

Charles A. Conklin Post #28

P. O. Box 439  
700 S. Harbor Avenue  
Grand Haven, MI 49417-1743



# THE AMERICAN LEGION

**HOURS:**

Mon - Fri 1 pm - 10 pm

Saturday 12 pm - 10 pm

Sunday 1 pm - 7 pm

Janet E. Fonger, Post 28 Commander  
jeflegion28@gmail.com

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April 2021

## AMERICAN LEGION

Jay Stevens, 1st Vice Commander  
TBD, 2nd Vice Commander  
Julie Johnson, Adjutant  
Jeff Moody, Finance Officer  
Duane Smith, Chaplain  
Jack VanWeelden, Judge Advocate  
Hoyt Fonger (interim), Sergeant-at-Arms  
Dennis Siron, Historian  
Hoyt Fonger, Service Officer  
Garrett Veihl, Service Officer  
Chuck Potter, Executive-at-Large  
Jerry Toogood, Executive-at-Large  
Hoyt Fonger, Executive-at-Large  
Bob Wydeck, Past Commander  
Mike Zeef, Past Commander

## AUXILIARY

Darlene DeHaan, President  
marcdarlene@gmail.com  
Melanie Riekels, 1st Vice Pres.  
Diane Janusch-Johnson 2nd Vice Pres.  
Ginny Hebert, Secretary  
Michele Stetts, Treasurer  
Linda Gieske, Historian  
Pam Medendorp-Peck, Chaplain  
Barb Kelly, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Kathleen Edwards, Membership

## SAL

Ross Berens, Commander  
salcmdrpost28@yahoo.com  
Hans VanHorsssen, 1st Vice Commander  
TBD, 2nd Vice Commander  
T.L. Lowe, Finance Officer  
Marc DeHaan, Chaplain  
TBD, Historian  
Steve VanderWall, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Scott Kelly, Membership  
Paul Kubicek, Adjutant  
Jeff Warner, Past Commander

## LEGION RIDERS

Gerald Keen, Director  
gerald.keen88@gmail.com  
Steve Barnes, Assistant Director  
Chase Kamhout, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Michelle Lucas, Secretary  
Larry Foose, Treasurer  
TBD, Chaplain  
Sally Kemme, Membership Chair

Yale Pope, Post Manager  
Dawn Stevens, Kitchen Manager  
(616) 842-5310

## COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



As warmer weather approaches, Springtime is definitely in the air and with that, a renewed sense of hope for more freedoms and enjoying our beautiful Post to its full potential-hopefully soon!  
We have had much to be proud of during our "down" time, one of which is the Eligibility of the Purple Heart to our namesake, Charles A. Conklin. Dr. Chris Petras has worked diligently on ensuring the Purple Heart could be awarded to Charles A. Conklin, and it was...

On March 26, the Charles A. Conklin, American Legion Post 28 had a presentation of the Purple Heart by Congressman Bill Huizenga, Michigan's 2nd Congressional District. It was an intimate crowd, as we were only allowed up to 25 in attendance.

Dr. Petras spoke on his research, while writing on the history of our Post, which lead to his documents being submitted for the Purple Heart. Chris has interviewed for many articles and television segments on finding the much-needed document, leading to Charles A. Conklin's eligibility for the Purple Heart. The television segment has broadcast across the country on network affiliates in major cities including Houston, TX; Dallas, TX; Norfolk, VA; Toledo, OH; San Diego, CA; and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, PA.

The National American Legion also did a piece which has appeared on their websites as well as the National Sons of the American Legion sites. The Purple Heart Foundation, the American Legion Remembrance site, and the Michigan SAL Detachment and Department has also posted this story.

As you can see, the Charles A. Conklin, American Legion Post 28, is getting much media attention, and everyone affiliated with our great Post should feel extremely proud. Dr. Chris Petras' endeavor has brought closure to a much-deserved Purple Heart to our Post's namesake, Charles A. Conklin. A word of appreciation and gratitude to Chris for all his research on his book of Post 28 history, co-producing the documentary of Post 28 and the realization, through his research, of the Purple Heart for Charles A. Conklin - a tough job, well done.

On another note, our Post has also been busy with serving Friday dinners, which continue to be sold out. Post Manager, Yale Pope, has made several of these dinners which have received rave reviews and will be served again. We also had successful Perch dinners, and I would like to personally thank the following NEW volunteers who have helped during these busy dinner times. Many thanks to Nancy Joure, Linda Corl and LaVon Thoma for their help in the kitchen and a sincere thanks to Lori Bronkema for manning the POS/cash register and serving up appetizers and pizzas on certain days! Thank you, ladies, and we hope for your continued support in the days ahead. Our next Perch dinner is scheduled for April 2nd.

As your Commander of Post 28 for the past year and a half, I am constantly reminded of the unselfish acts of service from our Legionnaires. We have veterans who have been giving of their time and talents to keep our Post open and moving in the right direction. They have volunteered many hours of their time to help in the kitchen, preparing and serving food. Others have maintained the Post with repairs and upkeep -- thanks to our Building and Grounds crew. Others have looked for cost savings during this time of uncertainty, reached out with notes of encouragement to veterans, talked to members who needed a Post home and transferred their membership to Post 28, spoke with veterans and their families when questions were raised regarding health issues or benefit questions, and served our Honor Guard by the many funeral services they participated in, to name just a few things that happen behind the scenes.

I need to mention, without our Executive Committee, I do not know how our Post could have navigated throughout this challenging past year and done it so well with keeping our Post open and safe for our members' return.

A sincere thank you to Adjutant Julie Johnson; Finance Officer Jeff Moody; Past Commanders Mike Zeeff and his excellent pizza crew, and Bob Wydeck for his hours in the kitchen and gaming committee; Executives at Large, Chuck Potter and his many hours at the Post, in the kitchen/cleaning and awesome organizational skills; Hoyt Fonger wearing many hats as Service Officer and Executive at Large; and Jerry Toogood for his calm and guiding wisdom during Executive Committee meetings.

Thank you, Legionnaires, for your integrity, and keeping the best interest of the Post always in mind.

Commander Janet

## POST 28 Election Information

*This is the official call for nominations.*

**P**ost 28 Election of Officers (2021-2022 term) \*Executive Officer positions. Please note elections will be held in accordance with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services mandates and by guidance of the American Legion Department of Michigan and American Legion 5th District of Michigan.

\*Commander: Open for nominations  
\*1st Vice Commander: Open for nominations  
\*2nd Vice Commander: Open for nominations  
\*Adjutant: Open for nominations  
\*Finance Officer: Open for nominations  
Service Officer (2 positions): Open for nominations  
Historian: Open for nominations  
Chaplain: Open for nominations  
Sgt-at-Arms: Open for nominations  
\*Exec-at-Large (3 positions): Open for nominations  
Judge Advocate: To be appointed by elected Commander for 2021/2022 term

Delegates needed 72 (36 + 36 alternates). If willing to serve, please contact Past Commander Mike Zeeff, email the Adjutant at: memberpost28@gmail.com

April: Nominations for prospective Officers accepted in writing or email per guidance of the Department and 5th District  
May: Election of new Officers, per guidance of the Department and 5th District  
June: Initiation of new members  
July: Swearing in and installation of new Officers

Nominations are due May 4th and no later.

Election to be held May 18, from 9am-12 noon and 4pm-7pm at the Post. Masks, photo ID and Legion membership card will be required.

All current COVID restrictions will be adhered.

Any questions please contact, Adjutant Julie Johnson, memberpost28@gmail.com

### **GENE ROTH SCHOLARSHIP - 2021**

**G**ene Roth Scholarship applications are available at Post 28 (see a bartender) when Post is open, or may be requested by email from jim.porenta@hotmail.com or you can view and print the application by clicking on the "View and Print the Scholarship Form" button on the Post 28 website page (<https://www.americanlegionh.org>). 2021 high school graduating seniors who are descendants of Post 28 American Legionnaires (current or deceased) and will be incoming 2021 - 2022 college freshmen are encouraged to apply. All applications must be received at Post 28 by April 16, 2021! Awardees will be notified by mail in mid May. Applications may also be mailed to: Chair, Post 28 Gene Roth Scholarship Committee, 700 S. Harbor Dr. Grand Haven, MI 49417

## The Chaplain's Corner

**H**onor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

(1 Peter 2:13-17)

We have just finished a transition of power in our country, and as Post 28, we will also have a change of leadership in the months that follow. For many, the last three words of this verse: "Honor the King" is a hard pill to swallow...for others it is a welcome change to the status quo.

Most commentators on this verse from St. Peter that I've read, have extended the "honor the king" to mean honor those in authority. For those of us who served in our Armed Force we took a solemn oath and understand what authority means. We are taught from the time we first put on the uniform that - we do not salute the person wearing the uniform, but we salute the position they represent - whether or not we agree with them, and whether or not they deserve the honor of a salute.

As we move forward with our lives under new leadership in our nation and in our personal associations, it would be well seek to "Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king." now more than ever - and no I'm not saying never disagree - but we can still work together.

Our nation and yes, Post 28 need to come together - as it says in the preamble to our National Constitution, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union..." and I take the liberty to add to "form a more perfect Post 28."

In His and Your Service  
Duane "Smitty" Smith  
Chaplain American Legion Post 28  
Grand Haven, MI

## *For God and Country*

### **Taps were played for:**

Richard Rutherford, US Coast Guard  
George Bennett, SR. US Army Air Corps  
David J. Poel, US Army  
James McHugh US Navy  
We were Assisted by Honor Guards of the Army for 2 and Navy for 1 service



In His and Your Service  
Duane "Smitty" Smith  
Chaplain, American Legion Post 28

### **Sick List:**

**George Bryant, Jim "Jimbo" Land,  
Charles Davis, Ken Kelly, Carl Kuzyk, Darrel Myers**

## AUXILIARY

Happy Spring to all of our Members!

First, and VERY importantly, we are planning to have a member meeting April 27, with the hope that the COVID restrictions will be lifted enough to hold the meeting at the Post! I realize that some of our members will not be comfortable meeting in person, so we will also conduct the meeting virtually. PLEASE CHECK OUR FACEBOOK PAGE APRIL 24 FOR DETAILS AND ANY UPDATES! We will be holding the election for our 2021-2022 Officers and Executive Board Members at this meeting, so please make every effort to attend.

The initial Slate of Officers was presented at an Executive Committee meeting March 23 by Past President, Kathleen Edwards, and Executive Board Members Jean Harms and Becky Glockzin. Nominations will be taken from the floor during our April 27 meeting, as well you may contact Kathleen Edwards if you are interested in running for any of these positions.

President - Darlene DeHaan

1st Vice President - Melanie Riekels

2nd Vice President - Diane Janusch-Johnson

Secretary - Ginny Hebert

Treasurer - Michele Stetts

Chaplain - Pam Medendorp-Peck

Historian - Linda Gieske

Sgt.-At-Arms - Vicki Siron

Executive Board - Jean Harms

Executive Board - Becky Glockzin

Executive Board - Pat Best, Barb Kelly

April is the Month of the Military Child, which is a month-long celebration to honor these children and teens.. April 15 is "Purple Up Day", and I would like to encourage everyone to wear purple in honor of these children. (Photos are welcome!) "Purple symbolizes a combination of the colors of each branch of the U.S. Military: Army green, Navy blue, Air Force blue, Marine red, and Coast Guard blue" (Feb. 2021 Auxiliary Magazine.)

We are proud to announce the winners of this year's Americanism Essay. This year's topic of the essays was "How can we address the well-being of our Veterans, Military, and Their Families?"

Class II

1st Place - DeAnna Grech (right)

2nd Place - Ariel De Los Santos

3rd Place - Emily Rangel

Class III

1st Place - Ian De Los Santos

2nd Place - Harrison Maurer,

3rd place - Sophie Skerbeck



I'd like to share DeAnna's essay. This young girl already has an amazing heart for Veterans, and a good understanding of their struggles! (Next month I will share Ian De Los Santos's excellent essay.)

"Veterans do so much for our country. They risk their lives every day for the freedoms we have. Coming back into civilian life can be a struggle for them. They can be injured physically and mentally. The least we can do for them is show them the right track to start. In the paragraphs below I'm going to show you how as a country we can help our beloved veterans find the support of health and mental support that they might need.

Gratitude show veterans that we support and care about them, and what they are doing. Mental support as well and physical support is a huge part of helping our veterans. Simply saying, 'Thank you for your service' is a monumental thank you to veterans! They need this support to help ease them into a society that cares for them. After all, they deserve it as a sign of respect. Many veterans fall into depression after the military. This is one of the hardships that veterans go through. Many programs such as the VA will provide mental and physical help.

Many veterans also come back from the military injured. Programs such as the Veterans Healthcare Program will support veterans with healthcare. The VA will give our veterans annual check-ups with specialists along with medical equipment such as prosthetics. Healthcare is an essential part of caring for veterans.

In conclusion, we need to support and care for our veterans as best as we can. They have done to much for our country. Please remember to thank the veterans you see. Veterans deserve as much love as they can get. A card, hug, salute are all ways to love our veterans. WE CAN HELP!"

Darlene DeHaan, President & PR Chair

## SAL

At our March Executive Board meeting at the Post, we approved 4 new members. Please help me welcome these new members to Post 28: Edward Aardema, Tanner Debien, Bradley Debien and Tim Kuniskis.

We are planning on the SAL Annual Golf Outing, and is being scheduled for Saturday, May 29. Flyers for signup are at the Post. The number of teams will be limited, so you will want to sign up early.

The nominations for the 2021 - 2022 SAL Officers have been coming in slow. We will be taking nominations at our next meeting. The last opportunity to nominate will be at the May 3 meeting before we vote on the slate of officers. Installation of officers will follow the vote. If you have interest in being an officer, or have someone you would like to nominate for a particular position, please email me at the address on the first page of this newsletter.

Our next meeting is scheduled for April 5 and will start at 6:00 p.m. At this time, it is planned as being a "regular" membership meeting with a limit of 25 participants.

Stay Safe and Stay Healthy!!

Serving Veterans and the Community

Ross Berens, SAL Commander



# APRIL

# 2021



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				01 April Fools Day	02 <b>Good Friday</b>  <b>Perch Fry 4p-7p</b>	03
04 	05 Deep Dish Pizza Day	06	07	08	09	10 National Siblings Day
11	12 National Grilled Cheese Day	13 Thomas Jefferson Birthday  New Moon	14 National Beer Day	15 National High Five Day	16 Scholarship Applications due today	17
18	19 Bicycle Day	20	21	22	23	24
25  Full Moon	26	27	28	29 International Dance Day  NFL Draft Day	30 Arbor Day	
National Humor Month	English Language Month	National Month of Hope	Stress Awareness Month	National Pet Month		