

ARLINGTON VFW POST 981

Meetings: 7:00 PM 1st Weds. Of Each Month – Arlington Heights Am. Legion Post #208



Website – vfwpost981.com

WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

COMMANDER

As the year ends 2025, I hope you and your family had a wonderful Holiday season and are continuing to be healthy and safe as we enter 2026. Last year was marked with some good things as for The bad the good things were:

1. We continued to go out in the community distributing poppies and using the money donated to help various veterans' organizations.
2. We gave 2 \$3,000 scholarships in the names of past members Wally Luettschwager and Bob Henderson.
3. We were a Teacher of the Year Nomination from becoming an All-State Post.
4. The Post activities included a hockey outing, a skybox at the Schaumburg Boomers and our Christmas party.
5. New recruits were sworn in to our Post.

The problems were:

1. Missing out from All-Stater Post for 2024- 2025 fiscal year.
2. The continued inability of the Post to fill leadership positions of Junior Vice- Commander and Service Officer.

Stewart

SENIOR VICE- COMMANDER

Happy Holidays! Of the current surviving estimated 167,000 World War 2 veterans, we are currently losing about 234 every day! Illinois has approximately 6,000 surviving World War 2 veterans. Do the math - at that rate it will only be 2-

4 years before the Greatest Generation of Veterans is gone. A sobering thought.

Unfortunately Korea War and even Vietnam War vets will soon be entering the same downward spiral. This why it is so important to be always on the lookout for potential new members.

The VFW is only as strong as the number of members that belong.

Tom

JUNIOR VICE- COMMANDER

STILL VACANT

Our next Post outing will be a family outing to a Chicago Wolves game on Sunday March 8 at 3:00 PM against the Texas Stars. Everyone will get a hot dog and soft drink, and if you are early enough, a giveaway of a Juha Jaaska bobble head. Give your checks and reservations to Quartermaster Mike Kolbuk

UPCOMING POST EVENTS

- Post Meeting – Wednesday (02/04)
- Post Meeting & Officer Nominations – Wednesday (03/04)
- Chicago Wolves Outing – Sunday (03/08) 3:00 PM Allstate Arena Rosemont
- Post Meeting & Elections – Wednesday (04/01)

TAPS



The members of Arlington Post 981, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America, pay their last tribute of respect to our departed comrades.

The following comrades passed away:

Arnold Goebbert

Edward Littel

As brave men and women they marched away with abiding faith in their God, their country, and their flag.

As soon as is possible we request that family members **notify the Post via email** (listed on our website) if a comrade has passed away. Too many times we must rely on seeing an obituary in the newspaper which leaves little or no time for members to pay their final respects.

POST CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Sunday December 7, 32 Post members and their guests gathered at Jameson's Original Charhouse in Arlington Heights for our holiday dinner. Each attendee received two alcoholic drink tickets attached to their place cards as they arrived.

Appetizers consisting of coconut shrimp and potato skins were served.

At 6:50 PM Commander Abbink greeted everyone and Chaplain Stransky said a thanksgiving prayer. Dinner orders were taken as everyone had a main course choice of either a 16-oz. ribeye, chicken Milanese or Greek style Halibut and a dessert choice of cheesecake or tiramisu.

The rest of the dinner was a creamy chicken rice soup, salad, vegetables and a starch appropriate to the main course ordered. Portions were extremely generous and containers were handed out at the end so the bounty of main course and dessert could be brought home.



WALLY LUETTSCHWAGER/ BOB HENDERSON SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

Thanks to the continued generosity of Bob Henderson's family our Post is looking for TWO recipients of our Scholarship Grants for the fall 2026 school year.

Any children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren of our members would be eligible. Those living in the NW suburbs, especially the ones we serve, will have an edge over other applicants of equal credentials.

All the information and the application is available through our website:
www.vfwpost981.com.

POST 981 ELECTION NOTICE

At the March 4 2026 meeting nominations for elected Post Officers – Commander, Sr. Vice-Commander, Jr. Vice-Commander, Quartermaster, and One-Year Trustee – will be accepted.

Additional nominations can be made at the April 1 2026 meeting when elections will happen. You do not need to be present at either meeting to be nominated, but, if interested, must submit a letter to the Adjutant, Phil Nagle, attesting that you will accept a nomination to a particular office. Only those members present at the April meeting are eligible to vote in the elections.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY & PATRIOTS PEN

On December 3 2025, at our VFW Post meeting, our Post PP award was presented to one of our two winners, Ashley Boswell from Lake Zurich Middle School North.

Our other PP winner was Lauren Glass from St. Theresa school in Palatine.

Our Voice of Democracy winner was Aubrey VanDeven from St. Viator HS.

All of our Post winners have been advanced to the VFW 4th District competition. The 4th District awards banquet will be held on January 18, 2025 at The Seville in Streamwood.

Congratulations and good luck to our winners on January 18!



STEVENSON HS POPPIES

For the fifth year in a row Post 981 delivered 1,000 poppies to Stevenson High School for a Veterans Day reminder to the students. Stevenson High School, in turn, donated \$500 to our Poppy Fund.

POPPY MONEY DONATIONS

Our Post made the following donations of money from our Poppy fund in December. Each organization received \$2,500:

- K9's For Veterans which trains service dogs
- Bravehearts Therapeutic Riding and Educational Center which connects veterans and their families with horses.
- Midwest Veterans Closet which helps veterans needing furnishing for their dwellings (pictured below).



FAREWELL TONY KOCHANNY

Long-time member Tony “Baloney” Kochanny attended his last 981 meeting in November. Tony and his son have moved to sunny Arizona 45 miles outside Phoenix. Tony has been a VFW member since 1978 and came to our Post in 2012 after moving from the South Side of Chicago.

Tony was an active member of the Post serving as Adjutant, Officer of the Day and Sr. Vice-Commander. He was always present at our outings like the Christmas Party and the hockey outing. He also participated in our meeting discussions, asking

the questions that everyone else was afraid or too polite to ask but needed to be asked.



TEACHER OF THE YEAR

On December 3 2025 at our Post meeting Karrin Musich was presented with the Teacher of the Year 2025 award.

Karrin has taught 18 years at Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary School, District 25 in Arlington Heights. She has been a recipient of many awards.



NEW POST MEMBERS

Richard Dunne transferred into our Post at the December meeting. He served 30 years in the Air Force including Desert Storm.



COLOR GUARD

The Color Guard Past events:

Nov 11 Buffalo Grove Park District – Veterans Day Celebration

The Color Guard participation at Buffalo Grove was covered extensively by the two local weekly papers, the Journal Topics and the Countryside, with both papers having front page pictures of the Color Guard.

Even if you cannot march you can participate in wakes and funerals. In addition, there are many other activities that we are involved in that you could participate in. If you would like to learn more about joining the Color Guard and the commitment level. If a veteran has passed away, as soon as is possible we request that family members notify the Post via email (listed on our website). Too many times we must rely on seeing an obituary in the newspaper which leaves little or no time for members to pay their final respects. If a family wishes a rifle salute, bugle and/or flag folding, they should contact the Post via our email vfwpost981@gmail.com.

Those interested to join the Color Guard please contact, Commander Abbink.



ARLINGTON VFW POST 981 HOCKEY TRIP

Chicago Wolves Family Outing

Center Balcony Game Ticket & Hot Dog & Soft Drink

JOIN US ON MARCH 8 AT 3:00 PM AT THE ALLSTATE ARENA IN ROSEMONT TO SEE THE WOLVES TAKE ON THE TEXAS STARS. ENTER AT VIP BUILDING NORTH OF ARENA. GO TO WILL CALL AND GIVE THEM YOUR NAME. PARKING ONLY \$15.

Post Members, 1 Guest, & Children under 18 –
\$5 apiece. Other Adults & Children over 18 - \$20

Send your reservations and checks (made out to **VFW Post 981**) to: Michael Kolbuk, 654 Briarwood Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090. Deadline for reservations - March Post Meeting March 4

Name _____

\$5 Guest _____

Of Children (under 18) \$5 _____

Number of Other Adults \$20 _____

Amount enclosed \$_____

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.®



ARLINGTON VFW POST 981

C/O Mike Kolbuk

P.O. Box 825

Arlington Heights, IL 60006

TO: