MI Legionnaire

Vol. XCV No. 4 michiganlegion.org December 2026



Commander Austin Speaking during the Veterans Day Ceremony at the State Capitol in Lansing

AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

In this Edition

Commander's Comments	Page 3
Runyan's Ramblings	Page 3
1st and 2nd Vice Commanders Article	Page 4
Passport Spotlight	Page 5
Auxiliaire	Page 6
District Meetings	Page 11
Sons of the American Legion	Page 14
Find a VSO	Page 18
Around the State	Page 23

DEADLINE DATES

December 2026 Deadline is December 15th

Circulation: Electronic

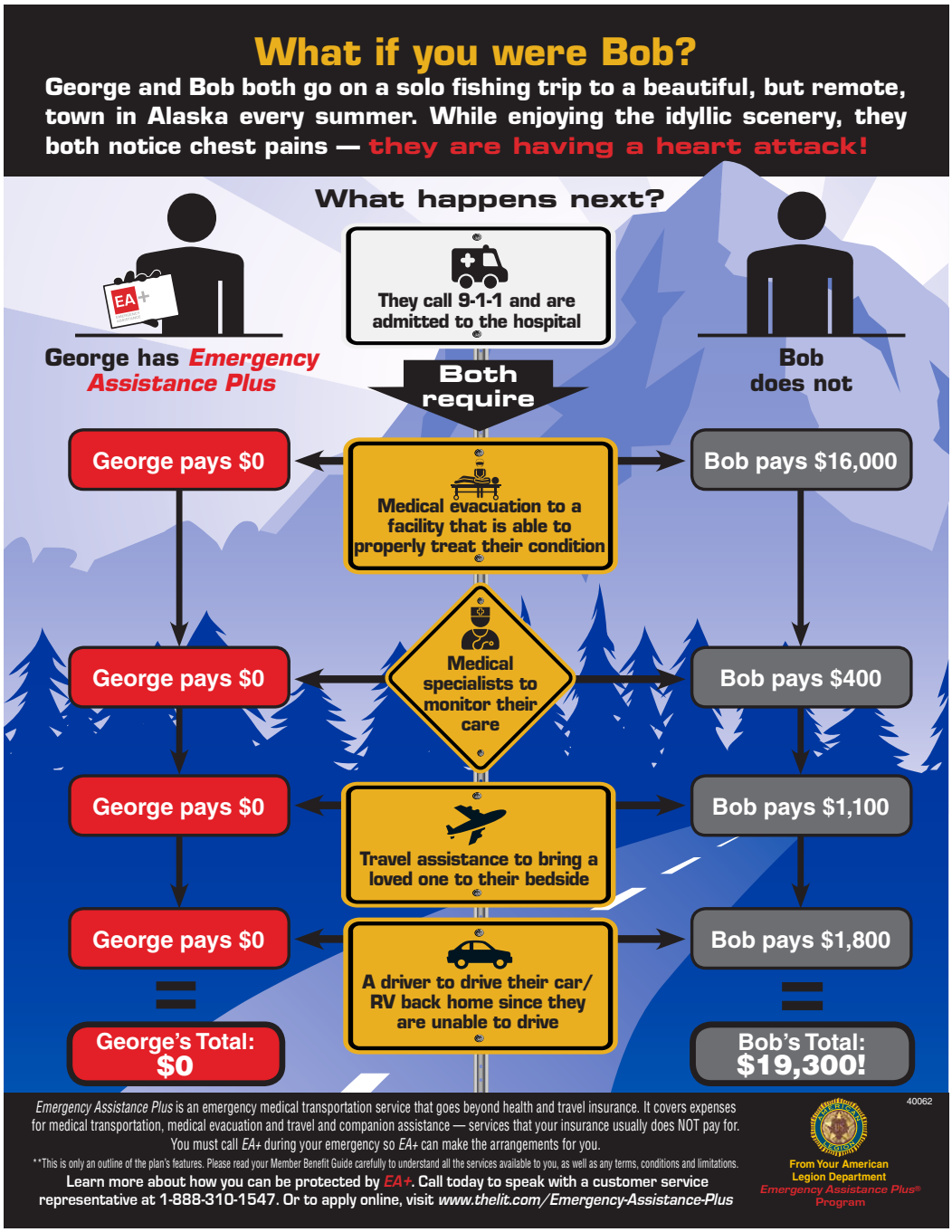
HEADQUARTERS DIRECTORY

Publisher: Ronald Runyan
Editor: Jim Showers
The American Legion Dept. of Michigan
212 N. Verlinden, Lansing, MI 48915
(517) 371-4720 Fax: (517) 689-6100
michiganlegion.org
media@michiganlegion.org

STATE ADJUTANT
EXT. 114 adj@michiganlegion.org
LEGION AND SAL MEMBERSHIP
EXT. 124 member@michiganlegion.org
LEGION FINANCE
EXT. 117 finance@michiganlegion.org
PROGRAMS: BOYS STATE, SCHOLARSHIPS, & BASEBALL
EXT. 123 legion@michiganlegion.org
WEBSITE, PR, NEWSPAPER & SOCIAL MEDIA
Ext. 116 media@michiganlegion.org

If 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 JPG. Do not submit a hard copy photo, Also 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



BE THE ONE

MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE & AUXILIAIRE

is published monthly by The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary,Department of Michigan, 212 N.Verlinden, Lansing, MI 48915-1297.Periodical postage paid at Lansing, MI, and additional mailing offices.Subscription $24 for member to receive the publication.

STATE OFFICERS

State Commander. . . . . Jim Austin
State Adjutant. . . . . Ron Runyan
1st Vice Commander . . . . . Roger Deaton
2nd Vice Commander . . . . . David Yahr
1st Zone . . . . . Mark Holthus
2nd Zone. . . . . Steve Caudil
3rd Zone . . . . . Tim Shosey
4th Zone . . . . . Ed Herter
5th Zone . . . . . Mark Maida
Chaplain. . . . . Rodney Tolbert
Finance Officer. . . . . Scott Nichols
Historian . . . . . Pete Ramik
N.E.C . . . . . Brett Holt
Judge Advocate. . . . . Brett Holt
Sergeant-at-Arms . . . . . Duane Miller
Immediate PDC. . . . . Roger Avie
Alt. N.E.C . . . . . Brian Mohlman
VA and R Director . . . . . Gary Easterling

Greetings From the Road!



Jim Austin
Department Commander

First, I'd like to wish everyone a belated Happy Veterans Day. I keep forgetting that my articles are a month behind the current time. I hope everyone celebrated safely and had a great time. We also held midterm elections, and while who you voted for isn't relevant, the fact that you fulfilled your civic duty of being an American citizen matters most.

Congratulations! We have met our November Membership goal of 65%. I am proud of the hard work you all have been putting in to accomplish these goals, from the Department membership team, all the way down to the newest blue cap, for your dedication and commitment to paying your dues in a timely fashion. Although membership drives the organization, there are several programs that are as important and worth the same level of attention. Deadlines are fast approaching, so keep getting the word out. These programs are ongoing from year to year. If anybody at the post level has any needs, questions, or needs help with any of these programs, your department-level committees are there to help you. Take advantage of the tools that are being offered to you. Please remember that there are several new membership incentive programs. Make sure to take advantage of them, and if you are unfamiliar with these new incentives, reach out to your post/department leadership to get information.



Lincoln Park American Legion Veteran ceremony and dinner!

Fall Meetings were held in Gaylord with great attendance and participation. Bravo Zulu to Chairman Jenna and the training committee for their commitment to getting all of us properly educated with the latest information. The Passport program is alive and well. We even had two unique stamps, available only at Gaylord during the meetings.

I want this organization to keep growing and getting better every day. Any contribution you offer to a program, whether that program is small or large, effective or less effective, your contribution makes it better and therefore pushes us towards my dream of improving the American Legion.

Getting a little better every day, personally, professionally, and through the American Legion is an effective way to implement "B.P.O.T.S."

In closing, happy holidays, and whatever you celebrate, I hope you do so safely and surrounded by friends and family. Until next month, keep moving this organization forward.

Commanders Project

Thank You to those who have purchased a coin and to the Posts, Units, Squadrons and Districts that have already donated. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

Donate $10.00 for Commander Austin's Coin



Supporting Guitars For Vets

Runyan's Ramblings: What You Don't Know About Music...



Ron Runyan
Dept. Adjutant

A **Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI)** music license gives a business legal permission to play copyrighted music from the BMI catalog in a public space.

What Is a Public Performance?

Under U.S. copyright law, playing music anywhere outside a normal private or domestic circle—such as in a restaurant, retail store, hotel lobby, gym, bar, brewery, or via background speakers, TVs, and live bands—is considered a **public performance**.

Owners of musical works (songwriters, composers, and music publishers) have the exclusive legal right to control and be compensated for these public performances.

How BMI Operates as a Bridge

The Performing Rights Organization (PRO): BMI is a non-profit PRO that represents over 1.5 million songwriters, composers, and publishers, managing rights for more than 25 million musical works.

The License: Instead of a business trying to track down and pay thousands of individual songwriters every time a song plays, they purchase a blanket or tier-based license from BMI.

Legal Compliance: Holding a BMI license protects the business from copyright infringement penalties under U.S. law, which can carry steep statutory damages.

How Business Fees Are Determined

Type of Establishment: Rates vary depending on how the business uses music (e.g., background music vs. live bands, jukeboxes, karaoke, or dance floors).

Business Size or Capacity: Fees for many brick-and-mortar locations are calculated using metrics like square footage, occupancy limits, or seating capacity.

Where the Money Goes: BMI collects these licensing fees and distributes them as royalties to the affiliated songwriters, composers, and publishers whose works were performed.

Important Things to Know

Other PROs Exist: BMI only covers the catalog of songwriters affiliated with BMI. If you play music written by artists tied to ASCAP, SESAC, or Global Music Rights (GMR), you generally need separate licenses from those respective organizations as well.

The Business Owner is Responsible: Even if you hire an independent DJ, play a streaming service personal account (like Spotify or Apple Music—which are strictly for personal, non-commercial use), or have live cover bands, the business owner (not the performer or the streaming platform) is legally responsible for securing the public performance license.



Membership

Roger Deaton
1st Vice Commander

Membership teams, thank you for your continued hard work. In November, we achieved 65% membership 8 days before the National goal date. I am confident we will continue to meet our targets. For those Posts that need assistance, please reach out.

Thank you to Wyandotte Post 217 for donating backpacks and school supplies to the American Legion Department of West Virginia, as this was the 3rd and final phase of our Operation Helping Hand. To recap, in the summer of 2026, West Virginia was devastated by flooding. Our department reached out to the Department of West Virginia and developed a plan that would safely assist those in need—a big thank you to everyone in both states who made this a humbling and worthwhile effort.

Thank you to the Department of Michigan reconnect team. Special thanks to Samantha Myer, Tecumseh Post 34 and Frank Roche, Royal Oak Post 253, for working on the Department of Michigan support for the Air National Guard's 127th Air Wing. As Selfridge Air Force Base grows, so will the American Legion's support of our Airmen and women. Thank you to Mt. Clemens Post 4 and Utica Post 351 for stepping up your support by hosting the families, providing the camaraderie the folks need and doing what we do – Support each other.

The Fall Conference ended on November 8th, and I just wanted to give a big kudos to the Department training team and the convention corporation for making this a fun event.

Americanism

David Yahr
2nd Vice Commander



As the holidays approach, please remember those away from their families. It's a good time to check in on our elderly and shut-ins. If you are able, bring them out to one of your Post events. It is this time of year that brings depression, especially to our members who have lost loved ones and are facing the holidays alone.

I had the distinct pleasure of visiting Post 397 in Holton. Very nice Post on the western side of the state. You can check out what is happening at their Post at https://holtonamericanlegionpost397.com/. While you are there for some great camaraderie and down-home fun, you can get your passport stamp. Ten stamps get you a hat pin, and 25 stamps get you a challenge coin. Remember, it's not just about the pin or coin. The goal is to get legion members out visiting other Posts to share ideas, have fun and enjoy events at other Posts.

Don't forget to send me your events so I can get them on the 2nd Vice Commander Facebook page. This is great advertising for your Post and helps legion members throughout the state visit your Post and support your event. Let's help grow Post events all through the state.

Program Dates

December 2026

December 4th- Oratorical Registrations deadline
December TBD- JSSP 1st round postal match target set sales & reg closes

January 2027

January 1st- Baseball registration opens on baseball.legion.org
January 4th- Brewer/Wilson Scholarship submission deadline.
January 8th- Law Officer of the Year submission deadline
January 8th- Firefighter of the Year submission deadline
January 24th- District Oratorical Contests deadline

February 2027

February TBD- JSSP Targets due to the Civilian Marksmanship Program
February 27th- Zone Oratorical Contests deadline.
February TBD- JSSP 2nd round postal match targets mailed by CMP.

March 2027

March 1st-Eagle Scout of the Year Award submission deadline
March 5th- Teacher of the Year Nominations deadline.
March 27th- Oratorical State Contest, Location TBD.

Stay up to date at: https://michiganlegion.org/programs/



Chaplains Corner

Rodney Tolbert, Department Chaplain

Mutual helpfulness is something we say a lot in the American Legion; what is its true meaning of it? Mutual helpfulness is the active, intentional practice of supporting others, driven by the understanding that communities thrive on reciprocity, shared responsibility, and care for one another. Rather than a business contract, it is a foundational mindset of looking out for one another's well-being.

Mutual helpfulness has a few meanings. Recognizing that everyone has strengths to contribute and moments where they need support. It replaces independence with a healthier dependence. Moving beyond feeling sorry for someone to actively stepping in to alleviate a burden, solve a problem, or lighten their load. Operating on the belief that when one member of the Legion succeeds and is supported, the entire Legion grows stronger. We can use it in our daily routine through small, intentional habits. Pay attention to the people around you, whether at home, at work or in your community. If you see someone overwhelmed with chores, or a neighbor carrying heavy groceries, step in and help. Everyone has a unique expertise. Offer to mentor someone or share practical resources you've found useful. Sometimes the most helpful thing you can do is listen without judgment. Participate in your post to help with work in and around the post. Help any way you can to support Veterans, not just Legionnaires; all Veterans and the wives of Veterans give them a ride to the post when they are having an event.

God and his scriptures place a heavy emphasis on community care; Biblical teachings frequently urge individuals not to focus solely on their own interest but to look out for the needs and well-being of others. (Philippians 2:4). Acts of practical kindness, sharing food, welcoming strangers, and offering material or physical assistance are consistently highlighted as tangible expressions of faith and love in action. Let's work at helping each other and the American Legion. Remember to pray for each other.

2027 Membership: November 20th Goal = 51,500
Current Total: 35,518 - 68.97%

Passport Post Spotlight
Cobb-Trygstad-Anderson Post 397, Holton



At Cobb Trygstad Anderson Post 397 in Holton, a visit might mean a perch dinner, a familiar face or a slice of birthday cake. Ask members what makes their post worth the trip, though, and the first answer is simple: camaraderie.

That spirit carries into the way the post's entities work together, supporting one another and veterans throughout the area. Members take particular pride in the progress they have made over the past year, drawing more community participation and encouraging more young people to volunteer.



The community returns that support by showing up for post events. Food is a favorite reason to gather, and visitors looking for a good introduction should consider a fish fry. According to the post, the perch dinner earns plenty of praise.

Fall and winter are especially busy. The steak fries held on the second Saturday in January and February are community favorites and offer another opportunity to stop in, enjoy a meal and get acquainted.

Visitors may meet bar manager Nicole Sands, whose efforts help make the post a welcoming place. Sands took it upon herself to make sure everyone's birthday is celebrated with cake and a card—a personal touch that gives members another reason to feel at home.

Post 397's commitment to its neighbors extends well beyond its front doors. During Holton Days, members march in the parade and contribute funding and volunteer hours to help the community celebration run smoothly. The post also operates a stand selling ox roast sandwiches during the two-day event, bringing its reputation for good food into the heart of the festivities.

That combination of community involvement, shared work and fellowship is what members want visitors to experience. They are proud of the meals they serve and the events they support, but especially of the difference they can make when everyone pitches in.



For Legion Family members planning their next Passport stop, Post 397 offers several reasons to make the trip. Come for a steak fry, try the perch or stop by to meet the people behind the post's community efforts.

Finding the welcome is easy: the post reports that GPS will bring visitors right to its front doors.

Plan your visit: Regular hours are noon to 8 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday and noon to 10 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. When the post is busy, the bartender may choose to stay open later.



L to R: Pat Twork, Trustee, Nate Kempf, Sgt. at Arms, Loraine Rodriguez, Adjutant, Jason Curtis, PSO, Royden Rinard, 1st Vice Commander

See Other Passport Posts or Register at https://michiganlegion.org/passport/



This Holiday Season, Make the Buddy Check

Steve "Radar" Caudill, 2nd Zone Commander

For many of us, the holidays bring joy, family gatherings, laughter, and cherished traditions. They offer an opportunity to celebrate our blessings and spend time with the people who matter most.

But the season does not feel the same for everyone. For some, an empty chair at the table brings memories of a loved one. Others face financial worries, health concerns, distance from family, or the loneliness of spending another holiday alone. Someone can smile at a Post gathering and still be carrying a burden we cannot see.

As Legionnaires, we share a responsibility to look after one another. That responsibility extends beyond our meetings and Post homes. During the holidays, a Buddy Check can be one of the most meaningful gifts we give.

Pick up the phone. Stop by for a visit. Invite someone to dinner, offer a ride to a Post event, or make time for a cup of coffee. Reach out especially to those we have not seen or heard from lately. You do not need a perfect speech or an answer to every problem. Start with a simple question: "How are you doing, and do you have someone to spend the holidays with?" Then take the time to listen.

If someone needs help, follow through. Work with your Post leadership to connect them with available support, and check back afterward. One conversation can open the door; continued contact shows that we mean it when we say we care.

I ask every Post in Zone 2 to make Buddy Checks a priority this holiday season. Include our Legion Family, surviving spouses, caregivers, and veterans who may not yet belong to our organization. And if you are the one having a difficult time, please reach out. You matter to this family, and you do not have to carry everything alone.

Enjoy the season, cherish your loved ones, and make room for someone who could use a little company. Our commitment to one another does not take a holiday.

Make the call. Extend the invitation. Do the Buddy Check.

212 N. Verlinden Ave, Ste. B, Lansing, MI 48915 Phone: (517) 267-8809

AUXILIAIRE

From the Desk of the President

December 2026



Anita L. Mennel
Department President
2026-2027

Greetings fellow Auxiliary members!

What a great Fall Conference we had. Our National President, Coral Grout, was with us for the weekend. She gave us some great encouragement and even ideas as we continue forward in this and coming years. A huge THANK YOU to our team of presenters. Our programs were all covered but one (that was extensively covered at the virtual conference in September). It takes many hands to make a conference great, and I thank all who had a hand with this one, especially our Office staff-so extra appreciation to Shannon and Mike.

We are coming to the close of 2026. But there is still much to do to support and work our mission. December is a 'giving season'; Christmas gift shops at our Hospitals and Veterans Homes can always use a little extra help. If you live far away, consider reaching out to our Reps and asking what you can do. Perhaps work with your unit or another organization to give a hand up. I encourage you to get busy with this, as some workshops are very early in December.

TIS THE SEASON

While this is a very hectic time for many, do make time for yourself. Maybe use the last week of the year to regenerate your energy. Take a few moments and look back at how your service has been and look forward to what you can do for your "why". What does that mean, you may ask – what is 'your why'? That is the best part of being a member of this American Legion Family – celebrate your 'why'. 'Why' you joined. Who gave you your eligibility? Who is the veteran or veterans in your life who influenced you to be part of this ALF – American Legion Family? Honor them by serving others. Be The One who reaches out, ask a veteran how they are! The holidays are often a time of remembrance, and for our veterans, that can bring unpleasant memories. It is a great opportunity to reach out and let them know you care. Let them know you are available, Ready to listen, to help, to encourage, to honor. If you are unsure, utilize the many resources and find someone who is. See you 'next year,' if not before. Wishing all a blessed Holiday season.

Junior Activities

Connie Kovacs, Chair

Juniors are our future-we must revitalize our Units and Districts' Junior Programs this year.

Build the Junior Activities program for one member at a time by giving Junior members a voice and opportunity to participate.

- Plan mission-related activities that are interesting and inspiring to Juniors.
- Participate in Wreaths Across America Day by volunteering to lay wreaths at local cemeteries.
- Hold graduation ceremonies to recognize Juniors who will move to ALA senior membership status.
- Pay the first year of senior membership to encourage retention.
- Share information about the ALA's scholarship programs

  Member Loyalty Scholarship
  Spirit of Youth Scholarship
  Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship
  Samsung Scholarships

Pair older Juniors with less experienced Juniors to promote mentorship. Make Junior meetings fun and informative.

- Explore mission service and how it can impact our mission at each meeting.
- Encourage friendships and mentoring by planning fun team-building activities (games, learning Junior songs, etc.) and/or providing age-appropriate crafts.
- Highlight the numerous ALA learning opportunities available to members in the ALA Academy, including the ALA Juniors eLearning Course.

Investing in Our Future

Jodi Loewenstein, Education Program Chair

Education is an important part of the American Legion Auxiliary's mission. Through our Education program, we can support students, promote quality education, and help individuals reach their goals.

One of the most meaningful ways we do this is through scholarships. The cost of college, trade schools, books, and other educational expenses can be a challenge for many families. Scholarships help ease that burden while showing students that we believe in them and their future.

The American Legion Auxiliary offers scholarship opportunities for graduating seniors, ALA Junior members, college students, and adults continuing or returning to their education. These scholarships can make a real difference for someone working toward a degree, certification, or new career.

As Auxiliary members, we play an important role in spreading the word. A scholarship cannot help someone if they do not know it is available. Share scholarship information at Unit meetings, with local schools and counselors, on social media, and with our Junior members and Legion Family. Let's make sure our students know these opportunities are available and encourage them to apply. A little encouragement can be the first step toward a very bright future.

Education does not stop after high school or college. Learning is a lifelong journey, and every opportunity we provide can help someone build a brighter future. When we promote education and scholarships, we do more than help pay for school; we invest in future leaders, strengthen our communities, and continue the American Legion Auxiliary's commitment to service.

Education opens doors. Scholarships help make those opportunities possible.

Today is Tomorrow's History!

Candie Chase, Department Historian

Historians have the privilege of preserving the rich legacy of the American Legion Auxiliary, an organization that has proudly served Veterans, military members, and their families since 1919. By collecting stories, preserving records, and celebrating our history, we ensure that everyone knows who we are, what we do and why we matter. By preserving history, we do more than remember the past, we inspire the future! We continue to ensure that the extraordinary work of the Department of Michigan educates, inspires, and reminds future generations that service is a legacy worth preserving. History is more than a collection of dates and photographs—it is the story of service, compassion, patriotism, and dedication that defines the ALA. Let us remember that every member has a story worth preserving, every Veteran has a legacy worth honoring, and every Unit plays an important role in shaping the future by protecting our past. Every photograph, article, program and personal memory tells the story of the ALA's unwavering support. Together, we will collect these moments, archive them with care, share them with pride, and honor the legacy they represent.

The heart of any organization's history is in its records–items that Units and Districts have produced and compiled over the years. They provide unique testimony to the achievements of an organization. Additionally, history allows us to build a stronger organization based upon those experiences. The Cavalcade of Memories Museum, as well as the library and archives located at ALA National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, serves as a resource for our members, volunteers, staff, and the public. You can also view this information on the National American Legion Auxiliary website at alaforveterans.org

By now, you should be compiling your scrapbooks and history books. When working on your written history, it is just that: a written history of what your Unit and District are doing. This is not just about the President and events attended, but the history of all members in your Unit or District. The Historian guide for the scrapbook and the history book is available on the Department of Michigan website. Please follow the guides when putting together your history. If you have questions, please contact me so I can help you.

National Security

Linda Kaare, Chair

Celebration/Observation Days. From December through March, six military organizations celebrate birthdays, including the American Legion (March 15th). Finding the list is easy when you let AI do the work for you. Other observances are Hug a GI Day March 4th and Medal of Honor Day March 25th. Keep your Legion Family informed so celebrations can be held if desired.

Deployment Support. Many Michigan National Guard members have been deployed to our nation's southwest border. Border security and combating drug trafficking are priorities. Sending care packages to these service members is essential. For the families left at home, work with your local Unit's Family Readiness members to identify ways to support the spouses and children. Fun care packages for children, baby showers, and gift cards are just a few ideas. District Units could rotate providing support to the families and service members. If you do something, please track the hours and be sure to include them in annual reports.

National Auxiliary Focus. This year, National has asked us to remember and identify/nominate service members for the Salute to Service Member Award (information and form located on the National Auxiliary website). They also asked to look for and nominate persons for the Hero Spotlight program (https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/hero_spotlight). A hero is someone with bravery, courage, selflessness, and noble qualities. Heroes may be military, first responders, or future first responders.

Supporting First Responders. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) organizations, staffed by retired first responders and psychologists, assist active responders following stressful or tragic incidents. They listen, provide emotional support and guidance. They assist with financial donations, help with counseling, travel, medical deductibles and more. Consider making monetary donations to these non-profits that help those who protect us and keep us safe.

Vaping/e-cigarettes. At the National Convention, Legion members learned about the dangers of unauthorized e-cigarettes. The FDA has only "authorized" 48 products made by five manufacturers. The PDF list can be found by searching "FDA authorized e-cigarettes list pdf." Unauthorized products may contain lead, other heavy metals, and harmful chemicals. Many vape retailers operate near military bases, and our service members' health can be negatively impacted. National Security focuses on a strong defense, which means our service members must be healthy. We, the people, have power, so spread the word to those who vape.

Gold Star Families

Mary Anne Yuncker, Past Department President

The 5th District recently held a Gold Star Families event hosted by the Neal E. Fonger American Legion Post 179 to raise awareness of the new Gold Star monument being built in Grandville, Michigan. It is part of the Woody Williams Foundation and is slated for dedication in September 2027. Refreshments were served by the members of the Auxiliary Unit 179. It was the perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



L to R: Carol Johnson, Stanley and Barbary Wilkosz, Joanne and John Burri, Rita Blodgett and Paul Anglim

Something Happening at your Unit?
Submit it to the Michigan Auxiliaire!
Send your articles and Pictures (with Cutline) to : info@michalaux.org

Michigan Veterans Home – Grand Rapids

Judy Jones, Representative

The motto above the door at Michigan Veterans Home in Grand Rapids reads: "A place of honor and compassion." The home lives up to that motto. As we volunteer at many events, we see this enacted daily in the care of the 128 members who live here.

The newer building is now the only structure still on the 90-acre grounds. The older buildings have all been demolished. The flag secured in the tops of the trees still flies all summer. It was just retired and stored until next spring.

Although the appearance of our home is different, the care of our veterans remains constant. As the old structures give way to more modern buildings, remembering our history has become more vital than before. Our facility chaplain, Bruce Kahlish, has prepared a program called "Where History Lives: 140 years of the Michigan Veterans Home at Grand Rapids". The community is invited to attend a tour of the cemetery and a presentation of how the home has evolved, including photos and memorabilia.

The Auxiliary team of Representative Judy Jones and Deputies Mary Anne Yuncker, Deb Weatherbee, and Sally Cole continue to bring the service cart every two weeks. Rosemary Maciejewski and Linda Walthorn join us for the Auxiliary-sponsored Bingo every month. Other events include a car show, "State Fair", Veteran 5K race, Haunted House, Trick or Treat, and Equine therapy trips. At our volunteer banquet in September, gifts and certificates of appreciation were given to all volunteers.

Every year the home has a star tree at the front entry door, covered with lists of what each member would like for Christmas. The gifts are purchased, wrapped and returned to the home for distribution on Christmas morning. This takes the place of the Christmas Gift Shops we held in the past.

The Auxiliary is grateful for the opportunity to serve our veterans and show our appreciation for their service. Our work at the home is under the direction of our volunteer coordinator Gretchen Muir. We continue the tradition of "service, not self," led by our predecessors Sarah Brooks and Pam McVeigh, who showed limitless "honor and compassion."



L to R: 3rd Deputy Sally Cole, 1st Deputy Mary Anne Yuncker, Representative Judy Jones and 2nd Deputy Deb Weatherbee

Chaplain's Notes

Darlene Jones, Department Chaplain

It has arrived! For many (and me too) some favorite times of the year are Halloween and Thanksgiving. They have passed and now we move into a very special season.

This month especially, we see lights everywhere, shopping malls decorated for the holidays, and, of course, snow and snowflakes! Many of you don't care for the snow or the cold, but you can't deny how beautiful freshly fallen snow looks on the ground and hanging from the trees. There is something amazing about the miracle of how a snowflake forms. Did you know some plants need cold temperatures to survive? Winter weather also helps control pests such as ticks, fleas, and invasive insects. And let's not forget how cute snowmen and snowwomen are!

But the best thing about this season is that people seem a little happier. Even though many of us have just spent Thanksgiving together, celebrating and being thankful, this season is an extension of that same love, kindness, and gratitude.

For those who are grieving a lost loved one this year, hopefully they look back on the good times and smile. Let's keep them in our thoughts and prayers - that God sends his comfort to them. For military families - many are missing their loved ones who can't come home. Let's continue to pray for their safe return home. There are so many reasons this may not be the happiest season for some. Let's pray they find peace and love, and that God will use you to provide comfort and care for them.

This season, as we gather with our family and friends, let's remember how blessed we are, because we have them. Let's ramp up our community service; send a card or small gift that will bring comfort, keeping in mind our motto is service to others, not self.

As the new year approaches, we get to celebrate a new beginning, a fresh start to make amends and move forward in our lives.

1 Chronicles 16:11-12:*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

VA&R

Rosemary Maciejewski, Chair

This has been an interesting and educational year as I work to understand hospital services, support homeless veterans, and bring services for all veterans together under one umbrella. Resources are available, but access varies. A county in West Michigan may have 10 places offering the same service, while one in the eastern part of the state may have only two. These differences highlight why we need to work together. Veterans have always been our priority, so let's communicate clearly about our expectations for this year.

Most importantly, continue documenting everything you do: stand downs, conferences, visits to other units, assistance you provide, and searches for resources. Sometimes stepping outside our usual circles makes a difference. At the Women's Veterans Conference in Bay City, I discovered valuable resources and made connections that helped me learn more about statewide events. Networking is one of the best ways to find information and resources. Collect business cards, share contacts, and tell me about the work that excites you.

Our challenge coin program is underway, but I have received only one report so far. If you want to know what the challenge coin represents or how to earn it, email me with your questions at Rammac999@yahoo.com. Once you prepare it, you can email your completed report. Participating is simple: tell your story and submit it using the fillable report on our website under Forms for Units, then the Unit Year-End Impact Report Tracking Spreadsheet, so we can document your activities.

Keep your work and reports on track for VA&R by completing them on time—or ahead of schedule. Thank you!



Fall Conference Wrap Up

Shannon Werner Executive Director,Secretary-Treasurer

If you were at the Fall Conference, you know how enjoyable, informative and successful it was. You all know that business and fundraising occur at all our gatherings. I wanted to let you know exactly what we were able to accomplish as a Legion family during our most recent event.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department Executive Committee approved the purchase of six Arjo Ceiling Weight Scales ($15,000+) for the Chesterfield Home for Veterans-this will significantly aid in the medical care and comfort of our Veterans located there.

Our Girls State Committee members raised almost $1,700 with merchandise sales and donations. They sold over $400 worth of raffle tickets for the quilt they had donated-if you haven't already gotten a ticket, get one soon by reaching out to one of the Committee members. The winner of the raffle will be announced during our Winter Meeting.

Our AEF Chair, Sheila Maxell, raised almost $500 by passing a "hat" during her presentation.

Our Department President, Anita L. Mennel, received $40 in cell phone fines and checks totaling $450 for the VA&R Endowment Fund-her special project this year.

National Security Chair, Linda Kaare, raffled off a beautiful patriotic diamond art picture and donated $435.00 to President Anita's special project from the proceeds.

So many great things happen when we come together. Consider attending the Winter Meeting that will be held February 12-14, 2027, in lovely Port Huron, Michigan.Have a great Thanksgiving and remember a Veteran while you are with your family and friends.

10th District Checking in

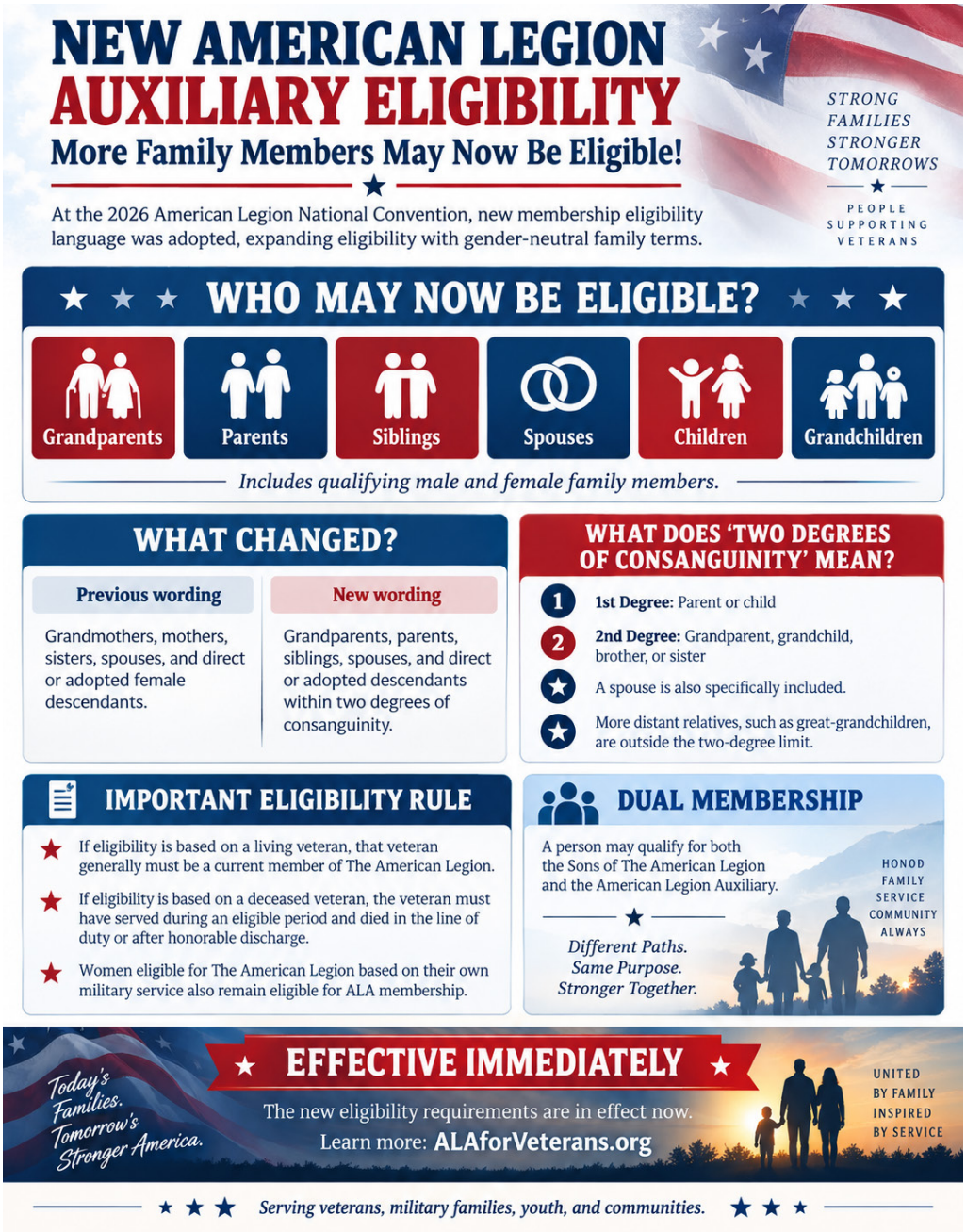
Rysta Brown, District President

Happy Thanksgiving from the "Mighty Tenth"! After the most magnificent Fall, we are working diligently to prepare for the upcoming holidays and winter. Events serving veterans, children and our communities are being planned. Units are gathering supplies to make sure that everyone is cared for.

Unit 239 in Linwood is decorating and filling 100 Stockings for Soldiers and exchanging ornaments with all participating entities. Unit 370 in Skidway has purchased 25 wreaths for Wreaths Across America and donated to the Freedom Center at Detroit Metro Airport to assist veterans traveling this Holiday season. Unit 18 in Bay City provides desserts for the Post Christmas party. They are also donating ten gas cards to the Bay County VSO and $250 for the guitar program at Bay Veterans Foundation. They donate hygiene products and laundry supplies to four veterans with permanent rooms at the Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter in Bay City.

The Auxiliary members at Unit 254 in Mikado will donate gifts and food to help families. Oscoda Auxiliary Unit 274 will have an Angel Tree (paper tags with the wishes of underserved children and families) where folks can choose as many tags as they want to gift the children in our community.

With a new year right around the corner. The 10th District will be serving veterans and our communities with L.O.V.E.



Renew NOW!

Just click on this box to start your Auxiliary membership renewal

https://www.legion-aux.org/renew

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

American Legion Auxiliary
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name (First) (M.I.) (Last)

Address

City State ZIP

Home Phone Cell Phone Email Address

/ / ☐ Birth to 17 ☐ 18 and over

Date of Birth *(Required)* Unit # Location

Have you been a member previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, fill in below.)

Previous Unit City/State ALA ID # (if known)

/ /

Signature of Applicant *(or legal guardian if under 18)* Date

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Through—Name of Veteran *(Female Veterans: List Your Own Name)*

If Living:

American Legion Member ID # *(Required)* Post # City State

☐ Deceased—If veteran is deceased, contact ALA unit about the necessary military records.
For Veteran's DD214 Discharge Papers: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records

Veteran Served:

☐ WWI (4/6/1917-11/11/1918)

Anytime After 12/7/1941 (check all that apply):

☐ Global War on Terror ☐ Panama ☐ Vietnam ☐ WWII
☐ Gulf War ☐ Lebanon/Grenada ☐ Korea ☐ Other Conflicts

Applicant's Relationship to the Veteran:

☐ Spouse ☐ Parent ☐ Sibling ☐ Grandparent ☐ Grandchild
☐ Child ☐ Self (Veteran or Current Servicemember)

To be Completed by an Officer of The American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary

I certify that the above named individual served at least one day of active duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or is still serving honorably.

Officer Membership Verification / / Date

HELP US GET YOU CONNECTED!

I am interested in learning more about:

☐ Volunteering for Veterans, Military, and Their Families
☐ Youth Activities, Including ALA Girls State, Junior Member Programs, and Scholarships
☐ Member Discounts and Services
☐ Other

Please contact the following individual about volunteering or joining the American Legion Auxiliary:

Name Phone Email

Name Phone Email

Name Phone Email

Recruiter's Name Unit/Post # City State

09/2026

Submit this application to the ALA unit you wish to join. If unit is unknown, contact National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500 for assistance.
Annual dues must accompany completed application. Ask local contact for amount due. ***Membership pending approval of application.***

District Meetings

First District
Meetings at 2 PM

Sunday, February 21
Location TBD
Sunday, May 23
Location TBD

Second District
Meetings: 11 am SAL, Riders@ Noon with Lunch, PSO training at 1 pm, Auxiliary & Legion @ 2 pm

January 10, 2027
Ida Post 514
11601 Lewis Ave.
Ida, MI 48140
March 14, 2027 (Nominations)
Springport Post 313
230 Mechanic St.
Springport, MI 49284
April 24, 2027 (Post Everlasting)
Tecumseh Post 34
300 N. Evans St.
Tecumseh, MI 49286
Post Everlasting ceremony will begin promptly at 3:30
May 16, 2027 (Elections)
Tecumseh Post 34
300 N. Evans St.
Tecumseh, MI 49286
June 12, 2027 (Organizational Meeting Promptly at 2pm)
Dexter Post 557
8225 Dexter-Chelsea Rd.
Dexter, MI 48130

Third District
Brunch @10am, Meeting @ 11:00am

January, 16 2027
Post 465 Climax
6010 S 44th St,
Climax, MI 49034
March, 20 2027
Post 48 Grand Ledge
731 N. Clinton ST,
Grand Ledge MI 4937
May, 15 2027
Post 36 Kalamazoo
1920 E Kilgore Rd,
Portage Mi 49002

Fourth District
Lunch@ 11:45 am Meetings @ 12:30

January 10, 2027
Three Rivers
March 7, 2027
Decatur
May 16, 2027
Door

Fifth District
Meal @ 5:30 pm & meeting @ 7 pm.

January 14, 2027
Post 179 2327 Wilson Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534
March 11, 2027(Nominations)
Post 47 3811 W River Dr NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321
May 13, 2027 (Elections)
Post 28 700 S Harbor Dr, Grand Haven, MI 49417

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

January 10, 2027
Devereaux Post 141
3265 W. Grand River Ave.
Howell, Michigan 48855
517-546-2534
March 14, 2027
Buck-Reasoner Post 238
1785 Cedar Street
Holt, Michigan 48842
517-699-2235
May 16, 2027
Bernard A. Bendle Post 294
3440 Morrish Road
Swartz Creek, Michigan 48473
810-635-7333

Seventh District
Lunch @12:30 meetings at 2:00pm

January 17, 2027
Post 16 Lapeer
March 14, 2027
Post 4 Mt clemens
May 16, 2027
Post 382 St clair
June 25, 2027
Department Convention

Eighth District
Trainings will start at Noon, Dinner at 1:00pm with Legion and Auxiliary meetings immediately following.

January 7, 2027
Breckenridge Post 295
Guest Speaker: Gary Tanner
March 21, 2027
Elsie Post 502
Guest Speaker: TBD
May 16, 2027
St Louis Post 256 - Tentative District Elections & Memorial Services

Ninth District
Executive meetings @ 11:00am with Lunch at noon. Meetings@1:00 pm

Tenth District
All meetings will start with lunch at noon. Meetings at 1:00 pm.

Eleventh District
All Meetings Start at 10 am, with Lunch to after.

Twelfth District
Coffee and Doughnuts at 9, meeting at 10 am, with a lunch and additional hour after lunch if needed.

Sixteenth District
All meetings start at 7:30 pm
* Service Officer School at 6:30 pm
**Memorial Service & Elections

December 8, 2026*
Southgate Post 478
January 12, 2027
Stitt Post 232
February 9, 2027*
Fort Dearborn, Post 364
March 9, 2027
Wyandotte, Post 217
April 13, 2027*
Trenton Post 426
May 11, 2027**
Lincoln Park Post 67
313-388-2088
June 8, 2027
Garden City 396

Eighteenth District
Meetings @ 2:00 pm

Nineteenth District
Meetings will be held at the **Gaylord Bowling Center, 1200 Gornick Ave, Gaylord, MI 49735**
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

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR POSTS AND SQUADRONS

90-DAY CHECK DEADLINE

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

All checks issued by the Department must be deposited or cashed within 90 days of the date printed on the check. This applies to checks already issued and all future checks. Checks more than 90 days old are void.

If your Post or Squadron has any outstanding checks more than 90 days old, please contact the Finance Department.

517-220-2751
finance@michiganlegion.org
Thank you for your cooperation.



Happenings at Post 351

Oscar Gomez, Post 351 Adjutant



First off, HAPPY VETERANS DAY!!! It was certainly an exhausting but AMAZING day for me. In the morning, I had the privilege of facilitating a Veterans Day Ceremony for several of the veterans, residents, family members and staff at Medilodge in Richmond. Big thank you to Robert Cook for helping out, especially by personally going to each veteran's room for those who could not attend the ceremony and bringing them their certificates, pin and challenge coin.

Then from there, I was off to the Michigan Veterans Home. (MVH) In Chesterfield Township for their Veterans Day celebration hosted by our American Legion Auxiliary...of course, coordinated by my wife, Marie. What a packed event. It seemed like almost all the members at MVH showed up. After the ceremony, I had a ton of fun playing a variety of songs for them, along with military, U.S. history, song and TV show trivia... thanks to the Auxiliary for providing the prizes for each trivia question and the yummy red, white and blue drink floats.



After we wrapped up at MVH, Marie wasted no time and quickly shifted gears to get ready for the Auxiliary (ALA)- sponsored MVH Christmas Shop for the veterans there, scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 08th (mark your calendars!!!). So, off to Meijer, where they were offering an additional 10% off for Veterans Day... let's just say we left with 3 full shopping carts for this Veterans Christmas Shop. Many, many, many more shopping "dates" with my wife to come over the next few weeks!!!



And to wrap up the night, we went to Post 351 (Utica) to support Troop #90 as they conducted Flag Retirement for hundreds of U.S. flags. Big thanks to our Post 351 Legion FAMILY (Legionaries, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders) for supporting our youth and Scout Troop during this event, which covers two of our four pillars of the American Legion: Children & Youth and Americanism.

Once again, thank you to all our VETERANS for your sacrifices and service!!!! And thank you to all our FAMILIES of Veterans for all your sacrifices and support!

SAVE THE DATE

Four Chaplains Memorial Service

JANUARY 30, 2027 • 2:00 PM

The American Legion Post 16
Lapeer, Michigan



Painting courtesy of the U.S. Army

George Fox, Alexander Goode, John Washington, and Clark Poling were U.S. Army chaplains representing Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic faiths. When the USAT Dorchester was torpedoed on February 3, 1943, they gave their life jackets to others. They prayed together as the ship sank, leaving a legacy of courage and selfless service.

Building the Next Generation of Citizens

How Districts Can Create a Mentorship Program for High School Oratorical Contest Students

David Kennedy, Education and Scholarship Committee Co-Chair

The American Legion High School Oratorical Contest is about more than scholarships or delivering a speech. At its heart, it challenges young people to study the U.S. Constitution, understand the responsibilities of citizenship, build confidence, and express their ideas before an audience.

Districts can strengthen that mission by going beyond holding a contest and mentoring students throughout the process. A District mentorship program need not be complicated or expensive. It requires committed Legion Family members, communication with Posts and schools, and a willingness to invest time in young people. The goal is not to write a student's speech but to help students become better researchers, thinkers, speakers, and citizens.

Begin by Building a District Mentorship Team

Identify three to six Legion Family members willing to mentor students. A strong team might include former Oratorical participants, teachers, attorneys, judges, clergy, Toastmasters members, veterans with leadership or instructional experience, and Legionnaires passionate about the Constitution.

One person should serve as District Mentorship Coordinator and provide a central point of contact for students, parents, schools, Posts, and mentors. Whenever possible, use a team approach. It gives students access to varied perspectives while keeping responsibility from falling on one person.

Recruit Students and Connect With Schools Early

Mentorship should begin well before the District contest. Posts can contact school administrators, government teachers, speech and debate coaches, JROTC programs, homeschool organizations, youth groups, and civic organizations early in the school year.

Districts and Posts should also meet students where they already are. Informational tables at high school football games, county fairs, community festivals, veterans events, and school activities can introduce families to the Oratorical Contest, scholarships, and mentorship opportunities. When students show interest, connect them with mentors quickly. This changes the conversation from "Here is a contest. Would you like to enter?" to "Here is an opportunity, and we are willing to help you prepare for it." For students who have never competed in public speaking, that difference can be significant.

Establish a Constitutional Foundation Without Writing the Speech

The Oratorical Contest is unique because students must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution. Mentors can help students find reliable research materials, understand constitutional terminology, explore historical context, and consider how constitutional principles apply today.

Rather than providing answers, mentors should ask questions:

Why was this provision included?
What issue were the Framers addressing?
How does this principle affect citizens today?
What responsibilities accompany the rights protected by the Constitution?

These conversations encourage students to think critically and develop arguments that are truly their own.

Develop a Consistent Practice Routine

Students improve through repetition. A student might begin by presenting to one mentor, then a small group of Legionnaires, a Post meeting, and eventually an audience in a setting similar to the actual contest. Mentors can provide constructive feedback on eye contact, posture, pacing, projection, transitions, clarity, confidence, and time management.

The objective is not to make every contestant sound alike. Some students are energetic speakers; others are thoughtful and deliberate. Good mentorship strengthens each student's own voice.

Add Assigned Topic Practice

The Assigned Topic portion can be intimidating because contestants do not know which topic they will receive during competition. Practice can turn that uncertainty into confidence. District mentors can conduct mock sessions in which students randomly draw one of the year's assigned topics and present under contest-like conditions.

Afterward, mentors can discuss whether the constitutional provision was clearly explained, the presentation was well organized, the examples were relevant, and the student demonstrated an understanding of constitutional rights and civic responsibilities.

Bring the Program Together Through a District Workshop

Districts should consider hosting an annual Oratorical Workshop or Constitution Day. A half-day program could include an introduction to the contest, constitutional education, speech development, public-speaking exercises, demonstrations from experienced speakers, Assigned Topic practice, and scholarship information. Posts could sponsor students, provide transportation, host the event, or help with meals and refreshments. A District workshop also gives Posts without established Oratorical programs an easy way to participate.

Expand Support Across the Legion Family

The American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion can assist with recruitment, communications, transportation, refreshments, event organization, and community outreach. Former contestants can be especially effective mentors. There is tremendous value in a young person hearing someone say, "I stood where you are standing." Districts should build relationships with past participants and invite them back as mentors.

Preserve Student Ownership Throughout the Process

There must always be a clear line between mentoring and doing the work for the student. Mentors can ask questions, identify unclear areas, recommend resources, teach speaking techniques, and listen to a speech repeatedly. However, the research, ideas, organization, and words must remain the student's own. Protecting that ownership preserves the contest's integrity while helping students develop skills that will last far beyond competition day.

Measure the Long-Term Impact

Every District wants its students to advance, but winning should not be the only measure of success. Success is the student who is afraid to speak in September but confidently addresses an audience in January. It is the student who opens the Constitution and begins asking questions. It is the young person who discovers an interest in law, government, education, communications, leadership, or public service. Most importantly, success is a student who learns that veterans and members of the American Legion Family believe their voice matters.

We should not simply invite students to participate in the Oratorical Contest. We should walk beside them as they prepare for it.

A District culture of mentorship can transform the Oratorical Contest from an annual competition into what it was meant to be: an investment in informed, confident, responsible American citizens.

Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Michigan

Mike Globke
Detachment Commander 2026-2027



I hope all is well as we prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday season. First, I want to thank everyone for their continued dedication and support of our great Detachment of Michigan.

A special thank-you to everyone who attended our recent Fall Conference in Gaylord, Michigan. It was a pleasure to welcome Mike Monserud of Iowa and his wife, Robin, Matthew Schuman, the leading candidate for American Legion National Commander, and Dr. Coral May Grout, American Legion Auxiliary President, all of whom addressed the SAL. We appreciate their participation and support.

I do have concerns about membership. We are behind where we need to be, and it's time to pick up the pace! Please submit those memberships and renewals, and remember to turn in your Squadron Data Reports (SDRs) to the Department as required.

I also want to thank American Legion Post 67 in Lincoln Park for hosting an outstanding Veterans Day program. What a great tribute to our veterans!

It is truly an honor to serve as your Detachment Commander. If you want me to attend an event at your post or squadron, please send me an invitation. I will do my best to be there.

As we move into the holidays, let's keep pushing forward, working together, supporting our veterans, and wishing everyone and their families a safe and wonderful holiday season!

Don't Wait Renew Right NOW!

Your renewal is just a click away. Click here or Log on https://mylegion.org/personifyebusiness/Membership/SAL-Renew



From National
Victor Fisher, NEC

First, I want to thank everyone throughout the Detachment of Michigan for your continued dedication, hard work, and commitment to our organization. Working together toward our membership goals is what makes our detachment successful.

We recently concluded our Fall Conference in Gaylord, Michigan, where I had the honor and pleasure of welcoming Mike Monserud from the Detachment of Iowa, the leading candidate for National Commander for 2027–2028, along with his lovely wife, Robin. What an outstanding couple! Mike brought a wealth of knowledge and experience, and both he and Robin were actively involved throughout our conference. It was truly a pleasure getting to know them, and we appreciate their visit to Michigan.

As your National Executive Committeeman and Media & Communications Chair, I encourage everyone to submit articles, event information, and photographs for the Michigan Legionnaire. Please remember that photographs submitted for publication must not contain alcohol. Let's continue showcasing the great work being done throughout our detachment.

If you haven't already, please follow the official Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Michigan Facebook page. If you need help finding it, contact me, and I'll gladly send you the link. We are also looking to expand our presence to X, TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram to reach younger generations and strengthen our communication.

Finally, membership is the lifeblood of our organization! As of November 15, we are behind where we need to be. I encourage every squadron to submit those memberships and renewals. Remember, there is no reward for being the last squadron to turn in memberships! Let's work together and get Michigan moving forward.

Thank you for everything you do for our veterans, their families, and the Sons of the American Legion.

I am proud to say that the recent NEC Meeting in Indy was a huge success. Three of the top Detachments in Donations were from the Central region, and Michigan was one of them. Since then, additional donations have come in, and we have donated over $8000 which is 33 cents per member. We are shooting for a Dollar per member at the request of National Commander Thom Skelley.

Last year, the SAL raised $324,557 and had 18,383 hours of participation. So far this year, we have raised close to $100,000, and we are less than $200,000 away from it being heaven when we reach 11, which means $ 11 million in donations from the Sons since we started our donations. Fantastic job, gentlemen. Let us do Michigan's part to reach this goal.

At the mid-winter conference in Port Huron, I will once again have a table set up with merchandise as I do every year. Please stop by and purchase or donate for the cause!

I am Happy to say that all 8 of these recommendations that we the Son's made for grants were accepted and approved, Hope love Company Inc., $12,000, American Kidney Foundation $35,000, Social Good Fund $20,100, Spectrum Sailing $4,200,

Child Well-Being & Youth
Sandy Lipman



Two Top Mountain Adaptive Sports $22,981, Our Military Kids $50,000, Recovery ED Program $500, Childhood Cancer Foundation 20,000 for a total of $164,781. Plus, the American Legion Children and Youth Programs received $625,000, of which $328,152.40 went to Baseball, $239,000 went to Boys Nation, and $107,647.60 went to oratorical and Junior Shooting Sports. Altogether, with the rest of the grants, over a Million Dollars was given out for our children.

A side note here are the figures for Children and Youth: CWF see above, Special Olympics $760,736 (15,675 hours), CMN $56,254(2612 hours), Ronald McDonald House $2124,790 (17,237 hours), Cota $154,965(17,884 hours), VCF $93,604 (14,741 hours), other C&Y programs 1,232,300(137,972 hours). This is with only 44% of the Squadrons and only 3 Districts reporting. Think about what these numbers would be if all reported. Keep up the good work and don't forget to thank a veteran.



Detachment Disaster Fund and Emergency Fund

Sandy Lipman, Chair

Many of our members are not aware of these 2 funds that the Detachment of Michigan Sons offers!

The newly formed Disaster Fund is set up like National's NEF, but it is strictly for our members within the state of Michigan who have been affected by natural Disasters. It provides help with housing, food, clothes, transportation and more. This fund is funded strictly by your donations, and all requests are kept confidential and reviewed only by an appointed committee. If you have a need, contact me, the chairman or the adjutant for guidance.

The Emergency Fund is set up to help our members who have fallen on hard times and may need help surviving (paying bills, food, medicine, temporary housing and more). When you apply for this help, we carefully review it to see whether all other resources have been tried. Then we will pay the bills directly to the utilities or other factions. For food and groceries, we will give you a gift card, and for housing, we will help cover the bill.

Please remember that these 2 funds are completely funded by your generous donations and can be presented at our conventions and conferences. Or you can send them to me at:

Sandy Lipman
13633 Vernon St.
Oak Park, Michigan 48237

I will get them to the right people in the Department. Never forget the sons are here for you, the veterans, and their families!



4th Zone

John Brown, Commander

I Hope all our members had a very Happy Thanksgiving, and all our squadrons paid respect to honor Veterans Day. Please remember that we are here to support our Veterans programs as well as our communities. Please get your membership turned in and try to recruit new members, so we can make a difference with our support of our veterans' programs.

We are in December now, and our homeless veterans can surely use our help, to stay warm this winter. I would like to wish all SAL members and their families an uneventful and Happy Holiday Season.If you have any information you may wish to pass on, then please contact me if I can be of assistance.

May God watch over and protect all of our active service members.

1st Zone

John Beeman, Commander



October was a busy month, starting with a fundraiser for PDC Carvin Chapman, who is recovering from a stroke and has been in rehab since June. What an event! Chief Pontiac really knows how to throw a fundraiser; lots of food, auction gifts and lots of people all came out to support Carvin and Kathy through this difficult time. Get well soon, brother.

On the 11th, I went to Blissfield for a District 2 meeting. Attendance was low, but we had a good meeting. On the 18th, PDC1 Clive Seydell, Detachment Sergeant at Arms young Clive Seydell, Detachment Chaplain Dave Seydell and I headed to American Legion Post 143 in Auburn Hills for PDC Dan Tyack's celebration of life. What a nice event honoring Dan, he will be missed.

I headed up to Wilwin on the weekend of the 22nd with PDC1 Clive and Chaplain Dave to help do the fall cleanup. We had a good turnout, and the weather was great, too. We set some posts for Clive's special project and made a game plan for the rest of it. Thanks to all the volunteers who took time out of their lives to help a great cause.

By the time you read this article, we will be in the holiday season, which is a happy time for most of us, but let us not forget those who are struggling. Take time to reach out and see if you can help. Maybe invite them over, do buddy checks; no one deserves to be alone during the holidays. You can Be the One to make a difference in their life. Do not forget to get renewed and push to get new members. In closing, I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

2027 SAL Membership: November 20th Goal = 29,822
Current Total: 11,740 - 39.36%

A New Year of Service, Growth, and Community

David Kenedy

The members of James E. Yenor American Legion Post 193 are filled with optimism and excitement for the future. With a dedicated leadership team and a shared vision, we are committed to strengthening our Post, expanding our impact, and continuing our mission of service to veterans, their families, and the entire Luna Pier community.

Commander Kathy Musick leads the Post with a passion for service and commitment to the American Legion. Alongside her, 1st Vice Commander and Adjutant Tommy Vance brings leadership and organizational skills that support our members and advance the Post's goals.

Finance Officer John Mallinger oversees our finances, ensuring fiscal responsibility while supporting programs and improvements for members. Chaplain Mike Elkins provides spiritual guidance and compassionate support, reinforcing the values that unite us as Legionnaires.

Service Officer and Bar Committee Chairperson David Kennedy helps veterans access their earned benefits while working to keep the Post a welcoming place for fellowship and community engagement. Together, these leaders share a commitment to serving our members and strengthening the Post's role in Luna Pier.

James E. Yenor Post 193 continues to embrace its role as a Veterans Community Center—a place where veterans, families, friends, and neighbors build connections, honor service, and strengthen our community. Our vision brings people together through shared experiences and opportunities to serve.

Our new weekend food menu gives members and guests another reason to visit, enjoy good company, and discover what the Post offers. We look forward to weekends filled with great food, meaningful conversations, and a welcoming atmosphere that makes the Post a regular destination.

Members can also look forward to expanded veteran outreach, community service projects, patriotic celebrations, family-friendly activities, live entertainment, and partnerships with local organizations. These efforts honor veterans while inviting the broader community to share in the values and fellowship of the American Legion. Each offers another way to get involved, meet neighbors, and contribute to our shared mission.

Our goal is to make Post 193 a cornerstone of the community, where service continues long after the uniform comes off and everyone is welcomed with respect and gratitude.

Traveling Legionnaires are always welcome! If you participate in the American Legion Passport Program, bring your Passport Book for a stamp. Whether you're passing through Luna Pier or planning a special trip, we'd be honored to share our hospitality and become a memorable stop on your Legion journey.

We invite veterans, Legion Family members, and community supporters to join us. Attend an event, enjoy our weekend menu, volunteer your time, or reach out for assistance. Whatever brings you through our doors, you'll find a home at James E. Yenor American Legion Post 193.

Together, we will honor the past, serve those in need today, and build a stronger tomorrow. Come meet our members, enjoy great food and fellowship, and experience your Veterans Community Center. We look forward to welcoming you!



The American Legion Family Department of Michigan Winter Meeting 2027

February 12, 13, and 14, 2027
BlueWater Convention Center,
800 Harker St., Port Huron, MI
On the Water - Below the BlueWater Bridge
Hosted by the Mid-Michigan Convention Corp

REGISTRATION FORM

Online at https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/department-of-michigan-american-legion-family-2027-winter-meeting

Or mail form below

The American Legion requires each person attending register with the corporation and be issued proper credentials to attend any meeting, session, or event in connection with the Conference.

(Please print legibly so we can correctly spell your name on your conference badge.)

Name: _____ **Group:** ☐Leg ☐Aux☐ Sons ☐ALR

Address: _____ **City/State/Zip:** _____

email address: _____ **Cellphone:** _____

Location Post/Unit (# & city) _____

Additional registrants covered under same payment:

Name: _____ **Group:** ☐Leg ☐Aux☐ Sons ☐ALR

Name: _____ **Group:** ☐Leg ☐Aux☐ Sons ☐ALR

Name: _____ **Group:** ☐Leg ☐Aux☐ Sons ☐ALR

Total registrations _____times (x) $25.00 per person = $_____

Will you be staying at local hotel? ☐Yes ☐No

If staying at local hotel which one? ☐DoubleTree ☐Fairfield Inn

Please make your check payable to: **MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION CORP**
and mail with this form to: AMERICAN LEGION MMCC, P. O. Box 441, Linden, MI 48451
Confirmation of registration being received will be emailed back by dianea7171@yahoo.com
Contact: with any questions. Tim Hill at text or call 810-444-8644 timothy_w_hill@yahoo.com

National Commander's Dinner Reservations must be made separately.

Refer to TAL Department Website at https://michiganlegion.org/

Room reservations at hotels are your responsibility and should be made directly with them.

Reserve your room early - Limited number of hotel rooms are available at discounted rates

Host Hotel attached to Convention Center
DoubleTree by Hilton
800 Harker St.
Port Huron

810-984-8000
Or Hotel Website

$139 Plus 11% tax
Reference Code GCB
Price is reserved until 1/ 10 2027 or sold out

Approx 1.4 miles from Convention Center
Fairfield Inn
1635 Yeager St
Port Huron
810-982-8500
Or Hotel Website

$119 to 129 room dependent Plus 11% tax
Reference Code Mention American Legion Room Block
Includes free breakfast
Price is reserved until 1 /29 / 2027 or sold out

Stay up to date Mid-Michigan Convention Corp

Winter Meeting Website



Thumb Coast Flip Book

Downtown Port Huron



Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Gary Easterling Director

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.

Gary Easterling, Director
geasterling@michiganlegion.org
Cell (313) 549-8557
Office Phone (313) 964-6640
Fax (313) 964-5697
Josh Scargall,Asst Diector
JScargallalad@outlook.com
Cell: 313-809-2002

Call for a Service officer in your area:

833.648.3826 Option 1

e-mail - al.vbadet@va.gov

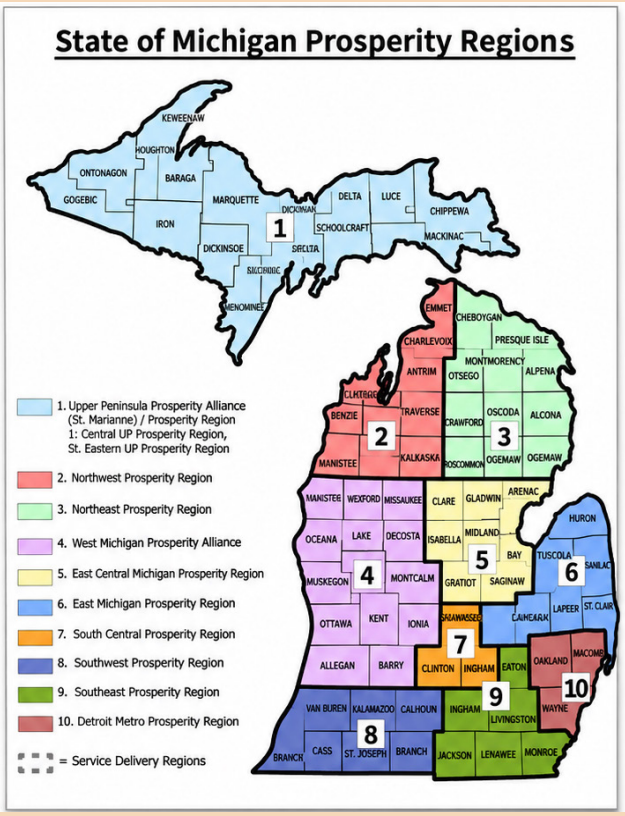
like us on Facebook @MichiganVAR

Check out all your benifits at
www.mivabenefits.org

DON'T FACE THE VA ALONE!

Find an American Legion Veteran Service Officer near you. Use an Accredited Veteran Service Officer. Find a Service Officer near you at **https://www.mivabenefits.org/find-service-officer/** OR Call **833.648.3826** Option 1 and they will guide you to an accredited veteran service officer who will help you.

Region	VSO(s)
1	Shay Grady; Betsy Huggett; Rick Wiles; Stacy Thill
2	Stephanie Fisher; Phil Babcock
3	Stephanie Fisher; Rick Wiles
4	Patty Breas; Courtney Mills
5	Kieshan Counts; Kimberly Napoleon; Tommy Simpkins
6	Nick Milligan
7	Nick Milligan
8	Joshua Clark
9	Brian Brooks
10	Angela Barkell; Justin Schave; Charles Johnson; Lisa Misenko; Josh Scargall; Matthew Schantz





Wellcare and Legionnaires Insurance Trust are proud to support veterans.

Wellcare and Legionnaires Insurance Trust are committed to helping veterans find the care they need as they strive to stay healthy and enjoy their best, happiest lives. This commitment is particularly important as we recognize the Be The One initiative and PTSD Awareness month, providing the support veterans need to thrive with coverage that respects their unique needs.

If you have Medicare and Medicaid limited income, recently lost employer coverage, are turning 65, or you've just moved, you may be eligible for one of many qualifying events that allow you to enroll now.

Find out how we can live healthier together.

Call today to learn more:

844-640-0095 (TTY:711)
8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.

Or visit www.thelit.com

AMERICAN LEGION | wellcare
THE OFFICIAL MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PROVIDER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
Endorsed by your American Legion Department

Donation Offers Another Way to Serve



Rev. James K. Warunek,
Blood, Eyes & Vital Organs Chairman

Service takes many forms. For members of The American Legion, donating blood or registering as an organ, eye and tissue donor offers another way to help neighbors, fellow veterans and families we may never meet.

Behind every donation is someone hoping for more time: a patient awaiting surgery, a parent facing organ failure or a person whose sight could be restored through a corneal transplant. A donor's decision can change their future.

Donated blood supports accident victims, cancer patients, surgical patients and people with chronic illnesses. It cannot be manufactured; the supply depends on people willing to give. Because blood can be separated into red blood cells, plasma and platelets, one donation can help multiple patients. For eligible donors, an appointment generally takes about an hour.

Eye donation can also transform lives. Donated corneal tissue can restore or improve vision for people with corneal blindness or disease, helping them regain independence and return to everyday activities. Wearing glasses, having poor eyesight or being older does not automatically rule out donation. Medical professionals determine eligibility.

For people with severe organ failure, a transplant may offer a chance to survive. One deceased organ donor can potentially save up to eight lives, while eye and tissue donations can help others.

Misunderstandings sometimes keep people from registering. The medical team treating a patient works to save that person's life, independently of the transplant team. Age and medical history do not automatically disqualify a donor; individual circumstances matter.

Donation is a personal choice, and religious beliefs, cultural traditions and individual values deserve respect. Making an informed decision—and sharing it with loved ones—can provide clarity during a difficult time.

Consider scheduling a blood donation if you are eligible. Learn about organ, eye and tissue donation through your state's donor registry or motor vehicle department, and talk with your family about your wishes.

For those committed to serving others, donation is a practical expression of that commitment. It can mean another birthday, restored sight or more time together for a family.

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.

We're proud to partner with the Department of Michigan American Legion.

Dignity Memorial
LIFE WELL CELEBRATED
DignityMichigan.com

THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY
MANDATED BY APPROVED RESOLUTION

POST RESOURCE OFFICER

Use the title Post Resource Officer for Post officers who do not hold official VA accreditation.

Only individuals officially accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs may use the title

Post Service Officer.

The American Legion Membership Application

(Name) (Date of Birth)

(Mailing Address) (Phone Number)

(City) (State) (Zip) (Post #)

(E-mail) ☐ Male ☐ Female (Gender) (Dues)

☐ 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 ☐ U.S. Army
☐ Gulf War ☐ U.S. Navy
☐ Panama ☐ U.S. Air Force
☐ Lebanon/Grenada ☐ U.S. Marines
☐ Vietnam ☐ U.S. Space Force
☐ Korea ☐ U.S. Coast Guard
☐ WWII ☐ Merchant Marines (WWII only)
☐ Other Conflicts

Signature of applicant Date



Legion Legislative Report

Tim Poxson, Legislative Chair

It was great seeing many of you at the Fall Conference. It was a great conference with many good classes.

The 2025 report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that Michigan's unemployment rate for the civilian population was 4.7%. While the unemployment rate for Michigan's veterans was 8.2 %, one of the highest veteran unemployment rates per-capita, even higher than California, Texas, and Florida all with greater veteran populations. Based on that report, the Department Executive Committee voted to add the "Veteran Unemployment" issue in Michigan to our Legislative Committee Priorities. We encourage your input if you have ideas to help lower the rate. We have a Representative, Cam Cavitt, who has promised to work with us to get legislation to lower these numbers in the 2026-2027 session of the State Legislature.

I am often asked, "How does an issue become a Legislative Priority?" As most of you know, the American Legion operates through resolutions. If you think something should be a Legislative Priority, you need to write a resolution. Then submit it to your Post for approval. With your Post's approval, you submit the resolution for District approval. If your District approves, they will send it to the Department for consideration at the next Conference by the Department Executive Committee (DEC) or the next Department Convention by the full body present at the Convention.

Sometimes, a resolution can be submitted to DEC sooner than a Convention or Conference. Resolutions can also be submitted by a committee or by the Department. At any point, a resolution can be sent back to the originator for more information, or it can be voted down. It can also be received and filed. I suggest that, before you write a resolution, you consult with someone in the American Legion who has a background in resolutions.

Once a resolution for a Legislative Priority is passed, the Legislative Chair, the Legislative Committee and every Legionnaire have the responsibility to help get it passed into law.

It will remain a priority until the Governor signs a legislative bill that takes care of the issue. However, it can also be removed as a priority if a resolution is passed to remove it. We have had several priorities removed because the legislation has been signed into law. As Legionnaires, it is also our responsibility to support the National organization's legislative priorities and help get them passed.



Legacy Ride is Set!

Tim Walters, Ride Captain

Calling all American Legion Riders, Legion Posts, friends, and supporters! Join us for two days of riding, camaraderie, and remembrance during the 2027 In-State Legacy Run, held entirely in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.



We'll kick things off at American Legion Post 5 in Iron Mountain, then crisscross the U.P. as we head east toward St. Ignace, just north of the Mighty Mac. Our final destination in St. Ignace will be announced as plans are finalized. Along the way, our U.P. Rider Chapters look forward to sharing their communities, scenic roads, and hospitality with riders from across the state.

No motorcycle? No problem! Cars and trucks are welcome, too. Whether you're on two wheels or four, you're invited to join the ride and be part of the fun. Posts without a Riders chapter are encouraged to connect with a nearby chapter and make the trip together.

This year's ride takes place the weekend after Labor Day, rather than in June. It's a great opportunity to enjoy the U.P. as fall approaches, reconnect with old friends, and make new ones. We'll also ride in remembrance of September 11, honoring the promise that "We Will Never Forget." The ride will continue to support MWRP, and any fundraising efforts by participating Chapters and Posts are appreciated.

Registration forms are available on the Michigan Legacy Run Facebook page, or you can request forms using the email address provided below.

Mark your calendars, gather your riding friends, and come explore the U.P. with us. Let's make the 2027 In-State Legacy Run a ride to remember!



Honoring Veterans Through Service and Connection

Samantha Myers, 2nd District 1st Vice Commander

The stories shared across a luncheon table, the fellowship of a community gathering, and the quiet reflection of a memorial ceremony all carry the meaning of Veterans Day. Each offers an opportunity to honor those who have worn our nation's uniform—and to remind them that their service is remembered.

This year, members of the American Legion's 2nd District leadership joined veterans, families, and community members for a day of recognition and connection.



2nd District Vice Commander Samantha Myers with Kathy Williams

At the Thank a Vet event, 2nd District 1st Vice Commander Samantha Myers represented the American Legion, speaking about the meaning and history of Veterans Day and the organization's work on behalf of veterans, their families, and their communities.

Her message also looked beyond the day itself, addressing what each of us can do to honor veterans throughout the year. Recognition begins with gratitude, but it grows through involvement: supporting local Posts, reaching out to veterans, and taking time to listen.

For Jackson County Commander Jim Ellis, Veterans Day brought a full schedule of opportunities to honor and spend time with fellow veterans.



His day began at a Veterans Day ceremony in downtown Jackson, where the community paid tribute to those who have served. From there, he visited Jackson Post 29 for a Veterans Day luncheon, followed by another luncheon honoring veterans at Rose City Post.



At Springport Post 313, Ellis attended a joint American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars dinner celebrating veterans. During the gathering, he also had the pleasure of meeting the 2026 VFW Ms. Sr. Michigan Pageant winner.

The day concluded with his return to Jackson Post 29 for a solemn ceremony remembering veterans who had passed away during the previous year. It was a time to reflect on their lives, honor their service, and share in the responsibility of preserving their memory.

Reflecting on the day, Ellis emphasized how meaningful it was to be surrounded by veterans and their loved ones. Listening to their stories of service, sacrifice, and life experiences made each stop more than an event on the schedule. It made it an opportunity to connect.

These visits reflect a central responsibility of American Legion leadership: being present.



Knight Templar Tim Monroe with County Commander Jim Ellis

Supporting Posts, connecting with veterans, listening to their experiences, and ensuring they know they are remembered are essential parts of the organization's mission. That work happens at ceremonies and community dinners, but also through personal visits, buddy checks, and everyday conversations.

Throughout the 2nd District, members and volunteers helped make Veterans Day meaningful. They organized ceremonies, prepared meals, welcomed guests, visited veterans, and offered their time. Their efforts created places for remembrance and fellowship—and opportunities for veterans to share their stories.

Veterans Day is one day on the calendar. The mission continues through the other 364. How did your Post or community honor veterans this Veterans Day?

Service does not end when the uniform comes off, and neither should our gratitude.



BE THE ONE

250th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

PAST ★ PEOPLE ★ PURPOSE ★ A STRONGER TOMORROW

SAME IDEALS. A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.

HONOR
SERVICE
CITIZENSHIP
STRONGER
AMERICANS

Commemorative .45 Cal 1911 Handgun

A MORE PERFECT UNION STILL INSPIRES

A Patriotic Fundraising Promotion Honoring America's 250th



FREEDOM
SERVICE
LEADERSHIP
CITIZENSHIP

1776 — 2026
FREEDOM THROUGH GENERATIONS

$3,400 value

AMERICA ★ 250 YEARS ★ ONE ENDURING LEGACY

Gun by A&A Engraving

Proceeds Go To The

AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION

Supporting Michigan Boys State

MICHIGAN BOYS STATE
LEAD ★ SERVE ★ BELONG

Drawing: **Monday, June 21, 2027 at 11:00 AM**

Tickets: **$20 each** Limited to 500 tickets

Location: **State HQ**

Same Spirit Brighter Futures

★ ★ INVESTING IN TOMORROW'S LEADERS ★ ★

TO PURCHASE NOW WITH CASH, CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD CONTACT ABBY AT 517-220-2753 OR SUPPORT@MICHIGANLEGION.ORG

Around the State...

Veterans Day Observations from Rochester Post 172



They served over 100 people Breakfast Before heading out to the ceremony

In Honor of Veterans Day

5th graders at the Wolverine Elementary School in Wolverine celebrated Veterans and their sacrifice and service. They have an annual Veterans Breakfast.



Pinning Ceremony in Grand Blanc







Commander Alyssa Paulie of Grand Blanc Post 413 attended a pinning ceremony honoring veterans. Veterans received a special pin, and everyone there got an American flag pin as a reminder of our gratitude and appreciation.

American Legion Post 9 Muskegon



Veterans Day Ceremony from the Causeway at The Veterans Park in Muskegon

AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

Veterans Speaks to Will Rogers Elementary



Kim Lambouris spoke to a wonderful group of 4th grade students. It was such a privilege and honor to spend a couple of hours with them

Symons Students Walk, Sing as Milan Veterans Day Tradition Returns



Post Commander Dutch Nie, Post 268, addresses the crowd at the ceremony

SCENES FROM THE FALL CONFERENCE



Ashley Zimmer presents Tim Shosey with a coin for visiting 20+ Passport Posts



Roger "Selfie" Deaton and the Membership Committee celebrate achieving the 65% goal ahead of Veterans Day



National Leading Candidate Matt Shuman addressing the DEC

More Pictures from the Conference at:
www.michiganlegion.org/2026-fall-conference

THE MICHIGAN AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION

Makes a Great *Christmas* Gift

Give a lasting tribute.

Honor someone special with a personalized memorial brick.

Bricks starting at $50

Supports veteran services and youth programs.



Placed at the entrance of Department of Michigan HQ.

Order your memorial brick today

michiganlegion.org/memorial-brick-orders/