

MI LEGIONNAIRE

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June 2026

NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY PARADE



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 **AMERICAN
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DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

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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.

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George and Bob both go on a solo fishing trip to a beautiful, but remote, town in Alaska every summer. While enjoying the idyllic scenery, they both notice chest pains — they are having a heart attack!

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George pays \$0

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George pays \$0

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Bob pays \$1,100

George pays \$0

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My Very Active 11th Month as Commander Roger Avie, Department Commander

Another very busy and rewarding month of Legion activity has come and gone. My 11th month as Department Commander continued at a fast pace throughout the state and beyond. On April 26th, I attended the First District meeting at the historic Grosse Pointe War Memorial Building. The facility itself is remarkable, honoring many veterans and their accomplishments throughout their military service. The walls are lined with plaques recognizing those who served our nation with distinction, making it a very moving and inspiring location for our meeting. On April 28th, I attended the Annual Eagle Scout Dinner at the Packard Proving Grounds and Museum in Macomb County. It was a wonderful evening honoring many scouts receiving their Eagle Certificates and our own Adjutant Ron Runyon, who received the prestigious NESA Outstanding Eagle Scout Award. The recognition was truly well deserved, and all of us in attendance were proud to see one of our own honored in such a meaningful way. From May 3rd through the 6th, I traveled to Indianapolis for the National Spring Meetings.

During that time, I attended the Finance Committee meeting and numerous additional meetings focused on issues affecting veterans, the future of the national organization, and ways we can continue strengthening The American Legion for generations to come. It was a productive and informative series of meetings. On May 11th, I attended the Annual Budget Meeting at Department Headquarters. We reviewed the budgets for all American Legion programs and made adjustments where necessary to accommodate the continued growth and success of

many committees and programs throughout the department.

I was also honored to attend a May 14th 71st Americanism Awards Ceremony in Battle Creek at Harper Creek High School, sponsored by Post 298, the ALA, the SAL and the Legion Riders. More than 80 fifth-grade students were recognized for living the tenets of Americanism throughout their school year. Seeing young people display patriotism, citizenship, and leadership gives all of us hope for the future. While in the area, I visited four posts in the Grand Rapids area and spoke with many incoming officers about their plans for the 2026-2027 Legion year. Their enthusiasm and dedication were encouraging to see.

On May 16th, I attended the Fifth District Memorial Service at Post 179 in Grandville, MI, honoring members of The American Legion, the Sons of The American Legion, and the American Legion Auxiliary who passed away during the previous year. It was an honor to speak at such a meaningful and respectful ceremony.

To conclude the month, I flew to Washington, D.C., and met with five key officers from the Michigan American Legion to participate in the May 25th Memorial Day Parade down Constitution Avenue. We proudly stepped off in front of Marty's Golden Aires from the Upper Peninsula, who did an outstanding job both during the parade and later that evening at the Lincoln Memorial Concert. All in all, it was another exceptionally busy month with even more activity ahead in June. Thank you all for your continued support, dedication, and commitment to our veterans, our communities, and The American Legion. God bless The American Legion, God bless the United States of America, and God bless all of you.

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!



Your \$10 donation gets you A SPECIAL COMMANDER COIN, with 100% OF THE DONATION GOING TO FREEDOM CENTER, SUPPORTING VETERANS IN MICHIGAN.



**Ron Runyan
Dept. Adjutant**

Runyan's Ramblings: Final thoughts on the 2025-2016 Year

This last article for the current leadership year is intended to report on the year we have had in our organization. The Department Executive Committee has been top-notch and has accomplished many great things. I applaud each of you for an outstanding year and hope you have also had some fun socializing, recruiting, and working in conjunction with your local posts and communities. To the post leadership, which encompasses 358 posts around Michigan, thank you. Without you, your members, and our membership, we could not achieve the program success and community engagement we all need and want to see happen.

The Department has made many strides to continue supporting all our programs, but at the same time, use your dues money in a way that ensures our long-term goals are met. As your fiduciary, I recently met with our Finance committee, in which they discussed and voted to keep the state dues at the same rate for next year. This will be a point of discussion and voted on this month at our state convention in Battle Creek.

Speaking of convention, there are a few items that posts will need to accomplish. These forms are due to Department HQ

now:

Officers List, Post Audit & Insurance, National Dues form (which tells National how much your post will charge your members), Consolidated Post Report (also known as the CPR)

Without these forms being turned in, the membership cards will remain in HQ until these have been turned in via mail or email to membership@michiganlegion.org

I am also requesting that every post turn in their delegate form to HQ, which shows how many votes your post has and who you have appointed as your delegates. Even if no member from your post is actually attending, please fill out the form and send it in.

Lastly, we are preparing to attend the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, at the end of August. All members are welcome to attend this event at this great venue. We have secured the Sports Illustrated club at Churchill Downs to hold a joint Michigan & Ohio party.

I also want to congratulate all the new officers at each level on their dedication and commitment to The American Legion. If you need assistance, guidance, training, or anything, please reach out to the HQ staff, and we will ensure you receive what you need to complete your jobs and tasks with ease. Let's make it another great year!

Membership Report



Jim Austin
1st Vice Commander

Wow, what a year it has been so far! I hope everyone's Memorial service went well and showed due respect. By now, most posts and districts have held their elections of Officers. These are the few comrades who have stepped up to do the work of many. Congratulations to all who were elected. To you members, please give your leadership all the support that they deserve.

To the new leaders, please familiarize yourselves with your post and department Constitution and bylaws, and carry out your duties with the utmost integrity. As always, your department leadership is here to help you with any issues that may arise.

There are still many department-level committee positions to be filled, and we are always looking for passionate, committed members to help this organization move forward.

A reminder: Your department convention is June 25th through June 28th at Kalamazoo. Please feel free to partake in the camaraderie and see your leadership in action.

I would like to personally thank everyone who helped me fulfill my duties as this year's membership committee chairman. We all know that membership is the backbone of any organization. Also, remember that recruiting does not stop in the summer. Keep up the great work, and I look forward to working with you next year as well.

You Can Renew!

Your renewal is just a click away. Click on your organization to renew on the national website right now.

LEGION
AUXILIARY
SAL

Americanism Report



Roger Deaton
2nd Vice Commander

Your Americanism chairman is excited for the summer, are you? So many events and fun Legion Posts to visit. Posts, keep "tagging" us on Social Media and email your Americanism, Membership and event flyers to us.

Great news! The American Legion Department of Michigan has revamped and expanded the Passport Program to expedite Stamps, Passport books and awards. Please visit our website and select the "Passport Logo." This will direct you to everything related to the Passport Program. Posts are encouraged to purchase the "Visitors" stamp as the vacation season is upon our great state as the Legion Family travels around Michigan it's a good time for Posts that can have items for visitors to purchase, offer a discount to Passport Holders and or have a printed coupon to invite the passport holders back to your post for one of your special events or discount off your menu - This program was designed to encourage the Legion Family to visit posts and have fun... so have fun with it.

This month's post spotlight is on Three Oaks, Post 204, and it is timely as we get ready for the Flag Celebrations and America 250 events. This post inspires me to do more. They are passionate about the sport of baseball and hold their world-renowned "Flag Day Parade" in high regard. I will work with the incoming 2nd vice to grow our passport program and continue to publish a "Post Spotlight Article" each month.

You're going to hear me say "Building our Brand" often. We at the Department of Michigan continue to invest in building our brand. By publishing the accomplishments of the post, attending events, showing off our programs and expanding our social media presence, we build brand recognition. The Legion will be a household name again. Why? To build a strong, vibrant Legion that upholds the Four Pillars of our organization. Posts need to have events and strong programs. That will attract membership. As membership grows, we can support more events and strengthen our programs, attracting more members. See where I'm going with this?

In the future, I see Membership like this: you "want" to join the Legion, or you "need" the Legion. In my case, I wanted to be part of something bigger than myself. I wanted to continue serving Veterans, Families and my community, and The American Legion provides this opportunity through programs, leadership and community outreach. Sometimes, Veterans and families will "Need" the Legion, and we have to continue our amazing support by being on the ready to welcome them into our organization, with PSOs educated on what's available in the local community and helping prepare veterans to meet with the best VSO program in the country. Gary Easterling and his staff can assist Veterans in understanding and applying for their benefits. We are all stronger together - Looking forward to another Legion Year with all of you.

Boys State has moved to Hillsdale College, June 21-27. The Committee would like to thank the Legion Family for its generosity in support of the "America 250 Initiative". The Boys State Alumni Association will have a membership drive at Hillsdale College in June. Its purpose is to provide mentorship, aid in growing Boys State participation, Camaraderie with Alumni and the Legion Family and develop a revenue stream for this program. If you or anyone you know of a Boys State Alumni, please have them email legion@michiganlegion.org with their contact information.

Thank you to all the Districts and Posts that hosted events. I am looking forward to seeing the Legion Family out visiting posts and having fun.

Program Dates and Deadlines

June 2026

June 1st-Boys State Application submission deadline
June 1st- Final day for Baseball teams to register
June 21st- 27th -Boys State program at TBD

July 2026

July 1st-Robert Turner Baseball Scholarship submission deadline
July 15th- Diamond Baseball Scholarship deadline
July 19th-24th- Student Trooper Program
July 21st- 25th - JSSP American Legion National Championship (Ind.)
July 25-28- Class AA, Sr. Baseball State Tourn. in Adrian, MI
July TBD- Class A Baseball State Tourn. in TBD
July TBD- Junior Baseball State Tourn.in TBD



Mentorship: The Legacy That Sustains Us

PDC, Dan Cooper

Mentorship has always been part of the heartbeat of military service. From the first nervous moment a recruit learns to lace up their boots, they are guided by those who have walked the path before them. In the armed forces, we grow through experience, discipline, sacrifice — and through the quiet strength of mentors who shape us into who we become.

When service members transition to civilian life, the world can feel unfamiliar. The structure, the purpose, the brotherhood — are suddenly gone.

That is where the American Legion steps in. Here, mentors help veterans rediscover direction, confidence, and a sense of belonging. They guide them through career changes, personal challenges, and moments of doubt, offering the same steady support they found in uniform.

Within the American Legion, mentorship is not simply advice. It is an act of devotion — seasoned Legionnaires giving their time, their wisdom, and their genuine care to lift up another veteran. It is the daily practice of honor, courage, and commitment. A true mentor doesn't just speak about leadership; they live it through service, accountability, and unwavering consistency.

Sometimes mentorship means offering guidance. Other times it means simply showing up — listening, checking in, reminding someone that they are never walking alone. For some veterans, that connection becomes a turning point. For others, it becomes a lifeline.

Mentorship also strengthens the American Legion itself. When experienced members share their knowledge of our history, traditions, and community service, they ensure the organization remains vibrant and relevant.

New members bring energy and fresh ideas, while mentors help anchor that enthusiasm in values that have stood the test of time.

By mentoring someone today, we carry forward a legacy that began long before us. We pass the torch. We keep our standards bright. We ensure the spirit of the American Legion remains strong for generations yet to come.

The American Legion is not just an organization; it is a family. And mentorship is how that family endures. When one Legionnaire takes the time to guide another, the legacy of the American Legion lives on — one member at a time.

One conversation, One example, One act of mentoring at a time.

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Chaplain's Corner

Mike Schlaack, Chaplain

As I write this article today, it appears that Spring just might be here. After several long months of soggy, gloomy weather, we are finally getting a taste of a beautiful Michigan summer. We look at the sky, enjoying the sun and warm temperatures. On days like today, all seems to

be well with the world. There should be no reason for despair over the tragedies of the world around us: Spring is finally here!

Unfortunately, for too many of our brothers and sisters, that sort of joy is in short supply. Past events and future uncertainties combine to make their todays unbearable. They have lost hope for a better tomorrow. This level of despair so often leads to either self-medicating or permanently withdrawing from a painful world.

We don't have to look too far to see the impact that hopelessness has on our society, especially within the military veteran community. Two tireless advocates, Jon Luker and Wendy Tibbits, have made it their mission to tell the story that is so often forgotten or lost beyond the headlines. Their work with 22-a-Day helps to shed light on the gruesome reality of veteran suicide, becoming a bullhorn for the unspeakable truth behind the tragic loss of loved ones through suicide. With their traveling presentation, Jon and Wendy work with local groups to set out 22 white crosses each day to symbolize the tragedy of military veteran suicide. They have traveled across Michigan and to several other states, bringing the message of hope to the communities that sponsor the display. If you haven't reached out to support this effort, I encourage you to visit www.22aday.org and see what you can do to get involved in this essential ministry to our military veteran community.

The ministry of hope is something that all of us can participate in. Don't wait for a "professional" to come along—Be the One yourself. Reach out to the brother or sister who is having a rough time in life and see what you can do to steer them in the right direction to receive the professional support they need. There are so many resources in Michigan and in the local communities that focus on the needs of veterans that no one should ever feel that they are alone in tackling their problems. And sometimes just a kind word is all it takes to help turn someone's bad day around, so don't be shy!

Yes, summer will be here again soon. Then, instead of complaining about the cold, we can get back to complaining about the humidity. It's a rite of passage here in the Great Lakes State. But through it all, we should never lose hope and be prepared to pass it along to others. Let's be part of the movement that helps to eliminate the twenty-two white crosses that are added each day.



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Passport Post Spotlight

The Heart of Three Oaks: Post 204 Keeps Tradition Alive



In the heart of southwest Michigan, the village of Three Oaks has long been known as a close-knit farming community where neighbors still know each other by name. While tourism has brought new energy and visitors to the area in recent years, the town continues to hold tightly to its values — and few places represent that spirit better than American Legion Post 204.

Officially known as the Randall Couchman Post 204, the Legion carries the name of a local soldier killed in action during World War I, ensuring his sacrifice remains forever tied to the community he served. Today, the post has become much more than a veterans organization. For many residents, it serves as the heart of community life in Three Oaks.

Post members proudly point to the town's nationally recognized Flag Day celebration as one of the community's defining traditions. Called the World's Largest Flag Day Celebration, the annual event draws visitors from across the country every June for a patriotic weekend filled with parades, music, ceremonies, and hometown pride. This year's celebration carries even greater significance with the upcoming release of the documentary film

Flag Day, scheduled to premiere during Flag Day weekend this June. The film follows veterans, volunteers, business owners, and residents as they prepare for the event. The project shines a national spotlight on the unique traditions and deep community spirit that define Three Oaks.

For members of Post 204, the true strength of the village goes far beyond any single event. The town has a genuine small-town feel where people look out for one another and friendships quickly feel like family.

That welcoming atmosphere is immediately apparent inside the Legion Hall, where regulars gather daily, and visitors are quickly treated like old friends. Volunteering remains central to the post's identity, with members supporting local causes and community events throughout the year.



Among the Post's most popular activities, aside from Flag Day, are Oktoberfest, Veterans Day dinners, Christmas parties, and the post's End of Summer festival. The celebration combines live music, food, and one particularly memorable tradition: decorating kid-sized swimming pools for a friendly contest before everyone relaxes together in the colorful kiddie pools with their favorite beverages. The event perfectly captures the fun, relaxed,

and welcoming personality of the post.

The Legion remains strongly committed to supporting local students. The Auxiliary awards an annual \$1,000 scholarship to area high school students, while the Sons of the American Legion and the Legion itself provide multiple \$500 scholarships each year.

Members are also proud of the facility itself. Recent improvements included more than \$250,000 invested in a new kitchen and an upgraded club room, helping create an inviting space for both members and visitors. One of the post's more unique traditions is its popular shuffleboard league, which features nearly 20 teams and has become a favorite pastime for both members and guests.

As the Flag Day celebration approaches with national attention from the documentary, American Legion Post 204 continues to stand as a symbol of the enduring values that define Three Oaks: patriotism, volunteerism, friendship, and community pride. For residents and visitors alike, stepping into American Legion Post 204 is like stepping into the living history.



L to R: Past Post CMDR Jason Niemzyk, Baseball chairman Bryan McCarty, Chaplain Mike Shannon, Post CMDR Carl Daley, Adjutant George Mangold, 1st Vice CMDR Steve Olson, Auxillary and Parade chair Dyane Thomas Niemzyk

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

Annual Americanism Report

Roger Deaton, Americanism Chair

It has been an exciting and productive year for Americanism across the Department of Michigan. From strengthening our youth programs to building camaraderie across our Posts, I could not be prouder of the work being done by the Legion Family.

One of the biggest successes this year has been the continued growth and visibility of our Americanism programs across the state. The Passport Program has brought Legionnaires together across Michigan, encouraging members to visit Posts, build camaraderie, and strengthen connections throughout the Legion Family. Participation and excitement surrounding the program continue to grow every month.

Our Student Trooper and Junior Shooting Sports programs are doing exceptionally well, with expanded planning, increased engagement, and continued support from Posts and volunteers across the state. These programs continue providing outstanding leadership and educational opportunities for Michigan youth.

Scouting also remains one of the shining examples of Americanism in action. Under the leadership of our Scouting Chairman, Gary Tanner, Michigan Posts have continued supporting scouting units, Eagle Scout recognition events, and partnerships with Scouting America. We have added 15 chartered troops this year. The American Legion remains proud of its long-standing commitment to helping develop young leaders in our communities.

I also want to recognize the importance of our Law Officer and Firefighter of the Year programs. The dedication and sacrifice shown by our law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders deserve our continued appreciation and support. These recognition programs remain an important way for the Legion Family to honor those who continue serving our communities every day.

Most importantly, thank you to the Legion Family for continuing to support our programs, volunteer in your communities, and promote Americanism throughout Michigan. Together, we are keeping our organization strong and ensuring these programs continue to grow for future generations.

Annual Membership Report

James Austin Membership Chair

Over the course of the year, we had monthly Zoom meetings. At many of our Zoom meetings, most committee members were present. At the beginning of the year, we discussed membership quotas and deadlines, goals, and incentive awards. We then discussed programs, practices and processes that we could use to maintain membership and to recruit new members. We discussed text messages, emails, personal contacts, or a combination of all the above. Up until the April quota deadline, we met all expectations. After the new year, we started discussing the membership award banquet/luncheon to be held at the department convention in Kalamazoo in June. We discussed everything, from which posts are eligible to the extent of the awards, certificates, and monetary awards. We also discussed next year's budget, and we reallocated some of the funds because we are moving away from hard awards (Plaques, computers, jackets, etc.) and towards monetary awards. This committee excels in professionalism and displays an extreme passion towards membership. Much of the committee will be retained for at least the next legion year. I want to entertain a motion to accept these minutes as printed, respectfully submitted by James Austin, 2025/2026 membership committee chairman.

Internal Affairs Report

Dan Cooper, Internal Affairs Chair

The Committee is charged with formulating and recommending policies to the Department, as well as overseeing the implementation of all adopted policies, including the administrative procedures governing Department Headquarters. In addition, the Committee provides oversight to the Subcommittees: Constitution and By-Laws, Leadership Development and Training, and the Legion Riders, and serves as liaison to the Sons of the American Legion (SAL), the SAL Legion Riders, and the Auxiliary Legion Riders.

Throughout the year, the Committee maintained a consistent and active schedule, with regular meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, convening as necessary. The Committee reviewed and evaluated multiple resolutions and proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws slated for consideration at this Convention. We also examined administrative procedures affecting Department employees and provided recommendations to ensure clarity, compliance, and operational efficiency.

The Committee further assisted in resolving matters related to rules, procedures, and protocol. Five resolutions were drafted and submitted to the Department Executive Committee at the Winter Meeting for their review and action. In addition to these responsibilities, the Committee continued to offer guidance and support to Department Standing Committees and District Officers as part of its ongoing mission.

On behalf of the Internal Affairs Committee, we extend our sincere appreciation to Commander Avie for the privilege of serving on this important committee. We also express our gratitude to the Department Staff for their continued cooperation and support throughout the year.

Legislative Report

Tim Poxson, Legislative Chair

Yearly Report 25-26 Legislative Summary

It has been a very interesting and productive year for the Legislative Committee. Between the Michigan Senate and House, over 35 bills have been introduced regarding Veteran issues. However, as of this report, many of those bills are stalled in the House but still have a very slim chance of moving forward to a House or Senate Veteran Committee or another and then to the floor for a full vote. One of the major reasons for this is that both the House and Senate have taken up the 26-27 budget. The Legislative Committee also voted not to support some of them, with DEC concurring. Mainly opposed the bills that would have changed the Michigan definition of the word "Veteran" as proposed in the House of Representatives Legislation. We had some wins, including bills that passed the Senate and are now awaiting House action. One bill we assisted on sets aside \$ 4 million for non-profit Post homes to apply for

a \$300,000.00 grant for needed repairs. However, one issue that became apparent was that this was a refund grant, meaning the Post had to pay the repair costs out of pocket first and then get reimbursed. As it turns out, this is the State of Michigan's policy for all grants.

Summary of Activities for the Chair of the Committee, as of this writing:

- Over 37 in-person meetings attended with Senators and Representatives and their staff
- Attended over 24 Zoom and Teams tele-meetings
- Testified 2 times and attended 5 Legislative Veterans Committee hearings
- Over 50 calls to or from elected officials
- Attended 25 meetings on Veteran issues in addition to the above
- Wrote and submitted two bills for consideration, both were introduced with some minor changes.

The Legislative Committee held Zoom meetings in January and September and will likely have at least one more before Summer Conference.

Boys State Report

Mark Brejcha

The Michigan Boys State Committee implemented a comprehensive modernization initiative in 2026, incorporating successful practices from programs nationwide to strengthen and revitalize the program. These improvements have positioned Michigan Boys State as a forward-looking civic leadership experience that the Department can take great pride in.

Key Accomplishments and New Initiatives for 2026

- Relocated Michigan Boys State to Hillsdale College
- Secured a \$20,000 Hillsdale College scholarship opportunity for attending delegates
- Implemented online registration
- Established a Michigan Boys State Alumni Association
- Purchased 20 Chromebook computers, eliminating the need for binders
- Launched the "Operation 1776" fundraiser, exceeding \$30,000
- Expanded staffing to a full team of 30, including three counselors per city
- Featured the Michigan Boys State 2025 promotional video at the National Convention
- Partnered with the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) to create a General Store
- Increased enrollment by 40%, growing from 108 delegates in 2025 to 150 delegates in 2026
- Hosted distinguished speakers, including Medal of Honor recipient Jim McCloughan and U.S. Congressman Tim Walberg
- Developed a partnership with Hillsdale American Legion Post 53
- Coordinated community service projects in the City of Hillsdale in partnership with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
- Introduced smartphone voting technology
- Added a professional Media Director to oversee delegate podcasts and the Whirligig
- Updated the Delegate Handbook
- Created essay scholarship opportunities through a partnership with the Gerald R. Ford Museum
- Instituted the Bill of Rights Institute Civic Virtues Program
- Improved and right-sized Upper Peninsula delegate transportation

Special appreciation is extended to the Boys State Committee members, Jim Ellis (Zone 1), Joe Blythe (Zone 2), Wendy Retzloff (Zone 3), Kevin Sherman (Zone 4), Tom Chernetzki (Zone 5), and John Beeman (SAL Liaison) for their dedicated volunteerism and leadership. Their continued service is strongly recommended for 2027. Committee members met during the 2025 State Convention, 2025 Fall Conference, and 2026 Winter Conference.

American Legion Riders Report

Robert "Skip" Kamin, ALR Department Chairman

Greetings, Riders and Legionnaires. The weather is getting warmer, and the bikes will be coming out. We got a lot done this past year.

3 to 4 new chapters have formed, and a couple more are in process. We had an issue to address regarding the use of a name. The concern was resolved and supported by the DEC. We are finalizing an actual "Charter" for the chapters. Hoping to get these finalized, approved by the committee, presented to and approved by the DEC. We made a change to the Riders' Rules of Procedure addressing if a chapter wants to move from one post to another.

I know that Districts have new commanders now. Please send the information on who your district liaison will be for the riders committee. There was a significant disconnect this past year because most district commanders did not identify their liaisons. The ones that are appointed are an integral part of the committee. They bring the concerns and information from the chapters to the committee and the committee to the chapters. If you are a rider and do not know if or who your District liaison is, reach out to your District Commander and find out. If they do not have one, maybe you could possibly step up and take the position.

It is up to the District Commanders on who their appointee is to the committee.

There are lots of rides happening around the state. The following are two of the biggest ones. You don't have to be a rider or even have a rider chapter at your post to support either or both of them. Both raise money for great causes. The money for both stays right here in Michigan. Helping our Veterans and families.

June 19th and 20th, the Michigan Legacy Ride will be happening, starting at American Legion Post 40 in Monroe. Overnight stay in South Haven. Ending at the Clare American Legion Post 558. Funds raised will be going to Michigan Wounded and Returning Warriors, keeping the money in the state to help our veterans and their families in need.

July 24th and 25th are the Hell to Paradise PTSD Awareness Ride, starting at the Stockbridge American Legion Post 510, traveling through Hell, with an overnight stay in Gaylord, then to Paradise in the UP. The final stop will be the Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie. All monies raised will be split between The Heroes Operation and Talons Out Honor Flight.

Hope to see you on the road, on a ride, at a post for one of the many functions going on. Remember, go and support other posts and chapters for their functions. Also, don't forget that first we are all Legionnaires, Auxiliaries, or SAL.

Permanent Time & Place / Resolutions

Assignment Committee Annual Report

Barry Wood, Chairperson

There are different ex officio members for the Permanent Time and Place and Resolutions Committees. Each is defined below.

The Permanent Time and Place Committee shall be comprised of the five living immediate Past Department Commanders, with expenses and the immediate outgoing Chairman of the committee, as an alternate, without expenses. (Resolution #13, Department Convention 1967, page 87). The ex officio members, without a vote, for the purpose under further stated Purpose and Responsibilities - Permanent Time and Place shall be the Department Commander, the Department Adjutant and the Department First Vice Commander. Department President, Department Executive Director, Department First Vice President of the Department of Michigan, American Legion Auxiliary.

The Resolutions Assignment Committee shall be comprised of the five living immediate Past Department Commanders with expenses and the immediate outgoing Chairman of the committee as an alternate, without expenses (Resolution #13, Department Convention 1967, page 87). The Department Commander and Department Adjutant shall serve as ex officio members without a vote for the purpose under stated Purpose and Responsibilities - Resolution Assignment.

The officers of the Permanent Time and Place / Resolutions Assignment Committee shall be the most senior Past Department Commander on the committee, in terms of office, serving as the Chairperson; the second most senior as Vice Chairperson; and the junior as Secretary. The purpose of the Permanent Time and Place Committee is to receive bids for Fall Conference, Winter Meeting and Summer Convention from Convention Corporations and to make recommendations to the Department Executive Committee as to the location and dates of the Fall Conference and Winter Meeting and to the Delegates of the Convention as to the location and dates of the Department Conventions.

The Fall Conference and Winter Meeting must be

awarded at least 1 year in advance of the event. The Summer Convention must be awarded at least two years in advance of the event.

The Sheraton Grand Rapids Airport was offered to and approved by the Department Executive Committee for the 2028 Winter Meeting and the 2028 Department Convention.

2026 Resolutions presented to the Department are listed on the Department website with disposition noted on the Resolution document. Meeting minutes of the Permanent Time and Place and the Resolutions Committee are available on the Department website.

Scheduled Department Meetings:

- **Annual Convention 2026 June 25-28 Battle Creek Double Tree Hilton**
- **Fall Conference 2026 November 6-8 Gaylord Treetops Resort**
- **Winter Meeting 2027 February 12-14 Port Huron Double Tree Hilton**
- **Annual Convention 2027 June 24-27 Battle Creek Double Tree Hilton**
- **Winter Meeting 2028 February 4-6 Grand Rapids Sheraton Grand Rapids Airport**
- **Annual Convention 2028 June 22-25 Grand Rapids Sheraton Grand Rapids Airport**

U.S. NAVY 1980-1985

30 YEAR MEMBER

PAST POSITIONS

2025-2026 1ST VICE COMMANDER

2024-2025 2ND VICE COMMANDER

**POST COMMANDER
DISTRICT COMMANDER**

ZONE COMMANDER

POW/MIA CHAIRMAN

LEGION RIDERS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



JIM AUSTIN

FOR

**Department Commander
of Michigan**

2026-2027

PROUDLY ENDORSED BY

**THE LAMOND FRANK POST,
THE 16TH, 6TH 7TH AND 8TH**

DISTRICTS

BE THE ONE

Baseball Committee Report

Tim Walters Chair

At the Fall Conference, names were submitted for the Single and Double A leagues for Chief Umpire, Dale Clyde, for AA and Brian York for Single A. The discussion of rule changes began, and the need to update the Tournament Contracts was raised. The Chairman was not at the fall conference as he was in Indianapolis for the National Baseball meeting. A vice chairman was nominated and elected, along with a committee secretary to ensure issues and proposals were saved for further discussions.

Multiple Zoom meetings were held, and emails were used to further the rule changes and additions. One of the most significant rule additions was Rule #18, which the DEC unanimously approved at the Winter Conference in Port Huron. It states: Any Coach/Manager while at a field for a game or practice overheard using foul or abusive language towards any player, coach or umpire, before, during or after a game will be suspended for 5 games. Coaches and Managers are supposed to setting an example for these young boys to follow. That kind of language cannot and will not be allowed or accepted during any American Legion Baseball game at any level. If a second incident should take place in the same season, that Coach/Manager will be "Banned" for 5 years from any involvement with any American Legion Youth Program.

It was even suggested that maybe a longer period of being 'banned' should be considered of 10 years, but that did not have a motion or second, and there was no further discussion on that matter. There were other minor changes or rewording of the current rule; all changes or modifications were accepted and passed unanimously by the DEC.

The number of qualified students that one team can draw from to play the Single "A" league was reduced from 7500 total students to 2500. If a team has more than 2,500 students, they are required to play in the "AA" baseball league. This was also fully approved by the DEC.

After the Winter Conference, the Baseball Committee continued to work on the baseball tournament contracts to bring them up to date and in line with current standing practices in the Department's Bylaws.

- State Class A Tournament: Adrian, MI (tentative) July 22nd - July 25th/26th
- 2026 State Class AA Tournament: Nicolay Field, Adrian College, July 25th - 28th
- 2026 Regional Tournament: Lexington, KY August 5th - 9th, 2026
- We are also working on a location for the Department Junior Baseball Tournament.

There has been some discussion to see if Baseball can follow the format of Boys & Girls State, and have a fixed or semi-fixed location at a college-level location that can host all of the Department's baseball tournaments in a set week at one location, which would help to reduce the funding required to hold/host these games each year. This is only in the discussion phase, and nothing is planned for the next couple of years as of this notice. The 2026 American Legion Department of Michigan Baseball Committee members and Zone responsibilities are: Jeffery McGinni, Zone 1; J.C. German, Zone 2; Kim Lambouris, Zone 3; Nelson Cronkright, Zone 4; and Tim Walters, Zone 5. Thank you for your continued dedication, leadership, and commitment to supporting and strengthening the American Legion Baseball program throughout Michigan.

THOMAS-DANIELS-HAND Post 443, AND DISTRICT 10 ENDORSES



**DAVID YAHR
FOR
DEPARTMENT 2ND
VICE COMMANDER
IN 2026-2027**

**AMERICAN LEGION 15 YEAR PUR
US NAVY 1982 - 2006
NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION
COLLEGE GRADUATE 2023**

**DEPARTMENT EXPERIENCE:
2025 DEPARTMENT LEGIONNAIRE
OF THE YEAR
DEC MEMBER, DMS COORDINATOR
AND POST DEVELOPMENT CHAIRMAN**

**DISTRICT EXPERIENCE:
10TH DISTRICT COMMANDER, FINANCE
OFFICER, HISTORIAN**

**POST EXPERIENCE:
2018 STATE ADJUTANT OF THE YEAR
POST COMMANDER, ADJUTANT
SERVICE OFFICER, HISTORIAN,
MIDLAND AREA HONOR GUARD**



**Proudly endorsed by:
Ann Arbor Post 46
2nd District Association**

**Scott
Nichols
for
Finance Officer**



**The American Legion
Department of Michigan**



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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Global War on Terror | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Army |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Navy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panama | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Air Force |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon/Grenada | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Marines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Space Force |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korea | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Coast Guard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WWII | <input type="checkbox"/> Merchant Marines (WWII only) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Conflicts | |



Signature of applicant _____

Date _____

Media and Communication Report

Steve Claudil Committee Chair

As another year of service comes to a close, the Department of Michigan Media & Communications Committee reflects on a productive, forward-focused year of strengthening communication, expanding digital outreach, and improving how The American Legion connects with members statewide.

From committee organization to strategic modernization, this year marked an important step in ensuring the Department's communications tools, branding, and online presence continue to support veterans, Posts, Districts, and communities across Michigan.

The year began at the September 26, 2025, Media & Communications Committee meeting, where Bill Mankee was elected Vice Chairman and Mike Fitzgerald was elected Committee Secretary. Members reviewed the previous year's budget and discussed practical ways to strengthen engagement and support Department communications efforts statewide.

One of the committee's most significant accomplishments was drafting proposed Department Webpage & Social Media Guidelines. The guidelines aim to establish consistent standards for online communication and branding across the Department, District, Post, Squadron, and affiliated platforms, to support a professional online presence, and to protect the integrity of the organization's emblem, brand, and mission.

The committee also explored opportunities to expand outreach through modern media, including discussion of a Fall 2025 Connected TV Campaign—one example of the Department's commitment to reaching veterans, families, and communities through evolving digital platforms.

A major milestone this year was completing the Department Strategic Website Evaluation Survey. At the February 7 meeting, the survey results provided valuable insight into how members view and use the Department website, michiganlegion.org. The survey confirmed strong support for the Department's mission and communications efforts, while also highlighting clear areas for improvement.

Members most often requested:

- Easier navigation
- Faster access to forms and documents
- Better mobile usability
- More current content
- Stronger accessibility compliance

In response, the committee developed a phased modernization strategy to strengthen the Department's digital presence in both the near and long term. The Early priorities include fixing broken links, consolidating key resources, improving accessibility, enhancing search, and modernizing site navigation. The Longer Range Goals include a broader redesign, expanded document libraries, improved operational tools, and forge a stronger integration across Department, District, and Post communications.

Bottom line, clearer messaging, a cleaner website experience, and faster access to the tools members and leadership need so the Legion Family can stay focused on serving veterans and communities.

Throughout the year, Media & Communications stayed focused on the single goal of ensuring members can quickly find the information, resources, and tools they need to advance The American Legion's mission. Looking ahead, the committee will continue modernizing communications, strengthening member engagement, and help build a more connected and informed Legion Family across the Department of Michigan.

The American Legion Pinckney Memorial Post 419 & the 6th District Proudly Endorses

Bob Higley



For Department Finance Officer 2026 -2027

Roger Deaton for 1st Vice CMDR 2026 -2027

National Experience:

National Americanism Committee 2025 & 2026
National American Legion College Graduate 2023
ANAVICUS Member Inducted 2025

Department (State) Experience:

2024 Department of Michigan Legionnaire of the Year
2nd Vice CMDR & Americanism Chairman 2025-2026
DEC Member
Boys State Committeeman

Zone & District Experience:

Zone 3 Vice CMDR
6th District CMDR
6th District Alternate CMDR
6th District Finance Officer
6th District ALR Liaison

Service: US Navy 1986 – 1994
American Legion PUFL = 30 +Years

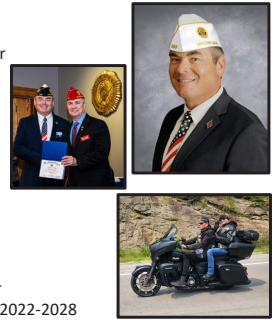
Post Experience:

2020 State Adjutant of the Year
Post CMDR
Post 1st Vice CMDR
Post Adjutant
ALR Director
Sgt at Arms
Post Executive Committee
SAL Squadron CMDR
SAL 1st Vice CMDR

Civilian Experience

County Veterans Court Mentor
Elected County Commissioner 2022-2028
Director, Supply Chain Tier 1 Automotive Supplier
Branch Chief Supervisor / DOD (Retired)
Small Business Owner

Education: BA and MBA



POST 48 & THE 3RD DISTRICT PROUDLY ENDORSES

DUANE MILLER

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN SGT-AT-ARMS 2026-2027



US AIR FORCE 75-79 & US ARMY 81-06 31 YEAR PUFL MEMBER

POST 48 OFFICES & PARTICIPATION
COMMANDER FOR 5 YEARS
1ST & 2ND VICE
ADJUTANT
SGT-AT-ARMS
BAR CHAIRMAN
HONOR GUARD
LEGION RIDER

3RD DISTRICT OFFICES
COMMANDER
1ST VICE
VA BINGO CHAIRMAN

2ND ZONE OFFICES
COMMANDER

DIRECTOR AND CARETAKER OF WILWIN

Education and Scholarship Report

Larry Money Committee Chair

Before I start, I want to thank those who took the time and did the work required to support this Program of The American Legion. Without your help, we would not have been able to provide the youth of our State with the opportunity to participate in the various programs and scholarships we offer. So, thank you, David Kennedy, Kim Lambouris, James Warunek, Mark Maida, and Charles High, for your steadfast dedication.

Also, a BIG thank you to our Programs Coordinator, Ashley Zimmer, whose help has been a tremendous asset in maintaining this Chairman's sanity.

As a committee, we presented (15) Guy M. Wilson scholarships of \$ 1,000 each to students in our (15) Districts. The William D. & Jewell Brewer for \$500.00 each to students in our (5) Zones. The Michigan American Legion Skilled Trades Scholarships were awarded to (7) recipients, 2 for \$1000.00 and (5) for \$500.00 each. We also awarded (5) Teacher of the Year awards for \$500.00 each to a teacher from each of our Zones.

Our Oratorical contest was once again this year held at Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing on 28 March. Thank you, Ashley, for securing this facility for our program. We had (4) four contestants who participated, with Breanna Zhang being our Department of Michigan winner and moving on to the National Finals Contest at Hillsdale College. Breanna received \$2000 for 1st place; 2nd place received \$1500; 3rd & 4th place received \$1000 each.

I want to thank Commander Avie for the opportunity to serve as your Chairman on this Committee, and once again, "Thank You" to all the Michigan Legionnaires, Posts, Districts and Zones who participated in our programs.

Scouting Report

Gary Tanner Scouting Chair

It has been quite a busy year for the Scouting Committee. When the year began, we set goals to grow the number of scouting units chartered by the American Legion Family. We began the year with 63 chartered units, and so far, we are over 80 and still growing! We have been busy supporting scouting events around the department, from the Upper Peninsula to the Southeast part of the state.

Wilwin hosted its spring Camporee in May, and we are gearing up for Operation Rendezvous at Camp Grayling in September and the Fall Camporee at Wilwin in October. The Michigan Crossroads Council welcomed over 500 new Eagle Scouts this year, and the American Legion Department of Michigan attended both the Grand Rapids Celebration of Talent at the Amway Grand Hotel and the Metro Detroit Eagle 250 Celebration at the historic Packard Proving Grounds to distribute our Department of Michigan Eagle Scout challenge coins.

Along with recognizing Eagle Scouts, our very own Department Adjutant, Ron Runyan, was recognized with the highest award the council can bestow on an Eagle Scout. The National Outstanding Eagle Scout Award! I, too, was recognized with the highest honor the council can bestow on a registered adult leader—the Silver Beaver Award.

I also want to thank Mike Bruce, who has been invaluable as our liaison to Camp Grayling for Operation Rendezvous, as well as for facilitating the growth of the scouting program in northern Michigan by attending district meetings and holding informational meetings for posts wishing to charter or adopt scouting units. Our Detachment of Michigan Commander, Clive Seidel, was also a great help serving as the Wilwin Scouting Liaison!

Together we have been able to provide great coverage for the entire state. We also have two American Legion Square Knot Awards in progress from the Albion SAL Squadron 246 and our 2025-26 Eagle Scout of the year! Stay tuned for the official presentations. I can't thank our Department of Michigan Family for their outstanding support this year! You have really made a big impact on the lives of our Scouts!

Don't Leave Your Loved Ones Locked Out, Leave A Digital Key

Rich Jennings, Post 1111 Commander

Think about it for a moment: if something happened to you tomorrow, would your family know how to unlock your phone or computer? Could they access your bank accounts to pay bills, find your mortgage information, or locate your will? Without a plan, your loved ones may face unnecessary stress during an already difficult time.

Preparing ahead of time is one of the greatest gifts you can leave your family. A little organization now can save them confusion, delays, and frustration later.

Start by making sure someone you trust can access your devices and digital accounts if needed. Apple users can set up a "Legacy Contact" through their iPhone settings, while Google and Android users can create a digital legacy plan through their Google account. Social media platforms like Facebook also allow accounts to be memorialized or removed after death.

Next, gather your important legal and financial information in one secure location. Your will or trust should clearly state where the original documents are stored and who your executor is. It's also wise to name both medical and legal powers of attorney, along with a digital executor to help manage online accounts. Keep a master list of important accounts, including banks, investments, insurance policies, pensions, utilities, and any cryptocurrency holdings. Store passwords securely and make sure the right person knows how to access them if necessary.

Your family will also need guidance for handling everyday re-

sponsibilities. Leave clear information about ongoing bills such as mortgages, utilities, insurance policies, and property taxes. Include details about email accounts, cloud storage, streaming services, online subscriptions, and social media accounts so they can be managed or closed properly. If you own online storefronts, websites, or personal domains, document how those should be handled as well.

It's equally important to write down your final wishes. Include information about funeral preferences, cemetery plots, prepaid arrangements, and any special requests. Your executor should also know they'll likely need several notarized copies of the death certificate to settle your estate. Finally, keep a list of friends and relatives who should be contacted personally, along with their phone numbers or email addresses.

The most important step is keeping everything together in one safe and secure place, whether that's a fireproof safe, a secure digital vault, or another protected location. Make sure your executor or trusted family member knows where it is and how to access it.

Taking the time to prepare today allows your loved ones to focus on your memory and healing rather than dealing with locked accounts and missing information. This information is intended as a general guide and should not replace professional legal or estate planning advice.



AUXILIAIRE

From the Desk of the President

June 2026



Dawn Gramza
Department President
2025-2026

The energy of spring is still with us, but there is also a quiet shift as we look ahead to summer gatherings, community events, and the continued work that keeps our mission strong. As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, this is a meaningful time to reflect on why we do

what we do and who we do it for.

June gives us the opportunity to pause and remember. With Memorial Day just behind us, many of us have stood in solemn moments at parades, cemeteries, or community services, honoring those who gave everything for our freedoms. Those moments stay with us. They remind us that our service in the Auxiliary is not just about meetings and programs-it's about people, families, and legacies.

As we move forward into the summer months, our work continues in different but equally important ways. Whether it's

In Service Not Self

supporting veterans and their families, mentoring our youth, or being present in our communities, each small act of service matters. Sometimes it's the small efforts-the phone call, the visit, the helping hand-that make the biggest difference.

June is also a time to reconnect. With longer days and warmer weather, we have more opportunities to gather, share stories, and strengthen the bonds that make our organization feel like family. I encourage each of you to reach out to a fellow member, to a new volunteer, or to someone who may need a reminder that they are not alone.

As my year as president comes to an end, I continue to be inspired by the dedication I see across our units and communities. Your compassion, your resilience, and your commitment to service truly embody the spirit of the Auxiliary. Let's carry that spirit with us into this season, honoring the past, serving in the present, and building a stronger future together.



Shannon Werner
Executive Director,
Secretary-Treasurer

At this time of year, there is so much excitement. The flowers are blooming, and the weather is getting warmer. The children are a ball of energy with all the activities happening at the end of the school year. Field trips, field days, award ceremonies, graduations, the list seems endless.

It's the same here at headquarters. Lots of nervous excitement and energy as we meet deadline after deadline. As an organization, this is the time of year when everything is "due". Reports from Units to Districts to Department to National.

Unit dues forms and remit to representatives reported to Department. Then Mike and I complete the very time-consuming project of getting the dues reported to National by their deadline, following their procedure. Some of the forms we receive require a phone call to the Unit due to erroneous or missing information, which slows down the process, as you can imagine. Units should only list the amount of senior dues for one member, not the entire membership roster. There can be no zeros-even if you have no juniors, you still must list the minimum junior dues of \$4.25. All of this is explained on the form itself-please read everything fully before you complete any American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) document or form. If there are changes to Unit dues after National's reporting

Spring at Department

deadline, they charge \$30.00 to complete it.

The donations and mail increase exponentially during this time of year, with our operating year ending. All the Units and Districts want to get what money they have out of their accounts to assist and support our Veterans. And we all want these activities listed in our year-end reports that are provided to National. The best way to accomplish that is to get them in early.

One program that requires extra attention during this time of year is our Girls State Program held in June. We have been keeping up with the reservation forms, registration fees, contracts for review and execution, donations, insurance coverages for review and purchase, invoices received for payment, manuals and such to order and process, etc. That is, if everything moves forward without error, but that never happens. There are checks made out to the wrong entity and checks received with no paperwork or memo-these require further attention.

And the biggest challenge of all is our Department of Michigan Convention. I won't go through all of the items, activities and tasks that this gathering requires, but if you want to discuss, feel free to get my attention, and we can have a conversation over the four-day event. Can not wait!

Remember to get out and pay your respects to our fallen veterans on Memorial Day.

Something Happening at your Unit?

Submit it to the Michigan Auxiliaire!

Send your articles and Pictures (with Cutline) to : info@michalaux.org

CONVENTION 101

Sharon Schulte, Constitution and Bylaws Chairman

As you read this article, the Department Convention is almost here. Are you prepared?

Robert's Rules of Order defines a Convention as "an assembly of delegates chosen as representatives of constituent units or subdivisions of a much larger body in whose name the Convention sits and acts". Our Department Constitution says, "The Legislative body of this organization is the Department Convention."

The Convention is first and foremost a business meeting. As such, we should always conduct ourselves in a businesslike manner. We accept annual reports (due to Department no later than May 15); celebrate our accomplishments; conduct ceremonies (such as flag processions, graduation ceremonies for Juniors, installation of officers, memorial service); vote on matters of importance to the Auxiliary as a whole (such as changes to our governing documents, dues increase) and of course, our annual election of new Department officers.

Our Convention is made up of Delegates at Large, Unit Delegates and Unit Alternates. All elected and appointed Department officers (District Presidents are considered De-

partment Officers), all members of Department Standing Committees, the Hospital Representatives and their first deputies of the VA Hospitals and State Veterans Homes, and all Past Department Presidents in good standing are delegates at large to the Department President.

The number of delegates a Unit is allowed is based on its membership, as of 30 days before Convention. Each Unit delegate is entitled to an alternate who will only vote if the delegate is not present. Delegates and Alternates must be elected at least 30 days before the Convention. Delegates should be elected at the same session as the election of officers. When your Unit receives its' delegate form, fill it out and submit it to Department headquarters with a check for \$10.00 per delegate. No fee is required for alternates. The Deadline to Department Headquarters is JUNE 10. If the delegate sheet is not returned by the deadline, the Unit will lose its right to vote. The credentials desk at Convention will not accept Unit delegate fees or forms.

The packet of Resolutions to be voted on at Convention is posted on the Department website. Bring a copy with you to Convention, as no additional copies will be available. If you have any questions, feel free to call me or email me. See you in Battle Creek.

Message to all Districts

Pat Lozano, 6th District President

It's always been my opinion that the first thing a District President and her executive committee should ask units is "How can we help you?" I see no purpose for Districts other than providing the best support they can to the units.

Our 6th District Executive Committee held a meeting at the beginning of our administrative year. We identified what we needed to put in place to support our units. We recognized that busy volunteers needed to see value in attending District meetings. So, we structured our meetings to be both instructive and enjoyable. We added an official training session featuring excellent subject-matter experts on major topics, held immediately before our lunch and official 6th District meetings.

Instead of dry lectured Chair Reports, we had each Chair provide a trivia question about their role. The answers and where to find them would earn a small prize for those who came up with the correct response. If you haven't been to one of our District training/meetings, see the value. This year, you would have learned about our governing documents, how to plan and deliver year-end reports that truly showcase your great work and the details of accurate and complete financial accounting and reporting, including ledgers, audits, 990s and LARA. At each meeting, you would have learned a current tidbit about each chairmanship in the organization.

If we choose to maintain our great organization, we must recognize and support new ideas and tools. We remain relevant because those before us have upgraded our processes, rules, and tools. Sometimes there was vehement resistance to those changes. I am very proud of our 6th District team and our units who are leading the way to the future. Thank You. I am excited to see modern online communications, bookkeeping, programs and online donation methods being implemented and at the same time re-enforcing the foundation of the historical purpose and meaning of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Look to my report in the 2026 Annual Convention Book of Reports, which will be distributed at Convention and later on the Department Website, for details of each of our wonderful units' reported successes.

Chaplains Corner

Dawn Gilbert, Chaplain

As we near the month of June and the end of our fiscal year, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the districts that took the time to submit their annual reports. Your dedication and hard work are truly appreciated. These reports have been compiled and successfully shared with National. Thank you for helping represent our department so well.

For those districts that did not submit a report this year, I encourage you to put plans in place to make this a priority next year. The Chaplain's annual report, in particular, was brief and consisted of only six questions. Please take a moment to review it and be prepared to submit it next year so we can achieve 100% reporting from our districts.

I was able to attend the Chaplain's Workshop held in April. Great information was shared, and the presentations were terrific. Thank you, 5th District, for making it happen. One thing our presenters reminded us of is that if you have a veteran in your life, make sure you know where a copy of their DD-214 is located. Any honors will require this document to be provided after they pass. It can be submitted for, but it may take too long to receive to allow honors to happen.

Please continue to keep your fellow Auxiliary members in your thoughts and prayers as many across our state recover from the devastating spring floods. Take time to reach out to members you haven't seen or spoken with recently to ensure they are safe and do not need assistance. A simple check in can make a meaningful difference.

Finally, prayers are still being accepted for Madam President Dawn to be included in her prayer book, which will be presented at the Fall Conference. There is still time to contribute, and I would love to make this a full and meaningful book that everyone will be proud to present.

Prayers can be sent by Email: dawngilbert21@aol.com, Text: 231 944 8099, Mail: 11667 Coster Rd. SW, Fife Lake, MI 49633. Thank you all for your continued service, compassion, and commitment to the American Legion Auxiliary.

Finance Article

Deanna Cortright, Finance Chair

We are at the end of the year. Reports should already be in, and everyone should be focusing on elections, transferring responsibilities, mentoring those moving into new positions, etc.

I want to cover something that many of you have issues with...membership and the time and cost associated with it.

Many of you do not want to use ALAMIS, and I totally understand that. If you live in an area where internet access is hard to come by, using the system becomes almost impossible. However, some of you just don't want to. There are way more benefits to using it than negatives. If you have access, you can enter your own membership without taking the time to mail it and wait for processing. One of the biggest advantages of the system is that you don't have to worry about having it returned. ALAMIS won't allow you to make mistakes unless it is in spelling, etc. If you forget to get the name of the Veteran the member is joining under, the system won't let you add them. It tells you how much to pay so you can't write a check for the wrong amount.

However, if you fail to fill out an application correctly, write the wrong total on the Transmittal, don't include a list of the members being paid, don't include a Member Data Form for transfers, or make any other errors, you will get it back from Department headquarters. You are responsible for having everything done accurately when you mail it. Sometimes, transmittals are received in the office two or three times because the errors cited when it was returned the first time weren't corrected. This is not only time-consuming but very costly. I do not think our members want their mandatory dues used to return transmittals several times, because errors aren't corrected when documentation has to be returned, taking time that could be used to complete another unit's transmittals.

Please know that what may have occurred in previous years will no longer happen. The staff members aren't going to correct your mistakes. It is your responsibility to send your documents, transmittals, applications, transfers, etc., correctly. We all make mistakes. When they happen, it is our responsibility to correct them.

I highly encourage all units to access ALAMIS so membership can be handled quickly, and you will always know where you stand.



DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN



American Legion Auxiliary

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY EXPLAINED

RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN:



- MOTHER
- DAUGHTER
- SISTER
- GRANDMOTHER
- GRANDDAUGHTER
- SELF — FEMALE VETERANS WHO HAVE SERVED
- MALE or FEMALE SPOUSE

ELIGIBILITY PERIODS: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941

TWO PATHS FOR ALA ELIGIBILITY

PATH ONE

The potential member is related to a living veteran by one of the relationships stated above and the veteran is living AND a current member of The American Legion.



If the potential member is a female veteran, she only needs to have served during the eligible time periods to be eligible for ALA membership.

PATH TWO

The potential member is related to a deceased veteran who served during the eligible time periods and was honorably discharged.



The deceased veteran did not have to be a member of The American Legion in order for the potential member to join the ALA.

For more information, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org

Mission Possible, Operation Success

Carol Burke, Membership Chairman

Operation 250 Candles is nearing completion, and we will achieve our goal of membership mission by July 4th, 2026. But let's not stop there—wouldn't it be great to celebrate America's 250th birthday with 30,000 mem-

bers?

We ended calendar year 1988 with our highest membership ever: 34,871 Auxiliary members. From then until 2021, membership steadily declined to a low of 26,401. Since 2022, we have gained members every year and are on pace to do so again this year. We have a long way to go to return to 1988 levels, but it would be wonderful to celebrate America's 250th birthday with a Department of Michigan membership of 30,000 or more. We can reach this mission by July 4th if each Unit, on average, achieves goal membership plus 3 additional members. Even if your Unit has already met that mark, our struggling Units still need your support—because we're in this together, one step at a time. Together, we can complete Mission Possible—Operation 250 Candles—and reach 30,000 members.

This year's membership success would not have been possible without the tireless work and dedication of our Unit Presidents, Unit Membership Chairs, District Presidents, District Membership Chairs, and you—the individual members—because “membership is everyone's responsibility.”

I'm grateful to the outstanding Department Membership Committee for helping make this possible. The next time you see them, please thank these not-so-secret agents: Southern Area Carla Pohl (Hummingbird), Eastern Area Shylynn Jones (Trouble), Western Area Candie Chase (Lightening), Northern Lower Area PDP Ruth Goth (The Wise Owl), and the UPAA Bonnie Taylor-Vazquez (Yoooper Goose II). Thank you all.

A huge thank-you to our Department headquarters staff, Shannon Werner and Mike Marriott, for their assistance and patience with me. Thank you as well to President Gramza for this appointment and her unwavering confidence in me. Now, let's celebrate the success of Operation 250 Candles—and aim for fireworks on July 4th with 30,000 members.

Parliamentarian Roles

Suzanne Knapp, Parliamentarian

A parliamentarian plays a vital role in maintaining order, fairness, and efficiency in meetings. The parliamentarian serves as a trusted advisor to the Chair, ensuring that all actions and decisions follow established rules. While their presence is often subtle, their impact is essential to protecting rights and upholding the integrity of the process.

During meetings, the parliamentarian functions primarily as an advisor. Their responsibility is to provide guidance to the Chair on procedural matters, helping interpret and apply the rules correctly in real time. Only the Chair has the authority to make official rulings. Communication typically flows privately between the Chair and the parliamentarian, allowing the Chair to maintain control and authority over the proceedings.

Procedurally, it is the Chair who initiates requests for advice. However, an effective parliamentarian remains proactive. They should not wait to be asked if a situation arises where rights may be compromised or rules are at risk of being misapplied. Timed, discreet intervention can prevent confusion or conflict before it escalates. However, the final decision always rests with the Chair, who may choose to accept or disregard the parliamentarian's guidance. Because of this dynamic, the parliamentarian must be visible enough to support the process, yet unobtrusive enough to

preserve the Chair's leadership. They are “seen but not heard” during meetings, contributing behind the scenes.

Outside of meetings, the parliamentarian takes on a broader, more consultative role. There is no strict limit to the additional responsibilities they may assume, especially when asked. These duties can extend beyond advising to include educating members on parliamentary procedure, conducting training sessions, or assisting with organizational governance.

Preparation is a key component of this consultative role. The Chair and parliamentarian should collaborate in advance to review the agenda and identify potential challenges. By anticipating issues ahead of time, they can ensure smoother proceedings and reduce the likelihood of disruptions.

The parliamentarian is often involved in the planning and work of specific committees where precise adherence to rules is critical. Early involvement in these processes helps prevent errors and strengthens the overall governance framework of the organization.

In both advisory and consultative capacities, the parliamentarian serves as a cornerstone of effective meetings. Through preparation, discretion, and expertise, they help create an environment where decisions are made fairly, efficiently, and in accordance with established rules.

Greetings from 2nd District

Mary Karen Rogers, President

needed throughout the year.

Unit membership chairs have been working very hard this year, and their efforts are very appreciated.

In November, the units in my District provided in-kind (gifts) and cash donations to the Ann Arbor VA Christmas Shop totaling over \$ 7,000.

Our units have been busy. Onstead Unit 550 gave teachers coupons for the local coffee shop during Teacher Appreciation Week. Ida Unit 514 provided lunch on the birthdays for each of the armed forces. Many of our units got together to work on the End of the Year Reports. The entire District participates in a yearly golf outing to raise money for Veteran scholarships.

I want to end with my president's project, which is Tunnel to Towers. This non-profit foundation's mission is to provide mortgage-free homes to Gold Star and fallen first responder families with young children. They also build specially adapted smart homes for catastrophically injured veterans and first responders. This group is committed to eradicating veteran homelessness. Check them out and donate if you can. Treat each other with kindness and respect, and remember your “why”.

This was my first year as a District President, and I have learned so much. We held a Second District Leadership Training event geared toward Unit-level new officers. We explained the duties and went over the forms and paperwork



Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Michigan

CLIVE R.A. SEYDELL

Detachment Commander 2025-2026



As I write my final article as your Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Michigan Commander for 2025-2026, I reflect on what an incredible and unforgettable year it has been. Since being installed at our convention last June, I've been across Michigan and around the country, representing our Detachment at conventions, conferences, tours, and Legion Family events. It has been a year filled with fellowship, service, hard work, and memories that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

I've attended many outstanding events alongside members of the American Legion Family. From the U.P. Summer Convention in Menominee and working the U.P. State Fair with my son Clive, to attending the National Convention in Tampa, National Commander Clancy's Homecoming in New York with Commander's Lady Stephanie, the Washington Conference, the Lincoln Pilgrimage, district events, Four Chaplains services, Veterans Day programs, local fundraisers, and the memorable U.P. Fall Tour, every experience reminded me how strong and united our American Legion Family

truly is.

Another major highlight of this year was the overwhelming support shown for my Commander's Special Project to help build a barrier-free fishing dock at Wilwin Lodge. The support shown by members, squadrons, districts, businesses, and Legion Family members across the state was truly incredible. I especially want to thank my Special Project Chairman, Henry Van Dusen, along with Missy and Jessica, for everything they have done this year in support of the project. Their hard work and dedication played a tremendous role in its success.

Moving forward, I encourage every squadron to keep up the momentum by recruiting new members, reaching out to members who may not have renewed yet, and, most importantly, checking on one another. Thank you, Membership Chairman Carvin, for the outstanding work you have done, helping keep our Detachment moving forward and assisting with new squadron charters.

I discovered during the Spring Meetings that Sons members are now eligible to apply for National Emergency Fund assistance from The American Legion. Also, the Detachment Executive Committee voted to establish a Detachment of Michigan Disaster Relief Fund to further assist members here in Michigan.

Thanks to our Detachment officers, chairmen, district leadership, squadron commanders, and members for everything you have done this year. Your dedication and volunteer hours are what keep the SAL in Michigan strong.

A very special thank you goes to Commander's Lady Stephanie, my son Clive, and Tom and Felicity for their love, support, understanding, and for the many travels shared throughout this journey while I represented the Detachment. Finally, I hope to see many of you at the upcoming Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Michigan Convention on June 5th, 6th, and 7th in Houghton Lake.

Serving as your Detachment Commander has truly been one of the greatest honors of my life. Thank you, Michigan SAL, for an incredible year.



4TH ZONE John Brown, 4th Zone Commander

Welcome, SAL members and families from the 4th Zone. I am looking forward to seeing you from June 5th to 7th at The Lakeside Resort and Convention Center at Houghton Lake for the 2026 SAL Detachment Convention.

Please remember to send in your new officers' list to the Department of Michigan. Deanna Clark needs your squadron information, as do your District and Zone commanders. We have 3 new Squadrons. the 19th District Post #194, Petoskey, District 10 Post #171 Gladwin, and Post 211 East Tawas.

Sons, remember that you are part of the Legion Family and you are respected for your contribution to supporting Legion programs and the community in which you live. Many times, when I thank a Veteran for their service, they, in turn, will thank the Sons for their service and support of our veterans.

Sons, please keep up the good work; your efforts do not go unnoticed. Thank you all for all that you do. What's going on with your Squadron? Remember to get photos and articles into the MI Legionnaire. May God watch over and protect all of our active service members.



VA & R REPORT Russell Bayliss, VA & R Chairman

We are finally on our way to summer. I have made some trips to VA Ann Arbor in the past 2 months, most without any problems due to bad weather. Watching the UP weather is a little frightening since they measure snow by the foot, not the 1/4 inch as in lower Michigan.

I enjoyed the trip to Washington, D.C., with Commander Clive, Stephanie and the Van Dams. Rodney Tolbert and I did some sight-seeing, but were unable to contact the Michigan representatives. The wreath ceremony was all inspiring. The National Commander put wreaths at 4 locations to represent his family of veterans.

VA & R volunteering in some hospitals has become challenging. Reps and Deputies must keep their badges current. During flu season, it is recommended that you have a flu shot before you tend to veterans.

I need a volunteer to work in Grand Rapids alongside Bill Wiley. I believe that, with myself, all the current volunteers are showing signs of slowing down and could use some younger helpers. Please feel free to contact the Department or me if you would like to be a volunteer.

Signing out. I hope to see you at the convention. Enjoy the summer, and as a reminder to all reps: spend your allowance at the hospitals.

TIME TO REMEMBER

Greg Price, Detachment Adjutant

By now, you should have completed your Elections and Installations of Squadron and District Officers for 2026-2027. We wish them congratulations and success as they represent their posts and communities. Nominations and Elections of our State Detachment Officers and National Executive Committeeman and Alternate National Executive Committeemen will be held at our 2026 Sons of the American Legion Convention at Houghton Lake, June 5th to 7th. Newly elected Detachment Officers and National Committeemen will be installed during the Convention.

We, Sons of the American Legion, will also be holding an additional meeting on Saturday, June 27th, at the American Legion Department of Michigan Convention, to be held June 25th - 28th in Battle Creek at the DoubleTree by Hilton. This meeting will give us insight into upcoming events and the opportunity to get answers to any questions you may have.

Flying Flags for Heroes is a program of the National Americanism Commission of the Sons of the American Legion. The

purpose of the Flying Flags for Heroes is to inspire genuine patriotism in our communities and promote national pride in our country. If your squadron has assisted in replacing or donating American Flags in your community, you can help assist the commission by sharing your stories before August 8th, to help them in achieving its goal of 100% Detachment participation. For additional information, visit FlyingFlagsForHeroes.org to access the reporting section of the website directly.

Many posts will be hosting events such as car shows, golf tournaments, and bar-b-ques. Some posts may be hosting a blood drive. These blood drives are very important. The donated blood, sometimes referred to as plasma (plasma is the liquid part of your blood), is used in operating rooms for transplant patients and surgical patients. Plasma helps to save lives. If your post, or a post near you, is having a blood drive, maybe you can stop and support their efforts to help others.

I want to say again how proud I am of us, Sons of the American Legion, in our support of the programs of The American Legion, our posts, and the veterans that live in the communities in which they are located.

5TH ZONE

Zack Pendell, 5th Zone Commander

This is for the ones who rise early to get the biscuits and gravy and coffee started for a Post breakfast. All the ones who start setting up chairs and tables for an event. All the ones who sell tickets and collect the money. All the ones who cook and wash dishes. All the ones who clean and mop the floors and restrooms. The ones who service and maintain the building and grounds. The ones who take veterans to the VA or give them rides to where they need to be. The ones who take them food and visit veterans at home, at the VA or at the hospital. The ones who give honors to our veterans and place the flags or wreaths at our cemeteries. For the ones who become leaders and help guide the squadrons forward.

This is for everyone who volunteered because of their priceless heritage to join the Sons of the American Legion. To help their veterans, their communities, state, and nation. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH! If I have not mentioned specifically, we know who you are. We may not have said it before, but we say it now: thank you, and thank you for your service.

A big thank you to all my Michigan Sons of the American Legion. Every day, some silently do the work needed to keep the Post running. Many go unnoticed, and more are overlooked when a simple thank you can make them feel appreciated.



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COOKOUT!







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CLOWN BAND**





RAFFLE!
AUCTION

July 11TH 12^{PM}

2026

**3383 E Hawley Rd
Custer, MI 49405**







**2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM
 ROOM BLOCK : AUGUST 25 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 3
 LOUISVILLE, KY – GALT HOUSE HOTEL – National HQ Hotel**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ **Cell Phone** _____

Rooms (Quantity): King _____ Queen Double: _____ ADA: _____ Rollaway: _____

Arrival Date: _____ **Arrival Time:** _____ **Departure Date:** _____

FLYING / Flight # _____ **DRIVING**

**All Rooms are \$142 per night (Plus 17.66% tax). The first night’s room deposit is required on this form.
 All rooms MUST be made through Adjutant Runyan and the Department block.**

Self-Parking \$40/day, Valet Parking \$45/day. Rollaway bed \$25/day, No Suites Available

Last Name	First	Cell #	LEG/AUX/SAL

Notes or Request: _____

Registration fee is \$35.00 for Legion members and guests. **ALA & SAL - send registration fees to ALA & SAL as required for delegates.** Michigan Party: Tickets are \$50 per person, Saturday, 8-29-2026

Enclose check or provide credit card info below:

First room night of \$167.07	x # of rooms	\$ _____
Legion Registration @ \$35 each	x # of badges	\$ _____
Michigan Party @ \$50 each	x # of attendees	\$ _____
National Commander Banquet @ \$75 each	x # of tickets	\$ _____
Total		\$ _____

Michigan Party will be held at Churchill Downs. No transportation provided (6.4 miles from hotel)

Make checks out to: The Department of Michigan American Legion or Cash – Credit Cards taken by calling Ron at 517-220-2748 or Wanda 517-220-2751

**RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT DEPARTMENT BY JULY 10, 2026 - ATTN: RON
NO REFUNDS AFTER THIS DATE**



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
Cell (313) 549-8557
geasterling@michiganlegion.org
Office Phone (313) 964-6640
Fax (313) 964-5697

Call for a Service officer in your area:
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Service Officer

Office Locations

Phil Babcock.....	Charlevoix, Petoskey, Kalkaska, Manistee Ludington, Big Rapids, Lake City
Patty Breas.....	Hastings, Caledonia, Grand Rapids, Kentwood, Wyoming, Holland
Brian Brooks	Ann Arbor
Josh Clark.....	Benton Harbor, Battle Creek, Coldwater
Kieshan Counts.....	Bay City, Saginaw, Vassar
Gary Easterling	Detroit
Stephanie Fisher.....	Onaway, Rogers City
Shay Grady.....	Rapid River, Ishpeming Little Lake, Marquette, Gwin
Valerie Johnson	Farwell, Ionia, Lansing, Battle Creek Bath, Grand Ledge, Eaton Rapids, Jackson, Laingsburg, Corunna
Courtney Mills.....	Ravenna, Muskegon, Grand Haven
Lisa Misenko.....	Troy, Oxford, Rochester, Detroit
VSO TBD.....	Detroit, Swartz Creek
Matthew Schantz.....	Garden City, Southgate, Detroit
Justin Schave.....	Detroit
Tommy Simpkins.....	Saginaw
Stacy Thill.....	Escanaba, Manistique
Rick Wiles.....	Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Gaylord
Kimberly Napoleon.....	Saginaw

District Meetings

The best way to increase participation at your District meetings, is to Publicize your District meetings!

As soon as you can send your District meeting times to media@michiganlegion.org. Once we receive them we will publish them every month in the pages of the Legionnaire, and on our Website www.michiganlegion.org

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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Around the State...

Quilts of Honor



Rich Jennings, Commander Stars & Stripes Post 1111 Walker receives a Quilt at a ceremony at ResLife in Grandville

Scholarship Presentation



Jackson County Commander Jim Ellis presents a \$500.00 scholarship to Jackson College Director of Donor Relations, Sheri Eldred to be used by a Veteran's son or daughter of a Veteran's son or daughter this coming year.

Membership Never Sleeps



First Zone Commander Scott Nichols is doing some recruiting at the VA in Ann Arbor

Post 422's New Officers

Left to Right: John Memo, Historian; Fred Zilliox, Chaplain; Joe Thick, 1st Vice; Julie Streeter, 2nd Vice; Stuart Smith, Finance Officer; Steve Stevens, Judge Advocate; Mike Adams, Commander; Bart Grzenkowiz, Sgt. at Arms; ad Kevin Ellis Adj



Ann Arbor VA Volunteer Awards

Post 46 member Frank Pape received the 2026 MVP award and also 1000 volunteer hour award.



L to R Dave Draper, Mark Lindke, Justo Hernandez, award winner Frank Pape, Scott Nichols, Robert Brown and Jeff Gamble all from post 46

Post Everlasting Memorial



2nd Dist Post Everlasting at Post 34 in Tecumseh. Guest speakers were Dept 1st Zone Commander Scott Nichols and Dept 2nd Vice Roger Deaton. Guests included active duty members U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant Colin Cady, Army Staff Sergeant Dakota Locklear, Coast Guard Lt Cmdr Mark Cole and Marine Corps Sergeant Abraham Casillas. Post 34 Honor Guard rendered military honors with Mark Young from Post 29 playing taps



Owen Barrett Post 110, Mt. Pleasant has been Busy

Their first ever Memorial Day 5K/2K held at Island Park, as well as providing Honor Services at Riverside, Calvary, and Memorial Gardens cemeteries with ceremonies all around Mt. Pleasant.



Supporting Special Olympics



L to R: Monroe county Sherrif SGT. Jason Mills, Mike Beck SR District VFW Commander, Wayne Blank A.L. 2nd District Adjutant, LT.Brian Stroka Monroe county Sherrif assisting at Monroe Special Olympics. 250 participants were competing



AMERICAN LEGION

MEMBERSHIP WORKSHOP & TRAINING

★ ★ STRONGER POSTS. STRONGER MEMBERS. STRONGER COMMUNITIES. ★ ★



SATURDAY
JULY 25TH

9AM TILL 3PM

*Growing Today.
Stronger Tomorrow.*



RICHARD F SMITH POST 29
3200 LANSING AVE, JACKSON, MI 49202
517-782-6675

PURPOSE

This workshop is designed to help American Legion posts strengthen membership growth, improve retention, engage younger veterans, and build a welcoming culture that supports long-term participation.



**BE THE
ONE**

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:

- Understand current membership challenges and opportunities
- Develop effective recruitment strategies
- Improve member retention and engagement
- Build stronger community visibility
- Create actionable membership goals for their post
- Utilize social media and outreach tools effectively
- Strengthen relationships with veterans, families, and community partners

**RECRUIT
NEW MEMBERS**

**RETAIN
OUR MEMBERS**

**ENGAGE
OUR COMMUNITY**

**BUILD A
STRONGER
AMERICAN LEGION**

STRONGER TOGETHER.

SERVING VETERANS.

STRENGTHENING OUR LEGACY.



DEPARTMENT CONVENTION 2026

JUNE 25TH - 28TH

BATTLE CREEK DOUBLE TREE HILTON

Register at:
michiganlegion.org/departments-convention-26

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS POST 53 PRESENT

\$50
per
Rider

\$30
per
guest

MICHIGAN LEGACY RIDE 2026

JUNE 19-20, 2026

**JUNE 18: MONROE POST 40
REGISTRATION OPENS AT 4:00PM**

**JUNE 19: KSU @ 9:00AM
LUNCH IN HILLSDALE**

ENDING DAY 1 IN SOUTH HAVEN

**JUNE 20: BREAKFAST + KSU @
8:00AM + TRAVELLING TO CLARE
CLOSING CEREMONY AT POST 558**

**REGISTRATION FRIDAY MORNING IN MONROE
/ SOUTH HAVEN ON 6.19 FOR THOSE
WISHING TO JOIN THERE**

RAISING MONEY FOR MICHIGAN

VETERANS AND CHILDRENS PROGRAMS

email: post53riders@gmail.com / more details to come

IN PERSON REGISTRATION OPENS JUNE 18TH 4-8PM

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENING IN FEBRUARY

Four Pillars/Outreach
Being an effective PSO

RICHARD A. MORRISON COMBINED ADVOCACY TRAINING ★★ ★



AUGUST 18-20, 2026
(TUE-WED-THUR)

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The American Legion Department of Michigan - Higgins Lake
American Legion VA&R Division
477 Michigan Ave, Room 1231 Attn: Joshua S.
Detroit, MI 48226



**CHECK-IN STARTS
AUGUST 18 AT 3:00PM**



**CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS
CALL 517-220-2751**



**HIGGINS LAKE DNR
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ROSCOMMON, MI 48653



★ ★ ★ ★ ★
THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN'S

250TH CELEBRATION OF AMERICA

ON THE MICHIGAN STATE CAPITOL GROUNDS
LANSING, MICHIGAN

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8TH, 2026 ★ 2:00 PM



A HISTORIC READING
OF THE DECLARATION
OF INDEPENDENCE
BY COLONEL NIXON



BEN FRANKLIN
WILL TELL THE STORY OF
HOW THE DECLARATION OF
INDEPENDENCE WAS WRITTEN.



PLYMOTH FIFE
AND DRUM CORPS

JOINING US IN CELEBRATION



SONS OF THE
AMERICAN
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DAUGHTERS OF THE
AMERICAN
REVOLUTION



COLONIAL MILITIA
WILL BE ON HAND
FOR A RIFLE SALUTE



HONORING OUR PAST
CELEBRATING OUR FREEDOM
INSPIRING OUR FUTURE



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