

2026 Public Relations Report
Department of North Dakota
Marcy Schmidt, Department Public Relations Chairman

My experience serving not only as Department Secretary, but as co-editor of our department's quarterly publication 'The Message' has given me an insight into the workings of our most active units.

Since September 2025, I have received a steady stream of articles and photos from unit presidents and members-at-large throughout North Dakota. These submissions provide unit activity dates and times for the department newspaper, as well as the names of individuals shown in the photos. Because of space constraints, we cannot publish all materials received; nonetheless, the editing team incorporated as many as possible.

Units and members frequently use social media, including Facebook, to publish photos and updates and to promote upcoming events. These posts are engaging to follow and provide real-time insight into the people involved and the projects they support. Many units also share event details and publicize fundraisers using posters and images.

Traditional local newspapers — once common in diners and grocery stores — are becoming increasingly rare in North Dakota. Units that still work with local papers often submit articles and photos highlighting American Legion Family events in their communities. They also share these items with me, as Public Relations Chairman, and with our Department President for posting on our Facebook page. It is rewarding to see how many local stories continue to appear.

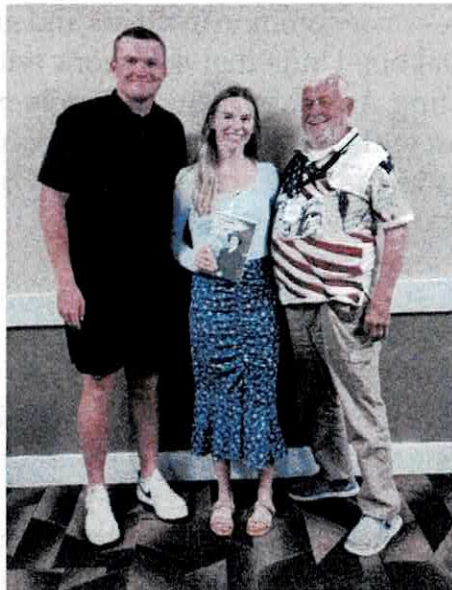
In today's fast-paced world, it is easy to forget the value of community and simple gatherings for camaraderie. The shared articles and photos make it clear that age is no barrier. People of all ages come together to share meals, play bingo, conduct flag-burning ceremonies, distribute poppies, march in parades, and support Veterans Day and Memorial Day programs, along with school-related community events.

I am so proud of the Auxiliary members who take the time to document unit activities through notes and photographs and to author these wonderful short articles. It is encouraging to know that the American Legion Auxiliary is recognized as an organization and continues to remain relevant in North Dakota.

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Carol Wolf, Dept VA&R Chair, presents check to VAMC-Fargo Volunteer Services for the 2025 Creative Arts Festival



Past Presidents Parley Nursing Scholarship Winner

Mallory Kvilvang, of Northwood, ND was awarded one of four 2025 Past Presidents Parley Nursing Scholarships. Mallory is currently studying in the Nurse Practitioners Program at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. She is pictured here with her husband Christian Kvilvang and her grandfather Curt Twete, Past Department Commander of McVile, ND.



2025 Unit Member of the Year - Lynn Helm

American Legion Auxiliary James Roberts Unit 124 McClusky, North Dakota nominated Lynn for her work on behalf of her unit and veterans.



***2025 Flickertail Girls
State Governor***

Photo: Left to Right - Marcy Schmidt, Department Secretary, Susan Degner, Department Treasurer, Rose Laning, Department Chaplain, Victoria Babingui, Minou Babingui, 2025 ND Girls State Governor, LoAnn Dick, Department President, and Sandra Smith, Department Vice President, Candace Berg, Department President-Elect.



***American Legion Auxiliary Hafner-Miller-Ross Unit 20 Wahpeton, ND
Americanism in the Schools***

Ruth Quam, President of ALA Hafner-Miller-Ross Unit 20 Wahpeton, presented "I Pledge Allegiance" booklets to students at St John's School on January 15, 2026. Ruth is pictured in the back row (left) with School Principal Kaja Kaste, back row (right) and some of the students who received the colorful booklets.



Celebrating Recruit 10

Photo: Marquita Novak, Unit 147 President, Park River, North Dakota is presented a certificate for her efforts to "Recruit 10" members by Department President, Candace Berg.



Children and Youth "Care Bears and Puppies:

*Photo: Left to Right:
Judy Twete, NEC, and
Director of Nursing, Jennifer
Rustin*

Curt and I returned home from Winter Conference after enjoying time with friends and learning the latest information during our legion and auxiliary sessions and bringing numerous "Care Animals" (stuffed puppies and bears) back with us. Three large shipments of these specially labeled stuffed animals were delivered to Nelson County Health System Hospital and the McVile Ambulance Service office. Director of Nursing, Jennifer Rustin, gladly received the animals, to be stored until needed.

These little "Care Animals" are presented by emergency response personnel to young patients who may be experiencing fear or trauma during a hospital visit or another emergency. The bears each wear a specially designed t-shirt with The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Son's of the American Legion, and Legion Riders names and logos imprinted on them.

"Care Animals" are provided free of charge to hospitals and first responders by the American Legion Family Children and Youth Programs. American Legion Auxiliary Ole Semling Unit 135 McVile, ND proudly donated \$500 to defray the cost of the bears and puppies.

Article submitted by: Judy Twete, President Unit 135



*Morlock Mayer Unit 250
Gackle, ND
Celebrating 50 years
Membership*



Vickie McPherson



Steve Bateman

Quilt of Valor Presented to Steve Bateman, Army Veteran

On a cold, mid-December night in McVile, I was able to make a very touching presentation to a McVile Dakota Prairie High School graduate and an Army Veteran, Steve Batemen. His mother Vickie McPherson, an Army veteran herself, asked about the possibility that Steve might be presented with a special Quilt of Valor created by the Home Bound Quilters serving the Nelson and Ramsey County areas.

Steve was surprised to see my husband, Curt and I arrive, and it was fun to visit and catch up on his life. When I asked if he knew about the Quilts of Valor Program, he said he did, and I shared the story from the organization's perspective. Then I brought out the quilt, and Steve's face turned pale as tears ran down his cheeks. He sat down in his chair and covered his face. It was an emotional time for both him and me. I draped the quilt over his shoulders and photos were taken with Steve and his mom, Vickie McPherson. These emotional presentations are one reason, why I feel so blessed to have been asked by the Home Bound Quilters to present quilts to veterans.

Congratulations to a fine young man and Army veteran from McVile.

Judy Twete, Unit 135 President



*North Dakota Boys Stater,
Bridger Rivinius
Speaks at Veterans Day
Program*

Veterans Day in Gackle, ND

The American Legion Posts and Auxiliary Units of Gackle, Streeter, Fredonia, and Kulm co-hosted a Veterans Day community event at the Gackle Legion Hall on Tuesday, November 11, 2025. The event included a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. A program followed the meal. Approximately one hundred people attended the event.

Gackle Legion Post #250 Commander Jon Metz welcomed everyone to the event and led the attendees in the "Pledge of Allegiance." Guest speakers were Bridger Rivinius who talked about his time at Legion Boys State this past June and Randy Entzminger who gave a presentation on "Basic Training...The Adventure Begins." Gackle-Streeter school student Myles Martin played "Yankee Doodle Boy" on the alto sax. 2025 State Poppy Poster winners Jenna Homola, Courtney Remboldt, and Emma Heller were recognized. As veterans were leaving the event, they received a homemade card designed by Gackle-Streeter elementary school students.

Thank you to all who attended and a special thank you to all our Veterans!

Elaine Ackerman, Unit 250 President



*Walker Bags and Neck
Pillows assembled and
donated to the VAMC- Fargo,
ND by member of Richard
Nelson Unit 297 Harwood,
ND*



*Mayer Morlock Unit 250
Gackle
Veterans Day Celebration*



*Holiday Fund Raiser
Grand Forks Unit 6*



Veterans Day Observed in Pekin, ND

American Legion Posts and Units, including Aneta, McVile, Pekin and Tolna, observed Veterans Day in Pekin, ND on November 11, 2025. The American Legion Family made up of veterans, auxiliary members and other guests made for a nice evening to celebrate our veterans. A delightful prime rib meal, sponsored by the Tolna and McVile Posts, was prepared and served by the famous Danny Bakken from Cooperstown. Those in attendance enjoyed the dinner, the music, the speaker, and camaraderie of an evening spent with fellow veterans and family.

Ole Semling Post 135 was the host post this year. Post 135 Commander Judy Sateren opened the evening with table grace and continued after the meal with introductions, the POW/MIA Table service and introduction of our local violinist, Jordan Ridgeway for some patriotic music. A lot of hard-working members supply the energy to be productive, while assisting veterans, serving military, families, and their communities. This is where the National American Legion shines with the slogan of "Be the One" comes in. Picking up the ball and being committed to the great programs of this service-oriented organization is so important.

Recognition of 50-year Legion members were presented. Pekin's Commander, Doug Messner, announced that David Foering is a 50-year Legion member and a certificate will be presented to him when he is in the area. McVile's Auxiliary Unit 135 presented certificates to two 50-year auxiliary members, sisters, Carma Hanson, and Dawn Johnson, daughters of Curt and Judy Twete. Carma currently serves as ALA Department Legislative Chair and is involved with "Safe Kids Car Seat Checkups" in Grand Forks, while Dawn is employed as an elementary teacher in Devils Lake.

Judy Twete, Unit 135 President



North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Department President Attends McVillage Library Celebration

North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Department President Candace Berg attended the 14th Anniversary Celebration of the McVillage Community Library on July 17, 2025. Many auxiliary members were also in attendance to show their support and enjoy the festivities.

The celebration featured a special performance by Teddy Roosevelt repriser Adam Lindquist, who entertained the crowd with a lively and educational portrayal of the 26th President.

The American Legion Post 135 and American Legion Auxiliary Unit 135 work with the McVillage Community Library in supporting their community. Donations received from the Legion and the Auxiliary are much appreciated by the library and community.



Celebrating 75-year Member

The American Legion Auxiliary Carl Rogen Unit 29 Watford City, ND celebrated the 99th birthday of Lucille Broderson, a 75-year auxiliary member. Lucille is pictured with Sharon Leiseth, Unit Secretary and Jill Carstens, Unit President.