

# Legionnaire



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For God and Country

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From left are Bayport Mayor-elect Michele Hanson, Post 491 Commander Corey Quick and Mayor Susan St. Ores.

## A pavilion to remember

Bayport's post, unit, city and troop all turned 100 in 2022

BAYPORT — It's been 100 years since South Stillwater changed its name to Bayport.

City Councilor Michele Hanson wanted to mark the name-change centennial with a project in a park, and she walked into Bayport American Legion Post 491 asking for a donation.

"Heck," said Commander Corey Quick, "it's also Post 491's centennial. Let's go in together on the project."

The city and Post 491 are splitting 50/50 the \$120,000 cost to construct a pavilion in the Village Green, just two blocks up the main drag from the post home, next to Andersen Elementary

School. The park is the location of Bayport's weekly farmers market.

"I think it's something that park really needed," said Hanson, who is the mayor-elect. "It just has a picnic table, and that's it."

The City Council did a survey, and  
Continued on Page 3

## Homeless no more

Nathan Smith took a long way home after the military

By Tim Engstrom

SAUK CENTRE — The story of Air Force and Army veteran Nathan Smith fits the definition of serendipity: "The occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way."

Smith, 46, is the adjutant of Sauk Centre Post 67 and commander of the American Legion West Stearns County Council. The former homeless veteran lives in a house with his wife, and his coming to Minnesota was by chance. Beforehand, he seemed to live everywhere but Minnesota.

Now he doesn't want to live anywhere else. He loves Sauk Centre, his wife and the camaraderie he finds among the veterans of The American Legion.

Smith graduated from high school in Limestone, Maine, in 1994. His father, Keith Smith, was stationed at Loring Air Force Base, which was closed that same year.

"We were one of the last families there," Nathan Smith said.

The oldest of four children, he grew up in an Air Force family. He was born at Holloman AFB in New Mexico, and was raised at Seymour Johnson AFB in North Carolina, Minot AFB in North Dakota and RAF Alconbury in England.



Nathan Smith stands outside American Legion Post 67 in Sauk Centre. The 46-year-old is active at multiple levels of The American Legion. He used to work on A-10 Warthog attack airplanes.

He entered the Air Force on Aug. 9, and, of course, went to basic at Lackland AFB outside San Antonio, Texas. Then it was off to tech school at Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls, Texas, where he became a crew chief for the A-10 Thunderbolt II, better known as the A-10 Warthog, a close-support attack aircraft.

The A-10 served with distinction in the Persian Gulf War and had roles in Grenada, the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and, more recently, against ISIS. In service since 1976, with many upgrades since, it can fly with a lot of damage, fire 3,900 rounds a minute and deploy missiles and bombs. Heavy armor, firewalls, extinguishers,

redundant systems and enemy-spotting avionics have made it famous — or infamous, if you are the enemy — for being difficult to shoot down.

The Air Force sent Smith to Osan Air Base in South Korea, where his A-10s patrolled the DMZ loaded with bombs and rockets most of the time.

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## Horse soldiers cmdr. speaks

HUTCHINSON — When the towers fell on Sept. 11, 2001, one of America's key leaders in the response to the terrorism was at home and no longer with his Army Special Forces unit.

On Sept. 10, Mark Nutsch had moved out of the workplace at Fort Campbell, Ky., for ODA 595 and was waiting for orders on his next role. After he watched 9/11 on television,

Continued on Page 4

## Legionville Education Center is back on solid footing



Legionville Board of Directors President Carl Moon gives a financial report on Legionville to the Department Executive Committee on Oct. 27 at the Best Western Plus Kelly Inn in St. Cloud.

ST. CLOUD — Legionville Education Center is in a strong position again after a string of lean years.

The Department Executive Committee on Oct. 27 received a report from Carl Moon of Zimmerman Post 560, as he was elected president of the Legionville Board of Directors at its Sept. 22 meeting.

He said the past summer had 389 campers, who paid \$400 each. Rates for participating this coming summer will be raised to \$500, which he said remains lower than surrounding summer camps.

"This is still lower than a lot of the camps around us," Moon said. "We had campers go to others nearby, and

they said they had a better time at our camp."

He said Camp Director Adam Felton has a goal of 400 to 500 campers in 2023 and is hoping to get the figure up to 800 in coming years.

Legionville is known for its crossing-guard safety, which is a partnership the Department of Minnesota has had with the Minnesota State Patrol since 1936. Moon said the camp staff have expanded offerings to have many types of safety: first aid, CPR, canoeing, swimming, camping, among others, and he said the State Patrol is working to begin gun safety, too.

To bolster camper numbers, he urged  
Continued on Page 7





Are you the son of a veteran? Maybe you are a veteran and the son or grandson of one? Either way, join your local Sons of the American Legion.

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# What's happening?

## No registration needed for Pearl Harbor Rally in Spicer

SPICER — The annual Pearl Harbor Rally is at Spicer Post 545 on Dec. 3.

The rally begins at 11 a.m. with a social hour and membership turn-in. Lunch will be served at noon, and the program begins at 1 p.m. and ends at 2 p.m.

The meal will be broasted chicken, mashed potatoes, corn, coleslaw and a roll. The cost of the meal is \$15, payable at the door with cash, check or credit card.

Parking will be in the Saulsbury Beach lot across Lake Street.

The Minnesota American Legion Riders are hosting the rally.

## Mark your calendars

OSSEO — Other rallies on the horizon are Sweetheart Rally at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 on Feb. 4 and Appreciation Rally at New Prague Post 45 on April 15.

Other upcoming events on the Legion calendar are the National Commander's Tour of Minnesota April 16-21 (heading north this time) and Minnesota Legion

College April 20-23.

If you want to plan for next summer and fall, the Department Convention is slated for July 12-15 in Redwood Falls, and the Department Fall Conference is set for Oct. 26-28 in St. Cloud.

## Future Preston Veterans Home has new admin

PRESTON — The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs announced Nov. 15 that it has hired an administrator for the future Preston Veterans Home.

Air Force veteran David Dunn has more than 18 years of experience as an administrator of nursing homes and other health-care facilities.



David Dunn

"We had great candidates who applied for this role, but the interview panel was most impressed by Dave's compassion for veterans and providing them the highest quality of care," said Deputy Commissioner Douglas Hughes.

Dunn will participate in the hiring process of other administrators at the Preston Veterans Home in the coming months.

He recently was the administrator of the New Richland Care Center. He's previously worked in Olivia, Redwood Falls, St. Cloud and Rochester.

Dunn enjoys golf, running and playing basketball. In his spare time, he likes to play drums at various care facilities with a Rochester-based band.

planned for each district in Minnesota:

1st District: Jan. 7, Owatonna Post 77

2nd District: Feb. 17-18, Blue Earth Post 89

3rd District: 7:30 a.m. Jan. 21, Lonsdale Post 586

4th & 5th districts: 9 a.m. Jan. 7, North St. Paul Post 39

6th District: Feb. 11, Ironton Post 443

7th District: Jan. 28, Granite Falls Post 69

8th District: Feb. 18, Zoom 9th District: 10 a.m. Jan. 14, Bagley Post 16

10th District: 9 a.m. Jan. 14, Anoka Post 102

## Could people send out cards?

ST. CLOUD — Friends and family of Edward W. Crawford are hoping this Army Air Forces veteran of World War II receives at least 100 cards for his 100th birthday.

Crawford was born Dec. 6, 1922, and he graduated from Barnum, Iowa, High School in 1940. He served in the Army Air Forces from April 1943 to February 1946. He had a civilian career with Thompson Distributing/Big Bear from 1954 to 1985. He has been a member of The American Legion for 19 years. He is with Waite Park Post 428.

He was married to Marian Ruth Cahill from January 1948 to January 2013. They have two sons and three daughters.

Even if belated, please send the birthday cards to Edward Crawford, 2021 Summit Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303-1249.

## Walker to rock a bonspiel

WALKER — Walker Post 134 is sponsoring a community festival that embraces winter and the Minnesota tradition of curling.

The Rock-N-Walker Bonspiel takes place Jan. 20-22 at the Walker Area Community Center, 105 Tower Ave. The after-party is at the Post 134 home, 407 Front St.

Proceeds support the Walker Curling Club, a nonprofit organization.

The early bird team registration is \$200, and the late registration after Dec. 2 is \$250. Registration ends Dec. 23.

The entry fee includes a two-game guarantee, four meal tickets, four door prizes, food and beverage specials all weekend and entry into the team outfit contest.

There also are cash prizes, raffles, DJ party, pulltabs and a skip-off competition.

Visit Facebook and search for "rocknwalkerbonspiel."

## Snowmobiles and veterans go together

BEMIDJI — The 15th annual Veterans Appreciation Ride takes place Saturday, Jan. 14, in Bemidji.

All veterans are welcome to enjoy a day of snowmobiling, including lodging and meals. Bring your own sled, but if you don't have one, they will be made available, along with proper clothing and helmets.

The annual ride is sponsored by the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association.

Register by emailing [mnveteransride@gmail.com](mailto:mnveteransride@gmail.com).

Last year, the ride had 130 veterans participate. It was held in Grand Rapids.

## Registration is open for state bowling tournament

DAYTON — The 2023 Minnesota State American Legion Family Bowling Tournament is planned for March 18 to April 22 at Sundance Lanes, 15240 113th Ave. N., Dayton. It is hosted by Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172.

The winning post in 2022 was Waite Park 428. In 2021, it was Bloomington Post 550.

Singles and Doubles happen at noon Saturdays. Team action

takes place at 3:30 p.m. Saturdays and noon Sundays.

Cari Lamb is the tournament secretary. She can be contacted at 612-968-4839 or [crmb74@gmail.com](mailto:crmb74@gmail.com). Her mailing address is 3217 19th St. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Visit [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org) and hover over "events" to find the downloadable registration form and hotel information.

## Country trio to play in Anoka

ANOKA — The Farmer's Daughters will perform acoustic country music at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 3 at American Legion Post 102 in Anoka.

The address is 400 W. Main St. in Anoka.

The high-energy country trio is based out of North Branch and plays across the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

## Soul, rock, R&B coming to town

FRIDLEY — You can find the Craig Clark Band performing 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 23, at Fridley Post 303.

The post is at 7365 Central Ave. NE, in Fridley.

Craig Clark plays soul, rock and rhythm and blues. He was influenced by Sam Cooke, Bobby Bland and Buddy Guy.

He moved from Pennsylvania to Minnesota in the late 1980s, and he has been playing his style of vocals and guitars around the Midwest since. That includes at the Broken Spoke Saloon in Sturgis, S.D.

He is joined on the bass and backup vocals by Eric Meyer.

## Pancakes, anyone?

MOORHEAD — Post 29 in Moorhead will host a pancake feed from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 18.

The event will include a silent auction and a bake sale.

## Gig Noonan coming to New London

NEW LONDON — New London Post 537 will host entertainment act Gig Noonan 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3.




Post 537 is at 21 Ash St. SE. Gig Noonan is the combination of husband and wife Mike and Cindy Noonan. They are vocalists and musicians who play songs from classic country to classic rock.

## Do New Year's in Roseville

ROSETOWN — Rosetown American Legion Post 542 in Roseville will host a New Year's Eve bash with Elephant in the Room.

The post is at 700 County Road C. The band plays 7-11 p.m.

Elephant in the Room plays timeless rock music.

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# Bayport city and American Legion join forces

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62 percent of residents said they favored the pavilion.

Post 491 is named in honor of Hesley Jensen, a local man who was killed in World War I in 1918. Post 491 received its temporary charter on Jan. 13, 1922, and its permanent charter on Nov. 8, 1922.

The first official meeting was held Nov. 22, 1922.

The post held a centennial dinner on Nov. 12, 2022, and before the dinner, Bayport Legionnaires and city officials joined together for a groundbreaking on the new pavilion.

Quick thanked Hanson for her vision.

"We wouldn't be here without the work Michele Hanson has done," he said. "She came to ask for help with Bayport's 100th, and we said we wanted to throw in with her."

Since the two joined forces, a few other century organizations in Bayport have been added to the list. Quick said they are Bayport American Legion Auxiliary Unit 491 and Boy Scout Troop 113.

He said 100 years ago the people of Bayport made it through World War I and were looking to get on with their lives. Prohibition was in effect, too.

"They were living in a time when there were people around who recalled the Civil War," Quick said.

He said it is a good sign of a strong community when the city works well with local service organizations.

The WWI veterans formed



the post to serve the veterans.

"We still are serving veterans down at the Legion," he said.

The post moved into its current building at 263 Third St. N. in 1964.

South Stillwater was incorporated as a village in 1881. The railroad combined three settlements into one in 1873. Hanson said that the residents grew weary of bearing the Stillwater name, along with the confusion it caused, and the name Bayport won a vote in 1922.

The post newsletter is called The Buck Passer, and these days, it is mailed quarterly and posted to the post website: bayportlegion.org.

The first post commander was Army veteran Robert Selb. The post has sponsored Boy Scout Troop 113 since 1929. The post organizes the annual Bayport Memorial Day Parade. Among its current members is Brig. General Sandy Best, the first female general in the Minnesota Army National Guard.

Department Commander Jennifer Havlick, in the white cap, came by for the groundbreaking. The pavilion design can be seen in a rendering, displayed on the left.



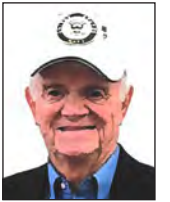
People mulled through historical displays in the lower level at Bayport Post 491 on Nov. 12. Among the 21 charter members of the post was Fred C. Andersen, son of the founder of Andersen Windows and a longtime CEO.

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## Plan summer camp for the kids today!



### Registration for Legionville Education Center begins in February



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# Capt. Nutsch now is in the bourbon business

Continued from Page 1

he wanted to be back with his team.

On Sept. 14, he was in a Babies R Us in Nashville when he got a call. "Capt. Nutsch, you are to return to your unit." Then he got a second call from another officer in his chain of command telling him to return to his unit.

"I let out a hoot and a holler right there in Babies R Us."

Nutsch spoke Nov. 15, of this year, at Saluting Community Heroes in Hutchinson. The event raised about \$250,000, which goes to veterans causes. Nutsch's experience in Afghanistan was portrayed by actor Chris Hemsworth, known for his role as "Thor" in Marvel movies.

Fourteen Special Forces teams were being considered as the first to deploy to Afghanistan and fight the Taliban in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Nutsch said. The Taliban had allowed al-Qaida to use Afghanistan as its staging base, and now America was going to take it to the Taliban.

Nutsch pushed to have his 12-man team be the first, and the Army granted his wish. He said he and his men will get to do what they have trained for many times over.

"You are going to the Super Bowl. There are no playoffs. You're it," he said.

The mission: Kill or capture Taliban soldiers wherever you encounter them and work with Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Afghan warlord. ODA 595 arrives, meets its CIA contact and awaits contact with Dostum's soldiers. Twenty horsemen gallop up, and suddenly these U.S. soldiers with heavy weapons, RPGs and machine guns realize their allies in the region expect them to ride horses.

"The last time the U.S. Army rode horses in combat was 1942," Nutsch said.

Fortunately, Nutsch grew up in central Kansas, and rodeo was



**Hutchinson Post 96's Tim Burley is the director of operations for Saluting Community Heroes, which gives out the Veteran Warrior Awards. Burley gave one to Navy veteran Christopher Shaw posthumously. Shaw was a Twin Cities comedian and Anoka Post 102 member who ran a mental wellness nonprofit called the Heart and Mind Connection. He gave speeches across the state about suicide prevention, despite battling daily suicide ideation. He took his own life in June. Accepting the award on his behalf is Melony Butler of the Eagle's Healing Nest.**



**Saluting Community Heroes CEO Shad Ketcher, left, gave a Veteran Warrior Award to Jay and Kristen Malone. Jay Malone Motors goes above and beyond to help veterans finance an automobile.**

his sport in school. He participated in team roping and tie-down roping, which was about to pay off. One of his men was from South Dakota and had some riding experience, but no one else did.

"Nothing other than putting a quarter in the machine as a kid outside of Kmart," he said. "We were like a 19th century force on horseback with 21st century weapons."

ODA 595 coordinated more than 300 airstrikes and fought

5,000 extremist fighters by bringing together different factions of the north against the Taliban. The work sometimes involved horse rides that lasted seven to 24 hours.

To reach their remote locale, American aircraft had to refuel two or three times.

After fighting their way through a critical mountain pass, where the enemy gave the most casualties to the horse soldiers and their allied factions, they rode into a city

of 300,000, where they were cheered. Nutsch told the citizens he needed their help — keep the lights on, keep the police going and secure the roads and airport.

And, finally, they could switch from horses to pickups and ATVs.

The effort from Nutsch and ODA 595 served as America's first victory in the War in Afghanistan, and the army they raised began toppling the Taliban like dominoes and driving them out of cities, including Kabul. Dostum later was elected vice president of Afghanistan.

He said a year ago, when the Taliban swept the country after U.S. forces pulled out, some of those same Afghan allies still were fighting the Taliban.

These days, Nutsch and five of his fellow Ranger and Special Forces comrades run American Freedom Distillery in St. Petersburg, Fla., which makes the well-regarded Horse Soldiers Bourbon Whiskey. It presently is constructing a distillery in Somerset, Ky.

Nutsch spoke about his after-military life, which included trying to find remains of pilots who perished in aircraft crashes off the island of Saipan in the Pacific Ocean.

He spoke about his new book, "Swords of Lightning."

"I'm told it pairs well with a bourbon."

He gave a salute to military spouses. He told how his pregnant wife was able to lean on other wives while he was away.

"We all serve in so many ways," Nutsch said.

Saluting Community Heroes plans to have Mark "Oz" Geist as its featured speaker in 2023. Geist is a Marine veteran who was working as a CIA security contractor when he was wounded in the 2011 attack on the CIA annex in Benghazi, Libya. The experience of the contractors — former military — was portrayed in the 2016 movie "13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi."



**Linda Dvorak leads a breakout session about membership and MyLegion.org.**

## Fall Conference was a success in many ways

### National Report

Bill Barbknecht



With the Fall Conference done for another year, it was great to have the leading candidate for national commander, Dan Seehaffer of Wisconsin, spend a couple days with us. He gave a very inspiring talk.

Thank you to Adjutant Mike Maxa on having a different format for the conference. A huge thanks goes to AI and Tess Davis and the entire Convention Corp. That was a job well-done. We'll be in St. Cloud for four more years. I also noted the excellent turnout.

We all are looking forward to Dec. 3 for the Pearl Harbor Rally at Spicer, starting at 11 a.m. Riders will be taking care of the program. Contact Jody Hassing.

I hope all posts are doing Buddy Checks and going out and seeing those who have not renewed as yet. You can "Be the One" who may prevent a suicide or help a veteran in need.

National Legion College will be Dec. 11-16. Minnesota will be sending Linda Dvorak and Marissa LaCourt.

Have you contacted your

school about the Oratorical Contest coming up soon? I thank Underwood Post 489 for the many donations this past year.

I thank many other post, units, squadrons and chapters for helping veterans, children, schools and communities. All while our state keeps taxing our post homes and charitable gambling, where more dollars could be used to support people in need. The state sits on over a \$9.25 billion surplus? I hope you all voted this past election season and again in the future.

Donna and I wish you all a very merry Christmas and happy and prosperous New Year for all.

As always, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at ...

billb3350@gmail.com or 218-770-6264.

Bill Barbknecht of Underwood Post 489 is the Department of Minnesota's National Executive Committeeman.

## Donate to helping Minn. veterans

If your post has gambling funds, please consider donating to Fund 85, which is the Veterans Assistance Fund. This is the means by which the Department of Minnesota helps local posts with financial assistance when they encounter veterans in financial trouble. Cut out this official request letter and place it in the inbox of your post's gambling manager for the next gambling meeting.

Good day, Legionnaires:  
I am asking your post to consider donating any amount to the Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund. The fund has assisted Veterans the past 11 months to the tune of over \$107,000 and, right now, we have five cases in the works and more in the pipeline. This time of year, as we transition into winter and the challenging economic times, I anticipate more Veterans requiring our assistance. Thank you in advance for consideration to this much-needed assistance to our Veterans in need. **Please make the check out to "Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 85."** Please mail the check to: Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund, 20 W. 12th St. Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155.

For God and Country,  
Mike Maxa  
Adjutant  
The American Legion  
Department of Minnesota  
Desk: 651-424-4613

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# 'Tis the season to check on buddies

Happy holidays!  
As I write this article, I am also preparing to decorate my house for Christmas. Christmas music is on, and I am looking forward to the season of kindness, giving, sacrifice and faith.

Please keep all who are serving in your hearts and prayers. Many of them don't get to spend a peaceful holiday with their loved ones because they are out there serving and protecting us.

I made several stops on Veterans Day — good people, good food and great fellowship. Our American Legion posts across Minnesota are working hard with their communities to provide services and support to our veterans, their families and others in their communities.

## Commander's Column

Jennifer Havlick



Well done, Legion Family. This time of year, it is very important to ramp up our Buddy Checks. I encourage all our posts, units, squadrons and chapters to call or visit our members, especially ones you haven't heard from or can't get out.

For those out there struggling, please reach out. Your Legion Family is here for you. You need only pick up the phone, and we will answer the call.

**I will hold a Christmas Eve Buddy Check Zoom meeting this year, 7 to 9 p.m. Dec. 24.** All are welcome. Email jennifer.havlick@outlook.com, and

chat — even wear your ugly Christmas sweaters.

I am looking forward to seeing you all around the state and on our holiday Buddy Check Zoom on Christmas Eve. Be safe, be kind and be good — for goodness' sake.

*Jennifer Havlick of Duluth Wisted Post 28 is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Honoring Our Past by Securing Our Future."*

# Mail Call

Send letters to the editor for Mail Call to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org).

*Editor's note: All letters are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily The American Legion or The Minnesota Legionnaire. We do favor dialogue as key to the American form of government.*

## VA vaccine mandates protect veterans

In a "Mail Call" letter in the October 2022 edition of The Minnesota Legionnaire, I was surprised to see ongoing misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccination (aka "the jab") and the rules surrounding its administration.

As a former Medical Squadron commander with over 40 years of health-care experience, I'd like to try to clarify some issues.

To say it is a violation of federal law (21 U.S.C. § 360bbb-3(e)(1)(A)(ii)) to require this vaccination is inaccurate. While there is a legal gray area for mandating vaccines authorized for emergency use, legal experts agree that businesses, employers and state governments generally have the power to do so. The VA's mandate for this vaccine ultimately protects vulnerable veterans from severe illness or possible death.

Yes, the individual does have the option to accept or refuse the vaccine provided they know the consequences which could include being released from their job. For the very few who could be impacted by this, they are able or empowered to seek out employment in organizations more aligned with their beliefs.

The letter writer also mentioned that "a very high percentage are objecting on religious grounds."

Only 10 percent of Americans believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine conflicts with their religious beliefs, and 59 percent of Americans say too many people are using religious beliefs as an excuse not to get vaccinated. Many of the people who object to the vaccine for religious reasons cite the use of aborted fetal cells in the development of the vaccines as a reason to oppose them. This is a specious argument.

Regarding the military, more than 96 percent of those serving have complied with the requirement. Servicemembers already get a battery of vaccines and vaccine mandates



Dan Morgan/St. Paul North End Post 474

**This desert sand is everywhere. I'm afraid to open my MRE. Argh! There's even sand in my caramel treat!**

are commonplace for military personnel.

Lastly, the COVID-19 vaccine is neither an "experimental or chemical concoction." At the beginning of 2022, the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines received full approval by the Food and Drug Administration. After many months of studies and more than 500 million COVID-19 vaccines given in the United States, the FDA has amassed scientific evidence to support use of these vaccines, showing that the benefits are greater than its risks, and that the vaccines can be manufactured reliably, safely and with consistent quality.

**Joan Gonzalez  
Burnsville Post 1700**

## Last-man clubs are still around

I enjoyed reading your article in the Legionnaire about the H & H Last Man's Club in Stillwater. As veteran of the Vietnam War and a member of Post 11 in Mankato, I've had the pleasure of knowing many members of our local World War I and World War II last-man clubs.

They are gone now, but their inspiration has given our area Vietnam veterans the idea to follow their lead and form the

Vietnam Veterans of Southern Minnesota Last Man's Club 31 years ago with over 200 members. St. Peter, in our area, also has a very active one called Last Man Club of Vietnam War Era, with over 400 members.

Thanks to those, including the Korean veterans, the tradition lives on.

**Tom McLaughlin,  
Mankato Post 11**

## Respect for alcohol can be taught early

I would like to put my two cents in on the point brought up about alcohol in Mail Call in recent issues of The Minnesota Legionnaire.

From my own experiences, I think 21-year-olds are not mature enough to handle spirits. Too many men get off on the wrong foot and never learn to respect it.

I was lucky. I had a father who trained me very well. I grew up in a French family (in Osseo) who celebrated with Champagne on every family occasion and was taught total respect for it.

On the subject of alcohol at our post bars, I joined the American Legion in 2015. One Sunday I came to our post bar

# It's a special time of year for religions

Soon, another year will have passed us by; Election Day, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Day are gone, and the month of December awaits us.

Hopefully, everyone voted in the last election. If you didn't, don't complain about who won or lost. If you did vote and it didn't go your way, in two years, it can change.

Some find this to be the happiest time of year, while for others, it's kind of a sad time. For those of us with family, kids and grandchildren, we find it to be joyful. But to those who are all alone, in the hospital or care facility, it could be a downer.

We must remember those who are alone at this time of year. Visit a veteran, do a Buddy Check, or go caroling at a nursing home. Make someone's day a little brighter.

We, as Christians, remember the birth of a child in Bethlehem that the prophet Isaiah told us about. In chapter 7 verse 14, "Therefore, the Lord himself, will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

And in the 9th chapter verse

6, it reads, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Christians believe this prophecy foretold the birth of Jesus, a little child who came to save us.

For our Jewish friends, this time of year includes the eight days of Hanukkah, a time to commemorate the rededication of the second Temple in Jerusalem during the Maccabean revolt. Candles of the Menorah are lit to commemorate the victory of the Maccabees over the Greek rulers. By a miracle, the oil burned in the Menorah for eight days.

For other religions or non-religions, this is also a special time of year. Whatever your faith may be, take time to thank God for all he has given us this past year. As we look forward to a new year, may your dreams

for the future be fulfilled. Pray for peace on earth, for our fellow countrymen, and also for people worldwide.

As we enter this Christmas/holiday season, I hope you would remember the "reason for the season." Remember our service personnel both here and abroad, check on a fellow veteran lend a hand to someone in need, and most of all, "Be the One" to someone else.

Till next month, God's peace and grace be with you and yours.

Remember:  
God is good all the time.  
And all the time, God is good!

*Larry Otto of Ellendale Post 296 is the chaplain for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.*



## Chaplain's Corner

Larry Otto

and saw mostly young people. I asked if there were any Korean War veterans here.

The response I got was, "None here today."

I asked, "Do they ever come around?"

The response was, "Not very often."

I noticed then that most of the people there were already in several stages toward intoxication. At that point, I left and have never returned to our clubhouse.

I am not a "teetotaler" with an attitude. I drink my share of Canadian whiskey, and my wife and I, who are well into our 80s, look forward to cocktails before dinner with wine.

For God and Country,

**Andre-Thomas deMeules  
Osseo Post 172**

## Learn about blood today

This letter to the editor contains information I have come across from the American Red Cross and is pertinent to our mission as Legionnaires:

**Donate Blood to Save Lives:**

"Blood types are determined by the presence or absence of certain antigens — substances that can trigger an immune response if they are foreign to the body. Since some antigens can trigger a patient's immune system to attack the transfused blood, safe blood transfusions depend on careful blood typing and cross-matching.

"There are four major blood groups determined by the presence or absence of two antigens, A and B, on the surface of red blood cells. In addition to the A and B antigens, there is a protein called the Rh factor, which can be either present (+) or absent (-), creating the 8 most common blood types (A+, A-, B+, B-, O+, O-, AB+, AB-). There are very specific ways in which blood types must be matched for a safe transfusion. The right blood transfusion can

mean the difference between life and death.

"Also, Rh-negative blood is given to Rh-negative patients, and Rh-positive or Rh-negative blood may be given to Rh-positive patients. The rules for plasma are the reverse. Universal donors are those with an O negative blood type. Why? O negative blood can be used in transfusions for any blood type.

"Type O is routinely in short supply and in high demand by

hospitals — both because it is the most common blood type and because type O negative blood is the universal blood type needed for emergency transfusions and for immune deficient infants.

"Approximately 45 percent of Caucasians are type O (positive or negative), but 51 percent of African Americans and 57 percent of Hispanics are type O. Minority and diverse

**Continued on Page 5**



# The Minnesota Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

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# Taps



Please send "Taps" entries to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org) or mail to 20 W. 12th St., Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155, or visit [mnlegion.org/taps](http://mnlegion.org/taps). Thank you.

Name of Deceased	Age	Date of Death	Branch	Era	Cont. Years	Post
<b>Becker, Gary W.</b>	77	10/7/22	Army	Vietnam	8	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Behnke, Larry F.</b>	80	11/2/22	Army	Korea	17	Belle Plaine Post 144
<b>Biddle, James R.</b>	82	3/82/22	AF/Army R.	Vietnam	49	Amboy Post 276
Note: While in the Air Force, he was stationed in Taiwan, Newfoundland, Philippines, Korea, Vietnam and Alaska, among other places. He was past post adjutant.						
<b>Bjorhus, K. Russel</b>	93	11/7/22	Air Force	Cold	55	Litchfield Post 104
<b>Blehr, Richard L.</b>	86	10/27/22	Army	Korea	61	Hoffman Post 393
Note: He learned International Morse Code and was then sent to far east Asia during the Korean War.						
<b>Blommer, James J.</b>	80	8/11/22	Navy	Vietnam	48	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Boyd, Donald J.</b>	94	9/24/22	Navy	WWII/Korea	67	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Boyd, Marcella D.</b>	85	9/9/22	Army	Korea	49	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Brady, James C.</b>	83	6/9/22	Navy	Vietnam	38	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Braun, Neal E.</b>	87	9/11/22	Army	Korea	49	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Brinks, Gary L.</b>	75	10/26/22	Air Force	Vietnam	36	Garvin Post 273
Note: He was the post adjutant for more than 20 years.						
<b>Brown, James M.</b>	74	10/21/22	Army	Vietnam	48	Green Isle Post 408
<b>Burke, Harry L.</b>	93	9/6/22	Marines	Korea	33	Bloomington Post 550
Note: He was one of the last surviving members of Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Regiment who served at the Chosin Reservoir, the "Chosin Few."						
<b>Carlson, Allen L.</b>	96	8/28/22	Army	Korea	18	Monticello Post 260
Note: He served in Germany.						
<b>Czycalla, Kurt A.</b>	82	11/1/22	Army	Vietnam	23	New London Post 537
<b>Dormady, Dennis B.</b>	68	10/22/22	Navy	Vietnam	18	Rochester Post 92
<b>Ferguson, Darvin E.</b>	78	9/14/22	Army	Vietnam	50	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Forster, Charles A.</b>	88	10/9/22	Army	Korea	32	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Gag, Michael G.</b>	83	11/1/22	Army	Vietnam	36	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Goihl, Bernard E.</b>	87	10/26/22	Army	Korea	29	Lake City Post 110
<b>Grage, Gordon L.</b>	89	10/24/22	Army	Korea	22	Ashby Post 357
<b>Green, Robert G.</b>	75	9/19/22	Navy	Vietnam	46	Gaylord Post 433
<b>Green, Roy H. Jr.</b>	88	9/6/22	Army	Korea	41	Dodge Center Post 384
<b>Greig, James L.</b>	93	11/12/22	Army	Korea	45	Albert Lea Post 56
<b>Grewe, James R.</b>	76	11/9/22	Army	Vietnam	36	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He served with the 4th Infantry Division in the Central Highlands by Ah Khe, Vietnam. He later transferred to the 101st Airborne Division at Camp Evans north of Hue City.						
<b>Grewe, Leroy F.</b>	80	10/24/22	Army	Vietnam	9	Gaylord Post 433
<b>Guggenberger, Linus L.</b>	95	1/16/22	Navy	WWII	20	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Halverson, Eugene C.</b>	75	10/17/22	Air Force	Vietnam	9	Willmar Post 67
<b>Hanf, Gerald R.</b>	71	10/16/22	Army	Vietnam	3	Spring Valley Post 68
<b>Hennen, Elmer J.</b>	89	12/6/21	Army	Korea	64	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Hollen, Lowell R.</b>	82	10/9/22	Army	Korea	43	New London Post 537
<b>Jacobson, Emil L.</b>	95	10/18/22	Navy	WWII	76	St. Peter Post 37
<b>Kalpin, Virgil D.</b>	90	9/14/22	Army	Korea	71	Monticello Post 260
Note: He received two Purple Hearts. He is a past post commander.						
<b>Kerger, Gene C.</b>	91	10/11/22	Air Force	Korea	31	Pequot Lakes Post 49
<b>Klossner, Michael H.</b>	73	10/19/22	Army	Vietnam	32	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Knick, Orlin H.</b>	80	9/21/22	Army	Vietnam	8	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Kuether, Dale A.</b>	80	9/30/22	Army	Vietnam	34	Milaca Post 178
<b>Lilyquist, Clinton R.</b>	87	10/30/22	Navy	Korea	39	Hackensack Post 202
<b>Mattsfield, John H.</b>	93	11/8/22	Army	Korea	56	Litchfield Post 104
<b>Muenchow, James C.</b>	97	8/7/22	Navy	WWII	24	Long Prairie Post 12
<b>Muller, David W.</b>	88	10/1/22	Army	Korea	17	Windom Post 206
<b>Nelsen, E. James</b>	98	9/3/22	Navy	WWII	74	Clements Post 519
<b>Olson, Donald E.</b>	97	10/3/22	Army	WWII	72	Amboy Post 276
Note: He served in the Army Air Forces.						
<b>Olson, Robert D.</b>	77	8/14/22	Navy	Vietnam	52	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Pals, Donald G.</b>	76	10/24/22	Air Force	Vietnam	33	Milroy Post 274
<b>Pearson, Donald L.</b>	98	10/17/22	Army	WWII	21	Litchfield Post 104
Note: He was stationed in the Philippines during WWII and the Allied occupation.						
<b>Pedelty, Sidney R.</b>	72	11/18/22	Army	Vietnam	30	Rochester Post 92
<b>Penas, Albert L. Jr.</b>	78	11/16/22	Army	Vietnam	35	Roseau Post 24
Note: His wife was a three-term member of the Minnesota House of Representatives.						
<b>Podein, Walter M.</b>	92	11/9/22	Army	Korea	37	Stewartville Post 164
<b>Renner, Jerome L.</b>	75	11/3/22	Army	Vietnam	46	Ashby Post 357
Note: He served in the artillery and was awarded the Bronze Star.						
<b>Rettmann, Lawrence A.</b>	76	9/12/22	Navy	Vietnam	54	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Richmond, Kevin L. Sr.</b>	66	10/21/22	Marines	Vietnam	38	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Ritter, James T.</b>	96	11/2/22	Army	WWII	34	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Rollie, Jerry T.</b>	89	10/12/22	Army	Korea	47	Spring Valley Post 68
<b>Sandquist, David T.</b>	81	10/11/22	Army	Vietnam	2	Minnesota Post 1982
<b>Schoenfelder, Gary D.</b>	74	10/27/22	Marines	Vietnam	12	Rochester Post 92
Note: He did two tours in Vietnam and fought at the battle of Khe Sanh.						
<b>Schultz, Eugene W.</b>	89	10/17/22	Army	Korea	16	Lewiston Post 90
<b>Sheehan, James M.</b>	81	9/19/22	Army	Vietnam	48	Pine River Post 613
Note: He worked on radar and electronics.						
<b>Siegle, Allen E.</b>	87	9/3/22	Army	Cold	19	Long Prairie Post 12
<b>Smith, Milferd</b>	86	10/19/22	Army	Vietnam	3	Litchfield Post 104
<b>St. John, Benjamin A.</b>	73	10/28/22	Army	Vietnam	34	Claremont Post 422
<b>Stehr, Nancy R.</b>	75	10/5/22	Army	Vietnam	4	Backus Post 368
<b>Stevens, Kenneth E.</b>	98	8/12/22	Marines	WWII	69	Long Prairie Post 12
<b>Swenson, Ronald A.</b>	77	8/19/22	Army	Vietnam	49	Hutchinson Post 96
<b>Szczesniak, Joseph</b>	77	8/29/22	Air Force	Vietnam	33	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Talarico, Robert J.</b>	74	10/16/22	Army	Vietnam	2	Barnum Post 415
<b>Tandsater, Richard H.</b>	88	10/19/22	Marines	Korea	50	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: Assigned to 3rd Tank Battalion of the 3rd Marine Division in Japan, he was trained as a gunner and became a tank commander.						
<b>Tanner, Lester J.</b>	93	10/27/22	Army	Korea	12	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Thepens, Carl J.</b>	81	11/10/22	Army	Persian Gulf	32	New Ulm Post 132
Note: He joined the Army, then National Guard and finally Army Reserves. He served in Operation Desert Storm after dedicating 20 years of his life to the Army Reserves. He was a member of the New Ulm Battery.						
<b>Theisen, James J.</b>	86	11/9/22	Army	Korea	34	Hackensack Post 202
Note: He served as a paratrooper.						
<b>U'Ren, John T.</b>	79	11/6/22	Army	Vietnam	25	Waconia Post 150
<b>Wahlstrom, Robert E.</b>	97	10/20/22	Army	WWII	40	St. Joseph Post 328
Note: He served in the Army Signal Corps and strung cable throughout Tokyo in Occupied Japan.						
<b>Waldner, Vernon G.</b>	84	10/28/22	Navy	Korea	53	Coon Rapids Post 334
<b>Weller, Richard E.</b>	80	10/30/22	Army	Vietnam	36	Coon Rapids Post 334

## All-Family Events Calendar

- Dec. 3:** Pearl Harbor Rally, Spicer Post 545
- Dec. 11-16:** National American Legion College, Indy
- Dec. 14:** 75 percent membership target
- Jan. 19:** 80 percent membership target
- Feb. 4:** Sweetheart Rally, Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
- Feb. 15:** 85 percent membership target
- Feb. 26-March 1:** Washington Conference
- March 15:** 90 percent membership target
- March 25:** ALA DEC Meeting, Dept HQ
- April 15:** DEC/Appreciation Rally, New Prague Post 45
- April 16-21:** National Commander's Tour of Minnesota
- April 19:** 95 percent membership target
- April 20-23:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley
- April 22:** Department President's Testimonial Dinner, Spicer Post 545
- May 13:** Department Commander's Testimonial, New Prague Post 45
- May 17:** 100 percent membership target
- June 11-17:** Minnesota Boys State, St. John's Univ.
- July 4:** Forest Lake Post 225 Fourth of July Parade
- July 12:** DEC, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls
- July 15:** Department Convention, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls
- July 26:** Legacy Run Kickoff Party, location TBD
- July 27-30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Sr. State Tournament, Rochester
- July 27-30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Jr. State Tournament, Burnsville
- July 28-30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II Sr. State Tournament, Roseau
- July 28-30:** Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament, New York Mills
- Aug. 4-6:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II Jr. State Tournament, Granite Falls
- Aug. 19:** Fund 85 Run (Minn. Veterans Assistance Fund), Forest Lake Post 225
- Aug. 25-31:** National Convention, Charlotte, N.C.
- Oct. 12-15:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley

## 'Mail Call' continued

**Continued from Page 4**  
 populations, therefore, play a critical role in meeting the constant need for blood.  
 "Types O negative and O positive are in high demand. Only 7 percent of the population are O negative. However, the need for O negative blood is the highest because it is used most often during emergencies. The need for O+ is high because it is the most frequently occurring blood type (37 percent of the

population).  
 "The universal red cell donor has Type O negative blood. The universal plasma donor has Type AB blood.  
 This year Minnesota was recognized as the top donor program of our size state at the National Convention.

**Terry Larson**  
**Chairman, Department Blood Donor Program Committee**  
**Forest Lake Post 225**

## School events are times to speak of Boys State

### Minn. Boys State

**Neil Kruse**



I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and reflected on all you were thankful for!  
 We're getting close to Boys State selection for 2023. Talk up the program in your community, as well as encourage young men to apply for positions. Use school events as opportunities to promote the chance to learn about local government, networking, enhancing leadership skills and to develop friendships.  
 If any of you are interested in serving as counselors for the week, contact Director Kyle Oldre. To get a feel for the position (to serve further in the future) and a better understanding of Boys State, spend a day at St. John's during the week. You can see the young man

your post sponsored and his city in action, as well as how counselors guide the political process. The website [www.mnboysstate.org](http://www.mnboysstate.org) serves as a great source of details for the June 11-17 event.  
 The week contains full days of activities which may not be appreciated immediately, but are cherished in the rear-view mirror.  
 Thank you for all you do to support the program and government at the local, county, state, and national levels!

*Neil Kruse is a counselor for Minnesota American Legion Boys State.*

## Department of Corrections

In a story about the last meeting of the H & H Last Man's Club in Stillwater in the November 2022 issue, the first name of Mr. Utecht was incorrect. Here is the corrected sentence: "Unable to attend were Ralph F. Utecht and Kenneth Streiff."



# Legionville receives conservation grant, plans to sell 2 unused parcels

Continued from Page 1

Legion members to speak to more than just the schools. They can go to school bus drivers, firefighters and police officers, and explain the importance of kids learning safety.

Legionville is its own non-profit corporation. Its finances are separate from the Department of Minnesota.

Legionville revenue exceeded expenses by \$268,793 this past year, Moon said, with an operating balance of \$199,186.

He listed reasons Legionville is stronger now than in past years.

First off, Legionville received \$148,630 from the state government for a Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) grant, for land it has in conservation status.

Second, Legionville re-worked a cell-tower lease agreement, which yielded a one-time \$75,000 payment. Third, Legionville received a PPE loan for \$50,000. Fourth, districts donated \$87,149.

Moon said \$50,000 of the overage will be invested in a CD, and after the markets improve, he hopes more investments can be added.

Additional income is expected in the coming year. At the Sept. 22 meeting, the board voted to sell two parcels. He said they are swampland that has been leased out for \$1,000 a year in recent years. The board had an appraisal done and found they are worth about \$225,000 to \$250,000.

"We are going to put that up for a bid because we can't get to it, we can't use it."

Moon spoke about a paver project and donor wall to show who has donated to Legionville. He mentioned the Camporee, which takes place Sept. 6-11, 2023, will no longer be hosted by the SAL Detachment of Minnesota. Now, it will be run by volunteers from the districts. Organizer Shawn Davis will assist in 2023 to help with the transition.

Moon also said the camp is looking to replace 168 mattresses.

The string of lean years was caused mainly by closed summer sessions. In 2018, a large floating bog force the camp to cancel. In 2020, COVID happened. In 2021, COVID restrictions were lifted at a time that left a narrow registration window.

The DEC heard from members who stood to say they are department candidates for the 2023-24 American Legion year. They were Paul Hassing of Bloomington Post 550 for commander, Randy Olson of Winnebago Post 82 for chaplain, Ray Kane of St. Paul Park Post 98 for historian, Brad Pagel of Slayton Post 64 for sergeant-at-arms, Paul Edwards of Nisswa Post 627 for vice commander, Victor Gades of Morris Post 29 for vice commander, Bill Gordon of St. Michael Post 567 for vice commander, Chuck Stone for vice commander, Bill Barbknecht for National Executive Committeeman and Peggy Moon for alternate NECman.

Two candidates seek Minnesota's next turn at having a national vice commander, and they stood, too. They were Michael Ash of St. Paul Christie deParcq Post 406 and Jim Kellogg of Adams Post 146.

Daniel Seehafer of Horicon, Wis., Post 157 stood to say he is seeking the office of national commander. Seehafer is the leading candidate.

## Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund to use Unite Us

Department Adjutant Mike Maxa said the MVAFF has been around for about one year and has given out more than \$110,000 to assist veterans.

The fund is part of the Minnesota American Legion Foundation. It is numbered as a dedicated account called Fund 85.

"Our Fund 85 is really starting to take off," Maxa said at the Fall Conference in St. Cloud.

He gave a shout out to VA&R Benefits Coordinator Sarah Sturner for her role in the funding. He mentioned how they even had six people apply in a single day.

American Legion posts across Minnesota work with Sturner at the department to apply for the funding to assist their local veterans facing financial hardships. The post assists her in vetting the applicant, and the funds are paid to the need, not the veteran.

Maxa said the assistance has ranged from helping a homeless woman with two children in Red Wing get on her feet by sheltering her in a hotel to replacing windows in a house for an elderly man. The fund has paid for medical, dental, food, gas, phone, utilities, among other things, for struggling veterans.

As an example, Maxa



Department Logo Option 1

mentioned one request was to pay for storage, but that request was denied. It wasn't essential.

"We want word to get out there that our No. 1 mission is to help veterans, and that is what we are doing," he said.

Sturner announced the Department of Minnesota VA&R Committee has begun using a new tool to help local veterans access MVAFF. It is a referral website called Unite Us (uniteus.com). She has been sending emails to post service officers to let them know.

She also will use Unite Us for annual Post Service Officer Training.

Many other organizations use Unite Us for reaching members and making referrals, from Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans to Beyond the Yellow Ribbon to 23rd Veteran. For training on how to use Unite Us, contact Allison Alstrin at allison.alstrin@uniteus.com.

To reach out regarding MVAFF assistance or donations, send a message to dso@mnlegion.org or to mmaxa@mnlegion.org.

Maxa said there is over \$90,000 in Fund 85 right now. He encouraged posts to donate. Gambling funds are allowed. (See written request on bottom right of Page 4.)

Foundation Chairman Lloyd Ricker appreciated donations to Fund 85 and listed off how much came from posts in each district:

- 1st District: \$200
- 2nd District: \$1,000
- 3rd District: \$10,850
- 4th District: \$300
- 5th District: \$10,000
- 6th District: \$2,250
- 7th District: \$1,000
- 8th District: \$0
- 9th District: \$1,200
- 10th District: \$11,000
- Miscellaneous sources: \$2,640

Ricker said recipients of the MVAFF are anonymous. He said



Department Logo Option 2

that when local posts verify a veteran in need, it should be kept among one or two key people, like the service officer and commander, and the ID of the veteran should not be shared with the entire membership.

## Softball Committee to expand

The DEC approved a resolution to expand the Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball Committee from four to 13. There would be one softball director from each of the 10 districts, and there would be three officers appointed by the department commander. Those three officers presently are Director Mike Arvidson of Detroit Lakes Squadron 15, Luann McMahan of Adams Post 146 and David Thompson of Howard Lake Post 145.

District commanders who haven't named a district softball director were encouraged to do so.

Softball coordinator Tim Engstrom reported that the softball program had \$46,490 at the end of the 2022 season. The season had 27 teams, and eight of them reached the state tournament in Mankato, which cost \$10,368 to operate.

He said the 2023 tournament price tag ought to go down because the committee has contracted with the softball association in the New York Mills and Perham area.

"Contracting reduces costs. Baseball does this, too. For example, umpires will be paid using gate receipts and other means of fundraising, like concessions and programs, rather than from the committee's money," he said.

He added that the first year was about getting things up and running.

The Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament will be at Lund Park in New York Mills July 28-30.

## Department budget relying on carryover

Moon also is the chairman of the Finance Committee. In his

report, he said dues would generate about \$700,000 this year. It was about \$848,000 in 2020. Membership decline has resulted in about \$150,000 decline in dues revenue to run department programs and committees.

Dues are not the only source of income, and he said the total income for the department lands at \$1,183,775. Budgeted expenses are \$1,231,485. That leaves the department with a loss of \$47,710.

The good news, he said, is the department had a \$67,555 carryover from last year.

Committee funding, he said, went up. It was \$196,778 last year, and this year is \$203,000, an increase of \$26,222. He said Finance Committee reduced funding for some committees and increased it for others at its Sept. 20 meeting at Elk River Post 112.

Still, the Finance Committee this year had to make many cuts. He said investments were down, too — a \$160,970 loss.

Moon urged the DEC to think of the budget in terms of membership. He said a \$150,000 gain would be equal to 11,000 new members.

"Give me 11,000 members, and I would be happy to give you a hell of a budget," he said.

## New logo barely approved

Many departments of The American Legion have developed their own logo, which they can use to publicize their efforts and to make additional revenue through caps, shirts and gear.

After reviewing two options for a new department logo, it was a tight race.

The Department Executive Committee voted 15-10 by a show of hands in favor of Option 1, a simple blue outline of Minnesota, over Option 2, a red, white and blue wilderness landscape inside the shape of Minnesota.

Option 2 was designed by Parker Prairie's Mark Ferley, who designed the new Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball logo, too. He also does graphic design for sports teams, such as the Mustangs of Menomonie, Wis.

## Committee to review purpose of committees

Commander Havlick announced the creation of an ad hoc committee to review purposes of committees. It is called the Internal Affairs Ad Hoc Committee. Linda Dvorak of New Prague Post 45 is the chair. Members are Don Pankake of Hutchinson Post 96, Chris Belfield of Two Harbors Post 109 and Randy Bastyr of North St. Paul Post 39.



Department Sergeant-at-Arms Carla Tappainer places a POW/MIA cover over the back of an empty chair during the opening of the Department Executive Committee meeting in St. Cloud on Oct. 27.

## Candidates for office

# Taps



Continued from Page 6

<b>Wells, Rodney L.</b>	88	10/31/22	Air Force	Korea	14	Deer Creek Post 283
<b>Wenner, Charles N.</b>	91	5/8/22	Marines	Korea	60	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Wick, Harold E.</b>	88	9/9/22	Army	Korea	41	Clara City Post 485
<b>Willson, Patrick L.</b>	73	9/25/22	Army	Vietnam	38	St. Peter Post 37
<b>Wilson, Ronald D. Sr.</b>	80	11/20/21	Army	Vietnam	31	Marshall Post 113
Note: He retired after 22 years in service, having been stationed in Arizona, Colorado, the Pentagon, Korea, Germany and twice in Vietnam.						
<b>Wimmer, James E.</b>	89	9/27/22	Navy/Mar.	Korea	26	Monticello Post 260
Note: He served as a corpsman.						
<b>Windschitl, Alvin J.</b>	92	10/26/22	Army	Korea	7	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Winter, Arthur E.</b>	75	11/5/22	Army	Vietnam	51	Cold Spring Post 455
<b>Wirtanen, Arthur E.</b>	94	10/6/22	Army	Korea	68	Cloquet Post 262
<b>Wise, Julius J.</b>	94	10/3/22	Navy	WWII	41	Winona Post 9
<b>Wyffels, Edward G.</b>	78	10/3/22	Army	Vietnam	55	Marshall Post 113
<b>Zabinski, Joseph F.</b>	87	10/16/22	Army	Korea	3	Waite Park Post 428
<b>Zinter, David J.</b>	85	8/7/22	Army Res.	Korea	22	Long Prairie Post 12
<b>Zunker, Howard P.</b>	94	10/31/22	Army	Korea	54	Anoka Post 102

Note: He was a past post commander.



Beach balls provide some levity during a break at the DEC meeting in St. Cloud. The balls were put into play by the Media & Communications Committee.



# Outstanding Enlisted

Annually at the Department Fall Conference, the National Security & Foreign Relations Committee hands down its awards for Outstanding Enlisted Personnel serving in Minnesota.



First Sgt. Lyle C. Howg is a recipient for the Army National Guard. He is from Laporte and serves in A Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment.



Sgt. Shon D. Beito, from B Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment, is a recipient for the Army National Guard. He is from Thief River Falls.



Staff Sgt. Gary S. Bush of Moorhead is the Marine Forces Reserve recipient. He serves with the Detachment Support Company of the 4th Law Enforcement Battalion.



Tech. Sgt. Alec A. Wamsher of Shakopee is the recipient for the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He is with the 934th Airlift Wing.



Tech. Sgt. Michael M. Schuette of the 133rd Airlift Wing is the recipient for the Air National Guard. He lives in Waconia.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Bradley of the U.S. Coast Guard station in Duluth is the recipient for the Coast Guard. He resides in Duluth.



Chief Petty Officer Brandon R. Thompson of Burnsville is the recipient for the Navy Reserve. He is part of the Indo Pacific Command.



Members of the Department of Minnesota National Security & Foreign Relations Committee are, front row, Member Emeritus Curt Norenberg and Chairman James Kellogg. Back row are Brad Pagel, Ted Berg, Eugene Leifeld and Gary H. Olson. The Army Reserve recipient of the awards was Staff Sgt. Dominic R. Titterton, who could not be present at St. Cloud. He lives in Evans, Colo., and serves with Headquarters Company of the 372nd Engineer Brigade at Fort Snelling.





Nathan Smith stands in front of a patriotic mural on the north side of Sauk Centre Post 67. He is the adjutant of his post and commander of his county council.

## Smith ended up meeting the right woman when he came to Sauk Centre

Continued from Page 1

He made sure the pilot got in the plane, and when the aircraft returned, he recovered all the items and made repairs. There were usually two flights a day.

Mornings began with a pre-flight inspection. At midday was a through-flight inspection, and at the end of the day was the post-flight inspection. These involved taking oil samples, filling fuel tanks, checking fluids, among other things, including parking and hauling out the aircraft.

His next duty station was Pope AFB in North Carolina, where he was crew chief for A-10s, and he deployed overseas to Kuwait and Iraq, including enforcement of the Iraq No Fly Zone and the 1998 bombing campaign that was Operation Desert Fox.

During his Pope years, the Air Force also sent the senior airman to temporary duties at Nellis AFB in Nevada and Davis-Monthan AFB in Arizona.

After four years, Smith got out and moved to Steamboat Springs, Colo. He had skied a lot as a kid in Maine and wanted to live the life.

He worked for a ski resort in central reservations. He started as an agent and became a team leader. After 2 1/2 years, he moved back with his parents, who were in Minot at this point, because he wanted to break into

television.

He started to work for the NBC station KMOT as a reporter, cameraman and editor. He decided to go to college at Full Sail University in Winter Park, Fla., for film and television.

He did well, but Smith never completed his degree because he began getting professional jobs. Most notably, he did freelance work for Outdoor Life Network's new Resort Sports Network.

In 2004, the country was in two wars, and there was consideration for reinstating the draft. Smith returned to Minot and decided he would re-enter the military. However, the Air Force doesn't let its veterans re-enlist.

"I chose the Army, but I lost rank. I now was an E-2. I went from blue to green," Smith said.

He went through a condensed four-week basic training called Warrior Transition Course at Fort Knox, Ky. Then it was off to Fort Sill, Okla., to get artillery training. His military occupational specialty was 13M, a MLRS crewmember. MLRS stands for "multiple launch rocket system."

"I chose that MOS because I would get to drive to work, not walk," Smith said.

The Army sent him to the DMZ in Korea. He was stationed at Camp Casey. Often, in the mountainous terrain, his unit would load the rockets, bring

the launch vehicle in hiding until called to launch, then go to the firing point and program the coordinates of the target. Then they would either fire on command or fire when ready.

On American Independence Day 2006, North Korea tested its first nuke-carrying-capable missile. In fact, the country did two rounds of missile tests on two types of missiles.

"That put us all on high alert," Smith said.

They were on high security, too, which included special battle drills, and this lasted the rest of the year. Smith exited the Army in 2007.

He drifted and ended up homeless in Austin, Texas.

How? He said he had no plan, no money saved, no job lined up.

In 2010, a fellow veteran took him to the Austin VA, where they put Smith on a non-service-connected pension of \$1,000 a month while they worked on his claim. He bounced from hotel to hotel, while fighting for this disability claim that never seemed to come through.

Finally, in 2014, he decided to switch scenery and move to Portland, Ore. He was still homeless. He lived in shelters and in the woods.

Smith had a close buddy die during his deployment to Kuwait in Operation Desert Fox. An A-10 aircraft engine fell on his head. Smith felt he should

have been the one who died, and, at this point in this life, he didn't realize he had untreated post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I didn't know anything about it," he said. "I thought it was just part of life."

Finally, the VA diagnosed him as 100 percent service-connected.

In 2016, he bought a car and began travelling around. He ended up at the St. Cloud VA, then transferred to the VA in Hot Springs, S.D., for in-patient PTSD treatment. He completed a 10-week program.

Homelessness has a sense of freedom to it, Smith said, but it's a daily struggle, too.

"I was fortunate to be getting any compensation," he said. "It can be difficult for people to come up with the first and last month's rent, plus a deposit."

Some folks like that lifestyle, he said, and eventually, it's all they know.

One day, he decided he was done with it.

He got a ride with his ex-girlfriend to Minnesota from South Dakota. She had previously lived in the Interstate 94 town of Sauk Centre.

Once there, Smith had no money, no car, and he went to Post 67. He started talking to a guy while having a smoke. He and his family turned out to be Christians, and they ordered him a meal — Post 67's chicken wings and a beer. They also put him up in the Gopher Prairie Inn for a week and paid his cellphone bill.

"Two days later, I met my future wife, and I never left," Smith said.

Now with online access, he visited a dating website to meet Sauk Centre women and connected with Diane Doubrava. It turns out her family is a big supporter of veterans, and her uncle signed Smith up to be a Legionnaire. The post put him on the housing committee the first week. Her family regularly camps at Legionville's annual Camporee.

"The Legion gives people a sense of purpose," he said. "I'm always trying to do stuff for veterans any chance I get."

That includes organizing a fundraiser to help Legion posts in Kentucky hit hard by tornadoes. He credits his wife for helping him make smart decisions.

Diane and Nathan married June 8, 2018. Thanks to a VA loan, the Smiths purchased a split-level home a little over a year ago. Before, they had lived in an apartment above a garage. She is the director of nursing at Cedar Cove Assisted Living, and he is 100 percent connected, so he doesn't work. However, he is attending Penn State online,

majoring in political science.

As a former homeless veteran, what does he think can be done to help homeless veterans?

"There's a lot of veterans out there who do not know about veterans programs, and when they do, people fall through the cracks after getting sick and tired of waiting," Smith said.

He said whatever can be done to reduce waiting times for HUD-VASH housing would be good. Many homeless veterans in shelters do not know there are resources just for them and end up in the civilian systems. Those general shelters need to help them get to veteran shelters.

He said there needs to be greater awareness of the Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund through the Minnesota American Legion, which can provide temporary assistance to struggling veterans, and of the shelters operated by the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, a nonprofit working to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota.



The A-10 Warthog is known for the fearsome 30 mm, seven-barrel Gatling gun mounted on its nose. Called the GAU-8/A Avenger, it fires armor-piercing depleted uranium and high explosive incendiary rounds.

## Minnesota DAV is in Immediate Need for Additional Volunteer Drivers

Minnesota DAV is in immediate need of additional volunteer drivers. This FREE service provides Veterans with transportation to and from their VA medical appointments and has transported over 15,000 Veterans this year

Contact your nearby VA Medical Center Voluntary Services Office and ask how to become a volunteer driver

Minneapolis: 612-467-2050

St. Cloud: 320-255-6365

[www.dav.org/help-dav/volunteer/drive-a-van](http://www.dav.org/help-dav/volunteer/drive-a-van)

Regions in high need of drivers include:  
Blue Earth, Brown and Sibley Counties  
St. Cloud Area  
(Morrison, Mille Lacs, Kanabec & Wright Counties)



You do not need to be a Veteran or DAV member to volunteer. Drivers must be fully vaccinated.

**DAV**  
OF MINNESOTA



Nathan Smith's post, Sauk Centre Post 67, is conducting a holiday food drive through Dec. 13. People can drop off nonperishable food items, and the food will be put into boxes for an effort called Tender Loving Christmas. Some of the food also will go to the Sauk Centre Food Shelf.



# Main speakers left strong impression at Dept. Fall Conference

Breakout sessions were popular; kept things moving

ST. CLOUD — This year, for the first time, the Fall Conference had many breakout sessions, much like a trade conference. Legionnaires could learn about topics ranging from media to membership to law to post officer roles, among others.

They went over very well. Some members stood to say it was the best Fall Conference they had ever attended.

And attendees praised the quality of the speakers, too.

The leading candidate for national commander, the Rev. Daniel Seehafer, spoke to attendees about the success The American Legion had in pushing Congress to pass the PACT Act last summer, and he said growing the organization is important if veterans wish to continue to have success on Capitol Hill.

He said Voter Voice, a way of contacting lawmakers via the Internet, was crucial in letting lawmakers hear from Legionnaires.

He described how a younger veteran who had been affected by toxic burnpits came to him and said how he would have to hold his breath while struggling through the toxic air.

"It's personal, isn't it?" Seehafer asked the veterans at the Fall Conference.

He said if every veteran in the Legion would contact lawmakers via Voter Voice or pen and paper, it would show the true power the organization has.

"I want to close up Congress's phone system, like we did in the past," Seehafer said.

He pointed to the POW/MIA flag, and how the Legion was instrumental in making sure it flew at all federal and state facilities.

"It's personal. I don't see any other organization fight like The American Legion," he said.

Seehafer mentioned the Legion's new suicide-prevention campaign called "Be the One." He described a member of his church who knew he was in the Legion. The man had called about a veteran friend who wanted to kill himself and wanted the right number to call.

Seehafer gave him the number, and, together, they



St. Cloud Mayor Dave Kleis, a member of St. Cloud Post 76, greeted the conference attendees on Friday, Oct. 28.

found out the veteran was going to the Madison VA, and was able to get him the appropriate VA help. The veteran is still alive today.

"Ask. Listen. Reach out," Seehafer said. "You definitely are the people to 'Be the One.' I know without a doubt our organization saves lives," he said.

Vicki Randall, mother of Cody Lee Randall, inspired everyone during a joint session of the Legion and the Auxiliary at the St. Cloud River's Edge Conference Center.

Cody was an Army sergeant stationed in Alaska and took his own life during the COVID lockdowns of 2020.

Vicki said her son had been struggling with substance abuse, then went to get help. He had attended three counseling sessions, then the lockdowns kicked in, leaving him without the help he had been receiving. He shot himself in April 2020.

Everything was a blur afterward. The casualty officer came. A chaplain came. She was booking flights to Alaska and was told she would be in quarantine for 14 days.

"All I know is I couldn't fly to Alaska and sit in a hotel for 14 days," she said. "No mother who lost their son should go through what I went through just to get to my son."

Vicki described her struggle to reach an official who could

help. Finally, a reporter from the Brainerd Dispatch put her in touch with the director of the Alaska Department of Health, and she was on an airplane the next day.

There was a viewing. They had her son in sweats, not his uniform. Vicki's daughter-in-law (Cody's wife) was angry.

He was cremated, and the ashes were not allowed to be present at a memorial service because then it would be considered a funeral, and Alaska was not allowing in-person funerals. When she got off the airplane in Brainerd, Paul and Sue Edwards of the Nisswa American Legion welcomed her, along with 11 veterans from the Eagle's Healing Nest in Sauk Centre.

Vicki tried to tell TV stations her story, but they seemed to be after dirt on the military, she said, not about Cody or the issue of suicide among veterans and servicemembers. She ended up telling her story to Liz Collins of Alpha News and told how her son never received military honors.

She got to know the Eagle's Healing Nest, and the veterans who receive treatment there.

She thanked Legion member Randy Olson of Winnebago Post 82 for organizing a funeral ceremony on private land for Cody.

"During COVID, we lost all sense of humanity," the mother said. "People were dying in



Daniel Seehafer of Horicon, Wis., is the leading candidate for 2023-24 national commander. If elected, he would begin holding the gavel at the end of the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., which is Aug. 25-31.

nursing homes alone, and nothing else mattered but COVID."

Since then, she has been involved in the Panda Project, an annual fundraiser for the Eagle's Healing Nest. Cody loved pandas and had a big panda tattoo that his mom never liked. However, she now has a panda tattoo, too.

The first Panda Project was on July 24, 2021, and the goal was \$10,000. It raised \$15,000.

The second was on Aug. 21 of this year, and it raised \$21,000. She thanked Legion posts in Nisswa and Ironton.

She encouraged posts to go to eagleshealingnest.org and click on "donate."

Vicki said she doesn't blame the Army for her son's death.

District 6: Hill City Post 340  
District 7: Buffalo Lake Post 469

District 8: Nashwauk Post 307  
District 9: Thief River Falls Post 117

District 10: Bloomington Post 550

The 2023 Fund 85 Ride is slated for Forest Lake Post 225 on Aug. 19.

Jody Hassing, secretary for the Minnesota American Legion Riders, said the Minnesota Legacy Run will be last weekend in July, going through northern Minnesota.

She thanked the posts of the Minnesota American Legion for helping the Riders raise \$155,000 for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides college funding to children of post-9/11 veterans who died on active duty or have a VA disability rating of 50 percent or greater. (Applications are taken at legion.org Jan. 1 to April 1.)

At the 103rd National Con-

vention in Milwaukee, Minnesota led the country — yet again — by having the largest donation to the fund.

He said the participants have been getting the program set at a state level, but it will shift to the post level next. He spoke about the Unite Us website and how it serves as a referral service. The Department of Minnesota has registered with it.

Every Third Saturday in Minneapolis offers Veterans Coffee Talk every Tuesday at 9 a.m., Maxa said. The location is 5402 43rd Ave. S., Minneapolis. It is an opportunity for anyone to speak with a veteran who will listen to their situation and help them with resources and connections.

Maxa encouraged posts to create similar coffee klatches, making help available where veterans need it.

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Legionnaires at the Fall Conference stand with Americanism Awards. From left are Karen Welander accepting for Buffalo Lake Post 469, Dwayne Collins for Hill City Post 340, Brad Pagel for Slayton Post 64, Americanism Chairwoman Tess Davis, Myron Ehrich accepting for West Concord Post 295 and Luis Campero accepting for Bloomington Post 550.

She said the Army needs to do more for mental health, and she will continue to advocate to prevent active-duty suicides.

The base where Cody had been stationed, Fort Richardson, experience seven active-duty suicides in 2020, and it had 17 in 2021.

To reach the suicide prevention hotline, dial 988 and press 1.

After Vicki Randall spoke, Department Commander Jennifer Havlick said she feels at home whenever she visits the Eagle's Healing Nest.

"I know we're not going to get along all the time, but I know that together we will tamp down this suicide epidemic," she said.

## Americanism Awards

Department Americanism Chairman Tess Davis handed out the Americanism Awards for Minnesota.

They went to:  
District 1: West Concord Post 295

District 2: Slayton Post 64  
District 3: Norwood Post 343

District 4: St. Paul Post 8  
District 5: Minneapolis Gopher Post 440



The Legion and Auxiliary met jointly to hear Vicki Randall, mother of an Army sergeant who died by suicide in 2020. She told of the difficulty of dignity during COVID lockdowns.



# Scenes from the Fall Conference



Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby provides advice on running post business.

## Judge advocate spends a moment on minutes

ST. CLOUD — Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby emphasized the importance of taking minutes. He reminded everyone that, when in court, it's not what you know, it's what you can prove. He said never destroy minutes. Keep them forever.

He fielded a question on how much should be included in minutes. He said there is not extensive case law. He said it is common to make note of financial matters, such as gambling donations and financial investment gains or losses.

Every state has differing procedures, and the Minnesota Auditor's Office

He said when posts amend their bylaws, they can't make changes on the spot. They need to post notice of the proposed

changes to the entire membership, and then they vote at the membership meeting, not just the executive meeting.

When it comes to disciplining a member, they must receive due process, Colby said. It is in the national bylaws.

However, local posts can decide for themselves when it comes to ceremonial procedures, even if it differs from national, he said.

He emphasized that district commanders have every right to stick their noses into post-level business. The American Legion is a transparent organization.

The posts, he said, do not have the authorization to force the removal of a department or district officer for trying to understand what is going on at any level of the organization.

## Tips on meeting minutes

The following is guidance the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor gives to townships, municipalities and other agencies, and that same guidance is often followed by nonprofits statewide.

It says minutes, at a minimum, must include:

- The subject matter making the motion.
- The persons making and seconding a motion.
- The roll call vote on a motion.
- The character of resolutions or ordinances offered, including a brief description of their subject matter, and ...
- Whether the motion to approve a resolution or ordinance was defeated or adopted.
- Any appropriation of money.

It goes on to say the amount of detail varies within each body and depends on their own procedures and bylaws. However, it adds the minutes ought not be cluttered with unnecessary detail, which could hamper efforts to review minutes.

It suggests that each aspect of a topic's conversation does not need to be in the minutes, but it is wise to include the facts and reasons used to reach the final decision, so that an organization can defend its decision against future claims.

The Office of the State Auditor recommends the following be included in minutes:

- Type of meeting (regular, special, emergency, continued, seasonal, etc.).
- Type of group that is meeting.
- Date and place.
- Time called to order.
- Approval of minutes of previous meeting, with corrections noted.
- Identity of parties to whom contracts or payments were awarded, with reasons.
- Abstentions from voting, with name and reason for abstention.
- Appointments of representatives to committees or outside organizations.
- Reports of the officers.
- Amount, purpose, source and recipient on funds, investments, revenue and expenditures, as well as setting paid hourly rates or salaries, mileage rates, meal reimbursements or per diem.
- Time the meeting adjourned.

Note the importance of having full details regarding anything related to money.

The OSA also recommends that minutes be signed by the clerk or secretary — in the Legion, this would be the adjutant — usually prior to the next meeting. Then after the minutes are approved, a designated member of the membership — preferably someone with excellent attendance — should sign and date them, too. It also says audio and video recording are not considered substitutes for meeting minutes.



Joe Bares of Jordan Post 3 hands a check to Commander Jennifer Havlick from the Pheasant Feed Committee in the amount of \$50,000 for the Minnesota Veteran Assistance Fund. Both the Pheasant Feed (Fund 65) and MVAFF (Fund 85) are under the Minnesota American Legion Foundation.



Bayport Post 491 Commander Corey Quick presented a plaque to Andersen Windows for being an outstanding partner of The American Legion. For example, it installed new windows at the Legionville dorms. Accepting the plaque for Andersen is Army veteran Rich Coleman.



Fifth District Commander Dave Dahl, on behalf of his post, St. Paul Post 8, hands two \$1,000 checks to Department Commander Jennifer Havlick for her project. One is for Project Delta, the other for Tunnels to Towers.



Past Department Commander Chuck Kruger hands a \$400 check to Department Commander Jennifer Havlick for her project on behalf of NTTBNTI, which is an organization of past department vice commanders.



On behalf of St. Paul Arcade-Phalen Post 577, John Weiss passes a check for \$300 to Commander Jennifer Havlick's project. The post also donated another \$800 later on.



Leading candidate for national commander, Dan Seehafer of Wisconsin, dances with Minnesota Auxiliary Department President Mary Kuperus on Oct. 28.



Historian Teresa Ash smiles as she greets a joint session of the Minnesota American Legion and Auxiliary. A gallery of images were posted to the department Facebook page.



Alternate NECman Peggy Moon and Past Department Chaplain Kelley Adelsman held a chat session about community service on Oct. 29.



Elbows are up during the flag salute to start the Department Executive meeting on Oct. 27.



# Special Memorial Issue

The Minnesota Legionnaire in the November issue printed many memorials from across the state, but the response was so great, we had to continue printing them in this issue.

On this and following pages are images of veterans memorials from all across Minnesota. Each one recognizes veterans for their bravery and service. Thank you for sending them in.



The Carver County Veterans Memorial and Registry is at the intersection of Minnesota Highway 25 and County Road 30 in Mayer. It is lit at nights. It consists of six panels, one for each of the five branches and one for POW/MIA and a soldier figurine, along with pictures of service. In the center is a showcase to memorialize deceased veterans.



"All gave some; some gave all" represents the veterans who served their country and are memorialized at a memorial Millville Post 579 built and dedicated in 2021 and 2022.



Construction began on the memorial that became Sheridan Memorial Park in Minneapolis in 2013, but the effort to build a memorial along the Mississippi River was led by WWII veterans beginning in 1995. Local artist Robert Smart designed the sphere, and markers along the walkway around it describe 10 conflicts Minnesotans have participated in. The grand opening was in June 2014. The park is at 1300 Water St. NE.



The Northfield Area Veterans Memorial Park was built in 2005 to honor local veterans of all branches. The park is home to 1,362 pavers, a monument honoring 113 fallen veterans, monuments for each branch, three spires with a bell for honoring fallen comrades on Memorial Day and a monument listing all major wars. Northfield is home for Post 84.



Chairman of Workman Township Board of Trustees Jim Berg, an Army veteran and member of Gary Post 505, on left, stands with Minnesota Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke on Oct. 22 at Lakeview Cemetery.

## Workman Township dedicates new veterans memorial

MCGREGOR — This one is the newest of the veterans memorials sent to The Minnesota Legionnaire.

On Oct. 22, the folks in Workman Township in Aitkin County unveiled a veterans memorial at Lakeview Cemetery. Names of contributors are engraved on the back. The space features an engraved bench. Post and district commanders for the American Legion and VFW gathered, and they were joined by Minnesota Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke, who gave a keynote address. After, lunch was served at the McGregor VFW hall.



The St. Charles Veterans Memorial became a reality in 2019. Situated in the heart of this Purple Heart Community, it has three monuments, 10 flags and 400 pavers. St. Charles is the home to Post 190.



Milaca Area Veterans Memorial is the result of the Milaca community, its businesses, organizations, veterans and their families coming together to create this beautiful memorial in Trimble Park.



The Minneota-Ghent-Taunton Veteran's Memorial sits in Veterans Park in Minneota. The park includes statues and flags of all military branches, as well as pavers listing living and deceased veterans from those three communities. The impressive park sits along Minnesota Highway 68.



The Stevens County Area Veterans Memorial is in Morris. Flags are flown for the U.S., Minnesota, POW/MIA and all military branches.



Rice has a strong support for its veterans. Labor from Rice Post 473 maintains it, and donations from local organizations fund it. The community turns out with strong support for Memorial Day, 9/11, Veterans Day and Peace Officer Memorial Day every year.



# Special Memorial Issue



The effort to erect the New Prague Veterans Memorial began in 2017, and the dedication took place in May 2022. The city donated the land, and the memorial has many features, with visitors lingering long to take them all in.



Osseo is home to Henry J. Boerboom Veterans Memorial Park, which has a memorial that says "For God and Country." The stone monuments memorialize residents who served in wars.



The Paynesville American Legion Post 271 Veterans Memorial Plaza is adjacent to Minnesota Highway 23. Dedicated in 2017, upgrades continue. This includes a memorial to posthumous Medal of Honor recipient Spc. Kenneth L. Olson.



The Pierz Veterans Memorial in Billig Park was made by the Pierz American Legion Post 341 to honor all who served the United States of America.



The Prinsburg Community Veterans Memorial was built in 2007. It has six stones, a main center stone with the six service emblems with an appropriate verse, a gold star stone with the names of those killed in action, and four stones with all the veterans names on.



Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial in Rochester was constructed to honor all veterans beginning with the Revolutionary War. The wars are explained geographically on circular walls. Rochester is home to Post 92.



The St. Stephen American Legion Post 221 Veterans Memorial was dedicated May 26, 1997, to the men and women who served the country. Two soldier statues were added in 2019.



Sleepy Eye Veterans Park is about a half block from Post 7 in downtown Sleepy Eye. It has a veterans memorial wall and a KIA monument. America, Minnesota, POW/MIAs and military branches are represented by flags.



The Spring Grove Area Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 2017 to honor the area veterans living and dead and who served in peace and war. It contains the names of 1,081 veterans from the Civil War to the present, including 60 who gave the full measure of devotion.



The community of St. Michael erected the St. Michael Veterans Memorial to honor and to pay tribute to veterans and servicemembers. St. Michael Post 567 headed up the project. Groundbreaking was in August 2016, and it was dedicated on Memorial Day 2021. The memorial also represents neighboring Albertville and Hanover.



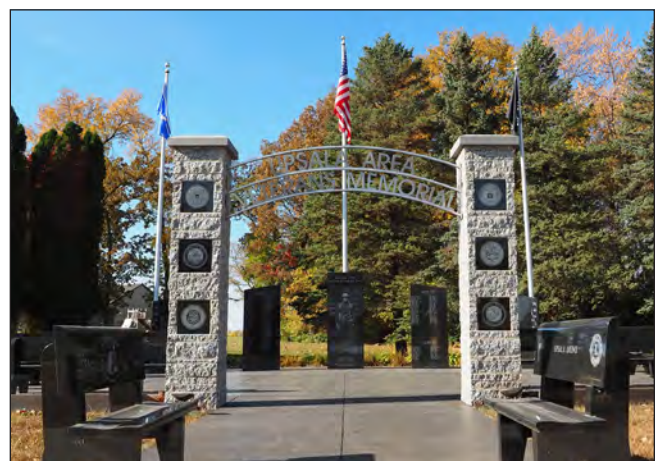
Veterans Memorial Park of Underwood was dedicated in October 2012. The park consists of eight monuments depicting casualty figures from conflicts from the Revolutionary War through the recent Middle East wars. There are nine photos of people from Underwood who gave the ultimate sacrifice.



The Waverly Veterans Memorial Wall honors veterans of Waverly and surrounding townships. The list of names now numbers more than 500 and is updated each Memorial Day. Engraving continues on the back. A special honor section for KIA, MIA, other distinctions, is being planned.



The Woodbury Veterans Memorial provides a tribute to more than 600 veterans through its granite pavers. The memorial is on the end of the the Woodbury City Hall campus.



Upsala American Legion Post 350 started planning and fundraising for a memorial in 2018, the 100th anniversary of World War I. The memorial is along Main Street.



# Special Memorial Issue



The Waterville Veterans Memorial was completed and dedicated on Sept. 12, 2020. It honors veterans day and night.



Zimmerman Post 560 is putting up a Gold Star monument in a local park. Above is a rendering. People can find a link to donate to the cause through the post's Facebook page. The post's Gold Star family is Stacey and Steve Burnham, who lost their daughter in the Army at a young age.



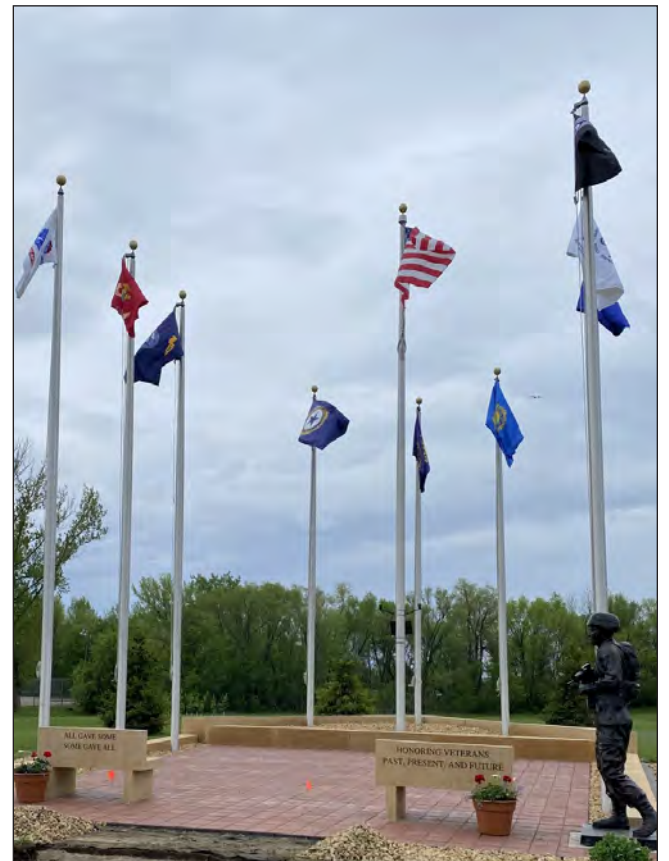
Maynard has a veterans memorial with the names of all veterans who lived in the area or went to school in Maynard.



Veterans Memorial Park in Vergas commemorates local veterans with flags, pillars and granite benches.



Renville American Legion Post 180 Veterans Memorial is bigger than this marker, but it greets visitors as they approach the memorial.



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 311 in Elysian worked with its Legion Family to raise over \$50,000. The memorial was built in 2019 at Sunset Park in Elysian, and it has about 350 pavers memorializing veterans dating back to the Civil War.

## KING TUTS AND NEFERTITIS



The King Tuts and Nefertitis met Oct. 21 and 22 at Paynesville Post 271. The King Tuts are past department commanders and past department adjutants. The "Tut" reference is a joking nod to how they are in the past or "dead." Front row from left are Chuck Kruger, Lloyd Ricker, Marland Ronning, present Department Commander Jennifer Havlick, Dan Ludwig and Peggy Moon. Back from left are present Adjutant Mike Maxa, Tom Fernlund, Mark Dvorak, Michael Ash, Don Pankake, Darrel Redepenning, Michael Schaffer and Randy Tesdahl.



The great Egyptian queen Nefertiti reigned at the wealthiest time of ancient Egypt. These Nefertitis are spouses of the department commanders or adjutants. Front row from left are Veronica Fernlund, Chris Ronning, Carl Moon, Betty Redepenning, Mary Ludwig and LuAnn Marschel. Back row from left are Teresa Ash, Linda Pankake, Nancy Maxa, Linda Dvorak, Nina Schaffer, Peggy Tesdahl and Donna Redepenning.



# District commanders



## 1st District

Mary Hanson



Merry Christmas from the 1st District.

No matter how you celebrate the upcoming season, please do not forget our veterans in the nursing homes — especially the ones who no longer have families. Make your light shine as bright as the lights on your Christmas tree. Even a short visit would make their Christmas brighter.

The Department Fall Conference in St. Cloud is now in the books for 2022. It was a great conference with many breakout sessions available. Each had valuable information. The Kelly Inn turned out to be a good place to hold it. I am looking forward to the next few years there. If you weren't there, you missed a great get-together by the 1st District.

Veterans Day found me in Stewartville at Post 164. The event was well-attended. Everyone was welcoming. I want to thank the post for inviting me.

Our 1st District membership director, Dale Wellik, and I have attended numerous membership dinners around the district.

All of the posts had great programs and even allowed me to speak. We were honored to represent the district.

Please contact your post and get your membership renewed. Even if you can't participate as much as you would like, your membership is vitally important right now.

The 1st District will be having a Christmas party on 1 p.m. Dec. 11 at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club, hosted by Post 52. We will be taking donations for Toys for Tots, having an ugly sweater contest and eat a lunch, among other activities. Please RSVP if you plan to attend.

We are gearing up for the Mid-Winter Conference on Jan. 7. Committee chairs are reminded that they need to attend or submit a report to the 1st District adjutant, Wayne Hammon Jr.

God bless America! God bless our veterans!



## 4th District

David Dahl



Good news! Past District Commander and current District Judge Advocate Larry Ryan has stepped up to be our new district adjutant. Thank you, Larry.

Mike Ash will act as judge advocate until we find someone who wants that job.

While on the topic of "wanting the job," I'd like to invite every member of the 4th District to think about what they would like to do to serve veterans. Please review the masthead of the 4th District newsletter to see all the officer and committee positions.

For members who haven't had much involvement at the district level, we promise not to push you into positions of responsibility until you say you are ready!

You can serve on a committee or as an assistant or vice for any of the officer positions, so you can have a chance to learn the operations at the district level. We need you, especially younger veterans. Please come forward to serve!

The next issue I'd like to talk about is related to the above. I

would like to suggest that every post create a 4th District liaison position and designate a person to attend our meetings. We meet at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. All meetings are face-to-face and on Zoom. See the 4th District newsletter for locations.

Per the recommendation of National Commander Vincent Troiola, here's another QR code. It brings up a page with the dates and locations of the 4th District meetings. The page also has a link to the 4th District directory.



## 8th District

Larry Pocrnich



Hello veterans, Thanksgiving has come and gone. Hope you spent time with family and friends. Now, Christmas is soon to be here. Please check on homeless and single veterans this time of year. We need to invite them to post functions. They would talk about being invited for a long time. They may even become a member when they find out how we (Legion) are helping the veterans.

That is what we do! Fall Conference was held and a lot of learning went on this time. We had classes we could go to all day. Among the topics were Americanism, membership, legal issues, resolutions, officer duties. The camaraderie was great. More post should send officers to the district and department conventions.

Speaking of post membership ... you knew it was coming, so don't be shocked.

Some of 8th District posts are short on percentages for this time of year. Let's check with our membership director or adjutant to renew our membership to The American Legion. I have sent a list of members still on Minnesota Post 1982 members to the vice commanders to contact to get them assigned to a post.

I also have lists of members who have not renewed membership. I will get that out. Check your card to see if it is a 2023 card; if not, please renew. We send the numbers to congress for bills we need passed for veterans.

With Christmas coming soon, visit those in the nursing homes. They would love to hear from you or their post.

My project this year is for Wounded Warrior United. This group does great with helping veterans fish, hunt, other activities. You can send donations to: 8th District Commander, P.O. Box 592. Hibbing, MN 55746. Checks payable to same.

The 8th District Mid-Winter Conference will be via Zoom videoconference on Feb. 18 at 9 a.m. There will be an email sent out districtwide for info to join. Also, 8th District convention will be on Saturday, May 6, at Taconite Post 301. The executive committee will meet at 9 a.m., with a joint assembly at 10 a.m.

Here is wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## 2nd District

Pam Krill



Greetings 2nd District, and American Legion Family,

First, I have to say thank you to everyone for their service. Veterans Day brought tears of joy and a very humbling feeling. As I traveled the district, it is was amazing to see the commitment, dedication and passion of our Legionnaires, their families and the community.

I was great to see the schools filled with children and their families and our veterans. To see the small communities of 200 people and half of the town filled up the community centers for a dinner or to see members coming from multiple location to meet together for each Veterans Day ceremony. Thank you for all of the invitations and the amazing events.

It's hard to believe we are already in December and the holiday season is here. As we continue to work on our membership and reaching out to our members, we need to be vigilant of what the holidays bring to

many of our Legionnaires. Many of them, even though they may be with their families, have memories of being alone on those holidays and away from their families. Even though they are with their families, it still may be a challenge for them to enjoy their time. Continue to do Buddy Checks, reach out and stay connected with our family at this time.

I hope everyone enjoys the holiday season and "thank you," 2nd District, for leading the way in membership. Stay focused and talk to those new members, young, old, renewing members or new members. Let's show them what the American Legion Family is all about.

We are quickly approaching the Mid-Winter Conference, Feb. 17-18, at Blue Earth Post 89. Hope to see you all soon.



## 6th District

Karen O'Bar



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. 2023 looks to be another busy year.

Sister district training went very well in Detroit Lakes. Lots of great information put out.

I was honored to attend McGregor Post 602, where its members unveiled a new veterans monument. I went to membership meals at Hillman Post 602, Brainerd Post 255 and Pierz Post 341. I feel like they try to fatten us up. Lots of wonderful Legion Family members and memories I will cherish forever.

I attended a veterans fair at Camp Ripley in late October. Wonderful exhibits and aid for veterans new and old.

On Oct. 27-29, the Department Fall Conference was held in St. Cloud. Lots of great classes were available. New memories made.

Jason Pierce from Aitkin Post 86 has agreed to step in as 6th District ALR liaison. Thank you, Jason.

I visited Clarissa Post 213, Long Prairie Post 12, Wadena Post 171, Little Sauk Post 417 with Mike VanHeel the 6th District as west sub vice commander.

On Nov. 10, I was honored to be part of Bertha Post 366 color guard at the Bertha-Hewitt High School. During this week, veterans from my post went into the school and read to the kindergarten through sixth-grade students. Helping them remember our past to ensure a better future for our great country.

Veterans Day, I was asked to speak to 11 veterans and their families at the Staples Care Center. These veterans have stories that need to be remembered. I was truly honored to be asked to speak.

Pearl Harbor Rally is Dec. 3 in Spicer Post 545. I hope to see some of your smiling faces.



## 3rd District

Gary Richardson



November brought us an early winter, and as we look forward to the coming holidays, I am reminded that not every veteran has access to a warm meal, a warm place to lay their heads at night or the funds to give their families a decent Christmas — or where or how to find mental health care.

Many do not know who they can talk with when they are in crisis. There are many veterans and community assistance organizations in our state that are there to help, and it is our job

as Legionnaires to help them connect with those organizations.

As our national commanders says, we can all "Be the One." Resources can be found at legion.org, mnlegion.org or a quick Google search of "veterans assistance Minnesota."

My best wishes for a merry Christmas and happy and safe New Year!



## 7th District

Karen Welander



The past month has been a flurry of post and community activities, and I am sure they will continue with the holiday season approaching. I have had the pleasure of meeting many people at the posts and enjoying their dinners and programs.

Thank you to all who invited me to attend and for the opportunity to see what you have to offer to your communities. Thank you so much for all you do. Keep up the good work.

We have one post making 100 percent membership at this early time in the year. Congratulations Echo Post 204 for leading the pack in membership.

We have some posts struggling with membership. The officers of the district make house calls to assist in achieving membership. All you need to do is ask. You are not alone when processing membership, just ask.

As the holidays come and go, we are reminded that "Freedom is not Free." As veterans we have been trained to spot things out of the ordinary that the uninitiated may miss. If you see something, say something. Be safe this holiday season.



## 10th District

William Gordon



The holidays are upon us, with lots of food family, friends and celebration.

Please remember if you have an event you want published, send the information to your 10th district adjutant, vice commander or me. We will do our best to get the word out.

Also remember, if you have a special event you want to share with, make a flier and send it to your media and communications representative or to me. I will for sure pass it along.

I am still scheduling post visits and hope to visit as many posts as I can between now and June 2023. The only hold up is time for my recuperation from left hip surgery and the weather.

If I have not yet visited your post. Please send me an email wgordon2494@hotmail.com with the date, time, location (address of your meeting place) and commander and adjutant's contact information.

Also, if you have an event coming up you would like me to attend, please send me an invite via email or a telephone call. I will do my very best to ensure I attend.

How many of you have started putting together your award packages? There are awards for Boy Scout of the Year, Legion Member of the Year, Police Officer of the Year, First Responder of the Year.

Also let's not forget the candidates to be submitted for Oratorical Contest, Boys and Girls State, and, of course, this coming summer at Legionnaire. Remember how you felt when

some-one gave you an award and thanked you. It was a humbling great feeling, wasn't it?

Why not take the time now to pass it forward? There are many members of our posts and communities that work tirelessly every day. No, they are not looking for recognition or thanks, yet it sure makes them feel really appreciated when we say thank you.

After all, who doesn't like to be thanked?

What is the saying? "To the world, you may be only one person. However, to that one person you may be the world."

Take the time to make a simple phone call to a veteran you have not seen or heard for a while. It may be just the thing that person needs. Keep in mind we do not wear signs telling everyone what we are dealing with every day, yet a small act of kindness can go so vary far.

I recently visited a post where a member offered me a room to stay the night because my trip was a long one. That simple act of kindness was greatly appreciated.

I did not take him up on the offer as I didn't feel the drive was all that far, yet I remember his kindness. When members of organizations are asked why they joined a particular club, group or organization the most replied answer is: "I want to make a difference."



# Listening Post



Walker American Legion Membership Chairman Jim Lucas is presented a fishing pole and reel in appreciation of his support of Homeless & Wounded Warriors of Minnesota. The organization is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and is based out of Emily. They are an all-volunteer organization with no paid employees. Over 90 percent of what they bring in goes back out to assist veterans and their families. If you would like more information about this group see their website at [homelessandwoundedwarriors-mn.org](http://homelessandwoundedwarriors-mn.org).

Tony Sauer



Fifth District Commander Lynne Nottage presents Post 581 Commander Steven Schultz with a new charter after the post changed its name from Minnesota Veterans Home Post 581 to Herb Gager Post 581. Gager was a World War II veteran and past post commander who received his Purple Heart from injuries suffered at Iwo Jima. The post meets regularly at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.



Navy veteran Duane Dahlstrom of Pine City Post 51 holds a quilt displaying an eagle in front of a U.S. flag.

## Quilts presented to Legion-VFW honor guard

By Quilts of Honor

PINE CITY — The Quilts of Honor program was started by Army veteran Gail Belmont in California and is now expanding nationwide.

Belmond played taps at funerals of comrades who gave the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam. The purpose of Quilts of Honor is to honor all veterans and active service personnel for their contributions to our nation.

On Oct. 17, Quilts of Honor were presented to 37 past and present members of the color and

honor guards for the Pine City American Legion Post 51 and the Pine City VFW Post 4258.

The program was coordinated by Lyn Johnson and the quilts were made by four ladies from the area pictured below; Lyn Johnson, Barb Heljm, Gladys Enzenauer and Leone Nyers.

The VFW quilts were presented by the Auxiliary President Carol Belko and the American Legion quilts were presented by American Legion Auxiliary President Linda Setterlund. This is an outstanding example of the American Legion and the VFW working together for the benefit of the community.



Lyn Johnson, Barb Heljm, Gladys Enzenauer and Leone Nyers.



Golden Valley Post 523, better known by its tribute name of "Chester Bird," erected a new flagpole near the end of September. It was totally funded by member donations. The pole is 80 feet tall. The concrete footing weighs 14,500 pounds. The flag is sited prominently on Minnesota Highway 100 at the edge of our parking lot. "We wanted to let everyone driving by to know who we are, where we are and what we stand for," said Commaner Craig Hartman.



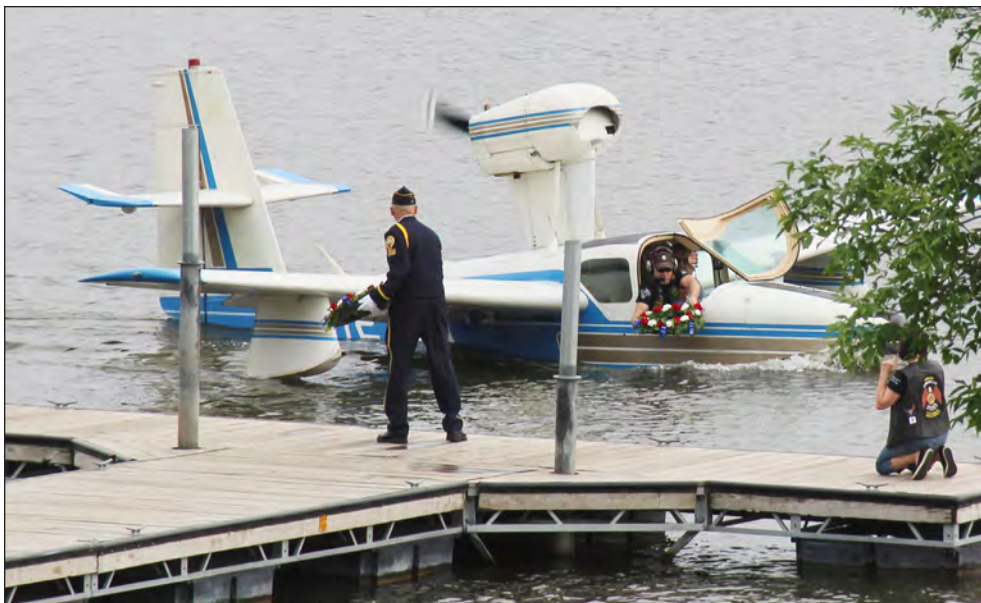
# Listening Post



Wheaton Post and Unit 80 donated clothing to the Fergus Falls Veterans Home. It has 83 residents presently who are either a veteran or spouse of one. When a new resident arrives, he or she may be in need to new clothing. Quilters of local churches also supply a quilt. From left are Fergus Falls Veterans Home Volunteer Services Coordinator Erin Hagen, Wheaton Auxiliary Unit 80 member Laurie Karsky, and Fergus Falls Veterans Home Development and Public Affairs Director Gary Harris.



Hillman Post 602 hosted its annual membership dinner on Oct. 22, with 125 people attending, which included guests and Auxiliary members. The post donated \$500 to 6th District Commander Karen O'Bar's project, who was on hand to accept the check. Handing it to her is Commander Jim Blaisdell.



It was the 50th year for Albert Lea pilot Jim Hanson of Albert Lea Post 56 to take part in the wreath-laying ceremony on Fountain Lake for Veterans Day. Pictured in the plane is Hanson, flying his Lake Amphibian, and Freeborn County Sheriff Kurt Freitag, who is a Legionnaire and a Legion Rider. Freitag does the honor of laying the wreath. Simultaneously, a Post 56 Honor Guard member lays one from a dock.

Sarah Stultz/Albert Lea Tribune



Woodbury Post 501 attended an array of veterans-related events on Veterans Day, and during all this, the Post 501 Legion Family took time for a photograph.



The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion presents the colors at all home football games for the Park Rapids Panthers. This photo shows three generations. From left are Air Force veteran Marv Vredenburg, Air Force veteran Aaron Major and SAL member Tye Majors.



Elk River Post 112 has an outreach program that started during the COVID-19 pandemic. On Sept. 29, the post held what it called the Veteran & Spouse Benefit Review, and it drew in 85 veterans and 20 spouses.

## Outreach event for resources draws in veterans

By Post 112

ELK RIVER — The idea of an outreach program started during COVID when it became apparent we needed to reach out to our veterans to assure their well-being.

That led to meeting with several veteran service organizations to generate more outreach ideas. A top idea was to schedule what we called the Veteran & Spouse Benefit Review with the goal being to ensure that veterans were receiving every benefit they were eligible for as a result of recent changes.

On Sept. 29, we conducted our first outreach event for veterans and spouses in Sherburne and Benton counties. The following agencies attended: Sherburne County Veterans Service Office, Veterans Benefits Administrations, VA Unemployment Department, VA Caregiver Support,

VA Health Care Systems, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the St. Cloud Stand Down, St. Cloud Outreach Clinics, Agent Orange and Blue Water Claims specialists and the Magnus Foundation in Dayton.

Sixth District Commander Karen O'Bar also attended and answered questions at our American Legion Family table.

This event was proclaimed a tremendous success according to Sherburne County Veterans Services Director Bruce Price.

In all, 85 veterans and 20 spouses attended the event. All reporting they were quite pleased to have attended.

There were 35 veterans who scheduled follow-up visits to proceed with claims and record updates, and 10 new veterans who registered with the county and will be scheduled for complete benefit reviews.





# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 23 Vol. 5

President Mary Kuperus • Treasurer Cathy Radil, cathy@mnala.org

Dept. HQ: Veterans Service Building, St. Paul, MN 55155 651-224-7634 December 2022

## The last month was filled with travel around state

### President's Column

Mary Kuperus



Welcome to December! My family and I would like to "Thank" all who sent their sympathies, condolences and memorials on the passing of our mother, Violet Manson, on Nov. 3. She lived a long life of 96 years, and we have a lot of great memories. She will be missed by many.

Seven Junior members attended the Northwestern Division Junior Meeting along with 33 senior members. They were there for mission training held on Nov. 5 in Minneapolis at the Radisson Blu Mall of America hotel. National Northwestern Division Honorary Junior Vice President Samantha Stai from Minnesota led the Junior meeting. Those attending learned about our programs, met new friends, and discovered more about the American Legion Auxiliary.

I have been blessed to be able to attend many events. Eight Minnesota members attended the National President's Homecoming in Evansville, Ind. We were able to spend time with American Legion Family members from all over the USA.

My husband and I were able to attend the Osseo-Maple Grove Veterans Day Dinner. Girls State and Boys State representatives spoke about their experiences from this past session. I was so happy to hear that they all enjoyed themselves and were very appreciative of the opportunity to attend. The next day we attended the Minnesota Veterans Day program at Inver Grove Heights and the Minneapolis Veterans Home Veterans Day program.

To finish off the day, we enjoyed our evening with the Spicer American Legion Family

Veterans Day and Membership Dinner. We attended the Rochester American Legion Family Membership Dinner, Saluting Community Heroes event in Hutchinson, 4th District American Legion Auxiliary Membership Dinner and the Auxiliary Birthday Celebration in Winsted. Thank you all for your kindness and hospitality.

The Pearl Harbor Membership Rally is on Dec. 3 in Spicer hosted by the American Legion Riders.

Starts at 11 a.m. with social hour and membership turn in for the American Legion Auxiliary. The American Legion Riders are hosting this rally.

The job posting for our department executive secretary is in this issue. Please encourage those you know who would be interested to apply. Thank you.

As we "Serve and Honor Every Day," let's remember all veterans who have served our country at home and abroad. Continue to support our military and their families whether serving overseas or stateside. Our communities continue to need our support in many ways. Thank you for all you do for our veterans!

*May you all have a wonderful Christmas season and a Happy New Year!*

*Mary Kuperus of New London Unit 537 is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Serve and Honor Every Day."*



Auxiliary member Mary Ann Davis of North St. Paul Unit 39 and Legionnaire John Grams of St. Paul North End Post 474 have attended 37 years of conferences and conventions.

## Department Office to be closed for several days near holidays

This year, more than ever, Legion Family members are feeling the loss of in person contact with our members throughout the state.

On behalf of the department staff, we want to wish each of you a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and happy holidays. We are thankful for each of you and ask you to continue to work the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The Department Office will be closed Dec. 23 and 26 for Christmas and Dec. 30 and Jan. 2 for New Year's.

— Treasurer Cathy Radil



Membership chairs met at Fall Conference in St. Cloud in their Paul Bunyan-themed gear. Front from left are Department President Mary Kuperus, 2nd Vice President Judy Ackerman, 1st District's Wanda Prescher, 2nd District's Kollett Kaehlert, 3rd District's Deanna Meyer, 4th District's Mary French, 5th District's Cari Lamb, Department Membership Chairman Sandy Wersal and 10th District's Anne Steffen. Back from left are Honorary Junior President Sydney Borntreger, 6th District's Patty Gilbertson, 7th District's Sheryl Solmon, 8th District's Sharon Voltz, 9th District's Becky Olson and 1st Vice President Sharon Thiemecke.

## This kind of PPP helps mentor new members

**Sharon Thiemecke**  
VA&R Chairman

What has your unit been doing for our veterans?

Have you sent photos with a narrative to your district chairman? Please include original copies of pictures separately in "actual size" when submitting by email because copies included as a scan do not share well.

### Districts

Chairmen, have you been in touch with your units to get

their pictures and narrative in to you?

I would like a few pictures with narratives emailed to me so I can share with national. There are no mid-year reports this year but national would like to see pictures of what we are doing in Minnesota.

Please include a short narrative with photos emailed in "actual size." National will use these to spotlight departments and be passed along to National VA&R Chairman Trish Ward for her report.

### Members

Since World War I, the members of the American Legion Auxiliary have taken an active role in the care and rehabilitation of veterans. There is a spectrum of challenges, needs for our veterans and opportunities for our members to assist them.

**Health issues:** Every veteran should revisit their County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO). Signing of the PACT ACT (Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics) into law, there are new presumptive conditions

that they may qualify for now that they did not in the past.

**Education:** Hand in hand with the VA&R program. Scholarships and helping our veterans further their military occupation specialty (MOS) in civilian life.

**Employment:** Help The American Legion, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and Chamber of Commerce promote job fairs for veterans and their families.

**Family:** Support veteran

Continued on Page 19



## JOB OPENING AT ALA DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

Resumes with cover letters are being accepted for a position with the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Persons who are interested must be an American Legion Auxiliary member.

This position provides the leadership, management and supervision necessary to ensure that the organization has the proper operational controls, administrative and reporting procedures, and systems in place to effectively grow the organization and to ensure financial strength and operating efficiency. This is a full-time position and is based in the St. Paul office. This position requires some weekend meetings and may include out-of-state travel.

Applicants must have a degree in business administration or ten years equivalent experience to include at least five years in a managerial or supervisory capacity, preferably in a nonprofit environment.

Resumes and cover letters should be sent to: Mary Kuperus American Legion Auxiliary Department President 313 Pine St. SW, New London MN 56273 Or emailed to: wmkuperus@tds.net.

A job description and application form are available on request. This position open until filled. Interviewing will begin in December.



# The Grand March

Dressy event at Fall Conference joins Legion Family members by title



Department Commander Jennifer Havlick with ALA Department President Mary Kuperus.



SAL Detachment Commander Tim Weaver with ALA Honorary Junior President Sydney Bortrager.



American Legion Riders Director Ted Berg with ALA Northwestern Division Junior Vice President Samantha Stai. Additional photos of the march are on the Facebook page for American Legion Department of Minnesota.



SAL Past National Commanders Doug Bible, left, and Joe Mayne, right, with ALA National Northwest Division President Marlene Boyer of North Dakota.



Minnesota American Legion NECman Bill Barbknecht, left, and Minnesota SAL NECman Shawn Davis with ALA NECman Jean Walker.



Minnesota American Legion Alternate NECman Peggy Moon with ALA Alternate NECman Raleen Tolzmann.



Minnesota SAL Finance Officer Steve Bilderback with ALA Treasurer Cathy Radil.



Minnesota American Legion Adjutant Mike Maxa with ALR Secretary Jody Hassing.



Minnesota ALA Department President Mary Kuperus speaks to the Minnesota American Legion on Oct. 29 at the Fall Conference.

## VA&R is key to ALA's mission

Continued from Page 18

caregivers, family members and survivors.

**Legal and Financial issues:** Stand downs are a starting point or search on the internet for local assistance, check with your post commander or service officer, also the veterans service officer (VSO).

**Homelessness:** Stand Downs are grassroots, community-based intervention program designed to help the homeless veterans. They offer on the spot help to all veterans including legal consultation, tax information and assistance, wellness exams, housing and shelter information/referrals, drug and alcohol treatment information and much more.

**Reintegration:** Families may have created new routines during absences and both the veteran, and the family need our help to adjust.

The Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary has representatives in five veteran homes and four VA Health Care Systems:

- Fargo VAHCS: Becky Olson
- Minneapolis Veterans Home: Sandy Gibson
- Fergus Falls Veterans Home: Doris Lafayette

Minneapolis VAHCS: Mary Ann Davis

Hastings Veterans Home: Darlene Wondra

Luverne Veterans Home: Jeannette Mertens

Sioux Falls VAHCS: Diane Strassburg

Silver Bay Veterans Home: Nancy Hopper

St. Cloud VAHCS: Jan Benson & Carol Kottom, Deputy

We have several funds that help to support the Auxiliary's efforts at the facilities listed above. Our ALA Hospital Program fund supports the work of our representatives by providing personal care items and other necessities for the veteran residents.

It also helps to provide for special events, outings, treats and more. Our Gift Shop Program is designed to provide all resident veterans, their spouse, and dependent children with a gift for the holidays.

Our \$ Bill Shower provides a cash gift to each resident veteran during the holiday.

Please be sure to send all donations to the Department Office and not the facilities. Checks should be made payable to ALA Department of Minnesota and earmarked for the specific program.

**WHEELCHAIR VANS**

- NEW/USED
- COMMERCIAL ADA
- VAN RENTALS

**CUMMINGS MOBILITY**

WE SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

VISIT OUR LOCATIONS  
 Albertville: 763-048-0103  
 Burnsville: 651-435-8889  
 Little Canada: 651-633-7887  
 Des Moines: 515-207-3555  
 Cummingsmobility.com

DISTRICT	# of Units	Goal	Period Gain	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal
One	48	3,810	171	2,345	61.55%
Two	72	3,833	147	2,173	56.69%
Three	46	3,797	121	2,282	60.10%
Four	7	570	13	290	50.88%
Five	7	515	7	271	52.62%
Six	62	4,991	252	3,142	62.95%
Seven	57	2,938	216	1,568	53.37%
Eight	23	1,237	69	714	57.72%
Nine	47	3,305	100	2,048	61.97%
Ten	43	3,758	227	2,153	57.29%

ALA Department of Minnesota membership as of Nov. 14.

## Veterans Linkage Line™

minnesotaveteran.org | 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)

# Help for veterans and families

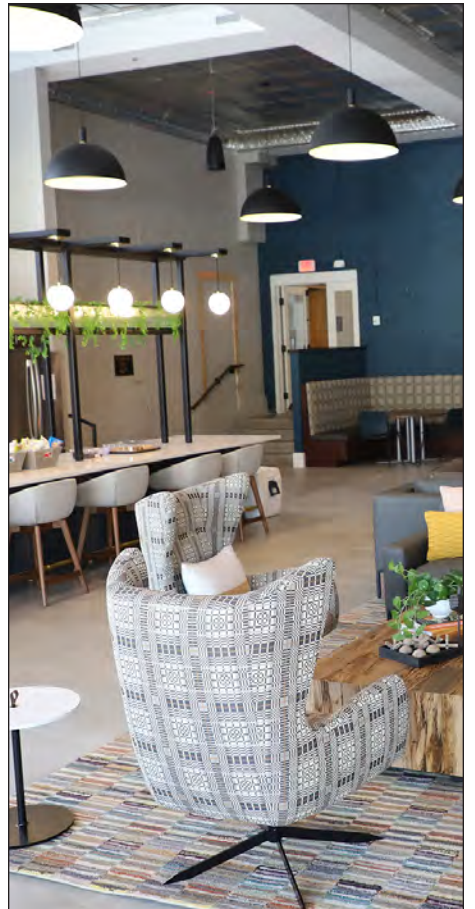




Upper Post Flats features a fitness gym.



Dominium Senior Vice President Owen Metz, center left, met with local officials at the Upper Post Flats residents at the Fort Snelling area (see ad Page 3) on Nov. 18. From left are Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Programs Coordinator Derek Holt, Metz, Met Council Metro HRA Director Terri Smith, MDVA Director of Veterans Programs and Memorial Affairs Andrew Garvais, Minnesota Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke, Carver County Assistant Veterans Service Officer Brett Lyons and MDVA Homeless Programs Coordinator Chakita Lewis. They were there to learn more about the housing project that saved 26 historic buildings at Fort Snelling. The Upper Post Flats have 191 apartments. It is considered "unorganized territory," meaning it isn't in a city, and with the state park, golf course and other amenities, there's a bevy of green space nearby and it is close to metro destinations, Metz said.



Tours of the Upper Post Flats are available 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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**SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**

Purchase a "Support Our Troops" Plate.  
Call: 651-4TROOPS  
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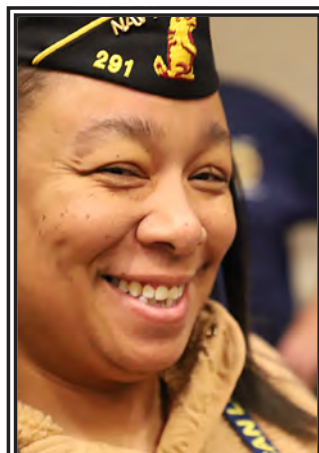
Michelle Witte, executive director of the League of Women Voters Minnesota, rings the Minnesota Liberty Bell at the Veterans Service Building on Veterans Day.

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- Accidental Death Protection
- On-The-Move Travel Accident
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- Lifeline Medical Alert Service



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- **Cancer Care** — Provides important protection and a daily benefit if you are hospitalized due to cancer.\*
- **Accidental Death** — Helps provide financial protection for you and your family. Up to \$5,000.00 LegionCare AD coverage at no cost to Legionnaires is available: (activation required).\* You can also purchase additional Accident coverage up to \$100,000.00.
- **On-The-Move Travel Accident** — Provides up to \$200,000.00 coverage when fatally injured in a covered accident while traveling, plus \$500.00 per day if a covered accident lands you in the hospital.\*
- **Emergency Assistance Plus** — Provides you with 24/7 emergency medical and travel assistance services should something happen to you or your family while traveling away from home.
- **Medicare Supplement Insurance** — Supplements your Medicare Coverage at group rates.
- **Health & Dental Insurance** — Request a quote on various Health & Dental Insurance Plans designed with you in mind.
- **Long-Term Care** — Can help provide home health care, supervised adult care, and more.
- **Lifeline Medical Alert Service** — Provides fast access to help in the event of a fall or medical emergency so you can live confidently and independently.

**To Learn More and Enroll, Visit [www.TheLIT.com](http://www.TheLIT.com)**  
**For Questions Call 1-800-235-6943**

\*The Accidental Death, Cancer Care, Hospital Help Plan, and On-The-Move Accident Insurance Plans are underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, St. Paul, MN. Plans may not be available in all states. These policies contain limitations and exclusions. Please visit [www.TheLIT.com](http://www.TheLIT.com) to review plan details.

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