



# THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY



## Ames Legion Family In Action

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## December 13, 2025—Ames Legion Family BIG WEEK

Everything you see on this page represents events that happened during the week surrounding December 13. It is referred to as the “BIG WEEK” since it required a maximum effort from the members of the Legion family. That maximum effort presented quite a challenge but that challenge was met and conquered.



That challenge graphic also has a specific meaning. In November the Post with the help of an anonymous donor kicked off a challenge to reduce the amount of the mortgage loan to be refinanced. With the help of our members, that challenge was not only met but was conquered. Rather than needing to refinance \$53,000, donation from our members and Legion family organizations reduced that amount to \$40,000.



Now we come to the events of December 13, biscuits and gravy breakfast by the Sons, cookie fair from the Auxiliary, Wreaths Across America under the leadership of the Riders and finally the Army-Navy watch party overseen by the Post.

The Sons served breakfast to 86 customers with the receipts going to general program support for the Squadron. Cookies—over 100 boxes of cookies were filled by cookie fairgoers with the proceeds from that event likewise going to program support for the Auxiliary.

From there, our Riders leadership left for the Ames Municipal Cemetery for the Wreaths Across America ceremony and wreath laying. They were prepared to hold the ceremony and because of the weather, postpone the wreath laying for a week. At the cemetery, though, they were met by 75-80 volunteers who braved that weather and placed those 1,900 wreaths on the graves of our veterans. Special mention goes to the Arnold Air Society cadets of the AFROTC unit at ISU. Not only did they place wreaths, but they uncovered the snow from many headstones so that the name could be read.

The Post finished the day by hosting a watch party for the Army-Navy game with pork loin by our volunteer chefs that was donated by the Deb and Jeff Hansen Foundation. That watch party saw 75-80 of our people come in to cheer on their favorite team and watch a great game.

Overall it was a great day to finish a great week. We saw first hand what the Legion family is capable of. It would not have been possible without the dozens of volunteers who donated funds, baked and donated cookies, came in early to cook breakfast, bundled up to place wreaths in a cold and snowy cemetery and cooked up some delicious pork loin.

Thanks especially to the Legion family leadership that took on these projects for BIG WEEK. They called and the volunteers stepped up. Put this week on your calendar for next year and be one of those volunteers or just enjoy one or more of the events.

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## Post Commander Cliff's Comments

Happy New Year everyone. I trust everyone had a terrific holiday season. The snow gave way to warmer weather and melted away. I know for sure winter will come back but for now lets take advantage of it. January is as much a time of pause and reflection as it is gearing up for the year ahead. This month we will have a couple events I'd like to make you aware of. First is for those of you that came to the All-Hands Meeting in November. If you weren't able to make it we took an hour to bring everyone up to speed on the state of things inside our post. After that meeting it was suggested we do this again as a follow up, what we accomplished and what the next steps are. Mark your calendars for January 15th at 7pm. This may become a regular meeting, held every 3-4 months. The good news is that with the deep outpouring of support we received in our mortgage pay down drive, our mortgage was refinanced for

a single 3 year term. With some luck, we may once again own the building outright, by deed and dollar, in less than that.

We will also be holding another Deep Clean Day on January 24th to spruce things up before spring. I'll have a list out soon with some of the things that need done. I don't expect it to be as intensive as the last times, the floors are the biggest part, but it's always been a good time to get together for the "Good of the Post", and it always looks so good.

Looking back, I would like to recognize all of you that turned out in December. From Wreath Day, to the Christmas Giving Tree, and everything else we accomplished, I want to say Thank You. None of this would be possible without the support and dedication of our membership. May you be proud of 2025, and may the year 2026 be as rewarding as you need it to be. Now lets put all our

resolutions into actions.



### JSSP Update

Post #37's JSSP club completed round two of the eight match series Iowa Postal Match. Participants shoot a 30 round match every two weeks until the series is completed. Winners are determined by individual aggregate scores in each shooting class. Additionally, eleven members of the club are looking forward to participating in the American Legion National Postal match in January. This is the first round of the national match to determine State Champions. The best shooters of round one are invited to participate in round two to determine the participants of the in-person National Championship in July on the campus of Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan.

## Unit President Jodi's Comments

December went by fast with so many activities and ways to participate with our Legion Family. The weather had its own agenda with snow, wind and very cold temperatures. We didn't let the weather stop us from helping the Legion Riders with a successful Wreaths Across America Day. Thank you to all who helped honor our veterans. A special thanks to Iowa State ROTC students, they are our future.

I want to thank our members for participating in our cookie fair held in conjunc-

tion with the SAL biscuits and gravy breakfast. It takes a great team of volunteers and so many people stepping up to coordinate, baking, refill trays, cashier and our clean up team.

We are blessed this Christmas to help a veteran's family with Christmas presents as part of our commitment to Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. Once again, the Legion Family came through and blessed this family with many gifts as well as gift cards and groceries. Thank you all for helping us

give back to our veterans.

Thank you for supporting whatever activities the leadership team comes up with. We still need to come up with fundraisers to help generate additional income. Dues alone don't support our various programs.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year!

## Squadron Commander Russ's Comments

If you are getting this before Christmas, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. And for those celebrating Hanukkah, I hope you were blessed to be surrounded by family and friends. As the year draws to a close, we all tend to reminisce and take inventory of the year's challenges and accomplishments, memorable times with friends and families, and remembering those we lost. The S.A.L. has been a blessing to me in the friendships I have developed, and the camaraderie we share at meetings and while working the variety of activities of the S.A.L.

I don't have the exact numbers, but from what I have heard, we have had a very positive response to the request for donations to help pay down the

mortgage before it was time to refinance. To everyone who contributed, a heartfelt THANK YOU! If you haven't donated yet, please remember that your donation is tax deductible. You have until December 31 to get your donation to us. When you donate you will receive a receipt that you can file with your taxes to lower your tax burden. Even if we have already completed the refinance, any donations made that are identified as being for the mortgage will be applied directly to the principle of the new mortgage.

I know the holidays can be especially difficult for some, for a variety of reasons. For their sake, please, Be The One. Many times, just a friendly smile, gesture, or letting them know you care

can make a big difference to someone who is struggling. You don't have to have the perfect comforting words. You just have to care enough to be there for them. Many times over the years, when I have been entering a trying situation, I have said this simple prayer; "God, please help me to reach this person, through my words and actions, that I may be of comfort and aid in their time of need. Amen." Your sincerity will bring comfort, and your caring for the person will have a powerful effect in giving them hope.

In closing, I pray that your difficult times were far outnumbered by your positives. And, I wish for each of you a healthy, and prosperous New Year.

## Clubroom News

Happy New Year to all!!! We hope that everyone had a joyous Holiday season. December was a crazy weather month and a little quiet around the clubroom. If the weather is good and you're looking for some place to hang out, watch a game, or talk with friends. Please keep us in mind. We would love to see you! Thank you to everyone that continues to support us. We hope to make 2026 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 31<sup>st</sup> or the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 7-Grilled Pork Chops

Wed. Jan 14-Chicken Enchilada's

Wed. Jan 21-Scalloped Potatoes and Ham

Wed. Jan 28-Creamy Tuscan Chicken

Friday, January 23-Music Bingo-7-9pm-  
Join us for what is sure to be a night of fun!

## THANK YOU



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, Cliff Barker, Rodger VanVoorhis, Julie Rinnard, Bill Donovan, Addison Donovan, Russ and Vicki Belz, Tom Hadaway, Gary Freel, Marty Kelly and Colten Christiansen

## Legion Riders

Hello everyone, I hope everyone had a great Holiday. The days will start getting longer and it will be riding season soon. If you are like me, I have been collecting new parts all winter and now need to wait for the garage to warm up to get those parts on the bike.

I stumbled across a site on Facebook that had a listing of Rally's throughout the USA. The one Rally that piqued my interest is the Four Corner Rally in Durango CO. It is in September so the weather shouldn't be too much of a concern. If you come across any rallies that may interest someone, please bring them to the meeting and let us know.

I have been itching to get back on the trike for several weeks. I don't like to go out with all the sand and salt on the road, but I may have to scoot around town if the streets are dry.

Please check on your fellow riders, make sure they are making it through the winter ok and remind them only 2-3 months left until we can ride again.

Have a great month, drive safe, be safe and see you all at our meeting.

## Membership Builds Relationships and Aids Legislation



You may have seen this picture on your television on December 17. This meeting was during a press conference called by President Trump to announce his signing of an executive order reclassifying marijuana from a Schedule I drug to Schedule III. This action aligns with a policy that The American Legion adopted by resolution in 2016.

This reclassification declares that marijuana is medically useful in certain situations and allows research to begin to further define what those conditions are when marijuana could be prescribed. There is significant anecdotal evidence that marijuana can play a prominent role in the treatment of PTSD, TBI and certain other conditions arising from military service. Without this reclassification, though that would only be anecdotal not scientific evidence and VA doctors could not prescribe marijuana in those cases.

There is much significance here beyond just the ability of the VA to begin research and that the administration has accepted the position of The American Legion. Our National Commanders have met with Presidents many times in the past and stood alongside as the President took an action advocated by us. This picture though is different.

The action seen here is President Trump inviting Commander Wiley to comment during the press conference on the action being taken. Those of us with many years of Legion membership cannot remember a previous time when the President invited our National Commander to speak during a press conference. December 17 represents a step forward in the relationship between our leadership and the nation's leadership. This step forward does NOT represent The American Legion automatically agreeing with the position of the administration. We have in the past and no doubt will in the future disagree with the administration and will say so. What this does mean is that the Trump administration recognizes that we advocate based on positions and that our membership is steadfast. Once we take a position, we continue to maintain our membership and support that position.



Why is that important to us here in Iowa other than recognizing the respect we have in DC. We have a situation coming in the Iowa Legislature next month where we need to continue to tell a similar story.

The American Legion has spent the last 100 years advocating for our veterans with the VA, helping them receive the service-connected compensation they have earned but also helping them and their widows and orphans receive the pension funds that are set through legislation. That work requires professional claims representatives on our part to assist with developing those claims. Now we need help.

HF1000 passed the House last year authorizing a \$250,000 matching grant to the VSOs to make sure professional claims representatives are available. Unless the Senate passes that bill in 2026, that measure and the funding dies. We need our membership to stand steadfast and encourage their Senators to ignore other ideological issues that may divide the Senate and stand together in favor of HF1000 passing so that we can provide that help. Join us on January 21 at 9AM at HQ, 720 Lyon in Des Moines for a briefing.

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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>
YOUTH AIR RIFLE 1-3 AT IZAAK WALTON	 Find us on Facebook at Legion Family of Ames, IA Post 37	American Family of Ames, IA Post 37	1 \$2 DOG NIGHT CHILI COOK-OFF OPERATIONS COMMITTEE 6:00	2 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	3 STEAK DINNER 5:00—7:00	
4 BINGO	5 WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA 5:30	6 SANDWICH & CHIPS	7 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL GRILLED CHOPS	8 \$2 DOG NIGHT LEGION REGULAR 7:00	9 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	10 RIDERS MEAT & CHEESE EVENT CAMBRIDGE 3:00—5:00
11 BINGO	12	13 SANDWICH & CHIPS SAL REGULAR 6:30	14 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL CHICKEN ENCHILADA	15 \$2 DOG NIGHT	16 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	17
18 BINGO	19 VFW POST MEETING 7:00	20 SANDWICH & CHIPS SOCIAL COMMITTEE 6:00	21 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY LEGISLATIVE DAY @ IOWA CAPITOL CURBSIDE MEAL POTATOES & HAM	22 \$2 DOG NIGHT 40&8	23 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUSIC BINGO 7:00-9:00 pm	24 POST CLEAN UP DAY 8:00 AM
25 BINGO	26	27 SANDWICH & CHIPS	28 WINESDAY WEDNESDAY CURBSIDE MEAL TUSCAN CHICKEN	29 \$2 DOG NIGHT	30 FIREBALL FRIDAY MUNCHIES NIGHT	31