

By The *Post Lake*



March / April, 2026

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.

I hope everyone is doing well. Hopefully the worst of winter is over, but I am sure we will have a little more snow before spring. As we prepare for spring, let's watch our bulletin boards and Facebook for events that might be scheduled for our Post. I know we have St. Patty's Day around the corner, followed by Easter.

Our general membership meeting is the second Thursday of each month in the hall at 7pm. Veterans, this is your Post. Your input and your vote matters and counts. I would like to hear from you. And usually on the second Saturday of each month, we have a work party. Volunteers are always welcome.

James Lockyer

Veteran Benefits and Resource Expo
Free to Attend
12-4pm American Legion Clifton Post 421
22001 Brookpark Rd.
Fairview Park, Ohio 44126
Contact: Jennifer Lynn
USOAL421@gmail.com



Newsletter Contents

Commander's Corner..... 1
"Prisoner of War Diary..." 2, 10-12
American Legion.....3
American Legion Auxiliary..... 4-5
Photo Board..... 6
Sons of American Legion..... 7-8
American Legion Riders.....9
Calendars..... 13-14
Bulletin Board and TAPS..... 15



Prisoner of War Diary Uncovered

"It reminded me how easy it is for someone's story to disappear if no one keeps track of it."

- Jesus Flores

Louis Pape returned from World War II with stories he rarely talked about. Years later, his daughter and son-in-law opened a box he left behind and found a diary of his life as a prisoner of war written on toilet paper.

The visit

It started with a visit to the family farm in Illinois in the late 1970s. Cheryl Denslow and her husband David had come to see her parents. Her father, Pape, had served in World War II as a P-38 fighter pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps and was a prisoner of war (POW).

Like many Veterans of that generation, he didn't talk about it much.



Cheryl and David Denslow

That day, Pape brought out an old cardboard box. It was one of the Red Cross boxes sent to Allied prisoners during the war. These boxes were packed with food and basic supplies, such as powdered milk, cigarettes and canned meat. Most prisoners reused the empty tins. Pape used his to make a cover for a diary written in pencil on sheets of toilet paper.

David remembers Pape showing a few items and quietly putting the box away.

"I was humbled by some of the stories he told," David said. "Cheryl told me I should feel privileged. She had never seen some of those items herself."

When Cheryl's mother died in 2013, the box was given to them. They didn't open it for years.

Documenting history

In 2024, Cheryl and David took a cruise that stopped in Norway. At a war museum, David met a woman whose father had also been a POW at Stalag Luft III, the same camp where Pape was held.

"When we got home, I told Cheryl, 'I want to go through the box again,'" he said.

David built a phone stand from scrap wood and began photographing each page of the diary. He enlarged the images on a screen to read Pape's writing.

"It was slow work," he said. "But I didn't want to miss anything."

Continued on Page 10

2nd Vice, Keith Mattison

Hello all,

Well, winter's half over and spring's right around the corner. It'll be daylight savings time pretty soon, and we'll be getting an extra hour of daylight. It's starting to warm up, and spring is going to be here soon. I hope everybody survived the winter so far. Also, I'm wishing everybody a very happy new year. I hope it's been prosperous and healthy, and that you all had outstanding holidays.

There's not a whole lot to report since this is our quiet time of the year. The fish fry dinners are in full swing and doing great. Thanks to all the groups who have been helping out to make the fish fry dinners successful.

By the time y'all read this, the Night at the Races will be in the books, and hopefully y'all had a great time. By the time the next newsletter comes out, we'll be getting ready to start our barbecues up again because it'll be the May newsletter—so start watching in mid-April for all that. I look forward to the return of spring in Ohio. I just want to say, I appreciate all of the work the volunteers do for us. It is greatly appreciated.

Also, as always, thank a Veteran and take the time to talk to one.

And as always, God bless the United States of America.

Keith



Sargeant of the Guard, Jon Silvis

Greetings everyone,

The USS Cleveland will be commissioned here in Cleveland on 17 May 2026. This event is open to the public. (Watch for Details.)

Also, History Days are 18 - 28 June 2026. Many museums and historical places will be running special events and discounts during that time.

Regards,

Jon

Building Chaiman, Gene Joy

Work parties are on the second Saturday of each month. Eggs ala Leopold is at 8am. No eggs ala anybody after 8:30. Drink chips will be provided for your labors.

Gene

*To the Colors!
The Travel! The Excitement!
The Pay! --just kidding*

**Your Post 91 Color Guard Needs
YOU!**

**We are always looking for
volunteers, Legionnaires and SALs.
Represent your Post in local
ceremonies and events. Uniforms
are provided. Short monthly drills.**

For more information contact,
Jon Silvis 440-823-1066 *OR* Bob Roginsky 440-582-5856



President, Nina Zdravecky

Hello Happy People!

Well, I hope that by now the worst of the deep freeze is over.

Don't forget to sign up your kid(s) for the Easter Bunny Brunch! Look for details in this newsletter and please save the date of April 18th for our annual spaghetti dinner. Watch for signs as we get closer to that date. I want to wish everyone a very blessed Easter.

Thank you and God bless,

Nina



AUX Blanket Making Event, 2026



1st Vice, Linda Joy

Hi,

I hope that by now, everyone has forgiven the groundhog. He didn't want any more winter than we did.

February's raffle baskets helped fund the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. We appreciate your support, and together we can make a difference.

Looking forward to spring,

Linda

2nd Vice, Stacey Lehmann

The Auxiliary scholarship, along with the other Post 91 scholarships, are now available. Paper copies of the applications for the Legionnaire and Auxiliary scholarships are available from a bartender in the canteen. All scholarships are available on the Post website.

The Auxiliary is looking for young women who will have completed their junior year of high school by June 1, 2026, and who would be interested in applying to participate in the Buckeye Girls State program. Interested candidates are asked to reach out to Stacey Lehmann for more information and an application.

Children's Easter party will be on Saturday April 4, 2026 from 11-1pm.

The sign-up sheet will be available on Monday, March 2, 2026.

The party is for children 10 years old and younger.

Stacey



Membership and Community Service Chairman, Nancy Doutt, Cont.

Membership Update

It saddens me to say that two more Auxiliary members entered into eternal rest. Four-year member Dorothy “Dot” Buzzard passed away on January 28, and 25-year member Mary Ann Deimling passed away on February 15. They were both such giving members and contributed to our programs throughout their memberships. Our deepest condolences go out to their families, many of whom are part of the Post 91 American Legion family. Rest in peace good and faithful servants.

As of the writing of this report, we have processed 405 memberships, and are at 97.4% of our goal of 416! Thank you! If you did not renew your dues before January 1, 2026, your cardkey access to the canteen has been turned off. You may have received a second notice from National 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

**Sandra Cusick
Cheryl Douglas
Kelly Kicen
Kathleen Kilbane
Margaret McCullough
Taps
Dorothy “Dot” Buzzard
Mary Ann Deimling**

American Legion Auxiliary Scholarship and Garage Sale

The Auxiliary scholarship application is available in the canteen, and completed applications are due back by April 15. Any member or relative of a member of any Post 91 organization is eligible to apply, no matter your age or gender. The Auxiliary scholarship is fully funded by the annual garage sale. This year’s sale will take place on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, May 7, 8, and 9. Drop-offs will be from Sunday, May 3, through Wednesday, May 6. Please watch for the flyer in the canteen for more details. Volunteers are appreciated.

Wade Park Domiciliary & Blind Rehab Visit

As of the writing of this report, the Wade Park Domiciliary and Blind Rehab Unit bus trip to Post 91 on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, is just days away. We will have a catered dinner, play games, and have ditty bags filled with comfort items and other items for them to select, such as new and gently-used clothing, personal care items, and handmade afghans and blankets. Thank you to our Post 91 family for participating and making them feel welcome.

Annual Reports

If you read this article right away, there’s still time to turn in your volunteer hours/activities to Nancy. We start our annual reports around March 15, and they are all due by April 15. You can leave a note in my Post 91 mailbox, or call me at (440) 552-4713 and I’ll record your information. No activity is too small—every random act of kindness counts! Thank you.

Nancy



SAL Commander, Sean Boddy

The year has been off to a good start!

The Superbowl party was a hit, and the Seahawks took home the victory! Thank you to all who came out and joined us!

We have several things coming up over the next couple months:

- Fish Fry every Friday
- March Madness Squares
- Scholarships
- Elections

There are March Madness squares available for \$20. Flyers will be in the canteen, on our wall, and on our Facebook page. You can contact our 2nd Vice, Jeff Haas, for more information as well.

This year we will be advertising two different scholarships—one for college education, and one for trade and/or technical school. Flyers with more information will be in the canteen and on Facebook shortly. Keep an eye out for those and spread the word.

True heroism lies in everyday courage, resilience and serving others. There's a saying, "Real heroes don't wear capes." Many of you may have heard this before, but I believe some do wear their capes but in disguise. Such is the case of our own SAL member and former SAL Commander, Charlie O'Malley, a Cleveland firefighter who recently received the Florian Award from the Cleveland Division of Fire for his bravery in rescuing a citizen from the frigid winter waters off the end of East 9th Street Pier.

Thank you, Charlie O'Malley, for your courage, bravery and service! We are proud to call you one of our own!

Charles O'Malley received the Florian Cross at the Cleveland Division of Fire Awards Ceremony for his heroic actions in rescuing a drowning victim from the East 9th Street Pier on December 18, 2025.

This award recognizes exemplary service and bravery in emergency situations.





SAL Commander, Sean Boddy, Cont.

In conclusion, I leave you with these quotes of heroism and inspiration. Remember to continue to look out for one another. One person may not be able to change the world, but you may change the world for one person.

“Those who say that we’re in a time when there are no heroes, they just don’t know where to look.” – Ronald Reagan

"If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." — Martin Luther King, Jr.

Please visit the Sons of 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

Membership Chairman, Jim Matej

Greetings to all Post 91 Sons of the American Legion Family,

We made it through the holidays, and according to Punxsutawney Phil, we’re in for six more weeks of winter. A great way to spend some of that time is with friends at the Post 91 canteen.

But wait—did you forget to renew your 2026 membership and lose access? Good news...there’s still time! You can renew by dropping off your information at the Post, emailing us at SAL91@gmail.com, or renewing online at www.mylegion.org. The Squadron 91 membership fee remains \$30.

Our Squadron 91 officers want to thank everyone who has already renewed for 2026, as well as all our new members who have joined the American Legion family. We currently have 321 renewed members and need just 56 more to reach this year’s state quota of 377. This should be very achievable, especially since 184 members have not renewed, some dating back to 2021. If you know a past member, please encourage them to come back.

If you’d like to get more involved, the easiest way is to attend our monthly meeting, which is held on the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm in the Post hall. Meetings last about an hour, and they’re a great way to hear what’s planned for the Post 91 family. Your input and help are always welcome.

If you have questions about membership, have moved, or need to update your information, feel free to drop us a note or email us at SALPOST91@gmail.com. You can also learn more about Sons of the American Legion programs and membership benefits at www.mylegion.org.

Thank you again for being a member of the Sons of the American Legion and for showing your support for our nation’s Veterans—past, present, and future.

Jim

Assistant Director, Tom Dees



Hello Legion Family,

It's been a tough winter for us Riders!! Usually, we get at least a day or two here and there to go on a short ride—but not this winter. We are all anxiously awaiting the warmer weather to get out on the bikes and enjoy the wind in our faces!!

BUT...the weather has not kept us Riders from staying busy. Several of us volunteered to go assist at the Christmas party at the Wade Park VA facility in December, and what an awesome experience that was!!! It was one of the highlights of my Christmas season. We also held our first Paint-N-Sip on Feb 7, in conjunction with the Ladies Auxiliary. We had about 30 attendees, and everyone did a great job on their artwork and had a good time. Keep your eyes open for a future announcement on the next Paint-N-Sip event!!

We attended the District 13 Riders Scheduling Meeting as well. Post 91 will be hosting the District's "Rolling Bike Nights" on July 15 and Sept 9.

We held our annual Officer Election as well. Here are your 2026 Officers:

- Director—David Rodriguez Jr
- Asst Director—Tom Dees
- Treasurer—Margie Leopold
- Secretary—OPEN

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

Here's to looking forward to warmer weather on the horizon.

Sincerely

Tom



Wade Park VA Domiciliary & Blind Rehab Visit to Post 91





Prisoner of War Diary Uncovered, Cont

Shot down

On Sept. 2, 1943, Pape was flying a mission over Naples, Italy, escorting B-25 bombers when more than 200 German fighters attacked. He shot down two enemy aircraft before taking hits from enemy and friendly fire.

He lost both engines and crash-landed in the Mediterranean Sea.

He regained consciousness underwater. After freeing himself from the cockpit, he floated for hours before being picked up by a German-controlled, Italian flying boat near the Isle of Capri.

He was processed in Italy through Naples, Capua, and Rome, and in Germany through Munich, and a transit camp called Dulag Luft, near Frankfurt. He was eventually moved by boxcar to Stalag Luft III in what is now Żagań, Poland.

Pape spent the next 20 months as a prisoner of war.

Camp life

Stalag Luft III held thousands of captured Allied pilots. Inside, prisoners called themselves Kriegies—short for Kriegsgefangener, the German word for POW.

Each day began with Appel, the roll call.

“Each person had a specific spot in line, and we were not to move under any circumstances,” Pape wrote. “The guards would walk in front and behind to count heads. Some liked to count using their rifles.”

Appel happened twice daily, at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

“We lived Appel to Appel,” Pape wrote. “It was a vicious cycle.”

Prisoners taught each other to stay focused. They used hip-pocket classes—short, informal teaching sessions—to stay sharp. Pape taught agriculture and electrical engineering. Others covered languages, mechanics or whatever skills they could offer.

Prisoners built stoves out of tin cans. They carved toothbrushes by hand. Pape kept writing because it helped him hold on.

Delicately written on toilet paper, he wrote: “This little book should contain a few notes and diagrams that sort of describe my life and experiences since I was shot down.”

Prisoner of War Diary Uncovered, Cont

The forced march

In late January 1945, the prisoners were ordered to evacuate Stalag Luft III ahead of the Soviet advance. Pape and thousands of others were forced to march over 58 miles through snow and subzero temperatures, pulling their gear on makeshift sleds.

They slept in barns, churches and empty buildings—often without food or firewood. Many became ill. The journey ended at Spremberg, where they were crammed 52 to a boxcar and transported to Moosburg, Germany.

Pape described the conditions as “deplorable.” Still, the men stuck together. Every mile of that march was survived the same way they had survived captivity—side by side.

Life after war

Pape was liberated on April 29, 1945, when American forces reached the camp. Soon after, he and a group of fellow POWs visited the Dachau concentration camp, where over 41,000 people perished. Pape never said much about that day.

“All he ever said,” David recalled, “was that he saw things no one should ever see.” He returned to Illinois, took over the family farm and raised a family. He lived to be 91.

Cheryl said she wished she’d asked more questions.

“It was a part of his life that wasn’t discussed,” she said. “I regret not asking more questions of both my parents.”

The brick

After her father passed, Cheryl came across a reunion newsletter from his old squadron. It mentioned a commemorative brick program at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, so she ordered one in Pape’s name.

During his time as a prisoner, Pape had been listed as missing in action. For a while, no one knew if he was alive.

When Cheryl visited the museum and followed the directions to her dad’s brick, it wasn’t where it should be.

Emotional, she went to the front desk and said, “He appears to be MIA once again.”

They eventually found it, but the moment stayed with her.

“It reminded me how easy it is for someone’s story to disappear if no one keeps track of it,” she said.



Prisoner of War Diary Uncovered, Cont

The story continues

Cheryl and David have shared the diary with their son and are still deciding whether to donate it. For now, it stays with them—kept safe.

They've gone line-by-line through Pape's handwriting. Each page brought new understanding—about the war, the man he was and the silence he lived with after coming home.

Cheryl emphasized that Pape's service is part of their family's and our country's history and wants America to learn of it.

“His story doesn't belong in a box,” Cheryl said. “It belongs to the country he fought for.”

For those still carrying it

Pape didn't talk about the hard parts. A lot of us don't. If you're carrying something, you don't have to do it alone.

Find mental health support at VA. You can also contact your local Vet Center to speak confidentially with another Veteran—no service connection or medical record is required. Help is here. Healing is possible.

(Originally published on <https://news.va.gov>)

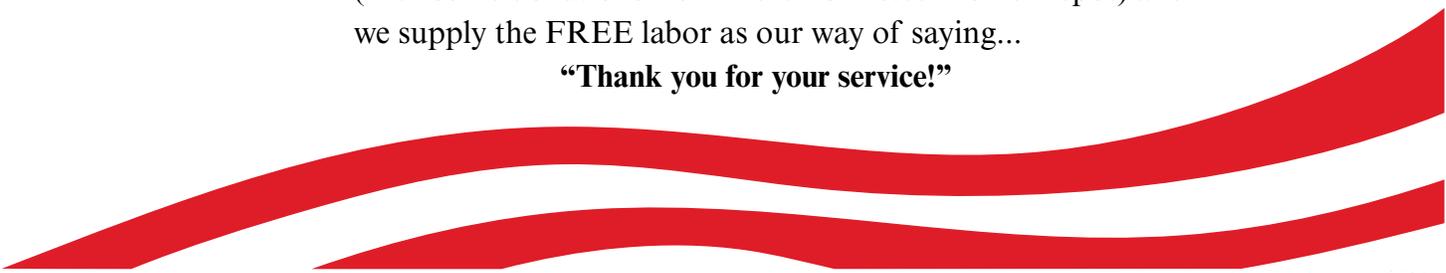
Jesus



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!”



Bulletin Board

March

- 1-5: Floor Renovation (Canteen Closed)
- 5: ALR Meeting, 7pm
- 9: AUX Meeting, 7:30pm
- 11: SAL Meeting, 7:30pm
- 12: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
- 14: Work Party, 8am
Erol Summer Band
- 17: St. Patty's Day
- 23: AUX Meeting, 7:30pm
- 26: Blue Caps E-Board, 7pm

April

- 2: ALR Meeting, 7pm
- 4: Easter Bunny Brunch, 11-1pm
Music, TBA
- 6: Easter, Canteen Closed
- 8: SAL Meeting, 7:30pm
- 9: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
- 11: Work Party, 8am
- 13: AUX Meeting 7:30pm
- 18: AUX Annual Spaghetti Dinner
- 23: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
- 27: AUX E-Board, 7:30pm



TAPS

Dorothy Buzzard
Robert Buzzard
Mary Ann Deimling
Alfred Dittabrand

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 or call 440-610-2682.