

The 245er
SERVING: the NATION - the VETERAN -
the CROSS PLAINS & MIDDLETON COMMUNITIES

CROSS PLAINS-MIDDLETON AMERICAN LEGION

Kerl-Endres-Brannan

Post 245

February 2026

Lest-We-Forget

Let us pause and remember those Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons of American Legion that have gone on to their reward and may our thoughts and prayers rekindle their souls with our heavenly Father.

Post 245 Sick Call

Chaplain Tim Engling

Paul Dull – Nursing Home

Ralph Schulenberg – Home

Albert Oleson – Nursing Home

Dennis Jones – Home

Joanne Dodge – Nursing Home

Please keep all these members in your thoughts and prayers as they continue to recover from their conditions.

Upcoming Events

February 05 Lions Club
 24 Model T Club

March 05 Lions Club
 15 Pancake Breakfast
 19 Legion, SAL, Aux meeting
 31 Model T Club

Need to include something in the Newsletter? Email Carol Yttri at carolyttri@gmail.com or call 608-516-5970. Please get information to me before the 1st of the month.

ADDRESS CHANGE OR REMOVAL for newsletter: If you are moving or would like to be removed from the mailing list for the newsletter contact Gary Itten at gijacondo@gmail.com, or 608-225-4722, or Flo Bayer at thebayes1@gmail.com or 608-798-4671.

HALL RENTAL: There is a special rental rate for members to use the building. If you would like to inquire about renting the hall, please contact Debby Niebuhr at americanlegioncp@gmail.com or 608-445-6590.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT: If you are in need of medical equipment, the Legion has some on hand. Please contact Dennis Heiliger at 608-798-2301. Leave message if no answer and he'll get back to you.

Someone ill or in the hospital? Call Chaplain Tim Engling at 312-371-0034 or e-mail timengling@gmail.com

OFFICERS: POST COMMANDER
 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT
 S.A.L. COMMANDER

Steve Zanon 608-213-9530
Flo Bayer 608-444-8199
Kevin Boehnen 608-798-2113

Post, Auxiliary & S.A.L meetings Third Thursday of month: Social hour 6pm; Dinner 6:30pm; Meeting 7:30pm
Executive Board Meeting: Third Thursday of the Month 5:30pm.

Website: www.americanlegioncp.org

Commander's Message

Steve Zanon

Greetings American Legion 245 people,

February is here, and if you have cabin fever, it's a great time to reach out to someone else from the post. It is likely he or she has it too, and a nice phone chat goes a long way to stave off loneliness. There will be no meetings in February.

Our legion post met in the basement in January, and we discussed many topics after enjoying take-out lasagna from Gino's deli in Middleton. The local cub scouts met above us in the hall, and I'm pretty sure the tap-dancing lessons are going well (Just kidding, it was fine).

We voted to pick up this year's membership dues for a long-time member Jo Ann, who isn't feeling well, and we discussed the recent passing of Ken Goss, and Paul Shepp, whose funeral our color guard held honors for.

We admired the newly installed airplane collection and display cases downstairs which were assembled by Rod Gallagher, (one time co-owner of Capital Sand and Gravel) who was a Korean war veteran and airplane pilot and enthusiast. The collection of WWII war planes is of 1/72 scale die cast metal, and the detail is striking! There is also a paper legend describing each of the planes. The collection deserves better lighting and a commemorative plate which we will work on. We should be very grateful to Sue and her son Geoff Gallagher, as well as Grandson Max Hoeser for their donation and hard work assembling cabinets and collection for display. Thank You!

Right to left: Rod Gallagher's son Goeff Gallagher, Rod's wife Sue; Rod's grandson Max Hoeser



We discussed membership also. First Vice Emily reported 151 paid members, or 82.6% of our total membership for 2026. Like Legion posts everywhere, we struggle to maintain membership that keeps pace with the attrition of aging and dying members. Please, if you know veterans who could use the camaraderie of a legion post, talk to them about ours. If you are not yet paid for this year, please do so. It goes a long way to sustain our causes.

Speaking of which, Bill Statz asks me to report that the Dane County Government Day in 2026 has been cancelled. Our A. L. County Commander had to call it off because no Legionnaire in the county volunteered, as Bill has in the past, to lead this effort. If you aren't familiar, County government day was a field trip for children and teachers from middle schools in our area to board a bus and go downtown Madison to learn about county government workings such as parks, county law making (legislation), county court system, and Sheriff's department, including the ever-popular K9 unit. Dignitaries from county government including County Executive, park system administrators, and elected Sheriff gave terrific lessons on how county government works and how to stay safe. American Legion posts rented the busses, Chaperoned the kids a bit, got them lunches, and rode back with them. Speaking on the subject during Thursday's County Legion meeting, Commander Scott was visibly saddened. It is one of our core pillars to sustain youth programs to develop educated, patriotic adults, and while fundraising events usually meet with success, leadership and skin-in-the-game volunteerism are a challenge for an organization with an aging membership.

We wrapped up with a discussion about the small bookshelf that used to hang on the wall where the airplane collection now hangs. It was a little-known feature that housed books usually relative to war subjects and heroism. We discussed supplementing our grounds with an outdoor registered "Little library", a book exchange case

probably near the street as you approach the building. The idea seems to have traction, so when the ground thaws, you may see this in spring.

That's all I have for now. Stay safe and warm. See you in March.
Steve Zanon, Commander, Post 245

Chaplain's message:

Tim Engling

In January 2026, the Post provided an honor guard for a fellow veteran who passed away in Cross Plains. Stay warm!

Notes from Adjutant Gary Itten:

I am still looking for 1 or 2 people to do a small flag route. It is only 2 times a year, one put the flags out on Memorial Day and 2 pick up the flags on Veterans Day. If interested call me at 608-225-4722 or email at gijacondo@gmail.com. I am also looking for someone to take over the administrative portion of the flag program. All it entails is marking the people paid and assigning new flag addresses to respective flag routes.

At our meeting in April we will be taking nominations for Officer positions. The elections will be held in May. We need people to step up and take a position, as we have numerous people holding 2 or more positions. Post 245 has been known to have all of their positions full, so please step up and take a position.

Clothing prices for Legion Post 245 Cross Plains / Middleton:

Contact Dan Cady for more information to order.

- Short sleeve shirts – \$25.00; 2XL 27.00
- Long sleeve shirts – \$27.00; 2XL 29.00
- Lined dress legion hats – \$75.00
- Lined jackets – \$75.00; 2XL 77.00
- Baseball caps – \$25.00
- Sweat shirts – M-XL \$34.00; 2XL \$38.00

Metal drop off:

If you have metal to recycle, you can drop off at the legion or give Dan Cady a call and we will pick up. 608 438 2987. You can also call Dave Vidlock 608 798 3087 or 608 843 6968.

REGULAR MEETING January 15, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Commander Zanon. A motion was made by Ed Pelowsky and seconded by Wayne Dohse to accept the minutes of the Nov. 20th meeting as printed in the 245er, motion carried. Joe Hodgson made a motion to accept the minutes of the Executive Board meeting of Nov. 20th Ed Pelowsky seconded it and motion carried.

No Guests or new members

Finance: Joe H. made a motion to accept the finance report subject to audit, Wayne D. 2nd it and motion carried. Steve Z. made a motion to move \$5,000.00 from the membership account to Edward Jones, Ed P. seconded it and motion carried.

Chaplain: Ken Goss WWII member passed away, and Wayne Esser is in the hospital.

1st Vice, Bill Statz reported for Emily that we have 148 members paid which puts us at 82.6%. You can send your dues to Emily Cash, 7780 Martinsville Rd., Cross Plains, WI 53528, or renew online at mylegionn.org.

2nd Vice: No report

3rd Vice: No report

SAL: No Report

Americanism: Joe H. reported that Boys State are all paid, and we do not have an oratorical contestant. Bill S. we will have 3 teams again this year for the American Legion Baseball program. He made a motion to donate \$3,000.00 to the teams, \$1,000.00 will be used for new shirts.

Children & Youth: No Report, need a chairman
Athletic: No Report
Community Service: No Report

Post Service Officer: Joe made a motion to donate \$100.00 to a kitty to pay for items at the VA Hospital. Wayne D. seconded it and motion carried.

Public Relations: Bill D. said he had scholarship, Honor Flight and Quilt of Valor forms available.
Old Business: No Report

New Business and Correspondence: Steve Z. made a motion to pay Joann Dodges dues and Joe H. seconded it, motion carried. Commander Zanon mentioned the 3rd District Holiday Party at Verona Feb 21st.

Good of the American Legion: Steve mentioned about the old uniforms out by the entrance of meeting area and Joe will look into storing them some place else. Commander Zanon is looking to build a small library out in front of the legion hall where people can pick up books to read and people can drop off books.

Gary I. Mentioned that elections will be held in May and nominations will be at the April meeting.
Commander Zanon announced there will be no meeting in February.

Kitty: Dick Zwettler, donated back to the Post
50/50: Joe Hodgson donated back to the Post.
Brandy: Wayne Dohse

Commander Zanon adjourned the meeting at 8:00 P.M.
Respectfully submitted,
Gary Itten, Adjutant

Auxiliary Newsletter

President Flo Bayer

Hello 245'ers!

February is American Heart Month, a time when all people are encouraged to focus on their cardiovascular health. I would also like to encourage you to *"know your heart numbers"* & learn CPR. We have two reasons to wear red Friday Feb. 6th. 1st is **"Go Red for Women"** to raise awareness about heart disease as leading cause of death among Americans, especially women. Also, every Friday is wear **R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deployed)** on Fridays! Let's not forget to keep our service members in our hearts and prayers. No meeting in February, looking forward to seeing you in warmer weather in March.

Presidents Day Mon. February 16th Culvers Share night Cross Plains – Treat yourself and support the Auxiliary! We'll be helping to serve up some delicious food and dessert. Our Unit will receive a percentage of the sales from 5-8pm which will go towards our Badger Girls State delegates, scholarships and Purple Up projects.

Kudos to Virginia Diebold, Jenny C., Sandy B. and **KID SAFE after school Park School kids**. Their **homemade Valentine Day cards** will allow the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital Veterans to know they are loved & appreciated.

In Remembrance: Auxiliary member Connie Faust passed away Jan. 17th. This year she would've been a member for 67 years! She served our Legion Family and community in many ways. She loved to bake and help with salads

and desserts. Her rhubarb bars were the best! Last year she crocheted wash clothes to help us raise funds for the Legion playground equipment & Aux. projects. Our dear condolences to her family and friends.

Purple Up – April 15th is National Purple Up Day where we thank our Military Kids. We are looking for children, or grandchildren with parents currently serving whether Active, Reserves or National Guard. We would like their name, address, which parent(s) are serving, branch and status. This year we are gifting kids up to 12 yrs old. You can email information to dniebuhr@chorus.net or call 608 445-6590. We'd like information by the end of February. We will put it together in March & get it to the children by the middle of April. If you'd like to make a monetary donation to help with costs, make a check to ALA Unit 245.

Virginia Faust Scholarship – Sandra Faust

The Virginia Faust Scholarship is available to seniors in high school and son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, grandchild, step-grandchild, niece, or nephew of a Veteran, active-duty military, National Guard or Reserves. Please contact Sandra Faust at 1-608-219-7644 or wbuschma@gmail.com. The scholarship application is due May 1, 2026. There are also scholarships available through the state office that are due by March 1, 2026. If you need any help accessing any of these, please let me know. We are working on a new online application form and hope to have it available soon. Will email Auxiliary when available.

National Scholarships – Due March 1st. What better time than NOW to get students focused on applying for the four ALA national scholarships? The scholarships are online only. Link to complete the application: www.ALAforVeterans.org/scholarships. This page also has information on the American Legion scholarships. Check them out!

The *Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship* is awarded to eligible students through the service of family members. The *Spirit of Youth Scholarship* offers Junior members in all 52 departments the opportunity to receive up to \$5,000. Encourage former Junior members who retained their ALA membership and are now in college to apply for the *Member Loyalty Scholarship*. The *Non-Traditional Scholarship* is available to students entering college later in life.

ALA Badger Girls State – JoAnna Richard

[June 21-26th, 2026 Government & Leadership Conference](#)

Applications are due Feb. 14th. Interested Middleton/Clark St HS Juniors should contact their Social Studies teacher or counselor to apply as a delegate. Any Auxiliary member interested in helping for the week or even a few days, check out a list of service opportunities at: <https://www.alabgs.org/alabgs-volunteer-info>.



As I'm completing my two-year term as Unit President, I'd like to especially thank my officers; Vice President - Katrina McKee, Treasurer/Secretary – Carol Ytrri, Chaplain – Pat Cady, & committee chairpersons. I have learned from each one of you and appreciate all you do to support and promote the mission of the Auxiliary.

It's time to plan for elections at our April meeting. The nomination committee is looking for nominations for the following Unit 245 positions: President, 1st Vice President, Treasurer, Chaplain, (2) Sergeant of Arms. We are also in need of a secretary, and this is an appointed position by the president. You can nominate yourself or someone you think is a good fit. Please let me or Deb Niebuhr know if you are able to serve any of the positions. Officer election voting will take place at our April meeting with installation of officers at our May Unit meeting. The Unit needs you and knows you will not be serving alone. Deb has been an invaluable mentor to me as president, and we will continue mentoring our new officers. You'll be surprised how fast two years go by. If we each just commit to 2 years, our Unit becomes stronger. I am grateful for all the support you all have given these past few years. The Auxiliary supports many programs and while each Unit does not do them all, it really comes down to the

interest/commitment of each member. Consider what you are being called to do, what your talents are and how you can serve.

VA Hospital Final Salute

When my father passed away in hospice at the Mpls. VA and while volunteering at the VA, I have witnessed Veterans "Final Salute". It is a very touching solemn moment. We get to pay last respects to a recently deceased veteran. Let us remember the Final Salute words given by ICU nurse Alex Pretti to Mac Randolph's father at the Minneapolis VA hospital.

Thank you: Connie Faust's family wishes to thank the CP AM Legion's Auxiliary for the wonderful salads, desserts, and deviled eggs provided for her funeral luncheon. Everyone enjoyed them. THANKS AGAIN.

"Today, we remember that freedom is not free. We have to work at it, nurture it, protect it and even sacrifice for it, May we never forget and always remember our brothers and sisters who have served, so that we may enjoy the gift of freedom. So in this moment, we remember and give thanks for their dedication and selfless service to our nation in the cause of freedom. In this solemn hour, we render our honor and our gratitude."

Lunch Committee – Jane Itten

- **February** – No Auxiliary meeting.

Membership – Debby Niebuhr

Please look for the May Newsletter asking you to pay your 2027 Auxiliary dues by the end of July 2026. The dues will remain the same: \$35.00/seniors (18+) and \$6.00/juniors (0-17) Thanking you in advance for your fantastic support. Hope you have a wonderful Valentines Day.

Sons of The American Legion

Kevin Boehnen

Monthly Meeting – There will be no monthly meeting this month.

Flags – If you need a flag please contact Rod Faust at 608 576 4803.

Ray Faust Scholarship

The Son's Of the American Legion Post 245 annually gives out a scholarship in memory of Ray Faust. Everyone in the surrounding area is eligible to apply for this scholarship. As always we encourage sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters of Legion, Auxiliary and SAL members to apply. If you know any good candidates from the surrounding communities also encourage them to apply. If you are interested in applying for the Ray Faust SAL Scholarship of \$500.00 please contact Ron Faust at 2129 Caesar St Cross Plains, WI 53528, 608 225 7281 or by e-mail ronaldfaust@reagan.com. We would like all applications turned in by May 1st.

Recyclable Run

On January 7th the Sons of the American Legion worked on clearing out Recyclable area. Would like to thank Steve (Whitey) Hillebrand, Tim Hillebrand, Mike Diebold, Tom Helleckson, Jack Regan, Rich Roberts and Kevin Boehnen for helping load the trailer to take items to recyclable center.

SAL Dues

We are still at 117 members as of the end of January. We are always looking for new members if you know anyone who is interested let me know and I can send them an application. Dues are \$15.00 a year or you can pay \$60.00 for 5 years. If you know of anyone who is interested call me at 608 798 2113 or email me at kabohnen@chorus.net.