

History Of
Department of Indiana
American Legion



2023 – 2024

By: Stephen DeFeo, Historian
The American Legion
Department of Indiana

Introduction

The American Legion, Department of Indiana was first chartered on May 24, 1919 - less than one month after the first U.S. caucus of what would become The American Legion in St. Louis. The Department is celebrated its Centennial during the American Legion's Centennial Year. The Department has had several firsts including:

- ❖ The first national application for an American Legion Auxiliary unit granted to the R.E. Kennington Unit 34 in Indianapolis.
- ❖ The first charter to a Sons of the American Legion squadron in any department went to the Bruce P. Robinson Squadron 133 in Indianapolis in 1933.

From its first commander Raymond Springer and continuing to this day, The Department has served Indiana Veterans while upholding the four pillars of The American Legion.

The Department of Indiana has been proud to count as Legionnaires luminaries including:

- ❖ Col. Harvey Weir Cook a World War I flying ace and a pioneer in commercial aviation who helped develop the air mail service.
- ❖ Paul V. McNutt, a World War I veteran, governor of Indiana from 1933 to 1937, and commander of both the American Legion state (1926-1927) and national (1928-1929) organizations.
- ❖ Eddie Rickenbacker was also a World War I flying ace. The Ohio native had been involved in the early days of auto racing before turning his attention to the skies, and after the war he became president of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.
- ❖ Jim Koutz, National Commander from 2012 – 2013 and originator of Operation Comfort Warriors which provides comfort items to veterans to hospitalized veterans.

In 2024. The Department of Indiana expanded its service to veterans through its Veterans Service Officer program, donations to organizations like Mission 22 and Operation Comfort Warriors and established its work through the Indiana American Legion Foundation. The foundation is help for Hoosier veterans and leadership programs for Indiana youth.

Under Department Commander Bob Oeth, the Department of Indiana continued to serve its Legionnaires actively supporting The American Legion's various programs. "It's the Oeth you took".

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Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion

**FOR GOD AND COUNTRY WE ASSOCIATE
OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR THE FOLLOWING
PURPOSES:**

- To uphold and defend the Constitution of the
United States of America;**
- To maintain law and order;**
- To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;**
- To preserve the memories and incidents of our
associations in all Wars;**
- To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community,
state and nation;**
- To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;**
- To make right the master of might;**
- To promote peace and goodwill on earth;**
- To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice,
freedom and democracy;**
- To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to
mutual helpfulness.**

Chapter 1 – Roster of Department Officers

2023-2024 Elected Officers



Department Commander: Bob Oeth



Northern Vice Commander: Wayne Zeman



Northern Vice Commander: Jack Platt



Southern Vice Commander: Joe Allen



Southern Vice Commander: Jerry Melton



National Executive Committeemember: Kenny Cooper



Alternate National Executive Committeemember (NEC): Terry Smith



Sergeant-at-Arms: Brandon Cross

2023-2024 Appointed Officers



Department Adjutant: Chad Woodburn



Executive Director: Josh Marshall



Director of Rehabilitation: John Hickey



Department Service Officer: Bryce Hullett



Department Service Officer: Stuart Holloway



Department Service Stephen Gregar



Department Service Officer: Jennifer Tyler



Department Service Officer: Joe Williams



Department Judge Advocate: Joseph Bumbleburg



Department Chaplin: Norris Keirn



Membership Chairperson: David Miller



Department Historian: Stephen DeFeo

Chapter 2 – Roster of District Commanders



First District Commander: Mike Wooden



Second District Commander: Jill Wable



Third District Commander: Cecil Brummett



Fourth District Commander: Karen Clark



Fifth District Commander: J. David Burnett Jr.



Sixth District Commander: Judy Pearson



Seventh District Commander: Dale McDonald



Eighth District Commander: Brian Barnett



Ninth District Commander: Lonnie Barnett



Tenth District Commander: Dave Roach



Eleventh District Commander: Robert Rowley

Chapter 3 - Department History: 2023-2024

July 2023

Department Scouts of the Year Winners



Blair Miller of Sixth District for winning Department Eagle Scout of the Year.



Sydney Devine of 11th District for winning Department Girl Scout of the Year.

Bob Oeth Sworn in as Department Commander 2023-2024
Meeting in convention at the Indianapolis Marriott East on July 8, 2023 delegates elected
Bob Oeth, Elberfeld Post 351 as Department Commander for 2023-2024.



PNC Jim Koutz administers the oath of office to Bob Oeth

Hoosier Legionnaire is going Digital

In our commitment to keeping up with the rapidly changing digital landscape, we are thrilled to introduce the new digital Hoosier Legionnaire—a user-friendly platform designed to make your Legionnaire reading more convenient and accessible than ever before. Starting with the 4th Quarter 2023 Fall issue in September, you will no longer receive a physical copy of the Hoosier in your postal mailbox. If we have your email on file, it will begin to arrive in your email inbox. To ensure you receive your email copy you can subscribe on the Department website footer, otherwise you can find your issue on at www.indianalegion.org/hoosierlegionnaire.

By embracing the digital Hoosier Legionnaire, you will gain numerous benefits. The digital platform allows you to access the latest issues anytime, anywhere, using your preferred device—a laptop, tablet, or smartphone. You'll have the power to zoom in and easily search for specific content, making it easier than ever to find the information that matters most to you.

We are aware that some of you may have concerns about the transition from print to digital, but rest assured, we are here to guide you every step of the way. When the conversion is final on September 1, 2023, the Department will mail postcards directly to your doorstep, providing you with clear instructions on how to access and navigate the digital Hoosier Legionnaire. Our dedicated staff will also be available to assist you with any questions or technical difficulties you may encounter. After four issues, the post card reminders will stop.

We are confident that the digital Hoosier Legionnaire will revolutionize the way you engage with our organization's news and updates. Embracing this change not only brings convenience and accessibility but also helps us adapt to the evolving needs of our members.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to The American Legion, Department of Indiana. We are excited about this new chapter and look forward to embarking on this digital journey together. Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team.

(Source:indianalegion.org)

Miami Correctional Facility Post 555 donates 737 lbs. of produce to local non-profits



At the Miami Correctional Facility, incarcerated veterans from American Legion Post 555 found a meaningful way to give back to their community. July 2023 they proudly donated a staggering 737 lbs. of squash and zucchini to two local organizations, the Gilead House and Kokomo Rescue Mission.

The Gilead House, known for its work in supporting women's addiction recovery and aiding their reintegration into society after incarceration, welcomed the contribution. The program offered by the Gilead House provides a safe and supportive environment for women during their recovery journey.

Meanwhile, the Kokomo Rescue Mission, an organization committed to serving the homeless, also gratefully received the donation. With their mission of providing over 9,000 meals each month and offering transitional housing at three locations in Kokomo, they recognized the value of the fresh produce from the incarcerated veterans' garden.

The inception of this remarkable garden can be traced back to April when Jerry Thompson, the American Legion Coordinator, and a group of incarcerated veterans joined forces to establish a community garden within the grounds of the Miami Correctional Facility. Together, they cultivated a diverse range of vegetables and fruits, including squash, zucchini, cucumbers, watermelons, carrots, corn, cantaloupe, honeydew, and tomatoes.

Driven by their desire to extend their philanthropic efforts further, Miami Correctional Facility is actively seeking additional non-profit partners in the Peru and Logansport areas who can benefit from the abundance of fresh produce grown in their garden. By collaborating with these organizations, they hope to make a positive impact on the local community by sharing the fruits of their labor and supporting those in need.

(Source: indianalegion.org)



August 2023

An Update by Membership Chair David Miller

An update from Membership Chair David Miller

There is something in the air!

After the fastest start for Department membership in recent history, the question is, why?
Can we maintain the pace we set? And if we can, then how?

*“After the fastest start for Department membership in recent history, the question is, why? C
And if we can, then how?”
David Miller, 2023-2024 Membership Chair*

The “why” is clear to me, there is something intangible in the air. A feeling at many different levels that we are ready to accept that the best days are ahead of us. We have an amazing opportunity with this group of district officers who believe we can succeed. Our District Commanders are almost entirely made up of Indiana Legion College graduates. Meaning they have the best training currently available. When you talk to them, they have the same excitement about our future. It is rare to hear complaints about the local posts not stepping up. And when we do, the answer is the same. Fix it! The Department of Indiana is ahead of last year's numbers by 3,776 members on July 31.

So, can we maintain our current pace? I believe we can. The 50% goal for the Department represents 33,000 members. What makes me believe? First, the early birds and national mailing (which represents the single largest outreach to members in paper form). These are historically known to our more experienced as the time to renew. Second is momentum. Nothing is better for success than more success. Additionally, almost every local post uses this time to reach out with booths at fairs and festivals for the season. I believe that this Department will have every single district meet their goal this month.

The “how” is where the real work gets accomplished. Our plan for this year is multifaceted and uses reinstating old school direct contact, with new school social media platforms. We intend to use social media to promote areas in your district that are struggling. We will be able to specifically address the programs that your posts already do and share them with younger veterans and their families. Studies show that the connections that we make with family members is the glue that holds. This month we ordered an additional canopy with all the extras, including a generator for use at locations without power. The canopy will be assigned to myself, and there is a form available on the website to request me for any event.

(Source: indianalegion.org)

Educator of the Year invests award money into her classroom



Lydgia Palmer, a dedicated 4th grade teacher hailing from Fortville Elementary, was the winner of the Department Educator of the Year award in the K-6th Grade category. This accolade not only brought her a well-deserved plaque but also a prize of \$500. Demonstrating her commitment to enhancing her students' learning experience, Lydgia chose to make a meaningful investment in her classroom. A portion of her award money was directed towards the purchase of six "student of the week tents." These tents serve as a special treat for good behavior, allowing "star students" the privilege of working within them. With this creative approach, Lydgia Palmer continues to shine as an inspiration for teachers.

(Source: indianalegion.org)



September 2023

Hoosier Legionnaire Goes Digital One hundred and one years ago, the founding members of the Department of Indiana, embracing the latest in print communications technology, launched the first edition of what was to become the voice of the Department, the Hoosier Legionnaire.

In the florid language typical of early 20th Century newspapers, the editors presented their vision for the paper in Issue No 1, Volume No. 1, on March 10, 1922:

"The Hoosier Legionnaire makes its inaugural appearance. It parts the curtain, steps forward and bows to its audience, the ex-service men and women of Indiana.

"It hopes that it will be cordially received; that you will be interested in making its acquaintance. It is interested in you; working for your welfare is the reason for its existence. Reciprocally, it is dependent on your friendliness for its life.

"It hopes to chronicle your activities in work or in play, to be mirror of your thought, to work for you to entertain you, and to be another means of liaison between you and your comrades of other years. It is the product of your pen and invites the best you can do for its columns in story, essay, criticism, philosophy, picture, and rhyme."

That sentiment remained unchanged during the intervening decades. The paper, however, did not.

Weekly publication became monthly, then quarterly. Advertisements dominated the pages in the early days; postal regulations all but erased those decades ago. Post level correspondents challenged one another and filled the pages with stories of membership successes, sporting events, and legislative initiatives. Some even embraced emerging technology with the potential to revolutionize communications:

"The Decatur American Legion post ... has established what they believe to be a precedent in the Department of Indiana, namely the organization of a Radio Club. "The club ... purchased equipment for sending wireless messages

as well as instrumental music ... offering no end of entertainment for the members of the club and Post. The ability to entertain a crowd with vocal and instrumental concerts is done by means of a speaker attached to a receiving outfit. With the present equipment an organization can receive messages or concerts from a radius of 800 miles. Additional apparatus to be installed within a relatively short time will have the ability to be heard around the world."

Those veterans, born at the turn of the century, transported to the battlefields of Europe where they were brutalized by crude technological innovation, and returned to a nation they were determined to transform, saw change as opportunity.

And they embraced it. This generation of veterans can do no less. As the printed version of the Hoosier Legionnaire fades into history, technology and innovation combine to present the Department of Indiana with more unprecedented opportunities, challenges and demands. The Hoosier Legionnaire is not immune from these.

(Source: Hoosier Legionnaire, Third Quarter 2023)

Introducing the Department of Indiana VanHooks Scholarship for JROTC Cadet of the Year

The American Legion, Department of Indiana is proud to announce the launch of the Department of Indiana VanHooks Scholarship, a remarkable opportunity for the most exemplary JROTC Cadet of the Year. This scholarship aims to recognize and reward the dedication, leadership, and commitment of exceptional high school students enrolled in JROTC programs across Indiana.



To be considered for the Department of Indiana VanHooks Scholarship, candidates must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be an active member of a JROTC unit in an approved Indiana high school.
- Only one student from each high school JROTC unit will be accepted as a nominee.
- The selection of the cadet for the scholarship will be the responsibility of the Senior Military Instructor of the respective JROTC unit.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive application package that includes the following components:

1. Letter of Recommendation: A letter of recommendation from the Commanding Officer of the JROTC unit endorsing the nominee's selection for the scholarship. This letter should be further endorsed by the District Commander.
2. Cadet's Military Record: A computer-generated copy of the cadet's military record, encompassing details such as ranks attained, positions held, awards received, and participation in significant events.
3. Typed Submissions: All application materials must be typed. Interested candidates can download the application form from the official Indiana Legion website at [www.indianalegion.org/jrotc](www.indianalegion.org/jrotc).

All completed application packages must be received by the Department no later than December 1st of the current school year.

(Source: indianalegion.org)

Van Harris, wife of Past National Chaplain Ed Harris Jr., passes away
It is with deep sadness that the Department announces the passing of Van Harris, wife of Past National Chaplain Ed Harris Jr.

Commander Oeth and the Department of Indiana give our condolences to Past National Chaplain Harris and his family.

(Source: Hoosier Legionnaire, Third Quarter 2023)

October 2023

Expanding Veteran Benefits: PACT Act at the Race Track



Bryce Hullett, along with Tomee Sue and Tony, spent five days at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in May and returned for the Brickyard Weekend on August 11-13, where he assisted veterans with their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits. Hullett, the Assistant Director of Rehabilitation for The American Legion, Department of Indiana Veterans Service Office, and his team helped approximately 45 veterans and family members during racing events.

Working out of the Legion's "Be the One" INDYCAR truck, Hullett connected with veterans from Indiana and across the nation. He helped them submit claims or intent to file, providing them with confirmation numbers for peace of mind.

"With us being able to be out here, we're not just connecting with our Indiana veterans. We're connecting with veterans across the nation," said Hullett. "To be able to set up like this, we can get that (claim or intent to file) submitted now. And when they leave, I can get them a confirmation number ... so that when they walk away, they're like, 'OK, someone listened to me. And someone did something for me right here and now.' That's one less thing they have to worry about now."

Hullett filed an intent to file for a veteran on August 11 and planned to file another later in the weekend. He also conducted high-level claim reviews. The passage of the PACT Act in August 2022, which expands benefits for toxic-exposed veterans and their families, has increased Hullett's workload.

This was made possible, in part, by the Indiana American Legion Foundation. Thanks to funds from the Foundation, Bryce Hullett is able to continue his rewarding work assisting veterans and making service connections.

(source: indianalegion.org)

Veterans: The Impact of Indiana Legion's Veteran Service Officers

In recent years, the Indiana American Legion has been at the forefront of providing crucial assistance to veterans in the Hoosier state. The Legion's dedicated team of service officers has continually demonstrated their commitment to improving the lives of veterans. Today, we are going to share some news that highlights the hard work being done by these service officers.

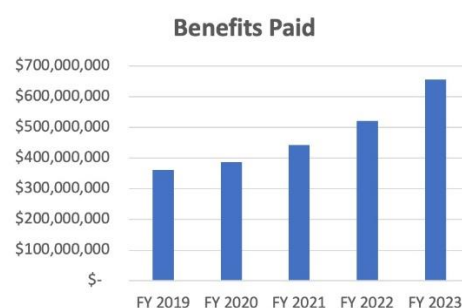
One of the most significant achievements of Indiana Legion's veteran service officers has been their ability to increase the financial benefits received by veterans. In comparison to veterans who opt to self-file their claims versus those who seek assistance from Indiana Legion service officers, service office represented claims have historically witnessed a remarkable 30-35% increase in their financial benefits. This track record underscores the role played by Indiana Legion's dedicated team, along with the hundreds of post, county, and district level service officers.

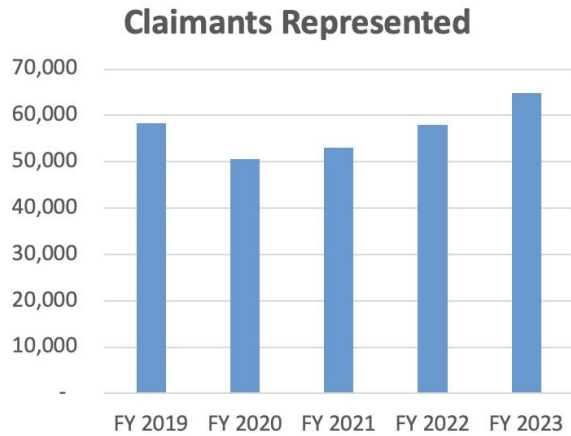
The year 2023 has been particularly exceptional for the Indiana American Legion. Our service officers have shown dedication to the veterans they serve, evident in the staggering 49.56% increase in claims filed from 2022 to 2023. This surge in claims filing speaks volumes about the commitment of these service officers to the welfare of Indiana veterans.

Another achievement of the Indiana American Legion is the 12.8% increase in the average annual payment per veteran and/or claimant. This growth can be attributed, in large part, to the cost-of-living increase initiated by the federal government. This increase ensures that veterans and claimants receive even more financial support, improving their overall quality of life.

Let's delve deeper into the remarkable success of Indiana Legion's veteran service officers by examining three charts: ****Claimants Represented, Claims Filed, and Benefits Paid.****

These charts reveal a substantial increase year over year, reinforcing the contributions of the Legion's service officers to veterans' lives.





To further enhance their support for Indiana veterans, the Indiana American Legion recently secured an additional grant. This funding enables the Department to add three more service officers to their staff. With this expansion, Indiana Legion is better equipped to process more claims while also ensuring faster submissions.

We would be remiss if we didn't express our heartfelt gratitude to the generous foundation supporters who have played a pivotal role in making these achievements possible. Their unwavering commitment and generous donations have had a profound impact on the lives of countless deserving veterans.

In the words of Commander Oeth, "When you donate to the Indiana American Legion Foundation, we say that your donations are multiplied, and these numbers we received today on our service officer's success prove that to be true. Thank you to our donors and to our service officers who help veterans obtain their earned benefits every single day."

(Source: indianalegion.org)

Department of Indiana Awarded First Place

The Department of Indiana earned first place in the Narrative History Contest for the 2022-2023 Legion Year. This is the third year in a row the Department has earned this honor.

In awarding first place, judges noted several items which helped reach the decision. Mentioned was the narrative format, its layout, and its editing.

November 2023

American Dairy Association Indiana raises funds for the Indiana American Legion Foundation



The American Dairy Association Indiana recently extended its hand in support of veterans and Indiana's youth by donating to the Indiana American Legion Foundation. This philanthropic gesture is a testament to the organization's commitment to serving not only their dairy farm families but also their broader community.

Jenni Browning, Chief Executive Officer of American Dairy Association Indiana believes that many dairy farm families and military veterans are one in the same. "As you can imagine, dairy farm families have a number of connections to the military, beyond service members. Both groups work incredibly hard to serve their community at a local, national and international level. And, they both understand that it's a family affair to support those efforts. We are proud to pass along the proceeds from a commemorative military cup sold at the Dairy Bar during the Indiana State Fair to the American Legion to support youth programming."

The funds from the commemorative military cup sales at the Dairy Bar during the Indiana State Fair will be channeled towards veterans and youth programming, ensuring that those who served and those who might serve receive the guidance and support they need.

Department Commander Bob Oeth believes that this donation will be put to good use. "We are honored that the American Dairy Association is making veterans, veteran's issues, and Indiana youth a priority. This donation will be multiplied, and we thank the ADAI."

(Source: indianalegion.org)



November 2023

Indiana American Legion Foundation

In the heartland of America, a foundation quietly but resolutely stands as a beacon of hope for both veterans and the youth of Indiana. The Indiana American Legion Foundation, through the unwavering support of its generous donors, has been the driving force behind transformative change in the lives of countless veterans and young Hoosiers. It is a testament to the power of community and philanthropy, as every dollar contributed has translated into meaningful action and profound impact. As we delve into the remarkable journey of this Foundation, it becomes abundantly clear that the spirit of giving is not just an abstract concept but a lifeline that connects the past, present, and future, bringing light and opportunities to those who have served our nation and the bright minds shaping Indiana's future.

The Foundation is Commander Oeth's 2023-2024 Project. It also recently underwent a name change from Indiana American Legion Legacy Foundation to Indiana American Legion Foundation. This not only shortens the

name, but also avoids the confusion with National's Legacy Fund.

The Indiana American Legion Foundation provides support for our Veterans Service Office and our American Legion youth programs, which provides Hoosier youth with scholarships and skill development. These programs include:

- Junior Shooting Sports: Promoting responsible firearm handling and marksmanship among Hoosier youth.
- American Legion Family Scholarships: Offering financial assistance to eligible students, including veterans and their descendants, who are pursuing higher education in the United States.
- Hoosier Boys State: Providing a unique experience in government and leadership for young men.

- Baseball: Offering a competitive youth baseball program that promotes teamwork, character development, and a strong sense of community.
- 4th Grade Flag Education: Instilling patriotism and respect for the American flag in young students.
- Americanism and Government: Encouraging civic responsibility and fostering an understanding of American values.
- Indiana Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Academy: Providing an educational experience for those interested in law enforcement careers.
- Oratorical: Promoting public speaking and leadership skills among high school students.
- Eagle Scout of the Year: Supporting local Boy Scout troops to help young people develop character and leadership.
- Girl Scout of the Year: Supporting local Girl Scout troops to help young people develop character and leadership.
- JROTC of the Year: Nurturing future leaders in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs.

During Fall Conference the Foundation held the Four Pillars Society Luncheon, which is a society of donors who have given over \$4,000. There are 23 founding members in the society, but any post, member, or business can always become a member once their cumulative donations have reached \$4,000 or more. Each year, the society will recognize three people who have stood out. This year the society recognized Laurie Bowman, Gina Owens, and Alan Connely. Their dedication exemplifies the spirit of service and community that the Foundation upholds.

(Source: Hoosier Legionnaire)



A Veteran's Lifeline: The Gift of a Service Dog



Dave Caldwell, a National Guard member with four years of Marine Corps active duty, had his life recently changed with the addition of May, a Belgian Sheepdog, to his family through Operation Comfort Warrior (OCW).

May replaced a beloved dog, who had to be put down due to health issues. After a period of mourning, Dave decided to find a new pet and discovered

May through an Ohio breeder. She became much more than a pet; she is now a service dog, thanks to OCW.

Dave learned about OCW through the American Legion Post 522 during an event. Although he is not formally diagnosed with PTSD through the VA, OCW provided him with a grant that covered the cost of May and her training as a service dog.

May's training took place at Indy Dog Training Elite in Indianapolis, where her trainers were impressed by her intelligence and quick learning. May has already proven to be a great source of comfort, particularly during thunderstorms and fireworks.

Dave is grateful to OCW and plans to pay it forward by training another service dog for a fellow service member once May completes her training.

Dave expresses gratitude for the life-changing gift OCW provided. It has improved his well-being and provided a valuable coping mechanism for the challenges faced by service members. His message is simple: help is available for those in need, making a significant difference in their lives.

Operation Comfort Warrior is an initiative which aims to improve the quality of life for wounded veterans by providing them with the resources they need to recover and thrive. The service dog is just one example of the many ways in which OCW and Indiana Legion supports Hoosier veterans. To donate to or seek assistance from OCW, visit legion.org/operationcomfortwarriors.

(Source: indianalegion.org)

January 2024

Dues Increase in Legion Year 2024-2025

For the first time in more than a decade, the American Legion, Department of Indiana, faces a significant yet essential change - an increase in membership dues. This decision, reached during an unprecedented emergency convention at the mid-winter conference, marks a pivotal moment in the history of our organization. While change often comes with its set of challenges, this adjustment in dues is a testament to the American Legion's enduring commitment to our member services, and the broader mission of serving our veterans and communities.

The last dues increase, a distant memory for many, made maintaining the quality and reach of our services challenging. During the 2023 National Convention, a \$5 dues increase was passed. This, along with the rapidly rising inflation pushed the Department of Indiana to take a historic step by convening an emergency convention to vote on, not only the national dues increase, but a Department increase as well.



Delegates discussing with their districts whether to pass the dues increase at the emergency convention on Jan. 13, 2024.

The plan was to adopt the \$5 national increase and implement a \$7 department increase for a total of a \$12 increase. This was to reduce the deficit that the Department of Indiana has been operating under. The proposal was struck down by the voting body. Many perceived this increase as too much of a burden on the membership and thought it promoted fiscal irresponsibility by the department. A motion for a \$10 increase (\$5 national, \$5 department) was then put forward with an amendment that required department to operate with a balanced budget. The motion and amendment passed.

The positives of this decision are multifaceted. Firstly, it reaffirms the efficacy of our voting process, a cornerstone of our organization's democratic values. It also enforces a discipline

of fiscal responsibility, ensuring that we have no deficit. This financial recalibration could set the stage for a more robust and sustainable future, where the American Legion can continue to thrive and make a difference in the lives of countless individuals.

However, we must acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. The transition to a balanced budget structure may entail growing pains, including potential cuts in certain areas. There's also the possibility of membership attrition, as some may find the increase difficult to accommodate. Additionally, this decision has illuminated a gap in understanding among some members about how the American Legion operates, highlighting a need for enhanced communication and education about our organizational structure and financial strategies.

As we navigate this new chapter, let us remember the resilience and unity that have always defined the American Legion. Together, we have secured the Legion's strength for at least another decade.

Source: Hoosier Legionnaire

February 2024

National Commander Embarks on a Transformative 5-Day Tour Across Eight Indiana Districts



National Commander Seehafer gives a speech on the Be the One campaign to prevent veteran suicide at Elberfeld Post 351 on Feb. 12, 2024.

In an effort to connect with veterans and military personnel across various communities, the National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer embarked on a five day tour of Indiana accompanied by Indiana NEC Member Kenny Cooper, State Commander Bob Oeth, Department Membership Chair David Miller and Department Adjutant Chad Woodburn. He visited eight of our districts and engaged with Legionnaires, the Auxiliary, and the Sons. This

extensive journey was driven by the powerful message of "Be The One," aiming to inspire and rally support around the critical issue of suicide facing our veterans and service members today.

The tour started on Monday, February 12, with a visit to Commander Oeth's own Post 351 in Elberfeld. Tuesday, February 13, started with a significant stop at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. This facility plays a crucial role in preparing military personnel and first

responders for complex urban scenarios. The visit underscored the importance of advanced training environments in enhancing the readiness and capabilities of our defenders. Tuesday also had a visit to Seymour Post 89 and Victory Post 70 in Shelbyville.

The following day, Wednesday, February 14, brought the national commander to the Indiana Army National Guard Airwing division in Shelbyville. Here, the focus was on the division's Blackhawk Helicopters, an essential asset in the National Guard's mission. The commander was briefed on their operations and engaged in a discussion on the challenges faced by the National Guard. The insights gained from this visit are set to be pivotal in the commander's upcoming testimony to Congress, highlighting the critical needs and support required for our National Guard. Notably, the visit also saw the enlistment of four members of the Guard into the Legion. The day also saw a visit to Bloomfield Post 196 and W. Lafayette Post 492.

The tour continued on Thursday, February 15, with a heartfelt visit to the Indiana Veterans Home. Beginning with a conversation with the Assistant Director, the national commander then toured the facility, engaging directly with veterans residing there. This visit was an opportunity to express gratitude for their service and sacrifices, reinforcing the Legion's commitment to supporting our veterans in all facets of their lives.

That same day, the national commander also made a stop at the Veterans Memorial and Shrine in Ft. Wayne. This visit allowed for a broader engagement with the veteran community, with numerous veterans coming forward to meet the commander. The tour of the facility provided a moment to reflect on the sacrifices of those who have served, further emphasizing the significance of the "Be The One" message. Fairmount Post 313 and De Kalb Post 97 in Auburn were also visited for a lunch and dinner respectively.

The tour wrapped up on Friday, February 16, with a breakfast at Paul Robert Strange Post 502 in Valparaiso. Through this extensive five day, eight district tour, the national commander not only spread a powerful message about veteran suicide prevention, but also gained invaluable insights into the diverse challenges and opportunities within our military and veteran communities in Indiana. These experiences are set to inform and drive forward the commander's advocacy efforts, ensuring that the needs of our veterans and service members are addressed at the highest levels.

Source: Hoosier Legionnaire

Indiana American Legion Foundation takes action with a \$6,500 donation to Mission 22 to combat veteran suicide

Mission 22 now has an additional \$6,500 to aid in preventing veteran suicide. Mission 22 is an organization dedicated to ending veteran suicide and this significant contribution underscores the pressing need to address the mental health challenges faced by those who have served our country and highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in creating a safer and more supportive environment for Indiana veterans.

Veteran suicide remains a critical issue that demands our attention and collective action. The challenges faced by those who have served in the military can often lead to mental health struggles, making it imperative for communities to come together to provide support

and resources. The Indiana American Legion Foundation's recent donation to Mission 22 reflects a commitment to addressing this pressing concern head-on.

Mission 22 has been at the forefront of the battle against veteran suicide, working tirelessly to provide treatment programs, raise awareness, and offer support to veterans in need. The organization's comprehensive approach focuses on creating a community that understands the unique challenges faced by veterans and aims to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

The Indiana American Legion Foundation's donation to Mission 22 directly translates into tangible support for local veterans. The funds will likely be utilized to expand outreach programs, enhance mental health resources, and provide essential services to those struggling with the invisible wounds of war.

Indiana veterans will benefit from increased access to counseling, peer support groups, and educational initiatives that promote mental well-being. By addressing the root causes of veteran suicide and fostering a culture of understanding, this collaboration between the Indiana American Legion Foundation and Mission 22 has the potential to make a lasting impact on the lives of those who have sacrificed so much for our country.

As citizens, it is crucial to recognize the role we can play in supporting our veterans. Whether through donations, volunteering, or advocating for mental health awareness, every effort counts. The Indiana American Legion Foundation's donation serves as an inspiring example of how organizations can lead by example, encouraging others to join the fight against veteran suicide.

The Indiana American Legion Foundation's \$6,500 donation to Mission 22 is a testament to the power of collaboration in addressing the mental health challenges faced by our veterans. By rallying behind organizations like Mission 22, we can work towards a future where the invisible wounds of war no longer claim the lives of those who have bravely served our nation. Together, we can build a stronger, more supportive community for Indiana veterans and ensure they receive the care and understanding they deserve.

Source: Hoosier Legionnaire

Presenting your 2024 JSSP Winners

Young shooters throughout the State of Indiana competed Saturday, February 24, 2024 in the Department Junior Shooting Sports Competition put on by The Indiana Legion and the Indiana American Legion Foundation. These young men and women gave it their all and did a great job. We'd like to extend our congratulations to all the winners.



Sporter Team Champions

Versailles



Precision Team Champions

Marion JROTC



Sporter Overall

1. Maria Vittoria Belisardi
2. Anna Block
3. Philip Baumgartner



Precision Overall

1. Emily Smith
2. Nicholas Purdy
3. Gwyneth Hamilton

March 2024

Broad Ripple Post 3: A Legacy of Service and Community Engagement
Broad Ripple American Legion Post 3, chartered in 1919 shortly after the establishment of the American Legion, has been a cornerstone of community service and patriotism. Their dedication is evident through extensive involvement in youth development and community support initiatives.

The post actively supports scouting, chartering a Cub Scout pack, a Boy Scout troop, and a Girl Scout troop. This engagement fosters leadership and character development among youth. Additionally, Post 3 is involved in Legion programs like 4th Grade Flag education, Junior Shooting Sports, Hoosier Boys State and Americanism and Government.

A notable achievement is their success in the Oratorical Contest, sponsoring the 2023 National Champion, Haley Bock, and a finalist in the 2024 Department Championship. These efforts highlight the post's commitment to nurturing informed and articulate citizens.

Post 3's collaboration with local emergency services, including sponsoring an Officer of the Month Award for the IMPD North District, where several members of their post honor an officer with a short ceremony thanking them for their service and presenting them with a \$100 gift certificate.

"I have found that the officers appreciate the recognition from the community they are serving more-so than the money we are giving them," said Post 3 Finance Officer Dan Cunningham, before encouraging other posts to implement similar programs.

The post's building, which was converted from an old power substation, is a community hub, hosting scouting events, food drives, and meetings for virtual post's, such as University Post 360. Unlike typical legion posts, Broad Ripple American Legion Post 3 operates without a bar, smoking, or pull tabs, focusing on service and community engagement. The post also works with veteran non-profits such as The Mission Continues and HVAF, enhancing support for veterans.

Broad Ripple American Legion Post 3 exemplifies dedication to service, community, and patriotism, maintaining a lasting impact through its programs and partnerships.

Source: Indianalegion.org

Department Holds Oratorical Contest

The Indiana Legion Oratorical Competition hosted by The Indiana American Legion Legacy Foundation had four strong competitors on Sunday, March 2, 2024. The competition was held in the American Legion National NEC room located in Downtown Indianapolis.

Knox Boyd now moves on to the National Oratorical Competition held in April.

Thank you to our guest judges for your time and commitment to The American Legion, Department of Indiana, and youth.

Source: indianalegion.org



Oratorical Contest Judges, Contestants and Hosts

Operation Comfort Warrior Fundraiser pleases PNC Jim Koutz
In what has become an annual tradition, Operation Comfort Warrior received a large donation from Kenneth N. Dowden Wayne Post 64. This year's fundraising efforts added \$60,784.00. This will allow OCW to provide more comfort items to our wounded, injured, and ill Soldiers and Veterans at VA Medical Centers.

According to PNC Jim Koutz, that Post alone had raised around \$800,000 for OCW by his count in approximately the last 11 years.



KND Wayne Post 64 Commander Glen Hawkins starts the donation presentations to PNC Jim Koutz during the Post's OCW fundraiser.



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

May 2024

University Post 360 at IUPUI: A Modern Approach to Veterans' Community Engagement

American Legion University Post 360, located at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), is a distinctive remote post that conducts hybrid meetings, combining both in-person and virtual attendance. This format increases accessibility for members who may be geographically dispersed, such as their member that currently lives in Croatia. However, this model also means they need a physical place to meet. Fortunately, several other American Legion Posts have offered them a place to meet, including Beech Grove Post 276 where they currently reside.

A key aspect of Post 360's operation is its partnership with IUPUI, which provides a supportive environment for veterans transitioning to academic and civilian life. This relationship facilitates access to university resources like career services and counseling, tailored specifically for veterans. As a result, the post is notable for having the youngest average age among Indiana's American Legion posts and is among the most diverse. This demographic shift reflects a broader, more inclusive approach to veteran community engagement.

"I became the membership chair, I strategically started recruiting veterans from all different backgrounds to represent what the military represents, which is everybody," said Post 360 and IUPUI staff member Clifton Morlan, "everybody that signed the dotted line deserves a respect of being a veteran."

Post 360 actively collaborates with other veteran organizations, such as The Mission Continues and HVAF to amplify their outreach and impact. Among their initiatives are helping host resource fairs and service projects such as their recent Williams Creek Cemetery cleanup, which honor fallen soldiers and foster community engagement.

"It makes me excited to see that they're making a difference in the community and that when I have time between classes that I'm able to go out and do my part as well," said Post 360 member and IUPUI student Amy Lee Schleppenbach.

In a time when membership is struggling, and the need for younger members is being highlighted, American Legion University Post 360 at IUPUI exemplifies how veteran organizations can adapt to meet these needs. They believe that emphasizing inclusivity, collaboration, and community service is what The American Legion needs to do, and they are leading by example in this endeavor.

June 2024

Close of Books 2024

Close of Books 2024 was different than previous year. It was a three-day event. Friday June 7th was At Risk Veterans Day. This day was for veterans and their families that need some help. We made available food, haircuts, dental assessments, mammograms (by appointment), prostate exams and care packages with food and hygiene items for no-cost to the at-risk veterans. Department service officers were available as well as various veteran organizations showcasing the services they offer. Saturday was for the community. Food trucks will sell food. A bounce house and various games will be there for the family to enjoy. Military vehicles were on display. Department service officers were available this day as well.

Sunday was the normal Close of Books activities.

Chapter 5 – Legislative Activities

Indiana Legion Legislative Accomplishments for 2024

The 2024 Indiana Legislative session was mostly successful for Hoosier Veterans.

Bills approved were:

Veterans at Risk are now covered under a Green Alert public notification program. Veterans at risk is now a category covered in the clearinghouse for information on missing children and missing or endangered adults.

Disabled Hoosier Veterans will see some property tax relief due to Big Four legislative efforts. The property tax deduction was raised to \$240,000 from \$200,000.

A compact for dental matters was established. It provides the requirements the state must follow. It provides criteria dentists and dental hygienists must practice and provides that active duty military and spouses should pay reduced or no fee services.

A new poster to promote military services and benefits will be created. It requires the Indiana Department of Labor to consult with the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to create and distribute a poster with certain information and requires Indiana employers with more than 50 employees to display the poster.

A special time will be set aside during hunting season to allow for catastrophically disabled veterans the ability to hunt on the same free hunting days as those designated for youth hunters.



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

Chapter 6 - Americanism

The *Americanism Commission* has as its purview a wide range of interests, dealing with sports, youth, and military affairs. Committees reporting to the commission are:

1. American Legion Baseball
2. Bowling
3. Golf
4. National Security Foreign Affairs
5. POW MIA
6. Sons of The American Legion.

As can be seen by the committee names, youth athletics outnumber the others, especially if the Sons of The American Legion program is included. The national security and POW MIA mix is the other important group.



Chapter 7– Children and Youth Commission

The objectives of the *Children and Youth Commission* include, but are not limited, to the following:

1. To promote understanding the principles of democratic government and an interest in bringing more citizens to consider the duties of citizenship;
2. To encourage participation of students in aspects of civic governance, such as the promotion of Boys State and the Oratorical contest;
3. To advance the cause of patriotism by offering a flag education contest at the grade school level;
4. To encourage youth participation in organized activities, such as the Boys Scout program and Junior Shooting Sports.

The committees that report to this commission include:

American Legion Family Scholarship

Established as a financial aid program to help students from The American Legion family attain their educational objectives and to contribute to the development of an informed citizenry Americanism and Government

Americanism and Government

The Americanism and Government program relates to the material presented in civics, social studies, or history classes regarding our Constitution and laws, the political process, and consequences. A study guide offers ideas for consideration, followed by a quiz and essay for 10, 11, and 12 grades during November.



Boys Scouts

Supporting Boy Scout activities is natural for Legionnaires, who bring their service-learned skills and experiences as veterans to bear to help build character and positive traits in "Young America." Few other Post activities generate more goodwill from the community.

Boys State Enrollment

Hoosier Boys State programs involve our high school students with exposure to the democratic procedures and our implementation of government and the political process. Together, these programs present many opportunities for the students of our nation to understand and exercise the tools of citizenship. Moreover, there is the chance for The American Legion to be a positive influence in the formation of our nation's next generation of citizens and leaders.

Children and Youth

This committee has the responsibility of coordinating and selecting of the awards for outstanding educators in the elementary and high school levels.

Children's Education and Welfare

The American Legion advocates for the interests of the children of veterans and to improve social, mental and physical conditions for all children and to strengthen and maintain the integrity of the family unit.

Flag Education Etiquette

The Flag Education program for 4th grade students offers information on our national symbol in the form of a comic book which can be provided to every student to acquaint them with the history, display, and etiquette in a friendly format for them and the teacher. A test and essay on the material in November results in a boy and girl honored in each school. The two state winners read their essay at the annual department convention.

Girl Scouts

Supporting the Girl Scout activities in a similar way to the Boys Scouts, helps to bring about skills and experiences to help build character and positive traits in these young people.





Junior Shooting Sports

Encourages the sport of shooting with emphasis on the technique and safety. The committee coordinates the competition locally.

Oratorical and School Awards

The American Legion Oratorical Contest is open to citizens and permanent residents attending grades 9 through 12. An original presentation on a constitutional theme lasting 8 to 10 minutes defines school and district winners. An assigned topic presentation of 3 to 5 minutes is added to zone, department, and national competition occurring from February to April each year.

Chapter 7 – Rehabilitation Commission

The *Rehabilitation Commission* is responsible for the oversight of the various programs via its committees that are under its review that are aimed at improving the lives of those veterans and their families as a result of their service for their country. Those committees include:

Employment

Among the functions of this committee, is to help coordinate employment opportunities for veterans, in either advocating job fairs, publicizing educational and/or training opportunities, and lobbying for the funding of agencies which support these activities.

General Hospital

Oversees the Voluntary Service Awards application process for Legion volunteers at local VA hospitals and at the national level. Its members also report on the conditions at the hospitals and other medical units under the authority of the VA.

Homeless Veterans

This committee recommends guidelines as in regards to the distribution of funds to organizations that help in the care of homeless veterans. Members report to the committee of the local communities' efforts, or lack of, in providing assistance. The committee addresses area posts to remind them that fundraising for the homeless should be one of their projects.

Indiana Veterans' Home

The Indiana Veterans' Home does not have as much financial support of this government agency as it wishes. So this committee reviews the conditions at the home and reviews lists of 'non-essential' items required with a mandate of funding their purchase. Those items in the past have included special mattresses, support chairs, and medical equipment.

Nursing Home

Private nursing homes are finding a greater number of veterans entering their facilities. The committee oversees conditions and supports the veterans with comfort care items such as socks, board games, and toiletries.

Veterans Assistance

This committee is a vehicle for promoting the resources and care that are aimed at all veterans in the state of Indiana. Speakers at seminars and other advertised events have covered subjects such as funeral planning, new VA disability guidelines, and upcoming workshops on a wide variety of matters. They also oversee the guidelines for the awarding of the Service Officer of the Year. Working closely with the department's service office, they render aid to claimants for disability and death compensation, pensions; dependency and indemnity compensation; insurance; and vocational training, among other areas. An important duty of the service department is ensuring that post service officers have the tools and training to help veterans at the local level.

Chapter 8 – Internal Affairs Commission

The *Internal Affairs Commission* is essentially a catch-all for other programs and activities that are carried out by the department that don't fall under one of the other commissions or that are not covered by one of the special committees that stand on their own via Department Executive Committee authority. Those committees are:

American Legion Riders

This committee oversees the activities of the Legion Riders and helps to promote local chapters around the state. The Riders are a group of American Legion Family members united together through their mutual interest in motorcycle riding. Local chapters go on fun rides, organize and promote charity rides and raise money to help those in their communities.



Community Involvement

The major task of this committee is to set the guidelines and judge the efforts of Legionnaires at the post level which are sent to the committee in the form of scrapbooks which highlight the activities of their post and, in the long run, serve as a history for that year. These scrapbooks are similar to but not identical to the standards for the national historian's scrapbook contest.

Convention Contests

This committee has the difficult task of bringing in more competition for the Color Guard contest at the department convention. Sadly, the interest by posts has greatly declined over the past few decades although this is not reflected in the wish by many attendees for these contests to be competitive. However, the Convention Contest Committee does set the guidelines and provides judges for the annual event.

Firefighter EMS

This committee consists only of representatives from the eleven districts and meets to discuss the guidelines of the competition.



Firefighter EMS Law and Order Awards

This committee consists of five members appointed by the department commander and develops the guidelines and oversee the granting of the awards. It promotes the competition in the districts.

Law and Order

In a similar way to the Firefighter EMS committee, this group meets to discuss the guidelines of the competition and promotion of the contest in the posts of the eleven districts.

Legislative

This committee attempts to keep current to the membership of the department all legislation, either proposed or adopted, that will have any effect on veterans and their families. Members will often be part of the national delegation when the newly elected national commander presents the mandates adopted at the national convention to the president in Washington, D.C. Then, early in the following year, there is a visit to Indiana's congressional delegation during the so-called 'Washington Conference.' The Legislative Committee along with the department commander keeps Hoosier veterans apprised of activities in the Indiana legislature.

Membership

The Membership Committee oversees the retention of members and the recruitment of new members. While considered a simple initiative, the well-being of the health of the department, in terms of its ability to carry out its mission, is critically related to the number of its members, both in dues payments and its revenue enhancement follow-through.

New Post Development Revitalization

Sometimes with the assistance of the staff from national headquarters, this committee encourages the establishment of a post in the area that appears to need one or works an area in which a post has lost members or enthusiasm to keep active. Often, this means a re-educational effort for those long-time officers in failing posts or bringing in new veterans to form active and community-related posts.

Public Relations

Many local posts lack the expertise to communicate with their membership or the local community, either via personal appearances or via the written word. Encouragement is developed through the newsletter/newspaper contest that is announcement at the department convention. Too many posts have a story to tell their fellow veterans and communities, but fail to appreciate that there really is an interest in what the post and its members do during the year.

Religious Emphasis

The department chaplain along with other members of the committee encourage Legion members to have a devotional aspect to their programs, deliberations, and functions, irrespective of any religious demonization. Especially of interest is the story of the Four Chaplains which few in the community will know, yet will draw attention to a posts that promotes that episode.

Chapter 9 – Special Committees

The Department Executive Committee has designated many committees that have the responsibility of reporting directly to itself. Those include:

Boys State Board of Directors

This committee monitors the overall operations of the Hoosier Boys State operations and makes recommendations to the Boys State Corporation and requests funding from the department.

Commander's Advisory

The committee helps the current commander and future candidates in assessing the important of current and future major projects of the department. Along with the Department Executive Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee, this committee should be considered one of the most 'future-guiding' committees in the organization.

Distinguished Service Awards

One of the main activities at the department convention is the presentation of the Distinguished Service Award to long-time serving Legionnaires for their dedication to their post, district and department. Members of this committee must evaluate and selection only worthy recipients.

District Headquarters Posts

These district headquarters often contain newly recruited members of The American Legion. This committee encourages and attempts to put into place the machinery to which these members can be transferred to a local post within the district.

Finance

All financial matters of significance are reviewed. Requests by committees for additional funding are reviewed and adjudged. New potential fund-raising projects are reviewed.

Finance – Special Reserve

This committee is responsible for the additions or usage from the Special Reserve Fund. Major projects that require substantial funding will be analyzed, discussed, considered, and voted upon before being presented to the Finance Committee and, with its approval, the Department Executive Committee. Rarely is this committee called into session.

Legal

As with any large organization, having legal counsel is imperative in our litigious society. This committee, with the department judge advocate as a permanent member, attempts to keep the department and its posts on the correct side of the law with its commendations and guidance.

Personnel

Along with the Legal Committee, the Personnel Committee oversees staff administration issues that arise when it is determined that matters such as grievances and other employment affairs problems and concerns go beyond the authority of the department executive office.

Resolutions Screening

With the varied subject matter of resolutions and their complexity, the Resolutions Screening Committee is tasked with reviewing and assigning resolutions to appropriate committees. It also reports to the Department Executive Committee of the actions of the committees that have studied them.

Strategic Planning.

The committee helps the current commander and future candidates in assessing the important of current and future major projects of the department. Along with the Department Executive Committee and the Commander's Advisory Committee, this committee should be considered one of the most 'future-guiding' committees in the organization.

Appendix

Past Department Commanders

1919-1920 Raymond Springer (Deceased)

1920-1921 Gen L R Gignilliat (Deceased)

1921-1922 Claude Gregg (Deceased)

1922-1923 Perry Faulkner (Deceased)

1923-1924 Edmund A Ball (Deceased)

1924-1925 Thomas S McConnell (Deceased)

1925-1926 Clarence A Jackson (Deceased)

1926-1927 Paul V McNutt (Deceased)

1927 -1928 Frank McHale (Deceased)

1928-1929 Fred L Wiecking (Deceased)

1929-1930 Forrest A Harness (Deceased)

1930-1931 Floyd L Young (Deceased)

1931-1932 Ralph F Gates (Deceased)

1932-1933 William O Nelson (Deceased)

1933-1934 V M Armstrong (Deceased)

1934-1935 Frank R Kossa (Deceased)

1935-1936 A R Killian (Deceased)

1936-1937 Charles H Maston (Deceased)

1937 -1938 Russell E Rhodes (Deceased)

1938-1939 Harold A Shindler (Deceased)

1939-1940 Capt Raymond B Townsley (Deceased)

1940-1941 John A Watkins (Deceased)

1941-1942 W Carl Graham (Deceased)

1942-1943 Clarence U Gramelspacher (Deceased)

1943-1944 F Dean Bechtol (Deceased)

1944-1945 William E Brown (Deceased)

1945-1946 Henry E Siebenmark (Deceased)

1946-1947 W I Brunton (Deceased)

1947 -1948 Harold E Morris (Deceased)

1948-1949 Joseph F Lutes (Deceased)

1949-1950 Homer W McDaniel (Deceased)

1950-1951 Jack W McIntyre (Deceased)

1951-1952 Gilbert Bates (Deceased)

1952-1953 John K Chappell (Deceased)

1953-1954 Roy M Amos (Deceased)

1954-1955 Ira E Lyon (Deceased)

1955-1956 Alton W Cochran (Deceased)

1956-1957 Reed Beard (Deceased)

1957-1958 Robert E Gates (Deceased)

1958-1959 William A Brennan Jr (Deceased)

1959-1960 Donald W Hynes (Deceased)

1960-1961 Orin Nowlin (Deceased)

1961-1962 Robert M Fritz (Deceased)

1962-1963 Ralph R Storm (Deceased)

1963-1964 Wayne L Talbert (Deceased)

1964-1965 Gilbert E Sheeks (Deceased)

1965-1966 George R Morton Sr (Deceased)

1966-1967 Frank I Hamilton (Deceased)

1967-1968 Joseph P Donovan (Deceased)

1968-1969 Ralph V "Curly" Cushman (Deceased)

1969-1970 Robert C Ayers (Deceased)

1970-1971 Dale E Kuhn (Deceased)

1971-1972 James R Zoll (Deceased)

1972-1973 Robert 'Bill' Sweet (Deceased)

1973-1974 Gaylord N Sheline (Deceased)

1974-1975 Charles S Boehm (Deceased)

1975-1976 Al Waichulis (Deceased)

1976-1977 James E Gallagher (Deceased)

1977-1978 John G Krupa (Deceased)

1978-1979 H Melvin Napier (Deceased)

1979-1980 Frederick J Jensen (Deceased)

1980-1981 Raymond T Anglin (Deceased)

1981-1982 Max E Julian Sr (Deceased)

1982-1983 Allen L Titus (Deceased)

1983-1984 Gerald L Bole (Deceased)

1984-1985 Richard F Wright (Deceased}

1985-1986 K W Ohi (Deceased}

1986-1987 Alvin O Werner (Deceased)

1987-1988 Larry E Bartlett

1988-1989 Billie J Holmes (Deceased}

1989-1990 Donald R Conn

1990-1991 James E Koutz

1991-1992 Terry L Smith

1992-1993 Thomas A Goad (Deceased)

1993-1994 Ron Miller (Deceased}

1994-1995 Ron Lowe (Deceased)

1995-1996 Thomas Henderson

1996-1997 William Cline (Deceased}

1997-1998 Richard Quattrin (Deceased)

1998-1999 Harold Epley (Deceased)

1999-2000 Richard Tonkel (Deceased)

2000-2001 James I Miller (Deceased)

2001-2002 John J Michalski (Deceased)

2002-2003 Lowell W Sullivan (Deceased)

2003-2004 M Roger Baker (Deceased)

2004-2005 Bill Firkins (Deceased)

2005-2006 Ron Martin (Deceased)

2006-2007 James A Delaney

2007-2008 Thomas Somerville

2008-2009 Ralph Tolan

2009-2010 Robert Newman

2010-2011 Leland Baxter (Deceased)

2011-2012 Michael J Miller (Deceased)

2012-2013 Richard Jewell

2013-2014 Edward Trice

2014-2015 Kenneth Hylton

2015-2016 Larry Lowry

2016-2017 James May

2017-2018 Marty Dziegłowicz

2019-2020 Rodney Strong (Deceased)

2019-2021 Allen Connelly

2021-2022 Mark Guillion

2022-2023 Jim Daube

Past National Executive Committeemen

Year	Name	Post & District When Elected
1919-1921	Dr. T. Victor Keene (Deceased)	Indianapolis Post #4 (11th District)
1921-1922	Oswald Ryan (Deceased)	Anderson Post #127 (5th District)
1922-1927	Bowman Elder (Deceased)	Indianapolis Post #4 (11th District)
1927-1928	Paul V. McNutt (Deceased)	Bloomington Post #18 (7th District)
1928-1929	Frank M. McHale (Deceased)	Logansport Post #60 (2nd District)
1929-1931	Raymond Springer (Deceased)	Connersville Post #1 (10th District)
1931-1933	Dr. A. C. Arnett (Deceased)	Lafayette Post #11 (2nd District)
1933-1935	Glen R. Hillis (Deceased)	Kokomo Post #6 (5th District)
1935-1943	Isadore E. Levine (Deceased)	LaPorte Post #83 (3rd District)
1943-1945	V. M. (Army) Armstrong (Deceased)	Memorial Post #3 (11th District)
1945-1947	Patrick Maloney (Deceased)	Crown Point Post #20 (1st District)
1947-1949	George N. Craig (Deceased)	Brazil Post #2 (7th District)
1949-1951	Harry E. Fitch (Deceased)	Terre Haute Post #40 (6th District)
1951-1953	Vincent Kelley (Deceased)	Anderson Post #371 (5th District)
1953-1955	John Wilson (Deceased)	Bloomington Post #18 (7th District)
1955-1959	Lawrence H. Hinds (Deceased)	Broad Ripple Post #312 (11th District)
1959-1961	Ferd Badt (Deceased)	Portland Post #211 (5th District)
1961-1963	Arthur McDowell (Deceased)	Delphi Post #75 (2nd District)
1963-1965	Dr. Fred Daugherty (Deceased)	Crawfordsville Post #72 (6th District)
1965-1967	Robert L. Kuntz (Deceased)	Kokomo Post #6 (5th District)
1967-1969	Charles S. Boehm (Deceased)	Indianapolis Post #264 (11th District)
1969-1977	Melvin H. Heckman (Deceased)	Fort Wayne Post #47 (4th District)
1977-1998	Gilbert E. Sheeks (Deceased)	Mitchell Post #250, (9th District)

1998-1999	John W. Pipher	LaGrange Post #215 (4th District)
1999-2003	Richard Quattrin (Deceased)	Whiting Post #80 (1st District)
2003-2005	Ron Lowe (Deceased)	Attica Post #52 (6th District)
2005-2007	Thomas Henderson	Valparaiso #94 (2nd District)
2007-2015	Darrell Hansel	Vevay Post #185 (9 th District)
2013-2017	Paul Steward	Mark L Wilt Post #210 (3rd District)
2017-2021	Jerry Jordon	Post #152 (10 th District)
2021-2023	Ed Trice	Post #313 (5 th District)
2023-2925	Kenny Cooper	Post #64 (11 th District)

Past Department Adjutants

1919 – 1921 L. Russell Newgent

1921 – 1926 Frank H. Henley

1926 – 1928 John Klinger

1928 – 1931 Pleas E. Greenlee

1931 – 1933 Ollie Davis

1933 – 1949 William E. Sayer

1942 – 1944 Carl Graham (acting)

1944 – 1945 Home McDaniel (acting)

1949 – 1951 William F. Hauck

1951 – 1969 Frank J. Myers

1969 – 1972 Richard C. Smidley

1972 – 1979 William D. Jackson

1979 – 1988 George S. Wilkerson

1988 – 1989 Gerald A. White

1989 – 1991 Robert J. Foster

1991 – 2001 K. Michael Ayers

2001 – 2011 Stephen W. Short

2011-2017 Hugh Dagley

2017 – 2018 William E. Henry

2018-2021 John Crosby

2021-2022 Hugh Dagley

2022 – Present Chad Woodburn

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