

Sons of The American Legion

Detachment of Wisconsin

Fall Detachment Executive Committee Minutes October 25, 2025

Opening

Call to Order

Saturday October 25, 2025 Detachment Commander Christopher Dannenmann (434) called to order the Fall Detachment Executive Committee meeting being held in Portage, WI at 1:34 pm.

Salute the Colors

Invocation

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony.

Blue Star Banner Ceremony

The Pledge of Allegiance

Reciting of the S.A.L. Preamble

Blue Star Banner Ceremony

Welcome by Detachment Commander Christopher Dannenmann (434)

Roll Call of Detachment Officers

Taken by the Detachment Adjutant David Faust (245). Voting Officers:

Detachment Commander	Christopher Dannenmann	(434)	Present
Detachment Vice Commander	Steven R. DuBois	(143)	Present
Detachment Vice Commander	Jeremy Mason	(015)	Present
Detachment Vice Commander	Dave Hodgson	(522)	Present
Detachment Vice Commander	Randy Timms	(375)	Present
Detachment Chaplain	John L'Huillier	(434)	Present
Detachment Sergeant-at-Arms	Rick Helms	(070)	Excused
Detachment Sergeant-at-Arms	Ray Dzieciol	(534)	Present
National Executive Committeeman	Christopher Sherman	(071)	Present
Alternate National Executive Committeeman	Mike Pook	(375)	Present
Past Detachment Commander	Allen Watry	(038)	Present
Past Detachment Commander	David Fuller	(209)	Present
Past Detachment Commander	Robert Sirovina, Jr.	(434)	Present
1st District Commander	Michael A. Hellquist	(021)	Present
2nd District Commander	Dave Hodgson	(522)	Present
3rd District Commander	Dave Havlik	(491)	Excused
4th District Commander	Terry Barrington	(416)	Present
6th District Commander	Shawn D. McCrary	(075)	Present
7th District Commander	Scott Johnson	(051)	Absent
9th District Commander	Robert G Seide	(038)	Present
10th District Commander	Rick A. Talford	(291)	Absent

Roll Call of Non-Voting Detachment Officers

Detachment Judge Advocate	Allen Watry	(038)	Present
Detachment Historian	Mike Pook	(375)	Present
Detachment Adjutant	David R. Faust	(245)	Present
Detachment Assistant Adjutant	Christopher Sherman	(071)	Present
Department S.A.L. Chairman	Christopher Dannenmann	(434)	Present

Past Detachment Commander Allen Watry (038) made a motion to have Alan McCormick recognized as 3rd District representative with voice only. The motion was seconded and passed.

Introduction of Guests

During the morning Commission and Committee Reports, Richard Bennett, an 85-year SAL member from Cazenovia, was recognized and acknowledged for his service.

The following guests were introduced:

- Alan McCormick 3rd District Past Commander
- Calvin Johnson Squadron 48 Beloit
- Robert Ames Squadron 48 Beloit
- Mark Pape Squadron 294 Hartland
- Tim Penkert Squadron 294 Hartland
- Jim Fischer Squadron 294 Hartland

Reading of the Previous Minutes

Detachment Assistant Adjutant Christopher Sherman (071).

Past Detachment Commander Robert Sirovina, Jr. (434) made a motion to approve the minutes as published. The motion was seconded and passed.

Official Correspondence

Detachment Adjutant David R. Faust (245):

- There was not any correspondence to report.

Detachment Officer Reports

Detachment Vice Commander – Steven R. DuBois (143) Districts (10, 11, 12) along with District Commanders.

Three potential Squadrons: 425 Exeland, 435 Superior, 499 Gordon. Discussed the status of membership and squadrons in Districts 10, 11, and 12.

Detachment Vice Commander – Jeremy Mason (015) Districts (2, 6, 9) along with District Commanders.

See attached report. Discussed the status of membership and squadrons in Districts 2, 6, and 9.

Detachment Vice Commander – Dave Hodgson (522) Districts (3, 7, 8) along with District Commanders.

Discussed the status of membership and squadrons in Districts 3, 7, and 8.

Detachment Vice Commander – Randy Timms (375) Districts (1, 4, 5) along with District Commanders.

See attached reports. Discussed the status of membership and squadrons in Districts 1, 4, and 5.

Detachment Chaplain – John L'Huillier (434)

Sent cards and correspondence to Legion family members.

Attended Legion family funerals and memorials.

Participated in community and Legion family events and contributed as a volunteer.

Detachment Historian – Mike Pook (375)

See attached report.

National Executive Committeeman – Christopher Sherman (071)

NECman Sherman relayed information from the various National Committees and Commissions to the corresponding Detachment Chairmen, and reported on many items during the morning discussion.

Alternate National Executive Committeeman – Mike Pook (375)

See attached report.

Department S.A.L. Chairman – Christopher Dannenmann (434)

See attached report combined with Detachment Commander.

Detachment Commander Dannenmann then turned the meeting over to Detachment Vice Commander Mason.

Detachment Vice Commander Mason then called on Detachment Commander Christopher Dannenmann (434) to give his report.

Detachment Commander – Christopher Dannenmann (434)

See attached report.

1st District Commander Michael Hellquist (021) made a motion to approve the Detachment Commander's reports as given and submitted. The motion was seconded and passed.

Detachment Vice Commander Mason then turned the meeting back to Detachment Commander Dannenmann.

Committee and Commission Reports

4th District Commander Terry Barrington (416) made a motion to dispense with the Committee and Commissions reporting out since most everyone was present for the Committee and Commission meetings during the morning. The motion was seconded and passed.

Programs Committee – Terry Barrington (416)

Americanism – Shawn D. McCrary (075)

See attached report from Chairman McCrary, along with the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Children & Youth – Robert Sirovina, Jr. (434)

See attached report from Chairman McCrary, along with the Committee and Commission Discussions.

National Security – John Hoeft II (234)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Veteran's Affairs & Rehabilitation – John Edelblute, IV (434)

See attached report from Chairman Edelblute, along with the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Finance Commission – Tom Petrie (189)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Internal Affairs Commission – Jeremy Mason (015)

Legislative – Steven R. DuBois (143)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Membership – David Fuller (209) and Ray Dzieciol (534)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Officer Development & Policy – Christopher Sherman (071)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Public Relations – Robert G Seide (038)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Convention Credentials, Resolutions, and Rules – Jeremy Mason (015)

See the Committee and Commission Discussions.

Detachment Subcommittee on Resolutions – Detachment Subcommittee on Resolutions Chairman Allen Watry (038) reported there were no resolution before this Detachment Executive Committee.

Unfinished Business

Past Detachment Commander Allen Watry (038) asked to meet with Detachment Vice Commanders Hodgson (522) and Mason (015) after the meeting to present them with gifts from the last administrative year.

Detachment Commander Christopher Dannenmann (434) presented two awards the Detachment received at National Convention.

- The Hartline award for the most new squadrons chartered during the 2025 membership year.
- Citation for achieving 100% of Squadrons reporting for Consolidated Squadron Reports.

Appointments

There were no appointments to be made at this time.

New Business

Detachment Vice Commander Randy Timms mentioned that he approached the other Detachment Vice Commanders to develop a proposal for a calendar raffle. There was discussion about how many tickets to sell, at what price, when it might take place, and whose license it should be run under. Commander Dannenmann asked the Vice Commanders to work on more details with a goal of having a proposal for the next Detachment Conference Call on November 11th.

Detachment Adjutant David Faust asked for a volunteer to be Wisconsin's representative to the National 100th Anniversary Committee. Commander Dannenmann appointed Mike Pook (375) who accepted. Motion was made by 4th District Commander Terry Barrington (416) to approve the appointment. The motion was seconded and passed.

Past National Vice Commander Patrick Gryskiewicz (093) asked if there was interest in conducting a basket raffle at Midwinter Conference. The consensus was to try to do the raffle, it will take several volunteers to staff the tables along with donated baskets. Pat G. will need to contact Department HQ to determine if this can be done, and to secure a license to run the raffle under.

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion

National Executive Committeeman Christopher Sherman (071) and Past Detachment Commander Allen Watry (038) had provided lunch for everyone, taking donations to for Operation ALF. \$174.00 was collected.

Everyone is reminded to be ready to make reservations for Midwinter Conference when it opens up on November 1st.

6th District Commander Shawn McCray (075) spoke about the Flying Flags for Heros program. After some discussion it was decided the Detachment's goal would be 15,000 flags. Mr. McCrary also mentioned there is a Fisher House that will be opening in Middleton, and that Nationally the SAL has contributed \$117,000.00 so far to the Child Well-Being Foundation which is about \$30,000.00 ahead of this time last year.

Past Detachment Vice Commander Robert Ames (048) talked about the impact of the ALF dogs with the pediatrics unit at Beloit Memorial Hospital. He encouraged everyone to reach out to the pediatrics units at their local hospitals to see if you can assist them.

Detachment Finance Committee Chairman Tom Petrie (189) talked about the 80% scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial being constructed as a permanent display in Watertown. In four months' time they have raised about 75% of the \$450,000.00 needed for the memorial.

Detachment Vice Commander Randy Timms (375) talked about Steve Conto who does a lot of work making sure unclaimed remains of veterans are taken care of.

Past Detachment Commander David Fuller (209) was in Portage last weekend to service the trailer by checking the lights, greasing the wheel bearings, lubricating hinges, door locks, padlocks, and cleaning up the chains. He reminded us that there is room on the trailer to put the names of some sponsors.

Closing

Benediction

Retirement of the POW/MIA Chair Cover

Commander's Charge

Retirement of the Colors

Adjournment

With no other business, Detachment Commander Christopher Dannenmann (434) declared the October 25, 2025 Fall Detachment Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 3:48 pm.

Detachment Assistant Adjutant
Christopher Sherman (071)



Vice Commander Mason's Report

Vice Commander Mason's Report

We have made steady progress this membership year, with solid efforts across all assigned districts (2, 6, and 9). There is significant work ahead to recover from early-year lags, but engagement remains high and the foundation for strong renewal performance is in place.

Overall — Districts 2, 6, 9

Total Squadrons: 43

100% Squadrons: 5

ATH: 0

Total Goal: 1,434

Current Membership: 614

% of Goal: 42.82%

New Members: 51

Renewals: 563

Renewal Rate: 39.26%

Squadrons at 0%: 13

While membership is currently below midyear benchmarks, historical data suggests strong renewals will arrive during November and December. Focus remains on retention communication and leadership follow-up. Personally have visited Montello twice this year to showcase our engagement and commitment to help squadrons recently formed have significant success.

District 2

Counties: Jefferson, Columbia, Dodge, Washington, Ozaukee, Sheboygan

Squadrons: 23

100% Squadrons: 3

ATH: 0

Total Goal: 750

Current Membership: 305

% of Goal: 40.67%

New Members: 30



Vice Commander Mason's Report

Renewals: 275

Renewal Rate: 36.67%

Zero-Reporting Squadrons: 8

Watertown (189), Hartford (19), and Port Washington (82) achieved or exceeded 100%. Most other units are below 50%, and 8 are inactive in reporting. Focus: personal outreach to zero-report squadrons and renewal engagement for Dodge County posts.

District 6

Counties: Marquette, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Winnebago, Calumet, Manitowoc

Squadrons: 11

100% Squadrons: 2

ATH: 0

Total Goal: 281

Current Membership: 116

% of Goal: 41.28%

New Members: 6

Renewals: 110

Renewal Rate: 39.15%

Zero-Reporting Squadrons: 3

Neenah (33) leads at 112.20%, followed by St. Nazianz (477) at 100%. Underperformers include Green Lake (306) at 3.85%, Princeton (366) at 10%, and Montello (351) at 0%. Focus: activation of non-reporting squadrons and re-engagement of Fond du Lac area posts.

District 9

Counties: Langlade, Forest, Florence, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, Brown, Kewaunee, Door

Squadrons: 9

100% Squadrons: 0

ATH: 0

Total Goal: 403

Current Membership: 193



Vice Commander Mason's Report

% of Goal: 47.89%

New Members: 15

Renewals: 178

Renewal Rate: 44.17%

Zero-Reporting Squadrons: 2

Hortonville (55) is performing well at 85.71%, Appleton (38) at 66.94%, and Green Bay (11) at 52.17%. Kimberly (60) remains inactive at 0%, and Carlton (538) has not reported. Focus: increase reporting accuracy and emphasize outreach in Outagamie County.

Summary

While performance is below October targets, the team is aligned for a strong recovery phase heading into Veterans Day and Pearl Harbor Day milestones. Renewals typically accelerate after early November; maintaining communication with squadron leadership and District Commanders will be key.

Action Items

- Reinforce renewal reminders with all District and Squadron Commanders.
- Continue new membership drives during November community events.
- Prepare readiness for January 95% benchmark push.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeremy Mason

Detachment Vice Commander

Districts 2, 6, and 9

**Sons of The American Legion
Vice Commanders Report
Districts - 1, 4, 5**



Detachment of Wisconsin

Name: Randy Timms

Date: 10-25-2025

Renewal Success as of 10-23-2025

District 1	46.78%	with 385 renewed and a goal of 823
Possible New Squadron(s): Walworth (102), Clinton (440), Darien (450), Sharon (130) Racine (310) and although doubtful, I keep East Troy 188 on this list.		
District 4	35.34%	with 100 renewed and a goal of 283
District 5	13.33%	with 2 renewed and a goal of 15

For a total of 487 renewed to date

Number of Squadrons in your area as of last D.E.C.	26
(NOTE: 1 additional squadron waiting for Charter but 1 Squadron likely to close)	

Number of "Goose Egg" Squadrons in your area	10
District 1 has 6 goose eggs	
District 4 has 4 goose eggs	
District 5 has -0- goose eggs	

Number of Squadrons at current goal	6
District 1 has 5 at current goal	
District 4 has 1 at current goal	
District 5 has 0 at current goal	

Number of Squadrons at 100% or more	1
District 1 has 1 at/over 100%	

Number of new Squadrons as of last D.E.C.

Still waiting on National to approve and forward the Charter for Okauchee 399.



Activity Since Last Report

- Badger Youth Camp Ride For Kids was held on September 6th. We had a total of 17 riders and numerous attendees. At present, we have collected enough in donations to support 59 children. However, this effort will continue until April 1, 2026, when funds must be provided to the National Guard **(or Camp)** for final calculations. My goal is \$40,000.00 with the help of the Legion and others. For example, I had a meeting with the Lions Club in East Troy and I'm waiting to hear if they will support the Camp. Early indications are they will – just not sure at what level. As of this writing, we've collected \$14,795.50.
- Continued discussions with the National Guard about the possibility of expanding the SAL/Legion role at Camp. (Riders? Legion? Auxiliary?) As well as several Posts in Wisconsin as they consider funding support.
- Continue to Communicate with District Commanders Hellquist and Barrington to assist them in recruiting efforts and communicating with all squadrons.
- I will continue to work with Commander Dannenmann and Vice Commander Mason as we prepare our Leadership Succession presentation.
- As the Assistant Editor of The Millennium e-magazine for the SAL, I encourage everyone to let me know when you have a program or event you feel could/should be presented to the public. The Millennium is emailed to about 83,000 people each month. When you see it on the SAL email, once you click the link provided, it will present the articles. Or, if you're not receiving announcements, go to MY LEGION.ORG and be sure you sign in to get the various publications.
- Met with Squadron 416 to assist in their discussions concerning funds and who is entitled to have access.
- Met with Post 416 and Unit 416 to introduce Badger Youth Camp as they had requested more information and a better understanding of this effort.



1st District SAL Report to DEC October 25, 2025

Good morning fellow Sons and guests. For those that were not aware, I am Michael Hellquist. I am the new 1st District SAL Commander fulfilling Randy Timms final year as he moved on to Detachment level and other obligations. I have had the honor of being installed at our Detachment Convention this past July in Greenbay and hit the ground running.

The night before I was installed, I was invited to come to Silver Lake Post 293 to install their newly formed officer group in the SAL. It was an honor and privilege to sit in on the meeting and get to know the new commander, Luke Gapko. I drove back to Greenbay the next morning to be installed as the new District Commander.

Since assuming the role of Commander, I have emailed every squadron or sent letters and am finally making some headway with having the squadrons update their information online so I can make my visits. I attended the 1st District Legion Fall Conference in Kenosha on October 5, 2025, and Commander Rothering was kind enough to oblige my schedule and let me speak first. I have attached my notes for your reading leisure. Upon my exit attempt, I was once again approached by Post 310 John Capriotti to begin talks in starting a squadron. He and I will work diligently to make this come to fruition.

Our membership started out strong and has started to grow stagnate. I have been making phone calls to members that have not renewed their dues yet. I am hopeful we will maintain our streak of finishing at 100% or better. Our membership stands currently at _____%.

I have delivered almost all the cards to the different squadrons that needed them. I have one left to deliver. However, I have tried to make their meeting, and it was apparently canceled, or they changed their meeting times. One of my objectives was to create a binder to hand out to each squadron with the same information in each one so everyone is on the same page. It included a copy of the district C&B and some other annual forms to fill out with added instructions on how to fill it out online for faster results.

I have also created a squadron visitation form, which I have shared with Detachment Commander Dannenmann. I use this tool to help give constructive and consistent feedback when I visit and attend each squadrons meeting.

There is much work to be done, however, I look forward to the future of the district and watching it thrive.

Michael Hellquist
1st District Commander

Detachment of Wisconsin, Historian Report, 10/17/2025

By Mike Pook

At the National Convention Yearbook Judging contest, there were five Year Books submitted covering 2 Squadrons, 1 District and 2 Detachments. Since there is no judging criteria for Districts, this Year Book was ejected for the contest. The Detachment of Wisconsin submitted two Year Books for judging. (1 Squadron and Detachment Year Books) The Detachment Yearbook scored a 8 and the Squadron 375 Yearbook score was and did not win.

Americanism Chair Hicks over saw this year's Judging and had changed the way the judging occurred to help even out the judging.

Three-four man teams.

Each Judge scores their own score sheet.

The 3/4 score sheets at averaged out into one overall score.

All members from the Detachment entries were excused from judging.

Americanism Chair Hicks, stated that the scoring and judging process needs to be updated to be fair for all entries. Some judges are over critical while others are not.

At the Fall of 2025 meetings held in October, the Judging and scoring of the Year Books and Scrap Books came up in both the Americanism Committee and Internal Affairs Commission meetings.

Internal Affairs Commission meeting

The Past National Historian Bill Towns volunteered created a committee to review and make recommendations to the Scoring and Judging the contest. Mike Pook volunteered to be on this committee.

Americanism Committee

Americanism Committee chair Hicks during his report at the DEC announces that he will be reviewing and make recommendations to update the Judging and scoring of the Yearbook/Scrap book Contest. He stated that Mike Pook from Wisconsin, had volunteered to be on this committee.

On October 16, 2025, Mike Pook sent Americanism Committee Chair Hicks proposed Judging and Scoring of the Year Book / Scrap Book Contests. The proposal states a new scoring system along with added criteria elements for judging itself.

Detachment Year Book

New Yearbook formatted. Starting to insert elements.

In Need Of:

- District Office list and Pictures
- Squadron Pictures with descriptions

Looking forward to covering our National Commander visit in February and our NVC in January.

2025 Fall DEC Historian Pook

The National SAL Snapshots of Service Award

Members of the Sons of the American Legion can submit their pictures to the SAL Snapshots of Service in regard to the Four Pillars of The American Legion. Pictures are judged and awards are given out for first and second place winners in each of four categories. For more information see the link & rules, site. You may have just taken that one picture that wins The SAL Snapshots of Service Award!

Lastly,

National Newsletter the Millennium, Squadron highlights picture with a paragraph. Such as seen with SAL Squadron 494, Silent March. Squadrons can send them in directly to the Millennium,

Detachment of Wisconsin, Historian Report

By Mike Pook

10/17/25

2025 Fall DEC ANEC Pook

ANEC Report
2025 Fall Meetings Oct 3-5, 2025
By Mike Pook

Detachment of Wisconsin representatives
PNC David Faust
NEC Chris Sherman
ANEC Mike Pook
Committee Scribe Allen Watry
Americanism Committee member Shawn McClarey

Friday, October 3
Committee & Commissions meetings

Between 6-7pm
Chris Sherman, Allen Watry, and Mike Pook met with National Commander Bill Clancy to outline his wishes on his visit to Wisconsin, starting February 13 to 15, 2026.

7:30-8:30pm
Children & Youth Committee, Jeff Troutman Chair
Think outside the Box
Take care of the Kids
Take care of our Vets

Get Parents to buy into program – Make it fun for the kids.

Goal for C & Y

- 1) Victory Garden
- 2) Youth Academy at Detachment Level
- 3) COTA (Children Organ Transplant Assoc)
- 4) VCF-
- 5) Child Miracle Network

Saturday, October 4, AM
Committee & Commissions meetings
8-9am
Public Media & Communication Commission (aka Media Communication Commission)
Resolution to change name (to Media Communication Commission) In line with Legion.

Goals

- 1) Increase member engagement
 - A. Get New Members
 - B. Do Press releases after meetings & Conf
- 2) Promote Detachment FB, Web sites, other social media sites

Comments: Pick a subject area, group – Target them Create guidelines and templates

- 3) Promote
 - A. Snap Shots of Service
 - B. Videos of Service

Comments: Release Forms

Taking pictures, Submit anything, Look at your Year, Capitalize on opportunities

For the Good-P L A U D, a recording device for minutes

9:30-10:30am

Internal Affairs Commission

Membership – Butch

Slogan 1,2,3, A, B, C!

Always Buddy Check

- 1- I got One
- 2- 1 new member one renewal = 2
- 3- 3, 3, 3, TAL, ALA, SAL = Family 3 Pin

Other comments:

52% of the American Legion Posts do not have a Squadron. Lots of potential growth!

Training – Check My Legion.Org for opportunities

Convention & meetings

The Good, the Bad & Ugly feedback from Conv and reviews for change

Internal Affairs Commission voted and passed Resolution to change name (to Media Communication Commission)

Scrapbook/Yearbook Judge guidelines to be reviewed. Bill Towns chairing a sub-committee. Mike Pook Volunteered as a member to be apart of it.

Adhoc to Committee - 100th Anniversary Team – Tyler

Awards Sub-Committee – Align due dates to be the same date. May 31 to National.
By July 1 Committee selects winners and forwards that to National

Saturday, October 4, 1pm

National Executive Committee (NEC)

The best part of Saturday afternoon is the highlights from the Chairs of how their meetings went.

Here are things to note:

Resolutions : voted and passed Resolution to change name (to Media Communication Commission)

2025 Fall DEC ANEC Pook

100% membership pin

\$2.7 Million donated to VA&R

Richard Rutmeyer named as VA&R Volunteer of the Year
Adjourned

Personal Point – When the ANEC was the official at the NECs, no check was issued by National. Filled out paperwork with proof of attendee thru receipts. Again no past checks Were issued. (Fall 2024 NEC, Post Convention NEC, 8/25)

Saturday, October 4, 4-5pm

National Executive Committee (NEC) Training

PNC Faust co presented NEC training and was informative.

Saturday, October 4, Evening Social at Indiana War Memorial
Dinner and Social

Leading Candidate and Trailing Candidate

Sunday, October 5, AM

National Executive Committee (NEC) Continued

National Guest

Nation Legion Cmdr

National ALA President

National Legion Chair for CWF

Continued with highlights from the Chairs of how their meetings went.

CWF highlights

35 Detachment participated

59% of total donations came from the SAL.

Americanism Report by Chair Hicks

Zoom meeting even months, 2nd Monday

Mentioned the Reviewing judging guidelines for Yearbook/Scrapbook.

SAL 100 – Tyler

- 1) Create yearbook
- 2) Promote past leadership
- 3) Detachment History
- 4) FB Pages
- 5) Share & Promote

Term – Move to File – Reports. Takes the motion and second out of the process.

Other Business:

Submit a Picture & Paragraph to national newsletter, Squadron, District, Detachment

Flame Spotters – Spot who are the future leaders talk

Move from being passive to Active group talk

2025 Fall DEC ANEC Pook

Leading Candidate and Trailing Candidate gave talks
Approval of Appointments
Donations - \$200 from Mike Pook for WI
Adjournment

By Mike Pook
ANEC Report
2025 Fall Meetings Oct 3-5, 2025

FYI- E-mail Chairman Hicks of Americanism my proposed changes on how to judge the Yearbook & Scrap Book contest. It also included new criteria elements for said judging.

Past National Historian Bill Towns will receive a copy of this email, once I locate his e-mail address.

53rd National Convention, SAL in Tampa

The Following Detachment Delegates attended some or all of the National Convention

Mike Pook – as the ANEC representative
David Faust – PNC
Allen Watry – Detachment Commander (His Convention)
Chris Dannenmann – Incoming Detachment Commander
Then Bob Sirovina, Terry Barrington, Andy Muinch, John Hoeft II, Pat G,

National Convention Committee Meetings Friday August 22

8am Children & Youth

Meeting lasted about 1 hour. General overview of what the various programs accomplished during the year was reviewed.

9:30am Scrapbook/History Book Contest

Scrapbook

5 groups of four people reviewed and judged the scrapbooks. The Committee Chair (The Americanism chair) averaged out the four judges score sheets for one point total.

History Book – 5 submissions covering (2) Squadrons, (1) District, (2) Detachments –
With a score of 100 points Mariland won

Members of the Detachment of WI were told to leave the room, since two Yearbooks were submitted for Judging. Stating a conflict of interest

2025 Fall DEC ANEC Pook

1pm Opening session of the National Convention.

Congrats on over 400K in membership!

Committee & Officer final reports

Saturday August 23, 9am, National Convention Session

At 11:45am to 12:45pm observed and took pictures at the Youth Academy.

Some of the kids had difficulty staying focused and were anxious to leave. I program was running late.

Sunday August 24, 8am National Convention Morning Session

8 graduates (Boys & Girls) received certificates and appeared on stage from the Youth Academy.

(Graduates received certificates, not a Ten Ideas program)

Detachment of WI Awards & Recognitions:

Most New Squadrons Award - Charting 10 New Squadron in a membership year

Detachment of WI – All Time High Membership Flag Ribbon

BE THE ONE – Detachment Winner 2024-2025

Consolidated Squadron Reporting Award

Sunday August 24, 12:30pm National Convention Installation

Bill Clancy of New York is elected and installed as National Commander of the SAL.

Sunday August 24, 2pm Post National Convention, NEC meeting

Roll Call ANEC representing WI

Appointments were made for the 2025-26 year.

Butch Ray is appointed as our Membership Chair.

Shawn McCrary was appointed to the Americanism Committee.

Sons of The American Legion
Detachment of Wisconsin
2930 American Legion Dr
Portage WI 53901
(608) 745-1090
wisal.org



Proud
Possessors
of a
Priceless
Heritage

From: Commander Christopher Dannenmann, Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of WI
To: Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin
Date: 25 October 2025
Subject: Commander's Report to the 2025 Fall Department Executive Committee

To the Officers, Committee members, visitors and guests,

The state of the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin is strong.

At the 56th Annual Detachment Convention of the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin, the Detachment officers were elected, then installed by The American Legion Past National Commander Rev. Daniel Seehafer on Saturday, July 19, 2025. The SAL Detachment Convention Report has been filed with the Department and is available for review.

There was a single resolution No: DC-2025-01 (**Updates to Constitution and Bylaws concerning Discipline and Districts**) that was approved. This resolution has been previously reviewed and approved by the Department Internal Affairs Committee in May, 2025. The resolution has been filed with the Department and is available for review.

The Detachment Officers roster, Convention report and the resolution No: DC-2025-01 were each separately approved by the Americanism Committee of TAL, Department of Wisconsin at their regularly convened annual Fall Conference on 09 September 2025.

With respect to membership and growth, we did eventually reach 100% for 2025, achieving a new all-time high. Our Official 2025 membership goal is about 4,800 and 2% greater than 2024. Our unofficial target is 5,000 members, or as my predecessor Past Cmdr. Watry coined the phrase, *Drive for 5 in 2025*. To this end, the Detachment has several new Squadron Charters in channels awaiting processing. There are numerous Posts throughout the State that are either actively forming or are gathering potential members for New Squadron formation and Charter submission. This number is conservatively estimated at 8 and the momentum is reaching even higher.

The ALF Dog project is moving strongly forward with several "events" in the last few months. We stand prepared and ready to serve Our troops and families with support in this coming year. I request that every member of the DEC review the ALF Dog protocols as posted on our web page. As the events approach, notification will be forthcoming.

In association with the ALF Dog Program, over \$100K in Kimberly-Clark products have been donated this year and they have just passed \$1 MM in donations in their relationship with TAL Family.

We will be hosting four of our National Leaders and I ask you to join me in welcoming them to our State:

- National American Legion commander Wiley November 8th or the 15th
- National Auxiliary President Pam Rey will be in Wisconsin November 28th to December 1st.
- The SAL National Commander Bill Clancy here February 13-15 to participate in the Operation Homeless Vets at Hartland and the Freezin' for a Reason event in Fond du Lac. He plans to sleep out at both events! Bill is from City Island, NY so he's no stranger to the cold.
- We will have SAL National Vice Commander Frank Meraz Jr. from Stockton, CA here for Midwinter conference in Green Bay in January. That could be a different story.
- Save the date April 11 2026 joint testimonial dinner The Clubs at Strawberry Creek
 - 14810 72nd St, Kenosha, WI 53142.

- Register for National American Legion Basic College
- Register and attend WALC and become an alumni
- Due your weekly & monthly buddy checks + widows and orphans
- Prepare your CSR's. Fill out the paperwork and submit it to Detachment
- Attend our monthly Zoom meetings
- Vice-Commander update calls
- My gratitude and thanks to our Vice-Commanders for attending the Fall Conferences across the state within TAL Family; Department, Sons, Auxiliary and Riders.
- October 25th 2nd district Mequon American Legion
- October 26th legion 6th district Montello Wisconsin
- July ° 120 Milwaukee Tanner – Paul TAL Family Installations
 - 4th of July Parades with ALRA District 4/5
 - Detachment Convention & various duties and obligations
- August ° Toured the Ronald Reagan boyhood home
 - Oelschlaeger – Dahlmann Post 434 TAL Family Picnic
 - SAL National in Tampa, FL
 - Graduate of the SAL National Commanders School
- September ° ALF Dogs @ 1/147 Air National Guard
 - West Bend National Guard Family Day Picnic (ALRA Dist. 2)
 - NVC Central Region Leadership Zoom Call
 - Post 494 Caledonia POW/MIA Silent March
 - Gold Star Family Day Remembrance
- October ° Attended 5 District Fall Conferences for TAL & SAL
 - Attended TAL Department Fall Conference giving the Detachment report
 - Guest speaker at the Harold A. Todd Auxiliary Unit 537 75th Anniversary Ceremonies
 - Celebrated the birthdays of both the US Navy and Gen. Chuck Yeager
 - Attended remembrance ceremonies for the Post Everlasting and 1993 bombing of the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon

Upcoming events:

- Discussion for fine tuning proposed Leadership training program for Mid-Winter rollout
- COLUMBIA Protocol Training
- LEBW Tissue Transport
- ALRA Meetings
- West Bend ALRA District 2 Chili Cook-Off
- USMC 250th Birthday
- Thanksgiving
- 12/13/2025 National Guard Birthday & Wreaths Across America
- Christmas & New Years Day
- Mid-Winter Conference & Training, Green Bay, WI

My personal thanks to all who continue to support the work and efforts of all of the members the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin.

Respectfully,
Chris Dannenmann, Commander

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION-DETACHMENT OF WISCONSIN

FALL DEC REPORT 10-25-25 CHILDREN & YOUTH PDC BOB SIROVINA, CHAIRMAN

Operation A.L.F.

- Shipments:
 - SAL Squadron 209, Colorado Springs, CO. 1 case \$300
 - TAL Post 24, Devils Lake, ND, 2 cases \$600
 - TAL Post 218, Hayward, WI, 1 case \$300
 - ALA Unit 126, Brillion, WI 2 dogs \$30
- Donations
 - SAL Squadron 75, Fond du Lac, WI, \$375
 - TAL Post 313, Mt Horeb WI, \$300
 - SAL 1st District, \$300
 - TAL Post 75, Fond du Lac, WI, \$60
 - Cash from fines at Convention, \$100
 - ALA Unit 38, Appleton, WI, \$240
 - ALR 2nd District, \$1000
 - ALA Unit 77, Chippewa Falls, WI, \$120
 - TAL 1st District, \$500
- Pre-deployment ceremonies
 - Possible multi-site ceremonies late November
- Misc. Operation A.L.F. Information
 - September 15th, drove to Portage to receive shipment, re-pack trailer, inventory cartons. All cartons are now numbered. There is an inventory list in the trailer. Any cartons removed from the trailer need to be noted on the inventory with date, name of person removing them, and where they are being used.

Other Activities

- Attended National Convention in Tampa
- Attended ALA National President's Cocktail Reception before ALA States Dinner
- Participated in Post 434 and Post 27 Honor Guard for multiple funerals
- Serving as SAL Representative at Zablocki VAMC
 - Volunteer Services requested an iPad and Keurig coffeemaker, SAL 434 provided, cost @ \$550



25 OCT 25 SAL Detachment of WI
SAL Fall DEC
Veteran Affairs & Rehab
Committee Report

Greetings,

Here are some items of interest.

Two Veteran housing facilities in WI closed at the end of September due to lack of funding. Chippewa Falls and in Green Bay. The facilities served homeless at-risk Veterans. Governor Evers had proposed 1.9 million for the program in his budget but a certain party's lawmakers removed the funding. There were 40 Veterans displaced. 23 from Chippewa Falls and 17 from Green Bay. They were offered alternative housing and continue to receive support benefits.

A new VA Clinic has opened up in Oconomowoc which helps serve Veterans in rural areas for certain types of appointments they may have rather than having to come to the Milwaukee or Madison VA.

The VA System in WI has approximately 5,762 veteran registered in the health care system here in WI . Nationally there are well over 400.000 Veterans.

The purpose of the CIIRP program is rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is learning the skills needed to live as independently outside of the hospital as your injury or disease allows. The inpatient team is dedicated to helping Veterans achieve

their goals. This program has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) since 2009.

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Volunteers are a very important asset in the VA facilities systems. In fact you could almost say they are irreplaceable. In the Milwaukee VA (Clement J Zablocki) they are at this time 302 volunteers with 76 VSO representing different organizations from which some of the volunteers are associated with. Last year in Milwaukee alone there were 57,180 volunteer hours recorded.

It is that time of year again where donations are being accepted at our VA facilities around Wisconsin. It is the Holiday season coming up fast and the donations are used to help needy Veterans and /or their families. Please consider giving. Example. Grocery stores like Pick N Save gift cards but cash works too.

Veteran Service Representatives are always available to help file a service-connected disability claim. If you know a Veteran who is thinking about filing a claim please encourage them to see a VSR rather than a lawyer or filing their claim themselves. VSR's are a great resource.

Thank You all once again for asking me to serve as your Veteran Affairs & Rehab Chairman.

Respectfully Submitted
John W Edelblute IV
SAL Detachment of WI
NHS Chairman

Commission and Committee Discussions

Programs Committee – Terry Barrington (416)

Children and Youth – Robert Sirovina, Jr. (434)

- Help Dog Program Report and Inventory
 - Program sales and donations were summarized:
 - Colorado: 1 case (\$300); Post 24.
 - Lake, North Dakota: 2 cases (\$600).
 - Post 218 (Hayward): 1 case (\$300).
 - Unit 26 (auxiliary): received 2 dogs; donated \$30.
 - Donations: Fond du Lac \$375; Post 113 \$300; District 1 \$300 (SAL); Post 75 (Fond du Lac) \$600; Unit 28 (Appleton) \$240; Riders, District 2 \$1,000; Chippewa Falls \$20; District 1 \$500.
 - Current inventory totals:
 - Trailer: 1,175 dogs; office: 25; personal garage: 600; Chris: 50; total: 1,825 dogs.
 - Three deployments scheduled in November expected to significantly reduce inventory.
 - Honor guard activity: performed for two posts, over 50 honors this year.
 - Distribution volumes discussed:
 - Approximate dogs handed out: 1,100 at a prior large event; 200 at Madison.
- Local Activities and Support Requests
 - District 1, Squadron 21 (Kenosha): “Food with the Badge” trunk-or-treat partnership with Kenosha Police; distributed candy and materials to 3,500 kids (expectation was 1,500). Plans to expand next year with costumes; intent to activate District 1 more in Children & Youth.
 - Squadron 434: Provided an iPad for a veteran with flash burn and a Keurig machine for permanent veterans on the ninth floor; total spend over the last 60 days was \$550.
 - District 3 coin challenge: Water jug fundraiser approaching “almost \$700” with additional jugs pending; noted outreach and education in southwest counties where awareness of the Sons is limited, with more activity forthcoming.
- Fundraising via Challenge Coins
 - At National Convention, seven CDF challenge coins were purchased; one was auctioned during Legion Riders Day, yielding \$100 from bidders.
 - \$100 was donated on behalf of American Legion Riders of Wisconsin, plus \$100 matching funds from the speaker. National suggests creative fundraising with challenge coins to support CWF.

Americanism – Shawn McCrary (075)

- National Goals and Program Emphasis
 - National commander requests a 10% increase in oratorical and Boys State-type participation.
 - Emphasis on starting or expanding junior shooting sports programs; guidance includes beginning with one approved rifle for a few hundred dollars and sharing equipment among youth as needed.
 - “Flying Flags for Heroes” initiative:
 - National challenge target is 1,000,000 flags across the Legion family.
 - Materials: 100 copies of a flyer with QR codes prepared for district commanders to distribute; more can be printed as needed.
 - Reporting is underutilized; all flag placements should be logged (e.g., Memorial Day graves, school education, Boy Scout activities, other organizations). Sons members participating in other groups’ flag placements should still log flags.

Commission and Committee Discussions

- Program origin credited to Michael Fox, Past National Commander; introduced during a past convention.
- Detachment goal setting:
 - With 400,000 members nationally, the average needed is 2.5 flags per member.
 - Wisconsin membership estimated at 5,000, implying 12,500 flags; a detachment goal of 15,000 (15K) was proposed and acknowledged as acceptable.
- Engagement, Volunteerism, and Leveraging Youth Programs
 - Encouragement to make personal, consistent asks to posts, districts, and community partners rather than relying on brief emails or texts; follow through after commitments.
 - Addressing changing demographics and attrition in Legion membership while positioning the Sons as supportive partners, not replacements.
 - Example from Fond du Lac: involving Boy Scouts and Legion baseball teams (students needing service hours) substantially reduced flag placement time from 7–8 hours to 2 hours and positively impacted youth and parents. Simple acts included placing a flag and thanking veterans for their service.
- Wisconsin Legion Baseball and Softball
 - Participation and Performance
 - Wisconsin had a little over 200 teams again this year and declared five state champions. The AAA champions chose not to attend the National Regional, reportedly preferring to play high school football, leading Wisconsin to send the second and third place teams to Illinois.
 - The Appleton Doubledays reached the semifinals, indicating a strong showing for Wisconsin teams at regionals.
 - Nationally, competition is intense; the regional winner from Portland, Oregon had 13 Division I players, while local teams in Wisconsin are typically lucky to have one Division I player.
 - Softball Program Developments
 - There were 12 teams, a state tournament, and an all-star game for the first time this year.
 - The softball all-stars were honored at Miller Park or AmFam Field alongside baseball during all-star weekend; it is unclear whether a game was played in conjunction with the baseball event.
 - Participation appears to be improving numbers-wise.
 - National Tournament Scheduling Concerns
 - One reason cited for the AAA team not attending Nationals was that Nationals reportedly moved the tournament up by a week, creating conflicts with the state tournament and reducing opportunities to play additional games; the team voted to prioritize more guaranteed games over Nationals.
 - Discussion noted a potential plan to move national tournaments into July; it was clarified this will not happen next year and cannot happen in the next two years due to existing whole-site contracts.
 - A change noted as “7, 28” could indicate a potential future change to baseball; specifics were not clarified. There was “great discussion,” and the group will wait and see.
 - If Nationals moves earlier (e.g., mid-June), it would severely impact Wisconsin Legion Baseball, potentially cutting the already short four-week season down to two and a half to three weeks. There is a belief that other departments may face similar constraints.
 - Wisconsin’s state tournament is larger than many departments due to the number of teams, contributing to timing conflicts.
 - Calendar Change Request Affecting Baseball Regions

Commission and Committee Discussions

- The request to change a calendar date originated from southern districts, creating conflict because roughly 60% of baseball players are in the north. Discussion acknowledged debate across West, Midwest, East, and South regions.
- The group is trying to resolve the scheduling conflict; no outcome was confirmed.
- SAL and Legion Post Engagement in Billings, Montana
 - An attendee connected with Post 4 in Billings while wearing SAL gear and observed a family Color Guard comprising SAL, Auxiliary, and the Legion.
 - The SAL squadron at Post 4 is described as very inactive and dissociated from the Post; encouragement was provided to re-engage and mend fences, particularly with the baseball program.
 - Plans were stated to follow up in the fall with a contact at Post 4 to continue improving ties and forge new inroads with their baseball program.

National Security – John Hoeft II (234)

- National Security Program Focus and Ongoing Advocacy
 - Emphasis was placed on continued support for deployed troops and their families, concerns around government shutdown impacts on troop pay, and the need to maintain a strong, well-trained, well-funded military.
 - Programs highlighted included POW/MIA, Star Families Day, Law Enforcement Career Academy, Junior ROTC, Operation Comfort Warriors, and Troop and Family Support Network.
- Application Timelines and Proposed Eligibility Changes
 - Applications will be available on the first Monday in January and accepted until March 31.
 - Typical applicants have been seniors and juniors; there is discussion (not finalized) to shift eligibility to juniors and sophomores because seniors often have already made decisions, and some are 18, creating mixed minor/adult participation and related background check considerations.
 - Attendance trends show male applicants meeting target levels, while female participation has declined to about 16–18; organizers are considering promoting younger participants to improve engagement.
- Application Submission Quality and Compliance
 - Members stressed the importance of encouraging qualified applicants to apply to avoid awards with only one or no submissions.
 - Strict adherence to submission instructions is necessary (e.g., correct photo size like “three-by-five,” head-and-shoulders framing, one-sided paper), as noncompliance can lead to disqualification.
- National Emergency Preparedness Committee Efforts
 - An ad hoc committee from Minneapolis is working to establish national emergency preparedness programs, noting the American Legion lacks a formal program or committee for this area.
 - The committee is exploring resource response for national emergencies, regional response, and training/guidelines; they plan to continue via Zoom.
 - Discussion included posts serving as emergency centers in coordination with county governments, distinct from the National Emergency Fund.
- Existing Designated Emergency Sites
 - The Air National Guard 128 has two posts in Milwaukee County designated as emergency sites (one on the south side and one on the west side), though specific post identities were not disclosed.
- Blood Donor Program Awareness and Reporting

Commission and Committee Discussions

- The blood donor program is part of national security, but meeting participants noted very few reports across districts and counties.
- Education and awareness were described as limited; members suggested increased focus on promotion and reporting, noting there are existing awards related to blood donation.
- Legal Immigration Promotion and Sponsorship Questions
 - A member asked whether the American Legion still sponsors legal immigration; others stated they had not heard of direct sponsorship, but affirmed the Legion promotes legal immigration.
 - Historical example: a post supported a translator through the process to citizenship by accompanying and sponsoring her as an applicant; current organizational involvement remains unclear.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation – John Edelblute, IV (434)

- Two veteran housing facilities (Chippewa Falls and Green Bay) closed at the end of September due to lack of funding, displacing 40 veterans (23 from Chippewa Falls and 17 from Green Bay). Alternative housing was offered and supportive benefits continue.
- A VA clinic opened about a year ago in Oconomowoc to serve rural Jefferson County and reduce travel to Milwaukee for certain appointments.
- The VA health care system in Wisconsin has approximately over now 5,700 veterans registered; nationally, “well over 400” was mentioned in a positive context tied to the CHAMP program, though details were fragmented.
- The CHAMP program focuses on rehabilitation and learning skills for independent living; it has been accredited since 2009. Team support helps veterans achieve their goals.
- Volunteers and Donations Supporting VA Facilities
 - Volunteers are critical and “almost irreplaceable” for VA facility operations. Milwaukee VA currently has 302 volunteers and 76 VSOs representing multiple organizations (American Legion, Masons, Elks, Lions, DAV, VFW, AMVETS).
 - Donations, including small gift cards (e.g., \$25), can significantly help needy veterans and families, especially during holidays. Suggestions included departmental donations to Voluntary Services offices across facilities (Green Bay, Tomah, Middleton, Milwaukee, Iron Mountain), potentially rotating annually.
- Encouraging Veteran Claims and Use of Service Officers
 - Members urged filing claims or intents to file for service-connected disabilities, especially under the PAC Act and burn pit exposure. They recommended using VSRs rather than filing alone or using outside law firms that may take 20%.
 - Community efforts like regular bread donations from Bread Smith benefit veterans and related community organizations, illustrating grassroots support networks.
- Funding Concerns and Legislative Engagement
 - Commentary noted that Governor Evers proposed \$1.9 million for housing and \$1.1 million for another program (Knight), with criticism of lawmakers for not advancing these funds despite a budget surplus mentioned as “\$1 million.”
 - Strong sentiments were expressed about advocating to legislators and confronting officials on funding decisions affecting veterans.
- Community Service Reporting
 - A significant percentage of posts and squadrons do not submit CPR/CSR reports, undermining evidence of impact for legislative advocacy. Members stressed that increasing membership without reporting activities weakens the case for support.

Commission and Committee Discussions

- Homeless Veteran Support Events and Outcomes
 - Squadrons have been active with initiatives like “freezing for a reason” to support homeless veterans. One group reported raising about \$300,000 over six years; combined with truckloads of food and clothing, the total impact is up to \$400,000.
- Dignitaries, Homeless Veterans Programs, Employer Engagement, and Badger Youth Camp
 - National Commander Visit and Event Coordination
 - Plans are underway for the SAL National Commander, Bill Clancy from New York, to visit Wisconsin, including sleeping out one night at Hartman in a cardboard box as part of the event’s tradition; a six-person tent is available but he insists on using the box. Travel appears to align with the annual Lincoln Pilgrimage in Springfield, with a suggested route to Hartman (Friday night) and then to Fond du Lac the next day.
 - Attendance may include his family, and coordination for return travel remains unspecified. The visit is framed as recognition of Wisconsin’s impact with the Hartman initiative.
 - Dignitaries at Mid-Winter and Engagement Opportunity
 - In addition to the national commander’s visit, the national vice commander will attend mid-winter, presenting opportunities for members to ask questions and interact with leadership.
 - Emphasis was placed on Wisconsin’s visibility and the chance to showcase programs and outcomes.
 - Homeless Veterans Support: Rock County Programs and Shelter Outcomes
 - A veteran health shelter program in the Janesville/Beloit area has operated for approximately 12 years, expanding from 24 rooms to 48 rooms through fundraising and donations; current staffing is 40. Each veteran has a private room, receives room and board, three meals a day, job access, education via Blackhawk Technical College, and medical/pharmacy support, with a canteen store.
 - The program reports about a 90% success rate, with stays up to two years and an average duration of 20 to 22 months; participants transition to housing, employment, and community contribution. Founding support included a military advisor role and a small committee; an early success story was noted involving a participant who later married, started a family, and secured a home in Milwaukee.
 - Rock County sought sponsors for veterans during Christmas, requesting items such as dress shirts, dress pants, and shoes for presentability. A local effort provided \$7,500 in \$150 gift cards to all residents and repeated funding for the current year. Including food donations, total support value is reported at approximately \$200,000, shared with a parallel effort led by Lance Baskins.
 - Employer Engagement and Veteran Accommodations
 - Discussion highlighted the need for ongoing accountability with employers who claim veteran support, noting that programs can lapse over time. At Mercury Marine, the visible support diminished to an old banner, with PTSD or injury accommodations requiring FMLA.
 - Recommendations stressed “holding feet to the fire” for employers, politicians, and communities to maintain active programs, ensuring allowances such as periodic time off for PTSD or mental health needs. Wisconsin and National Legion have awards recognizing employers who implement veteran-friendly programs; members were encouraged to work with posts and local companies to identify and promote such efforts.
 - VA&R Committee Membership and Roles
 - Two members present are full members of the Wisconsin American Legion’s VA&R committee: one focused on homeless veterans and one on veteran employment. The

Commission and Committee Discussions

appointments were made to revitalize roles that had seen limited activity in recent years, reflecting recognition of local impact.

- Badger Youth Camp: Fundraising, Accounts, and Program Expansion
 - District 1 sent the National Guard a check for \$12,000 covering 48 kids for the June camp. Subsequent fundraising totaled \$14,795.50 to be deposited into a restricted account (confirmed established in October), covering the cost for 59.18 children; the fractional coverage was noted humorously as “one-eighth child.”
 - Additional commitments include \$2,000 from the Red Granite correctional facility near Camp Lakota, and the local Lions Club is considering a donation (amount and certainty not yet known). The goal is to reach \$20,000 before sending money in April.
 - Camp dates are targeted for the third or fourth week in June next year; final dates are pending coordination between the National Guard and Camp Lakota. A potential third 90-minute session is under consideration, either by extending the current two sessions or adding a new hour, possibly to include the Legion, Legion Riders, and Auxiliary. The Guard is reported as supportive and pleased with SAL involvement.

Internal Affairs Commission – Jeremy Mason (015)

Legislative – Steven R. DuBois (143)

- Members were encouraged to register for the Legion’s grassroots program via legion.org under “legislative,” which provides email/text alerts and facilitates sending letters to congressmen and senators with minimal effort.
- Legion advocacy priorities cited include: improving VA C&P exams, access to community care, ending veteran homelessness, improving armed forces lethality, modernizing transition assistance programs, and winning the war on veteran suicide. Quality of life issues include spouse support, daycare, commissary competitiveness, procurement modernization, and increased funding for new barracks.
- Suicide prevention guidance emphasized direct questioning and assessing specific plans as indicators of risk; brief intervention and support can be critical given the possibility of rapid decision windows. Members noted that even small numbers of constituent messages (e.g., 10 letters) can significantly impact legislative attention.
 - Suicide Prevention Training and Approaches
 - Participants discussed the Columbia Protocol training; at least two attendees have completed it, one attendee plans to do it on Monday, and another has not yet found time to complete it.
 - A key technique mentioned is directly asking, “Are you thinking about suicide?” which may help some individuals articulate their thoughts and reduce immediate risk; it was emphasized that outcomes are not 100%.
 - Pain was identified as a primary driver of suicide, often more than relationship or “life” issues; acknowledging and listening can be crucial.
 - The Columbia Protocol reportedly has a phone number resource; guidance included encouraging individuals to contact the VA or accompany them to the VA, and offering regular peer support or “buddy chat” as potentially helpful.
 - Additional Training: RACE

Commission and Committee Discussions

- RACE (spelled R-A-C-E) was referenced as another training option associated with Curtis Peck; it provides structured approaches for non-professionals to help individuals think through their situation and connect with professionals.
- The aim is not to replace professional care but to bridge individuals to professional help.
- Grassroots Sign-Up
 - Attendees were encouraged to sign up for grassroots efforts via [Legion.org/action](https://legion.org/action).
 - The process is to use a phone to navigate directly to [Legion.org/action](https://legion.org/action) and complete the sign-up on that page.

Membership – David Fuller (209) and Ray Dzieciol (534)

- Membership Update Transition
 - The meeting transitioned to a membership update led by EDC Fuller, with mention that Ray is a co-chair.
 - The typical 10-page weekly membership report, usually reviewed page by page, will not be covered in that detailed manner during this session.
- Membership Reporting, Outreach, Charter Delays, and Transparency
 - Membership Reporting and Recognition
 - A participant emphasized the value of the graph in the membership report for clear visibility on status and timelines, stating it “tells everything,” is inclusive, and updated weekly. Edgerton Fauss was publicly applauded for making the reporting simple and efficient.
 - Reports include all necessary dates in one place; attendees acknowledged long-term familiarity with the format and utility for tracking progress.
 - Outreach and Formation of New Squadrons
 - Multiple posts expressed interest in starting squadrons: Wisconsin Dells (V.F.W./American Legion combined post), Argyle (3rd District), and Grand Marsh American Legion. An informational meeting was requested in Wisconsin Dells; travel and support arrangements were discussed.
 - The speaker helped Grand Marsh recover memberships and provided guidance on American Legion–Sons interaction; during the meeting, Grand Marsh approved a donation of 500 to the ELF program.
 - The speaker anticipates transferring membership from 209 to Grand Marsh or Wisconsin Dells to support leadership splits for strong starts, with the goal of guiding early setup and connecting new squadrons with Chris for officer development beyond the first 1–2 years.
 - Attendees encouraged vice commanders and others to notify the team of any posts seeking to form squadrons; support is available to attend events and assist with recruitment.
 - Individual Membership Card Issues and Address Management
 - One attendee reported a nearly six-month delay in receiving a membership card after paying in July and updating an address; the card finally arrived after repeated follow-ups. They noted others are experiencing similar issues.
 - Suggestions included having squadron membership or an adjutant/commander contact members to verify correct addresses; responsibility and process ownership remain unclear.
 - Handling Member Transfers from Other States
 - Question: For a transfer from Florida, should a Wisconsin card be issued for the current year? Guidance given: do not issue a Wisconsin card mid-year; the member’s Florida card remains valid this year. Upon renewal next year, transfer to Wisconsin will generate a

Commission and Committee Discussions

Wisconsin card. Avoid issuing a blank card and sending it in; a replacement blank could be held for display, but formal issuance should wait.

- Charter Application Delays and Impact on Growth
 - Turnaround from charter application submission to approval is commonly “6 plus” months; Mineral Point is at 10 months. Okauchee squadron 399’s check from April was not cashed, and the finance officer received multiple referrals without resolution.
 - There is no notification mechanism when a post submits a charter application; local leaders requested to be informed so they can “ride herd,” confirm receipt with Julie, and follow up with national processors via periodic emails. Prior repeated follow-ups helped clear 4–5 charters.
 - Delays harm membership targets (“triple nickel” not hit), as charters issued in May prevent meaningful dues collection for the prior year. Some posts considered abandoning efforts due to timelines; two posts decided not to start squadrons. Mount Hope has 42 prospective members, with at least 5 expressing frustration and disengaging.
 - Confirmed submitted applications: Mount Hope 229, Bagley 482, Mineral Point 170, and Okauchee 399. District 2 had three charters taking over 8 months. The issue is described as a national-level bottleneck affecting multiple detachments nationwide.
 - Interim guidance: Posts should continue acting as squadrons—keep meeting and functioning—even without an approved charter, to sustain momentum and community engagement.
- Transparency Proposals and Pressure Tactics
 - Proposal to create a public dashboard on the Sons page showing application status through department and national stages, increasing credibility and “lighting a fire” under national by exposing stalled items.
 - Suggestions included initiating a coordinated letter campaign, CC’ing vice and district commanders, department leadership, and potentially other state commanders to elevate visibility and urgency. Some advocated direct calls to responsible national contacts and leveraging past national commanders (e.g., Denise and Dan) for input.
 - A “Voter Voice”-style outreach to national leadership was discussed to apply organized pressure and document response timelines.
- Process Improvements and Tools
 - Using fillable PDFs from the state website for applications and membership forms was recommended to ensure legibility and reduce errors (e.g., recent correction of a misspelled last name). While not a fix, it removes one common excuse for delays.
 - Instances were noted where the membership report reflected an approved charter before national had notified the post; cross-checking the membership report can confirm status when communications lag.
- Squadron Startup, Website Accuracy, Cards vs. Online Processing, and Midwinter Participation
 - Squadron Startup Challenges and Logistics Capacity
 - One participant noted a milestone of “1,000” reached but highlighted the lack of logistical support for “400,000,” raising concern about scaling to “450,000” and warning that conditions may worsen. The numbers were presented as part of a concern about capacity, not finalized targets.
 - Delays are causing hesitancy among potential members when trying to start new squadrons; leadership wants to avoid anything that “tips the dam scale away” from forming squadrons.

Commission and Committee Discussions

- Some local opposition persists (“we don’t want squadrons in this county”), yet there are at least “two” squadrons waiting to proceed, indicating demand despite resistance.
- Data-Driven Visibility and Leadership Escalation
 - Emphasis on collecting detailed data about specific squadrons (status, submissions) to make problems visible to leadership (including a past national commander and state adjutant) and drive action.
 - Strength in numbers was encouraged: when a squadron starts, escalate that information through squadron, district, detachment leadership to the membership committee to ensure proper support and tracking.
- Participation Push for Midwinter
 - Members were urged to bring squadrons and stakeholders to Midwinter to advocate directly in front of “big wigs,” with a call for accountability and pressure (“hold it to their feet”).
 - Guidance: squadrons can meet and organize even without a charter, elect officers, adopt constitution and bylaws, and later formally approve existing setups once the charter is granted. Limitation: without a charter, they cannot have their own checking account.
- Website Updates and Accuracy of Squadron Information
 - Clear directive to ensure all squadron information is correctly filled out on the website; updates are acknowledged quickly upon submission.
 - Specific update statuses were noted:
 - District 1: Most squadrons are “24-25” and current; Genoa City and First District last updated “2023”; Dousman “2023”; Brookfield “2023”.
 - District 2: Germantown updated in “2025” but missing commander/adjutant info; Plymouth “2023”; Poinet “2023”.
 - LaMira and Grafton “2023”; Franklin (Sheboygan County, Squadron 387) “4-6 of 2016”.
 - Garnerville (3rd District) “11-3 of 2014” (entered as “4-33” then clarified).
 - Squadron 18, Milwaukee shows “12-31 of 1969,” which is a default/no-date indicator.
 - Recent example: Beloit submitted updates and was shown as “10 22 to 25” updated; district efforts included printing and distributing information sheets, though meeting attendance was poor.
- Membership Card Distribution vs. Mailing and Online Processing
 - Issue arose where officers took cards to hand-deliver (e.g., Genoa City 183), leading to delays due to meeting coordination and incorrect contact information. Leadership questioned why cards were taken rather than mailed.
 - Process recommendation:
 - Allow cards to be mailed to the post’s permanent address to ensure quicker, reliable delivery and prompt dues processing.
 - Promote mylegion.org to process memberships without waiting for physical cards; national turnover usually occurs around July 1, enabling squads to reach “100%” by “July 2” if dues are collected.
- Membership Modernization and Digital Cards
 - Several participants stated that membership processing is moving online, with the expectation that physical cards will cease and members will print documents themselves. One participant described already renewing online annually and receiving a digital card.
 - It was noted that a digital card exists via MyLegion accounts; however, there is not yet a phone wallet-compatible version, which “might be coming down the road.”
 - Concerns about “pay up for life” were raised; the latest update is that National is working on it, but timelines are vague (“maybe in his lifetime”). A similar answer was reportedly given “about four years ago,” indicating ongoing uncertainty.

Commission and Committee Discussions

- Website Update Process and Visibility for Charter Status
 - Website updates are handled manually upon email notification; the system is not set to auto-update due to authentication complexities. Updates typically occur “within a few days” depending on personal schedule and clarity of submitted information.
 - Incomplete submissions (missing address, phone, email) slow updates, sometimes requiring lookup on the national site to fill missing fields.
 - A suggestion was made for a banner/dashboard to track the status of new charters; participants clarified that charter steps (post, district, department commander, national) occur on the Legion side, limiting visibility. Collaboration with Julie was proposed to receive status updates and display them, enabling tracking and follow-ups.
- Jurisdiction and Entity Status
 - It was reiterated that they are not a separate entity and have limited jurisdiction between posts and squadrons, impacting visibility into charter processing steps.

Officer Development & Policy – Christopher Sherman (071)

- Discussion on officer development training was tabled to lunchtime. Plans were mentioned to start training “at lunch time” with some content coming through then.
- Lunch Logistics and Donations
 - Lunch is being provided by Mr. Sherman and Mr. Watry. Donations are welcomed via a cup to support the operation. Timing was discussed (food “needs to cook a little bit longer”).

Public Relations – Robert G Seide (038)

- Public Relations Guidance and Social Media Practices
 - Report from an auxiliary-led PR seminar covered Facebook etiquette: keep posts short and simple, use no more than two hashtags to avoid spam filtering on X and Facebook, and rely on pictures and flyers for better engagement (e.g., “pictures are a thousand words”).
 - Examples cited: posts 21 and 375 actively promoting themselves; use of AI (Copilot) to create newsletters; assertion that “67% of the people” prefer pictures over reading about local happenings.
 - Next seminar meeting is Wednesday at 6:30 to cover brand vs. logo, and attendance was confirmed.
 - Use of Zoom and Facebook Live for meetings is increasing, helping engage members who do not attend in person.
- Outreach Materials and Toolkits
 - A postcard and door hanger approach via Vistaprint was shared: physical mail and door hangers can reach audiences more reliably than unknown emails or calls.
 - Templates are available in a toolkit; National Supply also provides door hangers. The department has incorporated such materials into a toolkit.
- Branding Permissions and Logo Use
 - To use the Legion logo, a form must be filled and permission granted by the Legion; the department likely has guidance, and the national website has a publication (about two pages).
 - Using the Wisconsin American Legion logo may bypass certain national permission requirements, as advised at a department convention. It was suggested to put information and forms on the website and in newsletters to ensure squadrons follow correct procedures.
- Shared Events Calendar Initiative

Commission and Committee Discussions

- A Google Docs calendar was developed to list district/county/squadron events (time, date, location), modeled after a baseball calendar by Julie Milley. Goal is to get approval and place it on the department website, with weekly Facebook blurbs highlighting upcoming events.
- Example event details included: “post 21” spaghetti dinner, “November 1st,” “4 to 7.”
- Best Practices for Event Posts
 - Always include city and state in Facebook posts to avoid confusion from national visibility. Avoid vague references like “come on down to the post” without location details, and specify which Tuesday and exact times.
 - Avoid using “today” or “tomorrow” without later editing/removing those terms after the date passes.

Convention Credentials, Resolutions, and Rules – Jeremy Mason (015)

- Constitution, Bylaws, and Regulations
 - No resolutions were presented for discussion at this meeting.
 - The latest Constitution and Bylaws that were updated and voted on at convention have been approved by the Legion DEC and are now in effect.
 - No known changes to rules, credentials, or related items were reported at this time.

Finance Commission – Tom Petrie (189)

- Finance Status and Accounts
 - Income and Expenses
 - Current income based on membership is \$15,750, which is sufficient to pay the bills for the period July to December.
 - Almost 60% of annual spending occurs in the last six months of the year, but finances are currently stable.
 - Net Assets and Control
 - Net asset account balance (surplus budgets since July 1) is \$31,073; the department now controls this account directly rather than through the Legion.
 - The account maintains separate fund numbers for ALF and Badger’s Youth Camp to keep monies distinct.
 - Badger’s Youth Camp account number was finalized in October, after initial approval in July.
 - Anticipated Surplus and Audit Timing
 - A surplus of about \$4,000 is expected from this year’s budget, subject to confirmation after the audit, anticipated around February.
 - Program and Donation Details
 - Approximately \$8,000 in donations have been received since July, maintaining near break-even status for program purchases.
 - The “old Josh” account buffer had about \$14,000; some funds were used this year.
 - Spending variability was noted across years (some years minimal, other years multiple purchases). This year includes two orders totaling about \$18,000 due to replacements and purchases.
 - A single deployment involved 700 military personnel, with a planning figure of two dogs per person; one deployment cost was cited as \$100.
 - Badger’s Youth Camp Funds
 - Total available is \$14,795.50, with \$3,415.50 transferred from District 1’s treasury as funds are consolidated at the department level.

Commission and Committee Discussions

- Budget Process and Requests
 - Legion Finance Committee meets at convention, mid-winter, and approximately four or five additional times annually.
 - Next budget approvals typically occur in March or April (this year it was May).
 - Members should be prepared to submit budget items for mid-winter and provide requests in writing for department funding to ensure they are recorded and actionable.
- Contingency and Slush Fund Clarifications
 - A contingency (“slush”) fund is built into the budget annually, usually \$500 or \$600, to cover unforeseen needs during the year.
 - Historically, budgets were tightly allocated by role; the current approach allows limited flexibility via the contingency fund.
- Reimbursements, Gift Cards, and PIMS
 - Commander's PIMS is budgeted at \$1,000; an additional membership PIMS amount was added due to underspend, totaling \$2,000 available.
 - Questions were raised about coin purchases from this line item, with general agreement it covers such needs.
 - Reimbursement process issues persist:
 - Members report delays and disqualifications or pending notices from convention reimbursements; payments may arrive by December.
 - One reimbursement for pins was processed a month prior and expected to arrive Monday or Tuesday of the coming week.
 - Staffing issues were cited as a potential cause of delays; efforts are being made to streamline the process.
 - Members are asked to notify finance when they receive checks to improve tracking.