National Commander’s Tour slated for March

This year’s National Commander’s Tour of Minnesota will be a shortened version, hitting Northeastern Minnesota before ending in the Twin Cities.

National Commander Brett Reistad will visit posts in Two Harbors, West Duluth, Pequot Lakes, Brainerd and Anoka.

He will also be making side trips to the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth and to St. Cloud State University.

The tour will begin Sunday, March 10, with a dinner in Two Harbors and end on Tuesday, March 12, with a dinner in Anoka.

Reistad was elected National Commander at the national convention this past year in Minneapolis.

Also on the tour will be Commander Darrel Redepenning, Membership Director Mike Maxa and Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.

A list of exact times and RSVP phone numbers for the posts is on Page 2. Reservations are needed for meals.

Montevedio receives a major donation for its planned Minnesota Veterans Home

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has announced a $2.8 million donation from the estate of late Vietnam veteran, Steven Williams, for construction of the Montevedio Veterans Home. This is the largest single private gift benefiting a Minnesota Veterans Home.

Although Williams retired in Nevada, he grew up near Montevedio and stayed involved in Veteran issues in his home state. Williams’ brother, Jim, who still lives in the area, contacted him in early 2018 to share the news that the Minnesota Legislature was considering funds for a State Veterans Home in Montevedio.

“It was pretty exciting,” said Jim. “When I called Steve to tell him, he said, ‘Keep me posted, keep me posted. That’s a really good thing.’ Steve was very interested in this project.”

Steven Williams died in March, and a few months later the Minnesota Legislature approved $9.4 million towards construction of the Montevedio Veterans Home. The financial model for construction includes a portion of community fundraising. Williams’ donation brought the final community total to $7.4 million. If approved for construction through the Federal VA’s Construction Grant Priority List, the federal matching dollars could total $31.5 million. The application for the federal matching grant will be submitted in April, 2019. The planned 72-bed facility in Montevedio has a total project budget of $48.5 million. Currently in the pre-design phase, the Home would open in the summer of 2021.

“We want this to be the best Home in the country,” said Jim. “And if [Steven] knew that for every dollar he donated, he would have gotten nearly two more, he would have been just ecstatic.”

Although Williams passed away before the community fundraising kicked off, his brother Jim worked as the estate trustee to best reflect his brother’s wishes. Williams had dedicated a portion of his estate to Veteran organizations. All of these Veteran organizations agreed to pass on a percentage of their donation to the Montevedio project, which will total $2.8 million.

“The idea that these organizations were willing to work with us and not only fulfill Steve’s wishes, but to serve Veterans – even if it meant some donation funds would be redirected, is a testament to their selfless focus on serving Veterans” said Todd Bauman, Williams’ financial advisor. Williams joined the Army in 1968, and left for Vietnam that same year. He served in the 3rd Ranger Company, and his military decorations included the Bronze Star.

After returning from Vietnam, he enrolled in college, graduating from Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall. Shortly after, Williams accepted a sales job for Hormel Foods. Over his 30 years with the company he moved all over the country, eventually retiring in Nevada.

Minnesota veterans given Tribute Bell

A “Spirit of Minnesota Tribute Bell” was dedicated in December. The bell honors Minnesota’s past, present and future veterans.

The bell is on a mobile platform and will travel the state and raise awareness of veterans and military.

The bell was sponsored by Wells Fargo and donated to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans. It was made in 2018 by the Verdin Co. of Cincinnati.

Minnesotaans donated military items such as dog tags and medals that were used in the creating the bell.

The bell was dedicated at Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis. A photo of the bell is on Page 2 of this issue of the Legionnaire.
Endorsements

Brockberg endorsed for DVC

Charles-Flentje Post 461 in Round Lake endorsed Bill B. Brockberg for Vice Commander, Second and Seventh Districts, Department of Minnesota.

Brockberg is a past Commander, Vice-Commander, adjutant and membership director of Michael-Brock Post 6 of Pipestone and past Commander and vice-Commander of the Second District.

In his current American Legion Post, Brockberg serves as the adjutant and second vice-Commander.

A graduate of Bemidji State University, Brockberg entered the US Army in April of 1982 and served 24 years total in the Army, Army Reserve and Active-duty Reserve program.

At the District Level of The American Legion, Brockberg has served as Chairman of the Rehabilitation and Public Relations committees. Currently he is the Second District Judge Advocate. Brockberg is the County Veterans Service Officer for Nobles County in Worthington.

He’s a member of the Sons of the American Legion—Squadron 6 of Pipestone and the 40 and 8.

At Department, Brockberg has served on the Post Revitalization and Legislative committees. He was Department Chaplain two years ago and currently is serving as Chairman on the Rehabilitation Committee.

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2019 National Commander’s Tour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Harbors</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>218-834-4975 or 218-206-5796</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Duluth</td>
<td>8 a.m. breakfast</td>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>218-628-2181, post</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pequot Lakes</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>218-820-7683</td>
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<td>Brainerd</td>
<td>8 a.m. breakfast</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>218-829-2249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anoka</td>
<td>6 p.m. dinner</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>763-421-0883, Denise</td>
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</table>

All meal stops require a reservation at the above numbers. Commander Reistad will also tour the 148th Fighter Wing and St. Cloud State University. These events are not open to the public.

Northeast

Minnesota group reaches goal

The Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (CoC) announced they have cleared their housing waiting lists for homeless Veterans.

The Northeast CoC consists of six counties (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, and Lake Counties) and three Tribal Governments (Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage of Lake Superior Chippewa and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe) that surround St. Louis County.

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, HUD, and VA determined the six counties and three Indian Reservations served by the Northeast CoC have effectively ended homelessness among Veterans, becoming the fourth jurisdiction in the state of Minnesota to do so.

The West Central, Southwest and Northwest CoC’s all declared an end to Veteran homelessness in 2017.

SPIRIT OF MINNESOTA — Wells Fargo, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans and the Minneapolis Downtown Council sponsored a Tribute Bell, the “Spirit of Minnesota” and a dedication was held during the holidays. The bell is on a mobile platform and can be used throughout the state. It was cast by the Verdin Company in Ohio using metal from Minnesota veterans.

SHIP SHOP AND SHARE — Packages were send out in early December from the Ship, Shop and Share program sponsored by the Fourth District. Shown is the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, Combat Logistics Detachment, stationed in Norway. “We are all very fortunate for receiving the packages your team has put together. We all appreciate the Americans whom we serve for and are thankful for their generosity.”

Independent Rural Living

Senior apartments for elderly and those with disabilities. Safe, convenient, comfortable, and affordable rural living in Southeast Minnesota.

Also available: Housing with Services, Nursing Home, Subsidized Rent, Homemaker Services

Contact: Samantha 507-864-7714 or www.goodshep-rushford.org

Purple Cross Funeral Plans for Veterans

Purple Cross has been serving America’s Veterans since 1948 and continues to offer the best funeral plans available. With Funeral Preplanning you can:

- Protect your burial funds from nursing home expenses
- Protect your family from financial burden in time of grief
- Gain peace of mind knowing your funeral is taken care of

Yes, I would like to know more about:

☐ Traditional Funeral Cost ☐ Cremation Cost
☐ Payment Plan Options ☐ Discount Plans

For a free Funeral Preplanning Cost Estimate please return this coupon to Purple Cross, 15116 Miami Rd NE, Prior Lake, MN 55372 or call Jerry Albrecht at 952-226-4293. Absolutely no obligation!

Name:
Address:
City/State:
Phone:
Birth Date:

LEGION AT MACV EVENT — American Legion leadership attended the MACV, WCCO and Minnesota Twins Christmas luncheon, “Home for the Holidays.” Veterans were served at the Target Field ballpark. From left, Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, Assistant Service Officer Heather Larson, Commander Darrel Redepenning, Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller.

TWINS HELP — Former Twin Justin Morneau helped serve homeless and other veterans at the Home for the Holidays event at Target Field.
Does your library have these books?

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

Send to The American Legion Room 300A, 20 W. 12th St., St. Paul, MN 55155

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
Number of copies War Stories I ___ War Stories II ___ War Stories III ___
Amount enclosed $________

All books are $29 each including shipping.

Also a great gift for a loved one

Winter Book Sale

The Band of Brothers
Easy Company

Little did Herb Scrobs know when he joined the Army as a youth he would become famous in his 60th year. Scrobs was a replacement for the 393rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne — the Band of Brothers. He served for 23 days before a German shell

ORDER ONLINE

Jane Scrobs, his sister, says, “After the war, the Army sent Herb a

copy of The Band of Brothers. He read it, and the story inspired him to write his own story about his 23-day experience. He sent me a letter with the story.”

You can also order online at mnlegion.org

ATTEND WWII ROUND TABLE
Join author Geoffrey Megargee for a discussion about What Made the Nazi Military Work, Jan 10, Historic Fort Snelling.

EXPLORE FAKE NEWS
Hear a historical perspective on fake news during History Forum: The History of Fake News in the US, Jan 12, Minnesota History Center.

SEARCH MILITARY RECORDS
Research MNHS’s collection of military service records. Explore either in person or online. Admission to the library is always free! Gale Family Library at the Minnesota History Center, mnhs.org/library.

SEE 1968 BEFORE IT’S GONE
Civil rights. Free love. Space race. Last chance to see The 1968 Exhibit, closing Jan 21, Minnesota History Center.

FANTASTIC WAYS TO EXPERIENCE MNHS

1. ATTEND WWII ROUND TABLE
2. EXPLORE FAKE NEWS
3. SEARCH MILITARY RECORDS
4. SEE 1968 BEFORE IT’S GONE

PLAN YOUR VISIT OR PURCHASE ONLINE • MNHS.ORG • 1-844-MNSTORY
Greetings Legion Family and happy new year. Well it’s finally here, the highly anticipated centennial year of The American Legion. As I’ve traveled the state visiting posts large and small, one thing is certain, The American Legion is alive, strong and proud. We may see our numbers decreasing but not our spirit or devotion. I especially enjoy taking part in the recognition of their continuous Legion membership. One gentleman named Bud in Breckenridge proudly showed me his card with 75 years of continuous Legion membership. I shared the story with my dad who said, “You can never go wrong with a guy named Bud.”

So, whether your name is Bud or not, we owe the long time members of this great organization a ton of gratitude. Their devotion is the main reason we’re still here 100 years time members of this great organization. One gentleman named Bud in Breckenridge proudly showed me his card with 75 years of continuous Legion membership. I shared the story with my dad who said, “You can never go wrong with a guy named Bud.”

So, whether your name is Bud or not, we owe the long time members of this great organization a ton of gratitude. Their devotion is the main reason we’re still here 100 years later. Veteran’s organizations in general are the reason why we have veteran benefits. As we move forward in celebrating this year, be sure to thank our senior members for their long time commitment. Let them be our example of how important it is to continue to be involved and continue to make a difference. The month of January also brings us a start to our District Midwinter Conferences. It’s a great opportunity to get updated on District and Department activities. It is also a time to break up the winter and have a little fun with all your Legion friends. Please plan to attend, bring membership and new members with you. Midwinter’s are often our last big opportunity to increase membership. Some of our members like to renew at the beginning of the year, so it’s also time to collect all those renewals. I plan to make it to as many as time and Mother Nature will allow. Hope to see you there.

Before I close out this month, I would like to inform you about a change in one of my projects. This year I am committed to getting donations for Legionville and the Anoka Eagles Healing Nest. As of mid-December the Anoka facility has changed its name. The new name is “Haven for Heroes.” It will continue to be dedicated to veterans experiencing homelessness and crisis in their lives. I attended their name change and volunteer kick-off meeting. Over 125 energetic volunteers signed up to help finish renovations and assist in managing the facility. All money they raise will go exclusively to the “Haven for Heroes.” Some of the management team and leaders are still being determined, but by the sign of the crowded City Hall room, they certainly have a lot of support. I hope our generous Legionnaires and Legion Family can help bring this to reality. I will update you more in my visits to your post. Till next month, thanks for all you do and please keep doing it.

We are honored to have De Georgopulos in attendance. If you have any questions about the Brain Science committee 2018-2019 Chair president Gary Olson and vice president Bob Lockerman. Rosemary Niesen, Brain Sciences Secretary Cologne Veteran’s shadow box To the Editor:

I need a little help from the Legionnaires on an item that has turned up in a cleaned-up rental unit in our community. See the attached picture. I think the box was stolen, and given the empty center section, something was taken out of it. (just my opinion)

I will continue to query people regarding this; in the meantime, the box will remain at the Legion Post. I want to get this to the family member who it belongs to. My guess is they’re somewhere in our 8th District. Thanks for your help.

Anne Koskinen
Ely

Mail Call

Thanks for help to the Editor:

On behalf of our residents and staff, the Minnesota Veterans Home in Luvence would like to say “thank you” to the 2nd District American Legion Family as well as to the State of Minnesota American Legion Family for all your support this past year and especially during this past holiday season. The amount of love and kindness was shown to us over the past twelve months and for that we are truly thankful and grateful.

You brought joy to many of you a wonderful 2019 filled with joy and happiness, but especially LOVE for our nation’s heroes and their families. Duane J. Pokluda Volunteer Services Coordinator MVH-Luvence LIT plan

To the Editor:

Re: The LIT’s LegionCare No Cost to You Accidental Death Insurance Plan

Your members’ current Legion Care Accidental Death Insurance provider has recently made a decision to no longer market or service this product to Legion Department members. We are pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2019, Securian Life Insurance Company, an affiliate of Securian Financial Group (Securian) will become the new provider for LegionCare Accidental Death Coverage previously provided by Transamerica Life Insurance Company*. Securian Life Insurance Company is an A+ Superior company and has been independently rated organization A.M. Best. Eligible claims incurred prior to January 1, 2019, will be processed in accordance with the terms and conditions of your Transamerica coverage, while claims incurred on or after January 1, 2019 will be the responsibility of Securian.

We look forward to this new relationship with Securian and to continuing our commitment of service and protection to you.

J. Christopher Burke, FLMI President & CEO AGIA Affinity Brain Sciences

To the Editor:

This letter is to convey a very big Thank You for the Brain Science article that was in the December Legionnaire. It refreshes and enlightens all the veterans that didn’t or couldn’t know about this great program that is in our Veterans Hospital here in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The American Legion, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease and the V A Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease and the University of Minnesota. The American Legion, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease. It refreshes and enlightens all the veterans that didn’t or couldn’t know about this great program that is in our Veterans Hospital here in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The American Legion, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease and the University of Minnesota. The American Legion, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease.

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There are two corrections to the story “Spotting Artillery in Okinawa” in the December issue. The story indicated that Edgar Haider’s brother’s ship was torpedoed. Instead, it was his ship that torpedoed two enemy submarines. The story also stated at one point that Haider was at Iwo Jima, but it should have said he was at Okinawa.

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Brain Sciences

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Bemidji Bonspiels
Bemidji Post 14 will host its annual curling bonspiels in February and March. With the help of the Sons of the American Legion, Veterans Health Care Enrolement Fairs will be held Jan. 15, from 3-6 p.m. at the Sauk Rapids VFW Post 6992 in Sauk Rapids. The second will be held Jan. 24 from 3-6 at the Rum River Events Center in Isanti. Veterans should bring their DD214s and a statement of annual income.

Legal Clinics
The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is sponsoring a series of free legal clinics for veterans. The clinics include information on housing, expungement, employment, benefits, debt collection and family law including child support. A clinic will be held Tuesday, Jan. 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Cloud VA HCS Auditorium.

Upcoming conventions
In the next two years, major meetings will be held at:

What’s Happening

Taps
Plumhoff, Donald L., 89, Minnesota National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a drill instructor and a marksmanship instructor. He was a past commander of St. James Post 33.

Haler, Edward A., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Cropper, David, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Stephen Post 221.

Narverud, John “Joe,” 79, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 3, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Anderson, Russell O., 96, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 9, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.


Martin, Todd, 48, Army veteran of Operation Desert Storm, died Dec. 13, 2018. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Stein, Joseph R., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 213.

Townsend, George Keys, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 2, 2018. He was a corporal. He was a member of Bloomington Post 550.

O’Malley, Roger W., 82, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 13, 2018. He served in Japan. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Sjostrand, Glen D., 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.


Olson, Leroy C., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 26, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Peterson, Wallace, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 14, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Kvam, Robert T., 72, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War and National Guard veteran of Desert Storm, died Dec. 1, 2018. He served two tours in Vietnam, served in the Marine Reserves, and spent 25 years in the Minnesota Army National Guard. He deployed with the Indiana National Guard. He was a member of the honor guard and the Legion Riders of Austin Post 91.

Schleppregg, William, 95, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 29, 2018. He flew P-47 Thunderbolts in Europe for four months. He was a member of Minnesota Post 1982.

Ward, William, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 4, 2018. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Aronsen, Paul Musaus, 95, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 21, 2018. He served as a medical officer. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Zeithamer, Archie Eugene, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 1, 2018. He served in the U.S. Army in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Hood as a technical sergeant. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Erickson, David O., 81, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 5, 2018. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

Suskovich, Robert, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Buesgens, William F., Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 3, 2018. He served at Moses Lake, Washington, as an aircraft mechanic. He was a member of Jordan Post 3.

Lea, Arnold, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a member of Ely Post 311.

Klegstad, Dean R., 74, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 10, 2018. He served in Guam as a heavy equipment operator. He was a member of Middle River Post 44.

Jones, Mark S., 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 27, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Hansen, Raymond, 95, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 28, 2018. He saw the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima. He earned a Silver Heart at that battle. He was a member of Ely Post 311.

Roemhildt, Wayne, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 1, 2018. He was a member of Ely Post 311.

Suckow, David, 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 19, 2018. He was a member of Ely Post 314.

Perron, Maurice A., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 24, 2018. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Reinke, Roger D., 79, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 23, 2018. He was a member of Ely Post 314.

Nehring, Weston Craig, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 7, 2018. He was a past commander and member of the honor guard at Payneville Post 86.

Pflipsen, Alfred H., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 11, 2018. He was a member of St. Joseph Post 328.

Dennis, Richard Paul, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 17, 2018. He was a Spec 4 in Battery B of the 15th Artillery. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Branstad, Hubert Davis, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 9, 2018. He served in the Aleutian Islands. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Kalpin, Robert J., 97, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 20, 2018. He was a member of Parker’s Prairie Post 219.

Johnston, Robert J., 90, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 14, 2018. He was a past commander of Parker’s Prairie Post 219.

Petry, Calvin S., 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 7, 2018. He was a past commander and member of the honor guard at Payneville Post 86.

Weibye, Stephen Q., 71, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a Specialist 4. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 112.

Maurer, Keith H., 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 21, 2018. He was a member of St. Augusta Post 621.

Obituary policy
Obituaries of members of the Legion will be published in the Minnesota Legionnaire in a monthly column under the heading “Taps.”

Obituaries must be recent, within the last two months prior to the publication of the new edition of the Legionnaire. For example, the February edition would only contain obituaries from January and December.

While the obituaries are brief, the Legionnaire does seek certain information for our readers:
1. Complete name of deceased.
2. Date of birth and death.
3. Branch of service and war or wars the veteran served in.
4. Exact date of death.
5. Additional information about the veteran’s service including branch, unit type, service of place, service, medals, etc.
6. The post, unit or squadron the deceased belonged to.

For more information, contact Steve Anderson at 715-386-1288.
American Legion Riders

Greetings American Legion Family.

I would like to thank everyone who turned out for the Pearl Harbor Rally in Faribault. It was a nice afternoon for the Family to gather, honor the service of veterans that have paid the supreme price and share a laugh or two. If you missed it you missed one very special afternoon. I would like to once again thank our guests that day, Karla & Don Madden. Karla is a Gold Star Mom who delivered this very touching speech. Gene Kispert, U.S. Navy veteran, presented the U.S. Navy flag. Dan Bruester, U.S. Navy retired, sounded taps. Clint Bettermann sounded taps echo.

I hope everyone had a merry Christmas. Now it’s time to roll up our sleeves go out and recruit new members to the Legion Family, get the jobs that haven’t been done so to renew their memberships. I would like to issue a challenge for everyone to find one new member and bring that new member to the Sweat Sock, I mean Sweetheart Rally in Royalton on Saturday Feb 9th.

The Department Legacy Ride committee is starting to put together the 2019 ride. If you would like the Riders to stop and visit your post please contact Steve Sullivan, Jody or Paul Hasking, Shaw Davis, Ted Berg or myself. The dates for the first weekend are kick-off party Thursday August 1st, ride Friday, Saturday & Sunday August 2nd, 3rd, & 4th. The second weekend we will ride Friday, Saturday and Sunday August 9th, 10th & 11th. Don’t forget the stand down part on Sunday August 11th. I would like to point out that after the 2019 ride, Minnesota will become the first department nationally to have contributed over one million dollars to the Legacy Fund.

The 2018 year has ended, and I reflect on some of the events that have made their mark on the year. The year started out on a sad note with loss of my dad but better times followed with the 100-year kick off celebration of The American Legion in Rochester at Department Convention, a record setting Legacy Ride collecting $252,000, and Nation Convention in Minneapolis, the site of the first Nation Convention.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy, prosperous new year. Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

Ron Quade
Department Director

Sons of The American Legion

Happy New Year! While the calendar gives us a new year with new expectations, we are actually in the middle of our year of working towards our goals. And things speed up from here.

It is membership crunch time. If we are to reach 12,000 members this year we need to do two things. 1. Get all our members to renew. Reach out to every member and work on that renewal. Get that renewal turned in to Department ASAP. 2. Keep recruiting. A new member brings in new life to the squadron, new energy and new possibilities. Ask people if they are eligible and then to join. Ask if they want to make a difference in their community? Do they want to join and make a difference. Remember membership is important.

We also begin the season of mid-winters at the District level. I ask everyone to try to attend, to participate, and to learn. If you want to make improvements to this organization you have to participate. Going to these events is a step in that direction. Stepping up to take a role on the organization is the next step. And with every step we make progress toward the ultimate goal of success.

It is time to do what we have to do to reach our goals. 12,000 members. $2,000 for CWF, Brain Science, and Legionville. Together we can make wonderful things happen.

Ronald D. Quade H. Director
American Legion Claims Division

Membership Chart as of Dec. 20, 2018

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Sons of the American Legion News

Activate Your Squadron

With the new legislative year just around the corner, there are a couple of things that we encourage squadron members to take an active part in. Many posts, units and squadrons rely on charitable gambling to support our communities, our children and youth programs and our veterans. The amount of taxes has become a huge burden on charitable gambling here in Minnesota. That is where you come in. On December 6th, 2018, the State of Minnesota released a budget forecast that predicts a $1.5 billion-dollar surplus. This is in addition to $2 billion dollars that is in reserves. Please take the time to contact your state senators and representatives and tell them that it is very important for tax relief for charitable gambling be a priority item on the agenda. Please do so as soon as possible.

Also, please encourage the veterans in your posts to our United States Senators and demand that the Senate passes H.R. 299. The Senate must not delay passage of this important bill while Blue Water Navy veterans are sick and dying from diseases related to exposure to agent orange.

Legislative Points

The SAL Legislative Committee Chairman working in conjunction with the American Legion Department of Minnesota Legislative Committee is supporting these legislative goals.

A Veterans Omnibus Bill. A Revision to the current Property Tax Exclusion to recognize the Contributions of Surviving Spouses. In that there is currently an 8 year expiration date on the property tax exclusion for the surviving spouses of those who die during or as a result of their service with the U.S. Military. Spouses of our most severely disabled veterans often leave working life early to become full-time uncompensated caregivers for their disabled veteran, resulting in better care for our veterans and saving U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars. After their veteran pass away many surviving spouses see a 60% or more reduction of income. We seek to have the Property Tax exclusion a life time event. Also create a one-time transfer ability to a property of equal or lesser value. We also seek a bill that would increase the amount of the MDVA grants that employ disabled veterans.

The Department of Minnesota would also like to initiate a bill that would increase the amount of the MDVA grants to Veterans Service Organizations to $1 million. The current funding level is approximately $300,000 that is divided nine ways.

Further more, we would seek a tax credit for businesses that employ disabled veterans.

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Cdr. Shawn Davis: salshawn.davis@gmail.com
Adjutant Doug Bible: saladjmn@gmail.com

Website: www.mnsal.org

County Pro-rate the Tax liability immediately. We would also seek the ability of CVSO’s to automatically share the data with the County.

SAL Commander Shawn Davis and Auxiliary President Jean Walker share a Christmas moment at the Pearl Harbor Rally in Faribault.
RALLY AT FARIBAULT

President Jean Walker presents 6th District President Sharon Thiemecke with a membership star as 9th District President Lynn Carr looks on.

Auxiliary officers and their signs formed a line at the Pearl Harbor Day Rally in Faribault.

An antlered Honorary Junior President Harley Donnelly addresses the rally.

Riders Director Chuck Stone and Clint at the rally. The Riders provided the program for the rally.

Membership Director Mike Maxa presents 5th District Commander Joe Bayer with a membership certificate. All photos by Department Historian Dennis DeLong.

Commander Darrel Redepenning and Past National Commander Dan Ludwig share holiday greetings.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE GOPHERS

Bob Mace salutes as the rest of the Waite Park Color Guard presents colors at the Minnesota Golden Gophers men's basketball game vs. North Carolina A&T at Williams Arena just before Christmas. It was the annual American Legion Family Christmas with the Gophers outing. Waite Park is the Department's official color guard for this Legion year.

The Gophers shoot a free throw during the game.

Legion Family Gopher fans enjoy themselves as the Gophers went on to win the game.
Dick Pinckney said he was just an ordinary GI doing his job in World War II. But the Tyler resident did manage to make sergeant major in three years, and he was one of the first Americans to liberate the Dachau Concentration Camp.

By Al Zdon

He was born in 1919.

Dallas Pinckney, who has always gone by the name Dick, was born in Garvin, Minnesota, where his dad ran the livery.

Pinckney was the third son in the family, and his parents were hoping for a girl. Thus the name Dallas, which at that time was the boy’s name.

“But grandmother said she always wanted a grandchild named for her brother, Dick. So she pinned Dick on me, and I never remember anybody in my family calling me anything else.”

His father’s brother owned the bank in Garvin. “He told my dad that there was no place for him with those three sons except out on the farm. So the bank loaned my dad the money. He went away in debt to get that farm, and he never came back out.”

The farm had 21 cows that the boys milked every day at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sometimes the dad would take the older boys to the Sunday baseball game. “And then I got to milk all the cows. I wouldn’t get out until after 8 at night sometimes. There wasn’t any air conditioning in those days – you just slapped away the flies.”

Pinckney has a remarkable memory for a man 99 years old. As he thought back on those years growing up on the farm, every year is strikingly different for him.

“In 1931, there was no crop. In 1932, there was a bumper crop of corn. There were 4 ½ bushels and hogs were ½ cents a pound. 1933 was really the beginning of the dirty 30s. There wasn’t any crop. In 1934, there was absolutely no crop. In 1935, there was a grain crop. In 1936, there were some crops.”

Pinckney’s dad would sometimes try to earn some money playing baseball. “He called himself a semi-pro. He didn’t care who he played for, as long as they paid him. He’d charge them by how many hits he got, runs, runs batted in, and so forth.”

Pinckney went to school through the eighth grade at the four-room Garvin School, and then it was off to Tracy High School for the next several years.

“There was a man in Tracy who converted a 1928 Chevrolet into a school bus, and he made two trips a day, one of those Thursdays to bus into Louisville to marry his fiancé. We used one of those Thursdays to bus into Louisville to marry your fiancé.”

Pinckney waited every day at the first stop. “It was the Pinckneys, the Jones, the Lindos and the Nelsons. We were also the last stop at night. But no matter what time you got back, the chores were waiting.”

After chores, it was time for dinner and then school work. “We didn’t have electricity, so we had a gas lamp that hung directly over the table for light. Trouble was, it cast a shadow on the table and you couldn’t see your homework.”

‘Then it was back on the train for a journey to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for 13 weeks of basic training. “I know in the first two or three weeks I learned the nomenclature of a machine gun. But then they called four of us out of the room. We were with a first sergeant, and we were wondering what the hell we had done.”

They found they were being sent to record school, to learn to be Army clerks. “One nice thing was that when we came back to the barracks at night, the first sergeant couldn’t touch us with KP or anything?”

Pinckney recalls that he only went to the firing range once. “And then instead of giving me a gun they gave me a stick. There were kids from out East that had never seen a gun, and they were afraid of them. So we got sticks.”

After boot camp, it was on to Fort Knox Admin School for more clerk training. “That school was tough. We were in class from 5 a.m. to noon, and then it was off to the obstacle course for the rest of the day. I was in really good shape, but some of the other guys really suffered.”

The men only got Thursday afternoons off, and Pinckney used one of those Thursdays to bus into Louisville to marry his fiancée, Doris.

“We were getting $21 a month, and after they took out in physicals. ‘I asked my dad about it and he was okay with it. I took a job that winter and never went back to the farm again.’

In 1941, he was transferred to the Ross Lumber Co. at Cottonwood. “The manager there had a reputation of not getting along with his help, but he and I clicked right away and got along great. He expected you to work and that’s what I was there for.”

n Dec. 7, 1941, he and his boss were doing the inventory when a neighbor came over and told him the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. “We were in the back office, and Tom turned to me and said, ‘Dick, you’ll have to go.’

Pinckney was not quite ready for military life yet, though, and so he waited for the draft. “I liked civilian life.”

He didn’t have to wait long. On June 12, 1942, he got his draft notice. “Some of us went over to Milbank (South Dakota) and got on the Hiawatha to take us to Fort Snelling. We got there in the evening, and the next day was taken up in physicals. “A couple days later, about 10 or 12 of us were herded into a small room and told to raise our right hand. After we swore to uphold the Constitution, they told us all to take our clothes off.

“Then they told us to take our clothes and proceed through a door. It was not well lit, and we really couldn’t see where we were going. Well, it turns out there were three corpsmen there as soon as you went through the door. The one in front took a blood sample from your finger while the ones on either side stuck you with a needle. So it was finger, shot, shot.

“Then I was told to sit in a chair and the next thing I know a guy yells ‘9 Chicago’ and it was hit in the chest with a pair of shoes. And that was my induction into the army.”

The men were also issued army pants and other gear, but nothing fit. “My fatigues were about a foot too long. You had to try and find guys to trade with, and that took a little time. The only thing they fitted was the blouse. They wanted that to look good.”

The Army also gave him several sets of khaki under- wear. “I never did like khaki.”

Then it was back on the train for a journey to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for 13 weeks of basic training. “I know in the first two or three weeks I learned the nomenclature of a machine gun. But then they called four of us out of the room. We were with a first sergeant, and we were wondering what the hell we had done.”

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O
was the wooden walkway behind the barracks that led to the latrine.

In late January, 1943, the unit was transferred from the 8th Armored Division, and they soon became the cadre, or forming group, for the new 20th Armored Division. Pinckney was promoted to T-3, the equivalent of a corporal, as a tank driver. His pay went up $16 a month.

He said the work was hard. "We'd go out on a problem every day, and come back and that damned tank had to be cleaned. The only tools we had were a bucket and a broom. A lot of nights, the mess sergeant had to keep the chow hall open late to feed us supper."

As time went by, the tank commander on Pinckney's vehicle was sent to officer candidate school, and Pinckney moved up to tank commander. "So, by May I was a back sergeant. I had been in less than a year, and now I was someone of authority."

The biggest incident for Pinckney when he was with the training division happened one day while the tank was out on maneuvers. An ammunition truck arrived and delivered ammo to the Priest.

"The ammo sergeant was picking on my men, so I told him to lay off. He had no cause to be picking on the guys. So he said, 'Well, why don't we go off in the woods and settle this?' And I told him that probably wasn't necessary. And so he said, 'Ok, you're yellow.'"

"I turned red. Nobody could call me yellow. So we headed off to the woods. I had about 30 seconds to think about my strategy as we walked over there. He was quite a bit bigger than me, and if he had combat training, I was in trouble. But I was taking a chance that he was just a street fighter."

"When I was in high school, our gym teacher was the Upper Midwest Golden Gloves champion. He taught us a little bit about boxing. He told me one time, 'Pinckney, you've got quick hands, but you've got to get your feet to cooperate if you want to go somewhere."

"So we got to the woods, and just as I thought, he took a wild swing at me. I wasn't there. I got a left to his temple, and down he went. He tried to get up, and I knocked him down again. He tried to get up again, and I knocked him down. Finally, he said, 'Enough.'"

Winning the fight wasn't the end of the incident, though. The ammo sergeant reported Pinckney to his commanding officer.

"The next day I was arrested by a guard with gun. He said he was taking me to the colonel. I remember the officer's name was Col. Arthur P. Callahan. "Col. Callahan said to me, 'Okay, sergeant, what's the story?' I told him that the other sergeant was picking on my men, and I was defending them. He looked at me and said, 'Go back to duty, sergeant. I wish I had more men like you.'"

Pinckney and the others continued to train new men through late 1944, long after the D-Day invasion. "Training gets damned old after a while. We thought it was our turn to go fight."

They finally received an infusion of new soldiers who had been drafted but allowed to stay in college.

"I felt sorry for those troops that came in in late 1944. They got three weeks of artillery training, three weeks of infantry training, and three weeks of tanks. They trained until sometimes nine at night, and they took it. They got to go home for two weeks, and then they were headed overseas."

By December 1944, the division was in France.

"I remember going through St. Lo. There was absolutely nothing left. I recall the first time we got shot at in France. Hitler had a rail-mounted artillery piece about 20 miles away, and they had us picked out."

"It was our first encounter with being shot at, and it was at night. I just got the hell away from any vehicles. I was just out in the dark by myself."

"We got to Belgium right after the Battle of the Bulge, and we just did mop up activity."

"They were assigned to Patton's Army. 'I didn't like Patton and nobody else did either. He had all these Patton rules. We called them chicken shit. One day you had to wear a patch, and the next day you didn't. One day you had to wear a necktie, and the next day you didn't.'"

"After the Bulge, the 20th Armored joined the rest of the Army in pushing into Germany and pushing the German Army back."

Pinckney's unit was mobile artillery. "We moved mostly at night, and some prisoners we picked up called us the 'Ghost Division.' We would go down a road single file, but then we'd get an order to deploy to fire."

"One tank would go to the left and one to the right all the way down the line and we'd prepare our howitzer to fire."

"When word came from forward observer where the target was, often a small city, the tanks would follow a procedure. 'We send out smoke shells. The first one was deliberately aimed beyond the target, and the second one short. The third should have been right on if everything went as planned.'"

It was Pinckney's job as the commander to convert the yardage given by the forward observer to the degrees in aiming the howitzer.

If the target was a small town, the tanks would fire until..."
January 2019

those in the town started waving white flags to indicate surrender. “We wanted them to wave those white flags.”

The troops enjoyed a Bob Hope USO show, probably in Germany or Austria.

One of the scariest moments of the advance into Germany was crossing the Rhine River on a pontoon bridge. “Where we crossed the river, it’s about a half mile wide. But that night it felt like it was five miles wide.”

When the heavy tanks would go out on the bridge, they’d sink down close to the water line on the pontoons. “It was one hell of a ride. I was never so glad to see land again.”

The Germans had two-stage rockets then that would go right over our heads. You could always hear when the second stage kicked in. One time a couple of quarter-master guys brought us a new vehicle, but they didn’t have a way back so they were stuck with us. One of those rockets went over, and they were ducking. One of them said, ‘Did you hear that? Those (expletive deleted) are double-clutching.’

In April, the unit’s sergeant major left. The same Colonel Callahan who had complimented Pinckney for defending his men, called him to headquarters and informed him that he was the new sergeant major.

“I’ve still got my Eisenhower jacket with those six stripes on it. I went from $78 a month to $138 a month, and I never had better duty. I would get up early and get the orders of the day, and then have a first sergeants’ call and give them the orders of the day.”

On the 29th of April, 1945, the forward element of the 20th Armored advanced on a little town about 10 miles northwest of Munich.

“ donde was maybe the first division to come back after the war, and the scene when we were docking was unbelievable. The tugboat horns were tooting. There were boats in the harbor with girls dancing. What a celebration.”

“Callahan who had complimented Pinckney for defending his men, called him to headquarters and informed him that he was the new sergeant major.

“You’ve got to understand that after the massacre at Malmedy (during the Battle of the Bulge) by SS troops, I was relieved of command but not demoted. And a colonel were both court martialed for that. They were captured. “They were taken out and shot. A captain and a gondola train car full of skulls. I didn’t see the ovens.

“Two armored divisions were singled out for immediate transportation to the Pacific for the invasion of Japan. The 11th and the 20th. Pinckney and his comrades took a train to Camp Lucky Strike on the coast of France to take a boat ride back to America.

“Pinckney is an avid gardener and canner. Sometimes, he’ll jump in his shiny, black Chevy Equinox and head out for a cribbage game in Russell.

In the mid-50s, H.W. Ross began selling its yards, and Pinckney started looking around for his future. He became the manager at the Tyler Lumber Company. “When I took over, it was doing between a hundred thousand and two hundred thousand dollars a year in business. I got it up to over $4 million a year.”

“In the wee, wee hours of the morning, we stumbled into Dachau. Our forward artillery observer knocked down the first gate, the east gate, going into Dachau. He was the first American there.

“We left all our rations behind at Dachau for the prisoners. At a reunion of his division many years later, the group of tankers was addressed by a woman who had been a young girl at Dachau when it was liberated. “She told us that she was so dirty and so malnourished that she wondered how anybody could touch her.”

Pinckney recalls that a group of SS guards at the camp were captured. “They took a lot of out and shot. A colonel and a colonel were both court martialed for that. They were relieved of command but not demoted. The 11th and the 20th. Pinckney and his comrades took a train to Camp Lucky Strike on the coast of France to take a boat ride back to America.

“Remember three things about the end of the war. First, the quartermaster came to our camp and set up a large tent, and 15 men at a time could take showers.

“Second, when we were on the ship, for lunch they always served the same thing: Lettuce and two Polish sausages.

“And third was when the transport ship came into New York Harbor and we passed the Statue of Liberty. There wasn’t a dry eye on that ship.

“Pinckney got discharged on Dec. 19, 1945, at Fort Douglas, Wisconsin. “You couldn’t buy a train ticket out of Fort Douglas. The defense workers had bought all the seats on the trains. So another guy and I decided to hitchhike. They were short rides, but people would pick up servicemen then. We finally made it Sioux Falls and then we took a Jack Rabbit bus to Brookings. That’s where we split up.”

Pinckney finally got home in Western Minnesota on Christmas Eve afternoon. “It was at my wife’s home, and there were 21 of us and only three beds. Doris and I slept on the living floor on Christmas eve.

“Pinckney did that for a while, but didn’t like it. One day, he just refused an assignment. The company eventually offered him the manager’s job at Estelline, South Dakota. “There was great hunting and fishing there, and so I took the job. I was there 10 years.”

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“A couple of weeks later, we were moving into Munich which was the headquarters of the SS.

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“I don’t know where this was. Someplace along the way on the way back to Kentucky on a furlough.”
Order the sinking of the Ward.

Outerbridge, who had been in command of the Ward when it was hit by a kamikaze plane and crippled. The crew abandoned the ship, and the ship was sunk by an American destroyer so it would not fall into Japanese hands.

Extradition questions, and one went on the other. If they had flown in single file, they would have been easy pickings for Japanese attackers. “They were doing the best they could, and they didn’t believe we were kind of upset about it. We were done by us and not the Japanese. I guess you could say the action might have given the U.S. forces in Hawaii an hour to prepare, but instead the carrier-based Japanese aircraft arrived at 4:48 a.m. as a total surprise.

“Later on we were attacked by two Japanese aircraft. They were in formation, side by side, wingtip to wingtip. When they dropped their bombs, one went on one side of us and one went on the other. If they had flown in single file those 600 pound bombs would have done us in.”

Thill smiled and said, “So the first shot of the war was done by us and not the Japanese. I guess you could say the Ward started the war.”

The Ward, he said, continued to patrol the harbor for a few days before it was relieved.

In one of the more astounding coincidences in the war, exactly three years later on Dec. 7, 1944, the Ward was hit by a kamikaze plane and crippled. The crew abandoned ship, and the ship was sunk by an American destroyer so it would not fall into Japanese hands.

The commander of the other destroyer was W.W. Outerbridge, who had been in command of the Ward when it sank the midget submarine. Outerbridge had the duty to order the sinking of the Ward.

“He was a good man even if he did sink his own ship,” Thill said.

Michael Wenger was the military historian at the Round Table session. He is the author of two books on Pearl Harbor, with five more planned in the series.

Wenger, from North Carolina, is considered America’s leading authority on Japanese carrier operations in World War II, and in recent years has turned his attention to the attacks on Hawaii that brought the U.S. into the war.

His talk at Fort Snelling was specific to the attack on Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, a facility at the south side of the island that mainly housed patrol planes.

Wenger gave a brief history of the island, which was owned by the Honolulu Plant Company until it was taken over by the government to build an Army air field in 1917. The Navy also built a base in 1919 and the two branches shared the island after that.

He said that Dec. 7, 1941, was just another day. “There was just too much going on to anticipate anything but a normal morning. A report from a PBY, a navy patrol plane, talked about an enemy submarine one mile from the Pearl Harbor entrance. Another report from the USS Ward indicated the same.”

The officer on duty at the air station could hear the noise of an aircraft diving on the base, and he turned to another and asked if he got the identification of the offending aircraft, thinking it was an American plane sky karking. The other officer replied, “I think it was a squadron commander because I saw red on it.”

Wenger declined to get into a debate over whether President Roosevelt knew about the Japanese attack ahead of time, saying his was a military historian not a political historian.

Nakasone was asked if the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii were sent to internment camps as those living on the West Coast were. He said that for the most part they were not. He did say that over 2,000 who were suspected of having too close ties with Japan were arrested and incarcerated.

He remembered one Japanese plane flying overhead. “The cockpit was open, and the pilot was wearing a white scarf that streamed back. He looked like Snoopy.”

Nakasone watched dogfights, and saw one Japanese plane go down. “They took the body and buried it over in potter’s field.”

Later on, Nakasone studied at the Japanese Language School at Fort Snelling. After the war he moved to Minnesota and taught high school and college for over 30 years. His son, Gen. Paul Nakasone, is now the director of the National Security Agency.

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ONE TIRED SAL MEMBER — When Past 10th District Commander Paul Hassing spoke recently at the Waseca Veterans Day Dinner, grandson Ryland wanted to be with his grandpa.

FIFTH DISTRICT REACHES OUT — Fifth District Commander Joe Bayer and Wold-Chamberlin Unit member Kathy Teichroew manned The American Legion table at Home Depot on Veterans Day.

SCHROEDL HONORED — Longtime NECman Don Schroedl was honored for his work on the National Convention Corporation preparing for the Minneapolis Convention this summer. Joe Bayer presented.

VETERANS DAY WALK — St. Paul Post 8 and the Fourth District turned out to do a Veteran’s Day walk in downtown St. Paul. The organizer of the event was George Hunkins, in the center of the picture.

WOODBURY PRESENTS PAVER — Woodbury Post 501 presented a paver to Jon Beltz honoring his father, Robert, who served in the Navy during the Korean War. Jon and Maril Beltz had donated Robert’s war memorabilia to the post.

LEGION FOUNDATION — The Minnesota American Legion Foundation donated $3,000 to the Quilts of Valor, Minnesota Chapter. From left, Lloyd Ricker, president; Jenny Caugey, QOV; Bill Barbinkncht.

BACKUS WINNERS — At the annual Backus Post 368 Halloween Party, Pam and Jim Kichler won the costume contest representing the Hamms Bear and Wally the Beerman.

FALLDIN APPLES — Falldin Post 555 delivered apples for the teachers to Valley View Elementary in Columbia Heights. From left: Principal Edward Fellows, Commander Donovan Orttel and Ray Eiden.

NORTH BRANCH AWARDS — North Branch Post 85 recently awarded Law Officer and Paramedic/EMT awards for the year on Veterans Day. From left: Doug Volin, Lakes Region EMS, and Past Commander Randy Koivisto. At right Sgt. Matt Beckman of the Chisago County Sheriff’s Department.

EAGAN DONATION — Eagan Post 594 presented a flag collection box to the Sam’s Club in Eagan. Sam’s Club has been very supportive of the post through the years with donations. The flags will be collected regularly by the post, and saved for an annual flag retirement ceremony.
By making goals and seeing them through. If you haven’t figured the older you get, so they say. (I quit counting years ago.) Faribault had a great program (Thanks Chuck) and all the speakers did a great job in their nice hats. And the dedication to Pearl Harbor was also very touching and thanks to the Gold Star Mother for showing us the other side of the coin as they say.

Membership is coming in very well, but still needs to be a little better. It can always be better. Don’t forget that Dist. 1’s Midwinter is in Lyen. Dist. 1’s Oratorical Contest will also be at this time too.

Just had 1st Dist.’s Christmas Party at the Eyota Post and was a very nice event. The kids saw Santa, played some bingo, ate great food and had lots of conversation. It was also a very beautiful day, temperature-wise. I hope everyone had a good time. (I know Hamm’s grandkids did).

May God Bless America and God put a Special Blessing on our troops.

Hello American Legion Family Members,

If someone wishes you a "Happy New Year" I hope you take a moment to really reflect on what makes you happy. It seems to me the calendar page turns to 2019. Have you made any resolutions? What personal goals have you made for yourself, your family, your community, The American Legion? Think about your year, your talents, your gifts, your interests, what could you offer to make a change, donation, set a goal on what you can do to help our Veterans and the future of The American Legion. We really need to grow our organization so we can continue to help our Veterans, their families and our communities.

Upcoming events:

January 11-12 Mid-Winter Conference/Oratorical Contest Legion Post Brinckley.
February 9th, Sweetheart Rally, Royalton Post 137 February 16th, District Rally, Legion Post Lake Crystal.

Thank you for all your support to my projects the Lurverne Veterans Home and Legionville.

Thank you for your service to our country. Have a very happy new year.

New Year’s Greetings to everyone.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year. I know I certainly did. Lots of friends and family and way, way too much food. I swear everyone gains weight during the holidays. I’ve made a few New Year’s Resolutions and I’m going to try to stick with them this year. It gets harder and harder every year. heehee sigh. Now is the time to focus on the new year ahead and what it means for The American Legion. I know that everyone, especially the members, is focusing on membership but honestly that is the only way for us to succeed is by getting more members and getting them involved. Not only that, but we need to educate the people on what The American Legion is. I run into so many people that think we are just a bar and we need to change that ideology. I have reached out to my friends and contacts about us. Contact your local schools and volunteer with the students. You won’t be disappointed. Children are hungry for knowledge and if we make an impact now, they will look for them in the future. They will tell their parents, friends and family about The American Legion and all the wonderful things we are doing. Get out there. Don’t be shy.

Remember, the new year stands before us like a chapter book, waiting to be written. We can help. We can help write that story by voting and getting our voices heard.

January 2019         Minnesota Legionnaire    Page 13
Happy New Year. I would like to say that 2018 was an awesome year for me personally to have the great honor of being your Department President. I am so humbled.

The year has flown by and I am starting my second half of my term as your president. It has been very busy. I wouldn’t have traded it for anything in the world. Traveling the state, meeting with our members, and visiting with our veterans has been the best part of my year.

This last month I traveled to the 4th District for their Membership/Potluck Dinner, helped at the Shop, Shop & Share at Maplewood Mall, attended the 2019 District Mid-Winter Conferences. This is a great time to share the information with your unit members that were in attendance. This is the time to write, call, or email our elected officials to remind them of the needs of our veterans. That is what we are here for.

Please do not wait until Poppy Day. The National organization will be sending out a second notice to those who have not paid their dues by January 31. More information will be in this month’s Auxiliary Bulletin.

This year the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held at Bethel University. The session will be held June 10-17.

The National organization by December 10. That means some members may have trouble paying their dues. Please provide the fee to sponsor a girl but this must be run through a Unit. All reservation fees will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis. Any person, business or organization may provide the fee to sponsor a girl but this must be run through a Unit.

Another Christmas season is in the history books and I sure hope that Santa was good to you. We had a marvelous Christmas. The Pearl Harbor Rally was really well attended and everyone was decked out in the Christmas finery (is that a word?). It was so much fun and thank you Chuck Stone for the preparation and presentation of the program. You did good buddy! President Jean overdid it with gifts as usual and we had the best time. I really am happy that the Auxiliary still uses this as a membership rally – we had a whole bunch of turn-ins – 467 to be exact. That really boosted us up. Now I am asking you to try and make the Sweetheart Rally which will be held at the Royalton Post on February 9. Chairman Robin is in charge of this one so God only knows what surprises she will have for us. I guess my shout out this month is to all of you who attended the rally in Faribault. It is so much fun to get together and visit – and the biggest surprise was that Shorty went with me. I just still am wondering how Don Hayden ended up at the “important person” table – still love you Don. Hi to Leon – he is my most faithful reader ever. Everyone has a safe and prosperous New Year in 2019.

100th AUXILIARY ANNIVERSARY EMBLEM

We will have a small supply of our 100th Auxiliary Anniversary emblem-magnet available to anyone who would like to purchase one. They will also be $5.00 each. There will be a small shipping charge. If interested, please call the Department Office.

56th Junior Conference will be at Richfield on April 13

JUNIOR CONFERENCE
Saturday, April 13th is the date for the 56th Annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at Richfield American Legion Post 94 with the Fifth District serving as hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 12th. Complete information and the Call to the Junior Conference was included in the January-February Unit mailing. Be sure you share this information with your Junior Activities Chairman. Make arrangements for your Juniors to attend.

We need more Juniors to attend our Conference and share their successes with other Junior members so we can grow the program. Junior members are the Auxiliary’s future and we must nurture and promote what they do. We have a wonderful Honorary Junior President, Harley Donnelly, who has done a great job promoting Juniors and what they do for our Veterans.

GIRLS STATE RESERVATIONS
In the January/February Unit mailing, every Unit received the necessary information and reservation form to reserve a place for their candidate(s) to the 2019 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Please ask your Unit President for the necessary information.

After your Unit sends in the reservation fee ($300.00 per girl) and it has been processed, your Unit will receive a packet registar of information including a registration packet for each girl you are sponsoring. This will be sent to the person who signed the registration form.

Information will be mailed to each high school in Minnesota in January. The schools will be waiting to be contacted by you. Let them know now if you will be sponsoring a girl. A Unit may sponsor as many girls from the same high school as it would like to. There is no limit. The candidate must be a Minnesota public, charter, parochial, private, home-school, or a resident of Minnesota. All reservation fees will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. Any person, business or organization may provide the fee to sponsor a girl this must be run through a Unit.

This year the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held at Bethel University. The session will be held June 9-15.

2018/2019 POPPY ORDERS
Poppy orders are still being accepted in the department office. As of this writing, we have received orders from 232 Units. Please get your order into the Department Office. We need to know how many poppies are needed so we can plan accordingly. If you have already ordered and need to place a second order, please do so.

Shipment of Poppy orders has been ongoing. Upon receipt of your order, please check it carefully and report any discrepancies to the department office immediately. Please do not wait until Poppy Day.

THE PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

By Jean Walker

December 19, 2018, Auxiliary Membership

<table>
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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Membership to Date</th>
<th>Percent of Goal</th>
<th>Membership Last Year</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
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<td>3,080</td>
<td>72.77%</td>
<td>3,598</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>4,924</td>
<td>3,613</td>
<td>75.31%</td>
<td>3,400</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3,093</td>
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<td>66.39%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>788</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>59.65%</td>
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<td>Seven</td>
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<td>2,691</td>
<td>68.40%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>990</td>
<td>54.81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
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<td>2,919</td>
<td>67.20%</td>
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<td>Ten</td>
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<td>60.25%</td>
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<td>24,711</td>
<td>68.79%</td>
<td>26,698</td>
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SECOND DUES NOTICES
The National organization will be sending out a second dues notice around January 15, 2019 to all Senior members whose 2019 dues were NOT received and recorded by the National organization by December 10. That means some of you will receive this second notice though you recently paid your dues.

Remind – Any member who has not paid her 2018 dues by January 31 is considered delinquent and loses her rights, privileges and benefits of membership. Payment of her 2018 dues reinstates her as a member in good standing.

ANNULAR REPORTS
Annual reports along with Trophy and Award information have been sent to all Unit President’s in the January/February Unit Mailing packet. Please make sure and go through the reports and instruction sheets. If your Unit doesn’t participate in all of the programs be sure to fill out the ones you do participate in and return them. If your Unit is inactive and doesn’t participate in any of the programs, please send them back stating “do not participate” on the form.

APPLES FOR TEACHERS — Gaylord Unit President Barb Muchow provides apples for the teachers during National Education Week.
Legislation has become a ‘hot button’ subject across America in recent years

Once viewed as a “ho hum” subject, legislation has in recent years become a “hot button” for discussion among individuals and organized groups across America. Legislation is very important to all of us. Legislators have an amazing amount of control over such areas as your health costs and benefits, the state of the environment, property and personal income taxes, the strength of our military and our national security level. Each year, 300-400 resolutions (with legislative intent) are brought before the American Legion at National Convention! After reviewing each resolution, the American Legion Legislative Division narrows it’s focus down to 20-30 key issues.

The American Legion Auxiliary’s legislative purpose is to support the key issues determined by the American Legion. It’s important to remember the ALA doesn’t “take a stand” on an issue unless it is the official position of the American Legion. We also do not endorse any particular political candidates.

WHAT CAN YOU DO AS AN AUXILIARY MEMBER?
1. Obtain a copy of the ALA LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY GUIDE. It can be viewed and downloaded from our National website (www.alaforveterans.com)
2. If you have a computer, get the most up-to-date American Legion legislative news at www.legion.org/legislative Share the information with your unit at a meeting.
3. Signup for your legislator’s newsletters or “e” newsletters. You can quickly scan and discard/delete, unless there is an issue that “pushes your buttons” and deserves a quick note, telephone call or email from you as a voter in their district.
4. When an important vote is imminent on a piece of legislation affecting veterans, military or their families, you’ll receive an email urging you to immediately contact your legislator. www.capwiz.com/legion/mlm/signup

MARY HENDRICKSON
Department Legislation Chairman

Hello from Good Thunder
Unit 616/District 2 – Good Thunder

Good Morning, Ladies

Over the past few years many of our members have passed away reducing our membership drastically. It occurred to me that we needed to tap into the next generation.

My dad was a proud WWII veteran. He and my mom had 31 grandchildren which included 17 girls. My 2 daughters were already members but that left 15 eligible to join due to his service. I reached out to them and 8 of them are now members! Some of them also signed up their daughters as members! I also asked several other daughters or wives of current legion members.

I am now looking for projects that our Sr members can do with the Jrs. I welcome suggestions!

Thank you for your kind words. Happy Holidays to all of you!

Maureen Hollerich

EAGAN AT HASTINGS — Eagan Post and Auxiliary 594 participating in the Trim a Tree at the Hastings Veterans Home. Eagan graciously donated holiday treats and refreshments to everyone while there.

ADOPT A VET — Eagan Post and Auxiliary 594 participated in Adopt-a-Vet program at the Hastings Veterans Home. Each group adopted a veteran for the holiday season. Wayne Beierman and Sue Flynn delivered the wrapped gifts to Sue Register who is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Veterans Home.
Reverse Mortgages

The future doesn’t have to be uncertain.
The lower the Margin, the more you qualify for. Call for our low rates. Libor Margins as low as 1.5%. Call or email me for a free consumer guide and a personal quote.

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

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mkraus@muhomeequities.com

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