

September 26, 2026

Poppy Sales/Production Committee

The Poppy Sales/Production Committee was called to order at 10:01 am with a salute to the colors and the Pledge of Allegiance recited by all members. Present: 1st Division: Frank Thompson, 2nd Division: Todd Latham (acting Chair Pro Tem), 4th Division: Linda Glenn. HQ Staff-David Scott.

The committee reviewed the budget for Poppy Sales/Production and Poppy Scholarship, signed and returned to Finance.

Poppy Sales/ Production \$1,000 (Printing and Meetings)

Poppy Scholarships \$3,700 (Printing and Scholarships)

Reviewed the following brochures/documents:

Poppy Poster Contest Rules and Guidelines (Sept 2026)-No Change

Poppy Poster Contest Cover Sheet (Dept winners to National) changes accepted.

Poppy Order Form-

Cost increase anticipated for assembled poppy per thousand; shipping \$14.

Poppy order per unassembled to increase with shipping options.

Auxiliary Coloring Book was distributed.

Reviewed Poppy Sales/Distribution May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026.

Sales of All Districts: 188,131

Posters: 439

Club Cards: 738

Can Labels: 243

Citation of Recognition: 11

Bookmarks: 6,645

Division Totals:

1st Division 32,220

2nd Division 53,106

3rd Division 21,450

4th Division 52,650

5th Division 28,725

Other 18,260

Emblem Sales 230,000

The Finance Committee distributed Poppy Notes.

The committee reviewed the Committee Purpose issued by Commander C. Latham.

The committee was surprised that it had to submit a semi-annual report to the Finance Committee and sought clarification on “work closely with the Chicago office.”

Poppy Sales/Distribution/Poster Contest/Scholarships

Veterans’ Homes participating in poppy assembly included: LaSalle, Manteno, Quincy, Anna, Danville.

Commander Celeste Latham, Adjutant Josh Thielen, and Sr. Vice Commander Wayne Erickson visited the Committee.

Poppies are now pre-cut from two vendors with two options: assembled and unassembled. Due to the cost of supplies the cost per poppy will increase and estimated \$30 per 1,000 poppies. Department will encourage smaller orders to assemble their own poppies, at discount. Due to post office rates changing posts/units ordering poppies may not be charged shipping if orders are picked up and distributed at a Poppy Seminar. If not, the cost for shipping will likely increase and passed on with each order.

The committee set the following goals for the Department Poppy Program.

1. Distribute at least 180,000 poppies
2. Get the Legion Family full participation in the poppy program
3. All 5 Divisions and their Districts hold at least one Poppy Seminar
4. Support and promote Poppy Distribution, Poster Contest, Coloring Contest
5. Encourage more posts to use the Poppy Citation to recognize people, chairs, and businesses that support the poppy program.
6. Promote National Poppy Day, the Friday before Memorial Day
7. Select a Jr. Miss Poppy (Auxiliary) and Jr. Mister Poppy (SAL)

The Committee would like more posts/units in schools to promote the Poppy Program through Distribution.

The committee wants to emphasize how the Poppy Program is tied to each of the Four Pillars.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation-Pillar 1

Direct support: Donations collected from distributed poppies fund medical and financial assistance for disabled, needy, and hospitalized veterans.

Rehabilitation Work: The hand-made poppies, often assembled by disabled veterans, provide therapeutic work and a small income.

National Security-Pillar 2

Supporting families: Funds raised provide aid and essential resources to active-duty military personnel and their families facing financial or deployment hardships.

Americanism-Pillar 3

Honoring Sacrifice: Wearing a red poppy promotes public patriotism, memorializes fallen service members, and reminds the community of the cost of freedom.

Education: Local programs often include patriotic poppy poster contests in schools to teach youth about national sacrifice.

Children & Youth: Pillar 4

Family Assistance: Money raised through the American Legion poppy fund helps support family care initiatives, children's welfare organizations, and programs that assist military children in need.

The Committee can accomplish this by actively working with local schools to increase access, participation, and awareness of the Poppy Program. Program improvements would include increased distribution, increased Poppy Poster participation, and connecting the program with the four pillars to better support posts and members.

Lastly, we would like to report a goal that at the 2027 Department Convention: 200,000 were sold; all Divisions held at least one seminar; the number of post/units participating increased; and the National Poppy Day was used for greater awareness.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Latham, Vice Chair

Department of Illinois
Disabled American Veterans
DEC
September 20, 2026

September 20, 2026

Pledge was honored.

Roll call:

Present: Commander Don Houghland, Sr. Vice Corsello, 1st Jr. Vice Holman, 2nd Jr. Vice Morris, 3rd Jr. Vice Myers, Chaplain Johnson, Judge Advocate Slaton, Sgt-at-Arms Johnson, Adjutant/Treasurer Self, PDC Peters, PDC Couture, Chapter 1, Chapter 24, Chapter 28, Chapter 33, Chapter 34, Chapter 42, Chapter 47, Chapter 51, Chapter 53, Chapter 60, Chapter 69, Chapter 71, Chapter 76, Chapter 86, Chapter 90, Chapter 103

Minutes of last meeting approved.

Sickness and Distress: PDC Buck is doing well. He received an achievement award from the Department recently.

Adjutant/Treasurer: 10 chapters have already had their finance reports submitted and approved. Several haven't done anything yet. The department is happy to help. If chapter didn't receive per capita, let Adjutant know. Adjutant discusses having an active service fund instead of throwing big parties or buying unnecessary items instead of spending on Service. He discusses that a chapter should not have any accounts in a person's name- everything should only be in chapter's name. Elections are discussed. Chapters hold annual elections, but the same officer can be elected repeatedly. Chapters need to reimburse their commanders for attending National Convention. He also discusses moving the department convention to different places throughout the state instead of always being in Springfield. Adjutant and Sr. Vice went to visit a few chapters for their meetings, and the meetings had been moved to another day. This needs to be reported to the Department on the officer reports. Kevin Johnson 28, Tiffany Laurencio 71. Motion carried. Treasurer's report is read. Ken Wilson 103, Pearl Johnson 60. Motion carried.

Commander: Don Houghland talks about the events he attended after being re-elected, including the C&A training and the National Convention, several chapter meetings and community events, VAVS meetings, fundraising events, etc. National is close to hitting 1 million members again, which helps us get legislation through. Reach out when you meet a veteran- having that camaraderie helps in bigger ways than you may realize. The commander discusses the Commander's Action Network (CAN). Everyone with an email should sign up and you will get legislation regarding veterans and our dependents, and it will help you send it on to your legislators. They make it simple. We have over 6,000 in Illinois right now, but only a fraction

was sending the emails on to legislators. Push the button and send it through. Also, we will start training commanders and adjutants on the resources available and how to help our veterans. Feel free to reach out with questions because new scenarios arise constantly. Tiffany Laurencio is introduced- our new DSO in Marion. Houghland discusses changes in the department: trying to bring in more funds to get more vans, pay more delegate expenses, etc. There is a new webpage that looks great. 1st by Chapter 28, Kevin Johnson. 2nd by Tiffany Laurencio, Chapter 71. Motion carried.

Sr. Vice Carter Corsello talks about the National Convention and encourages others to attend. Next year's is in Indianapolis. He also attended the C&A. He and the adjutant did a northern tour. He reiterates updating meeting times on officer reports and that if a chapter needs help with anything, please reach out to the department. There is discussion on methods of bringing in new members: working with other veterans' organizations, social media, and outreach events. Next, he talks about recruiting and how to access the recruiting reports. Leroy Roper has the most members recruited so far. Membership is going up to \$350 in January. Our Illinois membership right now is 17,821 and our goal is 18,340. Each chapter has its own goals. I believe the American Legion is around 25,000. PDC Peters makes a motion. Homer Bizzle Chapter 33 seconds. Motion carried.

1st Jr. Vice Holman: reports on meetings he attended, including the Chaplain's meeting at National Convention, and other parts of the convention. John Rodriguez won one of the awards. He was 1st in the country for recruiting. Homer Bizzle 33, Melody Bohl 71. Motion carried.

2nd Jr. Vice Eric Morris: The CAN has over 7,000 members, but 6,000 do not participate. Only 1500 are active and send out emails. Keep members encouraged- send in the emails. He also mentions taking a photo of your card with your QR code so if you don't have the card with you, you can still recruit members. Morris spoke about how the Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 2102) officially reached the required 218 signatures on September 15, 2026, forcing a future vote on the House floor. Homer Bizzle 33, Kurt Myers 42. Motion carried.

3rd Jr. Vice Kurt Myers: Also attended National Convention. They encourage use of social media. He does CSO work in the Northern District. Carlo Melone and Terry Hillyard are having a meeting regarding outreach to first responders, encouraging them to file for benefits. Kurt spoke about recording volunteer hours and reporting them to National. Drew Nolan 42, Kevin Johnson, 28. Motion carries.

Jodi Slaton- JA and Women Veterans Council: Attended National Convention, chapter meetings, a Women's Committee meeting, and she is presenting on Battle Buddies at an event. There will be a women's retreat in October- the Centralia chapter's auxiliary has been amazing in their support. Any chapter that wants to help can donate. They had a galantines event and a Mothers' Day event. She has 100 women with interest in the group and many event ideas. Make sure chapters elect a Women's Coordinator. Homer Bizzle 33, Melody Bohl 71. Motion carries.

Director of Service/NSO Supervisor: Carlo Melone reports. He says in the 15 years he has been with the DAV, these are the best leaders he has seen. Communication between CSOs and NSOs has greatly improved. Kenneth Wilson 103, PDC Peters. Motion carries.

Claims and Services Report: Kurt Myers reports that they reviewed the bylaws and asked for input. There were some proposed changes with terminology. HSCs also handling the DSO job is too much, so the HSC and DSO will now be separate positions. They're also clarifying how to work with the NSO. Melody Bohl 71, Homer Bizzle 33. Motion carries.

Employment Report: Clay Webb reminds everyone that if they or any veterans they know need help finding employment, you can contact him. The DAV also has a National Employment Program. Spouses and families of veterans can also use the resources. Homer Bizzle 33, Kevin Johnson 28. Motion carries.

Finance Committee Report: Carter Corsello reports that 3 of the 5 members are new. The committee also reviewed the C&B and noted changes to be made- will be proposed at next meeting. Melody Bohl 71, Homer Bizzle 33. Motion carries.

VAVS Report: If you're on the VAVS and are assigned to attend hospital meetings, make sure you're attending and bringing the information back to the DEC. Marion still needs more volunteer drivers. They have 3 new DAV vans. Marion still needs shuttle drivers and volunteers within the hospital. No standdown this year. Food program for food insecurity is ongoing and costs about \$15,000/month, so donations are appreciated. There will be holiday food baskets. Melody Bohl 71, Homer Bizzle 33. Motion carries.

Veterans Homes:

Quincy:

Chicago:

Anna: 50 residents, 4 spouses, 25 army, 8 air force, 3 marine, 10 navy, 2 WWII, 9 Korean, 26 Vietnam, 3 Gulf War, 6 peace-time, 4 women

Manteno: Meeting is next month

LaSalle:

State fair: Kevin Johnson Chapter 28. Du Quoin Veterans' Day was September 30. DAV was present, as was the VA. Several veterans came through. No beer tent. Melody Bohl 71, Homer Bizzle 33. Motion carries.

POW/MIA: Kurt Myers, Chapter 42 reports as of now there are over 80,000 missing veterans: 71,850 from WWII (just over half is Navy veterans lost at sea), 7,398 Korean War, 1566 Vietnam, 126 Cold War, 6 Gulf War to present. DPAA is the organization that travels the world researching crash sites and brings in archaeologists. This year they found 184 WWII veterans, 46 Korean War veterans. Homer Bizzle 33, Kevin Johnson 28. Motion carries.

Unfinished business: None

New Business: None

Good of the order: Brian Hoedebeck talks about a recovery center in Swansea that works with the VA to get treatment for veterans in Illinois and parts of Missouri. There are 16 detox rooms and 32 inpatient rooms. VA will pay for treatment. Nice facility.

Next year's department convention is June 10-13, 2027.

We need vehicles at Hines. Chapters can't hoard money. You must spend it on your veterans.

Golden Corral lists should come out soon.

Kevin Johnson 28 made a motion to adjourn. Homer Bizzle 33 seconded. Motion carried.

OCT 07 2026

SCOUTING AMERICA
CMTE MEETING
26 SEP 2026
1000 HRS
FALL MTG

MEETING HELD AT ILL. LEGION HQ BLOOMINGTON, ILL.
PRAYER AND PLEDGE OFFERED.

PRESENT: ALBERT P. GANGOLF (1ST DIV. 8TH DIST.)

LEON KRAUT (2ND DIV. 13TH DIST.)

JAMES WATTS (3RD DIV. 15TH DIST.)

DAVID MORRIS (4TH DIV. 18TH DIST.)

JAMES PAGE (5TH DIV. 22ND DIST.)

CMDR. LATHAM VISITED AND THANKED THE SCOUTING AMERICA
CMTE. JOB WELL DONE. CMDR LATHAM REMINDED THE CMTE
TO CONTINUE USING THE GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATION NOTES
THE CMTE HAS RECEIVED.

MISC. CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO THE AMERICAN LEGION
AND SCOUTING AMERICA "PARTNERS FOR GOD AND COUNTRY"
PAMPHLET FOR THE 2026-2027 AMERICAN LEGION YR. CK. WEBSITE
THE SCOUTING AMERICA CMTE, SPRING MEETING
WILL BE: 01 MAY 2027 AT 1000 HRS AT ILL. LEGION HQ,
BLOOMINGTON, ILL.

ARTURO CHAVEZ WILL BE REPRESENTING THE 1ST DIV.
SCOUTING AMERICA CMTE. FOR LEGION YR 2026-2027, WAS
NOT PRESENT. MTG, ADJOURNED 1115 HRS

A SCOUT IS COURTEOUS

BERT GANGOLF
FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

PS: PLEASE MAIL THESE MINUTES OF FALL MTG.
TO THE SCOUTING AMERICA CMTE MBRS

District Reassignment Ad Hoc Committee

10-3-2026 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Don Horn-1st Division; Wayne Erickson-4th Division; Jeff Roscow-5th Division and Wayne Fischer 2nd Division. Roger Bennett was excused. Note Committee change: Don Horn was selected by the 1st Division Commander to represent the 1st Division in place of Larry Hippert. Approved by Department Commander.

Item 1: Commander Latham gave me what she had prepared prior to the Convention a handout spelling out the change of our committee assignment for this year is now to monitor and support the approved 1st Division redistricting plan during the 2026-2027 administrative year. All Committee members now have this handout.

Item 2: Commander Celeste and Department Adjutant Josh joined us initially and Celeste updated us on Membership efforts targeting non-renewals from the past 3-4-years. Revitalization efforts will initially focus on this group in October 2026.

Item 3: We started the meeting with a general and open discussion regarding Post items that needed to be addressed moving forward. They are Leadership; Membership; Post Activities; Financial Strength; and American Legion Family Strength.

Item 4: 1st Division Update by Don Horn, 1st Division Committee Member. Don had prepared a manual highlighting the current update of where things stand in the 1st Division Redistricting. In general, all is moving forward thanks to the District Officers and Don's leadership and "PUSH"!!!! Change is always a challenge, but here things are moving forward. Don has set our April 2027 DEC as the target for completing the major implementation activities, other than elections, and hopefully with the Districts using the manual as their guide it will help with the process. Then they can elect officers in April or May

then we can complete the final package for the Department before our Convention.

Item 5: Moving forward, at this point only Districts 2&3 and 4&5 may have some issues, and they have pretty much been identified. The original 7 Districts still operate independently but are moving together to get all the needed changes and work done for final presentation. Upcoming meeting dates; October 31st-District Updates and November 4th-1st Division Meeting.

Item 6: The final subject discussed was dealing with “Uncertified Posts”. This remains a big issue for the 1st division as many Posts are Corporate Posts, but we should explore how to keep these members in our American Legion.

In summary, our meeting went well, with everyone’s input. Don has put forth a lot of time and effort into this, and the “Redistricting Success” rests with our Division, District and Post Officers.

Respectively,


Wayne Fischer-Chair

Safety Law & Order Committee

Committee meet October 3 2026 at American Legion Headquarters in Bloomington at 10am.

Roll Call 1st Division Chevonne Woodard Present

2nd Division Chuck Coffey Present

3rd Division Candy Gann Present Vice Chairman

4th Division Paul Garrett Excused

5th Division Wayne Madson Present Chairman

We made updates for all the brochures for 2027

Committee voted to keep cost for cadets at \$350

Department Commander, Sr Vice Erickson, Adjutant Thielen stopped to discuss the committee's goals for the upcoming year.

1st Goal: To have 50 Certificates of Appreciation to Police and Firefighters that are veterans still serving their communities.

2nd Goal: To increase attendance for Youth Police School to 30 cadets.

Last year we had 25 cadets.

Chairman encouraged members to attend their Division and District meetings to pass along information about Youth Police School, encourage Post to recognize veterans still serving communities as Police Officers or Firefighters, and nominate a Police Officer or Firefighter of the year award.

Meeting adjourned 11:05 am

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Wayne Madson

Chairman Safety Law & Order

The Internal Affairs Commission met on Saturday, 3 October 2026, at Department Headquarters in Bloomington, Illinois. The original start time was postponed until 1020 hours when quorum was met. Opening protocols were followed. Commission Members present or accounted for were

1st Division - Member Peter Hirt

2nd Division - Member Marciciak was traveling

3rd Division - Vice-Chairman Erickson

4th Division - Member Iris Miranda-Kirschner

5th Division - Chairman Smith was traveling

The Department Commander spoke to the Members, asking them to review and revise the Commission Charter; to draft a specific goal for the current year; and to review the proposed budget. Each Member received a copy of the Committee Chairman Expectations and Video Conference Guidelines.

Item #1 - The Members reviewed the Commission Charter and voted unanimously to **DELETE** the following Charter language: **The Commission is charged with responsibility of initiating methods for the identification, locating, and marking of graves and permanent memorials of graves of veterans in the State of Illinois. The Commission shall recommend policies regarding the Energy and Pollution Program.**

The rest of the Charter's language remains intact because it accurately reflects the Commission's duties.

Item #2 - After detailed discussions, the Members voted unanimously to adopt the following goals for the current year:

To facilitate the execution of the Redistricting Plan for the 1st Division and to assist with the merger and acquisition of the Districts within the 1st Division. This Redistricting Plan was approved at the July Department Convention.

Item #3 - The Members reviewed and voted to approve the proposed Commission budget for the current year.

Meeting was adjourned at 1055 hours.

Thank you. Have a great Air Force Day -

Iris I. M. Kirschner