AMERICAN LEGION

Reports to the

Department Executive Committee

NEC Report

At the 107th National Convention in Louisville, KY this year, John W. "Jay" Bowen was selected as the National Commander for 2026-27. His goal is 90% retention with 75,000 new members. His theme for the year is "Be Part Of The Solution." (BPOTS)
our 5 Nat'l. Vice-Cmdrs:

Central Region- Roy E, Smith (Illinois)
Midwest Region-Hugh Holmes (S> Dakota)
NE Region: Frank J. Peters (New York)
SE Region: Michael Westergren (Arkansas)
West Region: Marths Bigbie (Utah)

Victor DeSloover from Iowa was appointed National Chaplain!

Department status was reviewed, the Dept. of Colorado remains on probation, with the Dept. currently preparing its building to provide lease space to generate revenue.
Future Nat'l. Conventions were announced, 2027 Kansas City, MO.,2028-Columbus, OH., 2029-Indianapolis, IN. All national commissions reported no emergency matters and all written reports are on file for all commissions.

At the fall NEC Meeting from Oct. 4-8, 2026, there were 16 resolutions approved and 13 rejected or sent back for further study. One of the resolutions from VA&R pertained to raising awareness among veterans of VA creative arts programs through its national communications platforms, encourage its departments and posts, working with the American Legion Family, to connect eligible veterans with local VA competitions that lead to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, and recognize the achievements of participating veterans. Another from Internal Affairs was for the Nat'l CMDR to appoint an ad hoc committee to meet virtually and, as appropriate, in person, to develop a vision and mission statement for a Legion E-sports and Video Gaming Club and to examine and make recommendations concerning its purpose, structure, activities, governance, resources and other considerations necessary to develop the concept and determine a potential timeframe for implementation. Darrin Alderson and Jennifer Rehbein were appointed to this committee. An other from Internal Affairs was that the American Legion support the development and implementation of The Stars and Stripes Relay, a nationally coordinated American flag relay culminating on Flag Day, June 14th, 2027 and it is open to all American Legion Family members willing to participate.

A reminder that Membership in the ALA is now open to grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within 2 consanguinity, (?generations),of members in TAL.

The new American Legion magazine has been downsized in size only, creating a savings of 2 million dollars.

Our NVC tour will be coming up Nov. 16-19, 2026. I'm hoping for a great turn out from the posts who have volunteered to help host National Vice-Commander Hugh Holmes. He has displayed his enthusiasm in meeting fellow legionnaires in Iowa. I looked forward to seeing you.

If there are no questions, this concludes my report.

Respectfully submitted
For God, Country, and Service
Bob Waugh, NEC

To: Department Executive Committee

From: Training Committee Chairman

Subject: Fall DEC Report

Commander DeKock,

The Training Committee met via Zoom teleconference on Monday August 24, 2026 and September 28. 2029. Chairman Kenneth Fields, committee members Dave Rehrebein, John Derner, and Polly Graham were in attendance. We invited the District Commanders, the Department Vice Commanders, as well as the Membership Chair Tony Lile.

The committee discussed several ideas for the 2027 Mid-Winter Conference to be held at the Des Moines Airport Holiday Inn February 11 – 14, 2027.

The Training Committee with Membership Committee are working towards tailoring the Mid-Winter training sessions to address retention of current members and recruiting new membership. Several ideas have been proposed, but nothing has been formalized. We will continue to work toward a schedule and speakers for the Mid-winter training.

1. Membership Retention, Recruitment, and Onboarding

The group emphasized shifting focus toward retention and structured member engagement. Proposed ideas included live membership drives during conference hours, buddy check training with role-playing/coaching to overcome elevator pitch anxieties and contacting expired or Post 729 members. The committee highlighted the necessity of a warm, structured onboarding process at local posts to ensure new members feel welcomed and engaged immediately.

2 . Conference Training Topics, Formats, and Speakers

Proposed Mid-Winter training topics will be 30-minute block sessions without lengthy scheduled breaks were suggested for morning tracks. The afternoon tracks will be longer in duration 45 – 60 minutes.

Proposed morning session topics include:

- Buddy Checks and Be The One initiative
- Retention techniques and welcoming/efficient post meeting structures
- New member recruiting and integration/onboarding processes
- Boys State overview and updates
- VA benefit funding opportunities and estate/funeral planning considerations

Proposed afternoon session topics include:

- Collaboration with Family Organizations

Company Use

    - In line with Department leadership goals, the committee supported expanding joint involvement with the Sons of The American Legion (SAL), Auxiliary, and Legion Riders. A panel or joint afternoon session was suggested to share successful recruiting and retention techniques across all entities, noting that SAL and Riders chapters have experienced significant growth.

- Virtual Meetings, Digital Media, and Technology
    - Discussions touched on introducing internet access (such as Starlink) and screens at post levels to stream online training videos and expand event hosting. For department training, Ian recommended creating short YouTube instructional videos (e.g., how to pull 729 reports) and adopting broader social media channels beyond Facebook to reach younger veterans. Recording Midwinter training sessions for asynchronous viewing was agreed upon over live streaming.
- Legislative Updates
    - Following an active legislative year, the committee recommended scheduling a session dedicated to legislative advocacy, led by the legislative committee chair and professional lobbyists, to encourage member involvement.

The Training Committee will continue to meet on the 4th Thursday of the month via Google Meets conference calls until we have a solid training schedule for training 2027 Mid-Winter Conference.

Respectfully,

Kenneth Fields

Training Committee Chairman

Company Use

SAL Committee Chairman's Report

At National Convention a new National Commander was sworn in. Thomas "Thom" Skelley is a dedicated 21-year member of the Sons of The American Legion, earning his eligibility through the honorable wartime service of his father, William M. Skelley Sr., who served in the Pacific Theater during World War II from 1941 to 1945.

Memebrship in Iowa off the report on October 15th, 2026. Iowa's year end goal is 5,283. For the detachment, Iowa currently has 1932 total members. Which is 36.57% of goal. Need 3351 more to reach 100%. For Iowa to reach 105% Iowa will need 3615 members.

National of the Oct. 19th report. Iowa is currently 18th. Iowa is currently 2nd in the Midwest behind North Dakota. Currently 9th District is in 1st place, sitting at 55.21% followed by 8th at 43.67%. Iowa has 6 squadrons sitting at 100% or better

Respectfully submitted

SAL Committee Chairman

Gary J Quinlan

American Legion Riders Report

DEC Meeting November 7th, 2026

The past riding season brought several new and exciting happenings for your Riders. First is that in addition to the District Legacy Rides, Iowa had a 2 day Department wide Legacy Ride. In one weekend, your riders traveled through all 9 districts to raise money for VCF. This was proposed, designed, and coordinated by a rider in the 5th District who simply asked for the chance to do it.

The Sojourn 250 Rude a success. On the morning of July 4, 250 Legion Riders from all over the country left Pittsburg, riding 250 miles to Washington DC. At the Washington Nationals game, they presented a flag that had flown over 22 national cemeteries, national sporting events, and traveled to every state and territory in the nation. From there was taken to the Arling National Cemetery as a remembrance of America's 250th Birthday. I'm proud to say Iowa had several of its Riders there.

This spring it was also announced that Iowa would be part of the National Legacy Run in a big way. Spending nearly 2 full days in the Department, we had stops in Missouri Valley, Carrol, Ames for an overnight, Tame for fuel and a tribal dance presentation, Solon for lunch, and Muscatine for the second overnight. On day 3, before we left the state, we were escorted by the Keokuk Riders to present a wreath at the memorial at the national cemetery in Keokuk. The Legacy Run ended at Ft. Knox at the Patton Museum, before we rode to Louisville. The goal for 2026 is 1.2 million dollars raised. I set a goal for Iowa at 40K. It was a moment of great pride for the Department of Iowa, a new record was set, as we presented nearly 50K to the National Commander on stage at National Convention. If every post, unit and squadron in Iowa contributed $50, we would exceed this goal next year. Together we are all the "Champions of Hope".

What have our Chapters been doing so far in 2026? Well, the Monroe Riders, with the help of Kellogg, were recognized with the 2026 Iowa Governors Group Volunteer Award for contributions and service to the Marshalltown VA and IVH.

Ames Riders continue the drive for Wreaths Across America, and many other Chapters escorted parades for Memorial Day, and many Riders were seen as members of the Honor Guards.

Chapter 2 in Council Bluffs continues their Ride for Suicide awareness, and Polk City 232 will again be making their Thanksgiving meal deliveries, not numbering nearly 400 families.

As always your Riders stand at the vanguard of "getting it done", consider how we can help your post or program. Help us support VCF, help us support the Veterans Emergency Fund here at department, and help us support all our communities.

Thank you for your time,

Respectfully submitted,

Cliff Barker, Chairman

Community Service Repot

October 13, 2026

I am doing something a little different with this fall's report. It has been brought to my attention that a major project is in progress in NE Iowa. It is the construction of a Vietnam Veterans memorial , spearheaded by the Northeast Iowa Vietnam Vets organization, many of whom are American Legion members as well.

What caught my eye was the fact of more than one veteran organization cooperating, and putting in to motion a project that will not only benefit the surrounding communities, but will also educate as well.

I have included the general information as an attachment. It explains this in more detail , so with that said, please read what is included with this report

Thank you.
Respectfully submitted,
Roger Hopwood
Roger Hopwood
Dept Chair Community Service

Fw: Vietnam Veterans memorial park preview report.

1 message

randy terminaldispatch.com <randy@terminaldispatch.com> Sat, Oct 3, 2026 at 6:24 PM
To: "roghopwoodwindstream@gmail.com" <roghopwoodwindstream@gmail.com>

From: randy terminaldispatch.com <randy@terminaldispatch.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 3, 2026 6:10 PM
To: roghopwoodwindstram@gmail.com <roghopwoodwindstram@gmail.com>
Subject: Vietnam Veterans memorial park preview report.

Giard Northeast Iowa Vietnam Veterans (roadside) Park.

This is a project undertaken here in NE Iowa by the Northeast Iowa Vietnam Vets organization. Many who are American Legion members as well.

The NE Iowa Vietnam Veterans are acting as the general contractors for this project. Design, funding and development of the site.

The primary focus is to memorialize the 53 men from the six NE Iowa counties who were sent off to war in Vietnam that were killed. The 53 came from Allamakee, Winneshiek, Fayette, Clayton, Buchanan and Delaware counties.

With the secondary focus being to educate all future generations of the challenges encountered by our troops who fought in this unconventional war. There were no front lines to be won or lost. The full might and power of our military to conduct this war was throttled by political dictates. That needs to be taught.

There will also be a cultural aspect displayed in the park as well. The property was originally deeded in 1800 to Basil Giard by Spain by right of occupation. The deeded property known as the Giard Grant is said to have been some 5760 acres. That extended from the Mississippi River West some 6 miles.

There will be story boards along the trail of all that can be told of the Park. There will be QR codes etc added so that travelers can take the experience with them to share with others.

The memorial Site location is or was the property of the Giard Methodist Church. The lot that was deeded to the project was an overgrown roadside ditch. The location of the Project is One mile East of us HWY 52 on US HWY 18. A heavily traveled byway in this area.

The University of Iowa was involved in developing and producing a project rendering.

This summer the old road ditch was cleared. Some 285 loads of dirt were dumped and leveled off to create a level grade. The sanitary waist tank for an ADA approved bathroom has been dug in. The concrete base structure for the Granite memorial stone has been cast. The stone is of the same material (Black Granite from India) that was used in the wall in DC. Planning began last fall with improvements and development of the site been ongoing all summer.

Gmail Roger Hopwood <roghopwoodwindstream@gmail.com>

Fw: Vietnam Veterans memorial park preview report.

1 message

randy terminaldispatch.com <randy@terminaldispatch.com> Sat, Oct 3, 2026 at 6:24 PM
To: "roghopwoodwindstream@gmail.com" <roghopwoodwindstream@gmail.com>

From: randy terminaldispatch.com <randy@terminaldispatch.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 3, 2026 6:10 PM
To: roghopwoodwindstram@gmail.com <roghopwoodwindstram@gmail.com>
Subject: Vietnam Veterans memorial park preview report.

Giard Northeast Iowa Vietnam Veterans (roadside) Park.

This is a project undertaken here in NE Iowa by the Northeast Iowa Vietnam Vets organization. Many who are American Legion members as well.

The NE Iowa Vietnam Veterans are acting as the general contractors for this project. Design, funding and development of the site.

The primary focus is to memorialize the 53 men from the six NE Iowa counties who were sent off to war in Vietnam that were killed. The 53 came from Allamakee, Winneshiek, Fayette, Clayton, Buchanan and Delaware counties.

With the secondary focus being to educate all future generations of the challenges encountered by our troops who fought in this unconventional war. There were no front lines to be won or lost. The full might and power of our military to conduct this war was throttled by political dictates. That needs to be taught.

There will also be a cultural aspect displayed in the park as well. The property was originally deeded in 1800 to Basil Giard by Spain by right of occupation. The deeded property known as the Giard Grant is said to have been some 5760 acres. That extended from the Mississippi River West some 6 miles.

There will be story boards along the trail of all that can be told of the Park. There will be QR codes etc added so that travelers can take the experience with them to share with others.

The memorial Site location is or was the property of the Giard Methodist Church. The lot that was deeded to the project was an overgrown roadside ditch. The location of the Project is One mile East of us HWY 52 on US HWY 18. A heavily traveled byway in this area.

The University of Iowa was involved in developing and producing a project rendering.

This summer the old road ditch was cleared. Some 285 loads of dirt were dumped and leveled off to create a level grade. The sanitary waist tank for an ADA approved bathroom has been dug in. The concrete base structure for the Granite memorial stone has been cast. The stone is of the same material (Black Granite from India) that was used in the wall in DC. Planning began last fall with improvements and development of the site been ongoing all summer.

Oratorical Report

October 13, 2026

This fall's report has myself and our volunteers busy finding and vetting possible candidates for the 2027 Department Oratorical being held during the Mid Winter Conference at the Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines, Iowa, February 14th.

The cut off dates are:
Local-Dec 7
County- Dec 21
District- Jan 11
Area-Jan 25

All three Areas have been contacted and responded to my request for updates and progress of their Local, County, District and Area location, time and contestants. I feel good about the situation at this time and don't see any major problems going forward. I am also expecting more contestants than last year, and an even more talented pool of participants. In my opinion, each years contestants seem to outdo the previous years, and that's a high bar to reach.

We are all looking forward to the contests to get under way and the selection of 2027s winner, who will be representing our Department of Iowa American Legion at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, MI in May.

Thank you,
Respectfully submitted,
Roger Hopwood
Roger Hopwood
Dept Oratorical Chair

21 October 2026

From: Chairman, Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation

To: American Legion Dept. of Iowa

Subject: V A & R benefits update

During these past few months Congress has passed into law two pieces of legislation; The FAST VETS Act.

In part this law affects veterans currently receiving monthly disability checks, dependency payments, too and including survivor benefits. These payments will increase to automatically keep pace with inflation. What this means is that people receiving the above stated payments should actually see their checks go up beginning December 2026.

Sharri Briley and Eric Edmungson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act of 2026

For disabled veterans who are already receive Aid and Attendance payments will see their checks increase which can make a real difference for those vets who depend on daily caregiving help. Surviving family members receiving DIC will also receive a cost-of-living increase.

In the House of Representatives; HR 9217 **Take Care of America's Veterans Act** with more than Five dozen veteran bi-partisan related bills have passed and sent to the Senate for committee review.

The big picture of this Act consists of 7 major points.

Making Survivor Benefits a top priority

Simplifying Job Training Access (VETT Act)

Investigating Vietnam Vet Health Concerns

Clearer Communication on Disability Claims

Fair Tuition for Reservists

Covering Vehicle Delivery Costs

Adjusting Life Insurance Values

In conclusion of why Veterans Benefits legislation matters so much is that the laws passed in Washington directly impact your life as a veteran. These laws determine eligibility for crucial support like VA health care, the amount of disability compensation received and access to education programs. Home loans are also shaped by these laws.

Respectfully submitted to be approved and filed.

Tom Ryan

Chairman, VA&R Committee

FALL 2026 VA&R Health Administration Report

The reporting system OIG (Office of Inspector General) for the VA Health

This evaluation focused on five key domains:
• Culture
• Environment of care
• Patient safety
• Integrated veteran care
• Veteran-centered safety net (Environment of Care)- Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

IOWA CITY VA MEDICAL AREA

- **VA awards $925 Thousand to organizations working to strengthen community-based suicide prevention efforts in Iowa**

  October 2, 2026
  The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded $925 thousand in grants to Iowa community organizations that provide suicide prevention services to Veterans in Iowa.

  Sent message to Cliff Barker and Be the One Program at this time does not qualify for funds.

- **VA awards $15.8 million in grants to fight Veteran homelessness in Iowa**

  September 21, 2026
  The Department of Veterans Affairs today awarded $15.8 million in grants to seven community **organizations** to help Veterans in FY 2027 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Iowa.

  Are the larger populated areas in Iowa arranging for Veteran Living Arrangements? Suggestion was made to have Tiny Homes for the Male Veterans with Children.

NOVEMBER 2026 **Construction of the new West Burlington space is expected with a projected open date in 2026 located at 415 W Division Street, West Burlington, IA next to the Mississippi Valley Veterans Memorial.**

The new VA outpatient clinic will total almost 18,700 square feet: more than 5 times larger than the current space. This increase allows VA the ability to add enhanced primary care and mental health services, along with essential lab and radiology testing.

IOWA CITY VA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER CONSTRUCTION is expected to have project completion late in November. An entire floor will be dedicated to the Women Clinic the other new floor will contain Specialty Clinics.

DES MOINES VA MEDICAL- Central Iowa- Serves six CBOCS, Carroll, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Knoxville, Marshalltown, and Mason City

- ## VA Central Iowa Health Care System receives funding for continued infrastructure improvements

  October 19, 2026
  VA Central Iowa Health Care System received funding for Non-recurring Maintenance projects in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2026, after receiving funds earlier in the year.

- ## VA awards $925,536 to organizations working to strengthen community-based suicide prevention efforts in Iowa

  October 8, 2026
  The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded $925,536 in grants to 4 community organizations that provide suicide prevention services to Veterans in Iowa.

VA SIOUX FALLS MEDICAL AREA-is a TEACHING HOSPITAL with full array of services affiliated with thirty Universities/Colleges. Nurses are the backbone of site.

Also serves five CBOCS- Aberdeen, Sioux City, Spirit Lake, Wagner, and Watertown.

- ## A awards $874,990 to organizations working to strengthen community-based suicide prevention efforts in South Dakota

  September 29, 2026
  The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded $874,990 in grants to three community organizations that provide suicide prevention services to Veterans in South Dakota/Sioux City.

Submitted on October 23, 2026 by Janet Grass

VA& R Health Administrative Chair

DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

November 7, 2026
Curt Rosener, Chair – Be The One Committee

Family,

The Be The One Committee is no longer just an initiative. Be The One continues to move forward throughout the Department of Iowa. Our focus is clear: provide the American Legion Family with the tools needed to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, encourage Posts to conduct Buddy Checks, and look out for the brothers and sisters within our circles so we can recognize when someone may need additional help.

Since Department Convention, the Be The One Committee has continued working with trainers to provide training opportunities across Iowa. We have also worked to strengthen the organization and visibility of the Be The One program so we can more effectively carry its message to our Districts and Posts.

At National Convention, it was clear that **Iowa is helping lead the way with Be The One.** But Be The One cannot simply be a slogan. We need boots on the ground, making a difference in our communities. Suicide-prevention training opportunities need to be publicized by the Department and Districts so that information reaches our Posts and members.

After returning from National Convention, I was tasked by National with providing scripts for all three youth programs we conducted last year. This was a first-of-its-kind effort, and with very little editing needed, the material is ready to be submitted for approval and sent to all Departments. **Iowa should be proud of that accomplishment.**

During the Fall District Conferences, Be The One training opportunities were presented to both the Auxiliary and Legion in eight of Iowa's nine Districts. Due to a work conflict, we were unable to have Be The One representation at the District 2 Conference.

We have also continued conducting QPR training, even during the busy Fall Conference schedule, with additional training opportunities scheduled.

Buddy Checks and District Committees

My ask of everyone here today is simple: **keep Buddy Checks moving forward.**

Buddy Checks remain one of the foundations of Be The One. When our Posts actively reach out and care for their members, we strengthen those Posts and demonstrate what the American Legion Family is all about.

Public

I am asking every District Commander to fill their District Be The One Committee and provide the names and contact information to me before Mid-Winter.

We are also improving documentation of activities being conducted by our members and trainers. After Action Reports and photographs from Be The One training events will help us document what is happening across Iowa and better tell the story of the work being done.

Community Outreach

Our outreach also extends beyond formal Legion meetings and training events. The committee has participated in John Deere's wellness fair and for the Bloomfield Legion Family fair. Upcoming is a veteran's resource fair put on by 6th District here in Des Moines. We have been asked to participate in Saddlebag & Treat at Big Barn Harley-Davidson to share the Be The One message with the broader community.

Support from Prairie Meadows and other donors has also been a tremendous blessing to our efforts. Be The One cannot belong to one committee or a handful of trainers. It needs to become part of the culture of the entire Iowa American Legion Family.

Together, we can continue reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and strengthen the way we care for Veterans, their families, and one another.

Respectfully submitted for God and Country,

Curt Rosener
American Legion of Iowa
Department Vice Commander
Department Be The One Chair
Post 374 Vice Commander
(515) 782-3444
crosener@hotmail.com

Public

The American Legion of Iowa Legislative Commission Report to the Department Executive Committee

November 7, 2026

The American Legion maintains a fully staffed office in Washington, D.C. to represent veterans and their families before Congress. The Department of Iowa Legislative Commission serves as the watchdog on all federal and state legislation affecting veterans and American Legion programs, and is responsible for Veterans Day at the Capitol.

We're Trying To Build A Coalition. Since the end of last session, the Commission has met with Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs Commandant Jacobus and staff at Department Headquarters to review last session and establish a path forward. After that meeting, IDVA-hosted roundtable with Iowa Veteran Service Organizations to share legislative priorities. The roundtable process was productive and will continue. We've maintained direct communication with members of the Iowa Legislature and invited gubernatorial candidates Lahn and Sands to meet with the Commission. Candidate Lahn met with Commission and Department leadership in August.

Last fiscal year, veterans and their families in Iowa, represented by Dept Veterans Service Offices working in cooperation with County Veteran Service Officers, received over $1.02 billion in federal VA benefits.

This service comes at no cost to the veteran. These are not windfalls. This is compensation for injuries and illnesses incurred in military service.

Our job is to protect the delivery system that brings those federal dollars home to Iowa, and to secure the state investment that makes it possible.

Legislative Priority #1: Do you remember HF 1000? — The bill we've pushed for the past years.

Our number one ask for the 92nd General Assembly will be passage of a bill to help fund our Dept Service Office.

That bill failed to advance last session. We will reintroduce it. Expect the bill to be renumbered and we'll immediately let everybody know.

This bill will provide matching grants to the Department Service Office in the federal building to expand the number of accredited employees working VA benefits claims in Department Service Offices. We are requesting $250,000 per year for a minimum of three years, administered by IDVA.

Grants are for additional employees only, not existing staff. Under the model, if salary and benefits for a new service officer total $40,000, the VSO contributes $20,000 and the grant provides $20,000.

This is not an expense. It is an investment. For a modest state match, Iowa secures over $1 billion in federal benefits that are spent in Iowa communities, in Iowa businesses, and on Iowa main streets. This will be the centerpiece of Veterans Day at the Capitol.

What to Watch: County Reform

What to Watch: County Reform

Last session, a County Veterans Services reform bill passed House Appropriations but failed to reach the House floor and died without debate. The American Legion of Iowa was registered as Opposed unless corrective language was adopted.

That corrective language is essential. It must explicitly protect the ability of a Veterans Service Organization to represent a veteran in the VA benefits claims process and to hold power of attorney for that purpose. Without that guarantee, our statutory authority to represent veterans is at risk.

This issue is not closed. That same reform proposal, or a bill like it, has been mentioned twice at recent meetings of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs and is expected to return this session, likely under a new bill number.

A second related proposal — the bill that would replace the County Commissions of Veteran Affairs Fund with the County Veterans Services Excellence Fund — also died last session but remains a preferred vehicle for IDVA. Portions of that bill were folded into the county reform bill. If it returns, it too will be renumbered.

Our position on both remains the same: any county reform must include an explicit statutory guarantee that a VSO retains authority to represent a veteran and hold power of attorney. If it does not, the Department will register as Opposed.

Our Plan?

Monitor: Attend all meetings of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs to track any successor to their bill last session.

Demand a Seat: Require a seat at the drafting table if IDVA reintroduces county reform legislation.

Be Ready to Act: Pre-draft corrective language. Any reintroduction of, or similar county reform must include protections — an explicit statutory guarantee that a VSO retains

authority to represent a veteran and hold power of attorney. If it does not, the Department of Iowa will register as Opposed and mobilize all posts and districts.

Veterans Day at the Capitol

January: Pre-session communications with the Director of IDVA, House and Senate Veterans Affairs Chairs, and our VSO coalition partners to discuss priorities.

Wednesday, January 20, 2027, 9:00 a.m. — Veterans Day at the Capitol, Iowa State Capitol. Our objective is to put a face on the $1.02 billion.

We will communicate regularly with the Districts and Post through our ENewsletter and social media. If you haven't done so, please sign up for our newsletter.

We respectfully submit this plan and report for approval and ask for the Department's full support.

Randy Johnson

Chairman, Legislative Commission

Department of Iowa

(Call Jim up first)

Your Marketing Commission has been working since the close of the convention. On the Promotion and revenue side we have our reoccurring sponsors such as BDI Signs, Green State, Scheels, and now CWL group. Coming up this week on Saturday in Iowa City we are having our flag exchange, it is also Veterans appreciation night at the Iowa Wild, at the time of writing this report I'm still waiting on a response from ticketing to see if every veteran will get a free ticket, I also have an inquiry to see if we are allowed a block of tickets so if you are available (and tickets are available) please reach out to me via email and request those tickets. We have started our Giving Tuesday campaign, as a reminder new IRS guidelines state that single filers can deduct $1,000 and married filers can deduct $2,000.

You probably thought I wasn't going to mention anything about the 1969 Big Block Chevy Camero huh, welp you're wrong. The national sweepstakes for this 1969 Big Block Chevy Camero is still going on, I'd like to say it is going great. So I will, the only money we have put in is printing material and a couple months ago I saw the figure of around $5k. I do believe we can do better I ask all of you vice commanders, all of you district commanders, share this information with your district vice commanders, with you posts and let them know its open to EVERYONE if we had a gun raffle you would be hitting up Joe Blow that runs the barbershop so hit him up now for this 1969 big block chevy Camero that comes with $10,000 or the secondary prize of $50,000.

Going back to Scheels I have a Thank you note that I would appreciate if everyone signed with you name and the town you call home. We will be sending this to the Jordan Creek Scheels so that every employee knows that we appreciate what they are doing when they donate their money from their paycheck to our organization. This year they have donated around $3,500.

As you've heard from Jim already, I will forgo any media and communications talking. Except to express again to subscribe to our newsletter.

Lastly, I want you all to pull out your phones and put down the 4th annual Stars Stripes Spirit 5K May 15th at Gray's Lake here in Des Moines. Thank you all for your continued support and if you have any connections to any business, please don't hesitate to let me know about them.

Submitted respectfully,

Samuel Johnson

American Legion of Iowa Boys State
DEC Update
October 23, 2026

Since the last DEC, the Boys State Board met in July, August and October to work on feedback from 2026 Boys State and plan for 2027 Boys State and beyond.

As a reminder, Boys State 2026 was conducted at Camp Dodge from June 21st to June 26th, 2026.

- 299 Delegates registered (and paid)
  - There were 17 no-shows (all parents and posts informed)
  - 2 arrived late, 2 left early (without completing the program),
  - The final headcount was 282 delegates.
  - That is a nearly 50% increase over 2025 … THANK YOU TO ALL THE POSTS AND DISTRICTS FOR THE HARD WORK!!
- The Director (Mike Vaughn) and Deputy Director (Jordan Pope) continued to implement positive changes to the program based on staff and delegate feedback, benchmarking other leading state programs and they have been recognized as overwhelmingly successful.
- We are building one of the best programs in the country

Based on initial and unaudited financial data and estimates, Boys State will be in the Black this year for the first time since 2019.

- A huge thank you to many of the people in this room who have been extremely supportive
- However, due to Camp Dodge scheduling next year, expenses are likely to rise again (“Starship” barracks not available).
- A rate increase for 2027 of $25 was approved by the Board and goes into effect Jan 1st 2027, so get your reservations in before 12/31/26 to avoid the rate increase.

We have several key Boys State Board initiatives to further improve the program and organization

- The board members will continue to be extremely engaged with the schools, districts and posts to increase attendance
  - There is no limit per post
  - We need posts and districts engaged with schools and parents
  - Posts that have more delegates than they can afford, we are working with posts that have funds budgeted and no attendees to send
- We have asked each board member to include a District Helper and the District Commander in the recruiting meetings
- The two largest costs are food and the Camp Dodge rental, these costs can be defrayed with more delegates
- The Boys State Board is also working on developing alumni donors, staff donors and corporate sponsors

The Board is Dealing with two major open issues

1. The CampWise program has been deemed insufficient by Boys State Staff, yet an appropriate replacement has not been finalized. Boys State will continue to use CampWise for 2027, but in its current state it is not sustainable.
2. Counselor to Delegate ratio is too low and it is causing staffing shortages that are impacting the program. Legionnaires and other staff are needed, please leverage your network to help keep Boys State appropriately staffed.
    - As delegate attendance increases, additional counselors are needed … any legionnaire can volunteer as a Boys State counselor!

The bottom line …

- We have a dedicated board and many posts and district personnel like you all that are invested in this program and want to ensure its continued success
- We have a Director, Deputy Director and staff who are extremely engaged in making this a going concern and
- We have a premium product that needs to be put in front of our potential customers (High School Juniors)
    - The feedback from attendees is overwhelmingly positive
- We have a plan to continue the positive trend, we need your continued support

The American Legion of Iowa Foundation
Report to The Department Executive Committee Nov. 7, 2026

I am honored to present this report of the American Legion of Iowa Foundation.

Current market value as of 10/23/2026 is $2,594,647

Calendar ytd. moneys added $41,708

The foundations 2ed district director Leonard Ernst has resigned and Commander, the foundation needs a Motion to appoint Patrick Reinert form Marion post to be the 2ed district director.

The new Foundation Tab on the Iowa American Legion web site is looking great, thank you all who had a part in this. The web site has the link for grant applications in it as well as the link for Giving to the Foundation.

I want to thank all of the Directors for their hard work.

Next meeting for the Foundation in Feb. at Mid Winter Convention.

Thank you to all of the Office staff for what they do for the Foundation.

For God and Country

Steve Dixon

President, American Legion of Iowa Foundation