

THE AMERICAN LEGION

JOSEPH B. WESTNEDGE POST #36

NEWSLETTER 14-02

Post Commander: Don Harrison	269-370-3940	DHarrisonNavy@gmail.com
Vice Commander: Jake Rickli	269-343-3356	JMRickli@SBCGlobal.net
Adjutant: Don Gillespie	269-626-0398	dlgilles@att.net

ADJUTANTS COLUMN

Good news! Our membership is growing. We have had a great year to date for recruiting transfers. We also have several new members, and a couple of them are active in club activities and regularly attend meetings. So, why am I worried? Unfortunately, many of our new transfers are from Posts that are closing due to aging members and declining membership. Are we on the same path?

A decline in membership has a serious impact on American Legion programs and diminishes visibility in our communities. The American Legion is only as strong as its membership base. The more devoted members it has, the better the organization can advocate for veterans and serve the military community which has given so much to our country. New veterans today are less likely to make a long-term commitment to an organization. The last two generational groups are not joining, so it is our responsibility to engage them and explain to them the benefits of becoming a Legion member.

What can we do? First we need a couple of committed volunteers who can focus on improving recruitment, especially of new veterans. If you are interested in helping with our recruiting efforts, please contact Jake Rickli or me. The rest of us can help every day. Word of mouth can be our most valuable tool. Nearly all of us know an active or returning service member. When a veteran learns what the Legion is about, they are more likely to become a member. So, talk to other veterans and share your knowledge of the Legion benefits. Many young veterans know little or nothing at all about the Legion. Wear your American Legion cap or shirt in public and while attending patriotic events. A good resource for information is the American Legion website- <http://www.legion.org/>

Once recruited, new members must always be welcomed, so go out your way to welcome them. New Legionnaires who feel welcome, comfortable and accepted are more likely to attend meetings and volunteer for activities. I would like to see us have a Welcome Committee and an annual New Member Reception. Again, volunteers and your ideas are needed.

To thrive as an organization, the Legion must recruit, and retain. We need to work harder in communities, and we must also build lasting relationships with the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, reservists, Coast Guard and Guardsmen who join our ranks. Thank you. Veterans Still Serving!

MEMBERSHIP

We would like to welcome 9 members of Post 332 and 8 members of Post 225 who have transferred to our Post. 2015 renewal is at 60% as of late September. Please remember to send in your renewals or renew on-line. Early bird renewals are appreciated and rewarded. If you know a qualified veteran who might like to join, call Jake Rickli @ (269)343-3356.

AMERICANISM

As we continue our patriotic leadership in the community, we welcome your involvement and ideas. If you and your family members want to ride out Post float during annual parades, please let us know. We need to renovate the float and your help is also welcome. When you are volunteering in the community, please wear your Legion gear and let us know about your volunteer hours. Member volunteerism is recognized in our annual Consolidated Post Report. Promote Americanism and your Post!

Monthly Trivia-

The American Legion wrote the first draft of what Bill? (which is considered the Legion's single greatest legislative achievement). The first person to mention the correct answer at a Post meeting will win something...to be determined. 😊

Operation Holiday Cheer-

Kalamazoo Blue Star Mothers is having a Shop for the troops "Operation Holiday Cheer" event on Oct. 4th, D & W Romence Rd. Portage, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. and on Oct. 25th Parkview and Oakland Drive D & W. Then on November 8, 2014 "Operation Holiday Cheer" ceremony, packing event! @ Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan, Kalamazoo Regional Center 601 W. Maple Street, Kalamazoo MI 49008 12:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. They need lots of help to supply and prepare the Christmas packages for local troops who are deployed.

COMING EVENTS

Tue	10/7	Red Arrow House Meeting 6 – 7pm
Thur	10/16	Monthly Meeting 7 – 8pm
Sun	11/2	3 rd District Meeting- Charlotte Post 42. Exec. Meeting - 11:30am. Dinner – noon. District Meeting – 1:00pm
Tues	11/4	Election Day. Red Arrow House Meeting 6 – 7pm
Sat	11/8	Operation Holiday Cheer. Ceremony and packing event (see this newsletter)
Tue	11/11	Veteran's Day – Thank You.
Thur	11/20	Monthly Meeting 7 – 8pm
Tue	12/2	Red Arrow House Meeting 6 – 7pm
Thur	12/18	Monthly Meeting 7 – 8pm
TBD		Christmas/New Years Celebrations.
Sun	1/11	3 rd District Meeting- Battle Creek Post 298. Exec. Meeting - 11:30am. Dinner – noon. District Meeting – 1:00pm

WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS- (And - we have a new Post email- MLLegionPost36@gmail.com)

We need your email address for our mailing list. If you have email, please send us your email address, so we can save money on mailings. Each newsletter we mail costs over \$100 in printing, envelopes and postage. If we could send half of them using email, we would save over \$200 per year. That is money we could spend on veterans needs instead. Thank you.

We also have a Facebook page **American Legion Post 36 Kalamazoo** and it's a great way to–

Send invitations to Post events.

Show off what we are doing and Share pictures

Welcome new members.

Survey members and receive your feedback.

Spread the word about our Post to many people.

Share information with other veterans groups.

If you don't have a Facebook account, you can sign up for one in a few steps:

Go to www.facebook.com.

If you see the signup form, fill out your name & email address. If you don't see the form, click **Sign Up**, then fill out the form.

Once you have joined – you can set your privacy so only those you want to can see your information.

TAPS. The Members of American Legion Post 36 and their families extend their deepest sympathies to the loved ones of these fallen Veterans. Their contributions and friendship have made a lasting impression on all of us.

HIATT, LEONARD "BUD"- Bud served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

SMALL, GEORGE C.- George was a World War II Veteran, serving in the U.S. Army.

HARRISON, MR. RICHARD H., JR.- During the Korean War, Richard served in Japan with the U.S. Air Force.

FEDESNA, DR. NICHOLAS E., JR.- American Legion Post 332. Nicholas served in the US Navy during the Vietnam War.

YAGER, NELSON GORDON.- American Legion Post 332. Gordon served as a pilot in the Army Air Force during World War II .

IN CASE OF DEATH OR INLESS OR FOR ASSISTANCE WITH MILITARY AFFAIRS, PLEASE CONTACT US

NEED A RIDE TO THE POST?

Our monthly meetings are the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 7pm. If you need a ride to a meeting, please contact Post Adjutant Don Gillespie at (269)626-0398, Judge Advocate Jim Saur at (269)375-2544 or Vice Commander Jake Rickli at (269)343-3356. Lack of transportation should not stop anyone from participating in our Post events.



The Four Pillars of the American Legion

- 1. Strong National Security**
- 2. Taking Care of Veterans**
- 3. Mentoring Youth**
- 4. Patriotism and Honor (Americanism)**

THE RED ARROW CLUB Call Stacie at (269) 349-7218