The first 20 years

As we move closer to celebrating The American Legion Centennial, what was it like in those early days in Minnesota? The posts didn’t have much money, but the buddies accomplished incredible feats

By Al Zdon

What would The American Legion in Minnesota be like if all its members were in their 20s and 30s? What would it be like if all of its members had fought in the same war, and all of them had come home at about the same time? What would it be like if the Legion operated in a state where the majority of people still lived in small towns and cities around the state, where the primary way to get things done was through civic organizations – and not government?

And what if that organization operated its first 10 years in an era known for jazz, flappers, speakeasies, new inventions, cars and planes, and prosperous times? And then operated in its second ten years during the nation’s worst depression?

The first 20 years of The American Legion in Minnesota was a time of birth and growth, amazing community projects, and, finally, a maturing into an organization that has now reached its 100th national convention.

From 1919 to 1938, the Minnesota American Legion spawned the Hospital Association, the Poppy Workshop, a newspaper, Legionville, Legion Baseball, the Sons of the American Legion, and dozens of other great projects to help veterans, youth and their own communities.

About 115,000 Minnesotans served in World War I, known at that time as the Great War. When the war ended in late 1918, the veterans began to trickle home. But in the first months of 1919, that trickle had become a torrent.

Commander’s Tour will visit nine posts on a southern swing

Minnesota will welcome our neighbor to the east during her National Commander’s Tour on Feb. 6-8. National Commander Denise Rohan of Wisconsin will visit Minnesota just after the Super Bowl, making stops at nine Minnesota posts.

The tour this year will take a southern swing through the state. It will start in Bayport for breakfast on Tuesday, Feb. 6, followed by lunch at Spicer Post 45 and dinner at Fulda Post 318.

On Wednesday, Rohan will visit Windom Post 206, Litchfield Post 104 and Lake Crystal Post 294. On Thursday, the tour will conclude with stops at Waseca Post 228, Wayzata Post 118, and Osseo Post 172.

A complete schedule of posts, times, events, and contact people is on page 3 of this issue. Meal reservations should be made by calling the contact people listed. All Legion Family members are welcome.

Membership Director Larry Ryan will host the tour.

Dental clinic at vets home will be first of its kind in the nation

The Minnesota Veterans Home at Minneapolis will be the first vets home in the nation to have a dental clinic on its campus.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs announced the project recently and said the facility should improve dental care for residents.

The dental clinic will be funded by a unique three-way partnership. The Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation will provide $100,000, the Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund will chip in $60,000 and the Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota will provide $50,000.

Construction has already begun, and the clinic is expected to open this spring.

“When we work together, all veterans win,” said Larry Shellito, commissioner of Veterans Affairs.

In most veterans’ home settings dental care is brought in through mobile units, but there are challenges to temporary...
PETER THOMPSON RECEIVES BOOK -- Peter Thompson, who earned six Purple Hearts in Vietnam, is shown with a copy of War Stories III, published by the Minnesota American Legion. His story is one of 31 stories in the book about Minnesotans who defended their nation. Thompson is a member of the Ojibwe Nation, and is wearing a ceremonial headdress given him by the Dakota Nation. (Photo courtesy of the Bagley Farmers Independent.)

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

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

Amount enclosed $______

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

Name ___________________________________
Address __________________________________
Number of copies
War Stories II ______
War Stories III ______
All books are $29 each including shipping.

5 FANTASTIC WAYS TO EXPERIENCE MNHS

1 REVITALIZE FORT SNELLING
Ask your state legislators to support funding for the revitalization of Historic Fort Snelling and thank Gov. Dayton for his support at mnhs.org/HFS2020.

2 SPEAK UP FOR HISTORY
Talk to your legislators during History Matters Day at the Capitol, Mar 8. Or take action now with a phone call or email at mnhs.org/historymatters.

3 VIEW AMVETS POST #5
See portraits of local Mexican and Mexican American military veterans at AMVETS Post #5:
Photographs by Xavier Tavera, on view now–Apr 22, Minnesota History Center, St. Paul.

USE YOUR DISCOUNT
Veterans and active military always receive discounted general admission at MNHS historic sites and museums around Minnesota. Visit soon!

4 1968 EXHIBIT
Have we come a long way since 1968? Explore this pivotal year, including stories from Vietnam War veterans. See the "Huey" helicopter reassembled with the help of 20+ vets who are also MNHS volunteers. Now on view, Minnesota History Center, St. Paul.
Endorsements

Hammon endorsed for vice commander

American Legion Post 161 of LeRoy, Minnesota has endorsed Wayne Hammon Jr. for the office of Minnesota Department Vice Commander for the 2018 – 2019 membership year.

Wayne is eligible for membership in The American Legion through his service in the US Army in Vietnam during 1969 – 1970 and is a dual SAL and American Legion member.

He has held several posts including command-
er for 18 years and is cur-
rently the adjutant.

On the district level he has held Membership Director, County Commander, Vice Commander, SAL Advisor and Commander.

He is currently the First District Adjutant. He is cur-
rently on the Board of Directors for the Minnesota American Legion Foundation.

He is a member of the 40 & 8 Votive 327 of Rochester and DAV Chapter 27 of Austin where he serves as Junior Vice Commander.

He is also Finance Officer for the Mower County Veterans Council, and a member of ANAVI-
CUS and NALPA.

He has been married to his wife Sharon for 42 years. They have three chil-
dren, three grandchildren and one great granddaughter, all members of the American Legion Family.

Wayne Hammon Jr.

2018 National Commander’s Tour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bayport</td>
<td>8 a.m. breakfast</td>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>651-439-5463, Judy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spicer</td>
<td>noon lunch</td>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>320-894-9402, Tammy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fulda</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>507-329-0500, Jim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windom*</td>
<td>8 a.m. breakfast</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>507-830-1440, Fred</td>
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<tr>
<td>Litchfield</td>
<td>noon lunch</td>
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<td>320-693-2350, Deb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Crystal</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>507-726-6050, Carla</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(call between 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. M-F)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waseca</td>
<td>8 a.m. breakfast</td>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td><a href="mailto:commanderpost228@gmail.com">commanderpost228@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayzata#</td>
<td>noon lunch</td>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>763-479-6405, Carol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osseo</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>763-425-4858, Michelle</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“*The Windom breakfast will be at Jack Slade’s Steakhouse.

#Deadline for Wayzata lunch RSVP is Jan. 25.

A social hour for all dinners begins at 5 p.m.

2018 Tour

Spicer  Wayzata#  Osseo

Fulda  Windom  Litchfield

Lake Crystal  Waseca

Legion supports efforts on homelessness

The American Legion submitted a statement for the record to the House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittees on Health and Economic Opportunity following a joint hearing on Jan. 18 to learn what efforts that U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Labor (DoL) officials are taking to reduce veteran homelessness.

The hearing featured testimonies from leading represen-
tatives of local nonprofits including the Tristate Veterans Community Alliance, Eastseas, Inc., U.S. VETS, The Opportunity Center and the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. Federal officials discussed various programs, from housing and health care to job placement assis-
tance, that their departments provide for homeless and at-risk veterans.

“This is a subject that is heart-breaking,” Economic Opportunity Subcommittee Chairman Jodey Arrington said. “When you look at the statistics on homelessness on the underlying issues that our veterans struggle with, many and maybe mostly on account of the burden that they bore for us and for our country and for our freedom, it’s just gut-wrenching. There’s not an issue that I don’t believe is more important than to find ways to help and serve this segment of the veteran population.”

To fully implement the VA’s pledge to eradicate veterans homelessness, The American Legion believes that Congress must continue making responsible investments in afford-
able housing and programs that move veterans and their families off the streets and into stable housing.

VA and HUD reported there were more than 40,000 homeless veterans on a single night in January 2017. The VA has since taken decisive action toward its goal of ending veteran homelessness by developing a plan to assist every individual willing to accept services; retain or acquire safe housing; provide needed treatment services; give employ-
ment opportunities; and provide benefits assistance.

Thomas Lynch, Veterans Health Administration’s health deputy undersecretary for clinical operations, said in his written testimony that the VA and its partners “have developed systematic protocols for ending veteran homelessness. (Those protocols) include the identification of all veterans experiencing homelessness, the ability to provide shelter immediately and the capacity to help veterans swiftly move into permanent housing.”

When it comes to addressing mental health concerns and substance use disorders, Lynch said the VA continues to integrate resources in the homeless program, with an emphasis on evidence-based treatment and suicide preven-
tion. Efforts in support of this include mandatory suicide prevention training.

Vets home will get fixed dental clinic

Continued from Page 1

facilities including limited procedures, the cost of setting up and tearing down, adequate space, durability of equipment and infection control.

The dental clinic in Minneapolis will serve veterans in a setting they are comfortable in, with better equipment and a dental staff that has experience dealing with the needs of a veterans population.

The clinic will not only serve the residents at the Minneapolis home, but also residents at the Hastings home. It will also serve veterans who are referred through the fed-
eral VA hospital system.

The MDVA is considering similar projects for the veter-
ans homes at Silver Bay, Fergus Falls and Luverne.

The facility at Minneapolis has been under consideration for some time, and the Delta Dental commitment got the ball rolling.

The Minneapolis home dates back to the 19th century and was the home of Civil War veterans at one time.

Veteran Disability Evaluations (not affiliated with the VA)

Depression, Anxiety, Trauma, TBI

FREE Total Disability Screening

Kenneth L. Dennis, Ph.D.

Ken.Dennis@June.com • 800-595-4053
I will start this month’s column by going down memory lane a bit and revising things I’ve mentioned before. They were important then and I believe they are worthy of men- tion yet once more.

I must start with my theme for this year, “learn, mentor, and prepare.” We must list what our past post successes were, and the things that didn’t work so well, then pass those good things on to our members, and non-members for a few more possibilities for the future. It’s those non-mem- bers that will be able to be the future of your post, please don’t just abandon them, never to be seen at a post meeting again. Mentor them for a year or until they are comfortable in the office. You’ll get better leadership in the bargain I do believe.

If you’ll give your best effort to learn and mentor, then you can be pretty well prepared for a bright future for your Legion post.

Mail Call

Sentence cut off

To the Editor:

I enjoy reading the Legionnaire newspaper very much. This month’s story about “A Tale of Two Wars,” was really good. I really enjoyed it.

But the end wasn’t there. I know you run out of space sometimes. It’s happened before. But it’s kind of hard not to know how the story ends.

But anyhow, thanks for the good reading. I feel really sorry for those who were in prison camps. My great aunt, who was a mission teacher, was in a Japanese prisoner camp in the Philippines. I also feel really sorry for the poor men and women who didn’t come home. My dad’s brother was killed in the war. My other mother’s cousin was killed with the Lassen in 1942. There were nine relatives in dad’s family who were in the service. My mother’s cousin was killed with the 7th Infantry in the Philippines. I also feel really sorry for the poor men and women who didn’t come home. My dad’s brother was killed in the war. My other mother’s cousin was killed with the Lassen in 1942.

I am a Legion member too.

Glen Dietz

Granite Falls

Editor’s note: The letter writer is correct that the last sentence of the story on Art Gruenberg in the December issue was cut off. Gruenberg was explaining why he carried the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart by the commendation general of the Army Service Forces. A special citation was given to him on account of his valor and because he had never before given and never to be awarded again, was authorized by the Congress and awarded by the President in 1961.

In February 1951, the Chapel of the Four Chaplains, an interfaith memorial chapel, was dedicated in Philadelphia.

Time to recruit

To the Editor:

Recruiting candidates from your local high schools can certainly begin for the 70th American Legion Minnesota Boys State program which will convene in June at St. John’s campus in Collegeville.

Listening to speakers, campaigning, making educated decisions about voting, and serving as elected and appoint- ed officers of city, county, and state governments are some of the activities in which these young men are involved.

Director Thomas Nelson and his staff are working to increase enrollment and appreciate your help in this process.

Boys that are currently juniors in high school can visit www.mnboysstate.com for more information.

Kellie Kruse

Spring Lake Park

Chaplain’s Corner

By Ralph Schneekloth

We are already to February, which the first Sunday is Four Chaplains Day. I was reminded of the story as I was looking through the files and the book I have about Chaplains in every branch of the military.

“Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?”

Malachi 2:10

I believe this is one of the best questions a veteran can ask about the service of another. It is best when you express it to them personally.

There were 40 men in the lifeboat in which the four chaplains and a Navy corpsman were assigned. They were to be rescued, but the ship was awash and lasted for 8 hours. Without the gloves, they would have never made it. Two out of 40 in that lifeboat survived. “Memorial to the Four Chaplains.”

“Valor is a gift,” Carl Sandburg once said. “Those hav- ing it never know for sure whether they have it until the test comes. Those who have had it pass its life’s ultimate test, and in doing so became an enduring example of extraordinary faith, courage, and selflessness.”

On 19 December, 1944, the story of these four chaplains was given the posthumous awards of the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart by the command general of the Army Service Forces. A special citation was given them on account of their valor and because they had never before given and never to be awarded again, was authorized by the Congress and awarded by the President in 1961.

In February 1951, the Chapel of the Four Chaplains, an interfaith memorial chapel, was dedicated in Philadelphia.

The opening was presided over by Reverend Daniel Poling, chaplain Poling’s father with President Truman in atten- dance. It is published monthly by The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, Room 300A, 20 West 12th Street, St. Paul, MN, and at additional mailing offices. The Legionnaire is a member of the National American Legion Press Association.

Second, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Here’s a couple of lessons to be learned:

First, Microsoft does not come into your computer and blank your files with a message. This is true only of banks, Pay Pal, and other legitimate companies. If any- body ever asks for remote access to your computer, tell them no.

Second, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Scammers can get the names of relatives, and make the messages sound like they came from them. But don’t count on spending that $100,000.

Older people in particular are being targeted by scam- mers. Just say no.

Scammers abound

There are people in the world who would like to separate you from your money, and the computer and other electron- ic devices are their best tools.

Two recent incidents that hit close to home illustrate a couple of these scams, and how easy it is to be misled.

The first incident happened on a home computer, where the user was searching the internet. All of a sudden, bang, there was a message across the whole screen warning of a virus in the computer. The message purportedly came from the user was searching the internet. All of a sudden, bang, there was a computer virus in the computer. The message purportedly came from the anti-virus program, the user was searching the internet.

The second incident was a phone call. The user was asked for remote access to the computer, and the user allowed it. BIG mistake. Luckily, the computer was using had no finan- cial information or personal information in it. The caller asked for access to other devices in the house, saying that they too were probably infected. But by this time, the user realized he was a victim, and hung up.

A second scam involved a woman getting a message through Facebook from her cousin saying she had won $100,000 and had noticed that the woman’s name was also used in a scam. The message purportedly came from the woman’s cousin saying she had won $100,000 and had noticed that the woman’s name was also used in a scam. The message purportedly came from the National Guard for four years. Two other cousins were in the Army and one of my nephews was in the Navy. My mother’s cousin was killed with the 7th Infantry in the Philippines. I also feel really sorry for the poor men and women who didn’t come home. My dad’s brother was killed in the war. My other mother’s cousin was killed with the Lassen in 1942. There were nine relatives in dad’s family who were in the service. My mother’s cousin was killed with the Lassen in 1942.

I am proud to be a Legion member too.

Glen Dietz

February 2018
The American Veterans Traveling Vietnam Wall will be in Austin, May 17-20. It’s an 80 percent scale model of the Washington D.C. Wall. The wall will be at the Mower County Fairgrounds.

New Prague Fest
A Music Fest fundraiser for the New Prague Area Veterans Memorial will be held Saturday, Feb. 10, at the New Prague American Legion Park Ballroom. The first band will be at 1 p.m. and the last band at 9.

Cost is $10 at the door and $12 at the door. There will be door prizes and a silent auction. Food will be available after 4 p.m. Kids, 12 and under, are free. Contact Mark Dvorak for more info or to purchase tickets, 952-873-6598.

Antique Sale, Flea Market
North St. Paul Post 39 will have an antique sale and flea market on Saturday, Feb. 17. There will also be a free-admission bake sale. For more information, call Betty at 651-777-5552. All proceeds go to Auxiliary programs.

Redwood Falls Guard
The Redwood Falls National Guard unit will have a Centennial Party on Saturday, Feb. 24, at the National Guard Armory. It will begin at 5 p.m. with a social hour with dinner at 6 followed by live music. Cost is $15 per person. For information, call Jim Mertens, 507-430-2261.

Drop in clinic
MACV will hold a drop in clinic in legal clinic at the Anoka County Government Center on Thursday, March 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sampson, John, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 17, 2018. He was Ninth District Commander from 2009-10. He was a past post commander of Thief River Falls Post 157, and served on the honor guard.

Spidel, Helen Eugene, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 9, 2018. He served as a navigator in the South Pacific. He was a member of the American Legion in calling for the VA to study the effects of medical cannabis on veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder or chronic pain.

Fischer, James F., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 30, 2017. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Lindgren, John, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 4, 2018. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Doran, Donald Norman, 85, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 20, 2017. He served on the USS Anzio. He was a member of Clear Lake Post 354.

Skorheim, Harvey, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 16, 2017. He was a member of Claremont Post 422.

Minnette, Arnold, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 30, 2017. He was a member of Paynesville Post 271.

Jelinski, Leonard, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 1, 2018. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Karnowski, James, 87, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 1, 2018. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Chell, Marvin D., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 7, 2018. He served in the South Pacific on the USS Valcan. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

Peterson, Dennis Theodore, 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 24, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Froehlich, John, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 4, 2018. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Lamberty, Frank M., 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 20, 2017. He was a member of Barrett Post 351.

Braun, Donald, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 18, 2017. He was a Seabee stationed on Guam with the 103rd Naval Construction Battalion. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Bennett, Rodney “Munk,” 85, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 23, 2017. He served in the 1st Marine Division at the Pusan Perimeter and later at the Chosin Reservoir. He got frozen feet and had to be evacuated. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Mums, Robert D., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 30, 2017. He was a member of Amboy Post 276.

Nelson, Howard B., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 4, 2018. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Burrell, Earl, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 4, 2018. He served in the Americal Division in the South Pacific. He was in the 164th Infantry Regiment and served in the Philippines. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Nelson, Emery M., 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 11, 2018. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

Stiever, Robert, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 11, 2018. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Doran, Donald Norman, 85, Air Force and National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 11, 2018. He was a member of Waseca Legion Post 528.

Schutrop, Larry R., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 23, 2017. He served in Korea. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 80.

Chow, Karlyn, 70, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 4, 2017. She was a member of Chippewa County Government Center on Thursday, March 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sheffield, Patricia, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 18, 2017. She was a member of Clear Lake Post 354.

Macha, Larry, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 1, 2018. He served in Tunisia, Southern France and central Europe. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 115.

Kramer, Eugene Francie, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 3, 2018. He helped build Desert Rock on Nevada’s LittleGLOBALS, which was used for testing. He was a member of Hector Post 35.

Uren, Kenneth “Corky,” 88, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 18, 2017. He was a Seabee stationed on Guam with the 103rd Naval Construction Battalion. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

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Stiever, Robert, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 11, 2018. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Wright, Dale, 89, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 29, 2017. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Olson, Floyd B., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 21, 2017. He was the son of a cherry picker and was on the sharp-shooting team and honor guard. He was a member of the Roseau Post 24.

Wainwright, Oliver Alexander, 76, Air Force veteran of World War II, died Dec. 18, 2017. He flew 35 missions in Europe during the war. He was a member of Clear Lake Post 354.

Matcha, Larry, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 1, 2018. He served in Tunisia, Southern France and central Europe. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 115.

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By Al Zdon

Wartime occupation was the most important or the most lethal battle of World War II.

If you ask many Americans, you might be the Battle of the Bulge, the landing at Normandy, or some other deadly conflict. Yet historians ask a military historian, though, the answer would probably be the Battle of Stalingrad.

This titanic struggle between the German and Soviet armies not only was perhaps the costliest battle in the history of warfare, it was a major turning point in the war. It was a defeat of epic proportions for Hitler and the Nazi forces.

But the real measure of the scale of the battle, compare it to the Battle of the Bulge. The Allies had called in about one million troops and over a thousand tanks. Casualties for the Allies in the Bulge were about 95,000 and casualties for the Germans were 125,000.

This battle involved over 2 million men fought on both sides, and over 6,000 tanks were committed to the fighting. Estimates for the Soviet Union were 1.1 million and for Germany, 850,000.

Stalingrad was the subject at the January World War II History Roundtable at Fort Snelling, and the speaker was Jonathan House, who is a retired colonel of military intelligence and a history professor at the Minnesota State General Staff College, gave a detailed background of the battle.

Germany had invaded Russia in June, 1941, and had driven the Soviet Union before winter and the destruction of both capitals caused a standstill in the fighting.

“As by 1942, both sides were trying frantically to re- move the reserves, the Soviets were ready for the next round,” House said.

Hitler and the high command decided to put its major resources into Army Group South

But Germany’s goal was to reach the Soviet’s major oil fields in the Caucasus that year.

The Soviet Union was having a major problem, House said. They had supersized the Army occupation forces and bungled all its officers up into more important positions. This meant some growing pains.

Power was an important problem for Germany. The Red Army had trained millions of reservists, trained and waiting to be called up, while Germany had to turn to its allies — Romania, Italy, Hungary, Baluchistan, Mandschuria, and Hungary — to fill out its manpower needs.

Said one of these non-German troops have been accused of being un Honest, even disloyal, to their own fighters, but he said the main problem was lack of equipment. “They simply didn’t have enough equipment for themselves, how much do you think they were going to give to Romans?”

There were three campaigns early in the year, all German victories. The Germans won battles at Sevastopol and the Crimean peninsula, and a Soviet offensive near Kharkov ended in failure and the loss of thousands of troops.

House noted that the German Army was still able to do little with Stalingrad. Army Group South was divided into two with “A” heading south towards the oil fields in Chechnya and Azerbaijan and “B” protecting the German army’s left flank.

“Oil was Germany’s logistical weakness. If they could get to the oil fields in Chechnya and Azerbaijan, they would not only get the oil themselves, but they would deny the Soviets from that supply.”

The battle commenced on June 28, 1942, with the Germans encountering little resistance. “It was just like a back in 1941, with the Germans roaring over the Steppes. The trouble was, they weren’t taking prisoners like they had in 1941.”

Instead the Soviets had better strategy and were withdrawing smartly, knowing they would turn and face the Germans when the terrain got more mountainous.

There were two factors. One was the tyranny of distance. From Karkov to Grozny (in Chechnya) is about a thousand kilometers. Plus it’s some of the worst terrain imaginable.

Meanwhile the B forces pushed east towards the Don River, where they thought they could make a stand against any Soviet attack on the flank.

In the end the plan began to go wrong. “It was a case of many bridges too far. The Germans just didn’t have enough resources.

But the Soviets also made major mistakes, often taking the higher command. “It might make sense for an officer to take a stand and cut losses, but he might not be around at the end of the war to collect his pensions.”

By the end of July, the German B group had pushed the Soviets to the other side of the Don River and headed further east to Grozny. A group was pushing into the Caucasus but had to slow because of the length of its supply lines.

Somewhere along the way the German army had become a target. For the Germans, there could be great propaganda value in taking a city named after the Soviet leader. For the same reason, protecting the city meant keeping it for as long as possible.

The terrain got more mountainous, and face the Germans when they weren’t taking many prisoners like they had in the south. The trouble was, they weren’t taking many prisoners.

By November, the Germans had captured 90 percent of the city and split the Soviet forces into two small pockets, but the Red Army didn’t give up. They fought for both love of country and because of the brutal measures used to keep them fighting. One estimate says 14,000 Soviet soldiers were summarily executed for not fighting at Stalingrad.

Meanwhile, the Soviet soldiers began massing troops to the north and south of Stalingrad for a counteroffensive. “It was first in time in the war the Soviets took their time to get ready.”

On November 19, the Soviets launched Operation Uranus, attacking the German flanks on either side of Stalingrad. In the middle areas, the Germans had used Romanian units for defense.

By Nov. 23, the two Soviet attacks linked, and Stalingrad was surrounded. About 265,000 Axis troops were cut off.

Hitler was convinced by his air force that Stalingrad could be resupplied by air, and so he ordered the city be held. Hitler was pressured to resupply and so it seems he was not around at the end of the war to collect his pensions.

Meanwhile Group A in the south gave up its advance and began to retreat from the Caucasus.

The Germans in Stalingrad lost their airfields and the supply from above came to a halt. Their position shrank until they were pushed back to the banks of the Volga. They were split into two and then three pockets of resistance.

By the beginning of February, all three pockets surrendered. Only 91,000 German troops were still fighting and they had run out of food and ammunition.

“It was a case of Germany just trying to hold too much. Once they got involved in Stalingrad, it was just too much.”

It was the worst defeat at that time for a German Army and it signaled the slow, agonizing defeat of Germany in World War II.

The Battle of Stalingrad was brutal, pivotal.

Please join the Posts Below in SUPPORTING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The National Convention Corporation of Minnesota would like to thank the Posts below for sponsoring our convention and invite those that aren’t on the list to consider participating. Contributions to the convention will be directed towards the Minnesota Convention Corporation’s hosting responsibilities and other ways to make this the best convention yet.

Pots of Distinction ($5,000 or more)

Morton Dale Post 83

Ralph Dougherty Post 322

Rudolph Prideau Post 322

Pots of Distinction ($2,500 to $4,999)

American Legion Post 113

Austin Post 93

East Grand Forks Post 137

EKholm-Huldersen Post 137

Frederick W. Inge Post 68

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Frank Lingberg Post 282

Herbert P. W. Post 200

Hermel Post 438

John Bridges Post 15

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Supporting Posts (Less than $2,500)

Alameda Post 20

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Dorothy C. Cattor Post 485

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Gresham Post 254

Gopher Post 446

Grand Meadow Post 140

Gaut, T. Frisbee Post 283

Hackenburg Post 200

Haris Post 139

Happel Post 220

Garcia Vladick Post 441

Garey Post 69

Lindsay Post 294

McAllister Metz Post 448

Siler Star Post 428

Squier Post 545

St James Post 35

St Peter Post 8

Le Center Post 108

Truman Blakeley Post 432

Le-Osborn Post 99

Matson Lane Post 220

Molin Bear Lake Post 168

Myers, T. Post 9

Nichols Memorial Post 99

Moorhead Post 320

Woodbury Post 501

We ask that you post to give a check out to the National Convention Corporation of Minnesota and to MN American Legion State Headquarters; Third Floor, Veterans Service Building: 201 22st Street, Room 300A - St. Paul, MN 55100-2001.

Do you know a company that may financially support the 100th National Convention through sponsorship or advertising?

There are sponsorship and advertising opportunities for businesses. We want to thank the companies below for supporting through sponsorships. If you know of a company that may want to participate through a sponsorship or an advertisement in the Legionnaires, please contact Michael Davy at (612) 347-9690 or mdavy@mnlegion.org.
**Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**

By Jeremy Wolfsteller

**Feeling Used & Abused?**

As honorable as it is to protect and serve your country's freedom, it can come at high costs; sometimes leaving you feeling chewed up and spit out.

What’s funny is that a majority of us say we would do it again.

We all know the military is in the business of winning wars but what you don’t know till after service is how it translates to wear and tear on your body both mentally and physically over the years.

Unfortunately we’re seeing younger men and women taking an unexpected early retirement after their service because of mental health conditions, depression, and lack of motivation sets in.

For those who are granted disability compensation for service related injuries, it can be very uplifting knowing that it is the VA who you have that will allow you to maintain income for you and your family. But for those that have their claim denied, they’re left feeling betrayed. The Veterans Benefits Administration has seen claims magnified by growing complexity.

There has been a 200 percent increase over the last 10 years in original claims containing eight or more specific medical issues, or contentions. This means that the time it takes to develop and review a claim is much longer with greater chances of the VA making an error or incorrect decision adjudicating.

**On August 23, 2017 the President signed into law the VA’s Appeals Modernization Act.** This legislation در VA to streamline an appellate process to provide veterans with the earliest possible resolution of their claim.

Currently in what VA calls the Legacy Appeals (claims that have been pending at the Board of Veterans Appeals) can take multiple years for a decision. Approximately 80,000 appeals are pending more than 125 days. Since the signing of the aforementioned legislation the VA has rolled out a Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP). This is a temporary program for eligible veterans to voluntarily opt into.

This program will end Feb 2019 when VA plans to fully implement the Appeals Modernization Act. VA has begun to solicit or notify veterans of their option via mail. Currently VA is not notifying the veteran’s power of attorney i.e. (The American Legion) when they mail out VA correspondence or notification of this RAMP program to their claimants. I’d recommend you receive a letter from the VA about RAMP to contact your representative to make sure RAMP is best for you.

Transitioning service members need a sense of hope filled with new goals and ambitions after the service, sometimes this new found motivation comes from knowing that you’re being taken care of by the VA.

Quality and timely healthcare and disability compensation for your sacrifices can sometimes be the moral boost you need to set new goals for the future.

**American Legion Riders**

By Chuck Stone

Department Director

Greetings American Legion Family,

Our National Commander, Denise Rohan, will be making a few stops Minnesota soon. I challenge all Riders to make it to one of the many posts visits on the schedule. Please wear your vest, enjoy a bite to eat and take in Commander Denise’s message.

I see there are a number of events sponsored by Riders coming up this Spring and Summer. We have a couple of great events like ice fishing, Veterans home visits, spaghetti feeds just to name a few.

If you haven’t heard, Legionville is in need of a few volunteers. There is grounds work to be done along with the notorious bog that moved in and took over the beach front. I have been told that the very day ice off occurs will the day moving the bog will take place. To borrow a command from the Navy, there will be a “All hands on deck” call sent out. Boats, rope and most important willing folks like yourself are needed to make this operation a success. Standby for further details or keep an eye on Adjunt Randy Tesdahl’s Facebook for up to the minute news on the bog.

I apologize for this being short as I am dealing with a family medical emergency. Thank you one and all for your prayers and well wishes. God Bless one and all.

**February 2018 Minnesota Legonnaire**

Page 7
Richard Donaldson was born in 1923. His family lived a couple of miles outside of Tracy, a booming agricultural community in southwestern Minnesota, on land that Donaldson’s grandfathers had settled after the Civil War. “People always ask me if I’ve lived in Tracy all my life, and I tell them, ‘not yet.’” Both of Donaldson’s grandfathers fought in the Civil War. They were allowed to homestead 160 acres of land, and they took the government up on the offer. They also obtained 160 additional acres by agreeing to plant trees on the second parcel. “There were no trees in those days except along the river beds. The prairie fires would take them all.”

Donaldson said farmers in the 1800s generally planted trees on the east and west sides of the farm house, leaving the southern exposure exposed. “It’s probably where the old saying came from, ‘There’s nothing colder than the north end of a south wind.’”

That winter in 1943 was one of the coldest on record. Donaldson stayed at Carlton, but was finally allowed to go active in February of 1943 — actually only a month later than his friend. He reported to the old Federal Building in Minneapolis and was put aboard a train for Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. “That winter in 1943 was one of the coldest on record. ‘We lived in a 16-by-16 foot hut with no windows, but it had these two-by-eight panels on each side, and the army made us keep two of them open every night. We’d wear our clothes and our overcoats to bed, and still freeze all night. There was a stove in the middle of the room, and a water bucket next to it for safety reasons. Every morning, the water in the pail would be frozen. ’

In my platoon of 50 guys, two guys died from pneumo-

Dick Donaldson flew 35 missions over Japan in World War II in the B-29 Superfortress, one of the most lethal weapons the U.S. developed in the war. His last mission was flown just days before the atomic bomb was dropped.
The Army still wasn’t ready to train that many pilots, and so many of the recruits were sent to colleges around the country to continue their educations.

“I was sent to Washington University in St. Louis. They gathered 700 of us in the chapel to tell us the rules. But no one could hear a thing because everybody was coughing from being at Jefferson Barracks. We called it the ‘JB hack.’”

After five months at the university, the next stop was the West Coast for pilot training. Donaldson said there were 60,000 waiting at Santa Ana to be trained as pilots, navigators or bombardiers. The soldiers all took tests to see which direction they would go.

“I was on our unit’s basketball team. The day of the championship, I had three wisdom teeth pulled, but I still played with those holes in my mouth. We won the base title.”

One of the classes was aircraft recognition. “They would turn out the lights and flash profiles of aircraft on the screen for like a tenth of a second. The trouble was that in a dark room, everyone got sleepy. So every now and then they’d flash a picture of a naked woman. That helped keep everyone awake.”

Donaldson did primary training in King City, California, on the PT-22 trainer made by Ryan.

“It was a civilian flying school, which was pretty nice. All the trainers were civilians, and the food was exception-ally good.

“Trainees usually got $75 a month, but we would get paid $225. Then we’d have to go down the line and pay for our food, our lodging and everything else. By the end of the line, we had $75 left.”

At Chico for basic training, the instruction continued on the BT-13, known among the cadets across America as the “Vultee Vibrator.”

“The reason they called it that was when you brought the airplane to stall speed, like when you wanted to land, it would start to vibrate a lot. It was a dangerous airplane to fly.”

At about this time, the trainees were introduced to night flying. During one of the exercises, Donaldson said, one of the new pilots called in on his radio, “I need help, I’m all f——-d up.”

Donaldson said swearing was never allowed on the radio. “The tower called back, ‘What is your name and number?’ And the trainee called back, ‘I may be f——-d up, but I’m not that f——-d up.’”

The pilots practiced night landings and were helped by their own landing lights plus flood lights, and the lights along the runway. “And then they made us turn off our lights and they got rid of the flood lights. They only way you could tell where the ground was, was by the spacing in the runway lights. That was a scary time.”

On one night flight, the trainees were flying by a huge ammunition building that had lights all the way down, similar to runway lights. “One of the guys decided that was the airfield and started to land on the building. Luckily, we had an instructor along on the mission, and he talked the guy out of it. That would have been a pretty good explosion.”

Along the way, did he ever feel like he might wash out of the program? Donaldson shrugged his shoulders. “You never knew where you stood. They held that washing out over your head for disciplinary reasons. Anyway, I made it. I always thought I was a competent pilot.”

Advanced training was at Stockton. “I wanted to either fly the P-38 or the A-20 attack bomber, but they told me that the United States was no longer in a defensive war, but we were in an offensive war. They didn’t want fighter pilots anymore. They wanted bomber pilots.”

At Stockton, he flew the UC-78 Bobcat, a two-engined plane whose cockpit looked like a 1935 Chevrolet car.

Donaldson survived all the training, and was presented his wings on May 23, 1944. His parents came to see the ceremony, and by chance it was filmed for the movie “Winged Victory.” Donaldson says he still sees the movie, and his graduation, on television.

Donaldson moved on to B-24 school at Kirtland Field in New Mexico. The B-24 Liberator is a very large four-engined bomber. And then it was on to B-29 school at Great Bend, Kansas. He was assigned to the 19th Bomb Group, 314th Wing.

He did miss not being able to fly the fighters. “Being a bomber pilot is like being a truck driver. Just keep it steady and level. Know what you’re doing. It’s more of a head game than a skill game.”

By this time, the end of 1944, the B-29s were finally coming on line after years of planning, design and testing. Just for comparison, the B-24 was 67 feet long, had a wingspan of 110 feet, and could carry 5,000 pounds of bombs on a long-range mission.

The B-29 was 99 feet long, had a wingspan of 141 feet, and could carry 12,000 pounds of bombs over 1,600 miles to the target.

The Superfortress also had the first completely pressurized cabin, advanced landing gear, and computerized firing systems for its machine guns.

The 11-man team that would work the big airplane was a veteran crew from all over the United States. The ship was flown by what was called an air commander, and...
Donaldson was the pilot, who was actually the co-pilot. “You had to have over 1,000 hours of flying missions or being a flight instructor to be an air commander.”

The new plane didn’t get a pretty pin-up girl painted on the nose. “The bomb group commander was a Christian and he was against all that pin-up girl stuff on our planes, so we were all told to name them after cities. We became the City of Austin, because our pilot was from Texas.”

One day, it just didn’t work. The City of Austin took off, and after 2 hours she found herself in a cloud bank. They were shot on the spot when they had to bail out of planes. “We couldn’t do anything about it. It was just a fact of war.”

The B-29 had 7,600 gallon gas tank, and the pilots learned techniques on how to save gas during the 15-hour flights.

The skipper of the City of Austin was a good pilot who could manage the gas use to perfection. Donaldson’s plane was the first to fly from Guam with a full load of 40 500-pound bombs.

Early on, the B-29 engines were a problem, and many B-29s were lost while taking off because of the engine trouble getting back to the last few cylinders and they would overheat and cause the engine to catch fire.

“Then we saw that two Japanese fishing boats were approaching the raft. We didn’t want them to get there before the submarine came to pick us up. We dropped them a life raft, and began circling over them.”

B-29 crews were not considered prisoners of war by the Japanese, but were designated as war criminals. Many B-29s were shot down.

One postscript to the war was that the City of Austin finally came through. “All the planes in the 314th Bomb Group were named after cities, and we all wrote to our cities. Denver sent the crew of the City of Denver a week’s paid vacation. Milwaukee sent her crew cases of beer. Austin sent us a letter saying, ‘Keep up the good work.’”

Returning to Tracy, he worked in the special education department at the high school for 10 years and his wife worked in the school library. And, for 20 years, he covered the sports beat for the Tracy Headlight-Herald.

Donaldson is thinking about golf again this summer. He and the other veterans met then joined the Peace Corps for four years, serving in Barbados and Jamaica. Donaldson taught the basics of running a business.

Donaldson said it was remarkable how his service coincided with the war. He tried to join after Pearl Harbor Day. After two years of training, he flew from February to August 1945. He completed 35 missions and headed home just as the war ended.
The Minnesota American Legion

1919 to 1924

The young men and women in the military were proud of their service and they wanted to continue to serve, to maintain their fellowship and to help and protect their fellow veterans and their families. Nationally, a caucus was held in Paris and then in St. Louis to organize this new veterans group, but in Minnesota the returning veterans just got busy organizing themselves. Across the state, soldiers and sailors’ clubs, veterans clubs, buddy clubs and others were springing up.

During the spring, minis-band service clubs started efforts to become part of the national group, which was now called “The American Legion.”

The first state convention was held in St. Paul in early September, and Col. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who had first organized The American Legion in Paris, was the featured speaker.

Wave after wave of applause roared through the St. Paul Auditorium as Roosevelt spoke, and he concluded with a phrase that John F. Kennedy would echo 50 years later: “Before the war, we asked, ‘What does the country owe me?’ Now we ask, ‘What do we owe our country?’”

Delegates were asked to work and to name the first name of the statewide organization: The Minnesota Branch of the American Legion.

Harrison Fuller was elected the first state commander. Membership at this point was about 10,000 spread over 159 posts.

The state Legions worked hard to get ready for the first national convention, to be held around Armistice Day in the Minneapolis Auditorium.

As the convention convened Nov. 10, a blizzard blew through western Minnesota. The Twin Cities, temps were in the teens and 20s. Nationally, by this time, there were 684,000 members. About 35,000 of those were from Minnesota. The Twin Cities’ cold was mild compared to the cold Minnesota veterans were enduring.

The first national parade had 15,000 marchers, and proceeded south on Nicollet Avenue. There were 11 Legion bands, and President David Wister of St. Paul led his Wisted Band which was the first post band organized in the Legion. The Wisted Band was later named the official national American Legion band.

Many things were accomplished at the convention including the establishment of the Auxiliary, but what Minnesota delegates were hoping for—declaring Minnesota as the permanent headquarters of the Legion—did not pass.

The weather, no doubt, played a part. The year concluded with a meeting of women in St. Paul to make plans for a Minnesota Auxiliary.

1920 was a year of settling in and getting busy. The number of posts rose to 470 and Department dues were raised to $25.50 per member.

The biggest development of the year was the emergence of trees along highways as part of a conservation program.

The Minnesota Legion continued to push for a new tuberculosis hospital, but the federal government finally announced final plans for the new hospital at St. Cloud which would treat veterans suffering from shell shock and other brain disorders.

In Minneapolis Post 8 got its temporary charter on May 7, 1919, the first in the state. By August 439 posts had been organized across the state.

By the end of May, a fledgling statewide Legion had been formed, and a secretary was hired. Within weeks, over 30 temporary charters had been applied for, and within two months, hundreds of applications were flooding the state and national headquarters.

On Sept. 23rd, the Hennepin County Legionnaire changed its name to the American Legionnaire. The county still ran the newspaper.

In September, 1922, the Hennepin County Legionnaire changed its name to the American Legionnaire.

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In 1923, the Legion pushed for a new tuberculosis hospital and a new neuro-psychiatry hospital in the state. The federal government soon announced final plans for the new hospital at St. Cloud which would treat veterans suffering from shell shock and other brain disorders.

“Before the war, we asked, ‘What does the country owe me?’ Now we ask, ‘What do we owe our country?’”

The featured speaker for the event was National Commander F.W. Galbraith, but just after leaving the podium he was shot and killed. His spot was taken by Hanford McNider of Iowa, who would later become a National Commander.

The parade went down Summit Avenue with over 50,000 marchers involved. Aerial combat displays using Great War aviation aircraft delighted the crowds.

Big Island veterans camps announced that they would now accept all veterans and not just disabled veterans. A spokesman for Big Island said, “No policing or peeling of spuds will be expected from the guests.” They were expected to make their own beds each day, however.

An exhibition of radio technicians at the offices of the St. Paul Legion posted injured two Legiamaries at a meeting. If that wasn’t bad enough, the next day the building caught fire and burned to the ground.

The race for Department Commander attracted three heavyweights. Luther Youngdahl, who would later become Minnesota governor, Jay C. Hormel of the meatpacking giant in Austin, and Ludwig Roe, one of the state’s most well known newspaper editors, faced off and Roe was elected.

Disabled veterans, probably suffering from tuberculosis from being exposed to gas during the war, made poppies at a Minnesota sanitarium in 1924. The Legion employed dozens of veterans in poppy workshops.

A new Veterans Bureau hospital was planned for the region, and St. Cloud won out over Robbinsdale, Brainerd, Watertown, S.D., and Fargo.

In September, 1923, the Minneapolis Post 1, replaced him.

Across the state in 1924, Legionnaires planted thousands of trees along highways as part of a conservation program.

The first state Legion bowling tourney was held in April. Big Marine and Big Island veterans camps announced that they would now accept all veterans and not just disabled veterans.

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Legionnaires heavily involved in getting it going were: Blanche Scallen, who was named secretary of the Auxiliary and their office was moved to Minneapolis.

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The first “Poppy Days” was established by the Auxiliary and the Legion and over 100,000 were sold bringing in $13,000 for Legion programs.

Big Island was donated for veterans use, and the Minnesota Legion was heavily involved in getting it going along with other civic groups.

A big dance was held at one session, and local women were booked to the island to be dance partners for the 200 disabled veterans enjoying a vacation.

A new Veterans Bureau hospital was planned for the St. Cloud, which would treat veterans suffering from shell shock and other brain disorders.

Nationally, a caucus was held in Paris and then in St. Louis to organize this new veterans group, but in Minnesota the returning veterans just got busy organizing themselves. Across the state, soldiers and sailors’ clubs, veterans clubs, buddy clubs and others were springing up.

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1924 brought the National Convention back to Minneapolis with over 100,000 visitors expected in St. Paul.

The parade went down Summit Avenue with over 50,000 marchers involved. Aerial combat displays using Great War aircraft entertained the spectators.

Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, the commissioner of baseball, addressed the convention. Reporters later asked him about the shocking new style of women bobbing their hair. “It’s okay if it’s becoming to her,” he answered adroitly.

Blanche Scallen was elected president of the National Auxiliary, Secretaries, and the poppy was chosen as an American Legion symbol at the convention. Lennard Bolles, who grew up in Minneapolis, resigned as National Adjutant and RussellCVEstoon, who was a member of Minneapolis Post 1, replaced him.

Across the state in 1924, Legionnaires planted thousands of trees along highways as part of a conservation program.

St. Paul’s Joyce Kilmer Post led an effort to clean up Big Marine camp, and also built four tennis courts there.

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1925-1929

The Minnesota Legion continued to push for a new tuberculosis hospital, but the federal government finally announced in 1925 that it was instead going to build a general hospital. The new facility would cost $1.2 million, have

The first 20 years

The early history of the Minnesota American Legion

Continued on from Page 1

across America as just over two million came back to their families and friends with their $60 discharge pay in their pockets.
In 1928, the Legion began a new sign program where local posts could buy by signs that said “Protect Our Children.” The signs could be posted around town and near schools. The Department Commander offered a $5 gold piece for a good motto for Minnesota, but a winner was never picked.

In 1929, the stock market crashed, but the next issue of the Legionnaire after the crash stated, “Gopher Gang full of pep at Banquet.”

In 1930-34, 18 in St. Paul added a new member. Jimmie Johnson, the national amateur golf champion. The state convention, held in Crookston, included a train ride to Winnipeg. Over 1,000 delegates took the trip and marched down the city’s main street and placed a wreath to the war dead.

In 1931, Ed Lindell, past commander and adjutant for the prior six years, resigned to go to work for the Rand Corporation, working for Rufus Rand, also a past commander. Lindell made one last air trip around the state to collect memberships.

In 1932, as the Great Depression settled in over America, the Minnesota Legion formed an unemployment committee, including the grandsons of Jay C. Hormel, William Hamm of brewery fame, Totton Heffelfinger, who later built Hazeltine Golf Course, and John Ordway, the Minnesota Legion’s conservation director.

The Legion urged all towns to form school safety patrols.

In 1933, The Great Depression continued in Illinois, but no concrete plans were made.

In 1934, the Minnesota American Legion Foundation was established. The construction of the state capital in St. Paul was underway. The ski state of Minnesota with 600 miles of groomed trails.

In 1935, The American Legion continued to lobby Congress to pay the World War bonus, which was due in 1945. Nay. Paying the bonus would cost the government $3.4 billion, and President Roosevelt opposed it. The Legion considered building a $10,000 permanent building at the fairgrounds.

In 1936, more than 1,000 veterans in Minnesota had tuberculosis, known at that time as the “white death.” Most cases were attributed to being gassed during the war.

In 1937, the Legion’s Conservation Committee urged the community to fight for veterans, build their communities, and preserve the land. The Legion considered building a $10,000 permanent building at the fairgrounds.

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Las Shaunce
Commander

Our Midwinter Conference is history. We had a very good turn out in spite of the miserable weather. We were all together in the morning in a joint session. We split up in the afternoon to have a separate business. After lunch we had our District Oratorical Contest. January 20th, was the 1st and 3rd District Fishing Contest at South Montgomery Post 79. Not a very big turn out but had fun of lots and lots of prizes were given out. Thanks for a good meal and a wonderful time.

February 3rd, is the Department Sweetheart Rally at North St Paul Post 39. Please plan to attend and bring plenty of memberships. Don’t forget that something for your sweetheart. Post 39 is always a great host.

February 3rd, is also our Four Chaplains Day. I hope everyone will remember their sacrifice with some type of memorial program. Remember to fly the flag at half-mast.

Paul Post 39. Bring in your renewals & new memberships. Let’s make this year the year that every soldier serving now become a member, so that we can in the year when membership counts for at the critical time of the year when membership counts for goal. Let’s work with our current members and retain our existing members. Consolidated Post Reports – last year every post in the District submitted a CPR, let’s do the same thing again this year. If you need help please reach out to your District Vice Commanders for help or Michelle, they are available to work with you on membership. Congratulations to St Paul Post 8 for making goal – 129%, we have several posts that are within four memberships of meeting goal. Let’s work with these posts to get them on board and help them to reach their goal.

To the members of the 4th and 5th District who walked in the Winter Carnival Parade – thank you. There is no RCCC meeting in February, the next RCCC will be March 16th at Archdale Phalen – special guest speaker, Jeremy Wolfsteller, the Department Service Officer.

Randy Olson
Commander

With our Mid-Winter Conference in the minutes, I would like to begin our thoughts for the turnout we had. Bucyrus Post 165 American Legion, SAL Squadron, and Auxiliary did an outstanding job.

Let me encourage you to take a little different approach to membership. First of all, everyone, yes everyone, ask the people we meet to join us in supporting our veterans both serving now and those that have served in the past. Just think of what you can do by joining the American Legion Family.

If you know or even if you don’t know, they are a veteran. For a member of a veteran ask them if they would like to honor them by joining our family. Remember most reply, “I’ve never been asked” or “I didn’t know I would like to honor them by joining our family. Remember every little count.

Keep talking up memberships for the Legion. Every member gets the Legion Americanism package. We are within four memberships of meeting goal. Let’s work with you on membership. Congratulations to St Paul Post 8 for making goal – 129%, we have several posts that are within four memberships of meeting goal. Let’s work with these posts to get them on board and help them to reach their goal.

Les Shaunce
Commander

The National Commander’s visit is February 6-8, 2018. There will be several locations at nine Minnesota Legion posts in the southern region that National Commander Dennis Johnson will be visiting. Please see the schedule in this Legionnaire newspaper.

The Centennial Convention 100th Anniversary is being hosted at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The convention begins on Friday August 24 through Thursday August 30, 2018. The National Parade is on Sunday afternoon August 26, 2018. March with your American flags in the parade, and receive a special banner for your flags. Posts, ask your local bands to participate. Applications for high school bands are accepted after January 1, 2018. Charitable gambling can be used to offset the cost of sending the bands.

The Sweetheart Membership Rally is on Saturday February 3, 2018 at North St Paul Post 39. This will be a great event and remember to turn in memberships. We are at the mid-winter season and membership year counts for at the critical time of the year when membership counts for goal.

Through our American Legion Family Memberships is what makes our programs strong and involves many of our members. To mention some Scholarship programs, American Legion Baseball, Boys State, Girls State, SAL and Auxiliary programs.

Lane Stunkel
Commander

The days are finally getting longer, more daylight, but we still have the cold and snow to deal with for 3 more months.

As of Bulletin 29, the 4th District membership is at 84.09%, we are only 4 percentage points behind the 6th District, last month the percentage was 84.05%. As we get smaller, let’s keep the pressure on, next month 3 points behind. Please reach out to your Vice Commanders and Members and ask your vice director. Mickey, they are available to work with you on membership. Congratulations to St Paul Post 8 for making goal – 129%, we have several posts that are within four memberships of meeting goal. Let’s work with these posts to get them on board and help them to reach their goal.

Donovan Goblish
Commander

February is here and time seems to be flying. District and Post meetings are in process. Try to attend the meetings if you can. The flu bug is upon us. Do you get your flu shots? They will make the flu easier to overcome. Keep sending you memberships in. The 8th is doing well. Keep up the good work. District and Post nominations are coming up. It’s time to get the nomination committee going for the next year. The Department convention is in March in Rochester. Try to come and participate in the area Legion post in Rochester. The National Legion convention is in MPLS at the Minneapolis auditorium; stay tuned for dates that need help. Keep talking up memberships for the Legion. Every member adds to the strength of our mission in the eyes of the public and the U.S. Congress.

Eugene Leifeld
Commander

February 3rd is the Department Sweetheart Rally at North Saint Paul Post 39. Bring in your renewals & new memberships. Let’s make this year the year that every soldier serving now become a member, so that we can in the year when membership counts for goal. Let’s work with these posts to get them on board and help them to reach their goal.

Ken Johnstone
Commander

January brought us a new year and I continue to wish everyone a happy and fruitful year. It also brings us into a busy period, mid-winter conferences, the Sweetheart Rally, and our starting to plan for the district conventions. My calendar for February is filling up fast, here are just a few highlights:

Dependent Day meeting with everybody at the Sweetheart Rally in St Paul on February 3rd.

February also brings us Presidents Day, Lent Fish Fry events, Valentine’s Day and yes, the Super Bowl.

Now to get down to the business of membership. The Sixth District is working hard to achieve the goal of 90 percent, set by Department, by the end of the Sweetheart Rally and our starting to plan for the district conventions. My calendar for February is filling up fast, here are just a few highlights:

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Hello American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

My hope is that all your New Year’s resolutions are still in play. This year with finally making and getting settled in, I did not make any resolutions.

Again my hope would be for you all to get out and invite your neighbors, friends, family and strangers (if you haven’t met yet) to join our American Legion Family.

Membership Mary and I have attended Midwinter’s in the 1st, 4th, 10th and 2nd so far in January. We have the 3rd, the Winter Carnival Parade with the 4th and 5th and the Snowmobile Rally with the 10th to attend yet as I write this letter. We also have the 6th District coming up in February.

The 8th and 9th Districts we will visit in the spring.

At all of these events we have attended we have had very enjoyable experiences. I cannot put into words how very pleased and satisfied we have been with all of your District Chairman’s reports. You are all doing a very good job this year. Please please please keep up the great work.

Membership Mary’s Search and Rescue Hard Hats have been making the rounds. Some Membership people happy and some not so much with their hard hats. Please remember to bring them along to the Sweetheart Rally.

A very informational Leadership Training was held in the 6th District. Thank 6th District President Vicki Bibeau to bring them along to the Sweetheart Rally.

I have been privileged to be a part of three of our Gift Squadrons who have donated to the Gift Shop Program this year. Well done.

This “gentlemen’s” agreement involves the VFW, American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Posts and Units. Everyone’s cooperation is necessary to ensure a successful Poppy program. Please do not distribute any Poppy Cards and/or Poppies prior to these dates. This applies to all Posts and Units in the seven-county metropolitan area (Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota, Carver, Scott and Anoka counties).

Legislative

An omission was made in the January issue of the Legionnaire. January is Legislation Month and our Department Chairman Jean Walker never misses a beat. She had sent her article in and it was not forwarded to Al Zdon. To this, the Department Office offers Jean a sincere apology. Jean’s article is on the next page.

Americanism Month

February is Americanism month. Chairman Joanie Krantz is a wonderful member of the State Department and is so eager to help us to promote Poppies throughout the year – wear them and get involved with your youth to teach them the importance of Americanism. Work closely with The American Legion and their Americanism programs.

Poppies Days

Poppy Card Distribution Days will be held April 20-29, 2018, to be followed by the Poppy Days activities beginning at 12:01 a.m. on April 20. Beginning April 19 Poppy Cards may be distributed anywhere right up until Poppy Day. Poppy Cards may be distributed within the confines of one’s own Post or home to members and patrons only on Thursday evening, April 20 – if the Cards are hung on the wall of the Post Home and NO distributed Cards leave the building on Thursday evening.

Poppy Days will be May 18-19, 2018, beginning at 12:01 a.m. on May 18. Closed territories are in effect until noon on Friday, May 18.

This “gentlemen’s agreement” involves the VFW, VFWA, the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Posts and Units. Everyone’s cooperation is necessary to ensure a successful Poppy program. Please do not distribute any Poppy Cards and/or Poppies prior to these dates. This applies to all Posts and Units in the seven-county metropolitan area (Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota, Carver, Scott and Anoka counties).

Do keep in mind the The American Legion wants all of us to promote Poppies throughout the year – wear them and share them proudly.

2019 Membership Dues

2019 Membership Dues

Gosh, it seems that these months go by so fast -- in the December issue, I am still mailing every Unit a notice asking for the amount of your Unit’s 2019 Senior and Junior dues, and the name and address of the person whose name/number you should have in your Unit’s rolodex. Please make sure this information gets back to Sandie at the Department Office by March 15. Please make sure and discuss the upcoming dues with your Units. Keep in mind that the National Organization has raised their portion of the dues from $9.00 to $12.00. The Department dues will still be $9.00 for 2019 so the amount you will send in to the Department Office will be $21.00 per member. Many Units currently only charge $20.00 for dues, send $18.00 to Department and keep $2.00 for themselves. Remember, that won’t work in 2019!! Also keep in mind the the American Legion Auxiliary are some of the most inexpensive organizations we have. What we do and what we stand for should make every proud to be a member.

Scholarships

Scholarships

Just a reminder all applications for any Department and National scholarships must be received in the department office by March 15. Let your schools know they are available and provide them with the application forms. They are also posted on our website for your convenience. If additional copies are needed, you may duplicate those you have received or contact the Department office.

Unit Annual Reports

Unit Annual Reports have been mailed to each Unit in January. All reports, conference notes and any paper will be in one envelope. If you don’t receive this envelope, contact the department office immediately. Please note: The U-Poppy distribution cover the period from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. This year the reports have again been reformatted because of the feedback we received from the Units that have made the Unit reports like those in the past. When our Units ask for better ways of doing things we do everything in our power to come through.

All Unit reports are due on or before April 15.

Girls State

Girls State

The American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State session has been set for June 10-16, 2018, at Bethel University in St. Paul.

The time is now to send your $300.00 fee to reserve a place for your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen(s). Cut-off for reservations is March 31.

Upon receipt of your reservation fee ($300.00 per girl) you will receive the needed materials and instructions. Enrollment is limited to the first 445 applications received. The name of the girl, information sheet, enrollment card, pledge and order form for the citizen’s Capitol Day polo shirt must be into the Department by May 1.

There is no restriction as to the number of delegates a Unit may send to American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State from their high school(s). The delegate must be a Minnesota resident, or attend a Minnesota school. Please note that there will be NO refunds given this year. Once we send your girl to the Girls State, there will be no refunds. If you are going to have a spare sponsor we will use it for a deserving girl who wants to attend but has no sponsor.

POPPY ORDERS

POPPY ORDERS

If you haven’t placed your Poppy order yet, please do so. We need to finalize the number of Poppies needed for this year. The U-Poppy distribution so we can plan accordingly. Let’s have 100% Unit participation in the Auxiliary Poppy program. Right now out of 438 Units 287 have placed orders. Remember the feedback we received from the Units that receive a small compensation for their work. Let’s support their efforts. It will help the Department Office tremendously to get your orders in before Poppy Day so we don’t wait until the last minute. That will ensure that we have the inventory to handle all orders.

Sandie’s Notes

Sandie’s Notes

We were just talking in the office today about where and the peak times go – as I am typing this it is already January 19. I promised Jan and Julie some quiet time to get things cleaned up in the office and for the 4th year in a row, the supposed “quiet time” has slipped away again. I have to write a note about my dear friend and our President Donna but have three training programs to see what everyone is doing. I encourage those that haven’t invited you to your Unit meeting or function, please do so. She has days open on her calendar and would love to come see you. There is a form online or you can just call me with your request. I want to thank all of those who came to our Montgomery Post 79 Appreciation Day in December –
Februray means Americanism Month

By this time Units have received information to give to your local schools about the Americanism Essay Contest. February is “Americanism” month and this year’s Essay Title is: “I can’t wait to promote Americanism in my school or community.” The Americanism Essay Contest 2018 cover sheet must be used with each Essay. The winner selected for each American Legion Auxiliary Unit Chairman MUST sign the contest cover sheet. Entries are due at the Department Office by April 1st, 2018. Essays are then moved to the National Americanism Division Chairman by April 15th, 2018. Unit members may encourage your children and grandchildren to participate in the essay contest. Units can publish flag etiquette tips in your newspaper and on social media, host a flag awareness event, communicate information in your schools, post home and public functions. Encourage local businesses to fly a flag, especially on patriotic holidays. Encourage your own members to fly the American flag in their yards, as well as educate proper flag display and respect. Purchase “The Code” brochure and distribute in your schools and community (brochure can be ordered from Emblem Sales). Organize a Flag Disposal from Emblem Sales. (brochure can be ordered and distribute in your community to be a part of this special event. You could even serve bars and coffee afterwards. March marches toward the month of April which is none other than ANNUAL REPORTS month … I am hoping that I don’t receive any annual reports that say, “Did Not Participate”. It’s hard for a Chairman to believe your Unit “did not participate” because being an AMERICAN citizen makes you qualified to promote American patriotism, showing respect for your country and its flag. We have opportunities to see positive examples of living in the United States of America as a GRATEFUL patriotic citizen. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance at your Unit meetings, singing the National Anthem at sporting events and flying an American fly, these promote the spirit of patriotism and you have now participated 100% reporting for Americanism.

The Americanism Chairman I will have the wonderful opportunity to attend the 2018 Girls State Week at Bethel University in the cities on June 10th-16th. A first-time ever experience instructing approximately 400 young women how to love the United States of America and its freedom. A reminder to all Units to get information packets to your schools about Girls State because of deadlines. Bethel University will be under construction during Girls State week, so please give the information a little more attention as there are some “Do’s and Don’ts”.

Americanism Chair Joanie Krantz

Resources available are The Dispatch, the Legionary American, The Legionary American web-site www.legion.org /legislative and the American Legion Auxiliary web-site www.alaforveterans.org/ad vocate/legislative. These websites have a lot of information on current and upcoming legislation on veterans benefits. Our Minnesota Legion Auxiliary Chairman Peggy Moon and her committee is another resource we can use to get updates on issues concerning our veterans as we work together as a Legion family.

So talk to your Legislators our elected officials and advocate for our veterans. Call them, email, write letters and let them know you want them to support our legislators for our veterans.

Thank you for all you do for our Veterans and their families. God Bless America, our Veterans and God Bless You.

Jean Walker, Legislative Chairman
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