

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

CROSS PLAINS-MIDDLETON AMERICAN LEGION

Kerl-Endres-Brannan

Post 245

May 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
Dennis Jones – Home

Ralph Schulenberg – Home
Joanne Dodge – Nursing Home

Albert Oleson – Nursing Home

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

Upcoming Events

May

07 Lions Club
21 Legion, SAL, Aux meeting
26 Model T Club
25 Memorial Day celebration
28 Legion, Aux Dane County mtg

June

04 Lions Club
15 Iron Horse band concert; shelter
18 Legion, SAL, Aux meeting
24 Red Cross Blood drive; 12 to 7
30 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

Hello 245 members and family, and welcome to May;

We had a great meeting and dinner in April. Whitey Hillenbrand did his Mom's special recipe ham and potato casserole with a really nice sauce and it was terrific! Thank you Whitey and all the SAL and Auxiliary volunteers. Flo Bayer ran a presentation on the significance, history, and ongoing efforts to sustain Poppy making and sales.

When we broke for meetings, lots of good stuff happened: Preparations are underway for our Memorial Day celebration. Paul Ripp will once again make Wagon (not a trailer I am told because it has four wheels) available for veterans who would like to be in the parade, but who'd be best not to march the parade route. Seats are plentiful so please try to attend. Steve Statz will again be driving the tow vehicle through the route. Pretty sure we need volunteers to decorate the wagon; I believe Flo Bayer is our point of contact for this.

The schedule for Memorial Day will follow closely with previous years, including an early breakfast provided by Whitey and the SAL around 0700, and a visit to our six cemeteries to render rifle salutes to fallen veterans around 0800.

The schedule from there at the memorial is ordinarily designed by the Chaplain, and we have learned recently that our Tim Engling will soon be moving to Florida. We will miss him a lot, and none more than me, but he has agreed to help his successor, Bill Herriges with a smooth transition, thank you Tim for your excellent spiritual leadership.

As our meeting progressed, we nominated officers for this next two-year term, and who will be sworn in during our May meeting. Bill Herriges, has nobly volunteered to become our chaplain, and also the administrator of our beloved flag program. You are probably familiar, but if not, residences and local businesses sign up to have a full-size flag planted by our volunteers in their yards starting on Memorial Day, and throughout the flag day season until fall. Money from their 25.00 donation goes to fund our multiple 1000-dollar scholarships, which we award annually. It is a wonderful program, but when they ask for members to take over the headache of administering it, I look down at my feet and shuffle awkwardly, and try not to make eye contact. Bill Herriges, on the other hand, stood tall. Thank you Dan Cady for running this so well for so long.

Another young man who answered the call was our new 3rd Vice Mike Ripp. In charge of keeping our grounds in working order, he takes the place of our hard-working Dave Vidlock. Other nominations took place of course, and you can find those in Gary's meeting minutes.

Members will be sworn into office during our May meeting, after eating the much sought after Steaks on the grill dinner by our Sons of the American legion squadron.

In June, I have some continuous membership certificates to hand out to members Orville Kerl (50ys), Jay Moretti (50), Charles Saeman (50), and Keith Faust (80. Yeah, you read it right). Gentlemen if we haven't talked on the phone yet, please show up in June and get my attention so we can present your certificate to you. If you can't make it, I will of course mail it to you.

Thanks for reading, see you all soon,
Steve Zanon, Commander, Post 245

Chaplain's message:

Tim Engling

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the Legion chaplain over the past four years. I enjoyed conducting Memorial Day observances and funeral ceremonies that honor the memory and sacrifices of our nation's veterans with dignity and respect.

Offering counsel, comfort, and support to fellow veterans reflects the values we all hold dear. As I move to Florida, I will fondly remember my time at the Legion and the people whom I met here. I will visit when I return to Wisconsin.

With gratitude,
Tim Engling

Thank you from Doug Deaton:

I want to thank everyone who helped make the Saint Patrick's Day Breakfast a success. Although the weather didn't cooperate we still had a good turnout of volunteers and patrons. Due to my own poor planning I did not get a thank you out in the last 245er. But I will correct that this month. Thanks to: Matt Cash, Rodney (Peanuts) Esser, Steve Zanon, Joe Hodgeson, Kevin Boehnen, Judy Eisner, Bill Statz, Gale Curran, Rick Hillebrand, Louise Powell, Cheryl Kelter, Carol Zwettler, Flo Bayer, Deb Wipperfurth, Jean Bolchen, Sheila Schultz, Marilyn Sagmoen, Sue Hutton, Mary Fitzsimmons, Mary Jones, Dick Zwettler, Emily Statz.

A special thanks to Debby Niebuhr and my wife Judi for all the planning and tireless effort to make the event happen.

Notes from Adjutant Gary Itten:

Election of Officers will be held at our May 21st meeting. If you are interested in a position, please let me know and you can be nominated at the meeting before the election. A list of the officers and nominees are in the minutes printed in this newsletter.

I would like to welcome Larry Stevens as a new member and Terry Duhr, Christopher Keefe, Jeremy Shields, and Gordon Pfanku as members who transferred into our Post.

If you have not paid your dues for 2026, please send them to Emily Cash, 7780 Martinsville Rd., Cross Plains, WI 53528 or renew online at mylegion.org. We would like to close out our membership for the year.

Memorial Day Celebration will be May 25th, we need members to go to the cemeteries leaving the legion at 8 AM, breakfast is served beforehand. The parade starts at 11 AM from Park School. If you are unable to march in the parade, there will be a wagon provided to ride.

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 April 16, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Commander Zanon.

A motion was made by Dan Cady and seconded by Dick Zwettler to accept the minutes of the Mar. 19th meeting as printed in the 245er, motion carried.

Dennis Heiliger made a motion to accept the minutes of the Executive Board meeting of Mar. 19th Dave Vidlock seconded and motion carried.

No Guests or new members

Finance: Dennis Heiliger made a motion to accept the finance report subject to audit, Bill Statz 2nd and motion carried.

Chaplain: Tim is moving to Florida, no report.

1st Vice, Commander Zanon reported on membership. 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: Dave V. thanked the SAL for taking care of the metal during the winter.

SAL: Kevin reported that the SAL made the meal for tonight. Contact Rodney Faust for Flags. Sal is getting new shirts and hopes to have them by Memorial Day. They will have the same officers for the next 2 years. Kevin is collecting pictures of veterans to put up on the wall.

Americanism: Bill Statz reported that on May 2nd the Middleton High School Baseball team will be having Veteran Appreciation Day. Be at the baseball high school diamond at 10:40 A.M.

Children & Youth: No Report, need a chairman

Athletic: No Report

Community Service: No Report

Post Service Officer: No report

Public Relations: Steve reported that the Lions will be building a handicap ramp for Hanna Ramos family. Bill D. reported there will be a Badger Honor Flight this Saturday.

Old Business: None

New Business and Correspondence: Steve read a letter from the Overseas Cemeteries Memorial Day Foundation. Dave V. Made a motion to donate \$200.00 and Joe H. 2nd it to this organization, motion carried. Commander Zanon reminded everyone about Memorial Day program May 25th, need people to visit the six cemeteries and march or ride in the parade. Bill Diebold brought up on getting a new computer and printer. It was tabled until next month.

Good of the American Legion: Bill D. reminded about scholarships that are due May 1st.

Nominations for the following Officer positions were held. Election of officers will be held at the May 21st meeting and will accept nominations at that time for any position.

Commander: Steve Zanon

Finance Officer: Bill Diebold

1ST Vice Commander: Tammy Rutlin, Declined

Judge Advocate: Bill Statz

Emily Cash

2nd Vice Commander: Dave Montag

Historian: Joe Hodgson

3rd Vice Commander: Mike Ripp

Post Service Officer: Joe Hodgson

Adjutant: Gary Itten

Chaplain: Bill Herriges

Sgt. At Arms 2 positions: Norm Esser Jr.

Ty Hall, Declined

Cody Bratton

Kitty: Dennis Harpold, not present

50/50: Bill Herriges

Brandy: Gary Itten, donated to drawdown

Commander Zanon adjourned the meeting at 8:51 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Heiliger, sitting in for Gary Itten Adjutant

We sure have had crazy weather this past month. I don't remember a time we were without power for over 12 hours. Thankfully we didn't have the hail damage that some had. It was a great reminder to have disaster recovery plans in place. I'm still working on my go bag. Check out <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/> for ideas to make an emergency kit and communication plans. A sure sign of spring is flowers and good for the spirit! I'd like to thank Susan Hutton for bringing the beautiful pansies as tables decorations and then donating them to our auxiliary members who were at the meeting.

May is an important month for us to remember those that paid the ultimate debt with their life in service to our Country on Memorial Day. Please join us as you can to pay respects at our local cemeteries, march/ride in the parade, and listen to our Memorial Day Service with Randy Plunkett singing the Anthem and the Middleton/Cross Plains HS band. Then, relax and enjoy Cross Plains friendship at the Chicken BBQ with tunes and games.

We had three Aux. members at the **District 3 Spring Conference** in Dodgeville. I must mention the inspiring, fantastic speaker we had. Her name is Raquel Durden who was a U.S. Army combat veteran, advanced cancer survivor and a holistic expert who helps veterans and first responders to move from chaos to calm. She wrote the book *"Dial Down – Holistic Strategies to Move from Chaos to Calm"*. I have purchased a copy if anyone is interested in checking it out. I also bought copies for some ER nurses and people I know who have PTSD. She just started working on a book for teens. She has a retreat scheduled for women combat veterans, August 15th, 2026 in Kiel, WI (<https://humblewarrior.org/>.) I encourage any women you know who served to attend! Dial Down inspires readers to:

- **Think:** "If these strategies work for warriors, they can work for me too."
- **Feel:** Empowered and equipped to navigate life's chaos with practical, calming tools.
- **Do:** Be a Wellness Weaver! Integrate connection and wellness practices into their daily lives for balance and well-being.

Virginia Faust Scholarship – Due to no applications yet the scholarship deadline has been extended to **May 15, 2026**. The \$1000 scholarship is available to seniors in high school who are a son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, grandchild, step-grandchild, niece, or nephew of an Auxiliary member, Veteran, active-duty military, National Guard or Reserves. Online application can be found at: <https://forms.gle/zaYzZ7ZRmyBeNwn8A>
To get more info: email CPAuxUnit245Scholarship@gmail.com or Sandra Faust @ wbuschma@gmail.com/1-608-219-7644. We plan to present at our Memorial Day service. **Encourage eligible seniors you know to apply!**

ALA Badger Girls State – [June 21-26th, 2026 Government & Leadership Conference](#)

Bring your pennies and spare change to our May meeting. Our delegates will use them for their "Pennies War" challenge that helps support BGS.

Unit 245 Officers - As my two-year term ends this month, I am truly grateful for the support of our Auxiliary Officers: Katrina McKee - VP, Carol Yttri – Treasurer/Secretary, Pat Cady – Chaplain, Sheila Luhman & Cheryl Kelter - Sergeant of Arms, & Program chairs: Membership/Volunteer Service Coordinator – Debby Niebuhr, Badger Girls State – JoAnna Richard, Badger Honor Flight – Cheryl Kelter, Scholarship – Sandra Faust, Poppy – Sheila Luhman, Sunshine – Cathy Barman, Good NeighborFest – JoAnna Richard & Sandra Faust, Social Media – Becky Ward, Lunch Committee – Jane Itten. Last but definitely not least, the rest of our members who show up to serve, make meals, bake pies & cookies and whatever else is needed. You have helped to make our Unit a fun and

meaningful organization to serve. *We wouldn't be able to serve our Military, their families, our Community & Nation without you!*

I'm so happy that we have some new officers who will bring their talents and perspectives to our Unit. The following Unit 245 Auxiliary Officers were elected and will be installed at our May meeting: President: Katrina McKee, Vice President: Susan Hutton, Treasurer: Ann Eicher, Chaplain: Pat Cady, Sergeant of Arms: Sheila Luhman & Cheryl Kelter.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart" – Elizabeth Andrew

May Lunch Committee – Jane Itten

Ann Eicher, Mary Jones, Mary Helleckson, Linda Niebuhr

If you can't make a dessert or help set up at 6pm and clean up after dinner, call or email Jane 608-712-3133. gijacondo@gmail.com so I can get someone to cover. Please feel free to leave a message.

Our Post will be hosting the May 28th Dane County Meeting. Thanks to those who have signed up to serve/clean up and make salads/desserts. The Vessel will cater the main meal.

May Service Opportunities

- May 16th – Distribute Poppies @Piggly Wiggly 9-12 (3) 12-3pm (3) – contact Sheila
- May 25th Memorial Day Activities
 - 7am – Start to assemble at Legion Hall, breakfast.
 - 8am – Carpool and leave for cemeteries.
 - 8am - Decorate Float
 - 10:30 - Gather to March in Parade by Park School
 - May 28th – Setup, Serve, Clean up Dane County Luncheon

Chaplains message – Pat Cady

God our Father, we gather at this time of the year to remember the men and women who fought and gave the supreme sacrifice so that we may live in freedom. Let us also remember the Gold Star Mothers, who have given their children in service to our country and members of our Unit who have passed away since Memorial Day 2025. In your name we pray. Amen Shirley Pawlias - 9-8-2025 Constance (Connie) Faust - 1-17-2026

Membership – Debby Niebuhr

We'll be collecting dues, need them by the end of July; if you want to pay in May or June to beat the rush feel free to mail your check to me at PO BOX 3 CP; otherwise if you want to use your credit card, we'll let you know when they open up the phone lines or website, usually mid July. Dues are the same this year \$35. for Seniors (18+) and juniors (0-17) are \$6.00.

Honor our Vets with the Poppy!!

Poppies are a year round project. National Poppy Day is May 22nd, 2026. Connecting the visual impage of the poppy with the sacrifice of service made by our veterans has been an important goal of the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program since its inception in 1921. On Memorial Day and Veterans Day, millions of red crepe paper poppies – all handmade by veterans as part of their therapeutic rehabilitation – are distributed across the country in exchange for donations that go directly to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans in our communities. This is a year round project.

From the battlefields of World War 1, weary soldiers brought home the memory of a barren landscape transformed by wild poppies, red as the blood that had soaked the soil. By that miracle of nature, the spirit of their lost comrades lived on. The poppy became a symbol of the sacrifice of lives in war and represented the hope that non had died in vain. The poppy can be traced to a single individual, Moina Michael. She was so moved by Lt Col. McCreae's poen, "in Flanders Fields", that she wrote a response. On impulse, he bought a bouquet of poppies – all that New York City's Wanamaker's Department Store had

and handed them to businessmen meeting at the New York YMCA where she worked. She asked them to wear the poppy as a tribute to the fallen service men and women. That was November 1918. World War 1 was over, but America's sons would rest forever "in Flanders Fields". Later she spearheaded a campaign that would result in the adoption of the poppy as the national symbol of sacrifice. Wear red and wear a poppy in honor of our Veterans.

Through the month of May, the Cross Plains American Legion Auxiliary have poppies and donation boxes available at Crossroads Coffeehouse, Culvers, Vessel Café, PJ's Pizza, Mikes' Mobile, Cross Plains Pharmacy, Jims Auto Repair Middleton and on May 16 at Piggly Wiggly Cross Plains.

Thank you to all that participate in this special event.
Sheila Luhman, Poppy Chairman – Cross Plains, WI

WHO WILL WEAR A POPPY – Anonymous

Who will wear a Poppy On our Poppy Day?

"I will", says the mother "For five boys who went away"

Who will wear a Poppy to honor those who fell?

"I will", says the doctor, "I've some memories of the hell"

"I will", the welfare worker says, "I know what Poppies do
For widows of our veterans and their helpless children too"

"I will", each World War Veteran says, "there are close ties that bind
Each one of you to help the rest, the crippled and the blind"

"I will", says the preacher, "I don't believe in war;
But I do believe in healing wounds, that's what the Poppy is for"

No single one replies "I won't", instead each with a thrill,
We hear each good American say when asked to wear, "I will"

Sons of The American Legion

Kevin Boehnen

Monthly Meeting

Joint meeting with the Legion will be on May 21st this month. We will need volunteers to help cook steaks, serve the meal and help clean up. Let Whitey now if you can help.

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. This scholarship will be handed out on Memorial Day.

Recyclable Run

On April 6th and 200th 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, Brad Niebuhr 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 March. 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.

Memorial Day

The SAL will be putting up flags on the cemeteries before Memorial Day will send out text about that.

Reminder if you have a flag route you will need to put up flags on Memorial Day.

The SAL will be providing the breakfast at the Legion Hall on Memorial Day. Whitey could use 3 or 4 people to help him cook and serve. Breakfast starts at 7:00 am.

Finally if you want to attend the cemeteries be at the Legion Hall by 7:30 AM and if you can we need people to march and be the Color Guard at the Memorial Day Ceremonies.

Your Poppy Donation Supports Veterans and Families



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 245 – Cross Plains/Middleton

Poppy Donations:

- Camp American Legion in Lake Tomahawk, WI
- William S Middleton Memorial – Madison VA
- Veterans Creative Arts Festival
- Fisher House – Madison (home away from home for families of Veterans are being treated)
- Veterans Day & Christmas Cheer at Veterans Hospitals and Veterans Homes
- Veterans & Family Assistance Fund (when veterans submit requests for assistance)
- VA Great lakes Health Care System in Tomah
- Veterans Homes in Chippewa Falls, King and Union Grove, WI
- Homeless Female Veterans
- Scholarships

How to donate:

1. Write a **check** made out to ALA Unit 245 & mail to Sheila Luhman, 2318 Center St, Cross Plains, WI 53528.
2. SquareUp 2 methods: Use Apple Pay, Google Pay, Credit Card or Cash App Pay. It's very simple.
 - a. Go to: <https://square.link/u/f8mfsR69>
 - b. **QR code** and click on the link. You don't need to sign up with Square, you can check out as a guest.



ALA Mission Statement

In the spirit of Service, Not Self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

American Legion Aux Unit 245 FB: <https://www.facebook.com/ALAUnit245>

American Legion Post 245: <http://americanlegioncp.org>