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**Unit President: Sandy Deacon**  
**Squadron Commander: Bob Bellinghausen**  
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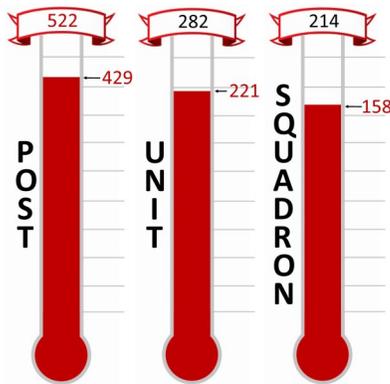
www.legion.org  
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# Ames Legion Family In Action

## Your Membership Helped Kill Widows Tax

The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Riders are waiting for you to pay your dues. You can see the progress below. The Post is still in the lead at over 80% but the Unit and Squadron continue to push them.

Our members should all



know that on December 31, their membership will expire.

That membership helps us to continue serving our youth and the programs of Legion, Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion. Beyond that, that membership enables us to lobby Congress to advocate for help for those most in need. Here is one example of that help.

For many years, a group of surviving spouses have been denied funds that should have been due them. These spouses were the survivors of veterans

who died on duty or due to a service-connected cause. That death entitled the surviving spouse to receive DIC, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

Many of those veterans here also were enrolled in the Survivor Benefit Plan, SBP. That plan provides a percentage of their retirement pay to their survivors after their death.

For many years, those surviving spouses have been penalized by having a dollar withheld from the SBP payment for every dollar paid through DIC. Both were earned benefits but the "widow's tax" linked them together and reduced the funds available for the surviving spouse by a yearly average of \$11,000.



The American Legion, along with other veterans' groups have lobbied for years for the removal of the "widow's tax". Finally this year, that lobbying has become successful.

Beginning in January, 1/3 of that offset in pay will be removed. In January 2022, 2/3 of the offset will be gone and January 1, 2023 will see the "widow's tax" removed completely.

You helped do that. You stayed a member and enabled the lobbying that helped take that offset away. Stay a member now. There are other issues like this that need our lobbyists.

Dues are \$45 for the Legion and the Sons. Dues are \$15 for Legion/Sons dual members and Sons under the age of 21. Dues are \$30 for the Auxiliary and \$5 for juniors under the age of 18. The Riders dues are \$20.

These may be mailed or dropped off at the post. 225 Main St, Ames IA 50010. Legion and Auxiliary dues may be paid online. Go to [legion.org](http://legion.org) or [legion-aux.org](http://legion-aux.org) and click the renew button at the top of the page.

Knowing that this has been a hard year for all of us, we will try to help with a membership if you let us know. Jennifer Monserud at the Post, Joyce Elliott & Sandy Deacon for the Unit and Bob Bellinghausen for the Squadron.

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## Post Commander Jennifer's Comments

Hello,

As I know many of you are, I am looking forward to 2021 and hopefully returning to gather with friends and family. Many people are battling pandemic fatigue but please keep being safe! The other day I read a post of Facebook that resonated with me and I would like to share a summary of that post with you.

On April 22, 2008 two brave marines lost their lives valiantly defending their post in Iraq. These two marines were strangers standing watch together at the entrance gate of an outpost that contained a makeshift barracks housing 50 marines and 100 Iraqi police. One marine was in the last days of his deployment, the other was just starting his.

A short time into their watch a large blue truck turned towards the entrance gate and sped its way through the serpentine of concrete jersey walls. The truck stopped just short of where the two were standing and exploded killing the two marines and throwing the engine block two hundred yards.

These two marines didn't run from the danger, they leaned in. One of the security cameras recorded some of the attack. It took six seconds from when the truck entered the alleyway that led to the entrance to the explosion. They never started to step aside; they never even shifted their weight. They never hesitated to protect their brothers and sisters from the attack.

They did not have time to think about

their families or their own lives, but more than enough time for two brave young men to do their duty.

They leaned in.

This is the caliber of our armed forces, past and present. Lean in and help us serve those veterans, our brothers and sisters struggling through the pandemic.

Lean in and help us support our community by continuing to participate in our drive through Wednesday night meals.

Lean in and continue your service with The American Legion.

I hope you all are well; the post is open and waiting for you when you are ready to return. We look forward to seeing you!

## Unit President Sandy's Comments

As we wind down 2020 and look forward to 2021, let's take a minute to reflect. 2020 has been a challenge to say the least. But we also find many positive things.

When the pandemic took away our in-person meetings, we looked to virtual meetings. Some of our members who are not able to attend meetings in person found a way to dial in virtually.

When the vending machines at the Iowa Veterans Home were empty because those who filled them were not allowed on the grounds, our Legion Family stepped up and we utilized our Wednesday curbside meals to collect over \$10,000 worth of snacks, masks, books and other items which we delivered to IVH.

Auxiliary members who are also American Legion Riders participated in "drive by" events on Memorial Day weekend at Northcrest Village and

Stone Brook. We rode by the Veterans houses and saluted them for their service. They loved it and we received several returned salutes.

When we couldn't distribute our Poppies in the usual way, we again used the curbside meals to offer poppies to our members as they picked up their food.

When the National Convention and the Legacy Run were cancelled, the National Commander asked Legion family members to walk, run or ride 100 miles in 100 days to support the Veterans and Children's Foundation. Congratulations to our Auxiliary members who received their 100 miles certificate.

When we were unable to hold our Annual Cookie Fair, we decided instead to sell cookies by the dozen. We baked and decorated 45 dozen sugar cookies. Thanks to those who purchased cookies.

Several of our members participated in

the Wreaths Across America ceremony on December 19<sup>th</sup> where we laid 7 wreaths in honor of those who have served and those who are still serving in our Military. Thanks to the American Legion Riders for organizing and conducting this ceremony.

Yes, it has been a challenging 2020, but we look forward to continuing to serve our Veterans, our Communities, and our Children and Youth in 2021.

What can you do? Pay your dues. We still have a lot to accomplish and your dues will help us continue our program. Help us with Buddy Checks by calling someone you haven't seen for a while and just chatting and checking up on them to see if there is anything they need. Let us know what you are doing as a volunteer. We still have annual reports to complete in April.

Stay safe and be good to yourself and others.

Sandy [Amesunit37@gmail.com](mailto:Amesunit37@gmail.com)

## Squadron Commander Bob's Comments

I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and that the New Year is far better than the last one. It is a new year, and it is time to move forward and to begin planning for a better year for the Sons of the American Legion.

I ask that all members of the Sons attend the first meeting in January to assist in establishing planning committees for the 2020-2021 year.

We need members interested in working on academics/scholarships, social,

operations, patriotic council, and Boys State. We need people interested in sitting on these committees and we need suggestions on fund raising projects and on community service.

So, if you are interested in becoming more involved with the Sons please come to the meeting on January 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.

May you all have a glorious New Year

## Tax Man Coming



It won't be long now before we all start thinking about taxes again. You could potentially save yourself some tax money and help your American

Legion Post at the same time. Donations to The American Legion are tax-deductible.

If you donated earlier, thank you. That donation has helped us keep the doors open and our programs in operation. A combination Christmas and tax donation would be welcome now.

## Clubroom News

Happy New Year to all!! We are excited to bring in the new year and say goodbye to 2020. We hope that everyone had a joyous Holiday season. We are sad that we are unable to have some of our normal clubroom events (like our annual New Year's Day Chili cookoff), we just want to keep everyone safe and healthy. We are hopeful that sometime in the near future we can start holding them again.

We will continue to do our curbside Wednesday meals in January. We are also going to add delivery if we have members in Ames that don't want to get out in the winter weather. I have volunteers who can bring the meal to you. Just call the clubroom and we can make arrangements.

I just want to say thank you again to everyone that has ordered and has continued to order and support our curbside meals. It has really helped to keep the doors open during the hard months of shutdown.

Here are our meals for the month, as always check our weekly updates and

Facebook page for any additions:

Wed. Jan 6-Meatloaf, garlic mashed potatoes, corn

Wed. Jan 13-Tenderloin Basket Night

Wed. Jan 20-Chicken Fried Steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans

Wed. Jan 27-Pork Loin, baked potato, carrots



Thanks to all that helped around the clubroom in 2020. This was a tough year and we really would not have been able to do it without you. Ken Woodley, Mike and Sandy Deacon, Russ and Vicki Belz, Stan and Joyce Elliott, Dave and Ann Rehbein, Julie and Dennis Rinard, Tom Fowler, John Schomaker, Bill and Addi Donovan, Rodger Van Voorhis, Grace Spear, Jennifer Monserud, Paul Madison, and Colten Christiansen.

**CLUBROOM COUPON**  
**Any Tuesday in January**  
**Present Coupon to get**  
**2 drinks for the price of 1.**  
**Cash Purchase Only**

## Ames Students Honored



270 Juniors and Seniors at Ames High School were honored by the presentation of an Academic Letter during a virtual ceremony on December 17. This ceremony is the 34th year that the Ames School System and the Ames Legion Family have combined to recognize academic achievement.

Ames High Principal Dr. Valerie Nyberg and Associate Principal Nicole Patton were very enthusiastic about partnering with us in recognizing their students. The Ames High School Youtube channel has the ceremony at the link [Ames High School Academic Letters Program - YouTube](#).

Registrar Ashley Smith who has overseen the school's arrangements for the ceremony has left the school. We want to thank her publicly for her past work and wish her the best in her new career as a caregiver.

Next year will be 35 years for a great program. Make sure you join us then.

## Your New Year's Resolution



Will you be making a New Year's Resolution this year? Here is one that you can keep and that will do some good for Ames, your Legion family and your country.

Resolve to spend at least one day volunteering.

Maybe you choose your Legion family to volunteer with or maybe you choose somewhere else entirely. What matters is the good volunteers do. Be a volunteer. Try it once and you'll be back.

## Riders Lead Wreaths Across America



Chapter President Cliff Barker and Ames City Mayor John Haila led the Wreaths Across America ceremony at Ames Municipal cemetery on December 19.

They were joined by members of the Ames Post, Ames Unit and Ames Squadron to place wreaths

at the Veterans Memorial at Municipal Cemetery. Wreaths were placed in honor of those who have served in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine.

Mayor Haila placed a wreath directly in front of the memorial in honor of those still carried as POW-MIA. The Merchant Marine wreath was placed by WW II Merchant Marine veteran Jim Adams.

Wreaths Across America dates back to 1992 when the Worcester Wreath Co. donated wreaths to mark every grave at Arlington National Cemetery. That tradition continued and grew to include other veterans cemeteries across America.

Wreaths Across America formally began in 2007. Wreaths now go all across the country to not only veterans cemeteries but to veterans graves in municipal cemeteries like Ames as well as private cemeteries.

The Legion Riders want to expand this program to place a wreath on every veterans grave in the Municipal cemetery next year and eventually to all three cemeteries in Ames. In order for that to happen, a fundraising campaign will need to occur.

Wreaths are purchased from the Worcester Wreath Co for \$15 apiece. The Riders have not set a goal for fundraising but you have seen the flags at Municipal cemetery and know how many veterans graves are there.

Mayor Haila pledged the city's support for the project. The Ames Patriotic Council will no doubt be involved but we will need the citizens of Ames to step forward not only with their checkbooks but next year at the cemetery when the time comes to place those several hundred wreaths.

Thank you to the Riders for getting this project off the ground this year. We are confident it will grow and become a part of the remembrance and honoring of our veterans all across the country at Christmastime.



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LOOK INSIDE FOR COUPON

# JANUARY

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	 Find us on Facebook at <b>American Legion Family of Ames, IA Post 37</b>				1 FIREBALL FRIDAY  NEW YEARS DAY	2
3	4  LEGION RIDERS 6:30	5 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP  AUXILIARY REGULAR 6:30	6 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY  CURBSIDE MEAL MEATLOAF	7 DOLLAR DOG DAY  OPERATIONS COMMITTEE 6:00	8 FIREBALL FRIDAY	9
10	11	12 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP  SAL REGULAR 6:30	13 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY  CURBSIDE MEAL TENDERLOIN	14 DOLLAR DOG DAY  LEGION REGULAR 7:00	15 FIREBALL FRIDAY	16
17	18  VFW POST MEETING 7:00	19 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP	20 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY  CURBSIDE MEAL CHK FRD STEAK	21 DOLLAR DOG DAY	22 FIREBALL FRIDAY	23
24  31	25	26 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP  40&8	27 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY  CURBSIDE MEAL PORK LOIN	28 DOLLAR DOG DAY	29 FIREBALL FRIDAY	30