By Al Zdon

The Legislature fired its first shot on veterans housing in mid-December, and the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs shot right back.

In a hearing held at the Capitol to look at a final report done for the Select Committee on Veterans Housing, Larry Shellito said the committee was crossing into the MDVA’s “wheelhouse.”

“I viewed this as a great opportunity to partner with this sub-committee and its powerful members to collaborate in developing a responsible way forward. Instead, what I received was a report rooted in the past.”

Shellito called it a report “anchored to the state history, steeped in innuendos, short on substance regarding recommendations included:

-- A tiered system should be set up where veterans with 70 percent disability should get priority for admission to the five state veterans homes.
-- The veterans homes system should decentralize management and patient care.
-- Emphasis should be on keeping veterans in their own homes as long as possible. -- Domiciliary units at the Hastings and Minneapolis homes should be geared to return veterans to the community.
-- A study should be done to reduce costs at the state homes. More federal money should be sought.
-- The “look back” rules, in which a veteran can transfer his or her assets to a third party a year before entering a veterans home, should be changed to a five-year period to match federal guidelines.

Shellito said the recommendations “did not provide enough information” to have a serious conversation with Gov. Dayton at this time.

Shellito concluded by saying, “I believe that many of your recommendations regarding the homes are either already in progress or would appear to be operationally

Continued on Page 2
House report discrede by commissioner

Continued from Page 1

cumbersome. And finally, the Administrative and policy recommendations identified are unnecessary and would handcuff our ability to effectively manage.”

Milt Schoen, legislative chairman for the Minnesota County Veterans Service Officers, said his organization was opposed to the proposed tier system in the report. He called the recommendation to put disabled veterans at the top of the list “very regressive testing.” He said, “It would be very regressive as a policy.”

Schoen also warned that trying to make the veterans housing system blend with the federal system could be more difficult than the Legislature supposes. “The Minnesota Department of Human Services and the CMS (Center for Medicaid Services) are mentioned in the report and they have very different benefit structures from veterans benefits.”

Neil said the state should only look at CMS (federal) certification as a “tool, a gap filler for only situations where it does not impact the veteran or the veteran’s spouse.”

Rep. Mary Murphy, DFL-Hermantown, a member of the committee, took issue with some of Shellito’s opening remarks, particularly his statement that the report was not ready to be discussed with the governor, and a comment by Shellito that the Legislature should “really partner” with the governor. Hausman cited the cap on veterans home nursing beds, and the lack of federal funding for building veterans homes.

His theme for the year is: “Building for Tomorrow -- Today.” The National Commander will take pictures with posts that have achieved goal by the time of the National Commander’s Tour. Each post will receive a certificate.

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Endorsements

Burt endorsed for Sg.t.-at-Arms

American Legion Post 322 and the Second District has endorsed Clinton Burt for the Department of Minnesota Sergeant-at-Arms for the year 2014-15. Burt served thirty years in the Army, including eight years in the Air Force and thirty years in the South Dakota Air National Guard. He is a life member of the Lionel Boudreau Post 322 Currie, Minnesota, and has served as Commander, Vice Commander, Chairman of the Bar Board and Membership Chairman. He served the Second District as Vice Commander, First Vice Commander and as Commander in 2005-2006. He also served as Judge Advocate, and V.A.V.S. Chairman. Burt is the Second/Seventh Districts Department Vice Commander at the present time, and is on his third term on the Minnesota American Legion Board of Publications.

The Center for Chronic Disease Outcomes Research (CCDOR) at the Minneapolis VA Health Care System has been designated a Center of Innovation (COIN) by VA’s Office of Research and Development.

“The COIN designation recognizes this medical centers expertise across a national level,” said Kent Crosley, MD, Minneapolis VA Chief of Staff. Only 19 of the 152 VA medical centers across the country have COINs. The purpose of a COIN site is to foster more timely and relevant research to address the needs of patients and providers.

The CCDOR Director Steven Fu, MD, the Minneapolis COIN will focus on PTSD, Cancer Prevention/Screening and Chronic Pain. “We are focusing on high priority topics that are extremely important to our Veterans and are fortunate to have some of the nation’s leading researchers in all three of these areas,” said Fu.

“The end result of our research will advance the quality of care delivered by the VA and hopefully improve lives.” Here are summaries of each area of research:

Evidence-Based Therapies for PTSD

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is very prevalent among Veterans—combat Veterans in particular; thus, treating PTSD is a high priority for VA.

To support the goal of providing effective, evidence-based treatment for Veterans affected by PTSD, HSR&D has funded the CREATE initiative, “Evidence-Based Therapies for PTSD,” with the overall goal of improving Veteran access to and engagement in evidence-based PTSD treatments.

Cancer Prevention and Screening

Cancer is the leading cause of death in the United States in people aged 45-64 years and the second leading cause of death among those over age 65. Because these age groups include 79% of the Veteran population, optimizing the provision of cancer prevention and screening services is highly relevant to improving Veteran health. Moreover, tobacco use is the leading cause of premature death in the United States and a major risk factor for cancer; it also is more prevalent among Veterans than in the general population. To support the goal to optimize the provision of cancer prevention and screening services to improve patient outcomes within the VA healthcare system, CCDOR investigators will pursue a number of projects to develop, evaluate and disseminate novel interventions to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use, and to optimize the appropriate use of cancer screening services.

Chronic Pain

Chronic pain is a major public health problem affecting more than 100 million adults in the United States and resulting in at least $560–$635 billion in healthcare costs and lost productivity each year. Additionally, treatment of pain with opioid analgesics has led to a second public health problem in recent years—an epidemic of prescription drug abuse and overdose. In the VA healthcare system, a majority of Veterans report at least moderate pain interference with daily activities, and overdose death rates are twice those in the general population. Chronic pain research is an emerging area for CCDOR, with a goal to improve functional outcomes for Veterans with chronic pain.

For more details on the Minneapolis COIN, see: www.hsrd.research.va.gov/centers/ccdor.cfm

Minneapolis VA named Center of Innovation

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Hjermstad Story
To the Editor:
Thank you Al Zdon and the MN Legionnaire for the wonderful feature on Cannon Falls’ Arnold Hjermstad and his photography of World War II. It is a true story of the brutalities of Hitler and the atrocities of that great struggle, Arnie Hjermstad is still going strong. He still has his original assignment to the U.S. Navy on the U.S.S. Groening’s Iron Cross. At ninety five he still greets customers everyday at the family hardware store. We must continue to remember and thank these great warriors of that time in history. Is he then an American hero? 

Emil Lund
Fought in Great Britain
To the Editor:
I would like to add another name to the honour roll of those Americans who fought for Great Britain prior to America’s entry into World War II. His name was Ralph Freiberg, a native of Eitzen, MN, a small community on the Iowa border in the far southeastern corner of Minnesota. I would like to share my story about Ralph Freiberg, a native of Eitzen, MN, a small community on the Iowa border in the far southeastern corner of Minnesota. I would like to share my story about Ralph Freiberg, a native of Eitzen, MN, a small community on the Iowa border in the far southeastern corner of Minnesota.

January is the time we hear about the four chaplains. Early February, on the 3rd, 1943, a troop-ship from the U.S.A Dorchester, was wallowing through the icy seas of Greenland. It had 900 troops on board. The ship was hit by a torpedo. There were four chaplains aboard. The chaplains led the men to boxes of life jackets and passed them out to the soldiers. When the boxes were empty, the chaplains took their own and gave them to four young soldiers and told them to jump. As the ship was sinking the chaplains were standing on the slanting deck, their arms linked together, as if praying. They were killed by the blast of gas from four different directions. One was Reformed Church of America, another Jewish, another Catholic and the last was a Nazarene. There was a song written for the four chaplains, which read, “You will never meet all that you fought to preserve.” It said so much. I cannot put it all in this letter. One paragraph read, “You will never meet all that you fought to preserve, but for each of us, we know you as — a soldier, a veteran, an American hero.” This card was sent from the Spicer Post Auxiliary and SAI.

Just before that I received a card in the mail. It was from my Post 545 Spicer. I opened the card thinking it was an invitation to the Veteran’s Day dinner, but it was not. I said, “Thank you soldier.” What a wonderful thing to get. I said so much. I cannot put it all in this letter. One paragraph read, “You will never meet all that you fought to preserve, but for each of us, we know you as — a soldier, a veteran, an American hero.” This card was sent from the Spicer Post Auxiliary and SAI.

This past weekend, we said good-bye to our non-tray. Troy is in the South Dakota National Guard. He and the rest of his company will be going to Afghanistan. For some it will be their first deployment and for others their second or third. The American Legion annual meeting was held in a high school. It seats 3,000 people and it was over that. What a send-off for those soldiers. We did get to say goodbye as a family Saturday before the opening ceremonies. As the time got closer, there were more tears and hugs. We left and went to the hallway. When the formation started we went in to watch. Proud. I was proud of my son, but also of those men and women who were standing and looking proud. I know there have been many deployments like this that I either was not aware of or was not able to attend due to a big lump in my throat and a tear, I left. I pray that this war will come to an end so soon. I also know this prayer is not just mine, but has been going on for a long time.

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Military service organization, I am always concerned about posts that have shrinking membership. The American Legion was not founded to run bars and banquet halls, but to serve as an advocate for our veterans, operate first class youth programs, promote patriotism and stand tall for America’s national defense. 

While your article pointed out the problems faced by one American Legion post, it ignored the fact that there are 11,000 American Legion posts in the United States. As a result, the one hundred and sixty thousand post members have an easier path to receive additional disability if they have sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of the five other ailments identified as being a result of traumatic brain injury. These ailments include: conversion disorder, mental retardation, mental illness, major depressive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder. The VA-DoD eBenefits portal at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebebenefits allows posts to host an online eBenefits tool to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria.

Service members who are within 180 days of discharge may be eligible for expanded benefits if the TBI was service connected. Eligibility for additional benefits will depend upon the severity of the TBI and the time between the injury causing the TBI and the onset of the second illness. Servicemembers who are within 180 days of discharge may be eligible for expanded benefits if they are diagnosed with any of the five other ailments identified as being a result of traumatic brain injury. The VA-DoD eBenefits portal at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebebenefits allows posts to host an online eBenefits tool to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria.

The published final rule is now available at http://www.regulations.gov.

VA expands benefits for TBI
WASHINGTON — Some Veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of five other ailments identified as being a result of traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of five other ailments identified as being a result of traumatic brain injury may be eligible for expanded benefits under new regulations developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The new regulation, which takes effect 30 days from publication, will have a number of important benefits for Veterans. First, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Second, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Third, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Fourth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Fifth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Sixth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Seventh, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Eighth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Ninth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Tenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Eleventh, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Twelfth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Thirteenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Fourteenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Fifteenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Sixteenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Seventeenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria. Eighteenth, it will allow Veterans who have sustained a traumatic brain injury to receive additional disability benefits if they have sustained a TBI and meet certain criteria.
Legal Clinic for Veterans
The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, in partner-
ship with the law firm of Fredrikson & Byron, will hold a drop-in legal clinic for veterans. Child Support, employ-
ment benefits, expungement and debt collection will be
addressed.
The clinic will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 14, from 9 a.m.
to 3 p.m. at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center Auditorium.
For more information, contact Sara Sommarstrom, 651-
224-0522 or email sSommarstrom@mac-v.org.

Bowling Volunteers Needed
Moorhead Post 21 is hosting the 67th annual Minnesota American Legion Bowling Tournament from Feb. 22 to April 13. The post will be providing shuttle service between the motels and the post. Drivers are needed.

Physically Disabled Hunt
Applications for the Physically Disabled Hunt are now being taken for eight weekends to coordinate the Kangaroo and Clean 30 games and to sell t-shirts. Contact Gary Olson, 218-233-
5130 or email garyholson@702zoom.com.

New Minneapolis VA Ramp
The new ramp at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center will open in January. There will be separate enter-
ning areas for visitors, patients and staff. It will create 640 additional parking spaces. There will be 420 patient and
visitor spaces.

Calendar out
The 2014 Minnesota American Legion calendar has been mailed. The calendar is not sent to every member. If you do not receive a calendar and would like one, please contact the Department Headquarters, 651-291-1800 or 1-866-259-
9163.
The calendar is a fundraiser for the Department. It fea-
tures the winning pictures in a photo contest. Members
were asked to send in their service photos, and the 12 best were used in the calendar.

New Clinics
The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced two new clinics in Minnesota. Valor Healthcare of Louisville, Ky., (Humana) has been awarded $3 million to operate two new VA commu-

ity-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) at Albert Lea and Shakopee.
The Shakopee clinic will be located at 1100 Shakopee Town Center. The Albert Lea clinic will be at Skyline Mall, 1665 West Main Street.

Baseball postings made
The appointments for positions at 2014 National American Legion Tournaments has been announced:
Jeff Jeffs of Moorhead has been named the Tournament
Director at the Mid-South Tournament in N. Little Rock, Ark.
Mike Gort, Marshall, will be the Tournament Director at the Northeast Tournament in Middletown, Coen.
David Kunz has been selected as the Assistant Tournament
Director at the Central Plains Tournament in Fargo, N.D.
Dick Joncikowski will be the PA announcer at the 2014 American Legion World Series at Shelby, N.C.

Socks and Shirts Needed
The annual Sockathon will be held Saturday, Feb. 1,
at Waite Park Post 172. Membership turn-in will be from
3-4:30 p.m. with a dinner at 5. The program will follow.

Round Tables
The St. Croix Valley Civil War Round Table will feature
“1863: The Wilderness, Spottsylvania, North Ana and Cold
Harbor” with speaker Stoney Stonecipher. The meeting will be held on Monday, January 27, at the Lowell Inn in
Stillwater. For information or reservations for dinner, con-
tact Steve Hopp at 763-626-1208 or by emailing him at
rodsallhaines@comcast.net.
The World War II Round Table will have “The War on the
Eastern Front.” It will feature a speaker and veterans of the
Eastern Front. The meeting will be held at the Fort
Snelling History Center at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 9.
Admission is $5.
The Rochester Veterans Round Table will feature “U.S. Airforce: Korea to the Cuban Missile Crisis,” with speaker
Phillip Jophson. The meeting will be held on Monday, Jan. 13, at the Rochester Assembly of God Church at 7 p.m.
Admission is $5.

Cancer Study
The VA Cooperative Studies Program 577 trial entitled
“Colonoscopy vs. Fecal Immunochemical Test” is enrolling
participants at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Eligibility includes veterans from 50-75 years old, due for a
colorectal cancer screening, with symptoms of the disease.
For more information, contact Ruth Anway or Mary Lindquist at 612-
467-2680.

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Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By Tom Newman

VA New Benefit

The Federal VA has granted up to one year retroactive benefits for veterans filing fully developed claims to help reduce the claims backlog.

The new benefit takes effect August 6 for first-time filers.

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that Veterans filing an original Fully Developed Claim (FDC) for service-connected disability compensation may be eligible for fully retroactive benefits, which are in effect Aug. 6, 2013, through Aug. 5, 2015.

By awarding fully developed claims to veterans, VA is continuing to implement several initiatives to meet the Department's goal to eliminate the claims backlog in compensation claims for Veterans by increasing the number of claims decisions and decreasing wait times for the newly implemented law.

VA strongly encourages Veterans to work with their County Veteran Service Officers and Veteran Service Organizations to file Fully Developed Claims and participate in VA's new initiative to expedite disability compensation claims decisions to increase production of compensation claims decisions and decrease wait times for all Veterans.

The new benefit takes effect August 6 for first-time filers.

Veterans can learn more about disability benefits on the VA's website, http://www.va.gov/disability.
**Membership Chart**

**As of Dec. 18, 2013**

<table>
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**Legion Day at the Gophers basketball**

The Hayfield Post 330, the official Minnesota American Legion Color Guard for 2013-14, presented the colors at the Minnesota Gopher basketball game just before Christmas.

**NVC Satrom speaks at Pearl Harbor Rally**

National Vice Commander Wayne Satrom of Nebraska spoke at the Pearl Harbor Rally held at the Osseo/Maple Grove Post 172.

Satrom brought greetings from National Commander Dan Dellinger of Virginia, and complimented Minnesota on such a large turnout for a membership rally. He said The American Legion was built on a “solid foundation.” “This is not a dying organization, and you have proved that.”

Satrom talked about supporting some of the Legion’s national programs such as Operation Comfort Warriors and the National Emergency Fund. He said it was important for Departments to keep an eye on the VA hospitals and other facilities because of anticipated cuts in federal spending.

Satrom also called on the Legion Family to support efforts to make the desecration of the American flag successful. “We need to give Old Glory the attention it deserves.”

In the membership announcements, the SAL’s Sixth District was in first place with 69.28 percent. The American Legion Auxiliary’s top district was the Ninth District at 80.09 percent.

And the Legion’s top membership getter was the Third District with 83.51 percent.

The Rally no longer incorporates the Cruzen awards.

Before the rally, the crowd of about 200 got a chance to see actual newsreel footage of the reporting of the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

The next rally will be at Waite Park on Saturday, Feb. 1.

There were smiles all around when the membership bonus checks were handed out to district representatives. From left: Department Vice Commander Denise Milton from Bagley; Carl Hendrickson, Eighth District; Dick Juhl, 10th District; Vern Massie, Sixth District; Gene Olsowld, Second District.

The next rally will be at Waite Park on Saturday, Feb. 1.

The Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary was honored for its contribution to the National Veterans Creative Art Festival held last year in Reno. Past Department President Norma Tramm, right, presented to Past Department President Raleen Tozmann.

There were elves, like Joyce Semmell, all over the Pearl Harbor Rally at Osseo.

There were smiles all around when the membership bonus checks were handed out to district representatives. From left: Department Vice Commander Denise Milton from Bagley; Carl Hendrickson, Eighth District; Dick Juhl, 10th District; Vern Massie, Sixth District; Gene Olsowld, Second District.

The Hayfield Post 330, the official Minnesota American Legion Color Guard for 2013-14, presented the colors at the Minnesota Gopher basketball game just before Christmas.

Commander Mike and Teresa Ash take in the Minnesota vs. Nebraska-Omaha game. Over 100 members of the Legion Family were on hand for the game at Williams Arena.
Grant was a nine-time letter winner at the University of Minnesota where he was a three-sport athlete, including both the U.S. Football Hall of Fame and the Canadian Football Hall of Fame. But it isn’t always football that Grant reminisces about.

He was three or four years older, but he was absolutely great to me. “He took me and his brother out one of Grant’s best friends had a brother who was a pilot. He got killed testing one of those jets.

Grant says that rather than watch TV, he often thinks back on his marriage and six kids and other highlights of his life. One of things he remembers most were some of the guys he knew back then who went to war and didn’t come back.

When Grant played football with Philadelphia Eagles, he happened to have the locker next to Chuck Bednarik, one of the toughest men to ever play pro football. “He was 24 years old when he retired from the Air Force, but he was absolutely great to me. He was a waist gunner on a B-24 during the war. Like a lot of other vets, he didn’t talk about his experiences in the war very much, but now and then he’d open up. He had flown his 25 missions at one point and could go home, but he volunteered for 10 more.

“Now and then we’d go out for a beer. After about two beers he’d get a little maudlin, and after some more, he’d start crying. He’d get a pen out and start writing down all the planes he could remember that were shot down from his squadron while he was there. There were 26 planes, and he could remember every one of them. There were 11 crew members on each plane, and he could remember a lot of those. He said that if he wrote the names down, it would help him to never forget his friends. He’d cry for a couple of hours, but he never forgot those planes.

Grant says that rather than watch TV, he often thinks back on his marriage and six kids and other highlights of his life. One of things he remembers most were some of the guys he knew back then who went to war and didn’t come back. He was 19 years old, and that was as far as he ever got.”

Grant was close to the Bong family in Superior. “I used to go hunting with Richard Bong’s younger brothers, and when he came home I got to meet him. He was a hero, and he was the first hero I’d ever known.”

Bong was America’s leading ace in World War II, shooting down 40 Japanese aircraft during the war. “He shot down 26 planes and they sent him home to sell war bonds and all that. He was a very quiet guy, and all that war bond stuff with the pretty girls just wasn’t him. I surmise that’s why he went back to the war. He was more comfortable with that environment. So he went back and shot down 14 more.”

“The U.S. was just developing jet planes at that time, and they made him a test pilot. He got killed testing one of those jets.”

“And so I think of him. He was 24 years old when he died. What kind of life Grant graduated from Superior High School in April 1945 and by June he was training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. He later trained on naval landing craft in preparation for the anticipated landings in Japan.

Grant was a nine-time letter winner at the University of Minnesota. He was later drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles of the NFL and the Minneapolis Lakers of the NBA and he tried out for the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team.
would he have had? He was so capable at whatever he did.”

At Superior High School, Grant played basketball with a smaller player nicknamed “Rabbit.” “He wasn’t big, but he could play. He was one of those guys you just wanted to be around because he enjoyed every day.

“He joined the Navy and they put him in submarines. We’d write back and forth. He was gone about a year, and when he came home he told me that they’d sunk a lot of Japanese ships.

“Then he had to go back to the war, but he was all excited because he was assigned to one of the new class of subs. It was bigger, better, faster, could carry more torpedoes and it was more comfortable for the crew. It was called the USS Bullhead.”

The Bullhead was operating in the Java Sea when it was sunk in August 1945. It was the last U.S. warship sunk during World War II.

“And so I think of him. I wonder what kind of a life he would have had if he had survived the war. And that’s what I do. Instead of thinking about a football game I might have won or lost, I think about these guys.”

Sometimes the former Viking coach thinks about American Legion Baseball. He began playing on the Superior Post team when he was 14 years old.

“I was precocious,” he said.

“There was not much else to do in the summertime but play baseball. We could hardly wait. We’d tape up our baseballs, and put screws in our bats to hold them together. We were just waiting for that first warm day.

“The only team in town was the Legion team so you had to make that team.”

Grant did make the team. He recalls two experiences, one bad and one good, from those early days.

“I was in left field and they hit a ball out to me and it went between my legs. A run scored and we lost the game. I was haunted by that. I vowed to never let a ball go through me again, and I don’t think one ever did.

The second game was in the early 40s when Superior traveled down to Minneapolis to take on the powerhouse Richfield Legion team. In 1943, Richfield won the Legion World Series.

“I remember we played the game at the Fort Snelling field. It came down to the bottom of the ninth, and they had a runner on third base with one out. We were ahead one to nothing.

“I knew that if they hit a ball out to me, I’d never be able to throw the guy out at the plate if he tagged up. So I cheated in a little bit. Sure enough, the batter hit a line drive right to me, and I threw the runner out at home plate.

“In those days you never took a shower after the game, you just hopped on the bus. I remember we sang all the way back to Superior. It was the first time I was ever the hero.”

Grant’s baseball prowess grew as he grew, and toward the end of his Legion career he was selected for a national East-West all-star game to be played in Chicago.

“They only paid for one berth, so my mom and I slept in the berth, and my dad sat up all night on the train. I was pretty excited, but I was just a punk kid from Superior. We didn’t have a shower at home, and so I was really excited at taking a shower at the hotel. The trouble was I didn’t know you were supposed to put the shower curtain inside the tub. So pretty soon there was a knock on the door because the water was going down into the room on the floor below.

“We practiced for three days and the coaches tried to figure who should play where. I really wanted to play outfield so I could hit. In batting practice I hit one out of the park, and this was Comiskey Field, the big-league park.

“But they decided I was the best pitcher on the team, and so they made me pitch. After three days of practice, my arm was dead. I only got one at-bat and I didn’t do anything.”

Grant said he and the other players truly appreciated American Legion Baseball. “It gave us structure. The Legion scheduled the games, they scheduled the practices. There was always a manager from the Legion post, and he made sure we had bats and balls and catching equipment.”

Grant said that he needs to be cautious about what he says about youth baseball or youth sports in general, but he said there’s room for improvement these days.

“I think the parents are more involved than the kids. They get them the equipment, and they get them uniforms. And then there’s always treats after the games. Treats after the games!”

In the Depression and war years, the kids played ball all summer, but managed to do so without adult supervision.

“We made up the teams. We decided where we would play and when and how long. I’d get a bunch of guys and someone else would get a bunch from the other side of town, and we’d play.

“We didn’t spend a lot of time arguing because we wanted to play. You’d settle the dispute quickly, just accept what the other guy said and move on.

“And that’s the problem. The kids don’t make any decisions today. Back then, we made them all. They’re not learning those life skills. The kids are only worried about what treats they get after the game.”

Grant spends most of his spare time hunting and fishing in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Canada.

As a bench player, Grant helped the Minneapolis Lakers win a world championship.

An American landing craft in the Pacific in 1944.
The U.S. military was caught by surprise on December 7, 1941, when Japanese planes swooped over the Hawaiian island of Oahu and wreaked carnage on the nation’s battleship fleet and the airfields surrounding Pearl Harbor. Somebody had to take the blame for the disaster, and those two somebodies were Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, in charge of the Pacific Fleet, and Gen. Walter Short, in charge of the Army defenses on Oahu.

Kimmel was relieved of duty shortly after the attack, reduced from a four-star admiral to a two-star rear admiral, and then found guilty by a presidential commission of “dereliction of duty.” He left the service in early 1942.

While Kimmel may have served as a prime scapegoat for the unpreparedness of the Navy at Pearl Harbor, historians, commissions and Congress have, through the years, determined that Kimmel was unfairly singled out in the rush to judgment.

Kimmel’s main defender and exponent in these years is his grandson, Thomas Kimmel, a former FBI agent who travels the country giving talks on his ancestor. Kimmel was the featured speaker at the December meeting of the World War II Round Table held at the Fort Snelling History Center.

“There’s no question that Admiral Kimmel was responsible and accountable for what happened at Pearl Harbor,” Thomas Kimmel said. “The question is whether he was blamable, and should he have been punished.”

The younger Kimmel presented a series of slides making his case that the admiral was unfairly treated.

One of the accusations was that Admiral Kimmel was listening to the MAGIC code breaking interceptions of Japanese diplomatic messages. Thomas Kimmel said that the admiral and other key officials did not have access to all the MAGIC information, “and besides that, the Japanese diplomats were not aware of what was going on in the military.”

There have been historical revelations in more recent years, Kimmel said, that the Soviets and the British had access to knowledge that the attack was coming, but that information, while shared with President Franklin Roosevelt, was not shared with Kimmel or Gen. Short.

The fate of Admiral Kimmel’s reputation went through eight commissions and one naval inquiry. The naval tribunal was dependent on Washington for intelligence, and he expected to get all that information. He had a false belief he was getting that information. He was “affirmatively misled.”

Thomas Kimmel said that information received at the White House in the days before Pearl Harbor caused Roosevelt to say, “This means war.”

“What would be the logical thing for FDR to do? Wouldn’t he notify the Army and the Navy as soon as possible?” That notification apparently never came.

The fate of Admiral Kimmel’s reputation went through eight commissions and one naval inquiry. The naval tribunal was the only inquiry where Admiral Kimmel was allowed to testify on his own behalf. That inquiry found there was no evidence to support the dereliction of duty charge.

What the family has been seeking all along, and what it continues to seek, Kimmel said, is for Admiral Kimmel to be posthumously advanced to his highest rank. Nearly all American flag officers in World War II were allowed to retire at their highest rank — except Kimmel. “It’s the last official stigma.”

In 2000, Congress passed a law recommending that Admiral Kimmel be posthumously advanced. As of now, the Department of Defense has chosen not to do so.

Thomas Kimmel recently wrote a lengthy letter to Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense, asking that the congressional recommendation be heeded. The letter included testimonials from dozens of people who are interested in restoring the admiral’s rank and reputation.

“I don’t believe there was a flag officer in the Pacific Fleet who did not feel that Kimmel was an ideal man for the job. Unfortunately, even an ideal man can’t do the job without proper tools, and Kimmel did not have them.” — Fleet Admiral William Halsey.

“It seems to me that they are (Kimmel and Short) no more blamable than a number of people in Washington…” — Samuel Eliot Morison, official naval historian for World War II.

“I consider that after Pearl Harbor, Admiral Kimmel received the rawest of raw deals.” — Commander, U.S. Fleet, James Richardson.

“This is the most tragic injustice in American military history.” — Vice President Joe Biden, who co-sponsored the posthumous advancement bill when he was a U.S. Senator.

Thomas Kimmel said the effort to restore the admiral’s reputation also has the full support of, and was suggested by, the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. “It would be nice to get this done while some of them are still around.”

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In defense of Admiral Husband E. Kimmel

Another speaker at the Round Table was Jack Lambert, a military historian who has done much research on Pearl Harbor. He spoke about the radar sites that were supposed to give early warning of an attack.

“There were six radar sites on Oahu. But it was like having a state of the art fire station and no fire fighters to man it. A blob on a radar screen didn’t tell us who was coming. Those who could interpret that blob were not there. There were no trained personnel.”

Lambert also talked about why American planes were left in such an exposed position at the Army airfields. “The fighters were removed from the protective barriers to protect them from sabotage, which was thought to be the main threat. The pilots were told to take the weekend off. So the planes were lined up on the ramp, wingtip to wingtip by squadron, ready for the Saturday morning review.”

He also said that the Army was told that anything that came over Oahu, the Navy could shoot it down.

Jim Johns, who has written an unpublished conspira-
cy theory book on Pearl Harbor, also spoke.

He claims that Washington knew that a carrier force of six attack ships was en route east from Japan in the week before Pearl Harbor.

Johns also showed a document that ordered the clearing of the sea lanes between Hawaii and Japan. “FDR cleared the way for the Japanese Fleet.”

Johns told a questioner that President Roosevelt was interested in making sure that the United States got into the world war, and the sea lanes were cleared so that nothing would interrupt the attack on Pearl Harbor.

I ad Nakasone, who was a 14-year-old Japanese American living on Oahu, told of his first-hand observation of the attack.

“We lived in the middle of Oahu. It was about 7:30 or 7:40 in the morning, and I was eating my Kellogg’s Corn Flakes. I could see about 15 or 18 Navy aircraft coming through the pass.

“I could see them strafing Schofield Barracks, and then they were up in the air again in perfect formation. Then they bombed Wheeler Airfield. I saw those bombs coming down and I said, ‘Oh my God, this is terrible.’

Nakasone said he ran back inside and turned on the radio. “A voice was saying, ‘All servicemen return to their bases. The Japanese are attacking. This is no joke, it’s the real McCoy.’

Nakasone said at one point one of the Japanese planes flew right by him. “I could see the white scarf blowing in the wind. I could see his eyes behind the goggles.”

The USS Shaw at Pearl Harbor after her forward maga-

azino exploded.
January 2014

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT
Brian Medinnus Commander

District Commanders

Second District
Eugene Olszewski Commander

Welcome to year 2014. It doesn't seem possible half my term as your Second District Commander is over. How time does fly.

The Third District celebrated their Christmas party differently this year. Instead of the usual Christmas party and gift exchange, we went to the Luverne Veteran's Home and celebrated with our vets with carols, each veteran getting a gift and a few of us had coffee and cream cheese. We received cards of thanks from the veterans on the wonderful time they had and receiving a gift from their wish list. This couldn't have been a success without the help of District President Jeannette and the support of the Second District. Thanks one and all.

National Commander Don Delinger is making two stops in our district on his tour of Minnesota, stopping in Pipestone for breakfast then onto Redwood Falls for dinner on February 3rd. Currently, we have seven posts at goal and I foresee by the end of the year our goal post goal by the end of January so these post members can be present at one of these stops to have their picture taken with the National Commander and displayed in each post's wall.

Sweetheart Rally is being held at Post 428 in Waite Park on February 1st. As always, blue caps are encouraged to attend. All posts should be at 85% by this date. Watch our website at: www.mnlegion2nddistrict.com for more information.

SIXTH DISTRICT
Vern Massie Commander

Well Happy New Year to one and all. 2013 was a great year and everyone can look back and reflect on the good throughout the year. As we look forward to 2014 and the hope's a new year brings with it.

By the New Year you get this we will be planning to attend the District Mid-Winter in Brainerd on January 25th.

I hope each post will consider sending at least one member to this training and information meeting. More information on the conference is listed in the bulletin.

We made a big push on membership at Pearl Harbor and fell just a little short but we are still in the race. Now the Holidays are here and we know everyone can look back and reflect on the good throughout the year. As we look forward to 2014 and the hope's a new year brings with it.

Two things to keep in mind.
1. Don't put same as last year as that means nothing as last year's reports are long gone.
2. As of December 18, 2013 we are at 80.37%.

The next District event will be the District's Mid Winter Meeting. It will be held in Adams on January at Post 146. The Executive Board will meet at 9 a.m and General Session will meet at 10.

SECOND DISTRICT
Greeting from the mighty 7th district

SECOND DISTRICT
Mark Drover Commander

Thank you to Rosemount Post 65 for hosting our 4th rally of the year and thank you to Vice Commander Don Skow for organizing the rally - the food was excellent and we had a good time.

The Third District's Facebook is up and running. Lots of information could be relayed to Post's if everyone posted. Adjuster Linda has been busy taking pictures and posting them to Facebook. Please let Adjustant Linda know if you want an item posted. If you get the Third District Newsletter via e-mail, you can click on the Facebook OR Third District Web site link to be automatically connected.

For those who get the newsletter via mail, the website address for the Third District web site is: www.mnthirddistrict.org

The Facebook address is: www.facebook.com/pages/MN-Third-District/187823168787025

Elyssan Post 311 will be hosting the Third District Mid-Winter conference on Saturday, January 25th. The joint session with the Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion will be from 9-10:00 a.m. with general sessions to follow. Committee chairpersons should give a brief report at the conference and if you are unable to attend, please send a copy of your report to Adjuntant Linda.

The consolidated report is the most important report the post can give. Each post should be documenting activities the post is involved in on a continual basis. The Third District goal is to have 100% turn-in rate.

FOURTH DISTRICT
Carroll Partridge Commander

Hello 4th District, Hope everyone had a great Christmas and a super New Year.

FIFTH DISTRICT
Robert Johnson Commander

We had an exciting first-half of our current Legion year and we look forward to a great finish. Many thanks to all who have volunteered to go that extra mile to help us to continue to serve our veterans.

It is time for our Posts to think about endorsing District Officer candidates for 2013-2014. Strong bench strength is the key to our continued success. We have a great cadre of officers on board now. Let’s keep it going. Think about endorsing your qualified candidates today.

At the time of this writing, the Fighting 5th District has surpassed the January 2014 National Membership goal of 80%. As of December 18, 2013 we are at 80.37%. Congratulations to our Membership Team headed by Wayne Wessel.

Winter Carnival time is here. January 25, 2014, we march with our friends from the Fabulous 4th District in the Grand Day Parade. Meet at Arcade-Phalen at 12 noon, march in the parade and enjoy a membership turn-in, lunch and camaraderie.

Happy New Year to each and every one of you.

SEVENTH DISTRICT
Harold Meyer Jr. Commander

Greetings from the mighty 7th district

Remember the mid-winter conference is on Saturday January 18th in Browns Valley Post 58. The conference will start at 0900 hours. It would be nice to have at least one member from every post to attend the meeting.

Membership is still coming in slowly and we need to go out and work a little harder to get those last few members. I would like to thank all of the posts that have made goal. There are a few posts that are really close to making goal so like I would say is “Let’s Get It Done”.

From my Family to yours have a very Merry Christmas and a safe and cheerful New Year.

God Bless you, May God Bless America the greatest land in the world. And God Bless all our Troops in harm’s way.

NINTH DISTRICT
Thomas Norgaard Sr. Commander

Now that the holiday season and my wife’s Christmas wreath business are done for the year, I can get back to Legion business. I hope that everyone had a very joyous holiday season and didn’t get into too much egg nog. Our membership is going along great but it will take some effort to ‘shovel’ the last few out of the ‘snowdrifts’.

My Commander’s Project to raise money for the Recreation Fund at the Fergus Falls Veterans Home is doing pretty good. I have been presented with several donations from Posts that I have visited. Remember that even a small donation will go a long way in the lives of our fellow Veterans.

Remember that January 17th and 18th is our Mid-Winter Conference in Crookston Post 20. I encourage as many of you that can make the trip to attend and see how our 9th District works and meet many of the District chairmen/women and hear about all the programs we have available. Until the Mid-Winter, I wish everyone a warm season.

TENTH DISTRICT
Richard Juhl Commander

What will the New Year bring? I remember the words of a song from when I was young. “Que Sera, Sera,” what will be, will be. Is that really true?

I believe we all have the ability to effect change in our lives and the lives of those around us, whether good or bad. We are part of a very special organization called The American Legion that has almost 100 years of helping others. That, by itself, says something about each of us. We unselshly give of our time, our labor and, when possible, our dollars. Let us never lose sight of that and as we start the New Year, try every day to put a smile on someone’s face.

As you think about your New Year’s resolutions, here are a few suggestions.

1. Call a friend you haven’t spoken to in a while.

2. Send a card to someone, just because.

3. Meet your neighbors (who knows, they might become your best friends).

4. Open a door or carry a bag of groceries for a stranger. It feels good.

Finally, I would like to remind you that we are about to start a new legislative session. Learn what the issues are, who your representatives are, what the Legion objectives are and vote.

EIGHTH DISTRICT
Jerry St. Michel Commander

Legionnaires of the Great Eighth. Now that the holidays are behind us and we didn’t get into too much egg nog. Our membership is going along great but it will take some effort to ‘shovel’ the last few out of the ‘snowdrifts’.

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Listening Post

News from around the State

FALLDIN APPLES — As has been the tradition with Falldin Post 555 for many years, apples were delivered to seven different schools for American Education Week. From left: Ray Eiden, Chuck Kirk, Columbia Academy staff person, Virgil Persing and Commander Don Orttel.

HUTCH DEDICATION — Hutchinson Post 96 dedicated a new helicopter as part of its McLeod County Veterans Memorial Park. Former Minnesota Adjutant General Eugene Andreotti was the featured speaker, and he introduced special guests. At left is Michael Benge, a former Marine who was captured as a civilian in Vietnam in 1968 and was held for five years in various North Vietnamese prisons, and Jack Zimmerman, a soldier from Cleveland, Minn., who lost both legs and his right arm to an IED explosion in Afghanistan.

STILLWATER TREE — Stillwater Post 48 had a hat, scarf, glove and mitten tree. The 200 donated items were distributed by the post during the holidays.

WALKER MEDAL CEREMONY — Glenn Bakeberg of Walker was presented with a Purple Heart by Col. Gregg Parks, the featured speaker at a ceremony at the Walker Post 134. Bakeberg served in the Korean War. On Oct. 4, 1951, he carried an injured comrade two miles to safety and then returned to his machine gun. The gun got so hot, it severely burned Bakeberg’s hands, and he was taken to Japan for treatment. He waited 62 years for his Purple Heart and other medals.

DEERWOOD COURT OF HONOR — Troop 100 held its annual Court of Honor at Deerwood Post 557, the sponsors of the troop. At right is Post Commander Ted Olson.

BACKUS CHRISTMAS PARTY — Karch Sawyer, 1, and his sister Kenzlee, 4, sit on Santa’s lap at the annual Backus Post and Auxiliary 368 Kid’s Christmas Party. Over 100 kids attended the party, co-sponsored by the Lions’ Club.

ST. FRANCIS TOURNAMENT — A golfer and veteran head out to the first hole of the Support the Troops tournament sponsored by St. Francis Post 622. The tourney featured a silent auction at the post and the SAL was active around the course and in cooking the banquet meal. Proceeds went to packages sent to the troops.

WOODBURY WALL OF THANKS — Woodbury Post 501 members and Santa participated in the Wall of Thanks program. Donations go to several deserving veterans causes. From left: Henry Kolashinski, Tom Grezek, Bob Halter and John Schuster.
**Bagley Tournament** -- Bagley Post 16 held its 8th annual softball tournament this past summer. The tournament included a food tent next to the field.

**Marshall Visit** -- American Legion Riders paid a visit to Marshall Post 113 this past year, collecting funds for the Legacy Scholarship. The post contributed over $1,000. The donation was later presented at the national convention.

**Square Knot at Ely** -- Rod Reifsteck was awarded the prestigious Boy Scouting Square Knot award at Elysian Post 311. The national award honored Reifsteck’s 30 years of leadership, dedication and service.

**Monticello at Vets Cemetery** -- Monticello Post 260 participated in the Veterans Day parade at the Veterans Cemetery near Camp Ripley. Pete Larson prepared for the parade with his granddaughter Ginny Alexander.

**Lismore Ceremony** -- Lismore Post 636 hosted the Nobles County Council Flag Disposal ceremony. All posts in the county were represented and 81 flags were properly disposed of.

**Chaska Sentry** -- A new bronze statue has been dedicated just outside Chaska Post 57. “The Sentry” is a World War II soldier walking guard duty. The monument is made out of bronze.


**Revere Makes Goal** -- Revere Post 582 achieved goal and was honored by the Second District. From left: District Membership Director Harvey Noble, District Commander Gene Otswold, Post Commander Dennis Erickson, Membership Director Marvin Kleven and Department Vice Commander Clint Burt.
Welcome to 2014 and Happy New Year. If you made any New Year’s resolutions or not I know that all of you will continue your dedicated volunteering in helping our veterans, service men and women and their families. That is who we are and what our great organization is about.

The past two months everyone was busy with Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas activities for our veterans, our service men and women and their families making sure they were remembered with cards, calls, gifts and visits.

Now is the time to remember them in another way. January is Legislative and National Security month. We need to turn to our elected officials with calls, emails, letters and personal visits reminding them of the needs of our veterans, our service men and women.

Medical insurance, cost of living, safety and security, hospitals and clinics that are well staffed, clean, good working equipment and structurally well maintained are some of the issues to contact them about. Help is needed to care for our homeless veterans.

If you are unsure of what bills are out there concerning them contact The American Legion Department Office and talk with Randy, contact your District and State Commanders and their NEC and Alternate NEC.

Each one of them will be able to help you. Also the Minnesota Legionnaire has information. If we as an auxiliary to a veterans organization, along with the veterans do not do this, who will?

Here is some food for thought. Who better than the veteran understands and knows the importance of “For God and Country,” patriotism, security of our country and the dues notices cross in the mail.

Do you know who represents you in Congress? How about what Legislative District you live in? Take this time to learn what Legislative District you live in and get to know those who represent you.

Keep informed on veteran’s issues and the bills that will affect them and their benefits. Read the “Legionnaire and “The Dispatch”. Keep informed of what is happening on the various veterans issues The American Legion is working on.

Support those families in your community who have loved ones serving in the military. Keep abreast of what is happening.

LEGISLATIVE MONTH

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GIRLS STATE RESERVATIONS

Just a reminder: The American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Please ask your Unit President for the necessary information.

After your Unit sends in the reservation fee ($300.00 per girl) and it has been processed, your Unit will receive a packet of information including a complete registration packet for each girl you are sponsoring. This will be sent to the person who signed the reservation form for your Unit. Information will be mailed to each high school on January 7th. The schools will be waiting to be contacted by you. Let them know now if you will be sponsoring a girl. A Unit may sponsor one or many girls from the same high school as it would like to. There is no limit. The candidate(s) must attend a Minnesota public, charter, parochial, home-school, or be a resident of Minnesota. All reservation fees will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

The exciting “new news” regarding Girls State is that it is moving to the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul this year. The University is 100% supportive of our program and is very excited to have our sessions there. Please make sure and pass this on to prospective citizens. There will be many new, fun things in the agenda this year and the girls will be going to be staying over Friday evening and Saturday.

GIRLS STATE ANNUALS

The annuals from 2012’s session of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be sent out soon. Every citizen receives a complimentary copy. Please check to make certain your citizens receive hers. Don’t forget to invite your 2013 Girls State citizen to one of your meetings so she can share her experiences with your members.

JUNIOR PATCH PROGRAM

Does your Unit have Juniors? What are you doing with them? Are they active in your Unit? Involve your Juniors in all the programs. They are members of your Unit, not a separate entity.

The 2013-14 Junior Patch program has been included in the January Unit Mailing. It is a set of activity sheets for three age groups. Make certain your Junior Activities Chairman receives this information and the forms so your Junior Members can complete their activities under the various programs. As your Juniors complete these activities, please send the form(s) into the Department for processing. Do not wait until the end of the year to send them in. Recognize your Junior members for their accomplishments and involvement by presenting them with these National patches as they are earned.

Do you not need to have an organized Junior group in order for your Junior members to participate.

DEPARTMENT JUNIORS

April 12th is the date for the annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at the Hopkins American Legion Post #320 with the Tenth District serving as our hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 11th. Complete information and the Call to the Junior Conference will be included in the January Unit mailing. Be sure you share this information with your Junior Activities Chairman. Arrange now for your Juniors to attend. There will be a mailing sent out to parents of all Junior Members sometime in January. This is something new this year in order to encourage more of our Juniors to attend and learn more about what the Auxiliary is and what Juniors can learn about the organization.

2014 POPPY ORDERS

Poppy orders are still being accepted in the department office. As of this writing, we have not yet received orders from 141 Units. Please get your order into the Department Office. We need to know how many 2014 Poppies are needed so we can plan accordingly. If you have already ordered and need to place a second order, please do so.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports will be sent to the Unit Presidents around the 15th of January. When you receive your annual report packet please open it immediately and become familiar with the new format. This mailing will include not only the reports, but all the instruction sheets, history paper, etc. you will need. Please be on the lookout for it, sometime in January. Also, in the January Unit mailing there will be a checkoff sheet where you can check each Unit and return it to the Department Office by January 10. This will tell us which programs you would like Annual Reports for. It will cut down on unnecessary postage being sent to those who don’t participate in all of the programs.

MEMBERSHIP RALLY

December 7th found around 200 Legislarians, Auxiliary and SAL members at the Osseo Post 172. It was an afternoo
Auxiliary Bulletin
Continued from Preceding Page

Reminder: Any member who has not paid her 2013 dues by January 31 is considered delinquent and loses her rights, privileges and benefits of membership. Payment of her 2013 dues reinstates her as a member in good standing.

2015 DIRECT BILLING
My how the time flies - though the calendar just turned to 2015, it is already that time of the year when the National organization requests the necessary information for printing the 2015 dues notices. Every Unit will receive a notice asking for the amount of your Year’s 2015 Senator and Junior dues, and the name and address of the person whose name should appear on the year 2015 dues notices. The information and form will be in the February Unit mailing. The information is due in the department office no later than March 31, 2014. We would appreciate your cooperation and getting this form back to us in a prompt manner.

THANK YOU
The American Legion Auxiliary undertakes a number of programs each year for our veterans, their families and the youth of our nation. But none of these would be possible without the generous financial support from our Units. Thank you to all who have contributed to our department programs.

Thank you too, to those Posts that have been supportive of several of our Auxiliary programs, namely the Gift Shop, our American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Program, Girls State and the $5.00 Bill Shower. We appreciate your help in making these programs possible.

AUXILIARY PROGRAMS
In reviewing the contributions to the various approved Department programs, we find there seems to be some questions as to what are our own Auxiliary programs; what are Department programs, we find there seems to be some questions as to what are our own Auxiliary programs; what are not.

Each year the Department Chairmen receive approval from the Department Executive Committee for those Auxiliary programs that need our financial support. These programs are listed on pages 14-15 of the Unit Annual Guide. Those marked with * are our own Department Auxiliary programs, namely: Junior Activities, Department Scholarships, Girls State, Past Presidents Health Care Scholarship, American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Program, $5.00 Bill Shower, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and the Christmas Gift Shop. These programs cannot be carried on without the financial support of our Units and those Posts that have so kindly supported our programs.

Many Units are having difficulties financially. Every Unit should look carefully at what they are donating to. Many, many letters of solicitation come to the Unit from other organizations. Some Units feel that they “must” support some organization in order to be carrying out the programs of the ALA. That is not the case. Too, some Units are supporting programs we are no longer involved with financially that have been completed.

SCHOLARSHIPS
Question. What has your Unit done with the copies of the scholarship applications sent to you last fall? Are they sitting in your Unit’s files, or have you taken them to your local schools and shared them with the students who are searching for ways to finance their education? If you are in need of additional copies for distribution, you may duplicate those you received or contact the department office for additional copies.

All scholarship applications are due into the department office by March 15. Let your schools and community know about these scholarships. There are eight Department scholarship awarded each year at $1,000.00 each.

The January Unit mailing left the Department Office on December 19th. Due to the holiday mail, there might be a delay in you receiving it. Our Department Chairmen have provided a wealth of information to your Unit Chairmen through the Unit mailings. Presidents, be certain you give each Chairman the information to your Unit Chairmen through the Unit mailings.

UNIT MAILING
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WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
The 2014 Washington Conference will be held in Washington DC, March 23-26, 2014. If any member is interested in attending, please contact the department office for details.

HAPPY NEW YEAR
I would like to take this opportunity, along with Department Treasurer Cathy Radil to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year and hope it is full of wonderful blessings - talk to you next month.

Sandra Deutsch, Department Secretary

Legislative Program supports priorities

First to fight for the right and to build the Nations Might and the Canadians go rolling along.

Off we go into the wild blue yonder, climbing high into the sun, here they come zooming to meet our thunder.

Anchors aweigh my boys, Anchors aweigh, Farewell to college joys, we sail at break of day-as-ay.

From the Hall of Montezuma, to the Shores of Tripoli, we fight our Country’s battles in the air, on land and sea.

From North and South and East and West, the Coast Guard in the fight. Destroying subs and landing troops, the Axis feels our might.

This is what is all about, we the people standing up for our rights to make our own decisions and servicemen and women and their family are taken care of.

HOW WE PROMOTE THE SUPPORT OF LEGION LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
Objective: know what The American Legion Priorities are. To promote support of American Legion’s priorities/agenda by American Legion Auxiliary members.

Action Step: Schedule meetings with the local, state and national officials to discuss issues facing veterans.

Communicate with the Legion and request that the Auxiliary will be included and be invited to Legion Legislative briefings and other functions.

Write - but make sure it will be sent to your District Representatives, it will reach officials much sooner.

Call - the District or Washington Office.

Email - use your own words and thoughts. Consider using the Legion’s Legislative Action Center at www.cap-wz.com/legion/home.

Visit in Person - in the Washington or District offices.

Resources: ALAforVets.org, Dispatch, Legion Auxiliary Legislative Advocacy Guide.


Be an active member in your Legion program and make sure your voices will be heard over and over again.

Chris Ronning
Department Legislative Chair

CHRIS RONNING
Legislative Chair

RALEEN TOLZMANN
National Security Chair

NATIONAL EMBLEM SALES
The National Emblem Sales catalog for the year 2014 has been sent to all Unit Presidents and Post Commanders. If you have not received your copy by the end of January, please request a copy of same directly from National Emblem Sales. 2014 prices are now in effect.

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Sandra Deutsch, Department Secretary

What is National Security?

The purpose of National Security is: To maintain and promote a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families. The Auxiliary meets the needs of our military service members by supporting their families at home and supporting them with activities for that veteran as the whole family transitions back when he or she returns home.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is a good example of this.

National Security is keeping our own families safe, especially in the winter with winter survival kits for our cars.

This is just a short list of all the things National Security is more information is included in the Unit Guide and in unit mailings.

Raleen Tolzmann
Department National Security Chairman

Jon Brown
VA Disability Appeals
952-201-1799

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Raleen Tolzmann
Department National Security Chairman

AUXILIARY PROGRAMS

SCHOLARSHIPS

UNIT MAILING

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

NATIONAL EMBLEM SALES

HAPPY NEW YEAR
Reverse Mortgages

Call for a free consumer guide and personal quote.
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-- Never make a monthly mortgage payment again.
-- Receive a lump sum of cash, credit line or monthly payments.
-- Income and credit not required.

Let a retired active duty veteran you can trust show you how you may benefit from a Reverse Mortgage.

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San Antonio, Texas
February 22-3, 2014
Tour Includes:
-- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Joyce Langerud
-- Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation
-- 8 Nights accommodations
-- Luggage handling (1 bag per person)
-- 14 Meals: 8 Breakfasts, 6 Dinners
-- Guided tour of San Antonio
-- Visit to the famous ALAMO and SIMexas Theater presentation: "ALAMO" the Price of Freedom
-- Tour of the LBJ Ranch
-- Cruise at San Antonio's famous River Walk District

New Orleans, Louisiana
March 27-3, 2014
INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR
-- 4 Seasons Vacations Tour Director, Jerry Gilberston
-- Deluxe motor coach transportation
-- Citgo hotel accommodations
-- Luggage handling for one suitcase
-- 15 meals: 3 Breakfasts, 7 Luncheons, 5 Dinners
-- 1 WWI Museum
-- Dixie Gem Theater performance of "Opry House"
-- New Orleans city and post hurricane Katrina tour
-- Elvis Presley's Graceland
-- Fraternal Rice Mill
-- Oak Alley Plantation
-- Barbier Vintage Moparos Distillery
-- Louisiana Sugar Factory
-- Gateway Arch

Heart of Alaska
July 30-August 6, 2014
INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR
-- 4 Seasons Vacations Tour Director, Joyce Langerud
-- Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation
-- 8 Nights Accomodations
-- 8 Meals: 6 Breakfasts, 2 Dinners
-- Luggage handling (1 bag per person)
-- Ferry Ride to the Island
-- Juneau Lightlifter Float Plane
-- Guided Tour of Anchorage City & Downtown
-- Cruise on the Great Bear
-- Visit the Alaska Wildlife Park
-- yposh Endicott-Molitor

Mackinac Island & Door County
July 20-26, 2014
Tour Includes:
-- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Joyce Langerud
-- Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation
-- 6 Nights Accommodations
-- 10 Meals: 6 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, 2 Dinners
-- Luggage handling (1 bag per person)
-- Ferry Ride to the Island
-- Sturgeon Lightlifter Float Plane
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Niagara Falls & Toronto
June 21-27, 2014
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VA Disability Appeals

Tom Hagen
Attorney & Veteran

Bradley & Guzzetta, LLC
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Twin Cities Metro: (651) 379-0990
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Minnesota LEGIONNIA
January 2014

VA Disability Appeals

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