

By The *Post Lake*



January / February 2025

www.postbythelake.org



Albert E Baesel
American Legion Post 91

91 American Legion Parkway
Berea, Ohio 44017
440-234-0091
admin@postbythelake.org

Canteen Hours

Monday-Friday 12-12 pm
Saturday 12-1
Sunday 12-8 pm

Kitchen Hours

Tuesday-Friday 12-2 pm
Monday, Thursday, Friday 6-8 pm
(Third Thursday 7-9pm)
Tuesday, Wednesday 5-7 pm

Hall Rentals

For hall rentals, contact
Wally Fadrowski: 757-642-2895
walterfadrowski3@gmail.com

Celebrations of Life / Sunshine Fund

*Post 91 provides hall and food at no
cost for members & immediate
family members for celebrations of life
Contact Marilla Baher
(216) 299-7744

Commander
James Lockyer

Editor/Designer
Victoria Schaft

Commander's Corner



Greetings Legion Family Members:

Happy New Year. I hope everyone had a safe and joyous holiday season. We are about to start a new year, 2026. Let's make this a good year for our Post. Watch our newsletters and boards. We could always use a few more volunteers.

Blue Caps, please make it a New Year's resolution to attend more meetings and be more involved. Remember, this is your Post. Exercise your right to vote and have a say. Our general membership meeting is the second Thursday of each month in the hall at 7:30pm.

James Lockyer



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Vietnam never leaves you. When you're in combat, it's always a shock. You never know when it's going to happen—a bomb goes off or you're getting shot at. We all had battle fatigue, and you don't know how to express that. There's no difference from emotional, psychological or an actual physical wound. They're all the same. But on June 30, 1969, I got hit—really bad. And every year on that day, I celebrate what I call my 'Alive Day' and think about how lucky I am.



I was drafted into the Army right after high school in September, 1968, and it was off to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for basic and then advanced infantry training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. As you get closer to the end of your eight-weeks training, it starts to become real. There were huge AWOL problems, so they locked the whole base down. They had MPs walking around the outer posts and barracks all night, and then when it was time, jeeps of MPs followed truckloads of us to an air force base outside of Fort Polk. We flew to Washington, then to Hawaii (where one guy went AWOL), then to Guam...and then to 'Nam, where I joined Bravo Company, 1st/20th Infantry, 11th Light Infantry Brigade.

I was an 81mm mortar man, so I'd carry the tube about in the bush. There's three parts to it: the base plate (about 55lbs), a tripod (35lbs), and the tube (about another 35lbs). I also carried my rucksack, bandoliers of M-16 ammo and a machete. As a mortar man, I normally didn't have to do patrols, but one time we were told we had to do the night defensive perimeter. I didn't think anything of it. We were in a rice patty and it was the dry season. I left my stuff there, taking only my machine gun and bandolier of ammo. When I got back, there was a direct hit from a mortar round in my helmet where I left it. If I hadn't done guard duty that night, I would have been killed. Once, we were walking on the dike going into the mountains when the land gave away. I looked down and it was a punji pit of about a dozen stakes. I had all this weight on my body and I thought, I'm going to hit it. This is all happening within a



second and all I could think was to spread my legs and arms. I hit the stakes but they were all rotten. I look up and there's four or five heads looking at me, thinking I was impaled.



Continued on Page 10

**Top:
Trapper with his Mortar Tube
on an LZ (Landing Zone)**

**Left:
Notice the Hole
in the Center of the Helmet**

1st Vice, Ed Leopold

Hello everyone and happy New Year to all! Well, ladies and gentlemen...time has come for all dues to have been paid by the end of the 2025 year. As of December 31, all cards that are not paid will be turned off.

Enjoy the New Year!

Ed



2nd Vice, Keith Mattison

As I start my report for January and February, it's hard to believe another year has gone by. Where do they go? It was a busy year at the Post and it sure went quick. I hope everybody was able to join and have some fun this year with us at the Post, whether it was the Riddy Run or the fall festival or the clambake or the customer appreciation gathering—whatever it may have been—I hope you were you able to make it to an event and enjoy it.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people and volunteers that helped put all of these things together. A special thanks goes out to Sarah and Kaylin for all the help you gave me and for everything we all did together. Always remember, if it wasn't for all of the volunteers that helped, a lot of these events would not have been possible...so I thank you for that.

As we begin 2026, mark your calendars for February 21, which is when we'll once again be having our spectacular Night at the Races. Keep an eye out for times and prices. If you've been to one, you know a good time is had by all. If not, hopefully we'll see you this year.

I hope everybody had a wonderful, merry Christmas and a blessed new year. Enjoy your holidays with family and friends. Stay safe and be careful. So, from me to you, merry Christmas to all and to all good health. Remember to Thank a Veteran.

God bless, and God bless the United States of America.

Keith



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Halloween Party, 2025
Costume Contest Winners, Top Left





1st Vice, Linda Joy

Happy New Year! Here's to 365 new chances to make it count! Wishing you good health, prosperity and exciting new adventures ahead.

Thank you for your amazing support for the ALA Monday night raffle baskets.
New Year—new baskets!

Linda



**Ceremonial Wreaths
Honoring All
Branches of the
Armed Forces at
Turkey Foot
Cemetery
and
Chestnut Grove
Cemetery
in Olmsted Falls,
2025**



Membership and Community Service Chairman, Nancy Doult

Membership Update

Another Auxiliary member has entered into eternal rest with the passing of Jane Miller. Jane was a 41-year member and one of our past presidents. She was very active in the Berea community and was a long-time realtor who donated 10% of every real estate sale to the charity of her client's choice. Thank you for your mentorship, Jane. Rest in peace.

As of the writing of this report, we have processed 332 memberships and are at 79.8% of our goal of 416! Thank you! If you did not renew your dues before January 1, 2026, you are considered delinquent, and your keycard access to the canteen has been turned off. Since we've been processing dues since August 1, 2025, please be patient when you pay your dues for the membership records to be updated at the Post, and for your keycard to be reactivated. When paying with cash in the canteen, please make sure the person who accepts your money writes your name on the envelope, along with your member number, phone number or address. The second notice from National will arrive in your mailbox in February, even if you already paid your dues. Please disregard if you have already paid and received your 2026 card. For members who pay their dues online, you do have the option of printing your membership card, and a National officer also sends you a card. We've also been asked to send you your card that is provided to us at the beginning of the membership year. We apologize for any confusion. Thank you.

Welcome New Members

**Bernice Ellison
Marsha Felber
Karen Kenney
Betty Malone
Theresa McCrae
Judith Petho
Kimberly Roth
Kathleen Switalski
Trish Wingenfeld
New Juniors
Malinah Rivas
Scarlett Zart**

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Giving Tree

I can't tell you how many times I had tears in my eyes while accepting and sorting giving tree gifts this year. Through your generosity, we were able to provide over 170 gifts to children and seniors through Berea Community Outreach, a couple of families in the community, a female Veteran from Second Mile Outreach and her two young children who were in a domestic violence situation, and Second Mile Veterans' families. We had donations from Post members, their families and friends, and even some of my classmates from Valley City, North Carolina and the state of Washington. You brought me as much joy with this project as I'm sure the recipients had on Christmas morning. I'd like to give a HUGE thank you to Carolee and T.J., who helped make tags and decorated the tree, and to Valerie, T.J., and Gayle, who sorted the gifts. The gifts were delivered after the writing of this article, so an additional thank you to the elves who helped with delivery.



Upcoming Veterans Events

“Baby it’s Cold Outside” baby shower—The Women’s Health area of the Parma Veteran’s Community-Based Outpatient Clinic is holding a baby shower for around 45 expecting female Veterans on Saturday, January 10, 2026. They are collecting the items below to make diaper cakes. If you would like to donate anything, please place it in the collection box in the canteen.

- Diapers (sizes newborn to 4), Bibs, Washcloths, Socks, Nail clippers, Nasal aspirators, Medicine droppers, Combs/Brushes, Thermometers, Onesies, Trial size baby products

Wade Park Domiciliary bus trip to Post 91 will be on Tuesday, February 17, 2026—Our American Legion family will be hosting 50 Veterans from the Dom for dinner, games and gifts. Please help make this event a success by joining them for dinner and participating in the games to make them feel welcome. The bus will arrive at 5:30pm. with a tentative departure by 7:30pm. To help get an idea for a headcount for dinner, please let Nancy know at (440) 552-4713 if you can attend. Thank you.



**Wreath Placed at Woodvale Cemetery
in Honor of Albert Baesel, 2025**

Nancy



SAL Commander, Sean Boddy

We had quite the year, didn't we? There were updates and changes to the Post, the remodeling in the canteen, and we remodeled our SAL wall and added a large digital picture frame.

We hosted several successful events, including our District 13 meeting, Browns tailgate, OSU tailgate party, Veterans Day dinner, and soon, our Superbowl party! All these events helped raise money for our "Bear" Hoff Scholarship Award and so many other Veteran organizations we donate to. Thank you to all who attended any of these events and helps make what we do possible.

Speaking of events...SUPERBOWL is right around the corner! We will be hosting our annual Superbowl party in the canteen again on Sunday, February 8, 2026. Watch for flyers for times, tickets and more information. There will be squares and raffles as well. Flyers will be in the canteen, on our wall and on our Facebook page. Hope to see you all there!

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, holiday times can be extra hard for people struggling with any kind of depression, conflict, and/or loneliness in their lives. There are people in our lives who could probably use a little extra care this holiday season and through the cold winter months. Just sending a quick text or a friendly email, mailing a card, or making a quick phone call can do more for them than you realize. Just knowing someone cares and they're not alone can even be lifesaving. It doesn't have to be anything big to make a huge difference. While the world around us may seem crazy and even dark at times right now, we need to remember to look out for one another.

In conclusion, I wish you all a safe and warm holiday and winter season full of love, laughter, comfort, great times and a happy New Year!

"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending."

—Maria Robinson

"What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year."

—Vern McLellan

Please visit the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 91 Facebook page for updates on future events and activities. As always, please consider joining us for one of our monthly meetings on every second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the upstairs hall. If you have any inquiries about our organization and/or membership, questions, comments or concerns, please contact an officer. Feel free to send us a message on Facebook or email Salpost91@gmail.com.

Sean



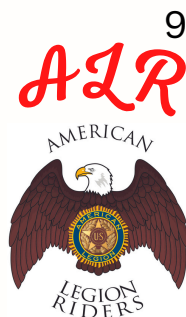
Assistant Director, Tom Dees

Dear Members,

The Bikes are put away until warmer weather comes, but the 91 Riders are still active!!

We have been serving lunch during the Browns games on Sundays. It has been a great experience getting to meet and talk with those of you who have come out for the games. Thank you for your support!!! The money we earned from those lunches allowed us to donate \$500 to two families in need through the Renew Community Church of Berea. A few of the Riders volunteered to help out at the Louis Stokes VA Christmas Party, where we helped the residents celebrate Christmas a few days early!!!

We are also partnering with the Auxiliary to sponsor a "Paint-N-Sip" night on Feb 7, 2026. We will have supplies and an art instructor to walk you through creating your very own painting that you will get to take home that night. Please keep an eye out at the Post for more details and the deadline to register!!!



Jack Frost Festival, 2025

SPAGHETTI

Dinner

JANUARY 10TH
4PM TO 7PM

Sponsored by

- Pasta
- Sauce
- Meatballs
- Garlic Bread
- Salad
- Pop/water
- Dessert



TICKETS
\$12 each
\$10 Kids 12 & under
Free kids 4 & under

Multiple sweepstakes
For you to enter.
Additional tickets
available at event.*

*No purchase necessary
to enter sweepstakes. Event
ticket equals 1 free
entry to sweepstakes

170 Seminary St
Berea, Oh

All proceeds to
support Cub
Scouts Pack 107
10% to local
Veterans

If there are any members out there who have a motorcycle and would like to see what we are about, or get more info about being a Rider, please reach out!! We are always looking to welcome more Riders to the family.

We would also like to take a moment to wish everyone a happy New Year and a healthy and successful 2026.

Sincerely,

Tom

When in infantry, you always walk in two or three columns—10 feet between each guy—in case you get attacked by a machine gun. I’m in the second row and suddenly there was an explosion. I hit the ground, looked to my left where the noise was, and saw something fly about 15 feet in the air. It was Rodriguez. I ran over there and looked at him, and I was in shock because he had no arms or legs. He was alive and just looking at us. It seemed to last forever.



Four and a half months or so into my service, I got hit. We were on this hill in the Duc Pho area, loading the wounded and dead into a medevac helicopter. You would use flashlights at night to bring it in, one with a red lens and one with a green lens. The helicopter hovers at the top of the hill, and a guy would use the green light to tell him to keep coming down and the red light to tell him to hover there. Anyways, this was the third time we were on this hill, and Charlie had boobytrapped it. Four mines were triggered. I got hit by the third mine. The wind from the Medevac chopper set it off. It picked us four guys up like we were dolls, throwing us 50-60 feet in the air. (This incident killed eight men and wounded 17.) I remember the guys putting me into the helicopter to take me to the rear, clutching my stomach because there was a big piece of shrapnel sticking out. I remember the nurse cutting off my shirt, pants—everything. You’re just in shock. You hear people talk about near death experiences...for me it went all the way back to my childhood, like a tape playing in my mind.



After I was wounded, they kept me in ‘Nam for about 21 days and then flew us to Camp Zama, Japan. That was another nightmare. They had cots secured to the ceiling and we were secured to the cots with three belts. The sad thing is they didn’t medicate the guys with TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). They were screaming the whole flight...for hours. Those poor guys, just screaming and crying. I stayed at Valley Forge Hospital for five months. Once, my parents came to visit and didn’t even recognize me because I was so darkly tanned and had lost 40lbs, leaving me at a mere 113lbs.

Once I recovered, I thought I would be medically discharged from the Army, but instead, they sent me to Fort Hood for more training. Eventually, I applied to Tri-C and got an early-out in June of 1970.

Bravo Company
Just Hours Before the Mines Exploded
Larry (on Left) was Killed That Day

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Since my injury on June 30, 1969, I have celebrated ‘Alive Day’ every year on that day. Sometimes I want to be with people and sometimes I just want to be by myself to think about how lucky I am. Once, I went to Brooklyn Heights Cemetery to visit my best buddy’s grave. Dave was like a brother to me. We flew to ‘Nam side-by-side. He served in 101st Airborne, and I had sent him a letter to tell him I was in Bravo Company. During a mail call, I suddenly got my letter back. I was still new (six to eight weeks in ‘Nam), and so I said to an older guy, “I wonder why I got my letter back.” He just looked at me and said, “he’s dead.” Dave didn’t even make it 30 days there! Anyway, at his grave, I placed a purple heart flag with his name on it and a card with my name and address in a sandwich bag, and I stuck the flag there. Dave’s brother sent me a letter. It said, “I wanted you to know, I remember you went to see my parents when you got out of the service.” I still have the letter.

Thirty years after the war, Vinnie, a guy who served in my mortar platoon, started tracking us all down to get together. The first year, there were three of us and it expanded more and more until there were about ten of us. I was just happy to see everyone again. We know we’re lucky, even though many of us are suffering from the effects of Agent Orange and other ailments caused by the war. And we’re lucky to have the VA, which is a state-of-the-art facility and offers great council. They are good people there: the LPNs, RNs, Doctors, nurse practitioners, janitors, secretaries... everyone.



Bravo Company Reunion at the National WWII Museum, 2024

From Left to Right:

Jim House, Vinnie Anyzeski, Kieth Kolozie, Jim (Trapper) Adams

I also support the motorcycle run to raise money for Clinton, Ohio. They have privately built a memorial wall for Ohio Vietnam Veterans. (We lost over 3,000 people.) The wall is beautiful. It’s made with black marble, and the battlefield cross and a Cobra helicopter are also displayed there. Things like that mean a lot.



Trapper and a Cobra Helicopter



Olmsted Falls High School's Veteran Support Program

- Contact Sean Pellerite at Olmsted Falls High School at 440-427-6132 or email spellerite@ofcs.net if you need a household repair, yardwork done, etc.
- The Veteran supplies some of the materials that are needed (with some donations from North Olmsted Home Depot) and we supply the FREE labor as our way of saying...

"Thank you for your service!"

2nd Vice, Stacey Lehmann (Auxiliary)

I would like to thank the WHOLE Post 91 family (Legionnaires, Auxiliary, SAL and the Riders) for their generous donations to the Wreaths Across America program. By working together, we were able to donate 432 wreaths. Of those, 342 were placed on the graves of Veterans at four of our local cemeteries, and 100 wreaths were placed at Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio under our Post 91 sponsorship. I would like to thank everyone who braved the freezing cold to participate in the ceremonies and placed wreaths throughout our community. Finally, I would like to thank our Commander and the Legionnaires for their support while trying something new for the Post, and for the opportunity to represent Post 91 as the site coordinator to our sponsored cemeteries. Happy 2026!

Stacey

A Letter from the Editor

I would like to thank everyone who shared their stories this past year in the *Post by the Lake*. All of your Post 91 family members appreciate your service: fellow Veterans, Auxiliary, SALs and Riders alike.

Please keep your stories flowing in the new year. They help remind other Veterans that they are not alone and help remind civilians that freedom isn't free. Please email your stories to vschaft@outlook.com and type Post 91 into the subject line, or if you'd like to orate your stories, call Victoria at 440-610-2682 and we can schedule a time to meet at the Post.

God bless you all and have the happiest New Year!

Victoria

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Bulletin Board

January

3: Billy Sullivan, 7pm
 8: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
 10: Work Party, 8:30am
 12: AUX Meeting, 7:30pm
 14: SAL Meeting, 7:30pm
 22: Blue Caps E-Board, 7pm
 26 AUX E-Board, 7pm

February

5: ALR Meeting, 7pm
 7: Paint-N-Sip
 8: Super Bowl Party
 9: AUX Meeting 7:30pm
 11: SAL Meeting, 7:30pm
 12: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
 14: Work Party, 8:30am
 21: Night at the Races
 23: AUX E-Board, 7:30pm
 26: Blue Caps E-Board, 7pm



TAPS

Bill Smith
 Richard Toth
 Jane Miller

NOT A MEMBER?
Ask an Officer or Bartender
how You can Join
Our American Legion Family



To share your patriotic stories, messages, photos and artwork, contact Victoria at vschaft@outlook.com and type "Post 91" into the subject line.