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The origins:
A million dollar baby

What it’s done:
PTSD to Gulf Illness

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“A one of the cures was to bury the soldier up to the neck in the ground and to shame him. That was not helpful.”

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Endorsements
Ash endorsed for V. Commander

Teresa A. Ash has been endorsed by Christie DePauw Post 406, St. Paul, and the Fourth District for Department Vice Commander (4th/5th District) for 2019-2020. Ash has been a member of The American Legion for years and is currently the Public Affairs chair for the 4th District. At the District level, she has held the position of Public Affairs Chair, Vice Commander and Commander. At the Department level she served as Public Relations chair and was a member on the 2012 and 2018 Department of Minnesota National Convention Corporation. Ash is eligible for membership in The American Legion through her service in the Army Reserve. She is a graduate of The American Legion College. In her personal life, she and her husband Mike have a son and daughter (all proud veterans and members of The American Legion) and four grandchildren. She works for the office of Veterans Affairs.

Legion seeking to open up membership

Membership eligibility in The American Legion is determined by Congress through the establishment of specific dates of declared hostilities in which U.S. military personnel were activated. Since its founding in 1919, membership in The American Legion has been open to veterans of World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Lebanon/Grenada, Panama and Gulf War/War on Terrorism.

There are at least 12 known combat operations that required an activated military personnel, such as the Cold War, Libyan Conflict and Persian Gulf Conflicts, and resulted in significant military and civilian casualties. However, because these operations are unrecognized by the U.S. government as a period of war, those who served during these conflicts are not eligible for membership in The American Legion.

The American Legion’s National Executive Committee passed a resolution during its annual Fall Meetings in Indianapolis Oct. 17 to change that.

Resolution No. 1, “Unrecognized armed hostilities membership date change,” which will change membership dates for The American Legion. This resolution will only be put in motion once the actions of Resolution No. 1 are approved by Congress. Once approved, membership in The American Legion will be open to the following war periods:

April 6, 1917 to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the U.S. government.

The American Legion believes that membership in the organization should be extended to all U.S. military personnel who served on active duty during the hostile events that are not seen as a period of war.

Millerville duo celebrated 100th birthdays

Larry Cline and Matt Thoennes have been to dozens of Legion meetings together over the years, but recently they shared a special moment.

Both turned 100 in recent weeks, and the post honored them with a large cake. Cline and Thoennes were both drafted into the Army in 1942 during World War II. Thoennes served in Europe and on the Burma Road, while Cline served as communications specialists in the South Pacific. Cline and his wife, Irene, have been married for 70 years while Thoennes and his wife, Corinne, have been married for 69 years.

Legion selects VA Physician of the Year for Minnesota

Dr. Christopher Churchill, the Service Line Director/Medical Director for the St. Cloud VA Health System’s Extended Care and Rehabilitation Service, has been chosen as the Minnesota VA Physician of the Year by the Department Rehabilitation Committee. Churchill works in the hospital’s Community Living Center, delivering memory care, nursing care and other services for a 225-bed unit.

“Dr. Churchill’s leadership style creates an environment where both veterans and staff can flourish,” said Dr. Scott Bartley, chief of staff at the hospital. States has been continuously engaged in a state of war from December 7, 1941 to present, and for Congress to direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to qualify a wartime veteran as any military service personnel who served honorably under Title 10 for at least one day from December 7, 1941 to present. Following the passing of Resolution No. 1, the NEC adopted Resolution No. 2, “Unrecognized armed hostilities membership date change,” which will change membership dates for The American Legion. This resolution will only be put in motion once the actions of Resolution No. 1 are approved by Congress. Once approved, membership in The American Legion will be open to the following war periods: April 6, 1917 to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to the date of cessation of armed hostilities as determined by the U.S. government.

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A GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR A VETERAN

Our preamble calls for us to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the great wars. The War Stories trilogy captures over 100 stories of Minnesotans who went to war. For our children and their children, let’s preserve this history of our veterans.

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St. Paul, MN 55155

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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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1. STEP INTO A WWI CHRISTMAS
   & WWI Christmas, Nov 23-25 & Nov 30-Dec 2,
   Charles Lindbergh House and Museum, Little Falls.

2. DISCOVER GUN CONTROL’S HISTORY
   History Forum: The Founding Fathers & the
   Origins of Gun Control, Sat, Dec 8, Minnesota
   History Center, St. Paul.

3. COMMEMORATE PEARL HARBOR
   Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Fri, Dec 7,

4. BAKE AS A FAMILY
   Make treats with your children at the Family
   Baking Workshop: Holiday Traditions, Dec 8, 9, 15, 16,
   22 & 23, Mill City Museum, Minneapolis.

5. FIND A WINTER READ
   Open the door to discovery with a history book from
   MNHS Press. Shop a wide selection of titles at the Minnesota
   History Center museum store, or online at shop.mnhs.org.

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Greetings Legion Family,

At the time of this writing, it is Thanksgiving evening, hopefully you can find some time to spend with the family. Normally when I write my article I have my calendar by my side and anticipate the next month’s activities as your Department Commander, I would like to discuss the full swing of the fall coming to an end. I guess it’s hard not to be reflective on Thanksgiving. Today we found our niece is expecting her first child, and it’ll be a girl. That will be the third great-granddaughter for my parents and of course they are very pleased.

Unfortunately there was a shadow hanging over our Thanksgiving this year. Dad recently found out that his cancer has spread and he is now on hospice care. I’ve known for some time that this day was coming and of course hoped it would be years away. Dad and I have followed similar paths in The American Legion. One of these paths has haunted me since my election. When Dad was done his year.” He’s my mentor, my confidante and most of all, my dad. Dad’s always been everything you could want in a Department Commander, my grandpa (his dad) passed away. Dad was his mentor, his confidante and most of all, my dad. I can share anything with him. I told him today that my prayer for him is that some evening he falls asleep next to mom and wakes up next to Jesus. I love you Dad.

I would also like to thank all the posts that have invited my wife and I to Veteran and Veteran’s Day dinners. Your hospitality has been great and we’re humbled by all the attention. Although our great state still has membership challenges to overcome, it’s certainly refreshing to see how active all of our Posts are in their communities. I am especially impressed by the Posts without buildings or businesses. The Legion still serves them very well. Our Legion Family will come together again this month with the Pearl Harbor Rally in Fairbault. A little different this year, as you may recall, an earlier start time and hosted by the Legion Region. If I knock Stone, this one is bound to be entertaining. I hope to see you all there.

As we draw an end to 2018, I hope you’re excited about 2019 and the American Legions 100th birthday. Wouldn’t it be a big birthday present if Minnesota could be at goal with membership? There is still time! Legion membership also makes a great Christmas present. It is the gift that keeps on giving for individuals and Posts alike. Consider a gift of membership, it’s a win-win situation.

Till next month, Hovde, Daddy.
What’s Happening

Chirstmas with the Gophers
The annual Legion Night with the Gophers will be Dec. 21 at Williams Arena. Discounted tickets are $15 and up. The Gophers men’s basketball team will host North Carolina A&T in a game at 7 p.m.

Call Jacob at 612-626-1525 or cjlamb@umn.edu to order tickets.

Waste Park Post 428 Color Guard present the colors for the national anthem at the game.

Shop, Ship and Share
The 4th District is again sponsoring the Shop, Ship and Share program at the Maplewood Mall. The event collects and mails goods and packages to military members serving overseas. Donations are accepted now through Nov. 30.

The event will be held Friday and Saturday, Nov. 30-Dec. 1, at the Maplewood Mall.

Bowling Tournament
The annual Minnesota American Legion Family Bowling Tournament will be held Feb. 23-March 31 at the Sunrise Lanes in Dayton. All requests for reservations, including the mail-in entry form, can be directed to Carib Lamb, Tournament Secretary, 612-986-4389 or email: cjlamb74@gmail.com.

Round Tables
The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will not meet in December.

The World War II History Round Table will meet at Historics Fort Snelling Visitor Center on Thursday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. The topic will be Pearl Harbor: “The Attack that Brought the U.S. into World War II.” Michael Wenger will be the speaker, and veterans of Pearl Harbor will serve on a panel. A $5 donation will be received.

The American Legion World War I Round Table will be held on Monday, Dec. 17, at Concordia University Bueyt Auditorium at 7 p.m. The topic will be Marine Reconnaissance Units and will feature veterans of the 1st and 3rd Marine Reconnaissance Battalions. There is no admission.

Wall of Thanks
The Woodbury Post 501 will continue the Wall of Thanks charity drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sundays up through Christmas at the Valley Creek Mall, across from Keyes Life. Money and other donations are accepted and will be used for a variety of military and veteran purposes. Names will be posted of those currently serving on the Wall of Thanks.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance
The official Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day will be held Dec. 7 at Historic Fort Snelling. The event will begin at 10 a.m.

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Greetings American Legion Family,

I hope everyone had their share of turkey and all that goes along with that on Thanksgiving. Good thing Thanksgiving only comes around once a year. Now we have a few weeks to work off all that we ate before stocking back up during the Christmas season. Remember, it’s a New Year.

If you do not have the 8th of December marked on your calendar for the Department Pearl Harbor Rally, now is the time to do so. Department Membership Director Mike has taken a slightly different approach to this years rallies and the American Legion Riders will be hosting or acting master of ceremonies at these events. The program looks to be an exciting and informative one. Hope to see you at Faribault American Legion Post 43 on the 8th.

Tuesday, December 4th is our Vikings day off, the other day. It went something like this. If you are wondering what to get the Veteran in your life for Christmas, how about a membership to The American Legion. I believe that it was Randy Olson from the Soaring Second District that had the posting, very nice Randy. As far as that goes invite any eligible Veteran to your post and give them the gift that keeps on giving. Just remember that you don’t have to wait for Christmas to give a membership.

The Department Membership Committee will be starting up with their planning meetings in January. If you know of a post that would like the Riders to visit on their 2019 Ride please get in touch with myself or Steve “Sully” Sullivan. You do not have to put on a meal to have us stop.

A short (1/2 hour “Butt Break”) with cookies, soda and ice cream will do just fine, donuts are nice too.

Christmas is just a short few weeks away. Now is not the time to start being good if you haven’t been good the past eleven months. Keep your charity and everyone of you have been good and will have a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

By Jeremy Wolfsteller

VA’s best kept secret revealed

Since the 2014 Phoenix VA scandal, the VA has been under scrutiny because of long wait times for veterans trying to access their healthcare appointments. It wasn’t until 2017 when Secretary Shulkin was appointed the VA did start to work back the hearts and minds of discouraged veterans across the nation. I believe this happened because of Shulkin’s top priority, VA Healthcare Transparency. This happened through a transparency tool veterans could use to compare VA Healthcare Systems to its private sector competitors, (www.access拓oate.va.gov).

Not only did VA’s transparency tool allow veterans to compare their wait times to the private sector in their area, it also provided veteran satisfaction within a facility, and comparing a veteran’s VA to other VA’s across the nation. In 2015 VA also made available a public facing dashboard called SAIL, which compares all VA Hospitals performances amongst each other using 25 quality measures. Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Value Model includes measures like death rate, complications and patient satisfaction. (SAIL)

Although these new additions have been an improvement in customer service, VA hasn’t been transparent on all aspects of its health care services. Recently VA’s best kept secret had been revealed according to an investigation by USA TODAY and the Globe who exposed care at many VA nursing facilities was worse than at private nursing homes using the Agency’s own internal ratings system. The investigation revealed VA data showing that 95% of 133 VA nursing homes – about 71 percent – scored worse than private nursing homes on a majority of quality indicators, such as rates of infection, serious pain and bedsores.

VA’s nursing home workload consists of three settings, Community Living Centers (CLC) which are VA owned and operated, community nursing homes which VA contracts with to provide care to veterans in the community and state veterans homes owned and operated by states. There’s an estimated 46,000 senior veterans that reside in VA’s nursing homes per day.

In 2013 The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on VA’s nursing homes that included the VA’s nursing home expenditures were $4.9 billion across all three VA nursing home settings. The VA spent 71% ($3.5 billion) of its total nursing home expenditures on care provided in CLC’s, 16% in state veterans homes ($784,000,000) and 13% at community nursing homes ($637,000,000). The ones in question were the CLCs that are operated directly by the VA. There are seven in our region, none of them received a “one,” the lowest score.

USA TODAY and Globe’s investigation is directed to VA’s owned and operated community living centers (CLC’s). VA did respond to these accusations stating that VA has been transparent with star ratings for these nursing homes on VA’s Access to Care Website. Although the VA did not address what are the quality measures used and why did the investigation show discrepancies that VA feels weren’t accurate?

To understand the complete truth on this subject may never happen, although when a story of this magnitude becomes public, it’s Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) like The American Legion that need to take action to ensure the truth does get revealed and if necessary, changes are made.

“Anybody who respects veterans should be angered by this,” American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad said. “America’s veterans deserve better.”

The American Legion is one of VA’s strongest supporters but can be its toughest critic at times, it’s important for The American Legion to have a working relationship with the VA to help address concerns to ensure the betterment of America’s veterans.

If you’re interested in seeing if you’re eligible for VA’s nursing home program, work with your primary care social worker and they can do a full review of the nursing facilities they’re recommending for you.

Jwolfsteller@mlejgon.org

Sons of the American Legion Commander Shawn Davis, 2018 VA’s American Legion National Commander Shawn Davis at the AI stress conference. Shown are President Jean Walker and Secretary Sandle Deutsch.

By Chuck Stone

American Legion Riders

December 2018

Minnesota Sons of the American Legion News

By Shawn Davis

Brain Sciences Center unravels health questions

On November 14 at the Lecture of the Brain Science The American Legion handed out two scholarships to two students who were chosen by Doctor Georgopoulos to continue in their education in their Brain Science studies. The lecture that followed was delivered by Brian Engdahl. He is the chairman of the William Anderson endowed chair in the studies of PTSD. The research has found evidence to begin unraveling and understanding the effects of issues like what has been termed Gulf War Illness. The studies show that auto immune deficiency prior to the batteries of immunization given prior to deployments are hampered by these factors. The research also found that blood from soldiers was seemingly leading up to the symptoms of Gulf War illness, Traumatic Brain Injuries and PTSD. In the early stages as they were diagnosing what later was termed GWI they were telling the soldiers that it was just in their heads. Now with the ‘Meg’ scanner they can see that it really is and where it is and what it looks like. Having this ability it is possible to evaluate and determine the best treatments and give hope to those who suffer these issues.

Check out brain.umn.edu for more information.

Cdr. Shawn Davis: salshawndavis@gmail.com
Adjutant Doug Bible: salajdrmn@gmail.com
Website: www.mnsal.org

ORNAMENTS FOR SALE – Sons of the American Legion ornaments are now on sale. The cost is $20 for one or three for $50. The top ornament shown is a 100th anniversary Minnesota ornament and the second is Sons ornament, not dated. They can be purchased at department rallies, or through Douglas Wolfe at 320-252-3964 or email: salajdrmn@gmail.com. Cash or check only. Shipping and handling charges will be added for orders shipped.
he never stops moving. I thought he’d wear me out when I started, but I survived. But we ended up picking him up, my job was to run to the COs of the other companies or to HQ, either to exchange information or to get orders. I would also run to outposts to get information or to get orders. I would also run to outposts to get

And now I’m here at his side. They say he was going to move him in a few minutes. I don’t think anyone supposes he’ll survive the move, or probably it’s too late already.

The nurse just changed his bandage for the last time, and the wound still looks terrible. And then she left, and I was alone with Captain Martin. I just wanted to tell him, and only a few minutes to do it. “Captain Martin,” I said. “I know you can hear me. This is Corporal Butler. I just want to tell you that the com- panions were coming a little closer, and he looked like a maniac as he aimed that rifle at my head. I knew I was a goner. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a blur that was Captain Martin, and I thought that Chinese soldier was about to squeeze off the round with my name on it, the captain launched himself between me and the enemy. At the same time the enemy snapped off that final shot that would have put me at St. Peter’s Gate.

But the bullet never arrived. I opened my eyes, although I don’t remember shutting them, and Captain Martin was stretched out at my feet. Blood was streaming from a wound on the side of his head. His helmet was gone. The rest is just fragments of my memory now. I remem- ber a corpsman putting a tourniquet on my leg and poking me with some morphine. I remember another corpsman bending over the captain and saying that he was still breath- ing. And then I remember waking up in the hospital.

L"It was good when you’re the hunter, and we were that for a while. Not that this war isn’t a terrible business. I’ve lost three good friends in the last month.

They were at a place called Yudam-ni, and, of course, the Marine humor was still there trying to make fun of the Chinese. It was all over in about 10 minutes, and the Chinese had taken the road, and the 5th Marines stayed behind for a while in Yudam-ni. At the same time word came around that we were heading back to the sea, about 80 miles away. I asked Captain Martin if this was a retreat, but he said, “No, we’re just advancing in the other direction.” And this was a lot tougher advance. Basically we were strung out on this road, which wasn’t much of a road, but it was the only road. The Chinese came at us from the sides, from the hills, from everywhere.

We’d get parachute drops, usually ammunition. We’d use the parachutes at night to help keep warm. We also got blankets from the dead Chinese soldiers.

I remember one drop where we got Tootsie Rolls and fresh baked bread. That was a good drop.

We had C rations, but they and the water were usually frozen solid. We had it bad, but here in the hospital I’ve heard of some units that had it much worse. Fox Company got the job of taking the high ground to protect the Toktong Pass, just south of Yudam-ni. They stood off the Reds for four days and five nights, and when they were finally relieved, they only had about 80 guys standing out of 240 that were sent up the hill. They stacked the frozen bodies of the enemy around their nest, and that was protection. They named the hill after the company, Fox Hill.

We kept pushing south, through Hagaru and on towards Koto-ri. At one point, the Chinese blew the only bridge over the river, and the 5th Marines stayed behind for a while in Yudam-ni. They stood off the Reds for four days and five nights, and when they were finally relieved, they only had about 80 guys standing out of 240 that were sent up the hill. They stacked the frozen bodies of the enemy around their nest, and that was protection. They named the hill after the company, Fox Hill.

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But then the Chinese moved in, and we were just starting to advance again. We had a couple of miles of road ahead of us, and we were just starting to advance again. We had a couple of miles of road ahead of us, and we were just starting to advance again. We had a couple of miles of road ahead of us, and we were just starting to advance again. We had a couple of miles of road ahead of us, and we were just starting to advance again. We had a couple of miles of road ahead of us, and we were just starting to advance again.

And then I heard it. “Buttttttttttttttlllllllllllllllllllllllerrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!” It wasn’t loud, only a whisper in fact. But the voice was unmistakable. I looked up, and Captain Martin was looking right at me. His eyes were open and he had a little smile on his lips.

“Captain Martin,” I said, and then tried again. “Butler,” he rasped, “get your ass over here.” And now the smile was there in full force. I put my head in his hands, and for the first time on that vigal, I started to weep. I tried not to cry out loud, but the tears were streaming down my face. I had finally reached that breaking point.

And there were tears in my eyes. I was sitting beside him, and I knew it was the only thing he wanted me to do. He was just a man who had been through so much. He had been there in the war, and he had been there in the peace. He had been there in the war, and he had been there in the peace. He had been there in the war, and he had been there in the peace. He had been there in the war, and he had been there in the peace. He had been there in the war, and he had been there in the peace.
SPOTTING ARTILLERY ON OKINAWA

By Al Zdon

When Wally Haider turned 17, he wanted to join the Marines. His best friend also wanted to go in, and they wanted to join the service together.

There was one problem: Wally’s father.

“My brother was already in a German prisoner of war camp, and my other brother was in the Navy. He was on a ship that was torpedoed twice: I was the last child. My dad wouldn’t sign the release.”

In order to join the Marines at age 17, a parent had to sign off. Haider said he wanted to be a Marine and he didn’t want to get drafted.

The two went through training together and then Haider went off to artillery school. The friend became a rifleman.

Haider attended Mechanic Arts High School and had his heart set on being an architect. He still has some of the drawings he made when he was a student.

“There were nine guys I hung out with and we did everything together.”

In September, 1943, one of those buddies, Ray, who was a year older and eligible for the draft, told Haider that they should go down and see the Marine recruiter together. “He said he wanted to be a Marine and he didn’t want to get drafted.”

The two were transferred together and then Haider went off to artillery school. The friend became a rifleman.

Haider was trained to be a spotter, the guy who is a mile or so in front of the big guns calling back the coordinates to the gunners. “I don’t know why they picked me. Maybe because I showed some aptitude for math.”

He was transported across the Pacific on the aircraft carrier USS Wasp, one of 3,000 replacement Marines. The ship stopped in Hawaii and then continued west. His first duty was on the tiny atoll in the Marshall Islands named Majuro. The U.S. had taken the island, unopposed, in January, 1944.

Next stop was Eniwetok, another atoll in the Marshalls. Haider was trained to be a spotter, the guy who is a mile or so in front of the big guns calling back the coordinates to the gunners. “I don’t know why they picked me. Maybe because I showed some aptitude for math.”

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Next stop was Eniwetok, another atoll in the Marshalls, which was attacked and secured by the U.S. a month in February. “We were just security forces in case the Japs supposed would provide them some protection from the constant Kamikaze attacks.

“I was on watch one morning at 4 a.m., and I had just been relieved and I went down to the mess hall. We usually had plenty of butter for our toast, and I was just commenting to my buddy that there wasn’t much butter that morning when the kamikaze hit us.

“It just threw us across the mess deck. We stumbled to our feet and we were all wet. The ship was thundering like it was going to go down.

“It wasn’t until 20 years later that I found out that the plane had caused a lot of damage, but the bomb the plane was carrying didn’t go off. If it had gone off, it would have just blown us up. We were carrying a lot of munitions. I know I wouldn’t be sitting here talking to you right now.”

The men were transferred to an LST, which now had too many Marines on board. “We would only go below for a meal, the rest of the time we spent up on deck. We slept on the promenade deck. Sometimes it was carrier to carrier, and we had to go to the other ship to find a meal, the rest of the time we spent up on deck. We slept on the promenade deck. Sometimes it was carrier to carrier, and we had to go to the other ship to find a meal.”

At home in Golden Valley was difficult for Wally Haider of St. Paul. Twice, while on his way to fight at Okinawa with the 2nd Marine Division, kamikaze planes came after his ship.

Just getting to the battle was difficult for Wally Haider of St. Paul. Twice, while on his way to fight at Okinawa with the 2nd Marine Division, kamikaze planes came after his ship.

WALLY HAIDER during World War II

WALLY HAIDER At home in Golden Valley
the deck.”

Not long afterward, the kamikazes came again. “The sirens went off and we all watched as the kamikaze headed straight for us. It was coming across the water, and we all knew our time was up. But then it was like the hand of God lifted that plane and it flew over our fantail and hit the ship on the other side of us.”

After that, Haider said, the Navy sent an escort carrier to provide some air support against the suicide bombers.

The assault ship joined a huge fleet of ships lying off the Okinawa landing area.

“When we were waiting to land, the hospital ship was next to us. We saw about a thousand stretcher cases go aboard the hospital ship. I said to my buddy, ‘Hey, look where we’re going.’

The battery had started at Camp Pendleton in training with 75 millimeter guns. “Those were good for learning, and on the small islands, but now we were using 105 millimeter guns.”

“In practice, we would put some stakes in the ground and then the spotters would direct the guns. The number two gun, for which I was the spotter, would fire and then the whole battery would fire. Once they had the target zeroed in, we’d go two clicks up, one down and then a half click up. That called that zone fire, and we’d cover a lot of ground.”

In combat, of course, there were no stakes.

Haider would be up with the assault troops at the front. “I’d try to get a Marine squad around me when I was spotting. They could protect me. The guy doing the spotting had to use all his time and attention to getting the coordinates right and didn’t have time to see who was shooting at him. A squad had 13 guys including three BAR men and they used a lot ammunition. They were great guys.

“I also had a Navajo talker with me. I’d set up my tripod and use the instrument to determine the range, give the coordinates to the Navajo and he’d radio it back to another Navajo back by the guns.”

One of the jobs of the artillery was to send shells into the caves occupied by Japanese troops. “But sometimes, that just didn’t work. Then two Marines would have to go up to either side of the cave and each throw in five pounds of TNT. They tossed it and got the hell out of there. Another weapon was a special shell that would embed itself into the coral rock before it would explode.

Haider didn’t escape Okinawa unscathed. His legs are dotted with scars. He was reluctant to talk about it but he did allow it was a mortar that did most of the damage and that he was sent back to an aid station to be bandaged up.

“In the Marine Corps, they say that if you lose an arm or a leg, that’s a good reason to get a Purple Heart. I lost some pieces of meat, but I never got a Purple Heart.”

He said he experienced plenty of bullets whizzing by him. “But none of them had my name on them, or even ‘to whom it may concern.’”

He said the scariest weapon the Japanese had was a 40 millimeter mortar. “You could just see that son of a bee coming at you, tumbling through the air. It really packed a wallop.”

The island was secured in June, 1945, and then it was back to Saipan to practice for the next mission: the invasion of Japan.

“The Marines have regulations about tents if you’re going to be in them for a long time. They have to be 18 inches off the ground and there has to be ditching around them to protect you from the rain.

“We were there for several months getting ready for Japan and our tents were on the ground. That was pretty miserable.”

But in August, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the war came to an abrupt halt.

“They were going to send about 50 of us to the Nagasaki area to be military policemen. I don’t know how they picked those guys, but I got selected.”

The men were stationed in an area not far from where the bomb had leveled part of Nagasaki, and part of their job was to watch over the Army intelligence people who had been sent there to gather information about the aftermath of the atomic bomb.

“We walked all over Nagasaki about a month after the bomb, and we didn’t have any protective clothing or anything. Nobody said it was dangerous.”

The MPs would have to go to the train station to ride to wherever their assignment was that day. “As soon as we got on the platform, the Japanese civilians would move away from us and keep bowing. We told our interpreter to tell them that we meant them no harm, but they had undergone years of indoctrination telling them that if the Americans ever came to Japan all they would do is rape and kill. The people were scared of us, and no matter what we told them they’d just keep bowing and moving away.”

Haider and some of his comrades were invited to the local police chief’s house one night for dinner. “After dinner, he said he was going to bring out the geisha girls. We were all looking at each other. Wow, geisha girls. But it turned out that they were just dancing girls and nothing

While training, probably on Saipan, Haider’s artillery crew posed for a photo. Haider is in the middle, in back.

With cap askew, Haider enjoys some free time in Hawaii.

A young Marine in the Pacific.

Back in the states, Haider had an official portrait done in full uniform.

On occupation duty in Japan, Haider served as a military policeman.

Haider’s unit of military policemen posed outside their barracks near Nagasaki, Japan.
**Dr. Georgopoulos**

**Continued from Page 1**

The new Brain Sciences Center was only a concept. "It was an opportunity to start something totally from scratch," Georgopoulos said. "We had a blank slate."

He paid tribute to Robert McDivitt, who is now director of the VA Midwest Health Care Network, and Tom Mullon, who was director of the Minneapolis VA for key help at that time.

"It was moment to moment, day to day trying to implement our ideas. It taught me how to make things happen."

The annual American Legion and University of Minnesota Brain Sciences Lecture was inaugurated two years later. "We've had the best in the world give the lectures, including two Nobel Prize recipients."

In late 90s, the VA in Denver, N.M., was seeking ways to put federal money into studying the brain. Georgopoulos was one of those on a panel charged with writing a report on how to achieve that. Results.

Georgopoulos, who had worked with magnetoencephalography at Johns Hopkins and knew the machine had tremendous potential for brain study, recommended buying MEGs, which cost several million dollars each.

"There's always something new. It's exciting, and I don't want to leave anything unfinished."

**AWARD WINNERS -- Two research assistants at the Brain Sciences center were the recipients of the American Legion Family Brain Sciences Award for 2018. The two will receive $1,000 each. From left: Eric Scuto, Don Thorpe, and Brain Sciences Foundation President Gary Olson, presenting the award at the annual Brain Science lecture. Scuto is studying the neurobiological functions of Gulf War Illness. Thorpe is studying the brain mechanisms of mild traumatic brain injury.**
Some scientists think that the human body is actually wired to get PTSD. "Some soldiers, when they were coming back from the Vietnam War, it was just considered a normal reaction to a trauma. "You were told you should just get over it," Engdahl said. "But it wasn’t until 1980 that the PTSD label was applied.

PTSD has been difficult to define because of its varied symptoms, and also because it is often combined with other problems such as alcoholism. PTSD can actually be mapped what’s wrong with the brain. "The MEG can be used with other scanning devices, and PTSD can actually be mapped what’s wrong with the brain," Engdahl said.

There are certain factors that seem to cause PTSD in some including lack of support, general life stress, poverty, a history of sexual abuse, low intelligence, mental disorders or a family history of PTSD.

Women are as likely to get PTSD as men. Engdahl said the 1970s when service for the disorder was.

The American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans fought to have Congress recognize PTSD as something the U.S. Air Force, but continued to serve through the years, more than 32,000 Veterans who live in Northern Minnesota and the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery - Duluth.

"This Cemetery will expand burial services to the more veterans," Ludwig said.

"Nobody was opposed to the concept," Ludwig said. "What we were doing at the time was still a mystery. We understood very little about the brain those days. But we knew that if we were to accomplish it, it would be good. There was no qualification to that.

First burial held at Duluth's veterans cemetery

Minnesota’s newest State Veterans Cemetery held its first interment on November 10, honoring a Minnesota Veteran who dedicated his life to service. Surrounded by family and close friends, Durbin M. Keeney Jr. was laid to rest Sunday afternoon at the new Cemetery, the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery - Duluth.

"This Cemetery will expand burial services to the more veterans," Ludwig said. "Starting in January 1987, we met every two or three weeks at Saskapaw. We’d meet from six p.m. till midnight most times, and everybody was at every meeting. By 1980, as the research built a case for the disorder. The American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans fought to have Congress recognize PTSD as something the U.S. Air Force, but continued to serve through the years, more than 32,000 Veterans who live in Northern Minnesota and the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery - Duluth.

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I want to encourage everyone to seek out our younger veterans and teach them what it means to belong to the American Legion. We do not teach them, they will not join. It’s not just about getting a membership, we need to get to them and their families involved. Remember, our veterans and their families will not survive if we can’t get the younger veterans involved.

Always remember......

*Christmas is the occasion to thank all the soldiers of our country who have given their lives for the nation....May you all be blessed with strength, love and joy. Merry Christmas to you.*

**FIRST DISTRICT**

Gary Miller Commander

Holiday greetings from the First District:

All the Fall Conferences are over, next is the Pearl Harbor Car Caravan Membership Rally in Faribault. Dec. 8th, Pearl Harbor Car Caravan at 11:00 am.

Veterans Day was again on the weekend (Sunday). My Post went to the two schools in Eloya on Friday I helped out with, I could. Some went Monday and some Posts had membership dinners. Now Saturday I went to the Marine Corps birthday at the Rochester VFW, even got on TV (Game 6). Sunday at my church they honored all the veterans and EMT’s and Firemen also, and we got in the St. Charles paper for that one. Matter of fact the St. Charles paper wrote a great paper for that one. Matter of fact the St. Charles paper did a great job across the 6th District. We recently were invited to the Leech Lake Post 2001, for their meeting and later to the tribal pow wow at the Walker Casino. It was an honor to attend the events. The pow wow was a special spiritual celebration, honoring the heritage of their culture and, combined with honoring the veterans, was something to see. It was the slow time for membership, but we must keep the membership coming in. We must strive to get the all-time high plus (+) one member from each post. The legion is losing members faster than we can get them in, keep up the good work.

Remember, membership is everybody’s job.

May God Bless the veteran.

**SECOND DISTRICT**

Cindy Brunk Commander

Hello American Legion Family Members,

A big thank you to all of you that honored our veterans on November 11th. It’s the date recognized by so many of us, when we remember that our veterans is what we work to do and should. All your efforts in whatever you did shows you care, in showing our appreciation and saying the thank yous in your own ways.

Thank you to all of you that made the Fall Conference in Marshall. If you were not there you missed a good one. Our new Commander Redepenning is setting the bar. I’m asking everyone to do something to make this the best year ever for all of our American Legion.

Not all of us can do everything but everyone of us can do something. Paying your dues is a good first move, plus going to post meetings, getting active in the post, the district, and community. Thank you so much.

Joining events: December 1st, 10 a.m. Membership Rally, Lamberton. December 8th, 1 p.m. Pearl Harbor Rally, Faribault Post 43. December 12th & 19th, 2:30 p.m. Legion Home Christmas Party. December 11-12th Mid-Winter Conference, Bricelyn. Thank you to Lake Wilson Post for hosting the November Membership Rally and to Duane Mabon from the Luverne Veterans Home for his presentation. Mark Conley funeral will be January 5th, 10:30 a.m. St Catherine Catholic Church, Luverne. Thank you for all your contributions to our projects to the Luverne Veterans Home and Legionville.

Thank you for your service to our country.

Wishing all of you a very merry Christmas and happy new year.

Please remember Legion family members mobilized for the holidays. Many of our members that we are in touch with loved ones, our members in nursing homes are and alone. Thank you.

**THIRD DISTRICT**

Carla Tappan Commander

Greetings Thundering Third

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I for one enjoyed every bit of it except for the extra five pounds that come with this particular holiday. Spending time with friends and family is the best. Of course, the shopping that happens on Black Friday is also great. Now we are on to Christmas and that actually is my favorite holiday of all.

We can reflect on all that has happened this last year and make plans for next year. I encourage everyone to spend time at our local veteran’s homes and maybe adopt a veteran for Christmas. Remember, it is not all about gifts. They want to know that they are not forgotten, and that we care about them. Please stop by to them.

**FOURTH DISTRICT**

Lane Stunkel Commander

Greetings Fabulous 4th District.

To all of the members of the Fabulous 4th – thank you. As of Bulletin 21, the 4th District dropped to 5th place. It’s let’s keep it going. Let’s work hard to retain our current membership and to find new members. Post Commanders and Adjutants, and Post Membership Officer please reach out to your District Vice Commander, Mickey or myself for assistance, we need help each Post make 100%.

Keep these dates in mind:

- Pearl Harbor Rally – December 8th, Faribault American Legion
- 4th district RCCC – December 12th, Arcade Phalen

There will be one more speaker, joining us will be our friends Jewish War Veterans.

Mid-Winter Conference – Arcade Phalen (4th and 5th District’s) Family January 5th doors open at 8 a.m., conference starts at 9 a.m. We have some great speakers lined up for the day including some of our American Legion Graduates.

In January the American Legion Graduates will be starting at Outstanding Enlisted Soldiers from the Guard and Reserve Units, if you know of a soldier that is in the Guards or Reserves please let me know.

*The following is the list of 5 years the 4th District had at least 1 veteran, let’s see if we can provide the names of outstanding enlisted service members to the National Security and Veteran Relations Committee, please help me the find next winner or winners.*

To all of you who helped with Shop Shop & Share thank you. Merry Christmas to you.

I wish all of the members of the 4th District a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God bless each and every one of you of the 4th American Legion Family and please keep our ailing members in your prayers. Thank you ALL for everything you do.

Greetings Fighting Fifth.

We had an information table at Home Depot on ‘Veterans Day’ and had positive response from both employees and customers. Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped with the membership revitalization held at Minneapolis/Richfield Post 435 in November. We appreciate all of your efforts.

The holidays are here now and our attention turns to the holidays. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*God bless the Legion family and the USA.*

**FIFTH DISTRICT**

Joe Bayer Commander

Greetings

This is the occasion to thank all the soldiers of our country who have given their lives for the nation....May you all be blessed with strength, love and joy. Merry Christmas to you.

**SIXTH DISTRICT**

Richard Cross Commander

Hi Legion family

It’s been a very busy month between post visits and pheasant dinners. President Sharon and I have been on the move across the 6th District. We recently were invited to the VA clinic expanded at Brainerd facility

The VA Clinic in Brainerd has added new services as the result of a recent physical expansion.

The physical expansion provided the space to develop full service, on-site audiology and optometry services that will be offered on a limited basis or at the Medical Center in St. Cloud. The enlarged clinic provides additional space to serve the growing number of Veterans seeking care at the Brainerd VA Clinic.

The expansion added 3,900 square feet to the clinic, increasing gross square footage to just over 20,000 square feet of clinical and professional space.

*An audiology booth with an exam suite. Audiology services were previously provided by the mobile audiology van, which visits in January each month. The expansion allows us to conduct 40-50 audiology exams per week (instead of 40-50 exams per month using the van). Exams, certified hearing aid fittings, and hearing aid repairs can now be obtained at the clinic.*

*Two fully equipped optometry exam rooms and an- other test room designated for auxiliary optometry testing including a visual field, optical coherence tomographer and retinal camera. This expansion allows us to conduct 70 optometry appointments per week, and Veterans are now able to obtain their eyeglasses at the clinic.*

**SEVENTH DISTRICT**

Will Swanson Commander

Hello out there in the Eighth District.

I want to thank those who attended the 8th/10th workshop and I hope we all got something out of the presentations. Our Commander, Darrel Redepenning, gave a great talk and our Membership Director, Mike Mata, did a great job.

I would like to extend appreciation to both for their dedication and hard work.

I appreciate Paul and the 10th District members who attended. If only we could all work hard as to promote The American Legion.

Things to remember is we do need the need to keep working to keep it going. New members are the key to our survival in the future.

We look forward to another 100 years of helping the good for all of veterans.

Since it is the Christmas season, I want to wish everyone in the Legion family the very best Christmas and Happy New Year.

As a reminder, the 2019 winter meeting January 26, in Hibbing. It will be held at the Servicemen’s Quarters, Memorial Building, 9 a.m. I encourage all who can to attend.

God bless the Legion family and the USA.

**EIGHTH DISTRICT**

Arlo Rude Commander

Greetings Fabulous 4th District.

May you enjoy the holidays with family and friends. Remember all the women and men who are stationed around the world and will be away from home for the holidays. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

We are a month away from the start of 2019. A New Year’s resolution to look for veterans who are not members of The American Legion and offer membership is a worthy goal.

The membership is declining. All the benefits and rights that accrue to service veterans are lost when membership stops. It is our turn to guard and improve veterans’ lives. The veterans who are not members now will have this responsibility in the future and we need to give future members the orientation to and knowledge of the needs in the future of veterans and the contacts to help provide veterans their rights and benefits.

Happy New Year. For God and Country.

Always remember…..

God Bless the veteran.

FLAG RETIREMENT AT BREWSTER — Posts from Round Lake, Dundee, Brewster, Ellsworth, Adrian, Heron Lake, Okabena and Worthington participated in the Nobles County Council flag retirement ceremony.

EAGAN MEMORIAL SERVICE — Eagan Post 594 conducted a memorial service marking the anniversary of the 911 attacks. The post’s color guard and the Eagan Fire Department participated. Post Commander John Flynn emceed the event.

FALLDIN DONATES SUPPLIES — Falldin Post 555 delivered school supplies to Valley View Elementary School in Columbia Heights. Presenting were Commander Donovan Orttel and Adjutant Ray Eiden. Accepting was Principal Edward Fellows.

FAIRMONT FLAG DONATION — Fairmont Post 36 recently donated 15 American flags to St. John Vianney Catholic School for display in each of the classrooms. Accepting were Principal Sara Striemer and first graders Elin Scheppman and Isaiah Cuellar.

LAKE CITY RETIRES FLAGS — Lake City Post 110 and VFW Post 8729 conducted a joint flag retirement ceremony at the VFW Post. Boy and Girl Scouts helped out with the ceremony.

ASHBY HONORS TEAM — Ashby Post and SAL 357 honored the Babe Ruth state champions and families with a dinner. Each player got a jacket.

BAGLEY MEMORIAL — In October, Bagley Post 16 had a special memorial service for its namesake, Irvin Blix. It was held at Lake Lomand, where Dennis Henkeneyer placed a memorial. It was 100 years exactly since Blix died at sea during World War I.

BACKUS BREAKFAST CREW — Backus Auxiliary wound up their breakfast season in October. The breakfasts are served from March through October twice a month. Proceeds went to veterans overseas and to a host of other projects. From left: Janine Thaler, Judy Johnston, Deb Winn, Larry Whalen, Bill Taylor, Marty Whalen, Coordinator Lynne Gagnon, Helen and Bill Dobson.
Girls State info going out in the January/February mailing

Information needed to reserve a place for your Girls in January. Remember that the Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be included in the January/February Unit mailing. Please make sure and go through all the information. The Committee has made some very exciting and positive changes to this year’s session! It will include an American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State informational brochure, a cover letter from the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Chairman and a reservation form. After the department office receives your reservation form and your registration check of $300.00 per girl, a packet will be sent to the Unit. This packet will include a set of registration forms for each girl you will be sponsoring. It will include the enrollment card, information sheet, pledge, brochure, dress code, order form for the polo shirts, etc. The packet will be sent to the person who signs the registration form. This registration materials must be returned to the department office on or before May 1. If you have any questions, please contact the department office. This year the Girls State week will be held at Bethel College in St. Paul.

As we start with another holiday season, I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving with family and friends. It is just hard to believe that December is here already.

As I close, I would like to wish our American Legion members a Happy New Year.

SECRETARY SANDIE’S NOTES

Some times it is hard to write down feelings. Another year is closing and a brand new one is about to start. It’s hard to believe I am in my eighth year trying to give all of you the best assistance I can. I remember my first day of work – the MSP airport to go to Indianapolis for a President/Secretary conference. There is one individual that I must recognize as he made me feel so welcome and has become a true friend. That is Ray DeZurik who was the NEC for Minnesota and I had no idea what my job was or where my desk was in St. Paul. Ray sat with me and welcomed me and offered all his support. To both Ray and Betty – love you to the moon and back. That was my first impression of the American Legion Family and has only grown 100% since then. As you are reading this our family Christmas will be in the history books. Don’t ever forget family and friends are everything – cherish each and every moment you have. Again, something that has already occurred is our annual Montgomery American Legion Thanksgiving Tom and Jerry/Bloody Mary morning. I work every year but this year I was awarded the title of “Celebrity Bartender” as Chester Reka had to retire. Of course the number one celebrity is none other than Steve “Vriz” Vrzal, wouldn’t be the same without him. I am kind of taking the mantle as I think was needed. It was a little bit because I was nobody else that wanted to work that hard. Thanks Manager Shorty!

Sharon thanks everyone for participating. She can’t find the name of the individual who won 3rd place for the Fergus Falls. If you have been awarded that place, please contact the Department Office so you can get the recognition you deserve in the next issue.

Cookbooks still for sale

To everyone, we still have a supply of our 100th Anniversary American Legion Auxiliary cookbooks available. What a wonderful Christmas gift this would be to make. Just give us a call at the Department Office and we can get them shipped out to you the same day. They are $25.00 a book plus $6.00 shipping and handling. We also have a new supply of our Auxiliary emblem magnets on hand. This is a great gift to give new members as you sign them up.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

The Department Staff, Sandie, Jan, and Julie want to wish everyone a Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year. This has been an outstanding year here – we are so happy to help you all with your needs and thank you for everything you do for us.

GIFT SHOP DISTRIBUTION DAY

There is a correction from the November issue of the Legionnaire. The Gift Shop Chairman this year is Linda Deschene and her committee member is Mary French. Apologies to both.

As we start with another holiday season, I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving with family and friends. It is just hard to believe that December is here already.

As I close, I would like to wish our American Legion members a Happy New Year.
December is VA&R Month for Auxiliary

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of veterans, military, and their families. Becoming a Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service volunteer (also referred to as a VAVS volunteer) is a fulfilling way to accomplish the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Our VA Health Care System and Veterans Homes need you! We recently held our VA Health Care System (VAHCS) and Veterans Home Representatives meeting and the Reps agree that they all need more volunteers. If you have a few hours each week, or each month, that you could become a regularly scheduled volunteer, please reach out to these Auxiliary members and they will connect you with the facility Voluntary Services Coordinator who will facilitate the training required and obtain the authorization for you to become an American Legion Auxiliary VAVS volunteer and work regularly with our veterans. All members should familiarize yourself with the ALA Guide for Volunteers. This can be downloaded directly from our website: www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/Veterans-Affairs-Rehabilitation.

We are grateful for the many American Legion Auxiliary members who sew items for our VA facilities. These items can be sheets, wheelchair bags, laundry bags, heart pillows, neck pillows, and quilts. Before delivering items, please contact the ALA Representative to find out if they need what you have sewn. Our storage areas are very limited so they can only take items that they specifically need at their location. The sewing list & patterns have been updated. Some of the items listed in previous years are no longer used. Be sure to check the Unit mailing for the new information.

The only facility that can accept used clothing is the Hastings Veterans Home. Donations to the Hastings Veterans Home must be NEW clothing items. Again, call and check with the Rep before you go shopping so you buy and donate the items that are needed there.

Veterans homelessness is a focus of the ALA. The numbers are growing at a dramatic pace. Regardless of the reason for their situation, we need to help our veterans. Connect with Minnesota’s Homeless Veterans Coordinators at the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VAHCS (find them at www.va.gov) to find out where your assistance is needed.

Participate in the VA Project CHALENG for Veterans (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups) which was organized to enhance the care for homeless veterans provided by your local VA and its surrounding community service organizations.

Carry telephone numbers for the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans and for the Eagle’s Healing Nest so you have referrals at your fingertips for veterans in need.

Our Christmas Gift Shop programs are underway at the 5 VAs and the 4 VAVS facilities that the Department of Minnesota ALA serves. Please contact the home or hospital ALA representative to see how you can volunteer and help to make the holidays a bit brighter for our veterans.

Be sure that if your Unit chooses to make a monetary donation, you will donate it to your VA facilities that you send that donation to the Department Office, not directly to the facility. This is the only way that the American Legion Auxiliary can track the money and report our impact.

Speaking of our impact, I have some amazing facts that were learned during the National convention. Each hour volunteered in the ALA VAVS program is equal to $24.14 per hour or $236 million! There are 66,844 active V A VS volunteers in the ALA V A VS program. Each hour volunteered is equal to $24.14 per hour or $236 million! There are 66,844 active VA VS volunteers in the ALA VA VS program. Each hour volunteered is equal to $24.14 per hour or $236 million! There are 66,844 active VA VS volunteers in the ALA VA VS program.

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