

SUBJECT: Chaplain Officer Report, 1st Quarter CY 2022

DATE: 28 April 2022

TO: Department Commander and Department Executive Committee

FROM: Chaplain John Gessner

1. Activities 1st quarter CY 2021:
 - a. Conducted a 12-week Reboot PTSD Recovery program to veterans and 1st responders.
 - b. Conducted training to chaplains and interested parties on The Role of an American Legion Chaplain at the Mid-Winter conference.
 - c. 12 Feb, participated in the State oratory Competition, Ripon, WI.
 - d. Established a chaplain's retreat at Camp American Legion for 21-22 May, the first in 4 years. Subjects will include the role of a chaplain, conducting various religious ceremonies, and a working group for developing religious emphasis action items for 2022-23. This retreat will serve as a baseline for future chaplain retreats.
 - e. Made considerable headway in developing a chaplain's contact list for resources and update information.
2. Upcoming activities 2022.
 - a. 21-22 May: Execute the Chaplain's Retreat, Camp American Legion.
 - b. 30 May: Speaker at Waterloo American Legion Post Memorial Day event.
 - c. 23 June: Speaker at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, La Crosse.
 - d. 14-17 July: Participate in the State Convention, Green Bay.

Respectfully submitted, 28 Apr 2022, John A. P. Gessner, Department Chaplain.



DuWayne Wieck : Department Historian

May 1, 2022

My journey as Department Historian for Commander Eirich has been an experience that I would not have had if Commander Eirich had not asked me to document his many travels throughout the state and beyond. I'd like to thank Department Commander Eirich for allowing me to many times work from home from pictures he has sent me through Facebook. Commander Eirich is on the road every week, many times multiple travels each week.

My last report left off just before Christmas so I will continue from there. After a short break for Christmas, Commander Eirich was invited to a Christmas dinner January 10th at Village Limits Restaurant in Little Chute. I met Commander Eirich there for the dinner and after the dinner we attended their Post meeting. January 13th-16th we attended Midwinter in Wisconsin Dells making appearances at many of the training classes held throughout the conference. Saturday night we attended the sweepstakes drawings and the entertainment who was an Elvis impersonator.

February 5th, 4 Chaplains remembrance ceremonies were held at 2 locations. Commander Eirich traveled to Post 385 in Verona for an early ceremony and then I met him in Saukville Post 470 for the 2nd District 4-Chaplains event. Both were well attended and very moving.

February 11th Commander Eirich submitted photos to me from his Lincoln Pilgrimage in Springfield Illinois. Some of the Legion dignitaries that attended with him were National Commander Paul Dillard, Wisconsin Auxiliary President Diane Weggen, and Wisconsin Adjutant Nathan Gear. The following day the Commander traveled to Oshkosh for the 6th District Americanism Banquet to help present awards. Photos were submitted via facebook.

Commander Eirich and Adjutant Gear met with members of the Department of Ohio American Legion February 17th for lunch in Milwaukee. On February 19th Commander Eirich attended the Arts & Rhythm Fundraiser in Grafton. Proceeds from the event went to veterans projects.

March 12th District 11 Executive Council held a meeting at Post 182 in Park Falls which Commander Eirich attended and the 13th he went to the Awards night at Post 494 in Caledonia. I received photos through facebook to document the events. March 18th I traveled with Commander Eirich to Orfordville where the SAL Squadron 209 held "Freezin' For A Reason" to raise money for Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative.

April 9th we were on the road again together for a full day of District Spring Conferences. We first went to Kaukauna for the 9th District Spring Conference and then to Minocqua for the 11th District. April 16th

Commander Eirich sent me photos from his day trip to Neillsville for their 7th District Spring Conference. Commander Eirich has given out thumbs up awards and Commander Coins to someone at almost all of the events he has attended including this one. April 23 Commander Eirich went to the Vans Ells-Schanen Post 82 in Port Washington for an event called Team Celebration. Money was raised for Dogs2Dogs Tags, an organization that trains comfort dogs, and 2 Veterans were there that received comfort dogs from D2DTags. Photos submitted. April 26th Commander Eirich and I went to the 68th Post Commanders Dinner in Plymouth, Post 243. He handed out awards for continuous years in the Legion and recognized the Past Commanders.

April 27th we were on the road to Twin Lakes for their Kenosha County Council meeting. Commander Eirich recognized Kenosha County for reaching 100% membership. April 29th we left for Boscobel to stay overnight to get an early start for Wauzeka's 3rd District Spring Conference the next morning. The Commander encouraged them to attend both the upcoming state and National Conferences. From there we headed to his own 2nd District Spring Conference in Lake Mills 2 hours away. There, he presented awards and reminded the membership to keep working for 100% and to attend the Celebration of Freedom in Portage.

Respectfully Submitted,

DuWayne Wieck

DuWayne Wieck
Department Historian



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
Nicholas P. Lange, Department Judge Advocate

JUDGE ADVOCATE REPORT
May 7, 2022

Activities since the 2022 Midwinter Conference

CONTRACT REVIEWS

- Review Overflow Room Contract with Tundra Lodge, Green Bay, for 2022 Department Convention
- Review Contract With Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, Green Bay, for 2026 Midwinter Conference
- Review Memorandum of Understanding between Badger Boys State and UW-Eau Claire for 2022, 2023, and 2024 Badger Boys State event.
- Review Contracts for Radisson Hotel & LaCrosse Center for 2024 Midwinter Conference.

POST/COUNTY/DISTRICT ISSUES

• **Manitowoc County Council – NOT IN GOOD STANDING**

Continuing to address the problem at Manitowoc County Council. They lost their tax-exempt status for the past several months have refused to get it reinstated. I explained to the previous Commander that it must be reinstated in 2021. My understanding is that other officers and County Council members have objected to that, because it will cost money. There has apparently been a recent change in leadership. The current Adjutant contacted me on April 18, 2022, to inform me that they were no longer going to be tax-exempt, they were closing their bank account, and returning the funds to the Posts within the county. As I had done previously, I advised him that tax-exempt status must be reinstated. I also requested that he notify me by April 30, 2022, whether the necessary actions would be undertaken by April 30, 2022. As of May 4, 2022, I have received no communication from him. However, on May 4, 2022, Department Vice Commander Julie Muhle informed me that they are now seeking reinstatement.

For more information about the tax issue, please read the attached Memorandum I have prepared.

• **Marshall Post 279, Dane County**

Post 279 has two members who have been brought up on charges of misconduct. An expulsion trial is scheduled for May 17, 2022. I am attempting to find a Legionnaire who is an attorney to act as the trial judge, which is required by Article 12, Section 11 of the Department By-Laws. If I'm unable to find someone to accept the appointment, my plan is to appoint myself.

- **La Crosse Post 52.** Post 52 was audited by the State and found be conducting unlicensed bingo games. There were other problematic behaviors that lead to nearly every officer resigning and transferring their membership to different Posts. After initially refusing to provide financial records and having their Post

Charter potentially subject to suspension or revocation, things seemed to have resolved favorably. Commander Eirich and Adjutant Gear were able to steer them back onto the correct path.

DEPARTMENT ISSUES

- **Tax Exempt Status.** The tax-exempt status issue faced by the Manitowoc County Council may be a growing problem in Wisconsin for The American Legion. I have obtained a database of all tax-exempt organizations that have lost their tax-exempt status for failing to file their 990 return with the IRS. For Wisconsin alone, the database contains nearly 17,000 organizations. My initial review shows that many of them are American Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL organizations in Wisconsin. I am trying to compile a select list focused solely on the Legion Family organizations and will try to coordinate an outreach program to assist these organizations, if they are still active, to regain their tax-exempt status. It may be worth considering a grant program to provide financial assistance where they do not have sufficient funds. The cost for reinstatement is \$600 if none of the “quick” exceptions apply.

CONTINUITY

I have communicated to Julie Muhle, who I anticipate will be the next Department Commander, that I want to step away from being the Department Judge Advocate at the end of my appointment at the conclusion of the 2022 Department Convention. In addition to serving as Department Judge Advocate, I am currently a Post Commander, District 10 Judge Advocate, ALRA District 10 Chaplain, and State ALRA Judge Advocate. My job is also keeping me busy. I am the Dunn County Corporation Counsel, but since early March I have been also the Acting County Administrator while the position is vacant. It's possible that I may be working in both jobs for the next few months.

When I was first appointed in January 2017, almost nobody knew me, but I've always felt welcomed have enjoy being the Department Judge Advocate immensely.

Nicholas P. Lange
Department Judge Advocate



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
Nicholas P. Lange, Department Judge Advocate

IRS FILINGS AND TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

FROM: Nicholas P. Lange, Department Judge Advocate

DATE: May 5, 2022

REQUIRED TAX FILINGS

Tax-exempt organizations must file a Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax every year. For American Legion posts, county councils, and districts, this will be the 990 Series of Forms. There are different versions Form 990 that organizations need to use, depending on their financial activity.

- **Form 990** must be filed if the organization has either: (1) gross receipts of \$200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand) or more, or (2) total assets of \$500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand).
- **Form 990-EZ** can be used if the organization has gross receipts less than \$200,000 and total assets of less than \$500,000.
- **Form 990-N** is the electronic version (no paper, it's done online). This can be used by an organization eligible to use a 990 or 990-EZ with gross receipts of \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand) or less.
- **Form 990-PF** is used by a private foundation exempt under section 501(c)(3).

More information about Form 990 and the different versions of it can be found on the IRS website at: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i990.pdf>

Failure to file the 990 eventually results in revocation of tax-exempt status.

TAX-EXEMPT STATUS IS REQUIRED

The American Legion is a federally chartered 501(c)(19) war veterans organization. It was created by a bill passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by the President. All of the other levels of the national organization ["National"] – post, county, district, department, and others, are bound by the federally chartered status of National and the National Constitution and By-Laws and all applicable resolutions of National.

Under federal law and state law, The American Legion is a corporation. All post, county, district and department organizations are corporations.

The Internal Revenue Services ["IRS"] issues every legal entity, such as corporations, partnerships, trusts, etc., an EIN. The American Legion (National) has an EIN, which is based on the tax-exempt status given to the entire organization in 1934. Because The American Legion is federally chartered, and has been given tax-exempt status by law, all of the levels are bound by National's tax-exempt status, and must be tax exempt. There is no choice.

As tax-exempt 501(c)(19) corporations, each post, county, district, department, etc., is required to file the appropriate Form 990 to maintain tax-exempt status. Any organization that fails to file an annual return or submit a notice as required for 3 consecutive years will have its tax-exempt status automatically revoked on and after the due date for filing its third annual return or notice.

Once an organization's tax-exempt status has been revoked, there are some problematic consequences:

- The organization is no longer a IRC § 501(c) tax-exempt organization.
- The organization is removed from the list of tax-exempt organizations by the IRS.
- The organization is now considered a “for-profit” organization.
- Unless exempt under IRC § 501, all corporations must file an income tax return whether or not they have taxable income. Every year. Domestic corporations need to file IRS Form 1120. Failure to file has legal consequences as well.
- All receipts from fundraising, dues, sales of beverages or food, rental of facilities, etc., are taxable. The organization may be liable for corporate income taxes. In addition, sales of beverages or food will be subject to sales tax.
- Donations to the organization are no longer tax-deductible to the donor.
- The organization, whether it's a post, county, district, or department, is no longer in good standing in The American Legion.

Perhaps most significantly, is that the organization that has lost its tax-exempt status, whether it's a post, county, district, or department, **is no longer in good standing**. An organization that is not in good standing risks having its charter (Constitution & By-laws) revoked.

Human beings aren't perfect. They make mistakes and forget to file the 990. Maybe they don't know it's supposed to be filed. However, once the officers of an organization knows that tax-exempt status has been lost, they begin taking steps to seek reinstatement.

Obviously, if the officers of an organization know that tax-exempt status has been lost and deliberately decide NOT to seek reinstatement additional problems are created, including Post Discipline, Member Discipline, and possibly other legal action.

The bottom line is that there is no option but to seek reinstatement. This is not something members vote on. It's unfortunate that it may cost money. However, it must be done. Remember - under federal law and state law, The American Legion is a corporation. All post, unit, squadron, county, district and department organizations are corporations. Corporations are either “for profit” or “tax exempt.” There are no other options. Now, imagine if all of the Posts, Auxiliary Units, SAL Squadrons, County Councils, Districts, etc., in every state became “for-profit” corporations. How long will Congress allow The American Legion be a tax-exempt 501(c)(19) organization?

Once reinstated, it should be someone's responsibility to file the 990. It doesn't take long.

HOW TO GET REINSTATEMENT

If an organization's tax-exempt status has been automatically revoked, the organization must apply to have tax-exempt status reinstated. This will require you to file an IRS Form, pay a reinstatement fee, and submit additional information. You can find more information about reinstatement on the IRS website at: <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/automatic-revocation-how-to-have-your-tax-exempt-status-retroactively-reinstated>

There are four ways to get reinstated, depending on when the revocation occurred:

1. Streamlined retroactive reinstatement
2. Retroactive reinstatement process (WITHIN 15 months)
3. Retroactive reinstatement process (AFTER 15 months)
4. Post-mark date reinstatement

1. Streamlined retroactive reinstatement

Organizations that were eligible to file Form 990-EZ or 990-N (ePostcard) for the three years that caused their revocation may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they:

- Have not previously had their tax-exempt status automatically revoked.
- Complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1023-EZ, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee not later than 15 months after the later of the date of the organization's Revocation Letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website.

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, "Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Streamlined Retroactive Reinstatement," and mail the application and user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 12192
Covington, KY 41012-0192

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure and files properly completed and executed paper Forms 990-EZ for all such taxable years. (For any year for which the organization was eligible to file a Form 990-N, the organization is not required to file a prior year Form 990-N or Form 990-EZ to avoid penalties.) The organization should write "Retroactive Reinstatement" on the Forms 990-EZ and mail them to:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Ogden, UT 84201-0027

2. Retroactive reinstatement process (within 15 months)

Organizations that cannot use the Streamlined Retroactive Reinstatement Process (such as those that were required to file Form 990 or Form 990-PF for any of the three years that caused revocation or those that were previously auto-revoked) may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they:

- Complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee not later than 15 months after the later of the date on the organization's revocation letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website.
- Include with the application a Reasonable Cause Statement that the organization had reasonable cause for its failure to file a required annual return for at least one of the three consecutive years in which it failed to file. There is more information about reasonable cause below.
- Include with the application a statement confirming that it has filed required returns for those three years and for any other taxable years after such period and before

the post-mark date of the application for which required returns were due and not filed.

- File properly completed and executed paper annual returns for the three consecutive years that caused the revocation and any following years. The organization should write “Retroactive Reinstatement” on these returns and mail them to:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service Center
Ogden, UT 84201-0027

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, “Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Retroactive Reinstatement,” and mail the application and user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 12192
Covington, KY 41012-0192

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure.

3. Retroactive reinstatement process (AFTER 15 months)

Organizations that apply for reinstatement more than 15 months after the later of the date on the organization’s revocation letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they satisfy all of the requirements described under the “Retroactive reinstatement (within 15 months)” procedure EXCEPT that the Reasonable Cause Statement the organization includes with its application must establish reasonable cause for its failure to file a required annual return for **all three** consecutive years in which it failed to file.

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure.

4. Post-mark date reinstatement

Organizations may apply for reinstatement effective from the post-mark date of their application if they complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1023-EZ, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee.

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, “Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Reinstatement Post-Mark Date,” and mail the application and user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 12192
Covington, KY 41012-0192

Reasonable Cause Statement

To establish reasonable cause, an organization must establish that it exercised ordinary business care and prudence in determining and attempting to comply with its reporting

requirements under section 6033. In determining whether the organization establishes reasonable cause, the IRS will take into account all pertinent facts and circumstances.

The Reasonable Cause Statement must provide all of the facts that support a claim for reasonable cause for failing to file a required Annual Return or notice for the relevant tax year or period, including a detailed description of all the facts and circumstances that led to the failure, the discovery of the failure, and the steps that have been or will be taken to avoid or mitigate future failures.

The following factors would weigh in favor of finding reasonable cause (with no single factor being either necessary or determinative):

- (1) The organization's failure was due to its reasonable, good faith reliance on erroneous written information from the IRS, stating that the organization was not required to file a return or notice under section 6033, provided the IRS was made aware of all relevant facts;
- (2) The failure to file the return or notice arose from events beyond the organization's control ("impediment") that made it impossible for the organization to file a return or notice for the year;
- (3) The organization acted in a responsible manner by undertaking significant steps to avoid or mitigate the failure to file the required return or notice and to prevent similar failures in the future, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Attempting to prevent an impediment or a failure, if it was foreseeable;
 - (b) Acting as promptly as possible to remove an impediment or correct the cause of the reporting failure, once the failure was discovered;
 - (c) After the failure was discovered, implementing safeguards designed to ensure future compliance with the reporting requirements under section 6033;
- (4) The organization has an established history of complying with its reporting requirements (if any) under section 6033 and/or any other applicable reporting or other requirements under the Code.

The Reasonable Cause Statement must also include an original declaration, dated and signed under penalties of perjury by an officer, director, trustee, or other official who is authorized to sign for the organization in the following form:

Declaration

I, (Name), (Title) declare, under penalties of perjury, that I am authorized to sign this request for retroactive reinstatement on behalf of (Name of Organization), and I further declare that I have examined this request for retroactive reinstatement, including the written explanation of all the facts of the claim for reasonable cause, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this request is true, correct, and complete.

Date: _____

Signed: _____



**DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN
SERVICE OFFICE
5400 W NATIONAL AVE.
MILWAUKEE, WI 53214**

Apr 29, 2022

TO: The Department Executive Committee
FROM: The Department Service Officer, James Fialkowski
SUBJECT: Activity Report, January - March 2022

Your Service Office is honored to represent The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin. Your office is proud, knowing that veterans, war widows(ers) and orphans will receive their due benefits and possibly one day a college education because we were able to help.

According to the VBA March 2022 data, the VA is currently tracking over 46 thousand Wisconsin American Legion clients at the Milwaukee VARO that received over 62 million dollars in federal benefits in the month of March and almost 370 million dollars since 10/01/2021.

Monthly, we continue to represent veterans in video BVA Judge Hearings and video/in-person hearings for the local VA Regional Office. The Service office continues training for all employees. We Attended VA Regional Office Service Officer and VA Hospital Meetings.

In March, the Service office completed national semi-annual training provided by Bergmann and Moore Veterans Law Group. The training focused on winning claims at the local level (State level versus appealing to the national board or higher).

In today's world, information security is vital. We are updating our capabilities and working to improve our service to veterans and their families. We are working to employ a platform to break down the distance barrier for many by being able to securely deliver and receive documents.

On April 18th, I provided headquarters with the Service Office portion of the WDVA State Grant request.

We are tracking work in the office differently since reopening the office.

Office Statistics	04/2021 - 03/2022
Walk in Clients	474
Appointments	342
Incoming Calls	2768
Outgoing Calls	4301
Emails	11949
Incoming Mail	21851
SEP and Transmittals	653
Direct Uploads	769
Hearings	83
Events Attended	3
Total Office Transactions	43193

Recap of VBA INFORMATION:

On August 5th, 2021, VBA added the new registry entry to the Title 38 CFR. § 3.320 Claims based on exposure to particulate matter for GWOT veteran that served in Southwest Asia – This entry provides **presumed service connection** for Asthma, Rhinitis, and Sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis).

On April 26, 2022, the VA has since **added nine rare respiratory cancers** to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to military environmental exposures to fine particulate matter. The cancers are:

- Squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx.
- Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea.
- Adenocarcinoma of the trachea.
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea.
- Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung.
- Large cell carcinoma of the lung.
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung.
- Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung.
- Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung.

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (“the Act” or “RECA”), establishes lump sum awards from 50 to 100 thousand dollars for individuals who contracted specified diseases for their roles in the atomic testing. By statute, the **RECA claims system terminates July 10, 2022**. Claims filed bearing a date of July 11, 2022, on the postmark or stamp by another commercial carrier shall be deemed timely filed when received by the Radiation Exposure Compensation Program. Claims after this date shall be barred. Get those claims in!

For more information, call our office.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN REPORT
DEPARTMENT SPRING MEETINGS – MAY 7, 2022

1. February 12, 2022 – Attended Department Oratorical contest at Ripon College, serving as a judge for the regional contests.
2. February 25, 2022 – Reviewed and voted in favor of Resolution #1, Statement on Ukraine.
3. March 1, 2022 – Attended a virtual Washington Conference visit with Senator Tammy Baldwin.
4. March 1, 2022 – Attended a virtual Washington Conference visit with Senator Ron Johnson.
5. March 3, 2022 – Attended a virtual Washington Conference visit with Congressman Glenn Grothman.
6. March 5, 2022 - Attended Badger Boys State meeting at Portage.
7. April 30, 2022 - Second District Conference – Lake Mills
8. May 1-3, 2022 – National Spring meetings, Indianapolis
 - Participated in the reception line for National Commander candidate Dan Seehafer on May 1, 2, and 3
 - Attended Convention Commission meetings as NEC Liaison – May 2-3
9. May 4-5 – NEC Meeting items of interest
 - An ad hoc committee on membership processing reviewed possible changes in the renewal process, including due dates, multiple year memberships, auto renewal by credit card, cyberpost for active military, and changes to PUFL. Some items will continue in study; several will be discussed below under resolutions.
 - Chip Ganassi Racing and the Legion unveiled a new initiative to combat veteran suicide called **Be the One**.
 - New DMS members as of May 1 total 95,512. The current national renewal rate is 89.2%.
 - Wisconsin will be recognized at the National Convention for Blood Donor awards in both post participation and individual participation
 - Scouting Square Knot Award winners from Wisconsin were Leonardo Campos-Moya and Robert Haglund
 - Mission Blue Post Assistance grants in 2021 totaled \$624,666 to 429 posts in 44 departments. For 2022, there have been 184 grants totaling \$273,384 to 116 posts in 33 departments. Posts have received over \$1 million since the program's inception in October 2020
 - DVOP (Disabled Veterans Outreach Program) of the Year Award – Geraldine Perry of Milwaukee
 - 2022 Legacy Scholarship awards – 71 recipients from 37 Departments (\$705,937)

- One from Wisconsin – Noelle Marie Destaubin

10. NEC Meeting resolutions

- The NEC considered 31 resolutions. 29 were approved, and two returned for further study. Following are several of significant note.

- Resolution 1 – Amend American Legion Constitution and By-Laws to Allow Multi-year and Rolling Memberships. This would allow the ad hoc committee mentioned above to proceed with creating procedures for viable changes to improve membership processing.

- Resolution 2 – The American Legion Legacy Scholarship. Provides for making more money available each year by allocating 100% of the prior year's donations and 50% of the prior year's net income. Priority still remains with children of the fallen, who receive \$10,000 per year. 50% disabled eligible children receive up to \$5000 per year. An additional change is the addition to trade schools for scholarship eligibility.

- Resolution 4 – Statement of Policy for the Temporary Financial Assistance Program. Clarifies the requirement for local investigation/verification of need, clarifies what TFA can cover, and defines eligible children. The revised statement of policy and procedures will be published soon.

- Resolution 28 – Creation of a Digital Membership Card supplementary to the traditional card. The digital card will be offered annually to all members in good standing in conjunction with the paper card.

- Resolution 29 – Bronze Brigade Membership Incentive Award. A new membership recognition for those who recruit 12-24 members

11. National Convention future locations and dates

2023 – Charlotte NC, Aug 25-31

2024 – New Orleans LA, Aug 23-29

2025 – Tampa Bay FL, Aug 22-28

2026 – Louisville KY, Aug 28-Sep 3

2027 – Kansas City MO, Aug 27-Sep 2

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Shappell

National Executive Committeeman

Department Adjutant FY22 Midwinter Officers Report

Welcome DEC and Guests,

We had a great third quarter at Department. Legion Programs commenced with this year's 2022 Oratorical Contest winner, Divyasree Chintamani. Congratulations to the 9th District and those that supported the program. Americanism and Government Testing and Junior Shooting Sports have completed successfully with the help of dedicated Legionnaires. The SALUTE Program partnership continues to grow and impact veterans in need throughout WI.

The HQ's Team continues to build stronger relations with our Legion Programs. I recently assigned a Program Coordinator to support the WI American Legion Riders (ALR). By working together, Department is helping provide more ALR outreach and marketing support. Check out the ALR new webpage on wilegion.org, under Our Family drop down.

The opportunity of serving veterans throughout WI's four seasons has opened up some new opportunities at Camp American Legion (CAL). CAL had a successful February event sponsored by veteran organization, WI Heroes Outdoors (WHO) ice fishing event. WHO's mission focuses on connecting veterans and their families to the outdoors which aligns well with CAL's mission. Another new adventure, CAL is making its own Maple Syrup for the first time thanks to a generous donation from WI American Legion Auxiliary Unit 449. This new spring season Maple Syrup event has already generated new volunteers at camp and future possibility of selling these products to generate new fundraising income opportunities.

We had some unfortunate news this spring with cabin sponsors from District 6 Riders and Price County withdrawing their cabin sponsorship. This withdraw was primarily due to financial and volunteer hardships. We thank them both for their continuous years of service supporting veterans. These recent resignations initiated me to have concerns regarding CAL operations and verifying the well-being of all our cabin sponsors. To help address these concerns we updated the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreements for Lot 3, 4, and 5 sponsorships. These MOUs have helped identify the strength of our cabin sponsors and identify current needs at camp to include future Capital Improvement Projects. We also began identifying new sponsorships interested in taking over those cabins minimizing operational impact on current camp schedules.

The Department Commander and I had to address some difficult issues presented to department. These issues range from not having proper licenses, to disciplinary issues from our Legion Posts. Please ensure your Posts have updated Constitution and Bylaws and properly filing annual taxes. We have several Posts who failed to file taxes annually, losing their nonprofit status meaning they can no longer operate under 501c19 Department of WI.

The 2022 National Convention is quickly approaching. Make sure to invite non-delegates to visit and attend the Departments Legion Family event on Sunday at the MKE War Memorial Center.

This is my report, unless any questions?

Respectively,

Department Adjutant Nathan Gear

Gregory P. Eirich
Department Commander
Department of Wisconsin
American Legion

April 27, 2022

Department Executive Committee

My attached report reflects most of what I have done since my last report at Mid-Winter. Some of the items missing are the daily phone calls with the Adjutant that can last up to 1 hour discussing issues within our department. Also, the numerous emails, phone calls that I had to address daily regarding problems with Posts, communications with Department Vice Commander's and the general business of running this Department. Also, not all trips to department have been noted.

To define some of the highlights since my last report.

A highly successful Mid-Winter conference at Ho Chunk Casino and Conference Report. Still on the tails of a Covid outbreak. The turnout was great considering the circumstances of this recovery period and the daily news blasting out this pandemic. Our department is now looking at a new Mid-Winter venue at Green Bay which is exciting. And my expectations are high for Mid-Winter 2023!

The Lincoln Pilgrimage was an outstanding event put on by the Illinois Department of American Legion. Going to Lincoln Tomb is always a humbling experience because it was my 3rd time visiting this site. Also, the touch of the nose with Department Auxiliary President Diane Weggen is always a fun and memorable time. The program put on in the tomb is outstanding and a pleasure to be part of.

The communication with our Congresspersons and Senators via Zoom was educational, informational, current, respectful, and cordial. It was a delight to interact with our Legislators and talk with them regarding the National American Legion Legislative efforts with support. Many of the legislators had the Legislative Updates that were sent out to them which was so good to see. If the legislators were not available, they had staff there who had a good ear and were genuinely concerned about veteran's issues. One of the notable comments made is their offices receive thousands of request each year. So, you can note that competition for Federal dollars will always be tough.

Monthly updates via Commander's Huddle with Department Vice Commander's and membership Chair Jim Waltich continues. This is a wonderful way to update our leadership on what is current and what is happening at Department. The exchanging of ideas, comments are beneficial to open communication with leadership. I keep the Zoom meeting to an hour.

March madness was a successful event! Despite some negative feedback from some District Commander's this event is worthwhile to put on every year. This is ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT, always. Bickering over the value of this was not helpful and some districts did not feel the full potential of this event due to lack of belief. The numbers provided by Membership Coordinator indicate that Membership Chair Waltich's work putting this event together was worth it. My recommendation for future March Madness events is rock solid. Continue them or some other similar format.

I have attended most of all District Conferences. Missing the 12th District Conference due to a conflict with my Testimonial. I notified Commander Markle of this. Distance was the factor in not attending.

Throughout this year, as your Department Commander I have completed several Commander's videos to help with communication throughout our department. I do hope as the next Department Commander takes over that Commander will do the same. That individualized touch from the Department Commander has meaning to the audience of our Legion members and the public if sent on the public spectrum. I want to thank Jen Swenson and Angie Chappell, as well as the Department Adjutant Gear for their assistance in making these videos happen.

As you can see from the weekly delivery of Commander's activity sheet, I have been busy. Though not all my time is not on the road. I continue to communicate Department wide that Commander Visit requests can be submitted.

I ask and I continue to emphasize that effective communication comes from talking to people personally about issues that come out. Sending out emails to several people is distracting for some and a negative to others. Most problems or questions can be dealt with directly via a Phone call to the Department Commander or Department Adjutant. There should be a communications forum via Zoom set up twice a year with PDCs to address concerns, issues, problems, solutions, etc. One in fall and one in spring. You do have a voice and I and any future Commander would like to hear it.

I want to thank our Department Team for all their challenging work, especially, as we enter spring and many of our programs start hitting the ground. We have a very dedicated TEAM. They are professional, courteous, detailed and determined to bring the best product to our department.

It has been a pleasure to be your Department Commander. It has been exciting, challenging, educational, and fun. Not all in that order. I have 2 ½ months to go as your Department Commander and I am determined to do the absolute best for this organization. Some of our District Commanders are moving on and up. Others, moving on to other endeavors. Always, remember that mentoring is a big part of your future now. We need excellence in our department. Find that excellence! Train, mentor, educate via WALC, and put them in a position that they can make a Positive Impact within our organization. PDC's, I ask the same of you. If you are already doing that, thank you! We need your help on a continual basis. Your guidance and wisdom are wanted and needed.

Finally, our organization can grow! Let us turn around this membership drop and let us start getting some positive numbers. Remember, ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT. We are all in it together. And that it is VETERANS!

Thank you for being here, thank you for all that you have done and will do. Continue to make a POSITIVE IMPACT with your Post, Community, State and Nation. LEGION WISCONSIN!

GREG EIRICH
Department Commander
Wisconsin American Legion

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
EIRICHS ACTIVITY REPORT

1/10/2022 Attend Post 258 Event in Little Chute, WI

1/13/2022 thru 1/16/2022 Midwinter Conference, Ho Chunk Casino and Conference Center.

1/25/2022 Department Headquarters

1/26/2022 Attend hearing at Wisconsin Capitol on POW/MIA issue

2/4/2022 Meeting with Fundraising Chairperson, Barb Belmont, Appleton, WI

2/5/2022 Attended 3rd District Holiday Party

Attended 2nd District 4 Chaplains Program, Saukville, WI

2/7/2022 Commander's Huddle

Attended 4 Chaplains Program, Post 38, Appleton, WI

2/11/2022 THRU 2/12/2022 Lincoln Pilgrimage, Springfield, IL

2/15/2022 Central Region Zoom Call with National Vice Commander Wilson

2/17/2022 Participated in Site Visits with Department of Ohio Commander Jean Wilson and her husband NVC Wilson, along with Department Adjutant and his spouse.

2/18/2022 Meeting at Department Headquarters to go over proposed speakers for Department Convention. Picture event with donations with Mike Burt. Foundation Board Special Meeting.

2/19/2022 Attend Art and Wine Tasting Event at Grafton Post. Fundraiser for Dan Seehafer.

2/21/2022 Attended 94th Annual Auxiliary George Washington event.

2/24/2022 Monthly Finance Zoom Meeting 1pm

Zoom meeting with Judge Advocate, Adjutant

2/26/2022 Attended Dinner and awards presentation at Post 537

3/1/2022 National Legislative Zoom meeting with Congressman Kind, 10:30 am

National Legislative Zoom Meeting with Senator Baldwin, 2:00 pm

National Legislative Zoom meeting with Senator Johnson, 3:00 pm

3/2/2022 National Legislative Zoom meeting with Congressman Tiffany's Liaison Carlos Goetz.

3/3/2022 National Legislative Zoom meeting with Congressman Grothman, 8:30 am

National Legislative Zoom meeting with Chris Coldson, Congresswoman Moore's office

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
EIRICHS ACTIVITY REPORT

National Legislative Zoom Meeting with Congressman Gallagher, 12:45pm

National Legislative Zoom meeting with Congressman Fitzgerald, 1:00 pm

3/5/2022 Badger State Directors Zoom Meeting, 9:00 am

VA & R Zoom Meeting, 10:00 AM

VA & R Zoom meeting, 1:00 pm

3/7/2022 National Legislative Zoom meeting with Congressman Steil

Commander's Huddle, 1:00 pm

Attended briefing at Middleton VA Hospital, Madison 2:30 pm

National Legislative Zoom Meeting with Congressman Pocan (Zoom while driving back to Sheboygan)

3/9/2022 Watched National Commander's Testimony

3/11/-3/12 22 Meeting with Taylor County Legionnaires and recognition. VFW Club, Medford, WI. Tour of Stetonsonville American Legion Post with 11th District Commander Polzien.

Attended 11th District Executive Committee Meeting on Saturday in Park Falls, WI.

3/14/2022 Attended Legion Birthday Party, Post 494, Caledonia, WI. Spoke and handed out Commander Pins to those in attendance.

3/18/2022 Attended Freezin for a Reason fundraiser. A SAL event in Ordfordville, WI.

3/22/2022 Department Headquarters Membership RoundTable with Chairmen Waltich

3/24/2022 Department Headquarters for Department Finance Meeting.

4/1/2022 Zoom Meeting with President Weegen, SAL Det Cdr David Fuller, State Legion Rider President Ray Pasbrig. How to work together better and fundraising for 2022-2023.

4/1/2022 Departed for 10th District Conference, Eau Claire, WI. Ice Breaker at Legion Post 53.

4/2/2022 10th District Conference, Legion Post 83. Spoke, presented Commander Coins, Commander's Pins, and Commander's Thumbs Up award to an outstanding Legionnaire for his years of volunteer service to the American Legion.

4/4/2022 Meeting with Adjutant at Department HQ's. Signed documents for SAL Squadron Charter. Foundation Zoom meeting with President Fisk and directors.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
EIRICHS ACTIVITY REPORT

4/7/2022 Meeting with Camp American Legion Committee via Zoom

4/9/2022 Attended 9th District Conference in Kaukauna. Recognized PNVC Russ Hansetter for his service and contribution to Marketing and Communication committee. Attended 11th District Conference in Minocqua. Recognized PDC Frank Koskta for his recruiting. Each individual received my Thumbs Up Statue and Commander's Coin.

4/11/2022 Commander's Huddle with Department Vice Commander's, Adjutant, Membership Chair, and 1st District Commander Karl Stuvengen.

Zoom meeting with DVC Latimer, 1st District Commander Stuvengen, DVC Julie, Adjutant. Discussion was on 5th District and how to communicate with that District and its members.

4/12/2022 Attended Cedarburg Post 288 Post event. 7pm.

4/16/2022 Zoom Meeting with PCC Club. Attended 7th District Spring Conference in Neillsville, WI. Recognized PDC Roger Mathison and PDVC Ken Schoolcraft for their volunteer duties. Each received a Thumbs Up statue and a Commander's coin.

4/19/2022 Department HQs for 100 Miles for Hope Video. Legion business with Adjutant, Administrative Manager and Membership Coordinator as well as Finance Director.

4/23/2022 Attended Children and Youth Event at Port Washington Post 82 in the morning. Participated in sending out a personal card to a veteran. Participated in meeting a couple of vets who were presented with support dogs from Dogs to Dogtags.

4/24/2022 Attended 6th District Conference at Fond Du Lac Post 75. Spoke to audience about Department events and recognized Posts who were achieving elevated levels of per centage in membership. Presented Thumbs Up Awards to Finance Officer and Wife of Adjutant Dave Steinert for her excellent volunteerism. Also, presented a Commander's coin to PDVC Jerry Lauby for his contributions to Badger Boys State.

4/26/2022 Attended 68th Post Commanders Dinner at Plymouth Post 243.

4/27/2022 Attended Kenosha County Council meeting in Twin Lakes, WI. Recognized County Commander Tom Visintainer for 100% County with a Thumbs Up award, Commander's Coin, and Membership Coin. Also recognized posts in attendance that reach 100% membership. Recognized Ted DiMicchi for his work regarding the National Convention in Milwaukee.

4/28/2022 Attended Department Finance Meeting at Department Headquarters, Portage. 1 pm meeting