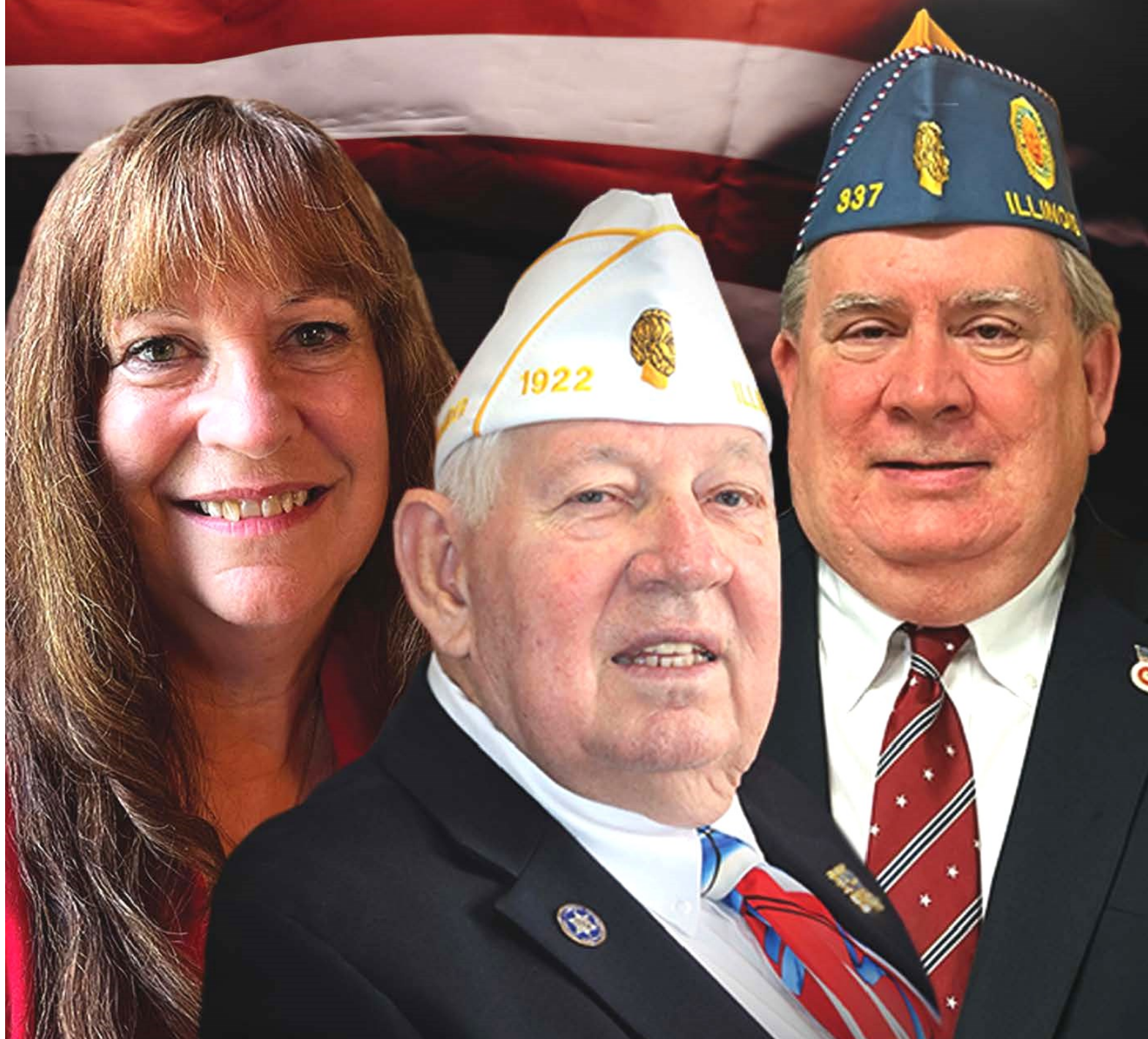


The background of the entire cover is a large, waving American flag. In the upper left, there is a red silhouette of the state of Illinois containing the American Legion seal. The title 'The Insider' is written in a large, black, serif font, with the 'i' in 'Insider' being lowercase and the rest uppercase. Below the title, the text 'American Legion Department of Illinois News' is written in a smaller, black, serif font. To the right of this text, 'FALL 2023' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. In the foreground, there are three people. On the left is a woman with long brown hair, smiling. In the center is an older man wearing a white American Legion garrison cap with the year '1922' and a gold emblem. On the right is another older man wearing a blue American Legion garrison cap with the number '337' and the word 'ILLINOIS' in gold. Both men are wearing dark suits and ties. The woman is also smiling.

# The Insider

American Legion Department of Illinois News  
FALL 2023



**To: All Legion Leadership**

**From: Dan Wheeler, National Adjutant**



The subject resolution was passed by the National Executive Committee by a vote of: YES - 59; NO - 0; ABSTAIN - 0 (Colorado and Washington did not vote due to charter suspensions.) Here is a link to the actual resolution: [Resolution No. 2: Centene Corporation Marketing Agreement | Digital Archive \(legion.org\)](#)

Centene, a reputable, publicly traded Fortune 25 company, will enter into a 5-year agreement to advertise Medicare plans to American Legion members through our national marketing channels, such as the website, newsletters, The American Legion Magazine, and our national convention. This lucrative contract will mean millions of dollars in net revenue to The American Legion. An announcement about the agreement will be made during the national convention.

As part of the agreement, Centene purchases exclusivity in the Medicare category. Exclusivity means The American Legion national organization would be prohibited from selling advertising to other Medicare providers. However, this exclusivity would NOT prohibit departments or posts from doing business with Centene competitors. The exclusivity clause only applies to the marketing channels available from the national organization.

We have thoroughly researched Centene and are comfortable recommending its brand, Wellcare, as an Official Provider of Medicare Supplements to the National Organization of The American Legion. Not only has the company been named by Fortune as one of the Worlds' Most Admired Companies for five consecutive years, it also has received several accolades related to hiring veterans and using veteran-owned suppliers.

This resolution will be implemented by the Marketing Commission. If you have any further questions about our new relationships with Centene, please contact Mary Jo Dial or Kimberly Meesters in the Marketing Division. They can both be reached at 317-630-1398 or [marketing@legion.org](mailto:marketing@legion.org).

Thank you.

## **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

**Send Dist/Div meeting dates, happenings at your post/community, announcements, etc!**

***Email [sgreen@illegion.org](mailto:sgreen@illegion.org) OR send by mail to:***

***American Legion, Dept. of IL***

***P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702***

***ATTN: SHANDI GREEN***

**Please submit any changes or updates to previous submissions to Shandi Green as soon as possible.**

**NOTE: WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO INCLUDE YOUR SUBMISSIONS BUT CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL BE. IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE, PLEASE SUBMIT BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR**



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# Delmar BUSKE



# Joseph LAMPERT

**G**reetings Everyone,

I would like to thank everyone for your confidence in me as your Department Commander. Let's make this a great year while we stop the slide in membership and have fun doing it.

June was a very busy month with our Youth Police School, Boys State, Girls State and Special Olympics. I enjoyed being involved in all of these programs. Programs are essential in keeping our membership up. This year, my two projects will be Youth Police School—Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program—and the Illinois Disaster Relief Fund. These two programs are very dear to me.

I had the opportunity to visit the traveling Vietnam wall when it was set up at Manhattan Post 935. While there, I had the privilege of speaking and meeting the "Medal of Honor" recipient Allen Lynch. What a wonderful opportunity! The Commander of Manhattan Post 935 and the members did an excellent job putting this program on.

I had the honor of installing the officers of Springfield Post 32 at their June meeting. It's great to be involved with the largest post in the state.

The Convention was a whirlwind of meetings! It was great having breakfast with leading candidate Daniel Seehafer and the incoming District and Division Commanders. It was also nice having the Director of Illinois State Police Brendan Kelly speak at our convention. The State Police Honor Guard removed the colors to close out the convention.

Lets work on membership this year and have fun doing it. **INTEGRITY—SERVICE—PROGRAMS**

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the DEC and my homecoming in Springfield on the 16th!

Delmar Buske, Commander

**T**o Our American Legion Family—

It is an honor and privilege to serve as your Sr. Vice Commander for the upcoming year. I thank you all for your support.

I enjoyed attending the National Membership Workshop with our Commander and our Division Commanders on July 27-29. I believe we have returned with some fresh ideas to help us with membership.

This is not an "I" job. It is a "WE" job! I am looking forward to working with each of you as "WE" have a successful and fun membership year!

Yours In Service,

Joe Lampert





# Angie GOLIGHTLY



# Michael VOZAR

**H**ello American Legion Family,  
I'm Angie Golightly, your 2023-2024 American Legion Auxiliary Department of Illinois President. I'm humbled and honored to fill this position. Honoring Veterans has been my life's work.

I was taught to respect Veterans by my father, First Sergeant William Lundy, while watching him lead the Honor Guard and ensuring that the Green Rock Colona American Legion Post 1233 business, would support their endeavors. Our priority was remembering his brother, Arthur Lundy, who was killed in Korea, in a battle they were fighting together.

Congratulations to all the previous year's Commanders and Presidents for a job well done! You've set the bar high for us to rise to your accomplishments, but we're going to do our very best.

The Department of Illinois American Legion Auxiliary theme this year is "Serving Veterans: The Real Superheroes". Our Veterans may have worn combat boots instead of 'capas' but we do believe they **are** heroes. Playing well does not make a hero, but signing up to be willing to die, protecting our country, does make our Veterans heroes.

My special project is to improve the lives of Veterans in VA Facilities. We hope to use our 'superpowers' to discover their needs and fill them.

I'm looking forward to a great year, working as a Legion Family, representing Illinois. When I speak to people, I tell them about our Heroes and to remember the sacrifices that were made. We can never forget!

**G**reetings from the Detachment of Illinois,  
Greetings to the Illinois American Legion Family!

I am very proud to serve as Detachment Commander this year. I look forward to working with Commander Buske, Vice Commander Lampert, and President Golightly. I feel we have a great leadership team in place that is dedicated to advancing the Four Pillars and will make us stronger.

My Fall DEC and Homecoming will be on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> in Genoa.

I am from the Second Division, 12<sup>th</sup> District, and a member of Bayard Brown Squadron 337 in Genoa. My membership eligibility comes from my father, CMM Stephen Vozar, who was a WWII Coast Guard veteran serving on the USCGC Escanaba in the North Atlantic. He was a Life Member and Post Commander of Post 28 in Grand Haven, Michigan where my mother served as Auxiliary Unit President. My parents taught me early the values of Americanism, God and Country, and service to our Veterans and their families. I attended Wolverine Boys State, participated in Oratorical Contest, and was an Eagle Scout.

My service project is Honor Flight Network. I have volunteered with Honor Flight Chicago for several years. It is wonderful engaging with veterans as they arrive and help them get ready for flight day to Washington. So many have told me what a truly special experience it was to receive such honor and thanks for their service. We will support all Honor Flight Network groups serving Illinois veterans.

My motto is "One For The Sons". This is a membership challenge for every member to recruit one new member. By growing our membership we can

*(Continued on page 5)*

(SAL Commander, Continued from page 4)

become stronger in our support of the Legion with a renewed sprit of enthusiasm, new ideas, develop future leaders, and stronger backs!

My slogan is "Beyond The Four Walls", A reminder to members that there are opportunities to serve our organization beyond the four walls of their Post. We will ask for their participation and encourage members to attend District and Division meetings, DEC's, and Convention to learn new things, further their skills, ask questions, develop new friendships, and maintain strong camaraderie.

Proud Possessor of a Priceless Heritage,  
Michael Vozar, Commander - Detachment of Illinois

**Loda Post 503**



**Oct 6, Nov 3  
& Dec 1**

—Fridays at Loda Post

**107 N. 600 East**

The menu includes Fish, Chicken, French fries, Baked beans, Green beans (with potatoes, bacon, and onions) Coleslaw, and Potato salad. Price is **\$10.00** for all you can eat. Children eat free.

**mark YOUR  
calendar!**

**SEPTEMBER**

SEPT. 4: **LABOR DAY**

**(OFFICE CLOSED)**

SEPT 5: **CMDR APPTS(@HQ)**

SEPT 11: **PATRIOT DAY**

SEPT 16: **FALL D.E.C. & CMDR  
HOMECOMING  
(SPRINGFIELD)/  
TAL DAY**

SEPT 23: **DIST/DIV SR & JR VICE  
TRAINING/2ND DIV  
FALL FORUM  
TRAINING (GENOA)**

SEPT 30: **SAL HOMECOMING &  
D.E.C./ CMTE & CMSN  
MEETINGS**



## PRESS RELEASE:

The Morrison American Legion will conduct its annual Retirement Flag Ceremony on the last Sunday in September (per our annual schedule), we will burn retired flags in a respectful manner. Flags are accepted on the day of, as long as we receive them in time to not disrupt the ceremony which starts at 12:30. Everyone is invited to attend the short but impressive ceremony. Lawn chairs are encouraged. The Ceremony will be held just west of the Veterans Memorial Park in Grove Hill Cemetery. If utilizing a GPS device, enter 520 N Genesee St, Morrison and the ceremony will be due North of that.

RELEASED By: J.W. Brearton



# 2023—2024 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
09/15/2023	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	FOX LAKE POST 703	FOX LAKE
09/20/2023	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226	LINCOLNWOOD
09/27/2023	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DES PLAINES POST 36	DES PLAINES
10/08/2023	11TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	HUNTLEY POST 673	HUNTLEY
10/15/2023	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING—15TH DIST. CANTON POST 16	CANTON
10/18/2023	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	GEORGE W. BENJAMIN POST 791	NORTHBROOK
10/21/2023	20TH DISTRICT	11:00 AM	ELDRED POST 1135	ELDRED
10/25/2023	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	PALATINE POST 690	PALATINE
10/29/2023	4TH DIVISION	TBD	WESTVILLE POST 21	WESTVILLE
11/15/2023	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	MORTON GROVE POST 134	MORTON GROVE
11/15/2023	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	RIVER GROVE POST 335	RIVER GROVE
11/17/2023	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	GURNEE POST 771	GURNEE
12/20/2023	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ELLSWORTH-MEINEKE POST 1983	HOFFMAN ESTATES
01/24/2024	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	MERLE-GUILD POST 208	ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
02/04/2024	11TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	NEW LENOX POST 1977	NEW LENOX
02/21/2024	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	ROGERS PARK POST 108	EVANSTON
02/28/2024	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	BILLY CALDWELL POST 806	FRANKLINK PARK
03/10/2024	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	3RD DIV. SPRING MEETING—20TH DIST.	TBD
03/15/2024	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	LAKE ZURICH POST 964	LAKE ZURICH
03/20/2024	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	JOSEPH M. SESTERHENN POST 166	MORTON



# embership

Is a group effort. And while there is healthy competition between us all as we fight for our Posts, Districts and Divisions to finish in the top, there is also friendship and camaraderie. On November, 13th District Senior Vice Commander Jerry Howard and 22nd District

Commander Ron Swaim announced their official competition to finish #1 in Membership for the 2022-2023 card year. Along with a small wager, the two agreed that whoever lost the bet would take a pie in the face at Department Convention. But there really is no "I" in "team." The two districts ended up tied for first place and went in for the prize together. To up the ante, Membership Director Jim Talaska promised to take a pie in the face for any District or Division to break the 100% threshold. He ended up getting not one...not two...but **THREE** pies (from 3rd District, 13th District and 22nd District). The Membership Awards portion of this year's Convention was one for 'the books.' We congratulate all the Districts and Divisions that were recognized and appreciate your hard work and dedication to our organization. Without you, there would be no American Legion Department of Illinois. Thank you!







Congratulations to all of the District and Division Commanders and Sr. Vice Commanders who earned membership awards!





# 2023 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

We came together to close another successful year. Thank you to all who attended!



- 1) Post 635 Honor Guard presenting the colors at the Convention opening.
- 2) Commander Lomac Payton being wrapped in one of many thoughtful gifts.
- 3) Senior Vice Commander Delmar Buske was thrilled to receive one as well!
- 4) Delmar Buske & Amanda Congdon with the Firefighter of the Year.
- 5) Delmar Buske, Amanda Congdon and Lomac Payton with the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.
- 6) Jeff Roscow
- 7) Paul Garret, Margaret Hopkins(a Community Service Award Recipient), Celeste Latham and Lomac Payton
- 8) Ashley Mason and Lomac Payton
- 9) Kevin O'Connell, Janet Bacon and Lomac Payton
- 10) Premier Boys State participants
- 11) Department Leadership group photo at State Convention.

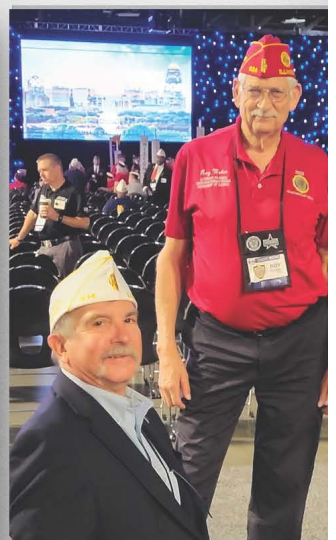
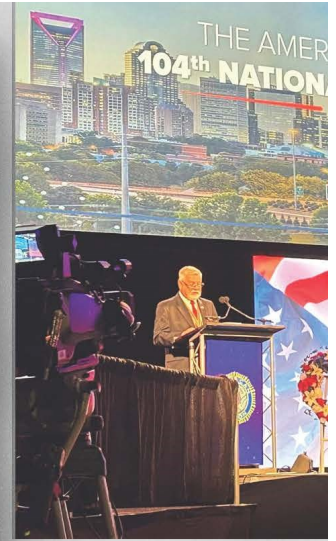


- 12) Congratulations to Legionnaire of the Year, Michelle Aaron!
- 13) (left to right) Harl "Butch" Ray, Detachment Sr. Vice Commander Michael Voza, Detachment Commander Kevin O'Connell, Department Commander Lomac Payton
- 14) Commander Payton presenting Misty Buscher, Mayor of Springfield, with a token of appreciation during the opening of the 2023 Convention.
- 15) Commander Payton and Leading National Candidate(recently installed as National Commander), Daniel Seehafer.
- 16) Department of Illinois Auxiliary leadership with Lomac Payton







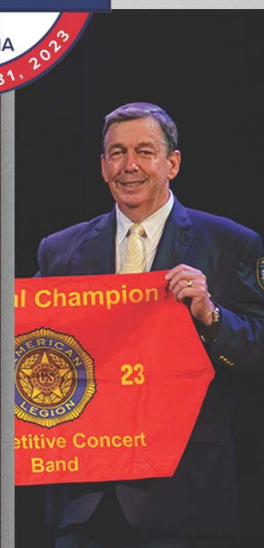




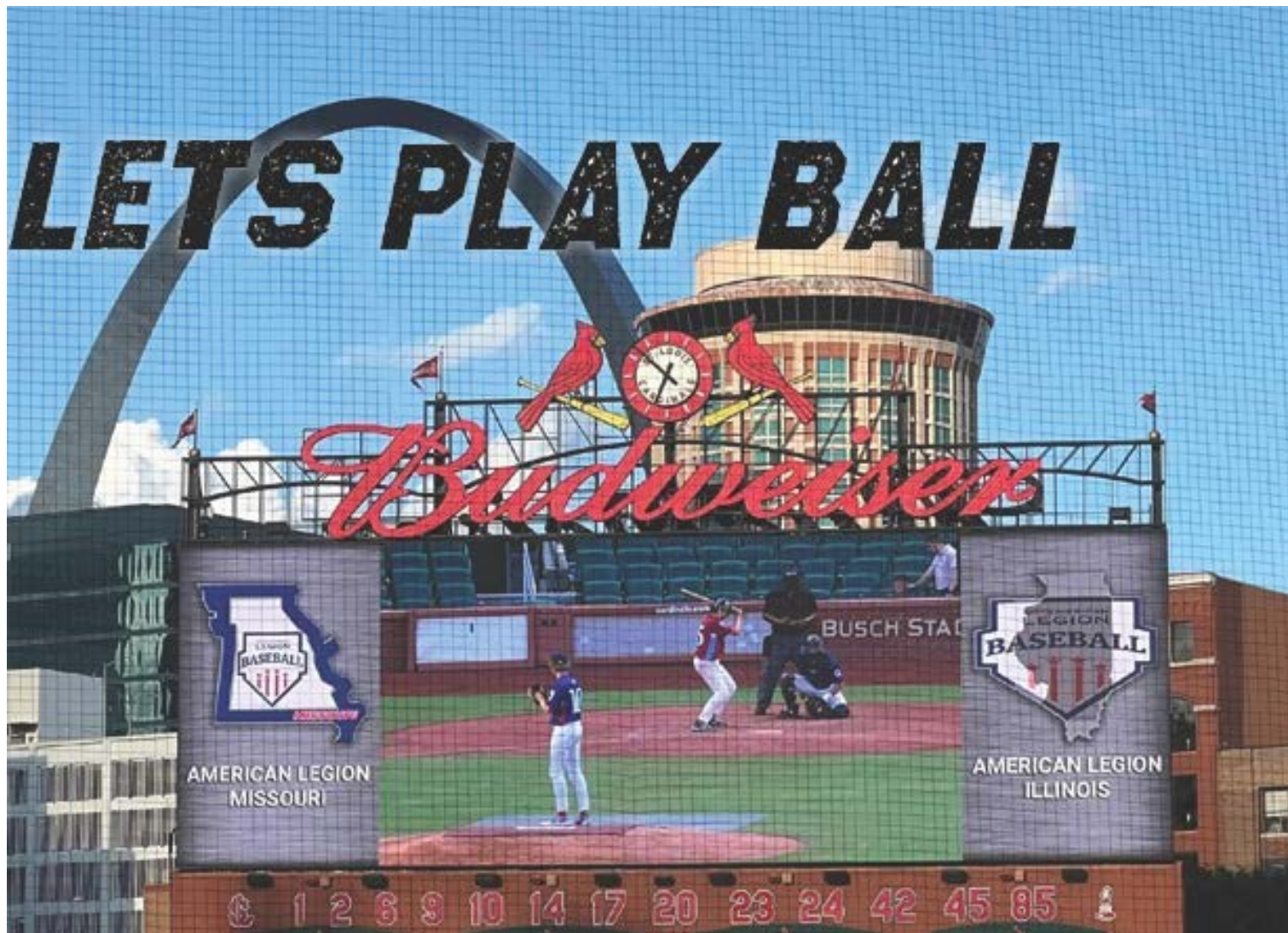
Soon following Department Convention, Illinois Legion family leadership recently visited Charlotte, North Carolina for The American Legion National Convention.

While there, the Joliet American Legion Band (defending champion), sponsored by Post 1080, performed "The Crosley March," "Sursum Corda," and "Prelude, Siciliano and Rondo." They finished with a score of 95.7.

We came back with a lot of useful information and look forward to sharing it with you as we move forward into the new Legion year!





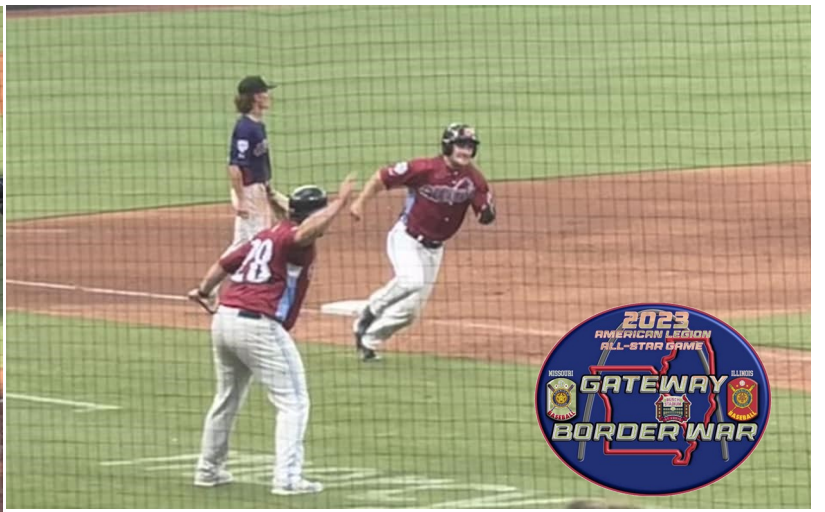
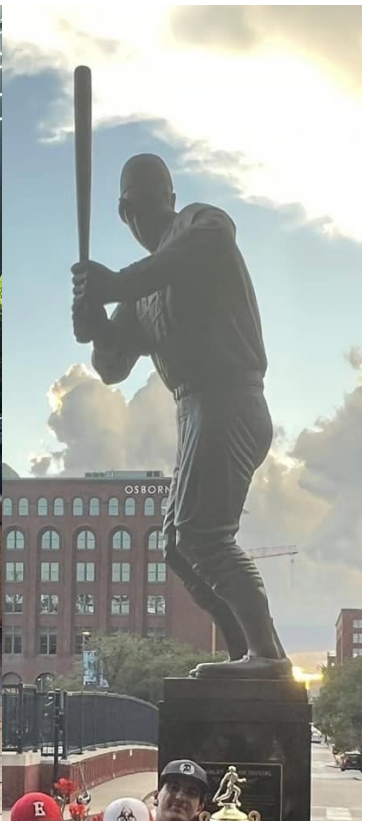
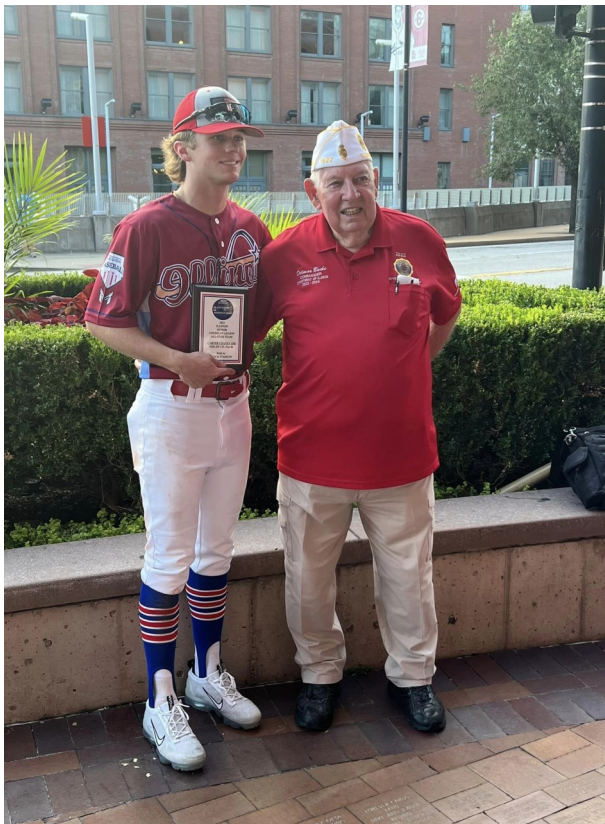


Sunday August 6, 2023 was American Legion Baseball Day at Busch Stadium in St. Louis as the Illinois Legion (19 & under). Our Illinois Legion All-Stars took on the Missouri Legion All-Stars in the first ever "Border War". The game followed the Cardinal, Colorado Rockies regular season game. Missouri bested Illinois 4-3 in a hard fought, very well played game. Congratulations to all the players for putting on a great exhibition!



Illinois Legion leadership were featured on the jumbotron while on the field.









## American Legion Department of Illinois, Office of VA&R

Starting in September, the American Legion Department of Illinois will have a VSO at Headquarters every third Wednesday, 0900 until 1400. Veterans and/or their family member will sign in upon arrival. No appointments will be made at this time, those that plan to visit us we ask for your patience as this is new for all those involved. All questions should be directed to 312-980-4266.

It is suggested that you bring the following information with you to help expedite the process.

1. DD-214 and/or activation document
2. A list of your currently diagnosed conditions related to your military service.
3. If there is any relevant records or documents, you may bring them with you however do not bring in boxes. (Call us if you have questions)

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### **DID YOU KNOW?**

As many as 100 spouses of deceased service members are expected to descend on Capitol Hill in late September to lobby for a bill that would eliminate financial penalties imposed for decades on husbands and wives who want to remarry. Congress decided in the 1960's that widows and widowers would lose compensation, health care, educational opportunities, commissary access and other benefits if they remarry before age 55. Now surviving spouses and advocates are asking lawmakers to undo those rules. At least 30,000 surviving spouses would benefit from the proposed legislation. While most spouses receiving compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs are in their 70's and 80's, the average age of a spouse at the time of their partner's death is now 25 to 35. The cost of this bill, if passed, is estimated to be \$2.7 billion dollars over 10 years. An Advocate for this bill believes that "The notion that a widow or widower will no longer need those benefits if they remarry before 55 is misguided, because it implies survivors become the responsibility of their new spouses.

- Submitted by Jerry Vogler (an excerpt from Veteran's Corner)





# American Legion State Golf Tournament







# Naperville Gold Star Families Memorial Dedication

On May 27, 2023, our Naperville Community dedicated Illinois first Hershel “Woody” Williams Gold Star Families Memorial in our Naperville Veterans Park. It was a beautiful day, and the turnout was tremendous. So, what is this “Memorial” truly all about?

Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments are a two-sided tribute made of black granite. One side bears the words: Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, a tribute to Gold Star Families and Relatives who sacrificed a Loved One for our Freedom.

The other side tells a local story through four granite panels: Homeland, Family, Patriot, and Sacrifice. (See pictures of both sides above)

Three of the panels for our monument in Veterans Park were designed by a local Naperville artist.

At the center of this tribute is a silhouette of a saluting service member which represents ***“The Legacy of the Loved Ones who have paid the Ultimate Sacrifice for our Freedom.”*** Together, these features tell each community’s unique story based upon the Pillars of the Woody Williams Foundation. You will also note that as you view the Saluting Service Member, you will see our US and Service Branch Flags that have been up for years in honor of all our Service Men and Women that have and currently serve.

***“In Honor of the 114 Men and Women of Naperville that paid the Ultimate Sacrifice in Service to their Country”***

***Submitted by Past Department Commander Wayne Fischer***





# Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul PRESS RELEASE

IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov



**For Immediate Release:**

Aug. 21, 2023

**Contact:**

[PressOffice@ilag.gov](mailto:PressOffice@ilag.gov)

## **ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES SUPREME COURT TO PROTECT VETERANS' RIGHTS AND EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS**

**Chicago** – Attorney General Kwame Raoul today, as part of a bipartisan coalition of 42 attorneys general, is urging the U.S. Supreme Court to protect veterans' rights and benefits, including the Post 9/11 Montgomery GI Bill educational benefit.

[In the brief](#), Raoul and the coalition support a Virginia U.S. Army veteran in Rudisill v. McDonough, who was denied his Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), even though veterans with multiple requisite periods of military service can earn up to 48 months of educational benefits.

“Individuals who serve our country should not be denied benefits when they return home, which is why I am urging the Supreme Court to protect the educational benefits veterans have earned through their military service,” Raoul said. “I remain dedicated to ensuring veterans and their families receive all of the benefits they have sacrificed so much for.”

James Rudisill is a Virginia resident and decorated U.S. Army veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. After his first tour, Rudisill used his Montgomery GI Bill benefits to further his education, successfully completed his undergraduate degree, and returned to the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer. Following his third overseas tour, Rudisill was accepted into the Yale Divinity School, with a goal of returning to the armed forces yet again, as a chaplain.

When the VA denied Rudisill his GI Bill benefits, the decision was overturned by multiple courts. However, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ultimately upheld the VA's decision, robbing thousands of veterans of the GI benefits they earned while serving their country in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In April, Raoul [joined bipartisan coalition](#) of 33 state attorneys general in asking the Supreme Court to take Rudisill's case.

Joining Raoul in submitting the brief were attorneys general from Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, the Northern Mariana Islands, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.



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Department of Illinois ~ Official Member of The National American Legion Press Association

MEMBERSHIP  
UPDATE

Top 10	
DISTRICT & DIVISION RANKINGS	
UPDATED 09/07/2023	
Division	Commander
4	VANCE
3	HINTON
2	REECE, JR.
1	HEDRICK
5	SCHOO

District	Commander
4	Acevedo
17	Rodriguez
16	Hope
10	Sassorossi
18	Taylor
8	McNellis
19	Walker
5	Reed
15	Hagie
14	Page



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