

**Coon Valley
Legion Post 116**



86th Anniversary 2007

Compiled by Post Historians

Henzil Hanson

Wayne Kuester

David Verse

Francis Mathison

Viki Lyn Burgemeister

- 1928 - Donation given to flood relief in Ohio.
- 1929 - Post paid one-half (\$48.36) of building a tennis court and paid one-half of upkeep until 1933.
- 1938 - Post was incorporated.
- 1947 - Post piano was sold to the village for \$35.
- 1949 - Baseball lights at Coon Valley Park dedicated June 24th.
- 1950 - Post has had available for use in time of emergency various hospital equipment. This consists of several wheelchairs, crutches, hospital beds, etc. This equipment has been acquired thru magazine sales and purchase.
- 1951 - In July the post bought property from Warren Easland for \$7,000. Tavern on the first floor and two apartments on second floor. Officers when building was purchased were: Richard Amundson, Commander; Curtis Olson, Adjutant. Officers at the time of mortgage burning were: Henzil Hanson, Commander; Walter Steenberg, Adjutant.
- 1954 - Apartments were torn out and the second story made into a Legion clubroom.
- 1954, '55, '56 - Harvest Festivals were held.
- 1956 - Post co-sponsored Centennial Celebration on July 2, 3 and 4th.
- 1956 - Post has sponsored Boy's State annually.
- 1961 - A Civil War Centennial Service was held on June 11th at the Retreat Cemetery. Color bearers and guards from this Post were present as were color bearers and guards from all of the other Veteran's organizations in Vernon County. At this service a plaque was dedicated in the memory of Francis Waller, a Civil War Veteran who was the only Vernon County veteran to have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.
- 1962 - Post presented Memorial Bibles to next of kin of Post members. This has continued to present day.
- 1963 - In Aug. the Lions Club asked the Legion to pay one-half of Welcome sign to Coon Valley. Sites determined at Oct. meeting to be at Brye farm and on church property.
- 1963 - In Oct. the Legion voted to erect a 30 foot flag pole by the Village Hall.
- 1964 - Legion Hall property sold to Harold Kennedy for \$8,000.
- 1964 - Magazine sales brought the Post extra capitol. Bought two mattresses, one mattress cover, one pair aluminum crutches, one walker and one bedside table.
- 1965 - In January the Legion presented a flag to Explorer Scouts. Plan of new Legion building approved on a vote of 18-8.
- 1965 - Art Halverson and Ed Kerska donated a flag pole to new club rooms in May.
- 1965 - Leased land from the village of Coon Valley for the purpose of erecting Legion Club-rooms for \$1.00. Deed recorded Sept 15, 1965.
- 1966 - Sixteen bids were approved by members to accept Gilbertson Bros. for general construction, plumbing and wiring. Heating bid accepted was for gas heat by Midwest Gas Co. of Viroqua. Bids called for a waylike block building 40' by 60'.

An event to remember (date unknown) was a project which the Post took upon themselves to clean up a cemetery at Koethe Nursery in which four veterans are buried.

Post donations have been made to various national organizations, needy veterans, local Christmas trees and children's Christmas parties. Donations given to the Boy Scouts and later sponsored the Boy Scouts. Post also donated jackets and sponsored Junior Legion Baseball Team, pledged \$50 toward community movie projector and flag pole to Coon Valley Park. Post

- Sep 1980 Post #116 and Lions Club erected Welcome signs at village limits.
- Apr 1981 Post #116 hosted Spring Conference.
- Oct 1981 Donated \$100 for the Jaws of Life.
- Apr 1982 Francis (Frank) Mathison elected Vernon County Commander.
- Aug 1982 Helped sponsor CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) Reunion.
- Jun 1983 Donated \$400 to Westby Legion Baseball Team.
- Jun 1984 Donated \$400 to Westby Legion Baseball Team.
- Mar 1985 Sons of The American Legion formed.
- Apr 1986 Post hosted 7th District Spring Conference.
- Sep 1985 Post received National Children & Youth Award for best program in Area #5
- Jan 1985 Legion attending Westby Area School board meeting to get the schools to say the Pledge of Allegiance again.
- Jul 1986 Wayne Kuester elected State Commander of The Sons Of The American Legion.
- May 1987 Bicentennial and Memorial Day Program held.
- Mar 1988 Hosted Vernon County Banquet.
- Apr 1988 Donated \$500 towards the new lights in the village park.
- Jun 1988 Donated \$500 to Westby Legion Baseball Team.
- Sep 1988 Purchased land from County Highway Dept. for purpose of building on to present building.
- Sep 1988 Awarded National award for having best Bicentennial program in Region #5.
- Oct 1988 Francis (Frank) Mathison received a national award for his work as a R.A.T. (Regional Action Team) for the Children and Youth Program.
- May 1989 Past National Auxiliary President, Pearl Behrend, was the speaker for Memorial Day.
- Aug 1989 Bids let for addition to clubrooms.
- Sep 1989 First function in new addition was a full wedding (marriage, ceremony, reception and dance.)
- Feb 1990 Hosted Vernon County Banquet.
- Mar 1990 Grand opening of new addition to hall.
- Oct 1990 Dedication of new bridge on west end of Coon Valley.
- Nov 1990 Servicemen's Flag and Scrapbook of WWII presented to Legion from Ruth Thrune.
- Apr 1991 Hosted 7th District Spring Conference.
- May 1991 Post hall used for dance for area middle school students.
- Aug 1991 Bus trip sponsored to Milwaukee for Legion Baseball Day at County Stadium.
- Sep 1991 Village park signs replaced by Post with Gordon Henley chairman.
- Oct 1991 Fund Raiser for Bob Parr in his campaign for State Vice Commander hosted by Post.
- May 1992 Steven Vance elected Vernon County Commander.
- May 1992 Hall used for dance for graduating 8th graders.
- Aug 1992 Bus trip to Legion Baseball Day at County Stadium in Milwaukee. Chad Rudie was member of all-star team.
- Aug 1992 Donated \$300 to Westby Legion Baseball Team.
- Sep 1992 Post goes before County Board requesting full-time County Veteran's Service Officer position.
- Feb 1993 Snowflake Ski Club banquet held in Legion Hall.
- Feb 1993 Vernon County Legion Banquet hosted by Post #116.
- Mar 1993 Erv Bena family donates funds for 105 Howitzer for display at Post.

- Feb 1999 Post hosts Vernon County Banquet.
- Apr 1999 Post donates \$200 to American Legion National Emergency Fund.
- May 1999 Post elects first female commander, Viki Lyn Burgemeister.
- Jun 1999 150th Anniversary of Coon Valley.
- Jun 1999 Wendy Susdorf selected Sesquicentennial Queen was sponsored by Post #116.
- Jun 1999 Coon Valley Veterans Memorial Park to be site of The Coon Creek Area Veterans Memorial.
- Oct 1999 Donated \$100 to Coon Valley Elementary School for Cartons for Computers contest.
- Jan 2000 Vernon County oratorical contest held in Coon Valley.
- Jan 2000 Post marches in Chaseburg Trail Days parade. Several rubber chickens reportedly shot by Post #116.
- Jan 2000 Post hosts appreciation night for Coon Valley Lions members.
- Mar 2000 Coon Creek Area Veterans Memorial Committee holds spaghetti dinner at clubrooms.
- Apr 2000 Post donates \$100 to WWII Memorial at Washington D.C.
- Apr 2000 Post donates \$200 to Children's Miracle Network.
- Apr 2000 Post purchases baseballs for Westby Legion Baseball Team for \$350.
- Jun 2000 Post donates \$100 to Ridge & Valley Garden Club for landscaping project at new Knutson Memorial Library.
- Jun 2000 Post hosts dance at Legion Hall for Coon Creek Days.
- Jul 2000 Francis Mathison appointed State Historian.
- Jul 2000 American Legion Regional Baseball Tournament held in Coon Valley.
- Aug 2000 Westby American Legion Baseball team Class A State Champs. Roger Mathison was coach.
- Sep 2000 Fryer shed refurbished with new doors, painted etc.
- Sep 2000 Color Guard raised flag at Knutson Memorial Library dedication.
- Oct 2000 First Post Everlasting Ceremony performed at Post meeting.
- Oct 2000 Roger Mathison appointed to National Convention Commission.
- Dec 2000 Russ Cornford elected Coon Valley Fire Fighter Of The Year.
- Jan 2001 Riding lawn mower purchased from Lincoln Halverson.
- Jan 2001 Men's bathroom remodeled.
- Feb 2001 Dan Hofslie voted life membership because of years of service as Post Firing Squad Commander.
- Feb 2001 Post hosts Vernon County Oratorical contest.
- Feb 2001 Vernon County Legion Banquet held in Coon Valley.
- Mar 2001 Post passes resolution urging schools to offer course on Veterans Influence on United States history.
- Apr 2001 Post donates \$100 to Coon Valley Area Youth Foundation.
- July 2001 Post donates \$100 to Siren Area Relief Fund to offer relief from damages from recent tornado.
- July 2001 Resolution #11 suggested by Post #116 urging schools to offer course on veterans influence on United States history was passed at State Convention at Middleton, Wi.
- July 2001 Francis (Frank) Mathison reappointed State Historian.
- Aug 2001 Post donates \$50 to the Summer Reading Program at the Coon Valley Memorial Library.

- Mar 2003 Post donated \$250 to children's Miracle Network.
- Jun 2003 Post donates use of hall for the 70th Civilian Conservation Corps. Commemoration Service.
- Aug 2003 Post 116 and S.A.L. Squadron #116 presented the colors at the opening ceremonies of the Brewer game on August 10, 2003.
- Sept 2003 Post purchased gun safe for \$632.99.
- Nov 2003 First annual pork dinner held.
- Nov 2003 Post donates \$100 to Westby Food Pantry for Thanksgiving. Amount was matched by Thrivent.
- Dec 2003 Post donates \$100 to each: Salvation Army, National Emergency Fund, King Home and hospital representative at the Tomah V.A.
- Jan 2004 Fifty-six Legion members from Vernon County attended Military Funeral Honors Training program at Coon Valley Legion Hall.
- Jan 2004 Post votes to purchase phone cards to distribute to any Coon Valley area resident serving in the military.
- Jan 2004 Post recognizes Fire Fighter Of The Year- Jerome Rybarczyk; Policeman Of The Year- Mike Raasch; and First Responder/E.M.T. Of The Year- Roger Niedfeldt.
- Jan 2004 Post purchases twenty-five new banquet tables for \$1,842.00.
- Feb 2004 Post purchases baseballs for Westby Legionnaire Baseball.
- Mar 2004 Coon Valley hosts Vernon County Banquet.
- Apr 2004 Post votes to make Memorial Day a community activity with assistance of the Chaseburg Legion and the Coon Creek Area V.F.W.
- May 2004 John Thurk and Children and Youth Chairman Don Kammel presented a maple syrup demonstration at the Chaseburg School.
- May 2004 John Thurk elected Vernon County Commander. Charlie Nelson appointed Vernon County adjutant.
- Sept 2004 Children and Youth Chairman, Don Kammel and Paul Hess presented a bee display at the Chaseburg School.
- Oct. 2004 Post donates \$250.00 to National Emergency Fund.
- Nov 2004 Post donates \$100 to each: Westby Food Pantry, Tomah V.A., King Veteran's Home and the Salvation Army.
- Nov 2004 Lawrence Olson donated \$1,500 towards Time Capsule to be buried at the Coon Creek Area Veteran's Memorial.
- Jan 2004 Coon Valley hosts Vernon County Oratorical Contest.
- Jan 2004 Post votes to donate \$400 to Westby Legion Baseball Team and \$400 towards a junior sanctioned Legion Team.
- Mar 2005 Fire Fighter Of The Year nominee-Daryl Brye; E.M.T. Of The Year nominee- Denise Dahlen; Policeman Of The Year nominee-Sheriff Gene Cary; Teacher Of The Year-Laura Weiker.
- May 2005 Denise Dahlen of Coon Valley chosen as State E.M.T. Of The Year.
- June 2005 Post reaches all-time high of 221 members.
- Oct 2005 Post donates \$250 to National Emergency Fund.
- Dec 2005 Post donates \$400 to the Junior Legion Baseball Team and \$400 to the Varsity Legion Baseball team.
- Dec 2005 Entranceway to banquet hall is renovated.

Annual Events:

Veterans Day Program held in Elementary-High School in schools since 1985.

Nite at Races at Tomah V.A. sponsored by Post each November since 1989.

Badger Boys State sponsored one boy each year.

Boy Scout and Cub Scouts use hall for meetings without charge.

Coloring and Essay Contest held in school each year.

Post has delegates regularly to County, District and State meetings and conventions.

Post sponsors Four Chaplain's Sunday observance in area churches on the first Sunday February.

Post members pack candy bags and hand out each in December for Santa's visit to community children.

Post conducts military funerals for all members and veterans in community if requested by family.

Each August the Post conducts a "Post Everlasting Ceremony" for all members that have passed away the previous year.

Annual Fund-Raisers:

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast

Chicken Q on the second Sunday in June

Port Dinner in November

Raffle Party in December

Hall available for rentals year around

1963-1964	Sam Gilbertson	Dean Amundson
1964-1965	Ted Dreves Jr.	Orv Aadland / G. Henley
1965-1966	Ted Dreves Jr.	Gordon Henley
1966-1967	Gordon Henley	Ted Dreves Jr.
1967-1968	Ardell Olson	Layton Nelson
1968-1969	Orin Ihle	Glenn Nordstrum
1969-1970	Kenneth Berg	Gary L. Gilbertson
1970-1971	Al Raitzer	Gary L. Gilbertson
1971-1972	Al Raitzer	Herby Jothén
1972-1973	Ernest Nelson	R. Arnoldy/J. McCormick
1973-1974	Ernest Nelson	Joe McCormick
1974-1975	Donald Kammel	J. McCormick/R. Mathison
1975-1976	Donald Kammel	Dick Baltzer/R. Mathison
1976-1977	Bob Strangstalien	Dick Baltzer
1977-1978	Bob Strangstalien	Larry Pinski
1978-1979	Thoralf Olson	Roger Mathison
1979-1980	Thoralf Olson	Roger Mathison
1980-1981	Roger Mathison	Francis Mathison
1981-1982	Roger Mathison	Francis Mathison
1982-1983	Dan Hofslie	Roger Mathison
1983-1984	Dan Hofslie	Roger Mathison
1984-1985	Wayne Kuester	Roger Mathison
1985-1986	Ernest Nelson	Calvin DeBuhr
1986-1987	Ron Hoff	Francis Mathison
1987-1988	Ron Hoff	Francis Mathison
1988-1989	Tom Silha	Roger Mathison
1989-1990	Francis Mathison	Roger Mathison
1990-1991	Richard Berg	Roger Mathison
1991-1992	Steven Vance	Roger Mathison
1992-1993	Steven Vance	Roger Mathison
1993-1994	Richard Berg	Roger Mathison
1994-1995	Steve Nelson	Roger Nelson/R. Mathison
1995-1996	Steve Nelson	Roger Mathison
1996-1997	Steve Nelson	Evelyn Williams
1997-1998	Francis Mathison	Evelyn Williams
1998-1999	Francis Mathison	Evelyn Williams
1999-2000	Viki Lyn Burgemeister	Evelyn Williams
2000-2001	Viki Lyn Burgemeister	Evelyn Williams
2001-2002	John Thurk	Charlie Nelson
2002-2003	John Thurk	Charlie Nelson
2003-2004	John Thurk	Charlie Nelson
2004-2005	John Thurk	Charlie Nelson
2005-2006	John Thurk	Charlie Nelson
2006-2007	Francis Mathison	Charlie Nelson

This March 2007 Edition
of
The Coon Valley American Legion
History Book

prepared by

PAST STATE HISTORIAN
FRANCIS "FRANK" MATHISON

POST #116 HISTORIAN
VIKI LYN BURGEMEISTER

and typed by
Judy Mathison