



The American Legion

Charles A. Conklin Post #28

HOURS: Mon. – Fri. 1pm – 10pm Saturday 12pm – 10pm Sunday 1pm – 7pm

Newsletter published monthly by Charles A. Conklin Post #28 of the American Legion
P. O. Box 439 ~ 700 S. Harbor Avenue ~ Grand Haven, MI 49417-1743 ~ www.grandhavenlegion.org

LEGION

Janet E. Fonger, Post 28 Commander
jeflegion28@gmail.com
Jay Stevens, 1st Vice Commander
Julie Johnson, 2nd Vice Commander
TBD, Adjutant
Cyndy Wierenga, 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
Charlie Chittenden, 2nd Vice Commander
T.L. Lowe, Finance Officer
Al VanDam, Chaplain
Charlie Chittenden, 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

POST MANAGER

Lori Pulciani
(616) 842-5310

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

It is with a heavy heart I must share this information on the status of the election of Officers for Post 28.

At the directive of the American Legion Department of Michigan, 5th District Commander, Dan Cooper, ordered an emergency meeting with all Post 28 Officers on June 24, 2020. During the emergency meeting, Commander Cooper read the determination letter from the Department Judge Advocate, regarding the Post's election of Officers including the admonishment of "certain members", who the Department believes, tampered with the election: A copy of the letter has been posted on the bulletin board at the Post for Members to read.

Within 24-hours of the Department's notification and directive including an investigation of the individuals alleged to have tampered with the election and squandered Post funds, several Executive Committee members resigned. The Department considered the resignations as a "mass form of retaliation" and thus notified the Post Commander that our charter was now under consideration for suspension or worse, revocation.

What does this mean? If the Department suspended our Post's charter, a management team from 5th District would be appointed to run our Post. This leadership team would make all decisions for the Post including programs, activities, and expenditure of funds. The Post would remain open, and all staff would retain their jobs. At any time during the suspension period the Post's Charter could be revoked.

If the Post charter were to be revoked, that's it. The Post closes and the Department takes the Post's assets. After receiving this devastating news, I was disheartened that "certain members" would ever place our Post charter in such jeopardy.

Our Post belongs to the membership. Therefore, I immediately contacted officials and began working out a plan to keep our Post's charter and good name.

Discussions over a three-day period with the District and the Department to keep our charter were positive. A deadline was given by the Department to establish an Executive Board in order to move forward. As of this writing, an Executive Board is being formed, and I am hopeful this will end on a positive note, with our Post continuing to thrive in fulfilling our mission of "Veterans serving Veterans." This will only occur; however, if acts of retaliation against our Post cease.

Losing our Post charter is a very real scenario based on recent and past behaviors by "certain members". For the sake of our Post and Post membership, retaliatory actions must stop.

On a very positive note, our Post reopened on June 15th with half capacity restrictions and following COVID-19 guidelines as mandated in Executive Order 2020-114.

The new kitchen is operating nicely with our new menu items and receiving rave reviews. As expected, the reopening under COVID-19 conditions is a learning curve for all. While a huge success, the reopening of our Post needs an A-Team of volunteers to facilitate kitchen and food service operations.

Combining traditional Post 28 food items with contemporary offerings are in the current planning process. Yes, changes are occurring. However, those changes are resulting in revenue increases for our Post and Post 28 veterans and community outreach programs. We understand Post 28 meals help our family units too in generating revenues for their great causes. This too will return as soon as possible

Continued on p. 2

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS cont'd.

given the current COVID-19 context.

Post 28 membership meetings have been on hold due to the Governor's Executive Orders regarding gatherings and social distancing. Our Post is classified in Region 2 as defined by the Governor which has not yet moved into a stage of less restrictions than some other Regions in Michigan. Our Region is currently in Stage 4 of the Governor's COVID-19 gatherings and social distancing restrictions which means we cannot hold a membership meeting, just yet. Only 10 people or fewer may gather in the Post for meetings with social distancing of 6-feet, required. My understanding is when our Region is categorized as Stage 5; we will be able to hold a membership meeting. Please understand our Post operations and functions have been completely thrown off by the Covid-19 pandemic. Your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated and needed. If you are a Post 28 Legionnaire or family unit (SAL, Auxiliary, or Riders) member and interested in volunteering at your Post, please email or call the Post. Your help will be greatly appreciated and will help keep our veterans and community programs thriving.

In gratitude,
Commander Janet

Flag Retirement Ceremony



Post 28 Re-opening



American Legion Post #28

Kitchen Ribbon Cutting



Photos courtesy of Chris Petras

The **Operation KP Fundraising Committee** thanks the following donors, as well as several anonymous donors, for their support of the Post's Kitchen Renovation Project.



Leonard & Wanda Anderson
Tom & Cathie Sherwood
Phillip & Helen Vannoy

Randy & Abby Crow
Christine Holstrom
Floyd Morrison

AUXILIARY

July is a month of beautiful weather, summer fun and vacations! I hope all of you are enjoying this time to rejuvenate and enjoy time with family and friends!

July will be very different for the Post and for Auxiliary with the cancellation of the Coast Guard Festival, as well as the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on everything! We will let you know as soon as we are able to start meeting again...maybe August???? Above all, I hope that all of us will celebrate Independence Day with a renewed sense of patriotism and appreciation for those who fought and died for this great country! The freedoms that we hold dear can NEVER be taken for granted!

This month I would like to highlight another familiar face of Auxiliary, and someone who has been a faithful and valuable mentor to me during my first year as Unit 28 President. Kathleen Edwards has been an Auxiliary member since 2013, and has tirelessly volunteered for our Auxiliary in so many capacities. This includes planning and serving at countless events and dinners, coordinating volunteers for events, serving as our Unit 28 President for three years, and managing membership of our unit of more than 1600 members. She was also instrumental in developing the Membership manual with Larry Lambert and Scott Kelly. She also has and continues to represent us at the District and Department levels. It is safe to say that she loves Auxiliary, what we stand for, and what we do. This is Kath's story in her own words.

Darlene DeHaan, Auxiliary President & PR Chair

Spotlight on the Auxiliary

"My great-great-grandparents immigrated from Denmark and Germany in the mid-1800's, and they eventually settled in Nebraska. Fate knit three more generations together, and my parents were married in 1952 while my father was in the Army. I was born in North Platte, Nebraska. Many years later, I learned about "The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen" during WWII. More than six million GI's passing through on troop trains made a brief stop for camaraderie and a meal served by community volunteers. They cooked and baked and served all day, every day, for five years to greet those GI's going to war. My grandmother was part of that amazing story.

My father-in-law (also an Army veteran) was a member of American Legion Post 64 in Flint, Michigan. My husband and I had our outdoor wedding there in 1977. Our search for a happy retirement place 35 years later led us to Grand Haven in 2012. Friends took us to American Legion Post 28, and we decided to become members to honor both of our fathers' Army service during the Korean conflict. Soon, I was anxious to "give back," and volunteered to help with Auxiliary membership.

I was welcomed, and mentored, by phenomenal women who had been leading our Auxiliary Unit for many years (Ann Kammeraad, Cleo Phipps, Ruth Kelly, Myrna Puse, Michele Stetts to name a few). As I learned and managed membership, I also found out there is so much to learn about the Auxiliary and its commitment to "Service, not self." Three years as President were tremendously



SAL

Great news..... Summer is here and the Post has re-opened!

The next SAL meeting is scheduled for July 6 @ 7:30. We will be discussing future events and the impact of the Coronavirus going forward. Please bring your masks. We will be practicing social distancing. I hope to see many of you at the meeting as we get back to somewhat normalcy.

The SAL Golf Outing date is August 22. Registration forms are available at the Post.

Serving Veterans and the Community
Ross Berens, SAL Commander



LEGION RIDERS

The Riders have been meeting and using the Zoom web conferencing service. We rode for Grand Haven and Spring Lake, both on Memorial Day. We had a Police led motorcade from the post, touring through both cities, seeing many people and a few pets. We were able to ride in tribute to see Jim Land and Lt. Col Baron by their homes, too. We added a couple new members also.

Post 28 Legion Riders Director Gerald Keen.



challenging and rewarding at the same time. I'm grateful for the support of our Executive Committee leadership, as we accomplished so much together! I also had the phenomenal experience of being a member of the Post's 2017 Patriot Day Committee and the 2018 Centennial Celebration Committee.

Our Auxiliary Unit's membership has doubled since 2011, but a large percentage of annual dues goes to the state and national Auxiliary. What we keep locally is supplemented by volunteer hours and fundraising to keep our programs strong. Look at our Leadership Booklet to see

our many programs and imagine our impact on the Post, Community, and State. Our Girls State program is absolutely life-changing for young women. Badly nicknamed "government camp," the high school girls we sponsor always report what an amazing experience it is! They are destined to be our future leaders.

Our Post is blessed with its "million dollar location," and enticing to members. While we socialize and enjoy the view, it's easy to forget our pledge: "To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion. To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness." My hope is that the 2020 Pandemic has reminded everyone what is truly important in life, and that more members will get involved in our Post's activities. We have so many veterans to honor and programs to support them!"



Around The Bar



We reopened June 15, 2020. Everything looks a little different. We are at half capacity, adhering to social distancing including on the upper and lower decks, asking that all members wear masks while not at a table, not moving tables and chairs and all of our bartenders are wearing masks.

Looks like pizzas will be back by July! Also for those of you who enjoy a drink on the upstairs porch or deck, we will have the upstairs bar open daily through the summer.

Bartenders are changing as well, we say goodbye to Kaleena and Chelsea, both have left us for management opportunities.

Great news, Richie, CJ and Mary are still mixing your favorite drinks. For those of you who have been in the Post you may have already met some of our new bartenders, if not stop in, say "hi" and meet Judy "Hey Jude", Brandon, Missy and Matt. I'm sure you will enjoy getting to know them and enjoy the new energy they bring.

Lori, Post Manager



Mike, Courtney and Junior (SAL member) Michael Thurber quickly cover their assignments.



If you know of anyone who should be added to this list, or would benefit from a call from me as their Chaplain, please let me know @ dstirlingsmith70@gmail.com, or 616.502.1555.

SICK CALL



In His and Your Service, Duane "Smitty" Smith, Chaplain

George Bryant, Walter Pedersen, Jim "Jimbo" Land, George Bennett, Charles Davis, Ken Kelly, Carl Kuzyk, Mike Ey, Jim Vette and all of our Legion family who are mourning the passing of loved ones.

Memorial Day 2020

While the community observance of Memorial Day was greatly reduced because of Covid-19 issues, the Honor Guard of Post 28 honored the long-standing tradition of placing flags on Veterans' graves buried in our local cemeteries in observance of Memorial Day. Post 28 Guard once again fulfilled our commitment even while under social distancing rules. Restricted to 10 members, our Honor Guard placed well over 400 flags on final resting places at Lake Forest Cemetery.

Organized by Past Commander Dave MacKellar, members of the Honor Guard met on 21 May, a windy Thursday morning prior to Memorial Day, to honor our fallen veterans.



Past Commanders Ray Ribbink and Dave MacKellar prepare flags for volunteers.



Past Commander Jim Porenta and Rifle Team member Harold Weaver place individual flags in their assigned area.

Now, more than ever, our veterans need your support. Please consider making a donation to the Auxiliary's Poppy Fund. One hundred percent of your donations support veterans, active duty personnel, and their families.

MAIL in a donation to:
 ALA Unit 28
 ATTN: Poppy Fund
 700 S. Harbor Dr.
 Grand Haven, MI 49417
 (Checks payable to ALA Unit 28)

PAY ONLINE, anytime, with a credit/debit card, at:
<https://www.americanlegiongh.org>
 click on the INFO menu, select DONATE,
 then choose POPPY PROGRAM.



Thank you for your support of veterans.

JULY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Please refer to the Post's Facebook page for
calendar updates @

https://www.facebook.com/pg/veteranswithacause.org/posts/?ref=page_internal

12						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	