

Gackle Area Units Honor Veterans and Members

The American Legion Posts and Auxiliary Units of Gackle, Streeter and Fredonia and the American Legion Post of Kulm co-hosted the 106th American Legion Birthday Party / Vietnam War Veterans Day event at the Gackle Legion Hall on Saturday, March 29, 2025. Approximately 100 people attended. A light meal was served, followed by a program.

Gackle Legion Post #250 Commander Jon Metz welcomed everyone to the event and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Randy Entzminger, Gackle Legion member and guest speaker, shared an informative presentation titled "The History of the Gackle American Legion Memorial Hall." His discourse included names and pictures of the founding members of the Gackle Legion and Auxiliary, and pictures of the building progress during construction of the Legion Hall.

The Saturday event was highlighted by the presentation of North Dakota "Welcome Home" coins to sixteen veterans who served between 1959 and 1975. The coin has a circle of 238 dots representing the known ND lives lost during the Vietnam War. 10 panels of the Vietnam Wall represent the remaining unrecovered ND MIA. The Welcome Home presentations were made by Veterans Service Officers, Jim Hilzendeger (Logan County) and Dave Bratton (Stutsman County). The audience gave a standing ovation to thank these veterans and provide the recognition they did not receive when they first came home.

Another highlight of the event was the presentation of Milestone Service Awards to Post and Unit members including a Legion 60-year and 70-year award and two Auxiliary 60-year awards.

American Legion – Gackle

50 Years: Luxton J. Brooks, Leslie Wirkkunen, John Henke, Michelle Pich, Rod Gilmore

60 Years: Wilbert Denning

70 Years: Darrell Ova

American Legion Auxiliary – Gackle

35 Years: Rachael Smaage

45 Years: Rebekah Wilke

50 Years: Brenda Mayer

55 Years: Doreen Mickelson

60 Years: Nedina Denning

American Legion Auxiliary – Fredonia

60 Years: Isabel Weber

Marella Presler Sebring read the elements of the "Missing Man Table" and Randy Entzminger offered prayers. Sharon Schlittenhard, pianist, provided accompaniment to the group songs "Star Spangled Banner," "God Bless America" and "Happy Birthday."

Thank you to all who attended!

Article and photos submitted by: Elaine Ackerman, President Unit 250 Gackle