



Snyder-Lewis-Welty Post 454 Colon Michigan



Hello Everybody,

Happy Days Are Here Again! While not, eradicated, restrictions related to COVID-19 have been fully lifted at this point and your Legion has returned to full activities. Come and join us for Bingo on Monday nights, Bar Poker on Wednesday afternoons, Queen of Hearts Drawing Saturday evening, Dine-in Fish Fry the last Friday of each month and SAL Breakfast the 2nd Sunday of each month (starting in September). Food service is still Thursday, Friday and Saturday each week from 4:00-8:00 PM with a menu of appetizers, burgers/sandwiches and dinners, all reasonably priced. While other businesses have struggled to find help, our loyal bartenders and cook, Gene, Debbie, and Fawnda, have returned and are prepared to serve you.

So, what's new since the last letter? Well, St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage went way past what we expected. With 30 pounds of corned beef in the cookers along with cabbage and potatoes, we ran out within 20 minutes. Suffice to say there were a lot of disappointed people. If you were one of them, I'm truly sorry. This being our first try at this, we really had no idea what to expect. We will do better next year.

Our Easter Egg Hunt was a resounding success again. The high school allowed us to conduct the event on the school grounds with the only restrictions being that we did not exceed 300 total people and everyone was required to wear a mask. Knowing that we don't usually get 100 kids and even if we did, they would each have to bring both parents to hit that number, we felt confident we would stay within the rules. Over four hours of coloring and hiding eggs was over in about five minutes as the kids swooped down the hill shoveling eggs into their bags.

We did our full compliment of Memorial Day services this year with our small parade in downtown Colon, ceremony of Lakside Cemetery and then participation in the services at Leonidas and Burr Oak. Our own Colon Legion member Matt Newman who currently serves as the Chief Planning and Policy Officer for the Readjustment Counseling Service, developing and writing policy for the VA at the national level was the keynote speaker at the cemetery.

On June 12, we honorably disposed of over 1500 unserviceable American Flags. Members gathered at the Legion barn and conducted a ceremony to retire these symbols of our country.



June also saw the second annual Palmer Lake Poker Run with 38 boats and over 180 people participating. Five stops were located around the lake, including a stop hosted by the Legion at Veterans Memorial Park. Thanks so much to SAL members Carl Thornton, Tim Taylor, Jim Crawford and Brent Franks and their lovely wives for their work on this event and to Legion Member Mike Smoker. The event raised over \$7000 for the Legion not counting the \$2000 day the bar had at the post.

Of course, when you think of July, you think of Independence Day. This year the Air National Guard did not provide a color guard and the American Legion Color Guard once again led the parade through Colon. And what a parade it was! In addition to the Color Guard, the Legion had a float and there was also a float for the Magic City Egg Fest along with many other walkers, vehicles, floats and of course fire trucks. All told, the parade lasted an hour and a half. The flotilla, led by Commodore Tim Taylor, was magnificent this year. With the theme *Cities of the World* boats were decorated anywhere from Paris to Honolulu, Sydney to Cairo. In the end, New York (Tom and Ginger Peak) took first place, Honolulu (Kim Walters) took second and Paris (Chuck Leimbach and Leann Wilczewski) took third.

Also in July new officers were installed for the Legion. I remain your Commander. With the adoption of a new post constitution and by-laws this year the remaining officer positions have changed a bit. There is now only one Vice Commander and that is Brian Reed. The Adjutant and Finance Officers continue to be Ron Taylor and Mike Smoker respectively. David (Buzz) Farrand re-upped as Chaplain and Dick Persing stayed on as Historian. Your new Sergeant-at-Arms is Don Truax. Congratulations to all and I look forward to working with this great group through the coming year.



Last year we remodeled the exterior of the post home. This year the barn will be getting a new steel roof. Materials are in and the contractor said he will try and squeeze us in between his existing jobs.

Background work on Veterans Memorial Park is progressing. Our architect has a concept sketch that was approved by both the Legion Park Committee and the Village Park Committee. Presentation to the Village Counsel is planned for August to get their approval and then we can begin work. Much of that work will include securing funding for the project, so if you would like to donate to the park, please let us know.

Speaking of funding for Veterans Memorial Park, our new progressive raffle is going gang busters! In ten weeks, no one has drawn the Queen of Hearts and the progressive jackpot stands at over \$15,000. Tickets are \$2.00 each and the drawing is held each Saturday, at the post, at 7:00 PM. All proceeds go to funding Veterans Memorial Park.

Our Legion membership goal for 2021 (which ended on June 30) was 114 members. I'm proud to inform you that we exceeded that goal and as of June 30 we had 115 members. Thank you to all who renewed their memberships and helped recruit new members. Of course, it being a new year, it is once again time to send in your dues. The SAL ended the year with 74 members. I was unable to obtain their membership goal for the year, but the goal for 2020 was 65 so I think it's safe to assume that they too met or exceeded their membership goal. The Auxiliary was right in there, achieving 94% of their membership goal of 84, ending the year with 79 members. Success begets success and I think our increasing membership shows that the community respects what the Legion, Auxiliary and SAL are doing and those eligible want to become a part of it and support our work.

Our next big event is the Magic City Egg Fest on August 21. We hope to have 30 teams competing on the Big Green Egg cooking ribs, chicken and pizza. Taster tickets are available at the Legion for \$10 in advance or \$15 at the gate. Taster tickets get you in the gate starting at 11:00 AM and allow you to eat



free ribs, chicken and pizza from our competing teams until the event closes at 5:00 PM. There will also be a cornhole tournament and a raffle for a Big Green Egg and other prizes. Lightly used (the day of the event only) Big Green Eggs will be available to purchase at a reduced cost. We hope to see you out there supporting this event, in the village parking lot behind Omni Credit Union. We need help to make this event a success so contact the post to see how you can assist.

Proceeds from the Magic City Egg Fest will go into our building fund. As mentioned previously, the outside of the post home has been redone and the barn is getting a new roof. We are now looking to remodel the interior of the post home including the upstairs which has been used only for storage but has the potential to add important, functional space to our operations. Mark your calendar for August 21!

Though we are in the middle of summer, fall is coming and with it comes Halloween and Veterans Day. Our Halloween costume party has been growing year by year. There have been some fantastic

costumes. This year's event will be held on October 30 so start thinking about your costume and come out and join us. Prizes for the best costumes.

Two years ago, we held our Veterans Day Ceremony at the high school in conjunction with the dedication of a plaque to those Colon students and teachers who died in war. Last year, of course, students were studying at home and not in school. We hope to get back into the school for our ceremony this fall, but regardless of where it is held, we will hold a Veterans Day Ceremony on November 11. As that date draws near, check our website or call the post to find out where and when.

Also in November will be Member Appreciation Night with drink and food specials. We will hold our annual turkey and ham sweepstakes that night as well. Proceeds from this sweepstakes go towards the Children's Christmas Party. Watch for you sweepstakes tickets in the mail sometime in October.

Here's the part of the newsletter that I hate. It is my sad duty to inform you of the passing of Snyder-Lewis-Welty Post 454, American Legion Members:

Raymond Wagner

John Cossairt

Marvin Reed

Ted Schipper

Olen Palmer

Our comrades will be missed.

Upcoming Special Activities:

August 21, 11:00- 5:00—Magic City Egg Fest

October 30, 7:00-??—Halloween Costume Party

November 11—Veterans Day Ceremony

November 12—Member Appreciation Night

December 18—Children's Christmas Party

December 31—New Year's Party

There are a lot of exciting things happening at and with your Legion. I cannot begin to tell you how honored and proud I am to be your commander and be associated with all the great things that YOUR POST is doing. In conclusion I want to thank each and everyone of you. Whether you come and volunteer to help at events we are putting on, help us honor veterans who have passed, buy raffle tickets or just pay your dues, we cannot exist and do all these things without you. So, yes, thank you all and keep up the good work!

As always, I look forward to seeing you around.

Brett Johnson
Commander

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