

**Community Service**

|                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Community Service               |   | X |
| Disaster Relief                 | x |   |
| Legion Riders                   | x | X |
| Public Relations                |   |   |
| Religious Emphasis              |   |   |
| Sons of American Legion Liaison |   | X |
| State Fair/Veterans Day         | x | X |
| Legislative Commission          | x | X |
| Flag Alliance                   |   |   |

**VETERANS SERVICES**

|                                         |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------|---|---|
| Gifts to the Yanks who Gave             | x |   |
| Hospital Services                       |   |   |
| National Cemetery/Monument (cem.va.gov) |   |   |
| Poppy Sales/Production                  | x | X |
| Technology                              |   | X |
| Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation       | x | X |
| Veterans Assistance Liaison             |   |   |
| Veterans' Home Advisory                 |   | X |

**YOUTH & FAMILY**

|                                |   |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Americanism Commission         | x | X |
| American Legion Baseball       |   | X |
| Boy Scout Committee            |   | X |
| Children & Youth               | x | X |
| Premier Boys State             |   | x |
| Safety Law & Order             | x | X |
| Education Scholarships/Awards  |   | X |
| Temporary Financial Assistance |   |   |

**SUPPORT THE TROOPS**

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| National Security | x | X |
| POW/MIA           | x | X |

**DEPARTMENT**

|                  |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|
| Internal Affairs |   | X |
| Finance          |   |   |
| Leadership       | x |   |
| DRC              | X |   |

September 27, 2025 American Legion  
Department of Illinois

## DISASTER RELIEF COMMITTEE

Chairman: Thomas Marciciak(2nd); Vice Chairman: Ronald Swaim(5th); Wade Hudson(1st); Thomas Chambers(1st); David Johnson(2nd); Steve Schlieper(3rd); Chirs Hagie(3rd); Terry Abdelnour(4th); Annette Tincher(4th); Wayne Madson(5th).

Present: Chairmen: Thomas Marciciak, VC:Ronald Swaim, Recorder: Annette Tincher, Wade Hudson, Steve Schlieper, Terry Abdelnour, Wayne Madson. (All others excused).  
Guest: Mike Vazor, Alt NEC for the Sons.

Meeting was opened by Chairmen Marciciak at 1300 hrs. Prayer was given by Wade Hudson.

Chairmen Marciciak handed out Pamphlets and Brochures for NEF and IEF. Wayne Madson reported that there was \$6000. Paid out to 3 members in the 5th Division. That the Son's can no longer apply for NEF.

Post can receive up to \$10,000 from NEF, and \$500 from IEF. Members can receive up to \$300 from MEF and \$2000 from IEF. Members must be in good standing at the time of the Disaster.

Terry brought up that pictures are needed to accompany applications That we can't always get into a site, however, if we have a family member with us can get in. PICTURES TELLS THE STORE.....

Discussion that the committee is in need of Standard OP for IEF. Terry will send out ALA application to all members of the committee to put in packet.

Visit from Commander Roy Smith, Vice Commander Celeste Latham, Adj Josh Thielen., Josh gave guide lines for zoom meetings, while Commander Smith gave guide lines for the committee both were given to Chairmen Marciciak. Commander Smith was asked who approved the applications. Commander Smith that since there was 10 on the committee that 5 should be on the IEF and 5 on the NEF. That he would get with Josh and let the committee know.

Motion was made by Ronald Swaim to have 3 members approve applications. Second by Wayne Madson. Motion carried.

Motion by Terry to close meeting. Second by Ronald. Motion carried. Meeting Closed.

Annette Tincher  
Recorder

# AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025

Chairman Lampert called the meeting to order at 1301 at Department Headquarters.

3 members of the committee were present.

- Joe Lampert – 1<sup>st</sup> Division – Chairman - Present
- John Reece – 2<sup>nd</sup> Division – Vice Chairman – Present
- Ron Harkness – 3<sup>rd</sup> Division - Absent
- Sean McNamara – 4<sup>th</sup> Division – Excused
- Roy Smith - 5<sup>th</sup> - Division (Dept. Commander) – Present

Budget from last year remained the same as previous years. No change for this year.

Discussed the ALR recruiter award (patch w/ year tab and Pin). They are available. Forms for recruiting 3 new ALR members is available on the Department website under the Riders tab (Programs and Services). Joe talked with Mike Monroe, Membership Director, about supply of patches and pins. They are available.

Discussed continuing the State ALR Officers meeting, meeting once a year vs twice a year, maybe a ride in event, etc. We are having the scheduled October 19 meeting in Plainfield. We decided to continue the meetings, currently planning only one annually, with the possibility to add another meeting if the group so desires. This will be discussed at the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Haven Run is April 25, 2026. Make plans on joining us.

Visited by the Department Commander Roy Smith, Department Sr. Vice Commander Celeste Latham, Membership Director Mike Monroe, and Adjutant Josh Thielen. Commander Smith thanked us for a good job and asked us to continue the hard work. Plans for next convention are coming together. Brett Miller is working on the Commanders In-State VCF run which will be in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division. Sr. Vice Latham thanked the committee for all its work. Adjutant Thielen spoke about using zoom etc., for future meetings to help Department cut costs. Membership Director Monroe asked how a new Chapter goes about obtaining a chapter. Chairman Lampert explained the process. We need to streamline how info gets posted on the website (i.e. Department emails Officer Certification Forms to ALR Committee, then we update the list on the website). It is important these forms get submitted annually by EVERY Chapter.

Discussed the possibility of adding a Chaplain to the ALR. It was decided not to at this time.

Website for Illinois ALR is live [www.illinoisamericanlegionriders.com](http://www.illinoisamericanlegionriders.com). This is an additional resource, not to replace the Department site. We are discussing wither or not to continue this site. Also looking into having 1 POC from each District/Division with access to add info and post info on the website if it continues.

Bob Sussen, Past National ALR Chairman passed away recently, we ask that all Chapters remember Bob and his Family.

Discussed ALR involvement in “America 250”, to include the cross-country ride on US 20, from New York to Oregon, as it is named Medal of Honor Highway, nationally. More to follow.

Department ALR Donated \$29,000+ to the VCF, \$12,100 to Be The One, and \$6,750 to North Carolina Hurricane relief.

Meeting adjourned at 1411

If you have questions or something you need help with or just want to start a Chapter, please contact your Division ALR Chairman.

Sincerely,

*John B. Reece Jr.*

Vice Chairman

Illinois ALR Committee

State Fair Veterans Day and Uniform Groups Committee Meeting

Oct 4, 2025

Chairman Miller called the meeting to order in Bloomington at 1:00pm

Opened with salute to the colors and pledge of allegiance.

Roll call was taken;

Present were:

Chairman: Larry Miller, Div 5

Vice Chair: Craig Fetzner, Div 3

Absent:

Thomas Jorstad, Div 2, recent surgery

Mark Friedman, Div 4, absent

1<sup>st</sup> Division position is vacant.

Miller passed out committee charge.

"STATE FAIR VETERANS' DAY AND UNIFORM GROUPS COMMITTEE shall publicize the Illinois State Fair Veterans' Day program throughout The American Legion, Department of Illinois; encourage each and every Post having an eligible unit to participate in the annual program. The duties and responsibilities of the Committee are to help on Veterans' Day at the Illinois State Fair. Members are assigned their duty by the superintendent of the fair. This Committee shall promote the organization, maintenance and sponsorship of the various types of musical and drill groups by the local Post, District, and County Council. They shall arrange for competitions, and prescribe the rules therefore, conforming to mandates of the National and Department Convention."

Veterans and Gold Star Day at the State Fair in Springfield for 2025 is August 16, 2026, and DuQuoin Aug 30, 2026.

The department budget has been the same for many years.

Miller reviewed the organization of the State Fair Committee at IDVA. The only tasking the Legion has had was passing out pins to veteran visitors to the fair. Miller also acted as the parade organizer in 2025.

Food at the fair was catered. It was suggested by the IDVA committee that for 2026, volunteers from the various veteran groups be

available to assist in serving the meal, if a meal was to be served. For a few years, vouchers were distributed for food, but the money for that ran out. IDVA committee members were encouraged to find sponsors for meals at the fair.

Also discussed was soliciting businesses to made donations to the State Fair fund, to allow for better menu at the Veterans Lunch.

Miller suggested that department committee members attempt to determine if any posts have honor guard groups that may want to participate in competitions at the Department Convention. I know of the Joliet band, but don't know of others. Rules would be the same as those used at National competitions. Robert Zimbelman is on the department convention committee. There generally has been no competition and the convention committee has no funding for competition.

The Consolidated Veterans Association (CVA) has run the beer tents for the past several years. This is by contract with the Department of Agriculture. The CVA may or may not have the contract for the 2026 fair. CVA's contract sith the Dept of Agriculture is for a designated amount. If the beer tents "earn" more than the designated amount contracted for, the overage amount is shared with the posts the beer tent workers are from, based on hours worked. Posts are encouraged to sign up to staff a beer tent, generally, for the duration of the state fair. (2026 State Fair Dates Aug 13-23)

Meeting adjourned at 1:40pm.

Larry Miller  
Chairman

**Minutes for Fall Legislative Commission Meeting**  
**27 Sep 25**

An in person meeting was called for the Department Legislative Commission at 10:00am on September 27, 2025. A zoom session was also active, which included American Legion Family members from the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion.

Commission Members present were:

Chair Larry Miller, Div 5

Vice Chair: Cheri Stanton, Div 3

Member: Edward Stash, Div 2

Division 4 was represented in Bloomington by Theresa Thomas sitting in for commission member George Elzy.

Division 1 member Terry Cornell Jr was present via Zoom.

Guests present via Zoom were:

Linda Iberg, Auxiliary 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Auxiliary Legislative Team Chair

Michael Canevit, SAL Legislative Commission Member

Angie Golightly, Auxiliary Legislative Team Member

Becky Larsen, Auxiliary Legislative Team Member

Chairman Miller opened the meeting with a salute to the colors and Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call and introductions followed.

Chairman Miller then read the purpose of Commission as found in the Department Directory:

"LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION shall accept resolutions requiring legislative action passed at the Department Convention, Cause Appropriate bills to be drawn in proper form by the Illinois Legislative Reference Bureau, and secure sponsors for such bills in both the Illinois House and Senate. Testimony before Legislative Commission will be presented by individuals indicated by the Legislative Commission Chairman and appropriate monthly reports will be made. Assistance will be given on Federal Legislation when requested by the National Legislative Director, or such other authorized person on the National level."

Miller suggested Division commission members need to pass information about legislative efforts down through the districts to the posts.

The commission was visited by Department Commander Roy Smith, Department Senior Vice Commander Celeste Latham, Department Adjutant Joshua Theilen, and Department Membership Mike Monroe.

Commander Smith provided a list of expectations for Committee Chairman and encouraged our commission in this election year, to emphasize the Legion "Get out the Vote" campaign. Adjutant Theilen provided a document regarding commission/committee Zoom meetings.

As there were no resolutions from the Department Convention that required action by the commission, Chairman Miller suggested our job in the commission should be to monitor and report on Legislation in Illinois affecting veterans or military members. We need to encourage Illinois

Legionnaires to become aware of and submit "Witness Slips" prior to hearings on legislation affecting veterans and military members. He encouraged everyone to create an account at the Illinois General Assembly website. ( <https://ILGA.gov> ) This allows a person to create a list of bills they wish to follow in the 104<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and receive status of the bills. When hearing are scheduled, the status will give information about hearings and members then may submit Witness Slips to show they approve or disapprove the legislation. The ILGA.gov website has been revamped and what the witness slip process will look like will be forwarded once committee hearings are scheduled. A spreadsheet of bills affecting veterans was distributed to commission members and will be emailed to those not present in person.

A "Department Of Illinois TAL Legislative Action Center" group has been created on Facebook for use by commission members to get the word out regarding pending hearings and other actions on bills that have been introduced relating to veterans and military members. It is a private group and membership requests from commission members and district legislative contact will be approved to join the group.

Chairman Miller suggested visiting Springfield as a Legion Legislative Day, to visit members of the General Assembly and address the concerns of the Illinois American Legion, either Feb 4 or 18, 2026, ahead of the Veterans Legislative day tentatively scheduled for March 11, 2026. This would be strictly a voluntary effort as there is no funding to reimburse anyone for attending. Chairman Miller plans to attend a Department of Indiana Legislative Day scheduled for Monday, January 12, 2026 in Indianapolis, to get ideas for a possible Illinois Legislative Day.

At the National Convention, Legislative Chairman Matthew Shuman provided some training for Legislative visits to the capitol. In the training, two documents, "10 Tips for Successful Meetings on Capitol Hill" and a worksheet to plan your visit were distributed. The tip sheet and worksheets may be found at <https://legion.org/advocacy/legislative> in the Advocacy Resources & Toolkit link. Scroll down to the "Downloadable Tools" on the right side of the page and download copies of the documents. These tips and worksheet are beneficial at all levels when planning a visit to an elected official.

Miller gave a quick review of the legislative pages on the national website to those attending the commission meeting. Our role in the National legislative arena is to help by promoting National programs and all members should sign up for the Grassroots newsletter and participate in the Voter Voice campaigns. The Grassroots newsletter has a scoreboard of Departments submitting Voter Voice emails to their elected officials. Illinois should be one of the top 5 in each newsletter.

Chairman Miller suggested that all members sign up for Fast Democracy, <https://fastdemocracy.com>, a free service that tracks legislation on a national and state level and provides periodic email updates on actions being taken on bills. When signing up, select to receive emails on legislation affecting "Veterans and Military."

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:03am.

Larry Miller, Chairman

## **Gifts To The Yanks**

Meeting September 27, 2025

2720 E Lincoln St.

Bloomington, IL 61704

Meeting Called to order by Vice Chairman, Thomas Lynch at 10:00 hours.

Present: 2<sup>nd</sup> Division-Thomas Lynch

3<sup>rd</sup> Division-Robert Gardner

5<sup>th</sup> Division-Francis "Dutch" Jancek (on phone)

Guest- Mike Todaro (Minerva), Jim Bacon (SAL) 12<sup>th</sup> District, Mike Monroe

Excused: 1<sup>st</sup> Division-Greg Jacobs

4<sup>th</sup> Division-Robert Balla

Vice Chairman Lynch called the meeting to order at 10:00 hours.

Dutch was called by Mike Todaro (needed an I phone) and put on a video call. Tom said lets start with the logo on the baseball hats, and beanies, which looked like the current pin.. Everyone weas sent mock ups on how the hats would look. There was a short discussion and every one liked them. A vote was taken and it was decided to use the pin design.

Mike T from Minerva was asked about the website. Mike said the website would be up October 1<sup>st</sup> until the 31<sup>st</sup>. He also stated that the changes to website with the Division representatives and their contact information is now on the website. Tom said this was done to stop people from calling Minerva and tying up their representatives. Tom Verified the pick up will be on December 10, 2025. Mike T said yes that will be the day. Our total cost is \$58,000.

Tom asked everyone to talk to their District Officers and ask them to have their Posts to fundraise for the program. Everyone said they would. Greg said the SAL would make sure the 12<sup>th</sup> District would help.

Meeting adjourned at 11:1=20 hours.

## **Department of Illinois Poppy Sales and Production Committee-HQ**

October 4, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chair Maden at 1:00 PM.

Sr Vice C. Latham and Membership Chair Monroe visited the committee with greetings and expectations.

Members Present: Division 1-Frank Thompson, Division 2-Todd Latham, Division 3 Ron Harkness, Division 4 Linda Glenn, Division 5-Dudley Maden, Auxiliary Sandy Kirby

A motion was made by Harkness, seconded by Maden, to approve the minutes of September 2025. The motion passed.

Unfinished Business-None

### **New Business**-

A report was given by VC Latham on the status of the poppy program. This included poppies set for production, those currently in assembly, and issues with fabric.

The committee reviewed the current Poppy Post Contest Rules at the request of Sandy Kirby, and a discussion was held on the poppy rules, specifically on the leaves of the poppy and word usage.

Recommended changes: The language was discussed to remove the phrase 'no leaves'. Thompson moved, seconded by Harkness, and the motion carried.

Discussion occurred on the language of "The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary". The committee believes leaving this adds two more words, which leaves 8 words, and the rules may need to be amended. The concern is meeting the requirements at both the Departmental and national contests, which have a 10-word limit.

VC Latham offered to create a new Poppy Seminar training guide pending the National response on poster dos and don'ts.

Motion to adjourn by Latham, seconded by Glenn, adjourning at 1:58 am.

Respectfully submitted, Todd Latham, VC

VA&R MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2025 DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

BROUGHT TO ORDER AT 10:05

## U.S Government shut down does not affect hospitals

Regional office closed

VA Clinics have not been affected; claims will still be heard. Federal appeals cases will be continued 1 day VA&R for Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, might need to be postponed depending on the government shut down.

Mike Monroe and Dept SR Vice visited

University of Chicago is site of VA&R resource meetings.

Adjourned at 11:24

Minutes Americanism Commission Dept of IL

4 Oct 2025

Dept of IL Headquarters, Bloomington, IL

🇺🇸 Chairman Mike Carder brought the meeting to order at 10:07 Hrs if full ceremony. Ralph Rounds offered a prayer and Norman Flowers lead the Pledge to the Flag.

🇺🇸 Present:

Mike Carder, 1<sup>st</sup> Div & Chairman

Celeste Latham, 2<sup>nd</sup> Div

Norman Flowers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Div

Ralph Rounds, 5<sup>th</sup> Div

➤ Other: Marty Conatser, Past Dept CC & current Dept Treasure

Diane Rounds, 23<sup>rd</sup> Dist Aux Americanism

Larry Miller, 5<sup>th</sup> Div Adjutant

➤ Excused: Mark Young, 4<sup>th</sup> Div.

🇺🇸 There was some discussion about the Oratorical program brochure and some needed changes. Under Contestant Certification the number of contestants for each division would be changed from three to two. It was also decided that there would be 10 total contestants at the Dept Contest. 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> would receive the normal scholarship amount as in previous contest. Sixth through 10<sup>th</sup> will receive \$500 each. This means that the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners from the Division contest will advance to the Dept Contest. That contest will be on 7 Mar 2026 which will be at the Heartland Community College in Normal.

🇺🇸 During the meeting there was a visit from Dept Sr. Vice Celeste and Membership Dir. Michael Monroe.

🇺🇸 The Essay brochure is ready to go with no changes made.

🇺🇸 Both Oratorical and Essay are ready for print and posting on Dept. website.

🇺🇸 Next was the topic about A/I being used in the essays. Nat'l has decided to not do anything yet. It was decided to write a resolution to address the topic for the 2026 convention and see what happens with it.

🇺🇸 The Commission voted on another Americanism pin for 2026. We will order 750 pins. They will be sold for \$5 each and pending cost they could be sold for 3 for \$10. The third-choice pin was selected by those present. (See graphic)

🇺🇸 Old Business: It was discussed as to the possibility of the commission should have a booth at the 2026 Dept Convention. The concern was staffing and what we should put out on the table. The topic was set aside for further discussion.

🇺🇸 New Business: With the Oratorical contest being one day and no overnight hotel should the Americanism Commission meet twice a year (In the Fall and at Dept Convention) or continue with three meetings as previous only meet just prior to the contest. It was felt that it would be a good idea to have the meeting at the contest in place just in case it is needed. Ralph made the motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Celeste and it was approved.

🇺🇸 There being no further business Ralph made a motion to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Celeste. Chairman Mike closed the meeting in full ceremony at 11:24 hrs.



Ralph W. Rounds II, Acting Secretary



Children & Youth Commission

Fall Meeting October 4, 2025

Department Headquarters

Meeting called to order 1000

Salute National Colors

Attendance:

Wade Hudson

David E. Johnson

Richard R Schomer Absent Excused

Mark Young Absent Excused

Christopher Schoo Temp Secretary

Sue Johnson ALA Chairman C&Y Guest

Visit from Department Sr Vice Celeste Latham and Membership Director Mike Monroe

Dave & Sue attended Children & Youth National Conference 9-27-2025 Indianapolis

Guest Speaker: Melanie Taylor ALA National Children & Youth Chairman

April is Children & Youth Month

April 15<sup>th</sup> is Purple Up for military children

American Legion Family Day: Last Saturday in April

Veteran and Military Family Recognition: Month of November

Youth Hero Award, Physical Acts of Valor, Good Deed Awards

Jr activities ALA patch program

Purple: Pre K to Kindergarten

Red: 1 -4

Gold: 5 – 8

Blue: 9 – 12

National Jr Meeting: November 15, Albany Minn, Jan 31 Feb 7 Atlanta

ALA Coloring books

Halloween Safety: Include your community, Trunk N Treat, Local Police and Fire, Booklets available

ALA Poppy Poster Contest June 1<sup>st</sup>

Military Child Ceremony

Guest Speaker: Jeff Trout, SAL National Chairman

VCF (addition) Veteran & Children Foundation

VCF Raised \$82,223 May 31, 2025, Raised \$115,000 at National Convention Tampa

CWF: Child Well-being Foundation, contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children and youth.

COTA: Children Organ Transplant Association, President and CEO Rick Lofgren, 2501 W Cota Dr, Bloomington, In. 800-366-2682, [www.cota.org](http://www.cota.org), rick@cota.org

Cota Raised \$67,688 in 2025, 2.5 million raised to date. All donations to recipient.

TFA for active duty, TAL member.

ALA would like to include the family with their programs

We need to look at Churches and Schools for TAL programs

Dave is working on a flier for C&Y TAL programs detailing deadline dates, scholarships, costs etc.

Special Olympics Summer Games: June 12 – 13, 2026

Booklet: Children & Youth Department Chairman Program Guide. Being updated.

Booklet: The Whole Child 2025, Children & Youth Programs, available on web site, Advocacy, Youth Support

TFA: Temporary Financial Assistance, Newer claim form filled out completely, Minor child in home, must be used for child not car payments, etc. If not title 10 member (Active Duty) must be a legion member. Prior to home visit provide list of needed documents. Citizenship not required.

Youth Garden: Two years ago helping children how to plant, care for and harvest a garden.

Victory Garden: This years program, From WWII, Types of gardens, based on location, container gardens, Hydroponic gardens.

Youth Academy: Held at National conventions in Americanism

Two C&Y National Conference meetings at Indianapolis: Fall meeting last Saturday in September, Spring meeting first weekend in May.

Consolidated Post Reports (CPR): Due June 1<sup>st</sup>, The Department Chairman will receive new training at the next Spring Conference in Indianapolis.

July 4<sup>th</sup>: All service organizations get together for 250 Anniversary.

C&Y Post, District, and Division Chairman need to attend the Special Olympics Summer games. We need volunteers. This is a large project to complete. Thank you.

Meeting dismissed at 1205.

Children & Youth Commission Chairman

David E Johnson

Safety Law&Order Committee met Saturday September 27,2025 at 10am Department Headquarters in Bloomington.

Present was the following

1st Division Chevonne Woodard

2nd Division Chuck Coffey Vice Chairman

3rd Division Candy Gann

5th Division Wayne Madson Chairman

Excused 4th Division Paul Garrett

We made updates to our Youth Cadet Law Enforcement pamphlet for 2026 plus our Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year pamphlets. We can't make arrangements at Camp Lincoln till October 1. Committee voted to keep cost at \$350 for cadets this year. Commander Roy Smith, Sr Vice Celeste Latham, Adjutant Josh Thielen and Membership Director Mike Monore stop by to visit with the committee. Committee approved a new certificate to honor those veterans that are still serving their local communities in Law Enforcement and Firefighters. That will be for local Post to recognize those veterans.

Meeting adjourned at 1050am

National Security Committee meeting convened at 1000 October 4, 2025, via zoom.

After a salute to the Flag, roll call was taken.

Members from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Division were present.

The annual budget was discussed, which is the same as last year. It was noted we are trying to keep expenses down by using zoom meetings.

The Chairman asked that all members contact the ROTC and JROTC schools in their Division to update contact information and establish a good relationship with the schools.

Over the years and due to COVID, we have lost contact with some schools that have cadet programs.

Discussed the Grass Roots program of voicing your opinion to Congress on the Legion priorities. This “[votervoicelink.com](https://votervoicelink.com)” is being used throughout the Legion membership.

At present, TAL is asking members to contact their Congress members about the “Ships for American Act”, and to fully fund the government and to end government shutdowns.

Our National organization in Washington D.C. provides a LINK to subscribe to the Legislative priorities through a Legislative weekly newsletter to let us know their work schedule. They update us on the number of repatriation of those missing in action on a regular basis, for example.

Meeting adjourned at 1025 in due order.

Roy Weber Chairman

October 1, 2025

## Minutes from POW/MIA Committee Meeting

Sept. 27, 2025

The POW/MIA committee met at Department on September 27, 2025, at 1:00. Members present were John Buhle 1<sup>st</sup> Division 8<sup>th</sup> District, Paul Ahern 2<sup>nd</sup> Division 10<sup>th</sup> District, Sam Rice 3<sup>rd</sup> Division 16<sup>th</sup> District, Theresa Thomas 4<sup>th</sup> Division 17<sup>th</sup> District, Chris Schoo 5<sup>th</sup> Division 24<sup>th</sup> District.

When we got to our meeting we were informed that our members from the 1<sup>st</sup> Division and 2<sup>nd</sup> Division had been replaced. We introduced ourselves to the new members and explained what our committee's mission is.

Theresa, Chris and Sam spent quite a lot of time answering their questions.

Our mission is to promote public awareness to Legionnaires and the general public that the American soldiers that are still listed as missing are not forgotten.

We gave suggestions to John and Paul on how we speak at public events, especially near Memorial Day and Veterans Day, and National POW/MIA Recognition Day to make people aware of the MIA situations.

We also give reports at District and Division meetings.

We discussed our booth at the 2025 convention. Sam informed all that he would not be at the 2026 convention to man the booth.

We talked about who will get Sam's POW/MIA table to convention and set it up in front of the stage.

We also discussed how the booth went with only one table length in front. It was decided we would stay with one table frontage.

We were visited by Commander Roy Smith, Sr. Vice Celeste Latham, Adjutant Josh Thielen, and Membership Director Mike Monroe. Adjutant Josh gave us directions on guidelines of the committee chairman expectations and video conference guidelines. They also volunteered their help if needed.

This fiscal year of 2025, which just ended, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced that 231 former MIAs were returned to their families for proper burial. Still

unaccounted for from WWII – 71,850; Korean War- 7,398; Vietnam – 1,566; Cold War – 126 for a total of 80,940.

Over 41,00 of those still missing are presumed lost at sea and may never be accounted for.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

**Legion Leadership** met at AL-Dept of IL HQ at 1 pm on September 27, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Chairman T. Latham. Opening ceremonies were completed.

The committee was visited by Commander Roy E. Smith, Sr. Vice C. Latham, Adjutant Theilen, and Membership Director Monroe.

Members Present: T. Latham, R. Walker, J. Buford, D. Horn, M. Aaron excused.

The previous work of the Committee was reviewed:  
Developing Leadership Training, Convention training

- Delivery options, training page, and the Leadership Manual.
- A training repository page is still needed on the Department of Illinois website.

The following unfinished business was discussed.

- The development of a Leadership Manual by October 20, 2024.
- Current training areas: Commander, Sr Vice, Jr Vice, Adjutant, Finance, Service Officer.
- Areas for consideration: Chaplain, Judge Advocate/ Effective Meetings, Legal Aspects of a Post, Sgt at Arms, Programs: Preparation and Delivery, Recruitment and

Retention, CPR, MyLegion, Rituals of the American Legion, Public Relations/Communications.

The committee members will evaluate other training manuals to eliminate duplication and consider what should and should not be in the Leadership Manual.

*Goals for the Year:*

- Completing the Leadership Manual
- Expand the Training Program
- Complete Training for Divisions

Schedule Training Tentative Locations

1<sup>st</sup> Div- TBD

2<sup>nd</sup> Div-Nov. 1, 9 am to 2 pm Ottawa, IL

3<sup>rd</sup> Div-Nov. 8, 1 pm to 4 pm Canton, IL

4<sup>th</sup> Div- Nov. 9, 1-4 pm, Champaign, IL

5<sup>th</sup> Div-TBD

Additional Work Assigned to the Committee

Manual work and edits weekly to the Leadership Manual

Review Four Pillars:

Americanism-Buford

National Security-T. Latham

VA&R- R. Walker

Youth Programs- Horn

Closing ceremonies were held with adjournment at 1:42 pm

**Department of Illinois DRC Ad Hoc October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Wayne Fischer 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. Chairman; Larry Hippert 1<sup>st</sup> Div.; Wayne Erickson 3<sup>rd</sup> Div.; Don Horn 1<sup>st</sup> Div. Commander; Marty Conatser Past Dept. Adjutant.

**Task: Consolidate the 1<sup>st</sup> Division from 7 Districts to 4 Districts**

**Don Horn updated the Group on current status of this consolidation of Districts. The 1<sup>st</sup> Division District Commanders met this past August, and the consensus was to move forward on Redistricting the 1<sup>st</sup> Division as follows: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> into the 2<sup>nd</sup> District; 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> District into the 3<sup>rd</sup>; 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> into the 1<sup>st</sup> District; and the 8<sup>th</sup> into the 4<sup>th</sup> District.**

**Boundaries have been tentatively drawn but may be subject to change prior to the final approval. There is more discussion coming out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> District and it will need to be covered to ensure what is needed will come together by our Spring DEC for final approval at our 2026 State Convention. Marty will be assisting on that.**

**As part of this, there are Posts that may want to remain in a District outside a designated District, which has happened before and worked okay. This could be more last minute decisions.**

**Don also included a preliminary 1<sup>st</sup> Division Redistricting Resolution-Phase 1 that has been reviewed by the District Officers. (see attached)**

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**1st DIVISION**  
**REDISTRICTING RESOLUTION**  
**PHASE I**

**WHEREAS,** The 1st Division is currently made up of Cook County; and

**WHEREAS,** Currently, the 1st Division has within its' boarders seven Districts consisting of Districts 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; and

**WHEREAS,** The 1st Division membership has been reducing over the years to where District mergers have been considered; and

**WHEREAS,** It is geographically logical to combine Districts 2 & 3, Districts 4 & 5, Districts 7 & 9; and

**WHEREAS,** The 8th District covers the bottom 20% of the Division and bound by County Boundaries on three of its four sides therefore it is advantageous to stand alone; and

**WHEREAS,** Separate agreements of each individual merger will be submitted with this resolution; and

**WHEREAS,** A follow-up resolution will be submitted with further details on the renaming of Districts, recommended boundaries and other warranted details; therefore be it

**RESOLVED,** The Redistricting of the 1st Division be made at the Departments earliest convience and at one time in unison if possible to save the Department and her Division and Districts unnecessary time and expense; and therefore be it finally

**RESOLVED,** By The American Legion, Department of Illinois, at the Annual Spring Meeting, assembled in Bloomington, Illinois, April 11, 2026, that The American Legion, Department of Illinois approves the 1st Division recommendations of Redistricting.

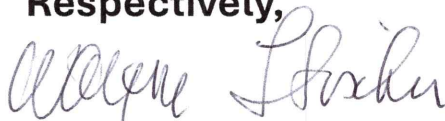
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## **Moving Forward:**

**Larry Hippert has prepared and presented material supporting the next possible step focusing on moving forward to 4 Divisions with 4 Districts in each or 16 Department Districts. Certainly, these changes will bring new challenges in Leadership and Communication. While both the Divisions and Districts will be larger, we must find the Leaders and more effective means to get the word out that does help to turn around our Membership back to the positive. There are around 450,000 eligible Veterans in Illinois to join the American Legion according to the Illinois Veterans Assistance Commission.**

**Our first challenge is to resolve our 1<sup>st</sup> Division Redistricting, and our plan is to have a Resolution(s) to present at the Spring DEC for support, then for a final presentation at our 2026 Illinois State Convention.**

**Respectively,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Fischer", written in dark ink.

**Wayne Fischer, Chair**

**THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS**

**DIVISIONS and DISTRICTS**

**FIRST DIVISION:**

*1st - 9th Districts:* Cook County

**SECOND DIVISION:**

*10th:* Lake County

*11th:* McHenry, Kane, DuPage, Will

*12th:* Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb,  
Lasalle, Kendall, Grundy

*13th:* Jo Daviess, Stephenson,  
Carroll, Ogle, Lee, Whiteside

**THIRD DIVISION:**

*14th:* Rock Island, Mercer,  
Henderson, Warren,  
Hancock, McDonough

*15th:* Henry, Knox, Fulton,  
Adams, Schuyler

*16th:* Bureau, Stark,  
Putnam, Marshall,  
Peoria, Tazewell

*20th:* Mason, Brown,  
Cass, Menard,  
Morgan, Scott,  
Pike, Calhoun,  
Greene, Jersey

**FOURTH DIVISION:**

*17th:* Woodford, Livingston,  
McLean, Ford, Logan

*18th:* Kankakee, Iroquois, Vermilion,  
Edgar, Clark, Cumberland

*19th:* Champaign, DeWitt, Piatt,  
Macon, Moultrie, Douglas,  
Coles, Shelby

*21st:* Sangamon, Christian, Macoupin,  
Montgomery

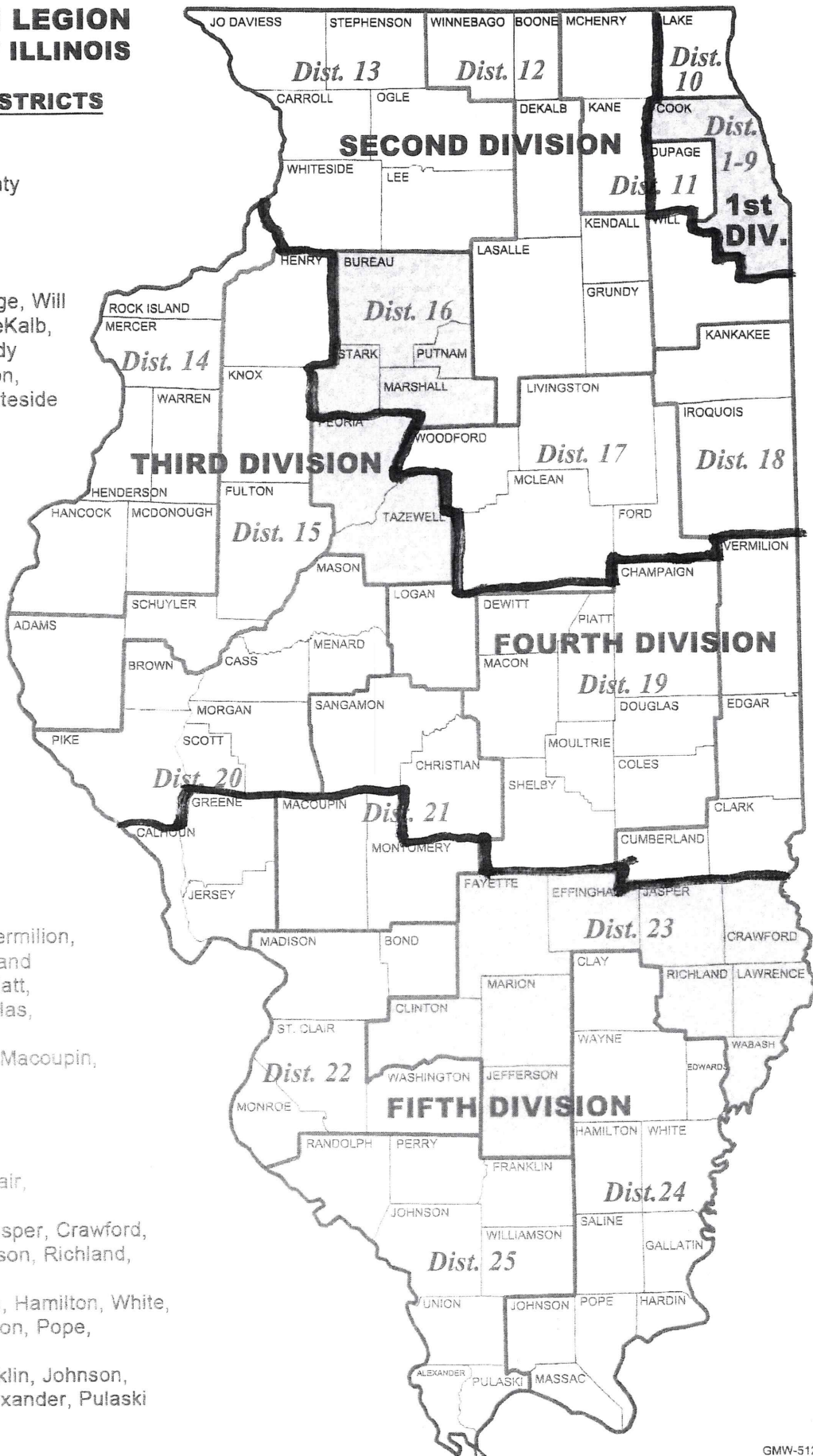
**FIFTH DIVISION:**

*22nd:* Madison, Bond, St. Clair,  
Monroe, Washington

*23rd:* Fayette, Effingham, Jasper, Crawford,  
Clinton, Marion, Jefferson, Richland,  
Lawrence, Wabash

*24th:* Clay, Wayne, Edwards, Hamilton, White,  
Saline, Gallatin, Johnson, Pope,  
Hardin, Massac

*25th:* Randolph, Perry, Franklin, Johnson,  
Williamson, Union, Alexander, Pulaski



Department Membership by county

| Division 1 |              | Division 2 |              | Division 3  |              | Division 4 |              |
|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| County     | # of Members | County     | # of Members | County      | # of Members | County     | # of Members |
| Cook       | 9780         | Will       | 2244         | McLean      | 822          | Calhoun    | 176          |
| Lake       | 2031         | Kane       | 1495         | Woodford    | 499          | Greene     | 224          |
| DuPage     | 2159         | McHenry    | 1308         | Mercer      | 150          | Jersey     | 249          |
| Total      | 13970        | Boone      | 333          | Rock Island | 737          | Macoupin   | 379          |
|            |              | DeKalb     | 618          | Henry       | 625          | Montgomery | 175          |
|            |              | Grundy     | 322          | Vermilion   | 723          | Bond       | 148          |
|            |              | Kendall    | 554          | Champaign   | 1080         | Madison    | 1706         |
|            |              | LaSalle    | 1162         | Warren      | 207          | Monroe     | 315          |
|            |              | Winnebago  | 1183         | Hancock     | 204          | St. Clair  | 1154         |
|            |              | Carroll    | 309          | Henderson   | 90           | Washington | 211          |
|            |              | Jo Daviess | 227          | McDonough   | 297          | Clinton    | 839          |
|            |              | Lee        | 260          | Fulton      | 604          | Crawford   | 243          |
|            |              | Ogle       | 288          | Peoria      | 1101         | Effingham  | 601          |
|            |              | Stephenson | 252          | Tazewell    | 710          | Fayette    | 196          |
|            |              | Whiteside  | 638          | Adams       | 324          | Jasper     | 200          |
|            |              | Bureau     | 276          | Schuyler    | 98           | Jefferson  | 228          |
|            |              | Stark      | 172          | Brown       | 64           | Lawrence   | 126          |
|            |              | Marshall   | 161          | Cass        | 93           | Marion     | 376          |
|            |              | Putnam     | 95           | Mason       | 150          | Richland   | 148          |
|            |              | Ford       | 169          | Menard      | 85           | Wabash     | 79           |
|            |              | Livingston | 468          | Morgan      | 252          | Clay       | 218          |
|            |              | Iroquois   | 643          | Pike        | 241          | Edwards    | 57           |
|            |              | Kankakee   | 553          | Scott       | 102          | Gallatin   | 181          |
|            |              | Total      | 13730        | Sangamon    | 1310         | Hamilton   | 80           |
|            |              |            |              | Logan       | 387          | Hardin     | 31           |
|            |              |            |              | Christian   | 375          | Massac     | 168          |
|            |              |            |              | DeWitt      | 347          | Pope       | 32           |
|            |              |            |              | Douglas     | 178          | Saline     | 222          |
|            |              |            |              | Macon       | 393          | Wayne      | 115          |
|            |              |            |              | Moultrie    | 218          | White      | 202          |
|            |              |            |              | Piatt       | 296          | Franklin   | 365          |
|            |              |            |              | Shelby      | 468          | Jackson    | 321          |
|            |              |            |              | Cumberland  | 139          | Perry      | 187          |
|            |              |            |              | Cumberland  | 63           | Pulaski    | 57           |
|            |              |            |              | Clark       | 261          | Randolph   | 536          |
|            |              |            |              | Total       | 13693        | Union      | 59           |
|            |              |            |              |             |              | Williamson | 410          |
|            |              |            |              |             |              | Total      | 11014        |