



Vol. XC No. 8

michiganlegion.org

October 2022

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

The PACT Act

and your VA Benefits

I would like to take this time and talk to you about the upcoming changes in VA benefits relating to “The PACT Act”. This new law enhances benefits related to toxic exposures for our Vietnam and Gulf War Veterans.

The Department Service Officers are encouraging all veterans to file a new or supplemental claim based on this new law. We also encourage all veterans to apply for VA health care. Eligible dependents and survivors of deceased veterans may also benefit from this new law. Contact a

Department Service Officer with all your questions. A full listing of our service officers is on page 6.

The Pact Act adds hypertension and monoclonal gammopathy of Underdetermined Significance to the list of presumptives for Agent Orange exposure. Establishes presumptions of service connection for additional respiratory illnesses and cancers related to burn pits or airborne hazards exposure for Gulf War and Global War on Terrorism veterans. Expands the presumption of Agent Orange exposure to veterans who served in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and other locations. Also expands and extends eligibility for health care for many veterans.

Now, we have all seen the commercials on TV relating to veterans that were stationed at Camp Lejeune and were exposed to the toxic water. Be leery of these, do your homework. You have until August 2024

to file a claim with these lawyers. But, keep in mind that if you do file a “Tort Claim” with these attorneys it could possibly affect your VA, Medicare and Medicaid benefits. This is a claim against the federal government See below extract from the new law.



From “Honoring Our PACT Act,” Section 804:

Any award made to an individual, or legal representative of an individual, under this section shall be offset by the amount of any disability award, payment, or benefit provided to the individual, or legal representative--

(A) under--

(i) any program under the laws administered by the

Secretary of Veterans Affairs; (ii) the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.);

or

(iii) the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

and

(B) in connection with health care or a disability relating to exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.

Again, contact a Department Service Officer with any questions, and thank you for your service to our Great Country and to The American Legion.



Gary Easterling, Director, VA&R




Buy Commander Britten's Challenge Coin and Support Zero Day!



The name Zero Day comes from the definition of Zero Hour: a time when a vital decision or decisive change must be made. Everything that Zero Day does and stands for revolves around a decisive action. Veterans have spent their entire military careers around making tough decisions and taking decisive actions. When they leave the military, nothing changes. Zero Day is an organization that stands ready to come alongside the Veteran and help them take that decisive action into a career.

Zero Day is not here to just provide jobs for Veterans, Zero day is here to inspire Veterans in their pursuit of rewarding careers.

See The Order Form on Page 15



New Member application!

Cut out this handy application with your information on the back and keep it with you!

Together we will keep growing the American Legion Department of Michigan

The American Legion Membership Application

	(Name)		(Date of Birth)		(Phone Number)		(Post #)
	(Mailing Address)		(State)		(Zip)		(Dues)
	(City)		(E-mail)		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <small>(Gender)</small>		

☐ I certify that I served at least one day of active military duty since December 7, 1941 and was honorably discharged or am still serving honorably.

Please check appropriate service era and branch of service below

☐ Global War on Terror

☐ Gulf War

☐ Panama

☐ Lebanon/Grenada

☐ Vietnam

☐ Korea

☐ WWII

☐ Other Conflicts

☐ U.S. Army

☐ U.S. Navy

☐ U.S. Air Force

☐ U.S. Marines

☐ U.S. Space Force

☐ U.S. Coast Guard

☐ Merchant Marines (WWII only)

Signature of applicant

Date

District Meetings

Second District

Meetings start at 11 am with the SAL followed by the Riders at Noon with a Lunch VSO starts at 1 pm and Legion meetings are at 2 pm.
October 16, 2022 Post 34 Tecumseh
January 8, 2023 Post 514 Ida
March 12, 2023 Post 268 Milan
April 22, 2023 Post 315 Brooklyn
May 21, 2023 Post 324 Jackson- Rose City

Third District

Meetings are at 1:00pm, lunch at 12:00pm.
November 6, 2022 Post 156
964 McCallum St. Montgomery, MI
January 8, 2023 Post 36
1920 E Kilgore Service Rd. Kalama-
zoo MI (VFW Post 1527)
March 5, 2023 Post 157
104 E Chicago St. Quincy, MI
May 7, 2023 Post 196
104 Coldwater Rd. Union City, MI

Fourth District

Service officers training at 11:00 am
Dinner at 12:30 pm Meetings at 2:00 pm.
November 6, 2022 Dorr Post 127
January 8, 2023 Coloma Post 362
March 5, 2023 Stevensville Post 568
May 7, 2023 South Haven Post 49

Fifth District

Meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of every month. Dinner @ 5:30 pm and Meeting @ 7 pm. For more information Email: districtadju-
tant5th@yahoo.com
or call: 1-616-799-4459
November 10, 2022 Furniture City
Post #258 (G.R.)
January 12, 2023 Grand Haven Post #28
March 9, 2023 Daniel G. Cassard
Post # 208 (Kentwood)
May 11, 2023 Neal E. Fonger Post #179 (G.R.)
July 13, 2023 TBD

Sixth District

Service Officer School at 11:10 am (when scheduled),Lunch at Noon, Meetings at 1 pm

November 13, 2022 Bernie A. Bendle
Post 294 3440 Morrish Rd
Swartz Creek MI 48473
810-635-7333
January 8, 2023 Devereaux Post 1441
3265 W Grand River Ave
Howell MI 48855
517-546-2534
March 12, 2023 Pickney Memorial
Post 419 9807 Whitewood Rd. Picknet
MI 48169 517-878-9522
May 7, 2023 Buck Reasoner Post 238
1785 Cedar St.
Holt MI 48842
517-699-2235

Seventh District

October 16, 2022 Sebewaing
January 9, 2023 Lapeer
March 12, 2023 Caro
May 21, 2023 Mt. Clemens

Eighth District

Trainings will start at Noon, Dinner at 1:00pm with Legion and Auxiliary meetings immediately following.
November 6, 2022 Chesaning Post 212
January 8, 2023 Frankenmuth Post 150
March 5, 2023 Portland Post 129
May 7, 2023 Belding Post 203

Nineth District

Executive meetings are at 11:00am with Lunch at noon. Meetings at 1:00pm.
December 10, 2022 Post 10 Manistee
March 11, 2023 Post 94 Cadillac
May 13, 2023 Post 397 Holton

Tenth District

All meetings will start with lunch at noon. Meetings at 1:00 pm.
November 5, 2022 Luzerne Post 162
January 7, 2023 Luzerne Post 162
March 4, 2023 Hale Post 422
May 6, 2023 Bay City Post 18

Eleventh District

All Meetings Start at 1pm. Dates and locations of future meetings are still being decided.
October 1, 2022 Marquette

Twelfth District

All Meetings Start at 1pm. Dates and locations of future meetings are still being decided.
October 1, 2022 Marquette

Sixteenth District

All meetings start at 7:30 pm.
October, December, February, & April
Service Officer School at 6:30 pm.
October 11, 2022 Riverview Post 289
November 8, 2022 Flat Rock Post 237
December 13, 2022 Southgate Post 478
January 10, 2023 Stitt Post 232
February 14, 2023 Fort Dearborn Post 364
March 14, 2023 Wyandotte 217
April 11, 2023 Trenton Post 426
May 9, 2023 Lincoln Park Post 67
June 13, 2023 Garden City Post 396

Eighteenth District

All meetings Meeting for the District Legion and Auxiliary Convene at 2:00 p.m
Oct 23, 2022 Rochester Hills
#172 248-651-2247
Jan 22, 2023 Rochester Hills
#172 248-651-2247
Feb 26, 2023
Hill Gazette Post #143 248-852-4880
Mar 26, 2023
Hill Gazette Post #143 248-852-4880
May 21, 2023 (Election of officers)
Chief Pontiac #377 248-673-9301

Nineteenth District

Meetings will be held at the Gaylord Bowling Center, 1200 Gornick Ave, Gaylord, MI 49735.
Meetings start with training at 10:00 am, Social Meet and Greet at 11:00 am, lunch served at noon. The both the Legion and Auxiliary will start at 1:00 pm.
December 10, 2022
March 11, 2023
May 13, 2023

MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE & AUXILIAIRE

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DEADLINE DATES

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HEADQUARTERS DIRECTORY

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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 media@michiganlegion.org or mail it to department attn: Jim Showers.
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 Jim Showers
media@michiganlegion.org
517-220-2747

STATE OFFICERS

State Commander. Marilyn Britten
State Adjutant. Ron Runyan
1st Vice Commander . . . Brian Mohlman
2nd Vice Commander . . . Dan Cooper
1st Zone. Craig Tillman
2nd Zone Wayne Blank
3rd Zone Jimmy Barrett

4th Zone Dave McGillen
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Judge Advocate. Brett Holt

Sergeant-at-Arms Larry Chase
Immediate Past Commander
. Richard Dubay
Alt. N.E.C Larry Money
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
Director Gary Easterling



Be seen in your Community

Brian Mohlman
1st Vice Commander

Does your local community and its Veterans know about all the meaningful programs and activities your Post contributes? Do you have a personal relationship with local media? Can your local school count on your Post to provide them with important Americanism and Patriotic services? Do Veterans in your community know they can come to you for guidance, assistance, and necessary benefit information?

What do any of these questions have to do with Membership? The more questions your Post can answer YES, the more apt you are to be seen in your community. When your Post is seen doing what you do best, what means the most to your community, people are naturally interested in becoming involved.

When you do the right things for local Veterans in the eyes of those around you, support will come from all directions. Involve your Post with your community, and involve your community with your Post.

Local media is always looking for exciting stories about how your organizations are giving back and leading the way to make a difference through their unequalled commitment to service before self. Take photos of your events...write short articles about the good your members did...invite the public to the smallest of your activities.

Your schools are always looking for creative ways to educate our youth, and our Posts can provide them with alternatives to mere textbooks. Children learn best when they can participate in a hands-on experience. Teach them to raise and lower the flag each day, and more importantly, teach them proper respect for our Nation's Colors, and when you do, involve local media.

Why so much focus on media? It's really quite simple. When you share your successes, your community wants to become involved. They want to be a part of something of great value. In turn, they will tell others about your Post and its wonderful programs. It'll spread like wildfire!

Be prepared! Veterans in your community will start walking in your front door and ask, "How do I join The American Legion?" It happens every day at Posts all across this nation. Make it happen at your Post!

First Membership Goal Achieved!

Thanks to all the hard work of your District Leadership and Post Membership Teams, we have exceeded the Sept 14 50% tSarget for 2023! We ended up at 51.88% of Goal, with an impressive 232 of our 373 Posts (62.2%) at or above the 50% mark.

Playing no small part in this impressive performance is the increase of MyLegion Membership processing at the Post Level. Compared to the same time period last year, Jul 1 – Sept 12, we've seen a 41% increase of MyLegion Post Membership Processing, for a total of 165 Posts. 44% of our 373 Posts are now using MyLegion! Keep up the GREAT work!

I've attached National's 2023 Target Dates for your reference. As you can see, the Veterans Day and Pearl Harbor Day targets are increases of 10% over the preceding Target Dates. We'll need to ensure we've got our Membership Game Face on, especially during those time periods.

Thanks for all your continued dedication and hard work!

2022 - 2023 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATES

EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF	SEPTEMBER 14, 2022	50%
FALL MEETINGS	OCTOBER 13, 2022	55%
VETERANS DAY	NOVEMBER 9, 2022	65%
PEARL HARBOR DAY	DECEMBER 14, 2022	75%
MID-WINTER	JANUARY 19, 2023	80%
PRESIDENT'S DAY	FEBRUARY 15, 2023	85%
LEGION BIRTHDAY	MARCH 15, 2023	90%
CHILDREN & YOUTH	APRIL 19, 2023	95%
ARMED FORCES DAY	MAY 17, 2023	100%
DELEGATE STRENGTH	30 DAYS PRIOR TO NATIONAL CONVENTION	

Can an S.A.L. member sign up a new Legion member?

Yes! The same applies to Auxiliary membership. As long as the necessary membership application is filled out and the prospective member provides a copy of his/her DD-214 discharge papers (this applies to Legion membership...prospective S.A.L. and Auxiliary members need to supply a copy of discharge papers for the relative through whom their eligibility is established) and they pay the appropriate amount for dues, simply submit these materials to the Legion or S.A.L. Adjutant. In fact...many members of the Sons like to carry around blank copies of membership applications for each of the Legion Family organizations, just in case.



The Americanism Report

Dan Cooper, 2nd Vice Commander
Americanism & Community Service

The Americanism pillar embodies the devotion to law and order, the raising of wholesome youth, an educated and law-abiding citizenship, and respectful observance of patriotic holidays and remembrances.

The legacy of Americanism is a legacy worth preserving, not only to honor those men and women who have served and laid down their lives to secure our freedom but to ensure that our freedoms and way of life are secure for generations to come.

Boys State - will be held June 18th - June 24th, 2023, at Grand Valley State University. The Boys State program is a 7 day, "hands-on" experience in the operation of the City, County, and State government and building relationships with other young men in their Junior year of high school.

Student Trooper - will be held June 11-16, 2023 at the Michigan State Police Training facility in Lansing, The Application deadline for students is April 10th, 2023.

Firefighter & Law Enforcement officer of the Year - The Deadline for nominations is January 3rd, 2023


American Legion Baseball - is the finest summer baseball program for high school students in Michigan and the nation today. American Legion Baseball serves as the largest source of talent to major league teams of any youth baseball program. In 2021, over 55% of players on all 30 major league teams played American Legion Baseball. 2022 marks the 97th year for American Legion Baseball, an enviable anniversary in any field. American Legion Baseball has always strived to maintain its reputation as the highest regarded youth baseball program in the nation.

POST ADJUTANTS NEED TO


- PROCESS MEMBERSHIP DAILY NOT LESS THAN WEEKLY.
- PROCESS THE POST HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS.
- BE USING MYLEGION BY NOW.
- NEED MYLEGION TRAINING? CONTACT US TODAY!

TOO MANY OF OUR MEMBERS PAY THEIR DUES TO THE POST AND THEIR DUES ARE NOT BEING TURNED IN THROUGH MYLEGION OR TRANSMITTALS.

THIS IS A VIOLATION OF THE STATE BY-LAWS.



WE'LL GET YOU HOME.



Any time you have an accident or sudden illness while traveling away from home, Legionnaire *Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+)* provides a crucial safety net that can help pay for emergency medical transportation expenses your health or travel insurance generally will NOT cover.

- + **Medical Evacuation (by air and/or ground)**
- + **Transportation after Stabilization**
- + **Vehicle Return Costs**
- + **Return of Traveling Companion, Children or Grandchildren**

EA+ rates specially negotiated for Legionnaires and their Families.
The *Legionnaire Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+)* Program is available to Legionnaires at a 35% discount off the broad market rate. A recent enhancement to EA+ now includes escorting you home with a qualified nurse, if deemed medically necessary by EA+ physicians, saving members anywhere from \$5,000 - \$25,000.

For more information log on to www.TheLIT.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus or call toll-free 1-888-310-1547 today to speak with a benefit representative.

*This information is only an outline of the plan's features. The full terms, benefits and conditions of the plan are shown in your Member Benefit Guide. Please read it carefully. ©2016 Worldwide Rescue & Security 40064

YOU HONORED US WITH YOUR SERVICE.

Now let us honor you.



Join us for a complimentary meal and pre-planning seminar to learn about VA burial benefits available. For more information, contact Anthony.Lauri@DignityMemorial.com or 586-775-2424.

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MI Legionnaire Opt Out

YES! I would like to view the Legionnaire online at 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: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature: _____

Veteran Service Office Locations

Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building 477 Michigan Ave. Rm 1231 Detroit, MI 48226 Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm Phone: 313.964.6640	Hours: Mon & Thurs 8a-4pm Phone: 906.202.4238	County Office, 400 River St. Manistee, MI 49660 Hours: 2nd 4th Thur 8am-4pm Phone: 231.590.6200
AL Post 144 115 Front St L'Anse, MI 49946 Hours: Tuesday 8am-4pm Phone: 906.286.3776	AL Post #194 455 Bay St. Petoskey, MI 49770 Hours: Tuesday 8am-4pm Phone: 231.590.6200	AL Post 44, 700 W. Bluff St. Marquette, MI 49855 Hours: Mon & Fri 8am-4pm Phone: 906.286.3776
Charlevoix County OVA 301 State Street Charlevoix, MI 49720 Hours: 2nd & 4th Wed 8:30am-4:30pm Phone: 231.590.6200	AL Post 294 3440 Morrish Rd. Swartz Creek, MI 48473 Hours: Mon-Tues 9am-2pm Phone: 517.897.1124	AL Post 76 318, N. James St. Ludington, MI 49431 Hours: 1 st & 3 rd Wed 8:30a-4:30p Phone: 231.590.6200
AL Post #257 7475 B Drive North Battlecreek, MI 49014 Hours: Thursday 8am-4pm Phone: 313.964.6640	Genesee Co. OVA, 1101 Beach St. Flint, MI 48502 Hours: Wednesday 9am-2pm Phone: 517.897.1124	Mecosta County Office 14330 Northland Dr. Big Rapids, MI 49307 Hours: Friday 8:30am-4:30pm Phone: 231.590.6200
Sault Ste. Marie CBOC 509 Osborn Blvd, Ste 306 Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783 Hours: Friday 8am-4pm Phone: 517.897.0855	Department Headquarters 212 N. Verlinden Lansing, MI 48915 Hours: Monday 8am-4pm Wed & Fri 7:15am – 5:45pm Phone: 517.371.4720 Ext. 112	AL Post #162, 202 Legion St. Luzerne, MI 48636 Hours: Thursday 11am-7pm Phone: 989.492.0086
AL Post 558 400 E. Ludington Dr. Farwell, MI 48622 Hours: Tuesday 8am-4pm Phone: 989.492.0086	AL Post 491 422 Woodworth St. Leslie, MI 49251 Hours: 2nd Tue 6pm-10pm Phone: 313.964.6640	Otsego County OVA 225 W. Main St, Room 104 Gaylord, MI 49735 Hours: Wed & Thur 8am-4pm Phone: 517.897.0855
AL Post 412 5480 Clark Rd Bath, MI 48808 Hours: 3rd Wed 8am-4pm Phone: 313.964.6640	Presque Isle County Veterans 151 E. Huron, 3rd flr. Rogers City, MI 49779 Hours: M,W,Th 9am-5:30pm Phone: 989.225.0221	AL Post #245 3564 S. Reserve Rd. Prudenville, MI 48651 Hours: Friday 8am-4pm Phone: 989.492.0086
AL Post 301, 10584 N. Main St. Rapid River, MI 49878 Hours: Wednesday 8am-4pm Phone: 906.286.3776	Kalkaska County OVA 890 Island Lake Rd. NW, Rm 8 Kalkaska, MI 49646 Hours: 1st & 3rd Thurs 8:30am-4:30pm Phone: 231.590.6200	Saginaw Vet Center 5360 Hampton Place Ste 200 Saginaw, MI 48604 Hours: Wed & Thur 8am-4pm Phone: 517.897.1124
Escanaba Vet Center 3500 Ludington St. Suite 110 Escanaba, MI 49829	Mackinac County OVA 100 S. Marley St. St. Ignace, MI 49781 Hours: Mon & Tue 8am-4pm Phone: 517.897.0855	Saginaw VAMC, 1500 Weiss st Saginaw, MI 48602



Gary Easterling
Director

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. Let us assist you and your dependents in getting the benefits that you have earned by your service to your country.

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Visit us on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/MichiganVAR
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Thomas Kaiser 517.331.1720
Rebecca Lewis 517.371.4720 Ext. 112
Richard Wiles 517.897.0855
Brian Machuk 989.321.4650

Hours: M,T, W- 8am-4pm Phone: 989.497.2500 ex11730	Ann Arbor, MI 48105 Hours: M-F 8am-4pm Phone: 517.243.5991
Schoolcraft County OVA 300 Walnut St. #206B Manistique, MI 49854 Hours: Tuesday 8am-4pm Phone: 906.202.4238	Michigan Works Bldg 401 North Lake St., Suite 700 Cadillac, MI 49601 Hours: Mon 8:30am-4:30pm Phone: 231.590.6200
AL Post 248 1240 W. Grand River Laingsburg, MI 48848 Hours: 1 st Wed 8am-4pm Phone: 313.964.6640	VFW Post 5670, 54 N. Mitchell Rd, Gwinn, MI 49841 Hours: Thurs, 8am-4pm Phone: 906.286.3776
Ann Arbor VAMC 2215 Fuller Rd.	

DON'T FACE THE VA ALONE!

Find an American Legion Veteran Service Officer near you. Use an Accredited Veteran Service Officer. Here are where American Legion Department Service Officers are. If one is not near you call 313-964-6640 and they will guide you to an accredited veteran service officer who will help you.



AUXILIAIRE

Page 7

October 2022

*From the Desk of the President**2022-2023 Department President, Marcy Jorae*

Show Me the Narratives!



By the time you read this, Fall Conference 2023 will be in the books – hopefully, as a great learning experience for our new members. Every member has the opportunity to learn something new each year. National Convention attendees have returned to Michigan with renewed enthusiasm for the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary and with new ideas shared by other Departments. That does

not mean, however, that we cannot continue to “think outside the box.” The last two and a half years have challenged our members to do just that, and we must continue to use our “thinking caps” and let our imaginations work for us.

While some VA homes and hospitals are beginning to loosen up their Covid restrictions, others are staying with a more conservative approach. That does not mean we cannot participate with the Veterans who reside in these facilities. Does your Unit regularly send cards to these Veterans - just to let them know they are being thought of and appreciated? How easy is it to pick up some cards and sign them, with a note included, at a Unit meeting?

How many Units donate to Homeless Shelters or Food Pantries? They may or may not be Veteran affiliated, but they are a part of the communities in which we live. If your Legion Post will allow, set up an area for collecting food and other items to donate - this does not need to be just during the holidays. Everyone eats year-round, not just during the holidays.

Past National President Kathy Daudistel's focus on caregivers this past year has made many people realize that they, too, are caregivers. Whether you care for a family member, a friend, or a stranger who has since become a friend, the time you give to them is a precious thing and not to be taken lightly.

How many members donate their time to helping kids in the classroom? Whether it is for your children, grandchildren, or for kids in your local schools, your time and talents make a difference.

I bet many of you reading this article fit into one or more categories of these activities. The big question is – do you report it when we do our Annual Reports? Keep track of your time, money spent, items donated, etc., then sit down and write out what you did as if you are writing in your diary from your younger years. Just a few sentences can make a narrative that you can submit. How many awards are

not presented because someone does not take the time to sit down and “write their story”? Time and time again, we have proven at Department Convention that we have no one to present many of the awards to – just because no one entered. Maybe you don't think your entry is worthy of anything, or you don't feel you need the recognition – but the American Legion Auxiliary does need that recognition. Each year, Units report to Districts – Districts report to Departments – Departments report to National, and all those little deeds, those little acts of kindness, the insignificant dollar amounts get added up. When you consider all the Units that the 52 ALA Departments have, that's a huge difference that Auxiliary members make – and most of it goes unreported. What is reported is taken by the National Commander when he/she visits Capitol Hill and testifies as to what difference the American Legion Family makes in the lives of our Veterans, in the lives of our active military and their families, and in the lives of our community members. The National Commander's testimony lets our members of Congress – the members we have elected to serve us, know who we are, what we do, and especially why we matter. And how long does it take you to write a few sentences? It certainly is time well spent.

And how long did it take me to write this? Really, not that long. It is time well spent if I can convince even just a few members to keep track of their individual activities, their Unit activities, and their District activities – then sit down once a month – more often if you are very active – and write your narratives. Hang onto them for Annual Reporting time in March – then see just what an impact you have made.

I would love to be able to sign certificate after certificate for awards for next year's Department Convention. Those of you who go to Department Conventions – do you know why the 2nd and 5th District Presidents are getting called to stand and accept so many awards? It is because they APPLY. You may submit an entry and not win, but I know you won't win if you don't even submit an entry. Give it a try – you might just be surprised at how many awards your Unit actually qualifies to enter. Look at the new guides soon and set your aims high. Look for the things your members or Units already does and write those up – then challenge yourselves to do a few new things. Let this be the Year of the Awards. Make your District President stand up and be proud.

Americanism

Bonnie Holt, Chairman

Fairs and Parades will be going on in the coming months, so be sure to display your flags with respect. Try passing out coloring books, small flags, and literature about flag etiquette. Have literature on where you meet, the time, etc... and what the American Legion Auxiliary is all about. Wear RED,

WHITE, and BLUE as a true American.

In your meetings, talk about Star Spangled Kids, say the Pledge of Allegiance and also learn its meaning, sing the National Anthem and learn its importance. Tell all the Legion family members to fly their Flags and count your hours. Talk about the Flag Protection Amendment Act and promote the observation of Patriotic hol-

idays. Try holding a flag-burn-ing ceremony, and host a get-out-and-vote candidate night. Do a 13-flag folding, explaining what each of the folds represents.

SCHOOLS - When at the schools, be respectful of the Flag. Bring literature on the Flag's history. Get our Veterans back in schools to tell their stories. Encourage student interest in the Oratorical Con-

test, Junior Shooting Sports, boys, and girls scouting, as well as Boys and Girls State. Tell about Legion Baseball, including the history of who has played in the past. Remember our favorite pass time song, Baseball, Hot Dogs. Apple Pie and Chevrolet. Now for the 2022-2023 Americanism Essay Contest – the title this year is “What does Patriotism Mean to You.”

Homeless Veterans

Chris Moore, Homeless Veterans Chair

I met with a Veteran and leader in the Michigan Veteran Community for dinner a few months ago. At one point in our conversation, he asked me if the VA's programs for Homeless Veterans were working. While I didn't have exact figures in my head, I assured him that their Ending Veteran Homelessness initiative began in 2010. The implementation of various programs designed to help veterans avoid or end homelessness, utilizing the Housing First model, has had measured success. According to data from the VA's 2021 Annual Report, since its inception twelve years ago, over 920,000 veterans and their families are no longer homeless. This means the homeless veteran population has gone from 26% of the total homeless population in 2009 to a low of 13% in 2021.

What do you say is Housing First? Housing First is a housing assistance policy that offers unconditional permanent housing, as quickly as possible, to homeless people with other supportive services provided after. Housing First is based on five main principles:

- Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
- Veteran choice and self-determination
- Individualized and client-driven supports
- Social and Community Integration
- Recovery orientation

While we may be inclined to put pre-conditions on services, the reality is that it is nearly impossible to sustain employment, education, physical and mental health, food stability, recovery/sobriety, and family cohesion if you don't have a permanent roof over your head. The reduction of 50% of veterans experiencing homelessness since 2010 demonstrates this truth.

While the VA provides directive funding and assistance to end homelessness, each county in Michigan implements its own homeless prevention program. Connecting with local leaders in your municipality by partnering with the VA, and advocating for Housing First, along with increased funding and implementation, is an important way to utilize our collective voice. Assisting a veteran to obtain transportation, technology, food, basic household items, proper ID,

and most importantly, helping them negotiate the system can make all the difference.

I would be remiss if I didn't address one issue. Since I have been working with homeless veterans, I repeatedly hear the same statement, "Some veterans want to be homeless!" In my experience, this is blatantly false. Veterans (and all people) don't want to be homeless. They may not be able to imagine how they can sustain or pay for housing. They may not want to negotiate the housing market. They may not want to obtain goals someone else chooses for them. They may not want to live in group housing, a tiny house, in the city, or out in the boonies. What they do want is autonomy, respect, support, and a place to call home.

Finally, PLEASE, if a veteran experiencing homelessness contacts you or your Legion family for help, connect them to VA services by contacting either the National call center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID VET (877-424-3838) or va.gov/homeless. Additionally, I am always available if you or a veteran you know needs help finding support and services at 616-916-6260 or clmoore459@gmail.com.

Service, not Self.

Have No Fear ALA MIS is Here!

Dawn Gilbert, Lower Northern Area Chair

What does the acronym ALA MIS mean? In formal terms, it means American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System. To myself and my Unit, it means fast, quick, and seamless payments for new members and renewals. It is also the system that allows our membership chairperson to help update names and addresses and change contact information on members.

Dale H. Wheeler, ALA Unit 219, of Fife Lake, Michigan, was part of the National Bata testers when National wanted to test, giving units access to their member's information. Now almost 15+ years later, we are again a Bata unit, this time for processing payments directly to national. Our ALA MIS access has been a wonderful tool, allowing us to process address, name, phone, or email changes. Besides making changes, you can quickly see which members are still not renewed by pulling an Unpaid Unit Members report. If you are wondering if a status change was completed? You can check if it has happened yet. ALA MIS allows you to quickly get a list and use it to make labels to mail to members also. The list of useful things goes on.

Now we are Bata testing direct payment processing, no longer having to mail a check and transmittal notice to the department. How is that going? Great! Have you ever mailed a transmittal and, after a few weeks, found an envelope from the department with the transmittal returned to you? Something was wrong; it did not balance, someone's dues were already paid, or any number of issues. So those 40 members that you tried to pay did not get processed. Fix the issue and mail it back for processing. That takes time. Not to mention if you also must get another check to add to it—no more of that. You go through the list of members and select the box for the year you are paying, as simple as that. Review your list, and make sure you have marked everyone on your list to pay. Check what the system says is the total charge. Note that for your checkbook, then put in the bank card number to process the payment—self-service at its best.

Public Relations Report

Chris Merlington, PR Chairman

Who we are, what we are, and why we are. These are all things that come to mind when promoting the Auxiliary to other people around Michigan and the United States. You could add where we are, but to tell the truth, we are in just about every corner of every state in these United States. Finding a location is not that hard, "IF" you are interested in joining.

To get people interested in joining, we need to get out and let them know who, what and why we are. To do this, you wear the Brand, items such as our T-shirts, Polos and Jackets with our name on it. Tell about us when asked what your logo stands for.

Another thing to do is promote your Post and Units online, through social media, and in the Local Newspapers. If you have an event at your Post, let the local TV Stations know about it. Invite them to come and take pictures, and do interviews with the Commanders and Presidents. Let them know that we are all about the Veterans, living and deceased. We honor both as often as we are able. Show them that you are all about the Community, host a Fundraiser and donate to a local Food Bank or Homeless Shelter. Tell them about our Poppy Programs, our Nurses Scholarships, and our Child Welfare Foundation. All these things are small parts of who we are and why we are, and what we are. They are not the entire picture, but they are a good part of it. Explain to them how we help and assist at multiple Veterans' Homes and Hospitals around the State and the Country. Show them we care about all our Veterans, especially those coming home from combat and active duty. Let them in our little slice of Heaven in Michigan called "Wilwin".

If we toot our horns loud enough, we will gain members through our actions. That leaves the final item in our goals, "How we are." If you remember to WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE and HOW, you have done an awesome job at Public Relations and encouraged members of the Community to join us.

Constitution and Bylaws

Constitution and Bylaws

In the National Standing Rules, the Department Standing Rules, and our Uniform Unit Bylaws, there is a clause entitled Inclusiveness and Diversity. It states, “The organization recognizes the value of diverse backgrounds and beliefs of its membership. The organization promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect for the worth and dignity of its members, those eligible to become members, and those we serve.”

The idea of inclusion is to bring a sense of belonging to all our members. We all need to feel welcomed, accepted, and wanted. We joined the American Legion Auxiliary to join with others and make a difference in the lives of our military, their families, and our communities. We are looking for members who can bring us new ideas and viewpoints to help us carry out our Mission of Service.

Diversity comes in many forms. It can be physical differences, differences in age, differences in perspective, or differences in approach. This diversity can broaden our view of issues. This diversity can sharpen our vision. It allows us to see aspects of a situation we did not think of before. It may stop us from “doing things the same way we have always done them.”

Those that we serve come from a variety of backgrounds. For us to better serve them, we need members who speak to their perspectives and expectations. One way for us to do this is through better awareness of the abilities of our members and volunteers. Intentionally participate with new members to find out their interests and how they feel they can best contribute. Make suggestions of projects they might like to assist with or lead. Take them under your wing and help other members get to know them as well. Such actions will make them lifelong volunteers and supporters.

Change can be difficult, but change is necessary to move forward. Change can renew enthusiasm, and a revitalized enthusiasm leads to greater success. “Respect the uniqueness of individual members” is part of our Value Statement. Show that respect every day. Look for ways to support the full participation of all of our members in our activities. Treat everyone with courtesy and kindness in word and action and empower our membership to achieve personal fulfillment through Service, Not Self. We owe it to the American Legion Auxiliary to represent our vision and values in all we do.

Chaplain’s Corner

Dawn Gramza, Department Chaplain

Welcome to a new year 2022-2023! This will be a positive year for the Department of Michigan American Legion Auxiliary.
I am looking forward to a year of positive words and a positive attitude.
I know we can all work together and continue on the mission of the ALA, honoring our veterans and working in our communities.
This year I would like to collect positive quotes and prayers and I am asking for your help.
Please send me a note if you can. It would be greatly appreciated.
“Positive Thinking is not only expecting the best to happen, but. . . It is also accepting whatever happens is for the best”
Unknown
I am looking forward to good thoughts and vibes.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK NOV. 14–18

Fran Babbage, Education Chair

Our education staff members in all our schools have gone through a lot these last few years. Let’s celebrate them during American Education Week. Let’s show them how much we appreciate them for all they do to educate our children.

I am suggesting you give them a thank you card filled with ideas. There is a card template designed on the ALA site that you can download, edit and use.

https://member.legion-aux.org/cmsdesk/ALA/media/PDF/Programs/ALA_American_Education_Week_Card-f.pdf

The MI ALA Education Committee gave out samples and shared ideas with you at our Fall Conference.

You can give the card to a specific teacher, writing how much you appreciated what they have been doing, and you can fill it with different items that would be helpful to encourage programs the teacher could use in the classroom.

Some items that you could provide along with the card are:

- Coloring books :
*(our flag, light of liberty, flag etiquette, pledge of allegiance flag code, veterans) are available in quantity at Emblem Sales.
*American Legion Auxiliary website has templates for Poppy, Halloween, and America the beautiful coloring books <https://member.legion-aux.org/coloring-books>.
- Poppy days toolkit (making poppies, bookmarks, and a cookie recipe) is also available on alaforveterans.org.
- Flag folding guides.
- Meaning of the poppy.
- Poppy contest rules.
- American essay contest rules.
- Girls state and Boys state programs.
- Specific projects your unit is working on

If you are sending the card to a high school staff member, you might want to also explain our scholarship programs and the American Legion oratorical contest. <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/education/scholarship-resources>

If you would rather send a card to the entire school staff besides the handouts, you might want to include a gift card for a pizzeria or a bakery. Remember all staff (principals, secretaries, teachers, teacher aides, custodians, bus drivers, food services, counselors, social workers, nurses, speech and reading specialists) work with our students.

LET’S CELEBRATE THEM THIS YEAR!

BATTLE CREEK VAMC

Chris Reed, VA&R Representative

Greetings from the Battle Creek VAMC! I hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful summer and looking forward to fall!

I have good news to share, and that is the Battle Creek VA has opened up some volunteer activities for our Veterans! We sponsored the PGA Pro Golf Outing in May with a pizza luncheon and were able to start our monthly Bingos, with the first one taking place on May 25th. The Afternoon Parties have not returned, mainly due to new dietary restrictions; however, we are working with staff to come up with some new ideas for the Veterans.

More good news to share – we have a new 2nd Deputy for Battle Creek that is taking the place of Carol Parks. Her name is Penny Wright, and many of you may know her. She is currently the President of her Unit 257 in Battle Creek, as well as President of the 3rd District. Penny has been with Unit 257 since they opened, and their Auxiliary, along with their Post members, have been a huge help in past years with our monthly Bingos. Barb Parks and I are so excited to have her join our team! Welcome, Penny!!!

16th District Report

Doreen McMahon, 16th District President

I am excited to report on behalf of the 16th District; we are made up of 12 units in the Southern Area for membership. We have over 1600 members in the district and are extremely proud of members of the 16th District that have taken on Chairmen and committee positions within the state of Michigan. We have Beryl Robbins for Girls State, Kim Frazier for Southern Area Membership, Pam Globke for Americanism, Karen McAdams is the representative at Dingell VA Hospital in Detroit, Fran Babbage for Education, Donna M. Price as personal scrapbook, and myself, Doreen McMahon, for Past Presidents Parley. As a District, we have 5 meetings a year, August, September, November, March, and May.

In July, we participated in the 4th of July parade that was hosted by the Wyandotte American Legion, and it was an honor to have Madam Department President Marcy Jorae, Department Commander Marilyn Britten, and Detachment Commander Victor Fisher in attendance. We also had our annual installation of our new officers for the 16th District. This year it was joint with Robert Kamin as 16th District American Legion Commander, and Sons of the American Legion Commander Jamie Frazier and the officers from all our District Legion Family.

We are all very excited for the 2022-2023 year. On October 26th, we will have our annual membership rally at the Carl E Stitt Post 232 in Dearborn Heights. Each year at the rally we have fun getting everyone excited about membership. We are also planning on having a leadership school on October 8th. In November, we have the VA Parade in Detroit, Michigan. Most of our Units also join in with their posts for Veterans Day Ceremonies. February brings our Annual Americanism banquet for the entire American Legion Family. On May 16th District American Legion family holds a memorial service to remember all the members that we have lost in the year.

All our Units are busy working for our veterans and their families. I hope to be able to visit all twelve units of the 16th District this year.

ALA Girls State News

Beryl Robbins and Rysta Brown, Chairmen

Neither power outages nor slow internet nor the distraction of an attention-starved pet nor gloom of covid stays these ALA Girls State Citizens from the successful completion of our 2022 American Legion Auxiliary Girls State!

There was no denying that the ALA Girls State citizens were extremely disappointed that they were not given the same experience that TAL Boys State citizens had by holding their session in-person. After holding two consecutive virtual sessions we learned that it's definitely time to get back to a college for an in-person program. The students are not engaged or committed to the program when they are not physically together. Many tried to work around school testing and employment schedules, rather than dedicating 100% to ALA Girls State. When they are able to leave their homes and given the chance to work togeth-

Additional activities slated for this calendar year at the Battle Creek VA include Carnival, which will be held this year on Wednesday, September 14th. The Auxiliary will be serving hot dogs, chips, and cookies.

Christmas Gift Shop is also coming back, but it will be just a one-day event. The date will be Wednesday, December 14th. More than likely, we will be starting around 8:00 a.m., and more details will be provided as we get updates from the VA. If your Unit is interested in participating, please contact me either via email at ckhud@mei.net or cell number (269) 420-1488.

In regards to Christmas Gift Shop this year, our plan will be to purchase all the items needed in advance. In past years we inevitably had to make last minute shopping trips to purchase items we were lacking. Therefore, we will be seeking only monetary donations. If you are able to help support, please send your check to the following address:

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

It is important to note that all indoor activities at the VA still follow Covid guidelines, which include wearing a mask and showing proof of vaccination (not necessary to show proof of boosters). If you are volunteering, it is best to bring your Covid card with you.

In checking with Todd Greenman at the VA, they are currently not in need of any donated items. They have accumulated a large inventory throughout the pandemic; therefore, their shelves are full!

In closing, I would like to reach out to all the Units for their help with our monthly Bingos at the VA. We are having a difficult time getting volunteers to cover the Bingos. They are on the 4th Wednesday of the month and start at 6:00. Time spent at the VA is approximately 1-1/2 hours. I am happy to provide more details on the Bingos, if anyone is interested. I can assure you it is a very heartwarming experience, and the Veterans absolutely love the event. You can contact me at the information I shared above if your Unit is able to help out.

I thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve as VA&R Representative for Battle Creek and thank all of you for your help and support over the past several years.

er with other students to create and run their own state, we have the opportunity to get to know them as they blossom into strong, confident leaders.

We had a total of 87 paid reservations, 68 students registered, and approximately 58 students participated enough to receive their certificate. We interviewed 6 delegates for ALA Girls Nation and Amara Michelle VanWagoner and Sierra Kammerer were chosen as our Michigan Senators. Sophia M. Grierson was the winner of the Samsung Scholarship and will find out in October if she is a national winner or runner-up. This year we gave out three additional awards: Saaberah Al-haqq won the Alber-Pearl Citizenship award, Serenity Smith won the Wojack County award, and Megan Homoka won the Judicial Award.

Plans are currently underway to hold an in-person program which has been tentatively scheduled for June 18 – June 24, 2023 at a college to be determined. Thank you to all who supported us!

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Julie Becker, Chairman

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of U.S. veterans, military, and their families.

You may be thinking, “How do I do that?” A good starting point would be by reading the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers. Within this guide, you will learn how to; engage in thoughtful conversation, listen without judgment, and the importance of confidentiality, attire, and professional behavior. Attending the webinar for VA&R is strongly suggested, { alaforveterans.org}.

What can you do? Assist in activities that help homeless veterans. A few examples; Raise funds for local American Legion posts to help veterans and their families through the Family Support Network for veterans at risk of losing their housing or homeless veterans transitioning to permanent housing. Make payments of overdue rent, utility payments or deposits, and security deposits. Contact homeless veteran emergency shelters, transitional housing projects, and permanent housing projects in your community and identify the organization’s volunteer and in-kind contribution needs. Help the American Legion, State Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Chamber of Commerce promote job fairs for veterans and their families. Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, specifically if the house being built is supported by the American Legion.

Educate units and community partners about volunteer opportunities available at VA medical centers, state veterans’ homes, Fisher Houses, and other VA healthcare locations. Sponsor informational programs and recruitment tables at post and unit functions and at community events. Utilize department websites, newsletters, and other media.

There is not a VA hospital close to your community? Service to veterans recognizes volunteers who provide services to veterans and their families outside a VAMC. Volunteers conduct projects and work for military, veterans, and/or families from their homes and communities. A few examples; organize transportation for veterans to assist them with essential errands or medical appointments. Contact the Legion Service Officer at your post and offer to be on the list of people to contact when a military family needs help. Please remember to keep track of your hours and money spent. This will be helpful when it is time to do unit reports.

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 our youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace, and security

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 FALL CONFERENCE PRIZE DRAWING SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS !!

Grand Prize	\$5,000	S. Rose	Buchanan, MI
2nd Prize	\$1,500	D. Frohm	Jackson, MI
3rd Prize	\$1,000	L. Hutchins	Rosebush, MI
4th Prize	\$500	G. Schroeder	Crosswell, MI
5th Prize	\$500	S. Jacobs	Atlanta, MI
6th Prize	\$500	W. Watkins	Grand Rapids, MI
7th Prize	\$500	T. Lariviere	Saint Helen, MI
8th Prize	\$500	D. Mills	Morley, MI
9th Prize	\$500	G. Paul	Ray, MI
10th Prize	\$100	G. Mason	Waterford, MI
11th Prize	\$100	A. Blodgett	Bloomfield, MI
12th Prize	\$100	D. Kailing	Big Rapids, MI
13th Prize	\$100	K. Henderson	Caseville, MI
14th Prize	\$100	N. Moloci	Buchanan, MI
15th Prize	\$100	W. Boulan	Lewiston, MI
16th Prize	\$100	E. Hendges	Pleasant Lake, MI
17th Prize	\$100	T. Blossom	Lapeer, MI
18th Prize	\$100	M. Sellers	Farmington Hills, MI
19th Prize	\$100	S. Barry	Quincy, MI



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Columbia Southern University’s dedicated military support staff is comprised of current and former military members who understand the unique needs of these students and their families. Our military support team is here to help with:

- » Tuition Rates Below DoD Cap
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- » Courses Offered Completely Online
- » GI Bill* Transferability
- » Military Training Credits
- » Career Services Available



Orange Beach, Ala. | Gainful employment information available at: ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Disclosure.

*GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Note information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill. **Paid ad. No federal endorsement of advertiser(s) intended. Any reference to U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) personnel, products or services does not constitute or imply endorsement by the DoD.

3RD DISTRICT REPORT

Sonja Patrick, 3rd District Commander

We’ve been busy over here in southwest Michigan. We were proud to welcome the Vietnam traveling Wall that Heals to Battle Creek. American Legion members volunteered around the clock while the Wall was here. It was nice to see members from almost every post in the 3rd District come out to help. The American Legion Riders played a HUGE part escorting the Wall to Harper Creek. Volunteers from the American Legion, Sons, and Auxiliary took shifts throughout the day and overnight to assist people who came out to see the Wall.

We had a great turnout for this year’s Department Convention in Kalamazoo. The 3rd District’s hospitality room was a huge success; thank you to everyone who could stop by and a huge thanks to those of you who worked during that time, especially to Jim Saur, who coordinated the entire weekend. This convention has shown me how strong and dedicated this team of American Legion members is. I am deeply humbled and proud to work alongside them.

I’d like to welcome some new faces to the 3rd District leadership team, which now consists of Veterans from a wide range of different generations.

- Dan Holdridge, a Post 9/11 Veteran, is the new Sr. Vice Commander. Dan is stepping into a new role as our membership chairman & hopes to meet with all of the Sr. Vice Commanders (or membership chairs, whoever that may be) belonging to the posts in the 3rd District. Dan is the youngest Veteran to ever serve in a leadership role within our District and is bringing some new innovative ideas to welcome our next generation of Veterans, as well their families, into the

American Legion.

- Don Kujawa is a Vietnam Veteran and Purple Heart recipient. Don was elected as the Jr. Vice Commander for the 3rd District. Don is a member of the Ft. Custer Honor Guard and is well known around the District for his willingness to help with anything that’s asked of him.
- Al Smith is a Vietnam Veteran who has been actively involved with Post 55 in Albion. Al has done an incredible job showcasing the history of Post 55 and is actively looking for anything about the history of the 3rd District. Al is a wealth of knowledge, and we’re happy to have him on board as the 3rd District Historian.
- Josh Clark is a Post 9/11 Veteran who gives all of himself to those in need. He thanks the American Legion for giving him a purpose outside of the military. When Josh isn’t busy with the American Legion, he can be found at the Battle Creek VA medical center serving Veterans. Josh is also a member of the Fort Custer Honor Guard. He’s one of the youngest members of Post 79 in Marshall and has been a true asset as their Sergeant at Arms, which has led him to serve the 3rd District in the same capacity.
- Andrew Mohlman is a Persian Gulf Veteran who is serving in a new capacity this year as the 3rd District Chaplain. Andrew has served the American Legion and the Veteran community in many roles these past couple of years. Andrew is always willing to learn ways he can further help the American Legion and its members.
- Dan Bement is a Vietnam Veteran and the new Kalamazoo County Commander, and he’s already becoming well-known throughout the county.

- Our new Judge Advocate is Gary Easterling, who is also the Michigan Department of the American Legion Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Director and an accredited Service Officer who helps Veterans file their claim. I am also pleased to welcome him as the Hillsdale County Commander.
- Our District meetings are open to all members of the American Legion, Sons- of-the-Legion, Auxiliary, and Legion Riders and are held every other month at a different location. 3rd District also has a Zoom account, and all of our meetings will be available on Zoom, as well as the recording of the meeting posted online. If you would like the zoom link emailed to you, please contact me. We will also be using Zoom to offer virtual training on the 2nd Sunday every month at 7:00 pm. There will be a new topic each time. It’s free and open to anyone who would like to attend.
- The Officers of the 3rd District are Veterans from all walks of life. We belong to different Posts, and many remain very active in the day-to-day operations of their local post. We may be different, but we all share the common desire to see that Veterans are never forgotten and that no one is ever left behind. My focus this year is to build a stronger relationship between the American Legion and the other Veterans Service Organizations in our area. I plan on attending the Post meetings in this District on a regular basis and helping with events or other functions as needed. Most importantly, I want to listen to you. I want to make sure that you are getting the value behind your membership in the American Legion. I can be reached at 517-231-1818 or michiganlegiondistrict3@gmail.com



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SCOUTING NEWS

Scouting is now a Subcommittee of the Americanism Committee. The upcoming Fall Conference in Muskegon, MI, September 23rd through 25th, will be my first meeting as the Department Scouting chairman.

I will be talking about what is happening within Scouting Program. On Saturday, there will be a workshop on "How to engage the community with Americanism programs." One topic will be "Eagle Scout of the Year" and what to look for that is important on the Eagle Scout of the Year form. I would also like to make sure that I have the correct number of Scouts from every Post.

If you have the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman's email of the troop your Post sponsors, please let me know as it will be easier to send them letters of what is coming in the future.

I hope to meet some of the Leaders at the Conference.

For God and Country

Doug Carignan, Dept. Scouting Chairman

email: carignandoug@yahoo.com

Phone: 586 – 484 – 4354



McDonald-Osmer Post 451 in Ada/Cascade Townships is the BSA Charter Organization for Troops 345B and 345G. We had the honor of recently participating in an Eagle Court of Honor for Eagle Scout Will Conrad. We presented the American Legion Eagle Scout Certificate of Appreciation and AL McDonald-Osmer Post 451 Eagle Scout Good Citizenship Citation.

THE FREEDOM TORCH

Fall Outing

Activities:

- * Flag Etiquette
- * Outdoor Cooking
- * Flag Retirements
- * Fire Crafting
- * Honor Guard Training
- * Team Building Challenges
- * Rope Challenges
- * Obstacle Course



October 14-16, 2022

WILWIN LODGE
AT CYGNET COVE

* Organized Camping Encouraged



Eagle Scout of the Year: Up to \$10,000 Scholarship!

Eagle Scout of the Year: Applications Due March 1, 2023

The American Legion, Department of Michigan honors the Eagle Scout of the Year at the department convention. The winner of the competition receives a \$1,000 scholarship and is advanced to the national competition.

The American Legion annually honors the Eagle Scout of the Year at the national convention. The winner of the competition receives a \$10,000 scholarship, and the three runners-up are each awarded \$2,500 scholarships.

Eagle Scout of the Year application and eligibility requirements can be found at www.michiganlegion.org/scouting.

American Legion Square Knot Award: Award for Legion Family Members


The American Legion Square Knot award is given to American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion members who volunteer for their post-scouting program. More information and application can be found at www.legion.org/scouting/award.

This award is designed to recognize members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. The award is meant to recognize dedication and work in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.

Requirements and checklists can be found on our website. Any application that is missing a requirement will be returned to the sender for correction and re-submission. Documentation may be sent at any time, awards are given upon approval of the documentation submitted.

To learn more about our scouting program, please email: legion@michiganlegion.org or visit www.michiganlegion.org/scouting





THE MICHIGAN AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION

BUY A BRICK PROGRAM

We are raising money to help support our veteran services and youth programs. The bricks will be placed at the front entrance of the Department HQ. Bricks can be either 4x8 for \$50 or 8x8 for \$100. Legion family and military emblems can be added for an additional \$25 with orders on the website.

The bricks will be engraved as printed below, double check spelling and layout.

All American Legion Family and veterans as well as family of veterans in remembrance are welcome to participate.

4 x 8 Grey Brick



IN HONOR OF
EUGENE GRAVES
1941-1945



SSGT JOHN SMITH
DESERT STORM
USMC SPECIAL OPS

8 x 8 Grey Brick



WE SALUTE VETERANS
PAST & PRESENT
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SERVICE

12 x 12 Grey Brick



JAMES A PILOZZI
US NAVY WW II
RONALD J. PILOZZI
US ARMY 101 ST ABD
NICHOLAS F PILOZZI
US ARMY 10 TH MTD

4 x 4 Black Grantie Replica Tile



IN HONOR OF
EUGENE GRAVES
1941-1945

Limited time only – Bricks will be sold until space is filled
If you have any questions, please call 517-371-4720

YOU CAN ALSO ORDER ON OUR ON-LINE ORDERING WEBSITE:
<https://polarengraving.com/themichiganamericanlegionfoundation>

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C/O Brick Project

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 T09	 T11	 T12	 T13
 T21	 T22	 T23	 T24
 T27	 T33	 T34	 T35
 T40	 T41	 T42	 T43
 T46	 T47	 T49	 T50
 T54	 T55	 T56	 T60

Legislative Update

Tim Poxson, Legislative Chairman

The Senate and House are now back in session to address some pressing issues. As many of you know, any bill that does not pass in this Legislative Session that ends in December will automatically die. So, both House and the Senate are working on getting some bills passed before then. This includes the "Lame Duck" session that will take place after the mid-term elections.

One issue that we have been told will come up before the end of the year is the Property Tax exemption given to Veterans who are 100% disabled and unemployable from service-connected injury(s). This issue was vetoed by the Governor's office because it was bundled with another bill she did not like. She has also expressed some concern as to the cost to State Government for this bill. As it is now funded in full by the Local units of Government, that as we have been advised is a violation of the State Constitution Article 19 subsection 29 and the Headlee Amendment. This is somewhat in dispute by some in State Government. I should add that some of the bills that were sponsored on this issue we did not support, including one that would let local units of Government decide on their own if they even wished to grant any such exemption. That bill is dead, and we will work hard to make sure it stays that way.

During this State Legislative Session, we were following 45 bills that had to do with Veteran issues, one issue the property tax exemption given to 100% totally disabled Veterans had 8 bills alone. We also dealt with the PACT ACT and other Federal issues, the VFW has taken the lead on is these issues and we worked as back up on some of the Federal Veteran issues.

The new State budget includes funding for a study to determine where New State Veteran Cemeteries should be placed. Crawford County is already ahead of the program in trying to get a New State Cemetery next to the National Guard Base in Grayling. As of this writing, all the details have not been worked out regarding the locations yet.

The 2023 State budget includes funding for a New Veterans Home in Marquette, Michigan, to replace the home at that site. We will still push for the full seven new Veteran Homes we promised a few years ago. Many Senators and Representatives have been very supportive of our efforts.

The 2023 State budget includes the request for funding for the Michigan Veterans Coalition to keep the service officer program run by MI DAV, VFW, Vietnam Veterans of American, and The American Legion. We will be working on Roll-

over funding for this program starting with the new Legislative session in 2023. This will enable the program to become a permanent part of the yearly budget process.

The VFW and the American Legion will still be pushing for Hyperbaric Oxidation Treatment for Veterans with PTSD and TBI. We should find out this month (September or early October) if a grant has been awarded to Oxford Treatment Center for a pilot program.

New bills are still being introduced as of this writing. One such bill would let the spouse of a Veteran who dies and has a Veteran License Plate at the time of death; the spouse could continue to display the License Plate on a Vehicle they own in their name. We discussed this issue at our Fall Conference in Muskegon and opted to not support this bill.

We will also be working with other Veteran Organizations to get more support for Veteran bills. This has proven to be very effective in the last few years.

Beyond keeping track of new bills that are introduced, some of our priorities are but are not limited to:

1. Suicide Prevention Programs for Veterans.
2. Roll over funding for the Service Officer Program run by The American Legion, Michigan Disabled Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America.
3. Continue to support the Property Tax Exemption given to 100% disabled Veterans from Service-connected injuries.
4. Funding for more Veteran homes.
5. Cemetery in the U. P. (Note should be made that this issue has been ongoing for at least 10 years. I have been advised that one of the problems is that when the Legislators get close to having a bill in the past, many Veterans and Vet-

eran Service Groups push to have it placed in a location they think it should be. Because the State budget includes funding to do a study as to where Cemeteries should go, we have agreed to let that be the determining factor and not push for a different location. We would hope that our Veterans from the U. P. would also honor this and not contact their Senators and Representatives about the placement of a cemetery.

6. Work with the Federal Government to change the law to include all Veterans getting V .A. Hospice Care at home after being in a V. A. Hospital or Veteran Home to get the larger burial payment.

7. Extend the eligibility of the State Vietnam bonus to include Veterans who did not get it when it was issued but served btw 2-24-1973 and 5-7-1975 when the war was officially over.

8. Work with other Veteran Groups and Legislators to determine how the MVAA could be best organized to work with Service Organizations like the American Legion.

9. Make sure Veterans have at least 75% seats on the Board of the C.C.C.O.A. (formerly the American Legion Property at Higgins Lake)

The order listed above is random.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: As many of you have seen on TV ads for Veterans and Civilians who were stationed at Camp Lejeune between 1953 and 1987 to contact an attorney as advertised. **MAKE SURE THAT VETERANS DO NOT CONTACT A PRIVATE ATTORNEY.** Veterans and their spouses should first contact a Service Officer. A private attorney will file the paperwork and then get a percentage of the award given to the filer. Service Officers charge nothing for this service and do not get any part of the award. Please make sure you pass this on to any Veteran or Veteran Groups. Civilians who worked on Base are the only ones who should talk with a Private Attorney.

2022-2023 Commanders Coin Order Form

YES! I want to Support Commander Britten's project

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.michiganlegion.org to order online through PayPal. Call Ashley Zimmer at 517-220-2754 for questions



Around the State...

American Legion Post 57 in Owosso seized the opportunity to have a party on their patio during Owosso’s vintage motorcycle days on August 27th. The event had two goals, fellowship for Post members and recruiting / open house for the community. Members from the entire Post family (Sons, Riders, Auxiliary, Legionnaires) pitched in to make the event a success. One of the Post’s newest members, Thomas Webb, showcased his talents in creating delicious wood-fired pizzas and pretzels. The smells alone from his creations are credited with drawing in community members right off the streets. Post 57 would also like to thank the Riders from surrounding Posts for making our event a destination ride that day.



Post member Thomas Webb is working his magic at the pizza oven.

CELEBRATING 101 YEARS



PDC Garrett Veldman celebrated his 101st Birthday with a trip to Headquarters. Pictured here with our staff from L-R Ashley Zimmer, Wanda Ophaug, Kim Siedelberg, Garrett Veldman, Deanna Clark, Ron Runyan and Command-er Marilyn Britten.

Robert Merrill achieved 51 years of continuous membership in the American Legion, Trenton Post 0426. Robert is a Korean War Veteran.



Pictured (L-R) are Chuck Blommer-Finance Officer, Robert Merrill-Recipient, and Michael Boyda-Adjutant.

Post Commander Patrick McGinn of Rebec-Hosler-Sweet Post 227 in East Jordan presents scholarship winners Amber Sneed and Garrett Wilson with \$1,000 awards towards studies this next school year. The awards were presented on August 6, 2022. Congratulations!



Garrett Wilson will attend North Central Michigan College in Petoskey.

Groves-Walker American Legion Post 346 Awards Carrington Wash with a Scholarship based on her essay “Optimism and Resilience: The Courage and Determination of Veterans in the Vietnam War.”



Miss Carrington Wash 2022 Miss Farmington Cities

Boys State Governor Sammy Leggett speaks to The Carl A. Johnson Post 2 in Grand Rapids September, 14th. He and 2 other delegates were sponsored by the Post.



Boys State delegates- Landon Wiedenhoft-Secretary of State, Warren Cody-Chief of Staff, and Governor Sammy Leggett.



Amber Sneed is going to Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City.



Assistant Membership Director Randy Gilbert and past Post Commander Fred Joles, both from The Dale H Wheeler American Legion post 219 Fife Lake, installed a new flagpole rope and donated 4 x 6 American flag.



Shannon Garrett, Administrator, Genesee County Department of Veteran’s Services, Daniel Vela VSO, Genesee County Department of Veteran’s Services, Brian Machuk, Veteran Service Officer, The American Legion, William Palmer, Director Genesee County Veteran Services. Timothy Hill, Adjutant, Post 294

