

Berg-Hemker-Olson American Legion Post 51

NEWSLETTER



Commander's Corner

Ben VanHorn, Post Commander Post 51

Happy April, everyone -

At this month's membership meeting we will hold nominations for incoming officers. If you are interested in becoming an officer or have questions about officer duties please reach out. We'd love to see you at our meeting on Wednesday, April 8th at 6:30pm.

Our Annual Smelt Fry will be held on Friday, April 17th at 5:30pm. The Smelt Fry is a big event for us so we need all hands on deck. If you are available to help clean smelt at the Post the evenings of Wednesday, April 15th and Thursday, April 16th the help would be greatly appreciated.

In addition to the annual Smelt Fry we also have our first Chicken Q of the year this month. Stop by on Saturday, April 25th at 11:00am to support the Village Park Pillars project.

We hope to see you at this month and next month's events - and as always we are happy to have any new faces to volunteer or visit. Check out the last few pages of the newsletter for some important events coming up.

President's Corner

Brooke Parr, ALA President Unit 51

Happy Spring! I hope you got to bring some kiddos—or anyone who still believes in a little magic—to visit the Easter Bunny last month. And if you were one of the lucky folks who strutted out of Softball Designer Purse Bingo with a brandnew bag... enjoy that fabulous win!

A huge, huge shoutout to our annual deep clean dream team: **Dan Hass, Jim Schmitz, Mike Schaller,** and **Gary Merfeld.** These guys put in serious elbow grease to get the Legion sparkling again. We couldn't have pulled it off without them. Give them a high five, fist bump, or at least a "you rock" next time you see them.

Let's get our veterans back in the air! On April 12th, we're rallying together for the Freedom Honor Flight fundraiser. Every penny of profit goes straight to this incredible program. Each flight costs \$10,000, and right now the La Crosse area doesn't have enough funding to schedule any. We will have dinner, live music by Quenten Brown, raffle baskets and 50/50 raffles. If you can't make it but still want to help the program, you can donate directly to their website here: [Donate - Freedom Honor Flight](#)

We've packed this month with events, so be sure to peek at the calendar at the bottom of this newsletter, on Facebook, or the file holder by Legion's front door. There's plenty to join in on.

A quick, friendly nudge for anyone who hasn't renewed their Auxiliary membership yet: we're accepting renewals and new applications. You can renew in person, by mail, online ([click here to renew online](#)), or by calling National Headquarters at (317) 5694570. Have your member ID handy and let them know you're with Unit 51 in West Salem, WI. If you're unsure of your status, just reach out to me or Nikki Vidal—we're happy to check.

And finally, we're looking for volunteers for April and May events, plus early signups for a two hour shift at the June Dairy Days Chicken Q June 6th and 7th. If you'd like to jump in for a shift or two, message me or check our Facebook page for details.

May is packed with fun – here's what's coming up!

Upcoming events:

- **Bingo – May 4** - Doors open at 5:30, bingo kicks off at 6:00. We'll have a light dinner and dessert, so come hungry and ready to yell "BINGO!"
- **Cinco de Mayo Dinner – May 5** - Tacos, enchiladas, chips, salsa, and more deliciousness. It's basically a fiesta on a plate.
- **Medicare Insurance Rep – May 7** - Deb will be at the post from 10:00–3:00 to answer your Medicare questions. Swing by and chat – she's a wealth of knowledge.
- **Fish, Shrimp & More – May 8** - Cooking starts at 5:30! Join us for a great meal or jump in to help. No experience needed – we'll show you the ropes and give you on the spot training.
- **Auxiliary Breakfast – May 10** - All you can eat breakfast buffet with biscuits and gravy, French toast, waffles, and more. Skip the dishes and treat yourself. Adults: \$14 | Kids 10 & under: \$7
- **Auxiliary Membership Meeting – May 12** - A private meeting for Auxiliary members.
- **Liver Lovers & Chicken Dinner – May 16** - Always a community favorite! Serving from 5:30 until it's gone! Proceeds support the Pillars rebuild project.
- **WSHS Senior Breakfast – May 22** - One of our favorite traditions! We host about 150 hungry seniors and get them through the buffet in under two hours – it's a whirlwind in the best way. We need lots of helping hands: cooking, serving, setup the day before, or cleanup afterward. We'll guide you through everything, and yes, we feed our volunteers too. It's a blast seeing all those excited faces!

Have you heard?

Veterans and active duty service members can expect steady benefit activity in April 2026. VA disability and related compensation programs scheduled for their next payout on May 1 and military pay continuing under the year's updated increases, including a 3.8% raise in basic pay and an average 4.2% boost to BAH, with BAS and family separation allowances also elevated for the year. These updates reflect ongoing 2026 adjustments aimed at stabilizing compensation, supporting dependents, and keeping pace with cost of living changes across the force. The VA also announced major improvements for survivors, elevating the Office of Survivors Assistance, launching a new "White Glove Survivor Outreach Team," and modernizing communication systems to make support faster and more compassionate. Meanwhile, Congress spent March reviewing 27 bills aimed at modernizing VA programs—from healthcare access to infrastructure upgrades—signaling potential long term improvements for veterans and their families.

I look forward to seeing you at the Legion! Let's make it another great month.

Building Commission

Phil Parr

Building Commission will continue to sell \$10 Calendar Raffle tickets through the end of April - proceeds will benefit the kitchen remodel, and there are cash prizes almost every day in May! Stop down to the Legion during any event this month to get yours.

Stop by our Chicken Q on Saturday, April 25th from 11:00am (until gone). No presale tickets will be sold, so it is first come first serve until gone. See you at the Pit.

**West Salem American Legion
Pillar Fundraiser
Chicken Q
Saturday, April 25th**

DRIVE Serving 11 am until gone
THRU Village Park, West Salem, WI



**No pre-sale tickets will
be sold, all dinners are first come first served
until sold out**

SAL

James Jacobson, SAL Commander Squadron 51

Hello All and Happy April.

Thanks to everyone who worked events this past month. Our Old Fashioned Fish Fry will be on April 24th. Prep will be at 6:00 on Thursday the 23rd.

The Pillars Committee meeting will be at 7:00pm on Monday, April 13th at the Legion. Anyone interested in attending please stop down. Contact Steve Craig with any questions.

Our membership meeting will be at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 21st.

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.

**Berg Hemker Olson Post 51,
West Salem, WI**

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

FAMILY



FREEDOM HONOR FLIGHT™

Pulled Pork Dinner

Music by Quenten Brown

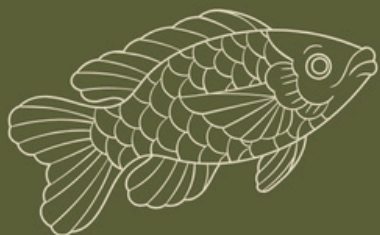
Raffle baskets

50/50

SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH

4:30PM

***Berg Hemker Olson American
Legion***



***ANNUAL
Smelt
Fry***



Join us for our Annual
Smelt Fry
Friday, April 17

**5:30 - 8 or
until gone**

*Dinner includes:
Smelt, chips, bread &
creamy coleslaw*

148 Leonard St S.
West Salem, WI



Bloody's & Bingo

SATURDAY, APRIL 18TH 8:00AM

Save the date

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

2026 Past Commanders and Past Presidents Dinner & Banquet

Sunday, April 26th

The night we honor our past, present and future

RSVP (for you and a guest) NO LATER THAN APRIL 19TH Invitations are being mailed out soon

Cocktails at 5:00, Dinner at 6:00 Presentations will follow dinner

West Salem American Legion AYCE Taco Night

MARGARITAS
WILL ALSO BE
AVAILABLE

BEEF TACOS
CHOICE BETWEEN
HARD OR SOFT SHELL

CHIPS & SALSA TOO



TUESDAY, MAY 5TH

All proceeds benefit the Kitchen Remodel Fund

Mother's Day Breakfast Buffet

Sunday May 10th
8 am - 11am



Saturday, May 16

Serving 5:30 - 7:30 (or until gone)

& Honey Pecan
CHICKEN TOO!

**LIVER
LOVERS**

Dinner Buffet includes:
Honey Pecan Chicken,
Liver, Bacon, Onions,
Cheese potatoes,
Mashed Rutabagas,
Salads & Dessert

\$15.00 per person

All funds going to the Pillars Fund to
renovate the Court of Honor

Berg Hemker Olson American Legion
148 Leonard St S
West Salem, WI



**JUNE DAIRY DAYS
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

JOB/SHIFT SIGN UP SHEETS WILL BE AT THE
LEGION BEGINNING THIS MONTH

Help is needed both at the park
and inside the Legion Hall, many
different jobs need coverage

April 2026 Post 51 Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Executive Board Meeting 6:30pm	2	3	4 Private Event
5	6 Bingo 6:30pm	7	8 Legion Meeting 6:30pm	9 Medicare 101 Meetings 10am-3pm	10 Fish & Shrimp 5:30pm	11 40-8 Femme
12 Freedom Honor Flight Fundraiser 4:30pm	13 Pillar Committee Meeting 7:00pm	14 Auxiliary Meeting 6:30pm	15 Building Commission Meeting 6:30pm <i>Smelt Cleaning</i>	16 40-8 Meeting 6:30pm <i>Smelt Cleaning</i>	17 Smelt Fry 5:30pm	18 Bingo & Bloodies 8:00am-Noon Race Smoker 3:00pm-7:00pm
19 Legion Event	20	21 SAL Meeting 7:00pm	22	23	24 Old Fashioned Fish Fry 5:30pm	25 Pillars Fund Chicken Q
26 Past President/Past Commanders Dinner 5:30pm	27	28	29 Membership Committee 6:00pm Investment Club 7:00pm	30		