are still asking that members call and make an appointment if they need to visit the department. Our goal is to continue to limit exposure of guests and staff, especially as flu season is upon us. With only two staff in the office, there may be times where we are not in the office or unavailable, so please call ahead of time to set up an appointment. Masks are required upon entry. Please sign the visitor’s log when you’re in to see us.

GIFT SHOPS
As of this printing, the Gift Shops for Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, Marquette/Jacobetti, and Saginaw have been canceled. The VA homes have been on lockdown since the pandemic began. This practice is likely to continue through the end of the year, or longer. At this time, the reps and hospitals are not accepting donations of physical items. Our amazing and hard-working representatives are finding other ways to support the homes and the residents. Please contact your region’s VA rep if you have any questions. We will keep everyone updated as we learn of new developments.

OPERATIONS
This has been a hectic and interesting year for the department! This summer, we completed a full financial audit for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Now we are beginning to start our annual review for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This should get us on track with IRS filing on a timely basis!

The migration of our new accounting software is complete! Now we are cleaning up and implementing new procedures to address any control issues that still linger. It’s a lengthy process, and it has caused many delays and some changes. We appreciate your continued patience as we do a thorough job of getting a reliable system in place.

We’ve unfortunately experienced some issues with our website and email system going down over the past few weeks. If you have sent us an email at the department and you have not received a response, we may not have received it! Please forward us your original email, and we’ll get back with you.

We will be making some changes on the back end to prevent future issues. We hope that there will not be another interruption of service, however, it is a possibility.

The Department Executive Committee was scheduled to have a conference call on September 24. At this time department cannot host a large conference call beyond just DEC members. We regret not being able to accommodate members outside of the DEC to participate. It is not the intent to exclude membership; it’s merely a matter of our technological limitations. I know we’re all hoping to be able to meet in person for the Winter meeting!

I want to congratulate Carol Lonsway for her three years of service at Department! She joined us at Department on September 18, 2017. I’ve now been with the department for 18 months and officially hired on for one year as of September 20, 2020.

I sincerely thank those of you who are a source of help, support, and encouragement to Department staff. It means more than you know!

Due to COVID or otherwise, most everyone has experienced hardship this year in one way or another. The challenges persist even when we’re weary. In the thick of it, try to remember what’s important: PEOPLE.

Love, support, and serve our family, our friends, our Auxiliary members, our Veterans, and our communities. These are the ties that bind us. Let us not take for granted what we have, strive to be better to each other, give grace, live with intention, and ask for help when we need it.

Let us not forget our mission:

Service, Not Self.
1st District Report
Jeff Haesker
Unfortunately, the COVID-19 year continues, along with the cancellation of a lot of our youth programs (which we were making a lot of progress on), not to mention canceling the State and National Conventions last year and the Fall Convention so far. However, last year’s merged 1st District went very well for us, considering. There are a lot of awesome post commanders in our district, and they stayed on-board to try to make an impact during these trying times.

The district lost Guadalupe Luna (who was also the Post Commander for Mexican-American Post 505 in Detroit) to the COVID-19 virus. Freeman Chandler-10, who was the Sergeant-at-Arms for the Frederick M. Alger Post 86, Dearborn Heights, to his long battle with cancer.

Myron H. Beals Post #32 Commander Dan Newton has been appointed as 2nd Vice Commander (until such time as we can come together to vote). Dan is a very strong leader, and he brings a lot of experience to the table as the commander of the 3rd largest post in the state of Michigan. I look forward to working with Dan this year. Welcome aboard, Dan!

Earlier this year, the District passed our “Resolution of Support for the Restoration of the Brodhead Naval Armory,” located in downtown Detroit next to Belle Isle. I recently sent a letter to the 2nd District Commission (with a copy of the Resolution) objecting to the Parade Company’s proposed plan to demolish 70% of this building for a float storage facility. That would leave 30% of very little of significance to be restored, and any attempt to salvage and restore the WPA murals (by dislodging and moving them) would end in tragedy. The district does not support the demolition of one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the city and all the irreplaceable WPA artwork, everything the placement on the “National Registry of Historic Places” was based on. I guess we shall see.

Our District has many volunteers from a couple of different posts that volunteer to help staff the Freedom Center at Metro Airport on a regular basis, as well as one member on the Board of Directors. We are proud of the work that they do.

District Adjutant Gary DeMar developed and maintains the district’s web page “District 1 Blog” (https://al.alaid1.org/), to provide an information portal that has access by any web browser. It contains notes, articles, and links to sites the Post Commanders and members that may be interested in reviewing. It is an excellent place to start for retrieval of information about our District, the VA, or any of the national American Legion programs.

It has been an honor to serve as our 1st District (and 17th District) Commander for the last several years. Please, everyone, stay safe, and we’ll see you on the other side.

6th District Report
Bob Higley
I want to thank the 6th District Legionnaires for having the trust in me to be their commander in the 2020-2021 year. I will work hard not to let you down. Remember, the district is here to help every post. I want to thank all the post membership teams for their efforts in the 2020 membership year. The district achieved 91.39% of our membership goal. Congratulations to the three posts in the district that reached 100% or better of their 2020 membership goal. They were the Brown-Cavernd Post 148, Mason, Ezra-Paul Post 321, Otisville, and Harry Baker Post 367, Montrose. I know the 2020 membership year was incredibly difficult since we couldn’t meet for the last four months.

The 2021 membership year is pretty much starting the same. We are limited to indoor gatherings of no more than ten people. There are alternatives, though. You can meet virtually via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Go To Meeting, FreeConferenceCall, and Amazon Chime. It is more important than ever to stay connected with your membership year. Members may not feel the need to renew their membership since some posts have temporarily closed their post homes due to the latest executive orders out of the Governor’s office. I’m encouraging all posts to regularly call on their members. Depending on the size of your post, you may need to enlist the help of several members to make the calls.

Currently, we still have two posts in the district that have not received their 2021 membership cards. If you have not received them yet, the department still needs to receive the post officer list for 2020-2021, post-audit for the last year, and post fidelity crime insurance form (bond). These forms can be found on the Department web site. We also have seven posts that have not turned in any renewals for 2021. If renewals are not received by the department by September 28, the members will receive another renewal notice.

Besides recruiting new members, we must remember to renew our existing members and re-enroll those that have dropped. Personal contact with them is the most effective way to find out why they didn’t renew. Most of the time, a member doesn’t renew because they don’t feel need ed, or there is a lack of communication. Communication is important, so members know what is going on. For this reason, the 6th District started a Facebook page. It is The American Legion 6th District Department of Michigan. If any Post wants to share something on our Facebook page, please let me know.

I would also like our posts to know the 6th District is again sponsoring three young men to Boy’s State this year. Every post is eligible to send in an applicant for consideration. We will be selecting one boy from each county for sponsorship. Applications are due by the May 2 district meeting for consideration. I also would like to see a representative from each post at our district meetings. There is a lot of valuable information that is shared at these meetings you could use at your posts. The representative does not have to be a post officer. Anyone can attend our District meetings.

I look forward to visiting all of the posts in our District this year. Unfortunately, things change, the visits will have to be by phone call.

7th District Report
Tim Shosey
Let me start by saying that I hope this finds everyone doing well with the COVID-19 virus hitting us hard. I’m sure you all know by now that all the district officers have remained the same for this year based on the lockdown and not being able to hold elections for the 2020 – 2021 year.

I would also like to remind everyone to please focus on your membership goals this year and strive to reach 100% or greater. With the new membership incentives from Department, it could help your Post. If you need any assistance or have questions with membership, please reach out to me or attend the district meeting. We are here to help you.

I also wanted to reach out to each Post and let you know about our upcoming 7th District meetings listed below. I want to encourage a representative from each Post to attend the District meetings. I, as Commander, represent each Post in the District as a member of the Department Executive Committee (D.E.C.), and your voice matters. All meetings also have open lines of communication to share information from the conventions and conferences of the American Legion that would assist you at your Post.

7th District Upcoming Meeting Schedule:
Oct. 11, 2020, Post 293, Sebewaing
Jan. 10, 2021, Post 16, Lapeer
Mar. 14, 2021, Post 7, Caro
May 16, 2021, Post 4, Mt. Clemens

Lunch will be served at 12:30 pm; the meeting begins at 2:00 pm.

Please contact me at 586-808-2580 if you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance to you in any way.

You can also reach me via email at tshosey@gmail.com

8th District Report
Art Diffin
Greetings from the 8th District, and the middle of the state. All the posts are off to a good start with membership renewals. The district was able to meet and exceed the first goal set by national headquarters. We couldn’t have accomplished this without the hard work and dedication of the posts’ executive team and every member.

In this time of the global pandemic, our posts are needed more than ever in our communities in fulfilling the four pillars on which our organization was founded. Several have stepped forward to answer this call. The Huffman-Hammond-Rando Post 502, Elsie, has held several events at area truck stops giving away masks, bottles of water, and providing musical entertainment for travelers. The Ray Barker Post 412, Bath, has partnered with the Rite Aid pharmacy to host a flu shot clinic open to the public. The Hugo Fales Post 203, Belding, recently held an event that raised over $1,000.00 for a local charity.

We may not function as we have in the past, but as veterans, we’re used to changing as the situation presents itself and still accomplishing our stated mission. We encourage everyone to think about how their post can fulfill the purpose and reason of their charter to serve both veterans and the community in their time of need.

11th & 12th District Report
George Maciejewski & Wendy Retzlaff
Life has been quiet here in the Great Upper Peninsula of Michigan with Covid19 State lock-down. Summer has passed with many challenges with very successful Legion Post locations awaiting a chance to reopen doors for business. I am happy to say, by way of buddy checks, we are all safe and healthy.

Some of the larger Legion Posts that have reopened in May and June have found innovative ways of fundraising and continuing to provide services to our Veterans and the communities by demonstrating the rules of social distancing.

August 22, the 906 Warrior Relief Fund held its 9th annual golf outing at the Morton-Guntley American Legion Post 349, Little Lake, which raises funds for veterans in the Upper Peninsula. This event normally raises as much as $15,000. to $20,000. a year. The Morton-Guntley Post hosted by providing volunteers to provide food and beverages, along with 50/50 drawings, raffle prizes, golf packages, and a dinner at the post at the end of the day.

The month of September, the 11th & 12th Districts had the honor to participate in a much-needed food drive as The American Legion Department of Michigan and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chipewa Indians partnered with Gleaners Community Food Bank in Detroit to distribute food boxes to veterans, seniors, and families in need in the Upper Peninsula. Legionnaires and volunteers distributed 1,000 40 lbs. food banks at eight different locations a crossed the U.P. Thank you, everyone, who participated.

Our membership is looking good so far as both the 11th & 12th Districts are over the 50% mark. We do anticipate membership percentage to rise when our smaller posts open back up for business.

Remember, when Governor Whitmer rescinds or issues executive orders, the posts in the Upper Peninsula are in Region 8. As of September 21, the current rules state that restaurants and clubs can have 25% maximum capacity or 250 customers, whichever is smaller, as is consistent with regions in Phase Five of the Governor’s MI Safe Start Plan.

We are all also excited and looking forward to next summer, July 8 through July 11, 2021, when the department convention will be at the Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie.

Stay Safe!
For God & Country

16th District Report
Ed Gorecki
Hello, Legionnaires’ of the 16th district, as we get ready to say goodbye to summer and hello to the changing season to fall. Fall marks the start of promoting the Legions fall and winter programs for high schools. Hard to think most of us have spent all summer indoors and not wanting to go outside for fear of getting the COVID 19. I thank God that all my brothers and sisters are safe.

Although executive orders have kept activity at posts to a mini-
16th District Report continued...

The Edward C. Headman Post 217, in Wyandotte, made improvements to the interior and patio area of their post. They are open per the restrictions in place.

I am excited to report that our district has a post sponsoring a girl’s 10u fastpitch softball team. Huron Valley Post 231, in New Boston, redid their parking lot and did a facelift on their building. The district is looking forward to holding the November district meeting at the post and hosting Department Commander Barry Wood.

The 19th District Report

Charles Bowman

As of the 14th of September, the 19th District is at 56% of our membership goal, it is important that we keep working on this. We held our September meeting as scheduled on the 12th of September at the Bowling Center in Gaylord. Public Relations Director Mark Sutton came up from department headquarters and gave very good training on by-laws and rules of procedure. It is a good idea for all posts to look over these items and make sure that they are current and allow the post and its members to operate in these trying times.

This year has brought us many challenges, figuring out how to hold our post and district meetings within the requirements brought forward by the global pandemic. The district is doing well on its membership numbers, and I am happy to say the most of the posts are at least holding their own if not managing to add new members. All we can do is look to the future and hold ourselves to the standards of The American Legion.

Look for ways to help your friends and neighbors out; however, you can. Engage the youth in your communities and be a beacon of light in these trying times. I look to the future and hope that things will improve. We have to decide if we are going to let this get the best of us or if we are going to persevere. I believe we can come out of this pandemic a stronger, more dedicated VSO if we so chose.

Americanism Committee

Carl Atkinson, Chairman

The following is a report of activities for the Americanism Committee for 2020.

A. The subcommittee for scouting is active and has planned the second annual scout camporee on Oct. 16-18 at Wlluin Cygnet Cove. The Eagle Scout of the Year award went to Eagle Scout Thomas Witten of Troop 360 Auburn Hills. No Square Knot awards were granted.

B. The subcommittee for Law & Order reported that Law Officer of the Year was awarded to Conservation Officer Jeffery Grinn of Newaygo, the Fire Fighter of the Year Award went to Jeremy Kurek of Dearborn Hts.

C. Junior Shooting Sports reported that the committee was meeting online and that all competitions were canceled due to the COVID virus but were able to start up again in September.

D. A vote was held online for needed committee action items with the following results: 1. Approve Law officer of the Year nomination deadline date of 1/11/21. 6 approved; 0-Rejects.

2. Approve Firefighter of the Year nomination deadline of 1/11/21. 6 approve; 0-reject.

3. Approve Student Trooper application deadline of 5/17/21. 6 approve; 0-reject.

4. Approve the increase of the Student Trooper application fee to $475 (previously $390) to help offset the costs for MSP to run the Student Trooper School for us. 6 approve; 0-reject.

5. Approve the Square Knot Award Checklist to be on the Department website and in paper form at Department HQ (to help folks send in their Square Knot applications to the proper people before it goes to National). 6 approve; 0-reject. (With a committee quorum participating in the online vote, all proposals were approved)

E. Due to the increase in the Americanism Committee composition, a recommendation was made to increase the annual budget. Also, we are working on updating the Rules of Procedure to reflect the committee changes.

F. All of our American Legion youth program volunteers are dealing with added training, background checks, and increased restrictions. We appreciate all that department is doing to help in this area.

G. A special thank you to all our committee members and for the department’s help and support to continue to carry on in support of our many American Legion programs during this unusual time of dealing with the restriction of the COVID-19 virus.

Boys State Committee continue

STEP FIVE: Complete the necessary paperwork, secure funding, and submit to department headquarters.

With every post working at sponsoring one young man to Boys State, we should be able to surpass our goal of 300 delegates to Boys State 2021.

School has started, and now is the time to begin planning and using our five-step recruitment program to sponsor young men to attend the Michigan American Legion Boys State Program, which will be held at Grand Valley State University in June 2021.

Every Post in Michigan should sponsor at least one young man from their local community to attend the Boys State Program. The Boys State Committee and all of our Boys State Volunteers are ready and able to assist every Post that needs help or assistance.

Want more information or need help to get started? Contact a Boys State committee member, a district Chair, Program Coordinator Ashley Zimmer, (517) 220-2754, legion@michiganlegion.org, or the Boys State Director jelkey2136@sbcglobal.net.

Did YOU attend a Michigan American Legion program in High School? Let us know, when and what. Legion@michiganlegion.org

Boys State Committee

Jerry Kelley, Chairman

This year brings a few changes to our Boys State Program. For the first time, we will accept not only juniors in high school, but we will also accept seniors with priority given to the young men that signed up to attend in 2020. We have also added a $25 non-refundable registration fee, paid by the attendee, that will be due with the application.

Even with these changes, our Michigan American Legion Boys State Program is an excellent way to help young men learn leadership skills that are sought after by all organizations, including business, education, government, and the military. Your Post has an opportunity to provide leadership for the future.

The five easy steps to sponsor a young man to Boys State are:

STEP ONE: Each Post and SAL Squadron selects a Boys State Committee Chair.

STEP TWO: The Post/Squadron Committee Chair then contacts a Boys State Committee Member or District Boys State Chair for assistance and attends District Meetings. There they will work with the District Committee Chair to learn how to find young men and how to provide funds to cover the cost of sending a young man to Boys State, which is $375, plus the $25 registration fee.

STEP THREE: Contact your local high school, Boy Scout Troop, or any youth-serving organization to share and discuss the importance of Boys State. Share the information that was sent to the school Principal in late October/early November, which can be used as a talking point. Be ready to talk about not only Boys State but all of our youth programs.

STEP FOUR: Find a contact person in the school that will help and assist you in recruiting at least one young man.
Michigan State Troopers and Law Enforcement Officers from around the State will show you what their life is like every day on the job. They bring their personal experience to the teachings of the day.

You will learn:
- Proper gun safety while live-firing handguns under the supervision of the Michigan State Police firing range officers.
- Self-defense techniques
- The adrenaline rush of underwater rescue and recovery in the training center pool
- Crash site investigation
- First aid
- Police K-9 units and their incredible abilities
- Basic “CSI- Crime Scene Investigations”
- Intense physical training (Yes, you will run!)
- How to work as a team

Top Student Trooper of the week wins a $1,000 College Scholarship
3 other categories win $500 each

Class is being offered: July 18-23, 2021
(Application deadline May 17, 2021)

Cost to attend is $475 per student. Ask your Post, Auxiliary, Sons of the Legion, civic organization, local business, or other organization to sponsor them.

Do You Know a high school student, 16 to 18 years old interested in a law enforcement career?

Speak Up for College Dollars with a Constitutional Speech Contest

Who can give a prepared oratorical presentation and an impromptu speech?
Who has an interest in the U.S. Constitution? Contestants have an opportunity to win $800 to $1,500 in scholarship money at the department level. Those moving on to the National Contest will receive $1500 for each level they move up to and compete for up to $25,000 in scholarship money at the National Oratorical Finals.

2021 Program deadlines:
- Contestant must register with the American Legion Department of Michigan by Tuesday, November 13, 2020
- Zone contests must be completed by February 14, 2021
- Department contest will be March 6, 2021

If you are interested visit your local American Legion Post or contact the American Legion Department of Michigan to register for more information.

www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships

This contest is open to ALL high school students in the 9th to 12th grade and contestants may compete multiple years, unless they win the National Finals

Do you know a high school/college student who is the descendent of a war-time era veteran?

Who will be attending any nationally accredited college or university?

William D. & Jewell Brewer Scholarship

- Scholarship available to only Michigan residents who are attending high school or college – no bachelor's degree,
- Who are a son, daughter, grandchild or great-grandchild of a war-time veteran planning to or are attending any nationally accredited college or university.
- Selection is based on a student's G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher, financial need, parent's or grandparent's honorable active war-time military service, goals and intentions.

Guy Wilson Scholarship

- Scholarship only available to Michigan residents attending high school and
- A son, daughter, grandchild or great-grandchild of a war-time veteran planning to attend any Michigan accredited college or university.
- Selection based on a student's G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher, financial need, parent's or grandparent's honorable active war-time military service, goals and intentions.

Scholarship form along with requested information must be received in the American Legion Department of Michigan by the deadline date of January 4, 2021 (not postmarked by).

www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships
Scholarship award amount is $500 and not renewable.

Do you know a high school/college student who is the descendent of a war-time era veteran?

Who will be attending a Michigan accredited college or university?

Guy Wilson Scholarship

- Scholarship only available to Michigan residents attending high school and
- A son, daughter, grandchild or great-grandchild of a war-time veteran planning to attend any Michigan accredited college or university.
- Selection based on a student's G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher, financial need, parent's or grandparent's honorable active war-time military service, goals and intentions.
American Legion Legacy Scholarship

Do you know a child of a fallen 9/11 servicemember?

Or

Do you know a child of a VA-rated, post 9/11 veteran with a combined disability rating of 50 percent of higher?

Since the inception of The American Legion Legacy Scholarship in 2001 following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, The American Legion has offered its support to the children of fallen post-9/11 servicemembers through this scholarship. Beginning with the 2017 award year, The American Legion expanded the scholarship to include children of VA-rated, post-9/11 veterans with a combined disability rating of 50 percent or higher. Our organization remains committed to honoring the memory and service of our fallen and disabled comrades by ensuring their children are afforded the best possible educational opportunities.

Financial Aid Offered

The total amount of Legacy Scholarship money to be awarded varies based on the amount of donations received each year and the total amount of income derived from interest on the trust each year. Fifty percent of each amount is made available for awards each year – beginning with the 2017 award year. Each award made is good for one year and may be up to $20,000. The amount of each award is determined by the financial need of that student as determined by fiscal information provided by the applicant during the application process. Depending on the amount of total money available for award, the number of applicants and the total need in a given year, all applicants might not receive an award. However, The American Legion will strive to offer as many awards as possible.

To learn more and apply visit:
https://www.legion.org/scholarships/legacy

Scholarships and Programs specifically for high school girls can be found at the Michigan Auxiliary web site www.michalaux.org (select scholarships on the right) The American Legion Auxiliary hosts a Girls State program similar to the Boys State.

Find information at www.michalaux.org
2021 Memorial Scholarship $500.00
2021 Non-Traditional Student $500.00
2021 Medical Career Scholarship $500.00
$20,000 Samsung Scholarship through the Girls State Program See their National site for 3 more scholarships www.alafortune-veterans.org (under “What we do”)

For the most up to date information on American Legion Department of Michigan Scholarships please visit: www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships
For applications, email: legion@michiganlegion.org or call 517-220-2754