

THE AMERICAN LEGION

JOSEPH B. WESTNEDGE POST #36

NEWSLETTER 22 - 2, April - June 2022

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN- Staying Involved.

As we approach the summer, it is our obligation as Veterans to increase our visibility in the community and show our neighbors how we continue to serve America. Our continued support of youth sports, appearance in patriotic parades, support of WMU student veterans and ROTC and veteran families in need are a few of our local, State and National contributions. As our membership has grown, we have been able to increase our support and participation in school Americanism activities as well.

As your Post Commander, I encourage all members to get involved in community and patriotic events this summer. Fly the flag of our Nation at your home every day and particularly on holiday like Flag Day (June 14), Memorial Day and July 4th. Also participate with us as we celebrate American in parades and other events through the summer.

Join us as we celebrate America – Jim Saur



Kalamazoo Hosts the Department of Michigan 2022 Annual Convention

Looking for a fun and educational way to get to know more about the American Legion? Come join us at the 2022 Dept. of Michigan Annual Convention. It will be held at the Radisson Hotel from June 23-26. We need volunteers to staff our table on the 24th and 25th. It's fun and you meet some great people. There are also meal discounts at downtown restaurants during the convention.

Our Annual Convention is the annual meeting for all Michigan Legion membership, where Constitution and by-law changes are proposed and voted on. Awards are given out to teachers, police, firefighter, winners of programs, and Legionnaires. Delegates can hear the reports and elect new officers for the coming year.

Who can attend the Convention? The convention is open to all Legionnaires. Post Adjutants are informed how many delegates their post is authorized and are asked to identify them. If you are interested in being a delegate, speak to our Post Commander.

What happens at convention? Convention committees, district caucuses, and zone caucuses are held on Friday morning. The convention officially opens Friday around 2 or 3 p.m.

On Saturday, the session opens in the morning for speeches, reports, and information. Social events are held in the afternoon.

On Sunday, reports are finished, and the election of officers is held. At the close of convention, the newly elected commander and department executive committee meet for the first time to conduct some business.

Americanism, by Dennis Lutz

Americanism is one of the pillars of the American Legion. In today's world, with its constant yammering and twenty-four-hour news cycles, it might be easy for our youth to forget that American is free because of the brave, or that Freedom is not a given.

I have advocated before that our Post needs to do more on this front. I know that COVID put things on hold, but there are many events that we can participate in as a Post (Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day, 9/11, Veterans Day, end of Viet Nam, WW2, Korea). It doesn't have to be a parade. With a post of over 250 members, we, the American Legion, should be more active. Activity is good for our own members, and good for the community as well.

We need to participate more. When I mentioned this the push back was, we don't have enough active members to do the things that we would like. It might be that we don't have the activities to draw in the members to be more active. At the moment, most of our activity spins around our business meetings. That surely by itself is non-sustainable.

There are roughly two hundred thousand soldiers, sailors, airmen, or marines that leave the service every year. This in a country of over three hundred and thirty million. That is what we draw our membership from. Every year, more than two hundred thousand veterans die. The veteran population continues to shrink, and our legion population continues to grow gray hair. We have to do more. We need to be seen by the public to not only broadcast that we have a legion post, but to inspire our youth and our unaffiliated veterans to join. We have to inspire our own membership to be more active, and we need to be proactive in doing so.

Our task is to make our community a better place, and to instill pride in America and what she stands for. While we do that, we need to get stronger, because by getting stronger (more active people) we can do more, and in so doing, our members and our community will take the same type of pride and joy we found when we did the services for our senior citizens.





Walk with Us in the 2022 Kalamazoo Memorial Day Parade.

The City of Kalamazoo has not held a Memorial Day parade since 2019. This year the parade is back on, and we plan to attend and honor our fallen. We are asking for a big turnout of Legion family members & fellow veterans who will ride the float or walk with us. This year we will also be walking the route with our fellow Red Arrow veteran organizations directly behind or in front of us.

Please set aside some time and come walk, or ride, with us and your fellow veterans. The parade starts at 10am in front of the Kalamazoo County Bldg. on Michigan Ave, heads down Michigan to Riverview, north to Gull Road and ends at Riverside Cemetery, at Riverview and Gull. There will be a brief wreath laying ceremony at the Veteran's Memorial Park in route, and a Memorial service at the Cemetery. We plan to carpool from the Post, and/or there will be parking at the start and end points of the route. If you want to join us at the parade or have any questions; email us, or call Jim Saur at 269-375-2544.



2022 – 2023 POST 36 OFFICER ELECTIONS

Every year our officers are nominated in April and elected in May at the monthly meetings. Some of our officers have served our Post for many years and would enjoy stepping down from the responsibility. We need some of our member to step up and take the reins for a year or two. Fresh new ideas and energy are good, and you would be doing our Post and membership a service. We typically have 11 meetings per year, and a few other events. If you are interested, please come to our April 21st meeting at 7pm.



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON 36.

Our application has been submitted, and we expect to receive our Sons of The American Legion Squadron 36 charter from National, sometime in April. If you, or someone you know are interested in joining our S.A.L. squadron, please have them email our S.A.L. officers at salsq36@gmail.com. Annual dues are only \$10 for 2022 and will increase to \$25 in 2023.

The S.A.L. mission is to strengthen the four pillars of The American Legion. Their campaigns will emphasize preserving American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship. S.A.L. members are males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership. Meetings will be held the 4th Wednesday of the month, at 7pm. For more info., visit - www.legion.org/sons.



Sgt. at Arms Cordell Gardner presents our donation to the Stones Church of Kalamazoo, for their community food pantry.

Welcome to our new members

- John Griffith - U.S. Air Force
- Carl Hughes, Jr. - U.S. Army
- Ed Kudzia - U.S. Navy
- Robert Koestner - U.S. Navy
- William Bennett - U.S. Air Force
- Christopher Hiscock - U.S. Navy
- Scott Nehmer - U.S.M.C.
- Orville Smith - U.S. Army
- Steve Tolliver - U.S. Army

Welcome, and thank you for your service!



Post 36 and patriot Guard members attending the funeral of an "unclaimed" veteran at Fort Custer National Cemetery.

From time to time a local veteran who has no known family passes away. When this happens, Fort Custer has a "unclaimed veteran" funeral service, with honors. We try to attend these funeral services, to pay our respect and give our final salute to our deceased brother or sister. If you want to attend these services with us, contact us via email, or call Don Gillespie (269-873-5115) and he will add you to our contact list.

May 4 Detroit Tigers Bus Trip!

We chartered a bus to the Detroit Tigers game against the Pittsburgh Pirates on Wednesday, May 4, at 1:10pm. All Legion Family members and your families are welcome.



It's **American Legion Family Day** at Comerica Park, and we have teamed up with Schoolcraft Post 475 to charter a 56-seat bus. There are still plenty of seats available. Seats on the bus are \$25 per person. The Tigers tickets are \$20 ea. in Kaline's Corner or \$27 ea. in the Right Field Grandstand. Each comes with \$10 credit at the Big-League Grill. The bus will be leaving Post 36 at 9:30am and should be back around 7:45pm.

We can order tickets for our Post 36 Legion Family members, or if you prefer to buy your own tickets, they are available at https://fevo.me/american_legion_22. Visit the website for more information. Again, please let us know as soon as possible, so we can plan for the bus and order tickets. Call Don at 269-873-5115 to reserve seats and buy tickets. Raffles and 50:50 on the bus.



Meet Your Fellow Veteran- Jerry Malmud was born on May 9, 1936, in the Bronx, NY. He grew up about a block from the Detroit Tigers Hall of Famer, Hank Greenberg. He fondly remembers when him and his friends challenged some recently returned WWII vets to play a game of baseball. The "big guys" crushed them but made it a lot of fun, even throwing with the

wrong hand and batting from their opposite side. Jerry has many great stories. Growing up in the Bronx was adventurous and fun, but going to school wasn't, and Jerry dropped out before graduating. On his 18th birthday, he walked in, registered for the draft, and enlisted in the U.S. Army, both on the same day. He was sent to Ft. Dix for basic and was assigned to cook school.

After graduation, he was assigned to the 5th Armored Division in Augsburg, Germany. There were no open cook slots, so his commander made him an infantryman. However, after the unit cook went AWOL, Jerry was given the job. A few months later, while his unit was on maneuvers near the Black Forest, Jerry had to slice bacon from slabs of pork every morning. The Captain was so impressed with "the way you cut your bacon", he asked him to apply for the breakfast cook position at the Officer's Club. That simple task turned into a better job and a raise. Months later, the 5th Armored Division was rotated back to the United States and Jerry was transferred to the 7th Infantry in Hanau, Germany.

In late 1956 Jerry left the Army, married a girl from Philadelphia, and they had two daughters. He got a job at Hot Point-GE, where he worked his way up from the parts counter to the service dept., to manager of their parts department. Twenty years later, and single again, Jerry moved to the west coast, He changed careers to work in sales. Soon he met Carole and they were married. Years later, they moved back to her hometown, Kalamazoo. Jerry worked at the Air Zoo until his retirement. Jerry and Carole will celebrate 45 years of marriage this April.

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

DR. JACK HUNT - Jack was born and raised in Benton Harbor. He attended Hope College and the University of Michigan Medical School. In 1960, Dr. Hunt joined the Navy and was stationed in Olathe, Kansas. Returning home, he established the Gove/Hunt private medical practice, and was later joined by his sons Drs. John and Jim. Jack also served as the team physician for Hillsdale College, Kalamazoo College, and Comstock Public Schools. Jack is survived by his wife of 69 years, Mary Lou, and their family.

JULIUS MILLERS - Julius was born Dec. 1, 1949, in Oldenburg, Germany, and moved to Kalamazoo when he was very young. After graduating from Loy Norrix, Julius was drafted and served in the Army from 1969-71. Most of his career was spent working for either Allied Papermill or Graphic Packaging. Julius is survived by Judy, his wife of 50 years, and their family.

CLAYTON CHAMPION - Clayton was born on Oct. 7, 1928. After graduating from Kal. Central High School, he served in the U.S. Army's 11th Airborne Division and trained as a boxer. On July 10, 1951, he married Alberta Knowles. Together, they owned and operated Champion's Heating & A/C for 35 years. Clayton is survived by his children and their family. He was preceded in death by his wife Alberta. (no photo available)

GLENN KEITH - Glenn was born June 5, 1939, in Chicago, IL. His family moved to Lawton, MI, and after high school, Glenn served in the U.S. Army in Germany. Upon his discharge, he returned home to marry his sweetheart, Marilyn, in 1962. Glenn was soon called back into the Army reserve due to the Vietnam War. He had a career in sales at Meyer Labs/GlaxoSmithKline. Glenn is survived by his wife, Marilyn, and their family. He was preceded in death by his beloved granddaughter, Jenna.



Dr. Jack Hunt



Julius Millers



Clayton Champion



Glenn Keith

Never Forgotten - Rest in Peace

Monthly Veteran's Breakfast

Join us at LaRue's Family Restaurant 6375 Stadium Dr, for our veteran's breakfast. We meet on the 4th Tuesday of every month, at 0830am. Bring a friend. ALL veterans are welcome. It's an opportunity for local veterans, family, and friends to sit, socialize, compare notes & give each other a hard time.

FYI- LaRue's does not take credit cards.



POST CALENDAR

Fri. every Trivia Night- 6:30pm every Friday. Bring in dinner if you wish, enjoy our drinks, and have some fun.

Sat. 4/16 Bells Brewery downtown- 8pm. Fundraiser for the Keystone Veteran Transitional House- Music by the Yesterdays & Colt Snuffer and the Dead Horsemen.

Thurs. 4/21 Legion Monthly Meeting. Please attend. Our 2022-23 Post 36 Officers will be nominated – 7pm

Tues. 4/26 Veterans breakfast at LaRue's – 0830

Wed. 4/27 S.A.L. Monthly Meeting – 7pm

Sat. 4/30 Blessing of the Bikes- 11:30 Blessing and ride to follow. Food and music in the evening at our post.

Sun. 5/1 3rd Dist. Meeting – Albion Post 55. Lunch at noon, meeting at 1300.

Wed. 5/4 Detroit Tigers-American Legion Family Day. Join us for an afternoon game vs. the Pirates. Van or bus rides available depending upon interest. See page 2 for info.

Sat. 5/14 Riverside Cemetery – 0900. Help us place Memorial Day flags on veterans graves. (rain day- 5/15)

Thurs. 5/19 Legion Monthly Meeting – Please attend the 2022-23 Post 36 Officer elections – 7pm

Tues. 5/24 Veterans breakfast at LaRue's – 0830

Wed. 5/25 S.A.L. Monthly Meeting – 7pm

Mon. 5/30 Memorial Day – Walk with us in the Kalamazoo Memorial Day parade and help us to honor the local men and women who have sacrificed for our freedom.

Thurs. 6/16 Legion Monthly Meeting – 7pm

Wed. 6/22 S.A.L. Monthly Meeting – 7pm

Th-Sun 6/23-26 The Department of Michigan Summer Convention. Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo.

Tues. 6/28 Veterans breakfast at LaRue's – 0830

July 4th Ride/walk with us at the Schoolcraft Parade

Update on the Red Arrow Post Fire and Repairs

Last fall we had an electrical fire in the kitchen. The fire damage was substantial, but it was contained to the kitchen and banquet room. The VFW leadership quickly had the post canteen and meeting room back open and in operation. Thank you!

The banquet room repairs are now complete. It is open for use, and it looks great. If you need a rental hall for a graduation party, reception, or any other event, please consider renting our hall. It is clean, convenient, and very affordable. And members get a discount on top of the already low rate. Unfortunately, our kitchen will be closed through summer. The fire also damaged the roof, so our roof is also going to be replaced this summer. If there is a silver lining, it is our old post getting a much-needed update, and part of our roof replacement is covered by insurance.

Please stop by - your business helps support the canteen.

COMING SOON- Fundraiser for a new Red Arrow sign.

The old, tired sign in front of our post needs to be upgraded. With all Kilgore Rd. traffic now passing by our post, our visibility is drastically increased. We need to step up our game and get a new sign with an electronic banner.

Serving Local Veterans – Kalamazoo County VSO

The Kalamazoo County Veterans Service Office is a great local resource, and they are committed to providing services and assistance to those who have honorably served their country.

The Kalamazoo County service officers can help you with:

- Claim development for VA Compensation
- Dependents and survivors benefits
- VA Home Loan Guaranty
- Federal and Local Burial & Headstone benefits
- Education benefits
- Medical treatment
- Military records and medals
- Emergency financial aidAND MORE

Their website is -<https://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/veterans/heir>

They also have a newsletter to inform veterans, spouses, dependents of Kal. County of the benefits & initiatives available-
<https://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/veterans/newsletters.php>

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

