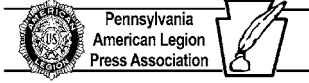


*The Legion in the Woods*



# POST 245 NEWSLETTER

1950 PINE HALL RD., STATE COLLEGE, PA 16801

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WEBSITE: [WWW.POST245.COM](http://WWW.POST245.COM)

DECEMBER 2022 - FEBRUARY 2023

## 2023 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

2023 Class A membership renewals have been mailed and it is important to renew your membership to post 245 before December 31, 2022. If you do not renew by then, your door card will be turned off until you do.

You can renew your membership many ways. Mail back a check to me using the return envelope, stop by the Legion and give it to the bartenders or go on line and renew. The dues have not changed of \$35.00. Make checks payable to American Legion Post 245.

For year 2022, we increased our membership from 697 to 712. I want to thank everyone who helped to do this. It is not just about the numbers. It is about being part of a great organization and the benefits it provides. Not to mention our great club and friends at the post.

So, if you know of a veteran that has not joined our post, ask if they would be interested and give them an application. Thank you in advance for your support.

Larry Hess – Post 245 Adjutant

## FROM THE COMMANDER,

Dear American Legion Post 245 members,

It's my pleasure to be writing my first newsletter to you. Allow me to first introduce myself. My name is John Smerbeck and I've been a member of Post 245 going on four years. I've spent the last 22 years in the U.S. Army, 14 of those years in the active-duty Infantry with five tours between Afghanistan and Iraq, and the last eight in the Active Army National Guard. What I've witnessed in that time has been nothing short of impressive. If we all recall in that time, we dealt with a myriad of national issues that caused disruption within our Post, such as COVID 19. However, we survived and are now thriving more than ever before. This Post succeeded because we had the best Americans in the right spots at the right time. Allow me to personally thank the following people for their unwavering leadership and contributions to the survivability of Post 245 during the time of a national pandemic. Just to name a few, in no particular order: Richard Seifert, Dan Verdoorn, Crystal Myers, Lewis Watt, Larry Hess, Tom Palchak, Chris Solo, Donald Hartzell, John McCabe, Richard Jackson, James Lanning, Karen Jackson, Bill Shuey and Ronda Spears. I know there were so many more and just know our deepest thanks can't even come close to the appreciation we feel. In addition, I would like to give the largest shout out to Richard Seifert for his 19 years of service as the Commander; your service to this Post is unmatched and deeply thanked.

Along with my election to Post Commander came a new team of Post Officers. I am pleased to introduce the following new officers: Richie Campbell, 2nd Vice Commander; Shawn Jacobs, Sergeant-at-Arms; Rich Hess, Judge Advocate; James Lanning, Service Officer; and Laura Smerbeck, Historian/Public Affairs. With this incredible team paired with Larry Hess, Adjutant General; Richard Jackson, 1st Vice Commander; Chris Solo, Finance Officer; and Jim Sweeney, Chaplain, I expect incredible things to happen for this Post and our veteran community.

As many who may have attended the last few Post meetings know, there are some changes going forward in the future to ensure that we stay compliant with the National American Legion constitution. It's come to the attention of our Bi-District Commander, the District Commander and me that we have unfortunately been operating outside of the State and National By-Laws. However, with the help and understanding of those Commanders we are well on our way to becoming compliant and in no danger of having our National Charter suspended. I understand that there is a lot of legal speak and misunderstanding in this regard but allow me to try to break this down so its easily understood.

In 1988 a Pennsylvania State law was passed giving guidance to American Legions and other Non-Profits on how they will qualify for a tax-exempt status. Our American Legion State Dept began updating the state By-Laws for the Posts to follow. One example of the changes that were made was that the only entity of the American Legion that is allowed BY LAW to own property is the POST not any type of club or club incorporation. With that being said, it has taken years for the State Dept of American Legion to begin cracking down on Posts that haven't updated their By-Laws or formed a Home Association to get into compliance. Fortunately, we figured this out before the State came down on us and for that we are blessed. Your Post officers have been working diligently over the last few months, assisted by attorneys, the Liquor Control Board, and the IRS to get us on the straight and narrow.



### 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

Like Us On  
Facebook 

I understand completely how confusing this may be to some of our Legionnaires, SAL and Aux. However, without these updates to our administration structure and operations we would have faced a six-month suspension along with serious legal issues. I also understand that some of our more senior members that may have served in various positions in the Post or Club can find this hard to understand, considering that we had an existing incorporation. Unfortunately, this incorporation (regardless of whether or not it once existed with By-Laws) is no longer formally recognized by the State American Legion, National American Legion or the IRS. The club has been filing all business under our Post's information for decades and we've begun to address this with the IRS as well. The phrase "But this is how we've always done it" is the death of any business, incorporation, or idea. We can't let this club fail because of this mindset, because some of us in this Post have enjoyed the blessings of coming here for friendship, love, and sacrifice for 30+ years. Now it's up to our Post Officers, along with the newly formed Home Association, to ensure that we all enjoy it for another 30+ years. The Army definition of LEADERSHIP is "The process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and IMPROVE THE ORGANIZATION." I live by this definition and the core values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. With these values to guide me, I consider myself dedicated to continuing the heavy lifting for ALL our members to ensure that our Post has no sunset. Like during COVID, we will survive, we will endure, we will thrive and continue giving back to those who sacrificed so much. I personally have an open-door policy for questions, comments or concerns, so if you see me please don't hesitate to introduce yourself. Again, thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve you as the Commander of the finest American Legion Post in PA.

Very Respectfully,  
Commander John Smerbeck, Master Sergeant, United States Army

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## CHAPLAINS CORNER

With the mild weather of the autumn months behind us, we hope the next three months will also be kind to us. The change of weather in the winter months have a shivering effect on our aging bones. I for one have been less tolerant of the cold, windy snow storms the last few years. I enjoy the change in seasons, but winter is my least favorite for sure. That brings me to a topic that has been on my mind lately. The effect of change and how we cope with it in our lives. I give one example of change that is constant, the weather. There are changes in our lives such as aging, health and emotions that we deal with daily. Our attitude toward these changes plays an important part in our mental and spiritual health. Change doesn't come easy for a lot of us. Our first response to change is to say no. I know in my case I sometimes react with a no before I digest the situation at hand. Change may trigger emotions of anger or resentment compounding the ability to think clearly. Communication plays a vital role in working out any disputes real or perceived in any situation that is changing.

Being the chaplain, I also recommend praying for guidance regarding any situation changing in your life. You may find asking God for the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to deal with change comforting in difficult situations. He is not that far away that he doesn't know your needs.

As we come closer to the holiday season and the bringing in the new year let us be thankful and grateful for all our comrades who come through the doors of Post 245. We might not agree all the time, but I sense we truly care for each other.

God bless,  
James F. Sweeney, Chaplain

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## NEWS FROM THE LADIES AUXILIARY...

As the auxiliary membership numbers continue to grow, we are excited to report 31 new members. Please help me in welcoming the following newest members: Renee R. Varner, Gloria D. Yoder, Jane E. McKinley, Rachael D. Futrell, Janie Brown, Bethany L. Felter, Joyce E. Morrow, Deborah L. Diercks, Donna H. Diercks, Rhonda R. Miller, Bethani L. Decrod, Rita H. Berg, Marion D. Williams, Emily J. Kaminske, Rebekah L. Evans, Kim Cutler, Dorothy Fletcher, Jessica Hunter, Jenna Deitrick, Sidney Baum-Siegfried, Emily Bromell, Leslie Aikens, Keena Corbett, Kandy Coble, Marlowe Ellenberger, Doreen Perks, Carol Pioli, Kelley Edwards, Amanda Bolig, Toni Baylets-Holsinger, and Shirley Walker. We are very happy to have you all as our newest members!!!! We look forward to seeing you at a future Auxiliary meeting. The meetings take place the fourth Tuesday at 7 PM. Come to a meeting and get involved in all the wonderful things that the Auxiliary does for Veterans and the community.

The auxiliary would like to remind you to pay your dues for 2023 before December 31st, 2022. You certainly don't want to miss out on any events by having a lapse in membership.

All Auxiliary members are invited to attend our annual Christmas party which will be held on Thursday, December 15th, 2022, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Happy hour will be from 5:00-6:00 p.m., with dinner at 6:00. Following dinner we will have a gift exchange. If you plan to participate, please bring a wrapped gift valued at \$15 or more.

Looking forward to seeing you over the upcoming holidays. Stay warm, safe, and healthy!!!!

Donita Gibboney, Second Vice-President

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## SPECIAL EVENTS

Hello and I hope everyone enjoyed the Velveta night held last month. We also want to wish everyone a **Very Merry Christmas** and a **Very Happy New Year**.

Speaking of the New Year, we will be hosting a New Years Eve Party with Coal Aly as the entertainment. The party is from 8 pm to 1 am and the suggested cost will be \$10.00 per person. We hope that everyone will attend and stay turned for more information. Please read the calendar of events on the last page for events in December and months next year. Stay safe!

Co-Chairs - Larry Hess & Bob McCool

# History of the American Flag

Illuminating American History Through the American Flag

Ninth in a Series

Part One (Forty-Nine-Star Flag)

By Thomas Palchak



The Korean War began when seven communist North Korean infantry divisions crossed the thirty-eight parallel and invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. That brutal, bloody, bitter war lasted until a cease-fire went into effect in July 1953. American troops displayed the Stars and Stripes in Korea. The flag was raised within a half hour after the first U.S. Marine battalion landed on Wolmi-do Island during the Inchon landing on September 15, 1950. But this stalemate never produced an iconic flag moment such as the flag raising at Iwo Jima. The war sputtered to an inconclusive end; no flag-flying victory celebrations took place at home after the fighting ended.

During the 1950's the biggest flag developments involved the pending statehood of Hawaii and Alaska. Congress voted to make Alaska the forty-ninth state on July 7, 1958. The previous flag resolutions of 1777, 1794, and 1818 provided no guidance, the questions of the exact arrangement of the stars had been debated for years. On September 27, 1958, Quartermaster General Maj. General Andrew T. McNamara and his staff sifted through some nineteen hundred proposed designs. It was finally decided to recommend arrangement of the forty-nine stars in seven staggered rows, according to an official Pentagon publication.

The proclamation that the president signed on January 3, 1959, admitting Alaska to the Union contained the design Eisenhower chose that day for the new forty-nine-star flag, which became official on July 4. The name of the designer of the forty-nine-star flag has not surfaced and is unknown to history.

These flags remain uncommon today because on August 29, 1959, President Eisenhower signed a proclamation admitting Hawaii, the fiftieth state, to the Union.

The name of this flag designer is matter of public record and his unusual story will be shared in part two in the next American Legion Newsletter. Stay tuned.



## Support a Scout

Dear American Legion Post 245 Members,

In 2019, a new Boy Scout Troop (BSA Troop 245) was chartered by the American Legion Post 245. When the troop started, we had 20 scouts and over the last three years our membership has more than doubled to 45 scouts. This growth is a result of quality programming, great leadership, and the fantastic facilities and woods at the American Legion Post 245. The mission of Troop 245 is to develop leadership skills that will help scouts be good citizens for our community and country later in life. In addition, the troop works to prepare these young folks to make the right ethical and moral choices over their lifetime.

As the troop has grown, so have our expenses. Each year cost of the registration fees, camping trips, merit badge, and advancement has increased. Troop 245 will not turn down a scout if their family cannot pay and tries to help those scouts go to summer camp and participate in troop activities.

We are asking for your help! Troop 245 has designed an exclusive T-shirt for American Legion Post 245 Members. The shirt design has carefully merged the logos of the Legion and Troop together. Please consider supporting Troop 245 by sponsoring a scout for \$50. In recognition of your gift, we will give you a troop t-shirt. Please use the QR code to place your order.

Meghan Davis



## Quilts of Valor

If you would like to nominate a veteran for a Quilt of Valor, please contact [tompalchak@gmail.com](mailto:tompalchak@gmail.com)



Post Commander John Smerbeck and Post Vice Commander Rich Jackson received their Quilts of Valor at a ceremony held at the Grange Fair in Centre Hall. On Sunday, October 10, 2022, Laura Smerbeck, Air Force veteran and Post 245 Historian, received a Quilt of Valor in Centre Hall. Congratulations!

THANK YOU! Thank you to all the volunteers who came out this year on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Patriot's Day, and Veteran's Day to help us fly 53 US Flags over Pine Hall Cemetery to honor our country and its Veterans--people such as CWO Allen Metheny and his daughter, Emma, (pictured) who raised flags on a rainy Veteran's Day. A special thanks to Boy Scout Troop 245 for their support. We normally also raise flags on Flag Day but that got rained out this year.

The following people helped out this year: Butch James; Gracie Widman; Brent, Andrew, and Christopher Laskowski; Judy and Larry Hess; Linda and Dean Dreibelbis; Kay and Tom Palchak; Todd Fuller; Caroline and Joe Fye; Debbie and Ron Strouse; Gus, Max, and Ryan Clement; J.P. Zeiders; John and Aidan Kerr; Jim DeWolfe; Sue Lechtanski and Kelp; Chris Rowland; Brian Rater; Rick Richards; Jonathan, Isaac, and Eli Keim; Erica and Aidan Sankey; Tina Hoy; Karen and Rich Jackson; Travis and Josh Bechtel; Katie and Curtis Bechtel; Bob McCool; Barb and Dale Cox; Barbara and Joe Phillips; Jason and Liam Foytack; Jennifer, Clayton, and Greg Barger; John and Aidan Kerr; Alex and Bill Seisler; Luke and Dave Swisher; Bryant Taylor; Allister, Joe, and Trey Zanghi; Cody Floyd; Lisa and Zach Spicer; Eric Albrich; Geoff, Conner, and Matthew White; Autumn, Cara, and Tricia Swisher; Carol King, and Donnie, Sarah, and D.J. Watkins; Erica and Aidan Sankey; Richie Seifert; Pete Bordi; Molly, Meagan, and Scottie Showers; Sarah Tomlinson; George Fye; Shawn Jacobs; Mary Hartzell; and Christopher and Laura Smerbeck. That is a lot of people, but on any given day, we can use your help!

Don Hartzell



**FROM THE EDITOR...** The deadline for the March - May 2023 edition is **Friday, Feb 10th, 2023**  
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 (4 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 - Richie Campbell  
Adjutant - Larry Hess  
Finance Officer - Chris Solo  
Sgt. at Arms - Shawn Jacobs  
Chaplain - James Sweeney  
Service Officer - James Lanning  
Judge Advocate - Richard Hess  
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 - Tina Hoy  
Sp. Events Coord. - Brandi Hartman

## SAL OFFICERS

Meets 3rd Thursday, 6 p.m.  
Commander - Eric Waltz  
1st Vice - Bill Shuey  
2nd Vice - Terry Bickle  
Adj. / Treas. - Jigs Poorman  
Sgt. at Arms - Guy Williams  
Chaplain - Mike Boonie  
Historian - Nate Frey

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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.

### **POST 245, Home Association - Meets 2nd Wednesday @ 6 p.m.**

John Smerbeck - President      Rich Jackson - Vice President      Chris Solo - Treasurer  
Larry Hess - Secretary      Richie Campbell - Sergeant At Arms.

The Four elected At-Large members are:

Laura Smerbeck, James Lanning, Bill Rose and Joe Delauter.

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Ex-Officio: Aux. President, Rhonda Spear; Social, Tom Houck; SAL Cmdr., Eric Waltz;  
ALR-President, Scott Spear; Club Manager, Crystal Myers

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

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

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## **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LISTS**

### **BUDGET & FINANCE**

Meets as required  
Bob McCool and Lewis Watt

### **BUILDING & GROUNDS**

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

### **DONATIONS**

Meets Monday before BoD @ 7 p.m.  
Larry Hess (Chair)  
Bob McCool (Co-Chair)  
Karen Jackson, Rich Seifert,  
Bud Yohe, Crystal Myers,  
Tom Palchak, Tina Hoy

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Meets as Required  
Larry Hess (Chairperson)  
Rich Seifert

### **HOUSE RULES & BY-LAWS**

Meets as Required  
Dan Verdoorn (Chairperson)

### **HOUSE**

Meets 1st Thursday @ 6 p.m.  
Dan Verdoorn (Co-Chair)  
Larry Hess (Co-Chair)  
Bud Yohe, Rich Seifert,  
Crystal Myers, Laura Smerbeck,  
Rhonda Spear,  
Chris Solo, Eric Waltz

### **LCB RULES & REGS**

Meets as Required  
Dan Verdoorn (Chairperson)

### **NEWSLETTER**

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

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Meets Monday before BoD @ 6 p.m.  
Larry Hess (Co-Chair)  
Bob McCool (Co-Chair)  
Crystal Myers, Karen Jackson,  
Bud Yohe, Carol King,  
Tom Palchak, Tina Hoy  
Laura Smerbeck



**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

## December

- 12/31 1am .....Decorate Legion for Christmas
- 12/3 8pm .....Jeopardy / Trivia Game Show
- 12/6 1pm-3pm .....Sal/Ladies AUX Children's Christmas Pary \*\*  
Santa arrives @2pm
- 12/6 10am .....Red Cross Blood Drive \*\*
- 12/7 12:45pm .....Pearl Harbor Day Ceremony / Boalsburg
- 12/15 11am-1:30pm .....Club Christmas Meal \*\*
- 12/24 6pm .....Club Closes @ 6pm
- 12/25 .....Christmas Day / Club Closed
- 12/31 8pm-1am ..... New Year's Eve Party/ Coal Aly

## January

- 1/14 .....American Legion Riders Cash Bingo

### **\*\*Non Smoking Events**

#### **Organization Meetings:**

(Post: 12/15; 1/19; 2/16) (Auxiliary: 12/27; 1/24; 2/28 ) (SAL: 12/15; 1/19; 2/16)  
(Riders: 12/1; 1/5; 2/2 ) (Post 245 Boy Scouts: every Monday)