



COON VALLEY AMERICAN LEGION POST 116



JANUARY 2016

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 7



Commanders Message:

A Blessed New Years to everyone! 2015 certainly was a busy year and a lot was accomplished by our Post. It is humbling to be in my position and to see all the little details and all of the huge efforts that make our programs and events a success. Everyone working together towards a common goal is what makes all of this possible. So you all have my utmost thanks and appreciation for a job well done!

If you have been missing our monthly newsletter and have not been able to make it to meetings or events, it is all because of one very old computer that finally curled up its toes and died. A big thank you to Gary Grethel and Charlie Nelson for persevering through this problem and getting us back online. Without our newsletter, we can't get the word out very efficiently.

Our membership renewals are almost on target for the goals the Department of Wisconsin has set for us. Only about 10 or 11 members need to get renewed yet. For those who have not been to meetings, it was announced a couple months ago that National is increasing its assessment by \$5.00 per member, which impacts the Department and all the way down to the Post level. At our October Post Meeting, we discussed the dues increase and we voted to raise the membership dues to \$40 per year, since it certainly won't be long before the Department will also raise their assess-

ment. For our members, this increase will not take place until the 2017 Membership Renewal Cards come out in July.

As usual, we have several events and fundraisers coming up in the next month or two, so please check out the Dates to Remember below and if you are able, please join us in these events. Also, please note that if your name is on a work schedule and you cannot make it, it is the responsibility of the member to find a replacement if possible.

As always, it is an honor to serve with all of our Legion Family at Post 116. I look forward to seeing all of you at the regular Post Meeting!

Gary M. Hess, Commander Post 116

DATES TO REMEMBER

- January 20th** Regular Post Meeting, meal at 7:30pm, meeting at 8:00pm
Lunch Committee: Steve Nelson and Charlie Nelson
- January 20th** SAL meeting at 8:00pm in barroom
- January 23rd** La Crosse County Legion Banquet at Post 52
- February 1st** Executive Meeting - 6:30pm
- February 3rd** Auxiliary Meeting, potluck at 6pm, meeting at 6:30pm
- February 5th** Present Colors at Opening Ceremonies of Snowflake Ski Jumping Tournament - 7:00pm
- February 6th** Vernon County Legion Banquet - Viroqua Legion Post 138
- February 7th** Superbowl Sunday Breakfast at the Legion Hall
- February 7th** 4 Chaplains Sunday
- February 13th** Coon Valley Lions Valentines Fundraiser - Village Hall
- February 17th** Regular Post Meeting, meal at 7:30pm, meeting at 8:00pm
Lunch Committee: Ron Miller and Michael Miller
- February 27th** C.V. Baseball Association Chicken-Q
- March 17th** Informal Post Meeting (if needed) - 7:00pm (THURSDAY - Lent)
Lunch Committee: Auxiliary - 7:30pm meal
Vernon County Meeting - 8:00pm
- March 20th** Palm Sunday Breakfast at the Legion Hall

January Newsletter

2015-2016

Last Bugle:

Stephen Sapuder*
Howard Mathison
Lester Gilbertson

* Not a Post 116 member



BUCKET DRAWING

Daryl Brye
Not Present

January
Drawing will be:
\$80.00

50/50
DRAWING
None



COON VALLEY AMERICAN LEGION POST 116

Commander: Gary M. Hess
(608) 788-1768
Adjutant: Charles E. Nelson
(608) 452 - 3018

Post 116 Newsletter is published monthly as a service to our members. If you wish to submit an article for a future edition, please contact:
Charles Nelson
(608) 452 - 3018
for more information.

Mailing Address:

Coon Valley American Legion
Post 116
PO Box 314
Coon Valley, WI 54623
Phone Contacts:
Legion: (608) 452-3179

Membership Totals to Date

2016 Paid Membership - 188
2016 Membership Goal - 197

On the web:

www.coonvalleywialpost116.org
Webmaster - Don Salter: dwsalter@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP:

Please make your check payable to C.V. Legion Post 116 in the amount of **\$30.00** and send to: Coon Valley American Legion Post 116
PO Box 314
Coon Valley, WI 54623

Adjutant Notes:

- **Comfort Warriors:** In 2015, Operation Comfort Warriors provided \$225,000 in grants to assist wounded veterans in their rehabilitation. www.legion.org/ocw
- **Legion Riders:** There are 1,800 American Legion Rider chapters across the country and 100,000 Riders. Locate a Riders chapter in your area at www.legion.org/riders.
- **The Oak Ridge Boys:** If you missed the airing of "The American Legion Christmas Special" with The Oak Ridge Boys and other performers, CDs of the performance can be purchased for \$14.99 plus shipping and handling at www.legionchristmasdvd.com.

December Potluck

Thanks to everyone who came to the member/spouse/children potluck in December and enjoyed a nice meal and shared some Christmas joy. A special thanks to Gary Hess for purchasing the Ham and preparing it, as well as everyone else who brought the other great dishes and desserts. I hope that everyone had a good time and please let us know what we can do to make this better in the future.

Vernon County American Legion Banquet - Viroqua Post 138 - February 6th

Viroqua Post 138 will be hosting the Vernon County Legion Banquet on February 6, 2016 at the Legion Club Rooms in Viroqua. The social will begin at 6:00pm. The meal will be served at 7:00pm. Program will begin at 7:30pm.

Please let Chris Soltau know how many members will be coming from your post by January 22. His email is: amlegion138@mwt.net or call 637-2271.

5-Year Increment Pins

5 year increment service pins were handed out at the December potluck. If anyone would like their 5 year increment pin and did not make the meeting, contact Charles Nelson and he will try to get it to you.



Message from S.A.L. Commander:

Happy New Year to everyone! Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 20th @ 8 pm. Various topics will be discussed so please try to attend.

Cal Manske, SAL Commander



Message from Auxiliary President:

We will meet on Wednesday, February 3rd, with potluck at 6:00pm and the meeting following. We look forward to a great meeting. There is a lot to discuss so please come if you can. Thanks.

Julie Nelson, Auxiliary President

Vernon County Veterans Service Office (Jim Young and Tami Saleska)

What is the role of a veterans service officer? (taken from an article in a National Legion publication)

A veterans service officer (VSO) is an individual who advocates for veterans benefits. They should never take an action which they believe to have a negative impact on the veteran or family of the veteran. The VSO is also responsible for being proficient in the areas of customer service, technical knowledge of regulation and law as it pertains to VA matters, and proper disposition of claims and appeals. They too should be empathetic, understanding and helpful.

I commonly group misconduct by VSOs into two sections: illegal and unprofessional. It is very rare that a VSO willingly executes an illegal action so I will focus on some issues which may constitute unprofessional conduct. These actions can include not filing a claim in a timely manner, unprofessional conversation with a client, and willfully submitting fraudulent evidence or documentation.

It is very important when seeking a professional VSO that you take several factors into consideration. First, verify that the service officer is accredited by a veterans service organization, such as The American Legion. Second, if a VSO attempts to charge you money for services rendered, either covertly or overtly, they should be reported to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Third, you should make an appointment with the prospective representative to explain your case and get a feel for how well they do their job. If you are not satisfied, find another VSO that you feel comfortable with. The VSO is your lifeline to VA benefits, and you must ensure that they are providing everything you deserve.

It is important to The American Legion that all of our accredited VSOs are competent, capable and professional. As an American Legion department service officer (DSO), one of our duties is to assure wholesome and professional service to veterans who have honored us by allowing us to represent their interests with VA. If you experience what you believe to be substandard service, you should contact the DSO for your state and file a written complaint.

Please contact Jim Young or Tami Saleska with any VSO questions at 608-637-5323.

Vernon County Youth Government Day

The 2015 Vernon County Youth Government Day was held December 4th at the Vernon County Courthouse in Viroqua. Vernon County American Legion Vice Commander, Gary Gilbertson, did a wonderful job setting up the program and coordinating the days activities. There were about 160 kids in attendance and they went through about \$775 worth of pizza in 2 minutes. Thanks to John Thurk, Dan Hofslie, and Charles Nelson for attending from Post 116.

Service Awards

There was no one willing to fill out the Service Awards this year so we will not have any nominations to present at the Vernon County Meeting in Viroqua on January 14th from Post 116.

The American Legion Department of Wisconsin, 2016 Midwinter Conference, January 15-17, 2016

The 2016 Midwinter Conference was held January 15-17, 2016 at the Ho-Chunk Hotel & Convention Center, S3214 Highway BD, Baraboo, WI 53913.

Westby Snowflake Ski Jump—Friday, February 5th

The Coon Valley American Legion will be presenting Colors at opening ceremony at the Snowflake Ski Jump on Friday evening at 7:00pm. Commander Hess will be contacting members to help with this.

Free Ski Jumping For Legionnaires!

Are you looking for a really unique, fun winter event in one of Wisconsin's most scenic locations? How about something filled with thrills for participants - but that is safe for spectators? Something that you could see at the Winter Olympics - if you could get a ticket? And it's something that's FREE FOR VETERANS and their families! That event will happen on February 5th and 6th at the Snowflake Ski Club near Westby, WI - 25 miles southeast of La Crosse. That is when over 25 male ski jumpers from Norway, Finland, Poland and across the US will gather to compete in the 93rd Annual Snowflake Ski Jumping Tournament. All jumps will be on a "118 meter hill" - meaning the hill meets the same engineering specifications that are used in Olympic competition. Competition will begin at 7 PM Friday evening - jumping at night with lighting will add an exciting and unique venue! Saturday's competition will begin at Noon. Once again, the Ski Club with the assistance of Logistics Health Incorporated (a LaCrosse based company that processes medical claims for many active duty military personnel and veterans) is admitting all veterans and their spouses at no charge upon display of a DD Form 214 or your American Legion membership card. Check out the following web site for pictures, a map, admission fees and an exciting YouTube video: www.snowflakeskiclub.com.

Mental Health Awareness Education Summit Coming To King!

Saturday, January 23, 2016, 7:45am to 2pm at WVH-King Marden Memorial Center. They served for you! How will you serve them? Did you know...One of every four dying Americans is a veteran?...22 veterans die every day due to suicide?...Almost 60% of the members at King have a diagnosis of Alzheimer's/dementia?

Learn about veteran suicide, mental health diagnoses in the veteran population, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Alzheimer's and dementia in the veteran population.

Registration is required because of limited seating. Lunch is available for \$7. For questions, please call Amber Nikolai, Member and Public Relations Director, at 715-258-4247 or email her at amber.nikolai@dva.wisconsin.gov



**THE AMERICAN LEGION
COON VALLEY POST No. 116
PO BOX 314
COON VALLEY, WI 54623-0314

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Super Bowl Sunday Breakfast - Sunday, February 7th

	7:00-10:00am	10:00am-1:00pm
Cooking Scrambled Eggs	Roger Mathison Charles Nelson	Steve Vance Dennis Kammel
Cooking Pancakes	Chuck Lind Ron Miller	Carl Holte Michael Miller
Cooking Sausages	Harlan Helseth Dan Hofslie	Rolv Ihle Gary Hess
Window Servers	Steve Nelson Wesley Guy	Ron Hoff Wally Cox
Tables, Beverages, Coffee	Mary Schmidt Sherman Olson Roger Starkey Tom Elson Richard Zube	Don Salter Ken Kammel Reuben Starch John Thurk Don Kammel
Cashier	Frank Mathison	James Hammes
Bartender	Rod Ofte (9am to noon)	

Cleanup (12:00 - 1:00) The late shifts will clean up from noon to 1:00p.m.!!! Anyone else is also welcome!