

Charles A. Conklin Post 28
P.O. Box 439
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www.americanlegiongh.org



**THE
AMERICAN
LEGION**

Walt Pedersen
Post 28 Commander
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Monday - Friday 1pm - 10 pm
Saturday 12 pm - 10 pm
Sunday 12 pm - 9 pm

January 2026
Issue #1256

AMERICAN LEGION

Cyndy Wierenga, 1st Vice Commander
Nick Matiash, 2nd Vice Commander
James O'Neal, Adjutant
Robert Kepner, Finance Officer
Gary Doublestein, Chaplain
Larry Lambert, Judge Advocate
Jim Porenta, Sergeant-at-Arms
Dennis Siron, Historian
Garrett Veihl, Service Officer
Mike Thurber, Service Officer
Karl Christensen, Executive-at-Large
Linda Laswell, Executive-at-Large
Freddy Smith, Executive-at-Large
Ron Streng, Past Commander

AUXILIARY

Becky Glockzin, President
glockzin@gmail.com
Darlene DeHaan, Vice President
Ginny Hebert, Secretary
Michele Stetts, Treasurer
Linda Gieske, Historian
Pam Medendorp, Chaplain
Laurie Koldyk, Sergeant-at-Arms
Kathleen Edwards, Membership

SAL

Tim Deiters, Commander
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Jeff Wierenga, 1st Vice Commander
Andrew Ruiters, 2nd Vice Commander
T.L. Lowe, Finance Officer
Marc DeHaan, Chaplain
Gary Kerkstra, Historian
Steve VanderWall, Sergeant-at-Arms
Dr. David Ireland, Membership
Mike Brown, Adjutant
Bill Moss, Past Commander

LEGION RIDERS

Alan Smith, Director
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Fred Smith, Assistant Director
Jim Sacks, Secretary
Larry Foose, Treasurer
Marc DeHaan, Chaplain
John Boese, Historian
Dave Feenstra, Sergeant-at-Arms
David Baldwin, Membership Chair
Al Smith, Road Captain
Tom Schultz, Safety Officer
Steven Barnes, Past Director
Yale Pope, Post Manager
(616) 842-5310



COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

Two days prior to preparing this article for the January 2026 Post Newsletter, I had the pleasure of watching Navy beat Army in that rivalry's 126th gridiron matchup, Navy leads the all-time series with a 64-55-7 over Army. Go Navy beat Army.

Yesterday during the Lions unfortunate loss to the Rams, Debra prepared Italian meatballs from scratch in our galley and provided delicious meatball subs and brownies for all who attended before and during the game, they were delicious.

Thanks to the Auxiliary for their excellent work on both the Legion Family Buffet and the Kids Christmas Party. Thank you so much AUX for all you do to make our Post such a great place to be a part of.

Thanks also to Mr. and Mrs. Claus for being there to give the kids a great time. Also, during the second weekend of December, Master Chief Kyle Thomas and his staff and crew had their Christmas Party at the Legion, we are proud to have a great relationship with our Coast Guard service men and women stationed here in Grand Haven, Semper Paratus.

Wednesday meals resume in the second week of this month, featuring Chop's meatloaf, Zesty Spaghetti, Baked potato bar with Paul's chili, and the Succulent Swiss steak. Thanks to our AUX, SAL, and assorted Legionnaires for their help with all these meals. At month's end, Vegas Night returns, thank you again to Chris Jarvis leading the event.

Just a peek into February, the Legion Riders will be sponsoring that ever popular Chili Cook Off, thank you Riders for all your efforts.

Once again, thank you to everyone, AUX, SAL ALR and Legionnaires in general who make Charles Conklin Post 28 Grand Haven the best Legion in the state of Michigan, I am proud to serve with each of you.

For the good of the Legion, Walt Pedersen Commander # 107.



December 2025 Events: Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Goodfellows, Kids Christmas Party and the Jingle Bell Parade.

2026 Gene Rothi Scholarship

Gene Rothi Scholarship applications and instructions are now available. Google "Gene Rothi Scholarship" to download the application. Year 2026 high school graduating seniors who are descendants of Post 28 American Legionnaires (current or deceased) and will be incoming 2026-2027 college freshmen are encouraged to apply. All applications must be received at Post 28 by April 2026! Awardees will be notified by mail in May.

AUXILIARY

Happy New Year!

We had a successful end to the 2025 year. Meatloaf Dinner on December 3 was well attended. We raised \$948 for our National Security program, which helps to send packages to our service men and women. The Kids Christmas Party on December 13 was a big success and well attended; thank you to organizer Nicole Goldberg and all the Legion Family volunteers who helped out. On December 16 we filled over 300



Bags of Joy, which were delivered to veterans and/or veterans' wives at assisted living homes. Thank



you to our organizers, Pat Best and Linda Gieske, and their volunteers. We also held three Christmas Craft Sales in December, raising almost \$900. Lastly, thank you to all the Salvation Army bell ringers and to the Goodfellows volunteers.

January 21 - Chops' Meatloaf 5-7 pm
January 27 - Auxiliary Meeting 6:30 pm
January 29 - Cookie Exchange 3 pm
Becky Glockzin, President

American Legion Goodfellows Firefighters Crusade for Toys

The American Legion Goodfellows & Firefighters' Crusade for Toys, wish to thank you for your time, effort, and donations to make this program such a success. It was our biggest year EVER!! We have been able to maintain a very stable program because of your thoughtfulness and we are looking forward to next year. Many thanks to the Legions organizations that supported us again this year with funds and volunteers. It takes a village!

With the help from the Salvation Army, we were able to serve 147 families and 351 children in the Northwest Ottawa County area. Each child received clothing, gloves, hat, toys, games, personal care items, blanket, and candy. We work with the Salvation Army for screening and to determine eligible families for our program. We also provided the Grand Haven and Spring Lake Special Education buses a stuffed animal for each child to help make Christmas a happier time. With your generosity we were also able to help support our area "Back Pack Programs" which provides food for children and youth ministries that numbered approximately 700 children. We appreciate your help in these endeavors.

We hope that in the future, these children will become giving citizens and pass the good times forward. We are grateful for all the thoughtful donations that support our mission. If you would still like to make a contribution, please visit the American Legion webpage and click on the donation link, or scan the QR code.

May you have a Prosperous and
Happy New Year!
Thank you everyone
The Goodfellows Committee (Elves)
Ron Ribbink & Lisa Danicek
Co-Chairs



SAL

This month we had thirteen new members join our group: D Corcoran, M Wasilewski, D Thomas, C Rakocy, T Perkins, L Hills, R Frizzle, A Frank, T Cocorran, D Rigas, S Saurman, J Saurman, and R Freeman.

Chris Petras of the Purple Heart Communities Project received funds from the SAL for signage and flags in Spring Lake, Ferrysburg and Grand Haven. Those signs were installed by 12-10-25.

Members will be helping distribute Christmas gifts collected mid-December with the Salvation Army; there were numerous gifts donated again this year. Thank you all for keeping this program supported!!!

Wishing all of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year.
Tim Deiters, SAL Commander

LEGION RIDERS

Looking Ahead to 2026

I hope everyone had a wonderful New Year and a Merry Christmas. As the weather turns colder, many of us have put our motorcycles away for the season, and our riding gear now hangs in the closet. With this seasonal pause from riding, it is a valuable time to shift our focus and begin planning for the upcoming events that will bring us together in the months ahead.

Chili Cook-off – February 21

Our first event of the year will be the Chili Cook-off, scheduled for February 21. Signup for teams is Saturday, January 31 at 3 pm at the Post. This event is open to the public, so feel free to invite your friends to join us. In addition to sampling a variety of delicious chili, attendees can take part in activities such as buying raffle tickets, entering 50/50 drawings, bidding in silent auctions, and having opportunities to win exciting door prizes.

Kentucky Derby Event – May 2

The next event on our calendar is the Kentucky Derby celebration, which is also open to the public. Highlights will include stick horse racing, a Lady's Hat Contest, 50/50 drawings, and live coverage of the race on all TVs. Join us for a mint julep and enjoy an afternoon filled with fun and excitement.

I would like to extend my thanks to everyone who took part in the Pick 3 drawing. Your involvement and support are appreciated.

Wishing everyone a fantastic 2026!

Tag Smith, Director/Road Captain



POST NEWS

WELCOME NEW LEGION MEMBERS

Bruce Ivie
Steven Willeford
Daniel Heimler
John Krueger
Maxwell Smith
Linda Torres

SICK CALL

Denny Siron
Bob Wydeck
David MacKellar
Roman Marciniak
Oscar Ledesma
Karl Kuzyk
Robert Sanders
Rick White
Stefanie Marvin-Miller
Daniel Kiomento II

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

EXAMINATION

So, the Holidays are over and maybe we can look back at this season and examine the gains and losses of our treatment of this most holy of celebrations.

Did the "sales" actually end the day after Christmas or were they replaced with "New Year Blowouts!"?

Does anyone remember every gift they gave or received or even what they had for Christmas dinner?

Did any of your children or Grandchildren leave home because you couldn't find the gift that would "make their dreams come true"? Or..did that gift ACTUALLY make their dreams come true?

I know that most of us need a vacation from the Holidays but very few actually paid homage to the miracle of "God with us", (Emmanuel)! Did you reflect on the love that God has for us that He sent His only Son to live and die for our sins?

Fortunately, we have a God that never thinks that it is too late. Now that the tug of Holiday "busy-ness" is over, maybe we should go back to the true joy of the season...the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Go back to appreciate all the wonderful blessings God has bestowed on us. Spend time learning more about The Person that so many people are afraid of and tend to want to reduce to just a "nice guy".

C.S. Lewis referred to our earthly existence as the "Shadowlands" since he firmly believed that reality was our life with God in heaven...and our experiences here were mere shadows of what reality truly is. Keep this in mind as the world paints a false picture of urgency and importance. Keep in mind that God made you for a much better life!

In Service of God and Country,
Gary L. Doublestein, Post 28 Chaplain

HONOR GUARD

There were no funerals for the month of November. The Honor Guard participated in five Flag Programs: Heartwood Lodge and St. Mary's, Holmes, Lakeshore Middle and Corpus Christi Schools. They also performed the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Eternal Flame.
Rifle Team Leader, Dave MacKellar

Legionnaires January 2026 Membership Update

Happy New Year, and thank you to all our members who have renewed their Membership for 2026! Please note that all 2025 Membership Cards expired on December 31, 2025.

We are seeing former members attempting to renew after several years of not renewing their membership. Depending on the amount of the time lapse, National may have removed your membership number from the American Legion roles. If it has been several years since your last renewal, please submit a copy of your DD214 or Service Record to help speed up the renewal process.

We ask that you consider renewing on line at mylegion.org. This immediately registers your payment and reports your renewal to your Membership Committee. This saves you postage and us time. In addition by renewing on line it is easy to update your personal information (address, phone, email etc). Should you forget or lose your card you can access a copy on line at the same site, saving you time and providing access to American Legion Posts, especially if you are out of town.

Please note: Anyone applying for **new** membership, or that is **transferring from another Post**, you must submit a copy of your DD-214. Active Duty applicants need to provide a proof of Active Duty. Feel free to black out or redact your Social Security number, we also will return it once your membership is approved. We cannot process or approve either without your DD-214, current military ID or Leave and Earnings Statement. Should you need a DD214 or other proof of Service, you may request it at <https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/>.

Please remember to **write your membership number** on your **check**, or if renewing at the Post write it on the **membership renewal and/or application (print CLEARLY)**, you can always just print a copy of your card and include it. This is not necessary if you use the form sent to you in the mail as your card number is already printed on it. As always should you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact us: Linda Doublestein - lindadoublestein@gmail.com, Linda Laswell - lindathemac@gmail.com, or Phil Polyak - wattnot@me.com.

From the Post Manager, Yale Pope Dalton Pope, Assistant Manager

Another Holiday Season has come and gone. Seems every year it happens faster and faster.

I hope that everyone has had an opportunity to take advantage of our various soups that we have been trying on the weekends. We have had an extensive selection in an attempt to please everyone's tastes.

As we get into the heart of winter, our staff and building and grounds crew are doing their best to keep the walkways shoveled and salted, but please continue to use caution when entering and exiting the Post. In addition, winter weather brings on numerous maintenance challenges, so a big thank-you to the volunteers and buildings and grounds crew who keep our Post operational and safe.

Let's have a safe and happy January.

Red Cross Blood Drive
Upstairs at the Post
Wednesday, January 7
9am to 2:30pm.




2026 JANUARY



Vegas Night is scheduled for Saturday, January 24 starting at 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Blackjack, 7 card stud, and a money wheel, open to the public. Dealers practice session on Thursday 22 at 6:30 p.m. Come and have some fun!

Visually impaired support group meets January 6, 2026, from 1-2 pm at the Post. Questions? Call Michelle at 269-370-4697.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 NOON-8 PM POST OPEN 	2 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	3
4	5 7 pm SAL Meeting 	6 7 pm Post Meeting	7 5-7 PM ZESTY SPAGHETTI DINNER (Legion) 9am-2:30pm 	8 7 PM ALR Meeting 6-8 PM DJ Musical Bingo	9 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	10 
11	12	13 6 pm Legion House Committee	14 5-7 PM POTATO BAR & PAUL'S CHILI (SAL)	15 7 PM 	16 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	17 
18 	19 	20 7 pm Legion Executive Committee	21 5-7 PM CHOPS' MEATLOAF DINNER (Auxiliary)	22 6:30 pm Vegas Night Dealers Practice 6-8 PM DJ Musical Bingo	23 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	24 4pm - 10pm Vegas Night Open to the public 
25 	26 	27 6:30 pm Auxiliary Meeting	28 5-7 PM SUCCULENT SWISS STEAK DINNER (Legion)	29 3 pm Cookie Exchange 	30 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	31 3 pm Sign up for Chili Cook-off at the Post
February 1	2 7 pm SAL Meeting 	6 7 pm Post Meeting	7 5-7 PM ZESTY SPAGHETTI DINNER (Legion)	8 7 pm ALR Meeting	9 5:30p-7:30p BURGERS	10