

THE AMERICAN LEGION

JOSEPH B. WESTNEDGE POST #36

NEWSLETTER 21-2, July – Sept. 2021

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And please join us on Facebook - American Legion Post 36 Kalamazoo

COMMANDER'S POST-

As your Post Commander for the 2021-22 Legion year, it is incumbent on me to lead our post with your help to achieve success. We have been there before with membership over 100 percent of the goal, successful youth programs and award-winning patriotic floats in local and regional parades. We demonstrated our commitment to the teaching of Americanism in the local schools through visits to the classroom with materials and stories. There is much to do this year to regain our prominence as one of the premier posts in the region.

It all starts with our members and the leaders that you have elected. Each of us has skills and experience that can be leveraged to help achieve the goals we seek. As your leaders it is our job to reach out for your assistance and organize our collective efforts to accomplish our goals. The efforts of our members are the key to our success. We can do this if we all buy in and contribute our skills and enthusiasm.

If you have an idea that you think falls within our Four Pillars of The American Legion: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children and Youth call me or any officer of the Post.

Finally, renew your membership early if you can and come to a meeting to find out more about our plans and how you can help.

Jim Saur, Post 36 Commander



Introducing your American Legion Post 36 Officers

Left to right- Tom Paccione (2-year Trustee), Don Harrison (Judge Advocate), Brian Stults (2nd Vice Commander), Paxton Jameson (1st Vice Commander), Jim Saur (Commander), Cordell Gardner (Sergeant at Arms), Dan Bement (3-year Trustee), Stan Rop (Chaplain), Dave Carvell (Finance Officer and 1-year Trustee), Don Gillespie (Adjutant).

ADJUTANT'S RANT- Innovate & Communicate.

First, thank you for allowing me to serve as the Post 36 Adjutant. After two years off, I am happy to be able to serve the Post again. The past couple of years were particularly challenging times for our Nation, our communities, and our families. I hope your family fared well and stayed healthy.

Post 36 is getting back to work. We are holding meetings; our 2021-22 officers have been elected and we are refocused on continuing our mission. But after so much time off and so much change, we face new challenges. Success will not come easily.

Fortunately, as veterans we were trained in the basic skills necessary for success. For instance- the 5-paragraph operations order was one of the lessons I was able to put to good use after I got out. Per the Op Order - we need to determine our situation and establish our mission(s). Determine how we execute and sustain our missions. And lastly, we need to communicate effectively with our members and the community. If we do these 5 things well, and with your help, we can succeed.

All veterans know that effective communication is critical for success. We need to let the community know who we are, and why we serve. We need to have better 2-way communication with our members. We need to keep you informed (without over doing it) and we need more feedback and input from our members.

We also need to have meetings that are shorter, more efficient, and much more fun! I would love to see us target a 30-minute meeting and 30-minute social time, vs an hour-long meeting. One way to innovate would be to have our behind-the-scenes work done by small teams. Each team (sports, school visits, VA, etc.) could work on projects throughout the month and report back to us very briefly at the monthly meetings.

Our new mission needs to be determined by our members, not our officers. To accomplish our missions, we need your input. What should our Post's priorities should be? What should we focus on, is there a project that interests you? If so, suggest it and volunteer with us. Assist in any way you can. We need you to communicate with us and communicate with the community. Tell your fellow veterans about our post, our mission, why you personally belong, and why they should join us.

Last thing - ARE YOU RECEIVING OUR EMAILS? If you are not, please check to see if they are going to your SPAM folder. We won't email you more than twice a month, but we do send meeting minutes and newsletters. Also, if your name, address or any other information is inaccurate, please let me know.

Thank you. With Respect, Adjutant Don Gillespie

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

As I start my first term as Finance Officer for Post 36, I have been familiarizing myself with the various accounts our Post holds and thought it would be a good time to share some of this information with our membership through our newsletter.

Our Operations Account is a checking account where, among other items, we deposit our reimbursement from the State from our membership dues. Other deposits might include any donations to our Post or income from any fundraising event we may have. Recent disbursements include two scholarship excellence awards to WMU student veterans and a donation to the "Lest We Forget Our Vets" Organization for a fund raiser they were organizing for a teacher who has supported veterans causes in the past. We might also use this account to fill requests from veterans for financial assistance.

Our Lotto Account is a checking account where we deposit our share from lottery sales at VFW Post 1527. We use money from this account to fund our participation as sponsors for Little League, charitable donations to various organizations that support veterans such as Blue Star Mothers, parade expenses (when we have them), other events of that nature, and requests from different community organizations to support their cause.

It is important to note that these disbursements and the accounts that they come from are agreed upon at our monthly meetings and aren't exclusive of each other but more as to where the membership at the meeting decides at that time. We always consider the Four Pillars of The American Legion- Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth- when deciding where to direct charitable contributions.

We also hold a money market account and two Certificates of Deposit, one a 12-month term and the other a 24-month term. These accounts aren't currently generating a lot of income, but we do consider different financing options when appropriate.

The last account is an annuity that we purchased in October 2009, with a guaranteed rate of return at 3%

I'm looking forward to my term as Finance Officer and serving Post 36. I intend to continue to share information about our finances with our membership in our newsletter and of course with my monthly report at our meetings.

Post 36 Finance Officer, Dave Carvell



2021 West Portage Little League's American Legion Team



COMING EVENTS

- Thurs. 8/19 Monthly Meeting 5pm South Haven Post 49, Bring your significant other and join us for Steak Night.
- Sat. 9/11 20th Anniversary of 9/11 - Never Forget!
- Sun. 9/12 3rd District Mtg. at the Bucket Restaurant in Union City. Lunch at noon, meeting at 1300.
- Thurs. 9/16 Monthly Meeting – 7pm
- Thurs. 10/21 Monthly Meeting – 7pm
- Sun. 11/7 3rd District Mtg. – Hillsdale Post 53, Lunch at noon, meeting at 1300.
- Wed. 11/11 Veterans Day- "*As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.*" -John Fitzgerald Kennedy
- Thurs. 11/18 Monthly Meeting – 7pm
- Sat. 12/11 Annual ARMY-NAVY GAME party.
- Sat. TBD All Post Christmas Potluck.



2021 Millwood Little League's American Legion Team

Please join us in welcoming these new or transferred American Legion members to Post 36.

Dena Erwin - U.S. Navy, Cold War

Jack Erwin - U.S. Navy, Cold War

Dennis Lutz - U.S. Army, Persian Gulf

Donnel Brown - U.S. Army, Vietnam

Blanca Moyer - U.S. Army, G.W.O.T.

Welcome and thank you for still serving.

PARTNERSHIP

One of the advantages of belonging to our Post is the partnerships we enjoy with the other organizations that call the VFW Red Arrow Club home. The Red Arrow Post is also home to the VFW, the Marine Corps League, the Blue Star Mothers, the Red Arrow Riders, the Kalamazoo Horseshoe Club, and the Kalamazoo Numismatics Club. Many of our members are members of one or more of these other organizations.

Your membership entitles you to use the Post's facilities. The meeting rooms, kitchen, outside pavilion, and grounds are yours to use for free, or for a relatively small fee. Our support helps them remain available and in good condition. The facilities offer a great venue for family events (parties, anniversaries, etc.) and/or club events. Nonmembers can also rent the facilities at higher rates.

We at the Red Arrow should encourage our members and other to plan their summer and fall events there.

The Red Arrow Post had an incredibly challenging 18 months due to COVID. Now, the I-94/Portage Rd exchange is being rebuilt and limiting visibility and accessibility. Please stop out for a Taco Tuesday (2nd and 4th Tuesday), or any other Post event. Or bring take out dinner and invite some friend to the post. While you're there, play Keno and have a few drinks. They need our support.



Blue Star Mothers Care Packages - 2021

The local Chapter of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., is seeking the community's help in supporting our troops and spreading holiday cheer to deployed men and women in the United States Armed Forces. The Kalamazoo Chapter of BSMA will be holding its annual "Operation Holiday Cheer" in November 2021. We are hoping to send care packages to our deployed service members; however, we need your assistance.

You can help by contributing a monetary donation and/or providing addresses for deployed service members. Whatever you can contribute would be greatly appreciated! If you would like a care package sent, please email your overseas APO address to: GreaterKalamazooBSM@gmail.com. Please make donations payable to Blue Star Mothers Kalamazoo MI Chapter #186, P.O. Box 20252, Kalamazoo, MI 49019. For tax purposes our EIN number is 300-593-785. BSMA is a non-profit, 501©3.

We are also gathering supplies for the VA's home veteran pantry. Toiletries, personal hygiene supplies, cleaning supplies, etc. are requested. And we are collecting receipts from D&W and Family Fare under the Direct Your Dollar program. The bins for donations for supplies or receipts are in the entryway of the Post.

The Greater Kalamazoo Michigan Chapter #186 of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., is a group of local area moms whose children are serving or have served in the U.S. Military. For more information please contact Bluestarmothersmi186@gmail.com
Marianna Gáncs Humphrey, President, 269.420.7607



The American Legion 100 Miles for Hope Challenge

In 2021, the American Legion kicked off another 100 Miles for Hope campaign, designed to raise funds for the Veterans and Children Foundation. Registration is \$25, which includes a (larger than expected) but nice-looking badge.

The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation has delivered over \$30 million in financial assistance for disabled veterans, military families, and children who have lost parents in service to our nation.

The 100 Miles for Hope campaign began on April 1. And participants have until September 6th to run, walk, or ride for 100 miles. For more info. visit- <https://www.legion.org/100miles>

As in 2020, we have several members who are participating. You can register via the Kilter App or at the American Legion Emblem sales website or phone. Shirts and other swag can also be purchased. The shirts are nice! Join us in getting active and contribute to a great charity. And share a picture to us or social media, so we can encourage others to join and contribute.

Memorializing 9/11 on the 20th Anniversary

20 years ago, on September 11th, 2001, terrorist attacks resulted in 2,977 Americans killed and over 6,000 injured. There are another estimated 25,000 people living with substantial long-term health consequences. America has been fighting terrorism around the globe ever since that fateful day. There have been nearly 7,100 American military lives lost and many times that number of wounded. American troops continue to serve in the Global War on Terrorism in over 30 countries.

**To all who have served and continue to serve.
We Will Never forget.**



PATRIOT DAY

We will never forget



TAPS- The members of Post 36 extend their deepest sympathies to the families of these fallen members.

JACK POST - Jack was born in Kalamazoo on Dec. 5, 1933, to Albert and Evelyn (Frame) Post. He was the eldest of three sons. Jack served as a military policeman in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. Upon his return home. Jack worked for Gibson Guitar until they closed, and later delivered flowers for both Flipse and VanderSalm's. Jack actively served the American Legion for over 40 years. He was our Post 36 commander in 1989 and 1990, and he served as our chaplain for many years. Jack championed our participation in local parades, helping maintain and re-decorate our floats every spring. He was always singing to the crowds from our float- he was the voice of Post 36. Jack was preceded in death by his brother Robert and his parents.

MARVIN DOWNEY - Marvin was born on July 16, 1932, to Eugene and Lucille Downey. In 1950, he graduated from Dowagiac High School, and soon enlisted in the US Air Force, serving from 1951-1955 during the Korean War. Upon returning home, Marv worked as a powerplant operator at the Upjohn Company for 32 years. Marvin married his wife Bernadine on May 5, 1956, in Decatur, Michigan. Marv and Bernie were highly active in civic and church organizations. Marvin was preceded in death by his wife Bernadine, and son Brian. He is survived by 3 sons, many grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

PAUL HOOGENBOOM - Paul was born in Kalamazoo on April 27, 1940, the son of Henry and Gertrude (Kokmeyer) Hoogenboom. He served his country honorably in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. Paul was a self-employed masonry contractor. He loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherman and hunter. On September 18, 1964, Paul married the former Janet M. Vander Weele, who survives. He is also survived by his children and grandchildren. Paul was preceded in death by his brother Kenneth and 3 sisters, Elaine and Barbara Hoogenboom and Judith Badtelamente, as well as two infant sisters and one infant brother.



Jack Post



Marvin Downey



Paul Hoogenboom



Standing tall and looking good! Ought to be in Hollywood!

Are you looking for a good way to show your colors and support the Legion? One way to show your support is with some nice Post 36 American Legion wear, a new coffee mug, or other Legion accessories! We have a small quantity of Post 36 wicking polos (very cool and comfortable). We also have Post 36 ball caps, uniform caps, and will soon be placing an order for customized coffee mugs, featuring the Legion logo and Joseph B. Westledge Post 36. We periodically place orders for the Post and for post members, at cost including shipping. Give us a call, email our adjutant, or visit the 2021 American Legion Flag & Emblem catalog online. We can combine your items to our bulk order and save on shipping expenses. And think of how good you'll look wearing your new Post 36 cap and shirt!

NEED A RIDE TO A MEETING OR APPOINTMENT?

If you need a ride, please contact us. Lack of transportation should not stop anyone from participating in our Post events, or from visiting the doctor or other necessary appointments.

The American Legion's success depends entirely on active members, participation, and volunteers. The organization belongs to the people it serves and the communities in which it thrives.

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 – (269)349-7218
Post 36 meetings are typically held every 3rd Thursday from 7-8pm in the Red Arrow VFW Post at **1920 E. Kilgore Service Rd., Portage**