

Commander’s Corner

Happy Holidays to all,

We hope to see you at the post for our many events this month and for membership meetings.

I’d like to extend a special thank you to Post 51 Honor Guard for their dedication to our Veteran’s Day programs at the West Salem Schools, and especially to those speaking at each program. I was personally invited to be a guest at the Galesville Elementary School program by my niece and nephew. Because of my fellow Legionnaires stepping up in West Salem I was able to assist my nephew with the folding of the flag, which is a memory I will never forget.

Join us for our Annual Bake Sale on December 20th. I’ve been known to purchase my own wife’s baked goods, but there are so many talented bakers that contribute to this sale. Save yourself some time and grab your Christmas gathering goodies from the Legion. That evening join us for a Pot Luck Ugly Sweater Party.

You can update your phone number online via MyLegion.org or by calling the post directly and we can update your phone number on you behalf for national and post level communication.

Over the last few months I’ve mentioned that we will be transitioning into an electronic monthly newsletter, and the time has come to make the switch. We plan to start the new year off with our first electronic newsletter in January. Newsletters will be emailed to members using the email address on file with your membership - if you need to update your email address please do so online, or let 1st Vice LaRae Ludeking know and we can help. Auxiliary and SAL members should also reach out to their Officers if assistance is needed to update contact information. If you do not have email, or would like a printed copy, some hard copies will be available at the Legion as well. Thank you again for your understanding with this change. Special thank you to all that have worked so hard to put together this newsletter over the years - the sacrifice and paper cuts did not go unnoticed.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone.

-Ben VanHorn, Post Commander Post 51

President’s Corner

Happy December to all!

Wow, is it just me or has time flown by this year? I hope every-one had a wonderful Thanksgiving and took time to think about what you were grateful for this year. I didn’t talk about it last month so I will say it now, I have much to be grateful for including my legion family. Every interaction, every month, I am in awe of those who give their time and talents so self-lessly, who genuinely care about their family, legion family and community. I’m sure you’ve heard if you want to see true change, you start in your own home first then it radiates out to your community. This is what I see, and I am continuously humbled. I am incredibly proud of all our new members too and their desire to help! I am grateful for the membership renewals, prayers and donations if that is all you can do; all of it counts! Thank you to everyone!!

Quilts of Honor – Auxiliary members and the Honor Guard handed out 21 quilts on Veterans Day!! If you know a veteran who has not yet received a handmade quilt, please let me or one of the Auxiliary officers know. We are compiling a list. We want to make sure that everyone who has served, gets one. If you came to Bloodies and Bingo, thank you! That event is a fundraiser for the Quilts of Honor program.

We are doing a Toys for Tots new toy drive this year. Toys must be turned in by December 5th. Any received after that will be donated to the West Salem Boys and Girls Club. We have a member who is very involved with the local food pantry so we will accept any non-perishable food donations. The West Salem Fire Department is also hosting a toy and food drive.

We will have our annual Christmas gift wrapping for toys donated to a few local families plus a fun game, instead of our regular meeting, at 6:00pm on the 9th . Breakfast with Santa is on December 13th. Bring your children or grandchil-dren down for pancakes and pictures with Santa! That’s the same time we will host a viewing (with food available) of the Army/Navy game. Our famous annual bake sale is on Saturday, the 20 th from 9–1. We’re having our Ugly Sweater Christmas Party starting at 5:00 pm. Christmas trays will be put together in the back room to be delivered first thing Sunday morning. Christmas trays are bags of different goodies the Auxiliary puts together for local veterans and community members who do not get out much. We served 120 people in 2023 and about 130 in 2024, so the numbers keep going up. If you’re able to bake even a dozen cookies or bars, we would be very grateful for any baking help. Please let me or one of our officers know if you know of someone who could use a bit of holiday cheer.

I wish you many blessings of peace, fellowship and joy this holiday season.

-Brooke Parr, President ALA Unit 51

SAL

Hello All and Happy Holiday's:

I write this from my hunting blind as I patiently wait for a deer, whether it be the Turdy Pointer or Rudolph, to walk by.

December 8th marks the 60th Anniversary of the USMC’s operation Harvest Moon during the Vietnam War. The oper-ation would be carried out in conjunction with the South Vietnamese Army and its purpose was to engage and if possible, destroy the 1st Viet Cong Regiment in Phuoc Ha Valley. Early in the operation, the South Vietnamese Army became pinned down and Marine Task Force Delta and the Marine Special Landing Force aboard the USS Valley Forge would arrive as reinforcements. Heavy fighting would com-mence for the next two weeks in very poor weather condi-tions with a majority of combat happening during heavy pelting monsoons. Harvest Moon would be the USMC’s biggest operation of 1965. When the Operation ended on December 20th, 51 Marines were killed and another 256 were wounded. Please take a moment to honor the sacri-fices our Father's and Grandfather's made in December of 1965, and as always, take a moment to honor those lost at Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941.

Thanks to everyone who worked events last month.

With December being such a busy month for not only the SAL but the Legion Family as a whole, we decided to forego our Old Fashioned Fish Fry for the month. We'll be back at it in January.

The Pillars Committee meeting will be held Monday, December 8th at 7 PM at the Legion. Anyone interested in attending, please stop down. Please contact Steve Craig with any questions.

We're always looking for new members, so if you're the male descendant of a Legionnaire or the male descendant of a veteran who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from the service, you're eligible. Anyone interested please contact myself or Dan Hass, or stop down at the Post to get signed up.

While the holiday season is a joyous time for most, it can be overwhelming for many who are struggling. So please take a moment to reach out to friends and loved ones this holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us in Squadron 51

-James Jacobson, SAL Commander

Building Commission

Happy Holidays everyone.

Winners have been drawn for the annual Building Commission raffle, congratulations to all.

Mike Schaller - \$1,000.00
Andrew Dummer - \$500.00
Paul Gilster - \$250.00
Don Heilman - \$50.00
James Horman - \$50.00
Karl Goethel - \$50.00
Mary Hess - \$50.00
Lee Schmitz - \$50.00

Some events we’d love to see you for this month:

December 1st - Bingo
December 13th - Breakfast with Santa
December 20th - Bake Sale 9:00am-3:00pm

If you would like to contribute to the Bake Sale please drop off at the Legion on Friday, December 19th.

Keep an eye out on Facebook for our annual New Year’s Eve Celebration - plans are still in the works, but we’d love to see you ring in the new year with the Legion Family.

-Phil Parr

Berg Hemker Olson
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December 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Bingo 6:30pm	2	3 Exec Board Meeting 6:30pm	4	5	6 Private Wedding Reception
7	8 Pillars Committee Meeting 7:00pm	9 Auxiliary Meeting 6:30pm	10 Legion Meeting 6:30pm	11 La Crosse 4H Leaders Meeting	12 NO FISH	13 Breakfast w/ Santa Army vs Navy Game
14 Auxiliary Breakfast 8-11	15	16 SAL Meeting 7:00pm	17 Building Comm Meeting 6:30pm	18	19	20 Bake Sale 9-3 Pot Luck Ugly Sweater Party
21 Christmas Tray Delivery	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			