

The American Legion  
Dane County Wisconsin  
Yearbook



1 May 2022 to 30 April 2026

Prepared by  
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(501, Madison)

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## Introduction

The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization. Focusing on service to veterans, servicemembers and communities, the Legion evolved from a group of war-weary veterans of World War I into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States. Membership swiftly grew to over 1 million, and local posts sprang up across the country. Today, membership stands at nearly 2 million in more than 13,000 posts worldwide. The posts are organized into 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines. (Legion, 2021)

Over the years, the Legion has influenced considerable social change in America, won hundreds of benefits for veterans and produced many important programs for children and youth.

As of the date of this compilation, there are 18 posts in the Dane County Council.

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction .....  | 3  |
| Table of Contents .....   | 4  |
| Table of Figures .....  | 5  |
| Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion .....           | 6  |
| Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary ..... | 7  |
| Roster of Dane County Council Officers .....                        | 8  |
| Legion Officers .....   | 8  |
| Program Chairmen .....  | 8  |
| Auxiliary Officers .....  | 9  |
| Dane County History, 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2025 .....              | 10 |
| Appendix .....  | 31 |
| Dane County American Legion Posts .....                             | 31 |
| Operation Renew and Reunite .....                                   | 32 |
| Events and Ceremonies .....   | 33 |
| Two Lights for Tomorrow .....                                       | 33 |
| Public Relations .....  | 39 |
| American Legion County Youth Government Day .....                   | 39 |
| References .....  | 40 |
| Index .....   | 41 |

## Table of Figures

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1 Deb Relitz received her quilt. 3 May 2022. At Post 279 Marshall. ....  | 10 |
| Figure 2 The secret to the delicious Cross Plains meal. 26 May 2022.....  | 11 |
| Figure 3 Rich Ruland (back to the camera) working the group. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022. ....  | 11 |
| Figure 4 The cooking and serving group. Cross Plains Post 0245 26 May 2022.....   | 12 |
| Figure 5 From left to right, need name, Cdr. Jerry Scalissi, the kitchen volunteers. Post 0245 Cross Plains. 26 May 2022. ....                        | 12 |
| Figure 6 Debbie talks about the dog she's been training for about two years. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022. ....                                | 14 |
| Figure 7 (above and below) Karen talks about the dog she's brought. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022. ....   | 15 |
| Figure 8 Cdr. Scalissi conducts the meeting (downstairs) after the dinner. (245, Cross Plains). 26 May 2022. ....                                     | 17 |
| Figure 9 Lisa Olson, 22 Sep 22, Unit 59, Stoughton.....   | 18 |
| Figure 10 Becky Lovell, 501, Madison.....   | 18 |
| Figure 11 Jane Reed .....   | 19 |
| Figure 12 Deb Relitz (279, Marshall).....   | 19 |
| Figure 13 Jerry Schultz (501, Madison).....   | 20 |
| Figure 14 .....   | 20 |
| Figure 15 Noreen Schmidt (348, DeForest) .....  | 21 |
| Figure 16 .....   | 21 |
| Figure 17 Chaplain Virgil Smith (437 Mazomanie) .....   | 22 |
| Figure 18 .....   | 22 |
| Figure 19 Legion Family attend Middleton Game 27 MAY 25.....  | 24 |
| Figure 20 Our star pitcher, Bill, and his catcher .....   | 24 |
| Figure 21 Bill Statz' windup.....   | 25 |
| Figure 22 Dane County Oratorical .....  | 27 |
| Figure 23 Ella Farritor.....  | 28 |
| Figure 24 Sarah Lewis .....   | 29 |
| Figure 25 Isaac Gunby – First place in the Oratorical contest.....  | 30 |
| Figure 26 Impromptu meeting, Morris Sadicario, Seàn Patchin, Darrel "AJ" Feucht, Denise Rohan. 14 APR 2025 Credit: John Schroeder, Wisconsin Eye..... | 38 |

# Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion



## Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary



### **PREAMBLE** (To its Constitution)

*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 participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.*

## Roster of Dane County Council Officers

### Legion Officers

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Commander                      | Jerry Scalissi (until January 2024)<br>Scott Klassy (starting January 2024) |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander | Jerry Hook  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander | Seán Patchin  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander | Nathan Weier  |
| Finance Officer                | Al Breunig  |
| Chaplain                       | Virgil Smith  |
| Adjutant                       | Keith Lovell  |
| Historian                      | Morris Sadicario  |
| Judge Advocate                 | Gary Peterson   |
| Sgt. at Arms                   | Phil Haas   |
| Asst. Sgt. at Arms             | Richard Schwenn   |
| Executive Committee            |   |
| Jane Cress                     |   |
| Chris Ogden                    |   |
| David Barman                   |   |

### Program Chairmen

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Membership            | Scott Klassy      |
| Public Relations      | Jerry Hook        |
| Americanism           | Seán Patchin      |
| Children & Youth      |                   |
| POW/MIA               | Chris Ogden       |
| Camp American Legion  | Chris Ogden       |
| VA Hospital           | Joe Hodgson       |
| Legislative           | Morris Sadicario  |
| County Blood Program  | Denise Rohan      |
| County Government Day | Bill Statz        |
| National Security     | Thomas Stolarczyk |
| Law & Order           | Thomas Stolarczyk |
| Oratorical            | Scott Klassy      |
| SAL                   | Seán Patchin      |
| Legion Riders         | David Barman      |

## Auxiliary Officers

President

Jenni Syftestad

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Lisa Olson

Secretary/Treasurer

Connie Skelton

Exec Member at Large

Bonnie Phaneuf

## Dane County History, 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2025

**3 May 2022.** Marshall Post 257. Deb Relitz received her quilt.



*Figure 1 Deb Relitz received her quilt. 3 May 2022. At Post 279 Marshall.*

**26 May 2022.** Cross Plains Post 245 hosted the monthly Dane County Meeting. Their excellent casserole with vegetables was the main course. People were heard to murmur about the tastiness of this main course. The secret appeared to be the KC Wild Wings and the love and knowledge of the kitchen magicians.



Figure 2 The secret to the delicious Cross Plains meal. 26 May 2022.



Figure 3 Rich Ruland (back to the camera) working the group. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022.



Figure 4 The cooking and serving group. Cross Plains Post 0245 26 May 2022



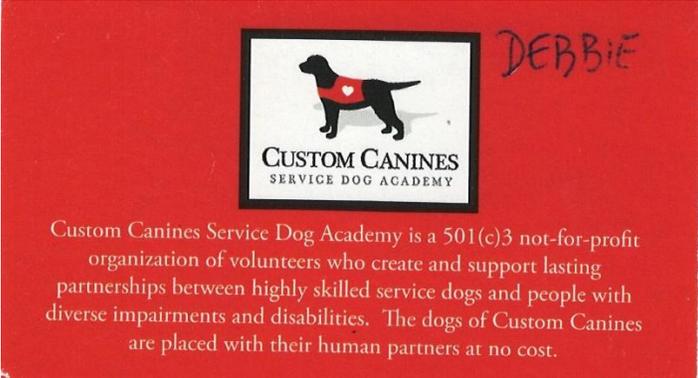
Figure 5 From left to right, need name, Cdr. Jerry Scalissi, the kitchen volunteers. Post 0245 Cross Plains. 26 May 2022.

In the after-dinner program, Karen and Debbie, Custom Canines participants, brought two service dogs with them. They explained what they do and fielded questions from those attending. Information is available by calling the number on the card below.



  
CUSTOM CANINES  
SERVICE DOG ACADEMY  
6610 Fieldwood Rd.  
Madison, WI 53718  
[www.customcanines.org](http://www.customcanines.org)

**SHANNON BECKER**  
director of development | veteran liaison  
shannon@customcanines.org  
(608) 235-1533



  
CUSTOM CANINES  
SERVICE DOG ACADEMY

DEBBIE

Custom Canines Service Dog Academy is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization of volunteers who create and support lasting partnerships between highly skilled service dogs and people with diverse impairments and disabilities. The dogs of Custom Canines are placed with their human partners at no cost.



Debbie, a service dog puppy raiser, had been working with her dog for about two years. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022.

*Figure 6 Debbie talks about the dog she's been training for about two years. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022.*



Figure 7 (above and below) Karen talks about the dog she's brought. Cross Plains Post 0245. 26 May 2022.





Debbie explained the difference between a “therapy” dog and a “service” dog. Briefly, the therapy dog is trained in “basic canine good citizenship” and a comfort animal to anyone who is “putting off energy” from having bad day or might just be

needing a hug and connection. Debbie is a member of Barneveld Post 433. She was at that post when she enlisted in the US Navy. Upon her return, she joined the Auxiliary. She was close to the American Legion in other ways. When she was in high school, Debbie competed in the Oratorical competitions and attended Badger Girls State.

100 percent of donations go to the dogs, their veterinary care and equipment.

The retriever in these photos was a COVID-puppy. According to Karen, this accounts for the relatively shorter-than expected leg lengths.



Figure 8 Cdr. Scalissi conducts the meeting (downstairs) after the dinner. (245, Cross Plains). 26 May 2022.

**22 September 2022.** Receiving thanks and F-16C plaque for service at 115th Fighter Wing Family Day, 22 SEP 2022.



*Figure 9 Lisa Olson, 22 Sep 22, Unit 59, Stoughton.*



*Figure 10 Becky Lovell, 501, Madison.*



*Figure 11 Jane Reed*



*Figure 12 Deb Relitz (279, Marshall)*



Figure 13 Jerry Schultz (501, Madison)



Figure 14



Figure 15 Noreen Schmidt (348, DeForest)



Figure 16



Figure 17 Chaplain Virgil Smith (437 Mazomanie)



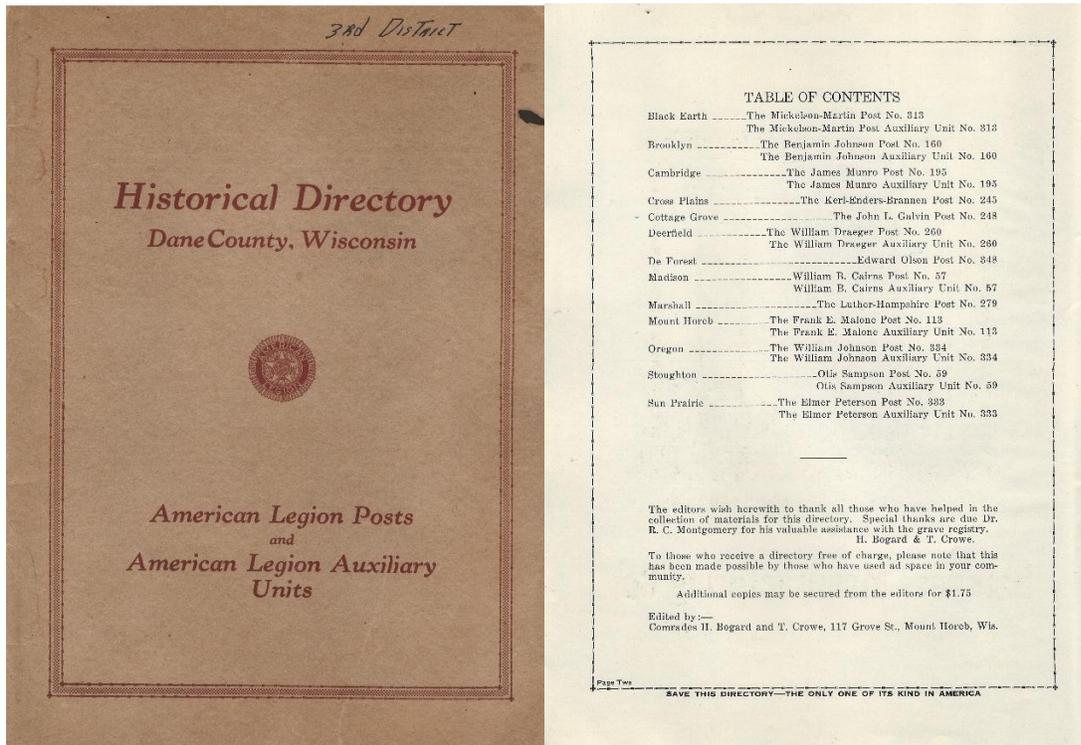
Figure 18

**1 February 2025.** Dane County Council Website was installed. The website's location is

**[wi-dcc.org](http://wi-dcc.org).**

Going forward, most of the information posted in a Yearbook, like this one, will be entered in the website, instead.

**30 April 2025.** Folders containing old documents from the past 20+ years belonging to Bud Mautz were brought to Post 501 by PNC Denise. Over time, several of us will go through the books looking for historical gems. Then, the books will be given to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum for archiving and storage. At first glance, many books cover 3<sup>rd</sup> District history. Here is an undated book that suggests the 1950's.



**27 May 2025. American Legion Appreciation Night**

The Middleton High School Baseball Team honored American Legion Members at the Middleton HS Baseball Game on Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. Legionnaire Bill Statz (245 Cross Plains), the main driver for this occasion, threw the first pitch. The game took place at the Borden Stadium of the Middleton High School athletic complex.



*Figure 19 Legion Family attend Middleton Game 27 MAY 25.*

The Legionnaire family that attended.



*Figure 20 Our star pitcher, Bill, and his catcher*



*Figure 21 Bill Statz' windup*

**13 September 2025.**

From Dane County Commander Klassy: Thank you Post 501 for cooking brats at the 115th Fighter Wing's family day. Also, a big thank you to the following volunteers for helping me out. We had Dan O'Brien 3rd District Cmdr., Dennis Riley, Scott and Deb Relitz, Cindy and Ruth Brosig from Post 279 Marshall. Post 113 Mt. Horeb had Jeff Anderson, Joe Willaims, and Post 151 Auxiliary member Sue Timmerman. It was a warm day, but we had a huge crowd. The service members were very appreciative of us being there.

Thank you to Deerfield Post 260 for inviting me to their August membership meeting. Thank you to Marshall Post 279 for inviting me to ride in their community parade. Congratulations to Post 245 Cross Plains-Middleton for sponsoring champions of American Legion Baseball.

**11 October 2025.** Post 481 Meat Raffle.

**12 October 2025.** Packer Party during the game.

**17 October 2025.** Post 481 Friday Fish Fry.

**5 February 2026. (Seán Patchin, Sr.)**

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) asked for Valentines to deliver to veterans in our state veterans homes. Grades K-3 at Core Knowledge Charter School in Verona sent in 367 Valentines and letters.



In the attached photo, Chad Churchill, Post 385 Commander in Verona, holds up a framed letter from a student named Olivia thanking the veterans for their service and telling them that they are loved.

7 February 2026.

The Dane County Oratorical Contest was held at Mason-Lindsay American Legion Post 385, Verona, WI, on Saturday, February 8th. Our contestants were prepared and eager to speak. Our assigned topic was on Amendment IV, Section 4, which relates to our Union's republican form of government.



*Figure 22 Dane County Oratorical*

Our contestants posed with Dane County Council Commander Scott Klassy after the contest. From left: Ella Farritor (Post 385, 3rd place), Isaac Gunby (Post 113, 1st place), and Sarah Lewis (Post 348, 2nd place)



Figure 23 Ella Farritor



Figure 24 Sarah Lewis



*Figure 25 Isaac Gunby – First place in the Oratorical contest.*

## Appendix

### Dane County American Legion Posts

| Post Number  | City                    | Membership (15 June 2022) |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| WI Post 0059 | Stoughton               | 322                       |
| WI Post 0113 | Mount Horeb             | 134                       |
| WI Post 0151 | Madison                 | 105                       |
| WI Post 0195 | Cambridge               | 5                         |
| WI Post 0245 | Cross Plains            | 170                       |
| WI Post 0248 | Cottage Grove           | 37                        |
| WI Post 0260 | Deerfield (deactivated) | 38                        |
| WI Post 0279 | Marshall                | 62                        |
| WI Post 0313 | Black Earth             | 79                        |
| WI Post 0333 | Sun Prairie             | 189                       |
| WI Post 0348 | De Forest               | 104                       |
| WI Post 0360 | Waunakee                | 238                       |
| WI Post 0385 | Verona                  | 129                       |
| WI Post 0437 | Mazomanie               | 80                        |
| WI Post 0460 | Belleville              | 47                        |
| WI Post 0481 | Madison                 | 134                       |
| WI Post 0501 | Madison                 | 290                       |
| WI Post 0503 | Dane                    | 44                        |
| WI Post 0534 | McFarland               | 262                       |

## Operation Renew and Reunite

The goal is for every Member to receive at least one Buddy Check by November 11th. 90% retention by Veterans Day as well. Please reach out and connect with our members.

3rd District "OPERATION RENEW AND REUNITE" starting with the week of August 24, 2025, and continuing each week until the week of Veterans Day. The objectives are to:

- Encourage 100% Buddy Check by Veterans Day.
- Maximize membership renewals across all posts.
- Strengthening bonds among veterans and encouraging participation.
- Reward posts and counties that excel in renewals.
- Encourage 100% membership renewals by Veterans Day

Incentives:

Posts:

First post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$100.00. Black Earth

Second post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$100.00. Marshall

Third post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$100.00. Shullsburg

Fourth post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$50.00.

Fifth post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$50.00.

Sixth post to reach 100% by 11/11 will receive \$50.00.

## Events and Ceremonies

### Two Lights for Tomorrow

April 14, 2025

The State of Wisconsin and Wisconsin historical associations kicked off the “Two Lights for Tomorrow” ceremony at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, on Monday, April 14, 2025. There was a ceremonial lighting of two lights at the Capitol Rotunda at noon. Wisconsin legislators are working on passing 2025 Assembly Joint Resolution 17 proclaiming the week of April 14 as “Two Lights for Tomorrow Week.” They have called on all Wisconsinites to unite in



remembrance of our shared history and are encouraging all Wisconsin government buildings, community centers, public spaces and citizens to take part in this symbolic display. This is a uniting call for our citizens to celebrate and serve.

American Legion and SAL members from nearby locations attended this ceremony: PNC Denise Rohan (Post 385-Verona), Chaplain/3VC Darrel “AJ” Feucht (Post 501-Madison), Historian Morris Sadicario (Post 501-Madison) and Historian Seán Patchin (3rd District SAL).

A color guard dressed in Revolutionary uniform started the proceedings, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and "The Star-Spangled Banner." Gov. Tony Evers highlighted the many firsts Wisconsin brought: kindergarten, the five-day work week, unemployment compensation, highway numbering system and more. He said that this "Two-Light" nationwide initiative, conceived by former curator at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Kevin Hampton, is another first. The Two Lights for Tomorrow website is at [wisvetsmuseum.com/america250](http://wisvetsmuseum.com/america250). Kevin is now at the Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission.

A ceremony including “Paul Revere’s Ride” was presented during “Two Lights” week at Post 501 in Madison.



*The "Two Lights for Tomorrow" logo.*



*From left: 3rd District SAL Historian Seán Patchin, PNC Denise Rohan, Chaplain/3VC Darrel "AJ" Feucht and Wisconsin Veterans Affairs Secretary James Bond.*



*The Sons of the American Revolution flank Mary Parker of the Daughters of the American Revolution.*



*"Don't trifle with the Fifer!" Bob Plastine.*



*Chris Kowalkowski, director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, and the two lights.*



*Figure 26 Impromptu meeting, Morris Sadicario, Seàn Patchin, Darrel "AJ" Feucht, Denise Rohan. 14 APR 2025 Credit: John Schroeder, Wisconsin Eye.*

## Public Relations

### American Legion County Youth Government Day



Youth are our future, and it's vital that they have the information and confidence to engage with their local community. The American Legion County Youth Government Day gives students hands-on experience of local government operations and inspires them to be more civically minded in their everyday lives.

Dane County is proud to be a leader in supporting our youth through innovative programs like Youth in Government, which empowers high school students to step into the shoes of elected officials, learn how policy is made, and experience the impact of public service firsthand. I was proud to start this program when I was on the Dane County Board!

This investment in the community translates to greater numbers at the polls and more effective governance. It was great to host the next generation of community leaders, share a bit of what we do here in Dane County, and foster a sense of change-making energy amongst our young people. You can find out more about the program from American Legion Wisconsin. (Miles, 2025)

## References

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## Index

115th Fighter Wing

F-16C Plaques, 19

Americanism

County Youth Government Day, 40

Custom Canines, 14

Monthly County Meeting

Cross Plains, 11

Post 385

Valentines for Veterans, 27

Programs

Custom Canines, 14

Public Relations

County Youth Government Day, 40

Quilt of Valor

Deb Relitz, 11

Rare Historical Directory of Dane County

American Legion Posts, 24

Statz, Bill, 26

Valentines for Veterans, 27

Website created, 23

Youth Government Day, 40