

# America 250 Committee Meeting

April 9 2026

## Meeting summary

### Quick recap

This meeting focused on the America 250th anniversary planning efforts for the Department of Illinois American Legion. John discussed various initiatives including challenge coins, lapel pins, and a Google Forms submission system for tracking America 250 activities across posts and units. The group reviewed plans for first responder certificates, a Commander's Walk event, and upcoming activities at the Freedom Fest. Rodney presented a detailed interactive map project he developed to locate all American Legion posts in Illinois, which he demonstrated during the meeting. The discussion also covered logistics for the upcoming DEC meeting and department convention, including housing arrangements across different hotels.

### Meeting

John discussed plans for America 250 initiatives, including challenge coins and lapel pins, though designs have not been finalized. He emphasized the importance of submitting activities related to America 250 through the department website's Google Forms, which will be compiled by Carter Corsello and shared at conventions. Rodney mentioned planning a gun raffle but decided not to tie it directly to the 250th anniversary. John also highlighted the availability of first responder's certificates for veterans and Legion family members who serve as first responders.

### Certificate Process and Fundraising Plans

John discussed the process for obtaining information needed for certificates, including names, current positions, and service details of eligible individuals. He mentioned that Shandy would prepare the certificates, which would be distributed through districts to posts, with some posts planning recognition ceremonies. John also talked about the Commander's Walk on May 9th, the potential inclusion of the Haven run, and the sale of U.S.A. 250 patches for \$10, with proceeds being divided among the Legion, auxiliary, and Sons. Additionally, he planned to hold a raffle at the convention to raise funds for the American 250 and Commander's projects.

### Freedom Fest Planning Discussion

John discussed ongoing plans for Freedom Fest, including a potential re-enlistment event and efforts to increase bike participation in a convention parade. He provided guidance to Edward regarding

certificate requests, suggesting he email Sandy at [sgreen@ILegion.org](mailto:sgreen@ILegion.org) for assistance with printing. John also encouraged more participation in the upcoming convention, suggesting it as an option for those who prefer not to stay overnight.

### **Legion Posts Meeting Updates**

John agreed to distribute meeting minutes within the next day or two and will discuss scheduling the next meeting with Roy and Josh. Rodney presented a Google Maps-based post locator for Illinois Legion posts that he developed, which currently needs an updated list from Mike Monroe to be fully functional. The group discussed convention logistics, with different divisions housed at the Lincoln and State House Inn locations.