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Ames Legion Family In Action

JANUARY 1 IS CLOSE—MAKE SURE YOU STAY CURRENT LEGIONNAIRES ELIGIBLE FOR \$500 DRAWING

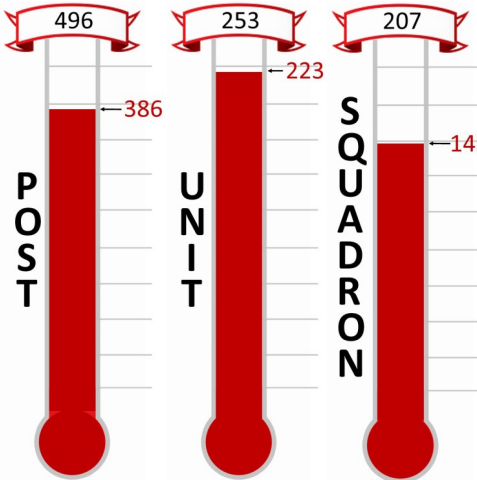
The membership work of the Legion family continues with the Unit beginning to stretch out their lead.

Remember that on January 1 membership becomes delinquent. Don't let that happen to you.

Also remember that for the Legionnaires, there will be a \$250 drawing on January 6 with everyone that is current on December 31 entered into that drawing.

There will be EIGHT winners drawn from among those whose membership is current. If any of those eight are from the Sixth District, there will be an additional \$250 added to the prize.

For all of the Legionnaires that have renewed or joined for 2023, you have contributed to helping Iowa be in the top 10 in the membership chart in the country.



There was a saying for a long time, "Iowa Leads the Legion". Recently we have had a national leader elected in all three Legion family organizations. More importantly, though, right now we are in the top 5, leading two of the three Legion family organizations.

We hear that the veterans organizations are dwindling in numbers. That may be true in many places but it is not true in Ames. In 1980, the Ames Post membership was approximately 500. Today our goal is nearly 500!

That is a tribute to our Legion family and the activities that we continue to sponsor and support every year. We may be the strongest Legion family in Iowa, providing leadership and programs that are second to none.

On December 14, the Iowa American Legion was in 3rd place nationally. That was the 75% target date with Iowa being nearly 80%. Thanks to all those who have a 2023 Legion card.

The Iowa American Legion Auxiliary has an even better record. A recent report showed them to be in **FIRST PLACE** in the nation.

50/50 RAFFLE UPDATE

December 1 was the first day of our monthly 50/50 raffles. As of today, December 20, the prize for December stood at **\$370**. That's the winner share if the drawing was today. Of course the drawing is not until COB December 31 so that number will do nothing except go up. How high? Your guess is as good as anyone's. Will it reach \$500? Could be. The final prize amount will be in next month's newsletter.

This month's proceeds will be used to help pay for a new sprinkler head in the cooler. Next month's raffle will go toward paying the costs for the Academic Awards program that was just completed. We will be opening a Venmo account so that our members can enter the raffle without having to come to the Post. We would like to see you at the Post but this way you can help too and maybe win.

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Post Commander Jay Was Called Away—Editor's Comments

The Iowa American Legion family will gather at the Iowa Capitol on January 18 for our annual Veterans Day on the Hill. We will gather at HQ for a briefing and move to the capitol for comments by the Governor and legislative leaders. Following that, Legion family members will meet individually with their Senators and Representatives. We will address five issues with our legislators. They are:

Increase in the Veterans Property Tax Exemption—The Veterans Property Tax has existed since 1886 with the last increase enacted in 1974 when the exemption was increased from \$500 to \$1,852.

Funding for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program—This program provides funds for recruiting out of state veterans by assisting with one-



time housing purchase. It typically runs out of money in the first few months each year with applicants placed on a waiting list. The program should have enough money to be available all year.

Increase Spendable Amount Annual-

ly from the Veterans Trust Fund—The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs is currently too restricted in the amount that can be spent each year from the Veterans Trust Fund. An increase would allow better use of the Trust Fund.

Increase Appropriation to the County Commission of Veterans Affairs Fund—The appropriation amount used by the county commissions for national training and related expenses for county veteran service officers and appropriate staff should be increased.

Approve Legislation for Veterans Treatment Courts—Veterans Treatment Courts provide a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans that will maximize efficiency and economize resources.

Unit President Rachel's Comments

Happy New Year to my American Legion Family! I hope this letter finds you well. We've had a busy December and I have several "Thank you's" in this article. Thank you to all of those who helped with the Annual Cookie Fair! Countless hours were spent planning, baking, decorating, packing and working this event. We had a very good day and a good turnout. At the conclusion of sales, we packed 78.5 dozen cookies that went to the Iowa Veterans Home to help them celebrate the holidays.

One of our other projects this time of year is to help a make veteran's family Christmas special. This year again we were able to make this happen. Thank

you to everyone that took a tag from our tree and purchased gifts or gave a monetary donation for our own elves to shop and wrap gifts for this family.

Thank you also to our Legion Riders who organized Wreaths Across America. It again was a bitterly cold day with snow flurries. What do you expect for a December day in Iowa? There was a lot of help that day and approximately 1800 wreaths were placed in a little more than an hour.

Legislation is an important program in the Auxiliary. With this program auxiliary members advocate with and on behalf of, veterans, the military, and their

families in order to make a better future for them. There are several ways to become involved. The best way is to vote. Elections happen at least every 2 years for various legislative positions, whether it be at the state or national level. Each year Unit 37 sends 2 girls to Girls State for the citizens to learn more about the legislative process. Other ways that you can help is to subscribe to the American Legions' Legislative Action Alerts, join the Legion Family's legislative Facebook pages and also contact your legislators.

Squadron Commander Doug's Comments

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a wonderful and enjoyable December holiday with family and friends.

It is hard to believe that it is 2023! The New Year brings with it new resolutions and self-made promises to make 2023 better than 2022 and I hope that all of you are successful in making those resolutions and that you are able to make this new year both rewarding and enjoyable.

As one of your New Year's resolutions I would ask that you make a renewed effort to increase your participation with the Squadron and our entire Post Family. Even if you only stop in at the Post once or twice a month, it helps ensure the vitality of the Post and gives you the

opportunity to renew acquaintances with old friends, meet new friends, and continue to support the priorities of our American Legion Family and our own Post in particular.

Since it is now January, those of you whom have not paid their dues to renew your membership are now considered delinquent. It is not too late! Please renew today! As a part of the Ames Legion Family we value your membership, but more importantly as a Squadron your membership adds to our collective ability to carry out the Programs we support throughout Ames and Central Iowa.

The beginning of the new year also provides an opportunity to increase our

ranks by encouraging those eligible to join our organization and our Legion Family. **We** are responsible for growing not only our Squadron, but our entire Legion Family. We can do it!

At our January Meeting we will be discussing some new ways to increase the effectiveness of our Squadron and scheduling events for the year. Please join us at this meeting so that your ideas can be heard and your thoughts on some of these initiatives heard. **Remember, this is your Squadron.**

In closing, I wish each of you a happy and prosperous 2023 with the hope that you will be able to visit the Post a little more often and participate in some of our Squadron and Post events.

Clubroom News

Happy New Year to all!! We hope that everyone had a joyous Holiday season. December was very busy in the Clubroom and we loved seeing all the faces throughout the month. Thank you to everyone that continues to support us. We hope to make 2023 a great one!

Bring it on!!! We want you to bring down your very best chili for our **Annual Chili Cook-off**. You may drop off your chili on the 31st or the morning of the 1st. We also encourage those not competing to bring a snack to share. There are prizes for first, second, and third place. As a bonus, the winner has bragging rights all year long. Of Course, all are welcome to come in and sample all the delicious entries and watch some football. Please have your chili here by 1pm.

Don't forget that the post is the ultimate place to enjoy all your favorite sports events. Come join us and cheer on your team with us!

Curbside Meals

Wed. Jan 4-Chicken and Noodles

Wed. Jan 11-Ham Balls

Wed. Jan 18-Hot Beef

Wed. Jan 25-Grilled Pork Chops

Friday, January 13-Baked Potato Bar 5-6:30pm. Get a baked potato and top it with all of your favorite toppings for just \$5.

Friday, January 27-Music Bingo-7-9pm-We are trying something new! Join us for what it sure to be a night of fun!



Thanks to all that made the events happen this month and for a very fun and festive clubroom Christmas party. Ken

Woodley, Mike Deacon, Sandy Deacon, Tom Fowler, Julie Rinard, Bill Donovan, Addison Donovan, Russ and Vicki Belz, Jason Neutzling and Colten Christiansen

Legion Riders

Happy New Year! Here's to a 2023 that's productive and enjoyable to us all. Your Riders met at Bill Couser's Corn and Cow Palace in December and reelected the standing 2022 officers for 2023. After the elections we feasted on Bills famous chili and enough sides that we could hardly get down the stairs to go home. I'm proud to say it was the largest gathering at Bill's the Riders have had.



December is very special for us. All year long we prepare and plan for Wreath Day, and just before the December meeting we had gotten notice that we had reached our goal. In only our

second year of fundraising we are able to cover 100% of Ames Municipal Cemetery AND Ontario Cemetery.

I cannot say how proud I am of the Wreath Committee, the Riders, and the Legion Family. So many donated their time, their money, their cans, and their hard work to help us achieve this milestone. Thank you all.

As for Wreath Day 2022, it was a chilly 18 degrees and windy, with a stiff west wind. Even then we had dozens of volunteers that came for the ceremony and when the time came they spread out across the cemetery. It was quite a sight to see.

In less than 90 minutes, all of the wreaths were in place, the empty boxes

were picked up, and the flags and banners were put away. What we left in the cemetery was a field of green and red. Each wreath placed one at a time, with respect, and in honor of the veterans of Ames in a way that set against the snow just brings a brightness that has to be seen to be enjoyed. I encourage you all to go drive around and see it for yourself.

We'd like to recognize everyone that took part but there's just not room. The Legion Honor Guard, Department Commander Johnson, the Patriot Guard, the Wreath Bearers, the volunteers to stand a flag line, The City of Ames, Ames Mayor Haila, Ames PD, Ames Fire, you get the picture here. It's a group effort and one that we are so proud to be part of. Thank you.

So on to 2023, May we all look back on 2022 with fond memories and look ahead at the coming year with optimism and joy. Raise a glass, be merry, and I leave you with a New Years quote from Edith Pierce... "We open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day."



Ride if you can, ride safe, and ride often
Cliff Barker - Riders Director

National Sew Day

Save the Date!



February 4, 2023

February 4, 2023 marks the 10th Anniversary of National Sew Day for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The Ames Unit will be hosting a sew day to mark this occasion and to gather together to

further the mission of QOVF- to honor and cover every veteran with a comforting and healing Quilt of Valor. So bring your sewing machine and whatever else you need – some fabric and patterns will be provided. You don't have to know how to sew, there are many other "tasks" that you can participate in.

Also, that day, the unit will be hosting a plarn cutting activity. Plarn is plastic bags cut into strips and crocheted into mats. These mats are distributed at the veterans standdown each year in Des Moines.

If you have other veteran related projects you wish to work on, that is fine too. Coming together as a community to learn and share is the important part of this day.

All are invited to join us and we hope to see many of our friends from throughout the state. Saturday, February 4, 2023, 9 am- 3 pm. 225 Main St, Ames, IA. A free will lunch will be provided and snacks are always welcome!

Contact Ann Rehbein for more information. amrehbein@msn.com or (515) 650-1708.

Giving Tree at Post



That picture is of a "Giving Tree" at the Post for the last few weeks. We were told of a veteran's family of 4 children that because of their father's surgery were going to have a very sparse Christmas.

mas.

The Legion family came together both as the organizations and as individuals to make sure that would not happen. You can see that each of the kids, ages 13, 10, 6 and 4, will be getting a new bike as well as the other presents under the tree.

Just one more example of the Ames Legion family in action


AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 37

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JANUARY

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
1 YOUTH AIR RIFLE 1-3 AT IZAACK WALTON BINGO	2 LEGION RIDERS 6:30	3 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP AUXILIARY REGULAR 6:30	4 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL CHICKEN & NOODLES	5 DOG NIGHT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE 6:00	6 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	7 STEAK DINNER 5:00—7:00
8 BINGO	9	10 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP SAL REGULAR 6:30	11 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL HAM BALLS	12 DOG NIGHT LEGION REGULAR 7:00	13 FIREBALL FRIDAY BAKED POTATO BAR 5:00-6:30	14 PAST PRESIDENT'S PARLEY 9AM
15 BINGO	16 VFW POST MEETING 7:00	17 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP	18 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL HOT BEEF	19 DOG NIGHT SOCIAL COMMITTEE 6:00	20 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	21
22 BINGO	23	24 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP	25 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL PORK CHOP	26 DOG NIGHT 40&8	27 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUSICAL BINGO 7:00-9:00	28
29 BINGO	30	31 TOASTED CHEESE & SOUP	 Find us on Facebook at American Legion Family of Ames, IA Post 37			