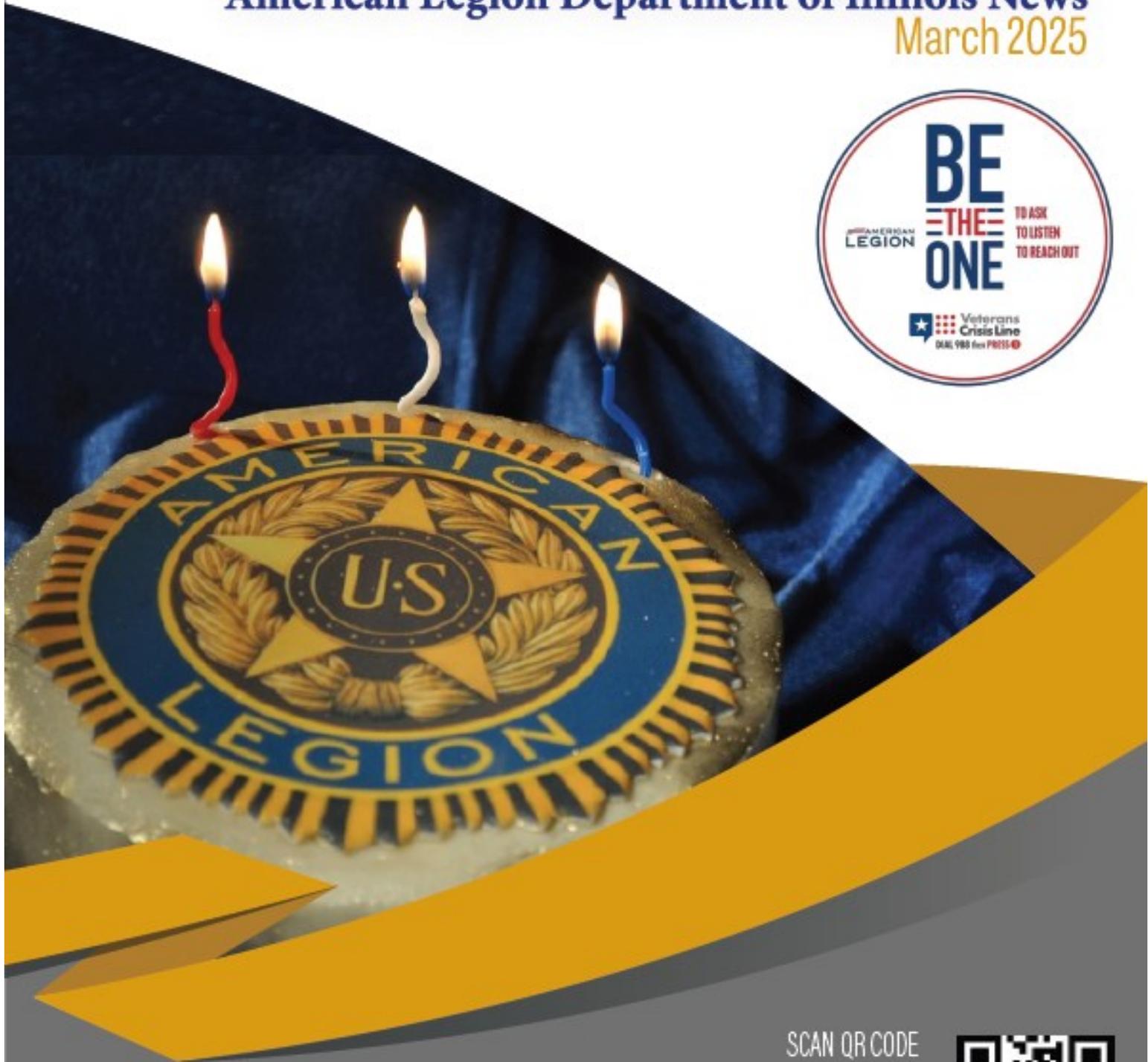


The Insider

American Legion Department of Illinois News
March 2025



Department Commander: Joseph P. Lampert
Department Adjutant: Joshua Thielen
Department Editor: Shandi Green
Department Print Operator: David Scott

SCAN QR CODE
TO VISIT THE
DEPARTMENT
WEBSITE
www.illegion.org





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mark your calendar!

MARCH

- MAR 15: **AMERICAN LEGION'S BIRTHDAY**
- MAR 21: **85% ALA TARGET DATE**
- MAR 21-22: **PATRIOTIC CONFERENCE (SPRINGFIELD)**
- MAR 29: **SAL COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING**

APRIL

- APR 12: **SPRING D.E.C.**
- APR 18: **GOOD FRIDAY (OFFICE CLOSED)**
- APR 20: **EASTER SUNDAY**
- APR 22: **EARTH DAY**
- APR 24: **HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY**

UPCOMING YOUTH PROGRAMS



**ILLINOIS
PREMIER
BOYS STATE**

June 7-13, 2025





**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
ILLINOIS
GIRLS
STATE**

June 15-21, 2025





**Youth Police
Academy**

June 22-27, 2025





**2025 Summer Games:
June 20-22, 2025**

**2025 State Tennis:
August 16-17, 2025**

DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	DETAILS & LOCATION
03/15/2025	20TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	SPRING MEETING @ ELDRED POST 1135
03/16/2025	19TH DISTRICT	TBD	SPRING MEETING @ WAYNESVILLE, IL
03/16/2025	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ THE HAVEN
03/19/2025	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	JOSEPH SESTER HENN POST 166 @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
03/21/2025	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ DEERFIELD POST 738
03/23/2025	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ SPRINGFIELD POST 809
03/23/2025	22ND DISTRICT	11:00 AM	DISTRICT MEETING @ DUPO POST 485
03/26/2025	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ RIVER GROVE POST 335
04/02/2025	1ST DIVISION	7:30 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ CICERO POST 96
04/16/2025	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ EVANSTON POST 42
04/23/2025	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ ELLSWORTH-MEINEKE POST 1983
05/11/2025	16TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	DISTRICT MEETING @ BRADFORD POST 445
05/16/2025	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ LAKES REGION POST 703
05/17/2025	13TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CONVENTION MEETING @ LANARK POST 357
05/18/2025	21ST DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT CONVENTION @ KINCAID POST 905
05/18/2025	23RD DISTRICT	10:00 AM	DISTRICT MEETING @ EFFINGHAM POST 120
05/21/2025	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	POST EVERLASTING @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
05/25/2025	22ND DISTRICT	10:00 AM	DISTRICT CONVENTION @ COLUMBIA POST 581
05/28/2025	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ DES PLAINES POST 36
05/31/2025	20TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CONVENTION MEETING @ KAMPSVILLE POST 1083
06/08/2025	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	LEWISTOWN POST 1 MEETING @ VFW
06/08/2025	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION CONVENTION @ NASHVILLE POST 110
06/18/2025	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226
06/20/2025	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING @ WAUCONDA POST 911
06/25/2025	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ PORTAGE PARK POST 183



Department Commander,

**JOSEPH
LAMPERT**

Greetings Legionnaires,

It has been a busy winter!
In November, I had the
pleasure of attending the

Utica Veterans Day Parade as well as the Piatt County Veterans Day Parade with President Arlene, Commander Rick, Sr. Vice Roy and Adjutant Josh. Our Department Leadership team accompanied by SAL National Vice Commander Butch Ray & TAL National Vice Commander Roger Mathison, toured the Marion VA to start The Haven Jamboree. A lot of progress has been made at the VA since our last visit. The Jamboree was very well attended by the ENTIRE LEGION FAMILY!! In December, I attended the 3rd District Military Ball, which featured PNC Marty Conatser and National Vice President Pam Ray as guest speakers. After the holidays, we shifted gears in preparation for the Legion Family Membership Caravan. We had the pleasure of hosting National Vice Commander Roger Mathison and National Detachment Commander Joseph Navarrete. We had a wonderful time touring our great state and collecting membership. Thank you to EVERYONE who came to your local stop.

The fun kept going into February as we came together with representatives from all over the nation to make the 91st Annual Pilgrimage to Lincoln's Tomb. We had an amazing turnout. Thank you to everyone who braved the cold and inclement weather. I hope everyone had safe travels home!

As you read this, we will be wrapping up the Department Oratorical Contest in Springfield. This is always such an inspirational event to witness and I'm privileged to once again have the opportunity to participate.

Remember that the Legion's birthday is right around the corner. Let's celebrate this great organization by getting involved during Buddy Check Week. Take a minute to reach out to your fellow brothers and sisters. Remember our purpose and our responsibility to our fellow Veterans.

Until next time!



Department Sr. Vice Commander,

**ROY
SMITH**

Hello My Fellow Legionnaires!

Well January went by in a hurry, Caravan was a success, had a good turnout and we had a good showing of cards turned in. We also had several turned in to Department while Dee was out on Caravan. As of the January 30 we had moved up to 24th place in the nation that is still down from a high of eighth place earlier in the Membership Year.

Lincoln Pilgrimage was a wonderful event, as always. In true Midwest fashion, we didn't let a little snow or freezing temps stop us from making our way to Lincoln's tomb for the 91st consecutive year. We were joined by Departments all over the Nation and had the pleasure of hosting National Commander James LaCoursiere, National President Ward and National Detachment Commander Navarrete. Thank you to everyone who participated!

Department Convention and National Convention will be here before we know it! We recently visited the National Convention Site, Tampa Florida in January, our Hotel is within walking distance of the Convention Center, a free trolley stop, and numerous other things to do. If that not what you want get on the trolley and find something. More info to come!

March 9 thru 15 is Buddy Check Week, start planning a get together at your post to go and check on Veterans, the Auxiliary's Patriotic Conference is March 21 and 22, and the SAL Detachment Commander's Homecoming is March 29

Spring will be just around the corner lets get membership finished up so we can enjoy the outdoors!

Have a great month!

Roy
Roy E. Smith,
Department Sr. Vice Commander



**Department
President,**

**ARLENE
HOLTGRAVE**

Hello everyone! It's still winter in Illinois! I'm ready for spring! In January and February, we have had more snow, ice and cold weather than I

care to remember.

It did not stop us, it may have hindered us some, but we accomplished the Family Membership Caravan all around the state, Mission Training in Nevada, back to Illinois for Lincoln Pilgrimage. March continues with the Oratorical Contest March 1. Bring the junior auxiliary members to Junior Conference March 15-16 and don't forget the young SONs they are invited too. Patriotic Conference/Spring Board meeting March 21-22 at the Abe Lincoln Hotel, Springfield and the SAL Detachment Commander Rick Allen's Homecoming March 29, Cullom. April is busy also but most importantly right now is Easter and the Haven Run. May brings National Creative Arts Festival and POPPY DAYS. June is Illini Girls State and Boys State. These applicants do not need to be Legion Family members. July is the Department Convention. WOW! And there are Unit, District and Division meetings not mentioned. I hope to see you at all of them!

Did you know that during the day Sunflowers look up to the sky (heavens) straight, tall and in darkness they look at each other!

Till next time...Stay Safe...Be Healthy and GOD BLESS AMERICA!

STAY SAFE, BE HEALTHY
And GOD BLESS AMERICA!

Arlene Holtgrave, IL ALA President



**Detachment
Commander,**

**RICK
ALLEN**

Greetings from Detachment

2025 is well under way and going good for the Detachment. The membership Caravan turned out well from Jan 9th to Jan 19th

It was a great to visit with everyone at our stops, the Sons of the American Legion National Commander Joseph Navarrete, along with American Legion National Vice Commander Rodger Mathison traveled with us .

February was a busy month! I attended the Four Chaplains Event at Arlington Heights on Feb 1st and attended a 100th Birthday Party for a Veteran on February 02. Then Feb 10th thru 12th I headed to Springfield for Lincoln Pilgrimage. This is always a grand event for great President Abraham Lincoln the 16th President—and still one of the most revered Presidents to ever serve the nation. We had a great turnout with representatives from all over the country! We were joined by our National Leadership: National Commander LaCoursiere, National President Ward and National Detachment Commander Navarrete. I finished up February attending the Washington Conference Feb 22nd to 24th. While there, we participated in the Wreath Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, paying respect to the Veterans and their sacrifices to the people of this nation. We will never forget . After returning from the Washington Conference, it was on to Springfield for the Oratorical Finals held at The Abraham Lincoln Hotel from Feb 28th to March 1st.

Later this month, I will be attending ALA juniors and young sons Conference March 15-16, Patriotic Conference at Springfield March 21-22, and will be attending Spring DEC for the Sons and celebrating my Homecoming on the March 29th at Cullom Post 122.

To all of the Legion Family thank you for the membership turn in so far keep up the good work! Remember: Be the One to Save One!
Proud to Serve you

Detachment Commander
Rick Allen

CELEBRATE OUR 106TH BIRTHDAY WITH YOUR BUDDIES!

106 years ago, dispirited members of The United States Armed Forces gathered in Paris, France in March of 1919 for what they called a “morale conference.” High attendance wasn’t expected. In fact, 463 troops registered and only 300 were anticipated. It is estimated that more than 1,000 troops came and went, whether on orders or not. This meeting launched the beginning of what we proudly know now as THE AMERICAN LEGION.

During the 2019 Spring Meetings, The National Executive Committee passed Resolution 18—calling for twice-annual Buddy Checks to be conducted Legion-wide on the weeks of The American Legion’s birthday—March 15 and Veterans Day. National has made an online kit available to help guide posts on Buddy Checks. It contains information on Buddy Checks, tips, answers to FAQs and downloadable resources such as flyers, scripts and more.

Our legacy began in Paris and it continues wherever there is someone who is willing to BE THE ONE TO SAVE ONE. Pick up the phone, type up an email, knock on a door. Check on your battle buddies.

Cut this out for the next time you go door knocking!



Visit www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/buddy-check for materials for your next buddy check.



Buddy Check



Your friends from The American Legion Family dropped by to say hello and see how you are doing.

If you need any help, supplies, transportation or just someone to talk to, let us know. We are here for you.

Contact:	
Post No.	
Address:	
Phone number:	
Email:	

Reach out to us anytime!



We left home as teenagers or young adults, embarking on an adventure we couldn't fully comprehend. We loved our country so deeply that we were willing to defend it, even at the cost of our own lives. We said goodbye to our families, friends, and everything familiar, stepping into the unknown. We mastered the basics and were then scattered across the globe, carried by the winds of duty. We found new friends who became family. We became brothers and sisters, united beyond color, race, or creed. We learned to adapt quickly to every situation, no matter how foreign or uncomfortable. We pushed ourselves further than we thought possible, discovering strength we didn't know we had.

We learned to live with what we carried, whether it was a pack on our backs or the weight in our hearts.

We spoke a language of acronyms, codes, and unspoken glances that others didn't understand.

We found humor in the darkest moments, knowing it was sometimes the only way to survive.

We trained hard, because we knew our preparation could mean life or death.

We were taught to make decisions under pressure, when hesitation wasn't an option.

We learned the value of discipline and the importance of selflessness.

We endured extreme heat, biting cold, and environments that tested every part of us.

We built homes wherever we landed, no matter how temporary or improvised they were.

We were often lonely, even when surrounded by people, yet we pressed on.

We celebrated the little things, like a care package from home or a few extra minutes of rest.

We held ourselves to standards that others might find impossible, because failure wasn't an option.

We became a part of something bigger than ourselves, a legacy that stretched back generations.

We learned to cherish the silence between the chaos, because calm never lasted long.

We shared meals, stories, and sometimes tears, bonding in ways words can't describe.

We stood in formations under the stars, feeling both proud and humbled by our purpose.

We sacrificed time, comfort, and sometimes our health, knowing the mission came first.

We learned to trust each other with everything we had, including our lives.

We carried photos, letters, and mementos, reminders of who we were fighting for.

We embraced rituals and traditions that connected us to those who came before us.

We stood guard while the world slept, often wondering if anyone noticed.

We learned to respect authority, but also questioned it when it mattered.

We saw beauty in unexpected places, even in the middle of hardship.

We adapted to constant change, knowing plans were made to be rewritten.

We carried our stories home, but not all of them could be told.

We knew that freedom had a cost, and we were willing to pay it.

We came home to parades, quiet handshakes, or sometimes just silence.

We returned as different people, forever shaped by what we experienced.

We live with memories that visit us in the quiet moments, unbidden but unforgettable.

We have a pride that runs deep, not in what we earned, but in what we gave.

We know that being a Veteran isn't just a title, it's a lifelong brotherhood and sisterhood.

We learned that true service never really ends, because the lessons and bonds stay with us forever.

This article is based on a piece that has been shared widely online, with no credited author. I've revised and adapted it to reflect my perspective and experiences as a veteran. Thank you for taking the time to read my version.

—Marine Cpl. Wally Beddoe

**submitted by PDC Wayne Fischer*

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Send us your meeting dates, happenings at your post/community, announcements etc!

***Email sgreen@illegion.org OR send by mail to:
American Legion, Dept. of IL***

P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702 ATTN: SHANDI GREEN

The Sons of the American Legion
Detachment of Illinois
proudly presents



RICK ALLEN

2024-2025 Detachment Commander

COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING

SATURDAY MARCH 29, 2025

American Legion Skinner-Trost Post 122
127 W. Jackson St. Cullom, IL 60929

COCKTAILS : 6:00-7:00 PM

DINNER: 7:00-8:00 PM

ENTERTAINMENT: 8:00 PM



HOUSING: HAMPTON INN - 2000 Grand Prix Drive Pontiac, IL Call (888) 616-7085 for reservations.

Dinner Menu: Entrée—choice of: smoked brisket, glazed chicken breast, or chicken alfredo. All entrees served with baked potato, California blend vegetables, salad and cupcakes. – CASH BAR AVAILABLE \$35.00/person

Name: _____ Division# _____ District# _____

Phone # _____ Email: _____ No. of Person(s) _____

(Smoked brisket @ \$35 x _____) (Glazed chicken @ \$35 x _____) (Chicken alfredo @ \$35 x _____)

Amount Enclosed: _____

To guarantee reservation, mail check & reservation form to: MARSHA HAAG, P.O. BOX 124, CULLOM, IL 60929 **no later than March 20, 2025.** Checks payable to Cullom American Legion Post 122

For questions or dietary restrictions, please contact Vicki Allen at (815) 685-7008 or vkallen@maxwire.net



11TH ANNUAL AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY HAVEN RUN

(ALL VEHICLES WELCOME—
2, 3 OR 4 WHEELS)

APRIL 26, 2025

START AT EDWARDSVILLE POST #199
REGISTRATION @ 8:30 AM / DEPART @ 9:00 AM

Stops Include:

Highland American Legion Post 439
Nashville American Legion Post 110
Centralia American Legion Post 446 (Lunch stop)
Du Quoin American Legion Post 647
Steeleville American Legion Post 480
The Haven (BBQ & End of Run)

Cost to Participate: \$25/person
(to be paid the morning of the run or when you join the run at any stop)

For those who wish to stay in Edwardsville **Friday night (4/25/25)**:

Rooms will be blocked at Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Edwardsville, IL - (618)692-7255

Make reservations by March 25th! Use code "American Legion Haven Run" - \$145.00 + tax

For those who wish to stay in Marion **Saturday Night (4/26/25)**:

Rooms will be blocked at Country Inn & Suites, Marion IL - (618)997-2444

Make reservations by March 25th! Use code "American Legion Haven Run" - \$157.00 + tax

YOU CAN JOIN THE RUN AT ANY STOP!

IF YOU WISH TO DONATE TOWARDS THE HAVEN, MEET US AT ANY STOP

CALL WAYNE MADSON WITH ANY QUESTIONS

(618)806-1408

madsonwsr@gmail.com

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE HAVEN

2025 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AWARD PROGRAM DEADLINES



The American Legion has many awards available to posts and individuals. Each year, **less and less** submissions are sent in. There are nearly 800 posts. Each program has an outline and criteria to meet for each award. **Details and submission instructions are available online www.illegion.org.** Be sure to check the deadline for all award submissions some are approaching fast. ***DON'T MISS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR POST TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR EFFORTS.*** All winning Posts will be notified and receive recognition at the Department Convention this July in Springfield.

- **Legionnaire of the Year Award—June 15**
- **Firefighter of the Year - May 31**
- **Law Officer of the Year - May 31**
- **TLW Legion Rider of the Year Award - March 31**
- **Chaplains Cross/Star of David Award - June 6**
- **Community Service Award - April 30**
- **Hall of Fame Award - April 30**
- **Public Relations Award - June 1**

Need hard copies? Contact the Department Print Shop for a hard copy at 309-663-0361 or email: printshop@illegion.org

**SEE FOLLOWING 2 PAGES TO SEND YOUR
SUBMISSIONS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE
AWARDS!**

POST NEWSLETTER & POST SCRAPBOOK CONTEST RULES

- ★ **ALL NEWSLETTERS**— (other than newsprint) Enter according to the type of newsletter you publish.
- ★ **NEWSPRINT**— Issues printed on newspaper quality paper.
- ★ Only one newsletter category per post; *however, you can also enter the Post Scrapbook category.*
- ★ Only one copy of 3 separate issues may be submitted. **More** or **Less** than 3 issues will disqualify entry.
- ★ Judging is based on general content, Legion program news, originality, art, composition and general appearance.
- ★ **SCRAPBOOK**— Must be composed of news clippings, photos of post activities dated and identified as to publications they appeared in. Clippings must be arranged by month with emphasis on local news clippings.
- ★ Judging is based on post news content, Legion programs, chronological mounting, dates indicated, neatness and originality.
- ★ Scrapbooks will be displayed at Department Convention and returned.
- ★ The committee reserves the right to disqualify any entry which in the opinion of the judges has been placed in an incorrect category.
- ★ **DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES**— APRIL 30. Entries must be for the period of MAY 1 to APRIL 30, 2025. See Community Service Committee brochure for additional information and full list of due dates.
- ★ Entries **MUST** be sent in and/or post marked **NO LATER** than **APRIL 30**. An entry form (below) **MUST** accompany each entry. Extra entry forms are available at Department Headquarters.
- ★ Securely fastened entry form to the first page of the scrapbook or newsletter or newsprint being submitted.
- ★ **All entries MUST be signed by the Post Commander or Adjutant.**
- ★ **AWARDS**— Awards are broken down according to size of post. There will be a total of 3 awards (1st, 2nd and 3rd Place) for each group. The groups are ; 15–100 members, 101–200 members, 201–400 members and 401 and up. All other entries will receive “Honorable Mention” citations.
- ★ Clip entry form (below) and submit both Entry and form to:

Community Service, C/O Dept. Adjutant
The American Legion, Dept. of IL 2720 E. Lincoln St.
Bloomington, IL 61704

POST NEWSLETTER OR NEWSPRINT OR SCRAPBOOK ENTRY FORM (Check only one category per entry form)



	POST SCRAP BOOK CATEGORY		Editor's Name:
	OR POST NEWSLETTER CATEGORY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TYPE OF NEWS-LETTER (Check only one)	Address:
		All Newsletters (except Newsprint)	Phone:
		Newsprint	Post Name:
SIZE OF POST (Check only one)			Post Address:
15—100 Members	<input type="checkbox"/>		Post No.: District No.: Division No.:
101—200 Members	<input type="checkbox"/>		Name of Publication:
201—400 Members	<input type="checkbox"/>		Printed By:
401 + Members	<input type="checkbox"/>		Number of Issues Yearly:

Signature of Post Commander or Adjutant

Address, city, state, zip

POST COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKSHEET

This award provides an opportunity for every Post, regardless of size to gain recognition for the many worthwhile projects that they participate in within their own communities. The purpose of this program is to recognize Posts that are not able to qualify for the HALL OF FAME AWARD. Illinois Posts may submit their Department Commander's Community Service Award application for projects completed between May 1 and April 30. **Please refer to the Community Service Committee brochure for details and specifications.**

Date _____ No. of Members Involved _____

Service Type (please select): FUNERAL _____ PARADE _____ DEDICATION _____ BENEFIT _____
OTHER _____

Service for _____

Member: _____ YES _____ NO

Service held at _____

TIME _____

NAMES OF MEMBERS INVOLVED: *(If additional space is needed please use a blank sheet of paper)*

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.
10.	11.	12.
13.	14.	15.
16.	17.	18.
19.	20.	21.
22.	23.	24.

Distance Traveled: _____ Man Hours Involved: _____ Cost: _____

Post Adjutant or Person in Charge: _____

(signature)

- This form is for tracking purposes and can be duplicated as needed. This form is to be filed with the Post Adjutant after each event. ADJUTANTS: Maintain this form on file to aid in filling out Community Service and Consolidated Post Report Forms.



The Illinois American Legion Second Division is Proud to Host

Armed Forces Day Dinner

Friday, May 16, 2025

*To be held at the Yorkville American Legion Post 489
9054 East Veterans Parkway Yorkville, IL 60560*

Key Note Speaker:

National Commander

James LaCoursiere Jr.

*Social Hour Starts at 6:00 pm, Dinner at 7:00 pm \$35.00 per person
Dinner will be a buffet with multiple entree choices, and multiple sides.*

Reservation

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Post #: _____ District #: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ Table of 8: Yes or NO

Please provide names on reverse side if a table of 8

Make checks payable to: American Legion 2nd Division

Mail to: Waldon L Gibbs 200 W 8th Street Milledgeville, IL 61051

Questions, call or email Waldon L Gibbs 815-499-5903 or lmgibbs64@gmail.com

RSVP by: May 2, 2025



WE'VE MISSED YOU!

Let's catch up with what your fellow Legion Family members have been up to!



Des Plaines Post 36 Commander Pat Flannigan, Unit 36 Auxiliary President Fran Strossner and Squadron 36 S.A.L. Commander Jim O'Connell worked with representatives from North School and Orchard Place School, Sam's Club Manager Eric Jakaitis and Assistant Club Manager Rob Sarlo to provide Thanksgiving dinner to families in need. They presented dinners complete with turkey, pumpkin pie, dinner rolls and all the fixings to 37 families from North School and 38 families from Orchard Place School.

**submitted by 9th District Sr. Vice Commander Tom Strossner who was there to witness this charitable event*



Pictured (left) is Korean Veteran Charles Davis proudly representing us at the 20th Veterans on Parade. It was a beautiful day and they had a great turnout. Charles is a paid up for life member at American Legion Post 147 in Marion, Illinois.

**submitted by Patricia Caraker*



On Veteran's Day 2024 the Rochelle Township High School sponsored a display of veteran related history and options for students on careers in the military. Students learned about past service of the veterans and what options are available for careers in the military. From left to right Chris Lewis (Principal), William Sunderlin (RTHS student), John Gruben (past Commander American Legion Post 403), Richard Mott (VFW member Post 3878), SSGT Jordan Jensen (Marine Corps Recruiter), Mary Beth Papke (Commander USN retired), Kyle Arreguin (Petty Officer 2nd Class), Steve Korth (Adjutant American Legion Post 403) and Chuck Roberts (Commander American Legion Post 403).

**Submitted by Jerry Howard*



Pictured above is a new bugle donated to Jerry Wickam Legion Post 1148 by Kate Borgmann/Fibbers Bar & Grill,

Pictured to the left is Veteran George Benes, a Jerry Wickam Leaf River Legion Post 1148 member.

Wood Dale Post 1205 started a new fundraising program called "Helmets For Heroes," inspired by a recent visit to a California Legion Post where they were introduced to a similar program consisting of a plastic military Helmet "piggy bank" for coins and larger denominations. Wood Dale's version has been a success and we plan on procuring additional Helmets to raffle off and place on more tables at our Post.

** submitted by Michael E. Salatino, Adjutant*



Roy Smith, Gary Fravel, and Chris Schoo participated in the Anna Veterans Home Fishing Day.

Paul Garrett revisited his "Taking Out The Trash Tuesday" tradition during the holiday season.



On Saturday, February 1, 2025, the 9th District American Legion Family held The Four Chaplains Ceremony at Merle Guild American Legion Post 208 in Arlington Heights. 9th District S.A.L. Chaplain Bob Morse offered the opening prayer, Past NEC Wayne Erickson read a biography of Rev. Clark Poling, 9th District Finance Officer Mark Kwiatkowski read the biography of Father John Washington, 9th District Auxiliary Chaplain Collinette Marshall read the biography of Rev. George Fox and Auxiliary Unit 36 Vice President Karen Jacobs read the biography of Rabbi Alexander Goode. Special guests in attendance at our ceremony were Past NEC Wayne Erickson, S.A.L. Detachment of Illinois Commander Rick Allen and Past S.A.L. Detachment Commander Mike Vozar. S.A.L. Detachment of Illinois Chaplain John Nemenich offered the closing prayer. Presentation of the Colors was done by the Color Guard of Post 208.

**submitted by Gregory Jacobs*



On October 7, Josh Thielen was inducted into Ye Steivos, a group whose members are American Legion Department Adjutants. They raise money to support Legion Charities. Part of his induction was to be blind folded, he was marched into the hall. While still blindfolded he received YE Oath OF BLOOD to seal his loyalty, he had to Quaff a concoction from the Bucket of Blood *disclaimer: no real blood was used!* Josh and Department Commander Joe Lampert were inducted and Marty Conatser seconded the nomination of Jimmy Foster as incoming Ye Steivos King Dryas XCIV.

**submitted by Chuck Zelinsky*



On October 15, 2024 members of Des Plaines Unit 36 Auxiliary presented patches to a young Son, Lincoln Kahney, of Squadron 36 that he earned through the Junior Activities Patch Program.



Members of the American Legion Post 57 present the colors during the Elgin Veterans Day ceremony at the Heritage Ballroom at the Centre of Elgin on Monday, Nov. 11, 2024

**Courtesy of city of Elgin*

Chicago Military Ball



On Saturday, November 9, 2024 the Legion Family came together to honor Illinois Veterans and their families at a beautifully organized Military Ball hosted by American Legion Millenium Post 2017 at the Doubletree in Alsip, IL. 3rd District and Millenium Post 2017 Commander Wade Hudson worked very hard with the help of his wife and numerous volunteers to execute a glamorous and fun-filled evening for all who attended.



Loda Post 503 Fish Fry schedule

107 N. 600 East Rd., Loda, Illinois

Upcoming dates:
March 28
April 18
May 9
June 6

Serving from 4-7 PM on Friday evenings unless otherwise specified.

Menu: Fish (Pollock), Chicken livers/gizzards, French fries, Baked beans, Green beans, Coleslaw.

Adults—\$10.00, Kids 6-12—\$5.00,
 Under 6—free

Reservations appreciated
 (for food ordering purposes)

Purchase your Youth Police Academy gear!

All proceeds go directly to the program. T-shirts, tumblers and challenge coins are all \$20 each. Koozies are \$3 each. If you'd like to make a purchase, contact Sons of The American Legion Senior Vice Commander Wayne Madson at (618)806-1408 or madsonwsr@gmail.com



2025 State Convention Book Application for Ad placement

BUSINESS / ORGANIZATION: _____
 CONTACT NAME: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____
 [Post use only] American Legion Post name: _____ Post No. _____

Slogan Choices: (three choices—choose one)

- _____ 1. We Are Proud To Be Part of The American Legion Family
- _____ 2. Helping The American Legion Help American's Veteran's
- _____ 3. We Proudly Stand Behind The American Legion

Ad Choice: (please choose black & white or color)

- Medal of Honor (full page--7-1/2 x 10 in.)
- Silver Star (half page--7-1/2 x 5 in.)
- Bronze Star (quarter page--3-3/4 x 5 in.)
- Purple Heart (3-3/4 x 3-3/8 in. "Business card")
- Commander Salute (3-3/4 - 1-11/16 in.)
- Flag Page (1-3/4 - 1 in.)

Black & White Ad

Color Ad

\$230.00 _____	\$250.00 _____
\$120.00 _____	\$125.00 _____
\$90.00 _____	\$95.00 _____
\$75.00 _____	\$80.00 _____
\$60.00 _____	\$65.00 _____
\$25.00 _____	\$25.00 _____

Method of Payment (please check one) All credit information will be kept confidential

_____ Check (Make Check payable to: AMERICAN LEGION DEPT. OF IL)
 Send Check to: American Legion, Dept. of IL 2720 E. Lincoln St. Bloomington, IL 61704
 _____ Credit Card _____
 EXP Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Security Code #: ____
 Card type: / MC / Visa / AmEx / Disc

2025 LEGION FAMILY MEMBERSHIP CARAVAN

Our Department Leadership had the pleasure of hosting American Legion National Vice Commander Roger Mathison and Sons of The American Legion National Commander Joseph Navarette on this year's Legion Family Membership Caravan. Temps were at a record low, but they didn't let that stop them from getting the job done. Thank you to everyone who made time to visit your local stops and congratulations to our Posts, Units and Squadrons on their membership gains!













WE BUILD, WE FIGHT

MEMBERSHIP FOR VETERANS



Photos of award winners continued on page__

Saying 'Thank You'

During the Village of Round Lake Park board meeting held on December 17, 2024, officers and members of The American Legion Round Lake Post 1170 recognized four Round Lake Park, IL police officers for their outstanding performance.

The Round Lake Post 1170 Commander Ed Fuhrmann, Senior Vice Commander Lenny Knapcik and Adjutant Gregory Corcoran attended the presentations. Each officer received the “The American Legion Bronze Medal of Merit” with accompanying ribbon and Ribar, along with the “Outstanding Performance Award Certificate” mounted on a wooden plaque. The Village of Round Lake Park Police Department has authorized each Officer to display their award Ribar as part of their official dress uniform.



The American Legion Bronze Medal of Merit presented to Officer Nicolai Fuhrmann for Technical Expertise in Thermal Drone Night Deployment and outstanding performance in Evidence Collection and Processing with the Lake County Major Crimes Task Force.



Pictured above (left to right): Post 1170 Sr. Vice Commander Lenny Knapcik, Post 1170 Commander Ed Fuhrmann, Officer Nic Fuhrman, Officer Matt Maculan and “Gunny,” Detective Anthony Santos and Post Adjutant Gregory Corcoran

The American Legion Bronze Medal of Merit presented to Detective Anthony Santos for Outstanding Performance as Investigator, proven escalation skills and undercover work with Special Investigative Group of Lake County.



Bronze Medal of Merit presented to Officer Matthew Maculan for dedication to ongoing training of K9 “Gunny,” and for Outstanding Performance in Drug Interdiction Actions, Searches and Apprehensions.

Officer “Gunny” also received his own American Legion Bronze Medal of Merit for his outstanding performance in Drug Interdiction Actions, Searches and Apprehensions.



CELEBRATING 26 YEARS WITH DEE!

Department Membership Secretary Dee Dalton celebrated her 26th anniversary of starting at the Legion! At Lincoln Pilgrimage, Department Commander Joe Lampert presented her with 26 red roses—one for each year she has been serving our Legionnaires. Congratulations, Dee! Pictured: Past National Commander /Past Department Adjutant Marty Conatser, Dee Dalton and Commander Joe Lampert

5th Division Gifts to the Yanks Vice Chairman Dutch Jancek has been hard at work promoting the GTTY program. He has been setting up informational tables at nearby restaurants that graciously provided him space to promote and often generously providing meals as well! He recently presented certificates of appreciation to (pictured below, left to right) Raising Canes Restaurant Leader Cris Leon, Chicken Salad Chick Manager Jadyn Pascua and Texas Roadhouse Store Marketer Nikki Davinroy. Thanks to their generosity, Dutch has raised funds to contribute to the program. He'd also like to ask all posts that may have it in their budget to consider making a donation to the Gifts to the Yanks Program. The Department of Illinois is the only state that has continued this program. Every year we are able to visit Veterans in nursing homes and care facilities at Christmas time and give them gifts.



ARMY—NAVY GAME 2024

*FEATURING TWO ILLINOIS PREMIER BOYS STATE ALUM!

Xavier Try (USNA, Class of 2008) and Caleb Kim (USMA, Class of 2028) became fast friends the Summer of 2023 and have stayed in touch over the last couple of years. They met up during the 2024 Army Navy game to take a photo and catch up.

This is a shining example of the lasting effects of attending Boys State. It truly is **"The Week of a Lifetime"** that can forge *friendships that last a lifetime.*



The American Legion Department of Illinois 91st Annual Lincoln Pilgrimage



Pictured (above left): Outside view of Lincoln's Tomb, (above right) Mayor Of Springfield Misty Buscher,



Pictured to the left (top row, left to right): National Commander James LaCoursiere, National President Trish Ward, National Detachment Commander Joseph Navarrete, (bottom row, left to right) Department Commander Joseph Lampert, Department President Arlene Holtgrave, Detachment Commander Rick Allen.



Pictured below (left to right): Grande Chef de Gare of the Illinois 40 & 8 Todd Latham, Immediate Past National Director of the Honor Society of Women Legionnaires 20 & 4 Georgiann Callaway, and others that spoke at Lincoln's Tomb.



Stand with anybody that stands right, stand with him while he is right and part with him when he goes wrong.—*Abraham Lincoln*



American Legion Department of Illinois 2025 Oratorical Contest



The 2025 American Legion Department of Illinois Oratorical Contest Finals took place on Saturday, March 1 in Springfield. All of the contestants did a fine job. Chaithrika Sripathi took First Place and will go on to represent Illinois at the National competition. Finalists pictured above (from left to right): Chaithrika Sripathi, Grady Simpson, Abigail McKoy and Kayden Wells.



AMERICAN LEGION **Department of ILLINOIS** **CONVENTION HOUSING FORM**

106th Annual Department Convention July 8 –13, 2025

All reservations **MUST** be made directly with the hotel housing your Division/S.A.L. on or before June 17, 2025. You may make your reservation by mailing in this form with your credit card information or first night's deposit including tax. ALL cancellations must be made 48 hours prior to arrival date. Failure to cancel by that date will result in billing of one night's room rate. **PARKING IS INCLUDED IN THE RATE AT BOTH HOTELS**

	<u>DIVISION/S.A.L.</u>	<u>RATE</u>
<u>WYNDHAM SPRINGFIELD CITY CENTRE</u> 700 E. Adams Springfield, IL 62701 217/789-1530	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd & 5 th Divisions and Sons of The American Legion	\$122.00 plus tax (\$139.08 total)

Reservation- Mail this form to the Wyndham Springfield ATTN: Grace Giacometti or phone 217/789-1530, ext 0. Visit <https://bit.ly/AmericanLegion2025> to make your reservation online. For online/phone reservations, provide **group code: 07087027AL**

<u>PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN HOTEL SPRINGFIELD</u> <i>(Doubletree by Hilton)</i> 701 E. Adams Springfield, IL 62701 217/544-8800	4 th Division & Auxiliary	\$122.00 plus tax (\$139.08 total)
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Reservation- Mail this form to the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield OR make your reservation online.
For **LEGION Reservations:** www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/americanlegion2025convention/
For **AUXILIARY Reservations:** www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/americanlegionauxiliary/

You may also call at 1/866-788-1860 or 217/544-8800. *Please use the Group Code of "AML" for the Legion and "AUX" for the Auxiliary.*

Special Notes: All rooms are subject to the applicable sales tax. All reservations must be made with credit card or advanced deposit. If reserving the room with a personal check, include the rate including tax as listed above. Cut-off date for ALL RESERVATIONS is June 17, 2025.

If you select a hotel that your Division is not housed in, you may be moved to your Division assigned hotel.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

Division _____ District _____ Legion/SAL Title _____

Hotel _____ Type of room (circle) 1 Bed 2 Beds Disabled Access _____
(Room type requests not guaranteed; hotels will do their best to accommodate. *All hotel rooms are non-smoking.*)

Other Special Requests: _____

Name: _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____ Cell _____

E-Mail _____ Fax _____

Name(s) of additional people in room: _____

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____





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MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Top 10

DISTRICT & DIVISION RANKINGS
 UPDATED 02/28/2025

Division	Commander
4	YOUNG
5	PAGE
3	HAZARD
1	HORN
2	CARLSON

District	Commander
3	Hudson
17	Thomas
22	Mahan
18	Norton
15	Harkness
19	Love
25	Edwards
8	Cornell
23	Funneman
21	Goodrich



Scan here to
 visit the Dept.
 website.