Minnesotans lobby in D.C. for vets rights

A group of about 25 Minnesota Legion Family members gathered in Washington DC in February to lobby Minnesota Congress people about veterans issues.

Before going up on Capitol Hill to talk to each of the state’s eight representatives and two senators, they went to the Commander’s Call for an informational session.

Two Minnesotans were honored at the Commander’s Call with plaques.

Diane Carlson Evans, who grew up in Buffalo and belonged to the Northfield Post 84 for many years, was given the Patriot Award for her work in creating the Vietnam Women’s Memorial on the Capitol Mall and for her continuing work in bringing recognition to women veterans.

With the help of The American Legion and other veteran groups, Evans almost single-handedly led the effort to create the Vietnam Women’s memorial, which now stands on the Mall.

She talked about how she got support and advice from Past National Commander Dan Foley of Minnesota. And she gave credit to her home post at that time, River Falls, WI, for its early support.

“Minnesota and Wisconsin were a blessing. They had a vision,” Evans said. “The Vietnam Women’s Memorial has contributed to our personal healing and is a shining beacon for all women.”

Evans now lives in Montana. Also honored was Dr. Amy Candy Heinlein, a doctor at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

Heinlein began working at the Minneapolis VA in 2004 as a doctor in training and then joined the staff in 2008. Her patient satisfaction ratings are in the 99th percentile.

She had earlier been recognized as the Minnesota VA Physician of the Year.

The veterans at the Call also got to hear Secretary of the

Continued on Page 9

First female commander visits Minnesota

National Commander Denise Rohan spent three days on the road in Minnesota visiting nine posts and nearly 700 Legionnaires, Auxiliary, SAL, Riders and guests.

“When I left the airport in Minneapolis, I saw something I hadn’t seen in a long time,” Rohan said. “My breath.

Rohan, and her aide and husband, Mike, have been traveling in warmer climes for some time, but Minnesota greeted them with a blast of arctic air and a couple of inches of snow at Worthington.

“It’s refreshing to be back in Minnesota. It’s, well, refreshing.”

The tour this year was through the southern part of the state with stops in Bayport, Spicer, Fulda, Windom, Litchfield, Lake Crystal, Waseca, Wayzata and Osseo.

Her theme for the tour and for the year is “family first,” and she spoke about “purpling up” along the way.

She said the purple was not in deference to Minnesota, the land of the Vikings, but to the fact when you add all the colors of the military together, they make purple.

Rohan said the Legion family must also work together.

“We need our family taking care of the nation’s families.”

And speaking of football, Rohan told the story about how during World War II when there was a manpower shortage, the Green Bay Legion post kept the Packers stadium running.

“To this day, Post 11 in Green Bay is the only color guard allowed on the field at Lambeau Field.”

Rohan told the story of a family whose father was deployed, and not long after a fire destroyed the family’s kitchen and the water heater went out. The local post greeted them with a blast of arctic air and a couple of inches of snow at Worthington.

Rohan, and her aide and husband, Mike, have been traveling in warmer climes for some time, but Minnesota greeted them with a blast of arctic air and a couple of inches of snow at Worthington.

Continued on Page 11

Vets on the Hill expecting big crowd

Veterans on the Hill Day will be held Monday, March 12, at the Minnesota Capitol.

The day will begin with a pre-rally breakfast and information session from 8-9:45 at the Veterans Service Building on the 5th Floor. The rally at the Rotunda will be from 10-11 a.m. and visits with lawmakers will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in regional rooms at the Capitol.

Buses will be available from all over the state and there will be park and rides in the Metro area.

The park and rides will leave from the Osseo Post 172 (763-227-8177), and the Roseville VFW (763-425-4858), Bloomington VFW (952-854-1296), the Anoka Post 102 (763-227-8177), and the Roseville VFW (651-776-1145). Those who will be using this service should call the posts to reserve a seat and find out about departure and return times.

Continued on Page 2

Legionnaire

Volume 100, Number 3
For God and Country
March 2018
Endorsements

Ward endorsed for state vice commander

The Fighting 5th District and Minneapolis Post No. 1 Legionnaire Dick Ward is a Life Member and was Post Commander for several years in the St. Paul area. He has held Third, Second, and First Vice Commander positions. Served as President of the Housing Corporation and a member of the Executive Board. Has been very active in all facets of Post operation, including the revitalization of the Minneapolis Post No. 1 Rifle Squad.

His District experiences include 5th District Commander 2011-2012, and three previous years in Vice Commander positions. Ward served as Adjutant, Chairman of the 5th District Oratorical Contest, and multicard member of the 5th District Executive Committee. While District Commander he was considered on the Department Executive Committee.

Ward is a member of Minneapolis Squadron No.1, Sons of the American Legion, a member of the 40 & 8 Voyager 414, and a member of the Fraternal Organization of Eagles Aerie 34.

District 4 and 3M Post 599 have endorsed Lou Michaels for Department Historian for 2018-19.

Michaels presently holds the historian position for both the post and the district. He is also an active member of the Jewish War Veterans. Michaels has been a photographer for over 50 years in the St. Paul area. He was the official photographer for the Minnesota Division I Baseball Tournament in St. Paul this past year.

Endorsements

LOU MICHAELS

Vets on the Hill

Continued from Page 1

Buses have been arranged for throughout the state, and the list includes:

Greater Minnesota Buses:
- St. Cloud Area Bus (Leaving from Waite Park American Legion)- To find out more information and/or reserve a seat contact Tom at 320-352-7880
- Willmar Area Bus (Kandiyohi County Veteran Service Officer)- To find out more information and/or reserve a seat, call the CVSO.
- Rochester (Preston, Zumbrota, Rochester) To find out locations of the stops and/or reserve a seat please contact Dave at 612-396-6389
- South Central Bus (Springfield, New Ulm, Mankato, St. Peter) To find out locations of stops and/or reserve a seat contact Windy at 507-327-3422
- Northeast Bus (Duluth, Cloquet, Asotin) To find out locations for stops and/or reserve a seat contact Gary at 218-879-2746

War Stories III

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

War Stories III is available. 31 stories of Minnesotans who went to war. Hundreds of photos and maps. You can also order online at mnlegion.org

Send to Department HQ Room 300A, 20 W. 12th St., St. Paul, 55155

Note: War Stories I is temporarily out of print.

Thank you

Thank you for the emails, phone calls, cards and memorials on the passing of my mother. She lived a full life to the wonderful age of 95. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Lori Skallerud Past Department President, and family.

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St. Louis park

Minnesota Historical Society
March came in like a lamb, as for this farm kid, experience tell me look out for the end of this month. On top of the W's tournament time, always a most fun time of year. One never knows, but then I've seen one more than a few blizzards in March. But while Minnesotans are tough, right?:)

Veterans Day on the Hill is scheduled for Monday, March 12; and you are very much needed there at the Capitol to let our legislature know that there are veteran related issues they need be aware of. Among the issues we will be stressing is Veterans Courts which are a problem-solving court that serves veterans charged with a criminal offense that are dealing with addiction and mental illness. This program is only in a few counties in Minnesota and has an 85% success rate of no repeat crimes. The intent is to take this Veterans Court system to every county in our state. Specifically: a really good thing to this Commander. Next item will be the law that gives Veteran spouse survivors a 100% tax free exemption one time move, which in the current law allows only an eight year window to use. The desire here is to make that a lifetime tax free, one time move only.

Mail Call

Oppportunity missed
To the Editor:
While the front page story on the location of the sunken USS Ward is a great addition to the story, there is a significant omission of actual sailors serving from the Great Lakes to the Pacific. Those sailors were the first Americans to combat Japanese aircraft attacking our ships. Most of those sailors did not stop after Pearl Harbor, it continued as described by Richard Klobohar in USS Ward book. Sailors tell their daily duties, in the book, and the life threatening challenges in the Pacific campaign. This includes the conversion of the USS Ward to an invasion destroyer, with Marines, in the island campaign having high risks of being sunk and large casualties. Japanese aircraft attacking the USS Ward were finally successful in destroying its operational presence in the Pacific. Klobohar tells the sailors fear of the close combat and the final costs in lives. The journey of these Veterans sailors would be told. It is in the USS Ward book by Klobohar.

James H Larson

Detroit Lakes

Boys' State
To the Editor:
Minnesota Boys' Staters spend their week learning and living Minnesota's various levels of government. They also learn what it takes to be a citizen of a dozen of the guys present and retrieve the Colors at the beginning and end of day. Folding and retreiving flags are a couple of other areas addressed about the flag of the U.S.A. Recruitment of attendees for this year's session (June 10-16) should begin. For those young men that express interest they have no interest in politics, remind them we need good people at all levels of government. Boys' State is a good place to learn and hone the skills to represent your constituency, to learn to become the politician you want your representative to be. Nellie

Spring Lake Park

Fort Snelling
To the Editor:
The Minnesota Historical Society (MHiS) is in the process of seeking funds from the State Legislature for their "Historic Fort Snelling Revitalization Project." They have run ads in The Minnesota Legionnaire, soliciting support for the project. The readers of the Legionnaire need to know that the MnHiS is subscribing to a politically radical agenda. So instead of the Revitalization Project focusing on the fort - a military installation - it is primarily focused on the Dakota. The draft program overview which the MnHiS has prepared and one of the points devoted to the Dakota, 12.5% to slavery and freedom, 12.5% to military and veterans, and 25% to others. It is simply an insult to all veterans who have served, and now, to be relegated to such an insignificant role at what is a military installation. While the Dakota need to be at the table, this specific story should focus on the fort itself and not on them. The Dakota's story at the fort is peripheral to that of the fort itself. Indicative of the very radical nature of the MnHiS proposal, they plan to sell each post to the Dakotas who were convicted of killing whites during the U.S. - Dakota War of 1862. The Dakotas - Dakota, Cheyenne, and Medicine Bottle - were hanged at Fort Snelling on November 11, 1865. I feel that establishing a memorial to them, instead of the sign who were killed by the Dakota, is something akin to establishing a memorial to the 9/11 hijackers. Why in the world would the MnHiS think that Minnesotan's want to go down that road?
I would urge the readers to contact their state legislators and the MNHiS and let them know their thoughts on this.

Curtis Dublin

Roseville

Legion history
To the Editor:
Your article in the February Legionnaire titled "The First 20 Years," was valuable in every way. People nowadays don't realize what The American Legion did in its history for the benefit of the American people, and still does. Just wanted to let you know, and thank you.

Maurice Bennett

Minneapolis

Fort Snelling
To the Editor:
I was watching the Parade of States in the opening of the Winter Olympics in South Korea. The U.S. had the most members with nice uniforms and caps. It bothered me a little that the deal to let the Veterans put their caps on their cars was not mentioned in the caption. Otherwise, in words, they had the flag for the left side on the right side of the parade. This is especially bad for an organization that belongs to a world wide membership. We need to know about flag etiquette.

Jim Finnes

Granite Falls

Honor a veteran
To the Editor:
I am reaching out to local veterans affiliated organizations to let you know of an opportunity to honor a veteran at Lake Bde Maka Ska next to the World War I Mast Memorial at the edge of the lake.

We are a grassroots nonprofit that manages a paving customization program. Members of the public can purchase a customized paver that are installed twice a year in the spring and fall. Our next order by date is March 15 if you would like a Spring installation.

Please visit the People for Parks Gifts and Memorials page for more information:
http://www.peopleforparks.net/paver-and-benches.html

The 40-foot tall mast is from the USS Minneapolis, which was part of the United States Navy fleet from 1894 to 1921. It was installed near the northeastern shore of Lake Calhoun. Maka Ska is 215 as a memorial to people who served in the Navy and Marine Corps during World War II.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you in advance for considering sharing this information with the veterans you serve and love. 612-927-2750.

Chris Joyce

Minneapolis
What’s Happening

Legal Clinics
Free drop-in legal clinics for veterans are being hosted by the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans. The clinics will cover housing, employment, benefits, expungement, wills, debt collection family law and child support.

Hoaxes and scams
A series of hoaxes involving veterans are being reported. One involves a caller saying they are calling from The American Legion on behalf of the Century Club. Do not give this called information. Veterans and others are cautioned about all contacts from whom you are not expecting a message, if it doesn’t seem professional, if it sounds too good to be true.

DEC and Rally
The Department Executive Committee will meet at 1 p.m. Saturday, March 10, at the Buffalo Post 270. The Appreciation Rally will follow with membership turn-in beginning at 3 and the dinner at 5, with the program to follow.

Caribbean Night
North St. Paul Post is sponsoring a Caribbean-inspired evening on Saturday, March 24 with social hour at 5 and dinner at 6. Tickets are $18. Please prepay at the post by March 21, or by email at flipflap5505@gmail.com. All proceeds go to veterans projects.

Free tours at Ft. Snelling
Group tours will be available at Fort Snelling on May 19. The tour will take 45 minutes and highlight many of the important military events at the fort. It will be followed by refreshment and conversation about the upcoming revitalization of the fort.

Traveling Wall
The Traveling Vietnam Wall will be in Austin from May 17-19. It is an 80 percent scale, the largest one that travels. It will be at the Texas County Fairgrounds. For more information, call 507-437-4563.

Bemidji Clinic operational
The new Bemidji VA Clinic, located at 1217 Anne Street in Bemidji, is now fully operational and open to veterans. All appointments will take place at the new clinic. For information or appointments, call 218-755-6360.

Camp Ripley Run
The annual Camp Ripley Motorcycle Run will be held June 30. The route will go from the Jenkins VFW Post to Camp Ripley. Registration starts at 9 a.m. with kickstands up at 11:30. Donations for riders is $15 and passengers, $10. The camp’s military museum will be open for viewing. For more information call Jim Hessegrave at 612-599-9149 or email at VFWMN@aol.com. All proceeds go to the disabled vets turkey and deer hunts.

Vietnam Vets Program
The 11th annual Vietnam Veterans Day program will be held Sunday, March 25, at the Forest Lake Post 225 at 2 p.m. Stan Turner will be the emcee, and will interview two veterans about the role of the tunnel rats in the war. The event is free and open to the public.

Outdoor events
The schedule for this year’s outdoor events for veterans has been announced.

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Outdoor events
The schedule for this year’s outdoor events for veterans has been announced.

-- The Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt will be held May 1-3 at Camp Ripley.
-- The Disabled Veterans Eel Fishing Program will be May 21-24 at the Veterans on the Lake Resort.
-- The Trolling for the Troops Fishing Program will be held at Camp Ripley and Lake Mille Lacs from May 31- June.

Application forms can be found on the Legion’s website, mnlegion.org.
Sons of the American Legion Membership Director Dave Vulcan announced the SAL results as Legion Membership Director Larry Ryan, Auxiliary President Donna Arends and Auxiliary Membership Chair Mary Kuperus look on.

About 200 hearty members of the Legion Family braved a major snowstorm to attend the Sweetheart Rally in North St. Paul in February. Districts that came out on top included:
- SAL, 2nd District, 85.17 percent. The Sons ranked 13th in the nation in membership.
- Auxiliary, Sixth District at 82.57 percent. The Auxiliary is 11th in the Nation and third in the Northwest Division.
- Legion, Sixth District at 90.25 percent. The Legion was ranked third in the nation.

Membership Director Larry Ryan said Minnesota’s high ranking was great, but more work is needed. “We need to keep doing what we’re doing, but press a little harder.”

Later, Commander Mike Schaffer had promoted his testimonial on April 21. There have been rumors that Schaffer will need to get an animal permit to take home his gifts from the testimonial.

SAL Director Chuck Stone rose from the floor to ask the commander a question. “What came first, the chicken or the egg?” Schaffer thought for a moment and responded, “I’ve always felt that you have to have a chicken before you can get an egg.”


Grandson Ryland Felmlee joined 10th District Commander Paul Hassing and 10th District President Jody Hassing at the rally.

Sons of the American Legion News

Greetings from your Sons of The American Legion. Membership, membership, membership.

It is that time of year when you may hear many people harping on where is your membership. And understandably so, 2018 memberships are due by January 1. By February 1, you risk losing your continuous year and eligibility for the membership benefits that are available for the paid up members.

So for those of you that are reading this article, check with your squadron, and verify that they have mailed all the membership they have received, into Department. Do not wait for everyone to pay. Membership should be sent in monthly. Be sure to include the proper transmittal form, and a check in the proper amount for the membership amount being sent in. If you have questions, reach out to your Post, District, or Detachment officers for help. We are only a phone call or email away.

And we are doing well. We are ahead of where we were last year. And if we can keep this momentum up, we will achieve that all time high of 12,000 members. That would be a great thing going into the National Convention coming to Minneapolis.

This is also the time to find the next generation of new officers for the Sons of the American Legion. Elections are coming soon, and have you reached out to your Squadron membership to see who would like to be nominated for a role at the Squadron.

This is also time to gather a record of all the activities, and donations that your squadron has done in the past year. Consolidated Squadron Reports (CSR’s) will be mailed out and we would like every squadron to complete one. Even if the Squadron did not do anything, or make any donations, indicate that with a ‘0’ and mail it in. 100% participation would be a great way to show what the Detachment of Minnesota SAL is doing to the National organization.

Lastly, I am looking at forming an ad-hoc committee to plan a golf outing as part of the National Convention this year in Minneapolis. If you have a love of golf, and are willing to help organize this event, please contact me to discuss further.

Thank you for all you do. Keep up the great work you do. 5 for Minnesota.

Up to date Consolidated Squadron Reports (CSR’s) will be mailed out March 2018.

SAL Detachment of Minnesota Membership As of Feb 21, 2018

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National Executive Committeeman Marland Ronning gave the national report at the rally.

Despite the weather, a good crowd came to participate in the Sweetheart Rally.

National Sons of The American Legion Commander Danny Smith from Nebraska is set to visit the State Detachment Spring Conference on March 16 and 17.

The Conference will be held at the Chaska Legion Post. Smith is the first-ever S.A.L. National Commander from Nebraska. He is a 44-year continuous member of the Sons. His eligibility is through his father, a Korean War Air Force Veteran. The Commander wants to pull closer together with other branches of the Legion Family tree. “We’re all brothers and sisters in this organization,” said Smith. “I would really like to see us all come together as an organization and work together with those common goals we all share. We can do it. I want every member of the Sons to pause and remember that we’re all privileged to be a member because someone served and sacrificed.”

Vets on the Hill
Veterans Day on The Hill–March 12th 2018-- All Veterans and Supporters are invited to rally in support of Veterans Legislation. This includes keeping surviving spouses in their homes, ending illegal predatory lending against veterans benefits and increasing access to the outdoors for our disabled veterans. Check out details at www.davm.org. Free pre-rally breakfast and info 8-10 a.m. (5th floor of Veterans Service Building).

Rally in Rotunda 10-11 a.m. Regional Rooms for Lawmakers 11:30-1:30 p.m.
March 10th will be our Department Appreciation Rally at the Cultural Center Executive Board will meet at 1 p.m. 10th membership turn in from 3-4:30 p.m., Dinner at 5 p.m. with meeting to follow. Please plan to attend and bring lots of memberships. This is one of the biggest reasons of the year. Let’s meet the challenge from the 6th District. March 12th is Veterans Day on The Hill. There are a few changes to the program this year. First they are adding a breakfast at the Veterans Service Bldg. from 8:00-9:45. We will then rally in the Rotunda of the Capital from 10-11 a.m. We will want to have a good turnout where you can or know those your local legislators. Please plan to attend, we need as many people there as possible. This is how we put the pressure on our legislators to listen to our agenda. We had a tremendous attendance for the National Commanders Tour. I want to thank National Commander Denise Rohan for making 3 stops in the 2nd District. She gave a number of speeches. I invite everyone from the Legion Family try to and listen to her message. I would like to ask every one to find a new member for the Legion. If you know of a Vietnam veteran, I’m proud of you all. Thank you all for your service and invite those that are not members for what they have accomplished. As the American Legion, it is our patriotic duty to join you. We will have multiple deployments coming up in the near future and I would like to be able to help our service men and women before, during, & after. Get to know them, help them with whatever needs they may have, keep in constant contact with them, and help them, showing them just how wonderful our Legion Family is. We need to be visible and I believe in being proactive. Let’s start adding our membership and be active in our programs. Show the world what we are made of. Veterans Day on The Hill is March 12th. Please make an effort to participate. We need representation to secure benefits for our veterans.

SECOND DISTRICT

Randy Olson Commander

We want to thank everyone who attended the 3rd District Mid-Winter Conference at Le Center Post. Thank you to everyone for all the work on membership and let’s continue work to find every veteran we meet or see. It is important not only to those veterans who are eligible and ask them how they can make a difference, ask them to join the American Legion Family. Remember, our deployed soldiers and those preparing to deploy. These soldiers need the support of Veterans organizations. Department of Minnesota Bulletin 33 shows the 3rd District up in 60.63%. Let’s continue with revitalizations, open houses and let those veterans know we need their support. These soldiers need the support of Veterans organizations.

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March 12th will be our Department Appreciation Rally at the Cultural Center Executive Board will meet at 1 p.m. 10th membership turn in from 3-4:30 p.m., Dinner at 5 p.m. with meeting to follow. Please plan to attend and bring lots of memberships. This is one of the biggest reasons of the year. Let’s meet the challenge from the 6th District. March 12th is Veterans Day on The Hill. There are a few changes to the program this year. First they are adding a breakfast at the Veterans Service Bldg. from 8:00-9:45. We will then rally in the Rotunda of the Capital from 10-11 a.m. We will want to have a good turnout where you can or know those your local legislators. Please plan to attend, we need as many people there as possible. This is how we put the pressure on our legislators to listen to our agenda.

Diane Carlson Evans, who grew up on Minnesota and was the organizer for creating the Women's Vietnam Memorial on Capitol Mall in Washington D.C., received the Legion's Patriot Award during the Washington Conference. Carlson spoke at the Commander’s Call, a meeting to prepare Legion lobbyists before they went up on Capitol Hill to meet with their Congressional officials.

Past Department Commander Bill Barbknecht, who is the Selective Service representative for Minnesota, had a chance while in Washington to talk with Donald Benton, the director of the U.S. Selective Service System.

Dr. Amy Candy Heinlein of the Minneapolis VA received The American Legion’s award for Outstanding Physician in the national VA system. She was presented the award at the Washington Conference by VA Secretary David Shulkin. She was nominated by the Department of Minnesota.
program. It’s a recipe for disaster.”

privatize the VA. Privatization would be more costly to tax-

rmanders. (Resolution 315)

serving a veteran into waiving his or her veteran’s

gress to civilian life. The Legion

requires the VA to work with non-VA care programs with VA as the coordinator and

shrink VHA too small to function economically or pre-

VA’s health-care system. Excessive outsourcing would

ment expertise in electronic health record

Continued from Page 1

Theodore Roosevelt IV, the grandson of the founder of

Washington Conference

Continued from Page 1

Veterans Affairs David Shulkin and several key

Congressional lawmakers.

Shulkin outlined several areas where the VA has gained

ground in the last year. “Without The American Legion’s

support we would not be seeing the progress we are in the

VA.”

Shulkin said the VA has plans to close or demolish 1,200
dilapidated facilities around the U.S. and use that money for

newer, better facilities.

He also said that the VA is now scheduling 96 percent of

its appointments within 30 days, and same day service has

expanded for mental health and primary care cases.

Progress has also been made in disability claims and

appeals, he said.

And he said that the VA will now be using the same tech-
nical company that the Department of Defense uses for

medical records. The goal is a seamless transition from mil-

itary to the VA system for veterans.

Rep. Phil Roe, MD, (R-Tennessee), the chairman of the

House Veterans Affairs Committee, said recent legislation

that allows the VA more latitude in firing bad employees

will improve medical care. “The bad actions of a few have

tainted the reputation of the others for too long.”

Roe said there was no effort in Congress to privatize

the VA. “Why would we spend so much money on the VA

if our endgame was to shut it down?”

Sen. Joe Tester, (D-Montana), who serves on the Senate

Veterans Committee, was stronger on the issue of privatiza-

tion. “Let me be clear. Congress can forget any attempts to

privatize the VA. Privatization would be more costly to tax-

payers, and it would leave only a skeleton of a VA system,

and the whole thing would just become another insurance

program. It’s a recipe for disaster.”

Tester said it’s time to update the Choice program, which

allows veterans to seek out care closer to home, and make

it better for veterans.

The Washington Conference concluded when National

Commander Denise Rohan spoke to a joint committee of

veterans affairs and talked about about veterans rights.
Membership Director Larry Ryan gives the winning sign for reaching the membership goal -- or is it the Wisconsin sign? Ryan has a bet with the Department of Wisconsin, the commander’s home state, and if he loses he will have to wear green and gold and sing “Go Pack Go” to the Wisconsin caucus at the National Convention. In early February, Wisconsin was first in the nation and Minnesota was fourth, about two percentage points behind. Ryan was speaking at Waseca.

The last day of the tour brought a striking sunrise with sunbeams flaring up from the rising sun as the van made its way to Waseca.

National Commander’s Tour

National Commander Denise Rohan talks things over with World War II veteran Floyd Walter during a stop at Litchfield.

Second District Vice Commander Pam Krill, Blue Earth Post 89, listened to the commander speak during the stop at Lake Crystal.
fixed the kitchen, got a new water heater and put the family up at a hotel until the work was done.

“That’s what we do, that’s who we are. I’m proud to be part of a family that makes a difference. Everything you do in the American Legion is a statement of faith, that you believe in our family.”

When a member doesn’t renew, the post or unit or squadron should contact them, not to just get their membership, but to find out how they are. “We need to reach out. They need to know that someone cares.”

“I believe God put us on this earth to take care of one another,” Rohan said.

Rohan told the story about how when she first tried to join the Legion, she was turned away and asked to join the Auxiliary. “Now that post has a sign up on the wall with my picture that says, ‘We could have had her as a member.’”

She said it was important to still reach out to women veterans. “They may have been turned away at some point. We need to apologize and welcome them to the family.”

She reminded her audiences in Minnesota that the Legion is a service organization. “For God and country, we are doing our best. We are making a difference each and every day. You may not realize how many lives you touch and the difference you’ve made.”

Traveling with the commander was Membership Director Larry Ryan, Commander Mike Schaffer and Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.

Along the way, she also talked to a television station, ten newspapers and a radio station. Her final stop at Osseo was live-streamed to the American Legion website.
When it looked like he’d be drafted, Les Sanderson hitched a ride to Minneapolis and signed up with the Coast Guard. He had seen his uncle come home from World War I as a cripple, and he didn’t want anything to do with the Army.

By Al Zdon

Not everybody who went to war put a flag at the top of Mt. Suribachi, or did the Bataan Death March or shot down 15 German airplanes. Not everybody who served in the war could say that.

As a boatswain’s mate third class during the war, Les Sanderson served on a converted yacht. “It was decked out with a .30 caliber machine gun up front, and a depth charge mounted in the back. I’m sure glad with never had to use that depth charge because it would have blown us up before we could get away.”

The Coasties’ job was to board any boat that left harbor and take an inventory of how many people were on board. When the boat came back, they counted heads again and checked to make sure nobody was hiding. The Germans checked to make sure nobody was hiding. The Germans protected our shores and came home with no stories about the enemy shooting at him on Iwo Jima. Well, there was that story where his ship almost blew up…

But Sanderson was like the vast majority of American veterans in World War II. They simply served their nation and they won the war.

Les Sanderson was born in the wilds of Montana.

His dad, Lewis, was a pioneer of sorts, staking out a claim in Big Sky country with a homestead near Scobey, in the very northeast corner of Montana.

Alma Sanderson gave birth in 1921 to twin boys out on the prairie, and one of them died. Les was the survivor. A lot of farmer’s boys from Minnesota went to Morris High School. Sanderson would have to report to a local farm at 4 a.m., get a ride to school, and take an inventory of how many people were on board.

The family figured out that he could attend the agricultural high school at Morris, if he worked and paid his own way. Sanderson completed the eighth grade and quickly ran away. It was really loud.”

One thing they didn’t have much of was heat. “The only stove was on the first floor, and there were registers in the floor. You had to sleep with so much quilt that you couldn’t turn over. Of course, everyone shared a bed, and you needed that to keep warm.”

There was no running water in the house, but Lewis tried to spoil Alma with the luxuries of the times. “He bought her a new wood-fueled range called a Home Comfort that had a water reservoir on the side. You could fill it up with a couple of five gallon pails and have hot water all the time.”

Lewis next got her a Dexter gasoline-engine washing machine with a hand-powered wringer. “You had to run the exhaust line through a hole in the window to vent the fumes. When mom did the wash, that engine just roared away. It was really loud.”

Sanderson completed the eighth grade and quickly ran out of schooling options. There was no high school.

The family figured out that he could attend the agricultural high school at Morris, if he worked and paid his own way. Sanderson was 19 years old by then, not uncommon for high school boys in the state during the 1930s.

“A lot of farmer’s boys from Minnesota went to Morris to learn about farming. Dad couldn’t afford to send me, but I got a job.”

Sanderson would have to report to a local farm at 4 a.m. to clean the horse barn and feed the animals. He’d get back in time at 7 to have breakfast and go to school. “Because it was outside work, they paid me 75 cents an hour. That was pretty good pay. I was able to pay the $19 a month I needed for room and board.”

When he went back for his sophomore year, he was hopping to get a farm job again, but the school had other ideas.

He was made an assistant preceptor for the freshman boy’s dormitory.

“Now this was inside work, and so they only paid me 30 cents an hour. But I got by.”

On a day in December, 1941, the school assembled all the students in the auditorium. “When we all got seated, the head of the school came out and told us the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. Most of us were farm boys, and maybe 21 years old. We knew was war meant. We’d soon be drafted.”

After completing that school year, Sanderson did farm work again during the summer of ’42, wondering when Uncle Sam would call.

“There was a classmate of my sister’s home on leave, and he was serving in the Coast Guard. After visiting with him, I thought I’d see about joining the Coast Guard. My uncle had been in the Army in World War I and had been crippled and spent five years in the veterans hospital. I didn’t want to go in the Army.”

The only place he could enlist was in the Twin Cities, but that was a long ways off and there was no money for travel. “I knew somebody who was in the sheep shipping association, and they arranged for me to go along with a shipment, getting a free ride in the caboose.”

The recruiter signed him up, but sent him back home. “He told me that if I got drafted, I should come back right away.”

By October, 1942, he was in training at Manhattan Beach, New York.

“I didn’t know what I was getting myself into, but I suppose everybody who served in the war could say that.”

After training, he ended up in West Palm Beach, Florida. “The Coast Guard had leased boats to patrol the coast and waterways. A lot of these were luxury yachts or fishing boats.”

Les Sanderson left high school, joined the Coast Guard, and was made an assistant preceptor for the freshman boy’s dormitory.

By Al Zdon

When he went back for his sophomore year, he was hopping to get a farm job again, but the school had other ideas.
were known to drop off spies from submarines and they would come ashore in fishing boats.

“We’d be wearing a .38 pistol on our side, so nobody messed with us.”

His next duty was on Florida’s inland waterway, radiating out from Lake Okeechobee. “That lake is so big, we lost sight of shore and had to find our way using a compass. Next it was on to Everglades City. A lot of guys who didn’t want to go in the service were hiding out in the Everglades. We’d be checking boats and trying to find them.”

Sanderson moved further south to Key West where he was assigned to a buoy tender.

The buoys were very important in those shallow waters, and they had lights on them. The lights were fueled by LP gas. “So we would have to travel around, pull them on board, clean them up, and put in a new gas tank. And then seal it all up again.”

A hurricane blew into the Caribbean. “A buoy tender is a big ship, and we were anchored to the pylons. Normally, you could walk from the pier to the ship and it was level. But when this storm blew in, the boat rose up on the swell, and now it was 12 or 14 feet above the pier. We had to just keep playing out the lines. They kept the engines running at all times in case we had to make a dash for the sea.”

Besides buoys, Key West was a major naval base, and it was protected by mines. When the hurricane swept by, many of the mines were moved. In fact, neither the Navy nor the Coast Guard knew where they ended up.

“Don’t you suppose, our job was to go out there and find them, pick them up and move them where they ought to be.”

The buoy tender, a metal ship, went to sea with three minesweepers, all made out of wood. “We just dropped anchor and waited. When the minesweepers found them, we’d pick them up and move to the next spot. We were out there a long, long time.”

The minesweepers, because they were wooden, would not set off the wayward mines, but the big tender could set one off just by coming close. They didn’t know how close they came until they came in for the night and the captain gathered the crew around.

“The captain said, ‘Well, boys, you don’t know how close you came to being angels today.’”

Sanderson by this time was getting tired of Florida. It was 1945, and he was restless to see some more of the world.

“I had applied for a transfer several times, but nothing happened. I didn’t understand that because I was a fairly good worker. But one night I was at a dance party, and I met this girl. She heard about my effort to get transferred, and she told me to come to the office she worked at the next day, and so I did. Three months later, my transfer came through.”

When on duty on the tender, Sanderson, who was a third class boatswain’s mate, had put on report a first class yeoman who wasn’t showing up for work. The yeoman got his revenge by taking out all the leave time Sanderson had planned to use on his way to California and making him report early.

Sanderson was sent to San Pedro, California, to join the crew of USCGC Sebago, one of three new cutters being built there. Because he was in the original crew, he was considered a plank owner, a high honor in the Coast Guard.

Each new cutter would eventually build up a crew of 373 officers and men.

“We trained in San Francisco with the Navy. In wartime, the Coast Guard is under the Department of Navy.”

The Sebago was finally commissioned, but on its first trial run it caught fire and had to be towed back to port and go back into dry dock. By the time the cutter was ready to go sea again, Germany had surrendered.

“We were out on the next shakedown cruise, Japan surrendered. The war was over and I never saw any service in a war zone.”

The cutter was sent to the East Coast, through the Panama Canal. “We were in no hurry, so they let us have plenty of liberty along the way. I remembered we went to Key West and then up the east coast to New York and the Bull Run, and then back to San Francisco and the Hawaiian Islands.”

When the ship got to Norfolk, all of its weaponry was allowed to stay on the ship. They took the five-inch gun off the after part of the ship and replaced it with a building that weather balloons could be launched from. The conversion from war to peacetime was underway.

The Coast Guard was also over-staffed for a peacetime role, and advancement in the ranks came to a screeching halt. “I could pass all the tests and be recommended for second class, but nobody was being advanced.”

Sanderson figured it was time to get out, but there was one little problem. He had just re-enlisted for three more years.

“One day I saw on the bulletin board that there were too many third class petty officers in the Coast Guard, and that they were having a lottery to see who would get out. I put my name in, and I won. I got discharged.”

The USCG Cutter Sebago was commissioned just after the war ended. Sanderson spent a year on the ship and it was a plank owner.

Sanderson was one of the 373 original crew of Sebago. He is the last survivor of cutter.

Sanderson is recovering from a stroke at a Tyler nursing home. His visitor was his special friend Velva.

Right before he got out, he and the captain of the ship had a missed communication while the Sebago was trying to dock, and several lines snapped. “I had my sea bags packed and ready to go, but I wondered if they were going to punish me. I hadn’t followed orders very good. I was waiting for somebody to really chew me out. But nothing happened, and I just walked off the ship.”

He was discharged in St. Louis in June 1946 and hitchhiked first to Rochester and then to his home in western Minnesota. “I served for three years, eight months and 13 days.”

Sanderson went back to farming and tried the ag school again. By now, though, he was 25 years old, and by his own reckoning, too old for high school.

Along the way he owned both a 1942 Harley-Davidson, which he bought in 1946 still on its shipping container, and an Indian motorcycle. Eventually, he got into the oil business in Tyler working for Mobil. He traveled the countryside as an agent, selling oil to the farmers. One day his boss called him in and asked if he would be a trainer for new agents.

“I said I didn’t know if I could do that job, but he said, ‘I wouldn’t have asked if I didn’t think you could do it.’”

Sanderson trained agents in South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota for the next 20 years. He retired at age 62 in 1983, worked at the Tyler golf course for six years, and then worked at the local funeral home for another 25 years before retiring again.

Along the way, he got his high school diploma through a special state program for awarding World War II veterans the degree they would have earned had they not been called away to war.

And two years ago, he got a call from the Coast Guard. They were trying to find the plank owners of the Sebago, because they were going to dedicate a park with that name in Pensacola, Florida.

“There were three of us left, but by the time the dedication came around, I was the only one left.” Sanderson wells up with tears as he thinks back on his wartime service.

In the end, the Coast Guard brought Sanderson and his whole family down for the ceremony. “They treated us like royalty. It was funny because no matter where I went, everybody knew my name and I didn’t know anybody’s name.”

During his stay, he was presented with coins by a member of Congress.

Sanderson, who is 96, had a stroke recently, but he has been rehabbing with great determination at a nursing home. He is transitioning from a wheel chair to a walker, and he intends to go home soon.

His wife died some years ago. They had two sons. Sanderson has a close friend, Velva, who is a widow, and they have been together for 21 years. “Oh, we used to love to go dancing.”
**Oratorical Contest**

Continued from Page 1

Mersini and John Parker and has four younger siblings, Abigail, Benjamin, Nathan and Lydia.

She has been involved in speech for several years and the last two years has qualified for regional competition in the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association.

Her speech coach for four years has been Marti Ackland. She has played the piano since the first grade. She attends Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mounds View.

Parker said she enjoys preparing for the oratorical contest, but it’s a great deal of work. “I like to do a lot of research, reading books and watching movies, and studying government. You have to practice it, add this and take out that, and time it.”

The Oratorical Contest is divided into two speeches, one prepared oration on the Constitution of up to 10 minutes, and then a shorter speech on one of four topics — with the students having to be ready to do any one of the four. This year’s shorter talk was on the impeachment process.

Parker, who was sponsored by the 10th District and Lino Lakes Post 566, had to come out on top of three other finalists: Ricky Erpelding, Kasson; First District, Albert Lea Post 56; Zaviot Dillard, Minneapolis, Fifth District, Minneapolis Post 1; and Owen Mische, St. Paul, Fourth District, Christie-DeParcq Post 406. Others who competed were: Jamie Jablonski, Jordan, District Three, Jordan Post 3; Ethan Marichalar, Baxter, Sixth District, Brainerd Post 255; Natalie Barka, Litchfield, Seventh District, Litchfield Post 104; Ann Stangler, Deer River, District Eight, Deer River Post 122; Aiden Begnaud, Lake Crystal, District Two, Lake Crystal Post 294.

“I’m really excited to to to the national contest,” Parker said. “You get to delve into history, apply today’s standards, look at values. It’s wonderful to learn about the Constitution.”

She said it’s important for all citizens to understand our Constitution. “If we lose sight of what our founders created, we could lose the freedoms they gave to us. The contest will be held April 13-15. The winner of the contest will receive an $18,000 scholarship.

**Legion Day at Twins will be June**

The annual American Legion Family Day at the Twins will be Friday, July 13, vs. the Tampa Bay Rays.

Tickets are $21 and are in the Home Plate view section.

Tickets can be obtained by contacting the Twins by phone (612-659-3400) or on their website. Ask for the special group rate for the Legion.

For special orders, or for further information, call Brian Besler at the Twins at 612-659-4083.

Commander Mike Schaffer will throw out the first pitch, and the American and Twins Territory flag raisers will be selected by The American Legion.

**Legion's Oldest District Band**

The Ninth District Band marches down Main Street in Mahnomen during the 2017 Department Convention Parade.

**Ninth District Band has a long history, seeks funding**

By Bernie Mckigney

50 year Ninth District Band Member and US Army Veteran

The Minnesota American Legion 9th District Band was established in 1928 in Crookston. The original band director and organizer was Ted Thoresen of Fertile. Bill Pond of Bemidji also served as band director for many years. The band's current director is Bernie Mckigney of Moorhead.

The band remained strong and active for years because of the dedicated efforts of band member and Business Manager, Herschel Lysaker of Crookston. The band currently has a roster of over 50 musicians from over 20 communities throughout the 9th District of Minnesota.

The band's annual schedule includes the Mid-Winter Conference, Commander's Testimonial, District and State Department Conventions, all of which the band has faithfully performed at every year since its first District Convention in Thief River Falls in 1929.

When financially possible, the band also attends the American Legion National Convention, approximately every other year.

The band has been able to stay active for nearly 90 years because of its dedicated members, yearly fundraising, and recruiting efforts. The band members are actively looking for new, good players for replacements. While the first priority is finding a veteran who's also a musician, the band also accepts relatives of veterans or musicians that want to join and support American Legion goals. Over the years, the band has been able to keep up its player strength by recruiting players from other community bands.

In June of this year the band will celebrate its 89th Anniversary Year. That longevity has been made possible because of the financial support received over the years from many generous donors. Recently, a letter requesting donations for financial assistance was sent out. The band's continued success weighs heavily upon the support received from the Posts, Auxiliaries, and individuals throughout Minnesota. The Minnesota 9th District Band is a non-profit organization, determined in Section 501(c) of the IRS Code, Section 501 (c)(3). Our EIN Number is: 456037447. Individuals wishing to make a donation can send a check to:

9th District American Legion Band Elaine Borud, Treasurer 4808 Crystal Creek Drive Moorhead, MN 56560.

Besides actively participating in District events and State Legion Conventions, we are planning to take part in the National Convention Band Competition. Our first involvement in this event was in Cincinnati and proved to be such a positive experience that we decided to do it again! For the band, this is not an easy undertaking as our members live far and wide in the 9 District, making rehearsal's difficult, but we are up for the challenge. It will be a real privilege to represent the 9th District at the State of Minnesota at the Band Competition in Minneapolis this August.
March 2018

**Netherlands Memorial seeks Minnesota photos**

The Faces of Margariten at the American War Cemetery in Margariten, Netherlands is a project seeking photos of Americans who are buried there.

Over 4,100 photos have been collected thus far, but over 600 are still needed. Contributions are especially appreciated for those Americans buried at the cemetery for which there is no photo.

For more information about the project, go to thecemeteryofmargariten.org.

If you have a photo or question, contact David Scharrlbing at david.scharlbing@medtronic.com.

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**March 2018 Minnesota Legionnaire Page 15**

Guimond, Robert, 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 20, 2018. He was a radio operator. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Lyle, David S., 89, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 22, 2018. He was a member of the 52nd Battalion. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Lundgren, Earl M., 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 26, 2018. He was a lieutenant and earned a Bronze Star.

Hecimovich, Norman E., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm, died Feb. 18, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 56.

Beavens, Leon, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 27, 2018. He was a corporal and served in Europe.

Posts at Goal during the 2018 National Commander’s Tour

APPLE VALLEY POST 1776

WEST CONCORD POST 295

RICHMOND POST 292

ADRIAN POST 32

AVOCA POST 576

DUNDEE POST 386

IVANHOE POST 194

LAMBERTON POST 41

LISMORE POST 636

SLAYTON POST 64

PIPESTONE POST 6

BREWSTER POST 464

JACKSON POST 130

KINGSTON POST 483

SILVER LAKE POST 141

ST. JOSEPH POST 328

BRICELYN POST 165

MADELIA POST 19
Veterans, service members rehab WWII vet's dilapidated property

By Henry Howard

More than two dozen volunteers, ranging from active-duty servicemembers in their 20s to veterans in their 70s, rallied to rehabilitate the property of a World War II veteran March 3 in Chula Vista, Calif.

“I don’t even have words to describe what’s going on here, it’s so appreciated,” said Michelle Miranda, daughter of Navy veteran Ernie Miranda, who is 94. “I am so happy that it is being done. My father — his mind is blown. He’s skeptical in general. But to see this happening is amazing. He’s from that old school where you don’t ask for anything. You don’t ask for handouts.”

“I didn’t realize how bad it had become because I had worked on cleaning up our shared side,” said Graff, a member of American Legion Post 492. “I got sick and was in Balboa Hospital on and off for a while. After that, I noticed water was leaking through my wall. When I told Emie about it, he said the sewer line in his bathroom was broken.”

That’s what prompted Graff to reach out to nonprofits. “That’s when things started popping,” Graff said.

A team began to survey the property, meet with the family, solicit volunteers, acquire the proper permits and other preliminary legwork that led to the transformation’s first phase. Once the outside is cleaned up, volunteers will assess the inside of the home and work with vendors on repairs.

The American Legion connection in the area is what solidified the deal,” Stewart said. “The family felt comfortable with The American Legion and U.S. 4 Warriors is well-known in this area.”

Stewart is a former commander of District 22. “That’s the beauty of The American Legion,” he said. “The American Legion has the best reach and warm handshakes with other groups so that we can make things happen and do what’s really important.”

Camarato underscored the importance of veterans organizations working together.

“In today’s day and age, partnerships go a long way,” he said. “It’s one of the best ways to tackle issues that are facing us. I work closely with other organizations like U.S. 4 Warriors. Every organization is taxed to the maximum. So when you work together, you actually enhance your resources and your ability to do larger projects that you might not be able to do.”

Angel Castillo, commander of Post 434, saw the property for the first time when he arrived to work in the yard. “We’re here to help and anything we can do, we will do our best to help out,” Castillo said. “It’s a surprise that it has gotten to this stage. But we have to understand that sometimes conditions — physical or mental — come into play and this can happen. But it takes the community to stand up and say, ‘Hey, this gentleman needs help.’ That’s what being a veteran means — continuing to serve.”

Lisa Miranda, the granddaughter of Ernie, says his health is good, given his age. His spirits were lifted when the team of volunteers showed up.

“He loves everything about today, he’s amazed about how many people have come out,” she said, noting her grandfather was looking outside from a window. “He made a joke about ‘They are here for the food.’ And I said, ‘No, they are here out of the goodness of their hearts.’”

March 2018 Minnesota Legionnaire

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Greetings American Legion Auxiliary Members Department of Minnesota.

As I am writing this February is fleeting by. That is A-O.K. with me. Those winter months can fly by quickly. I shared with you my travels, I have had a few more. Membership Mary and I traveled to Le Center for the 3rd District Midwinter. That was very good to see all the 3rd District Legion families. Everyone was very kind and welcoming.

Unfortunately, we were not able to stay long as we would have liked as we were also invited to American Legion Arcade Phalen Post. There we joined the 4th and 5th District in walking in the St. Paul Winter Carnival Parade. We were honored to carry the 4th District Banner. What a fun experience with of course Great American Legion Family members there also. We have also made plans to attend next year’s parade again.

Next we went to the Lino Lakes American Legion Post. There we attended the 10th District Snowmobile Rally Membership Banquet. Yes there were snowmobiles there, one actually driven there by the Snowmobile Organizer at age 90+. What an impressive event that was. That was my first in participating and I was impressed. Great Job 10th District. The Lino Lakes Unit was gracious enough to provide us hotel accommodations that night. So believe me when I say we juggled ourselves home the next day. We were exhausted but had many wonderful memories.

February 1st was a very impressive Essay Contest Winners Reception at the Elk River Post with their Unit. 6th District President Nicki Biens and I attended. What a great future we have with youth like those marching up the plate. Thank you Elk River Unit for the invitation to that event. I enjoyed that very much.

February 3rd was the Sweetheart Membership Rally in North St. Paul. Roads were less than good, however Membership Mary was a very good driver and we arrived safely. There also was a very good turnout of American Legion Family Members despite the horrible roads. Thank you North St. Paul Post and Unit for a great meal and hospitality. A huge thank you to Commander Mike and Membership Director Larry for all the beautiful flowers they shared with Mary, Diane, Nina and myself.

Feb 7th was the Montgomery Sweetheart Dinner, served to us by the Montgomery Legionnaires no less. It was delicious and a great time was had by all. I sure enjoyed the reserved parking spot also right in front of their Post. Thank You Shorts.

Feb 10th was the 6th District Midwinter in Melrose. Again great Post and Unit dinner, informational Chairmen reports and a nice silent auction. Thank you 6th District.

An update on my flashlight project - I received word from St. Stephens, that in fiscal year 2017 they had served 1,717 adults and 671 families in street outreach, emergency shelters and multiple housing programs. 330 street homeless were helped and 235 veterans were served. The largest age group of people served were age 25-40 being at 41.4%. Age 55+ was 18.9%. So please keep those flashlights coming in. My other project of dividing funds for the five Veteran Homes and the Armed Forces Center at the Minneapolis St. Paul airport is currently at $16,000+ so I am concerned in the future you could contribute to that also would be very much appreciated. Poppy funds may be used as this is going to the betterment of our veterans at these facilities.

Until next time stay warm and keep all of your veterans and their families in your thoughts and prayers. God bless you all.

GREETINGS AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MEMBERS DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

American Legion Auxiliary National President Diane Dudcheck will be visiting Minnesota from April 16 – 18, 2018. As her stay is short, we will be conducting a mini-tour of our state. Following is a daily itinerary that we will be following. Please make it a priority to attend one of the functions to welcome the National President.

2018 POPPY UPDATE

Poppy time is fast approaching. To date, 309 out of 438 Units have ordered their 2018 small and/or large Poppies. To remain the 129 units, please place your orders now. Keep in mind who assembles these poppies. They are made by our Veterans, many of which have disabilities. If the poppies you receive aren’t as perfect as you would like, remember where they came from. Let people know who assembles these—I think you will be surprised at how many individuals don’t know.

GIRLS STATE

Remember your application for reservation and your $300.00 registration fee must be received by March 31st to reserve a place for your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen. If your Unit has not yet sent this in, please take care of it immediately. Reservations with the payment of the $300.00 registration fee for each candidate will be accepted on a “first-come-first-served” basis. Upon processing your Unit’s reservation fee you will receive the necessary registration packet for each citizen you are sponsoring. American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State can accommodate 445 citizens.

A Unit may send as many young women to American Legion Auxiliary Girls State as they wish to. The candidate must be a Minnesota resident, attend a Minnesota school or home school.

The 2018 session of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held at Bethel University in St. Paul, June 10-16. We look forward to the 72nd annual American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State week and another educational and successful session.

LEADERSHIP - FINAL WORKSHOP

You still have time to sign up for the last Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary Leadership Workshop for this Auxiliary Year. March 10, 2018 the Leadership Workshop will be held at the Community Center in Buffalo. The goal of the workshop is to keep Units, Districts and the Department strong.
With mixed feeling I am withdrawing my name as a can- didate for Minnesota National Executive Committee woman for the 2018 – 2020 term. My years as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary are years I will always remem- ber with pride and joy. Seven of the past ten years I have been on the Department Executive Committee. Of the other three, one I campaigned across the state for 2nd vice presi- dent and the other I was your Alternate NEC woman. I know my limits and know the effort is not how I want to spend my time. Thank you to Department Secretary Sandle for getting me there a number of times.

It is time to let a new generation mentor young women with new and fresh ideas for our programs and organization.

LYNN OLSON

... Shirley Frederick

 NEC candidacy

will still be active on all levels and ready to help, volunteer, mentor always. Thank you American Legion Family for all the support and friendships.

Fabulous 4th having a great new year

The Fabulous 4th District is off to a rousing start for 2018. Our Mid-winter Conference, that was held in January was a roaring suc- cess with two dynamic speakers. Amy Callahan, a 24 year veteran of the United States Army, is currently the Executive Director of the Ft. Snelling National Cemetery. She spoke on “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon” program, and had so much valuable information on other programs to help the veterans.

On Saturday, January 27th, we had the honor of our Auxiliary Department President, Donna Arends and the Membership Chairman, Mary Kuperus, carry the Fabulous 4th District membership call to the members of our district. As they rode in the parade there was a short rally and lunch served at the Arcade Phalen Post 573. Arcade Phalen began hosting their Friday Night Fish Fry on Friday, February 16th. The newly renovated Post is beautiful in the area, it looks and feels like a true Fish Fry.

The 4th District ALA/VA Fun Night was held on January 16th and was Las Vegas Night. There were 15 veterans that attended the fun of bingo, blackjack, and cards (21). The next Fun Night will be April 17th, and it is Horse Racing Night. The veterans enjoy the games, but Horse Racing Night was a huge favorite.

Rosetown will be hosting our annual casino bus trip to Treasure Island on Sunday, March 11th. This is our Past Post 255 Parley fund raiser for the $500 scholarship pro- vided each year. This is also the same day of the SAL

Bone-in-Ham breakfast

Then the next big Auxiliary event, at Rosetown, will be our Spring Style Show. This will be our 43rd year hosting this afternoon of fun, food and fashion.

Rosetown has Junior members but we do not have a Junior program. We are entertaining starting a Junior pro- gram. We have a few members willing to take this proj- ect on to see if we can get some interest at the post. They will attend the Junior Conference at North St Paul in April.

It is with mixed feelings that the deadline for the Caribbean Night on March 24th. It will be a Caribbean Inspired evening with dinner, games and music.

February is American Legion Auxiliary Membership Month.

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4 seasons

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