



# MICHIGAN LEGIONNAIRE

Michigan Legionnaire & Wolverine Auxiliaire Vol. LXXXII No. 8

## The American Legion Takes the Lead for Our Veterans

**Mark Sutton, Public Relations Director**

Spring Meeting 2014 in Indianapolis had just begun for the committees called to attend. As our committee began the business assigned we were visited by PNC Jake Comer and others who came to inform us that a press conference would begin at 2PM on the 4th floor of the National Headquarters. National Commander Dan Dellinger would be asking for the resignation of US Department of Veterans Affairs Director Secretary Eric Shinseki. Most of us had heard about the initial problems in Phoenix, Az the week prior, however, new revelations the previous night reported by the media combined with findings of TAL "A System Worth Saving" Task Force and the other reports from a crossed the country about problems at VA Medical centers and manager prompted asking for his resignation.

Over the course the next weeks, light is being brought upon a long list of issues showing lapses in leadership and management. "It's not just Phoenix" has become the theme of reporters, representatives, and veterans alike. While other organizations have criticized The American Legion's stand on this issue, TAL is pressing on and

making sure our veterans are cared for properly and continually. Asking for the resignation of a USDVA Secretary is not a decision one comes to lightly, but there comes a time when the problems pile up to a point that the leadership has to act.

To learn more about the other problems found visit <http://www.legion.org/veteran-healthcare/222046/its-not-just-phoenix> or scan the QR Code.

### Is It All Bad News?

The Veterans Administration and the task they have to serve our veterans is not a complete mess. The System Worth Saving Task Force visited the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center at the end of April and the Director Robert McDivitt is pressing ahead with the task at hand. See page 13 for more about the visit.

There are bad apples in every bunch, let us be sure to give credit where credit is due and thank the workers, doctors, nurses, and other staff who care for our veterans who are performing in outstanding ways. Let us also continue to be vigilant to ensure every veteran is receiving the care they have earned.



## 2014 Convention Reports Edition of the Michigan Legionnaire

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June 2014

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Please keep the photo at least 200 dpi or larger. If you are submitting a hard copy photo, please note photos printed from a home printer cannot be used, nor can photos clipped from newspapers.

We look for photos showing Legion caps in action whenever possible.

Interested in placing an ad in the Michigan Legionnaire? Please Contact Mark Sutton at: info@michiganlegion.org or by phone at 517-371-4720 ext 16.



**Chaplain**  
**Jennifer L. Smith, State Chaplain**  
**Summer Walk**

How has your 2014 as a member of the Legion Family been so far? Do you have plans for the summer – Activities that will uphold the mission of patriotic service of our organization? Many Posts have a variety of events scheduled, with special reverence paid to memorial events, youth programs, and/or celebrations of our nation's independence. I hope you have such plans as well and that they bring you joy and touch the hearts of others.

This topic brings me to a recollection of a past late spring/summer event of my youth. This was for a charity walk that supported a local food bank and others in the area. As a young person (11, I believe), true poverty was not something I could fully appreciate then. Although my family endured many rather lean times, we were incredibly blessed, especially when compared to those living with far less.

The task was to get donations for a 10-mile walk and the event was supported by my church and Girl Scout troop. As a part of the endeavor, a couple members of my troop and some of our church members toured the local food pantry; which I previously did not even know existed. It was really eye opening as we noticed the amount of food used, indicating a need larger than we had imagined. Most touching, my friend from the Girl Scouts and I were shocked when we noticed a classmate's mother getting food. She saw us and was so embarrassed that we pretended not to see her. She had been grateful and relieved by the two bags of groceries given, but upon noticing us, the look on her face was sorrowful. I wondered then, and now, how many suffer in relative silence.

It was not until years later, when stationed in Saudi Arabia and Iraq that I saw abject poverty and the looks given were observed with new appreciation in the face of stark hunger and despair. This is why focusing upon blessings is so important as while we each have much to complain about, we are also given many gifts, great and small, that we too often take for

granted and forget to be thankful for in a meaningful way. Therefore, we should endeavor to be grateful for what we have, even in the face of travails. As Psalm 136:1 ESV proclaims, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."

Regarding the 10-mile walk, I endured it thanks to friends and Gatorade, but it reminded me of the time I was dragged to the day after Thanksgiving sale at the mall (minus the observed hand-to-hand combat for an on sale purse) – Hot, crowded, and miles long. Still, it was worthwhile and the look on that mother's face has stayed with me despite my never speaking of it. For me, here was the lesson -- Our issues are relative to our environment regarding what is considered poor, etc., and we should always focus on what positives we have with gratitude, though it can sometimes be terribly difficult. Moreover, we should also give as we can and understand that we may have those among us suffering in obscurity. Gladly, this selfless giving is nothing new for members of the Legion Family for as Legionnaires, Sisters, Sons, and Riders, we often give freely of our time and resources to help others. In that regard, we are upholding not only the Four Pillars, but also for some, it is fulfilling a higher purpose. "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35 ESV).

Finally, I thank you for your fellowship over the past year. While I was not able to travel as much as I would have liked, it was still wonderful to see and meet with all of you that I did and I was blessed by the interactions. Thank you, and of course Dept. Commander Moore, for allowing me to be your State Chaplain and I pray you continue your amazing efforts for God and Country in this summer and for many years to come.

May God richly bless you.

**WILWIN NEWSLETTER**

**Bill Hafeman, PDC, and Director**

The opening of Wilwin got off to a slow start this year. The winter would not go away. Lou Oberle was able to get in on May 4th to turn on the heat and electricity to the Veterans Home. All building have survived the winter; the forest lost many trees due to the harsh winter.

Wilwin solicitation letters went out in April to all American Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units and Sons of the American Legion Squadrons. If your organization has not made its annual donation, we encourage you to continue your support of our objectives.

Volunteers are needed to assist in the many and various aspects of the beginning of our camping season. We have lots of work and very few laborers. I encourage and challenge each of you to take a few days out of your schedules to drive up and look at the exciting changes that are ongoing. Currently the work of restoration and facility improvements is being done by a few volunteers, and many "hired professionals" instead.

This year plans on being the busiest year ever at the Lodge. We are expecting more PTSD and TBI patients from around the State. In addition, we expect Sheryl Mankel to be back with her horses for equestrian therapy for our wounded warriors along with her dogs whom participate in the healing process. Sheryl is a Nationally Certified Practitioner for equestrian therapy. Unless you are there as a witness, you will not believe the difference Wilwin makes for these disabled veterans. All disabled veterans on retreats and the veterans and their families that reunite after long deployments are pro gratis. The same holds true with the Scouts and other youth organizations.

On May 9th, Lou Oberle attended a conference of the Michigan Psychological Services of Michigan at Mackinac City. The 25 attendees were professional providers who work for the VA, DOD, Veteran's Court System and private practice psychologists, social workers

**Wilwin Continued Page 4**

**STATE OFFICERS**

State Commander .....Raymond Moore, Lake City	Finance Officer .. George Dolan, Grand Blanc	Alt. National Executive Committeeman ..... Roger Webster, Croton
State Adjutant. . . . Patrick W. Lafferty, Farwell	Historian ..... Mitch Louth, St. Johns	Immediate Past Commander ..... Thomas Brown, Oscoda
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3rd Zone ..... August Miele	National Executive Committeeman ..... John Skinner, Schoolcraft	Public Relations Director ..... Mark Sutton, Eaton Rapids
4th Zone ..... Gary Hlavka		
5th Zone. .... David Spencer		

# Headquarters

*Raymond Moore, State Commander*

## AS WE CLOSE OUT ONE YEAR, WE BEGIN ANEW



Raymond Moore  
State Commander

Last call for Membership and a need to complete our programs for 2014 is upon us. It is now time to review what has transpired so far this membership year, dig out the walking shoes, review the Post roster and contact those that have yet to pay their 2014 dues. We must determine if there is a need for each of us to act to ensure those who have not yet paid are in need of assistance to maintain their membership. Is there a hardship which we can assist with? Why haven't we done this or known about it before now? Are we really assisting our fellow members and their families by waiting to hear from someone else about a friend and fellow mem-

ber perhaps going through a tough time, financially or medically that we could or could have been assisting with? Veterans serving Veterans has been our mantra, so let us give the mantra meaning.

Programs are now in full swing. Have we pursued signing up a student for our programs? Will there be a Student from your area involved in Boys State, Student Trooper, American Legion Baseball or Girls State? Does the Post have a plan to be involved in any local celebrations? Will The American Legion be involved in Local Parades, host a Get out the Vote program, host a Meet the Candidates effort? Will you complete the year by compiling the reports, Service Officers, Consolidated Post Report, Bonding and Officers List and getting them into Lansing in a timely manner? Remember, the job is not done until

the paperwork is in.

Are we registering delegates for The American Legion Convention in July? Every Post should have a representative at the District and Department Conventions to stay up to date on what will be important to our Veterans and Active Duty military and their families. At a time when Veteran issues are hot topics and many changes happening in the area of delivery of services to our Veterans in this State, we all need to be involved in seeing to it that these changes only enhance the mission. At a time when there is a prospect for a reduction in force for our Active Duty Military, we all need to have a voice in how deep these cuts may be. As we elect new Post and District and Department Officers we each need to know who may be best qualified and what they see as important to maintain the principles

of our Organization. These issues can only be addressed by being involved. Those attending Convention will have many opportunities for some training from our Michigan and National Staff. You will hear from many speakers and be a part of ensuring our future by knowing the leaders who will oversee our many programs.

On a personal note, as I wrap up one of the finest years of my life; I want to thank each of you, Legionnaire, Auxiliaries, Senior and Junior, and Son for the courtesies extended to Marcia and I at each event we were able to attend. I have been involved in our organization for many years but this year allowed me a new perspective to see up close what you all do to support the 4 Pillars of The American Legion. (If only you would all report it and publicize it so our membership and our non-member Veterans would have the same perspective so they would renew or sign up).

I have always been proud to be a member, but am rejuvenated by knowing that each of you is in some way carrying out the mission. Some efforts that are successful in one area may not work in another location but in each location there is a program in support of the mission that works for the good of everyone. This is what we do and you all do it very well.

I can only hope that my mission to represent each of you was successful and thank you for the opportunity. "THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES" HOPE TO SEE YOU IN LIVONIA!

*Patrick Lafferty, State Adjutant*

## Pure Michigan Contributions

### D-Day plus 70 Years



Patrick Lafferty  
State Adjutant

As you receive this issue in the mail the United States and Allied Force countries will be remembering the 70th Anniversary of the Allied Invasion of Normandy, France, D-Day. The day 156,000 Allied troops disembarked to liberate Europe from the hands and oppression of Hitler's Third Reich. Thousands of ships, planes, tanks, and materials descended on the shores of northern France.

On June 6th, 2014 high school

students from Michigan's Lakeshore High School band will play and march in festivities taking place in France. They will go to recognize and honor the 419 Michigan service members buried at Normandy, France, and the American Cemetery by pouring sand from Michigan beaches on their graves.

Michigan's contributions to D-Day and World War II was not just from the men and women who served in the Military, but also the thousands who worked in the Ford, GM, and Chrysler plants producing the fighting supplies for those service members to use. B-24 Liberator Bombers, Sherman Tanks, Jeeps,

Half-tracks, not to mention the millions of rounds of ammunition and artillery shells were all pouring out of Michigan factories. Oldsmobile alone produced 48 million rounds in one plant.

Today let us take a moment to remember and appreciate the contributions of not only the American service members who were killed to liberate Europe, but also the thousands of our Michigan friends and families who produced the supplies to keep the fight going to Berlin. Not everyone carried a rifle to win World War II, but they contributed none the less.

# Membership

## Membership Pressing On - Membership Matters



**By Larry Money,  
Membership Director**

I can hardly believe that the 2013-14 membership year is coming to an end. It seemed like winter would never end and here we are going into June.

With all the rough weather conditions we endured, the Department of Michigan has prevailed. At this writing we are at 95% plus of our membership goal for 2013-14. What an outstanding job the Zone Commanders, District Commanders and Post Commanders have done this year.

Although 100% goal is always our hope, we have done an excellent job this year. I want to thank each of you that has contributed to this year's goals.

I want to personally thank Commander Moore for entrusting me with the privilege of being his Membership Director. Thank you to all the staff at Department Headquarters this year for all that you have done for me and the Department of Michigan.

For God and Country

*Larry*

### Wilwin Continued

and other professionals dealing primarily with PTSD & TBI injuries. It was an opportunity for him to share our work at Wilwin Lodge along with Dr. Mark Kane. Their conference will be scheduled at our lodge in the future. The providers come from all regions of Michigan, all VA hospitals and the private sector. Lou states, "It was a 'real eye opener' for me, being a Vietnam veteran and not having access to a provider when I returned and transitioned back into civilian life."

Remember, Wilwin is your program, open to all veterans, regardless of affiliation. As veterans, you are entitled to use the facilities at anytime there is room available. There are a limited number of camping areas for those who have motor homes or camper trailers. Electrical plugs and great tasting well water are available on the premises at all times. The only thing that the board of directors ask is that anytime that you wish to stay overnight at the facility, please contact Earl or Bev Ruttkofsky at 231-881-0844 for reservations.

We are looking forward to meeting with everyone at Livonia summer convention. Our annual meeting will be held and board members will be getting assignments for this next year. If anyone wishes to serve on a committee within the association we have vacancies. Please attend the Wilwin board meeting.

Again, we thank each and every one of you for your tremendous support. Without your support we would not be able to achieve our goals of aiding our veterans in a place that each and every one of you can be proud of.

## District Meetings 2013 - 2014

### 1st District

Meetings begin @ 7PM  
June 2, 2014 @ Joe Louis Post #375  
Address: 19486 Sherwood, Detroit, MI. 48234

### 10th District

Lunch @ 12:00PM  
Meeting @ 1:00PM  
Jun. 7, 2014 @ TBA

### 11th & 12th District

June 13 & 14  
Location: Quality Suites & Inn, 2603 N. Lincoln Rd, Escanaba (US 2/41/35 before you get to Escanaba on the west side of the road)  
Rooms: \$91.40/ night. Reservations under American Legion must be in by May 15th, 906-789-1200: Alternative motel is the Super 8 Motel next door; 906-786--7819.  
Times: Registration (\$10) starting at noon Fri-

day 6/13/14.

Joint session for Memorial Service begins at 6:30 P.M.

Banquet Saturday evening \$20. Congressman Dan Benechek is expected to speak on the VA in Washington.

### 16th District

Meetings Begin at 7:30 PM  
June 10th, 2014 @ Garden City Post 396 \*  
\* Service Officer School 6:30 PM  
\*\* Memorial Service at 6:30 PM

### 17th District

Meetings start @ 7PM  
4-Jun @ Livonia #32 @ 6:30PM

### 18th District

Meetings start @ 2:00PM  
June 8, 2014 @ Royal Oak Post #253



### LEAD Training

## Expand Your Knowledge at 2014 Summer Convention in Livonia, MI

### 4 reasons to be at Summer Convention: Training, Training, Training, and Training.

Are you a new commander or new adjutant? Have questions? Need to understand some of the requirements? **Join us Friday night June 27th at 6:30PM for training and instruction.**

On Saturday June 28th, 2014 we have the **American Legion Extension Institute** from 8AM-12PM, learn all about the history and structure of the organization you belong too. Required to attend Leadership College in Indianapolis.

Then at 1PM we will talk about creating a great **Americanism and Children & Youth Community program** for your area.

The last class will begin at 3PM with a class on **Communication Services - The right mix of digital and print media is vital to The American Legion's mission and identity alike. Today's media landscape is constantly changing. From the real-time de-**

*livery of American Legion messages through social media like Twitter to the construction of an engaging quarterly print publication, a communications strategy must connect the dots between these various information channels. Students will leave with a good knowledge on how to market, deliver and engage the Legion audience through these channels. Success depends on strategic planning and a clear understanding of the desired result.*



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*Mike Huckelberry*



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SECTION TWO

# AUXILIAIRE



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June 2014

*From the Desk of the President*

*2013 - 2014 Department President, Sandra Snyder*



## On Track With Our Veterans and Our Programs

It is hard to believe that my year as your Department President is coming to a close. Where did those months go??

We set goals for the year and some we have met, and others fell a little short

Our work is never done as we continue our Mission for our Veterans, their families and our programs.

I want to thank Nancy Knox, Sue Verville, Mary Anne Yuncker and Bonnie Olson for stepping up to fill in for me when I was not able to travel. When I started this year I was in good health but it didn't stay that way. I have been grounded since the first weekend in March to my chair or bed with a double compound fracture of my left foot.

I got the green light on April 30, 2014 from my doctor so I am back on the road again. Not walking yet but have wheelchair and scooter, and with help of a driver I shall finish my year.

So with all needed equipment and driver I was off to Battle Creek on May 1st for the 60th Annual School Awards Program at the W.K. Kel-

logg Auditorium hosted by Capt. Oscar Brady Post No. 298. I had the honor of speaking to the students who were receiving the awards and brought them congratulation on a

Job well done from the Auxiliary. May 2nd I attended the installation of Edward C. Headman Post No. 217, Legion, Auxiliary and SAL. I brought greetings and wished them success for the coming year. May 3rd we were off to Grand Rapids for the Poppy program held at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. We were taught how a poppy is made. I give our veterans who make our poppies a special thank you.

Making a poppy is not easy and takes a lot of patience. Our Juniors were there and they colored poppy pictures that will be on display in the Poppy room. After the Poppy program I returned home as my foot had started to swell and I needed to rest it. Sunday, May 4, took us to Ida, MI for the luncheon held at Lynn C. Weeman Post 514 by the Auxiliary, Legion and SAL to Honor the Gold and Blue Star Parents and Spouses. I brought greeting from Department. I had the honored to thank each one of the family

members present and present each of them with the Michigan Legion Family member thank you card.

Monday May 5, we will attend the 1st District Joint Memorial Service held at Joe Louis Post 375 and on May 6 -7 we will be in Holland for the Tulip Time 2014 Festivities with Willard G. Leenhouts Post 6, legion, Auxiliary and SAL. May 17th we will attend the 5th District Joint Memorial Service at Glen Hill Post 287. June will begin with the Sons of the American Legion Convention in South Haven June 6-8, 2014 the following week is the UP Summer Convention, then Girls State at Michigan State and finally Department Convention in Livonia, Michigan

Continue you good works that you all do for our organization and I will return to my unit and continue to work alongside with you. Remember to recruit new members, retain the ones we have and ask those who have left us to renew their membership so we can go forward into the future with a strong Auxiliary to serve our future Veterans and their families.

Serving Those Who Served For US

## A Springtime Reminder from VA&R

### Sharon Therrien, VA&R Field Officer

With the arrival of April and May comes camaraderie, clean-up, and building anew. On that note I want to touch briefly on three things.

First, don't forget to check on your disabled and senior veterans, especially those who are shut-ins during the more difficult months. Team up with fellow Unit members and go visiting. Fun and greatly appreciated items to bring are cookies, tea, light bulbs, smoke detector batteries, night lights, or maybe even a flat of flowering plants for a quick garden spruce up. Pop a small tool box in the car for quick and easy repairs. Also remember to make sure that they have a ride to doctor appointments and Unit Activities.

Secondly, it's very important to record

and report your Home Volunteer/Field Service Hours. Those hours show just how much work the American Legion Auxiliary does and may also reflect funding received for future projects.

Lastly, if you have participated in a VA&R Orientation and received your blue Orientation Card, you are eligible to receive pins and bars when accumulate certain levels of hours...So...As the weather warms up and you get together with fellow Auxiliary Members whether from just your Unit or from neighboring ones, please talk about hosting an Orientation. I will be glad to present the necessary information to you and your new members so you can receive you Cards and start logging your own hours.

Thank you for all the hard work you have done and continue to do.

## Convention Choir

Anita L. Mennel, Music Chair

Do you like to sing? Have you enjoyed the choirs of the past? Then don't just sit there, come be a part of the choir this year. It is pretty easy, just requires a little of your time for practice @ convention. THAT'S IT!!! Pretty easy, for certain. Come be a part. All you need to do to let your wishes known is to either email or call! I need to plan for enough sheets of music, so please let me know. Don't let the choir die from apathy! Get out of your seat and join us!

Please call or email by June 23rd.

amie657@yahoo.com or 810-796-9844 -leave your name and contact info., as well as when you will be arriving at convention. I will get back with you.



Ellen Jackson, Department Chaplain

## Prayer is a Gift To Give

As our year comes to an end I would like to first give a heartfelt thank you to everyone for the well wishes and beautiful cards you sent to my family and I. When we are down we must always keep in mind that God will be there! May is a time to remember the wonderful people who have been called into His light. A time to remember all the beautiful ways they have affected our life. Just think how far we have come as the "Legion Family", remembering our Veterans who paid the ultimate price for you, for me and our country. Let us always be thankful because our way of life is Free! Free to say, do, live, play when and where we want. To the Veterans here with us today I say thank you for everything you do and have done for our families and country.

Thank you to all the Units and their members who sent a prayer for Department President Sandra's book. It was great reading the

prayers and devotional thoughts I received so far. If you would still like to be included in the book there is still time to send them to me. I will be presenting Sandra her book at Fall Conference. I also would like to thank everyone for allowing me to serve as your Chaplain this year. It has been an honor and a learning experience that I will always remember. Not just because of the Unit, the District and Department members we have lost, but the new members I have met. Don't forget to enter your Unit, District prayer books at Summer Convention I look forward to seeing them! I will keep everyone in my prayers and thoughts now and always.

A quote by George Will, "It is said that God gave us memory so we could have roses in winter. But it is also true that without memory we could not have self in any season. The more memories you have, the more you have. That is why, as Swift said, No wise man ever wished to be younger."

## 2nd District Report

### Peggy Nolff, 2nd District President

Hard to believe my year as 2nd District President is coming to a close. As I look back at my year it has brought back many emotions. A few words that come to mind are communication, dedication, support and service. The Units in 2nd District live and feel these words, in meetings, community services, and their work for our Veterans. We have fed the homeless, supported our youth, worked with others in our communities and within our Legion family. They have truly shone the Auxiliary way of "Service to others Not to Self". I have enjoyed visiting the Units in my District, attending fall and winter conference. These provided me with a great learning experience that I hope to pass onto others.

**COMMUNICATION** is a key word when we think of the word **SUPPORT**, without it we do not connect. Our goals in 2nd District does not stop with four meetings a year. We have been promoting our Facebook page, encouraging our Units to post upcoming fundraising events, Legion and Auxiliary functions, and Community events they are involved in. We have developed a District email for better communication between the Units and the District. With the new POD system we plan to highlight Auxiliary Programs at the District level, encourage Units to share their programs and ideas on what works and what doesn't. After reviewing POD reports it was disappointing that they did not reflect the hard work I have seen in 2nd District. Our goal will be to find a way that will help support the Units to provide narratives and encourage participation for Department and National award.

I would like to thank all of my Units in 2nd District, the Department Staff, and Department President, Sandy Snyder, and my own Unit 514 for all the support and encouragement that I have received this past year. I will continue to provide the same for all the Auxiliary members I may come into contact with in the upcoming year.

## Is Tradition Hurting the Organization?

### Suzanne Knapp, Leadership Chairman

As I traveled around the state this year working with the Leadership committee with The American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion, I met many Auxiliary members who had a recurring theme of questions. These are new members to our organization who want to make a difference. They are enthusiastic and motivated to do more, but their biggest complaint has been the "because we have always done it that way" answer when they ask a question.

Charles Kettering reminds us that "If you've always done it that way, it's probably

wrong." Are we hurting the organization because these new members read the by-laws and, say "oh I can do that", but then are told by others, well no you can't, because we always do it like this. What kind of talent are we letting walk from the Auxiliary because the tradition of something is more important than the governing rules of the organization?

If we feel a tradition is important, than we should put it in writing and in the by-laws or rules of procedure and, vote on it as a group. If the group likes it than let it be so. However, if the group opposes it, then maybe, just maybe "it's probably wrong".

## Membership

### Lora Lee Nauta,

#### Western Area Membership Chairmen

I can't believe this year is almost over already, where did this year go? Well, Congrats to 5th and 6th districts, you are in 1st and 2nd place, Job well done! Everyone is working very hard to meet goals. But let's not forget about the juniors members they are our future. Make sure you always made new members feel welcome. If you take the time to sit and get to know them, they are more willing to stay involved, you may be surprised to find that they know someone, and who knows someone and when they

see that you're having fun whiling helping the Veterans, or doing one of our other wonderful programs they may want to join. You never know. The western area has 10,633 members, and 9,867 had paid their dues, as of 4/2, only 766 members to go to be 100%. It may sound like a lot, but I know we can do it. I hope all my fellow Area Chairman have had as much fun and adventure as i did being Western Area Chairman. We are part of an AWESOME organization, and a great group of ladies. See you all at the Convention. Thank you Sue for letting me be a part of your team.



1st Vice President Nancy Knox presents to National President Nancy Brown-Park a Department of Michigan check for the "Parade of Checks" at the Washington D.C. Conference.



## 2014 DEC Reports

**Article IX, Section 1 of the Department By-Laws requires officers and chairpersons to make an annual detailed report for publication in the Michigan Legionnaire. District Commanders are invited, but not required to submit reports.**

### 3rd Zone



**August Miele**  
Zone Commander

The year is coming to an end; this will be my final report. It has been an honor to have served the 3rd Zone. I learned a lot from all of you and made many new friends. Everywhere I went, I was accepted in proper Legion style. Each District is unique and is focused on carrying out American Legion Programs. I was able to visit all five Districts twice. I also took part in the 6th District's Commander's Tour. That was a long but successful day. Surprisingly, considering the grueling winter we had, my traveling weather was decent.

Membership in the Zone was good. We did not reach our goal of 100%, but topped off at 95% which places us first of the five Zones. For that, I thank the District Commanders: 6th William Cool, 7th Kenneth Miller, 8th Terry Hessler, 17th Kevin Gilliam, and 18th Joseph Lauzon. These gentlemen did a great job making mine easier. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the State Convention.

Semper Fi and God Bless

### 4th Zone



**Gary Hlavka**  
Zone Commander

My year as 4th Zone Commander is rapidly coming to an end. It has been a very rewarding year, places I have been, Legionnaires I have met along the way are dedicated as are the Son's and the Auxiliary, with out them and their programs it would be hard for some Post's to survive.

In February I was contacted by Jason Allen regarding the Northern Michigan Republican

Dinner and fundraiser at Bay Harbor. They were in need of an honor guard to Post color's. I contacted the 19th District Commander George Bolinger and he got the job done. Wolverine Post did an excellent job. Mr. Allen invited them them to stay for dinner or receive a monetary contribution for the post. They choose the donation for their services, thank you Mr. Allen. At the dinner I had the opportunity to meet Rep. Dan Benishek, Lt. Gov Calley whose band played the music, State Rep. Macmasters, W. Schmidt, State Sen. Walker, Sec. Of State Ruth Johnson and many others.

In March I attended a meeting at Garland-Tompkins Post 399 at Old Mission with 9th District Commander Neil Horning and his wife Marilyn, a great meal was enjoyed. Post Commander Cal Jamison opened the meeting in due form. A ceremony was held on Sgt. John Garland one of the WWII men the Post was named after. Sgt Garland was a crew member of the bomber leader with tail number T. Square One that went missing after a bombing run on an engine plant in Japan. They were hit by flak and had to ditch in the pacific, and were never found. Sgt. Garland's brother attended, numerous metals, photo's were presented to the Post. Another crew member was SSgt Clarence C. Mushing of Kingsley, Michigan. I was glad to have attended and learned some history. I am presently working with Post 399 on getting their Post address changed to Old Mission from Traverse City, they house the Old Mission Post Office at their Post.

The year has been a learning experience, many thanks to Commander's George Bolinger of the 19th, Ken Burca Jr. Of the 10th and Neil Horning from my home District the 19th. Thank you to

the Post's who hosted the district meetings in the zone. As we go forward into the new year let's all give our support to all of the new state officers coming on board after our annual state convention in Livonia, Michigan.

Membership is needed, let's all try and get 1 new member, just think of how the Department could grow and support our programs. If you know a veteran down on his luck, adopt him and pay his dues, I have.

Many thanks to Commander Moore for all he has done in the past, present, and will do in the future. We also must not forget our first lady Marcia for her support of our commander. It has been a privilege to serve with Commander Moore, thank you to the Lansing Staff for their help and dedication to the Department of Michigan.

Let us never forget those who put their life on the line and all who served to give us the America we know today, God bless them. May God bless us and our families.

### 5th Zone



**David Spencer**  
Zone Commander

I would like to thank everyone for the chance to serve the U.P. As Zone Commander, it has been a good year. All of the Post's are working hard and doing great things to help our veterans and their families. Membership is going good, but it can always be better; our biggest challenge is to attract more younger veterans and their families to the group.

I have visited some of the Posts, both in the 11th and 12th districts. Some are having a hard time finding members to step up to officer positions. The strength

of our organization is numbers, membership numbers and members willing to lead and manage the post affairs. More members makes our voices heard in Lansing and in Washington, D.C.

In April, 11th District Commander Stan Kennedy, 12th District Commander Jim Dougivito, and I attended a meeting with the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency Outreach Director. We brought attention to the area's lacking coverage by a American Legion Veteran's Service Officer in the U.P. I hope they will see that we need a full time service officer in the U.P. We will keep everyone informed at future meetings on the progress.

As the year comes to an end please join us on Saturday June 28th, 2014 in Livonia at State Convention, the U.P. Association will be hosting a hospitality room.

Again thank you for the opportunity to work with you and for you this past year. We have great people, great posts, and the best communities in Michigan, I have learned more about the greatness of our Legion Posts here in the U.P. It has been a pleasure.

### 1st District



**Ray Droste**  
District Commander

Greetings fellow legionnaires from the 1st District. Despite a drop-off in overall District membership, there were a number of wonderful positives during the 2013/14 membership year. There was a strong movement to open a new post in downtown Detroit (employees of the Quicken Loans Corporation). With the help of Al Ford's Post Development Team we expect to get this new post "off the ground" in the near future.

Also, there are a number of on-going activities in which the 1st District takes part :

1. We donate ROTC medals to candidates from 9 Detroit area public high school ROTC programs.

2. We support the Piquette Square 150 unit complex for homeless veterans that were established several years ago.

3. The Detroit Vets' Task Force and Wayne County Veterans' Action Team are also supported (primarily by Past State Commander, Richard Chatman).

4. We supply a large presence for the Detroit Vets' Parade each November.

5. We have contributed financially and labor wise to the restoration of the Michigan War Memorial located at the old state fairgrounds.

6. Continued support for the Boys' State/Girls' State Programs from a number of district posts.

Several posts have extended significant financial contributions throughout the metro Detroit area. Namely, Grosse Pointe Post #303 has not only annually donated \$250.+ to 9 charities (most veteran based) but also offered \$1,000 scholarships too both of the area high schools. Posts

86, 126, 132, 202, 372, 375 have likewise been very supportive in their respective areas.

We have many membership challenges in year ahead but are very encouraged by the prospect of a new post with many younger generation members. An injection of youth would be a wonderful boost to our district. God bless our American Legion Family and let's move forward to a successful 2014/15 membership year.

**Reports Continued Page 8**

## 2014/2015 MICHIGAN CANDIDATES



**Candidate State  
Commander Jim Wallace**



**Candidate Finance Officer  
George Dolan**



**Candidate Historian  
Mitch Louth**



**Candidate Sgt-at-Arms  
Frank Flores**



**Candidate Sgt-at-Arms  
Gary Gross**

## Reports Continued

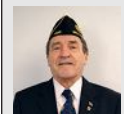
### 2nd District



**Anthony Perales**  
District Commander

I would like to thank all the members of the 2nd District for giving me the privilege to serve this fine District. It has been an honor for me. I have found that the State Conventions and Conferences have been most helpful with great information that has helped me perform the duties of 2nd District Commander. However, making visit to all the post have been somewhat a challenge due to the bad winter. I've tried to visit as many as I could in my short term, sorry if I missed your post. Membership; as of last in the 2nd District we have 5 Post at a 100%, we still need to grow our membership. I continue to impress upon each post to continue their hard work in this area of membership. We need to keep increasing our membership. Projects; we still need as always, to continue to support and promote "Boys state" "Girls state" "Oratorical" and "student troopers". Scholarship; within the 2nd District we had 12 scholarship applications for the Wilson scholarship, and 18 applications for the Brewer, this was great. In closing I would like to thank all the 2nd District officers who have helped me with my duties as 2nd District Commander.

### 3rd District

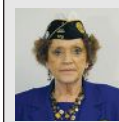


**Jim Carlin**  
District Commander

It has been an extremely satisfying and unprecedented two years as 3rd District Commander. I had the privilege of being the first commander in 94 years to be re-elected to a second term. On May 4th we held elections and my 1st Vice Commander, Jim Saur will assume duties as district commander after the Convention in June. The slate of officers in the 3rd will have continuity and we expect the next year to be just as productive as the last two. The District is in sound financial shape, we have done well with our Distinguished Service awards program for not only Post members, but Sons of the Legion, American Legion Riders, and the Auxiliary. We have started two new Posts, and they are thriving with excellent membership. Thinking outside the box has helped our District, and I could not have accomplished these objectives without my team within the District, and all our Posts.

During our May meeting, I also had the privilege of unaniously being elected 2nd Zone

Commander for the 2014-2015 term and my objectives will be in the area of education, and helping the Riders have a voice not only in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Districts, but at the Department level. We cannot survive without compromise and we must all work together as a team. To all of my friends and supporters, and to the many veterans that we serve, I stand at attention, salute you, and say; "Thank you for your service to our great nation."



**5th District**  
**Catherine Buckley**  
District Commander

The 5th District had a rough winter as most. That didn't stop us from gathering new members. Visiting Post was slow during February, so we jump on it in March.

Our March meeting was very exciting with something new we started by having a 5th District Legionnaire of the Year. The honor was bestowed to David MacKellar of Grand Haven Post#28.

We all know there are Legionnaires out there that go beyond the call of duty in silent. It is wonderful to recognize these people in a small way.

Our March meeting also gave homage to the 95 years of the American Legion.

We were honor with Commander and Mrs. Moore. Commander gave us some very up lifting words of wisdom.

The year is coming to an end and I find that there hasn't been enough time to get all the important things done. The needs of our Veterans will never end and the American Legion needs all of us to continue our steadfast march to help each and every one. At times there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel, but when you reach a veteran and bring a smile to his/her face and hear "thank you" you know that the hours have been worth every minute.

I find that I miss active duty, but I also know that with age I cannot serve, but I have found that missing link in the American Legion. For we are serving in just a different way. So I ask all my fellow Legionnaires to find the time to reach out to other veterans and their families and to also help keep the American Legion strong with membership. Our generation is now the backbone that the Legion needs.



**6th District**  
**William Cool**  
District Commander

What an honor and privilege it was to serve as your 6th District COMmander for 2013-2014; it was a good learning experience.

I want to thank all of the officers and committee persons and all of the post's that sent representatives to our district meetings, without you this year would not have been so successful.

As I visited the different Post's in our District it was great to see the meetings well attended. Rick Schultz and I have visited 24 out of 32 Posts, we hope to have the rest visited by the 2nd Friday in June. This past winter kept us from visiting many, so we are playing catch up.

It has been an honor to see so many of our Posts and how they serve and honor our veterans. The Davison and Clio Post's regularly perform burial honors at the Great Lakes National Cemetery as well as, performing the honors at other cemeteries upon request. It is such a great service you do for veterans and their families.

In March we did the State Commander's Tour, we visited 8 Posts with all having a good time.

In April I attended the Livingston County Veteran of the Year Banquet for John Colone, what a great tribute to a wonderful veteran.

In July during the Fowlerville fair week (July 21-26) the District will have a membership booth set up for the entire Legion Family. Volunteers are need, if you would like to grow membership for your Post, Unit, or Squadron, please let me know.

Thank you for letting me bend your ear, until next time, God's speed.



**11th District**  
**Stan Kennedy**  
District Commander

It's been a great honor and pleasure to serve the 11th District as your District Commander the past year. Kudos to our 11th District Posts for their efforts that improved our membership standing this year. And a special recognition to the Posts who generously hosted Department Commander Ray Moore and his team during the UP Winter Tour. Thanks to a great team of 11th District officers for their support of all our activities.

I appreciate the welcome support by Escanaba Cloverland Post#82 of our 11th District Membership team visit, and for Post#3's hospitable reception for my visits to Sault Ste. Marie. Keep up the

good work!

Strongly encourage all 11th District Posts to attend the upcoming Upper Peninsula Association of Legion Posts Summer Convention Escanaba, at the Quality Inn, June 13 & 14. This venue includes our 11th District summer meeting and election of next year's District officer team. These meetings are critical also, in establishing the program to staff a UP State Fair American Legion booth during week of August 12th thru 17th, in Escanaba.

Good luck and best wishes to the incoming 11th District Commander and his team. I stand ready to support you in any way possible. Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Michigan Department Summer Convention in Livonia. Stop by the UP Association hospitality room on Saturday afternoon to say hello.

In this period of turmoil within the Veterans Administration, remember that the American Legion's first priority remains the support of our veterans in homes and hospitals, as well as our brethren serving on active duty. Lets step up, wherever we can, to fill the gap in their trust and needs.



**12th District**  
**James Dougovito**  
District Commander

As another year draws to a close a huge "BRAVO" to the 12th District for their efforts in membership - 5th places as of the April 23rd. And together with the 11th district we take up two spots in the top ten. Keep up the great work. We have taken a significant setback in the Upper Peninsula with the loss of American Legion Service Officer Coverage west of Sault Ste. Marie. Certainly a sad state of affairs to our dues paying members and the rest of the Veteran Families. As our Nation's LARG-EST Veterans

Service Organization let us work together to insure our service officer coverage returns! Lastly, another "BRAVO" to Post 27 Legion Member Tom DeCarlo, 88, for his participation in the 8th Annual Regional Hospice Polar Plunge in chilly Sunday Lake on March 29, 2014.



**17th District**  
**Kevin Gilliam**  
District Commander

Wow how time flies when you're having fun. It seemed like it was only yesterday that I had written my first article for the year and laid out all the goals, hopes, dreams, and things to do for the year. It has really been a pleasure to serve the membership of

the 17th District this year as their Commander I thank them for the opportunity that I was given to serve them in the capacity that I have this year. It has really been quite an honor.

At the District Installation of Officers last July I got up in front of the membership and told everyone that we were going to hammer membership, hammer membership, and hammer membership some more. I was literally taken back by the fact that my words were taken to heart by the Post Commanders, Adjutants, and Membership Chairs. We had a banner year in membership and put forth an effort that will be hard to duplicate in coming years. Going forward I truly feel in my heart that we as a District are up to the task. Everyone deserves a pat on the back for a job well done this year but there are some that deserve special mention. Redford Post #271 set an all time high in membership. We currently have 4 posts that have hit 100% or higher in membership. Congratulations to Livonia #32, Northville #147, Plymouth #391, and Redford #271 on achieving the 100% membership goal. Rosedale Park #390 only needs 1 more membership to hit 100% and I am confident that they can get it by Summer Convention. In addition I would like to congratulate Jim Pardo who will be receiving his second Gold Brigade Award at Summer Convention. Congrats Jim. As of right now, I am very proud to announce that the 17th District sits at 106.32% and is in 1st place in membership.

This year we were blessed to have the Department Auxiliary President based out of our District. At this time I want to personally thank Sandra Snyder for everything that she has done to serve us on the Department level and for her continued support of our veterans. There are literally a lot of thank yous to go around this year. I want to really thank the Post Commanders in the District on a job well done this year. Jim Pardo, Dennis Strikulis, Roger Avie, Frank Pawelak, and Bernie McCarthy...you gentlemen did an outstanding job this year and made my job easy. Thank you to all the District Officers this year for their faithful service to the membership and thank you to the Department of Michigan for all their help and support to make this a successful year.

Thinking back on the past year I am very pleased to tell everyone that we have either hit or exceeded every goal that I had personally set for the District to accomplish this year. I am a bit of a movie buff as my wife Beverly can personally vouch for so you



should be able to understand the words that I chose to describe the past year for the 17th District. In the words of John Rambo, "Mission Accomplished".



**George Dolan**  
Finance Officer

Greetings from the Department of Michigan Finance Officer. First, I would like to thank my fellow Legionnaires for electing me to this high office of finance. It is an honor and a privilege.

As you well know, our Department of Michigan has been in the red the last few years. A good part can be attributed to membership decline and some to fat business practices. YOU can help change this by signing up a new member.

Your department is constantly looking for more cost saving measures to make your dues payments go further. The finance department is pruning our purchasing practices now, by utilizing a new "purchase request" for higher cost items. This request has to be reviewed and ok'd by the Department Adjutant and the Finance Officer. Additionally all expense vouchers need to be accompanied by all receipts and signed. Together we are moving our American Legion into the black, to have more funds to help our veterans and families. That is what we are, "Veterans Helping Veterans"



**F. Gerritt Veldman**  
State Judge  
Advocate

It has been a great pleasure to serve as a Assistant Department Judge Advocate and Department Judge Advocate. I applaud the many Posts of the Department that have submitted well written documents that contain all the essentials mandated by the Department and National By-Laws. There are a few problem Posts that test your wits and occasionally it is necessary to call on a higher authority to solve a problem. I especially thank Elmer White for his expertise as an Attorney. He rendered special assistance in some cases that were very vexing to say the least. Thanks to Pat Lafferty for the times we had to consult on some Posts. And thanks to Kim for keeping me busy at times when things were just easing along.

**State Committees**  
**Evaluate '14 Programs**  
*Americanism*  
*Beverly List*  
*State Chairwoman*

It looks like winter has finally

left us just in time for all sorts of holidays. We would like to remind everyone to properly display their flags. If you have any questions in how to do so, Emblem Sales has a book, Be right on flag etiquette. Memorial Day is just around the corner followed by 4th of July. When you are out participating in the community with parades, hand out 3x5 flags to the children, they love them.

I would personally like to remind all Post Commanders and Adjutants to turn in their Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs). As a member feel free to ask your local leadership if they have been submitted.

Recently, I was asked about all the programs we have in the American Legion and why, some members didn't even know they existed. One of my best suggestions to a post of any size is look at the strengths of your members and decide what works best for you. We have a multitude of programs to choose from; Boys State, Student Trooper, Scouting, Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, adopt a National Guard unit or Reserve Unit, vets in the classroom, get the vote out, Oratorical etc. There are so many programs to choose from, but if you are a smaller post pick one or two things that your post can do well and shine in your local community.

The Americanism committee has been able to make some changes to their rules of procedure so that when judging Americanism and Community service program awards from CPRs, smaller posts will have an opportunity to gain recognition. Since our awards are based on the size of your post, please make sure your current membership is listed.

This past year you may have not seen me out and about with information or updates on our programs. Mark Sutton our PR Director, in an effort to save the Department money, traveled across the state both with Leadership Classes and a variety of functions offering information on American Legion programs. We had several public service announcements that were done around the Department. We would like to thank Mark for all of his efforts to assist in getting the word out on Legion programs.

I did attend the 3rd zones Four Chaplains service, which was outstanding. If that is not a program your posts participates in, find one in a local community. On February 3, 1943, these men of all faiths and assigned to the USAT Dorchester, after being hit by a torpedo from a German U-boat, provided assistance, life jackets, words of encouragement, prayer and guidance and ultimately their

life jackets and lives. Please mark it on your calendar for next year to attend a ceremony and honor these patriots.

To the members of the 16th District I would like to apologize for not being able to make it for your banquet. I promise, if invited I will be there next year.

To those I did see thank you for making me feel welcome

**Boys State**  
**Jerry Kelley**  
**State Chairman**

Ten months ago I began a journey as the Chairman of the Boys State Committee and the Director of Michigan Boys State. In that time I have challenged District Commanders to have ten more young men from their District attend Boys state than attended last year. Our committee members have been to Department Meetings, District Meetings, Post Meetings and have just visited many Posts across Michigan. In every case we have asked that our Posts sponsor one more young man to Boys State than they did last year.

The response and support that the Boys State Committee has received in the last ten months is greatly appreciated.

We are now ready for Boys State to start. June 15 to June 21 is Boys State week at Northwood University in Midland. Please stop by Boys State to see the program in action.

As an added note, I have received information that Lt Governor Calley will be visiting us sometime during the week.

Thank you for all of your help and support.

**Children & Youth**  
**Ron Gieger**  
**State Chairman**

I would first like to thank Commander Moore for the privilege of serving as Children and Youth Chairman.

At fall conference the committee set in place our programs for the year, as Chairman I picked Temporary Financial Assistance as a good program to increase participation throughout the department. I am proud to say this was accomplished. The Dictionary program was also supported, and is a growing program. The child welfare banner and Children's Miracle Network Pennies and Change program will both also continue.

Children and Youth pins were distributed to committee members, sales from which made and balanced on the fund. Support was made to; 2 Boys Fund, 2 Girls Fund, and 2 Student Troopers

candidates to receive their monies to attend, thank you to all for supporting pin sales.

There was discussion as to modify the Tabs for Tots program where each district would control their own funds, instead of sending them to department. This program would continue on the same as before. This change we feel is needed to give new life to the well worthy program. As I write, the support thus far has been for 177 pieces of pediatric equipment. This will be discussed at conference and a resolution to modify the program will be made. A plaque for highest % of Consolidated Post Reports turned in will be presented at conference, to the top district. Let's make Michigan a 100% turn in department.

The committee did not get called at winter conference; however I was pleased to hear of the past involvement in Children and Youth from many of the legion and legion families.

A big thank you to those of you who made contributions to the various programs this year! Any former member of D.E.C. is eligible to attend the Red Passenheim luncheon on the Friday of convention. Let's increase attendance this year to help support Children and Youth. I would be amiss if I did not acknowledge my committee; Butch Noel, Rod Galbraith, Keith Tyler, John Shirky, and Bill Clark. Thank you. Keep supporting the children and see you at conference.

**Economic**  
**Gerald Merrell**  
**State Chairman**

I would like to thank Commander Ray Moore, Adjutant Pat Lafferty (Happy Retirement my friend), Kim Sielderberg, Denise Koets, and Mark Sutton for their assistance and guidance for making 2014 a successful year. I would like to thank my fellow Economic Committee members for their input and support. Donald Connor, Dale Gould, and Robert Johnson. 2014 Has been an interesting year in Economics; we have cracked the credentialing issue. Starting in May 2014 Michigan Veterans can get the veteran designation on their driver's licenses and state ID's. 2014 has brought many changes to Michigan Veterans' Services. We said good bye to our director MG (ret) Robert Smith III and Michigan is leading the way by going to a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist model (DVOP) In the past a veteran would be directed to the "Vet rep. Under the new model veterans are first seen by employment services staff, and if needed referred to a DVOP. As with any change

there will be some "getting used to" 2014 saw Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) transitioned to the role of DVOP. Michigan has rolled out the Michigan Veterans' Affairs Agency a "No Wrong Door" for Michigan's returning veterans. You can get more information at [www.michiganveterans.com](http://www.michiganveterans.com) Thanks to the American legion and our other sponsors we had a very successful job fair. The Great Lakes Bay Job Fair was held Thursday March 20th at Delta College we had over 86 employers and Veterans were able to find a new job and get information about their veteran's benefits. The UP Fair and other events we had a role in. The Department of Michigan Economic Committee continues to be a force in supporting and preserving veteran economic programs for members of the armed forces and those who served in years past. Veterans should enjoy the very freedoms they safeguard. "Honorable military service should create opportunity, not obstacles. "The best friend of any veteran and of our American Legion Economic programs is the State of Michigan Veterans' Services Division, and DOL Veterans Employment and Training programs designed to help veterans those who face employability barriers and those who are job ready. VETS gives priority service to all veterans, with the highest priority afforded to disabled veterans. VETS programs include the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP's) If you're looking for a better job in Michigan, locate your nearest Veterans Employment Specialist by calling 1-800-455 5228 or you can go to [www.mitalent.org/veterans](http://www.mitalent.org/veterans) check out our web page <http://www.mitalent.org/Veterans/> and Check out the Veterans' Services Face Book page <https://www.facebook.com/MIVeteransServices> The Post 911 GI Bill offers Veterans great educational opportunities a lot has changed since the Post 911 GI Bill was rolled out, I encourage veterans to check out the GI Bill web page [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) The Economic Committee fights for these benefits and more. "Are you willing to reach out your hand to a fellow veteran and invite them to your post home?" Please continue to support your local veterans by remembering to invite them before the post meeting to talk about jobs, education, homes and how to find them. Make your post home their post home. All they ask for is a handshake a smile. "Welcome Home In closing I would like to congratulate this years Economic Award winners

## Reports Continued

DVOP of the Year: Mr. Steven Munoz

LVER of the Year: Mr. Jesse Mikaelsen

Employer of the Year awards:  
Medium: Bisbee Infrared Services, Inc.

Local Office: South Central Michigan Works

Our Economic award winners are taking care of our veterans, and in some cases they are veterans taking care of their fellow veteran. If you know of a business or individual who goes the extra mile for our "Home Town Heroes" please contact me so we can recognize them next year. 2015 has been both a challenging and rewarding year, but there is no better friend a veteran can have; The American Legion is on duty to support our veterans, through help with VA claims, help for families, and other programs, I'm proud to do my part helping our "Home Town Heroes"

God Bless America God Bless our Veterans'

### Finance Ray Carlson State Chairman

The fiscal year (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014) began with the Department of Michigan facing a considerable budget deficit. The VA & R program being the main factor of this and with the American Legion Department of Michigan's strong desire to retain a vital service to the veterans of the State of Michigan through Veterans' Service.

At the Department Fall Meeting in Boyne Highlands, the Committee welcomed new members Brett Holt and Don Meskill, as well as new Finance Officer George Dolan. Dave Buist was elected Vice Chairman of the Committee. The other members of the Committee are Joe Callahan and I and Ex-officio members, Department Commander Ray Moore, Department Adjutant, Pat Lafferty, and Director of Veterans Affairs, Jim Topps. The committee reviewed the dues rate and recommended that no dues increase was warranted for this year. Department insurance policies were reviewed and approved. Department financial statements were reviewed and accepted.

Draft audits were presented and approved. Current Fall Raffle results were reported by Adjutant Lafferty.

At the January meeting at Department Headquarters, the final audits were reviewed and approved. Siena Wealth Advisors presented a second bid to manage the Departments' investments. After discussion, the Committee

voted to move the investments to Siena.

After discussion, it was voted to make a donation to the National Emergency Fund on behalf of the Department of Michigan. This will be done by Commander Moore at the National Convention. Al Ford asked the Committee for an increase to the Post Development Committee for several revitalizations in the Department. This was approved. Mark Sutton, Department Public Relations Director, reported that Department can communicate with Post 225 members without further postage cost to Department by inserting a newsletter along with a Request to Transfer to Another Post form along with their Membership Cards.

In Flint at the February meeting, financial statements were reviewed and accepted.

Mr. Gary Easterling was welcomed as the new VA&R Director for the Department.

Siena Wealth Advisors reported that the transfer of investments from TAG was seamless and we would receive quarterly reports. Also, Siena would be reporting in person at Fall meetings at no cost to Department.

Roger Webster from the Wilwin Board of Directors reported that Graymont Corporation has offered to purchase at least a portion of the Wilwin property. Mr. Webster stated that the Wilwin Board needs to look at the legal issues involved before any decision can be made. Sons of the American Legion Detachment Finance Officer, Chris Dohnal, presented the Committee with the 2014/2015 Detachment Budget. The Budget was approved. The William Morris Trust was voted to be placed in an interest bearing account. Adjutant Lafferty will research the Trust for any restrictions or specific requirements and report back to Committee at the May Budget meeting.

The Budget meeting will be on Friday, May 16, 2014 at 9:00 A.M. in Department Headquarters.

There were several departures of employees and new hires in the VA&R office. There was a retirement of Barb Money in the Department Headquarters. There were also some disability absences during the year. The staff in the Detroit VA&R office and also at Department Headquarters is to be commended for their doing extra work while short handed at times. Their efforts have greatly helped to reduce the budget deficit for this year. Former VA&R Director Jim Topps and Adjutant Pat Lafferty have worked beyond their normal operations in helping to schedule

during these adverse times. We thank and admire their efforts!

Lastly, I want to thank Commander Moore for having the confidence in appointing me as Chairman of this Committee. It really isn't too difficult with the talent of the Committee as a whole and having Denise Koets for invaluable assistance. I appreciate each of you and thank you all.

### Internal Affairs Stephen German State Chairman

The Department Internal Affairs Committee had very busy and productive sessions this past year. The main purpose of the Internal Affairs Committee is to formulate and recommend policies, procedures and changes regarding the organizational structure of the Department and other such matters that do not come within the scope of other Department Committees.

The Committee also provided guidance and recommendations to Dept. Standing Committees as well as District Officers this year. We hopefully assisted and clarified issues relating to rules, procedures and protocol.

We have proposed one amendment to be voted on at the Department Convention. The full text of the amendment as well as the reasoning behind the change was published in the April/May issue of the Legionnaire. We recommend that the Convention Delegates approve this amendment.

In closing and speaking on behalf of the Committee (Pat, Bob, Don, Mike, and myself), we want to thank Kim Siedelberg of the Dept. Staff for her administrative support to our committee. And "Thanks" to Commander Moore for appointing us to this great committee.

### Leadership College Bud Hansarger State Chairman

It is hard to believe another year has passed. A long hard winter, slow starting spring, and now summer convention is almost upon us. Where does the time go? By now our posts, districts, zones, and department companies for new officers is being finalized, voting taking place, officer installments scheduled, new officer rooster sheets being prepared. O the logistics. Let's not forget taxes and other IRS forms, post data sheets, budget requests, cpr's, post bonding, membership cards, and year end committee reports that keep us busy.

Department Leadership College Committee yearend report: 2013 - 2014 Leadership College

was a Legion Family success!! Thank You. 11 classes: 3 in the 5th zone, 1 in the 4th, 3 in the 3rd, 2 in the 2nd, 1 in the 1st and Winter meeting having 284 members in attendance - 133 Legionaries, 85 Auxiliary, 47 SAL, and 19 ALR an interesting diverse group that where engaging. Leadership committee evaluations: 58% positive remarks with constructive criticism, 36% no comments or suggestions, 4% negative remarks, and 2% uncompleted or not returned. A special thank you to the Auxiliary and the SAL for providing content and presenters (w/budget) for each leadership class location. Thank You.

A truly successful family endeavor! Leadership committee also participated in, sponsored, and attended: 63rd Brigade Joint Service's Military Ball, Department Oratorical at Gerald R. Ford Museum, Western Michigan University Bronco Battalion ROTC Awards Ceremony, as well as district meetings giving single topic training presentations.

2014 - 2015 Leadership College: this year's content will be concentrating on Post/Unit/Squadron and District Officer Training. Committee is currently reviewing and researching topics, creating presentations, scouting locations (host posts needed) and looking for enthusiastic knowledgeable instructors. Some of the topics being researched: Post and District Offices responsibilities and requirements, post operations for posts with lounges - do's and don'ts, post fundraising, why committees and what committees do are some of the topics that have been requested and being considered.

Join us at summer convention Friday June 27th 6:30 - 8:30 for Officer training, committees, open discussion of upcoming training topics, and a description of hosting post needs.

I'm excited about this coming Legion Family Year. Seeing some of our comrades moving up in the chairs, meeting and encouraging newer members in their involvement, discovering what will be Department Commanders special project and developing our own leadership potentials. Develop Leadership Daily - it's not developed in a day.

### Legislative Doug Williams State Chairman

Not much has occurred since the Winter Conference and with the upcoming elections I do not anticipate much activity will occur between now and our June Convention.

There is still work to be done

on some Licensing and Regulation legislation that is currently before the Military Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security Committee and that will be completed prior to the summer recess.

I am happy to report that Secretary of State Ruth Johnson supported the legislation that allows for the placing of Veteran on the State of Michigan Driver's License and we thank Legion Past Post Commander Steve McGee for his efforts. Steve will tell you getting involved does work. The new veteran license plates will be available soon and we and other veterans organizations will receive some of the proceeds from the sale of the plates so purchase yours when you can.

Remember again this year we will be asked to elect Representatives and Senators to the State Offices and if you have someone running in your District be mindful that they have our veteran's needs on their agenda.

This year we had more money appropriated for our VSO program and I have been informed by Adjutant Lafferty that things are getting better and that he looks forward to a better year.

This year we will be reviewing the State Civil Service Rules and Regulations and making some recommendations toward bringing them more in line with the Federal Rules and Regulations. We are doing this to make it better for our returning veterans.

I hope to see you at the June Convention.

### Post Development Al Ford State Chairman

This Legion Year has been a very busy one for the Post Development Committee, we started out the first couple months going to Posts and Districts that requested information and guidance on how to go about doing Post revitalization or how to turn in a Post Charter.

There were 2 Districts and 14 Posts requesting Re-Vi information.

There were 18 Posts requesting to turn in their Charters. Hopefully we will be able to salvage part of them. In most cases the members have gotten older and have failed to bring along the younger member and let the pick up the reigns. The hardest part of this job is when I have to go into a Post that is failing and help them close up shop and turn in their charter. There is so much Legion history and artifacts in these Post Homes that ultimately will be lost or destroyed. In some cases I have

## National Security

### Sue Verville, National Security Chairman

Your National Security committee would like to thank everyone for all the hard work that they did this year for this program. Only by working together throughout the whole year as "The Legion Family" for our National Security Program, is how we can and did make a difference in someone's life. We are still working on identifying and filling the needs of our current military, our wounded warriors, our Veterans and their families. We made sure that we informed our community and our military of what we, as members, had to offer them in ways of help and what kind of help we had available for them. Remember we still need to work on our programs throughout the summer months. Keep track of everything that you do and use it for next year's report. This is a great time to host a training session for our members on community safety and disaster relief. Put together disaster supply kits and help with the Toasty Toes program. Gather items for our soldiers and make care packages. Remember your Junior members they can help. Give out Blue/Gold Star Banners and hold welcome home or send off events for our Military when needed. Use your local media, face-book, websites, other organizations, newspaper or Post newsletter to get the word out about what the "Legion Family" programs are all about.

The following are some of the Family Support Programs available under National Security:

**OPERATION COMFORT WARRIORS** - Items purchased from these donations have included rehabilitation equipment, special clothing

for burn victims, and photography, fishing and music gear. [www.legion.org/operationcomfort-warriors](http://www.legion.org/operationcomfort-warriors)

**HEROES TO HOMETOWN** - Heroes to Hometown (H2H) is a transition program for the severely injured service members returning home. H2H can provide a welcome home celebration, temporary family assistance (need a baby sitter, a little time off, food, help with the utility bill etc.), pro-bono financial planning, housing assistance, home and vehicle adaptation, claims assistance and general family support. [heroes-tohometowns@legion.org](mailto:heroes-tohometowns@legion.org)

**POPPY PROGRAM** - Funds donated after May 2014 can be used to help the current military and their families. Be sure and keep these funds separate. Examples could include: To purchase a gift certificate for a service member through the Army and Air Force exchange go to [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com)

To contribute towards the cost of lodging for a family of an injured service member go to [www.fisherhouse.org](http://www.fisherhouse.org).

To write a letter of encouragement for any injured hero visit [www.caringbridge.org/wounded/heroes](http://www.caringbridge.org/wounded/heroes)

To provide a foster home for the pet of a service member visit Net Pets at [www.net-pets.org/foster.php](http://www.net-pets.org/foster.php)

To provide a gift of groceries to a military family visit [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com)

Other resources: [www.yellowribbon.mil](http://www.yellowribbon.mil), [www.uso.org](http://www.uso.org), [www.operationhomefront.net](http://www.operationhomefront.net), [www.legion.org/familysupport](http://www.legion.org/familysupport).

## Homeless Veteran's

### Darlene Jones,

### Homeless Veterans Service Coordinator

Let me start off by thanking everyone who helped this year with the stand downs, through your help we were able to help at 4 Stand downs throughout Michigan, but the need is still there and growing so I have compiled a list of some needed items. I will be collecting these items at Department Convention and am again asking for your help.

Bath Soap	Candy
Bath Towels	Cereal Bars
Deodorant	Chips, etc
Face Cloths	Cookies
Crackers	Female Items (Personal)
Razors	Little Debbie's
Shaving Cream	Popcorn – Microwave
Shampoo	Clothing – Clean
Tooth Brushes	Coats
Toothpaste	Jackets
Cremora	Shoes
Coffee	Socks
Hot Chocolate	Sweaters
Juice Boxes	Books
Kool Aid	Board Games
Tea Sugar	Crossword Puzzles
Checkers	Playing Cards
Seek & Find Puzzles	

Again thank you for your support. They have started an all-female Veteran only stand down so we do need items for Women.

## NEC Report

### Mary Ann Yuncker, NEC

In March of this year, it was my honor to represent Michigan at the National Executive Committee meeting in Washington D.C. While the first meeting of the NEC in Houston was simply to ratify National President Nancy Brown Park's appointments and approve the proposed budget, this meeting had several items of interest to every member of our Auxiliary.

The audit company that reviewed our National finances gave our organization a very high rating. The company recommended that the National Executives Committeewomen serve for more than one year to improve the continuity of the committee.

A Department Operations guide will be available at the National Leadership Conference in May.

This year seating at the National Convention will not be based on the total membership of the Department, but rather on the percentage of renewals for this year. Let's make membership retention our goal!

The National Leadership stressed the opportunity to make the Auxiliary a beneficiary when planning our estate distribution as a way to increase funds for our organization.

Another recommendation of the audit committee is in regard to the governance of the Auxiliary. The issue is to how to establish an intermediate and smaller executive board, adding a tier between the National Executive Committee (with representation by all fifty states), and the National officers.

This smaller governing body will review and funnel issues to be decided to the Executive Committee. It has determined that this new Executive Board would have five positions: National President, National first Vice President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, and the National Finance Chairman. This will be voted on at the 2014 National Convention.

There are proposed changes to the Unit and Department Constitution and Bylaws and Department Standing Rules. These were approved and will be explained by the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Donna Fuelling at our Michigan Department Convention in June.

Each National Chairman gave a report of her program this year, based on the mid-year reports she received. Our Central Division had nearly one hundred percent reporting, which made our Division Vice-President Donna Ray very proud. The National Americanism Chairman highlighted Michigan's Americanism Chairman, Kathy Copeland for including the program goals in our Auxiliaire publication, reaching over 60,000 households in our state with Americanism ideals. National Security Chairman, Sue Verville reported on using social media as part of her agenda to keep our Auxiliary informed. Michigan's Poppy Chairman, Margot Forrester was applauded for her plant a poppy idea.

A large part of our time at the Washington Conference was spent outlining the goals of the Centennial Strategic Plan. The mission of this Commit-

tee is that by 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary's one million members will by making a difference for veterans and their families in every neighborhood.

Since 2019 is our 100 year anniversary, the five goals are 1) to attain one million members, 2) create an internal culture of goodwill, 3) develop leadership at all levels, 4) strengthen Departments and Units, and 5) with the American Legion, build brand loyalty. Over the next five years we will hear more about the implementation of these initiatives. As a National Executive Committee, we adopted this 2014-2019 Strategic Plan's Vision and Goals. We are moving to a million!

This year's Public Spirit Award was presented to Sarah Smiley. She is the author of Dinner With the Smileys, in which she chronicled a year of weekly dinners with community members and leaders while her Navy husband was deployed. She and her husband Lt. Comd. Dustin Smiley joined us as we honored their sacrifices to our country and applauded the awareness that Sarah has brought to the military family community.

The highlight of the conference was the flash mob on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. We all wore red, white and blue T-shirts and joined to sing patriotic songs, waving flags. Our "God Bless America" showed our love for our country. You can see us on YouTube.

Thank you for allowing me to represent our Department with all the enthusiasm and pride that makes us Pure Michigan.

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
94th ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION**

Wednesday, June 25-Sunday June 29, 2014  
Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center Detroit-Livonia

**PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE**  
(a detailed schedule will appear in the Convention Program Book)

**WEDNESDAY, June 25**

5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. **Early** Auxiliary Registration—NO Events Hotel Lobby

**THURSDAY, June 26**

8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	Registration and Credentials	Hotel Lobby
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Auxiliary Headquarters	Erie B
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Registration of Colors & Displays	Erie B
12:00 noon	OUTGOING Chairman's Luncheon	TBA
2:00 p.m.-2:45 p.m.	Membership Workshop	Huron A
3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Pre-Convention Meetings	
	Adm. Info Pod I	Huron A
	Adm. Info Pod II	Huron B
	Vet./Mil. Support & Adv. Pod	Huron C
	Family Support Pod	Michigan
	Youth Devel. Pod	St. Clair
4:00 p.m.	Resolutions Committee	Superior CII
4:30 p.m.	Credentials Committee	Superior CII
5:00 p.m.	DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	Huron Ballroom
7:00 p.m.	Flag Rehearsal	Huron Ballroom
7:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal—Immed. after Flag Rehearsal	Huron Ballroom

**FRIDAY, June 27**

8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	Registration and Credentials	Hotel Lobby
11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	Auxiliary Headquarters Office	Erie B
8:00 a.m.	Official Opening of 94 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention	Huron Ballroom
11:30 a.m.	Recess for Lunch	
11:30 a.m.	VA&R Volunteer Luncheon	Ontario Room
1:00 p.m.	94 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Reconvenes	Huron Ballroom
5:00 p.m.	Joint Memorial Service Rehearsal	Superior Ballroom
7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.	"Meet and Greet"—National President	St. Clair Room

**SATURDAY, June 28**

8:00a.m.-12:00	Registration	Hotel Lobby
8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.	<b>The Credentials Desk closes promptly at 8:30 a.m.</b>	Hotel Lobby
9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	94th Annual Convention Reconvenes	Huron Ballroom
12:00 p.m.	MALPA	
12:00 p.m.	INCOMING Chairman's Luncheon	TBA
12:00 p.m.	Freedom Center Visit with National President	Invitation Only
5:00 p.m.	Parade	
5:00 p.m.	Mass—Local church of your choice	
7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.	2014-2015 President's Reception	TBA

**SUNDAY, June 29**

7:30 a.m.	Line Up for Memorial Service	TBA
8:00 a.m.	Joint Memorial Service	Superior Ballroom
10:00 a.m.	94th Annual Convention Reconvenes	Huron Ballroom

## Poppy Days in Grand Rapids

### Tad Such, Poppy Supervisor Grand Rapids Home for Veterans

I would like to take this time to share with you a wonderful experience that I had on May the 3rd, 2014 here at the Grand Rapids Home For Veterans.

Poppy Days was observed here at the Grand Rapids Home For Veterans and I had the privilege of attending to give a short speech and show a large crowd how to assemble poppies. There was a surprise guest, Sandy, Department president, who was in attendance. A very good turnout of people which included several young people which I was extremely happy to see.

Along with them learning how to make poppies, I asked the young people to color and put stickers on a poppy drawing and include their names and ages. As you can see, we have put them up as wallpaper in the poppy and we have enclosed a picture of that wall. They have really brightened up the poppy room and their messages of hope and love will inspire all the poppy makers, including myself.

Thank you very much to all who came for Poppy Days at the Grand Rapids Home For Veterans and God willing, I hope to have the privilege of attending next year's event.



The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Michigan, would like to extend sincere appreciation and love to ALL our veteran poppy makers for producing OVER 500,000 poppies this year!!



### Auxiliary Junior Convention



### Testimonial Dinner



## Learn. Connect. Share. June is PTSD Awareness Month

Shell shock. Battle fatigue. Soldier's heart. Combat exhaustion. Hysteria.

Throughout history, the condition we now know as post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI) has gone by many names and impacted individuals from all walks of life, including many veterans and their families.

This year, Michigan is recognizing June 27 as Michigan Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day to educate service members, veterans, their families and the public about the causes, symptoms, and treatment of PTSI.

Congress first designated June 27 as PTSD Awareness Day in 2010 (S. Res. 455). Since then, June has been recognized as PTSD Awareness Month, a time to raise public awareness of PTSI and its effective treatments so everyone can help people affected by this injury.

This month, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency joins the VA's National Center for PTSD in encouraging you to "Learn. Connect. Share." and raise awareness by:

- Learning more about PTSI
- Challenging your beliefs
- Exploring options
- Reaching out and making a difference

You can learn more about PTSI, including symptoms, treatment options, new research findings and common misconceptions about the condition at the National Center for PTSD's website

at [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov).

There are many misconceptions about PTSI and veterans in our culture. Challenge your beliefs about PTSI by hearing the stories of veterans who live with it every day and find out how treatment turned their lives around at <http://tinyurl.com/vaaboutface>.

The VA offers many options for veterans seeking treatment for PTSI. Some may even qualify for benefits because of a PTSI diagnosis, if it is service-connected. Explore your options by contacting your nearest Vet Center or calling 877-WAR-VETS to learn about treatment options.

Sometimes, it takes the urging of a family member or friend for someone to seek the help they need. If you are concerned about someone in your life who may be experiencing PTSI, reach out and make a difference by encouraging them to seek the help they need.

PTSI is a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances, and it touches every corner of society. While it should be taken seriously, a PTSI diagnosis is not a life sentence. Just like any other battlefield injury, PTSI can be overcome with proper treatment.

For more information about the services and benefits available to Michigan veterans and their families, visit [www.MichiganVeterans.com](http://www.MichiganVeterans.com) or call 800-MICH-VET.



## Marine veteran appointed to oversee Michigan Veterans Trust Fund

LANSING – Marine veteran Lindell Holm has been appointed to oversee the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, announced Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency Director Jeff Barnes. Holm will oversee day-to-day operations for the Trust Fund, which awards emergency grants to Michigan combat veterans.

"Lindell's passion, energy and commitment to his fellow veterans make him a great addition to our team. He has worked extensively on behalf of wounded service members and veterans as part of the Marine Corps' Wounded Warrior Regiment, and we are fortunate to be able to put that expertise to work for Michigan veterans," Barnes said. "I look forward to working with him to strengthen and grow the Trust Fund as an important resource for Michigan veterans."

Holm served 25 years in the United States Marine Corps, where he earned numerous medals, including the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal (twice), Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four times), Armed Forces Expeditionary Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Med-

al (twice) and the Sikorsky Lifesaving Award (twice). He has a B.A. from the University of Minnesota and an M.A. from Biola University.

"I'm honored to join the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency team in assisting those who have selflessly stepped forward to serve our country," Holm said. "The Trust Fund has a long history of providing vital assistance to our veterans, and I am proud to be a part of that. I'm also excited to get in on the ground floor of an organization like MVAA that is devoted to pulling out all the stops in reaching our veterans."

The Michigan Veterans Trust Fund awarded grants totaling more than \$2.3 million in 2013, helping more than 1,800 veterans weather financial emergencies. The Trust Fund awards emergency grants to combat-era veterans when an unforeseen situation creates a temporary financial hardship that a grant, if approved, would resolve. Applicants must be able to show they will be able to meet future expenses after the grant.

For more information regarding emergency grants through the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, please visit [www.michiganveterans.com](http://www.michiganveterans.com) or call 517-284-5298.

## SWS site visit to Michigan VA positive

By **The American Legion** - **May 9, 2014**

The VA Ann Arbor (Mich.) Health care

System was the first health care organization in the U.S. to receive silver status from Planetree for significant advancement in patient-centered care. The honorable recognition is one of several ways the facility has made great strides in becoming a veterans-centered organization since 2003 — the last time The American Legion's System Worth Savings (SWS) Task Force conducted a site visit.

"Our goal is to truly become a veteran-driven organization with veterans actively involved in every facet of our organization from our governance board to health-care delivery and everything in between," said Robert McDivitt, director of Ann Arbor VA and a member of American Legion Post 46. "Our mission is to honor Ameri-

ca's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being."

Members of the Legion's SWS Task Force — Past National Commander Ron Conley and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director Verna Jones — visited the facility April 27-28 to hear about some improvements made over the past 10 years and to identify areas of need.

Ann Arbor VA projects it will provide health-care services to more than 64,000 veterans in 2014 — a significant jump from 2009 when 49,000 veterans received care. To meet the demand, the facility has spent an average of \$20 million a year in construction over the past several years, adding a new emergency department and renovating the inpatient medical/surgical unit, inpatient mental health unit and outpatient clinics, infusion center and community living center. The redesign of each unit now includes an area for children to play in the waiting room, furniture for family to stay over with their loved ones and single patient rooms.

"With every project we design, we want to create the most veteran-centered area that makes sense for our employees and the veterans they serve," McDivitt said. "Today's veteran looks very different from the average veteran in 1953 (when the facility was built). We are seeing more female veterans and more veterans are also bringing their small children to appointments, so we must adapt."

With the renovations and new construction, Jones and Conley would have liked to have seen a separate inpatient mental health unit for women veterans.

Two other areas for improvement the facility is currently working on are enrollment and outreach efforts.

An ongoing enrollment problem for the facility is the long delay it takes for the Veterans Benefits Administration to respond back about health-care services for veterans who received other than honorable discharges. And to continue supporting its outreach mission of getting veterans enrolled in VA health care, the facility recently approved the construction of a mobile

health clinic.

An emergency vehicle will be transformed to create the mobile health clinic, which will travel to events within Ann Arbor VA's catchment area where veterans will be. The mobile health clinic will allow VA staff members to conduct onsite vesting exams, as well as provide mental health evaluations and primary care through telehealth.

Another area of outreach that has been successful for Ann Arbor VA is the Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL) program. The facility was a test pilot for VITAL, which places a VA employee on college campuses to inform veterans of the programs and resources available to them through the VA. The program has now expanded to 20 VA facilities.

"VITAL is meeting student veterans where they're at," said Brittany Powers, Ann Arbor VA's college and university outreach VITAL program manager. "It's talking about VA health care, letting the veteran know their



**AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN**  
 2014 GOLF OUTING in LIVONIA, MICHIGAN  
 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Anyone interested in a round of golf? A golf outing has been set up at a Livonia area golf course.

Greens Fees are \$28.00 per person for 18 holes including a cart. Tees times will be at 12 noon on Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014. **Fees must be received by May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in order to secure a spot.** All information regarding your secured tee time and course will be sent or email to you upon receipt of payment.

Please type or print clearly:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to and send with registration form to:

The American Legion 2014 Convention  
 22625 Arcadia  
 St Clair Shores MI 48082

## Gary Gross for Department Sergeant At Arms

My name is Gary Gross of Post 153, District 8, Zone 3, St. Johns, Michigan. And I am taking this opportunity to announce my candidacy for American Legion, Department of Michigan, Sergeant at Arms, 2014.

I joined the American Legion in 1983 on/off and I now have 12 consecutive years, becoming a PUFL in the mid 90's. In the American Legion, I was Post Sgt-at-Arms (1 yr), Junior Vice Commander (10 yrs) and I am up for Post Commander this year. In District 8, I was Sgt-at-Arms, Junior Vice Commander, Senior Vice Commander and District Commander, over 27 Posts and 4800+ Legionnaires. I have volunteered on many Post Legion projects, like State Police Operation CARE and many Post boards/projects. Currently I am one of the Department of Michigan

Sergeant at Arms Assistant under Sergeant at Arms Michael Buda.

I am also a PUFL member of the Marine Corps League of Owosso, where I was Adjutant (3 yrs), Junior Vice Commandant (2 yrs), Senior Vice Commandant (2 yrs) and Commandant (2 yrs).

If you have any questions about my qualifications for Department Sergeant at Arms, please email me, call me at (517) 483-3897 or contact me through the Department and I will get back to you.

Please review my qualifications, review my opponents qualifications, for the best candidate for Department Sergeant at Arms. I would appreciate it if you would print off this email and have it read at your next Post meeting. I would like your vote for Department Sergeant at Arms. Thank you for your time.



**2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM**  
 August 22 – 29, 2014

Hampton Inn Charlotte Uptown  
 530 E Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28202

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rooms (quantity): \_\_\_\_\_ king \_\_\_\_\_ double \_\_\_\_\_ handicapped  
 Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rooms are \$142.91 per night (tax included). First night's room deposit needs to be sent to Department. More than 2 people in a room is an additional \$10 per day. Rollaways are complimentary (limited) and parking is complimentary.  
 Roommate(s): \_\_\_\_\_ (LEG/AUX/SAL)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (LEG/AUX/SAL)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (LEG/AUX/SAL)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (LEG/AUX/SAL)

Special Room Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$25 each LEGION \_\_\_\_\_ AUX \_\_\_\_\_ SAL \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Note: If you are an Auxiliary or SAL delegate, do not include your registration fee)

Michigan Party: Tickets are \$25 each. This will be Adjutant Lafferty's last Michigan Party so let's make it special! Plan ahead and bring stories, photos, gag gifts, etc.! The Michigan Party will be Saturday evening.

National Commander's Banquet: Tickets are \$45 each. The banquet is Tuesday 8.26.14.

Enclose check or credit card information for:

First room night deposit	\$142.91	X	# of Rooms	_____	\$	_____
# of Registrations	\$25 each	X	# of badges	_____	\$	_____
# of tickets for Michigan Party	\$25 each	X	# of tickets	_____	\$	_____
# of tickets for Natl Comm Banquet	\$45 each	X	# of tickets	_____	\$	_____
TOTAL ENCLOSED					\$	_____

Visa  Mastercard CC# \_\_\_\_\_ exp. date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT DEPARTMENT BY JULY 18, 2014 – Attn: Kim  
 No refunds after 7.21.14



**AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN**  
 2014 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION REGISTRATION  
 JUNE 26-29, 2014

**DEADLINE DATE FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS: WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2014**

**Meeting Registration:** Registration badges are required for attendance at all meetings. The fee is \$15.00 per person.

All Housing requests will be **handled through the hotel**. All standard sleeping rooms are \$84.00 plus 14% tax. **No hotel room will be accepted for less than two nights.** Check-in time is 3PM and check-out time is 12 noon. Registration fee is \$15 per person. All Posts, Units and Squadrons should ascertain the number of delegates it expects to have and register them now in the name of the Post, Unit or Squadron, providing the name of the post adjutant or unit secretary.

All Hospitality Room requests must be in writing and requires a two night minimum. When requesting a hospitality room, type out your request and submit with this form. All suite assignments will be made by Gary W. Sammons.

Please type or print clearly:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Verification of registration will be emailed.)  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Holiday Inn Detroit Livonia Conference Center  
 17123 Laurel Park Drive North  
 Livonia, Michigan 48152  
 Mention code: ALA  
 734.464.1300 or online at:  
 www.holidayinn.com

Please make checks payable to and send with registration form to:

The American Legion 2014 Convention  
 22625 Arcadia  
 St Clair Shores MI 48082

Number of registrations \_\_\_\_\_ X \$15.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	LEG/AUX/SAL	POST/UNIT/SQU#	DISTRICT#

### American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

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Gary Easterling  
 Director

American Legion Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Mr. Gary Easterling, Director

Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building Room 1210

477 Michigan Avenue Detroit, MI 48226

Office Phone (313) 964-6640 or (313) 964-5697

e-mail - Gary.Easterling@va.gov

Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Erna LaBeau, Director's Secretary - ernawati.laueau@va.gov

Lannie Thomas, Department Service Officer - lannie.thomas@va.gov

Tripp Cantwell, Department Service Officer - tripp.cantwell@va.gov

**Call the Detroit office for Field Service Officer Schedule**

## Classifieds

"The contents of advertisements which appear in the Legionnaire are solely the responsibility of the advertisers. Appearance of any advertisement in the Legionnaire does not constitute either a recommendation, nor an endorsement of the goods and services offered therein."

Buying Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, 40/8, VFW, DAV, Masonic, and FOE medals, badges, pins, caps, bars, membership cards, and Stamp Collections. Contact **Craig R. Wotring**, PO Box 1743 Owosso, MI 48867, **989-725-9728**  
 Legion Member

## Reports Continued

contacted community museums to try to get them to help in saving some of these items.

The Posts that have been revitalized and had successful recruiting drives this year are: 1. Adrian # 97, 2. Farmington #346, 3. Utica #351, 4. Dowagiac # 563, 5. Roseville #261, 6. Sparta #107, 7. Jackson #324, 8. Lansing #183, 9. Lansing #178, 10. Lansing # 205, 11. Lansing # 237, 12. Royal Oak #253, 13. Ionia #37.

There were 441 new and or transferred members added to these 13 Posts.

There was a new post formed in Augusta in the 3rd District, Fort Custer Post # 257.

There were 4 Post recommended for Charter cancellation and several more are being considered for cancellation at this time.

Plans are being made now to get an early start in the New Legion Year to help as many Posts as possible achieve their goals.

### Public Relations David Loop State Chairman

The year has gone by so quickly, my message for each Post is to have a Public Relations Officer at every Legion Post. They are to be trusted to get the communications out to the community. However, as time went by I realized that PR is not up to 1 officer in the post. It is up to each of us, every one of our 86,000 Legionnaires is a walking talking Public Relations person.

When you are at events, at the ball park, or anywhere veterans gather, "WEAR YOUR CAP", "WEAR YOUR JACKET". Wear your Legion logo with pride. When you meet a veteran ask them "What Post do you belong to?". And if they don't belong, then sign them up.

The committee has been encouraged to work hard promote to all of the PR representatives out there, if you have questions about PR let us know we are here to help. Keep up the great work on getting the word out there and keep promoting The American Legion.

### Reconnect Gary Tanner State Chairman

2013-2014 was another busy year for the Reconnect Committee and welcomed two new committee members this year. Sean Green and Earl Lash joined the Reconnect Committee and have done a tremendous job so far! I truly feel that I could not ask for a better or more caring team than the Re-

connect Committee and I would like to thank Commander Moore and the DEC for the opportunity to continue serving in this capacity. I would also like to thank Pat Lafferty, Denise Koets, Mark Sutton, George Dolan, the Finance Committee and the entire Headquarters Staff. Reconnect truly is a team effort and we couldn't do it without such magnificent support. Thank You for believing in the Reconnect Program!

We have continued to expand our wide reaching and highly visible presence here in our state. The Reconnect Committee has become the "Go To" source for our Michigan Military Families and our veterans. The American Legion Department of Michigan's Reconnect Committee is now listed in many Veteran Resource Guides published by other agencies and organizations and we have been receiving referrals from the Red Cross, VA Homeless Veteran / HUD-VASH Coordinators, County Assistance Agencies, National Guard Units, and even from national organizations such as Operation Homefront and Military One Source. Your Reconnect Committee is dedicated and committed to providing the best possible assistance and quality of life for our military families and our veterans!

The Reconnect Committee has been fortunate to receive support from many outside organizations and community partnerships such as the Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau and Island merchants, ACO Hardware, the Michigan Psychological Association Foundation, The No Restrictions Golf Foundation, Treetops Resort in Gaylord, Michigan, Family Video, The Templar Foundation and most recently, The Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, MG (Ret) Bruce McDonald.

Although these are incredible assets to have at our disposal, our most important and critical support comes from the Michigan Legion Family itself! The money and support generated throughout the year whether from private donations, or post, district and Zone level fundraising events are what allow the Reconnect committee programs to remain active, funded and viable! The Patriot Fund has been the hardest hit program this year by far allowing veterans of all service eras and peacetime to receive critical, life impacting assistance when all others have turned them away! If not for the Patriot Fund, many homeless veterans would not have had the funding to get into permanent housing with their HUD-VASH Grants alone. Many families would have been evicted, had their utilities shut off,

or lost their transportation! Your Reconnect Committee has provided 12 all expenses paid family retreats, funded several group PTSD sessions, and awarded close to \$40,000.00 in Emergency Temporary Financial Assistance.

Through attendance at the Michigan National Guard Yellow Ribbon workshops and our El-mobility Room missions, the Reconnect Committee impacts well over 500 military families here in Michigan each year. We will continue to expand our reach and improve our programs as needed to meet the growing ever changing needs of our veterans, Returning Warriors and their families.

We look forward to your continued support as we wind down this year's activities and Gear up for another successful year ahead.

### Scouting Carl Atkinson State Chairman



Tim Kneeshaw of Grand Rapids, MI is our Michigan Department Eagle Scout of the year. Tim will be presented a plaque and a \$1000.00 scholarship in recognition of this great accomplishment at our summer state convention.

Tim attends Northview High School and carries a 4.176 average. Tim not only excels scholarly but also plays in the band, plays on the tennis and swim team, and sings in varsity voice. Tim has held many positions within his Boy Scout troop and has earned 51 merit badges and 3 palms to his Eagle Scout rank. Tim's Eagle Scout project was repairing a 200 foot long board walk and building 4 benches in a grotto area at his church in Rockford, MI. Tim has been involved in many activities/project within his community as camps, environmental projects and sporting events.

Tim is involved in his church and has been on a two week mission trip to Denver, CO. Tim earned the Ad Altare Dei and Pope Pius XI religious award. Tim's career goal is to get a pre-med medi-

cal degree then go on to get either an Optometry or Ophthalmology Doctorate degree.

As the winner of the Michigan Department Eagle Scout of the Year Tim's application will be sent to National where he will compete with other state winners for a \$10,000.00 scholarship. We congratulate Tim on all that he has accomplished in his scouting career and wish his much success in his future goals.

### VAVS/VHVS Don Chmielewski State Chairman

Outstanding year at Ann Arbor VA, with for the first time in our 60-year history, we provided healthcare to more than 60,000 Veterans.

The Toledo, Ohio CBOC experienced significant growth in FY 2013 seeing nearly 15,000 Veterans from FY 2012

Saginaw VA Rep Henery Altman  
Saginaw VA saw entrance

## SWS Continued from page 13

eligibility, getting them connected to the many services VA provides, enrolling them and setting up an appointment with a provider on the spot."

Powers is currently connected with seven schools in Ann Arbor VA's catchment area where she holds office hours weekly or monthly. She connects with student veterans by attending orientation classes and student veteran meetings, and by making routine visits to the student veterans' center. Since 2011, Ann Arbor's VITAL program has enrolled 300 new veterans.

Ann Arbor VA is also using advance technology to meet the busy schedules student veterans have — telehealth is becoming available at Bowling Green (Ohio) State University. Through telehealth, a student veteran will be able to take a post-traumatic stress disorder assessment with a provider, or speak to a provider about medical care, on a secure computer network in a private room without ever leaving campus.

Along with its outreach efforts and many veteran-specific programs, providing quality care is at the forefront of Ann Arbor VA's mission. To help achieve this, the facility implemented the No Veteran Dies Alone program

renovations and numerous other improvements.

*Grand Rapids Home for Veterans*  
Rep. Gerald Dennis

Numerous activities held for Veterans throughout year including Bingo, Ballgames Horseshoe tournament etc.

*Jacobetti Home for Veterans*  
Rep. Jim Feliciano

14,000 hours of time donated to our Veterans at the Home among all service groups and individuals.

Activities included Fishing Trip Wild Boar pig Roast.

Annual carnival and also traveling to Escanaba for State Fair *Iron Mountain VA* Ferrand Eth-  
ington, Dennis Larson

Attendance at VAVS meeting, with annual joint review submitted. Strong support of SAL organization.

*Detroit VA* James Navin  
Operations continuing to improve as per last report

Orv Stevens VA Report on upcoming events.

to offer comfort to veterans at the end of life.

Ann Arbor VA's program consists of 60 volunteers — college students, VA employees and veterans — who sit with patients at the bedside, when family members cannot, to provide companionship in their final days.

"Everyone wants to be at the birth of a child because it's a milestone, but when a veteran is dying it's a milestone in their life so it's an honor and a privilege for our volunteers to be there at the bedside," said Joan Garbarino, Ann Arbor VA's nurse care manager for the palliative care unit.

After the passing of a veteran on any unit within the facility, a U.S. flag is draped over the body and the veteran is wheeled out of the unit with family, doctors and nurses proceeding, while a recording of Taps is played and the halls are lined with patients and VA staff members saluting. "Our mission begins with three simple words: Honor America's Veterans," McDivitt said.

Jones agreed that in talking with several staff members in the facility, "you could hear the true passion for their job; you can't fake that," she said. "We appreciate the spirit of this facility to want to do more for its veterans."

## Around the State...



Ryan Martin , Birch Run Legion Post 125's eagle scout of the year 2014 with Dan Taylor Chairman of the Scout Committee for Post 125



Jim Perry (Executive Director, DCC), Jim Topps (V.S.O.), Patricia Henisse (C.O.O., DCC), Charles Hayes (Veterans Employment Specialist, DCC)



Tom Cadmus, Nancy Knox, acting Dept. Aux President; 2nd Zone Vice Commander Jerry Andrus; 2nd District Aux President Peggy Nolf; SAL State Commander Mike Boughner; Post 514 Commander Barbara Weimert; 2nd District Commander Tony Perales; Post 514 AUX President Mickey Cluckey; Post 514 ALR President Wayne Blank; Post 514 SAL Commander Doug Winkler.

Lynn C. Weeman Post 514, The American Legion held its 56th Birthday Party and celebrated the 95th Anniversary of the American Legion on March 15, 2014. Guest were (left to right) PNC



A great time was had at the UP Associations Legislative Reception in April. Thank you Post 50 for a great dinner and time.



The Upper Peninsula Honor Flight held an "Honorary" Honor Flight for over 70 World War II veterans at the D. J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans in Marquette. The program consisted of videos of the UP Honor Flights first mission in September 2011 and patriotic music from a USO style show in Escanaba which benefitted the Honor Flight.



Members of Post 101 honor guard visited the Greenville Glider and Military Museum. The main feature of the museum is a CG-4A Glider.

## On every mission, there were holes.



Thirty-five times, nine men went out on a bomber so big they called it the Flying Fortress. Each and every time they came back in a plane peppered with bullet holes. Sometimes, many times, the guys flying in the plane next to them didn't come back at all.

On Monday, April 21, 2014 – more than 69 years after he flew his final mission – the U.S. Air Force presented former Technical Sgt. Alfred P. Murphy with a Distinguished Flying Cross after an official review determined that he earned the medal in World War II,

while flying as a radio operator/mechanic/gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress bomber in Europe.

"It was only the skill and courage of the entire crew that allowed us to live through that," said Murphy, now a few weeks shy of his 92nd birthday and living in retirement at an American House community in Rochester Hills, Mich. "No one man could have done that. You had to be a team."

Through 35 missions, over a roughly 8-month period that began in the summer of 1944 -- roughly from the Invasion of Normandy through the Battle of Bulge -- Murphy and his fellow Airmen in the 322nd Bomb Squadron survived anti-aircraft fire, repeated attacks by enemy fighters and -- after every mission -- they'd land back at their base in Bassingbourn, England, and shake their heads at the bullet holes in their planes. After every mission.

"The dedication and self-sacrifice of Airmen like Patrick Murphy set a standard of excellence for today's Air Force," said Col. Philip Sheridan, commander of the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Sheridan awarded the DFC medal to Murphy in a short ceremony at Murphy's retirement community, April 21. "It was an honor not only to present this award to him, but also to shake his hand and say thank you for your service to our great nation."

Article by and picture: TSgt. Dan Heaton 127th Wing Public Affairs

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