

BRAINERD AMERICAN LEGION POST 255



VETERANS HELPING THE COMMUNITY

THE COMMANDER MAY 2026

COMMANDER REPORT



Welcome to Spring!

I think we can finally say goodbye to the white stuff—spring has arrived! The docks are going in, fishing opener is right around the corner, and we're excited to welcome back all of our snowbirds. We missed you!

Last month, we tried something a little different and teamed up with the Elks Club for a Saturday afternoon music event. It was a great success! Together, we raised money for the Elks Veterans Grocery

Delivery Program, sold over 70 meals, and kept the bar busy all afternoon. A big thank you to Kris and the Elks crew for helping run the kitchen and serve food. Dos Guys did a fantastic job, and we're hopeful this becomes an annual event. We also want to thank our generous sponsors - Minnesota Home Health Care (Terri Getty) and Amy Price, LPT Realty - for helping make it all possible.

We did have a bit of excitement last month when smoke was detected in the building and the fire department was called. After investigating, they found that a blower motor in one of the rooftop units had caught fire. The good news: there was no damage to the roof, and smoke inside the club was minimal and we were able to air everything out quickly. The not-so-good news: we have three furnaces (around 25 years old, maybe older, one hasn't worked for years) and an A/C unit that all need replacing. Repairs aren't cost-effective due to their age, and replacement will require a crane to remove the old units and install new ones. We're currently exploring options, but the projected cost is between \$80,000 and \$90,000.

On a brighter note, we've been seeing lots of new faces enjoying our lunch specials, and the new breakfast format seems to be going over very well. Don't forget, we've got the Twins on this season, so come down and cheer them on with us. We're also continuing to watch the Wild and Timberwolves battle it out in the playoffs.

Quote of the Month:

"You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don't try."

Commander – Wayne Harting

AUXILIARY REPORT

Hello everyone - Spring has arrived - looking forward to warmer days ahead! On Thursday April 23rd Stacy, Dan and Aiden Bednarek, myself and Rick served the luncheon at Camp Ripley for our Veterans attending the annual turkey hunt. Stacy and Dan did all the food prep - smoked pork and sides. Received many compliments for the meal!

The Posts annual Memorial service honoring our members that passed away during the last year will be held Tuesday evening May 19th. I encourage everyone to please attend this special event honoring those that have passed.

A reminder - Poppy Day sales will be held on Friday May 22nd. Volunteers are needed to make this event successful. A sign up sheet is at the bar - please get signed up early.

The proceeds from last years Poppy sales were used to purchase and distribute Christmas gifts to Veterans in area nursing homes.

Our Auxiliary is currently in need of a secretary and a membership chair - please let me know if you can help.

I want to thank everyone for all the help you provide! Let's keep up the good work.

Kathy Wiersgalla
Auxiliary President

AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP

For the past 10 years I have been the Membership Chairman so I have decided to turn it over to someone else. The best thing about this position is that I have gotten to know a lot of the members and for that I am so grateful. My last day was April 13th of 2026.

Sharon Berkner

POST MEMBERSHIP

Membership for 2026 started on 7/1/2025. Legion dues will be \$55.00 and SAL dues will be \$20.00.

Our department goal is 497 member renewals. We are at 95.77% of the goal. We need 21 members to renew their membership to achieve our goal. Please return your renewal as soon as possible. On the SAL side our goal is 56 member renewals, we have exceeded the goal. Welcome to all new members.

Please renew for 2026 if you are not current. We encourage the expired members to rejoin; the post needs you. Your payment will be applied to most recent outstanding year. Membership renewal may also be made online via the mylegion.com site.

Mylegion is a convenient way of keeping your membership up to date. Also, you can update your mailing address, phone number, and email address. You can also print your current year membership card from the site. Renewal may also be paid for with a credit card from the Post 255 website, www.brainerdlegion255.org. Select the membership button at the top of the page. Zeffy is safe and secure.

If you are interested in the three-year Legion membership, 2026-2028, option, please visit <https://www.legion.org/renew> and follow the instructions. Payment only via credit card. Paid up for life (PUFL) memberships are available on-line at mylegion.com. Payment is based on the member's age and the Post's dues.

This is the rate schedule:

24 & Under	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
\$2187	\$2096	\$1997	\$1890	\$1773	\$1647	\$1508
55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-85	85 & Over
\$1359	\$1204	\$1049	\$898	\$751	\$617	\$523

Chair John Pietruszewski, 612-799-0055

BRAINERD AREA HONOR GUARD

Brainerd Area Honor Guard Performed Military Honors for the following:

April 14th, Douglas Pockrandt, US Army

April 18th, Jeffrey Fleisher, US Army

Brained Area Color Guard presented the colors for the opening ceremony and honors at the Bataan Memorial on April 9th

Consider becoming a member of the Brainerd Area Honor Guard. Uniforms and training will be provided. You are not required to participate in all events. Honor Guard members can earn a 2027 membership by participating in funeral services and civic events.

Please contact John Pietruszewski, 612-799-0055, if you are interested or have any questions.

CURRENT EXECUTIVE BOARD

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Commander	Wayne Harting	218-831-2056	wayneharting@wastepartnersinc.com
1st Vice Commander	Don Gylling	763-498-4699	d.gylling@hotmail.com
2 nd Vice Commander	Bill Lowe	605-201-3987	billyjoelowe@gmail.com
Adjutant	John Pietruszewski	612-799-0055	jpietru@comcast.net
Financial Officer	Mike Bellos	218-838-9804	tulibeemike@gmail.com
Chaplain	Brian Dunham	218-591-1824	dunham_brian@hotmail.com
Sgt-At-Arms	Glen Anhorn	218-828-6421	
Past Commander	Rick Wiersgalla	218-851-1554	rickw@brainerd.net
1-year E-Board Member	Tom Getty	218-330-7766	tom.getty7766@gmail.com
1-year E-Board Member	Rory Papenfuss	218-330-3200	rory.papenfuss@gmail.com
2-year E-Board Member	Christine Casperson	218-820-6586	babe16@icloud.com
2-year E-Board Member	Dale Tougas	218-851-2481	daletougas@hotmail.com
3-year E-Board Member	Leroy Ailts	218-839-5101	leroyailts@gmail.com
3-year E-Board Member	Tom Swanson	218-513-0681	militarypapa@icloud.com

ELECTIONS

Election Schedule:

Early Voting: May 4th-18th.

Regular Voting: May 18th 3pm-5:30pm.

Ballot box will be located on the counter by the popcorn machine. Ask the bartender for a ballot if early voting. **No ballots can leave the building.** You must show your current membership card or Drivers License/ MN ID and the bartender will verify with the current membership list. Please place the ballot in the ballot box when completed.

If you have any questions or concerns contact any member of the nominating committee: Don Gylling, Tom Swanson, or LeRoy Ailts

LEGION RIDERS REPORT



Like activities at the post, the weather is improving. Music and sunshine and breakfast to order, can't get much better than that. The Commander and exec board are bringing much needed variety back to the post. Come down and show your support. Bring your bike, your friends and family. There's something for everyone.

Lots of bikes out now, please see them. The roads are a little rough, lots of pot holes and the repairs are making loose gravel spots in unexpected places. Be careful, we've had enough people in the hospital this year.

Things are getting busy. May brings us Memorial Day. If you'd like to help, contact Blair Francis at 218-831-0521 or Commander Wayne at the post. We will be placing the small flags next to each of the makers at the MSVC Little Falls on Friday, 5-22-26 at 11:00AM. Meet by Columbarium B for instructions and safety brief. We will pick up the flags on Tuesday 5-26-26 at 11:00AM. (weather permitting) Public welcome.

Sunday 5-24-26 there will be a Memorial Day Program at the MSVC Little Falls starting at 1:30 PM. If you would like to assist with the program, we could use some help with traffic control and parking. We meet at the maintenance building at 10:30 for safety briefing and assignments. We release at the start of the program. Public welcome.

Monday 5-25-26, Memorial Day wreath presentation at the Loral Street Bridge followed by the program at the All-Veterans Memorial next to the Court House, followed by a presentation at the Evergreen Cemetery. Public welcome.

Monday 5-25-26, Legion Riders meet at the post at 8:00 AM and ride to Crosslake Legion. At 9:30 form up and escort flag to Crosslake cemetery. Stay for program. Either return to Brainerd Legion for lunch or stay in Crosslake. This is a rain or shine event.

We are planning for a large commemorative Benghazi / Gold Star Families event August 15th, with special guest speakers at the MSVC Little Falls Memorial followed by the Gold Star Families Ice Cream Social at the Camp Ripley Hanger Complex. Please mark your calendar and plan on joining us there.

The new coloring books are available. These were created by the riders and post members. See if you can recognize anyone you may know. A goodwill offering of \$5 is recommended. Comes with color pencils.

I would like to encourage everyone to remember to do your buddy checks.

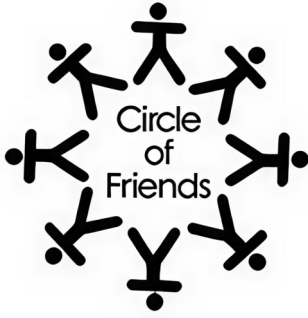
Socials are usually on Wednesdays, have short notice times and are at someplace decided by the group. Check your emails and phones for times and/or place.

Thank you to everyone that shows up and volunteers.

Sincerely,
Director Blair Francis
Legion Rider's Post 255

Next Meeting: June 8th, 2026 7:00 PM, Post 255.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



Glen & Lela Anhorn, Duane & Sharon Berg,
Duane & Sharon Berkner,
Roger & Darla Gonnerman, Shirley Hauck, John Raboin,
Patricia Wlasiuk, Darlene Schaefer, Don & Nealna Gylling,
Tom & Helen Swanson,
Tom Borden (in memory of Jack Borden),
Paul Gode, Frank & Carol Welter, Gary & Pat Bluth,
Nate Tuomi of Gull Lake Glass,
Caralee Bjerkness, Aubrey Fillbrandt

What is the Circle of Friends?

The "Circle of Friends" is an opportunity for members to help provide funds for the legion to cover the cost of postage for mailing the "Commander Newsletter" to people without internet or email access. We presently are mailing about 85 newsletters. If you know of someone who would like to be added to our mailing list, please call us and we will take care of that. If you would like to help with the costs of providing this service to our veterans, riders, auxiliary or SAL members you can drop off your donation to the bar staff or mail Duane Berkner, 10998 Bonnie Rd, Brainerd, MN 56401. You can also use a credit card on our website under Donate.

Thank You for your support.
Don Gylling 763-498-4699 & Duane Berkner 218-828-5074

WHAT'S HAPPING

BRAINERD AREA CLUB BREAKFASTS **8 a.m. to Noon**

ELKS: Sunday, May 3rd

EAGLES: Sunday, May 10th (8:30am)

VFW: Sunday, May 17th

LEGION: Sunday, May 24th

EAGLES: Sunday, May 31st (8:30am)



CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP

The following members of Post 255 will receive certificates of continuous membership at the May 18th member meeting. Receiving a certificate of 50 years of membership will be: Robert A Christensen, Larry Osvold, and Floyd Sweet. Those receiving a certificate of 60 years will be: Howard R Cronquist, Darwin J Haberman, Judson R Murray, Dennis L Sands, and Allan L Whitted.

LEGION MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICE

The American Legion Brainerd Post 255 will be holding our annual Member Memorial Service on Tuesday, 19 May 2026, starting at 6:30pm at the Post. This service will honor the deceased members of the Legion, Sons of the American Legion, and Auxiliary who have passed away after 1 May 2026. Family members of the deceased are encouraged to attend and will receive a remembrance gift. Flag display cases will be available at no charge to families of the deceased veterans. The public is also welcome. Legion and SAL deceased members to be honored: Alan O Macarthur, Gary Miller, Richard P Klein, Charles Jackson, Lester Detsch, Thomas L Brown, Thomas L Brown, Don L Cate, Phillip Paulson Jr, Lester Franz, Stephen E Shively, Roger Spreeman, Edward N Yunker, Dennis L Dixon, Derald Watson, David E Yde, Larry W Helsene, Charles F Halsted, Dean Jansson, Wayne L Wooden, Darrell W Hannahs, William N Matthies, Henry G Frasl Jr, Clinton Wheeler, Daniel L Wiechmann, Robert Horak, Robert J Ryan, and Kevin L Christensen

BRAINERD MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS

Brainerd Memorial Day, Monday May 25, 2026

9:00 am Wreath thrown into the Mississippi at the Laurel St. Bridge
9:30 am Short ceremony at the All Veterans Memorial, 4th & Laurel St.
10:00 am Parade going north on 3rd Avenue NE from B Street
10:30 am Main ceremony at Evergreen Cemetery, 1105 3rd Ave NE
In case of rain, go to the National Guard Armory at 1115 Wright St.
11:00 am Free lunch at the Brainerd American Legion
at 708 Front Street for veterans and families.
Donations will be accepted. Others can purchase lunch.
3:00 pm Taps Across America at the All Veterans Memorial, 4th & Laurel
Details at BrainerdVFW.org/MemorialDay



For those who cannot attend in person, a video will be available mid-evening on:

Facebook: Facebook.com/BrainerdMemorialDay

Website: BrainerdVFW.org/MemorialDay

HONOR ★ REMEMBER ★ CELEBRATE

MEMORIAL DAY

Picnic

★ HONORING OUR HEROES. GRATEFUL FOR OUR FREEDOM. ★

HOSTED BY
Elks, Legion and VFW

 DATE:
MONDAY, MAY 25, 2026

 TIME:
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

 LOCATION:
**BRAINERD AMERICAN LEGION
708 FRONT STREET**



★ **FREE TO ALL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES** ★
Everyone is Welcome!

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SERVED

FRIDAY DINNERS SERVED 4PM-8PM

- Friday, May 1st - Chicken Dinner \$15
- Friday, May 8th - Bob's BBQ Ribs \$18
- Friday, May 15th - Shrimp Platter \$15
- Friday, May 22nd - Burger Night \$9
- Friday, May 29th - Roast Beef Dinner \$15

Walleye Dinner \$15 Every Friday Night

MAY 2026

BAR HOURS:
 MONDAY-THURSDAY: 11AM-8PM
 FRIDAY: 11AM-9PM
 SATURDAY: NOON-5PM
 SUNDAY: CLOSED
KITCHEN HOURS:
 MONDAY-THURSDAY: 11:30AM-7PM
 FRIDAY: 11:30AM-7:30PM
 SATURDAY & SUNDAY: CLOSED

3	4 HOT TURKEY SANDWICH BOOK CLUB 11:30AM	5 BROASTED CHICKEN RIB BASKET LINEDANCING CLASSES 11AM-1PM NARFS 11:30AM BMX 6:30PM	6 BROASTED CHICKEN POUND OF WINGS	7 BROASTED CHICKEN PULLED PORK SANDWICH & CUP OF SOUP SPORTS BOOSTERS NOON MARINE CORP 5PM WOMEN OF TODAY 5PM LE & VETS LIONS CROW WING/CASS 6PM BRICKLAYERS 7PM	8 SLOPPY JOE 11AM-4PM SPECIALS: 4-7:30PM BOB'S BBQ RIBS \$18 WALLEYE DINNER \$15 MEAT RAFFLE 5:30PM	9 FISHING OUPING 
10 	11 HOT TURKEY SANDWICH LIONS MEETING 5:30PM LEGION RIDERS 7PM	12 BROASTED CHICKEN RIB BASKET LINEDANCING CLASSES 11AM-1PM	13 BROASTED CHICKEN POUND OF WINGS RETIRED STATE HOSPITAL WORKERS NOON	14 BROASTED CHICKEN PULLED PORK SANDWICH & CUP OF SOUP SPORTS BOOSTERS NOON POKER LEAGUE 5PM-9PM	15 SLOPPY JOE 11AM-4PM SPECIALS: 4-7:30PM SHRIMP PLATTER \$15 WALLEYE DINNER \$15 MEAT RAFFLE 5:30PM	16 PRIVATE MEMORIAL SERVICE 1-4PM
17	18 HOT TURKEY SANDWICH GRIEF GROUP NOON E-BOARD MTG 5:30PM POST MEMBERSHIP MTG 5:30PM GAMBLING MTG 5:30PM AUXILIARY 6PM BEE KEEPERS 6PM	19 BROASTED CHICKEN RIB BASKET LINEDANCING CLASSES 11AM-1PM POST 255 MEMORIAL PROGRAM 6:30PM	20 BROASTED CHICKEN POUND OF WINGS JACOB'S VOICE 5:30 JACOB'S LIONS 6:30PM	21 BROASTED CHICKEN PULLED PORK SANDWICH & CUP OF SOUP SPORTS BOOSTERS NOON	22 SLOPPY JOE 11AM-4PM SPECIALS: 4-7:30PM BURGER NIGHT \$9 WALLEYE DINNER \$15 MEAT RAFFLE 5:30PM POPPY DAY	23 CELEBRATION OF LIFE ROBERT VOELS NOON-5PM
24 BREAKFAST 8AM-NOON	25  ELKS / LEGION / VFW 11AM-1PM (HERE)	26 BROASTED CHICKEN RIB BASKET LINEDANCING CLASSES 11AM-1PM BETHLEHEM GROUP NOON	27 BROASTED CHICKEN POUND OF WINGS	28 BROASTED CHICKEN PULLED PORK SANDWICH & CUP OF SOUP	29 SLOPPY JOE 11AM-4PM SPECIALS: 4-7:30PM ROAST BEEF DINNER \$15 WALLEYE DINNER \$15 MEAT RAFFLE 5:30PM	30
31						