



THE LEGION POST

OTIS SAMPSON POST 59

803 North Page Street - STOUGHTON, WI

PH: 608.205.9090

Post 59 Website: www.post59.us

SPRING 2024



2023-2024

POST 59 OFFICERS

Commander

Michael Currie

1st Vice Commander

Rodger Hansen

2nd Vice Commander

Mike Ayers

3rd Vice Commander

Ken Schieldt

Service Officer

John Solis

Sgt. At Arms

Jim Schiferl

Finance Officer

Jim Oler

Historian

Al Vick

Adjutant

Joshua Holt

Judge Advocate

Tom Jenny

Chaplain

Edward Nowicki

Membership

Mike Ayers



FROM THE COMMANDER'S DESK

Greetings to one and all, hope you're enjoying this very mild winter. With these above average temperatures it looks like Jimmy the Ground Hog was right and we will have an early spring. We do live in Wisconsin so I certainly know that could change. There are a few things to report at this time. Stoughton had a number of power outages this past year so to make sure that the Post runs smoothly if one would occur in our area, we will be having a generator installed sometime this early spring. We will also be upgrading the bar entrance door as well. As you all know, over this past year there has been rising costs in food. We have seen a considerable rise in cost of our breakfast offerings so starting with our March Sunday breakfast we will go from \$10 per person to \$11 per person for adults, but the kids price will remain the same.

As always there will be a number of events over the next three months with musical entertainment, either Friday or Saturday nights. In March we will have a St. Patrick's Day celebration, and don't forget our Annual Kentucky Derby party in May. Two of the most important events coming in May will be Syttende Mai celebration from the 17th through the 19th and our annual Memorial Day Parade and Program on May 27th. These Memorial Day events are co-sponsored by the Stoughton American Legion and the Stoughton VFW. please see the notices for those events in this newsletter.

We plan to open up our Tiki Bar on weekends, weather permitting sometime in May. To all our Legion Post members, a big Thank You for renewing your memberships and welcome to all of our new members. We are at 100% for the year 2024. I would like to thank Mike Ayers our Membership Chairman for his hard work. As always thank you to all our wonderful volunteers, guests and patrons for your continued support of our Post. Your support allows us to continue to supporting Stoughton area Veterans and the Stoughton area community.

One last item, our American Legion County Commander Scott Klassy will be attending our March Post members meeting on the 11th at 7:00pm. If you can please try and attend it would be much appreciated.

Stay well and we will see you at the Post.

Commander Michael



Sons of the American Legion Report Squadron 59



2023-2024

**Squadron 59 SAL
OFFICERS**

Commander

Bob Hocking

1st Vice Commander

Bob Crofoot

2nd Vice Commander

Dan Blomgren

Sgt. At Arms

Greg Clark

Finance Officer

Jim Oler

Adjutant

Brian Vogt

Historian

Roger Strandlie

Chaplain

Brian Vogt

Summing up the finish to 2023 for the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 59 can be best expressed by the title to the Beatles classic "With a Little Help from My Friends." With arguably our two most important fund raisers, the "Amish candy sale" and the "Breakfast with Santa" scheduled for the Christmas season, we leaned heavily on our friends and family. Along with SAL members selling the delicious candy offerings we were helped again this past year by Mary Sundby selling candy as she has in past years and Heather from the Utica bar stepping up to help increase the sales totals. We are very grateful to both these women for their help.

Breakfast with Santa tested our preparedness and thanks to all the help from Legion family members and volunteers we had what could have been our best Christmas outing for local children and their parents in the history of our "Breakfast with Santa" The coffers were certainly filled for the shopping for our Toys for Tots donations. Watch for an exciting tweak to our Toys for Tots in December 2025.

We are in the process of planning our events schedule for the upcoming year and it will also have some changes to what we have done in previous years. Stay tuned but know that the core of our involvement in the Legion Family will remain strong with a little help from our friends.

Bob Hocking
SAL Squadron 59
Commander

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

AUXILIARY 9th ANNUAL CHICKEN 'N BISCUIT DINNER



Saturday, MARCH 23rd

4:00 PM to 7:00

Adults \$12.00 ~ Children 10 & under \$6



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 59

2023-2024

UNIT 59 AUXILIARY OFFICERS

President

Amy Hermes

Sr. Vice President

Dawn Clark

Jr. Vice President

Sally Schieldt

Secretary

Kate Schieldt

Treasurer

Lisa Olson

Chaplain

Anna Paul

Membership

Lisa Olson

Greetings All,

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

Our membership continues to grow. We are 168 members strong and recently recognized for being one of the highest recruiting units! We have 17 new members for the 2024 year.

Many hands helped with our poppy distributions in May, and we were able to donate over \$3900 to a variety of Veteran’s Programs. Some of the programs that received support were Dog2Dog Tags, Shield of Sisters, Camp American Legion, DAV and the Homeless Female Veteran’s fund.

In December, we enjoyed the Christmas spirit addressing 843 Christmas cards for the veterans in the VA hospital & other facilities in Wisconsin with other Dane County ALA members.

Karen Ayers and Sherrie Hensel chaired our Giving Tree project for the Veterans Home at King. Our unit was able to collect over 300 items. Additionally, we collected over 20 baby items for the Madison VA.



We are excited to be sending three Stoughton Area High School girls to Badger Girl State this year. This is possible given our partnership with the Stoughton Rotary Club and the Stoughton Lions. We are also looking forward to giving our 2nd Annual HS Scholarship this May.

Going into spring will be a very busy time for the ALA. In addition to helping support the meat raffles, in March we will be partnering with the Small Animal Advocates, selling lunches for their Quarter Auction fundraiser, March 9. Other save the date events:

- Chicken and Biscuit Dinner, March 23
- “Senior Prom”, April 13
- Kentucky Derby Party, May 4

National Volunteer Month is celebrated April 1-April 30. Volunteering helps weave us together, strengthening the community we serve and the support we give one another. This is so true of the amazing group I have the honor to lead.

In friendship and fellowship,



THE CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

We gather this day in your Name, mindful of the seasons of our lives and of our organization, mindful of the passing of time and of the shortness of time in which to plant the seeds and harvest the fruit of your Kingdom. Be with us this day. Heighten our awareness of the abundance of gifts and opportunities you have given us to carry out your healing work in this world. Strengthen our commitment to take the fullest advantage of the precious but ever fleeting time you have given us so that the harvest of our lives and that of our organization will be abundant. We ask this in faith. - Amen.

Ed Nowicki – Chaplain

LEGION MEMBERSHIP NEWS

***** Thanks to everyone in making Post 59 103% percent membership for 2024 and still growing*****

Currently we have 289 renewed and 28 new members for a total of 317 Legionnaires to date.

Since our Winter newsletter we welcome the following new members to our post.

Daniel Clark – USMC, Robert Grady – USN, Randy Logan – USAF, Gerald Oler – USMC, Bjorn Seybold – USAF, James Stafford – USA, John Vagedes – USN, Tina Vagedes – USAF, and Richard Wilson - USA

On behalf of Commander Michael Currie and myself we thank you for your service, support, and membership with American Legion Post #59. Take pride in knowing you belong to a membership strong and reputable post in Wisconsin providing community services and support for local veterans and their families.

*****The American Legion National Executive Committee has approved a multiyear renewal and new member signup option beginning with dues for 2025.*****

Current members and new members may renew and sign up for 3 years at the current dues rate in place at time of signing. If you wish to take advantage of these savings, **you must do this online.** This is not mandatory, and you can continue to renew as you have done in the past.

- Renewals must be done at legion.org/renew.
- New memberships must be made at legion.org/join.
- Multiyear membership participants will not receive future renewal notices.
- Each year Post 59 will send participants a new membership card.

Membership Contact Information

Within the next several months, we here at Post 59 will be verifying and updating our membership contact information. Our goal is to expand and better provide timely information regarding post activities and services. We want to enhance our current web and Facebook services with a communications network made up of mail, phone and/or email services.



Not only do we recognize our new and continued members for Post 59 but take a moment to recognize and honor those that Post 59 have lost since our last newsletter.

Robert Stricker (01/24/2024) Vietnam - USA
Robert Niehus (01/08/2024) Korea - USA
David Lazenby (11/12/2023) Korean - USAF
Robert Bennett (08/04/2023) Korea - USMC

Again, thank you for your continued support and service to our country and the American Legion.

Michael L. Ayers – Post 59 - 2nd Vice Commander and Membership Chair
PH: (608) 335-1771 Email: tqmgr@yahoo.com



AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP NEWS

In the spirit of service not self...

Our Auxiliary is now over 114%!

We needed 147 members to pay their 2024 dues to reach our 100% goal and we now have 168 paid members. Thank you to each and every Auxiliary member who has renewed and to our 17 new members who have joined us this year. Welcome to Kayla Manhart who just rejoined last month. And we remember with special thoughts & blessings our member Pam Griggs who we lost in late November.

We have now received nine 100% Unit Ribbons & Certificates in the past 20 years proving what an awesome & active Auxiliary we are. We are one of the largest units in Dane County and District 3 and are #1 right now in the state for recruiting new members!

~ Lisa Olson – Membership Chair Unit 59



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY ~ March 29th

Stoughton Vietnam Veterans – March 2023



THIS IS WHAT WE DO



The Post 59 Family was pleased to present a donation to the Stoughton Hospital Outpatient Renovation Fund for the new Cardiac Rehab unit. Pictured are Lisa Olson – ALA , Dawn Clark – ALA, Laura Mays – Stoughton Hospital Foundation, Sally Schieldt – ALA, Michael Currie – Post Commander and Jim Oler - SAL.



The ALA PATRIOTIC STITCHERS



Roger Strandlie was presented with a quilt made by Pat Broadbent thanking him for his volunteer service to Post 59 as an SAL Member.



Myron Sime was presented with a quilt made by Alice Moen at the January Post dinner in appreciation for his service.



Post 59 Calendar of Events

MARCH 2024

- Mar. 4th : Monthly Auxiliary Meeting @ 5:30pm
- Mar. 8th: Music by JR & Susie 7:00-10:00pm
- Mar. 11th: American Legion Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- Mar. 13th: SAL Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- Mar. 16th: Bad Habit Band 7:00-10:00pm
- Mar. 17th: Monthly Legion Breakfast for HATS– 7:30-11:30am
- Mar. 22nd: Blue Moon Karaoke - 7:00-11:00pm
- Mar. 23rd: Chicken & Biscuits - 4:00-7:00pm
- Mar. 24th: Country Music JAM 2:00-6:00pm
- Mar. 26th: Monthly Post Dinner @ 6:00pm

APRIL 2024

- Apr. 6th: Universal Sound 7:00-10:00pm
- Apr. 1st: Monthly Auxiliary Meeting @ 5:30pm
- Apr. 8th: American Legion Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- Apr. 10th: SAL Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- Apr. 12th: Lefty's Old Time Jukebox - 7:00-10:00pm
- Apr. 13th: Adult Prom - 5:00-10:00pm
- Apr. 19th: Country Renegades Band 7:00 - 10:00pm
- Apr. 21st: Monthly Legion Breakfast – 7:30-11:30am
- Apr. 23rd: Monthly Post Dinner @ 6:00pm
- Apr. 26th: Dean's Blue Country 7:00-10:00pm
- Apr. 28th: Country Music JAM 2:00-6:00pm

MAY 2024

- May. 3rd: Jackie Marie & The Dance Hall Kings 7:00-10:00pm
- May 4th: Kentucky Derby 1:00-6:00pm
- May 6th: Monthly Auxiliary Meeting @ 5:30pm
- May 8th: SAL Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- May 11th: Bad Habit Band 7:00-10:00pm
- May 13th: American Legion Monthly Meeting @ 7:00pm
- May 18th: Dan Reilly Music 7:00-11:00pm
- May 19th: Monthly Legion Breakfast – 7:30-11:30am
- May 24th: Blue Moon Karaoke 7:00-11:00
- May 26th: Country Music JAM 2:00-6:00pm
- May 31st: Lefty's Old Time Jukebox 7:00-10:00pm

MEAT RAFFLE EVERY SATURDAY @ 2:00pm

Events are subject to change. Please check our website @ www.post59.us or our Facebook page @ www.facebook.com/post59stoughton for any changes to the events listed above.

Contact Information for Post 59

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Bob Hocking – SAL Commander

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Email: bobghocking@gmail.com

Bob Crofoot - Editor

Email: 59legionpost@gmail.com



Calling all Veterans & Active Duty Military

Veterans from all eras are needed to ride the veteran's float in the Syttende Mai and Memorial Day parades. Not necessary to have been in a combat zone. Not necessary to be in uniform. These floats are in your honor.

Please come and participate. No RSVP necessary.

Syttende Mai Parade - Sunday, May 19th

Meet at Mandt Park by 1:00 p.m. The Veteran's Float parks on South Fourth Street

Memorial Day Parade - Monday, May 27th

Beginning at 10:00 am on S. Prairie and West Main St.

Shuttle available from the Mandt Center to parade line-up for parade participants beginning at 9:15.

Veteran's Float parks on the corner of S. Prairie & W. Main at 9:30.

Memorial Day Program – Monday, May 27th

(Immediately Following the Parade @ 11:00 a.m. at the Mandt Center - rain or shine)

Program is open to the public



2023 Syttende Mai and Memorial Day Help Schedule

Help needed for Syttende Mai

Saturday May 20th - Decorate float at VFW at 9:00 am.

Help Needed for Cemetery Flag Placement

Thursday May 25th - 8:00 am - Meet at Riverside Cemetery to Put Out Flags

Rain Date: Friday May 26 - 8:00 am

Tuesday May 30th - 8:00 am - Meet at Riverside Cemetery to Remove Flags

Rain date: Wednesday May 31st- 8:00 am

Set up for the Memorial Day Program at the Mandt Center

Saturday May 27th - 9:00 am

Thank you in advance for your help.

The Memorial Day Committee





AMERICAN LEGION POST 59 HONOR GUARD

The Beginning Until Now

On November 11, 1999, President Bill Clinton signed the Honor Guard Recognition Act authorizing the Secretary of Defense to provide a \$25 stipend to local veteran groups to perform military honors at the funerals of deceased military veterans.

On May 5, 2024, the American Legion Post 59 Honor Guard will celebrate its 22nd year conducting military honors for deceased area veterans, in what is a final tribute of respect to an honorably discharged veteran who served his/her country in the United States Military.

The Post 59 Honor Guard was started in 2002 under the leadership of then Post Commander, Bill Redepenning, and Adjutant, Wayne Christensen. Approximately 35 Legion veterans received the necessary training and certification led by the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs. Following the purchase of rifles and ammunition from the DVA, each Honor Guard member purchased his own Honor Guard dress uniform. Now, when a member passes away, his uniform is donated to the Legion so that incoming members are spared those start-up costs.

Of the 35 who were initially trained, there are now 17 active members. Of the initial 35, there are four remaining from that team—DuWayne Teigen and Bud Erickson, active, and Archie Christensen and Roger Uttermark, inactive. Two members of the Sons of the American Legion are also current members.

The Honor Guard Coordinator has the major responsibility in organizing and assuring things run smoothly. Initially, after the death of a veteran, he coordinates with the Veterans Administration and the Funeral Home Director. Next, he assembles the team which will pay the last tribute of respect to the deceased veteran. The team consists of a chaplain, a captain, five riflemen, a bugler and two flag holders. For the initial several years, the unit also did the flag folding, but now the military handles that responsibility. Vietnam era Navy veteran, Tom Jenny, is the current coordinator. According to Tom, "I consider it an honor to coordinate this group of devoted veterans". His predecessors were Bill Redepenning, Archie Christensen, Nick Bierman, Monte Whitford, Bud Erickson, and Al Vick.

The Honor Guard Captain is responsible for the training of new members, conducting the practice drills, calling the commands at the funeral, and making sure that proper military etiquette and procedures are followed. Past captains were Wayne Christensen, Al Phelps, Nick Bierman and Al Vick. Current captains are Bud Erickson, Jim Schiferl, and Mike Currie.

During the first few years, Post 59 was one of the few honor guard units in the area. As a result, the Stoughton Post was called on to conduct the honors for many area deceased veterans. In addition to Stoughton and Madison, the Honor guard traveled from Black Earth to Janesville and from Lake Mills to Mt. Horeb and most communities within that region. In 2005, the team conducted 135 funerals—sometimes 2-3 per day. Now that many local VFW and Legion posts have their own honor Guard units, Post 59 does the honors for approximately 35 funerals per year.

All members are volunteers; the Post now gets a \$50 stipend for each funeral.

Locations where the Post 59 Honor Guard has conducted military honors:

Albion Prairie, Black Earth, Brooklyn, Cambridge, Cooksville, Cottage Grove, Deerfield, Deforest, Edgerton, Janesville, East and Western Koshkonong, Lake Mills, Madison, McFarland, Middleton, Mt. Horeb, Muscoda, Oregon, Stoughton, Sun Prairie, Verona

Although most honors take place at churches and associated cemeteries, following are other locations where honors have been held: These include: private residences; rural cemeteries like Graves, Jug Prairie, Mt. Vernon; Hauge, Hope Lutheran, Prairie Mound, Dunn, Lake Ripley, Rockdale, Token Park, Wheeler Prairie, and Lewis Park; Kegonsa Campground; Pleasant Springs Pub; Nora Tavern; Stoughton Conservation Club; Skaalen Home; Veterans Memorial Park

These are the current active members: Mike Ayer (A), Father Randy Budnar (AF), Mike Currie (N), Bud Erickson (A), Mike Griggs (N), Mike Gerard (A), Rodger Hansen (A), Rod Haried (AF), Scott Johnson (N), Tom Jenny (N), Ed Nowicki (N), Ken Schieldt (A), Jim Schiferl (AF), DuWayne Stellmacher (M), Arlin Teigen (A), DuWayne Teigen (A), Al Vick (A)

The SAL members are Tim Carter and Roger Strandlie

Code: A-Army, N-Navy, M-Marines, AF-Air Force

*Bud Erickson
January, 2024*

AQUAVIT ON MEMORIAL DAY

The tradition of serving Aquavit after the Memorial Day events are completed, dates back to the year 2000. At the time, Bud Erickson was the VFW commander, and Al Phelps was the commander of the American Legion. Bud was also a member of Torske Klubben (aka Codfish Club), an organization of Norwegian descendant males which meets monthly in Madison. Norwegian traditions which are maintained are the serving of codfish and the imbibing of Linie Aquavit (Linya Akavit). At the March meeting in 2000, Al attended as Bud's guest. On the way home, Al remarked that he thought the aquavit tasted pretty good and that I should bring some to the post at the Memorial Day gathering and "run it up the flagpole to see who salutes". I got my half bottle out of the freezer and poured small samples to some brave souls. They saluted. The rest is history.

There are numerous aquavits in Scandinavia, but Linie is unique in that it is the only one which has traveled in sherry casks from Oslo, Norway, across the equator to Australia, and back to Hasle, north of Oslo, where it is bottled. It is often called Eau de Ville (the water of life). It is believed to lengthen life, get rid of bad humor, revitalize the heart, and keep one young.

The key ingredients are potatoes and ample caraway, plus other spices as anise-seed, fennel, dill, coriander, and paradise grain. The recipes are better protected than Norway's gold stocks. Locked down in a fireproof vault lie four hand-written recipe books. Only a small handful of faithful know where the key is.

It is difficult to say when the custom of sending aquavit on sea voyages began. The most plausible theory is that Norwegian sailors of yore discovered the aquavit they had on board became better and better tasting as their voyage under distant skies went on. The old sherry casks were not full, and the aquavit splashed around as the ship rolled over the equatorial waves. The changing climate conditions, together with the steady rolling that the aquavit was subjected to, had beneficial outcomes. At present, the tradition is continued on today's modern ships.

Aquavit is a sipping drink—not a down the hatch snort. Some like to drink it ice cold; others prefer room temperature,

*Skoal!
Bud Erickson*

Lest We Forget: Veterans Memorial at Riverside Park

The Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park on Highway B is new and impressive, but it is not the city's only veterans' memorial. Two historic memorials, one honoring Stoughton's Civil War veterans, and the other dedicated to all veterans, stand quietly and often forgotten about or unknown in Riverside Park. Together, they are a testament to the city's long-standing commitment to honoring its veterans and are part of Stoughton's history.

Originally erected in 1887 in what is now Riverside Cemetery, the historic Civil War cenotaph bears the ravages of time, but its inscriptions, including "Lest We Forget" and "Died For The Union" remain legible. Dedicated to the 79 Stoughton area soldiers who lost their lives fighting in the Civil War, the cenotaph was moved in 1932 to nearby land now known as Riverside Park.

An article in the May 24, 1932, edition of The Capital Times noted "because of the filling up of the cemetery, the open space near the monument has become so small that the nearby graves are being trampled upon by crowds assembled during Memorial Day exercises. To remedy this, the memorial was moved to a suitable location on the crest of a knoll on a six-acre plot of ground". Although the decision to move the monument was made in 1923, the actual move took place in 1932. Known then as West Side Park, the park's name was changed to Riverside Park in 1967.

Vandalism

In the fall of 2001, vandals attacked Riverside Cemetery and Park, severely damaging many tombstones as well as the Civil War monument. A glass globe, a symbol of unity and peace, that originally sat atop the cenotaph was irreparably damaged, but the rest of the monument was repaired. Just to the east of the Civil War monument, a second, 14-foot-tall monument was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1968. Honoring all veterans and war dead, it features etching of a spread eagle, a symbol of strength, courage, and freedom. Beneath the eagle, inscriptions read, "Lest We Forget" and "Dedicated to the Men and Women of Stoughton and community who, in the roar of conflict, by their unselfish patriotism have advanced the American ideals of liberty and universal brotherhood of man". Another inscription reads, "Let no ravages of time testify to coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic".

The monument's base includes nine medallions representing various veteran groups.

Memorial Day

From the late 1800's until 2005, Riverside Park was the setting for Stoughton's annual Memorial Day program, which ultimately outgrew the park's capacity to handle the crowds. Early on, attendees either brought their own chairs, stood, or sat on the grass. As crowds grew bigger, seating was provided, thanks to veterans from VFW Post 328 and American Legion Post 59, who hauled bleachers back and forth from the Mandt Park livestock barns.

Historical records show that in 1935, fewer than 100 people attended the Memorial Day ceremony, including the Stoughton High School Band.

By 2005, with crowds continuing to grow and after two consecutive years of weather-related cancellations, the decision was made to permanently move the program to Mandt Park. People continue to be attracted to the program, which honors all military men and women who paid the supreme sacrifice in defense of their country. In 2003, some 600 people attended the Memorial Day event.


Bud Erickson

Note: Thanks to Eloise Christensen and Lesley Johnson, volunteers at Stoughton Public Library, and Dan Jenks, Police Chief of the Stoughton Police Department, for their assistance in researching this project.

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AMERICAN LEGION BAR

803 NORTH PAGE STREET

STOUGHTON, WI

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – 608-205-9090

Bar Open to Serve You:

Wednesday – Sunday

(Monday & Tuesday **CLOSED**)

Wednesday: **3:00pm – 8:00pm**

Thursday: **3:00pm – 8:00pm**

Friday: **3:00pm - 10:00pm**

Saturday: **12:00am - 12:00pm**

Sunday: **12:00-6:00pm**