

V.F.W. NEWS

Published Four Times a Year by Marion C. Cranefield Post 1318
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vol 26 No. 4 October/November/December 2026



Greetings Comrades,

What a glorious fall we are having. The colors have started to change and will soon be in full bloom and so is the Post. We have had several events over the past few months.

First of all was Fitchburg Night Out. This was held on Wednesday August 12th. Several Post and Auxiliary members attended to serve food to community members. This event grows bigger each year. It was great fun for all who attended.

September was a busy month. The 115th Fighter Wing hosted a family day. Even though 30% of the unit is currently deployed; the event was extremely well attended. Vance served as top chef for this by smoking one hundred and fifty pounds of pork. It was delicious. We also served potato salad and coleslaw. It was a fabulous opportunity for veterans to serve those soldiers who are still in service.

Our main event was W4W (Walk 4 Warriors). Previously known as Operation Ruck 22, this project raises funds to support the prevention of Veterans suicide. Ruck 22 originated at Post 1318 over 10 years ago, but the 501c(3), dissolved after last year's Ruck. Post 1318 members voted last fall to continue this mission. When this walk first started there were 22 veteran suicides per day, but it is currently down to 19. That is success but we have farther to go. The event was a success!!! Through registrations, sponsorships, basket raffle, and cash raffle the post raised over \$16,000. We will keep a minimum amount for startup funds for the upcoming year, but the remainder of the funds will be donated to Country Haven, Rivers of Recovery and Custom Canines. I would like to thank the Walk 4 Warriors committee for their hard work in making this event a success.

Veteran's Day is right around the corner. I would like to sign off with a poem I recently came across.

IT IS THE SOLDIER

It is the soldier, not the minister, who gives us freedom of religion.
It is the soldier, not the reporter, who gives us freedom of the press.
It is the soldier, not the poet, who gives us freedom of speech.
It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, who gives us freedom to protest.
It is the soldier, not the lawyer, who gives us the right to a fair trial.
It is the soldier, not the politician, who gives us the right to vote.
It is the soldier, who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag,
And whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protestor to burn the flag.

With that, I bid you all a Happy Veteran's Day and sincerely proclaim to each comrade:
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.

Venus Hilgart, Commander VFW Post 1318



Commander Venus Hilgart

UPCOMING EVENTS

October

5th – Post Meeting – 6:00 pm
6th – Auxiliary Meeting – 7:30 pm
10th – Rolling Thunder – 10:00 am
27th – Events Committee – 6:00 pm
House Committee – 6:30 pm

November

2nd – Post Meeting – 6:00 pm
3rd – Auxiliary Meeting – 6:30 pm
11th – Veterans Day Ceremony – 10:00 am
Capitol
14th – Rolling Thunder – 10:00 am
Extravaganza –
W4W Check Presentation
24th – Events Committee – 6:00 pm
House Committee – 6:30 pm
28th – Meat Raffle - 3:00-5:00 pm
29th – Pancake Breakfast – 9:00 am-Noon

December

1st – Auxiliary Meeting – 6:30 pm
7th – Post Meeting – 6:00 pm
12th – Rolling Thunder – 10:00 am
22nd – Events Committee – 6:00 pm
House Committee – 6:30 pm
26th – Meat Raffle – 3:00 pm
27th – Pancake Breakfast – 9:00 am

Thursday Night Trivia 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Friday Fish Fry (all day) and Karaoke 6:30 – 10:30 pm
Sunday fun with Wacko at 3:00 – 5:00 pm

POST OFFICERS

Commander -----Venus Hilgart
 Sr. Vice Commander-----Rose Doucette
 Jr. Vice Commander -----John Barghusen
 Quartermaster-----Gundel Metz
 Adjutant -----Steve Eisenhauer
 Judge Advocate -----Bob Evans
 Chaplain -----Sharon Warsaw
 Surgeon -----Rose Doucette
 Trustee, 3yr -----William Austin
 Trustee, 2yr -----Andy Lochner
 Trustee, 1yr -----Tim Hilsenhoff
 Officer of the Day-----Ray Trent
 Service Officer-----Steve Eisenhauer
 Guard -----Ray Trent
 Citizenship Education-----Bob Evens
 Community Service----- Bob Evans
 Legislative Officer ----- Steve Eisenhauer
 Newsletter Editor-----Gundel Metz
 Web Administrator-----Andy Mansfield
 Voice of Democracy/PP-----John Barghusen
 Historian----- William Muether

House Committee -----Members: Bob Evans, Venus Hilgart, Ray Trent, Sharon Warsaw, Rose Doucette, Gundel Metz, Vance Hunt, Joseph Hines, Justin East and Permanent Guest - Auxiliary Representative
 House Committee and Events Committee meet on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm

V.F.W. NEWS OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

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V.F.W. Post 1318
 2740 Ski Lane
 Madison, WI 53711

Questions or comments about the Newsletter?
 E-mail: VFW1318QM@gmail.com

POST MEETINGS:

First Monday of each month @ 6 p.m.

AUXILIARY MEETINGS:

First Tuesday of each month @ 6:30 p.m.

DANE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

1709 Aberg Avenue – Suite 2
 Madison, WI 53704
 Phone: 608-266-4158 TDD 608-266-4157
 Legislative HOT-LINE 800-362-9696

AUXILIARY OFFICERS

President -----Rose Doucette
 Sr. Vice -----Michael Rowland
 Jr. Vice -----Ray Rung
 Treasurer -----Melissa Crary
 Conductor-----Gundel Metz
 Secretary -----Amy Homer
 Trustee, 1 yr----- Michael Rowland
 Trustee, 2 yr-----Ray Rung
 Trustee, 3 yr-----Daniel Burkhardt
 Chaplain-----Ellen Evans
 Guard-----Irmgard Metz
 Historian-----Rose Doucette

Find us on FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/vfw1318

EVENTS

If you have an idea for the Events Committee, please send an email to:

VFW1318events@gmail.com

WEB ADDRESS

VFW1318.ORG

Telephone: 608-255-5955

Email: vfw1318qm@gmail.com

V.F.W. NEWS DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 30th. IF YOU HAVE A STORY, AN IDEA, A WEBSITE TO SHARE, PLEASE SEND THE INFORMATION IN AN EMAIL OR THROUGH THE POST OFFICE TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR.



CANTEEN

CANTEEN HOURS

Monday – Closed
 Tuesday: 11 am to 8 pm
 Wednesday: 11 am to 8 pm
 Thursday: 11 am to 11 pm
 Friday: 11 am to 11 pm
 Saturday: 11 am to 11 pm
 Sunday: 11 am to 8 pm

Canteen Information:

Food Specials:

Taco Tuesday
 Burger Wednesday
 Trivia Thursday
 Friday Fish fry

Happy Hour Specials:

Tequila Tuesday
 Top Shelf Whiskey Wednesday
 Thirsty Thursday
 The Boyle Fridays

Trivia every Thursday at 7:00 pm and
 Karaoke every Friday at 7:00 pm

Plus, we have the weekly draw on Fridays.

WACKO – Every Sunday 3:00-5:00 pm

Stop on by and meet our staff: Kate, Erica, Alison, Nichole, Maddy, Michael, Anna Marie, Flip, Vance, Lee and others.

Saturday evenings we may have a band, singer or paint night.

As always call the Post if you want to know what is going on that day.

If you want information for the on-line Post meetings, please contact the Post Quartermaster at vfw1318qm@gmail.com. All Post meetings are hybrid, some members at the Post and the others via internet.

WALK 4 WARRIORS

BY JAMIE HERRMANN

Walk 4 Warriors – Thank You for Every Step

On Saturday, September 19, 2026, VFW Post 1318 hosted Walk 4 Warriors, and what a day it was! More than 70 participants signed up to walk or ruck in support of our local Veterans, and the community came out in force to cheer them on.

In addition to the walks and rucks, the day featured many basket raffles and other raffles, made possible by the generosity of the businesses and individuals who donated prizes.

We are proud to report that Walk 4 Warriors raised over \$14,000! The proceeds will go to three outstanding local organizations that provide direct support to Veterans at no cost to the Veterans they serve:

- Custom Canines Service Dog Academy
- Wisconsin Women Veterans Rivers of Recovery
- Country Haven Farm Veterans Retreat

Check Presentation: Please join us on Saturday, November 14, 2026, at approximately 1:00 PM during our Holiday Extravaganza, when we will present the checks to all three organizations. A big thank you to all of our sponsors, donors, and the community. We could not have done this without you. Your support turned every step into real help for the Veterans in our area.

Together, we proved once again that Every Step Saves Lives.

WALK 4 WARRIORS
PRESENTED BY VFW POST 1318 MADISON, WI ★ SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

★ THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS! ★

★ TITLE SPONSOR ★
Rolling Thunder, Inc.
WISCONSIN CHAPTER 5

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AUXILIARY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Rose Doucette

Hello Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters,

Auxiliary Post 1318 has participated in 3 community events in August and September. Our participation and turnout was wonderful. I want to thank each one of you for your help and support. The events supported include the Fitchburg Nite-out, family day at the 115th Fighter Wing and the Walk 4 Warriors. We had 6-8 members at each event.

One of our goals is to support veterans and veterans' organizations. Each of these events did just that. Through our help with Walk 4 Warriors, we assisted with financial support to 3 organizations. Custom Canines has matched more than 300 working service dog teams since 2013. They focus on PTSD service dogs for military veterans and first responders. Rivers of Recovery will also benefit from our recent fund raising. This organization specializes in the rehabilitation of combat veterans suffering from PTSD, minor traumatic brain injury, stress, anxiety and depression. This is accomplished via researched-based fly-fishing recreational therapy. Country Heaven farm in Gleason, Wisconsin is a private retreat for any veteran or veterans' family to have a quiet place to stay, relax and enjoy Wisconsin's north woods. It is free of charge and guests may relax with farm animals. They may choose to help with farm chores or just get away from life's daily struggles. The farm has a variety of friendly animals including pygmy and fainting goats, pigs, Scottish highland cows and miniature donkeys.

Our Auxiliary has a few other organizations that are near and dear to our hearts. We have raised funds for The UW MIA (Missing in Action) recovery and identification project. This honors the sacrifice of US service members who are unaccounted for. It has a primary mission to recover, identify and repatriate remains of soldiers from past global conflicts. Auxiliary members also raise money and support Dane county's Shop with a Cop program. This program is a community outreach program where police officers volunteer to take school age children from low-income families shopping for holiday gifts. It is designed to foster trust and a positive relationship between law enforcement and the community. After shopping, they arrive at Post 1318 to wrap gifts and enjoy a pizza party with Santa Claus as the guest of honor. We have purchased and collected blankets to be distributed by Police officers to children who need them in frightful situations. We have collected other items as requested by the VA hospital. Last year we participated in the battle buddy tree. We will again purchase Christmas gifts for veterans in need.

As stated by our Wisconsin department President Charlene Cobb "Working together we are strong". We work for veterans and our community. We can make a huge impact on the community we serve. In the next few meetings, we will continue to look at ways to fund raise and support those we serve. Please let me know of organizations or events you would like us to assist. Our next scheduled fund raiser is November 22, the 4th Sunday of the month. We will be hosting a pancake breakfast at 1318. I hope to see there.

EVENTS

JAMIE HERRMANN

As we wrapped up the third quarter of 2026, The Post continued to grow as a gathering place for Veterans, members, and our community. Summer brought live music, creative classes, recurring weekly events, and the arrival of one of our most meaningful Veteran-focused initiatives.

Throughout July, August, and September, we enjoyed Live Music, Paint Nites, Cake Decorating, our Epoxy Workshop, Meat Raffles, Pancake Breakfasts, and our weekly favorites of Trivia, Karaoke, and WACKO. These events continued to provide opportunities for fellowship while supporting the mission of the Post. The third quarter was highlighted by our inaugural Walk 4 Warriors on September 19, a community fundraising event dedicated to raising awareness of Veteran suicide and supporting Wisconsin organizations that serve Veterans. Thank you to every volunteer, walker, sponsor, and supporter who helped make the day a success.

The fourth quarter carries that momentum into the fall and holiday season with a welcoming mix of weekly favorites, creative classes, entertainment, and community events, highlighted by our November 14 Holiday Extravaganza and **Walk 4 Warriors Check Presentation**.

Our weekly favorites—Trivia every Thursday, Karaoke every Friday, and WACKO every Sunday—continue to provide regular opportunities for members and guests to gather throughout the fall. Whether you're looking for a fun night out, a chance to learn something new, or an opportunity to support Veterans and our community, there's something for everyone at The "V".

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

- October 10 | Drag BINGO (5–9 PM)
- October 17 | Paint Nite (6–9 PM)
- October 20 | Decorating Class (6:00 PM Cake)
- October 21 | Epoxy Class (6:00 PM)
- October 24 | Monthly Meat Raffle (3–5 PM)
- October 25 | Monthly Pancake Breakfast (9 AM – Noon)

October is packed with creative classes and entertainment, from Drag BINGO and Paint Nite to back-to-back Cake Decorating and Epoxy classes. Whether you're decorating your first cake or pouring your next epoxy masterpiece, it's a great month to try something new. Visit the VFW Post 1318 Facebook page for registration information and event details.

(Events continues on Page 6)

(Events continued from page 5)

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

- November 7 | UW Football game hospitality tent (time to be determined)
- November 14 | Holiday Extravaganza (11 AM – 4 PM)
 - Walk 4 Warriors Check Presentation (1 PM)
- November 14 | Drag BINGO (5–9 PM)
- November 14 | Paint Nite (6–9 PM)
- November 21 | Bucks over Bags Purse WACKO (3–5 PM)
- November 22 | Pancake Breakfast hosted by the Auxiliary
- November 28 | Monthly Meat Raffle (3–5 PM)

November brings our biggest day of the quarter. On November 14th, join us from 11 AM to 4 PM for our Holiday Extravaganza, featuring a quarter auction, meat raffles, plenty of other raffles, and a lot of fun. At 1 PM we'll take a break for the Walk 4 Warriors Check Presentation as we present the proceeds to the organizations it supports. Stick around afterward for Drag BINGO and Paint Nite to keep the celebration going into the evening. Later in the month, don't miss Bucks over Bags Purse WACKO on November 21 for a chance to take home a great bag while kicking off the opening weekend of hunting season with friends at The Post.

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

- December 12 | Army vs. Navy Watch Party
- December 15 | Cake Decorating Class (6–8 PM)
- December 19 | Paint Nite (6–9 PM)
- December 26 | Monthly Meat Raffle (3–5 PM)
- December 27 | Monthly Pancake Breakfast (9 AM – Noon)

December closes out the year with one of the most anticipated games of the season—cheer on your branch at our Army vs. Navy Watch Party on December 12. Holiday Cake Decorating and Paint Nite offer festive ways to celebrate with friends and family, and we'll wrap up 2026 with our Meat Raffle and Pancake Breakfast.

There is always something happening at The “V”; Whether you're joining us for Trivia, Karaoke, WACKO, Paint Nite, one of our creative classes, or our November 14 Holiday Extravaganza, we appreciate everyone who supports VFW Post 1318.

(Events continued on page 7)

(Events Continued from page 6)

We encourage everyone to:

- Follow us on Facebook: VFW Post 1318
- Visit our website for upcoming events and announcements
- Join us on November 14 as we celebrate the impact of Walk 4 Warriors and present this Year's proceeds to the organizations serving Wisconsin Veterans.

Thank you to our members, volunteers, Auxiliary, and community partners who continue to make VFW Post 1318 a welcoming place where Veterans and our community come together. We wish you a safe and happy holiday season and look forward to another year of fellowship, service, and support.



Pictures from
Walk 4 Warriors
Event



ROLLING THUNDER®, INC.

WISCONSIN CHAPTER 5

BY WILLIAM MUETHER

Rolling Thunder Wisconsin Chapter 5 members hosted a booth at “Pistons and Props” on Friday, August 28th from 4-8:30 pm (Veterans Night), and Saturday and Sunday, August 29th and 30th from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm at Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport in Janesville. Proceeds support youth STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics) and aviation programs, as well as local veterans.

- The chapter hosted a ceremony at the State Capitol for National POW/MIA Recognition Day on September 18th. Guest speakers were Wisconsin State Commander Renee Simpson and State Senator André Jacque.
- Several chapter members supported a water station on September 19th at the Walk 4 Warriors event on September 19th. Rolling Thunder Wisconsin Chapter 5 was the title sponsor.
- The chapter’s annual Thunder Run event occurred on September 19th at Whiskey Row Saloon in Avoca. This year’s proceeds will benefit Walk 4 Warriors, the UW MIA Recovery and Identification Project, Custom Canines and veteran housing.
- The chapter was honored at the annual UW MIA RIP fundraiser at Smoke on the Water in Okauchee, WI, on Saturday evening, September 19th, with six members attending as invited guests.
- The annual Rolling Thunder National Conference in DC is scheduled from October 30-31 and several of our chapter officers will be in attendance.

Please contact the chapter at rtnadison5@gmail.com if you would like to join us or participate in future events, or if you have questions about Rolling Thunder®, Inc. You do not need to be a veteran or own a motorcycle. All we require is an earnest desire to help raise POW/MIA awareness and assist our local veterans in need.





Pictures from
Fitchburg
Night Out



Top: Hammerschlagen
pictures and epoxy class.
L: Luke Herrmann
pouring his own epoxy.
R: Post member Vance
Hunt preparing scrambled
eggs for breakfast.



LEGISLATIVE

**JORDAN TILLESON, 2ND DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE CHAIR
MEMBER STATE & NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES**

Wisconsin VFW Legislative Activities Fall 2026

- Federal Issues
 - Take Care of America's Veterans Act
 - VFW is against if Section 108 is not removed
 - We reject any provisions that reduce or offset future veterans' disability compensation to finance other legislation.
 - Major Richard Star Act
 - Get a clean version through as a standalone bill or attach to the NDAA for FY27
 - Rep. Nancy Mace was the 218th to sign the discharge petition and force a vote
 - Transition from Service – TAP Promotion Act
 - Written Informed Consent Act - to expand written informed consent requirements to ensure veterans receive clear, written information about the benefits, risks, alternatives, and expectations associated with long-term psychiatric medications.
- State Activities
 - Study Committee on State Veterans Benefits
 - VFW is the only VSO that was granted a voting seat for the committee
 - Committee is reviewing the definition of "Veteran" in state statutes and how it applies to state offered veteran benefits
 - Committee is reviewing benchmarks set decades ago on qualifying factors for certain state veteran benefits.
 - Committee recommendations will go to State Legislators when complete
 - Veterans Day at the Capitol (VDATC) 2027
 - The VFW, American Legion, and DAV are beginning planning
 - Date TBD. Looking to host event in late February compared to March so we address issues with legislators before they begin budget planning in March
 - Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
 - VFW State Leadership continues to observe state Veteran Homes
 - Discussing ways to combat "Claim Sharks" at state level
 - Looking at new ways to document/honor State's veteran involvement in the Middle East
 - Pillars in the Community Event that happened 30SEP26
 - Event open to all VSO members led by the VFW to learn about Wisconsin's election processes and procedures and answer any questions you may have. Event went well.
- November election is coming up – Don't forget to vote
 - Engage with your local/state/national representatives and senators
- VFW Action Corps – <https://www.votervoice.net/VFW/Register>
 - Reach out to Jordan Tilleson – jordant@vfwwi.org

A Round of Thanks!

October 27 – November 14

This Veterans Day, help us say THANK YOU to those who served! Beginning October 27th, purchase a drink chip at The V and place it in our donation bucket. Starting Veteran's Day, Nov. 11th visiting veterans can enjoy one complimentary drink per day through Saturday, courtesy of our generous patrons, while donated chips last through November 14th. Any remaining chips after November 14th will be converted into a monetary donation to Badger Honor Flight, helping honor our local veterans.

Buy a chip. Thank a vet. Make a difference! Sponsored by the Post Auxiliary.



STARTING NOVEMBER 1, 2026

THE BATTLE BUDDY TREE

Honor a Veteran. Spread Hope. Give with Gratitude.



How It Works

- 1 Pick a Tag**
Choose an anonymous request from the Battle Buddy Tree (each tag lists one needed item).
- 2 Shop With Heart**
Purchase the requested item (new items only, please).
- 3 Wrap It Up**
Wrap your gift and secure the request tag to the outside — this makes sure it gets to the correct veteran.
- 4 Bring the Gift**
Bring the gift to 2740 Ski Lane by 12/20 and drop it off with the bartender.

Why It Matters

Many veterans face challenges during the holidays — isolation, financial strain, mobility limitations, or a lack of family support. Your kindness fills the gap. Together, we can remind every veteran that their community stands with them.

**Rooted in Gratitude.
Growing Through Generosity.
Honoring Those Who Served.**

Drop-off: 2740 Ski Lane, by 12/20



Above pictures are from Walk 4 Warrior Event.
Entertainment was provided by Beaches and Cream

MEMBERS CORNER



Post member Gundel Metz was honored by the immediate Past Commander-in-Chief, Carol Whitmore, with the Gold Medal of Merit award at the National Convention.



Gundel Metz was honored at Fitchburg Night Out with a Home town Hero Award by the Fitchburg Police Department



L: Post members Terry Waller and Chuck Kneebone working Pancake Breakfast.
R: Post Senior-Vice and Auxiliary President Rose Doucette & Aux Sr-V Mike Rowland



HAVE YOU MOVED RECENTLY

Please notify the Post if you have moved or have a new email address so that we can keep you informed and plugged into Post Activities

Please send your email address to the Quartermaster so we can send you the Newsletter electronically. Thanks.
vfw1318qm@gmail.com