

Celebrating 100 Years of Service to Veterans, U.S. Military, Youth, & Community



American Legion Post 43

100th Anniversary
1919 - 2019

American Legion Post 43
PO Box 4
Naperville, IL 60566

Naperville American Legion Post 43
Annual Activities & Financial Support

- Presentations of Certificates for Korean War/Cold War Veterans
- Monthly Visits to Hines VA Hospital
- Monthly Saturday Morning Visits with Veterans at four Senior Living Centers
- Donated \$1,000 to Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans
- Donated \$1,500 to "Gifts for the Yanks"
- Donated to "Operation Caramel Corn" thru Nuts and Sweets of Naperville
- Solicited Poppy Donations of over \$4,900 in Support of "Operation Comfort Warrior"
- Contributed to the American Legion National Emergency Fund
- Held 7 Dinner/Socials each year for Members, Spouses and Guests
- Provided Volunteers and Funds to "DuPage Veterans Foundation" for Honor Flight Chicago
- Ongoing attendance at Veterans' Wakes, Rendering Them a Final Salute & Recognition of their Service
- Combined Honor Guard with Post 3873 for Military Funeral Honors
- Presented Post 43 Citizens of the Year Awards
- Contributed to School Districts 203 & 204 Programs
- Our "Keeping Posted" Post Newsletter has been a Department winner 7 of the last 8 years
- Post 43 American Legion "Riders" Chapter now has over 50 members, who raise money for the American Legion Annual "Legacy Ride" from Nation HDQ to National Convention
- Newly organized Sons of the American Legion Squadron 43 now has 28 members
- Sponsor Boy Scout Troop #106
- Sent 7 Boys to Illinois Premier Boys State in 2018
- Sent 18 Girls to Illini Girls State in 2018
- Sponsored Little League Baseball Team
- Held Speech Contest for Local Jr. High Students - Presented Monetary Awards
- Provided 2-\$5000 Scholarship Awards for High School Seniors
- Held Oratorical Contest for High School Students - Presented Monetary Awards
- Presented the American Legion School Award Medallion & Certificate to 50 Students
- Participated in the Annual American Legion Lincoln Pilgrimage in Springfield, IL
- Supported the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund
- Supported the VFW Children's Home
- Co-Sponsored Naperville Memorial Day Activities and Parade
- Participated in all Naperville Patriotic Celebrations and Memorial Events, including members inclusion in numerous school programs during Veterans Day week
- Decorated approximately 2500 Veterans Gravesites in Naperville & surrounding Cemeteries for Memorial Day
- Post members are active in District, Division, and Department Commissions and Committees

A History of Naperville American Legion Post 43

1919 - 2019

Post 43's history coincides with the formation of The American Legion. That took place during the Paris Caucus for "Comrades in Service," which convened in Paris, France on March 15-17, 1919. In June of that same year, a group of 15 WWI Veterans from Naperville, IL, met to form a local American Legion Post.

The group, led by Chauncey W. Reed, mailed an application to the state American Legion on June 25th and State Headquarters issued a charter, dated July 5, 1919, which designated Naperville American Legion Post 43. The Post received its National Charter on August 1, 1920.

Post 43 began with 126 charter members. They represented the more than 300 Naperville Veterans of World War I – some 10% of the community's population at that time. Seven of those Napervillians lost their lives in the conflict.



Chauncey W. Reed

Post 43's first Commander was Chauncey W. Reed, the leader of the group that applied for the organizing charter. Reed later served in the U.S. Congress for more than 20 years. He was succeeded by Win G. Knoch, a community leader, lawyer and both a County and Circuit Court Judge. Other prominent Post 43 members include Naperville Mayor Chester J. "Chet" Rybicki, and Naperville Councilman Don Wehrli. Post 43 has had 77 Post Commanders, since it was chartered in 1919, which have contributed to the success and longevity of this Post.

Community Service

From its beginning and continuing throughout its history, Post 43 has maintained steadfast support for programs that serve our Country, Veterans, Young people and its Community.

An early example of that civic dedication took less than a decade to appear. In 1920, Post 43 spearheaded fundraising to erect the Spirit of the American Doughboy statue in Naperville's Burlington Park to honor WWI Veterans. Dedicated on Memorial Day in 1926, the six-foot copper statue, resting on a stone base, depicts a WWI soldier, bayonet fixed, advancing into battle. The statue, one of more than 100 installed in communities across the country, was created by Indiana sculptor E. M. Viquesney. It is notable for its attention to authentic uniform detail right down, in the words of the sculptor, to "every buckle, every snap, every strap."

In the 1920s Post 43 assumed responsibility for organizing Naperville's Memorial Day parade, which the Grand Army of the Republic had previously managed. The American Legion now co-sponsors with the Veterans of Foreign Wars this annual patriotic event and associated ceremonies, including placing flags on the graves of local Veterans.

Post 43's close relationship with the community continued through the years. An example of these close ties between the Post and the city of Naperville occurred in 1933.

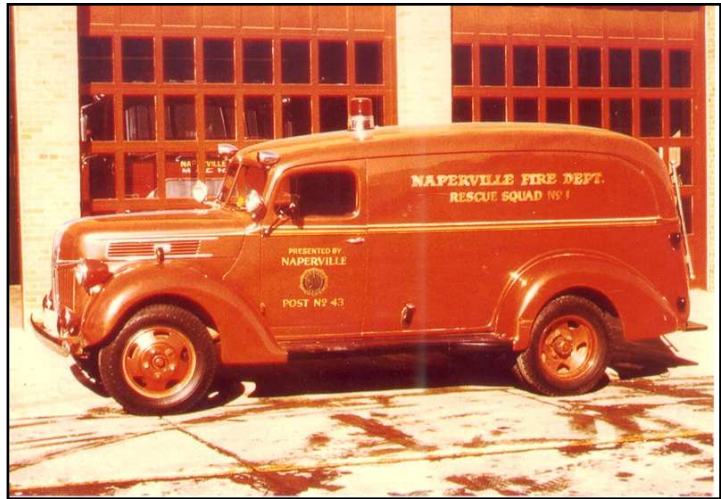


Memorial Day Parade held in Naperville

(Photo by Jim Hoch)

To coincide with the National Convention of the American Legion held that year in Chicago, the city declared October 3rd a holiday to allow citizens to attend the convention parade, described in the proclamation as one of "the largest ever presented by the Legion and will be the greatest spectacle of this character in the history of the City of Chicago."

During the 1940s, Post 43 sponsored an annual carnival and car raffle to raise money for community projects. These included the donation of playground equipment and books for Naperville's Nichols Library. One especially significant result of these fundraising efforts was the donation of an emergency rescue vehicle for the Naperville Fire Department.



NFD Emergency Vehicle

Post Home Purchased

Another milestone in Post 43's history came in 1947 with the purchase of a Post Home as a permanent meeting place for members. Members of Post 43 funded the purchase of a building owned by the Naperville Oddfellows Temple Association by buying varying numbers of bonds, each with a face value of \$100. Currently, portions of the Post Home building at 10 W. Chicago Av. in Naperville are rented to commercial interests with the top floor retained by Post 43 for meetings of Post Trustees, certain Post activities; and is used by affiliated groups, such as Boy Scout Troop 106. Current monthly Post meetings are now held at the Judd Kendall VFW Post 3873.



Naperville Veterans Park (Photo by Jim Hoch)

In the mid-1980s, Post 43 supported the creation of Veteran's Park in Naperville as a site honoring Veterans of all services. The park was dedicated on November 11, 1989. Situated on the banks of the DuPage River, the park is a popular picnic area and is the site of annual Memorial Day commemorations, and Veterans Day Ceremony.

Patriotism and Veterans

Post 43 re-visited one of its earliest projects in 2001 with the start of a community effort to restore the Spirit of the American Doughboy statue. Over the years, the statue had deteriorated due to the effects of weather and vandalism. By the turn of the century, the statue's needs for repair included replacement of a missing arm and bayonet and general restoration.



The Post was a sponsor of a fundraising campaign aimed at paying for the statue's repair as well as improvements to the surrounding park area. Those efforts culminated on May 25, 2003 with a rededication ceremony attended by Veterans, civic organizations and city officials.

In another campaign to build closer relationships between Veterans and the community, Post 43 helped organize the 2009 Healing Field of Honor in Naperville, which was a joint collaboration between the Exchange Club of Naperville and the Naperville Park District. From November

8th to 14th, 2009 U.S. flags were displayed on 8-foot poles in an open space in the center of the city to honor "the men and women of the United States Military who have served our Nation or are currently serving at home or abroad."

In addition to the display, proceeds from the subsequent sales of the flags helped support the operations of Fisher House for visiting families at nearby Hines VA Hospital.

In 2013, Post 43 supported efforts by the Naperville Century Walk Foundation and other civic organizations to add a second statue at the city's Burlington Park as a complement to the existing Spirit of the American Doughboy. A local historian discovered in a Michigan antique store a Spirit of the American Navy statue, created by the same sculptor, Ernest Moore Viquesneys, who created the Doughboy statue. The sailor statue -- one of only eight created -- was always meant by the artist to serve as a companion to the Doughboy depiction.



A \$73,000 fundraising campaign to restore and install the sailor statue culminated in October, 2013, -- on the birthday of the U.S. Navy -- with the installation of the Spirit of the American Navy figure, which faces the Doughboy statue across the city park.

Post 43 currently has over 540 members. The Post continues to participate in Veterans Day observances, including visits by Veterans to local schools and the ceremony at Naperville's Veterans Park.



Naperville Veterans Day

(Photos by Jim Hoch)

Current Activities

Reflecting these and other efforts and for service to Veterans and the Nation, Post 43 has been recognized by various awards. A partial list includes:

- Certificate of Meritorious Service from the National Department of the American Legion
- Numerous awards for the Post Newsletter, *Keeping Posted*
- Naperville Exchange Club's Spirit of America award

In addition to special campaigns, Post 43 supports an array of ongoing programs in support of veterans, young people and the community. These programs include: Boy Scout Troop 106; Premier Boys State; Illini Girls State; High School Oratorical and Middle School Speech contests; College Scholarships; and annual recognition of Citizen of the Year Awards to members of the local leaders for contributions to Veterans, Youth and the Community.



Boy Scout Troop 106 (Photo by Jim Hoch)

For additional Information, visit Post 43 Website at: www.naperlegion.org

History of The American Legion



The American Legion began following World War I with a meeting of 20 officers who were tasked with finding means to boost troop morale. One of the group, Lieutenant Colonel Teddy Roosevelt, Jr., suggested forming an organization made up of Veterans and dedicated to Veterans' well-being.

A larger meeting, known as the Paris Caucus, convened in March of 1919 and adopted a temporary constitution and designated the organization name: The American Legion. Later that year in St. Louis, some 1100 delegates expanded on the Paris proposals by completing the organization's constitution and setting up the outlines of its permanent organization. In September of 1919 the U.S. Congress granted a charter to the American Legion, followed by the group's first convention held in Minneapolis.

Today The American Legion is one of the largest non-partisan, non-profit groups in the U.S., dedicated to four pillars: Patriotism, Youth, Veterans and National Defense. These pillars cover a multitude of programs to benefit the many thousands of our nation's Veterans, service members, young people and ordinary citizens. These programs are carried out through more than two million Legion members belonging to over 13,000 local posts located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines.

Among The American Legion's contributions was its key role in creating the U.S. Veterans Administration, passing into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or GI Bill of Rights that among other accomplishments has assisted in obtaining college educations for some 8 million Veterans, formation of American Legion Child Welfare Foundation that has awarded more than \$11 million to organizations that help America's children and its continuing efforts to raise awareness over the fate of American Prisoners of War and those missing in action.



Post 43 Officers

Commander - Don Chasteen	Sr. Vice-Commander - Jack Amberg
Jr. Vice Commander - Jennifer Slown	Sgt-at-Arms - Glenn Granat
Finance Officer - Bob Colby	Service Officer - Mike Barbour
Chaplain - Dick Komarek	Judge Advocate - Don Hennessy
Historians - Joe Strebel, Lee Lindberg, Lauren Evans	
Adjutant - Nadia Rios	Immediate Past Commander - Doug Deetjen
Public Relations - Jim Vahle	Legion Riders Dir. - Tom Dillon
Newsletter Editor - Rich Yndestad	Webmaster - Liz Michalski
Honor Guard - Jim Oftedal	Color Guard - Jim Sarns
Girls State - Eileen Lass	Boys State - Ken Mores
Sons of the American Legion - Chris Lance	

Post 43 Trustees

Don Chasteen	Doug Deetjen
Bob Colby	Jim Vahle
Wayne Fischer	Jim Stoffregen
Ken Garhan	

Cover and Booklet Design - Rich Yndestad



Past Commanders: (Front Row) Priscilla Laubscher, Doug Deetjen, John Prescott, Mike Rechenmacher, Lee Lindberg (Back Row) Phil Maughan, Chuck Koretke, Wayne Fischer



Combined Post 43 and Post 3873 Honor Guard performs Military Honors for Veterans final Salute.

(Photos by Jim Hoch)