Minnesota Senate passes Restorative Justice Act

House to wait until bond-rating quiet period ends; both chambers to do it all again

By Tim Engstrom

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Senate on Aug. 12 passed the Veterans Restorative Justice Act during the third special session, but it’s not a law yet. This time, the Minnesota House didn’t vote on it. It was a reversal of the Senate’s vote in the July special session and a reversal of the 2019 regular session, when the House passed it and the Senate did not.

But members of the Minnesota Commanders’ Task Force expect it to cross the finish line before Election Day.

Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka and House Speaker Melissa Hortman separately told the Legionnaire they will be glad to approve it all over again and send it to the governor’s desk for a signature next month.

Hortman cited the bond-rating blackout for the House not acting. Before the one-day session, Minnesota Management and Budget Commissioner Myron Frans had called for a quiet period on the state fiscal outlook. Even if the VRJA saves money, it affects the outlook.

That means the bill will be voted on again in September.

Gazelka said it made sense to get it done. “It was never about veterans not being important,” he said. “It was about not doing too much in a special session without a committee process.”

He credited Sen. Roger Chamberlain of Lino

Continued on Page 2

Legion donates 50 iPads to VA

Dept. won a grant from Operation Comfort Warriors

By Cameran Richardson

MINNEAPOLIS — When the COVID-19 pandemic caused VA health care facilities nationwide to close their doors to visitors for the safety of hospitalized veterans and staff, the Minneapolis VA Medical Center put plans in motion to provide virtual visitor opportunities. Those plans involved an $18,000 Operation Comfort Warriors grant from The American Legion.

Operation Comfort Warriors is an American Legion program dedicated to meeting the needs of wounded, injured or ill veterans and military personnel by providing them with items usually not supplied by the government.

On July 30, 50 Apple iPads were presented to Minneapolis VA Director Pat Kelly to help connect impatient veterans of the Fairmont area and local volunteers, it went to Martin County, said Steve Chase, government liaison on the Martin County Veterans Memorial Committee and a Legion member.

State employee Joseph Grove, who manages federal surplus property for the state, was key in helping Minnesota get the attack helicopter.

From California, the Cobra arrived at the Fairmont airport on June 24, 2019, thanks to Baarts Trucking out of Truman. The committee formed a 28-person restoration team led by Legion member Tom Westcott of Fairmont.

On June 18, 2020, the Cobra was mounted on a 10-foot pole at the Martin County Veterans Memorial Park.

It’s safe to say thousands attended the ceremony the morning of Aug. 1. Hundreds were inside the ropes and hundreds more were outside. Further
Minnesota CTF shows how vets work together

Sen. Limmer: Avoid a possible slippery slope

Continued from Page 1

Lakes for getting the bill over the top.

Chairman, chief author of the Senate’s bill, said the timing was right, considering information learned in hearings. He said lowering the costs of criminal justice and aiding service members transitioning to civilians is important.

“As a society, as a culture, as a state, we don’t want people in the prison who don’t need to be there,” he said. The only change in this version was moving the effective date up to April 1, 2021, he noted.

The measure allows judges to hold pleas for low-level criminal and instead send a veteran to veterans-oriented treatment, such as VA counseling, if the actions can be tied to military-related trauma.

The Senate only allows five authors per bill. Other authors were Sen. Carri Rozeb of Broomyard, Sen. Andrew Lang of Olivia, Sen. Bruce Anderson of Buffalo and Sen. Jeff Howe of Willmar.

Sen. Michelle Benson of Ham Lake pushed for the bill during caucuses. She said she will make sure it passes again in September.

“We are supportive of veterans and their unique experiences being treated in a unique and respectful way by Minnesota courts,” she said. “We are excited for the opportunity to rebuild their lives if they have taken a wrong step.”

Rep. Rob Ecklund of International Falls, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, chief author of the original 2019 bill and a Legionnaire, called it the signature legislation of his committee.

“I was pleased to see the Senate did finally act on the bill, and as far as I’m concerned it’s been fully vetted in the House,” he said. “We will take it up as soon as quiet period for bonds sales is done, and we’ll be ready to go.”

Rep. Rob Dettmer of Forest Lake, ranking member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee and a Legionnaire, was a co-author of the original 2019 bill.

“This piece of legislation should have been brought down during the regular session,” he said.

He said it got passed by both chambers in a September special session. He also wants to see how it lines up with plans for veteran courts.

American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak said the CTF has worked on the Veterans Restorative Justice Act for the last three years.

Dvorak said a number of issues were handled by the Legislature, and those calls had a positive impact. He thanked the senators for changing course and that the bill reaching the governor’s desk in September.

“It shouldn’t have taken this long,” he said.

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs staff for their work on the bill.

It passed the Senate on Aug. 13. It passed the House in 2019. Kemery and other CTF members were present, he said.

“With the 2019 bill and a Legionnaire, Veterans Affairs Commissioner Karin Anderer and as far as I’m concerned it’s not going to be a problem to pass again when a bond-rating quiet period ends.”

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The American Legion issued the following statement Aug. 18 highlighting its commitment to veterans who rely on family mail delivery to receive prescriptions: "Millions of our nation's veterans depend on a strong U.S. Postal Service for critical needs such as prescription refills. The Department of Veterans Affairs fills over half a million prescriptions each day through the Consolidated Mail Output Pharmacy system. The vast majority of these prescriptions are mailed to veterans through the USPS. "Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced "Veteran- to-veteran" in-person services at VA facilities, including access to the pharmacy, places veterans in greater reliance on mail-order prescriptions and a strong USPS. If our leaders in Washington, D.C. choose not to fund the post office by the end of September, The American Legion is concerned it could have dire consequences for those millions of veterans who rely on the mail every day to deliver life-saving medication. The Postal Service often plays a pivotal role in the delivery of paperwork needed to process claims for veterans who have been disabled in the service of their country. "The American Legion has spoken out in favor of a strong USPS before the passage of a resolution at our National Convention in 2016. The American Legion implores Congress to address this issue impacting our nation’s veterans in an expedited manner so they can continue to receive the critical services they need during these difficult times."
Nonpolitical piece was right

During an election year when our country is so politically di-vided, Department Judge Advo-cate Greg Colby’s August article, “When it is fine to be political and when it is wise to be nonpo-litical,” was very timely. With social media, we now have the ability to share our personal political views to a much larger audience. Perhaps some need a reminder that recognized Legionnaires, veteran advocates and veteran leaders, our personal views can inadver-tently and unintentionally be perceived as the views of The American Legion. It’s important that we protect The American Legion’s neutrality in politics so we can always be welcoming to all veterans, regard-less of political affiliation. If you missed Judge Colby’s article, I urge you to take the time to go back and read it.

Darrel Redepenning Past Dept. Commander Anoka Post 102 Judge Advocate

China is not USA’s friend

With all of the Wuhan virus going around, it must take time and take a long hard look at where we as Americans are spending our discretionary dollars. Because the commu-nist government of China is using our dollars to build up its military!

When we go into any retail establishment or online to pur-chase an item that says “Made in China” you are helping to destroy America, the America that we all took an oath to defend. Am I always able to buy American? No. Sometimes we have to hold our noses. I, myself, have been in retail stores many times and see an item that I think, “Gee, I’d like to have that,” but then I look for the country of origin. That is “Made in China” and it gets put back on the shelf. I’ve learned to do without it, thank you.

Earl Pederson
Renville Post 1918

Mail Call

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Commentary was political

I found Page 6 of the August 2020 Minnesota Legionnaire re-flective of the times we live in. On the top right of Page 6 the judge advocate advises veterans members to be non-political. He points to the Legion’s Constitu-tion and Article 2 Section 2. However, on the left of the page, the service officer totally violates this idea and encor-ages VA secretary Wilkie, the present administration, heaps praise on a D and specific scorn on sixs. As usual if it is important to the membership it is not followed by the leaders of our state organization. Big double standard.

David Deeringer Anoka Post 102

Editor’s note: Thank you, D. SK, for your mention of media inadver-tently being out of detail-oriented. It is noted going forward.

Can USA honor the Rosies?

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Earl Pederson
Renville Post 1918
Taps

Anderson, Harry C., 102, Navy veteran of World War II, died June 3, 2020. He was a 51-year member of Richfield Post 435.

Baker, Ronald W., 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam era, died April 4, 2020. He was a 32-year member of Coon Rapids Post 334.

Bannister, Irvin T. “Mike,” 81, Army Reserve and National Guard veteran of the Vietnam and Gulf Wars era, died July 15, 2020. He was in the military for more than 33 years. He was a 35-year member of Backus Post 368 and served on the Backus Guard.

Barclay, Floyd A., 86, Air Force veteran of Vietnam War, died May 14, 2020. He was a 37-year member of Mahtomedi Post 5.

Barduson, Truman L., 85, Army veteran of the Korea era, died Aug. 8, 2020. He was stationed in Germany. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Cada, Michael G., 75, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War era, died July 2, 2020. He was a 38-year member of Champlin Post 600.

Hoffman, Tom, 81, Naval Air Reserve veteran of the Korea era, died July 24, 2020. He was a member of Gaylord Post 10.

Jirsik, William J. “Bill,” Army veteran of the Vietnam War and Cuban Missile Crisis, died July 20, 2020. He was a 50-year member of New Prague Post 245.

Johnson, Donald, 83, Army veteran of the Korea era, died May 3, 2020. He was a member of Broten Post 280.

Johnson, Edward, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War. He was a past commander of Cloquet Post 262.

Kendall, Richard A., Army veteran of the Korea era, died July 22, 2020. He was a 34-year member of Little Falls Post 46.

Kolar, Charles W., 95, Air Force veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Aug. 5, 2020. He served as an aerial navigator during World War II. He was a 74-year member of Minneapolis Fallsoldi Post 555.


Kremer, William N. Sr., 85, Army veteran of the Korea era, died July 19, 2020. He was stationed in Germany during the Berlin Crisis. He was a company training sergeant in the 8th MP Company Division. He was a 42-year member of Dodge Center Post 384.

Lindeman, Lester W.H., 77, Air Force veteran of the Korean era, died July 5, 2020. He served as a cryptographer for the Anoka-Ramsey Community College football team.

Lindeman, W. Blake Sr., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War. He was a 51-year member of Richfield Post 435.

Lund, Brian T., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 24, 2020. He was part of the Color Guard as bugler for and 30-year member of Cloquet Post 527.

Majerus, Clarence J., 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 1, 2020. He was a 54-year member of Cloquet Post 527.

Moe, William H., 80, Navy veteran of the Gulf War era, died July 17, 2020. He was an interpreter and member of The American Legion.

Mortenson, Paul A., 89, Army veteran of World War II, died July 14, 2020. He served as Post chaplain for many years for Benson Post 62.

Myers, Theodore “Ted,” 86, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 12, 2020. He was a long line of family doctors. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 9.

Nieman, Earl L., 81, Air Force veteran of Vietnam era, died July 22, 2020. He was a 34-year member of Little Falls Post 46.

Norling, Vernon “Lefty,” 84, Army veteran of the Cold War, died June 29, 2020. He was inducted into the Minnesota Aubie's Hall of Fame in 2004. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Olson, Ralph A. “Ole,” 82, Army veteran of the Cold War, died July 19, 2020. He was stationed in Germany. He started Olson Sheet Metal. He was a 46-year member of Willmar Post 167.

Onstad, Kurt O., 66, Army Reserve veteran of Lebanon/Grenada era and Gulf War era, died Dec. 4, 2018, and interred July 24, 2020. He had a 20-year career and commanded several Reserve units in Minnesota. He was a member of Spring Grove Post 439.

Opalski, Raymond I. “Ray,” 93, Army veteran of World War II, died June 2, 2020. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Poppler, Gerald E., 82, Army veteran of the Korean era, died Aug. 9, 2020. He served in Colorado handling unit mail. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Rasmussen, Richard A., Army veteran of the Korea era, died July 27, 2020. He was a member of the Honor Guard. He was a member of Lewiston Post 90.

Rasmussen, Robin F., 90, Navy veteran of the Korean era, died March 30, 2020. He was a 53-year member of Willmar Post 167.

Ripplinger, Joseph, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 10, 2020. He was a 35-year member of Underwood Post 489.

Roche, Kenneth R., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died May 26, 2020. He served in France and Germany under Gen. George S. Patton. He was a 38-year member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Roering, Norbert J., Army veteran of World War II, died June 28, 2020. He was a 42-year member of Upsala Post 350.

Rolfe, Rodney C. “Rod,” 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam era, died July 9, 2020. He was a 50-year member of Alexandria Post 157.

Rypkema, Wallace R., 95, Coast Guard veteran of World War II, died April 17, 2020. He patrolled for submarines around the waters of the Florida Keys. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Sawyer, Forrest P., 96, Army veteran of World War II, died July 6, 2020. He was a member of Waconia Post 9.

Saxton, Gerald “Jerry,” 92, Army National Guard veteran of Korea and later era, died March 30, 2020. He was an officer and full-time military technician at Camp Ripley. He was a 69-year member of the Little Falls Post 46.

Schmidt, Brad W., 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 17, 2020. He served two tours as an air combat medic in the 101st Airborne Division. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross Star with Valor and two Purple Hearts. He played offensive guard for the Anoka-Ramsey Community College football team and then the University of Minnesota football team. He was a member of Buena Post 3.

Schug, Theodore A., 73, Navy veteran of the Vietnam era, died Aug. 16, 2020. He was a member of Waconia Post 150 and held positions of gambling manager and a member of the rifle squad.

Schulz, Robert L. “Fuzz,” 65, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 22, 2020. He was a helicopter crew chief with the 101st Airborne Division. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 9.

Seifert, Donald “Don,” 89, Navy veteran of the Korea War, died July 30, 2020. He was a member of the USS Bexar as an operations office yeoman and a captain’s office yeoman. He became a school business manager and was the announcer for Perham High sports. He was a 63-year member of the American Legion Post 148. During his term, he was instrumental in building the Dent Veterans Memorial.

Sennertsey, Perry G., 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam era, died Aug. 17, 2020. He served in Germany during the war. He was a member of Lakeshore Post 40.

Shaver, Jerald, 89, Army veteran of the Korea era, died June 10, 2020. He was a WACO echelon of Eagan Post 594.


Smith, Joseph M., 60, Army National Guard veteran of Lebanon/Grenada era and Gulf War era, died Aug. 9, 2020. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Spitzman, Sheldon, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 30, 2020. His family founded the Spitzman Fruit Co. He was a member of Eagan Post 594.

Obituaries

The Minnesota Legionnaires reserve the right to edit all obituaries for style and brevity. Please send to tengstrom@mlnion.org or in the mail to the Department of Minnesota.
Hello American Legion Family,

I hope everyone is doing well. For those of you who aren’t, please reach out. We have a great organization that is full of people who understand what you may be going through. It looks like the Camporee is a go for September. It will be great seeing everyone. The ALR Romp on Sept. 17-20 is also a go. We will be having a meeting for all of the District reps at 1400 hours Saturday, Sept. 19. (That’s 2 p.m. for those of you who have been out a long time). We will discuss the new National Riders Resolution along with a few other items.

For all of the chapters out there, please let us know about the things you are doing. We have to start tooting our own horns. We do so many things that people don’t know about, and we need to change that. Let the world know just how awesome we are.

Again, if you need anything, or just need to talk, my number is 612-598-0419. I really hope to be seeing a lot of you this month.

Paul Hassing is the director of the American Legion Riders for the Department of Minnesota.

### American Legion Riders Chapter 395 out of Onamia made its inaugural scholarship donation of $500 each to two Onamia High School seniors who graduated in 2020. The recipients were Zach Anderson and Bryce Brandt.

### Pipestone Post 6 presents a certificate to World War II Army veteran Harold Totman for becoming a 75-year member.

### Dent Post 148 planted a tree at Veterans Park in Dent on July 15.

### The caption of this photo in the Redwood Falls Gazette from November 1968 said:


Clipping sent in by Tom Schottenbauer of St. Louis Park Post 282. His grandfather is fifth from the right in the top row.

### The American Legion Department of Minnesota 2021 District Membership Report as of Aug 20, 2020

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The National American Legion staff hired a Minneapolis freelance videographer to cover the Operation Comfort Warriors donation on July 30. Here, the videographer records Minneapolis VA Medical Center Director Pat Kelly and American Legion Department of Minnesota Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller. The video is worth watching and can be found by going to https://www.legion.org/operationcomfortwarriors/videos/ then scrolling down a bit.

Operation Comfort Warriors comes through for VA veterans face-to-face virtually with their loved ones during this ongoing pandemic. “This is just one more example, a continued example of the incredible support we get from all of our service organizations, but I really want to distinguish the work we have been doing and the help we have been getting from The American Legion,” Kelly said during the presentation outside the Minneapolis VA, where American Legion Department of Minnesota leadership were present. “Thank you, The American Legion. This is really going to help us.”

The OCW grant was made possible thanks to the efforts of American Legion Department of Minnesota Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller, whose office is next to the polytrauma unit at the Minneapolis VA. He informed the telehealth coordinator and assistant technology program coordinator of their need for iPads. “This demonstrates The American Legion’s longtime support and advocacy for the VA,” Wolfsteller said. “The American Legion always stands ready, and it’s here to assist the VA in its mission.”

Wolfsteller put in an OCW grant application for the iPads back in April, a time when iPads were in high demand due to schools nationwide moving to e-learning because of COVID-19. It took until July for the 10 o’clock news.

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Somehow, Baca got the iPads, he said. “I turned in the 9/11 grant application or administration. Nobody really knew what would happen next. At one point, they were all told they might become infantry, even though Dan had entered to serve the military. Carl was draft-aged in the most recent deployment. Dan Wieman enlisted into the U.S. Army in 1972 for two years before transferring to the Army Reserves for another 25 years. Carl retired in 1998. As a senior at Owatonna in 2001, Dan Wieman enlisted into the Army Reserves. Carl recalls talking to his son about joining. “I told him that if he joined, there is no turning back no matter how much he may not like it,” Carl said. “I also gave him the positives. You do get to travel, maybe not always to a place that you want to go,” he added.

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‘They were craftsmen who tirelessly patched them up’

Continued from Page 1

events commenced at the fairgrounds in the afternoon.

Vietnam veterans, especially ones who had ties to helicopters, came to see it from all across America.

Powders credited the pilots who flew the dangerous missions and the gunners who came along, then noted the chopper doesn’t fly by itself. She acknowledged the work of the crew chief, test pilots, mechanics and more.

“They were the craftsmen who tirelessly patched them up,” she said. She asked Vietnam vets to raise their hands.

“No one ever questions the intentions of these honorable men,” Powders said.

She then read a message from President Donald Trump.

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke, who grew up in Mankato, was a distinguished speaker, too. He told how he rode on a Cobra when he was in the National Guard. The pilot showed him the moves.

“I thought, ‘Oh, my goodness. Are we going to survive this ride?’” he said.

Near the end, the pilot employed autorotation, where the rotors turn without engine power as a result of upward airflow, and turned the engine off. Then he flared and turned the engine back on and landed.

“I said: Thank God I am still alive,” Herke said.

He said he appreciates Minnesota’s 308,000 veterans. He mentioned the MDVA’s five veterans homes and said the agency is working to add three more. The MDVA has three state cemeteries and wants to add two others.

The MDVA, he said, is helping with employment and disability claims and is working to reduce veteran suicides and eliminate veteran homelessness.

On Aug. 1, Minnesota had 263 known homeless veterans. He mentioned the efforts of Minnesota, as allies in the war, laid down their lives for our freedom.

He thanked the Vietnam helicopter crew who came to speak.

“Heroes are ordinary people doing extraordinary things in the face of extreme adversity,” he said.

He thanked the Minnesota Helicopter Pilots Association, which flew a Huey around that morning, and nurse Kay Bauer, the 2018 Minnesota Female Veteran of the Year.

Fairmont Mayor Debbie Foster gave a greeting. The Vietnamese Community of Minnesota, as allies in the war, laid a wreath on the memorial and said a poem. Westcott oversaw placement of dog tags on the pole that holds the Cobra.

Major Cory Germain, a chaplain with the Minnesota National Guard who is a pastor in Fairmont, gave a benediction. The American Legion and VFW fired a rifle salute, and high school students played “Taps” with a mournful echo. Bryn Miller was the drummer, and Emily and Hudson Laven were buglers.

South Vietnamese veterans who are part of the Vietnamese Community of Minnesota place a wreath at the Martin County Veterans Memorial. President Thomas Tan Cao stands, with a white shirt and black coat, at center. VA Acting Deputy Director Pamela Powers is in a blue dress and Martin County Veterans Memorial’s Steve Chase is in a Navy Dress Blue uniform.

Riflemen from honor guards with the Fairmont American Legion and VFW fire a salute at the Aug. 1 ceremony.

Proclamation from Gov. Walz

Whereas: Martin County, Minnesota, is dedicating an internationally famous Cobra Rotary Wing Attack Helicopter that is on public display at the Martin County Veteran Memorial Park as a reminder of the dedication of our veterans of county, state, country and our allies who have served in our Armed Forces.

Whereas: The bravery of the U.S. Army crews that flew the Cobra AH-1F-15327 completed all its combat missions in the Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos during the Vietnam War.

Whereas: The stallwart crews completed many missions of combat, recon and armed escort, and bullet holes riddled the helicopter 12 times in Vietnam. After a repair, the Cobra was put back in action.

Whereas: At the battle of Lan Son 719, in Laos, pilot David Stinson and gunner Stephen Wilton took on a devastating projectile in the hydraulic system directly behind pilot Stinson’s head, making a landing that will never be forgotten. Members of the South Vietnamese ARVN assisted in their rescue and they all made it back alive.

Whereas: Cobra-327 was again put to the test for Kern County, California, fire department. Strapped with a 380-gallon water tank and infrared sensors, it fought night fires, maneuvering in the tightest spots that earned this machine the title of “The Snake.”

Therefore: May this memorial remind us of all the veterans who have acted bravely in face of danger to preserve the American dream.

— signed by Gov. Tim Walz

Message from President Trump

I send my best wishes to those attending the dedication ceremony of the Bell Cobra Helicopter 327 in Fairmont, Minnesota.

Our nation’s service members and veterans are the pride of America and embody our country’s unyielding and intrepid spirit. Since our founding, they have dauntlessly defended our cherished freedoms and precious liberties. Thanks to their devotion to duty and willingness to defend our interests both at home and abroad, the United States has been blessed with unparalleled prosperity and success.

In addition to paying tribute to one of our nation’s most historic military assets, the Bell Cobra Helicopter 327, today’s ceremony is also an opportunity to honor our military members and their families for their immeasurable sacrifice and valiant service.

May God watch over our Armed Forces, and may he continue to bless the United States of America.

— signed by President Donald Trump
Shadows of Liberty: The Fallen Soldiers

This poem was read by Vietnamese Community of Minnesota President Thomas Tan Cao at a wreath-laying in Fairmont on Aug. 1. It was written by Oanh Pham of Minnesota:

Like drops of morning dew soaked with rays sparkly
So vibrant full of life to end so suddenly
You came to our homeland to build democracy
together for human right and equality
No honor so high and service so dearly
for our countries and for humanity
from now on till eternity
with sacrifices of precious own right to be
You fell so liberty stands tall majestically
with branches grow beyond nations’ boundaries
Giving up yours gracefully for so many
being able to live and die with dignity
No honor so high and service so dearly
for our countries and for humanity
from now on till eternity
with sacrifices of precious own right to be
Fallen soldiers stand for ever the legacy
to always be ingrained in the Viet memory
of those indebted to presents so heavenly
of lives, hearts and souls on eagle’s wings carried
Vietnam War veteran Lyle Foltz relaxes in his home in Apple Valley. He retired as The American Legion Department of Minnesota adjutant in 2009. He is a member of Mabel Post 299.

**VIETNAM WAR**

**One close call after another**

By Tim Engstrom

APPLE VALLEY — Vietnam veteran Lyle Foltz has been a member of Mabel Post 299 for 53 years, lives in Apple Valley and is a former Department of Minnesota adjutant.

But in 1966, he was just planning to get his degree and pursue a career. That’s when his country called on him to serve in the Army.

He was raised across the border in Hesper, Iowa, and that’s where he was drafted.

He was attending junior college in Rochester when he was drafted.

“That changed my course, my direction, significantly,” he said.

The Army put him a bus with other draftees headed to Fort Des Moines in Iowa. A sergeant handed him a clipboard and said he was in charge during the ride. He was at the processing center there a couple of days, then headed to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for basic training.

After basic, most other soldiers left for their assignments, but he and a few other men waited around for days. Finally, they got the word: advanced infantry training at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

When he arrived, he learned there had been an outbreak of spinal meningitis and three guys died. So for the entire AIT, Foltz experienced no physical training, and everyone had to maintain space, even at the movies.

“Fortunately, no one got spinal meningitis, but we were unable to have a meaningful experience,” he said. “But in the Army way, at the end, they gave us a PT test.”

His training focused on the 81 mm mortar. The soldiers there had an idea they were going to Vietnam, but by the end, the drill sergeants told them they were going.

Foltz flew to Travis AFB, where he spent a few days with his parents, then he left for Vietnam on Feb. 16, 1967, aboard a C-141 Starlifter.

He handed the Air Force his duffel, and the plane flew to Wake Island, then to Clark AFB in the Philippines, then to Tan Son Nut Air Base in Saigon. He got off the bird. It was the middle of the night and Foltz said it was pitch dark.

The heat, he said, stuck to you like a wet rag.

“And the smell was so bad it just knocked you over,” he said. “It felt like I was just about three weeks before I had my appetite. The smell was horrendous.”

Buses took him to the 90th Replacement Battalion. There was a large field with flood lights. Soldiers searched for their duffles. Foltz didn’t find his. He was sent back to the plane. Gone.

All he had were the clothes on his back: khaki pants and shirt and a maroon undershirt. He wore them for a week and stood out among the green fatigue the Army wore in Vietnam.

Three days later, he was assigned to The Big Red One. He was among replacements sent to Di An Base Camp, where the 1st Infantry Division’s headquarters were. The next day, he and a Japanese-American were assigned latrine detail. Drag the barreled out. Dig a hole. Burn it. That got old, and no one was around, so they beat feet to the enlisted Men’s Club and closed the place down.

Next day, in formation, the sergeants weren’t impressed and assigned them latrine detail again. Again, the duo headed to the EM Club.

Next day, Foltz and others were sent on a C-130 Hercules from Di An to Phuoc Vinh Base Camp. The crew told them they were going to a combat zone and to run as soon as the door drops. They bolted out.

But there was only a group of children selling Coca-Cola.

“The joke was on us,” Foltz said.

He was a new member of 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, often called the Black Scarf Battalion. He also was issued jungle fatigues, jungle boots and equipment.

Early on, his platoon sergeant assigned Foltz to ride shotgun in the first truck in a convoy of deuce-and-a-halfs. They stopped suddenly. Troops got out with mine sweepers and found a mine 40 yards ahead in the road. The 120 mm rocket had killed everyone in the company.

“On this one time, a chopper crashed in a mine 40 yards ahead in the road. The pilot and co-pilot were dead. A 120 mm rocket had killed everyone in that bunker prior to his unit’s arrival,” Foltz said.

He was in an infantry platoon, and, “fortunately,” he said, he never had to fire a weapon.

But there was only a group of children selling Coca-Cola.

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“The joke was on us,” Foltz said.

One of Foltz’s buddies earned the nickname Terry the Torch because he lit himself on fire by mistake. Another fellow who bumped the M-60 earned the nickname Cool Breeze, after he mentioned it would be nice if they had a cool breeze.

On Oct. 3, his platoon set up an NDP near Hobo Woods. They had a new leader, too, a second lieutenant this time. The bunker for the command post typically accommodates five men with shelter halves for cover. The new LT didn’t like the single-bunkers sleeping with enlistees, so they had to dig a new bunker 20 feet away for him and the platoon sergeant.

“At 1 a.m.,” Foltz said, “Mortars!”

Foltz and another RTO were changing shifts right at that moment. A soldier in the CP named Dale wanted to wake up the leaders. They went out.

Kablam!

A mortar struck near Dale, the platoon leader, platoon sergeant and Foltz.

“It feels like a tornado has hit you with a large net of sand and gravel and everything,” he said.

Foltz fell on his back, stunned. He scrambled to the CP bunker. He had been hit in the right leg. He had small pieces of metal in his neck, too, and another in his right index finger. He heard the hooches screaming and blinding human cremation, so he dragged him into the bunker.

Continued on Page 11
Continued from Page 10

He got on the radio and called the company CP, asking for medics. Medics convoy in, and a medevac helicopter lands. Four guys get loaded on, and they ask Foltz whether he wanted to hop aboard, too.

He bristled at the thought of riding in the chopper at night and passed. A staff sergeant from none other than St. Paul, Minnesota, took over the platoon, and the next morning, still Oct. 3, Foltz and others had to clean up the blood, and they had to hump the entire camp to a new site.

A different medic looked at Foltz’s wounds, put a salve on his legs and popsocket sticks on his finger. Well, the popsocket sticks broke in five minutes. And that medic never received Foltz’s wounds. You know what that means? There’s no record of him being wounded—Foltz didn’t receive a Purple Heart.

In the ensuing years, his platoon sergeant gave statements on his wound, and X-rays showed the shell fragments, but still no medal.

Of the guys on the chopper, Dale went home. The others returned to them not to jump in the ditch if attacked down the road.

They turned bad. The artillery was flown out to a Special Forces camp two miles and dogs in the dark as they headed. The 3rd Platoon was providing security for an artillery battery. They had planned to get to the chopper, and, somehow, the sergeant from St. Paul were at the 1st Battalion commander gave a speech on a stump about need—to stymie counts. The estimated Viet-namese dead was 250. Four Americans were killed, with none of the Foltz’s plato-on. They had to put the Vietnamese bodies in cargo nets to be flown out.

Foltz’s platoon was on patrol in January 1968 and found a 500-pound bomb and leaflets in the grass about American imperial dogs. Was this a booby trap? A dad? They called back to the CP, and they wanted to have them blow it up. They had a demolition expert with them, and after packing it with C-4, the platoon took off running down the road and waited. And waited. And waited. Nothing.

The St. Paul platoon sergeant said they have to go back. Foltz, the platoon sergeant and the demo guy go back and determine the fuse was wet. The demo guy replaces the fuse, and they run again.

Ten seconds later: Kabliew! Shrapnel rains down on the trees. “I wondered what would have happened if it had gone off when we came by it,” Foltz said. At one time, Foltz and the St. Paul sergeant were scouting 200 yards away. The battery had beehives, and those big Viet-namese honeybees were chasing them.

The Black Scarves were riding with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at the end of January. Foltz and others rode atop tanks. “I would just as soon walk,” he said.

They were called back to Quan Loi Base Camp, where Foltz spent the rest of his tour. On Oct. 3, a friend said, “Let’s go to headquarters so we can go home.” They walked over, signed out, the commander shook his hand, and off they went in a helicopter to Di An, then to the 90th Replacement Battalion, then on a freedom bird to Travis AFB. From there, they flew a commercial flight to Minneapolis, then to Rochester, where his family greeted him and took him home to Mabel and Hesper.

“Then I got insulted by a World War II veteran,” Foltz said. It was some comment about his Class A uniform.

His time in Vietnam was done, but his service wasn’t over. He was sent to Fort Hood, Texas. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4. The Army flew his unit to Chicago for riot control.

They stayed at Mayor Daley’s gym by Lake Michigan and slept on the floor. They were issued M-14s and no ammo. It was over swiftly, and Foltz was sent to North Fort Hood, where he stayed in a tent city for five more months. It was almost like Vietnam but not completely.

“The tent was a next step up from sleeping on the ground in Vietnam,” he said.

They spent their time training Na-tional Guard troops that summer. He was discharged Aug. 31. He got home on a Saturday and went to work at his father’s construction com-pany on Monday.

He did that for a year, then enrolled at Winona State and graduated in 1975 with a degree in social studies and a teaching certificate. He was unable to find a job teaching, though, and re-turned to the construction company.

In 1986, The American Legion Department of Minnesota had a job opening — hospital representative serving vets at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis. Two years later, his boss retired and Foltz got the job as department service officer, only back then it was called director of rehabilitation.

After six years, he applied for the assistant adjutant position. He was in the role for a year and a half when the adjutant, Al Davis, left. Foltz served as adjutant for the Department of Min-nesota from 1995 to his retirement in 2010, one of the longest tenures.

Some of his accomplishments were:

• Going to secret ballots to elect department officers.
• Reorganizing the Finance Commit-teee to recognize the commander and treasurer as voting members.
• Creating a staff of dedicated and conscientious people: Laura Weber, Jennifer Kelley, the late Sharon Perrins, Misty Paull, Roger Myren and Al Zenz.

“This was some comment about his Class A uniform.”

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That night, the VC started a mortar attack, as Foltz predicted. An ambush patrol got hit and had to run back to the perimeter. Soon, a ground attack began, killing a listening post soldier trying to return to safety. The two sides battled the rest of the night.

It turns out they were attacked by two regiments of North Vietnamese Army troops. The Americans would drop flares, allowing them to see the enemy and gun them down. A battery of artillery was inside the American perimeter. The battery had beehives, which are anti-personal rounds that fire directly at the enemy.

Foltz blasted the [expletive] out of them with beehives. Once they did it, pretty much put a stop to the attack,” he said.

There was a body count of 49, but the Vietnamese removed their dead to stymie counts. The estimated Viet-

namese dead was 250. Four Americans were killed, with none of the Foltz’s platoon.

They had to put the Vietnamese bodies in cargo nets to be flown out.

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namese dead was 250. Four Americans were killed, with none of the Foltz’s platoon.

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Continued from Page 5

Taps

Stanius, Dennis H., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 28, 2020. He was a 31-year member of Cambridge Post 290.

Stankey, Delmar, 65, Army veteran of the Korean era, died Aug. 10, 2020. He was a 41-year member of Red Wing Post 54.

Taleen, Edward V., 97, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 10, 2020. He served in the Pacific aboard the USS Enterprise. He was a 75-year member of Ironton Post 443.

Thomas, Jerome E., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 20, 2020. He served in the 19th Infantry Regiment of the Korean War, died July 20, 2020. He was a 66-year member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 11.

Volkart, Howard W., 101, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died July 12, 2020. He was a pilot, serving as an instructor. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Walker, Jack H., 82, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died June 21, 2020. He was a 33-year member of North Branch Post 85.

Wangen, Lamar C., 90, Army veteran of the Korea era, died April 14, 2020. He was a 42-year member of Richfield Post 435.

Westrock, Clarence W., 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean era, died Dec. 5, 2020. He was a 50-year member of Grand Rapids Post 60.

Wolf, Douglas T., 72, veteran of the Vietnam era, died July 11, 2020. He was a 43-year member of Coon Rapids Post 334.

Wollin, Russell, 79, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean era, died July 18, 2020. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Wussow, Wallace “Jerry,” 89, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died July 12, 2020. He was a 66-year member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 19.

Zahl, Carsten J., Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 9, 2020. He served in communications running lines from one camp to another. In the Legion, he held every officer position at one time or another and was a 69-year member of Coon Rapids Post 200.

Zins, Donald E. "Ed," 98, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died July 25, 2020. He served as a B-25 navigator/bombardier while flying 43 missions in the Pacific. He was a 36-year member of Waite Park Post 428.

What’s happening?

World War II Roundtable is coming back

Don Patton, organizer of the Harold C. Deutsch World War II Roundtable, has released a schedule for the 34th year of the presentations.

On Sept. 8 at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, D.M. Giangreco, author of "World War II Roundtable," will lecture on "Patton’s Strategy in the Pacific: From Burma to Okinawa." Patton said the September, October and November lectures will have reduced attendance based on a roster and no student outreach.

The Minnesota Legislature will be present to share the stories with veterans who could not attend. Patton also has a volunteer who records them and posts videos to the YouTube channel “World War II History Round Table.”

Camporee remains on the calendar

BRainerd — Legionville and the Minnesota Sons of The American Legion are ready for the 51st annual Camporee, which benefits Legionville School Patrol Camp.

It is Thursday, Sept. 10, to Sunday, Sept. 13.

Each meal is a fundraiser:
• Thursday supper: Steak Fry, provided by the SAL.
• Friday supper: Chili Feed, provided by the 10th District.
• Saturday lunch: Omelets, provided by the SAL.
• Sunday breakfast: Omelets, provided by the SAL.
• Other meals are available at the SAL Snack Shack.

The Harvest Rally is planned for Saturday, Sept. 12. (See brief on Page 15.)

Organizers say social distancing should be maintained at all times. Masks will be required inside buildings. Sanitizing stations will be available. Building capacities will be limited. Plan on tenting, tailgaring or RVing.

Camporee fees, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, are $10 a day per person, $75 max per family.

If you overlook off the property but participant in Camporee, the fee is $5 a day per person, $75 max per family.

On Saturday, members of the military and their family are complimentary. Camping before Thursday is free. Ages 3 and under are free.

Therefore, no congressional act is needed to clarify membership, he added.

Vets homes have 10 positive cases

The Minnesota Veterans Homes COVID-19 update recorded, on Aug. 24, there were 10 positive cases in the system.

It said there were eight cases at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, one case at the Winger Veterans Home and one at the Hastings Veterans Home.

Due to privacy laws, the MDVA is not allowed to delineate whether the figures are residents or staff.

Call 651-757-1599 to hear.

The recordings are made at 9 a.m. daily.

Blood donors needed now

The American Legion Department of Minnesota is hoping to make a sizable donation of blood to the American Red Cross at the Fall Conference.

“There’s currently an urgent need for blood donors of all blood types to give now,” said Terry Larson, chairman of the Department’s Blood Program Committee.

From noon to 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22, conference-goers can sign up to donate. Larson said the goal is 34 units, which amounts to three or four donors per per.

Go to redcrossblood.org and enter “legion conference” for zip code or call 866-236-3276.

Department of Corrections

A brief on Page 4 mistakenly said the annual John Zogda Memorial Deer Hunt takes place at Camp Ripley.

The SAL Update:

Help the Sons rebuild Bauer Cabin

Greetings American Legion Family from your Sons of The American Legion?

It is an interesting time as we move through the COVID-19 era in our lives. We will have Camporee 2020 and Fall Harvest Rally at the wonderful grounds on North Long Lake called Legionville School Patrol Camp on Sept. 10-13.

I hope many of you are able to attend the Fall Harvest rally at Legionville to see the wonderful changes and improvements that the crew did this summer.

We do have one major issue at Legionville that we need to address. One of the cabins called the Bauer Cabin condemned by the board this summer because of black mold found throughout the building. My project for this year is to start fundraising with the goal of getting it rebuilt. I hope all of you will consider helping me with this project since it will be a big undertaking. Please consider whatever resources you can access to assist.

As we look forward to our next upcoming event, Fall Conference will be at Breezy Point east of Pequot Lakes on Friday, Oct. 23, and Saturday, Oct. 24.

The Minnesota Veterans Home COVID-19 update released on Aug. 14, there were none at Fergus Falls or Hastings Veterans Home. There were 10 positive cases in the system.

It said there were eight cases at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, one case at the Winger Veterans Home and one at the Hastings Veterans Home. There were none at Fergus Falls or Silver Bay.

Due to privacy laws, the MDVA is not allowed to delineate whether the figures are residents or staff.

Call 651-757-1599 to hear.

The recordings are made at 9 a.m. daily.

Executive Board and Finance will be on Friday during the day. General membership on Saturday. I look forward to seeing you all at Fall Conference. Until we see you again, stay safe and healthy.

Dave Vulcan is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.

Dave Vulcan
Greetings from the Mighty 1st District American Legion Family.

Thank you for your service and support.

We are off and into another American Legion year.

Membership is off and on a big roll. Some posts are over 50 percent renewal already. This is great, and let’s keep things rolling.

We still have to abide by COVID-19 rules and regulations.

We need to continue to plan to go forward and to get information out to the membership — newsletter, email, Zoom, conference calls or other means you can come up with.

With larger meetings, you may have to limit the number of people on site and go with Zoom or conference calling at the same time so everyone gets the same information at the same time, firsthand.

We have the Camporee and Department Harvest Rally at Lebanon.

Department Fall Conference is coming up at Breezy Point. More information on these are elsewhere in this issue!

Remember and pray for the deployed and their families back home this holiday season. Let’s do our best to keep the COVID-19 crisis.

Pray for our leaders to make the right decision for the people.

For membership, I will just report with a smile on my face that the 6th District is off the “Goose Egg.” A big “well done” to all the vice commanders, Post commanders, and membership directors who worked to make this happen.

As we approach Labor Day and the end of summer, I sincerely hope that everyone has had a good summer and that you have spent quality time with family, friends, and your Post commander will present and shown on line to your Post.

We are off and into another American Legion year.

Hello to all our 4th District Legion Family members.

In October the 3rd District will have a rally, or a family gathering, as we call it. It will be great to see Legion Family members in person instead of on a computer screen.

Membership is going well in the District, the new membership report from Department takes a little getting used to and knowledge of how to read it. Goals are not loaded yet, once all the district goals are received by the Department, we can be added.

I have not been very active in the weekly Legion chats on Zoom, but this time of year is very hard to commit to. Hopefully later this fall or winter participation will pick up. It is a great way to keep in touch.

Greetings to the mighty 7th District.

I joined the Minnesota National Guard at age 17 and am a strong and viable voice for the County to honor all who have served your nation. Hope to see you there.

The new year has started out good so let’s keep the momentum going to keep the Legion a strong and viable voice for the American veteran.

Ashley Laganiere joined the Minnesota Army National Guard at age 17 and is a third generation Army veteran and spouse.

She has an Olmsted County veteran service officer for three years and previously served as the Minnesota Department of Veteran Affairs Gold Star family coordinator as well as a veteran service representative for the federal VA.

Laganiere is a member of American Legion Post 551 in Rush City and is active in DAV Chapter 28 and Department activities. In her free time, Ashley enjoys historical films, kayaking and spending time with her family.

Laganiere can be reached by phone at 507-328-6355 and by email at ashley.legionnaires@gmail.com.

Ashley Laganiere

Get to know your CVSOs

Ashley Laganiere joined the Minnesota Army National Guard at age 17 and is a third generation Army veteran and spouse. She has an Olmsted County veteran service officer for three years and previously served as the Minnesota Department of Veteran Affairs Gold Star family coordinator as well as a veteran service representative for the federal VA.

Laganiere is a member of American Legion Post 551 in Rush City and is active in DAV Chapter 28 and Department activities. In her free time, Ashley enjoys historical films, kayaking and spending time with her family.

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Ashley Laganiere

Greg Peterson is a 1980 graduate of New Ulm Public High School. He served 25 years in the U.S. Air Force as a loadmaster flying aboard the C-141 and C-17 jet transport planes. He lives on the family Century Farm in rural New Ulm with his spouse and two children. Peterson has been the director of veterans services in Brown County since April 2004.

Besides being the president of the Minnesota Association of County Veteran Service Officers, he is also president of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in New Ulm. He belongs to Legion Post 300 in Lafayette and serves as their funeral honor flag presenter. He is a member of Legion Riders Post 132 in New Ulm as well as the DAV and VFW. He enjoys history, motorcycles and snowmobile riding. Peterson can be reached by phone at 507-233-6637 and by email at greg.peterson@co.brown.mn.us.
Mary Hendrickson

September has always been one of my favorite months. I loved school, both as a student and a teacher. A new school year meant a fresh start with new people, new activities and new goals.

In the past, the American Legion Family somewhat shared this concept. COVID-19 threw a wrench into this pattern. Our world is different today in so many ways. I greatly appreciate those Auxiliary members at the Unit, District and Department levels who have indicated they are willing to hold their offices until our next Department convention in July 2021.

The American Legion Family leadership team looks forward to working together in the second half of our 24-month year of service! Hopefully members will be able to host and attend the activities and events we have come to love during the year between department conventions. Above all else, our eyes remain focused on service to veterans, active duty military and their families.

August proved to be a month of incredible highs and some deep lows. In early August, my husband, Carl, and I had the opportunity to join many other American Legion Family members at the outdoor wedding of NEC Bill Barbknecht and Past Department President Donna Arends.

Our retired department secretary, Sandie Deutsch, officiated at the ceremony. Congratulations and best wishes to Bill and Donna!

On Aug. 15, Auxiliary Department officers, District presidents, committee chairmen, committee members and special appointees spent the day at the Waite Park American Legion for our annual organizational meeting, making plans for the 2020-2021 Auxiliary year.

It was so nice to see all of these loyal and hard-working members. The Girls State Committee, Finance Committee and Membership Team are under the direction of Membership Chairman Sharon Thiemcneke spent some quality time getting organized for the coming year. The DEC met for three-plus hours in the afternoon.

It was a long, but productive day. I’d like to personally thank our office staff for gathering and organizing all the notebooks, folders, etc., which needed to get into the hands of our leadership team that day.

I’m still enjoying the opportunity to share information with individuals and committees via Zoom. One of my favorites was the mid-August ALA 100th Anniversary “Chat & Check-In” during the National ALA 100th Anniversary Virtual Celebration Sub-Committee. I assume, like me, you’re probably getting very tired of the word “virtual.” Yes, we need to keep the 100th anniversary in the forefront of our ALA programs through August of 2021. Don’t put away those 1920s hats and flapper clothes/accessories just yet!

On a very sad note, we send our deepest condolences to DuWayn Thygenson of Thief River Falls and his extended family on the loss of his wife, Karen. Karen was our Department president in 2002-2003. She was a mentor to several members and an inspiration to all of us. We will miss her smile and her willingness to share her knowledge and time. Rest in peace, Karen. I hope to see many of you at Camporee. Stay safe and optimistic about the future.

Mary Hendrickson is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT TO BE AT FALL CONFERENCE

National president to be at Fall Conference

NISSWA — National President Nicole Clapp of Gladbrook, Iowa, will be our special guest at Fall Conference at Breezy Point on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 22-24, 2020, hosted by the Nisswa American Legion Family. All of the Auxiliary’s sessions will be held in the Whitebirch Room 2.

Thursday evening’s session is from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and is open to the entire American Legion Family. It will be a law-and-order panel featuring a county attorney, county sheriff, county truancy case guide and hopefully a retired judge.

Friday’s session will begin at 8 a.m. and run until 3 p.m. A reception for retiring Secretary Sandie Deutsch will be at the close of the afternoon session. Auxiliary members are also encouraged to attend the Hospital Association meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Friday evening from 6:30 to 7:30 there will be the Legion Family Membership Payoff under the direction of our membership chairman Sharon Thiemcneke. The conference will continue into Saturday morning from 8 to 10:15 a.m.

Please do try to attend — both distancing and the current rules will prevail.

Workshop forms plans for the year

WAITE PARK — The American Legion Auxiliary held its annual August Workshop at the Waite Park American Legion Post 428 with social distancing in place. It was quite different from the typical workshop with tables separated and scattered around the room.

Program chairmen came together and planned their programs for the Auxiliary year. Options for holding some of our most important activities utilizing COVID-19 precautions are also being considered and planned for as a precaution.

In the afternoon, President Mary Hendrickson presided over the first Department Executive Committee meeting of the year. Programs and solicitation of funds for programs were approved as well as projects for each respective district.

All of these plans will be included in the Unit Guide, which will be available at Fall Conference. Units will receive one copy in the second Unit mailing of the year as well. Please read this guide when you receive it. It will help to make you and your members more aware of the programs this year.

Who would like a presidential visit?

ST. PAUL — If you would like to have the Department president attend a function or meeting of your Unit, please invite her, said Department Auxiliary Secretary Marsha Bible.

“”She has dedicated this year to serving the American Legion Auxiliary, its programs, and working with you, our Unit members, in a meaningful and helpful manner,” she said. “President Mary would like the opportunity to work with each of our Units and Districts and is more than happy to join you, schedule permitting.”

Invitations should be directed to “Department President” and sent to Marsha Bible, Department Secretary, American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota, 12th St., Room 314, St. Paul, MN 55155.

Please do not send invitations to her home address, Bible said. An invitation form will be included in the first Unit mailing. Please be sure to put a point of contact name, phone number and email address in case a cancellation occurs.

Annual silent auction needs donations

A silent auction will again be held at our Fall Conference with the proceeds going to support the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. This has become a tradition at Fall Conference, giving each of us the opportunity to help our members in need.

Chairman Lance Krantz is asking for new or gently used items to be used in the silent auction. All items welcome.

“We are looking for the very popular Theme Baskets again this year. Units, Districts, TAL, SAR or TLR’s,” said Krantz. “The baskets bring in a tremendous amount of donations for our program.”

Krantz said bidders can be all members of The American Legion Family. All members are welcomed. All items should be brought Thursday evening or early Friday morning. Bidding will be on Friday only from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

National president to be at Fall Conference

Members of the Department Executive Committee gather for a photo at Waite Park Post 428. From left, seated, are First VP Patti Coleman, President Mary Hendrickson and 2nd VP Mary Kuperus. Standing are Wanda Prescher (Dist. 1), Robin Olson (Dist. 2), Secretary Marsha Bible, Linda Kelly (Dist. 3), Sandy Gibson (Dist. 4), Mary Younkin (Dist. 5), Roberta Elvecrog (Dist. 6), Lorraine Wigen (Dist. 7), Sue Korhonen (Dist. 8), Treasurer Jan Lauby, Pat Hanson (Dist. 9), Brandi Christianson (Dist. 10).

President Mary’s project to be CVSOs

DULUTH — Department of Minnesota President Mary Hendrickson will change her project for the 2020-2021 year. This year with the help of all of you, she would like to assist the veterans service officers in Minnesota’s 87 counties.

The role of the county veterans service officer (or CVSO) is to assist service members, veterans and their family members to efficiently navigate the Veterans Administration benefits system. They assist veterans to help them get the federal, state and county benefits they have earned.

Many of the veterans who visit their CVSO are also in need of a helping hand, and they can offer emergency resources. President Mary’s project will be to purchase gift cards for items such as gasoline and groceries so they can distribute them when needed.

General funds, poppy funds and charitable gambling are acceptable to use. Donations should be made payable to: ALA Department of Minnesota earmarked President’s Project and sent to the Department Office.

President Mary’s project to be CVSOs

Who would like a presidential visit?

THIEF RIVER FALLS — Past Department President, 2002-2003, Karen (Fredrickson) Thygeson, passed away on Aug. 14 after a long battle with cancer. She was 74.

Karen was married to Floyd Fredrickson in 1954 until his death in 1997 from cancer. She married DuWayn Thygenson in 2002. She is survived by her husband, DuWayn;
Mary Kuperus was secretary for five years. At the Department level, Mary has held chairmanships in Children & Youth, Community Service, Junior Activities, Poppy, Membership and Girls State. She has served as a counselor for three years. Mary is currently serving as the Leadership chairman.

For the past 28 years, Mary has been employed with the New London-Spicer Elementary School as a Title I Paraprofessional. She is the president of her union at school and is on the Board of Directors with the New London to New Brighton Antique Car Run.

Mary belongs to Peace Lutheran Church in New London. She and her husband have three adult children, one son-in-law and seven grandchildren.

She is eligible through the service of her husband, Bill Kuperus, re- served during World War II and served in the army from 1942-1945. The three brothers served and she continued to serve the Legion Auxiliary have endorsed Mary Kuperus for the position of Department first vice president for the 2021-2022 Auxiliary year.

Mary is a 37-year PUFL member. She is eligible through the service of her late father, Earl Manson, who served during World War II and her husband, Bill Kuperus, retired sergeant first class of the U.S. Army serving during the Persian Gulf War. Mary has served all offices and most committee chairmanships at the local level, including Unit president for multiple years. In the 7th District, she has held many offices and served as the 7th District president in 2010-2011.

The Auxiliary has endorsed Mary Kuperus for the position of Department first vice president for the 2021-2022 Auxiliary year.

Mary is a 37-year PUFL member. She is eligible through the service of her husband, Bill Kuperus, reservist during World War II and served in the army from 1942-1945. The three brothers served and she continued to serve.

We Shall Not Sleep, though Poppies Grow

Poppies can be ordered now

ST. PAUL — An order form will be included in the first Unit mailing. Prices in effect for this year: Small Poppies — $20 a hundred plus shipping. (Small poppies must be ordered in lots of 100 only). Large poppies are $18 a dozen. The shipping charge schedule is on the order form.

Harvest Rally is set for Sept. 12

BRAINERD — The Harvest Rally, held during the Camporee at Legionville on North Long Lake, starts at 3 p.m. Sept. 12 and is slated to end at 6 p.m. The Sons of The American Legion host.

Details on the Camporee and its prices are on Page 12.

“Since the Harvest Rally is more of a family picnic this year, the SAL Snack Shack will be open and serving food before, during, and after the event,” said Chairman Dennis Blue of the Legionville Camporee Committee. “So please enjoy. No tickets are needed. Cash is preferred.”

Due to the situation with COVID-19, the event can change quickly. To stay informed, please follow the Facebook Page (facebook.com/LegionvilleCamporee) or subscribe to the committee’s texting service. Send CAMPORR to 84483 to receive alerts about Legionville Camporee.

The committee can be reached at legionville.camporee@gmail.com or 218-262-9902.

For the Auxiliary side of things, turn-in will be 2-3 p.m. Sept. 12. There will be no evening meal tickets, though the SAL will have its Snack Shack concession stand open.

Be sure to bring a lawn chair for the rally. Masks will be required inside buildings. Sanitizing stations will be available. If you plan on playing bingo, you can bring your own dauber or buy one from the SAL.

American Legion Auxiliary

100 years of serving veterans, military and their families

1919 - 2019

Donated by Hackensack Auxiliary Unit 202

Hackensack Unit 202 donated new flower planters at Hillcrest Cemetery in Hackensack in memory of all veterans. This donation was made to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Auxiliary’s service to veterans, active military and their families.

We Shall Not Sleep, though Poppies Grow

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Last Man Club Golf Classic was a success

The fifth annual Last Man Club Golf Classic Presented by Ballman Roofing took place on June 19 at Shoreland Country Club in St. Peter and is put on by the Last Man Club of Vietnam War Era of St. Peter.

The annual event raises funds for the Last Man Club Veteran Relief Fund, which provides emergency assistance to local veterans in crisis where no federal, state or local program exists or those funds have been exhausted. The primary goal of the relief fund is to keep veterans in a stable situation or return them to one.

To date, the relief fund has assisted over 40 local veterans totaling over $29,000 in relief. More than 140 sponsors and 160 golfers supported this year’s event and helped to raise $20,000 for the relief fund. The next one is scheduled for June 18, 2021. For more information, please visit lmcclassic.com.

Tyler Trimbo makes a long putt for Eagle on Hole 2. St. Peter Post 37 Color Guard presents the colors to kick off the day.