The Insider

American Legion Department of Illinois News

FALL 2025



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ADJUTANT'S CORNER

Submitted by

Dept. Adjutant,

Joshua Thielen



Over the past year I have learned so much. Now it's time to start expanding. One of the things we will be converting to is emailed call letters. This will save on our mailing and printing costs. We will be transitioning our committee meetings to start using Zoom, Teams, or similar software for their meetings. Those are a few of the things we are attempting to do in the department to cut some costs. For our posts to cut their costs consider using mylegion.org to process membership, draft renewal letters, and email your membership in mass emails. Use it to find members in your area that signed up online or through a national direct mailing.

Another item I have heard throughout the department is more training. Our training team is working on putting together in person training that will assist everyone with understanding their leadership roles at specific positions. Outside of that training, and for more immediate assistance, consider looking at the following webpage:
https://www.legion.org/informationcenter/training/training-tuesdays

There are over 40 presentations and videos that cover a wide array of topics. If you cannot find what you're looking for you can always call the department 309-663-0361 and we will do our best to answer your question.

Finally, one of my biggest pushes for this year is to meet our deadlines. So here is some deadlines to keep in mind over the next two months.

American Legion Auxiliary National President Pam Ray's Homecoming
· Room Block ends October 8, 2025
· Event reservations need to be turned in by October 1, 2025

Membership Renewal Notice Cutoff Date

· Get your membership renewed by October 15, 2025 to avoid getting the third dues notice!

National Membership Target Date

· As a Department we need to be over 55% renewal by October 15, 2025 and over 65% by November 13, 2025.

Post 100% Membership Award deadline is November 11, 2025. Get your cards turned in early!

MEET YOUR NEWLY ELECTED



Department Commander,

ROY SMITH

Thank you all for allowing me the pleasure of serving as your Department Commander. This is truly an honor!

Most of you know my background— I have been around for a while! My Pin kind of tells my story— Navy Veteran, a Mustang (I enlisted then became an Officer) Chief Warrant Officer, and Engineering Tech. American Legion Family.

My Slogan is "Just One More." Just One More What? Fill in the blank, don't stop with one! Keep going. knock on **Just One More** door, raise **Just One More** dollar, walk **Just One More** mile. See what I mean? If we all keep asking ourselves where we can apply the concept of "Just One More," who knows where it will end?

We have quite a few useful catch phases this year! Mine is "Just One More," National's is "Be the One," and we know what that is about. American Legion Family USA 250 Challenge. launched on July 3, 2025. Three categories - Fitness, mental wellness and community service. So what can the Illinois Legion Family do to meet the goals? Some ideas are: start a fitness campaign at your post, buddy checks, or 250 hours of community service. Think about and start planning today. Lets have fun doing it.

I recently took the opportunity to watch a little baseball, Legion Baseball that is. Americas pastime! I told you at convention to have fun. Remember when we played baseball for fun? As a boy I would get on my bicycle, with my glove hanging on the handlebars and off I would go! I could always find a game in town! Most teams always needed an extra player. The Junior and Senior Tournaments brought back those memories of me this week. Watching those young men play the GAME, some dreaming of moving to the next level and some just playing for the love

(Continued on page 3)



Department Sr. Vice Commander,

CELESTE LATHAM

Greetings, Department of Illinois Family!

As your new Senior Vice Commander, I am both honored and excited to step into this role, ready to work alongside each one of you as we continue our mission of service, community, and growth. The new membership year is upon us, and it's the perfect time to look ahead, renew our commitment, and make sure we're welcoming new members to join this incredible journey with us.

Early Renewal: Lead by Example!

Renewing your membership early is a commitment to our organization and helps us start the year strong, with the energy and resources we need to make a lasting impact. By renewing early, you also set the tone for others to follow. Your action shows leadership and sets a powerful example.

As we focus on growing our ranks, we invite you to share the value of being part of our vibrant community. Every renewal and new member strengthens our ability to make a difference.

Recruitment: Every Voice Matters!

As we know, our strength lies in our members —and that's where you come in! Recruitment is vital, and each of us has the power to bring someone new into our organization. Start by sharing your personal journey—talk about the incredible experiences you've had, the friendships you've built, and the work we've done together.

Take the time to invite someone to an event or meeting. Often, the best way to spark someone's interest is to give them a glimpse of the camaraderie and purpose that comes with being a member. You don't have to be a recruiter by title—you're already a

(Continued on page 3)

2025-2026 LEGION LEADERSHIP



Department President,

JILL LAYTON

Let me share a bit about myself for those who I have not yet met. I am a 65-year PUFL member of Strasburg Unit 289, District 19, Division Four. I have been a very active member on all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary. My eligibility is through my dad, who was a World War II Veteran; my brother, an Army Vietnam Veteran; and my son, a Marine Corps Veteran serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and is currently serving in the Marine Reserves.

My theme is "Believe." I love Christmas. I love Christmas music, the smells of Christmas, the decorations, the spirit of Christmas where people smile at strangers and wish them a Merry Christmas, the random acts of kindness. Having "Believe" as my theme was just spontaneous. To me it says it all. Christmas magic is silent. You don't hear it – you feel it. You know it. You believe it. Incorporating my love of Christmas with the American Legion Auxiliary, believe in our great organization. We are the largest patriotic organization for a reason as we are a major force in advocating for Veterans' rights and benefits, supporting youth programs, and promoting patriotism. Believe in our programs. Believe in our mission. But most of all believe in yourself. Take on your challenges, conquer your fears, do what you love and believe in.

I am honored to be serving the Department of Illinois American Legion Family this year along side Department Commander Roy and Detachment Commander Wayne. The emphasis of The American Legion Family will continue this year. We have developed a great friendship which will grow as we travel the state together this year. I think it proves what a great team we will be when we realized we were all on the same page with our special projects: Commander Roy – Boys State; Commander Wayne – Police

(Continued on page 3)



Detachment Commander,

WAYNE MADSON

Hello American Legion Family. First I want to say Thank You to the Detachment of Illinois for electing me as your Commander. Also with the election of John Nemanich as Sr. Vice, we are Illinois's FIRST Dual members as Commander and Sr Vice at the same time. I will like to Thank our Immediate Past Commander Rick Allen for his leadership and dedication to our organization last year. I hope you all been enjoying those videos of Commander Roy , President Jill , and myself promoting the American Legion Family. My goals this year are to keep growing our membership along with a retention of 90% of our current members. I want to increase our dual membership if you already belong to other veterans organizations why not join the Sons also? Wow it has been busy right from the start and enjoying every minute of it. I attended Marty Conatser's retirement party in Bloomington which had a excellent showing. Thank You Marty for your guidance thru the years with the Detachment. Than I was off to Post 435 Glen Carbon to install their Officers. Next I was off to American Legion Baseball Tournaments in the 5th Division in Trenton, Junior State Baseball in Alton, and the Senior State Baseball Tournament in Rantoul. It was a privilege to participate in the ceremonies at those places. Thank You to all the committee members, coaches, and players who participate in American Legion Baseball. As I'm writing this I just got back home from Danville and participating in the American Legion State Golf Tournament. Commander Roy, President Jill, Roy's Aide Ron, and myself made up a super team. It's not where you place it's about having fun and supporting the programs, and enjoying the camaraderie. We also had the SAL National Commander Joseph Navarrete with SAL National Vice Commander Butch Ray join us. We appreciated those two gentleman joining us. Made a side trip to Gurnee for a town hall

(Continued on page 3)

Mark your calendar!

OCTOBER

OCT. 3-5: **SAL NATIONAL FALL MEETINGS**

OCT. 4: **FALL MEETINGS**

ALA FALL FORUM

(1ST DIV—FRANKLIN PARK)

OCT. 5: **ALA FALL FORUM**

(2ND DIV—GENOA)

OCT. 6-9: **NATIONAL FALL MEETINGS**

OCT. 11: **ALA FALL FORUM**

(16TH DIST—HENNEPIN)

OCT. 13: **COLUMBUS DAY**

(OFFICE CLOSED)

OCT. 18: **ALA FALL FORUM**

(15TH DIST—TBD)

OCT. 19: **ALA FALL FORUM**

(5TH DIV—O'FALLON)

OCT. 23-26: **NATIONAL PRESIDENT PAM RAY HOMECOMING**

(SPRINGFIELD)

NOVEMBER

NOV. 1: **UTICA PARADE**

ALA FALL FORUM

(17TH DIST—CULLOM)

NOV 10-11: **OFFICE CLOSED FOR VETERANS DAY**

NOV 14: **75% CUTOFF (NOON)**

CHICAGO MILITARY BALL

VET HEALTH FAIR

NOV 21-23: **EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDER'S CLUB/HAVEN JAMBOREE**

NOV 27-28: **OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING**

(Department Commander, continued from page 1)

of the game. The next time you know of a Legion Baseball game, go out and watch one. They a lot more entertaining than the big leagues! Bring a team to your community by sponsoring a team.

I will have 3 special projects this year. If you cant tell, I am fond of youth baseball and softball, so Legion Baseball is one of my projects. Boys State is number two and I would like to give the veterans at the Anna Veterans Home some new Lift Chairs.

The leadership from the Department of Illinois was asked to participate in an Regional Office Assessment Review (ROAR) at the Regional Veterans claims center in Chicago. This review consisted of meeting with the Leadership and interviewing employees and supervisors at each level. The interviews I observed were professional and the employees were open and seemed concerned about veterans and their benefits.

Thank you again for your support

Just One More

(Senior Vice Commander, continued from page 1)

recruiter by example.

Final Thoughts: Together, We Make a Difference

As we enter this new membership year, let's remind ourselves that our collective efforts can achieve great things. Renewing early, recruiting new members, and supporting one another is how we build a stronger, more vibrant organization. It's not just about numbers—it's about the passion, dedication, and community spirit we share.

I'm excited about what lies ahead, and with your leadership and energy, I know we'll make this year one to remember. Let's focus on renewing today, recruiting tomorrow, and continuing our service and dedication to making a difference in the American Legion. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment.

Onward and upward—together, we can do amazing things!

In Service,

Celeste Latham Senior Vice Commander

(Auxiliary President, Continued from page 2)

School, and mine is Illini Girls State. We are all promoting the wonderful programs for the youth of

Illinois. The American Legion Auxiliary has wonderful programs for the Veterans, active military, communities and our youth. We would be honored and thrilled to have your spouse, children and grandchildren join us in the Auxiliary to carry out these amazing programs!

As I travel the State of Illinois this year, I look forward to seeing my Legionnaire friends and making new Legionnaire friends!

(Detachment Commander, continued from page 2)

meeting to listen to veterans about their healthcare needs and was able to tour Lovell VA Center. Next we head to the State Fair in Springfield. Following weekend I was invited to attend the Legion Division& District Officer Training. Trying to get the Legion and SAL Officers working together. Then we were off to Tampa for National Convention, followed by our joint Homecoming Party in Effingham. Thank you to all who attended! The Detachment is having a cash raffle again this year with the same payout as last year 1st $5,000, 2nd $2,250, 3rd $1,000, 4th $750, 5th $500, 6th $500. This year tickets are only $20 each. Drawing will be held March 14 at the spring DEC. Looking forward on seeing everyone in my travels.

Working Together for Veterans

Wayne Madson

2025—2026 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	DETAILS & LOCATION
09/25/2025	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ E. HAZEL CREST POST 1139
10/05/2025	16TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ BRIMFIELD POST 452
10/05/2025	23RD DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ PATOKA POST 543
10/12/2025	15TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ ORION POST 255
10/12/2025	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ ANNA POST 344
10/15/2025	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ GEO. W. BENJAMIN POST 791
10/19/2025	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ CHATSWORTH POST 613
10/25/2025	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ MARRS-MEYER POST 991
11/09/2025	3RD DIVISION	10:00 AM	DIVISION MEETING @ MILAN POST 569
11/19/2025	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
11/20/25	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ EDWARD SCHULTZ POST 697
12/06/2025	8TH DISTRICT	TBD	HOLIDAY HOP @ TINLEY PARK POST 615
12/11/2025—12/13/205	4TH DIVISION	TBD	BUDDY CHECKS @ DECATUR POST 105 (3 DAYS)
01/11/2026	23RD DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ MT. VERNON POST 141
01/11/2026	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ THE HAVEN
01/21/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
01/22/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ MATTESON POST 474
02/18/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	HELLENIC POST 343 MEETING @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
02/26/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ELECTION CALL @ GLEN MAKER POST 1160

2025—2026 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	DETAILS & LOCATION
03/08/2026	16TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ BARTONVILLE POST 979
03/08/2026	23RD DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ GERMANTOWN POST 325
03/08/2025	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ MURPHYSBORO POST 127
03/15/2026	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	POPPY MEETING @ STONINGTON POST 257
03/18/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	JOSEPH M. SESTERHENN POST 166 MEETING @ MORTON GROVE POST 134
03/26/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ELECTION CALL @ TINLEY PARK POST 615
APRIL—TBD	4TH DIVISION	TBD	BUDDY CHECKS
04/15/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ EVANSTON POST 42
04/23/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	ELECTION CALL @ HAZEL CREST POST 398
05/03/2026	23RD DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ NEWTON POST 20
05/17/2026	15TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT CONVENTION MEETING @ FAIRVIEW POST 644
05/17/2026	16TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT CONVENTION MEETING @ DEER CREEK POST 1276
05/20/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING MORTON GROVE POST 134
05/23/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	POST EVERLASTING ELECTION @ EVERGREEN PARK POST 854
05/30/2026	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ MATTOON POST 88—RAILSPLITTERS
05/30/2025	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	DISTRICT MEETING @ STEELEVILLE POST 480
05/31/2026	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DIVISION MEETING @ MATTOON POST 88
06/07/2026	3RD DIVISION	10:00 AM	DIVISION CONVENTION MEETING @ DELAVAN POST 382
06/17/2026	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	DISTRICT MEETING @ LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226
06/26/2026	8TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	TBD

Did You Know….?

By Ray Toczek, Retired Department Service Officer



That when we were in the military we went through constant training. Many of us had weekly and sometimes daily physical training to keep our bodies in shape. We qualified with our weapons at least once a year and practiced mock fire drills, gas attacks and a host of other scenarios to be sure we were prepared. Well, we are all now veterans and we need to prepare for answering our final roll call. Let's face it, we all will sooner or later come to the end of our life's journey and we need to be prepared. We don't want our spouse or children having to scramble around when the time comes for various papers and documents. There is a lot we can do now to be proactive and here are some common ones I run into as a service officer.

1. Have a legible copy of your DD 214 or separation papers available and at home. A copy in your safe deposit box isn't a good idea. You may die on a weekend or holiday and your survivors may not be able to access it. This document is needed by the undertaker to obtain your burial flag, honor guard, government headstone and burial in a VA national cemetery.

2. Be sure your insurance beneficiary is up-to-date on all your policies and the policy number is handy. Too often a veteran gets divorced and remarries and forgets to change the beneficiary so the first spouse gets the money. This goes for your IRA's and other investments too.

3. Headstone information. The free government headstone has only so much room so if you received eight or ten different service medals, you'll need to choose ahead of time which ones you want engraved and let your next-of-kin know.

4. Ready cash for burial expenses. If you have all your money tied up in investments or CD's your executor may have to sell something or cash in a CD early and pay a penalty. The best idea would be to buy a prepaid burial with a local funeral home and have enough liquid cash in a checking account or money market fund for final expenses. Of course, if you are the only one listed on the account that will be a problem too. My mother put me on her checking account just for that reason and when she died, I had no problem accessing funds to pay the bills

5. Be sure your will is up to date. As time passes the family dynamic changes. That son who you were so proud of is now a drug addict and refuses to go into rehab yet he will get half your estate. Or the daughter who got pregnant out-of-wedlock and you disinherited, has now gotten married and you have three wonderful grandchildren, yet she won't get a dime! Make those changes now.

These are just some of the more important things one can do to be proactive but there are many more. I suggest you contact the American Legion at the address below (call, write or e-mail) and ask for their informative and updated publication "WHAT TO DO BEFORE A VETERAN DIES"

The American Legion

1608 K St. NW

Washington, D.C. 20006

202-861-2700

var@legion.org

2025 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION



The Legion Family came together to close yet another successful year. We were excited to see more first timers in attendance this year! While there is a lot of planning (and RE planning when hurdles arise) to pull it off and a lot of hard work during that week, there's a lot of fun too! Convention is a great event that brings Legion Family members from all over the state together. Thank you to all who attended!

























DEPARTMENT

Lampert Skyway





REFLECTION SHINES WITH GRATITUDE

Written by Hannah Leong

Sourced from Positively Naperville; August 2025

Imagine a nation where the government leads with empathy, not ego; heart, not hierarchy. A nation where debate serves to open minds, not polarize. A nation of girls, for girls.
Welcome to Girls Nation.
Girls Nation is a week-long program that takes two exceptional girls from each state and flies them out to Washington D.C. for the experience of a lifetime. This summer, I was fortunate enough to be chosen as one of the two girls to represent Illinois at Girls Nation. In June, I was elected as Senator Leong from Illinois Girls State, and in July, I stepped foot in the nation's capitol.

On that first day in D.C., I must've met three or four dozen girls. It was a whirl of introductions that left me feeling like I had found a place where I belonged. Beyond their intelligence or eloquence, every single girl there was incredibly kind. As a young woman, I had never felt so empowered by the people around me.
One of the most striking things about Girls Nation was the depth of conversation. Sitting at the dinner table, we would talk about our beliefs, current politics, and how our experiences shaped us as individuals. That's not to say we weren't silly at times—we were all still teenage girls, after all. But I truly believe that the best and brightest female leaders of tomorrow will come from Girls Nation.



To my fellow Girls Nation senators: I have no doubt that you will all go on to do great things, and it's been an honor to share this experience with you.
Thank you to the American Legion Auxiliary for sponsoring Girls Nation, and thank you to my community, my city, and my family for supporting me along every step of the way.
Senator Leong, out.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We are happy to include your District/Division Meeting Dates, Happenings at your local 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

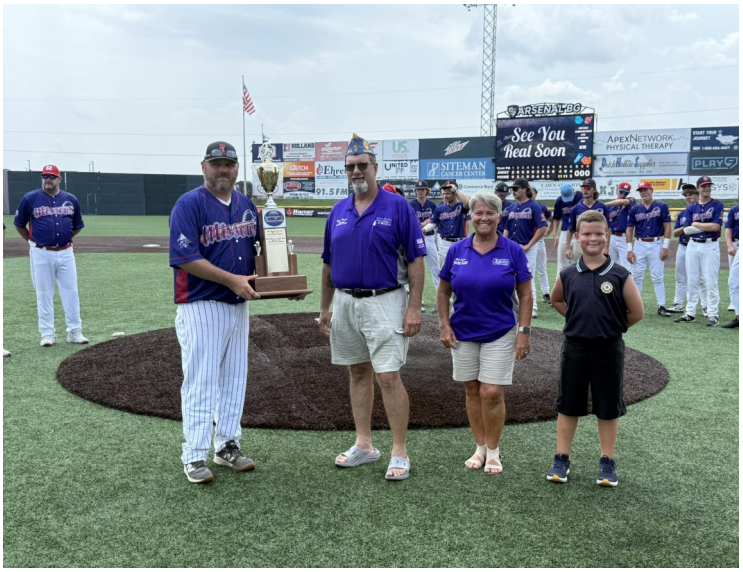
Please submit any changes or updates to previous submissions to Shandi Green as soon as possible. NOTE: WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO INCLUDE YOUR SUBMISSIONS BUT CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL BE. IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE, PLEASE SUBMIT BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR



Immediate Past Detachment Commander Rick Allen, Immediate Past National Detachment Commander Joseph Navarrete, Membership Director Mike Monroe and Past Detachment Commander Mike Vozar at the American Legion State Golf Tournament in Danville



American Legion Baseball Chairman Don Wallis, Department Commander Roy Smith, Detachment Commander Wayne Madson & Department Commander's Aide Chris Schoo attending the banquet for the opening of the American Legion Baseball Senior Tournament in Illinois.



Illinois Detachment Commander Wayne Madson, Illinois Department President Jill Storm Layton and her grandson Cam present the trophy to The American Legion Department of Missouri All-Stars after their 11-4 victory over the Department of Illinois All-Stars



Many members of The American Legion Department of Illinois leadership represented at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield, IL

HAPPY RETIREMENT, MARTY!!

On July 18, Legion Family members from near and far all gathered to celebrate Department Adjutant Martin Conatser's retirement. During his impressive Legion career (Past National Commander, Past Department Commander, Department Adjutant, etc.), he's touched the lives of many—as you can see from the crowd that showed up to thank him and celebrate him in person. Marty has served as Department Adjutant for 10 years and it definitely won't be the same without him! Thank you for all you have done for the state of Illinois and will continue to do.






















DoubleTree
by Hilton

NATIONAL CONVENTION

TAMPA, FLORIDA



















Egyptian Past Commanders ' Club

88th HAVEN JAMBOREE

Sponsored by the:

EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDERS AND PAST PRESIDENTS CLUBS

November 21-23, 2025

The E.P. C.C. has as its main responsibility, the support and maintenance of THE HAVEN, located on beautiful Crab Orchard Lake, Route #13, Carbondale, Illinois. This is an important phase of the rehabilitation work in the 5th Division. Our main sources of income are: Donations, Annual Dues, Annual Post Per Capita Assessment, Annual Jamboree Raffle, Special Projects, and Poppy Money.

JAMBOREE RAFFLE AND DONATIONS

The operation of THE HAVEN is no small undertaking. With your help, the E.P.C.C. has been able to maintain THE HAVEN since 1950. Participation in the Annual Jamboree Raffle will help support THE HAVEN for another year. Please assist by purchasing or selling the enclosed raffle tickets. We will gladly mail extra tickets! Please mail stubs and money to:
William J. Flanagan, Secretary/Treasurer, 409 East Oak Street, New Baden, IL 62265.
If not mailed by **11/8/2025**, please bring them with you.

JAMBOREE HOUSING FOR 2025

We will again enjoy accommodations at the Country Inn and Suites, 1306 Halfway Road, Marion, IL, 62959. Please make your own reservations by calling 1-618-997-2444. Be sure to mention The American Legion block of rooms coded **AMERICAN LEGION HAVEN JAMBOREE 2025** for the weekend of **11/21 through 11/23/2025**. Your reservations must be received by **October 23, 2025**. The rate for the rooms will be: standard queen $116.00 plus tax , $111.00 standard king plus tax, $125.00 plus tax king studio, or king suite $140.00 plus tax.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21

1:00 P.M. Tour of the Marion Veterans Administration Medical Center. (possible limit in attendees)
5:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. Steak Fry at the Haven. COST $20.00 per person. Due to large turnout for the steak fry, we appreciate your patience and consideration in seating and serving.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. Open House at The Haven
5:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Cocktail Hour (Courtesy 5th Div. Am. Leg.) Country Inn & Suites

7:00 P.M. **Buffet Style Banquet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1601 W. White St., Marion.** The Menu will be: Pork Loin, Chicken Au Vin, Mashed Potatoes, Caesar Salad, Vegetable Medley, rolls w/butter, dessert (cheesecake), coffee, tea, water. Directions to the Knights of Columbus Hall will be available at hotel. Cost: $35.00 a person. Cash bar available.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

9:00 A.M. Egyptian Past Presidents Club, Meeting, Country Inn and Suites
10:00 A.M. Annual Meeting of the Egyptian Past Commanders Club at The Haven

REALLY IMPORTANT!

MAKE ONE CHECK FOR PAST COMMANDERS DUES, STEAK FRY, BANQUET AND RAFFLE TICKETS PAYABLE TO: THE EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDERS CLUB

CHECKS FOR PAST PRESIDENTS DUES PAYBLE TO: EGYPTIAN PAST PRESIDENTS CLUB

PAST PRESIDENTS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Dues are $5.00 per year.
Detach and mail to: Judy Zimmerman
5531 Oak Street, Highland, IL 62249
Name _____
Dist. _____ Unit _____
Address:_____
_____

PAST COMMANDERS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Dues are $5.00 per year.
Detach & mail to William Flanagan 409 E. Oak, New Baden, IL 62265
Name _____
Dist _____ Post _____ Squadron _____
Address:_____
_____

STEAK FRY RESERVATIONS Friday evening, November 21, 5-8 P.M. Enclosed is my check for $_____($20 per person). Reservations due 11/8/2025

Detach and mail to: William Flanagan
409 E. Oak, New Baden, IL 62265

Steak _____
Name_____

_____

BANQUET RESERVATION FORM – Knights of Columbus Hall, Marion

Reservations due 11/8/2025 for Buffet Banquet. Detach and mail to William Flanagan
409 E. Oak, New Baden, IL 62265
Enclosed is my check for $_____ ($35 per person) for E.P.C.C. Banquet, **Saturday, 11/22/2025.**
Tickets may be picked up at the door. Please include all names for reservations.

Name(s)_____

Gifts to Gift to The Yanks Christmas Gifts Worksheet

Please complete this form and go to
https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts_to_the_yanks/shop/home
to order. All orders must be placed between October 1st- 31st, 2025.

V.A Hospital or Nursing Home Name _____

Address _____City/Zip_____

Activity Director or Person in charge _____

Facility Telephone number (include area code) _____

American Legion Representative responsible for delivering gifts _____

Post # _____Phone # (include area code)_____

Address _____City/Zip_____

Facility is located in ____District of the_____Division of the Department of Illinois American Legion.

Total number of VETERAN patients in you facility? Male _____Female_____

I certify these figures are accurate as of today's date_____

Superintendent or Administrator_____

GIFT LIST (ONE GIFT PER VETERAN)
(Please note, these are the only sizes available).

ITEMS	Quantity Each Size					
	Small	*Medium*	*Large*	*X-Large*	*XX-Large*	*XXX-Large*
Sweatshirt Top						
Blanket						
GIFT BAG						

A Gift Bag Gift, for a veteran where size may be a problem: GIFT BAGS_____ **One Gift Per Veteran**

Total Gifts Needed_____

Gift to Yanks Christmas Gifts Worksheet

Please complete this form and go to
https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts_to_the_yanks/shop/home
to order. All orders must be placed between October 1st- 31st, 2025.

	Name	Gift & Size	Room #
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
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Millennium Post 2017
Hosting



2nd Annual Chicago Military Ball

Come and Honor the Illinois Veterans & Families

Attire: Black Tie Affair

Friday, November 14, 2025

6:30 pm - 12:00 midnight

Price per ticket: $100

Free Veterans Health Fair - Same Day - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Doubletree by Hilton

5000 West 127th Street, Alsip, IL, 60803

Hotel Reservations - Under Chicago Military Ball
Code: CML



Purchase tickets thru Commander Wade Hudson
chicagopost2017@outlook.com
(312) 479-4862

Veterans Health Fair

FREE!

Friday, November 14, 2025

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

FREE!

Doubletree by Hilton

5000 West 127th Street, Alsip, IL 60803

FREE VETERANS RESOURCES

- *Free Health Screenings*
- *Jesse Brown VA Medical Center*
- *Free Health Screenings*
- *Free Veteran Resources*
- *Disability Compensation*
- *VA Pension*
- *Education and Financial Assistance*
- *Job Resources*
- *Life Insurance*
- *Red Cross*
- *Community Resources*
- *Vendors are welcomed!*

Chicago Military Ball Following Health Fair
6:30 pm - 12:00 midnight
(A Ticketed Event)

Hosted by:
Millennium Post 2017

Vendor registration contact
Commander Wade Hudson
chicagopost2017@outlook.com • (312) 479-4862

To purchase tickets for the Military Ball
contact Commander Wade Hudson
chicagopost2017@outlook.com
(312) 479-4862

VETERANS CORNER

Submitted by

Jerry Vogler

SEPTEMBER 11TH MEMORIAL CEREMONY IN BLOOMINGTON

The American Legion Honor Guard will hold a brief memorial ceremony remembering the September 11, 2001 (9/11) destruction of the World Trade Center, the damages to the Pentagon and the crash of the hijacked plane in Pennsylvania, by terrorists! The ceremony will commence at 11:00 a.m. on September 11, 2024, on the east steps of the "Old Courthouse" (the McLean County Historical Museum" in downtown Bloomington. There will be an invocation, some brief comments concerning the tragedy, TAPS will be played, a three-volley rifle salute and the playing of Amazing Grace on the Bagpipes. A "Flyover" final salute is planned if weather and other factors permit it. Take a little time that day to honor and celebrate the memory of the thousands who were killed or suffered injury or illness from that day.

GOLD STAR MISSION 500 MILE BIKE RIDE

The Gold Star Mission Veterans Organization will hold its annual 500-mile Bike Ride again this year through Illinois. This year's Bike Ride will start at Metropolis, Illinois and continue from September24 through September 28, 2024. Gold Star Mission will recognize Illinois heroes during the stops near many towns on the Bike Ride route, as follows: September 24 Metropolis to Mr. Vernon; Mount Vernon to Mattoon September 25: Mattoon to Normal September 26: Normal to Princeton September 27: Princeton to Rockford September 28 with a closing ceremony at

the Rockford VFW Post 5149. For more information call 1-217-720-9574.

Q: I served in the Illinois National Guard for six years and was Honorably discharged. I heard recently that the local bus line will provide a bus pass to Veterans which will allow the Veteran to utilize the bus service for free. My discharge papers were lost in a fire several years ago and I have not gotten them replaced. I was told by a friend that all he did to get a bus pass was present his DD214 with Honorable discharge and have a picture ID. I don't recall ever getting a DD214. What do I have to do to get the bus pass?

A: Other than for initial or periodic training for the National Guard, you probably never received a DD214. The National Guard separation from service form is NGB 22. To receive a new copy of your NGB 22 you must contact the Adjutant General's Office of the Illinois National Guard. For assistance in reaching the Adjutant General National Guard Records Department call 1-217-761-3500. You must have full name of Veteran, date of birth, date (approximate) entered National Guard service. Approximate separation date from the National Guard, and social security number will help the Records Department find your records.

DID YOU KNOW?

The State of Illinois does not tax Military Pay; Military Retirement Pay; Military Survivor pay; Social Security pay. Additionally, if you have a VA service-connected disability rating

and own or are purchasing your own home you may be eligible to receive a reduction in the Equalized Assess Value (EAV) of your property for tax purposes. i.e. if your VA disability rating is at least 30% your EAV will be reduced by $2,500. If your VA disability rating is 50% or higher, your EAV will be reduced by $5,000. If the Veteran is rated at least 70% disabled by the VA, the Veteran will not be required to pay property taxes on the first $250,000 EAV on the Veteran's primary home. Completion of PTAX – 342 Form Eligibility for Standard Homestead Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities and submission to the County Assessor's Office is required.

COMMENTARY ON QUOTE OF THE DAY

Why do we tolerate and continue to elect and reelect leaders who campaign on one agenda and then govern in a direction which few Americans support. Gross overspending on social and cultural change, division of Americans into small groups instead of uniting us all as Americans have diminished what little respect, we have for those we elected. The Quote of the Day provides the guidance we need to follow if we want to preserve our Great Nation!

QUOTE OF THE DAY

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Top 10

DISTRICT & DIVISION

RANKINGS UPDATED 09/19/2025

Division	Commander
16	BENNETT
2	LATHAM
4	TINCHER
5	OWENS
1	MCNELLIS

District	Commander
13	Howard
17	Elzy
10	Garris
15	Seward, Jr.
14	Arbuckle
23	Funneman
22	Scheyer
12	Brubach
16	Frank
8	Wilson

Scan here to visit the Dept. website.

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