



# THE INFORMER

## SEPTEMBER, 2024

**September 8** – District Picnic Darlington Swimming Pool Park  
**September 24** - DEC Mineral Point Legion Post. Meeting at 7pm  
**October 19** - Fall Conference Verona Legion Post  
**November 26** – DEC Barneveld Legion Post. Meeting at 7pm  
**January 2025** - Mid-Winters in Appleton  
**February 15** - District Holiday Party - Tentative Barneveld Legion Post

**March 25** - DEC Mineral Point Legion Post. Meeting at 7pm  
**May 3** - Spring Conference tentatively set in Monroe  
**May 27** - DEC Barneveld Legion Post. Meeting at 7pm  
**June 24** - DEC Richland Center Legion Post. Meeting at 7pm  
**July** - State Convention to be held in Green Bay  
 We are working on scheduling the District Oratorical Contest



### Dan O'Brien – 3rd District Commander

I want to thank Jenni for reminding me that it was time for the Commander’s article for the Informer. I am thankful that we have wonderful people in our 3<sup>rd</sup> District that help make things go smoothly. I have been busy and learning a lot of things since being Installed as your 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander on Sunday of the Convention.

One week off then off to Membership Training in Indianapolis. Some good training and good camaraderie. We had the opportunity to listen to one of The American Legion Lobbyist that we have in Washington D.C. Good information on the positive things The American Legion is getting done. I did ask him how much influence The American Legion had in Washington. The answer was not surprising but here it is. We do not have as much pull or influence as we did 10 to 15 years ago. In looking at Membership I found that in 2004 there were 2,657,623 Legion Members and in 2013 the Legion Membership was 2,311,701. We are roughly around 2,000,000 now. I still believe the American Legion has a tremendous amount of influence as we led the way to getting the PACT ACT passed. In the American Legion Magazine, it stated that up to May around 1 million Veterans have filed E claims under the PACT ACT. If it was not for The American Legion would these Veterans who so proudly served fallen through the cracks? WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Can we improve on our Membership? We have opportunities. In our 3<sup>rd</sup> District there are approximately 32,000 Veterans. We have 5,273 Legion Members in our 3<sup>rd</sup> District. This means there are 26,727 opportunities to grow our Membership. We will be looking at ways to bring these Veterans into our Legion Family. We also need to keep growing our 3<sup>rd</sup> District American Legion Family. Working together with the Auxiliary, SAL and Legion Riders to make us stronger. Vice Commander Mike Rohan and I will be soliciting ideas from around the District to help us all grow together.

We have some great events coming up in the next couple of months.

- Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup> the “Patriots Car Show” at Legion Headquarters
- Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Picnic at the Darlington Swimming Pool Park Upper Shelter House. Email Dan O’Brien to let him know you are coming. [Danh.obrien@hotmail.com](mailto:Danh.obrien@hotmail.com)
- Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>-Cross Plains Post 245 is holding there 100 Year Anniversary.
- Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>-Celebration of Freedom Golf Outing-Fairfield Hills Golf Club in Baraboo
- \*\*Saturday October 19<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> District Fall Conference. It is being held at Verona Post 385. Registration at 8am and the Conference will start at 9am. We will have some great training on how to move around on the American Legion Home Page. This will help answer many of the questions we may have on how to get information from the Home Page. We will also take time for some MyLegion training. If you have a lap top computer, feel free to bring it.

All Legion Members are welcome to attend our DEC Meetings. The next DEC meeting will be held on Tuesday September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Mineral Point Legion Post. Meeting will start at 7pm.

I would like to end this with some thoughts. Communication, Involvement and Visibility. Over the next two years you will probably hear me talk about these items. I really believe if we do all three of these things well, we can grow our Membership.

This past weekend I had the opportunity to attend the Argyle Post 251 Picnic and the Green County Picnic. Thank you to Argyle Post 251 Commander Jerry Gerber and Green County Commander Rhonda Waldvogel. Good turnouts at both picnics. Having events and making themselves visible.



## Chaplains Corner



Hello, 3<sup>rd</sup> District. I pray that all is well with you and your families. Most of you know that over the last year I have been serving as your Department Chaplain. It has been and still is my privilege and honor to have served you as your Department Chaplain and now as your 3<sup>rd</sup> District Chaplain. I have learned a lot during my time at Department and am looking forward over the next two years to share with you that which I have learned. I am currently working on a training course for Post, and County chaplains and commanders. You might ask why I have included the post and county commanders the answer is simple they need to know what you know so they can use your unique talents to the fullest. I hope to have more information coming out soon. The topics will come out of

the National Chaplains Manual, the Chaplains Prayer Book and other resources. If you are interested in working with me in this endeavor, please let me know, by contacting me at 608-643-9148 or [smithvirgil1957@gmail.com](mailto:smithvirgil1957@gmail.com). Until next time: ***The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.***

Chaplain Virgil Smith  
Past Department Chaplain  
3<sup>rd</sup> District Chaplain / Dane County Chaplain



Argyle Post members presented certificates of commendation to three young area men and friends for their commitment to military service.

## GOLF OUTING



Dennis Wood and Lee Pollack

## HIGHLITES FROM STATE CONVENTION FOLLOWS



National Commander, Daniel Seehafer inspires the attendees at the 105<sup>th</sup> Department Convention



WDVA Secretary, James Bond bringing greeting



Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Commissioner – Roger Mathison



Commander Karl and Leo Endres – Waunakee Children and Youth Award



Commander Karl and Terry Woolf – Grant County



National Commander Seehafer and Commander Karl, Scott Relitz - Marshall



National Commander Seehafer & Commander Karl, Peter Herman - Argyle



National Commander Seehafer and Jerry Hook - District Award



Commander Karl and Lee Pollock – Barneveld



National Commander Seehafer and Commander Karl, James Skelton - DeForest



National Commander Seehafer and Commander Karl, Scott Klassy – Mt Horeb



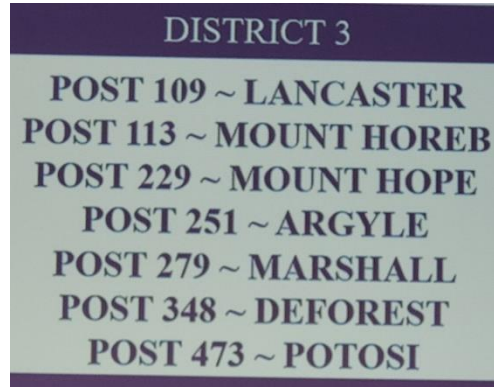
Badger Boys State Governor 2024 – Jon Orth



Past Department Historian - Frank Mathison (Department Historians Award, 2nd place National Post History), 501 Historian Morris Sadicario (**Martha Marlowe** Historian Award), Department Commander Karl Stuvengen, and Department Historian Michelle Adams.



Legion Rider State Director, Corey Doehrmann



Post receiving awards



Past District Commander, Jerry Hook and District Commander, Dan O'Brien



Present and Past Third District Commanders



2024 - 2025 DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN LEADERSHIP



Members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District attended American Legion Membership Training in Indianapolis, Indiana in July. Very good training and we got to meet other Legion Members from around the State of Wisconsin and Legion Members from all over the United States. On Saturday morning we got to hear from Wisconsin Legionnaire and our National Commander Dan Seehafer. An inspiring speaker. Pictured our members from our 3<sup>rd</sup> District mixed in with other Legion Members from Wisconsin.



**Come help celebrate 100 years of  
American Legion in Cross plains!**

Post 245 Cross Plains, Middleton

2217 American Legion Dr Cross Plains, WI 53528

Saturday September 21st

Dinner and drinks starting at 5:00 pm and music following the meal.

\$25.00 includes one drink ticket and a fine meal and night out

Please RSVP to Steve Zanon 3205 Cedar Trail, Middleton, WI 53562  
(608)213-9530

Then on Sunday Sept 22 enjoy the day on our grounds with Food,  
Drinks, local musicians, Flag folding ceremony, flag burning  
ceremony, bouncy houses for the kids, temporary tattoos, and games.

11:00am-7:00pm

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons attending Saturday evening Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed (25.00 X Number attending) \_\_\_\_\_



### **Noreen Schmidt – 3<sup>rd</sup> District President**

Department President Becky Mueller's project that she wants us to focus on is to bring awareness to the Wisconsin's 1,800 POW/MIA still missing.

September 20, 2024, is National POW/MIA Recognition Day; I am focusing on the Vietnam War as my husband, my brother, two brothers-in-law and a first cousin all fought in the Vietnam War, and all returned home.

Approximately 57,000 Wisconsinites fought in the Vietnam War. 1,241 lost their lives and another 26 are still listed as missing.

Since 1973, the remains of more than 1,000 Americans killed during the Vietnam War have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. Of the nearly 1,600 Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War, hundreds are believed to be in a "non-recoverable" category, meaning after rigorous investigation Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) has determined that the individual perished but does not believe it is possible to recover the remains.

The Vietnam war lasted from July 8, 1959, until May 15, 1975. It was fought in North and South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Still missing of the 2,641 – 1,066 have been accounted for but 1,575 are still unaccounted for.

What can we do as Auxiliary members to assist in the DPAA's mission? We can contact elected officials requesting more funding and staff in an effort of recovering the missing; and we can support financially the organizations that assist homeless Vietnam War veterans. We can pray for the families and friends that are still waiting for the phone call that says, "we have found your loved one". Let's support our President and her focus mission.



## **Membership**

To ALA Official Family:

The following message is sent on behalf of Department Membership Chairman Amy Luft.

*All officers at all levels - unit, county, district and department - are asked to please renew their 2025 memberships by **September 1**.*

*The first "Checking Your Pulse" award deadline is **September 15**. All units who reach 75% will be placed in a drawing to win \$100. Units must have their Unit Officer form submitted to headquarters with all officers paid to be eligible.*

*Thank you!*

**Amy Luft / American Legion Auxiliary**  
*National Leadership Chair - Central Division*  
*Department of WI 1st Vice President*  
Cell: 414-651-7300





## **Membership** **Shelley and Nicole**

Greetings to all from your 3<sup>rd</sup> District membership team! We are happy and excited to engage and help in any way we can. Please contact us with your questions and concerns and we will address them to the best of knowledge. We are new to these positions, but we have amazing mentors helping us learn and grow.

Nicole and I want to welcome all of our new members, we are excited to have you! Any questions about your membership, what it means, what is expected and of course all our wonderful benefits, contact your Unit President or your Unit membership chairman. Other fantastic resources are the National and Department websites. Join them all and never be out of the loop.

RENEWAL TIME IS HERE AGAIN!!! We offer many levels of membership awards, starting in September. So, get those memberships in and get your Unit in line for some amazing awards and recognition. Your 3<sup>rd</sup> District membership team is currently working on members out there with unpaid dues. Our hope is to retain these members. Please reach out to these members, make a call, send a friendly reminder of how great our organization is and all the wonderful programs we support for the American Legion Family and Active Military and their families. Check out the latest membership benefits. National has done a great job of working with many new companies to bolster our benefits.

Serving from the heart with respect, love and kindness. God Bless our Country, our Veterans, our troops and our wonderful volunteers.



### ***Chaplains Corner***

Breathe Deep and Know: More is happening than you can see.

Living by faith means trusting that the pieces are all working together, even if you can't see the whole picture yet.



### **Americanism** **Carol & Bill Ridgely**

The purpose of the Americanism program is to inspire, recognize, and perpetuate responsible citizenship through education and acts of patriotism, as well as raise awareness and increase appreciation of the price paid for our fundamental freedoms. The program includes increasing flag etiquette awareness in communities, awareness and participation in youth activities that promote proper respect for our flag and loyalty to our country and promoting Auxiliary participation in The American Legion Americanism programs.

Congratulations to the twenty-six students from thirteen units across the state who were named Americanism Essay Contest winners. Seven units had multiple winners and Menominee Falls (unit 382) and Plum City (unit 365) had winners in four classes each.

Now that the Department convention is over, we can begin to plan for the next year's programs. September 17<sup>th</sup> is Constitution Day and the traditional start of the annual Legion High School Constitution Oratorical Scholarship contest. The local Post is the entry portal for the national contest. ALA Badger Girls State was held in June and yet it is only four short months from now that the deadline for selecting participants will again be on us.

We are here to act as an information clearinghouse and to help your units implement your Americanism program. Please contact us if you want information. 608-846-2823

**Congratulations to the  
Otis Sampson American Legion Auxiliary Unit 59's  
100 Year Centennial Anniversary**

Unit 59 is in Stoughton within Dane County. The current membership as of July is at a 114% with 169 members. 7,000 volunteer hours and over \$10,000 was donated to the American Legion Auxiliary programs and to the community of Stoughton. Fund raisers were also conducted to raise money for a \$1,000 trades scholarship and to purchase a van for a Ukrainian refugee family.



Please consider volunteering at the annual Wayne D. Horner Memorial Stand Down being held in Madison at the Salvation Army on October 19<sup>th</sup>. A Stand Down offers a hand up not a handout to our Nation's veterans. Within the city of Madison, nearly 150 veterans struggle daily without permanent housing or basic needs. Without affordable housing many veterans depend on emergency homeless shelters or sleep outdoors. Additional information regarding volunteering your service or to make donations, please call 608.301.5528.

**Madison VA Hospital**

**Current Needs List (08/15/24)**

1. Visa Gift Cards \$20 - \$50
2. Maze puzzle books
3. Lego sets
4. Diaper rash cream
5. Diapers Newborn
6. Diaper Garbage Bags
7. Velcro Swaddles
8. Child size clothes 0-3 and 3 months Gender Neutral

Hospice Comfort Cart – (for families of hospice patients)

9. Cheez It crackers
10. Rice Krispy treats
11. Ritz Bits
12. granola bars
13. Goldfish crackers
14. Pop-tarts
15. Animal crackers
16. Microwaveable popcorn

Mailing Address:  
Madison VA Hospital  
Community Relations – 135  
2500 Overlook Terrace  
Madison, WI 53705



**Seán Patchin - SAL 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander**

Summer is coming to an end, and our Third District SAL is starting to regain momentum. I was officially sworn in by our National Vice-Commander and came into possession of our District Flag. That's important because it's a symbol of our District SAL, so I want to get it displayed as much as possible. I carried it in the Sun Prairie Sweet Corn Festival parade and SAL District Chaplain Matthew McCormick carried it in a Legion Family Color Guard at the Grant County Fair. Keep an eye out for it at Legion Family and SAL activities in the Third District.

Our SAL Third District officers, besides me, are:

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Commander Alan McCormick (Squadron 220)

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Commander Virgil Smith (Squadron 437)

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-Commander Paul Donovan (Squadron 84)

Chaplain Matthew McCormick (Squadron 2200)

Adjutant David Faust (Squadron 245)

Finance Officer & Judge Advocate Keith Lovell (Squadron 501)

We will have our 3<sup>rd</sup> District Family Picnic on Sunday, September 8, gathering at Noon and eating at 1 PM at the Darlington Swimming Pool (at the Legion Hall in case of inclement weather). I look to seeing many of you there.

Our Fall Conference will be Friday, October 18, at the Legion Hall in Verona, beginning at 7 PM. You can expect a mailing about this arriving in the near future and it will contain three proposed amendments to our District Constitution & By-Laws: one dealing with language in our current document, such as removing references to county entities as they're not recognized by Detachment, one dealing with the procedure for dealing with complaints regarding the SAL 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander, and one dealing with the dress code for District officers. We will be voting on these at our Fall Conference.

Finally, we're asking all squadrons, posts, units, and Riders chapters in Third District to contribute to the Detachment of Wisconsin's A.L.F. Dog program by sending their contributions to Department Headquarters annotated that it's a donation to the A.L.F. Dog program. The A.L.F. Dog is a stuffed dog that the Detachment buys, and its name stands for American Legion Family. The A.L.F. Dog program provides a stuffed dog to children of deploying troops in Wisconsin. The "word on the street" is that there are numerous troops being deployed in upcoming months. Anyone can contribute to this and every dog costs the Detachment \$18 plus shipping. They buy 1,000 at a time and the Wisconsin National Guard is counting on The American Legion Family being there to help the children of their deployed personnel. You may not remember or be aware, but it all started about 13-14 years ago by Third District stepping up to donate enough funds for the Detachment to supply every child and the Adjutant General with a Josh Dog. It's time for us to step up to the plate again and send donations to Headquarters. Please send me an email how much you're donating, just for recordkeeping. Let's show that Third District leads the way!