



## National cmdr. to tour NE Minn.

### Vincent Troiola visits in April

ST. PAUL — The American Legion National Commander's Tour of Minnesota is all planned and set for April.

"The national commander will get to see the Iron Range this time as we head off to beautiful northeast Minnesota," said Adjutant Mike Maxa. "We hope you find a post stop on the tour and come meet him and hear him speak."

National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola was elected in Milwaukee at the 103rd American Legion National Convention. He is a member of New City Post 1682 in Rockland County, N.Y.



Vincent Troiola

Coincidentally, the Department of Minnesota commander, Jennifer Havlick of Duluth Post 28, originally hails

from New York. They will be on the tour together, along with Maxa, of Montgomery Post 79, Membership Director Linda Dvorak of New Prague Post 45, Communications Director Tim Engstrom of Bloomington Post 550 and National Commander's Aide Gary Schacher of Cobleskill, N.Y., Post 57.

The commander's tour is divided among American Legion posts, U.S. military bases and other stops. The public is welcome to sign up and hear him speak at posts. There is a schedule on Page 3, with contact information.

Troiola arrives Sunday, April 16, and the tour begins Monday, April 17, with his arrival at the 148th Fighter

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# There for you



Department Commander Jennifer Havlick testifies before the Minnesota House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee on Jan. 23. Beside her is Department Adjutant Mike Maxa. The committee meeting was at the State Office Building in St. Paul.



Department Legislative Chair Kristy Janigo holds up the American Legion Department of Minnesota Legislative Priorities on Jan. 19 when she testified before the Minnesota Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee. It was at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

## Stay in the know when it comes to veterans issues

ST. PAUL — The American Legion Department of Minnesota is active in getting laws passed at the Minnesota Legislature. Near the end of January, both the state commander and the state legislative chair testified before House and Senate committees.

"It is important that we have a presence at the Capitol. We are representing all of our members," said Commander Jennifer Havlick, "but it doesn't happen without the veterans of Minnesota getting involved. It is important for them to know what we are asking for in St. Paul so that they, when they bump into lawmakers on the local level, know what to discuss."

The following is the Minnesota American Legion 2023 Legislative Priorities, not in any certain order:

### Pass the Veterans and Military Omnibus Bill

It is important to us that our legislation is not lumped in with other bills in an effort to get other proposals through the Legislature. We feel this is best for both the veterans and for the lawmakers of Minnesota. It will allow Minnesota to stand as a shining example to other states.

### Support the Hastings Veterans Home Campus Revitalization

This capital infrastructure project has a price tag of \$170 million. It would replace six of the nine buildings at the campus. A federal VA grant would pay two-thirds (\$111 million), but the state must

commit to its one-third share (\$59.6 million).

### Allocate state-dedicated funding to MDVA for veteran suicide prevention

The American Legion in Minnesota and nationwide has dedicated itself to suicide prevention. We have programs from our buddy checks to the Minnesota American Legion Suicide Prevention Coalition. We 100 percent support any effort by the state to help prevent the loss of life among our brothers and sisters in the veterans community.

### Amend the Post-9/11 Service Bonus

The state Legislature last year approved this bonus, but in the campaign medals listed, it inadvertently left out Operation Inherent Resolve, the international

Continued on Page 8



Lyle Area Cancer Team co-chair Larry Ricke points at bidders during the Lyle Area Cancer Auction on Saturday, Jan. 14.

## A little post near Iowa line goes all out every January

LYLE — Who'll gimme a hundred dollars? One-hundred-dollar bid, now two, now two, will ya gimme two hundred dollars? Two-hundred-dollar bid. How-bout three, now three hundred, will ya gimme three? Two hundred fifty! Over here. How about two sixty, two sixty? I've got sixty, now two seventy?

If there is one event on the Lyle calendar that is known throughout southern Minnesota, it's the Lyle Area Cancer Auction, and Lyle American Legion Post 105 has a major role in it.

The fundraiser to fight cancer in this town on the Iowa border started 44 years

ago at the Silver Saddle Dance Hall, and it would have died shortly out of the gate had Post 105 not volunteered to host it in 1982. It has been the host ever since. The dance hall is long gone.

"The longevity is heartwarming," said Lyle Area Cancer Team co-chair Gary Ziegler. "People have given so much over four-and-a-half decades, and the Legion has been the backbone of it the last 42 of 44 years."

The other co-chair, Larry Ricke, said the place would be packed, especially in the evenings.

Continued on Page 2



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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# Lyle Post 105 plays big role in fighting cancer

Continued from Page 1

"They couldn't get another body in there," he said.

The city maintenance building is right next door, and, in 2003, the organizers moved the auctioneering into there. The food remained in the Legion, and a walkway connected the two buildings. That temporary walkway is now a permanent connection.

"Tonight, it will be standing-room-only," Ricke said. "Both buildings will be packed."

Ricke is a Lyle Post 105 member, and Ziegler is a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 105.

The Lyle Area Cancer Auction took place Jan. 13 and 14. This year, they raised \$212,500, which was donated to the Eagles Cancer Telethon on Jan. 15.

"When we go over there now, they look for us," Ricke said. "We're one of the last presenters."

"We're the biggest presenters," Ziegler said, "and the place goes crazy."

The Eagles Cancer Telethon is a 20-hour broadcast on KTTC, and it is held at the Mayo Civic Center. This year, the amount raised was more than \$1 million. The funds for cancer research are donated to the Hormel Institute in Austin, the Mayo Clinic in Rochester and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

The Geneva Cancer Auction, which is 39 years old, typically places second. This year, it raised \$165,000.

Both Geneva and Lyle rely on more than auction revenue.



To the amusement of everyone except the usual glued-to-cellphone types, Lyle Area Cancer Team co-chair Larry Ricke rides a black bicycle with pink wheels down the aisle at the annual Lyle Area Cancer Auction. Ricke is a member of Lyle Post 105. Vietnam veteran Tim Hornbacher of Adams Post 146 had the winning bid of \$550.

Other local events contribute to their totals before their grand sums are brought to the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester.

For instance, a pool tournament in Carpenter, Iowa, added \$37,000 to Lyle's total. A raffle for a side-by-side and a trailer raised \$29,000. There also are food and beverage proceeds. Hayfield Post 330, in past years, did some of its own fundraising, and contributed to the total.

During the auction, some items are donated back after being sold. According to the Austin Daily Herald, a volleyball donated by 15-year-old Rebecca Van Hooser, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma in April 2021, raised almost \$5,000. That's because it was auctioned off four times. Van Hooser today is cancer-free.

It also helps to have dozens of volunteers, many of whom are Legion Family volunteers, and there are dedicated sponsors: Agri-Steel Inc. in Lyle, Gordy's Repair & Implement in Stacyville, Iowa, J&S Outdoor in Grand Meadow, J&R Ransom in Rose Creek.

Over the course of four-and-a-half decades, little Lyle has raised \$3.5 million.



Darin Lundeen of Elgin shouts when a bid is made on Jan. 14 at the Lyle Area Cancer Auction



Miss Lyle, aka Lily Vanderr, displays a sock monkey with cancer ribbons for hair. She is holding a piece of paper that explains which color corresponds with which type of cancer.



Lyle Area Cancer Team co-chair Larry Ricke presents a \$500 check from Lyle Post 105, handed to him by Lyle Post 105 Commander Galen Holst, right. In addition to the cash donation, the Post 105 Legion Family provides volunteers and space to the fundraising effort.

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- The Haygoods
- Dutton Family Christmas Show
- Clay Cooper's Country Christmas
- Queen Esther @ Sight & Sound Theatre
- Hot Rods & High Heels Christmas Show
- Christmas Wonderland

## Oratorical Contest set for Feb. 25

ANOKA — The American Legion Department of Minnesota Oratorical Contest is planned for Feb. 25. The semifinals take place at 9 a.m. at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 and Anoka Post 102, typically with five contestants at each post. The finals happen at 1 p.m. at Anoka Post 102. The times and locations are subject to possible changes, if necessary, depending on the number of contestants.



People can have photos taken with the national commander during the tour. It's even better when they bring a check to present to the National Commander's Project. During the 2022 tour, several members of the 2nd District presented a check to then-National Commander Paul Dillard at Fairmont Post 36. Present National Commander Jim Troiola's Project is the same Dillard's — American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation.

## Minnesota is ready to host national commander

Continued from Page 1

Wing in Duluth, where he will visit the unit and learn about its mission.

That afternoon, he will tour the Silver Bay Veterans Home and meet the staff and residents of the nursing home.

In the evening, West Duluth Post 71 will host a dinner, and he will speak for the program.

Troiola visits Coast Guard Station Duluth on the morning of Tuesday, April 18. He follows it with an interview at Duluth TV station KBJR. After lunch, he's off to the University of Minnesota Duluth Veteran Service Center to meet with student veterans.

In the evening, the tour heads to the Iron Range, where Chisholm Post 247 will host a dinner, with Troiola as the speaker, at Valentini's Supper Club.

Breakfast on Wednesday, April 19, is at Aitkin Post 86, where the commander again will speak. He speaks after lunch at Hackensack Post 202, and again after supper at Ironton Post 443. It's not easy speaking three times in one day.

On Thursday, April 20, the national commander and his entourage arrive for breakfast and his next speech at Underwood Post 489. Long Prairie Post 12 hosts Troiola for lunch and a program.

That evening, he will visit Minnesota American Legion College at Camp Ripley, and he will spend time with the

### American Legion National Commander's Tour

Please call or email to reserve your spot.

Location	Meal	Time	Contact
<b>Monday, April 17</b> West Duluth Post 71	dinner*	6 p.m.	218-628-1495 (Post)
<b>Tuesday, April 18</b> Chisholm Post 247 held at Valentini's Supper Club	dinner*	6 p.m.	218-966-0603 (Brad) (or via Chisholm Post 247 Facebook)
<b>Wednesday, April 19</b> Aitkin Post 86 Hackensack Post 202 Ironton Post 443	breakfast lunch dinner*	8:30 a.m. noon 6 p.m.	218-927-2965 (Post, after 11 Tue.-Sat.) 763-227-0704 (Rob) 218-833-2117 (Anthony)
<b>Thursday, April 20</b> Underwood Post 489 Long Prairie Post 12	breakfast lunch	8:30 a.m. noon	218-770-6264 (NECman Bill Barbknecht) 320-732-4045 (Post)

\* includes 5 p.m. social hour

Read the story to find out about non-public-oriented stops on the tour.

participants and instructors. Finally, on Friday, April 21, he and his aide depart via the Brainerd Regional Airport.

Troiola (pronounced tree-ola) served in the Navy and Navy Reserves from 1969 to 1974. He spent his career in the automotive service industry, rising to serve in many management capacities. In retirement, he found a new career as a school bus driver.

He was 2010-11 commander for the Department of New York, and he was a national vice commander for 2016-17. He has chaired several national commissions.

He married his wife, Saveria,

in 1973. They have two daughters, Laura and Jeanette; a son-in-law, Michael; and three grandchildren, Alexander, Abigail and Natalia. The Troiolas include three generations of

American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion membership.

The commander presently lives in Maine to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren.





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- Walker American Legion Post #134
- West Duluth American Legion Post #71
- Virginia American Legion Post #239
- Golden Valley American Legion Post #523
- Little Sauk American Legion Post #417
- Hugo American Legion Post #620
- Plummer American Legion Post #623
- Sauk Centre American Legion Post #67
- Anoka American Legion Post #102
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# You might be the world to one person

Retention is as important as recruitment. When we hear a veteran wants to join The American Legion, we are quick to take their dues. We get excited that our membership percentages will rise and our influence at the state and federal level increases.

But ask yourself: What happens next?

In a successful post, a welcome committee makes contact with the veterans and invites them to a meeting. When they arrive at the post for the first time, they are made to feel welcome and important, just like a brand new toy on Christmas Day.

Post officers engage those new members and find out what their interests are to help them fit in and feel comfortable. All that is true in that moment. But what happens when that shiny new member gets put on the shelf and starts to collect dust. The story below speaks to the question of: What happens next?

Dear American Legion Post. Do you remember me? I'm the person you asked to join. I paid my dues and was asked to be a loyal faithful member.

I'm the person who came to every meeting, but nobody paid

## Commander's Column

Jennifer Havlick



any attention to me. I tried to be friendly, but everyone seemed to have their own friends to talk to and sit with.

I sat with different people several times, but they did not pay attention to me. I hoped somebody would ask me to join on the committees or to do something, but no one did.

Finally, because of illness, I missed a meeting. When I came again, no one asked me where I had been. I guess it did not matter much whether I came or not. Next time I decided to stay home and watch a good TV show. When I came back again, no one asked where I was the meeting before.

You might say I'm a veteran and pleasant person. You know what else I am? I'm the member who never came back.

This year National Commander Jim Troiola's theme is "V.E.T.S." for veterans, education, teamwork, sponsor. Our members should never feel alone or feel like they don't fit in.

Sponsoring a new member means ensuring they feel welcome and included. It means offering education on our programs, hands-on training in how we operate. Teamwork means listening to new ideas on how to improve how we make a difference in our communities, state and the nation. Sponsoring new members ensures that they feel included and needed.

Adding them to our buddy list ensures no veteran will stand alone during times of struggle. They will know that we are here for them from the moment we meet them. They will no doubt find tremendous value and purpose in their membership.

I would like each of you to find three veterans you can designate as your buddies, three people who will drop everything and come to you, talk to you and be with you should you need them. Put those contacts on your phone as an "Emergency Veteran Contact."

Remember you are never alone, and you are deeply loved, and you matter. In return, offer to be someone's buddy. "To the world, you may be one person; but to one person, you may be the world."

—Dr. Seuss

Get out there and be the world for someone.

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."

# Story of 4 chaplains gives purpose

What is it about the significance of the four Army chaplains who died when the USAT Dorchester was torpedoed on Feb. 3, 1943, in the North Atlantic off the coast of Greenland for us to commemorate them and that day?

There were 668 other people who died that day. When countries, as a last resort, enter into war, servicemembers and civilians fall victim to war's non-discriminatory death.

George Washington knew the significance of one's religious beliefs on the battlefield. Purpose for the greater good of us all is a spiritual endeavor. War comes with many mysteries and requirements of one to feel and know the dark depths one is capable of but can restrain from.

The laws in war frame acceptable and not acceptable actions. But more is needed, for war without a greater good for many as its purpose is selfish power exerted. He ensured that chaplains were present with those involved in the battle.

The Chaplain Corps is the second oldest corps in the military, after the infantry. In the military, the chaplains, as noncombatants, provide connection to the Divine, God, g-d. They are to be examples of seeking after the greater good to which we yearn for on Earth. They facilitate the

## Chaplain's Corner

Kelley Adelman



hope, forgiveness and sense of spiritual significance.

Today's military enlists chaplains from a variety of organized religions: Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu. Some spiritual practices not recognized as a religion by the Department of Defense continue to be in communication to become recognized in today's military.

The military has been and remains an example of how different faiths and practiced religions can train and fight alongside one another with a spiritual commonality to accomplish greater good for the many that fits within their practiced faiths.

The founders of The American Legion each had their own experience of practicing their faith in a war zone. They might have instituted the commemoration of the four chaplains as a part of our practice to remind us what those four young Army lieutenants evidenced that fateful day on an Army transport ship.

There was a Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi and two Protestant reverends on that ship on their way to their assignments. The

specifics of how they gave their life jackets to another person for their possible survival and then together die as the ship sank will remain unclear. What they evidenced though is clear. Chaplains George L. Fox; Alexander D. Goode; John P. Washington and Clark V. Poling exemplified the ultimate earthly sacrifice of love. They did not let our ideals down but spoke into reality the language of our souls.

For this, we have been reminded again on Feb. 3 that what we do is for God and country; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars; to promote peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; and to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Kelley Adelman of Pine Island Post 184 is the chaplain for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.

## Earn a V.E.T.S. pin

To qualify for National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola's V.E.T.S. (veterans, education, teamwork and sponsor) expired membership incentive pin, American Legion members will need to reinstate five expired members into The American Legion for the 2023 membership year who were not a member during the 2022 membership year.

Please make sure that members have been processed before submission of this award. Pins will not be mailed until they are verified on the national database.

The deadline is June 30, 2023. The easiest way to find the form is to search on Google for "American Legion V.E.T.S. pin."

# 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.

## Send cards to 101-year-old

On March 17, 1922, life in Minnesota was quite different from life lived today.

Ervin H. Stark was born on a farm near Ann Lake.

In those days, there was no electricity or running water in the family farmhouse. Ervin's early memories include reading by an Aladdin lamp and Saturday night baths in the kitchen with a tub on the floor and shared water among the boys.

When Ervin was old enough for school, he was also old enough to work on the farm alongside his father and mother planting, pitching hay, harvesting and taking Tom, a family horse, to its WPA job building roads.

Ervin would get up early to go to the one-room schoolhouse and start up a fire to warm the classroom before the teacher and other students arrived. Then he rode Tom to his building job and walked the three miles back to school. When school was over, Ervin would walk back the three miles to Tom's WPA job and ride him home.



Ervin Stark

In Minnesota, many winter days recorded temperatures at minus 40 degrees and snow piles reached the telephone wires.

After high school graduation, Ervin left the farm and moved to the cities to find work. While there Henry Stark told Ervin that a shipyard was going to be built in Superior, Wis., and that he should go to school to become a welder. Ervin took his advice working at a blanket factory located on the Mississippi in the morning and then attending welding school in the afternoon. When the shipyard opened Ervin was hired as a welder and within two months became

a supervisor. Three years later, he was drafted into the Army Air Corps, which became the Army Air Forces in 1941.

Ervin took his basic training on Miami Beach and lived in a hotel. He was then transferred to Chicago, staying at the Stevens Hotel. In Chicago, he received specialized training on fighter planes and became a mechanic.

Upon completion of the course, he was sent to Matagorda Island off the coast of Texas. There, he readied planes to fly and trained pilots to shoot at a long moving target pulled by a fast B-25 plane. U.S. and allied pilots trained at this center. Ervin was then transferred to Leyte Island in the Philippines and continued to work on planes and training until the war ended.

Throughout his life Ervin embraced hard work, education, and family. He was a Minnesotan. He hunted, fished, rode snow mobiles over snow covered trails, played cards, and danced. Today at 101 he is straight and tall, strong, kind, and humble.

Ervin H. Stark is a 65-year member of Mora Post 201. He turns 101 on March 17. Send birthday cards to 9450 Harbor

Greens Way, A503, Seminole, FL 33776.

Joan Merrill Ervin Stark's wife Seminole, Fla.

## Auxiliary seeks your help to make poppies

Greetings American Legion Members,

I am reaching out to you in hopes that some of you would be willing to help the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

We are currently looking for members who would be interested in making poppies.

Here is the scoop! We provide all of the materials you need, and we can arrange for the pickup of the finished poppies if needed, and we can pay you 10 cents per poppy.

I know that this does not sound like a lot, but it is something that you can do at your own pace, in your own home and it benefits everyone in the state of Minnesota.

We currently have two individuals in their homes, veterans in the Hastings Veterans Home, veterans at the Eagle's Healing Nest who are making the small poppies and one veteran making the large poppies in his home. We so appreciate these people and all of the work they do for us!

Last year, we distributed 182,000 small poppies and 4,740 large poppies, and, to date, have shipped and have orders pending for 102,800 small and 3,264 large poppies, with orders coming in almost every day.

Last year and again this year, we have reached out to the ALA

Department of Wisconsin to purchase poppies made by veterans there to be able to fill the orders for Minnesota, but I am sure that there are Minnesota veterans who would like to make poppies for us.

If this is something that you would be interested in, please contact the Auxiliary Department office at 651-224-7634 to discuss the possibilities. One

hundred percent of the poppy funds go directly to assisting veterans and their families, and we would like to share this opportunity with you. Please consider this.

Cathy Radil interim secretary American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota Mail Call 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>Aakre, Harlan P.</b>	88	12/31/22	Army	Korea	42	Rochester Post 92
<b>Albrecht, Dennis F.</b>	72	12/12/22	Army	Vietnam	18	Winona Post 9
<b>Ambuhl, John R.</b>	87	12/7/22	Navy	Vietnam	20	Winona Post 9
<b>Bakken, Samuel J.</b>	21	12/18/22	Army NG	GWOT	2	Breckenridge Post 53
Note: He served as a cavalry scout in the quick-reaction force 2-136 Bearcat Battalion of the Minnesota National Guard.						
<b>Baynes, John</b>	85	12/1/22	Navy	Korea	27	Springfield Post 257
<b>Becker, Gerald J.</b>	78	1/6/23	Army	Vietnam	17	Waite Park Post 428
<b>Blanchette, James C.</b>	74	12/24/22	Marine	Vietnam	20	Bemidji Post 14
<b>Bradshaw, Richard L.</b>	92	1/20/23	Army	Korea	70	Le Center Post 108
Note: He served in the artillery in Korea.						
<b>Brodeen, Arthur L.</b>	94	12/4/22	Army	WWII	22	Anoka Post 102
<b>Davis, Victor E.</b>	90	12/14/22	Marines	Korea	49	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Ebnet, Albert L.</b>	91	11/9/22	Navy	Korea	30	Springfield Post 257
Note: In 1955, he was on LST 21048 in Operation Wigwam, an underwater atomic test.						
<b>Erdahl, Lee R.</b>	74	12/2/22	Air Force	Vietnam	52	Minneapolis Falldin Post 555
<b>Ernst, John A.</b>	86	12/21/22	Army	VN/PG	32	Elk River Post 112
<b>Falk, Roderick A.</b>	70	12/24/22	Army	Vietnam	20	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Feriancek, H. Douglas</b>	80	10/27/22	Marines	Vietnam	23	Minneapolis Post 1
<b>Fuller, Stephen C.</b>	83	12/25/23	Navy	Vietnam	23	Austin Post 91
<b>Gill, Marion R.</b>	84	12/22/22	Army NG	Vietnam	38	Dent Post 148
<b>Girvin, William G.</b>	98	11/25/22	Army	Korea	69	Little Falls Post 46
<b>Glaeseman, Alfred D.</b>	70	8/1/22	Army	Vietnam	41	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Gnerer, Phillip O.</b>	81	11/30/22	Army	Vietnam	36	Bloomington Post 550
<b>Goettl, Kenneth J.</b>	90	1/15/23	Army	Korea	52	Montgomery Post 72
Note: He was department vice commander in 1987-88, 3rd District commander in 1980-81, 3rd District adjutant in 1983-84, 1991-92 and 1995-96 and had served several positions in Post 79.						
<b>Graden, James</b>	80	12/10/22	Navy	Vietnam	40	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Gravelle, Thomas H.</b>	82	12/19/22	Army NG	Vietnam	20	Aitkin Post 86
<b>Halter, William Jr.</b>	93	12/19/22	Army	Korea	42	Springfield Post 257
<b>Hansen, Norman A.</b>	95	1/14/22	Air Force	WWII	44	St. Joseph Post 328
Note: He was past post commander.						
<b>Hanson, Clifford T.</b>	91	12/21/22	Navy	Korea	53	Two Harbors Post 109
Note: He managed business operations for Post 109 until his retirement.						
<b>Haug, Dale C.</b>	74	12/17/22	Army	Vietnam	31	St. Joseph Post 328
<b>Heffern, Robert E.</b>	91	1/8/23	Air Force	Korea	46	Richfield Post 435
<b>Hennebry, Robert M.</b>	71	12/18/22	Army	Vietnam	1	Bemidji Post 14
<b>Hodnefield, Maynard A.</b>	92	5/10/23	Navy	Korea	28	Austin Post 91
<b>Holstad, Alfred</b>	93	1/3/23	Army	Korea	51	Paynesville Post 271
<b>Holtan, Melroy S.</b>	90	12/31/22	Army	Korea	4	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Huff, Oscar C.</b>	86	12/25/22	Army	Vietnam	30	Austin Post 91
<b>Jensen, John J.</b>	54	12/4/22	Air Force	Persian Gulf	5	Kelliher Post 470
Note: He was an aircraft armament systems specialist.						
<b>Johnson, Joyce N.</b>	101	12/22/22	Army AF	WWII	27	Stewartville Post 164
Note: He became a pilot, and as part of the 8th Air Force, he flew B-17 Flying Fortresses on combat missions over Europe. After the war, he stayed and participated in a mission to photograph Europe for mapmaking, and he served as a test pilot.						
<b>Johnson, Paul A.</b>	90	1/9/23	Marines	Korea	49	Aitkin Post 86
<b>Karlsson, Karl E.</b>	105	12/31/22	Army AF	WWII	22	Roseau Post 24
Note: He was a radio repairman in the Army Air Forces, the precursor to the Air Force. He traveled from Alabama to Wisconsin to Florida, then brief stops in England and France, before landing in Trinidad.						
<b>Klever, Harvey J.</b>	76	12/26/22	Navy	Vietnam	13	Deer Creek Post 283
<b>Kramer, Kenneth D.</b>	80	12/16/22	Air Force	Vietnam	36	Stewartville Post 164
<b>Langord, Glenn A.</b>	95	12/1/22	Navy	WWII	7	Lakeville Post 44
<b>Larkey, Lee R.</b>	83	12/15/22	Air Force	Vietnam	53	Holdingford Post 211
<b>Lasley, Michael J.</b>	75	12/6/22	Army	Vietnam	4	Minnesota Post 1982
<b>Lee, Gerald B.</b>	80	12/17/22	Army NG	Vietnam	30	Albert Lea Post 56
<b>Lee, Rodney H.</b>	78	10/25/22	Army	Vietnam	48	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Lenz, Warren A.</b>	94	12/25/22	Army	Korea	47	Albert Lea Post 56
<b>Liebl, James C.</b>	91	12/14/22	Army	Korea	46	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Lutteke, Harlan B.</b>	90	11/9/22	Army	Korea	63	Alden Post 404
<b>Majerus, Richard W.</b>	73	12/27/22	Army	Vietnam	53	Bellechester Post 598
<b>Mattson, Robert C.</b>	96	11/15/22	Navy	WWII	75	Thief River Falls Post 117
<b>Mayo, Fred E.</b>	78	12/29/22	Air Force	Vietnam	22	Winona Post 9
<b>McCormack, Robert J.</b>	98	1/5/23	Army AF	WWII/Korea	5	Two Harbors Post 109
Note: He served as navigator on more than 30 bombing missions over Germany.						
<b>Mead, Thomas R.</b>	74	12/22/22	Air Force	Vietnam	6	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Meindl, Robert J.</b>	91	12/29/22	Army	Korea	56	Breckenridge Post 53
<b>Milbrandt, Robert L.</b>	91	12/27/22	Army	Korea	10	Rochester Post 92
<b>Miller, John C.</b>	72	12/11/22	Navy	Vietnam	8	St. Joseph Post 328
<b>Miller, Thomas L.</b>	75	12/28/22	Marines	Vietnam	52	Thief River Falls Post 117
<b>Morton, Jill M.</b>	62	12/26/22	Navy	Persian Gulf	18	Coon Rapids Post 334
<b>Mosbo, Richard D.</b>	76	1/10/23	Army	Vietnam	2	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He served as a security agent in Turkey.						
<b>Opatz, George J.</b>	94	1/6/23	Army	Korea	70	Holdingford Post 211
<b>Otto, Larry H.</b>	73	12/31/22	Army	Vietnam	51	Ellendale Post 296
Note: He was department chaplain at the time of his passing. He had been 1st District chaplain since 2018, in addition to serving at Post 296.						
<b>Palan, Morris D.</b>	91	12/13/22	Army	Korea	36	Deer Creek Post 283
<b>Parlin, Michael G.</b>	74	12/28/22	Army	Vietnam	74	Minnesota Post 1982
Note: He served as a mechanic at Fort Greely, Alaska, in the Cold Regions Test Center and Northern Warfare Training Center.						
<b>Peterson, Jerome D.</b>	88	10/23/22	Air Force	Korea	30	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Pittman, Raymond J.</b>	74	12/14/22	Army	Vietnam	33	North Branch Post 85
Note: His legs were wounded in Vietnam as a result of an explosion that struck an armored personnel carrier. He received the Purple Heart Medal. Later in life, he succumbed to diseases related to Agent Orange.						
<b>Pluth, Rudolph N.</b>	94	1/9/23	Navy	WWII	35	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Rannow, John H.</b>	72	11/8/22	Army	Vietnam	25	Minneapolis Post 1
Note: He was a past post commander.						
<b>Sanow, Donald D.</b>	86	12/21/22	Army NG	Korea	41	Minneota Post 199
<b>Schueler, Jerome O.</b>	82	1/6/23	Air Force	Vietnam	23	Rochester Post 92
<b>Schwartz, David R.</b>	82	11/6/22	Navy	Vietnam	33	Springfield Post 257
<b>Sculthorp, Dennis W.</b>	76	1/18/23	Army	Vietnam	42	Robbinsdale Post 251
Note: He was department commander 1999-2000, department vice commander in 1995-96, department membership director in 1990-91, 10th District commander in 1988-89 and had served several positions in Post 251.						
<b>Serwa, Stanley S.</b>	80	12/24/22	Army	Vietnam	9	Winona Post 9

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## All-Family Events Calendar

- Feb. 4:** Sweetheart Rally, Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
- Feb. 15:** TAL 85 percent membership target
- Feb. 25:** Department Oratorical Contest, Anoka Post 102 and Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
- Feb. 26-March 1:** Washington Conference
- March 15:** TAL 90 percent membership target
- March 15:** American Legion Birthday
- March 15:** ALA 85 percent membership target
- March 18-April 22:** Minnesota American Legion Bowling Tournament, Sundance Lanes, Dayton
- March 25:** ALA DEC Meeting, Dept HQ
- April 14-15:** ALA Junior Conference, New Prague Post 45
- April 15:** DEC/Appreciation Rally, New Prague Post 45
- April 16-21:** National Commander's Tour of Minnesota
- April 19:** TAL 95 percent membership target
- April 20-23:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley
- April 22:** Department President's Testimonial Dinner, Spicer Post 545
- May 1-3:** National President's Tour of Minnesota
- May 13:** Department Commander's Testimonial, New Prague Post 45
- May 17:** TAL 100 percent membership target
- May 26:** National Poppy Day
- May 29:** Memorial Day, local ceremonies
- June 11-17:** Minnesota Boys State, St. John's Univ.
- June 11-17:** Minnesota Girls State, Bethel Univ.
- June 13:** ALA 95 percent membership target
- July 4:** Forest Lake Post 225 Fourth of July Parade
- July 12:** DEC, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls
- July 13-15:** Department Convention, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls
- July 26:** Legacy Run Kickoff Party, location TBD
- 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

## Things are being lined up for summer rides

### Legion Riders



Ted Berg

Greetings Legion Family, Hopefully everyone had a great holiday season.

It's been a long winter so far with a lot of white stuff in our area. With everybody starting to get cabin fever, it feels good to get out and about to see Legion Family at the rallies and at post, unit or squadron events.

February and March have a lot of events for the Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and Riders. Get out to everyone you can and let's spread the word of who we are and what we do.

We are currently getting things lined up for the Legacy Run and Fund 85 Run. Looking

forward to getting back to riding, but Mother Nature has to cooperate first.

In closing, let us not forget the men and women who have given us our freedom and please keep our family members who are currently sick and or hurting and pray for their quick healing and recovery.

*Ted Berg of Bloomington Post 550 is the director of the Minnesota American Legion Riders.*

## Mail Call

Continued from Page 4

### Blood update is related to human mad cow disease

I donated blood on Nov. 29 and was informed that donors who served in Northwestern Europe are now being accepted.

- In alignment with new FDA guidelines, the American Red Cross will eliminate the deferral of donors who spent time in the certain European countries from 1980 to 2001, who were previously considered to have geographic risk of possible exposure to vCJD, also known as variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease or better known as human mad cow disease. Spread comes from eating beef infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease.

- The Red Cross will also eliminate the deferral for individuals who received a blood transfusion from certain European counties from 1980 to present.

- Implementation of this change and reinstatement of approximately 188,000 previously deferred donors was scheduled to begin Oct. 3, 2022

**Terry Larson**  
chairman  
Blood Committee  
American Legion Department of Minnesota

# Taps



Continued from Page 5

<b>Sindelar, Sheldon S.</b>	93	1/13/23	Army	Korea	70	New Prague Post 45
Note: He earned five battle stars serving with the 1st Cavalry Division from Pusan to Pyongyang to Unsan and back.						
<b>Soenneker, Francis G.</b>	91	1/8/23	Army	Korea	64	Lake Henry Post 612
Note: He served in the Korean War and was past post commander.						
<b>Solorz, Thomas F.</b>	90	12/22/22	Army	Korea	37	Rush City Post 93
<b>Steiger, Kenneth W.</b>	84	12/7/22	Army	Vietnam	7	Alexandria Post 87
<b>Stephes, Joseph T.</b>	101	12/28/22	Navy	WWII	51	Apple Valley Post 1776
<b>Stream, Glenn O.</b>	84	12/20/22	Army	Korea	3	Rush City Post 93
<b>Stream, Glenn O.</b>	84	12/20/22	Army	Vietnam	18	Rush City Post 93
<b>Strege, Clifford W.</b>	79	1/5/23	Marines	Vietnam	23	Breckenridge Post 53
<b>Strege, Clyde J.</b>	75	12/25/22	Army	Vietnam	50	Willmar Post 167
<b>Swanson, Ordean N.</b>	91	11/9/22	Army	Korea	70	Clearbrook Post 256
Note: In Korea, he operated heavy equipment, building roads and bunkers for tanks and big guns. He had been honored at the recent Veterans Day program.						
<b>Swenson, Earl W.</b>	82	12/26/22	Navy	Vietnam	23	Willmar Post 167
<b>Theisen, Eugene J.</b>	91	7/31/22	Army	Korea	44	Fridley Post 303
<b>Thomas, Lawrence F.</b>	86	12/31/22	Navy	Korea	43	St. Peter Post 37
Note: He was a past post adjutant.						
<b>Vinje, Marvin P.</b>	90	11/11/22	Army	Korea	59	Lakeville Post 44
<b>Westby, James R.</b>	74	9/11/22	Marines	Vietnam	54	Mabel Post 299
Note: He served one tour in Vietnam. He was Area 1 vice commander for the 1st District and mayor of Mabel at the time of his passing.						
<b>Witt, Donald G.</b>	91	12/25/22	Army	Korea	63	Janesville Post 281
<b>Zellmer, Thomas H.</b>	91	12/30/22	Army	Korea	22	St. Peter Post 37
<b>Zimmer, Joseph F.</b>	95	1/14/23	Air Force	WWII	44	St. Joseph Post 328

## Courage, compassion taught by veterans

### Guest Column

Larry Johnson



The Old Gardening Party promotes courage and compassion, both evident on Feb. 3, 1943, when a German submarine torpedoed Army transport Dorchester.

Four chaplains aboard immediately began distributing calming words and lifesaving equipment. When lifejackets ran out, each of the men gave his own to other passengers, and as the ship sank, survivors reported the chaplains, arms locked, praying and singing hymns.

Today the four — a Jewish rabbi, Catholic priest and two Protestant ministers — are remembered as “The Four Immortal Chaplains.”

On Immortal Chaplains Day, Feb. 3, 2021, Wayne Terwilliger died at age 95. He was a World War II Marine veteran, baseball lifer and set a lifelong example of giving to others.

When I was 2, my dad built a house in Bloomington so we could grow up in the country, and when the nearby corn field became Metropolitan Stadium, Terwilliger played second base for the home team, the Minneapolis Millers.

Living behind us, the “Twig” led an aspiring group of Bloomington Athletic Association Little Leaguers hang out in his yard, teaching life lessons disguised as baseball tips: “A lot of times it seems like nothing’s going on, but when the pitcher winds up, a good player thinks ahead. Look where the runners are and think: ‘If the ball comes to me, what should I do?’ You don’t want to panic and mess it up by throwing to the wrong place.”

The “Twig” showed us how to make double plays, and sometimes we did, leading us to that year’s All Bloomington Championship. We played under the lights at Legion Field where Interstate 35W now crosses 98th Street, and the “Twig” came to cheer us on because there was no Millers game that night.

When the Twins won the 1991 World Series, I was a storyteller and video specialist at Pillsbury School in Minneapolis. To me, it was no surprise that the “Twig” was a highly respected coach.

I called him and identified myself as the kid who mowed his lawn when he played for the Millers and helped us become Little League champions. I invited him to tell baseball stories to Glory Oljace’s fifth-grade class, and we put our guest

ballplayer on closed circuit TV for the whole school.

The respected coach spoke and took questions with the same care he showed us when we were that age, and a week later he sent me a poem, using the names of all the students in Glory’s class.

I started paying attention to baseball again, and now go to Twins games when I can, taking advantage of discounted tickets for veterans. Among the many adult books I’ve read is “Terwilliger Bunts One,” full of baseball and military stories one could tell to children. It includes the one about being chased by a Japanese tank, zig-zagging through the soft South Pacific sand, trying to be a harder target to hit.

It’s good for children to understand that athletes, like everyone else, are bigger than any immediate perception. Once when knitting came up, a boy said with disdain, “Knitting is for girls.”

All I could remember was, “Oh, I don’t know ... Rosey Grier used to knit, and he was a veteran and famous football player.”

Needing more of the story, I went back and found he played for the Giants and the Rams in the 1950s. Technically, Grier did needlepoint, a cousin to knitting, but I also found that after football, he was an actor and a bodyguard for Bobby Kennedy’s family.

When Kennedy was assassinated, Grier’s courageous response kept that tragic killing from escalating into something more horrendous. Then he went on to be a part of the Marlo Thomas children’s program, “Free To Be You and Me.”

Grier wrote and sang, “It’s all right to cry. Crying takes the hurt out of it” — another thing the misguided might say is just for girls.

Then there’s Tom Cornish, a 96-year-old Minnesota World War II veteran who spends a lot of time knitting hats for those in need. Seven veterans: Cornish, Grier, Terwilliger and the Four Chaplains. All are stories inspiring courage and compassion in children.

Larry Johnson resides in Golden Valley and is a member of Bloomington Post 550.

## How are membership goals established?

### Membership Moment

Linda Dvorak



First of all — we made our 80 percent target of Jan. 19. We are well on our way to the next target of 85 percent on Feb. 15.

Every year we go through the process of establishing membership goals, and every year there are questions regarding how the department comes up with the post’s goals.

Our department goal is set by National HQ each year using our numbers from sometime in July. The Department of Minnesota, by resolution, increases each district goal by 1 over each post’s membership totals at the Department Convention in July. (A district with 25 posts will have an increase of 25 over its Department Convention membership total). Each District will decide how to distribute the increase in the district goals.

Why do I bring this up? Each year we have posts that get to 100 percent or close, or it gets to be April or May and someone wants to join The American Legion and they are told, “We will sign you up when the new year starts in July.”

This is not the way we

should be approaching membership. If a person wants to join, sign them up for the current year. Some of the benefits of being a Legionnaire are based on your membership year, by holding off on processing membership, these benefits are also being delayed.

Looking for recruiting or incentive tools? Some posts will pay for the individual’s second year if they pay for the current year. This is a great recruiting tool. It gives the member two years of membership to see what we do and how they can fit in and get involved. Some posts pay for the first year, others pay for active-duty servicemembers.

Whatever your post is doing to renew or recruit membership, keep up the great work!

Linda Dvorak of New Prague Post 45 is the membership director for the Department of Minnesota.



## Legion Family provides hospitality like no other

### National Report

Bill Barbknecht



District mid-winter conferences keep us on the go. A great time for the American Legion Family members to learn and see what is going on in their district, state and national.

We saw a very good turnout at the mid-winter conferences we attended, and we were shown great hospitality.

March will be a very busy month. Daylight savings time begins March 12. The American Legion birthday is March 15. What is your post doing for its members? St. Patrick’s Day is March 17. Are you having an event at your post for this day? All posts should be over 90 percent in membership. Do you need help with that?

Call your district vice commanders. Registration for Legion baseball and girls’ fast-pitch softball opened Jan. 1. Will you have a team? Spring will be coming soon. Now is the time to get the Boys Staters and Legionville campers ready.

I ask you again to please contact your state senator, representative and governor to give some relief on taxes and licenses on our veterans post homes — as well as on charitable gambling. Minnesota still is sitting on an \$18 billion surplus.

Every homeowner also is taxed way too much. The senators and representatives should appreciate the sacrifices all veterans have made.

I am asking all posts to consider making a donation to the

Foundation of Hope. It is for all veterans and children in need of assistance. You can make donations to:

American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation  
P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206

Thank The American Legion for the Pact Act to help our veterans at all VA hospitals. We need more new members so we have a stronger voice in St. Paul and Washington, D.C.

I want to thank all of you who have attended Legion College at National HQ and at Camp Ripley in Minnesota. We need more leaders, and leaders need to be out and about and talking with our members to encourage them to work the programs as well as signing up new members.

I am aware of Legion Family members who want to meet and speak with the leadership team.

In closing, if I can be of any help, please call me at 218-770-6264. I am a proud member of Post 489 in Underwood.

Donna and I look forward to visiting with you all in our travels.

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

## Minnesota American Legion loses present chaplain, past commander and past vice commander

ELLENDALE — Tall and sporting a red 1st District jacket, Department Chaplain Larry Otto could be spotted anywhere.

He regularly asked Legionnaires to repeat after him at the end of his prayers: “God is good all the time, and all the time God is good.”

Otto, of Ellendale Post 296, was an Army veteran who died Dec. 31 at 73. He had been married to his wife, Emily, for 51 years.

Otto was elected department chaplain at the Department Convention in Willmar last summer. He was 1st District chaplain since 2018.

Dennis Sculthorp, of Robbinsdale Post 251,

was department commander 1999-2000. He was department vice commander 1995-96, department membership director 1990-91 and 10th District commander 1988.

Sculthorp spoke at Lino Lakes Post 566 after the last 10th District Snowmobile Run in 2021. He thanked everyone for their dedication through the event’s 50 years.

He is an Army veteran who died at 76 on Jan. 18.

Kenneth Goettl, of Montgomery Post 79, died Jan. 15 at the age of 90. He, too, was an Army veteran.

He was department vice commander in 1987-88, 3rd District commander in 1980-81, 3rd District adjutant in 1983-84, 1991-92 and 1995-96.

Goettl’s wife, Dolores, who died in 2001, and second daughter, Darlene Wondra, are past American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota presidents.

Involved in church and community service, the three men embodied the “God and Country” motto of The American Legion.

They are survived by many children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



Larry Otto



Dennis Sculthorp



Kenneth Goettl

# The SAL Update:

## Guess who is coming to Spring Conf.?

Greetings and SALutations! Happy February, and I hope to see everyone at the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 4 hosted by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

Coming up in March, the Sons of The American Legion has the Detachment of Minnesota Spring Conference hosted by Squadron 446 in Rochester. I am hoping for a good turnout for this conference and to see a lot of new faces. SAL National Commander Chris Carlton from Indiana will be in attendance.

### Detachment commander

**Tim Weaver**



My project is the American Legion Veterans & Children's Fund. If you have any donations for this project, or any project, please bring those with you.

As always please keep our service personnel both domestic and abroad in your thoughts and prayers.

Also, please keep our Legion Family members who are sick

in your prayers as well.

*Tim Weaver of La Crescent Squadron 595 is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.*



At the Pearl Harbor Rally on Dec. 3 at Spicer Post 545, SAL Detachment Commander Tim Weaver of La Crescent Post 595 recognizes Jim Kellogg of Adams Post 146 as the 2021-22 Legionnaire of the Year. The award was to be presented at the Fall Conference in St. Cloud, but Kellogg, an Air Force veteran and a farmer, had to depart the conference to tend to the harvest. Kellogg was department commander in 2015-16. He has served as department historian, vice commander and sergeant-at-arms. He chairs the department's National Security & Foreign Relations Committee and has been involved with the Brain Science Foundation. He has served on national committees, too. He and his wife, Brenda, have four children and 10 grandchildren.



SAL Detachment Commander Tim Weaver presents American Legion Auxiliary Department Honorary Junior President Sydney Borntrager with money collected from the room at the Pearl Harbor Rally for her project. She is raising money for the adaptive sports program at the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center.

# What's happening?

## Now national chaplain is visiting, too

OSSEO — The list of who is coming to the Minnesota American Legion Family Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 4 at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 just keeps getting bigger.

American Legion National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus is the featured speaker.

Now, American Legion National Chaplain Mark Antal will be there, too. He will offer a reading.

Antal is a resident of Apple Valley and a member of Post 156 in Edinburg, N.D. He is a veteran of the Army, Army Reserve and National Guard.

He served as chaplain for The American Legion Department of North Dakota for seven years. He is a Legion Rider and has traveled by motorcycle all across the country. He and his wife, Ruth, have four children and 11 grandchildren.

Wahus is a Navy veteran and member of Watford City, N.D., Post 29. He is self-employed and serves on legislative panels for the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. He was North Dakota American Legion commander in 2018-19. He is a past district and post commander, too, and has chaired VA&R committees over his 32 years of membership.

Wahus and his wife, Tina, have two sons. He is retired from the oil industry. Membership turn-in and social hour is 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and the program is after the meal.

Sweetheart Rally participants can pay in advance or at the door. To pay in advance, checks for \$15 must be received by Wednesday, Jan. 28. Make

checks payable to "ALA Department of Minnesota."

To pay at the door, bring \$15 in cash or a check. The meal is sloppy-joes, coleslaw, chips and dessert.

Participants are encouraged to bring members who have never been to a department event before.

On the horizon is the Appreciation Rally at New Prague Post 45 on April 15.

See the front page for a story on the National Commander's Tour of Minnesota in April.

Minnesota Legion College is at Camp Ripley April 20-23. 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.

ST. PAUL — Veterans Day on the Hill 2023 will be March 30.

The DAV of Minnesota will provide a free lunch at 11 a.m. at the St. Paul Armory, 600 Cedar St.

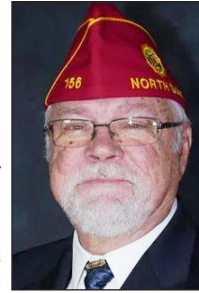
Doors open at 10 a.m. The Veterans March is at 12:40 p.m. from the Armory to the Veterans Service Building, followed by a rally at the Capitol Rotunda at 1 p.m.

Topics include passing a veterans omnibus bill, suicide prevention efforts, property tax relief for surviving spouses, fixing the post-9/11 service bonus and funding new buildings at the Hastings Veterans Home.

See front-page story for a list of issues The American Legion is pursuing during the 2023 legislative session in St. Paul.

The DAV of Minnesota has offered to assist posts with the cost of transportation. It will pay for half, but posts cannot charge for rides, not even free-will offerings.

Transportation reimbursement forms can be requested from the DAV's Trent Dilks at trent@davmn.org by March 1.



**Mark Antal**



**Glenn Wahus**

## A few district conferences are left

ST. PAUL — Some of the districts held their conferences in January, but some are still on the calendar for February. Here they are:

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

6th District: Feb. 11, Ironton Post 443

8th District: Feb. 18, Zoom

## Registration is open for bowling

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 Post 172. 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 crlmb74@gmail.com. Her mailing address is 3217 19th St. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Visit mnlegion.org and hover over "events" to find the downloadable registration form.

## Vets Day on Hill in March

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## Commander's Project

Let's do this!

Department Commander Jennifer Havlick's Project raises funds for Minnesota families receiving mortgage-free smarthomes from Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

She also hopes to raise funds for Project Delta, which creates service dogs for veterans from rescue/shelter dogs, and for Eagle's Healing Nest, which helps veterans with the invisible wounds of war.

Mail to American Legion Dept. of Minnesota, 20 W. 12th St. Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155-2000

Goal: \$60,000

Present: 55% at \$33,590

(It's not a secret. Gambling funds are permitted.)

Make checks out to: Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 82. The foundation is a 501(c)3.

Date of graphic: Jan. 19

# WINGS OF THE NORTH AIR MUSEUM

Home of the: MINNESOTA AVIATION HALL OF FAME

We have lost our leased hangar space at Flying Cloud Airport. Access to the histories of over 200 Minnesota Aviation Veterans is no longer available. HELP US BUILD A NEW HOME!



Go to: [fund.wotn.org](http://fund.wotn.org)  
For larger donations, email: [museum@wotn.org](mailto:museum@wotn.org)  
WOTN & MAHOF are 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations  
Museum Director is an AF Veteran, Post 580 member



# It's time to help Gold Star spouses and their children

Continued from Page 1

military intervention against ISIS. These combat veterans surely deserve the bonus, too. Also, the legislation last year left out veterans who have moved to Minnesota and become residents. No other veteran benefits in our state say they must have entered the military in Minnesota. This provision is unfair to the many servicemembers who came to the Land of 10,000 Lakes and remained.

## Amend 2 laws to help county veteran service officers

Change the language of 386.20 to say "uniformed services" so that all DD214 discharge documents may be recorded at county courthouses. Alter 197.63 to include county veteran service officers in the list of entities that can be issued documents with no charge.

## Eliminate vehicle registration fees for Gold Star spouses and children, as well as 100 percent disabled veterans

Many states do not charge Gold Star spouses and children for vehicle registration fees (based on DD1300 Report of Casualty), and they do not charge veterans who have a VA rating of 100 percent permanent and total disabled. Let's bring that good idea to Minnesota. The loved ones of these people already have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

## Fix a property-tax exemption for Gold Star families

The present law says the surviving spouse must file within two years of the death and must live in the home at the time of the death.

This outdated law clearly discriminates against active-duty spouses and would help only Minnesota National Guard and Reserve spouses. Active-duty spouses from Minnesota likely would live out of state at the time of the death, and when they return to Minnesota, they find a state unwilling to give them the tax exemption. This is unfair. Let's fix it, and let's eliminate the two-year rule.

## Provide a percentage-based change to Homestead Market Value Exclusion

The present level is \$300,000, but with home values rising, we ask that the Legislature brings this to \$400,000, and we ask that the Legislature set up a percentage-based relief starting at 50 percent with an inflationary-based formula. We support the removal of the equal or lesser value language for surviving spouses.

## Eliminate the 2-year rule for DIC recipients

The current exclusion reads that the application for exclusion must be made by the surviving spouse within two years of the death of the veteran. This language doesn't allow for cases where the VA may take more than two years to make the proper decision for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). It also excludes the vast majority of surviving spouses made eligible by the recent

Minnesota encourages homelessness by taking federal benefits income from veterans and others to pay for their wraparound shelter services. Presently, veterans can enter a shelter and be left with just \$111 a month or remain homeless and keep their money.

Fixing this issue would reduce the number of homeless veterans. Last year, this bill was HF3568/SF3417, led by Catholic Charities. It has bipartisan support and should pass this year in the human services bill.

## Provide 100 percent property tax relief for posts of veteran service organizations

State and county tax entities claim different interpretations of the property tax as laws. Meanwhile, posts are closing



Members of the House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee listen to testimony on Jan. 23.

as a result of the heavy tax burden. Waite Park Post 428 is a recent example, closing as a result of \$60,000 in taxes. Zero taxes would remove any confusion. Considering all the good deeds these posts do, and the buildings themselves serving as community centers, this would be sound policy.

## Reduce the cost of hunting, trapping and fishing licenses for disabled veterans

This likely would result in a net increase for DNR revenue. We are working with the Department of Natural Resources to bring this to fruition.

## Administrative: Update the personal needs allowance at Minnesota Veterans Homes

No new law is needed for this matter, but The American Legion is working with the MDVA to increase the personal needs allowance for veterans in the Minnesota Veterans Homes. Presently, in a worst-case scenario, veterans are allowed to keep \$90 a month, and that has not changed in 30 years. For the sake of dignity, it's time to increase their allowance to reflect increases in the cost of living.

## Charitable gambling: Preserve use of e-tab devices

The American Legion asks the state Legislature to preserve the use of e-tab devices in charitable gambling and to allow for its continued growth in popularity. Taking this away would hurt youth sports, veterans in need and many good causes. This issue was discussed in 2021, and the Gambling Control Board director at the time said his studies showed the revenue would be lost. People who go to their favorite bar would still go. He said it would not result in those people going to casinos. The 2021 House fiscal note said eliminating e-tabs would cut \$33 million a year in charitable giving and \$35 million in local wages. The 2012 Dayton administration agreement on e-tabs has been challenged in court, and twice the courts have said the agreement has not been broken. Please keep e-tabs in place.



Members of the Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee listen to testimony on Jan. 19.

changes to Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans, who may have passed away while being denied all benefits.

## Request approval of three new license plates and issue Purple Heart plates at no cost

Jewish War Veterans, Air Medal Veterans, Retired Military by Branch and to introduce Purple Heart plates issued at no cost.

## Increase the monthly allowance given to sheltered homeless veterans

## Charitable gambling: Reduce tax burden on gambling operations

Charitable gambling operations pay state taxes around 36-38 percent of the gross receipts, and some cities have additional taxes. And these operations pay taxes twice, because they pay taxes on games and other equipment needed to run a gambling operation. Plus, they have to pay provider fees, among other fees. Think of how much more vibrant our local communities could be if the operations could donate to more good causes. Food shelves, kids, families, homeless shelters, fire stations, city festivals, Fourth of July displays, people in need from all walks of life, they all would benefit.

# Did you get 2 or no copies of The Minn. Legionnaire?

All-American

Tim Engstrom



Some American Legion members have received multiple copies of The Minnesota Legionnaire.

**Question:** Why is this? Is the editor just a complete idiot? Probably, but his lack of brain power is not the issue.

The true reason is membership. See, Minnesota Legionnaires get The Minnesota Legionnaire free with membership. The state membership list is one and the same as the Legionnaire's mailing list.

That means, if membership is off, the Legionnaire is off.

**Answer:** Quite likely, you have signed up for two or perhaps three memberships in The American Legion.

Open this issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire to the front page, and in the bottom left corner you'll find your address label. The nine-digit number along with it is your membership number. It matches your membership card in your pocket. Well, if you keep it there.

If you have two copies of this paper, you'll find each has a different membership number. That means you have two memberships. Congratulations.

What's been happening is members will have a Legion membership signed up for years upon years through their local post, typically via the mail every autumn. Suddenly, they — or their loved ones — renew it online at the National American Legion website but select "join" instead of "renew." Oops.

As a result, the employee at National HQ thinks it is a new membership and assigns the new number. Finally, a month or two later, the member calls me up and says, "Why am I getting two Legionnaires?"

I typically ask them for the two ID numbers on their newspapers. Then I send an email to customer service at HQ, list the two numbers in the message, then write, "These two members are actually one member." I include the member's name and address, and I explain the older number is the one that should be used.

That email is [cs@legion.org](mailto:cs@legion.org). If you absolutely are not receiving the paper and should be, well, you probably aren't reading this article

anyway. Maybe your buddy gave you this copy.

Please know that, typically, the problem is we sent it out and the U.S. Postal Service didn't deliver. The Legionnaire is second-class mail, and I've simply come to believe some less-experienced mail carriers get second-class mail and third-class mail mixed up.

Second class is called "periodicals" these days and delivery is supposed to be speedy, like first class. Third class is junk mail, which USPS calls "marketing mail" and delivery is not speedy and not even guaranteed.

I would imagine young carriers who didn't grow up with newspapers and magazines would, at times, have a hard time discerning a shopper or a marketing magazine from a real newspaper or a true magazine.

If you call my desk phone at 651-424-4612, I will mail you a copy in an envelope first class, but, when you get it in the mail, I would like you to show it to your local postmaster and explain it ought to be delivered promptly. This is a periodical, not marketing mail.

One member in East Grand Forks did just that, and the delivery problem went away. He got his Legionnaire again. I imagine a supervisor must have had a talk with a young buck.

If you are an Auxiliary member and, as a unit president or secretary, are supposed to receive a copy of the Legionnaire but have not received it for months, please speak to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. The number is 651-224-7634. I don't maintain their list. They do.

Finally, if you prefer to receive the Legionnaire via email, visit [mnlegion.org/legionnaire](http://mnlegion.org/legionnaire). There is a spot to send in the requisite information.

*Tim Engstrom is the editor of The Minnesota Legionnaire and the communications director for The American Legion Department of Minnesota. He is a member of Bloomington Post 550.*

# Celebrate your Valentine ... with a gift of membership

SAL Membership

Matthew Verkuilen



With Valentines Day around the corner, you may be trying to think of what to give that special person in your life. Well, look no further.

Consider a membership in the American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, or the Riders!

While it may seem silly, it is a very simple way of showing someone who may be on the fence about joining our family the *why* that you belong. We see it every day across our state; members of our family going above and beyond to help our veterans, their families, and our communities.

What an exciting thing to be a part of! Perhaps it's beginning a legacy with your children or grandchildren. Maybe it is showing that son or daughter that served in our armed forces the

benefits of being an American Legion Family member and how we fight for their benefits and care. Perhaps it's as simple as that family member (adult or child) that simply is looking for a way to be involved.

There is a place for everyone within our Legion family and, as I have said many times, it would be an honor for your family to become part of our family as we remain proud possessors of a priceless (Valentine) heritage.

*Matthew Verkuilen is the membership director for the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.*





Beth Cornish/Henderson Independent

Marion Peck, front, is pictured with Henderson Post 74 members Ned Pilling, Sven Mattson and Arden Kroehler. She is a 25-year member of Le Sueur Post 55. She was honored at the Le Sueur-Henderson Public Schools Veterans Day Program. She turned 100 on Nov. 14.

# She made waves when she was in the Navy WAVES

Marion Peck, 100, was Marion Wieland, 19, when she pushed her parents to allow her to join America's war effort during WWII

By Marion Peck

**L**ESUEUR — Today, I am going to tell you about my Navy experiences in World War II.

However, women in the Navy were not allowed on ships or overseas, so my story will be lighthearted with a little humor thrown in.

In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt realized the United States was in dire need of more Navy personnel in order to cover both Atlantic and Pacific war zones.

Against much opposition, he pushed Congress to pass a bill allowing women in the Navy. They were named WAVES, which stands for Women Accepted For Voluntary Emergency Service.

Their purpose was to take stateside Navy jobs, thus releasing their male counterparts for sea duty.

My interest in the military started in high school, where my dream was to attend a military academy for women. Of course, there was no such thing. The war in Europe was escalating, and, by that time, I was in business college.

**O**n Dec 7, 1941, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. My classmate, Fred Krause, went down with the battleship Arizona.

In typing class, I pretended I was shooting Japanese as I swiftly tapped the keys. All Americans joined the war effort, even saving their cooking grease to be used in the munition factories. Ration stamps were issued for sugar and meat, as supplies were limited.

Banners with a blue star in windows indicated sons in service, and sometimes a gold star for families with sons who had given their lives for their country. No new cars, tires or appliances could be bought. People moved to other states to work in defense plants.

One day I picked up a Life magazine, and, lo and behold, on the cover was a

woman in a Navy uniform. I couldn't believe my eyes, and I said to myself, "That's for me."

There was one drawback. I had to be 21 years old, or 20 with my parents' consent. I had one month until my 20th birthday.

My dad had no problem with it. He was a World War I veteran, but my mother was absolutely adamant.

Well, I went into tears mode and said, "Mom, you just got to let me do this. I have to join the Navy!"

Mom finally broke down, and I was sworn into the Navy on my 20th birthday.

**B**oot camp was at the Bronx campus of Hunter College in New York City. We arrived by troop train via a roundabout route to avoid sabotage. The Navy had taken all the surrounding apartment buildings for our barracks. All the rooms were filled with bunks. I found a little red toy truck in one of the cupboards, and I wondered where all the hundreds of families went and whether the little boy missed his truck.

We were measured for uniforms, which arrived a week later. Then the powers-that-be made a big boo-boo. They marched us over to the ship's store every day, and we stocked up on our limit of six candy bars. Mine were Babe Ruth.

You guessed it, when the uniforms arrived, they were all too tight. After some adjustments, they finally fit.

We would have several hours of drilling and marching, in which our platoon leader would yell, "Wieland, your head is bobbing up when everyone else's is down. I didn't realize that I had been walking incorrectly for the first 20 years of my life. Finally, we all began looking ship shape and seaman like.

The galley crew discovered that lipstick stuck to the silverware when it

was washed, so lipstick was a no-no. But it didn't really matter because there were no men on the base anyway.

I remember the room inspections. Bed sheets were taut, with square corners, no dust anywhere. We stood up straight, shoulders back, afraid to move a muscle.

After six weeks of studying seamanship, Navy regulations and history, nautical terms and drilling, the big parade day arrived. New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia was in the reviewing stand and thousands of WAVES graduated as Seaman 1st Class.

On to advanced training for three months at a Boston business college to study naval accounting and payroll. We were billeted in an old hotel filled with bunk beds. In the middle of the night, we had fire drills and had to run outside in our pajamas and line up on the sidewalk. Every weekday we marched in platoons down the middle of the street to our classes singing Navy songs. A little old lady would run along beside us calling us a bad name.

**T**hree months later, with a promotion to petty officer 3rd class, I arrived at my first duty station. It was in the payroll office of the Naval Midshipman School at the University of Notre Dame. Can you imagine joining the Navy and ending up spending two and a half years at a midshipman school in Indiana? We called the midshipmen "90-day wonders" because they became Navy officers in just three months.

We also handled the payroll of hundreds of naval undergraduates.

We were billeted in an old cockroach-infested hotel in South Bend, but we felt lucky having twin-bedded rooms, with maid service. In the mornings, my toothbrush would be covered with tiny insects crawling between the bristles. I hoped that a swish of very hot

water would take care of them.

We were given a meal allowance, so we ate in the hotel and the university cafeteria. We did give the Navy mess hall one try, but when 12 WAVES sit at a table among hundreds of sailors and midshipmen, it gets a bit tense. We felt like we were in a fishbowl. Besides, my boiled egg at the mess hall was rotten.

Our exercise time was held in the Notre Dame football stadium, and we played baseball in the armory. We used the long-barrel machine gun mounted on a stand for our first base.

One poor WAVE named Retz hit her forehead on the side of the gun barrel when she ran into first base. She had a goosebump on her brow for days.

Bad luck followed Retz everywhere. One time when we had breakfast in the hotel, Retz took a bite of her pancake and syrup, then ran out of the room like a bat out of hell. It turns out the syrup pitcher had been filled with liquid soap by mistake. Or was it?

Our extra-duty job on weekends consisted of manning the Navy telephone switchboard. We always got this incoming call from a South Bend gal who wanted to talk to a sailor — any sailor. I always connected her to the armory where some poor sailor stood watch with nothing to do. They would chew the fat for hours.

We were picked up each day at our hotel entrance by a Navy conveyance that we named "the gray dragon."

Our WAVES payroll officer was a hefty red-headed female who put the scare of the devil into us. She would yell, "Wieland!" and I knew that I was in big heap of trouble. There was an error in my payroll figures, and I shook in my boots.

When she went to the downtown bank to pick up the thousands of dollars to pay the hundreds of Navy personnel, she would fasten her leather gun holster around her buxom hips and march out of the office with a couple of us in tow.

We called her the "Pistol Packin' Mama."

We would sit around the bank's boardroom table counting out all the bills. The totals had to agree with the amount we requested from the bank. Midshipmen were paid in \$100 bills.

Can you imagine hundreds of midshipmen going into the downtown South Bend bars on Saturday night with \$100 bills to cash?

**O**ur off-duty time consisted of attending Notre Dame games, dancing at the USO, which was on the second floor in a downtown building and was packed with sailors. It's a wonder the floor didn't collapse.

There were weekends in Chicago. We were also invited to dinner in people's homes. Back then, there were no TV sets, no computers and no cellphones. We read books, went to movies, listened to the radio, knitted, dated and wrote lots of letters.

My biggest error in judgment happened when I was invited by a midshipman to a military ball. Waves were never allowed out of uniform, but I just

couldn't resist wearing a formal gown.

It wouldn't have been so bad, but I had the audacity to go through the receiving line and be introduced to the captain and WAVES officer. The next day, I was called up to appear at a captain's mast, which is a court hearing. The captain called my action a bold affront to him, and I lost my 2nd class stripe.

In my free time, I took some flying lessons at the South Bend airport. I had one little mishap. When my instructor and I were rolling down the runway, lo and behold, an American Airlines airplane landed right smack in front of us. We veered into a corn field. I never did get around to soloing.

**A**fter Japan surrendered in 1945, the midshipman school was closed, and we were sent to active-duty stations. My friend Retz and I got assigned to the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, Texas. As we pulled into the train station, there was a hurricane in process, so we had to remain on the train overnight.

The Naval Air Station was an exciting change of pace, and the first taste of the real Navy. We lived in a barracks with bunk beds and ate in a chow hall. And the base had a chapel, movie theater, swimming pool and beer hall. What a great life!

But they also had huge cockroaches. Retz and I decided to request a transfer to the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Fla., but the personnel officer informed us that the cockroaches over there were even larger.

When I walked into my new payroll office, I was surrounded by a large number of new faces, but when I laid my peepers on one sharp-looking sailor with dark hair, sparkling eyes and a cocky walk, I was smitten.

It being Texas, I tried horseback riding lessons. A rattlesnake showed up near my horse's leg. I am scared of both horses and snakes. End of lessons.

I was introduced to Bob Hope one day when he was doing a USO show at the base. Many famous movie stars and bands gave so much of their time entertaining the troops around the world.

After three years in the Navy, my discharge came through. My cute little sailor and I had our final date in the beer hall. I left for Minnesota, and he was transferred to a ship that was sent to China. Two years later, his ship returned to the States. He had a month's leave, came to visit me, and said, "Let's get married," and I said, "OK."

**M**y WAVES friends and I have kept in touch over the years. Our first reunion brought us back to Notre Dame. The hotel was torn down, cockroaches were gone, but we WAVES felt like we had never been separated. Now my buddies are all gone, and my heart is sad.

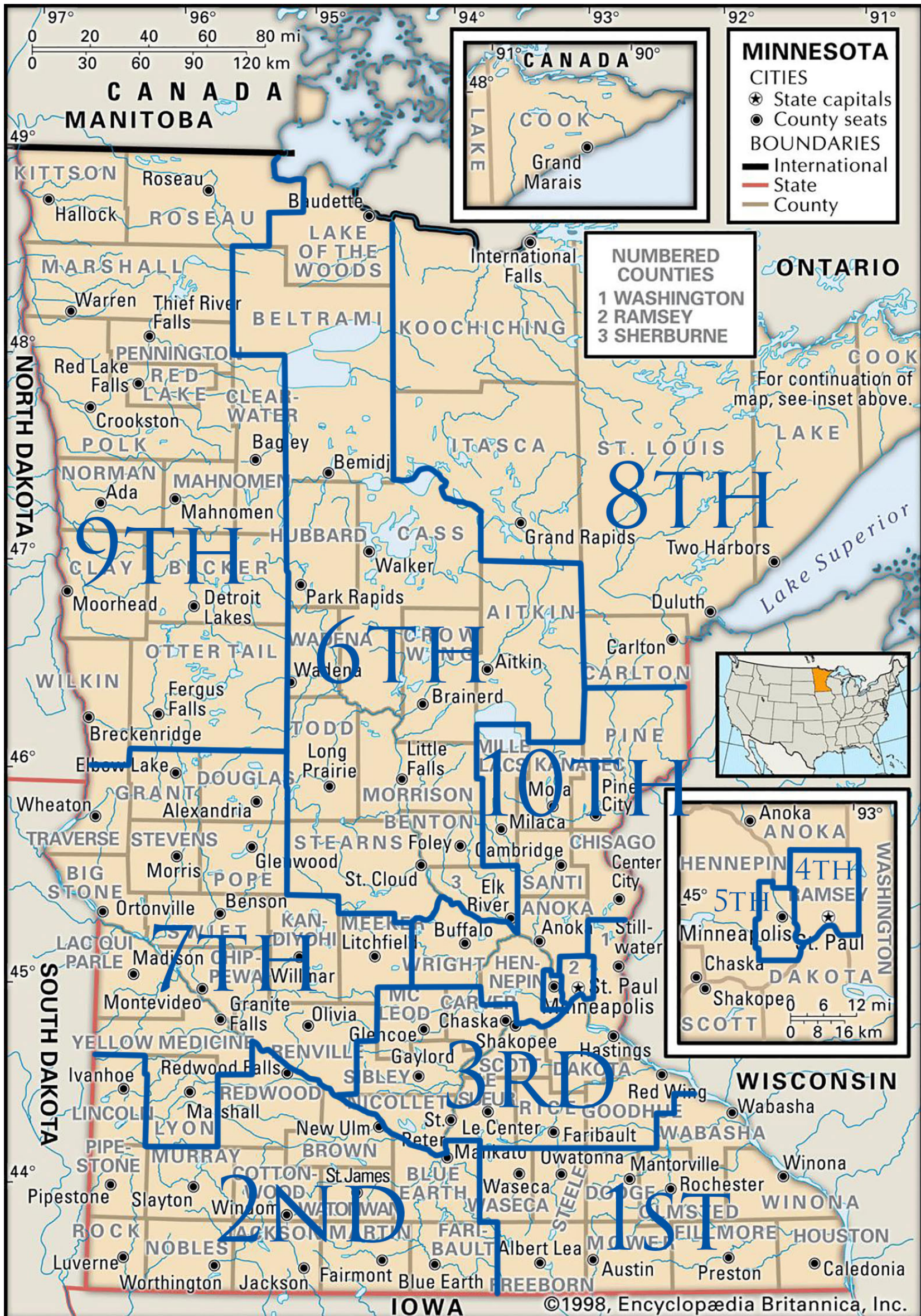
I love my country, and I love the Navy, and if the Navy would accept 100-year-olds, I would be on an aircraft carrier tomorrow.



Marion Peck speaks at Le Sueur-Henderson High School on Nov. 11.

# Know the districts of the Department of Minnesota

American Legion structure is good to know for the sake of understanding how we can help each other



**1st District**  
 Counties of Wabasha, Waseca, Steele, Dodge, Olmsted, Winona, Freeborn, Mower, Fillmore, Houston

**2nd District**  
 Counties of Lincoln, Pipestone, Murray, Redwood, Brown, Cottonwood, Watonwan, Blue Earth, Rock, Nobles, Jackson, Martin, Faribault

**3rd District**  
 Counties of McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Nicollet, Scott, LeSueur, Rice, Dakota, Goodhue, Washington

**4th District**  
 Ramsey County

**5th District**  
 Cities of Minneapolis and Richfield

**6th District**  
 Counties of Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, Hubbard, Wadena, Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin, Todd, Morrison, Stearn, Benton, Sherburne

**7th District**  
 Counties of Traverse, Grant, Douglas, Stevens, Pope, Big Stone, Swift, Kandiyohi, Meeker, Lac Qui Parle, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Lyon, Renville

**8th District**  
 Counties of Koochiching, Itasca, St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Cook

**9th District**  
 Counties of Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Pennington, Red Lake, Polk, Clearwater, Norman, Mahnomen, Clay, Becker, Wilkin, Otter Tail

**10th District**  
 Counties of Mille Lacs, Kanabec, Pine, Isanti, Chisago, Anoka, Wright, and Hennepin, except for the cities of Minneapolis and Richfield



Underlying map by Encyclopedia Britannica Inc.

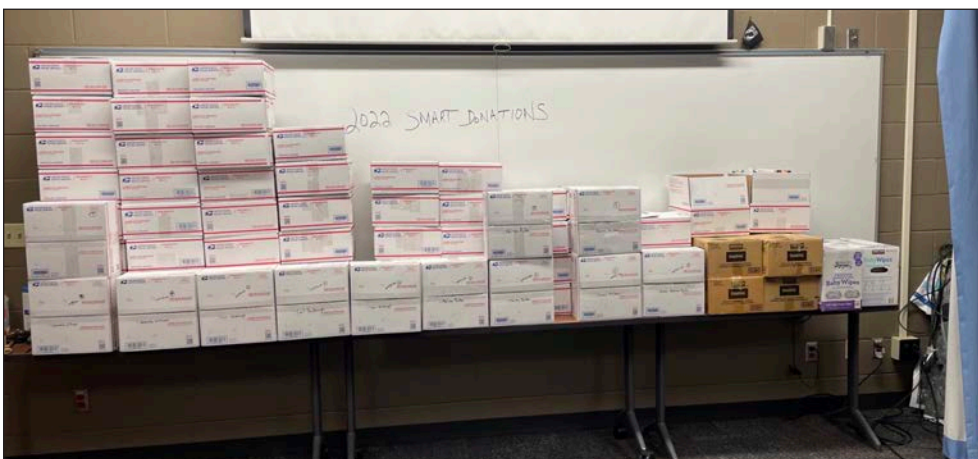
# Listening Post



On a balmy Jan. 15, the Legion Riders of Elk River hosted a "summer in January" breakfast. The Riders were decked in their summer attire to serve a great meal. Palm trees, beach balls, fishing rods and Hawaiian leis were just a few items that welcomed members and guests. The only item missing was a motorcycle!



Martin County veteran Mike Daisy requested assistance for replacing the transmission in his van. Fairmont Post 36 and Ceylon Post 529 joined forces with DAV Chapter 32 and VFW Post 1222 to purchase a new transmission and installation from Feely Transmission in Welcome. From left are Ceylon Post 529 Commander Allen Kahler, Steve Feeley of Feeley Transmission & Auto Repair, Fairmont Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness, Army veteran and new Post 529 member Mike Daisy, DAV Chapter 32 Commander Mike Chepa and Fairmont VFW Post 1222 Commander Tom Childs.



Golden Valley Post 523, better known as the Chester Bird post, has been collaborating with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office to send care packages to deployed deputies since 2014. The Sheriff's Office has a high number of employees who are either veterans or are active in the Reserve or Guard components. All of the people in the top photos are veterans and work in the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office. Donations came from deputies, civilian employees, Post 523 itself and a private company called Buyers Support Group in Minneapolis.

By the numbers:

- 71 total packages.
- 996 pounds total weight.
- 5 Sheriff's Office employees and their units will receive and share these packages. Sheriff's Office firearms instructor Erik Fleck, Post 523 Commander Craig Hartman and several veterans who are in law enforcement showed up to assist with boxing.



Fairmont FFA Chapter officers Lincoln Becker and Lilly Laven accept a \$5,000 donation from Fairmont Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness.



Joe Bares of Jordan Post 3 went to Fort Snelling to put wreaths on graves of veterans for Wreaths Across America, and he noticed many Legion members and veterans in general were there. There was so much help, he said, that the work took just a little over an hour. He sent in these photographs. Editor Tim Engstrom replied, "Look at that Scout in the blue coat with the three-finger Scout salute. Pictures like these, of real Americans who love their country, are why readers love The Minnesota Legionnaire. Thank you for sending."

# District commanders



## 1st District

Mary Hanson



What a difference 4 months makes. In that short time span, The American Legion lost two true Legionnaires. On Sept. 11, we lost James Westby from Mabel. He was the 1st District Area 1 vice commander.

And then on Dec. 31, we lost Larry Otto from Ellendale. Larry was the Department of Minnesota chaplain and 1st District chaplain. God, family and country. Please keep both men and their families in your prayers. Our heartfelt condolences to both families. A huge loss to The American Legion and the 1st District.

On Jan. 7, the 1st District held the Mid-Winter Conference at Post 77 in Owatonna. It was a busy day, starting with the executive board, where four resolutions were passed — two for housekeeping on our committees and creating a new one for the girls' fastpitch softball.

We had a number of guests from the Legion Family.

The Oratorical Contest was held. Unfortunately, there was only one contestant. She did a wonderful job and will move up to department again.

At the time of this writing, the 1st District is back in third place for membership. Please work on the 1982 and 1982AD lists. Call the members on your expired list. Find out why they have not renewed and get them back.

The consolidated post report is now available on myLegion.org and we will mail it to your adjutant soon. Please keep in mind the reporting period is from June 1 to May 31. Get this filled out and in to department on time and keep a copy. The membership team will appreciate you.



## 2nd District

Pam Krill



Thank you, 2nd District! You continue to amaze me, with your commitment and dedication to the American Legion Family. The district is still sitting in 1st place for membership with the department.

Keep up the great work, everyone!

I hope to see all of you at the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference in Blue Earth, at Post 89, Feb. 17-18.

Registration will start at 5 p.m. Feb. 17. Post 89 will have its evening meat raffle and the executive meeting will be at 7 p.m. following the raffle. Saturday will start with registration at 8 a.m. and the general session meeting starts at 9 a.m. The day will be filled with fun, training, questions and answers and camaraderie.

This new year my focus is to get out to as many posts as possible, to talk about seeking out veterans in need, trying to connect with those in our communities.

I have heard from various post commanders and membership directors on members who

have gone to Post Everlasting. They are concerned that, if our communities are not growing, they may never make their goals.

Please reach out to me. We may not be able to adjust your goal this year, but we may be able to find ways to navigate those challenges next year. We are all facing the challenges of recruiting and retaining members. Let's work together and help one another. Let's work those 1982 listings.

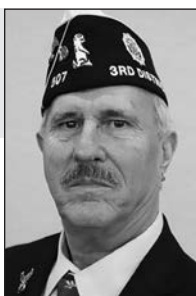
If there are events in your community, you could put a booth or a table, see if you can do that, find ways to get the word out.

We can do great things, but we need to be able to communicate with one another. If there is something you need from the district, please reach out and let me know. I am here for you; each of the vice commanders are ready to help. Call 757-771-6901 anytime or email me at pjkrill74@gmail.com.



## 3rd District

Gary Richardson



Greetings, Legionnaires! Hopefully everyone is surviving the winter mess this year. It's been tough to get out for some of us. I want to thank my district officers for getting out to their local posts to relay information from the district, department and national.

Of the posts that I have had the honor of visiting, I have to say they are out there doing a great job keeping their members involved and doing the work of the Legion to help our veterans!

Legion Baseball and Legion Fastpitch Softball registration is now open and all information on these two great programs can be found at [baseball.legion.org](http://baseball.legion.org) and

minnesotal legion softball.com.

If you have teams in your area that are interested, please contact the softball director, Mike Arvidson, at [michaelarvidson1@gmail.com](mailto:michaelarvidson1@gmail.com), or the 3rd District baseball director, Bruce Young, at [byoung3547@yahoo.com](mailto:byoung3547@yahoo.com), for more information.

I had the honor last year of throwing out the first pitch for a game at the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament in Burnsville and to meet many of

the players. What an awesome group! These are very good programs to get our young people involved with and I look forward to a successful season for both this year.

With the Legislature in session, it is vitally important that we get involved. Veterans Day

on the Hill is scheduled this year for March 30. Let's see a sea of Legion caps at this event! More information is available on Page 7.

Hope to see everyone out and about at the department rallies and around the state. Keep doing the great work you are doing!



## 4th District

David Dahl



The 4th & 5th District Mid-Winter Conference was a huge success. We had 60 attendees, plus 20 online.

Thanks to Shawn and Jill Davis and Matthew Verkuilen for excellent audio-video support. Thanks to the 4th & 5th District American Legion Family leaders who helped with plans.

The 4th District's monthly meeting — the RCCC: Ramsey County Central Committee — meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month: Feb. 8 at Rosetown, March 8 at Arcade-Phalen, and April 12 and May 10 at North St. Paul.

I'd like to see at least one member from every post at these meetings. Please plan to attend.

The Minnesota American Legion Suicide Prevention Coalition meets monthly via Zoom on the third Tuesday. All Legionnaires are encouraged to participate. We want to conduct S.A.V.E. training at every post. S.A.V.E. training will help you act with care and compassion

if you encounter a veteran who is in crisis or experiencing suicidal thoughts. The acronym S.A.V.E. helps you remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- S: Signs of suicidal thinking
- A: Ask: "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"
- V: Validate the Veteran's experience
- E: Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

All the American Legion Family are invited, but every bar manager, bartender, waiter and waitress should complete S.A.V.E. training. Contact your district commander or the department adjutant to get the link to join the monthly SPC meetings or to schedule the S.A.V.E. training at your post.

Still serving — serving veterans and serving our communities!



## 6th District

Karen O'Bar



Happy Valentine's Day my Legion Family members. I'm sure that we all have had our fill of snow!

January has been pretty uneventful. I have been preparing for my surgery that has to be rescheduled from Jan. 16 to who-knows-when. I am hoping this surgery helps me with my bionic powers.

Because of the reschedule, I'm not sure if I will attend the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 4 at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172, and then the 6th District Mid-Winter Conference at Ironton Post 443 followed by our executive board at St. Augusta Post 621.

Blessed be things will turn out grand. We are holding in membership

with 85.12 percent, which puts us in second place.

With 82.03 percent, the sister districts of 6th and 9th moved up to second.

Like a lot of our posts, I, too, am having membership problems within my post. Make those phone calls or schedule a time to meet new veterans in your area. Keep up the outstanding work.

Use the 6th District chairmen. They are here to help everyone. They are 6th District subject matter experts. We are a family and with the combined knowledge we have we can accomplish anything.



## 7th District

Karen Welander



As this new year begins, let us reassess all the great things our American Legion Family is doing to help veterans, families, children and communities to be strong and successful in this great country.

We need to individually do a little bit more this year to help our American Legion maintain the many missions. Each post determines their missions and how they will make that mission successful.

The blood drives, pancake feeds, raffles and community participation are fulfilling those missions. The mission is

quantified in the reports completed by the post administration. The post's resources for answers are the district officers and manuals that are always available to resolve your questions. Use all your resources to accomplish all your membership and program goals.

Training your members is an important part of a successful post. Take the time and you will improve your volunteer base to assist in legion programs. Each post decides their fate by how

they function within their constitution and bylaws to achieve the legion programs they report on. Be inspired by all the great

programs you successfully support.

Until next month, do good things.



## 8th District

Larry Pocrnich



Hello, veterans.

Here it is, the new year and almost February. Let's get out and check on other veterans we have not seen or talked to this month. There are also members who we should be talking to, too. We should be near the 80 percent range now on completing our membership goal. Some posts that are below should be calling on their members.

There will be a calling for new officers for the year 2023-24 by May. They are not that hard of positions to fulfill. Teamwork at all the posts is essential. This brings me to the 8th District also. We need a few veterans to jump in to fill a couple shoes. There are a lot of past officers to help you.

The 8th District Mid-Winter Conference will be via Zoom videoconferencing, "weather permitting." (LOL.) It is at 9:30 a.m. Feb. 11 with the executive committee first, then on to the

regular meeting. We will be sending out the information to join in the meeting.

The adjutants will receive information on Boys State soon.

Combine two posts if one cannot afford the full cost. Ask a business to help with the cost. Please contact your school counselor and teachers to send a student. It is at St. John's University in Collegeville the second full week in June. It is a week filled with information and fun. I will be attending, and, as usual, if a student needs a ride.

Do not forget the scholarships the Legion has for students. Also, keep up your post scholarships for students.

Now go out and do good on behalf of The American Legion. Thanks for all you do.



## 9th District

Terry Buraas



Mid-winter is a done deal, and now we need to look toward the future. Membership has been declining over the years due to death and the young members are not stepping up to fill the leadership roles.

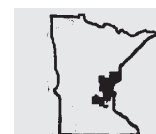
I will be done in July and all districts are searching for those young people to step forward as we did many years ago and fill the leadership ranks again.

I have the same problem here at East Grand Forks. I may have close to 500 members but of those 500, perhaps 30 to 35 are younger than my 73 years.

It comes down to the larger posts needing to push their young members to step up or

this organization will be in a declining mood. World War III hasn't happened, and we don't want that to happen.

Many female veterans have stepped up at the department and national levels, so if you have a young female who knows what leadership is about, push that member forward. They are the future of The American Legion. Their families have happened, and they may be looking for that motivational inspiration to start something new in their lives.



## 10th District

William Gordon



The 10th District Mid-Winter Conference was great, and we missed all of you who did not or could not make it. We look forward to seeing you next year in 2024.

Tie your kilt on tight and roll up your sleeves it's time to get to work.

The Department Sweetheart Rally is at 10:30 a.m. Feb. 4 at Osseo Post 172, and the 10th District Sweetheart Rally is at noon Feb. 11 at North Branch Post 85.

The suicide coalition is hard at work. S.A.V.E. training is available. Reach out to me or the department adjutant for information.

Please take a few minutes and reach out to a fellow veteran or member you have not seen for a while, and those veterans trying to get back on their feet. Your words of encouragement are so important to them.

The Junior Conference is scheduled for April in New Prague. Let's support our Juniors, they support you!

I will be visiting at least 10 more posts in the next two months. How many of you have the names of the students who will be competing in the 10th District Oratorical Contest this year? Please send them to myself or to Cliff Newman at Anoka Legion Post 102 as soon as possible!

The department contest is Feb. 25. We want to send a winner this year.

Also, how many of your adjutants are working on your consolidated post reports each month? If you do, it will not be

Continued on Page 13



From left are Tracy, Bud, Olivia, Jay, Dawson and Barb, all last name of Krog.

# Assigned to a tiny island

Post 10's Bud Krog served in the Navy and served on Midway in the Pacific Ocean

By Gary Kass

**L**AKE BENTON — Clyde “Bud” Harold Krog was born on Aug. 16, 1942, and grew up on the family farm five miles north of Lake Benton in Diamond Lake Township.

Krog recalls that his family had milk cows, raised hogs and chickens. He said as he grew up, he “baled hay, milked cows, pitched manure — did everything that anyone who grew up on a farm did.”

Krog attended Diamond Lake School north of Lake Benton for the first eight grades. That school, built by the WPA in the 1930s, was a palatial brick building. For his last four years of school, he attended Lake Benton High School graduating in 1960.

After talking to a Navy recruiter, Krog was enticed and enlisted into the Navy on April 3, 1961.

“It was the best thing I ever did.”

**H**e was sent to San Diego for boot camp. Then he was trained as a yeoman (clerk), and he was assigned to Naval Air Station Midway Atoll in the Central Pacific. (In 1993, the Navy ceded control of the atoll, which is near the site of the first major defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy in World War II, to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. It is now a federal wildlife sanctuary.)

Initially, Krog was assigned as the yeoman for the island's command unit but, when the yeoman to the commander of the airborne squadron was reassigned, Krog was selected for that position.

The mission of the Airborne Early Warning Barrier Squadron-Pacific, was to have aircraft on patrol 24/7/365 over the Northern Pacific to watch for Russian intrusion into American airspace. They flew Lockheed Super Constellation airplanes with two radar domes, one on the top and one on the bottom.

Occasionally, Krog was allowed to fly aboard the aircraft as it flew over wide

stretches of the Bering Sea.

“I got to see a Russian plane flying right beside us,” he said about one of the flights. “They were watching us, too.”

On one occasion, Krog's commanding officer took him to a heavily guarded hanger.

Inside, he was allowed to see the then-secret U2 spy plane that had landed on Midway for repairs. In October 1962, the Mercury-Atlas 8 spacecraft (MA-8) piloted by astronaut Wally Schirra's splashed down in the Pacific near Midway. Interestingly, in 2007, the Krog family visited the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, and grandson Dawson got to sit inside the MA-8 space capsule.

After a year on Midway, Krog was assigned to the USS Oriskany, an Essex-class aircraft carrier. On the Oriskany, Krog was assigned to the personnel office and once again worked primarily on officer records.

He said that he and the 10 other yeomen aboard were extremely lucky to have a work area that was air-conditioned.

“We had an admiral aboard, and he didn't even have air conditioning.”

The carrier made ports of call in Manila, Hong Kong and many ports in Japan. While on liberty in Japan, Krog toured the Hiroshima Ground Zero Memorial Center 20 years after the bombing.

Krog was on the Oriskany in June 1963, when President John F. Kennedy arrived aboard the ship. Krog did not get to see him because of tight security, but believes that the president was there to consult with senior Navy officers, and

then made a brief appearance on the flight deck.

After a year and a half, on the Oriskany, Krog was reassigned to his last military assignment, Naval Station Key West in Florida.

He said that his personnel office was near ex-President Harry Truman's “Summer White House” and he saw him and his Secret Service detail on several occasions, but was unaware of the one time that Truman was in his office consulting with his commanding officer.

**K**rog left the Navy in 1965 after performing a duty few in the service ever get to do — type his own DD214 discharge form.

Krog returned to Lake Benton and soon met a young lady visiting her first cousin, who was Krog's brother's wife. The lady's name was Barbara Tholkes, and she grew up in Milwaukee and Philadelphia.

Soon becoming fast friends, Bud and Barb were married in Feb. 4, 1967, in Broomall, Penn. They then returned to Lake Benton and have made their home there ever since.

In 1969, Krog began working for Dwire Inc. and was involved in building the final stretches of Interstate 90 near Fairmont (Grenada overpass) and also worked at constructing Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) in Marshall.

In the early 1990s, Krog started his own excavation business and was involved in tearing down two famous landmarks in the Lake Benton area, the Showboat Ballroom and the Diamond Lake schoolhouse where he was schooled. He also dug graves at local cemeteries for over 20 years.

As a sideline pursuit, he raced stock cars at the Slayton Raceway.

**B**ud and Barb have two boys, Carey, a Navy veteran who is now a cellphone company executive, and Jay, who is an optometrist at the Naval Hospital in Bremerton, Wash. Krog built a beautiful house on Lake Benton, doing much of the construction himself.

Krog is proud of his time in the Navy and the many construction and excavating jobs he has performed over the years. He and Barb are now retired and continue to enjoy many water recreation activities as well as traveling to meet with Carey in Brookings, S.D., and Jay, daughter-in-law Tracy and grandchildren Dawson and Olivia in Seattle. Bud and Barb are proud to have lived, worked and raised their family in the beautiful community of Lake Benton.

They are active in the Lake Benton American Legion Post 10, and they are justly proud of their many years of hard work and their contributions to the Lake Benton community.



Carey, Bud, Barb and Jay Krog



Clyde Krog  
1960  
Lake Benton  
High School



Clyde Krog  
1960  
Lake Benton  
High School

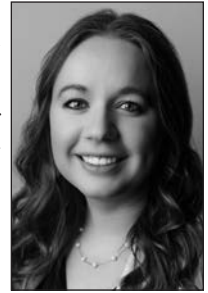
## MDVA hires administrator for Montevideo Veterans Home

**MONTEVIDEO** — The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has announced the hiring of the administrator for the future Montevideo Veterans Home, scheduled to open in mid-2023.

Ashley Bormann, a graduate of Concordia College in Moorhead, began Jan. 4. She works from a temporary office in Montevideo. She will participate in interviewing and selecting other leaders of her team.

She has served as a nursing home administrator since 2014. She has a degree in healthcare management with an emphasis in long-term care.

“I feel honored to have the opportunity to serve veterans



Ashley Bormann

and their families in this role. I am excited to begin planning the successful opening of the new Montevideo Veterans Home and look forward to connecting with the community and sharing our progress over the next several months,” she said.

She previously worked at Bethesda, a senior living facility in Willmar. She worked there for nine years, and it included the roles of administrator and chief operating officer. She has experience planning and opening new facilities, according to an MDVA news release.

She and her husband, Scott, have ties to the area. They have three young children.



## Why should you go to Minn. American Legion College?

By Paul Edwards

While I was serving as 6th District commander, the three things I pushed were communication, education and mentorship.

This article is in reference to the education part.

There are some folks who believe that The American Legion begins and ends at the door of their Legion post. One of the first things you will learn when you start your education journey is that there is much more to The American Legion than just that place down the street where the old guys sit and drink and talk about who they used to be.

The first step is the Basic Training course, which is online and free to members. It is \$9.95 for nonmembers.

In it, you will learn the who, what, when and how The American Legion was founded. You will learn that the very first National Convention was held right here in our state of Minnesota. You will learn about some of the programs of The American Legion and will hear from some folks whom these programs have affected. You will probably be surprised at some of the well-known folks who are past Boys State and Boys Nation attendees.

The next step is Legion College. While Basic Training is to help you become a well-rounded and knowledgeable Legionnaire, Legion College is more geared toward developing Legion leaders. You will learn about conflict resolution, resolution writing, legal aspects of Legion leadership and much more.

Attendees at the April session at Camp Ripley will have the opportunity to meet National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola. Perhaps the most important part of Legion College is being able to meet and interact with Legion folks from other parts of the state.

I encourage you to take the next step on your Legion education journey.

### Links:

Department of Minnesota Legion College:  
[mnlegion.org/legion-college/](http://mnlegion.org/legion-college/)  
American Legion Basic Training:  
[legion.org/alei](http://legion.org/alei)

## District Commanders

Continued from Page 12

Remember they do not have a headache come time to send it out.

Also, we are looking for your packages of who you are submitting as your Legionnaire of the Year, Boy Scout of the Year, Police Officer of the Year? Fire-fighter of the Year.

And, not to be forgotten, your Outstanding Enlisted Personnel.

Summer will be here in four months so, let's reach out to our community and get the names of the students attending Legionville Safety Education Center this year.

to be dependents of veterans. Any child can go between ages 10 to 13 years old. You can find out all the information you need if you go to the department website at [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org), and under “Programs” in the top menu, you find “Legionville.”

By the way, a new Legionville website is coming out soon.

If you would like me to visit your post meeting, please email a date to [wgordon2494@hotmail.com](mailto:wgordon2494@hotmail.com). I will do my best to attend.



# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 23 Vol. 7

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

Dept. HQ: Veterans Service Building, St. Paul, MN 55155 651-224-7634 February 2023

## We are looking forward to the spring

Welcome to February!  
Wow, over 11,000 miles so far and the 2022-2023 year is only half over.

Thank you all for your kindness and hospitality. It is so great to see members enjoying each other's company and eating such wonderful food!

My husband, Bill, and I have enjoyed our time visiting units, squadrons, and posts throughout the Department of Minnesota.

The Sweetheart Membership Rally is coming up on Feb. 4 at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172. The American Legion Auxiliary is hosting this event. Social and membership turn-in is at 10:30 a.m., meal at 11:30 a.m. with the program to follow. National Vice Commander of the Midwest Region Glen Wahus will be visiting from North Dakota and so will National Chaplain Mark Antal from Apple Valley. (See Page 7.)

The 60th annual Department

### President's Column

Mary Kuperus



Junior Conference is scheduled for Saturday, April 15, in New Prague at the American Legion. A fun evening is planned on Friday, April 14, at New Prague Post 45. This conference and fun night are hosted by the 3rd District American Legion Auxiliary. Registration information was in the January unit mailing.

Honorary Junior President Sydney Borntrager would like to encourage all Junior members to attend. Please register by March 15.

American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State is on June 11-17 at Bethel University. Now is the time to contact your local high school to encourage young ladies to attend. Don't forget home schools, charter and private schools also. Registration

information is on our website: [mnala.org](http://mnala.org).

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!

*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."*



At the 1st District Mid-Winter Conference at Owatonna Post 77 on Jan. 7, 1st District Secretary Sandy Fredrickson, 1st District President Tonia Bettermann and Department President Mary Kuperus review the Department Unit Guide.

## Call to the 2023 Department Junior Conference

The 60th annual Junior Conference of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota is hereby called to be held at the New Prague American Legion Post 45, 300 Lexington Avenue South, New Prague, MN 56071 at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 15, 2023, for the purpose of:

1. Presentation and judging of awards.
2. Reports from the District Honorary Junior Presidents
3. Election of Department Honorary Junior Officers
4. Other business for the good of the Junior Auxiliary

### Conference Schedule

All events will be held at New Prague Post 45.

Registration	April 14	6-8 p.m.
	April 15	8-9 a.m.
Advisory Committee Meeting	April 14	7:30 p.m.
Processional Practice	April 15	8 a.m.
Senior Advisor/Sr. Judges Meeting.	April 15	8 a.m.
Conference Call to Order	April 15	9 a.m.

The Advisory Committee is composed of the

department junior activities chairman, honorary department junior president, secretary, 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, district junior presidents and district junior activities chairmen. Also included are the department junior conference parliamentarian and senior secretary.

### Processional

Each district is encouraged to bring their district colors. Per the Standing Rules, Junior Color bearers should wear navy skirt or navy slacks and white blouses or appropriate attire.

### Conference location

The Department Junior Conference will be held at New Prague Post 45, also called the Park Ballroom. The conference is hosted by the 3rd District. Contact the Department Office for housing information for the Junior Conference

### Registration fee

The registration fee for the Department Junior Conference is \$15 per person and should be paid when you arrive at New Prague Post 45 and check in for the conference. To prepay, please send your check along with your registration form. Checks should be made payable to 3rd District American Legion Auxiliary.



Department President Mary Kuperus smiles for the camera alongside 6th District President Bev Grose at the Kimball Post 261 Christmas Party on Jan. 11.

## Scholarship applications due March 1

Applications for ALA national scholarships are due on or before March 1 to your local unit. Now is a great time to contact your area high schools and send them the applications. Reminder: National scholarships can now be completed online through a fillable application. Please note national has waived the requirement of an ACT or SAT score this year if students



were unable to take the test because of COVID. Applicants should just note that on the application.

All scholarship applications — national, department and Past

Presidents Parley — are due to Department office no later than March 15.

### Deadlines for essays and dues forms

Unit essay contest winners should be sent to the Department Americanism Chairman Bethany Dickert no later than March 15.

2023 dues forms are due to department office no later than March 15. This form lists where members are to remit their dues and the amounts for 2024 for both Senior and Junior members.



At the 3rd District Mid-Winter Conference Jan. 21 at Lonsdale Post 586, 3rd District President Kim Carlander and Department President Mary Kuperus bring greetings on behalf of the members of the ALA Department of Minnesota.



# Endorsements

## Thiemecke endorsed for president

Sharon Thiemecke's eligibility began through her father, Charles A. Ruckoldt, a Marine veteran of the Korean War. She became eligible through her grandfather, Frank Moskal a World War I Navy veteran and past commander of Portage Park Post 183 in Chicago, when the eligibility was changed to include granddaughters in 1970.

She also qualifies through her oldest son Robert S. Haas II, a 24-year veteran retired from the Air Force, son Matthew Haas of the Army National Guard, daughter Jennifer Lowry of the Air Force and youngest son Kristopher Thiemecke of the Army.

Born in Chicago and raised in Arlington Heights, Ill., Sharon Thiemecke grew up an active Junior member of Portage Park American Legion Auxiliary, where her mom, aunt and grandmother were her mentors. The Juniors were busy making items for the VA hospital in Chicago and attending many Legion and Auxiliary events.

She was 9th District Honorary Junior Historian in Illinois. She and her mom transferred to Bemidji Unit 14 in 1999.

Thiemecke has held historian, chaplain/memorial, Children & Youth, Poppy, Education, Junior Activities, Leadership, sergeant-at-arms and is currently the Bemidji Unit 14 secretary/treasurer. She was her unit's president in 2006-2008 and in 2015-2017.

Thiemecke served as 6th District president in 2011-2012 and 2018-2019. She has held the Legislation, Junior Activities, Girls State Transportation, Membership, Past President's Parley and Education chairmanships.

In the Department of Minnesota, Thiemecke is the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation chairman. She has been the Legislative chairman, served on the Commanders Task Force and the board for the



Sharon Thiemecke

Legionnaire. She has been the Leadership chairman, served as the sergeant-at-arms, served on the Audit Committee, Girls State Committee, Poppy chairman, department membership chairman and also on the board for the American Legion Family Hospital Association.

Thiemecke has served as a counselor at the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State and served on the Girls State Committee. She actively attends fall conferences, mid-winter conferences, district, department and national conventions.

The 6th District American Legion Family, the 6th District Past Presidents and Ralph Gracie Post and Unit 14 of Bemidji proudly endorse Sharon Thiemecke for the position of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota president for 2023-2024.

## Hey, February is Americanism Month!

By **Bethany Dickert**  
Americanism Chairman

February is Americanism month, but Americanism isn't only done in February!

I encourage everyone to take some time and reflect on what Americanism means to you. The American dream is different for everyone, and so too is the meaning of Americanism.

Here are several ways to work the Americanism program all year long:

- Collect unserviceable flags from your community and hold a flag retirement ceremony;

invite people from your community to attend.

- Contact your schools and see if you can be a part of their Veterans Day, Presidents Day or Memorial Day programs; a POW/MIA table presentation or a flag folding demonstration are things many students likely haven't seen and find very interesting.

- Make up thank-yous and give them to businesses and individuals who properly are displaying our flag.

- Create a place to display the U.S. Flag Code, there is a lot of misinformation spread

around about what we should and should not do with our flag

We are ramping up our Americanism Essay Contest as the submission deadline approaches. I have set a department goal to have at least three entries in each of the six classes this year.

This year's topic is "What Does Patriotism Mean to You?" If you have children in your life in grade 3-12, they are eligible to participate in the contest. Contact your local auxiliary for a cover sheet and the guidelines. The submission deadline is 5 p.m. March 25.

## Auxiliary has awards for leadership

By **Raleen Tolzmann**  
Leadership Chairman

### Unit Member of the Year

Each year your unit has a chance to honor a very special unit member. This unit member is the one who is willing to help wherever she/he is needed and volunteers to head up any special project or fund raiser your unit may be having. This unit member is active in the community and may be involved with other organizations. Why not nominate this unit member for Unit Member of the Year?

Requirements:

1. Open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president.

2. Units: Submit a narrative

of 1,000 words or less to your department leadership chairman (Raleen Tolzmann). Describe the nominee's accomplishments and activities and include the nominee's name and address.

3. Submit only one entry per unit. Entry is due April 20th as I need to judge them and send the winner to national by June 1st.

4. Your entry must be on the official Unit Member of the year application form and must be emailed to me.

5. You can find the Unit Member of the Year form on the National Website: [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org). You will need to go to forms and click on the application for unit member of the year.

6. Selection is based on accomplishments, activities, etc. for the current

administrative year.

### Florence Hamel Plaque

This is awarded to the unit submitting the best overall Leadership Program for the year.

This entry must be in narrative form and not to exceed 1,000 words. It must be typed and please include pictures and any press releases you may have done. You will need the official cover sheet for awards with the application.

You still have time to register for the next "Let's Be a Leader" Leadership Training.

It will be at the Montevideo American Legion on March 25. I have attached a registration form to this unit mailing.

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way."

# TESTIMONIAL DINNER CELEBRATING AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA PRESIDENT

## MARY KUPERUS

HOSTED BY:  
NEW LONDON UNIT 537



APRIL 22, 2023  
SPICER  
AMERICAN  
LEGION POST 545

SOCIAL HOUR: 5PM  
DINNER: 6PM  
PROGRAM FOLLOING  
COST: \$25

SEND RESERVATIONS  
BY APRIL 14TH TO:  
BEV DRESSER  
PO BOX 225  
NEW LONDON MN 56273

MENU:  
BROASTED CHICKEN  
& MEATBALL BUFFET

MAKE CHECKS  
PAYABLE TO  
UNIT 537

ENTERTAINMENT:  
"CUSTOM MADE BAND"



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ # OF GUESTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT # AND EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Minnesota  
**Leadership Training**

"Let's Be A Leader"

Being a good leader, the Auxiliary will "Serve and Honor Every Day" our veterans, military, their families and your communities.

Basic ALA leadership Training. All members are welcome, invite your Juniors to come.

**Saturday, March 25, 2023**

Montevideo American Legion Post

9:30 to 2:00 p.m.

\$15.00 Registration

Includes coffee, rolls, lunch & course handouts

**Register by March 15, 2023**

If your unit or District would like to host a leadership training in this Winter or Spring

Please contact – Raleen Tolzmann

[raleen44aux@gmail.com](mailto:raleen44aux@gmail.com)

507-317-3240

Return this portion along with you check for \$15.00 for the Leadership Training

Send to – Raleen Tolzmann, 46590 Evergreen Lane, Cleveland, MN 56017

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
UNIT # \_\_\_\_\_ UNIT LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_  
DISTRICT # \_\_\_\_\_ SENIOR \_\_\_\_\_ JUNIOR \_\_\_\_\_  
CELL PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
MARCH 25, 2023 \_\_\_\_\_

**Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

FOR THE CAUSE,  
NOT THE APPLAUSE

Editor's note: We had a special issue in November dedicated to veterans memorials. We asked readers to send in pictures of veterans memorials, and we had so many, we had to run half in November and half in December. Well, we had even more trickle in since then, so we are printing them in this issue.

# Special Memorial Issue

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Appeal services are offered at no cost by VSOs



The Johnsburg Veterans Memorial is at St. John's Catholic Church Cemetery in Johnsburg. It was donated by ret. Capt. Gerald Kramer.



This is a picture of the Le Roy Veterans Memorial with decorations in place for the Christmas season. It was built by the city and Le Roy Post 161.

**Minnesota DRIVE HOME YOUR SUPPORT!**

**Purchase a "Support Our Troops" Plate.**  
Call: 651-4TROOPS  
Visit: [www.minnesotaveteran.org](http://www.minnesotaveteran.org)



The Roseau Memorial Park has monuments commemorating Roseau County veterans who gave all during World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.



The Stephen Veterans Memorial outside Stephen Post 390 looks solemn at night with fires burning brightly. They are for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

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For all Veterans, Disabled Public, their Families and Friends



## YOU SERVED YOUR COUNTRY

AS A VETERAN, YOUR LIFE OF SERVICE HAS JUST BEGUN.

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR COUNTRY AND FELLOW VETERANS — ALL WHILE HAVING A GOOD TIME MAKING DIFFERENCES WITH PEOPLE WHO GET YOU.

BE PART OF THE LEGACY. SHARE THE VISION.



JOIN THE LEGION AT [MNLEGION.ORG](http://MNLEGION.ORG)

## Legionnaire Benefits

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- Cancer Care
- Accidental Death Protection
- On-The-Move Travel Accident
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ENDORSED BY YOUR AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT



- **Hospital HELP Plan** — Provides benefits for hospital stays including intensive care, cardiac care, care for cancer, rehabilitative facilities, and V.A. hospitals.\*
- **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.
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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.

**Veterans Linkage Line™**

[minnesotaveteran.org](http://minnesotaveteran.org) | 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)

Help for veterans and families