

# The Legion in the Woods



# POST 245 NEWSLETTER

1950 PINE HALL RD., STATE COLLEGE, PA 16801

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MARCH 2024 - JUNE 2024

## FROM THE COMMANDER,

Dear Legion Family,

I hope that you had wonderful holidays with friends and family, had time to relax and recharge for our new year that's kicking off with incredible speed. I would like to take a moment to explain what it means to me to be a Legionnaire. I know we have our four pillars (Americanism, Children and Youth, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and National Security), but it means more than that to me. It means I get to be a part of something bigger than myself again, it means I can feel comfortable in my own skin around others who feel the same, it means that I can tell a story about my service and the person I'm talking to knows what I'm talking about down to the smell in the air and judgment free. It means that I have a family that if needed would lay down in traffic if I asked. I believe that there should be a fifth pillar "Camaraderie", and the lack of it is something I think is contributing to the tragic suicide rate amongst us. I was asked why Vets don't talk more open about our shared experiences, and I don't believe it's because we don't want to or that we're embarrassed but that unless you were there or went through the same situations its hard to understand and it becomes too difficult to try and explain. However, we have our Post, and within those walls I've found purpose and camaraderie again. Being a Legionnaire has filled the preverbal hole left when I separated after 22 years, swapping the uniform for another. After recognizing that being a Legionnaire is more than having access to a bar, I began to discover that we play a pivotal role in having a voice to our elected leaders, about the care of your generation of Veterans and care of the next coming up. I realized that we play a pivotal part of giving back to our community showcasing what the service taught us about family, country and God.

We are being called into action once again but this time it's to set an example within our community. Your Post needs your help, simply coming to our monthly meetings or asking to be considered to serve on a committee, be considered as an Officer or on the Board of Directors for the Legion in the Woods (The business side of the Post). These are all volunteer positions and are treated as such, we are just asking to get in when you can fit in. We are arguably the best Post in the State and I truly believe that we have an opportunity to set the example to the rest of the State and Nation on how and what an American Legion Post is to look like.

The Legion in the Woods will be holding elections for the Board of Directors on the 10th of July for 6 at Large members, also will be voting on the Legion in the Woods Constitution and By-Laws. All family members are welcome to attend however only Class A members in good standing with the Post are eligible for the seats and to vote. A copy of the Constitution and By-laws will be available for review at any time, just ask an employee for a copy.

For God and Country,

John Smerbeck, Commander, Nittany American Legion Post 245



### Club Hours:

11am - 11pm Mon thru Sat  
1pm - 8pm Sun

### Kitchen Hours:

Grill: 11am - 8pm Mon - Sat  
Fryers: 11am - 10pm Mon - Sat  
Grill & Fryers: 1pm - 7pm Sun

### Happy Hour:

Monday 7-9pm

## EVENING SPECIALS NIGHTLY!

### FRIDAYS

Wing Night 5-10pm

## Membership - Nittany American Legion Post 245, Inc.

### ADDRESS CHANGED? MAKE SURE YOU LET AMERICAN LEGION POST 245 KNOW

Membership renewals are behind last years pace and I am requesting that each and every member of our Post to go out and recruit one new member. **Can you do that for your Post?** Or, if you know that one of our members has not renewed, encourage that delinquent member to renew. Better yet, if they transferred out, get them to transfer back to a Great and successful Post. The future is in our hands. The 100% cutoff is May 15, 2024. The dues for 2024 are still \$35.00. However, because of rising costs for all of us, Harrisburg HQ and National, the **Dues for 2025 have increased and will be \$45.00 for Class A members.** This will be reflected in your first 2025 renewal notice you receive in July and reminder notices after that.

Another option for our members is the Paid Up for Life (PUFL) program. Here is the chart for PUFL

AGE	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
FEE	\$1,535	\$1,399	\$1229	\$1,025	\$815	\$599	\$429	\$329

**2025 Social dues will also be \$45.00**

**Please renew for 2024 if you have not done so.** Thank you, Larry Hess - Adjutant

**Attention Legionnaires and Legion Family: Stay informed!**  
**Email [post245legion@gmail.com](mailto:post245legion@gmail.com) to get added to our mailing list if you're not receiving updates. Thank you!**

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**NEWS FROM THE SAL**

To our SAL:

This is DJ Wilson (SAL commander) with a few updates for everybody. Our meeting last night, 2/15, went well and we are planning a few different events and fundraisers for the SAL. Please be on the lookout for them as we are still in the planning phase and are not certain on dates and times. Also with it being 2024 please remind your fellow SAL members to pay their dues if they have not. We are also still hoping for bigger showings at our meetings which are held the third Thursday of every month (None in July) at 6pm. Please invite your fellow SAL members out! Looking forward to more great things to come from all of our SAL family.

DJ Wilson

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**NEWS FROM THE LADIES AUXILIARY**

We are looking forward to Spring and all of the fun events we have on the horizon. But first, join me in welcoming our newest members: Sandy Stauffer, Judith Nettleton, Julie McGrath, Paula Robert's, Lori Stratton, Susie Sekunda, Julien Hindman, Carol Kennedy, Jennifer Brucker, Amanda Tuscan, Tami Shaw, Linda Hanagan, and Stephanie Johnson. All Auxiliary members are encouraged to attend our monthly meetings. They are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM. We always welcome new faces with new ideas.

Upcoming events: Join us March 3rd at 12 noon for CA\$H Bingo!

Bring the little ones for our annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt. It is planned for March 23 with a rain date of March 30. Hope to see you at a meeting, event or at the club.

Tina Hoy

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**NEWS FROM SPECIAL EVENTS**

Mr. Phil Groundhog says Spring is just around the corner, we will see. Here are some Highlights of what events that are planned in the next four months.

- 03-31-24 – Easter Brunch – 11 am to 2 pm
- 04-08-24 – Red Cross Blood Drive – 10 am to 5 pm
- 04-20-24 – Spring Work Day – 9 am starting time - please help
- 05-12-24 – Mother's Day Brunch – 11 am to 1:30 pm
- 05-18-24 – Armed Forces Day – Raise Flags at Pine Hall  
Up at 7 am down at 7 pm
- 05-26-24 – Memorial Services  
2 pm at Shilo Church  
3 pm at Pine Hall Cemetery
- 06-12-24 – Red Cross Blood Drive – 11 am to 6 pm
- 06-14-24 – Flag day Ceremony at Our Post 245 – 6 pm
- 07-04-24 – Club Will Be Closed
- 08-10-24 – Our Annual Club Picnic

See you at the Legion  
Larry Hess, Bob McCool and Ashley Walker

**NEWS FROM THE LEGION RIDERS**

Hello all,  
Hopefully an early spring is just around the corner so we can get those bikes out!  
Just a reminder that the riders meeting is held on the first thursday of each month at 7pm.  
We want to thank everyone that came out to support us for our bingo! Thanks to all of you it was a great success.  
Winter is slow for us ( since most of our bikes are in storage). Once the weather breaks we look forward to hosting more events.  
We are trying to lock down a date for another cash bingo. More info to come.

Stay safe,  
Scott spear

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**NOMINATIONS**

The Nomination Committee is accepting Nominations for the Five (5) Post Officers. Nominations MUST be made by the May 16, 2024 Post Meeting. Nominees should have been a member of the Post for at least twenty four (24) months or have attended Legion College or have attended Legion College Extension. During the regular Post Meeting in MAY the Commander will read the list of nominees and receive additional nominations from the floor. This will be the Final list of candidates. NO nominations will be accepted at the June Meeting.

Anyone interested in any of the Post positions Please contact a Nomination Committee Member: Rich Seifert Chairperson, Larry Hess Chairperson of Membership, & D.J. Watkins Second Vice Commander.

Thank You for your Support,  
Rich Seifert, Chairperson

## Americanism Committee Report

The Post Americanism Committee got off to a great start, with 13 middle and high school students submitting entries for our annual essay contests. The high school subject was “Why is the First Amendment Important in America” and the middle schoolers shared their opinion on “Do You Believe That U.S. Flag Etiquette Should be Taught in School?”. Thanks to the generosity of life member Chuck Brickell, we were able to award \$2400.00 dollars in scholarships to the winners. The high school winner will move on to compete at the district and department level for even more money in prizes. The winning essays will be posted on the Americanism Committee bulletin board and on the Post social media. Next year’s themes will be announced in the fall.

The Post will be participating in local patriotic celebrations including parades with our Scouts. We would like to recognize a Veteran to be honored as the Post representative in each parade. They will ride in a classic vehicle with their name displayed. If you would like to nominate someone for this honor, please forward their name to the committee. If you have a classic vehicle you would like to volunteer to drive in the parade, please let the committee know that as well. There will be several opportunities throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

The Post would like to recognize those businesses and individuals who proudly display the American Flag with a certificate of recognition. If you know of a person or business deserving of this honor, please forward their information to the committee.

The Post will be the primary sponsor for an American Legion Baseball team this year. We will post their schedule on the bulletin board located in the vestibule. Come out and support YOUR Team!

Our Boy Scout Troop placed second in the Klondike Derby, their best showing ever!

We have installed a book swap in the vestibule. Please donate any books you feel are worth passing on and feel free to help yourself to any books there that grab your interest. The true university is a collection of books. I think I’ve read that somewhere...

D.J. Watkins, Americanism Chairman, [donald.watkins@me.com](mailto:donald.watkins@me.com)



1st Place \$1000 winner - Gus Clement



2nd Place \$500 winner - Stephen Fowler



3rd place \$300 winner  
Max Clement



Post 245 American Legion baseball team. \$4100 was donated as a cumulative effort from the Post, SAL, Auxiliary and the Riders. A schedule of the game will be sent out via the Post email as soon as it is available.



## HONORS ON NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Nittany Post 245 volunteers honor veterans by raising and lowering 53 large flags at Pine Hall Cemetery every Flag Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, September 11th, and Veterans Day. Weather-permitting, we raise the flags at 7 AM and lower and fold them at either 5 or 7 PM. Please come out this year and join the following Post 245 veterans, Auxiliary, Sons, Riders, Boy Scout Troop 245 members, and Post 245 friends who helped in 2023: Mary Hartzell; Alexander, David II, and David Braum; Butch James; Grace Widmann; Ken Lusht; Donny Watkins; DJ Watkins; Carol King; Brent, Andrew, and Chris Laskowski; Chase Dzemyan; Harrison Shelby; Eli and Jonathan Keim; Leslie and Bryant Hartzell; George Fye; Tom Palchak; Helen and Henry Horten; Ryan, Max, and Gus Clement; Barb and Dale Cox; Jacob, Erica, Bethany, and Aaron Felter; Aaron and AJ Spak; Susan Lechtanski and SSD Kelp; Zach and Lisa Spicer; Larry and Judy Hess; Ian and Ken Knappenberger; Ron and Debbie Strouse; Helen and Henry Horten; Don Galio; Dave, Luke, and Trisha Swisher; Eric and Alex Olbrich; Adam Crebs; Cora Woodring; Jim DeWolfe; Bill and Alex Seisler; Rich Jackson; Karen Reed; Todd Fuller; and Alan Methany. For more information, please contact Don Hartzell, 703-347-5059, [donhartzell46@gmail.com](mailto:donhartzell46@gmail.com)

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### BSA Troop 245 Corner

The American Legion BSA Troop 245 is excited to provide an update in our first Legion newsletter! We plan to include information on the troop each quarter. We want to thank all American Legion members for their support of the troop!

In 2023, we had 34 scouts advance in rank including 3 Eagles, 7 Life Scouts, 2 First Class, 3 Second Class, 8 Tenderfoot, and 8 Scouts. The scouts earned 159 merit badges. Seven of our scouts were tapped out for the Order of the Arrow honor society. We logged 474 camping nights for both scouts and leaders on 8 different campouts. We logged 389 miles of hiking for both scouts and leaders on 4 different hikes. We performed 690.5 hours of Community service, including 237.5 hours directly for the American Legion. Some of the service we did for the Legion included flag raising and lowering at Pine Hall Cemetery, the Ladies Auxiliary Veteran's Day Dinner and Easter Egg Hunt, Spring and Fall Cleanup and the Annual Legion Picnic. There are currently 34 scouts and 27 leaders in the troop.

In the upcoming months we will be attending Klondike Derby at Seven Mountains Scout Camp, skiing at Holiday Valley, traveling to Penn College in Williamsport for a Merit Badge College, holding our annual Cook off between patrols, welcoming new recruits in March, and holding our New Scout Campout at Putts Camp.

We would like to send a special acknowledgement to Chuck Brickell and Don Hartzel for the purchase of a troop trailer. We would also like to acknowledge Ken Williamson for his support in purchasing K-bar knives for our Eagle Scouts over the last 4 years. Thank you all for your support!

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**FROM THE EDITOR...** The deadline for the July - Oct 2024 edition is **Friday, June 14th, 2024**

Comments and suggestions are welcome and can be emailed to [mayesb76@icloud.com](mailto:mayesb76@icloud.com)

If you **DO NOT** want your newsletter mailed, please fill in the form below and send it in.

If you know of a member without computer access, please pass this information along to them. Becky Mayes, Editor

*NO! I do not want the newsletter (3 issues per year) mailed to me.*

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail completed form to: American Legion Post 245 ~ 1950 Pine Hall Rd. ~ State College, PA 16801  
Attn: Newsletter Editor Or Email: [Becky Mayes w/complete info at mayesb76@icloud.com](mailto:Becky Mayes w/complete info at mayesb76@icloud.com)

**POST OFFICERS**

Meets 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m.  
Commander - John Smerbeck  
1st Vice - Rich Jackson  
2nd Vice - D.J. Watkins  
Adjutant - Larry Hess  
Finance Officer - Chris Solo  
Sgt.at Arms - Shawn Jacobs  
Chaplain - Jeff Schulman  
Service Officer - James Lanning  
Judge Advocate - Phillip Mowry  
Historian/Public Affairs - Laura Smerbeck

**AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

Meets 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
President - Rhonda Spear  
1st Vice - Penny Dry  
2nd Vice - Donita Gibboney  
Secretary - Kathy Croyle  
Treasurer - Tina Johns  
Sgt.-At-Arms - Karen Jackson  
Chaplain - Jean Folk  
Historian - Jessica Champain  
Sp. Events Coord. - Brandi Hartman

**SAL OFFICERS**

Meets 3rd Thursday, 6 p.m.  
Commander - D.J. Wilson  
1st Vice - Randy Weaver  
2nd Vice - Casey Inhoof  
Adj. / Treas. - Bob McCool  
Sgt. at Arms - Rick Richards  
Chaplain - Mike Boonie  
Historian - Brent Becker

The following individuals will be serving in place of the former Directors per the By-Laws of the Pa American Legion. The five elected Post Officers will serve in the de facto positions until the HA bylaw's are approved in approximately 30 days.

**Legion In The Woods Home Association - Meets 2nd Wednesday @ 7pm**

John Smerbeck - President Rich Jackson - Vice President Chris Solo - Treasurer  
Larry Hess - Secretary D.J. Watkins - Sergeant At Arms.

The Four elected At-Large members are:  
Tom Hoy, James Lanning, Robert Beadle and Joe Delauter.

Ex-Officio: Aux. President, Rhonda Spear; Social, Tom Houck; SAL Cmdr., D.J. Wilson  
ALR-President, Scott Spear; Club Manager, Ashley Walker

**AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS 245 – Meets 1st Thursday @ 7 p.m.**

Director: Scott Spear	Vice-Director: Randy Weaver	Secretary: Rhonda Spear
Treasurer: Jeff Gonet	Chaplain: Brian McMahon	Road Captain: Samantha Hartman
Randy Weaver		

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LISTS**

**BUDGET & FINANCE**

Meets as required  
Bob McCool, Chris Solo,  
Ashley Walker

**BUILDING & GROUNDS**

Meets 2nd Tuesday @ 6pm  
Don Hartzell (Chair)  
Rich Jackson, Dana Landskroner  
Gerry Thompson, D.J. Watkins,  
Ashley Walker

**DONATIONS**

Meets Monday before  
Home Association @ 7 p.m.  
Larry Hess (Chair)  
Bob McCool (Co-Chair)  
Rich Seifert, Tom Palchak,  
Tina Hoy, Ashley Walker

**MEMBERSHIP**

Meets as Required  
Larry Hess (Chairperson)  
John Smerbeck

**HOUSE RULES & BY-LAWS**

Meets as Required  
John Smerbeck (Chairperson)  
Ashley Walker

**LCB RULES & REGS**

Meets as Required  
John Smerbeck (Chairperson)

**NEWSLETTER**

Meets as Required  
Larry Hess (Chairperson)  
Becky Mayes (Editor)

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Meets Monday before  
Home Association @ 6 p.m.  
Larry Hess (Co-Chair)  
Bob McCool (Co-Chair)  
Tom Palchak, Tina Hoy,  
Laura Smerbeck, Katie Snyder,  
Rich Seifert, Ashley Walker



**Are YOU interested in volunteering?**  
Please do the following:  
1. Go to <http://www.post245.com>  
2. Click on the Volunteer Form link  
3. Print it out and fill it in and drop off completed form at club

## American Legion Post 245 Upcoming Events

### March

- 3/3 12noon-5pm.....NEW / Ladies AUX Cash Bingo \*\*
- 3/7 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 3/14 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 3/21 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 3/23 1130am-1pm.....Ladies AUX / Easter Egg Hunt \*\*
- 3/23 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club / Officer's Meeting \*\*
- 3/28 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 3/30 11:30am-1pm.... Ladies AUX Easter Egg Hunt / RAIN DATE \*\*
- 3/31 .....EASTER / Club Opened Regular Hours
- 3/31 11am-2pm .....Easter Brunch at Club \*\*

### April

- 4/8 10am-5pm.....Red Cross Blood Drive \*\*
- 4/11 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 4/11 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 4/20 9am.....Spring Work Day
- 4/25 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 4/25 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*

### May

- 5/9 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 5/9 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 5/12 11am-1:30pm....Mother's Day Brunch 2024 \*\*
- 5/18 .....Armed Forces Day
- 5/20 7am.....Flags Raised ( Full Staff ) Pine Hall Cemetery
- 5/20 7pm.....Flags Lowered Pine Hall Cemetery
- 5/23 11am .....PTSD Dubois
- 5/23 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 5/25 1pm.....Memorial Day Service / C C Memorial Park
- 5/26 2pm.....Memorial Day Service / Shiloh Church
- 5/26 3pm.....Memorial Day Service / Pine Hall Cemetery
- 5/26 4:30pm.....Memorial Day / Luncheon
- 5/27 .....Memorial Day
- 5/27 .....Memorial Day / Club Closed
- 5/27 9am.....Memorial Day Service / Houserville Cemetery

### June

- 6/6 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 6/12 11am-6pm.....NEW TIMES /Red Cross Blood Drive \*\*
- 6/13 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*
- 6/14 .....Flag Day
- 6/14 6pm.....Flag Day Ceremony with the Elk's
- 6/14 7pm.....US Army Bithday / Vinny Tedesco
- 6/16 11am-1:30pm....Father's Day Brunch 2024 \*\*
- 6/20 11am .....PTSD Dubois \*\*
- 6/21 6pm.....SAL Social / Outside on Deck
- 6/27 6pm-9pm.....Elk's Club Lodge Meeting \*\*

\*\*Non Smoking Events

### Organization Meetings:

(Post: 3/21; 4/18; 5/16; 6/20) (Auxiliary: 3/26; 4/23; 5/28; 6/25) (SAL: 3/21; 4/18; 5/16; 6/20)  
 (Riders: 3/7; 4/4; 5/2; 6/6) (Post 245 Boy Scouts: every Monday)