



Dick Middleton and Glenn Anderson of Chanhassen Post 580, right, meet with Fort Snelling National Cemetery officials.

Time to repair cemetery carillon

Chanhassen Post 580 and V4V join forces to bring back the music

FORT SNELLING — An effort by Chanhassen Post 580 member Dick Middleton and Post 580 Commander Glenn Anderson to raise funds to repair the carillon at Fort Snelling has found a home.

The Minnesota Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund will be the recipient organization for the effort to raise \$90,000 for the project.

Chanhassen Post 580 cannot receive the donations because, under state gambling laws, a licensed gambling organization

cannot donate to a licensed gambling organization except under certain circumstances. Post 580 has a gambling license and operates a booth at its popular restaurant.

However, the Gambling Control Board staff gave the green light to unlicensed Minnesota V4V to receive the funds because it indeed is eligible to receive gambling donations under Code 26 of the “A Codes,” the lawful purpose expenditures in the gambling manual.

“V4V is a perfect home for this project. That way, Legion, VFW and other groups will want to participate,” said Past Department Commander Don Pankake, who sits on the V4V Board of Directors.

Most national cemeteries have a carillon that can play patriotic music, bugle calls such as “Taps,” chimes, bells and other sounds. The existing one at Fort Snelling was installed in 1986 — it’s actually the

Continued on Page 10

Tax bill scales e-tabs back severely

‘It’s going to be further back than when they came out’

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Legislature on May 21 sent Gov. Tim Walz a tax bill that provides some tax relief for charitable gambling but scales back electronic pulltabs.

“In very simple terms to me, it’s going to be a true reflection of a paper counterpart,” said Allen Lund, gambling manager for Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 and former head of Allied Charities of Minnesota. “It’s going further back than when they came out.”

Walz signed the tax bill, and others, on the steps of the Capitol on May 24.

Charitable gambling is a major way for The American Legion, in

Continued on Page 8

Meet Bill Strusinski, lobbyist and Army medic veteran

By Tim Engstrom

ST. PAUL — Bill Strusinski is a common face at the State Capitol. He’s been involved in government since graduating from Mankato State College in political science 51 years ago.

But he’s not just another lobbyist. He’s a medic who survived combat during the Vietnam War.

The 77-year-old once served state government as the deputy commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Administration for Gov. Wendell Anderson. Gov. Rudy Perpich promoted him to commissioner, and Gov. Al Quie kept him in that role.

He’s been a lobbyist since. He is the senior director of government affairs for the Libby Law Office.

Strusinski lives with his wife, Kirsten, in Scandia, and he is a member of Forest Lake Post 225. He wrote a book chronicling his experiences in Vietnam. Calumet Editions, based in Edina, published his book in April 2020. It is called “Care Under Fire.” It is available at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

In 1964, Strusinski graduated from Hill High School, an all-boy Catholic school in St. Paul. In 1971, a merger resulted in the co-ed school today known as Hill-Murray.

It was off to college at Mankato State College, as it was then known, and he was the first in his family to attend higher education. In October 1966,

Capitol one



Bill Strusinski of Forest Lake Post 225 sits on a bench in front of the State Capitol on May 8. He works as a lobbyist for Libby Law Office in St. Paul and served his country with the 1st Infantry Division.

during his sophomore year, he came down with an illness that put him in the hospital. In November, he received notice that he lost his deferment, because he hadn’t met minimum requirements, and in December, he received a letter from Uncle Sam.

“Women, fun, fast cars, the library, smart professors with words of wisdom and campus parties were officially over. My youthful quest for happiness, truth and justice was about to enter a new dimension,” Strusinski wrote.

He didn’t worry too much because his father and several uncles had served.

His older brother was called to service, too, but a car crash resulting in a broken shoulder prevented entry into the Army basic training a month prior.

Strusinski was sworn in at the St. Paul Armory. Doctors certified him. Every eighth man in the group of recruits was called out. They went to the Marines.

The Army sent Strusinski to Fort Campbell, Ky. At one point during the training, an education specialist offered him job choices. Good jobs seemed to go to soldiers who enlisted, and the rest went to the drafted ones.

He had seen the TV show “Combat Medic,” and it influenced him. He already knew how to shoot, so he thought he would learn new skills. Besides, a sergeant mentioned he could put in for hospital duty in Germany or Italy, and that sounded safe.

Uncle Sam agreed to make Strusinski a combat medic, and he sent him to Fort Sam, also called Fort Sam Houston, for 10 weeks of training down in Texas.

“Finally, as we stood at attention and

Continued on Page 9

Legislature OKs 9/11 bonus, veterans omnibus, Hastings

ST. PAUL — For the second year in a row, the Minnesota Legislature passed an omnibus bill for veterans and military affairs.

Members of the Commander’s Task Force, to include American Legion Department of Minnesota, had pushed for the veterans omnibus bill so that it sets a precedence.

“This should help our veterans legislation not become entangled in the politics of the State Capitol,” said Kristy

Janigo, chairwoman of the Department Legislative Committee.

Gov. Tim Walz signed it into law May 15.

At Veterans Day on the Hill in late April, many lawmakers said they would work to ensure veterans had their own omnibus bill, and it happened. Here are highlights:

Post-9/11 Bonus expanded

Called HF1938, it provides a total

appropriation of \$146.5 million to the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs in the fiscal year beginning July 1, and \$132 million in the following fiscal year.

Within that funding, the state provides a one-time \$15 million boost for the Post-9/11 Bonus program. The initial bonus was passed last year, to the tune of \$30 million, but it did not provide bonuses to post-9/11 veterans in present-day Minnesota who entered

the military from other states. It also neglected veterans who had served in Operation Inherent Resolve, the successful effort to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

American Legion Department of Minnesota Comptroller Rachael Hill testified before House and Senate committees, explaining her family moved to Ohio from Minnesota through no fault of her own. After leaving the Air

Continued on Page 8

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Law to let veterans in housing retain earnings

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Legislature approved a budget bill May 22 for the Department of Health and Department of Human Services, and it will impact homeless veterans.

Presently, for homeless veterans who receive a federal pension or disability, the state government takes approximately 80 to 90 percent of their so-called "unearned income" when they enter a housing support program such as ones operated by Catholic Charities. A typical homeless veteran with about \$1,000 a month in disability ended up with just \$121 to get by.

This would result in them opting to remain homeless, rather than seeking shelter, particularly in the warm months.

The Health and Human Services bill caps the amount the state takes at 30 percent.

"That's a lot less than 90 percent," said

Department of Minnesota Communications Director Tim Engstrom, who testified for the bill.

The measure, signed by Gov. Tim Walz on May 24, doesn't go into effect until October 2024.

"This change has been years in the making," said Lorna Schmidt, public policy director for Catholic Charities, "and it would not have been possible without the expertise and support of partners."

The American Legion Department of Minnesota partnered with Catholic Charities and other organizations in an effort to change that percentage. It had bipartisan support.

"We felt if someone served their country and is receiving veterans benefits, it's not 'unearned.' Who would take income away from a veteran who lost a limb or



Lorna Schmidt

suffers respiratory problems on behalf of their country? It's definitely earned income," Engstrom said. "Sometimes the barriers to preventing homelessness are not substances or mental health. They can be policies, too."

The measure also applies to non-veterans seeking housing assistance who have income such as SSI, RSDI and child support. Further, it does not apply to boarding homes or lodge-type settings. It is applicable to community settings with habitability inspections and where residents have their own leases.

Catholic Charities operates shelters in the Twin Cities, such as the Dorothy Day Shelter in St. Paul and Higher Ground Shelter in Minneapolis. Many veterans find their way into the facilities.

National is rolling out a 3-year membership deal

Seasons change and officers change. Elections have been done at most posts. Please work with your new officers, support them and make your post a better American Legion post each day.

There were many changes at the NEC spring meetings that were just held in May in Indianapolis.

1. There will be a three-year membership plan. Kind of like the Forever Stamp. You pay the current dues for three years (one lump sum) and if national, department or district goes up, you **DO NOT PAY MORE.**

2. The Legacy Run will continue; however, in 2024, the dollars raised will go to the

Veterans & Childrens Foundation. Enough has been raised for the scholarship fund. Six students from Minnesota were awarded monies from the Legacy Fund. Thanks to all that have donated.

A big congratulations to Jeff Miller and Al Davis and the entire baseball committee. They have 403 teams registered to play this summer. Minnesota was once again pointed out as a leader for this program.

Make plans to attend your district convention. Please be willing to step up and take a leadership role. The 104th Department Convention is July 12-15 in Redwood Falls at Jackpot Junction Hotel &

National Report

Bill Barbknecht



Casino near Redwood Falls. Thursday will be a gambling training seminar at 2 p.m.

We remind everyone to do your Buddy Checks, and be kind to everyone. Treat people as you would like to be treated.

A big "thank you" to all of the posts that hosted National Commander Jim Troiola. I thank my post, Underwood Post 489. Commander Frank McKenzie and incoming Commander Sean Savage did an excellent job.

The 104th National Convention is in Charlotte, N.C., Aug.

25-Aug. 31. Please make plans to attend.

Donna and I look forward to visiting you in the coming months. As always if I can be of any assistance or answer questions, please call 218-770-6264.

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

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- Guided Tour of Smoky Mountains
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- Gateway Arch



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Endorsements

Bill Gordon of St. Michael endorsed for department vice commander

St. Michael Post 567 has endorsed William Gordon to be a vice commander for The American Legion Department of Minnesota. The executive boards for the 8th District and the 10th District also have endorsed Gordon.

Gordon is the present commander of the 10th District, serving since September 2021. He was a district vice commander 2020-21. He was

district membership director 2021-22 and district representative of the Legionville Board of Directors 2019-22. He was Wright County vice commander 2020-21 and inducted into the 40&8 La Soci  t   in April 2021.

He is a PUFL member of St. Michael Post 567. He served as post 1st vice commander 2017-21. He was awarded 10th District Vice Commander of the

Year for 2020-21.

Gordon is an Air Force veteran of several eras: Vietnam, Lebanon-Grenada, Persian Gulf and the Cold War. He became a widower in 1993. He has four daughters, 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

In the Air Force, he served with distinction as a security police officer and retired as an investigator.

He was nominated for the U.S. Air Force Information Security Managers Award and the 15th Air Force 1989 Ten Outstanding Young Americans Award. He received the Non-commissioned Officer of the Month, Quarter and Year, along with other training, longevity and overseas tours, ribbons and medals.

His eldest daughter, Mary Kristine, served in the Army in Afghanistan. His grandson, Alex, served in the Navy aboard the USS Blue Ridge, the flagship for the 7th Fleet.



Bill Gordon

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Candidates for the department election shaping up

REDWOOD FALLS — Registration is under way for the 104th Department Convention, hosted by Redwood Falls Post 38.

The convention takes place July 13-15 at Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel.

The Department Executive Committee meeting is at 7 p.m. July 12. Some committee meetings take place on July 12, too.

Attendees must make their own housing reservations with their hotel of choice. All delegates, alternates and guests must pay the \$15 registration fee. Use the form below. After July 1, the fee becomes \$18.

Hotel rooms are \$120 plus tax per night. Use block "American Legion State Convention." Reservations are on a first-come-first-served basis.

Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel can be reached at 507-679-8000 or 800-946-2274. It is at 39375 County Highway 24, Morton.

"The convention is a time

to conduct the business of The American Legion," said Department Commander Jennifer Havlick. "Thank you for taking three days out of your busy lives to come to Redwood Falls. We hope to see new faces and familiar ones, too."

Candidates for office

Elections of officers take place at the convention, and a new slate of department officers will be announced on the final day of the convention.

Here are the announced candidates for department officers and their home posts:

Commander

- Paul Hassing, Bloomington Post 550

Vice Commander (vote for five)

- Victor Gades, Morris Post 29
- Paul Edwards, Nisswa Post 627
- Chuck Stone, Owatonna Post 77
- Bill Gordon, St. Michael

Post 567

- Another candidate is expected to have an endorsement in the July issue.

Chaplain

- Joe Tappainer, Apple Valley Post 1776
- Dean Knutson, Ashby Post 357

Historian

- Christopher Anderson, Hastings Post 47

Sergeant-at-arms

- Brad Pagel, Slayton Post 64

Here are the announced candidates for national officers from Minnesota and their home posts:

NECman

- Bill Barbknecht, Underwood Post 489

Alternate NECman

- Peggy Moon, Zimmerman Post 560

Vice Commander (vote for one)

- Michael Ash, St. Paul Christie-DeParcq Post 406
- James Kellogg, Adams Post 146

Candidates announce their candidacies in the form of endorsements printed in The Minnesota Legionnaire. This way, the entire Minnesota American Legion membership can be aware of candidacies.

Keep in mind, there remains time to announce a candidacy. In fact, nominations even can come at the convention.

One interesting aspect at the convention in Redwood Falls is the selection of a national vice commander for the region. It's Minnesota's turn to nominate a national vice commander, and this convention determines the nominee.

See the Convention Call on Page 11. Rules are on Page 12.

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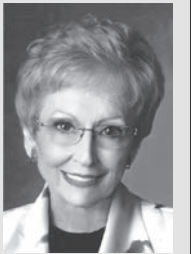
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Department of Corrections

The 2nd District Executive Committee did not endorse Randy Olson for department chaplain. The timing of the meeting and publication deadline for the May issue were at about the same time, which led to an error saying that it did. That means Olson is not a candidate unless he is endorsed by the 2nd District Convention or on the floor of the Department of Minnesota Convention. The 2nd District Convention is June 9-10 at Madelia Post 19.

A typo led to an error in a caption in a story about e-tabs and the Minnesota Legislature on Page 12 of the May 2023 issue. The final sentence of the photo caption should have read, "Minnesota would be the only state without an 'open all' button."



AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT CONVENTION REGISTRATION

— Official Form —

A registration fee of \$15 for each person attending, whether a delegate, alternate or a guest, must accompany this form.

Make your check payable to "American Legion Post 38" with "Dept. Convention" written on the memo line. No credit cards will be accepted.

Please mail this form with your check to:

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Registration after July 1 will be \$18.

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Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Delegate _____ Alternate _____
Guest _____
Delegate at-Large (Auxiliary) _____

(Choose Past Dept. President or Dept. Exec. Cmte.)

If additional registrations accompany this request, this registration form should be photocopied for each person. The registration fee must be enclosed for each person.

The legislative session had wins, losses

This year's Minnesota Legislative session had wins and losses for veterans of Minnesota.

The state approved bonding for much-needed improvements to the Hastings Veterans Home campus.

The Veterans & Military Affairs Omnibus Bill passed with bipartisan support and the governor's backing. This is great news for our veterans and their families. The veterans legislation in the bill, such as the expansion for the Post-9/11 Bonus, is not tied down by partisan fights.

Unfortunately, that is where the bipartisanship ends. In the final days of the legislative session in a completely partisan vote, both the Minnesota House and Senate voted to pass the Tax Omnibus Bill that will have devastating effects on charitable gambling through e-tab language change that will require the manufactures of e-tabs to completely redesign e-tabs to a more static form of play.

We have lobbied for months now against this change. The American Legion, along with other nonprofits across the state, believe that the losses from this change will devastate our ability to raise funds for our communities through e-tabs.

The governor signed this devastating legislation a day before the Legionnaire went to press.

Commander's Column

Jennifer Havlick



At this point, our job is to remember the actions taken by our legislative body, both positive and negative, and hold them accountable moving forward. There has been talk about moving this year's Department Convention from its current location in response to the change in e-tabs. We have investigated that option and unfortunately it is just not possible both logistically and financially.

I am asking you all to attend our Department Convention despite its location at a casino. Besides, the Legion way is to discuss, to engage, not to cancel.

We have important business to attend during our convention that needs to be done. Remember resolutions are the key to changing things in The American Legion and those get passed at Department Convention.

If you want policies or any other kind of change, write a resolution.

Now, on to other things. Please remember to get your officer reports and consolidated post reports into Department HQ. They were due June 1. Districts conventions have begun, and new officers are being elected for the

2023-2024 membership year.

As we elect new officers, show them your support whether they were your choice or not. Volunteer to serve on committees and commissions. Attend your post, district and department functions. It takes all of us to accomplish the mission of the American Legion.

We need to show our state legislators what effective governing looks like through the eyes of The American Legion. We strive to make a positive difference in our veterans' lives and our communities despite our varying points of view. Together we move forward into the future. I am looking forward to seeing you all at our Department Convention this year. Stand with the Department of Minnesota and make this the best attended convention ever.

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."

God's justice leads American Legion

What year was the following written?

"The Legion desires to stand not in a position of getting something from the nation but of giving something to the nation. The Legion must carry on its Americanism program in behalf of better education and aid generally in the development of patriotism and love of country — its program to inculcate in all our people 'a sense of individual responsibility to community, state and nation,' and must now actively help in righting one of the greatest wrongs in the history of the American people — a wrong connected with the prosecution of the war, and therefore, the duty of The American Legion to help correct — the exposing of the war profiteers."

It could have been written after any of the wars. The men and women who brought The American Legion to life framed it to transcend the personal sacrifice endured and to honor the lives' killed on the battlefield. The fight to equal the wrongs of profiting from war stems out of the godly value of justice. We need our governing body to be guided by values that transcend their own personal goals. This is a human need infused in all of our souls for when injustice

Chaplain's Corner

Kelley Adelman



is at hand, no words are ever needed to validate it — it is felt in the marrows of our souls.

We value selflessness for the betterment of not only ourselves, but to better those we pour ourselves into. The hope of a future tempered by justice, fairness, kindness, mercy and grace is our vision for we have seen the results of greed, selfishness, and evil. Destruction are their only accomplishments. The words were written as part of a Resolution at the New Orleans National American Legion Convention, Oct. 16-20, 1922.

Legionnaires learned that those who did not go to war were paid more and lived a secure life as a result. Some companies profited from their overreach lining in their pockets with abundance — greed. The soldiers returned with less and were struggling to pick up where they left off or to start new. Jobs were no longer there, and healing was absent except in the company of other veterans.

The battle to be compensated was not easily won in the

Legion. For many, integrity convinced them to fight for financial compensation.

June 11-17 will be the 74th session of Minnesota Boys State. Many men and women again commit themselves to teaching over 200 young men how to be a governing leader in our county couched in the godly values of justice, honesty, beneficence and patience.

Let us pray together, for in prayer we are brought closer to justice, mercy and peace: "God, we thank you for your continued benevolence in our lives. It is through You we can be just. Protect the time-honored agenda of our Boys State program. May their willing young minds grow into leadership framed with a desire to be just."

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

Mail Call

Send letters to the editor for Mail Call to 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.

Thanks for the correction

I want to thank you for printing a correction of the name Gary Kroshus in the "Taps" section of the May issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire. I enjoy learning about some of the veterans in the short comments after their name in the "Taps" section of deceased Legion veterans.

Carlyn G. Kraabel
Spring Grove Post 249

Time to give new vet home administrators a positive start

As a longtime nurse at both the Minneapolis Veterans Home and currently in the Minneapolis Domiciliary, I want to applaud Minnesota Legionnaire Editor Tim Engstrom for his coverage of the State Senate Oversight Hearing in St. Paul. (Shakeup in Hastings, April 2023.)

As one who testified and was around the issues as they developed last year, I know the Legislature's examination about work culture at the Hastings Domiciliary was a complicated story to report. It was also hard to read. Not for lack of clarity in the writing, but for having to ponder where things broke down, and how to move on strongly from here.

I was particularly pleased to meet Mr. Engstrom, Minnesota

Department of Veterans Affairs Legislative Director Ben Johnson and many Legion officers.

Nobody has all the right answers, and there are two sides — or more — to every story. But I appreciate Engstrom's suggestion that Minnesota Veterans Homes workforce reps should build a better rapport with the Legion.

I do think the Legislature's attention was sadly necessary, but even as one who testified, a highly formal and politically charged grilling may not be the very best way to gain clarity.

A partnership would have especially high value now, as the Minnesota Veterans Home program embarks on opening three new homes outstate, as we search for a new deputy commissioner, and the Hastings program recovers from its leadership change. I think we are also in for a generational change in top leadership at the Minneapolis home with a few recent retirements and more impending.

As I testified at the Senate's field hearing in January, I have met and seen good things from first-year Minneapolis Administrator Tory Barrick. I was also impressed meeting Preston Administrator David Dunn, the interim administrator for Hastings. They and all the other management teams at the homes deserve their own chance to outshine recent events. And they'll all need extra support amid challenges for the health care industry overall.

I've been critical of certain aspects of the program when I felt I needed to be, but I pledge

to work positively with anyone supporting respectful quality care of our veterans and their loving families.

James Meyer, LPN
South Minneapolis
Minneapolis Veterans Home,
(Domiciliary Program)

Editor's note: Thank you for the kind words. We want to add this disclaimer: "The author is speaking for himself, not on behalf of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs."

What about the Cold War veterans?

Reading through the Minnesota Legionnaire always brings to mind a situation.

Sometimes it makes me sad. And other times, it makes me angry.

I'm a Cold War veteran. I volunteered to serve my country from 1957 to 1960. I served honorably, safely and remain proud of my country.

In that time period, going through basic training, we were taught what to do if we were the victims of a Russian nuclear strike. It was serious. In my Army school for six months after basic, I learned to be a Morse interceptor and about the Russian mentality.

I was stationed in Germany, on the American side of the "Iron Curtain" and spent two years on duty there — daily, expecting a missile to come up over the horizon from the

Russian side and kill us all.

There was a degree of tension that lingered the whole two years. We were given leave time, with the restriction that we not travel to Berlin. Why? Because the Russians were harassing troops and civilians who traveled through the corridors and grabbing certain persons for whatever reasons.

Since I had a security clearance, the Army dared not let me get captured. Some of my fellow troopers were caught. And some of them never came back! You haven't heard that? It's still confidential, swept under the rug — because we didn't exist!

I have not suffered from my tour; in fact, the VA has given me hearing aids and a 10 percent disability for the loss of my hearing. I have nothing to complain about, really, but ...

We Cold War veterans are the Ghost Generation. We are forgotten. My outfit did not receive rank advances for the entire two years I served in Germany. We didn't exist. The illustrious American Legion would not even admit us as members until five years ago!

I am a Legion member now, and proud of that, but I still feel left out. In the whole of the latest issue of the Legionnaire, I see no Cold War veteran honors, pictures or special mention. The Greatest Generation is venerated, the Korean War veterans are honored, as are the Vietnam, Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan vets.

That is good; they all deserve whatever honor we could bestow. But the Ghost Generation is nowhere to be heard from. When I wrote to the state of Minnesota, for example, asking them to promote a "Cold War Veteran" license plate, I got a letter telling me to "just get a generic veteran plate."

No, there are specific plates for every other conflict — but the Cold War. Or, look down the list of deceased vets names under your column "Taps" — yes, there are only a couple persons who maybe served during the Cold War — only one is listed as such.

I don't expect you Minnesota

Legion folks to do anything about it. I can go into the local Legion and drink all the beer I want and visit with friends, but I want you to know — there is something lacking for my generation. And I presume Cold War veterans will die off without much mention in the history

Continued on Page 5

The Minnesota Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Official publication of
The American Legion
Department of Minnesota

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Taps



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

Name of Deceased	Age	Date of Death	Branch	Era	Cont. Years	Post
Abraham, Robert W.	94	4/8/23	Army	Korea	32	Winona Post 9
Adams, Dallas G.	99	1/25/23	Army	WWII	75	Millville Valley Post 579
Note: He was stationed in Okinawa, Japan, during the war.						
Anderson, William P.	94	4/11/23	Army	Korea	48	Onamia Post 395
Note: He served as a tank mechanic in the Korean War.						
Bakken, Einar S.	94	5/13/23	Army	Korea	38	Roseau Post 24
Benjamin, Gerald D.	88	6/29/22	Air Force	Korea	66	Jackson Post 130
Benson, Earl M.	81	5/12/23	Army	Korea	44	Park Rapids Post 212
Benson, Rodney E.	74	12/24/22	Navy	Vietnam	22	Pine City Post 51
Bianco, Chester A.	97	5/1/23	Army	WWII	11	Two Harbors Post 109
Blonigen, Clarence A.	85	1/29/23	Army	Vietnam	18	Melrose Post 101
Borgerding, Thomas J.	88	10/20/22	Navy	Korea	21	Melrose Post 101
Bratrud, Allan L.	95	4/22/23	Army NG	Korea	55	Jackson Post 130
Bungum, Gerhard M.	100	4/6/23	Air Force	Vietnam	69	Kasson Post 333
Cairns, Patrick J.	87	5/15/23	Army	VN/Leb-Gren	56	Rice Post 473
Carufel, Gerald H.	100	3/27/23	Army	WWII	77	St. Paul 3M Post 599
Note: He was in the 709th Armored Tank Battalion. He survived a deadly tank training mishap and remained stationed in the United States.						
DeMarce, Paul E.	97	4/26/23	Navy	WWII	38	Walker Post 34
Dick, Peter J.	74	9/29/22	Air Force	Vietnam	51	Millville Valley Post 579
Note: He served in Vietnam and received the Airman's Medal for risking his life to save the pilot of a burning Vietnamese aircraft.						
Dougherty, Ralph	95	3/13/23	Navy	WWII	20	Albert Lea Post 56
Duenow, Ronald D.	82	3/24/23	Army NG	Vietnam	38	Detroit Lakes Post 15
Emerson, David B.	82	5/15/23	Army	Vietnam	42	Moorhead Post 21
Erickson, Leland M.	92	11/11/12	Navy	Korea	54	Jackson Post 130
Fertig, David W.	88	1/31/23	Army	Vietnam	17	Hallock Post 63
Fuchs, Ronald D.	74	4/25/23	Navy	Vietnam	38	Waseca Post 228
Note: He is a recipient of the Purple Heart.						
Fuhrman, Floyd M.	94	4/16/23	Army	Korea	45	Graceville Post 297
Note: He was active in the post honor guard.						
Gareis, John H.	75	5/2/23	Army	Vietnam	8	New Ulm Post 132
Note: He was drafted and fought in Vietnam; then re-enlisted and served in Germany, making a career of the Army. He received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Silver Star.						
Germescheid, Edward P.	87	5/5/23	Army	Korea	65	Le Center Post 108
Gillaspie, Steve L.	73	5/16/23	Army	Vietnam	19	Arlington Post 250
Girard, Roger J.	80	4/30/23	Army	Vietnam	14	Milaca Post 178
Note: He served as a sharpshooter.						
Green, George F.	90	5/5/23	Navy	Korea/VN	2	Minnesota Post 1982
Grunst, Virgil M.	97	4/17/23	Army	WWII	77	Nicollet Post 510
Note: He was a past post commander.						
Hall, James J.	73	11/27/22	Army	Vietnam	53	Jackson Post 130
Hamblin, Carroll J.	81	4/24/23	Army	Vietnam	7	Hutchinson Post 96
Hampel, Dennis L.	79	8/14/22	Marines	Cold	31	Jackson Post 130
Hanson, Rickland P.	71	4/18/23	Navy	Vietnam	55	Albert Lea Post 56
Heidgerken, Dennis A.	85	5/5/23	Army	Vietnam	29	Melrose Post 101
Herman, Vernon J.	92	4/4/23	Navy	Korea	44	Detroit Lakes Post 15
Hillesheim, Paul E.	75	4/22/23	Army	Vietnam	45	New Ulm Post 132
Note: He enlisted in the 452nd General Supply Company, Army Reserve, which was activated and sent to Vietnam, where he served for a year.						
Huberty, Donald J.	94	4/26/23	Army	Korea	34	Waite Park Post 428
Huberty, Ralph T.	87	4/8/23	Army	Vietnam	64	Watkins Post 453
Hunt, Rodney K.	97	4/17/23	Navy	WWII/Korea	97	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He enlisted and served in the Pacific Theater right after high school, served with Red Cross during Korea and was stationed in California, England, Spain and other locales.						
Inderrieden, Ralph N.	79	9/22/22	Army	Vietnam	45	Melrose Post 101
Johnson, Claude L.	98	4/8/23	Navy	WWII	17	Chisago City Post 272
Note: He served as a pilot and continued flying in his civilian career.						
Johnson, Phillip R.	89	2/11/23	Army	Korea	46	Detroit Lakes Post 15
Jones, Martin R.	86	3/31/23	Army	Korea	34	Lake Crystal Post 294
Jurgens, Wallace W.	91	5/11/23	Army	Korea	48	St. James Post 33
Kratzke, Merle A.	91	4/13/23	Army	Korea	70	Elk River Post 112
Kuiters, David J.	87	4/11/23	Air Force	Korea	17	Albert Lea Post 56
Kummet, George H.	94	4/1/23	Army	Korea	70	Eden Valley Post 381
Kvamme, Thomas A.	75	5/16/23	Navy	Vietnam	9	Milaca Post 178
Note: He served as a radio operator floating in active combat areas of Vietnam. He worked as a sports editor and a sports radio announcer. He played Santa for years in Milaca.						
Lastine, James M.	82	4/30/23	Army	Vietnam	57	St. James Post 33
Leach, Irene L.	100	8/27/22	Navy	WWII	28	Jackson Post 130
Lee, Orland E.	98	4/29/23	Army	WWII	33	Albert Lea Post 56
Lorenz, John G.	70	4/9/23	Air Force	Vietnam	35	Winona Post 9
Lovell, Roger W.	87	9/6/22	Army	Korea	51	Jackson Post 130
MacLeod, Ronald L. Sr.	76	5/3/23	Army	Vietnam	4	Park Rapids Post 212
Marfell, James E.	83	5/6/23	Air Force	Vietnam	12	Bayport Post 491
Massmann, William F.	83	4/26/23	Army	Vietnam	44	Melrose Post 101
Mayhew, William B.	80	5/15/23	Army	Vietnam	6	Rochester Post 92
Meyer, Gary M.	75	3/24/23	Navy	Vietnam	54	Lake Benton Post 10
Milacek, Emil C. Jr.	89	2/25/23	Navy	Korea/VN	48	University of Minnesota Post 548
Note: He was past post adjutant and 5th District treasurer.						
Nelson, Alvern J.	90	5/3/22	Army	Korea	70	Jackson Post 130
Note: He served in the Signal Corps maintaining cable and radio relays between Korea and Japan.						
Nelson, Clifford A.	93	4/20/23	Army	Korea	53	Anoka Post 102
Norby, Alan J.	87	5/2/23	Army	Vietnam	33	Albert Lea Post 56
O'Brien, Francis E.	99	4/11/23	Navy	WWII	29	Kasson Post 333
Oeltjenbruns, Mark A.	64	4/17/23	Army	Persian Gulf	30	Jackson Post 130
Ogle, James R.	20	3/6/23	Navy	Korea	29	Melrose Post 101
Oien, David A.	93	5/2/23	Army	Korea	70	Mora Post 201
Note: Over the years, he had held all of the post leadership positions including commander.						
Okland, Gerald A.	77	4/17/23	Navy	Vietnam	27	Winona Post 9
Olmscheid, Lyle E.	91	12/7/22	Air Force	Korea	35	Melrose Post 101
Otto, Richard H.	93	4/1/23	Army	Korea	69	Winona Post 9
Perry, Ruth C.	98	4/13/23	Army/AF	WWII/K/VN	39	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: She entered the Army Air Forces during WWII, stationed in Germany, then re-enlisted into the Air Force when it became its own branch. She managed a base gymnasium at the Air Force Academy, where she wrote a book that taught women servicemembers what was expected of them. During part of her 20-year career, Perry						

AMERICAN LEGION

All-Family Events Calendar

- June 10:** 2v2 Call of Duty Charity LAN Tournament, Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
- 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
- June 16:** Last Man Club Golf Classic, Shoreland Country Club, St. Peter
- June 17:** Street Dance & BBQ, 5 p.m., Golden Valley "Chester Bird" Post 523
- June 23-24:** SAL Detachment Conference, Anoka Post 102
- June 28:** Eagle Group, 6-8 p.m., Cargill of Hopkins
- 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, North Branch Post 85
- July 27-30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Sr. State Tournament, Rochester
- July 27-29:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Jr. State Tournament, Burnsville
- July 28-30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II Sr. State Tournament, Roseau
- July 28-30:** Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament, New York Mills
- Aug. 4-5:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Prospect Series, Reynolds Field, Univ. of Northwestern, Roseville
- Aug. 4-6:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II Jr. State Tournament, Granite Falls
- Aug. 4-6:** Junior Fun Weekend, Legionville
- Aug. 12:** ALA Officers & Chairmen Workshop, TBD
- Aug. 15-20:** American Veterans Traveling Tribute, Murray County Fair, Slayton
- 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
- Oct. 26-28:** Department Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud
- Nov. 11:** Veterans Day, local ceremonies

Mail Call

Continued from Page 5

books. That's what makes me both sad — and angry.

Just thought you ought to know.

**Noel E. Allard
Delano Post 377**

Editor's note: The Legion can do something about it, because anyone can change the Legion, but it requires your involvement. Write a resolution and have your post approve it. Then your district. Then the department. At that point, the department can advocate for the issue at hand.

In "Taps," the era for Korea ends Jan. 31, 1955, even though the ceasefire was in 1953. The Vietnam era begins Feb. 28, 1961. I've noticed that a number of the Cold War veterans just barely cross one era or the other and, therefore, get counted at Korea or Vietnam. I've also noticed some totally Cold War veterans marked "Korea" or "Vietnam" years ago so they could join the Legion. To me, it seems like the LEGION Act was in effect at many local posts (but not all) long before it was passed by Congress.

And I am glad they joined. We welcome you.



Dan Morgan/North End Post 474

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Taps

Continued from Page 5

served as unit first sergeant as well as a recruiter, where she was responsible for a three-state region. She was active in all the Freeborn County veterans events. She was the 2019 Minnesota Women Veteran of the Year.

Perry, Theodore F.	91	5/17/23	Army	Korea	32	Rochester Post 92
Peterson, Gary L.	82	4/12/23	Air Force	Vietnam	41	Spring Valley Post 68
Peterson, LeRoy O.	88	4/22/23	Army	Korea	46	Milaca Post 178
Peterson, Lowell D.	89	2/2/23	Navy	Korea	18	Chaska Post 57

Note: He was a crew member aboard the submarine USS Nautilus.

Plaehn, Leonard A.	91	4/24/23	Navy	Korea	68	Spring Valley Post 68
Rademacher, Gerald B.	81	10/30/22	Army	Vietnam	50	Melrose Post 101
Roth, Gregory G.	71	4/5/23	Army	Vietnam	34	Bloomington Post 550
Schnieder, Raphael F. "Ray"	91	3/30/23	Army	Korea	69	Lismore Post 636
Schultz, Donald F.	91	5/12/23	Army	Korea	52	Hutchinson Post 96
Seberson, LaVerne S.	95	5/6/23	Army	Korea	59	Albert Lea Post 56

Note: He served in combat in the Korean War and received three Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart.

Sheppard, Robert C.	84	3/16/23	Coast Guard	Vietnam	56	Pine River Post 613
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Note: He was past post commander. He served as a fire technician on the CGC Ingham, which is now a floating museum in Key West, Fla.

Shones, Scott E.	62	4/12/23	Army	Vietnam	29	Millville Valley Post 579
Skaar, Bryce W.	83	4/20/23	Navy	Korea	20	Northfield Post 84
Srp, Alan C.	76	4/29/23	Army	Vietnam	52	Austin Post 91
Stich, Gordon A.	86	3/13/23	Army	Korea/VN	66	Audubon Post 339

Note: He was past post commander and former Audubon police chief.

Strohmeier, David J.	75	3/23/23	Army	Vietnam	52	Watkins Post 453
Tuma, George G.	82	9/20/22	Army	Vietnam	57	East Grand Forks Post 157
Watkins, Robert J.	94	4/27/23	AF/Army	NG Korea	66	Graceville Post 297

Note: He served as a military police officer at Cocoa Beach, Fla. and the Bahamas. In civilian life, he served as a Minnesota state trooper for 31 years.

Weir, Michael C.	76	4/20/23	Army	Vietnam	55	Becker Post 193
Welch, John D.	93	3/20/23	Navy	Korea	30	Bloomington Post 52
Westendorf, Herman H.	95	12/17/22	Navy	WWII	17	Melrose Post 101

Note: He served in the Pacific aboard the light cruiser USS Topeka and the battleship USS Iowa.

Williams, Earl P.	90	4/22/23	Army	Korea	4	Elk River Post 112
Woodruff, Jeffrey W.	76	5/1/23	Navy	Vietnam	11	Walker Post 34

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The SAL Update:



Robert Bristo, of Minneapolis Gopher Squadron 440 and Central Region Membership Chairman, addresses the Central Region Caucus at the Spring National Executive Committee meetings in Indianapolis. The SAL Spring Meetings were May 5-7 at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel.

Thanks to all my families for your understanding

Detachment commander

Tim Weaver



I would like to start off by stating that our Detachment of Minnesota Convention is in Anoka on June 23 and 24. Please make every effort to attend as this is where we elect our new officers for the upcoming year and conduct the business of the detachment.

This is also the time of year where everyone looks back on the last 12 months of what we as a family have done but also look to the future. In my case, it has been the last 24 months, and I could not be more grateful. As my term as commander is winding down, I wanted to take some time to give thanks to certain groups and people.

First off, to my dart family. I know that most of them will probably not see this unless I show it to them, but I wanted to give them thanks for understanding why I couldn't shoot in national tournaments over the last couple of years. I will be

back soon and at the line with all of you.

Secondly, to my work family. Working in medical insurance is wonderful and the support my work family has given me in allowing me to have time off to go to Department Convention and National Convention. I appreciate it more than they know.

I will have more thanks to give in next month's article, which will be my final newsletter article.

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

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

Note: There will not be a testimonial dinner for Commander Tim Weaver. Please bring any gifts to the Saturday session of the Detachment Convention in Anoka on June 24.

2022 Results as of 7/31/2022	11158
Current Received as of 5/4/2023	10551
2023 Detachment Goal	11947

88.32% *Includes traditional and online renewals
11378 92.73% set from national

Vice Commanders	2022 Results	2023 Goal	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st and 3rd	3732	4008	3557	88.75%	3
2nd and 7th	2120	2206	2000	90.66%	2
4th and 5th	712	762	632	82.94%	5
6th and 9th	2528	2708	2342	86.48%	4
8th and 10th	2064	2210	2019	91.36%	1
Totals	11156	11894	10550	88.70%	

*The above goals are set by the District Leadership

Districts	2022 Results	2023 Goal	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st District	1676	1807	1588	87.88%	7
2nd District	1216	1261	1145	90.80%	3
3rd District	2056	2201	1969	89.46%	5
4th District	364	390	337	86.41%	8
5th District	348	372	295	79.30%	10
6th District	1601	1715	1514	88.28%	6
7th District	904	945	855	90.48%	4
8th District	475	509	471	92.53%	1
9th District	927	993	828	83.38%	9
10th District	1589	1701	1548	91.01%	2
Totals	11156	11894	10550	88.70%	

*The above goals are set by the District Leadership

1982 MN SAL AT-LARGE

1



The Detachment of Minnesota's SAL National Executive Committeeman Shawn Davis of Richfield Squadron 435 stands with SAL National Commander Chris Carlton, who hails from Squadron 495 in Indianapolis.

Know the rules, meet the players of e-tab session

In May, the Minnesota House and Senate passed their Omnibus Tax Bill. It was signed into law by the governor.

Included in the bill are major changes to electronic pulltabs and electronic linked bingo. Both games will now be required to be a reflection of their paper counterparts. There is tax relief of roughly \$20 million that is meant to soften the blow of losing up to \$300 million in net receipts.

How did we end up with this bill? I will tell you what I believe happened, but first I need to give a short lesson as to what politics is all about.

Rule 1: Cash (donations) is King.

Those with the cash get access and results. Charities are prohibited from giving to politicians; tribes are under no such prohibition. Add six or seven zeros to the first number and you will be in the neighborhood of what the tribes contribute annually.

Rule 2: Reread Rule 1.

Who were the players in this Greek tragedy?

Tribal casinos and the director of the Gambling Control Board:

For four years they did not make a sound regarding electronics. It was only after electronics started to gain traction that they voiced their objections. The tribes had three bites of the

legal apple, and it was only after the third attempt did they find a court to side with them. That decision was rendered solely on two emails that the Gambling Control Board sent to manufacturers. It had nothing to do with the legality of the games currently being offered.

Gov. Tim Walz:

Soon after the tribes started to voice their concerns, he explained to them that there was nothing that could be done until the Minnesota Vikings stadium was paid for. He promised to take care of them after that, and he has delivered.

Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan:

The lieutenant governor is a tribal member and has made it clear that those of us who are not tribal members owe a debt to them for past occurrences and being guests on their land.

House Speaker Melissa Hortman:

She believes that gambling charities are a rich Republican enterprise that preys on poor people in order to have someone else pay for their kid's sports. I believe that she has confused us with the Minnesota Lottery, whose payout is 25 percent less than ours.

Rep. Zach Stephenson, Coon Rapids, author of the bill to neuter charities:

He wants to be the next

Guest Column

Allen Lund



governor and knows that he cannot do that without tribal money to back his campaign.

Rep. Aisha Gomez, chairwoman of the House Tax Committee:

She believes that charities have conspired to keep minority groups out of charitable gambling, even though we have nothing to do with who gets licensed. She has stated that her allegiance is not to the state but to the tribes.

Sen. Ann Rest, chairwoman of the Senate Tax Committee:

She has stated publicly that those of us with Legion/VFW post homes have "Taj Mahals" that we have built for our own pleasure instead of helping those in need.

What's next? I will tell you what I think will ensue.

The politicians who pushed this through are counting on you forgetting this ever happened come the next election. Unless tribal casinos feel some pain, there will be further attempts to eliminate charitable gambling altogether. The people who did this to us believe that their actions were made in a vacuum, that there is nothing that can be done to them. I want

them to know that nothing occurs in a vacuum, that there are consequences for every action.

I make this promise to you, there are two things that I will never do again. I will never again darken the door of a Minnesota casino. If you care about Minnesota charities and those we serve, I would ask you to do the same. We have 3,000 sites in Minnesota that offer charitable gambling, two horse track/card clubs and casinos across the state line that would welcome our support.

The other is that I will never vote for anyone who supported this undoing of charitable gambling. A hole that probably can never be repaired has been torn in a safety net that is nearly 80 years old. I would say that they should be ashamed of themselves, but I know that they have no shame.

Allen Lund is the gambling manager for Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 and is the former director of Allied Charities of Minnesota. He is a member of the American Legion Department of Minnesota Legislative Committee.

Department of Minn. Commander's Project

It's rising!

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.

Contribution Deadline: July 15

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

Goal: \$60,000

Present: 87% at \$52,180

Shout out to districts 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 for their recent contributions. Also thanks to individual donors and to Post 643.

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

Date of graphic: May 10

What's happening?

New archery range now open at Ripley

CAMP RIPLEY — The new Camp Ripley Archery Range is now open and available to current servicemembers, veterans and Camp Ripley staff.

American Heroes Outdoors made the announcement via video and gave thanks to the St. Cloud Scheels store and to the Camp Ripley environmental office for helping with the construction of the project.

"This is beyond what I envisioned when they came to me and said 'Let's build an archery range,'" said Camp Ripley Brig. Gen. Lowell Kruse.

He, in turn, thanked American Heroes Outdoors.

Legionville registration is open

BRAINERD — Registration is open for sending kids ages 10-12 to Legionville Education Center.

Legionville now has a new website. It is at legionville.org.

The registration fee is \$500, and that cost typically is paid by the local American Legion post or other sponsor, like a local school, fraternal organization or civic club.

Parents complete the registration, but it is advised to have the sponsor lined up first.

Session dates are June 11-16, June 18-23, June 25-30, July 9-14, July 16-21, July 23-28 and July 30-Aug. 4.

War displays coming to Slayton

SLAYTON — Slayton American Legion Post 64 is hosting a tribute display.

An 80 percent replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington arrives Aug. 15, during the Murray County Fair, and

will feature opening ceremonies at 7 p.m.

This display is from American Veterans Traveling Tribute. It will also have a tribute to the veterans of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other wars and conflicts going back to 1914.

Take me out to Vets Resource Night

ST. CLOUD — The St. Cloud Stand Down is hosting Veteran Resource Night at the June 30 game of the St. Cloud Rox baseball team.

American Legion posts in the area are collaborating with the St. Cloud Stand Down and the Rox to provide resources, right there in the parking lot 4-7 p.m. at the ballpark, 5001 Veterans Drive.

The game starts at 6 p.m. It also is Military Appreciation Night at the game.

Milaca to host POW/MIA balloon

MILACA — Milaca Post 178 on Sunday, Aug. 6., hosts the annual Milaca Municipal Airport Fly-In Breakfast.

The breakfast features a POW/MIA hot air balloon, which will offer free rides, weather permitting.

The event runs from 8 a.m. to noon at the airport. The cost is \$12 for people ages 12 and older. It is \$8 for ages 6 to 12, and free for 5 and younger.

The breakfast offers pancakes, sausage, ham, eggs, fruit and a beverage.

Shakopee to host legal clinic

SHAKOPEE — The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans and Scott County offer a free legal clinic for low-income veterans.

The clinic covers housing, employment, benefits, debt collection, expungement and family law.

The clinic is open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at American Legion Post 2 in Shakopee, 1266 First Ave. E.

Lawyers, staff and service officers will be on hand to answer questions. Other Scott County officials will be available, too.

Campground set to retire U.S. flags

FOREST CITY — Veterans Campground at Big Marine Lake will host its annual flag retirement ceremony on Saturday, June 10.

The ceremony is typically attended by hundreds, with over 10,000 flags retired.

Flags must be brought by 11 a.m. to be added. The ceremony begins at noon.

There will be a potluck. Bring a salad or dessert to share. Live music by The Fugitives is from 4 to 8 p.m.

Eagle Group of Minn. to host the Legion

HOPKINS — American Legion Department Service Officer Ray Kane and Communications Director Tim Engstrom will speak at the next Eagle Group of Minnesota.

Eagle Group of Minnesota meets from 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, June 28, at the Cargill campus in Hopkins. The address is 9320 Excelsior Blvd.

Eagle Group is an effort in the Twin Cities to assist veterans with employment and career issues and to connect to available resources. It typically meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Participants must register in advance at eaglegroupmn.org.

All veterans and their supporters are invited to attend.

VETERANS on the LAKE RESORT

Ely, Minnesota
Open year-round!

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vetlake@frontiernet.net
veteransonthelakeresort.org

For all Veterans, Disabled Public, their Families and Friends

Veterans Linkage Line™

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

Help for veterans and families

Existing e-tab games can stick around until after the next election

Continued from Page 1

Minnesota and many other states, to raise funds for assisting veterans, providing honor guards, supporting youth activities, helping fire departments and other local causes. There are 190 American Legion posts with charitable gambling licenses in Minnesota and four American Legion Auxiliary units.

E-tab revenue has helped offset rising costs facing the posts and the donation recipients, said Lund, who is on the American Legion Department of Minnesota Legislative Committee.

Here is what is in the tax bill regarding charitable gambling:

- Effective Aug. 1, 2023, new e-tab games must meet the revised standards. The Gambling Control Board must remove any and all remaining games not meeting the new standards by Dec. 31, 2024.

- The new games, from e-tabs to e-bingo, cannot have free plays, bonus games, screens (i.e.: the kind that open from the first screen) or any other game features triggered from the result of the initial game.

- The new games require players to manually activate each ticket and each row on the ticket. This gets rid of the "open all" button.

- The new games must be certified from a Gambling Control Board-approved testing laboratory to ensure they are in compliance.

- Effective July 1, 2024, licensed e-tab distributors may not charge a licensed gambling organization more than 25 percent of gross profits. Presently, they charge anywhere from 26 to 30 percent.



People begin to gather at the State Capitol steps on May 24 for Gov. Tim Walz's bill signings, including the Omnibus Tax Bill.

- Effective July 1, 2023, for organizations with combined net receipts under \$87,500, the state tax is reduced from 9 to 8 percent.

- Effective July 1, 2023, for organizations with combined net receipts over \$87,500 but under \$122,500, the state tax is reduced from 18 to 17 percent.

- Effective July 1, 2023, for organizations with combined net receipts over \$122,500 but under \$157,500, the state tax is reduced from 27 to 25 percent.

- Effective July 1, 2023, for organizations with combined net receipts over \$157,500, the state tax is reduced from 36 to 33.5 percent.

- Existing law says any organization with gross receipts over \$750,000 in any year must have an annual financial audit of its gambling activities. The bill says, effective after June 30, 2023, calculation of that figure does not include receipts from electronic pulltabs.

- Effective the day after enactment, e-pulltab manufacturers must complete and submit annual audits from an independent accounting firm.

Lund said the measure forces game manufacturers to have to rework the games.

"No bonuses. No free games," he said. "It will be that

you open three windows and you will know that you win or you lose, and that's it."

He said the issue has been around since 2015-16 and it is no coincidence that changes have come out after the pro football stadium was paid off.

Allied Charities of Minnesota Director Rachel Jenner said courts have ruled twice that e-tabs did not resemble slot machines.

Minnesota Indian Gaming Association is behind the push to remove the "open all" function on e-tabs to defend what its member tribes believe to be an infringement on slot machines.

Slot machines, Jenner said, have variable prize structures, jackpots and unlimited bets. E-tabs do not.

"Our e-tabs in Minnesota already are more restrictive than in other states," she said. "Now they are just trying to take it one step further."

She said charitable gambling operations never have had issues with how casinos conduct gambling.

"We want the casinos to succeed and run a good business," she said, "and we ask that they respect our right to have games and support our communities and do the best we can with our games."



The American Legion was right up front during Veterans Day on the Hill in March.

Legion pushed lawmakers to expand Post 9/11 Bonus to include move-ins

Continued from Page 1

Force, she returned to Minnesota as a Gold Star spouse, where she raises her two sons, and she felt it was unfair for her home state to exclude her.

"It means a lot to be included," she said. "It feels great we got this done for many veterans across the state."

The funding begins after June 30. Go to the MDVA's website, minnesotaveteran.org/service-bonus, to find the application portal or visit a county veteran service officer.

The basic bonus is \$600 for veteran or current servicemember serving between Sept. 11, 2001, and Aug. 30, 2021.

If the veteran or servicemember received campaign medals that show they deployed to the combat operation, such as Iraq or Afghanistan, they may receive \$1,200.

The beneficiary of a veteran who died as a result of their service and was awarded one of the campaign medals may receive \$2,000.

Other veteran-related items in the bill

Other funding for the biennium (two years) on the veterans part of the omnibus bill are:

- \$4.28 million in each year for state veterans cemeteries.
- \$500,000 each year for grants to veteran service organizations.
- \$200,000 each year for compensation for honor guards.
- \$200,000 each year for Minnesota G.I. Bill.
- \$100,000 each year for the Gold Star Program.
- \$1.55 million each year for the County Veteran Service Office Grant program.
- \$300,000 each year for the Veteran Resilience Project.
- \$1.23 million each year for the Counseling and Case Management Outreach Referral and Education program.
- \$369,000 each year for the operation of the state's Link Vet Call Center.



Hastings Veterans Home

- \$350,000 each year for the operation of a program for recently separated veterans.

- \$1.04 million to operate the homeless veteran registry and homeless veteran programs.

- \$7.87 million each year for the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans.

- \$540,000 each year for a grant to Metro Meals on Wheels.

- \$225,000 the second year for a grant to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum.

- \$100,000 each year for a grant to Every Third Saturday in South Minneapolis.

- \$4.31 million the first year and \$1.31 million the second for an MDVA veteran homelessness initiative.

- \$744,000 the first year for grants to Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake for wastewater system upgrades.

- \$90 million the first year and 100.8 million the second for veterans health care. This is the appropriation for operating the Minnesota Veterans Homes. Keep in mind, this is the state portion of the MDVA budget and does not reflect federal revenue or other revenue sources. One new item listed is \$400,000 each year to staff "veteran community health navigators" in community hospitals around Minnesota.

The Military Affairs portion

The Minnesota National Guard and the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs are

the same thing. This figure is the state portion of funding for the Minnesota National Guard, and it does not reflect its federal revenue or other revenue sources.

The state appropriated \$61 million for the fiscal year beginning July 1 and \$29.4 million for the following fiscal year.

Two reasons for the disparity in the two figures are \$17.6 million the first year for designing and constructing the Army Combat Fitness Test Field House at the Arden Hills Army Training Site and \$14.1 million the first year for construction of the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum outside Camp Ripley.

Hastings gets its campus upgrade

Not all the veteran-related items fall conveniently into the veterans omnibus bill.

In the infrastructure package, lawmakers saw fit to fund replacements or repairs of many buildings at the Hastings Veterans Home and to fund repairs to the other veterans homes.

The infrastructure package was the combination of two bills, and some projects were funded with bonding and others with cash allocation. There are local veteran-themed projects funded in the package, too:

- \$77.7 million to MDVA for the Hastings Veterans Home campus revitalization. This funding will open up an estimated \$144.2 million in federal money to assist with the \$222 million price tag. It includes replacing six of the nine buildings of the former state-operated mental hospital. It has served veterans since 1978.

- \$12.4 million to MDVA for asset preservation of its veterans homes and cemeteries

- \$5 million to Dakota County, for the Veterans Memorial Greenway.

- \$350,000 to City of Bloomington, for a veterans memorial.

- \$250,000 to City of Forest Lake, for a veterans memorial.

- \$50,000 to City of Parkers Prairie, for Veterans Memorial Park.

- \$2 million to a museum in St. Paul, to honor veterans of a Hmong special guerilla unit.



Mike Maxa

Department of Minnesota Comptroller Rachael Hill, with Elk River Post 112, testified before the Minnesota Senate on March 21 regarding the Post-9/11 Bonus. She testified in February before the House. She now qualifies for the bonus. To her left is Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Legislative Director Ben Johnson and state Sen. Andrew Lang of Olivia.

BACKING THE BLUES
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STREET DANCE AND BBQ Competition

JUNE 17, 2023
5:00 PM - DUSK

Chester Bird Legion Post, 200 Lilac Dr N, Golden Valley, MN

JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTERS, AND PARAMEDICS

Admission is free, so bring your family and friends to show your support and raise money for scholarships.

Enjoy a BBQ cookoff featuring teams from local first response agencies and the community at large. A grand prize of \$250.00 will be awarded for the top teams, and an award for the best first responder team.

- Food and beverages will be available for purchase.
- First response agencies will have equipment on display for attendees to explore.
- Blankets are encouraged for attendees to relax and enjoy the festivities.
- Live music will be performed by Elephant in the Room.
- Spectacular fireworks display at dusk.

For more information, visit www.sheriffoundation.org/streetdance

Book details Strusinski's leap year in Vietnam

Continued from Page 1

cooked in the hot Texas sun, our assignments were distributed," Strusinski wrote. "The battalion commander congratulated each of us as he presented our Medic Certificates, acknowledging our competency as combat medics. Cool. But I am thinking, 'Where are the duty station assignment orders?'"

Then the orders were passed out.

"What is Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division?" he asked his first sergeant.

"Son, you've been assigned to an infantry unit in Vietnam. You're hereby declared to be a combat medic."

Holy shit!

"So what about my request for a hospital assignment in Germany or Italy?"

"Son, the Army is always open to requests but never duty-bound by such trivia," the first sergeant replied loud enough for everyone to hear. "The Army is very smart and knows best how to deploy its personnel resources."

One last shot. Strusinski showed the first sergeant the front cover of his personnel files. On it, stamped in big, red letters was, "Not qualified for combat duty."

The first sergeant took the files and rifled through them.

"Look here. It says you have bad eyesight and need to wear glasses. That's the reason. But hold on, I can fix that!"

He ordered his company clerk to order three additional pairs of glasses and to make sure one was sunglasses.

Strusinski, on one hand, thought it was time to kiss his ass goodbye, but on the other, he told himself to "suck it up."

He thought about how 1968 was a leap year. He faced 366 days in Nam, not 365.

Strusinski arrived in Vietnam on Aug. 10, 1967. After a week at jungle school, he arrived at the Big Red One's 26th Infantry, known as the Blue Spaders.

"Shortly after my arrival, enemy rockets hit the main ammo dump where most of the base ammunition ordnance was stored. As ammo exploded, the concussions literally threw me to the ground. The smell of cordite filled the air and debris cascaded down, covering everything in a thick coat of red clay. A tall plume of fire and smoke rapidly filled the sky. It was a million-dollar fireworks display, and I had a front seat! Unfortunately, it would not be my last show," he wrote.

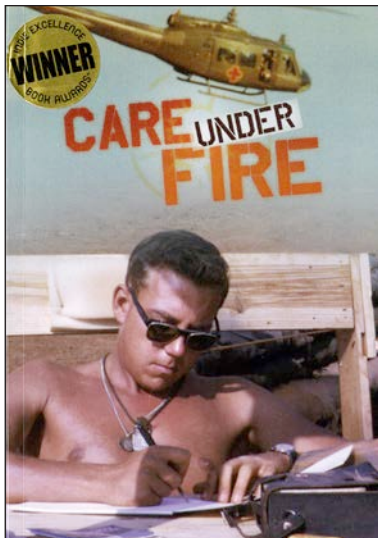
The commanding officer ordered him to memorize the 1st Infantry Division's motto, "No mission too difficult. No sacrifice too great. Duty first!"

B Company tracked down the Viet Cong who attacked the ammo dump and gave them a firefight.

The company surgeon assigned him to the men of Lima Platoon, and they were skeptical of this recruit. It wasn't before they were in a skirmish, and



Bill Strusinski has been through more than four decades of legislative sessions in St. Paul. He and his wife, Kirsten, enjoy going at to dinner with fellow veterans at Forest Lake Post 225. He has been involved in lining up floats for the post's annual Fourth of July Parade.



"Care Under Fire" by Bill Strusinski is available at Amazon and at Barnes & Noble. It was published in April 2020.

Strusinski proved his mettle under fire.

The soldiers of his platoon thought it was cool to wear their berets at night. It looked menacing and reduced the sound of branches hitting the pot.

A protracted firefight changed their minds.

"On this particular night, we had neither entrenchment tools nor helmets. I hoped and prayed that no bullets would find any of us. Like all good soldiers, we learned from this patrol. Berets and soft hats were now out, and the unfashionable-but-practical steel pots were back in. More on-the-job training!"

Months later, a bullet knocked his helmet off his head.

"The steel pot was slightly altered, but my head remained intact. Lucky me!"

The book details many of his Vietnam episodes, and R&R in Japan. There are too many stories to share in one Legionnaire profile.



Bill Strusinski, ready with M-16 and aid bag, in his government-issued uniform, helmet and glasses in Vietnam.

One story, coming on the tail of the Tet Offensive, tells of a brave and reliable M-60 gunner who covered for him while he saved the life of a flank guard who had been wounded in the open while they were on patrol near Dian, home of the Big Red One headquarters.

"Like most M-60 gunners, he was an unsung hero that day," he wrote.

Strusinski saved the flank guard's life, but not the man's eye.

Not long after, the company commander field-promoted him to sergeant and made him the senior medic for the company.

It was common in Vietnam at dusk for battalions to dispatch ambush patrols, especially when the enemy was nearby in large numbers. A heavy firefight developed about 700 yards from the night defensive position. Three soldiers suffered wounds, and one of them was the medic. The remaining eight men had to fight their way back, but it would be difficult to care for the wounded at the same time.

The company medical doctor came to Strusinski and asked him, as the senior medic, what to do? He would send out a rescue team, Strusinski replied, and he volunteered to lead the rescue. He requested and the doctor granted two other medics to join him. They went with a platoon-sized force shortly after midnight and faced enemy harassment fire the whole way.

"During the chaos, I began to think about our exit strategy once we reached our destination and packed up

the wounded. 'How the hell are we going to carry these guys 700 yards on our return trip through this seemingly impossible terrain?' This would surely be an enormous physical and mental challenge. Such an exercise was not in the Army manual or in my training background. We eventually reached our embattled brothers, who were very pleased to see us. However, I knew we were only halfway home in completing our mission. The three wounded combatants needed us to fix 'em up, pack 'em up and get 'em back to the perimeter for an enhanced level of safety and medical treatment."

Strusinski assigned a medic to each one, and he began to treat the most seriously injured soldier. The man needed fluids and it was difficult to get an IV started. Thirty minutes later, it was time to go. Strusinski was glad he brought rigid stretchers, not canvas, for the long way back.

"I don't know if anyone else has ever had to accomplish such a daunting task as carrying wounded comrades as far as we did that night. As we made the return trip back to the safety of the perimeter, we carried our three wounded brothers over hills, through ditches and up over downed trees."

They made it back to the NDP around 3 a.m., but the casualty Strusinski treated died.

"This was the longest night of my life, and the entire time, I was on edge and scared shitless. It was one of the most exhausting and difficult physical

and mental things I have ever done."

The day wasn't over. The battle continued for hours. He treated wounds, and he had medics treating soldiers who were wounded or died performing look-through-hole stupidity rather than calling-in-greater-firepower wisdom. Medics were called "docs" in the field of battle, and Strusinski cleaned the brains and skull fragments of a soldier because a fellow "doc" knew the man and didn't want to clean up his buddy.

"In combat, you do anything to help a brother."

Strusinski received three Bronze Stars during his tour with the Big Red One in Vietnam. He feels he didn't do anything different than any other soldier would do. Among his decorations, he is most proud of his Combat Medical Badge.

He returned to Mankato State, where he became introverted in a sea of students with whom he had nothing in common. Dates would ask him if he had killed any babies. Such comments hurt.

One day, he noticed an ad for "Veterans Club Smoker," and it was at the American Legion post. He met other veterans joining the organization.

"Many compatriots I met that night would become lifelong friends," he wrote.

He regained his sanity through the Mankato State College Vets Club, which avoided the societal unrest of the day and focused on being a safe harbor for re-entry into civilian life.

His time serving his country inspired him to enter the realm of public policy, and it led to him serving his state.

He was a deputy commissioner for the Department of Administration for six years, starting in 1973. Then commissioner in 1978 to 1981, and he became a contract lobbyist in 1981.

He has experience in regulations for construction, trade, commerce, tax, finance and capital investment. His clients don't fall on one side of the aisle or the other, but all over the map, seeking him for his abilities and experience, not politics.

"You have to gather support from both sides of the aisle and make it pass. You gather a lot of support for the policy when you do that," he said.

Oh, and that Libby Law Firm. His wife is the boss. She is Kirsten Libby.

If you run into Strusinski at the Capitol, or at Forest Lake Post 225, ask him to tell the story of the time the company commander ordered him to treat a cow's backside.



The Big Red One is the Army's 1st Division, signified by the shoulder patch with a red one in the center. But Bill Strusinski is most proud of the combat medic badge, shown here above "1970" on his ballcap.



American Legion VA&R Chairwoman Marissa LaCourt, left, speaks during a discussion at the Hastings Veterans Home on veterans care in the MDVA Domiciliary Program.

VA&R Committee looks into veteran care in MDVA Domiciliary Program

Improvements made within the past month

By Tim Engstrom

HASTINGS — The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs is on the mend after allegations of employee issues resulted in the dismissal of the Hastings Veterans Home administrator and the deputy commissioner of health care.

MDVA operates the Minnesota Veterans Homes. The American Legion Department of Minnesota Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee met with MDVA leadership May 3 to follow-up on veteran-related issues that have come across their plate, not the employee-related matters.

The report, from Department Service Officer Ray Kane, addresses communication gaps when it comes to medication, a foul odor, transportation and issues with community engagement.

The meeting brought together Kane, ADSO Janet Lorenzo, VA&R Committee Chairwoman Marissa LaCourt and VA&R Committee members Donn Dufner and Jan Ekert in the same meeting room in Hastings with Interim Deputy Commissioner Brad Lindsey, Senior Director for Health Care Simone Hogan, Interim Hastings Administrator Dave Dunn, Director of Nursing Stephanie Juhl and Legislature Director Ben Johnson.

The community engagement aspect was three Legion posts or units struggling to get in contact with the home to set up events for veterans. Dunn said he feels the issue is already better, with outside groups already set up to volunteer.

The MDVA's domiciliary program is mainly at

Hastings, but it exists at part of the Minneapolis campus, too. Domiciliary care, or "dom care," where residents live independently but have someone there for day-to-day living, is provided to veterans struggling with substance abuse or behavioral and mental issues. The other homes specialize in nursing care for elderly veterans.

The medication communication issue, according to Kane, had to do with a Hastings staff doctor reviewing recommendations from doctors at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Ekert, who has experience in the medical field, questioned the process and felt the Hastings physician needs to communicate with the primary care physician at the VA to ensure correct dosage. MDVA agreed and said it would be implemented.

Kane and Lorenzo had visited the Minneapolis Veterans Home a month prior and noticed a foul odor. They asked that the source be reviewed, and the interim administrator at the time said it would be addressed. Many veterans approached them about problems they noticed.

On May 3, Kane and Lorenzo returned and noticed a much-improved environment, not just in smell but in appearance, wall hangings and general cleanliness. The veterans weren't approaching them with issues.

Lindsey explained that the original odor stemmed from a broken sewage pipe that has been replaced. He said broken air conditioning has been fixed, too. Windows, he said, are being replaced, among other ongoing updates.

The report said the discussion in Hastings delved into transportation between Hastings and the Twin Cities. Officials at the home said veterans rarely have a problem with not meeting appointments at the Minneapolis VA.



Hastings Veterans Home Interim Administrator Dave Dunn listens to the conversation about the Domiciliary Program.



It's not a birdhouse. It's not for bats. It's not for repelling mosquitoes. It's a carillon. Chanhassen Post 580 member Dick Middleton and Post 580 Commander Glen Anderson stand beside the carillon at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. They have made it the post's mission to bring music back to the tower, and they have partnered with Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund to make it happen.

Carillon has been silent since 2003

Continued from Page 1

third one — and, in 2003, the speaker line was cut inadvertently. It hasn't been repaired since.

With Anderson by his side, Middleton has made it his mission to get it functional again.

"This project is about the veterans and loved ones who are there," Middleton said. "It's not about blame or fault. That is so hindsight. We are looking forward."

Post 580 applied for and received approval from the Department of Veterans Affairs and its National Cemetery Administration to raise and donate the funds for the project.

The funds would connect the cemetery administration building to the carillon tower via an underground conduit. Wireless signals are disallowed because of the nearby airport.

The funds would cover the cost for a modern sound system, with new speakers and controls. The company that typically works on cemetery carillons is Chimemaster. Middleton said the company recently installed them at the Air Force Academy and at the Black Hills

National Cemetery.

To donate:

Make the check out to "Minnesota V4V Carillon Fund." Mail it to Chanhassen American Legion Post 580, 290 Lake Drive E., Chanhassen, MN 55317.

This way, Middleton can track donors and send out thank-you letters. After he does that, the checks go to the V4V treasurer to be deposited in the bank.

V4V was established in 2006 with funds from the \$5.7 million sale of Big Island Veterans Camp on Big Island in Lake Minnetonka to the City of Orono. Though four veterans organizations appoint the board's directors to two-year terms, V4V operates independently and is not considered "affiliated" to them under gambling rules.

From the interest and dividends of the initial seed money, V4V regularly gives grants to programs that benefit veterans, such as \$25,000 to help veterans in remote northwestern Minnesota receive transportation to a VA hospital.

Call for 104th Department of Minnesota Convention

The 104th Annual Convention of The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, is hereby called in conformity with provisions of the Department Constitution and By-Laws, and by action of the Department Executive Committee, sponsored by Redwood Falls American Legion Post 38 and held at Jackpot Junction in Morton, Minnesota, July 13, 14, 15, 2023.



PURPOSE OF CONVENTION

The Convention is called for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing year, amending the Constitution and By-Laws, and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before it.

REPRESENTATION AT CONVENTION

The Department Convention shall be composed of delegates from each Post, members of the Department Executive Committee, the Department Chaplain, Treasurer, Historian, and the District Adjutants, but only delegates from Posts shall be entitled to vote at such Convention, (Sec.2, Article Five, Department Constitution). Each Post shall be entitled to two delegates and to one additional delegate for each hundred members or major fraction thereof, whose Department dues have been received by the Department Treasurer and whose District dues have been paid to their respective District officers, 30 days prior to the Convention for which they are chosen. The final voting strength of each Post shall be determined 30 days prior to the Convention. Each Post shall choose its own delegates, who shall be members in good standing of such Post. In addition, each Post may choose alternate delegates to serve in the absence of the principal delegate, (Sec. 3, Article Five, Department Constitution). Delegates

or alternates must register in order to vote.

GAMBLING SEMINAR MEETING

The Gambling Seminar will be at 2 p.m. on Thursday, July 13, 2023 at Jackpot Junction, Dacotah Exposition Center, Morton, Minnesota.

DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Department Executive Committee has been called and will be held at 7:00 P.M on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, in Morton, MN at the Dacotah Exposition Center, as specified in the upcoming Call to Meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Standing Department Committee Meetings will be held at Jackpot Junction, Morton, Minnesota, in the meeting rooms to be determined. These rooms will be confirmed in each committee's Call to Meeting.

AMERICANISM

4 p.m. Wednesday, July 12 TBD

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

4 p.m. Wednesday, July 12 TBD

FINANCE

4 p.m. Wednesday, July 12 TBD

NATIONAL SECURITY

4 p.m. Wednesday, July 12 TBD

REHABILITATION

4 p.m. Wednesday, July 12 TBD

GENERAL SESSIONS

Dacotah Exposition Center, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

HOUSING AND REGISTRATION

For the 2023 Department Convention, hotel reservations will be done "on your own" directly with the hotel. Please call the hotel directly and use block "The American Legion State Convention," Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel, 507-697-8000 or 1-800-946-2274.

A registration fee of \$15 for each Delegate/Alternate and/or Guest must be sent to: Legion Post 38, P.O. Box 354, Redwood Falls, MN 56283.

Registration checks should be made payable to "American Legion Post 38" with "Department Convention" in the memo line. Registration will be \$18 after July 1.

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS OFFICE

A temporary Legion Department Headquarters office will be set up at Jackpot Junction in a room still to be determined starting Thursday, July 13, 2023 for convention service and business during convention business hours only. Meetings will start ON TIME as scheduled unless otherwise announced.

Jennifer Havlick
Department Commander

ATTEST: Michael Maxa
Department Adjutant
Dated at St. Paul, Minnesota, this first day of May, 2023

7 things to know about the Minneapolis VA

Veterans Affairs

Pat Kelly



1. 105,000 Minnesota and western Wisconsin veterans receive care through the Minneapolis VA Health Care System every year. A little less than half of these veterans are Vietnam-era veterans. Seven thousand are women veterans. Taken together, we average 1 million outpatient visits every year and have been serving Minnesota veterans in the metro area since 1921.
2. The Minneapolis VA is a tertiary care hospital. We provide the full range of services except for transplant services which are done at VA Transplant Centers of Excellence or in the community. The full range of services isn't limited to the clinical services you'd see in a traditional hospital. Since our mission is to improve the lives of veterans, we have nontraditional hospital services to include homeless programs, comprehensive work therapy programs and community living center beds to name a few.
3. We have 13 Community-Based Outpatient Clinics ranging from Albert Lea in the south to Ely in the north along with four clinics in western Wisconsin. All clinics provide comprehensive primary care services, mental health services and telehealth services. Larger clinics also have optometry services, audiology services and physical therapy. We attempt to provide services close to where veterans live.
4. We spend about \$325 million every year buying care for veterans in the community. When we don't offer a service or can't meet established access or drive time standards, we will offer community care to veterans. For our veterans, some of the most frequently used community services include skilled home care, home health care, eye care services and dental services.
5. The VA is a national leader in research with a focus on those diseases or injuries most impacting veteran care. Research focus areas for the Minneapolis VA include rehabilitative medicine, PTSD and other mental health disorders, brain sciences and traumatic brain injury and aging. Though these diseases are not unique to veterans, they are very prevalent in the veteran community and as a result, a focus of our research.
6. Seventy percent of America's physicians receive some of their training in the VA. In Minneapolis, we first established an affiliate relationship with the University of Minnesota in 1946 — the second longest affiliate relationship in the country. As a teaching hospital, we have 150 agreements with training institutions and train over 1,500 trainees every year. Some of these trainees will come to work for the VA. All will leave with a better understanding of Veterans health care wherever they practice.
7. There are 800 volunteers at the Minneapolis VA. Some are very visible, wearing red vests (ambassadors) or blue vests (escorts) while others are working in a variety of other roles throughout the medical center. Veteran service organizations, including The American Legion, provide many hours of voluntary services along with donations and other services in kind every year.

Pat Kelly is the director of the Minneapolis VA Health Care System. He is a member of The American Legion with St. Paul 3M Post 599. He is retired from the Navy.

Minnesota is sitting in 28th place for membership

We are getting very close to the end of my term as membership director.

At this time not only do we need to still concentrate on membership, but we also need to concentrate on getting the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) completed and sent in. The deadline for the CPR to Department Headquarters is by June 1. The Department HQ has to get it to

Membership Moment

Linda Dvorak

National HQ by July 1.

If you mail it in, make sure you have it mailed in time for department to get it and submit it to national. Remember, also, there is a lag time from the post office in St. Paul to Department

HQ.

As for membership, the last report as of May 17, shows



we are in 28th place. We are at 90.44 percent membership and 89.84 percent renewal rate. After January it seems that membership just slows down and by April it is at a standstill. The membership year doesn't end until Dec. 31.

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



Fairmont Post 36 Scholarship Committee Members Bob Altman, left, and Velma Schaal, right, present \$18,000 to Fairmont Area High School seniors: Front row, from left, are Taylor Madsen, Paige Lindse, Lilly Laven, Sasha Franzen, Gage Cyphers, Beau Becker, Brendan Schmidtke and Christian Thom. Back row, from left, are Mackenzie Carlson, Abigail Cihoski, Jack Hagen, Sawyer Tordsen, Gavin Junkermeier, Landen Meyerdirk, Adam Wohlhuter and Aiden Nelson. Not pictured are Jack Kosbab and Sawyer Waterbury.

Altman and Schaal present \$7,000 in scholarships to Martin County West seniors. From left are Max Olson, Aspen Kosbab, Sydney Borntreger, Mikenna Harder, Thea Anderson, Ashton Feely and Bruce Oechsle.



Altman and Schaal present \$5,000 in scholarships to five Granada-Huntley-East Chain seniors. From left are Kaiden Musser, Mathew Steuber, Amanda Pytleski and Hayley Stensland. Not pictured is Emma Carlson.



Altman and Schaal present \$5,000 in scholarships to Martin Luther High School seniors. From left are Sutton Bohlsen, Hannah Bergt, Diana Sargent, Emily Engelby and Ashley Engelby.

Rules for 104th Dept. of Minnesota Convention

To the Post Commanders:

The Rules Committee submits the following proposed Rules for the Convention to be held at Redwood Falls, Minnesota, July 13, 14, 15, 2023:



- 1) With the following modifications, Robert's Rules of Order, revised, be adopted for this Convention.
- 2) (a) That the speech of any Delegate, recognized by the Commander, shall be limited to three (3) minutes and no more.
(b) Where a motion is made to table a resolution, the sponsor shall be entitled to speak to the Convention for three (3) minutes on the subject, and three (3) minutes rebuttal be granted to the maker of the motion to table before the motion is put.
- 3) That the Floor be permitted but once to any individual on any subject, except with the unanimous consent of the Convention.
- 4) (a) That all resolutions, with the exception of those prepared by Convention Committees, must be presented in writing signed by the author thereof, not later than 9:00 A.M. the first day of the Convention, to the Department Adjutant who shall refer them to the Resolutions Assignment Committee without debate. Each District Delegation Chairman or Secretary will meet with the Department Resolutions Assignment Committee at 9:00 A.M. of the first day of the Convention to be informed as to the resolutions assigned to each Convention Committee, then provide copies of those resolutions to the representatives they have appointed to said Convention Committee. The Resolutions Assignment Committee is responsible for receiving, registering and accounting for all resolutions forwarded to it by the Department Adjutant and all committee originated resolutions.
(b) Resolutions containing matters of legislation shall be cleared by the Convention Legislative Committee.
- 5) On matters where voting has been by roll call vote, when the poll of any Post Delegation is demanded by the Delegate of any Post, the Secretary of the Convention shall poll the vote of that Delegation by Delegates, without debate or discussion.
- 6) That on Roll Call, the Chair or Acting Chair of each Delegation on the Floor shall announce the vote of this Delegation.
- 7) No person, not duly accredited, shall participate directly or indirectly in debate on any subject before the Convention, but Past Department Commanders and members of the Department Executive Committee shall have the privilege of speaking from the Floor, but not of voting, except as Delegates.
- 8) That no Delegate be permitted on the Convention Floor unless certified by the Delegate's Post as Delegate or Alternate and that every Delegate or Alternate, to be duly accredited, must be registered.
- 9) That the published program be approved by this Convention.
- 10) No person or Delegate shall act by proxy for any Post. No Post shall vote unless at least one registered and accredited Delegate or Alternate be present on the Convention Floor.
- 11) The voting shall be by acclamation, except when a Roll Call is demanded by the Chair or Acting Chair of at least three Delegations; and except for elections which shall be as follows:
(a) The election of Department Officers, NEC positions, and the Member of the Board of

Publications shall be by written ballot unless there is but one candidate or, in the case of election of Vice Commanders, there are but five candidates.

(b) The election of candidates for other positions shall be by District as set forth in Rule 14 below. Candidates receiving the highest number of votes in one round of voting shall be elected to the positions.

If there are more than five candidates for Vice Commander, those five receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. Cumulative voting shall not be allowed.

The printed ballot shall include the names of all candidates who have notified the Department Office of their candidacy at least 30 days prior to the first day of the Convention.

For the election of Department Officers and NEC positions, the Tellers shall issue to the Delegation Chair of each registered Post the number of written ballots equal to the delegate strength of that Post. Said Chair shall sign for the ballots.

Ballots shall be issued and the polls shall be open during the following times:

- (a) Friday, for one hour after recess of the Convention, with a starting time to receive ballots no more than one hour after the Department Commander or his designated vice commander gavels the session of the convention into recess. A time less than an hour may be set by agreement between the Department Commander or his designee, the Department Adjutant, and the Department Judge Advocate.
- (b) Saturday, from 8:00 A.M. until 8:30 A.M. No ballots shall be counted before Saturday morning. No ballots shall leave the polling place.

The District Commander of each District shall appoint a Teller. Tellers shall elect among themselves two Tellers from the Districts which have no candidate for Commander. These two Tellers, and the Judge Advocate, shall tabulate and total the election results. The result of each contest shall be confidential and shall be placed in a separate envelope and delivered to the Commander.

If there is a written ballot contest which has not resulted in a majority vote (except for Vice Commanders), the Commander will be informed immediately. Then, written ballots for that contest shall be distributed immediately in accordance with these Rules and be cast within one-half hour of completion of the distribution. Tabulation and reporting shall be in accordance with these Rules. Results of the vote count shall be reported to the Convention. All ballots and results shall be destroyed immediately

following the close of the Convention, unless there is a motion to preserve.

12) Nominations for Department Officers and NEC positions shall be held on the afternoon of Friday of the Convention. Nominations shall be made from the Floor on Roll Call by Districts, in ascending order starting with the District whose number matches the last digit of the year of the Convention; each District may present as many candidates as it chooses. Thereafter, nominations may be made from the Floor.

13) Nominating speeches for Department Officers shall be limited to five (5) minutes. There will be no seconding speeches allowed for any candidates.

14) When the convention has adopted a Motion to suspend the rules and vote on a matter by District, each District may vote its entire voting strength. If the matter is the election of individuals for any open positions (such as Department Delegate at-Large), each District may vote its voting strength times the number of open positions, but shall not vote more than its voting strength for any one individual. The call for District votes shall be in ascending order starting with the District whose number matches the last digit of the year of the Convention.

15) In the event more than two candidates are nominated for any office, the balloting shall continue until one candidate shall have received a majority of the votes cast. In elections where there are more than two candidates, the candidate receiving the fewest votes in each round of voting shall be eliminated.

16) No personalities or partisan politics shall be discussed or indulged in on the Convention Floor, and the Department Commander shall prohibit such indulgences.

17) (a) Rules Committee approves the following list of Convention Committees to be chosen at this Convention, each District to choose one representative on each Committee:

- Americanism
- National Security/Foreign Relations
- Children & Youth
- Public Relations
- Constitution-By-Laws
- Recreation-Sports
- Employment
- Rehabilitation
- Legislative
- Resolutions
- Membership
- Safety-School Patrol

(b) The following Department Standing Committees are approved as Convention Committees:

- Finance
- Next Meeting Place
- (Convention Corp. Committee)
- Resolutions Assignment
- Credentials

18) The order of business of the Convention shall be in accordance with the printed program, except that the election of officers shall be a special order of business, to be held in accordance with Rules 11 and 12. The order of election of Department Officers shall be as follows:

- Commander
- Five Vice Commanders, without numerical designation
- Chaplain
- Historian
- Sergeant-at-Arms

Member of Publication Board, for three-year term

Delegates-at-Large to the National Convention

Five Alternates-at-Large to the National Convention

National Executive Committeeman and Alternate National Executive Committeeman (when appropriate)

19) The Committee Chairman shall inform the Department Commander when the report is ready to be presented, and the Department Commander shall recognize it as an order of business. The committees reporting action on Resolutions must read all approved Resolutions. It is sufficient to report all rejected Resolutions by number, unless requested by a Delegate to set a Resolution aside for separate consideration.

20) All printed reports, which shall have been handed to the Convention Committees, shall be referred to the proper Convention Committee for action.

21) No Band, Drum Corps or other musical organization shall be permitted in the Convention Hall without the invitation of the Department Commander.

22) (a) Any Guests who are not on the official program as speakers shall be introduced by the Department Commander only, and shall be limited to an address of not more than three (3) minutes.

(b) The Commander is to adhere as nearly as possible to the printed program so that guests, and others to be honored, are presented without undue delay.

23) No elective political office holder shall be permitted to speak during the Convention except the Chief Executive of the State of Minnesota, and the Chief Executive of the Convention City, or such persons as are on the official printed and published program.

24) All major speeches shall be limited to fifteen (15) minutes and all others not to exceed five (5) minutes.

25) No intoxicating liquors shall be sold or dispensed in the building of the Convention meeting, except as authorized by the Convention Corporation.

26) The Roll Call of Posts shall be called in numerical sequence in accordance with Post numbers assigned, including the city or town, beginning with Post No. 1, except in odd numbered years the order of call will be reversed, but only those Posts having one or more duly registered and accredited Delegates or alternates accredited prior to 9:00 a.m. as confirmed by the Credentials Committee, shall be included in the Roll Call at any time.

27) Posts challenging exclusion from the Roll Call shall consult with the Credentials Committee for resolution of the problem.

THE COMMITTEE: (Members Present)

DIST.	MEMBER	HOMETOWN
First	Mary Hanson	Austin
Second	Pam Krill	Blue Earth
Third	Gary Richardson	Mahtomedi
Fourth	David Dahl	St. Paul
Fifth	Lynne Nottage	Minneapolis
Sixth	Karen O'Bar	Verndale
Seventh	Karen Welander	Sunburg
Eighth	Larry Pocrnich	Hibbing
Ninth	Terry Buraas	GrandForks,N.D.
Tenth	William Gordon	Albertville

Department commander and Legionnaire editor win TALMA Contest awards

INDIANAPOLIS — Minnesota Legionnaire Editor Tim Engstrom and Department of Minnesota Commander Jennifer Havlick won awards in The American Legion Media Association Contest.

The association is better known as TALMA.

The awards are for media created in 2022. This year received a record 103 entries.

Havlick won in the Social Media category among departments and district. She regularly posted on Facebook in the mornings.

Engstrom won in the Publication

category among departments and districts nationwide. The Minnesota Legionnaire is well-recognized within the national organization as a quality veteran publication today and in the past.

The Department of Minnesota website, which Engstrom maintains, won in the Website category among departments and districts nationwide. The website is mnlegion.org.

He also won in the category of Editorial/Info among departments and



districts for a story he wrote about the efforts of veterans to pass a veterans omnibus bill, which happened in May, and the success was documented in the June 2022 issue.

Engstrom also won the Chairman's

Award for his coverage of the veterans omnibus bill. It is his second year in a row winning the Chairman's Award.

The award is presented by Dave Wallace, chairman of the National Media & Communications Committee, to any media entered in the contest at any level. The

TALMA Contest also has post-level categories of big, medium and small.

Awards are entered between January and mid-April at legion.org/talma.

Any Legion member can join

TALMA by paying dues of \$15. Membership provides a press pass and access to media training and other resources.

A special awards luncheon is to be held during the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., to recognize contest winners on Aug. 28.

TALMA members also gather on Aug. 28 for the annual Media Training Workshop.

Another award regardless of category is the Innovation Award, and that went to Cory Brockmann of the Department of Oregon for his public relations efforts.

District commanders



1st District

Mary Hanson



Hello from the 1st District. Memorial Day is over. I hope you all had the chance to attend Memorial Day services in your community. We need to continue to honor our fallen comrades. Our freedom was not free. If your community no longer has parades or services of any type, now is the time to step up and do what you can to start them up. It only takes one person to plant the seed. This is a tradition that we can't let die.

June 14th is Flag Day. Please fly your flag. Fly it every day. We do not see the flag flying like we have in the past. We don't want another 9/11 to get them flying again.

I want to thank everyone that attended my joint testimonial with 1st District Auxiliary President Tonia Betterman. Owatonna Post 77 hosted the event with a catered meal. The room was packed. Jim Kellogg and Wanda

Prescher handled their duties as co-emcees well. Hopefully, a fun time was had by all.

The 1st District Convention was held on May 20 at Kasson Post 333. We had a few obstacles to overcome, but they were very gracious and worked hard to make the convention a success.

Please remember to send in your CPRs. As you have your post elections the post officer report needs to be sent to department as soon as possible.

Department Convention will be July 13-15 at Jackpot Junction. It is important for you to attend if possible. New officers will be elected and resolutions will be voted on. Time to make new friends and renew old ones. I hope to see many of you there.



4th District

David Dahl



The flag of the United States of American is one of the oldest of the national standards in the world.

The colors in the flag are often interpreted as expressing the very character of our nation. The Continental Congress of 1777 declared that the white stars in a field of blue shall represent a "new constellation." George Washington described the white in the flag as symbolizing our desire for liberty — the land of the free. We say the red signifies the courage and sacrifices of the nation's defenders, and the blue has been likened to the loyalty and unity of our citizens.

On June 14, 1777, Congress passed a flag act, the birthday of the flag as we now know it and June 14 is now celebrated as "Flag Day."

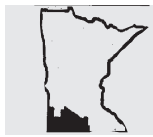
The Minnesota American Legion Flag Retirement

Ceremony is held on the Saturday closest to Flag Day. This year it will be on Saturday, June 10. Responsibility for the ceremony is rotated between the 3rd, 4th and 5th Districts, this year falling on the 3rd District.

It is held at the Veterans Campground, 11300 180th St N, Marine on St Croix. The ceremony will start promptly at noon. Volunteers are welcome on Friday, June 9 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) to help stack flags for the Saturday ceremony. Flags to be retired are welcome up to the start of the ceremony.

Please honor our flag by attending the American Legion Flag Retirement Ceremony.

Still serving! Serving veterans and serving our communities.



2nd District

Pam Krill



Welcome to the warm weather, 2nd District!

As we start to close in on the end of the year, I am so impressed with the commitment, dedication, and tenacity of the 2nd District Legion Family. We continue to push hard with our membership and our commitment to the vision and mission of The American Legion and that is taking care of our veterans, their families, and our communities.

One thing I have been doing is reflecting on this year and the things we could have done better, and I will always go back to the communication and sharing. Many of our posts are doing great things and we need to share those great things, whether it's the district newsletter, or sharing on Facebook, share your stories. Be proud of the things you are doing and continue to share.

I thank all of you for working with me this year. I know I did not make it out to all of our posts in the 2nd District, but that is a large feat for one person. With this upcoming year reach out to your district commander, ask for a visit to your post and highlight the things you are doing.

I have learned this year that we need everyone in order to be successful. I would not have been able to make it through this year without each and every one of you.

Enjoy your summer and I hope to see many of you at the 104th Department Convention in July. Come out and support your department leadership and the camaraderie of your fellow Legionnaires.



6th District

Karen O'Bar



Happy summer my fellow Legionnaires. As my year comes to an end, I want to thank each and every one of you that walked with me this last year. You all made the 6th District shine. Newsletters, Facebook, emails, phone calls, events were shared. Keep spreading our word.

These past few months have seen ups and downs in our district, but we keep chugging forward and as of this newsletter we are in first place for membership.

Each year it gets harder and harder to recruit new members. They are out there. The Mighty 6th will prevail.

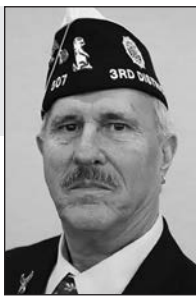
I hope we have a successful 2023-2024 year. I look forward to seeing you all in my future Legion adventures.

The totals for your projects are: Project Delta, \$15,075 and Guitars for Heroes, \$9,450.



3rd District

Gary Richardson



As my year as district commander is slowly coming to an end, I am reminded of the many great things our members have done this year for our veteran community from the incredible representation at the state capitol working hard to save our charitable gaming (thank you Kristy for your tireless efforts!) to the Department leadership who have spent many days advocating for our benefits.

I said it before and would like to remind our upcoming officers that mentoring new members in their roles in the American Legion will be each of our responsibilities. Teaching and learning from one another is the way we help to create great leaders in this organization. We have made a commitment to the Legion, and each of us has a

responsibility to live up to those commitments. There is plenty of help out there, all we need to do is simply ask someone. It is part of the commitment we make every time we recite the words "To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

This year is quickly coming to an end with district conventions voting new officers into the fold. We will soon be turning over our primary June responsibilities to new members of this great organization. Let's help them in any way we can to transition to the roles they are about to assume.

Until next month, stay safe, and thank you for all you do!



7th District

Karen Welander



You have some great people representing you. But it is the individual post, unit, squadron and chapter that are the boots on the ground who make it happen. This upcoming American Legion year will be full of changes and new challenges. Get out there and make a difference. Leadership, communication and working together as a family will be the watchwords used by all members of the district. This is the time of the year to open your doors and show your community what the American Legion is all about.

Remember: Be loud, be proud.

Publicize what you do in your community by listing what your charitable gambling goes to. Let everyone know they are important to the community and represent the entire Legion

Family. We are inclusive and not exclusive.

We have a public relations toolkit that can be used at your community events. This kit is great for bringing attention at any event and is available to everyone in the district. Think outside the box and have your post meeting outside so the community sees what you do or even have it on a weekend serving coffee and donuts.

New faces are what we need to excel with new ideas and further the programs of the Legion. Stand up and make a difference. Show who you are to our fellow veterans and if not members sign them up. God Bless all and always remember "Family First."



10th District

William Gordon



As Benjamin Franklin was leaving the building where, after four months of hard work, the Constitution had been completed and signed, a lady asked him what kind of government did the convention create. A very old, very tired and very wise Benjamin Franklin replied: "A

Republic, ma'am, if you can keep it."

This month's article is just a reminder that we are all in this together. As of late our

world, our country and even our communities have been experiencing a multitude of changes. I do not know anyone who thinks it will ever go back the way it was or who wants it to. I do know that we must work to keep our organization strong.

Our membership is aging out. Change as hard as it is for many of us needs to be embraced. Our strength is in our ability to work as a team, Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Juniors, Sons of the Legion, and the Legion Riders. Together we are *unstoppable!*

I know, I have seen it, in many of the posts I have visited.

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.

Our district convention is being held in St. Michael this year, and we are looking forward to seeing many of you attend. The Riders will hold their district convention on June 1. Our banquet will be the evening of June 2. Bring your special person and have a great dinner and enjoy some comradery. Our conversion will be on June 3.

Hitting their mark with air rifles: Minn. Centershots

By Kirk Schitker
Outdoor News, April 25

I recently received a call from Anoka pal Jeff Weaver, who told me he was at a meeting at the Anoka American Legion. While he was there, he found a group of young people shooting air rifles in the basement. Jeff said he had to stop and check it out and was excited to see more youth enjoying a shooting sport.

He asked me if I wanted to see them at their next practice. I said sure. I had recalled seeing a youth air rifle exhibit at Pheasant Fest in February. At that time, my 10-year-old granddaughter, Addi, took them up on an offer to shoot at the range they had in the booth at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

So off Jeff and I went to see them practice.

I had three initial impressions. These young shooters were serious, they enthusiastically enjoyed the practice session and its challenges, and their parents were equally enthusiastic about the sport.

I learned I was witnessing the Minnesota Centershots Junior Rifle Club. It's an area non-profit, sponsored by the Anoka American Legion and affiliated with the Minneapolis Rifle Club. They participate in USA Shooting, NRA and the Civilian Marksmanship Program at local and national matches.

The coaches are NRA-trained and certified. This organization is welcoming to new participants, and youth ages 11 to 18 can join. The Minnesota club has lofty goals and has to its credit significant achievements among its shooters.

From the Centershots mission statement: "We run a friendly, competitive program designed to teach all levels of position rifle shooting, using sporter and precision-grade air rifles. Your journey can range from raw beginner to winning matches at the national level in air rifle and small-bore rifles. Our goal is to teach you how to shoot safely and accurately, compete at national and international matches, and prepare for NCAA or military teams and scholarships."

The group is clear that they shoot to win.

At the practice I attended, I met with head coach Bill Bueseler and coach Ed Jaros and learned about the sport, rifles, and target equipment. The rifles do not have magnification — only peep sights for shooting

at a 50-cent-piece size target from 33 feet. Each shooter has a laptop at their shooting station that digitally shows where each shot was placed. It also shows the pattern and can show how steady one is prior to the shot.

The air rifles shoot a .177-caliber pellet, but even those are not the ones we amateurs use for plinking. Jaros said they sometimes use pellets that are more competition-grade and can prove to be more accurate. Shooting is done in standing, prone, and kneeling positions. Matches are 60 rounds per shooter and typically include 20 rounds in each of the three positions.

Coach Bueseler is an authority on youth air rifle shooting, but based on some bright and straight-shooting daughters, his experience has expanded to collegiate and NCAA shooting and USA's Shootings Junior Olympics.

His twin daughters Abby and Dana discovered the competitive rifle sport at Game Fair and decided to pursue opportunities in the sport. Both excelled and were recruited by NCAA coaches. Abby went on to shoot at the University of Mississippi's Ole Miss Team, and Dana went to Kentucky's Murray State University. They have fared well in shooting and their education.

Not to be outdone, kid sister Allison, four years younger, went on to attend and shoot at the University of Kentucky, where its NCAA team finished third at the championship in Ohio last March.

Allison will next be competing at the USA Shooting's Junior Olympics and Paralympic Center in Colorado Springs.

There's more, but one can say these women have come a long way from a stop at a booth at Game Fair.

Allison will be joined in Colorado by former Minnesota Centershots shooters Gavin Barnick and Julianna Hays and by current Centershots shooters Megan Jaros, Elsa Eugster, Tanner Barth, Nathan Engman, and Elly Ross. Coach Jaros' daughter, Megan Jaros, a high school junior, is working hard to make a college team. She took first place in two recent state championships. Additionally, she placed sixth in a nationwide three-position match. Very impressive. ...

Minnesota Centershots welcomes new shooters and can be contacted by calling Carla Bueseler at 651-815-3523.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 23 Vol. 11

President Mary Kuperus • Secretary Christie Avant, christie@mnala.org

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



National President Vickie Koutz with members of Monticello Unit 260 on May 3.



President Mary presents the Minneapolis Fisher House a donation of \$20,693.44 on behalf of the Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary on May 1. From left are Fisher House Manager Kimberly Bihm, Department President Mary Kuperus and Deputy Director CDCE Christopher Hayes.

President Koutz visited new vets home

Welcome to June!
Unfortunately, I was not able to join the American Legion National Commander's Tour. I was able to watch Facebook for pictures and updates daily and watched the livestream from Underwood Post 489. I was so happy to see so many American Legion Family members attend the breakfasts, lunches and dinners in his honor along the way.

The National American Legion Auxiliary President's Tour throughout parts of Minnesota went very well. Donations of \$1,325 for the National President's Project were presented at the lunches and dinners.

National President Vickie Koutz said she had a wonderful time in Minnesota, and she really enjoyed the fun along the trip. Thank you to the units and post for your hospitality and to the American Legion Family members for attending the many lunches and dinners in honor of National President Vickie Koutz.

One of the stops along the National President's Tour was at the new Montevideo Veterans Home. The residents of these new homes will have a bright welcome with a lot of windows. I was able to see where the meditation room is going to be.

Each meditation room receives a stained-glass window from the old Minneapolis Veterans Home,

President's Column

Mary Kuperus



and it will be right across from the outside windows. It is going to be so pretty when finished. I am anxious to go see the new homes when they are finished! Thank you all for the donations toward the Department President's Project. Please continue to donate if you can.

District conventions and testimonials have kept us all busy and they will continue into June. Congratulations to all the district leadership teams on your successful year of service for the American Legion Family. As the department president, I am honored to serve with you all!

The 76th American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be June 11-17 at Bethel University. What an awesome week for the young women who will learn so much about leadership, Americanism and government. They will meet new friends that they will have for the rest of their lives.

Thank you to all the volunteers, especially for the hard-working Girls State Committee! Flag Day, June 14, is celebrated at American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State every year with a flag retirement ceremony. Each citizen receives

a flag pin to wear with pride. Please don't forget to register for the department convention. It is being held at Jackpot Junction Casino on July 13-15 in Morton.

I would like to "thank" all of you who were able to attend my testimonial dinner. I appreciate your presence and willingness to give up a Saturday night to come to Spicer to spend time with me and members of the American Legion Family. Thank you to my New London Unit and Post 537 for hosting and Spicer American Legion Post 545 for the venue. My family and I had a great time!

As we "Serve and Honor Every Day." Let's remember all veterans who have served our country at home and abroad. Thank you for all you do for our veterans and military!

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."



Department President Mary Kuperus addressing the audience at her testimonial dinner at Spicer Post 545 on April 22.



National President Vickie Koutz stands with Minneapolis VA hospital representative for the Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary, Mary Ann Davis, on DATE. Davis is a member with North St. Paul Unit 39.



National President Vickie Koutz with her Minnesota tour guides at Legionville Education Center on May 2. Back row from left are Department Membership Chairman Sandy Wersal and National Executive Committeewoman Jean Walker. In front from left are National President Vickie Koutz and Department President Mary Kuperus.

Are you going to the department convention?

Membership packets for 2023-2024

Membership packets will be available for pickup at the Department Convention. Please stop by the Department office any time Thursday or Friday to sign them out. Any packets not picked up will be mailed out the week after Department Convention.

Unit officer lists for 2023-2024

Unit officer lists were due in the Department office by June 1st. If you have not submitted yours, please email them immediately to depoffice@mnala.org.

These lists are important as we develop our mailing list for the upcoming Auxiliary year.

Your unit will not receive your membership card packet until we have a current list. This list is required each year even if you are keeping the same officers.

2023 Department Convention is just around the corner

Please join us at 103rd Department Convention being held July 13-15, 2023 at Jackpot Junction, Morton. It is hosted by Redwood Falls Post 38.

Prior to the Convention, the Department Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday, July 12 at 1 p.m. in the Tatanka III room of the convention center.

Auxiliary District Caucuses will take place on both Thursday and Friday mornings at 8:15 am. The convention sessions will begin at 9:15 am.

Convention schedule

Wednesday, July 12, 2023		
Pre-Convention Dept. Executive Meeting	1 p.m.	Tatanka III
Thursday, July 13, 2023		
District Caucuses (Auxiliary)	8:15 a.m.	Various locations
Convention Session	9:15 a.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom
Joint Memorial Service	11:15 a.m.	Dacotah Exposition Center
Convention Committee Meetings (Auxiliary)	2 p.m.	Various locations
Friday, July 14, 2023		
District Caucuses (Auxiliary)	8:15 a.m.	Various locations
Convention Session	9:15 a.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom
Past Department Presidents Luncheon	11:30 a.m.	TBD
Convention Reconvenes	1:30 p.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom
Saturday, July 15, 2023		
Convention Reconvenes	9 a.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom
Election of 2023-24 Officers	11 a.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom
Installation of 2023-24 Officers	11:30 a.m.	Grand Eagle Ballroom

Election schedule

The following members have been endorsed for Department office:

- Department President: Sharon Thiemecke, Bemidji Unit 14
- Department 1st Vice President: Judy Ackerman, Northrup Unit 522
- Department 2nd Vice President: Robin Dorf, Monticello Unit 260

Nominations will be on Thursday morning. When there is more than one candidate nominated, elections will take place by balloting. There will also be nominations for delegates at-large to the National Convention. Please remember to bring your entries for the Poppy Contest. All entries must be at the convention by 9 a.m. on Thursday, July 13. Tables will be set up in the display area for the entries. Winners will be announced during the Poppy report on Friday. It's not too late to register! Find the registration form on Page 3 of this issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire.



Department President Mary Kuperus receives a gift from her family at her testimonial dinner on April 22 at Spicer Post 545.



President Mary presents the Armed Forces Service Center a check for \$20,834.18, on behalf of the Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary on April 30. From left are Armed Forces Service Center Director Debra Cain, Department President Mary Kuperus, and AFSC Treasurer Patti Carr.



From left are Department President Mary Kuperus, St. Paul Park Unit 98 Jr. Auxiliary member Evelyn Koran, Unit 98 President Jeorgia Cluckey and National President Vickie Koutz. Koran raised \$500 for St. Jude Hospital and displays her Good Deed Award.



Minnesota Honorary Jr. Auxiliary President Sydney Borntreger with National President Vickie Koutz at St. Paul Park Post 98 on May 3.

Department Membership Chairman Sandy Wersal, Department President Mary Kuperus and National President Vickie Koutz stand beside a statue of Paul Bunyan on May 2 in Brainerd.

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