

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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www.americanlegiongh.org

March 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 VanHorsen, 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**



The pandemic continues to challenge our veterans, our Post, and our community. We were hopeful for resuming at least 50% capacity in our Post by the end of March -- time will tell.

During these frustrating times, our Post and those individuals supporting our Post have risen to the occasion. We have had successful in-dining and to-go dinners and our lounge is beginning to bounce back to life. A grateful thank you to those who have offered their time in the kitchen with preparation and serving our members and families. Volunteers are the bedrock of non-profits

and the lack of volunteers has truly been a challenge. We need kitchen volunteers; however, we also understand the hesitancy of volunteering during these Covid times.

If you are so moved to help, please contact Yale, our Post Manager. Please know all the necessary precautions are taken and only so many volunteers are allowed in the kitchen and masks are worn at all times. We are also looking for a short order cook and if you know of someone, please contact Yale.

The new MDHHS (Michigan Department of Health and Human Services) mandate continues to restrict our membership meetings through March, however, we will do what is necessary to ensure nominations and elections of officers which normally take place in April and May respectively, will be held in accordance with MDHHS mandates and suggestions offered by the American Legion Department of Michigan.

During the meeting on April 6, whether in-person or determined by other means, our Post Legionnaires will nominate individuals to represent the largest combined (Legionnaires, Sons of the American Legion, Riders, and Auxiliary) American Legion Post membership in the state of Michigan.

Expectations of Post officers have changed. Our Post officers have faced many challenges during this past year, which will go down in history as the Great Pandemic of 2019. Our current Executive Committee has navigated uncharted waters and has done an outstanding job with the "unknown". We all should be proud of them stepping up and stepping in when needed and unselfishly serving our Post.

Looking ahead, Officers must stay current with technology and trends affecting the membership of veterans' service organizations, be actively involved, while at the same time, protecting the membership from any individual acts of self-interest and possible exploitation of Legion assets.

As I stated in the newsletter of March 2020, American Legion Posts are run by the membership (you). When you attend monthly membership meetings, you have a voice and vote. Your involvement and vote will determine how effective and transparent we are as a Post. Please do not hesitate to offer your skills and ideas. Consider serving as a Post 28 Officer. New "blood" will continue to move our Post forward and your knowledge and skills may be of great value to our Post and rewarding for you.

For more information on the nomination process, please speak with Nomination Committee members (Mike Zeeff, Chuck Potter and Jack Van Weelden). Or feel free to contact me at jeflegion28@gmail.com and I will be happy to answer any questions. All members benefit by becoming familiar with our Post's by-laws which are easily accessible at www.americanlegiongh.org under the tab: INFO.

The more knowledgeable you are, the greater positive impact you will have on the future of our Post.

Normally during March, we have enjoyed a celebration of the birthday of the American Legion, and this year we would be celebrating our 102nd birthday. We would also honor and recognize Legionnaires with continuous membership awards in the American Legion with a framed certificate and a pin with the number of years of their continuous membership. These certificates and pins will either be hand delivered or mailed in the near future. I am proud and honored to announce the following individuals and their continuous support of the American Legion throughout the years:

Donald P. Brower, USA Korea, 70 years  
Edward J. Gardner, USA Korea, 50 years  
Philip C. Jordan, USN Vietnam, 50 years

James E. Ellman, USA Korea, 50 years  
Terry J. Johnson, USN Vietnam, 50 years

Thank you, gentleman, for your service to our great country and the support you have given over the years to the American Legion!

Commander Janet

## From Your Post Manager

You've probably noticed a few new faces behind the bar recently, so stop in and introduce yourself to our new bartenders.

Samantha Ortiz is a Grand Haven resident whose family comes from a long line of military service. She also has extensive bartending and restaurant experience. Jeni Bell is a Saginaw native who currently resides in Holland and has years in the customer service industry. Dalton Pope is recently discharged after four years in the U.S. Marine Corps and grew up working in the family bar and restaurant business. In addition to bartending and helping out in the kitchen, Dalton will be assisting the post in drawing in our younger and recently discharged veterans for post membership.

Please welcome these new additions to our post as we continue to move forward into the future.

Yale C. Pope

**Post Manager**

### *New members & transfers:*

#### **New members:**

Nels L Peterson, Navy, Korea

Allen S Noles, Navy, Panama

#### **Transfers:**

Ron Ward, Marine Corp, Viet Nam

Ed Rumsey, Army, War on Terror

Anton Fischer Sr, Navy, Viet Nam

Alan Betts, Army, Other Conflicts

Terry Brunei, Marine Corp, Viet Nam

### **2021-2022 Prospective Slate of Officers Post 28**

More information on membership meeting forthcoming based on MDHHS Covid-19 mandates. Must be nominated in April. Nominations also accepted from the floor (if in-person meeting) during April.

Commander..... Jonathan (Jay) Stevens

1st Vice..... VACANT

2nd Vice..... VACANT

Adjutant..... Julie Johnson

Finance Officer... Jeff Moody

Service Officer... Garrett Veihl

Service Officer... VACANT

Historian..... Dennis Siron

Chaplain..... Duane Smith

Sergeant-at-Arms... VACANT

Executive at Large... Chuck Potter

Executive at Large.... Hoyt Fonger

Executive at Large.... VACANT

Judge Advocate.....appointed by new Commander

Delegates needed 72 (36 + 36 alternates). If willing to serve, please contact

Past Commander Mike Zeeff, email the adjutant at: julieszymas765@gmail.com

April: Nominations for prospective Officers

May: Election of new Officers

June: Initiation of new members

July: Swearing in and installation of new Officers

## Sick List:

George Bryant, Jim "Jimbo" Land, George Bennett, Charles Davis, Ken Kelly, Carl Kuzyk, Darrel Meyers, Mike Rippla, Jack Gardner

### Taps were played for:

Lance A. Tikkanen, US Navy

Thomas Ryan, US Army

Robert James Robinson US Army

US Army participated in two services

IN Addition: Post 28 Rifle Team and Chaplain participated in the 4 Chaplains Memorial Service I Walk hosted by Post 459 and Post 1111.

In His and Your Service

Duane "Smitty" Smith

Chaplain, American Legion Post 28



## The Chaplain's Corner

As I watched the Four Chaplains Anniversary Ceremony in January, I was reminded of the dramatic situation of survival that the Four Chaplains pulled off. As they watched the military men, the survivors, being launched into lifeboats, they grasped the knowledge of their inevitable fate! They hurried to give every last warm article of clothing to each of the men to save them, not holding back they stripped themselves of gloves, coats... etc. The one Chaplain had told a story to one of the survivors that his Father had told him. Before he entered the service his dad told him that to serve as a Chaplain was a position that had a very high mortality rate they would have no access to weapons, no trained skill to protect the physical combat, but they were certainly trained a skill to obtain protection of the spiritual and the soul.

Hearing this made me think of the survival of spiritual and the soul. We may watch in our lives situations what seem to threaten and kill our physical being, but it is our spiritual being that lives on in challenging times. The growth in our Post with numbers is still there, but the desire to return for camaraderie with shut-downs and changes has left the spirit of the post empty. In our Country we need to heal spiritually too.

Once again, I am drawn to contemplate how that had to appear to the survivors as they watched the sinking ship, that once protected them, with the visual of the four chaplains arm in arm singing and praying. What will we witness this coming year? Will we physically be watching as some businesses, some long time organizations, some relationships falter and fail. Will our spiritual side prevail? Will we be arm in arm, praying and singing? God Please Bless Our Country, and please Bless our Post.

In His Service,  
Pam Medendorp-Peck  
Chaplain

### For 8&40:

Partners, although we haven't met for awhile, you're thought about often. Hope you are all doing well. Annual Reports have not been mailed as yet. We'll probably get them by April (they're due in June). Still looking forward to seeing you all soon. Take care. Happy Birthday to Post 28!

La Chapeau, Becky

This month we are very proud to announce the winners of our Poppy contest. It was very difficult to get participants this year due to the unique challenges of the schools, but the talent and insight demonstrated by the students from Corpus Christi Catholic School (Holland) and Holmes Elementary School (Spring Lake) is amazing.

Here are a few examples of the statements the students included to honor our Veterans:

“They didn’t put on a uniform for themselves.”  
 “Served to love, served to be, served for unity.”  
 “These battles are proof of their love.”  
 “Poppies are not for decorating, they are for honoring.”  
 “The poppy is a small symbol of a huge sacrifice.”  
 “Gone, but never forgotten.”

Here are the winners:

**Class IV -**

- Lauren Dishinger - 1st Place (see photo below)
- Sophie Skerbeck - 2nd Place
- Olivia Munster - 3rd Place

**Class III -**

- Theresa Rodden - 1st Place (see photo, right)
- Nick Skerbeck - 2nd Place
- Maggie Kuhn - 3rd Place

**Class II -**

- Dylan Grimaldo - 1st Place (see photo, below right)
- Layla Fair - 2nd Place
- Natalie Naverrete - 3rd Place

Many thanks to ALL of students who submitted posters!  
 Perhaps April will bring with it the opportunity to have a member meeting...please watch our Auxiliary Facebook page for updates and information

Darlene DeHaan, President & PR Chair

At our February “ZOOM” meeting we approved 2 new members. Please help me welcome these **new members** to Post 28: **Craig DeYoung** and **Scott Hewitt**.

Also approved was a donation of \$2,500 to Love in Action/Salvation Army for the Easter canned goods drive. Our next meeting is scheduled for March 1 and will start at 7:00 p.m. The meeting, at this time, is planned as being a “regular” membership as long as conditions remain the same. If conditions change, we will once again be doing a ZOOM meeting with only the Executive Board.

Meeting agenda will include an opportunity to nominate SAL Officers for the 2021 – 2022 year. 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.

The last opportunity to nominate officers will be at our April 5 meeting during which we will vote on the 2021 – 2022 SAL officers.

Stay Safe and Stay Healthy!!  
 Serving Veterans and the Community  
 Ross Berens, SAL Commander



Above: Theresa Rodden, 1st place  
 Class III (grades 6/7) Corpus Christi Catholic School





Above: Dylan Grimaldi, 1st place  
 Class II (grades 4/5) Corpus Christi Catholic School



Left: Laura Dishinger  
 1st place  
 Class IV (grades 8/9)  
 Corpus Christi Catholic School



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	01	02	03 National Anthem Day	04 National Hug a G.I. Day	05 Perch Fry 4p-7p	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13  New Moon
14 Daylight Saving Time	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Perch Fry 4p-7p	20 Spring Begins
21	22 National Goof-Off Day	23	24	25 National Medal of Honor Day	26	27 Passover
28 Palm Sunday  Full Moon	29	30	31	 <p>* Happy St. Patrick's Day *</p>		
			Sing With Your Child Month	Save Your Vision Month	National Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month	Paws to Read Month, encouraging kids to read to their pets to improve their reading skills