

THE AMERICAN LEGION

JOSEPH B. WESTNEDGE POST #36

NEWSLETTER, 4th Quarter, October - December 2021

Post Commander: Jim Saur

269-375-2544

technan@charter.net

Sr. Vice Commander: Paxton Jameson

269-303-9721

paxjameson@gmail.com

Adjutant: Don Gillespie

269-873-5115

dlgilles@att.net

Mailing address- **P.O. Box 19248, Kalamazoo, MI 49019**

Post email - **MILegionPost36@gmail.com**

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

COMMANDER'S POST-

Veterans Day is an excellent time to reflect on our past, enjoy the present-day attention, and look forward to our future as a veteran service organization. Our Post dates to the end of WW I and we have been an active service organization in the Kalamazoo area for over a century. Our mission is to serve local veterans in the community and promote a pride in America through patriotic education and public events. We have been a regular participant in classroom visits and local parades for over fifty years. Throughout that time, we have offered a helping hand to veterans in need. But we can do more.

Our present-day veterans are leaving active and reserve duties in growing numbers. As they return to civilian life, we must actively engage them and offer our support. Those who pursue further education need to know about our Joseph B Westnedge scholarship grant. Those looking for employment may be able to network through our members or get help writing a focused resume relating their military experience to civilian needs.

We need to support the veteran's families. Spouses who interrupted careers to support the military member's movement can use our help as well. We can do more for this new generation of veterans if they are aware of our capabilities and desire to help. Engage them.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY. Jim Saur, Post Commander

FOR THE GOOD OF THE LEGION

Thank you to John Gumper and Phil Leland for your generous donations. Donations such as yours allow us to continue helping our local veterans, youth, and other community events.



ADJUTANT'S NEWS - Service and New Friends

The best thing I have received from the American Legion is all the new friends that I have made over the past 20 years. While serving as Adjutant, I have been able to meet many of our members. Some of you I have met at events, meetings, or while delivering continuous year certificates with Jake, (something I am tardy on this year) or while interviewing you for a *Meet Your Fellow Veteran* column. I have enjoyed meeting every one of you. Sadly, some of my newfound friends have passed recently. But it was a privilege to have known them and they will never be forgotten.

Another benefit is the great feeling that comes from serving others. I know that most of our members serve in their own way. Many of you serve at Meals on Wheels, South County Services, church or somewhere in your community. It seems that most veterans still seek to serve, that's probably why we are members.

If you are looking for a way to serve, or an opportunity to meet some fellow veterans and their families, turn the page, look at our calendar, pick an event, and come join us. You will not regret it.

With Respect, Adjutant Don Gillespie



INVITE YOUR FAMILY and FRIENDS TO JOIN OUR SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON

We are establishing a Sons of The American Legion squadron at our post. Eligible members must be male and have parents (including step or adopted parents) or grandparents who both served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership. The key to maintaining our new S.A.L. squadron will be finding a few members who will step up and volunteer to serve as officers. We currently have at least ten people interested in membership, and two are willing to serve in a leadership position. We need at least 1 more member who would be willing to serve as an officer. Officers will be required to attend monthly meetings. Annual dues for the Sons will be \$20 for an adult and \$10 for minors.

If you, a family member, or friend are eligible and interested in joining our S.A.L. squadron, please have them contact one of our officers (as noted on the top of the front page) If you are a Legion member, and eligible, please consider a dual membership to help us become established.

For more information, visit - www.legion.org/sons

**In Honor of Veteran's Day,
Heritage Community of Kalamazoo and the
Vineyard Assisted Living have invited us to
pay tribute to their resident Veterans.**

A flag ceremony and Veteran's Day tribute is scheduled at Heritage Community on Thurs., Nov. 4 at 3:00pm. Wyndham's address is 2300 Portage Rd. Note - you must turn onto Phillips St. to access Wyndham's driveway.

The flag folding ceremony is scheduled at Vineyard Assisted Living Facility on Tues., Nov. 9 at 1:00pm. Vineyard is located at 8170 Vineyard Pkwy, in Texas Corners, just off West Q Ave.

COVID protocols are- if you are fully vaccinated, you can enter with a temperature check. If you are not vaccinated, you will need a negative COVID test within 7 days of entrance.

If you want to join us in honoring our fellow veterans, please contact Commander Saur at 375-2544 or Adjutant Gillespie at 873-5115. We hope to see you. These events are always fun and very rewarding.



9/11 Silent Stair Climb at WMU

On Sept. 11th, several members participated in WMU's Silent Stair Climb, an annual remembrance climb honoring those who sacrificed all on 9/11. This year there were 124 participants and the event raised over \$3,400 for two local charities. The Cuff & Ladder Fund raises money and resources for sick, injured and in-need Police, Fire and EMS responders who live or work in southwest Michigan. The WMU Veterans and Dependents Scholarship is a needs-based scholarship available to military members currently serving, those who have previously served, and dependents.

The stair climb was a challenging and humbling way to honor those who were lost, and support those who sacrificed on Sept. 11th. Thank you to WMU Dept. of Military and Veteran Affairs, ROTC, the WMU Student Veterans of America, and the local corporate sponsors who made this a successful fund raiser and helping ensure that we never forget.

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

Kathleen Vanwerden - U.S. Navy, Vietnam

Mervin Cato - U.S.A.F., Vietnam

Gary Giguire - U.S. Army, Other Conflicts

Mary Cestnik - U.S.A.F., Vietnam

James Sternbergh - U.S. Army, Panama

Thomas Miller - U.S. Navy, Vietnam

Ralph Robertson II - U.S. Army, G.W.O.T.

David Munson - U.S. Army, Vietnam

Gerrit Vander Kamp - Army, Grenada/Lebanon

Dustin Conlin - U.S. Navy, Other Conflicts

David Thompson - U.S. Navy, Panama

Tammy Tarver - U.S.A.F., Grenada/Lebanon

Donnie Tarver - U.S.M.C., G.W.O.T.

Michael Sinclair - U.S. Army, Other Conflicts

Jack Amos - U.S. Navy, Vietnam

Robert Kipp - U.S. Navy, Vietnam

John Olson - U.S. Army, Vietnam

Robert Georgia - U.S. Army, Gulf War

Barton Nafe - U.S.M.C., Other Conflicts

Jerry Malmud - U.S. Army, Korea

**Welcome and thank you helping us
continue our mission in Kalamazoo.**



Taco Tuesdays - stop by the Red Arrow Post on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday. Get two tacos, with chips on the side for \$5! Chicken or beef, soft-shell, or hard-shell options available!



TRIVIA NIGHT - 6pm Every Friday

Join us at 6pm every Friday for Trivia Nights. Bring your family and friends. Takeout food is welcome. Have some great fun. Drinks and snacks are available. There are a fun variety of categories. Surprise others with the amount of completely useless information that you know! Sponsored by the Red Arrow Riders and VFW.

MEET YOUR FELLOW VETERANS- Leonard Laney

Leonard was born Dec. 10.1927 in Grand Junction, CO. He attended high school in Blairsville, PA. In June of 1945, he was 17 and "everyone was doing their part to help the war effort". While attending a parade, he saw the Pennsylvania State Guard marching and was so impressed that he enlisted. He served with the 10th Infantry, PA State Guard for one year, until they were demobilized in June 1946. He then tried to join the regular Army, but they turned him away because of his eyesight, so Leonard asked to be drafted. In October 1946 he was drafted, and sent to the Quartermaster Corps in Camp Lee, VA. Because of his prior experience, and the needs of the Army, his basic training was cut short, and Leonard was sent to the Army of Occupation of Japan.

Leonard was assigned to the 8th Army HQ, Quartermaster Section, Memorial Division. They were tasked with recording information on dead and missing airmen who had been lost over Japan. After 6 months in Japan, the military demobilized all draftees, and he was sent home. Upon returning to PA, Leonard joined the PA National Guard, and assigned as a company clerk in L Co., 28th Infantry. After 4 months he was unable to find a job or pay for college, so he enlisted for 3 years with the in the newly formed U.S. Air Force. His first duty was in legal affairs at Fort Slocum. He processed records for personnel going to/from the Berlin air lift, along with many other duties. After about 18 months, he volunteered for "overseas" duty in Alaska. He was stationed at Elmendorf AFB in Anchorage, working with the Air Police. Soon after, the Korean War started and Leonard was promoted to S/SGT, locked down in Alaska and extended for another year. He spent his last 6 months at Hamilton AFB, California processing returning Korea War veterans.

After serving 4 years in the USAF, Leonard and a couple of other airmen headed home, driving cross country. When they stopped in Lafayette, IN to drop off a friend, he was introduced to Barbara. Romance followed and Leonard ended up staying in Indiana, attending Purdue on the GI Bill. He majored in economics. In 1953, him and Barbara were married.

Leonard has worked in procurement at several companies, mostly purchasing parts and equipment for the military. He finished his career at National Waterlift in Kalamazoo.

COMING EVENTS



- Tues. 10/12 & 26 Taco Tuesdays are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, from 6-8pm.
- Fri. every Trivia Night- 6pm every Friday. Feel free to bring in dinner, enjoy our drinks, and have some fun.
- Thurs. 10/21 Monthly Meeting – 7pm
- Thurs. 11/4 Wyndham Apartments - Join us while paying tribute to our senior veterans. 3pm.
- Sun. 11/7 3rd District Mtg. – Hillsdale Post 53, Lunch at noon, meeting at 1300.
- Tues. 11/9 Vineyard Assisted Living - Join us while paying tribute to our senior veterans. 1pm.
- Thurs. 11/11 Veterans Day- Come join us at one of several local Veteran Day events – details in this newsletter.
- Thurs. 11/18 Monthly Meeting – 7pm
- Tues. 12/7 80th Anniversary of Pearly Harbor, "A date which will live in Infamy".
- Sat. 12/11 Annual ARMY-NAVY GAME party.
- Sat. TBD All Post Christmas Potluck.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ATTENDING A MONTHLY VETERANS BREAKFAST IN KALAMAZOO OR PORTAGE? STAY TUNED.

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.

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

DAVID SCHEFFERS - David was born Sept. 13, 1944, the son of Arthur and Iris (Courtney) Scheffers and delivered by his sister, Ruth (age 16). After graduating from Kal. Christian, David went to City Barber Styling School in Detroit. Dave enlisted in the United States Army and was deployed to South Vietnam as a Chaplain's Assistant. After being honorably discharged, he was self-employed and retired from Scheffers Hair Design after 53 years. David is survived by his wife Carol, their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

FRED STEVENS - Born in 1922, Fred excelled as a 3-sport athlete at Hart high school and then at WMU. WWII temporarily interrupted his education and sports career. Fred was soon serving in the US Navy, as a 1 LT on LTS 572 delivering men and equipment on Omaha beach. Next, they were sent to the Pacific, where they participated in the battles around Okinawa and the Philippines. Returning home, Fred soon married his wife Ann, who unfortunately passed away in 2010, after 65 years of marriage. He turned down offers to play pro baseball and joined WMU's Athletic Dept. where he worked for about 40 years.

ROBERT PHILIPP - Robert was born on Sept 22, 1937, in Kalamazoo. After graduating from Kalamazoo Central High School, he served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War era. Bob attended Ferris State before transferring to Michigan State University, to play baseball. He worked as custodian of records for 5/3rd Bank until he retired. On Sept. 9, 1967, he married Sharon Kuiper. Bob was preceded in death by his wife, Sharon; daughter, Becky Jones; and a granddaughter Allison Sharon Jones. He is survived by his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.



David Scheffers



Fred Stevens



Robert Philipp

Never Forgotten - Rest in Peace



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 or accessories! We have a small quantity of Post 36 wicking polos, ball caps, uniform caps, customized coffee mugs, all featuring the Legion logo and/or Joseph B. Westnedge Post 36. We periodically place orders for the Post and for post members, at cost plus shipping. Give us a call, email our adjutant, or visit the 2021 American Legion Flag & Emblem catalog online. Help support the American Legion and your Post by wearing your Post 36 cap and shirt!

The Red Arrow Post has weekly pool and dart tournaments. Visit or call 349-7218 for more information.

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

American Legion Post 36 meetings are usually held every 3rd Thursday from 7-8pm in the Red Arrow VFW located at 1920 E. Kilgore Service Rd., Portage