

THE KENDALL-GRAM

Volume 26 Issue 04

May 2026



A Monthly Publication for the Members of VFW Post 3873



**Commander
Staci Boyer**



April was a month of momentum, collaboration, and forward movement. That's who we are as a Post. We don't wait—we build, we lead, and we show up. April was a busy month both for planning and events.

We began planning efforts for the WSFDV Rockin' for Our Vets concert in partnership with the Gary Sinise Foundation and the Lt. Dan Band—an incredible opportunity to continue supporting our veteran community in a big way. We also planned our VFW Day of Service event—a Free Military Pet Vaccine Clinic on May 3rd—another example of how we continue to think outside the box to serve those who have served.

One of the most impactful moments this month was hosting an award ceremony for the NNHS and NCHS Student Veterans Clubs, where Mayor Scott Wehrli presented the Kindness Counts Award through KidsMatter. Seeing these young leaders recognized for their service and commitment reminds us exactly why investing in the next generation matters.

That investment continues. We are proud to co-host an end-of-school-year celebration with the American Legion for the NNHS and NCHS Veterans Clubs, and I want to personally recognize the new WVHS Veterans Club members who showed up and volunteered all seven weeks of our Fish Fry. That level of consistency and commitment does not go unnoticed.

Speaking of consistency—our VFW Auxiliary has been nothing short of outstanding. As shown by their support throughout Fish Fry season and to all of our programs, their dedication continues to strengthen everything we do as a Post. Similarly, the Plant Sale Committee has consistently delivered an amazing event to support the Post.

We also had the honor of supporting the Military First Responder Tribute at the NPC Phoenix Natural Noble Warrior on April 18th. A huge thank you to our combined Color Guard, along with all three high school Veterans Clubs, for leading that powerful tribute. This is what community collaboration looks like in action.

On April 29th, we represented the Post at the Naperville Responds for Veterans Strength and Honor Luncheon, which provided more opportunities to connect, serve, and lead.

Looking ahead, please stay tuned for important emails regarding flag placements at our local cemeteries for Memorial Day. These moments of honor and remembrance are part of our sacred responsibility.

Also, be sure to save the date for our Officer Installation Dinner on May 30th—RSVPs are available through our TicketSource link.

At every level—youth engagement, community partnerships, and innovative service—this Post continues to rise to the challenge.

Because that's what we do. We don't just talk about service—we live it.

Commander's Reflections "Our impact is built through action—and this Post proves it every day."

Business of the Post

Post Meeting April 9, 2026 Highlights



Commander Staci Boyer opened the meeting according to ritual at 1906 hours.

New Membership Applications: 3 new members, two Air Force, one USMC.

Swore in one new member, Army.

Quartermaster: Big jump in cash due to plant sale and Fish Fry. Outflow next month for plant sale. Canteen and Hall both continuing well. No unexpected expenses this month.

Service Officer: VA will start sending text to remind you of things. DON'T click. Take it as a prompt to log into your account on the website directly.

Membership: We are at 101%, still working toward 103%. Membership chair has plans, keep an eye out.

Honor Guard: Conducted 2 military funeral honors, one Army, one USMC.

Color Guard: Upcoming: 4/18 Phoenix Natural, 5/3 Military Pet Vaccine/VFW Day of Service, Memorial Day

Poppy Distribution: Please sign up to volunteer! See Page 6.

Trustees: Requested one donation for total of \$500. Motioned and Passed.

Confirmed the slate of officers for 2026-2027. Confirmed Officers listed on Page 4.

Commander Boyer closed the meeting according to ritual at 2017. Next meeting is Thursday, May 14, 2026.

Plant Sale 2026

Photos courtesy of Jim Hoch. See the full gallery on his [SmugMug](#) page.





**Junior Vice Commander
Josh Warner**



When World War II broke out, a young James Jabara enlisted in the Army at Fort Riley, just down the road from his hometown of Wichita, Kansas. The “Ceegar Kid,” as he would be nicknamed during the war, was a first-generation American of Lebanese descent. Jabara’s parents emigrated to Muskogee, Oklahoma, where James was born October 10, 1923. Nine years later, the family relocated to Kansas where they opened a grocery store, where Jabara worked while attending Wichita North High School. Though he was only five feet five inches tall and had less-than-perfect vision, he was intent on being a pilot. He would not only earn his wings but also earn selection as a fighter pilot.

During his first assignment to the 363rd Fighter Group, Ninth Air Force, Jabara was in direct air support of the Normandy invasion and later the operations in greater Germany. During this time, he downed a Messerschmitt Bf 109 after his canopy had been shot away by another enemy fighter. His second assignment was to the 355th Fighter Group, Eighth Air Force, where he claimed 1.5 aerial kills and 4 ground. After the war, Jabara remained on active duty and transitioned to the newly-formed US Air Force.

In 1951, James Jabara was assigned to the 334th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Kimpo Airfield in Korea, flying the F-86 Saber. Jabara made his first kill in “MiG Alley” on April 3, 1951, and his second a week later. By the end of April, James had downed 4 MiGs, just shy of “ace” status. When his Squadron rotated out of country, Jabara pursued an assignment to the 335th FIS to pursue his 5th kill. On May 20, 1951, he made his fifth, earning the title Ace. By the time he departed Korea, Jabara had earned the title of Triple Ace.

Posters for Upcoming Events

Click on the image to go to the [TicketSource](#) page



**MEMBERS FAMILY
BREAKFAST**
1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
9AM-12PM | KENDALL HALL



JAN. 4TH	FEB. 1ST
MARCH 1ST	APRIL 12TH
MAY 10TH	JUNE 7TH
JULY 12TH	AUG. 2ND
SEPT. 6TH	OCT. 4TH
NOV. 1ST	DEC. 6TH

Breakfast includes eggs, bacon/or sausage biscuits & Gravy & Milk, Water, Orange Juice & Coffee
Free for Members & Families

ENJOY COMARADERIE WITH FELLOW VETERANS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS & SHARE STORIES IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT!




Memorial Flag Placements

Schedule of Events

Tuesday: Place Flags on Veteran Memorials and Cemeteries
Meet and leave from the VFW parking lot at 08:30, need minimum of 6 people in 2 car. See separate page for notes on this activity.

Wednesday: Place Flags on Veteran Memorials and Cemeteries
Meet and leave from the VFW parking lot at 08:30, need minimum of 6 people in 2 car. See separate page for notes on this activity.

Thursday: Rain Day or Day of Rest

Friday: Place Flags in Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery
Meet at the Cemetery to start promptly at 09:00, so get there early. Follow instructions in Cemetery booklets, but see general flag placement page.

Saturday: Place Flags in Naperville City Cemetery
Meet at the Cemetery to start promptly at 09:00, so get there early. Follow instructions in Cemetery booklets, but see general flag placement page.

Sunday: Day of Rest

Monday: Wreath Laying Ceremonies and Parade
(Not included in this schedule)

Tuesday: Pick up flags in all Cemeteries and Memorials
*Meet at Saints Peter & Paul Cemetery at 09:00, teams will disperse from there. Need all hands on deck as we will break into 4 teams to pick up all flags.
ONLY PICK UP FLAGS WITH A WHITE OR RED PIECE OF TAPE ON IT!!!
See separate pages for notes on this activity.*



**OFFICER INSTALLATION
DINNER**
May 30, 2026
6pm | Social hour
7pm-9pm | Dinner & Ceremony

SPACE IS LIMITED RSVP REQUIRED.
TICKETS ARE FREE ALTHOUGH A SMALL DONATION AT THE DOOR IS APPRECIATED

RSVP VIA
WWW.TICKETSOURCE.US/NAPERVILLE-VFW-5873
*908 Jackson ave.
Naperville, Illinois 60540*



Benefits Advisor Updates

Dennis Lukavsky



Veteran Family Needs Support

A Gulf War Marine veteran and his family are in urgent need of support. The veteran suffers from chronic PTSD, which has progressively worsened over time. Due to the severity of his condition, he is no longer able to work and previously lost his job as a result.

His wife, who has been the family's sole source of income, recently lost her job after her role was eliminated following the introduction of AI at her company. She is actively seeking new employment to support their family.

They are devoted parents to two children—one in college and one in high school—and are working hard to navigate these challenging circumstances.

If you or someone in your network may be able to assist with employment opportunities for his wife, your support would be deeply appreciated. The wife is open to any decent paying job opportunity.

Please feel free to contact me for more information.

Benefits Advisor Email Blast Distribution List

Our Service Officer sends out several emails per month with updates on events at the Post, important details from the State and National VFW offices, and other information of interest to members of the Post. If you would like to receive the Blasts, please send an email to dlukavsky@yahoo.com.

2026-2027 VFW Post 2873 Officer Slate

The Nominating Committee submitted the following list of nominees for 2006-2027.

Commander: Staci Boyer
Senior Vice Commander: Josh Warner
Junior Vice Commander: Laela Sharrieff
Quartermaster: Phil Maughan
Asst Quartermaster: John Shaw, Tom Rickert
Judge Advocate: Dom Guerrieri
Surgeon: Ingrid Kanady

Officer of the Day: Lou Kuelczo
Guard: Roger Budny
3 Year Trustee: Brad Nila
2 Year Trustee: Jan Schraeder
1 Year Trustee: Leo Jaime
3 Year House: Matt Shiffer



National Home Chairman Mike McGrath



Stronger Together: Building Hope and Community at the VFW National Home—From the National Home Newsletter

This March, six new families arrived at the VFW National Home, and more families are getting ready to move onto campus—each bringing their own story, challenges, and hopes for a brighter future. It's a powerful reminder that while every journey is different, no one has to walk it alone.

As Director of Veteran Services Dr. Jerred Johnson shares, "It's an exciting time for our community, and we encourage everyone to take a moment to say hi and extend a warm welcome."

At the National Home, connection is everything. Veterans and families from all backgrounds come together not just to rebuild—but to belong.

"Each person who joins us arrives with their own set of goals and aspirations," Jerred says. And in that diversity, something special happens—shared experiences create opportunities for support, understanding, and growth.

Residents are encouraged to lean into those connections. "Building connections is essential, as our community is stronger when we collaborate and support one another" Jerred reminds the community.

That support often starts with something simple: sharing your story.

"By discussing past mistakes and sharing insights, we can help each other avoid potential pitfalls," Jerred explains. In those honest moments, residents find guidance, encouragement, and the confidence to keep moving forward.

Every family here is working toward SMART goals—building stability, independence, and a successful future. And while those goals are personal, the journey is shared.

Before long, each family will move forward, ready for what's next. But their impact doesn't end there.

"When you share your journey, you not only highlight the support you have received but also inspire others seeking the same vital assistance," Jerred says.

At its core, the VFW National Home is more than a program—it's a community built on resilience, connection, and hope.

And together, as Jerred reminds us, "we create a welcoming and supportive environment that fosters healing and a stronger sense of community for everyone involved."

In the end, the true strength of the VFW National Home isn't just in the services provided—it's in the people who make up this community. It's in every welcome, every shared story, and every goal achieved side by side. Here, veterans and their families don't just rebuild—they rise, together. And as each family moves forward, they carry that strength with them, proving that even after hardship, a brighter, more hopeful future isn't just possible—it's within reach.



Taps

Stephen O'Donnell, age 52, Army and USMC.

Kenneth Orth, age 83, Army, Vietnam

James Rericha, age 89, Air Force, Korea

John Watkins, age 81, USMC, Vietnam

Contact the Quartermaster for mailing address if you wish to send a sympathy card.

**Auxiliary President****Maryann Groner**

Members of the Auxiliary will be busy this month working on the plant sale distribution, seeking donations for poppies, putting flags on deceased members' graves as well as participation in the Memorial Day parade and helping to serve dessert to the Navy and those who join us for lunch at the post.

First, I want to thank Bertha Novaczyk for using her creativity to design an entry in the Poppy contest (see page 8). Her work was on display at the District Memorial on April 25. Bertha is also always willing and ready to support us with baskets for every occasion.

It is time again to donate a few hours of your time to help collect donations for poppies. We depend on the funds raised through this campaign. All the money collected during this time can only be used to directly benefit Veterans. Please be generous with your time as well as making a donation to support Veterans. Wear your Poppy proudly. If you are able, please consider helping to place flags at both St Peter and Paul Cemetery and the Naperville Cemetery the weekend before Memorial Day to honor our brothers and sisters who have passed. The Auxiliary has hired the trolley for the parade, and I want to thank Auxiliary member, Annette Wehrli for the generous discount. We want members to participate on Memorial Day with us. You can either carry a flag, walk with the group or ride the trolley. Our "uniform" of the day is a blue polo and white slacks. Don't let not having this combination stop you from being part of the parade. As soon as I know the location of our position, I will send out an email.

Elections for 2026-2027 were held at the April meeting. Maryann Groner was elected President; Berni Budny, Sr. Vice President; Deb Smith, Jr. Vice President; Leo Hart, Treasurer; Geri Tice, Chaplain; Anita Danza, Conductress and Kathy Lukavsky, Guard. Bob Pavelchik was elected 3 year trustee and joins Brenda Hasler and Julie Cunningham. Nancy Marinello will stay as secretary. We will be inducted at the dinner on May 30th. Join us in a great year to come!

Poppy Volunteers Needed!

It's time once again for our annual Buddy Poppy fundraiser. We need volunteers to sign up for the two-hour slots at the various locations that have graciously allowed us to distribute poppies. The signup will use the same tool as the previous years. Go to

<https://volunteersignup.org/WAFFK>

and look for a location, day, and time that suits you. Feel free to sign up for multiple slots. We need all the help we can get. Signups are much lower than previous. Please don't wait to sign up. This is the major fundraiser for our post, and it relies on you volunteering your time to help make it a success.

Remember that you need to come to the Post to get what you need for your shift in advance of your time slot. You need to come when the Post is open (i.e, Monday through Friday between 0900 and 1200), or when the canteen is open (1400 most days). You need a collection jug and one bag of poppies per two-hour shift. Each bag contains 150 poppies, which is enough for a two-hour slot at a busy location. Please return your supplies and funds collected as quickly as possible. Collection jugs are a shared resource, we need these returned for others to use. So please get your money, poppies, and jug back to us as quickly as you can. Jugs and unused poppies should be returned to the conference room. Money collected should be given to the bartender.

Once again, please sign up for slots now, so we can plan our coverage of locations. The signup sheet link is live now. The information on 'how to' will also be on the post web site.

Post Information

Mailing Address: Judd Kendall VFW Post 3873
 908 W. Jackson
 Naperville, IL 60540

Phone Number: **(630) 420-9820**

Website: <https://www.napervfw3873.org/>

Facebook: Naperville VFW Judd Kendall 3873

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm in the upstairs hall of the Post.

Canteen Hours

	Open	Close
Mon—Thur	1:00 p.m.	10:00 pm
Friday	Noon	Midnight
Saturday	Noon	10:00 pm
Sunday	Noon	6:00 pm

The bartender may elect to close the Canteen early due to low patronage. The bartender will give a last call and close the Canteen 15 minutes later.

NO ONE is allowed behind the bar except the Bartenders.

THE BARTENDER IS BOSS

Kendall-Gram Submission Policy: Post members are encouraged to submit articles and photos. Send articles and photos to the email address below. Photos MUST include location, date, event, names. All submissions may be edited for length and content as needed.

Kendall-Gram Link Policy: Live links are provided for convenience and information only and are consistent with the mission of the Post and VFW. However, the appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the Post or the VFW of the information, products, or services contained therein.

Kendall-Gram Email: kendallgramvfw3873@gmail.com

Hines Hospital Visits

Hines Hospital visits will take place on the second Tuesday of each month from September through June. Due to Hospital requirements face masks will be required for all participants when they enter. The bus will leave from the Post promptly at 6:30PM and we should return before 9PM.

Questions: John Shaw, theshawsjb@aol.com

Judd Kendall Post 3873 Officers

Commander	Staci Boyer	(773) 351-4646
Sr. Vice Commander	Jennifer Slown	
Jr. Vice Commander	Josh Warner	
Quartermaster	Phil Maughan	(630) 383-1974
Ass't Quartermaster	John Shaw	(630) 253-3318
Adjutant	Jason Sharpton	
Judge Advocate	Dom Guerrieri	(630) 207-3100
Surgeon	Ingrid Kanady	(847) 951-3300
Service Officer	Dennis Lukavsky	(630) 272-9064
Officer of the Day	Lou Kueltz	(630) 898-8760
Guard	Roger Budny	(630) 205-8745
Chaplain	Bob Grember	(630) 960-1998
1-Year Trustee	Craig Frier	(630) 373-1186
2-Year Trustee	Leo Jaime	(773) 441-3887
3-Year Trustee	Jan Schrader	

Committees

Americanism	Leo Jaime	(773) 441-3887
Blood Drive	Ingrid Kanady	(847) 951-3300
Buddy Poppy	Bob Colby	(630) 301-2664
Building	Mike Rechenmacher	(630) 244-3747
Color Guard	Dennis Regan	(630) 361-4644
Communications	Dennis Lukavsky	(630) 272-9064
Eighth Grade Awards	Tom Benton	(630) 579-8514
Grounds	Phil Maughan	(630) 357-3440
Honor Guard	Jim Oftedal	(630) 357-4030
Hospital	John Shaw	(630) 253-3318
House	Mike McGrath	(630) 357-2680
House	Bob Tallon	(630) 561-9902
House	Mike Rechenmacher	(630) 244-3747
Membership	Jennifer Slown	
Legislative	Staci Boyer	(773) 351-4646
National Home	Mike McGrath	(630) 357-2680
Patriot's Pen	Mark Overstreet	(773) 517-7346
Safety	Mike McGrath	(630) 357-2680
Social Media	Staci Boyer	(773) 351-4646
Voice of Democracy	Mark Overstreet	(773) 517-7346

Auxiliary Officers

President	Maryann Groner	(630) 363-8138
Sr. Vice President	Bernadette Budny	(630) 717-9471
Jr. Vice President	Debbie Smith	
Secretary	Nancy Marinello	(630) 420-1717
Treasurer	Leo Hart	(630) 816-0506
Chaplain	Geri Tice	(630) 201-4852
Guard	Mary Ellen DiMatteo	(630) 664-1612
Conductor	Kathy Thornton	(630) 667-6740
3 yr Trustee	Brenda Hasler	
2 yr Trustee	Julie Cunningham	
1 yr Trustee	Amy Ownby	



**VFW Post 3873
Upcoming Events**



May 2026

- Fri 05/01: Plant Sale Pickup
- Sat 05/02: Monarch Landing Visit, 10:00am
- Sun 05/03: Day of Service Event: Military Pet Vaccination
- Mon 05/04: Auxiliary Bingo, Arista Healthcare, 2:00pm
- Tues 05/05: Hines Outreach, 10:00am-2:00pm, Post; Veteran Business Connection After Hours, 6:00pm, Canteen; Hines Hospital Visit, 6:15pm Meet at Post, back by 9:00pm
- Wed 05/06: Yoga for Vets, 9:30am, VFW Post
- Sat 05/09: Brookdale Retirement Home Visit, 10:00am
- Sun 05/10: Members Family Breakfast, 9:00am-12:00pm, Post
- Wed 05/13: Yoga for Vets, 9:30am, VFW Post
- Thurs 05/14: VFW Post Meeting, 7:00pm, VFW Post
- Sat 05/16: Tabor Hills Visit, 10:00am
- Sun 05/17: Lotus Vibrations
- Mon 05/18: Veteran Business Connection Meeting, 8:00am, Rosie's 2155 City Gate Lane Naperville
- Wed 05/20: Yoga for Vets, 9:30am, VFW Post
- Thurs 05/21: Auxiliary Meeting, 7:00pm, VFW Post
- Sat 05/23: Story Point Retirement Home Visit, 10:00am
- Mon 05/25: Memorial Day Events
- Wed 05/27: Yoga for Vets, 9:30am, VFW Post
- Sat 05/30: Independence Village Retirement Home Visit, 10:00am; Officer Induction Dinner

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook. Look for highlight buttons for what we have been doing and what is upcoming labeled by the month. On Facebook we pin upcoming events for easy access. You can also find past KendallGram links on all of our social media channels as well. ALL upcoming events are also on this [Ticket Source link!](#)

**NAPERVILLE MEMORIAL DAY
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

0745 SERVICE AT CMDR. DAN SHANOWER 9/11 MEMORIAL
 0815 SERVICE AT GAR MONUMENT, NAPERVILLE CEMETERY
 0835 SERVICE AT VETERANS PARK
 0900 SERVICE AT SAINTS PETER AND PAUL CEMETERY
 0925 SERVICE AT BURLINGTON SQUARE

**10AM PARADE LINE-UP
WEST & JACKSON**

1015 VETERANS STEP OFF TO START PARADE (MUSTER BEHIND JEEP)
 1020 SERVICE AT RIVERWALK (DURING PARADE)
 NOON CEREMONY AT CENTRAL PARK BANDSHELL
 IPM LUNCHEON AT THE VFW FOR VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES



Bertha Novaczyk's Entry in Poppy Contest

Upcoming Events

- 6/7 Member and family Breakfast
- 6/21 Lotus Vibrations
- 6/28 National Home 100th Anniversary
- 7/11 Lt Dan Band (POC Staci Boyer)
- 7/12 Member and Family Breakfast