

COMMANDER'S CORNER:

Wow! Another summer is officially in the books, and the leaves are starting to show their fall colors! Thanks to the dedication of our members and volunteers, we had a successful summer across our pillars. **Supporting our Veterans**: We made a large donation to Old Glory Honor Flight, provided direct financial assistance to local Veterans, and turned out strong to welcome home Veterans from the Freedom to Liberty Retreats, Honor Flight, and redeploying Service Members. **Investing in our Youth:** We sponsored outstanding local candidates for Badger Boys and donated new soccer nets to the Valders HS girls soccer team. **Strengthening our Community:** From hosting our Celebration of Freedom and marching in local parades to supporting the Manitowoc Community Baby Shower and awarding scholarships, our presence remains strong. Hats off to every one of you who helps Post and Squadron 477 succeed! We couldn't do this vital work without your time, heart and dedication. I can't stress this enough – THANK YOU!!!

In last September's newsletter, I touched on the Legion's 'BE THE ONE', my own experiences with suicide, and how important it is to me! In the VA 2025 National Veteran Suicide Annual Report, one of the many things that I took out of the report is SUPPORT. In response, Post 477 has partnered with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) in Manitowoc who is looking to team up! We are planning to establish dedicated Veteran support groups to be held at their new Manitowoc Facility. As soon as meeting schedules and details are finalized, I will share them with you.

So, getting back to 'Be the One' – as stated before, the American Legion has put forth this mission nationally, but the only way that it is going to fully work is if everybody continue to do their part. Especially at the Post level! So, if someone reaches out to you doing a "Buddy Check" via phone call, text or email, PLEASE respond. Also, this doesn't just mean post members – reach out to any veteran. At that, any person – everybody has struggles! Take care and BE THE ONE!

PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING OUR NEWEST MEMBERS TO POST 477:

Chyanne Bowe – Currently serving in the US Navy
Matthew Dressel - USN GWOT Veteran
Nicholas Grube – USMC GWOT Veteran
Micaiah Kennedy - USMC GWOT Veteran
Tim Leatherman – USAF Vietnam Veteran
Tristen Pfeifer - Currently serving in the USAF
Tyler Decker – USMC GWOT Veteran
Jason Dvorak - USMC GWOT Veteran
Thomas Jacobs – US Army GWOT Veteran
Kara Klubunde – US Army GWOT Veteran
Scott Maurer – USAF Veteran
Scott Ruh – USAF Veteran
Brady Thomas – US Army GWOT Veteran

A warm welcome to all our new members joining the Post 477 Family! A huge thank you goes out to everyone involved in recruiting them. We are truly grateful to each of you for sharing the Post 477 story and inviting fellow Veterans to join our mission.

SERVICE OFFICER: While helping staff the American Legion booth at the County Fair, we spoke with visitors about the Legion's mission, programs, membership, and assistance in navigating VA benefits, along with sharing our story and recruiting new members.

During the past couple of months, we've also continued direct assistance to Veterans, helping them navigate Community Care referrals and VA claims. This includes guidance on required documentation, tracking claim status, and moving requests smoothly through the system.

If you would like assistance working through the VA process, please reach out to Rebecca at (920) 645-8102 or email rpribyl29@gmail.com.

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS: On October 17th, the 6th District Riders are holding a memorial ride and celebration of life for Jim Erskine, former member of the District Riders. Cost of the ride to include food is $20. Start and end at the Fox Hole Bar (Post 75) in Fond du lac. Kickstands up at 10:30. Contact Heather to learn about membership in the American Legion Riders (414) 704-4191.

POST 477 DOING BIG THINGS IN OUR COMMUNITY:

1. Parade Season: Rain, Shine & Big Smiles! Our parade lineup this season had many firsts and included a six-person 477 Family flag line with rifle escorts, our America 250 float, a WWII era jeep, walkers greeting the crowd and handing out candy, and American Legion Riders. We kicked things off with a gorgeous day at the Cleveland Dairyland parade, which was a fantastic day from start to finish. The next week, we were fully geared up and ready to 'step off' at the Kiel Community Parade when Mother Nature decided to intervene with lightning and the parade was canceled. At that point, rain gear was off and we were soaked to the skin, but that didn't "dampen" our spirits. We still had great fun and big smiles on our faces! We ended our parade season during the St. Nazianz Meat's Fest parade. It's always fun to 'show off a bit' before the home crowd. A huge Thank You to everyone who showed up, marched, waved, and made these community traditions so memorable.



Photo: Rain soaked Legion Family 477 members lined up for the Kiel Community Parade.

2. Our County Fair info booth gave the American Legion 477 Family an incredible opportunity to connect face-to-face with neighbors and friends from across the area. Visitors stopped by to learn more about who we are, what we stand for, and the vital work we do every single day. Conversations at the booth truly highlighted our mission. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our dedicated members who volunteered their time to staff the booth, answer questions, and show everyone how Post 477 is "Doing BIG Things in OUR Community."



3. Post 477 members and friends turned out at the Appleton Airport in late August to welcome home Veterans from the Freedom to Liberty Retreat Mission #4 (F2L4), including our very own Post member, Ashley. The homecoming was filled with patriotic pride, joyful smiles, and tears – a true testament to the strong camaraderie of Veterans showing up to support their own.

Photo: Bill, Gary, Kevin, and Rebecca with Ashley during the F2L4 welcome home celebration.

4. Our first Veterans Coffee was an absolute hit! We were thrilled to walk in and have so many Veterans chatting and enjoying a cup of coffee together.

While there, we did a survey of sorts, attendees overwhelmingly encouraged us to continue the get-togethers on a monthly basis. Please mark your calendars for the next three gatherings: November 6 – The Village Bakery (Valders), December 4 - On A Whim Sweet Treats (Francis Creek) and January 8 - the Marsh Inn (Collins).



Photo: Some of the group who gathered for the Veterans Coffee at Meat's Opera Haus.



5. Post 477 stood proudly alongside our community to welcome home the Soldiers of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 1/121 Field Artillery. We extend our deepest gratitude to these service members and their families for their incredible dedication and sacrifice throughout this deployment. We are especially proud to send a heartfelt shout-out to our very own returning Post members, Josh and Taylor. Thank you both for your service and welcome home!

WHAT'S NEXT - HONOR, ACTION AND COMMUNITY:

1. Old Glory Honor Flight Mission 84 takes flight on October 27, 2026, carrying 18 Veterans from Manitowoc County – including our very own Ken Knauf. About half of the County Veterans are locals or friends of American Legion Post 477: Melvin Waack (Kiel), Paul Tienor (Valders), the Duchow Triplets (Dan, Dave, and Delton) and the Dvorachek Brothers (Bob, Dave, and Jim).

Post 477 will be there in full force to give our Veterans the hero's welcome they deserve. Commander Nett will help arrange rides to the airport, give him a call if you'd like to participate. Because the plane is expected to arrive around 9:15 pm, carpooling is strongly encouraged. Wear your patriotic colors, bring your welcome home signs, and get ready to join an unforgettable celebration.



2. We currently have 15 walkers (and one runner) signed up for the American Legion 477 Family team for the Boots on the Ground Veteran Suicide Awareness Ruck on Saturday November 7th, and there is still time to join. Whether you complete one mile, five miles, ten miles, or tackle the entire 17.5-mile route**,** every step helps raise awareness of Veteran and Military suicide and reminds those who are struggling that they are not alone. Come walk with your Legion Family, invite your family and friends to join us in spreading the Be The One message. Please text Nancy at (920) 905-6273 if you would like to be part of the team.

3. Did you know that The American Legion is an associate sponsor of the Army-Navy Game? Are you Team Army?!? Or Team Navy?!? Join your fellow Veterans and Military members on December 12th at Shadows in School Hill for an Army-Navy Game watch party! Wear your service colors to earn door prize opportunities. The day will include 50/50 raffles along with paddle raffles throughout the game, so bring your game face, sport your team colors and join the fun!

Please note that Army/Navy apparel is available at Ranger Up Army-Navy Game Apparel



4. Post 477 sponsors the "Stories of Service" podcast, airing Fridays at 7:45 am on WCUB and Saturdays 9:45 am on WOMT. This program highlights local Veterans who have experienced an Honor Flight, participated in a Freedom to Liberty Retreat, or continue to demonstrate what "Service After Service' means in our community.

If you would like to share your story, we want to hear from you! Please reach out to Nancy to get scheduled. We prefer to conduct the 10-minute prerecorded interviews in-person at the Manitowoc radio studios, but telephone interviews can be arranged.

BEYOND THE POST:

1. The incentive for the completion of the National online Basic Course runs through October 18th. Send a copy of your completion certificate (completed since January 1, 2022) for a chance to win one of two $50 gift cards. If you completed the course prior to 2022, retake the exam for an updated certificate. Email your certificate to vicecommandereast@gmail.com.

2. The Manitowoc County Veterans Night out is at Bricks in Manitowoc on Friday October 23rd beginning at 6. All Veterans and Military members along with your family and friends are invited to join us for an evening of conversation and camaraderie. Food is available for purchase. We hope that you're able to join us.

3. Join us for an inspiring and memorable evening celebrating our local Veteran Community at the Manitowoc County Veterans Banquet. Saturday, November 14th at Seven Lakes Golf & Dining. Social hour begins at 5, the program at 6, the meal is served at 6:30. The banquet committee has worked hard to make this an enjoyable evening with guest speaker, Tim Zadalis & entertainment with BellaRain Music. We'll also take part in honoring the Manitowoc County Veteran of the Year, the Veteran Advocate of the Year, and the Veteran Friendly Business of the Year.



Cost is $20 per person and tickets are available by contacting Bill Schuh at phone (920) 973-4010. We ask for RSVPs by November 7th.

Everyone is welcome! The event is open to all Veterans, Military members, Families, Friends, and Community Supporters who wish to join in the fellowship and celebration.

4. Our Meeme Liberty Pole Capital Campaign will continue through the end of 2026 as we work to further enhance this historic site. Future improvements include additional landscaping, a memorial stone, and possibly a bench where visitors can sit, reflect, and appreciate the significance of the Liberty Pole. Mail your donations directly to Post 477; please write "Meeme Liberty Pole" on the memo line of your check. There is also an opportunity to donate through The Wisconsin American Legion Foundation, Inc.**,** a 501(c)(3) organization. The Foundation will provide the appropriate tax acknowledgment, and all of the funds will be distributed to Post 477 in support of the project. When donating through the Foundation, it is very important to include EIN 26-1582528 and specifically designate your contribution for the "Post 477 Flagpole Project." Mail donations to: The Wisconsin American Legion Foundation, Inc. P.O. Box 827 Portage, WI 53901.

5. It took time and persistence, but a couple of our Post members, Chuck and Ron, have (finally) signed up for their Honor Flight! Did you know that you are eligible if you served in any component (Active Duty, National Guard, Reserves), at any location, at any time, prior to 7 May 1975? Veterans fly at no cost! Ask a family member or friend to join you as your Guardian; two caveats, they must be between 18-69 years old and cannot be your spouse. Cost for the Guardian is $500. Please text Nancy at (920) 905-6273 for assistance in completing and application or if you have any questions.



POST MEETINGS: General membership meetings are at the St Nazianz Village Hall. The SAL meeting begins at 5:30, the Legion follows at 6:30. Our last 2026 meetings are on 22 October.

The Post Executive Committee (PEC) meets monthly to ensure that Post business/planning is completed. If you have anything you'd like to discuss, please reach out to Kevin, he'll add the topic to the agenda.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- 12 October – Manitowoc County Council Meeting (Manitowoc Eagles Club)
- 21 October – Elk Soup for Veterans (Elks Lodge Manitowoc)
- 22 October – SAL & Post Meeting
- 23 October – Manitowoc County Veterans Night Out (Bricks in Manitowoc)
- 25 October – 6th District Fall Conference (Fond du lac Post 75)
- 27 October – Old Glory Honor Flight Mission 84 Welcome Home
- 6 November – Veterans Coffee (Village Bakery – Valders)
- 7 November – Veteran Suicide Awareness Ruck March (Snow Ranger Building in Plymouth)
- 10 November – Veterans Day Programs (Manitowoc Lutheran & Valders Elementary)
- 11 November – Veterans Day Programs (Mishicot Elementary, Kiel HS, Cleveland Elementary)
- 12 November – Veterans Day Program (St Mary's-St Michaels)
- 14 November – Manitowoc County Veterans Banquet (Seven Lakes Golf & Dining)
- 4 December – Veterans Coffee (On a Whim Sweet Treats – Francis Creek)
- 12 December – Army-Navy Game Watch Party (Shadows in School Hill)

POST LEADERSHIP:

- Commander: Kevin Nett (920) 286-3009
- 1st Vice Commander & Membership: Jeff Bronson (920) 901-6801
- 2nd Vice Commander & Fundraising: Gary Bonnett (920) 652-6811
- Adjutant & Public Relations: Nancy Rivera (920) 905-6273
- Finance Officer: Chris Bestul (920) 629-9107
- Service Officer: Rebecca Pribyl (920) 645-8102
- Service Officer & ALR Contact: Heather Bruckschen (414) 704-4191

CONTACT US:

Mailing address: PO Box 162 St Nazianz, WI 54232
Post email: americanlegionpost477@gmail.com

The Legion 477 Family in Action: Moments that define what it means to be a Legionnaire, serving our Community, supporting our Veterans & Military members, and keeping the spirit of patriotism alive.









Clockwise from the top left: 1) Post member, Matt K. bows his head in prayer during the F2L4 Retreat welcome-home.
2) Congratulations to Zach S., wife Lily, and big sister Sophia on welcoming baby Hudson Robert to their family (and ours). 3) Andrew & Rebecca drop off a donation of essential baby items and some of our favorite books for the Manitowoc County Wide Baby Shower. 4) Rebecca, Kevin, Lindsay, and Craig represent the Legion 477 Family at the County Fair. 5) The Legion 477 flag line prepares to march in the Meat's Fest parade. 6) Nancy visits ECK Industries to present a thank-you for their continued support of the Post. 7) Jeff with his Granddaughters wave from the America250 float. 8) Nancy, Chuck, and Kevin present the Blue Star Banner to members of Taylor's Family. 9) The entire Legion 477 Family had a fun time at this year's Camp Sinawa Fall Family Day & Trunk or Treat. 10) Surrounded by Family & Friends, Josh & Taylor were welcomed home at their redeployment ceremony. 11) Gary, Kevin, Matt, Julie and Bill waited for the F2L Retreat plane to arrive, alongside Ariana. holding a photo of her Mom, Ashley.













