



# 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](http://www.grandhavenlegion.org)

### LEGION

Janet E. Fonger, Post 28 Commander  
[jefflegion28@gmail.com](mailto:jefflegion28@gmail.com)  
Jay Stevens, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander  
TBD, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander  
Julie Johnson, 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](mailto:marcdarlene@gmail.com)  
Melanie Riekels, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres.  
Diane Janusch-Johnson 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:salcmdrpost28@yahoo.com)  
Hans VanHorsen, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander  
TBD, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto: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



On August 25, 2020, our Post experienced a historic milestone. The centennial history of Post 28 was shared with thousands of television viewers when WGVU Grand Rapids and WGVK Kalamazoo PBS television stations premiered our documentary, "Our Family, Our Home: Charles A. Conklin American Legion Post 28 Grand Haven, MI." We heard from many across West Michigan including Post 28 members, who gave accolades and mentioned how proud they were of our Post.

With a successful premiere under our belt, I am proud to announce that the documentary is confirmed for broadcast on another PBS station this Fall. More details coming. Dr. Chris Petras spearheaded this project and has been a champion of telling the world of our Post's accomplishments in serving veterans, veterans' families, and the local community. His efforts have greatly benefited our Post programs.

The Post kitchen is close to launching (before Labor Day weekend) and with a new Kitchen Manager at the helm! Dawn Stevens joins Post 28's "Forward for Tomorrow" team with a wealth of experience, including culinary work at Mission Point and the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. Dawn is a Post 28 Auxiliary member and nationally certified in proper food handling, preparation, and storage including kitchen sanitation.

Dawn's menu of "Tasty Fun" includes mouth-watering chicken tenders, mini-corn dogs, BBQ chicken nuggets, onion rings, tortilla chips with a delicious southern-style salsa (just the right kick), breaded mushrooms, and more. Quick and tasty. Post 28 dinners, both traditional and contemporary, will phase into Dawn's menu by Fall. As we wind down the summer, bring your family and/or friends to Post 28 for some "Tasty Fun." Don't forget, only members may purchase alcohol for themselves and nonmembers and that we are still governed by the Governor's social distancing, gathering, and sanitation and hygiene mandates.

Licenses (e.g., liquor licenses) for our Post are legally tied to compliance with the Governor's Executive Orders. Please be courteous and adhere to the COVID-19 rules at Post 28 so all may enjoy their Post 28 experience. Check the Post Facebook page and website for the kitchen reopening date. Announcement coming soon! The uncertainty and constant change of the COVID-19 context, along with our Post's operational licenses tied to compliance with Executive Order mandates, has left the scheduling of membership meetings in limbo. As Commander, I cannot, in good conscience, justify any attempts to "work-around" the Executive Order mandates. Doing so, could place the health and well-being of our older members, especially those with underlying conditions, at risk.

Secondly, our Post licenses are currently tied to compliance with Executive Order mandates and not worth the risk. In addition, attempts to restructure the Post premises with only one entrance/exit and additional mandated COVID-19 mandatory procedures, through "work around" attempts, would place an additional and unnecessary burden on our Post's staff in enforcing COVID-19 mandates. Again, not worth the risk. We will revisit the scheduling of membership meetings when the COVID-19 context allows.

Please note that after discussions with local officials, the September 4 screening of the documentary at Waterfront Stadium in Grand Haven has been postponed, given  
continued on page 2

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

**NEW MEMBERS**

KRISTINE M BEENEN	NAVY
ADAM WIGHT	COAST GUARD
ALEXANDER STANKOVICS	NAVY
BRADLEY A MARTIN	ARMY
CATHERINE A PAYNE KIRTLEY	MARINES
CHRIS SALENS	ARMY
CHRISTOPHER DOLLAHON	COAST GUARD
CHRISTOPHER J BLACK	NAVY
CODY DAWSON	COAST GUARD
CONNER DENNING	ARMY
CORY WISECUP	COAST GUARD
DALE BROWN	ARMY
DAVID STAFFORD	ARMY
DONALD ROSINSKI	ARMY
DUSTIN THOMAS	COAST GUARD
EDWARD RUNK	NAVY
EMILY NAIL	AIR FORCE
GARY GONZALEZ	ARMY
JACK DUFFY	COAST GUARD
JAMES BURKE	NAVY
JEFFERY STILL	NAVY
JIM RAICOVICH	NAVY
JOHN GIUSTI	ARMY
KEVIN HACKBARTH	AIR FORCE
LARRY D JACKSON	NAVY
LOUIS MILTON ADAMS	AIR FORCE
MAXWELL MC CLAY	COAST GUARD
MERLE PRINS	ARMY
MICHAEL KENNY	COAST GUARD
MICHAEL NAIL	NAVY
MICHAEL RIEDY	ARMY
NANCY WORLEY	COAST GUARD

**TRANSFERS**

JAMES THEIS	AIR FORCE
JERALD ALGER	ARMY
JEROME KLEIN	ARMY
JUSTIN PEGG	AIR FORCE
LARRY FISCHER	ARMY
MARK SWEET	ARMY
MICHAEL ROBERTSON	MARINES
RICHARD GROENEVELT	NAVY
RICHARD NESMITH	NAVY
THOMAS DEWEERD	NAVY
WILLIAM WATKINS	ARMY

**TAPS WERE PLAYED FOR:**

Mike Ey, USAF  
 Soren 'Skip' Nessen, USA  
 Ted Ostradick, USN  
 Clarence Diedrich, USA  
 David Roger-Horton, USA  
 Richard harden, USA  
 Kenneth R. Whitney, USN  
 Ira Bleyaert, USA  
 Rodney Bice, USA  
 Honors for Charles A. Conklin



**COMMANDER'S COMMENTS cont'd.**

the current COVID-19 context. Also, our annual 9/11 ceremony held at Post 28 is cancelled.

I want to thank everyone for your patience and support throughout the COVID-19 ordeal and for your inspiration in navigating our Post through these tough times. As the documentary notes, our Post has seen troubled times in the past but has always managed to pull-together and weather the storm. And why, we are 101-years strong.

Commander Janet



Commander Fonger participating in the Loutit District Library Wonder Woman campaign, encouraging kids and parents to sign up for a library card.



No one will ever forget where they were on the morning of September 11, 2001, when they heard of the attacks on the twin World Trade Towers in NYC and the Pentagon in Washington. This horrible and tragic day is etched forever in our memories.

Like the attack on Pearl Harbor that brought us into World War II, the 9.11 attacks led us into a new war... the war on terrorism. It also touched and changed forever the lives of each and every American.

On the anniversary of 9.11, we encourage you to spend a few minutes reflecting upon this event, and praying for the victims who died, and their families and friends.

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](mailto: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, Jim Vette, Darrel Myers, Mike Ripa and Roman Marciniak & spouse,** and all of our Legion family who are mourning the passing of loved ones.

## AUXILIARY

Happy September to everyone!

Serving and donating to our Veterans (our mission) has and will continue to be challenging with the COVID limitations.

However, with a little creativity locally and within our 5th District, ideas are sparking! Please support these initiatives...and know that we will be actively pursuing more new ideas and ways to serve/raise funds for Veterans starting this fall!

1. *Donations to the GRHV:* Since the Christmas Gift Shop is cancelled for this year, our 5th District Leadership Team has requested donations for our Veterans who live there. Our Auxiliary will be donating \$1000, and Nicole Goldberg and her Juniors will be collecting some of the specified items, as well as has already committed extra Girl Scout Cookies to GRHV! Please watch for details on how to donate on our Auxiliary FB page!

2. *Unit 28 Collection of D&W / Family Fare Receipts for "Direct your Dollars":* Please save all of these receipts and turn them in at the Post in an envelope marked "Auxiliary", or give the receipts to one of our Auxiliary Officers. It takes a LOT of receipts to make this work so spread the word with your friends and family!

3. *Serving at Post 28:* Please watch for opportunities to volunteer at the Post in the near future for food service. This is still in the planning phase, but more to come!

### Key Dates

Sept. 1-2: The City of Grand Rapids and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum will be celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II known as the Greatest Generation Day Celebration. This will include stories from WWII veterans, guest speakers, and a B-17 Armed Services Flyover on 9/2 @ 6pm. The events will take place on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> in Grand Rapids.

While it is not Flag Day, Independence Day, or even Veteran's Day this month, some of the quotes by Veterans submitted by Christine Trahan, National Americanism Committee Member for the ALA eBulletin, are so inspiring regarding what our flag means to them.....

- Cpl. Dora M. Blue, U.S. Marine Corps: Freedom, respect, courage, honor, duty.
- Staff Sgt. Kimberly Biggerstaff, U.S. Air Force: Duty, honor, country. Standing for a symbol of my country, I served honorably and for those who paid the ultimate price.
- Spc. 4th Class Charles L. Davis, U.S. Army: The flag means freedom to live in the best country in the world.
- Col. Donald R. Grannan, U.S. Air Force (Ret). I have seen it flown at hundreds of military installations across the globe. I have seen it flying in combat zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. And I have put far too many flag-draped coffins on planes for the final ride home. That flag is just a symbol; it is just a piece of cloth. But it symbolizes something tangible in what we stand for. Unlike many places in the world, we have an environment and way of life that provides fair opportunities for everyone to succeed. You can work in whatever field you wish, your property is yours to do with as you wish, and you can travel freely and live wherever you wish. In America, you are not immune from the consequences of your choices, but

American Legion Post #28



## SAL

Our August meeting was cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Our next meeting has been moved to September 14 due to Labor Day falling on the first Monday. However, due to restrictions, the meeting is limited to ten participants. We are planning on having the meeting with only the Executive Board and whatever spots are available from our members to make ten total. If you plan on attending, please come early or you may be unable to attend. The meeting will start @ 6:30 p.m. Please note the time!

Recent SAL contributions were given to the following: National Emergency Fund, Homeless Vets, Boys State, Love in Action and the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans (Recreation Fund).

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



## LEGION RIDERS

Ride safe. Stay safe & healthy.

Post 28 Legion Riders Director Gerald Keen.



## 8 & 40 SALON 499

Our monthly meetings continue to be on standby until further notice. Please stay safe & healthy!

Le Chapeau, Becky



they are your choices to make. There are no guaranteed outcomes, but you can expect fair and equal justice in the courts. America is not perfect, but you have the right to speak up and demand change without reprisal from the government. These freedoms created the strongest economy the world has ever seen. And these freedoms are why people around the world risk their lives to come here. These freedoms are also often mistaken for weakness by those who wish to destroy us. But we have shown throughout our history that if the cause is just, Americans will band together to fight and die for these ideals that our forefathers brilliantly crafted, and that our flag represents. That is why we drape the flag on those coffins, and that is what the flag means to me.

➤ BU2 Fraley, U.S. Navy: The flag means freedom, paid for by blood, sweat, and tears of those who served before, with, and after me. It means there are many families' loved ones who did not come home. It is honor and pride to see the flag wave in the wind, which many of us say are the breaths of those fallen soldiers. The flag reminds us that what we fought for — our freedom — covers the entire country, not just a small part.

Take care of yourselves, care for those in your circle, serve others wherever and whenever possible, and may God bless the USA!

Darlene DeHaan, Auxiliary President & PR Chair

Issue #1192 September 2020

## The Chaplain's Corner

### Standing In the Gap, But Not Alone!

It is a Challenge to follow Chaplain Smitty's God given words of wisdom. I am honored in following him this month in our newsletter! His article last month is a reminder of who our Leader is!

"For God And Country!", our Auxiliary Mission is worded in that order for a reason! We follow God first! He IS decided by our founders as our First Commander. Our earthly Commanders, as well as, our Commander-in-Chief have all been set in place by Him.

When my Son left for overseas I knew he was standing in the Gap, following his Commander's instruction. God destines the Who, of Who our Commander IS! We can do our deciding, but God brings the result. God placed my Son's Commander to lead him through things unforeseen in a foreign country. In comparison, you could say, this pandemic is like being in a foreign country !!!

For that reason, "For God and Country" are in that order. Imagine for just a moment that the Four Chaplains disputed over whose God was to be in charge? They all knew one thing, we all have a Loving God that set the example of sacrifice! So they laid down their differences, as watched by their troops, and prayed together to one God. They went down, as a sacrifice, with the ship .....while lives were saved! Yes, again, here's the clincher... those men who watched were changed forever! You see they witnessed God's Grace and sacrifice in those men, who laid down their lives in Unity following their God-given Mission for their lives.

Yes, Chaplain Smitty, I stand with you in the Gap, praying for peace and unity to be restored to our Post once again, by-passing our opinions and divisions with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians(5:22-24) As a reminder, we, as Auxiliary, are here to stand for the mission "In the Spirit of Service not Self...the Auxiliary is "to support The American Legion and honor..." and the preamble that we swore to uphold..."To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and goodwill on earth.....and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness." We must not look at this unusual time in our Country as the "normal" by which we make reasons to fight within, but by "the how " of rising above and promoting peace and goodwill within! In The Spirit of Service not Self!

Pam Medendorp-Peck, Auxiliary Chaplain



American Legion Post #28

## Around The Bar



Still dealing with Covid-19 and 50%, but want to thank all the members across the country who have come to visit us this summer. Also want to thank our bartenders. You guys have been amazing through all of this. We have had to deal with some crazy changes, but you all keep your smiles and your attitudes high.

Here's to a beautiful fall. Stay tuned for some fun beers and wines coming.

Thank you all again.

Lori, Post Manager

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.



Richard & Trudy Abraham  
Sandra Fitzgerald  
Richard Garay

## Poppy Fund Needs Your Help!



Our Poppy funds are extremely low! Less than 100 people have donated to the Poppy Fund this year. If every member of Post 28 American Legion Family donated \$1, we would raise close to \$4,000! Among other things, we support the GRHV veterans, who have been confined to their rooms for months. They can't even leave to get a snack from the vending machines! No visitors allowed, either. Our support would provide items of necessity, food, and entertainment (i.e. CD players) for the veterans.

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)

OR

**PAY ONLINE**, anytime, with a credit/debit card, at:

<https://www.americanlegiongh.org>

click on the INFO menu, select DONATE and choose POPPY PROGRAM.

Thank you for your support of veterans.

Issue #1192 September 2020

## Post Newsletter - Position Available

The Post is looking for a new layout editor for the monthly newsletter. Proficient computer skills required. The position is open to any Legion, SAL, or Auxiliary member. Please apply ASAP; the job begins with the October newsletter (which is done in mid-September). Contact Michele at [mlstetts44@gmail.com](mailto:mlstetts44@gmail.com).

# SEPTEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>Please refer to the Post's Facebook page for calendar updates @</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/pg/veteranswithacause.org/posts/?ref=page_internal">https://www.facebook.com/pg/veteranswithacause.org/posts/?ref=page_internal</a></p>						
9						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29