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For God and Country

November 2024

American Legion NEC passes anthrax resolution



Ray

Measure calls for federal research into shot

Legion National Executive Committee, at Foundation. its meetings Oct. 9-10, approved a resolution calling for the federal government to conduct research on the anthrax shot given to many Persian Gulf War-era veterans.

Minnesota American Legion Department Service Officer Ray Kane was the primary author of the resolution. It is based on research conducted by the University of Minnesota Brain Sciences Center, founded by

INDIANAPOLIS — The American the American Legion Family Brain Science

The research linked the shot to Gulf War

"More than three decades after the Gulf War, veterans with GWI continue to experience significant health issues," Kane said. "There is currently no definitive cure for the illness, and treatments typically focus on managing individual symptoms. However, ongoing research aims to better with some studies suggesting that neutralizing persistent antigens or removing them from the bloodstream may offer therapeutic potential."

The resolution calls on the VA and several other federal agencies "to initiate a thorough and independent investigation to evaluate the effects of anthrax vaccinations on veterans."

This includes long-term and short-term effects. It urges transparent findings for

understand the underlying mechanisms of both veterans and the general public, and GWI and identify effective interventions, that agencies take necessary responses to that agencies take necessary responses to the finding.

The same resolution was held up in a convention committee in August at the National Convention, but after a slight editing back to the way Kane had it in the first place, the measure passed at the NEC meeting

The shot was given to Gulf War troops deploying to the Mideast but also to many troops remaining on bases. It was given to

Continued on Page 5

Hennepin County declares **functional** zero

Ramsey County is last area of the state

MINNEAPOLIS - On Oct. 15, Hennepin County declared "functional zero" when it comes to veteran homelessness.

The term "functional zero" doesn't mean there won't be homeless veterans. And, of course, it won't mean an end to occasional panhandlers who hold cardboard signs claiming to be homeless vets. The "functional zero" means veteran homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring.

In practical terms, it means the county's system responds within 90 days on

"We approach veteran homelessness from many angles," said Neil Doyle, director of Hennepin County Veterans Services. "Today's achievement celebrates the challenging and compassionate work our staff and partners do every day. We are committed to continuing this important work, because even one veteran without housing is one too many."

Continued on Page 5

Enabled veterans

Guides, volunteers turn disabled vets into hunters again at Zgoda Deer Hunt

By Tim Engstrom

EGIONVILLE — It was dark and gloomy when guide Gary Richardson and disabled veteran Carla Tappainer climbed the ladder at the red deer stand in the backwoods of Legionville Education Center.

There are 11 permanent deer stands in the woods at the camp. The red one is known for great sightlines and has a strong track record for success.

The two silently watched the sunlight creep into the woods. A stick broke now and then. A splash was herd. A tom flew down from his perch.

No deer. Richardson and Tappainer would have to return at night.

The Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Minnesota has conducted the John Zgoda Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt annually at Legionville Education Center since 2007. This was the 18th year for the

Lloyd Schaeffer, commander of Chaska Squadron 57, recalls how the event came to be. John Zgoda of Hastings Squadron 47, he said, was the Detachment of Minnesota commander in 2006-07. He wanted to launch an event where guides from SAL squad-



Carla Tappainer steadies her Remington .308-caliber rifle and peers through the scope on the morning of Friday, Oct. 4., at Legionnville at a deer hunt organized by the SAL Detachment of Minnesota.

at Legionville. He asked Wayne Mattingly of Osseo Squadron 172 to work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to put together a deer hunt.

Mattingly ended up having to tell Zgoda that the DNR wasn't returning his phone calls. Zgoda spoke with Department Commander John Cox of Mahtomedi-Willernie Post 507, who rons take disabled veterans hunting reached out to the DNR. The DNR did

return his call, and together the DNR, on the grounds" Schaeffer said. "The TAL and SAL planned a disabled veterans deer hunt for Legionville. Deer season was over by this point in 2006. The first one happened in 2007.

The first one had three hunters, Schaeffer said. The most the event has is six hunters, and this year, it had six hunters.

good volunteer crew, to have support

DNR wanted us to be safe but never told us any restrictions. We want it safe and organized."

He said staff from the DNR came the first year, gave a few suggestions, and since then it has trusted the Detachment of Minnesota to run it well.

Zgoda, Schaeffer said, got Bill "The biggest thing was to have a and Judy Stein of Wayzata Post 118

Continued on Page 9



Brock Hunter, co-founder of the Veterans Defense Project, spoke Oct. 25 at the Fall Conference in St. Cloud.

Lawyer: 'The system can do a better job with our veterans'

Commander's Project highlighted at conference

ST. CLOUD — Brock Hunter, a Minneapolis-based criminal defense lawyer and Army veteran, is the co-founder of the Veterans Defense Project. The Minnesota American Legion and the VDP were partners in the 2021 passage of the Veterans Restorative Justice Act in Minnesota.

The law standardized veterans courts from county to county, and it allowed veterans before judges in counties without veterans courts to petition to have their case heard in ones with them.

Hunter was the main speaker for the Fall Conference in St. Cloud. The VDP is Commander Carl Moon's project. He has a goal of raising \$60,000.

VDP is working on similar legislation in other states and expanding veterans courts in Minnesota. Hunter gave an update.

"Of the 3 million Americans who served in Vietnam, 1-1.5 million suffer psychological injuries," Hunter said.

He said a separate conversation about the **Continued on Page 10**

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What's happening?

Veterans Day program moves to Arden Hills

ARDEN HILLS — Commissioner Brad Lindsay, a member of New Prague Post 45, said one of the things he wanted to do as commissioner was to move the state's annual official Veterans Day Event around the state.

It has been held in Inver Grove Heights for decades. However, 2024 will be different.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs will hold the event on Nov. 11 at the National Guard's Ben Franklin Readiness Center in Arden Hills.

The address is 1536 Ben Franklin St.

Free breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m. Program is at 10 a.m.

All veterans and their supporters are welcomed.

Pearl Harbor Rally looking like a lot of fun

SPICER — The Pearl Harbor Rally will be Saturday, Dec. 7, at Spicer Post 545 and will be hosted by the American Legion Riders for all members of the American Legion Family.

It starts with an 11 a.m. social hour and a noon meal, followed by a program.

The meal ticket is \$20. To pay by mail, send a \$20 check to:

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The meal will be pork roast, baby reds, corn, broccoli, pasta salad, tossed salad and dinner

To register online, visit mnlegion.org/calendar and click on the Eventbrite link.

Post 545 is at 155 Lake Ave. S, Spicer.

Some attendees will travel there and back home, but lodging is available for people staying overnight, typically that Saturday night, at SureStay by Best Western next to the post. Call 320-796-2300.

Hampton Inn is 320-796-3000, and Little Crow Resort is at 320-347-1500.

The Sweetheart Rally takes place Saturday, Feb. 8, at Royalton Post 137. This one starts at 11 a.m., also, with a noon meal and a program to follow.

The Appreciation Rally is set for Saturday, March 8, and it will be at Chanhassen Post 580. The time also slated for 11 a.m.

Restorative justice is front and center

MINNEAPOLIS — The Veterans Defense Project invites Minnesota veterans and their supporters interested in the justice system to its third annual event.

Retired Maj. Gen. Johanna Clyborne is the featured speaker. Retired Gen. Joseph Votel will provide taped remarks.

is American Legion Department Commander Carl Moon's fundraising project. (See thermometer on Page 7.)

The event happens 4 p.m. Nov. 12 at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, 1101

Register for free over Eventbrite. Search for "veterans restorative justice event" on Google and it comes up, or visit veteransdefenseproject.org.

Pickleball, anyone?

OAKDALE — The USA 4 Veterans Foundation is holding a pickleball tournament for veterans called the USA 4 Veterans Foundation Pickleball Challenge.

It is from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Nov. 8, noon-4 p.m. Nov. 9 and noon-4 p.m. Nov. 10 at The Burrow in Oakdale.

Each day has various challenges and games. To participate in all three days, it is \$100. For Nov. 8, it is \$50. For Nov. 9, it is \$35, and for Nov. 10, it also

To register, email barry@usa4veterans.org or dan@usa4veterans.org or visit usa4veterans.

The organization raises funds through events so it can help other organizations, such as The American Legion, provide help to veterans in crisis.

Honor Flight is raising funds

ADAMS — North Star Honor Flight is a new hub officially recognized by the National Honor Flight Network.

As a new hub, North Star Honor Flight will take WWII, Korean, Vietnam Era and terminally ill veterans on all-expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C. to see the memorials built in their honor. Veterans will visit a variety of sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the WWII Memorial, the Korean War Memorial and the Vietnam Memorial.

Jill Klapperich, board president, said: "Every veteran deserves this opportunity. Our goal is to raise enough funds to take our first flight in the spring of 2025."

Donations are accepted at northstarhonorflight.org.

North Star Honor Flight will serve nine counties in Minnesota and five counties in Iowa. The Minnesota counties are: Blue Earth, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Mower, Olmsted, Steele and Waseca. The Iowa counties are: Cerro Gordo, Howard, Mitchell, Worth and Winnebago.

Busy times at Post 39

PROJECT NEW HOPE

NORTH ST. PAUL - American Legion Post 39 has announced upcoming events.

The Auxiliary Boutique is Nov. 3. A free SOS lunch for veterans is Nov. 11. There will be a mega meat raffle Nov. 23

Military Family Retreats

at no cost to Veterans

The Veterans Defense Project

Harmon Place, Minneapolis.

and a Pearl Harbor Day Pancake Breakfast Dec. 7.

Protocol trains members to spot signs of suicide risks

NEW YORK — As part of its "Be the One" mission, The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to develop training for responding to veterans who may be in crisis.

Upcoming online sessions are 1:30 p.m. (2:30 Eastern) on Nov. 7, Nov. 21, Dec. 5 and Dec. 19.

The training will help members learn risk factors and warning signs, how to communicate effectively and the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk.

The protocol also shares the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale.

Google "American Legion Be the One Training." Click on the first result, and the online sessions are listed with links for registering.

There is such a thing as a free meal ...

ST. PAUL — Metro Meals on Wheels has funding to provide healthy, home-delivered meals to veterans thanks to a grant from the Minnesota Legislature.

In addition to receiving nutritious meals prepared at a local kitchen, the program provides regular connection with a volunteer driver.

To be eligible, veterans must be age 60 or older or experiencing food insecurity or unable to obtain food because of a medical or mental health condition.

Information about our meals can be found online at mealson-wheels.com. Veterans should call Metro Meals on Wheels at 612-623-3363 to find out more and enroll.

WWII authors to speak

ST. PAUL — At 7 p.m. Nov. 13 at the Minnesota History Center, retired Lt. Gen. James Dubik, the author of "Just War," will challenge the logic of war as a solution to diplomatic disputes and the Clausewitz Principles

It is part of the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Round Table, which meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month from September to May at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul.

On Dec. 10, the speaker is Kevin Hymel, author of "Patton's War Vol. 2." He will tell the impact of the Battle of the Bulge in the decimation of the Nazi attack in the largest land battle of the western front.

Marc Wortman, author of "The Greatest Capitalist Who Ever Lived," speaks on Jan. 14. Rick Beyer, author of "Ghost Soldiers," speaks Feb. 11.

Retired Maj. Gen. Mari K. Eder, author of "The Girls Who Stepped Out of Line," speaks March 11.

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- Chateau Lake Louise
- 1988 Olympic Village and Calgary Stampede Grounds



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2024 JUNE 7-9 **2024 OCTOBER 4-6 2024 DECEMBER 6-8**

Get to know MDVA's suicide-prevention efforts

Hello. I am the director of training and education. Veteran Community-Based Services, overseeing both the Veteran Suicide Prevention and the Veteran Health Navigator programs for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. The team includes Veteran Suicide Prevention Program Liaison Krysta Stanenas, who provides data analytics and alignment, grant and research coordination; and Veteran Suicide Prevention Program Development Coordinator Kristi Stites, who provides

The Veteran Community-Based Services team leads the Minnesota Veteran Suicide Prevention Collaborative (formerly known as the Governor's Challenge) and the Minnesota Veteran Suicide Prevention and Awareness Day, held the first Saturday in October.

The team is working to end veteran suicide by coordinating activities across multi-sectors and collaborating with national and state agencies. Strategies

Guest Column

Rachel Johnson

and priorities are aligned to Health the VA's National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, the White House's National strategy, and Minnesota State Suicide Prevention Plan.

The Minnesota Veteran Suicide Prevention Collaborative leverages the resources of the Substance Abuse and Mental



the name SAMHSA) and their focused priority areas to guide our efforts to end Veteran Suicide in Minnesota.

- 1. Identifying servicemembers, veterans and their families (SMVF) and screening for suicide risk.
- 2. Promoting connectedness and improving care transitions.
- 3. Increasing lethal means safety and safety planning.

We are proud to partner with key stakeholders across the state and nation, and appreciate the dedication and engagement of The American Legion's national "Be the One" campaign and The American Legion Department of Minnesota's efforts in helping to end veteran suicide in Minnesota.

Other partners include: · Minnesota Commanders'

Region	Veterans	Suicides	% Suicides
Northwest	10,956	1	0.0091%
North Central	14,834	6	0.0404%
Northeast	22,035	11	0.0499%
West Central	14,912	1	0.0067%
Central	25,162	11	0.0437%
East Central	11,580	4	0.0345%
Metro	136,826	45	0.0329%
Southwest	13,686	7	0.0579%
South Central	23,197	10	0.0431%
Southeast	21,044	4	0.0190%
Total	294,232	101*	0.0343%

November 2024 Task Force.

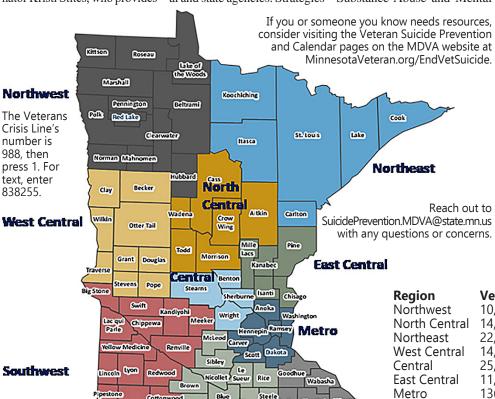
- Service Officers: Suicide Prevention Task Force.
- Minnesota Department of Health: Suicide Prevention Unit.
- Minnesota Army National Guard: Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention (R3SP)
- VA: Community and Engagement Partnership Coordinators.
- VISN-23: Community Based Intervention, Mental Health-Suicide Prevention Program
- Minnesota Veteran Community-Based Organizations.

The collaborative meets quar-• Minnesota County Veteran terly to share suicide prevention activities, network, and identify gaps and opportunities.

The Minnesota Legionnaire

The Veteran Community-Based Services team has divided the state of Minnesota into regions to identify where resources and support are most needed. Exhibit A represents state regions. Exhibit B is data by regions, by veteran population, number of veteran deaths by suicide and statistically by

Rachel Johnson is the director of Veteran Community-Based Grassroots Services at MDVA.



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DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION

Congratulations on anthrax resolution

I am hoping that everyone who attended the Fall Conference had the opportunity to attend the classes and presentations offered. I especially want to thank Adjutant Mike Maxa and the Training Committee for on Veterans, Service Members by setting this up and the presenters for their time and knowledge.

I also hope that everyone took time to catch up with old friends and meet a few new ones before "you know what" slows our travels down for a while.

Congratulations to Chris Anderson from Hastings Post 47, who is a member of the Media & Communications Committee and Department Membership Director Carla Tappainer from Apple Valley Post 1776 for being accepted to attend the National American Legion College Nov. 17-23. I am looking forward to hearing about their experience and the knowledge they gained.

I wanted to update you on the Minnesota resolutions presented at the National Convention in New Orleans. Specifically, Resolution 24-2 "Assessing the Effects of Anthrax Vaccinations

Commander's Column

Carl Moon

and National Guard Personnel."

Initially, the resolution was sent back to the VA&R Screening Committee for further study. But I am so happy to report that at the Fall NEC Meeting in Indianapolis, the resolution passed!

Congratulations to both Department Service Officer Ray Kane and Assistant Department Service Officer Janet Lorenzo for all their hard work, persistence and patience in getting this very important resolution passed. Please thank them when

Just an update on my project, the Veterans Defense Project (aka VDP). Its goal is to expand the veterans courts to the rural counties. Currently, only 26 of the 87 Minnesota counties have veterans courts, which offer veterans with low-level offensives

completing a one vear probationary

program that allows their criminal record to be expunged, thereby allowing them to return to being

productive citizens. My goal is to raise \$60,000 to help VDP achieve its goal. I am pleased to report that, as of this printing of the Legionnaire, \$10,192 has been received toward this goal. Thank you to everyone who has generously donated to this worthy cause.

Peggy and I just want to wish everyone a grateful and relaxing Thanksgiving.

Carl Moon of Zimmerman Post 560 is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota. His theme is "ACT: Accountability, Coman alternative to incarceration, munication and Transparency.'

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.

Boy Scouts now Scouting **America**

At the Fall Conference Americanism Committee meeting, it was suggested we try to "advertise" the upcoming Eagle Scout of the Year program. The following was what I wrote for the District 7 Newsletter and thought I'd use some of it for the Legionnaire.

The Boy Scouts have announced an official change to their name and program. Starting Feb. 8, 2025, their official name changes to Scouting America. As we move forward, I hope we all understand their need to rebrand themselves and support this change in name. This change was needed because of the legal issues these past few years and the adding of females to the Scouting program.

In fact, the American Legion National Eagle Scout of the Year for 2024 was Lauren Tyree. She is a very impressive young Eagle Scout. If you'd like to see her acceptance speech at the national convention, please search "Lauren Tyree speech."

Also impressive was Minnesota's Eagle Scout of the Year, who came in tied for second place at the national level Our Scout, Jackson Kramer of Hutchinson, received a \$2,500 scholarship for this second



Dan Morgan/North End Post 474

Don't wrap it too tight, doc. I don't want to get high blood pressure.

The new Eagle Scout of the Year program is starting soon. Now is the perfect time to contact your local Scouting America Troops, see if your post can help promote and support their programs and if any current or future Eagle Scouts need access to the Scholarship Nomination

To download the form, go to mnlegion.org/programs/. Open the folder that says "Additional Programs" and select Scouts. You will see the Eagle Scout of Eagle Scout of the Year scholthe Year application as a PDF.

Primary requirements for Eagle Scout of the Year are: Earn and receive their Eagle Scout badge prior to high school

graduation; receive a religious badge from any scouting level; and the troop being sponsored or charted by a American Legion Family group (Legion, Auxiliary or SAL) — or, have a parent or grandparent that is a member of any Legion Family group.

All applications will need to be submitted to your district Scouting chair no later than Feb. 15, and they'll forward it on to Department HQ by March 1.

Minnesota Department's arship is \$2,000 and the National scholarship is \$10,000! If any Scouts, leaders, or posts have any questions on this program, please feel free to contact me

Bruce Olson, a former Marine, carries the Certified Military Advisor designation, providing dedicated support for both military and non-military members and their families.

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Autumn is a great time to be thankful

Lately my ponderings weigh heavy in the field of gratitude. Allow me to share a few. One is up there. This past month a solar eclipse, two meteor showers, a comet and a supermoon were a part of the stars, sunrises and sunsets.

Hopefully you were able to see one of them. It boggles my mind how horrifying forest fires produce glorious pinks, oranges and reds at sunset and sunrise. Our home spins around an orbit with a gravitational force that keeps our feet on the ground as well as protecting us from solar radiation.

Thank you, Pam Ekert, for sunrise pictures on Facebook.

Our Jewish brothers and sisters observed their most holy day in October, Yom Kippur, aka the Day of Atonement. Historically, a blemish-free lamb ceremoniously received the sins of the nation upon its head to then be sent to the desert to die. I am thankful for this day, even though I am not Jewish, for this day reminds us that individually and collectively we fail, do harm, do wrong and are in need of forgiveness.

Leaves give their final curtain call with rich reds, oranges and yellows before they drop to be home for insects (unless you rake them away) for the coming winter. Nature keeping us in rhythm with life and death. May we each plant a tree to benefit those who will come after us to remember that there

320-220-3001.

Chip Manson Spicer Post 545 Chairman of Scouting **America Committee**

Promote Minn. **Boys State**

Autumn has surrounded us, as harvest is nearly completed in most of the state. Homecoming activities at most high schools are also in the rearview mirror.

Here's a thought about promoting Boys and Girls State in your area. Maybe some of you have already done this. Most school board meetings include a "Public Forum" time period.

If you have representatives from this year's Boys State and Girls State, ask them to accompany you to the school board meeting and talk about their experiences.

No representatives this year? Speak at the school board meeting about the merits of students attending. Ask for support and help in recruiting members of your school district to attend in 2025. Promoting our programs can only help them succeed.

At a local foundation meeting this month, I sat next to a gentleman who attended Boys State and Boys Nation in 1978. He is still fired up about his experiences in both locations. I asked him to write up a testimonial to post on our website. All of us know others who had positive experiences with these American Legion activities. Ask them to promote these life-enhancing encounters.

Exercise your civic duty to vote in the upcoming elections! Thank you for all you do for

Chaplain's Corner

Kelley Adelsman

are days to laugh and days to mourn. Grateful though I might not want to think about the seasons of life those leaves remind

I am thankful for the communal gathering Dee Dee Buckley's celebration of life brought. Listening to those remember her and her influence was sacred as she demanded of us to pray for her, give better of ourselves than what we thought possible and encouraged you to know who you were important for. Much wisdom in what and how she lived. I am thankful for her.

I am thankful for our U.S. Constitution. The First Amendment remains a striven ideal, ensuring five freedoms — religion, speech, press, petition and assembly — without government interference.

Finally, I am very thankful that humans act with compassion when our fellow humans have been devastated by hurricanes and forest fires. May our hearts always be malleable to grace and empathy. **Religious Holy Days:**

Nov. 1: All Saints' Day, Catholic Church recognizes all who have been canonized. Nov. 3: Birth of Baha'u'llah,

founder of Baha'i birthday.

at my new phone number: your communities and American Legion posts!

> **Neil Kruse** Counselor Minnesota Boys State



Baha'i Day the Covenant celebrates the day Ab-

Nov.

du'l-Baha was appointed the Covenant. Nov. 27: Ascension of Ab-

du'l-Baha honors the day he

Nov. 30: Catholic St. Andrew's Feast Day, patron saint of Romania, Ukraine, Barbados, Greece, Russia, and Scotland.

Dec. 1-24: Advent is the season Christians prepare for Christ's Nativity by focusing on hope, peace, joy and love.

Dec. 8: Bodhi Day Buddhist holiday remembers the day that Gautama Buddha is believed to attain enlightenment.

Dec. 21-Jan. 1: Yule is the time Pagans and Wiccans celebrate the winter solstice.

Dec. 25: Christmas is when Christians remember the birth of Jesus Christ.

Dec. 26-Jan 2: Jewish Hanukkah, 8-day celebration of the victory over Syrian Greeks.

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



The Minnesota

Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Official publication of The American Legion **Department of Minnesota**

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Anthrax resolution could be a VA game-changer

Continued from Page 1

many civilians after the 9/11 attacks when anthrax-laced letters killed five and sickened 17.

Kane said Gulf War illness is a multiple-symptom illness. Symptoms are chronic fatigue, muscle and joint pain, cognitive and neurological issues, respiratory and gastrointestinal issues, sleep disorders.

Several factors have been cited, such as chemical exposures, bromide pills and burn pits. However, Brain Sciences Center researchers said they all have the anthrax shot in common.

A second resolution from Minnesota passed at the NEC meeting in Indy.

Kane said veterans give up burial rights when choosing an urn or commemorative plaque instead. The resolution calls on Congress to amend the law to allow them to retain eligibility for burial.

"For example, your mom might want your dad there,' Kane said. "The spouse got the burial benefit but the veteran didn't. That doesn't make sense at all."

Resolutions

Kane encouraged posts to write resolutions and send them to district conventions.

"People can make change. It doesn't have to come from department. That's what is great about The American Legion,"



The NEC governs The American Legion when delegates are not gathered for national conventions and can approve national resolutions.

their families.

He said department staff is resolutions. happy to assist with understanding laws, rules and other email at dso@mnlegion.org. factors so that posts can write

Kane can be reached via

161 FERNBERG RD. ELY, MINNESOTA 55731 218-365-6900 VETERANSONTHELAKERESORT.ORG Welcome to YBAR-ROUND! FOR ALL VETERANS, DISABLED PUBLIC, THEIR FAMILIES & FRIENDS.



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Hennepin County reaches homelessness milestone

Continued from Page 1

As of Sept. 30, 69 veterans were experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County, five of whom were unsheltered. That number is down from 167 veterans experiencing homelessness in August 2023. The county is home to 48,410 veterans, one-sixth of the state's veteran population.

"Hennepin County is proud of our work to reach this milestone of effectively ending veteran homelessness," said Hennepin County Board Chairwoman Irene Fernando. "By using a holistic approach and by identifying veterans as a priority population, we are succeeding in a housing-first methodology. I'm very grateful to the staff that worked to create and implement Hennepin's plan, and I look forward to expanding our work to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring."

The declaration comes via certification from the United States Interagency Council

on Homelessness, Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Veterans Affairs.

For homelessness-prevention efforts, the state of Minnesota is divided into 10 regions called "continuums of care" or commonly called COCs. Hennepin and Ramsey counties were the final remaining COCs, and now the state awaits Ramsey County's progress on the effort.

Resources

Hennepin Shelter Hotline serves all Hennepin County residents seeking emergency shelter by helping them find a safe, temporary place to stay while they work on next steps toward stable housing.

Hennepin Shelter Hotline: 612-204-8200 Hennepin County Veterans Services helps service members and veterans access their federal, state and county benefits.

questions from veterans and their families. LinkVet: 1-888-LinkVet

Homeless Veteran Registry

As of Oct. 30, the Minnesota Homeless Veteran Registry, maintained by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, there were 206 veterans in Minnesota experiencing homelessness.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans

LinkVet is a call center open seven days

Affairs serves all Minnesota veterans and

a week to provide information and answer

Hennepin County may have reached a big milestone, but the registry reveals the struggle of a large population. Of the 206, 79 were in Hennepin County. Of those, 37 lacked a housing plan, 22 were ineligible for VA care, 12 were new and 7 were re-engaged.



Veterans Day Event 2024

Monday, November 11, 8:30 a.m.

National Guard Ben Franklin Readiness Center 1536 Ben Franklin Dr Arden Hills, MN 55112



NEW LOCATION!

All-Family Events Calendar

Nov. 8-11: Veterans Day weekend, local ceremonies Nov. 11: Minnesota Official Veterans Day Event, Nat'l Guard Ben Franklin Readiness Center, Arden Hills Nov. 21-22: Allied Charities of Minnesota Convention, Mayo Civic Center, Rochester

Dec. 7: Pearl Harbor Rally, Spicer Post 545

Jan. 11: 1st District Mid-Winter Conf., Winona Post 9 Jan. 11: 4th & 5th District Mid-Winter Conference, Arcade-Phalen Post 577

Jan. 11: 9th District Mid-Winter Conf., Warren Post 27 Jan. 11: 10th District Mid-Winter Conf., Anoka Post 102

Jan. 18: 6th District Mid-Winter Conf., Melrose Post 101 Jan. 18: 7th District Mid-Winter Conf., Olivia Post 186

Jan. 25: 8th District Mid-Winter Conf., location TBD **Jan. 25:** 3rd District Mid-Winter Conf., Lonsdale Post 586 **Feb. 8:** Sweetheart Rally, Royalton Post 137

Feb. 15: 2nd District Mid-Winter Conf, Bricelyn Post 165

Feb. 22: Minnesota Oratorical Contest, Osseo Post 172 & Anoka Post 102 **Feb. 22-26:** Washington Conference, D.C.

March 8: TAL & ALA Department Executive Committees, Chanhassen Post 580

March 8: Appreciation Rally, Chanhassen Post 580 March 14-15: SAL Detachment Spring Conference,

hosted by Rochester Post 446 April 24-27: Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley

May 5-9: Spring Meetings, Indianapolis
May 15-18: Work & Play Weekend, Legionville May 17: 1st District Convention, Lake City Wild Wings

May 17: 3rd District Convention, Forest Lake Post 225 May 17: 4th District Convention, N. St. Paul Post 39 May 17: 7th District Convention, Echo Post 204

June 7: 2nd District Convention, Pipestone Post 6 June 7: 5th District Convention, location TBD

June 7: 8th District Convention, location TBD **June 7:** 6th District Convention, Brainerd Post 255 June 8-14: Minnesota Boys State, St. John's Univ.

June 14: 9th District Convention, E. Grand Forks Post 157 June 15-21: Minnesota Girls State, Bethel University June 15-Aug. 1: Six weeklong sessions of youth

camping at Legionville June 25: American Legion Day at Target Field,

Minnesota Twins vs. Seattle Mariners, Minneapolis June 27-28: SAL Detachment of Minnesota Convention, Morris Post 29

July 9: Department Executive Committee, Willman July 10-12: 106th Department Convention, Willmar July 12: Department Executive Committee, Willman July 28-31: Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I-A State Tournament, Burnsville (dates tentative) July 31-Aug. 3: Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament, St. Michael

Aug. 1-3: Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Jr. State Tournament, location TBD

Aug. 1-3: Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II State Tournament, Ely

Aug. 2-3: Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament, Fairmont

Aug. 8-10: Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II Jr. State Tournmanet, Hayfield

Aug. 8-10: Auxiliary Junior Fun Weekend, Legionville Aug. 22-28: 106th National Convention, Tampa Bay, Fla. **Sept. 4-7:** Camporee, Legionville

Sept. 11-14: Minnesota ALR Romp, Legionville Sept. 30-Oct. 5: John Zgoda Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt, Legionville

Oct. 23: Minnesota American Legion Department Executive Committee, Kelly Inn, St. Cloud

Oct. 24-25: Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center & Kelly Inn, St. Cloud



HELP IS HERE FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



Tanc 🗱



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

192	103			55155, or visit mnlegion.org/taps. Thank you.			
Name of		Date of			Cont.		
Deceased	Age	Death	Branch	Era	Years	Post	
Althoff, John O.	78 ँ		Air Force	Vietnam	8	Cannon Falls Post 142	
Amann, Blaine W. "Ben"	92	10/2/24	Air Force	Korea	32	Rochester Post 92	
Note: He served four years in the Air Weather Service. After, he joined the U.S. Weather Bureau in Rochester, eventu-							
ally serving as "official in charge" for 20 years. (U.S. Weather Bureau became the National Weather Service in 1970.)							
Anderson, Roger M.	90	10/6/24	Army	Korea	16	Wendell Post 426	
Note: He was a tank driver stationed at Fort Polk, La., and Fort Knox, Ky.							
Bautch, Roger F.	80	9/8/24	Army				
Berg, Gary W.	77	9/225/24	Navy	Vietnam	56	Waseca Post 228	
Note: He was a SeaBee stationed in Vietnam. He was gravely injured by mortar fire on the first night of the Tet Offen-							
sive. After a lengthy hospital stay, he received the Purple Heart. Despite being legally blind and physically disabled, he							
went to school, then worked for the IRS for 22 years. He was a past post commander and finance officer.							
Biser, Kenneth F.						New Ulm Post 132	
Note: He served as a corporal in the Minnesota National Guard, and his unit was called up for active duty for a year							
						Group, known as the Four-Deuce-Five.	
						Spring Grove Post 249	
Note: He was a past post commander. He founded the polka band Jim Busta Band, which performed nationally and							
on cruise ships for 45 years. He and his wife also danced during a polka scene in the Clint Eastwood movie "The							
Mule." His daughter is the host of the weekly RFD-TV show Mollie B Polka Party.							
Carman, Gerald B.	94	-, -,	Army	Korea		Grand Meadow Post 140	
Note: He was in the 304th Signal Battalion stationed in Incheon, Korea, working with teletype and Morse code and							
handling messages from the front lines.							
			Army/Navy	Vietnam	6	Aitkin Post 86	
Comstock, Duane C.	92	10/15/24	Air Force	Korea	69	Roseau Post 24	

Navy Crowson, Lyle J. 9/27/24 Wykoff Post 369 Cold 21 Dahl, Clifford G. "Butch" Marshall Post 113 75 9/22/24 Vietnam 34 Davies, Rodney A. 102 9/10/24 WWII 3 Rosetown Post 542 Marine Note: He served in Guadalcanal and Guam, and he recovered from dysentery at a hospital in Honolulu. Decker, Norman J. 92 8/31/24 Army Winona Post 9 Korea

Note: He served in France and Germany. 81 Vietnam 38

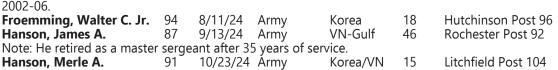
Dimmel, Stanley V. 9/27/24 Army Janesville Post 281 WWII/Korea 19 Eickhoff, Virgil D. 94 9/21/24 Navy Wykoff Post 369

Note: He enlisted in 1945 and served aboard the antisubmarine carrier USS Tarawa (which in 1952 was converted to an attack aircraft carrier) during the Korean War. Lewiston Post 90 Erdmann, Kent D. 80 10/4/24 Army Vietnam 43

Erling, Berger M. 94 6/10/24 Army Kora 70 Alexandria Post 87 Note: He served in Korea for two years, earning campaign decorations. Eveslage, Leo C. 91 10/11/24 Army Vietnam Melrose Post 101 Ewing, Donald J. Sr. 81 9/1/24 Air Force Vietnam 14 **Balaton Post 237** Vietnam Anoka Post 102 Finnegan, Paul R. 79 9/20/24 Army Note: He served as a tank commander in Baumholder, Germany, followed by a career with the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Marshals. He was post commander 1993-94.

Forsmark, Lewis W. 95 2/21/24 Army Bloomington Post 550 Korea 13 Fortroy, G. Donna 77 7/22/23 Air Force Vietnam 50 Duluth Post 71 Note: She was stationed in California as a medical lab specialist.

Friesen, Robert G. 87 10/6/24 Army Vietnam 38 Lowry Post 253 Note: His career included two tours in Germany, then stateside, then Vietnam, followed by serving in the Army Reserve in Minnesota and Nebraska. He retired a major. He received the Bronze Star in Vietnam. He was 7th District commander 2006-07. He was Glenwood Post 187 commander



Note: He missed high school graduation in 1951 because his National Guard unit was called to active duty. After the guard, he worked in the civilian sector, then joined the active Army. This resulted in a career that went from private to full colonel. He toured Vietnam twice and Germany thrice.

Little Falls Post 46 Haselkamp, Herbert C. 86 8/27/24 Army Vietnam 48 Holthaus, Jack 88 8/26/24 Army Korea 67 Lake Henry Post 612 Note: He served as a tank driver. He was a past post commander. Johnson, Lloyd I. 10/4/24 Navy/Army Korea Albert Lea Post 56 89 60 Johnson, Omara W. 95 9/27/24 Army Korea Marshall Post 113 Jurgensen, Gary E. 88 10/7/24 Army 33 Round Lake Post 461 Korea Kennedy, Charles B. 58 9/20/24 Vietnam Army 58 Walker Post 134 Note: He was a past post commander. Kiewatt, Gerald A. 85 9/17/24 Navy Vietnam 41 Rochester Post 92 Note: He served 21 years in the Navy. 9/22/24 Army AF WWII Stewartville Post 164 King, Richard G. 101 36 Note: He trained as a gunner on both B-17 and B-29 bombers. 9/26/24 Knudtson, David L. Navy Korea 46 Northfield Post 84 7/15/24 Koch, Stanley L. 89 9 Rochester Post 92 Korea Navy Kohnen, Bernard W. 80 10/6/24 Army Vietnam 36 Caledonia Post 191 Krongard, Leslie E. 99 10/4/24 WWII 79 Army Bayport Post 491 Kukowski, John L. Jr. 93 9/30/24 Army Korea Greenbush Post 88 9/6/24 Larson, Glenn L. 101 WWII 16 Bagley Post 16 Army 9/20/24 Larson, Harlan C. 92 Navy Korea 16 Elk River Post 112 8/22/24 Navy 93 48 Willmar Post 167 Larson, Harold V. Korea

10/11/24 53 Owatonna Post 77 Larson, Larry R. Army Vietnam Note: He was stationed in Korea. Mpls. Gopher Post Larson, Wade A. 55 10/18/24 Army Panama/Gulf13

Note: He was 5th District commander 2020-22. He was post commander 2022-24 and 2014-16, in addition to other officer roles. He was a 2021 graduate of National American Legion College.

Lastine, Gaylen L. 92 10/15/24 Army Korea Austin Post 91 Leutink, Leonard Jr. 77 9/16/24 Army 33 Spring Valley Post 68 Vietnam Janesville Post 281 Lochner, Darwin J. 89 10/19/24 Army Korea 43 8/28/24 Navy Loewen, Robert D. 91 25 Austin Post 91 Korea Vietnam Lundquist, Scott A. 76 8/27/24 Army 46 Spicer Post 545 Note: He served as a medic in Germany. McCabe, Roger P. "Mac" 9/22/24 Lanesboro Post 40 Vietnam 81 Navy 41 9/19/24 Meyer, Alfred J. 94 Army WWII 46 Deer Creek Post 283 Vietnam Michalson, Thomas L. 76 9/22/24 Army 52 Tri-County Post 124 Mlynar, Edward L. 93 4/5/24 70 Lester Prairie Post 463 Army Korea

Note: He was past post adjutant and membership director. Vietnam Waseca Post 228 69 10/4/24 Navy 30 Moat, Les A.

Note: In civilian life, he worked for the Federal Bureau of Prisons and led a team that opened Federal Correctional Institution-Waseca. He stayed as general foreman until retirement in 2008.



Friesen



Wade Larson

Please consider donating to Nat'l Emergency Fund

Fall meetings at National HQ in Indianapolis were well-attended by the Minnesota delegation. Thank you to those of you who represented the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

A big thank-you to Al Davis on the fine job he did in giving the Baseball Report at the Americanism Commission.

Big news! The National Emergency Fund is in desperate need of donations. With two hurricanes and tornados in the Southeast, it's created a situation. So many individuals have lost everything and over 200 are dead. In speaking to one Legionnaire from North Carolina, they had over 30 inches of rain in one city.

So many Legionnaires and their families need help now. Several Legion post homes were damaged or gone. I ask each of you and your post to donate to the NEF now. We all remember the floods of East Grand Forks a few years ago. Make the check out to American Legion National Emergency Fund. Mail it to: The American Legion, Donation from in a while or not paid hour at the post? How about tive Committeeman.

National Report

Bill Barbknecht

Processing, P.O. Box 361626, their dues. Indianapolis, IN 462336-1626.

I was contacted by a fellow Minnesota veteran last week as he was having problems with having no hot water as his hot water heater went out. The county service officer recommended him to me. In return, I contacted our Fund 85 personnel and was able through Fund 85 to help him out with that. So, therefore, do not forget that Fund 85 is closer to home.

We in the American Legion are helping so many veterans in Minnesota also in need of our help. As Past National Commander Dan Seehafer would say "Character, Competence and Commitment.'

Are you and members of your post doing Buddy Checks? You need to go check out those members that you have not heard

Peggy Moon has been endorsed for alternate NECman

Moon has been a member of Post 560 for 48 years

and was awarded a life membership by her Post in 1997.

She has served as commander, adjutant, chaplain and was on the Post 560 Honor Guard. She served in the

On the district level, Moon served as commander,

vice commander, public relations chairman, children and youth chairman, and currently serves as command-

Air Force 1971-1974.

er's advisor.

by Kriesel-Jacobsen Post 560 in Zimmerman and the

6th District of Minnesota for the years 2025-2027.

they need some financial help.

are changing and saving lives as we did when we served.

The Fall Conference will be over when you read this. It was a very good conference. A big thank-you to national commander leading candidate Dan Wiley from Kansas for an inspiring speech on Friday. Wiley is a judge and a cattle rancher.

I hope you have your Veterans Day program scheduled. A coffee hour or a meal for all veterans on Nov. 11 this year.

Now is the time of year your post is going to hold events for your members. Have you ever had a Christmas Party, coffee

delivering membership cards and food to that needy Veteran in your commuity? That is what The American Legion is all about.

Helping all veterans, being kind to one another as we worked together in the military, so do it now for the good of the post, district, department and national.

A big thank you to the department staff. Program Coordinator Jennifer Kelley has been there for over 30 years. Membership Coordinator Misty Padilla is at 19 years. What dedication! Great job to all.

Go vote on Election Day if you have not voted already.

Donna and I look forward to seeing you throughout this American Legion year as we travel the state. If you have any questions, please call me 218-770-6264.

Bill Barbknecht of Fergus Falls Post 30 is the Department of Minnesota's National Execu-

On the department level, Moon has served as em-

ployment chairman, PR chairman, children and youth

chairman and vice commander. She served as member-

ship chairman 2009-2010 and commander 2014-2015. On the national level, she currently serves as our alter-

nate NECman, vice president for the Child Well-Being

Foundation Board of Directors (formerly known as the

Child Welfare Foundation) and as vice-chairman of the

50 years, have two daughters and six grandchildren,

all members of The American Legion Family.

She and her husband, Carl, have been married for

Children & Youth Council.

The American Legion

Department of Minn. Commander's Project

Department Commander Carl Moon's Project raises money for the Veterans Defense Project.

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

Make checks out to: Minnesota American Legion **Foundation** Memo: Fund 82.

Fund 82 is the fund for the Commander's Project. The foundation is a 501(c)3. Gambling funds are permitted.

Goal: \$60,000

Thanks to posts 24, 54, 104, 126, 149, 164, 191, 255, 328, 343, 443, 482, 555, 561, 627 and various individual donors.

Present: 17% at \$10,192

Click on the QR code below to donate over any cellphone.



Date of graphic: Oct. 30

Peggy

Empower Veterans, Play Pilot Games!

Peggy Moon endorsed for alternate NECman

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Let's get lots of Riders to the Pearl Harbor Rally

Legion Riders

With fall upon us, many of us Riders are hoping for a couple of more rides before we have to put our bikes away for the winter. The warm weather is holding on for a bit longer, so I hope you are all getting your wish for a couple of nice fall rides.

During the American Legion Department of Minnesota Executive Committee meeting at Fall Conference in St. Cloud, the Constitution and Bylaws for the American Legion Riders was ratified!

This document includes a Preamble consistent with the rest of the Legion Family. Also, as I shared in my last article, the Constitution and Bylaws excludes the use of a bottom rocker/bar/ribbon from wear on any Minnesota American Legion Rider vest.

This was discussed by all in attendance at both the Riders Convention in July and the Riders meeting

at the

Romp in September. The district representatives



voted to approve the Constitution and Bylaws before it was forwarded to the American Legion DEC for approval. Riders Secretary Shawn Davis will send the approved copy by email to all the Riders for whom we have contacts.

Please contact Davis (secretary@mnalr.org) if you would like a copy and you have not received one.

The Pearl Harbor Rally is on Dec. 7 at Spicer American Legion Post 545. This is a Legion Family gathering that is hosted by the American Legion Riders. Social hour will be at 11 a.m., lunch at noon, with a program to follow. I am looking forward to seeing many of our Legion Riders there as well as the rest of the Legion Family!

What plans does your chapter have to keep active during the winter? I know there are many chapter runs and fundraisers happening across the state and throughout the year. Please invite me to your events so I can see all the good things you are doing!

God bless and keep the rubber side down.

Jody Hassing of Bloomington Unit 550 is the director of the Minnesota American Legion Riders.

laps **Continued from Page 5**

Moberg, Gerald R. Marshall Post 113 9/4/24 Korea 72 Army Mock, Robert E. 10/2/24 Navy WWII Echo Post 204 Note: He was post commander 2001-09. Moe, Clarence L. 2/20/24 Marines Korea Clarissa Post 213 Moody, Roger J. Naatz, Harold D. 79 Anoka Post 102 6/7/24 Vietnam Navy 8/31/24 Air Force Cold 36 Austin Post 91 Nelson, Donald E. 87 9/10/24 49 Little Falls Post 46 Navy Korea Nester, Ilot C. 92 9/28/24 Korea Caledonia Post 191

Note: He worked on the bingo crew for over 34 years. Opatz, Jack T. 79 9/17/24 Navy Vietnam Holdingford Post 211 Note: He worked at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center for over 30 years, starting in the laundry department and ending

as a cook. Ostrem, Verlin A. Peters, Floran J. Worthington Post 5 10/5/24 Army Vietnam 4/22/24 Air Force Vietnam 54 Albert Lea Post 56

Peters. Robert C. Watkins Post 453 85 8/23/24 Army 37 Cold e was a past post commander. Note: He was instrumental in obtaining the tank at Watkins Memorial Park. H

Priebe, Larry J. 85 10/26/24 Air Force Vietnam Austin Post 91 Note: He was a member of the post honor guard. Quale, James L. 10/26/24 Air Force Aitkin Post 86 83 Vietnam

9/21/24 Air Force Austin Post 91 Richard, Lees H. Korea Rolloff, Keith L. 74 9/14/24 Army 40 New Ulm Post 132 Vietnam Note: He served in the Army Reserve and completed basic at Fort Ord, Calif.

Rueter, Joseph B. 10/24/24 Army Melrose Post 101 89 Vietnam 19 Bellechester Post 598 Schenach, Richard L. 9/17/24 Army Vietnam Seydel, Eugene R. 83 9/13/24 Air Force 39 Willmar Post 167 Vietnam Note: He served as a jet fighter crew chief. He was post commander 2012-14.

85

10/18/24 Navy Fairmont Post 36 Simser, James E. Vietnam 25 Solberg, Donald L. 9/29/24 Army Vietnam New Ulm Post 132 Solberg, Donald P. 9/8/24 94 45 Korea Zumbrota Post 183 Air Force 91 Sorum, Lyle C. 3/14/24 Navy Korea 37 Rosetown Memorial Post 542

Note: He served aboard the destroyer tender USS Shenandoah. Sparks, Larry R. 9/24/24 Army Vietnam 47 Hayfield Post 330 Note: He was trained as a medic.

Splichal, Donald H. Walker Post 134 10/4/24 Army Korea Note: He made 33 jumps as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division.

Stark, Ervin H. 102 9/16/24 Army AF WWII Mora Post 201 Note: In February 1943, he entered the Army Air Forces, with basic in Miami, then to mechanics school in Chicago (already having a degree in electrical welding before joining). The Army sent him to Matagorda Island, Texas, a

training center for pilots. In September 1945, he was reassigned to Leyte Island, Philippines. Vietnam Park Rapids Post 212 Stehr, Donald P. 6/19/24 Army Symanietz, Stanley A. 83 8/30/24 40 Holdingford Post 211 Army Vietnam Thompson, Donald O. 85 9/12/24 Army Vietnam 39 Nicollet Post 510

Note: He retired as a sergeant major. He served in Alaska, Korea, Germany, Vietnam and the continental U.S. He was a recipient of the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He was the longtime deputy veterans service officer for Nicollet County. He was a 30-year advocate for military retirees to receive federal veterans' benefits without compromising full retirement pay. His efforts, with the efforts of The American Legion and other groups, resulted in the VA's combat-related special compensation.

Walker, Richard D. 8/30/24 Army Vietnam Albert Lea Post 56 Walsh, William G. Sr. 62 Little Falls Post 46 94 Korea 10/1/24 Army Washington, Robert H. 79 5/24/24 Army Korea Bloomington Post 550 Wegner, Dennis B. 7 New Ulm Post 132 81 10/26/24 Navy Vietnam

Note: He served as an electronics technician. He was aboard destroyer escort USS Durant as part of Operation Deep Freeze in the South Pacific and Southern Ocean.

Weitzenkamp, Dennis D. 9/20/22 Army Vietnam Winthrop Post 314 10/11/24 Army 55 Weyrens, Hugo B. 95 Korea Waite Park Post 428

Note: He served 27 years in the Army, including the St. Cloud Reserve Center. He served the community as St. Joseph mayor and as a city councilor in the 1970s.

Willette, Roger F. 9/10/24 Army St. Paul Post 450 Note: He enlisted in the Army and served in Korea during the war. He then re-enlisted in the Army Reserves as a warrant officer.

Willmott, Raymond J. 79 9/9/24 Navy Vietnam 12 Owatonna Post 77

Note: He served aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Benjamin Stoddert.





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admin@greenviewmn.com





The 4th District held a bus tour of the post homes across the district on Oct. 15. Participants launched from Rosetown Memorial Post 542, then went to White Bear Lake Post 168, North St. Paul Post 39 and St. Paul Arcade-Phalen Post 577. Back row from left are Stu Sonnee of Squadron 577, John Weiss of Post & Squadron 577, 4th District Area 1 Vice Commander Josh Fowler of Post 577, Post 39 Adjutant Mickey Ostrum, Sandy Gibson of Unit 168, Department Vice Commander for Districts 4 & 5 Joe Jansen of St. Paul Christie-Deparq Post 406 and 4th District Sergeant-at-Arms Maliek Kamm of St. Paul Post 8. In front are 4th District Commander Jon Haworth of Post 406 and Jamie Brooks of Post 406.



In the front are the six disabled veterans who hunted at the John Zgoda Disabled Veteran Deer Hunt in early October. They are Paul Hassing of Montgomery, Dean Christenson of Wabasha, Lloyde Parker Jr. of Rochester, James Kelly of Wabasha, Carla Tappainer of Apple Valley and Robert Olson of Sandstone. In the other rows are guides and support staff. In the second row, from left, are Clint Betterman, Jody Hassing, Betty Jass, Sherri Neville and Department Vice Commander Veronica Fernlund. In the third row are Lloyd Schaeffer, Glenn Neville, Chuck Stone, Steve Bilderback, Matt Berens, Dave Bilderback, Laura Blue and Camp Manager Adam Felton. In the back by the Legionville sign are Dave Vulcan, Dave Arend Jr., Ted Berg and Gary Richardson.

Different hunters selected annually "Isst mnlegion.org, nover on "Events" then select "Hunting"

Continued from Page 1

involved, and they were well-known in the Legion and Legion Riders. He got posts and squadrons to bring meals. When Jim Kellogg of Adams Post 146 was American Legion Department of Minnesota commander in 2015-16, and he was among volunteers to help with skinning and gutting.

Dave Vulcan, one of the hunt's co-chairmen, said the Detachment of Minnesota (if you haven't figured it out yet, Legion says "department" for state level and SAL says "detachment") funded the hunt at first. These days, it's entirely funded by contributions. Posts can use gambling funds to donate to Minnesota American Legion Foundation, and enter Fund 54 in the memo.

Those donations in 2014 helped the detachment build what's called the SAL Shed at Legionville. That's where the organizers store equipment for the hunt, and that's where the deer are hung and drained. Equipment includes stands, shirts, chairs, roasters, fish friers, pop-up blinds, among other things, so they don't hog up space for Legionville's summer camp equipment.

The SAL supplies rifles if the disabled veteran doesn't have one. They have .243 rifles, and Federal Cartridge out of Anoka donates the rounds. You won't find the rifles stored in the shed, though.

Richardson, a member of Squadron and Post 507, has volunteered as a guide since 2016.

He is a past 3rd District Legion commander and is presently membership director for the SAL Detachment of Minnesota.

& Fishing.' This year disabled very there was a second commander and is presently membership director for the sale of the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently membership director for the second commander and is presently the second commander and the second commander and

Building deer stands has been part of the work the volunteers do every year. They have received donations from Menard's and Scheels. The volunteers, he said, show up on the Monday before the hunt and head into the woods with side-by-sides and golf carts to trim down the shooting lanes. The hunt takes place on Friday and Saturday.

The hunters arrive Thursday. Sunday is for taking down equipment. This year, the dates were Oct. 3-6.

Kellogg, who presently is a national vice commander, also gets kudos for supplying five heaters from his and other squadrons in southern Minnesota. He also knows a place to get good prime rib steaks at a reasonable price. Those are grilled up on Thursday night before the hunt.

Zgoda died on Jan. 10, 2012, at the age of 53 following a courageous battle with cancer. The detachment voted to name its annual deer hunt for him. Mattingly died a little after. Bill Stein passed in March 2016; Judy in May 2024.

"It just goes to show you what veterans and their supporters can accomplish for future veterans when we work together," Kellogg said.

Disabled veterans can apply for the John Zgoda Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt by going to mnsal.org and clicking on "Our Programs." Or they can

Aided by longtime guide Gary Richardson, Carla Tappainer shot a buck at the Zgoda Deer Hunt on Oct. 4.

visit mnlegion.org, hover on "Events" then select "Hunting & Fishing." shot it in the neck. We attended to it and were having a cup of coffee after a half hour because

This year, six guides took six disabled veterans hunting, and there was a dozen support staff. There are five co-chairs on the committee. They run the hunt: Dave Vulcan, Ted Berg, Lloyd Schaeffer, Dave Bilderback and Steve Bilderback. They try to select different hunters each year.

All of them talk at length about what a great time is had during the hunt.

"We've never had a hunter who didn't have a good time up here," Vulcan said.

Schaeffer added, "One year, we had a retired veterinarian who hadn't picked up a gun since he was in the military. He shot a big doe. He was thrilled."

Dave Bilderback, commander of Rochester Squadron 446, said the hunt is why he is involved with the SAL, "so we can help our veterans. It's one of the ways we can get our hands into it and help our veterans along."

Robert Olson of Sandstone was one of the hunters. He is a 75-year-old disabled veteran with Bruno Post 563.

"I've been hunting since 16. I just like doing it," he said. "If I try to do it by myself, I end up relying on Life Alert. But here, I have someone with me."

Disabled veteran Dean Christenson of Wabasha — who says he needs to join the Legion — shot the first deer of the hunt this year. He got it from a deer stand near the cell tower, which is way in the back of the 495-acre property.

He came to the hunt because his neighbor encouraged him to apply online. He and his neighbor were selected. Christenson can walk but has a bad back. He also deals with PTSD.

"I could have got my stuff out for hunting but it would've been difficult," he said.

He served in three deployments: Kosovo in 2004-05, Iraq in 2006-07 and Kuwait/Iraq in 2011-12. He bagged a doe with a 7 mm Remington. Matt Berens of Hopkins Post & Squadron 320 was his guide.

"I was facing west. Matt was facing east," Christenson said. "She stopped at 30 yards behind us, right on the deer trail, and I shot it in the neck. We attended to it and were having a cup of coffee after a half hour because the crew came and took it to the shed with a side-by-side. No meat was wasted."

Tappainer, a member of Apple Valley Post 1776 and the department membership director, got a young buck that same evening. In all, four of the six disabled veterans shot a deer.

Past Department Commander Paul Hassing was among them, getting a buck with seven minutes left before the end.



Paul
Hassing of
Montgomery
got a deer
on Oct.
5, seven
minutes
before they
were going
to wrap up.

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Minnesota American Legion Riders Director Jody Hassing laughs during a light-hearted moment while giving her report on Oct. 26 to the veterans attending the Fall Conference in St. Cloud. The Minnesota American Legion Department Executive Committee ratified the MNALR Constitution on Oct. 24.

Minn. Am. Legion Riders have constitution, bylaws

Continued from Page 1

nature and data of the Vietnam War could be had. Nevertheless, he said society demonized the Vietnam veterans, then the justice system treated them more harshly than the civilian population for the same offenses, studies have shown.

"We could not have done a much worse job with the Vietnam generation," Hunter said.

While 58,000 were killed in the Vietnam War, it is estimated another 50,000 have died by suicide, he said, and the figure would be higher if self-destructive behaviors are factored.

He called on the audience to think of the families impacted and the sheer cost of incarceration on taxpayers. Then he shifted to the present.

He said 2.6 million Americans have served in Iraq and Afghanistan wars, with around 500,000 suffering effects of PTSD, and 500,000 with traumatic brain injuries. He said the actual numbers are likely higher. The VA says the veteran suicide rate is 17 per day. However, he noted the true figure is higher, again, when including self-destructive behavior.

This includes 300,000 women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, with 20 percent diagnosed with PTSD from combat or military sexual trauma, Hunter said.

These were long wars fought without a draft, so the burden was not spread out among the American population. Servicemembers went on multiple deployments whether they liked it or not. The government sent in smaller forces than during Vietnam "and recycled troops again and again and again."

This, he noted, included the National Guard units. He mentioned the Minnesota National Guard's infamous "long deployment," a record 22-month finally become official. deployment by the 1st BCT of the 34th Infantry Division. It came as a result of extensions.

Hunter said the VA has expanded its capacity for psychological injuries. Three main barriers tend to prevent seeking help: 1. Superman syndrome, where the soldier feels 10 feet tall and bulletproof. 2. Survivor guilt. 3. Feeling shameful about getting help. Often, they will self-medicate with alcohol or possibly other drugs.

The Minnesota Legislature passed a law in 2008 asking — not telling — courts to consider military service when sentencing and whether getting help would be possible.

In Porter v. McCollum, the U.S. Supreme Court in 2009 overturned a Florfailed to consider military service.

That same year, Buffalo, N.Y., established the first Veterans Treatment Court. Minnesota, in 2011, started its own pilot program. Of the 87 counties in Minnesota, only 26 have veterans courts.

Under the guidance of former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Nebraska enacted a law in the spring called the Veterans Justice Act, much like Minnesota's 2021 law, to get veterans into an evidence-based treatment program.

"The system can do a better job with our veterans," Hunter said. "A dozen more states are looking to pass the same law. The snowball might be too big to keep up with.'

American Legion Family members are invited to register for the third annual Veterans Defense Project event at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, 1101 Harmon Place, Minneapolis, by RSVPing at veteransdefenseproject. org. Speakers include retired Maj. Gen. Johanna Clyborne and retired Gen. Joseph Votel.

Legion Riders

The Minnesota American Legion Riders now have a constitution and bylaws, rather than a standard operating procedure.

The American Legion Department of Minnesota Executive Committee, at its Oct. 24 meeting in St. Cloud, ratified the Minnesota ALR Constitution & Bylaws after making minor changes pertaining to verb tense and the position of road captain and the term American Legion Family.

Minnesota American Legion Riders Director Jody Hassing and Secretary Shawn Davis were glad to see the document they brought to Legion and Legion Riders meetings last summer President Lloyd Ricker.

with similar documents for the Legion, Auxiliary and SAL. A major change for the Minnesota Legion Riders is getting rid of the bottom rocker on vests.

Hassing shares more information in her column on Page 8.

Candidates for 2025

At the DEC meeting, candidates had the opportunity to announce. The 2025 candidates so far are:

- Bill Barbknecht, two-year term as National Executive Committeeman.
- Peggy Moon, two-year term as alternate NECman.
- Linda Dvorak, one-year term as

• Steve NaSalle, one-year term as ida death sentence because lower courts vice commander for districts 6 and 9.

• Karen Welander, one-year term as vice commander for districts 2 and 7.

Finance Committee

The total department budget for 2024-25 was set at \$1,314,260, with a projected income of \$1,263,220 and a deficit of \$50.40. The committee voted to leave the deficit in place because not all of the committees spend their entire budgets.

Plus, other sources of income, such as sponsorships, may come in, said Carl Hendrickson, who gave the Finance Committee report.

The department's investment portfolio, he said, stands at \$3,015,996.

Legionville

Legionville President Carl Moon reported that it has been operating at a deficit between \$45,000 and \$50,000 for the last two years. The budget projection for 2024-25 is \$48,350. As of Sept. 30, its operating balance was \$89,845. The board voted to take \$50,000 from the operating balance to balance the budget.

There will be six weeklong sessions of summer camp beginning June 15 and running through Aug. 1, with the possibility of expanding to Aug. 8 if

Other upcoming events are Work & Play Weekend May 15-18, Junior Fun Weekend Aug. 8-10, Camporee Sept. 4-7, Romp Sept. 11-14, Zgoda Deer Hunt Sept. 30-Oct. 5, and a new SAL Turkey Hunt two days prior to the deer hunt.

Foundation

The Minnesota American Legion Foundation has a net worth of \$1,848,540, said Foundation Board

The foundation made \$60,000 from Hassing said the document is in line interest and investments, and it distributed the money among its programs: \$1,000 to Minnesota American Legion Baseball, \$1,000 to the Fund for Hospitalized Veterans, \$200 to the John Zgoda Memorial Deer Hunt, \$1,000 to the Scouts Scholarships, \$1,000 to Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball, \$700 to ROTC Scholarship, \$1,500 to the Pheasant Dinner, \$1,500 to Nurses Scholarship, \$500 to Oratorical Scholarship, \$1,000 to Memorial Scholarship, \$2,000 to Minnesota Boys State, \$800 to Minnesota Disaster Relief, \$1,000 to Scout Council Assistance, \$6,000 to Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund, \$1,000 to the Disabled Veterans Outdoor Fund and \$500 to Junior Shooting Sports.

Continued on Page 11

OUTSTANDING ENLISTED AWARDS



Commander Carl Moon stands with the mother of Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Hayes. Diane Hayes of Detroit Lakes Unit 15 was 9th District president in 2010-11. Stacy Hayes, a member of Detroit Lakes Post 15, is in Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment, of the Minnesota National Guard in Moorhead. Go to Facebook.com/MNLegion to see more photos.



Moon presents the award to Chief Petty Officer Natasha Segelstrom with the Navy Reserve. She drills at the Navy Reserve Center in Minneapolis and is part of Navy Security Force for Rota, Spain. She is a member of Mora Post 201.



Moon presents the award to Sgt. Timothy J. Pacheco of the Detachment Support Company of Wahpeton, N.D., for the 4th Law Enforcement **Battalion with the Marine Corps Reserve.**



Moon presents the award to Spc. Kyra Heaton, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment, of the Minnesota National Guard. out of Moorhead. Any Legion member can submit nominations at mnlegion.org/nationalsecurity-foreign-relations/.



Foundation President Lloyd Ricker recognized Past Department Commander Paul Hassing for exceeding a goal of \$100,000 for the foundation's Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund. He raised \$151,893.

He said the foundation gave \$4,000 for a huge umbrella at the new Montevideo Veterans Home to replace little umbrellas the wind blew away. It also donated \$4,000 for a big umbrella at the Bemidji Veterans Home to replace the little ones. To even things out, the foundation gave \$4,000 to the Preston Veterans Home for miscellaneous needs.

Ricker said the foundation received a request from Montevideo. The architects and engineers put in tables that won't go up for wheelchairs. The foundation purchased four tables that will go up and down for the recreation area and dining.

Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund

Better known as Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 85, the MVAF gave out \$142,549 in assistance to Minnesota veterans in the past fiscal year, Ricker said.

Adjutant Mike Maxa added that around 53 veterans were helped.

The program has given more than \$380,000 in aid to Minnesota veterans since its inception in fall 2021, Maxa said.

Assistant Department Service Officer Janet Lorenzo said the application is found at the department website (mnlegion. org) under "Veteran Services." She said all required documents must be sent in to be approved.

"A lot of people worked hard to raise this money," she said. "We need to be guardians of this fund."

Posts that donate to Fund 85 can count it as Code A2 under the Gambling Control Board's codes for lawful purpose expenditures. A2 is for offsetting the effects of poverty, homelessness or disability.

Membership

Minnesota sits in fifth place nationally, said Membership Director Carla Tappainer. She wore waders because she was "fishin' for veterans." She noted Commander Moon's pin is fishing, too.

She said districts at 75 percent by the Pearl Harbor Rally Dec. 7 will get the Crappie Award. If they are lower, they get the Carp Award.

Tappainer has a bet with the Wisconsin membership director: Whoever is behind by the Dec. 29 Vikings-Packers game has to come to the other's convention and tell them how wonderful the other state is.

Chaplain Kelley Adelsman said a reason to belong to The American Legion is it is the only organization that was able to unite north and south. She said many had tried and failed in the decades after the Civil War. It wasn't until The American Legion came along in 1919 that the country came together behind support for veterans who had fought in World War I.

PUFL credits

Letters will go out in mid-November to post membership directors regarding credits posts receive for PUFL members.

"Posts that exclusively process membership online will be provided a form to complete to request a check to



Scan this QR code to nominate an enlisted servicemember for the Minnesota **American** Outstanding Legion **Enlisted Awards.**

pay out their credit balance," said Membership Coordinator Misty Padilla. "Those that mail in transmittals will be able to deduct their credit from the transmittal total."

She encouraged membership directors to watch the mail for the letters.

Grouper

It was announced there is a social fitness platform called Grouper aiming to enhance mental and physical health among veterans. It will pay people who enroll \$50, which can be used to cover American Legion memberships, by staying active and socializing with friends.

Grouper has partnered with The American Legion. Members can enroll at hellogrouper. com/al.

'The whole purpose is to get members out and about," said Commander Carl Moon.

Blood drive

The chairman of the Blood Committee, Terry Larson of Forest Lake Post 225, organized a blood drive for the Thursday afternoon when people arrived for the conference. The drive had a goal of 25 units. Thirty-one people donated for a total of 29 units.

He said the Blood Committee intends to make the Thursday afternoon blood drive a regular feature of the Fall Conference.

Minnesota Boys State

The program in 2024 had 159 delegates and 34 staff. Giving the report was Joe Bares of Jordan Post 3. He said the program continues to recover from reduced attendance during the pandemic, which is in line with other Boys State programs across the nation.

The programs' board is looking at building additional time for camaraderie among delegates and other ways to improve Boys State.

Charter turn-ins

The DEC accepted the charter turn-ins for Gilbert Post 138 and Euclid Post 539.

Board of Publications

The DEC appointed Steve Fosness, commander of Fairmont Post 36, to fill a vacant spot on the Board of Publications, which oversees The Minnesota Legionnaire.

Leading candidate

Dan Wiley is a district court judge in Kansas who, on the side, raises Angus cattle. He is an Air Force veteran, a member of Leavenworth, Kan., Post 23, a member of Oskaloosa, Kan., Squadron 36 and the leading candidate for American Legion national commander.

He is a past Department of Kansas commander and currently the NECman from Kansas. He has served in several roles at the post, district. department and national levels.

His wife, Sonia, and their children, Austin and Christy, are all members of the Legion

Wiley said it is important for candidates to make visits and learn from Legionnaires across the country. He encouraged commanders of all levels to tour their area.

"Be the leader that communicates. It elevates the people around them, which elevates the post, the district, the department," Wiley said. "You cannot put out enough information for people who crave knowledge."

He encouraged members to be aware of veterans in crisis. Be the one to prevent suicides.

"People say we're not going to save everybody. True. We are not going to save everybody. But we are going to save somebody, and that somebody is worth saving," Wiley said.

The American Legion is the leading voice for veterans in Congress. He said no bill on veterans gets passed without the support of the Legion. He encouraged people to go to legion.org/action and tell their senators and representatives how they feel on veterans issues.

The next national commander election is in late August at the 106th National Convention in Tampa, Fla.

SAL national vice commander

Sons of The American Legion National Vice Commander Mike Monserud of Iowa was impressed that the SAL Detachment of Minnesota holds an annual disabled veterans deer hunt.

He pointed his time at the podium toward the Be the One campaign. He said the Legion and Columbia University have partnered to provide online training for veteran suicide prevention. Search for "Be the One training," and the first result should pop up.

Legionnaire of the Year, Rider of the Year

Each year, the SAL Detachment of Minnesota awards a Legionnaire of the Year and a Rider of the Year.

Tenth District Commander Kristy Janigo of Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 was announced as Legionnaire of the Year. She is the chairwoman of the Department Legislative Committee.

Ted Berg of Springfield Post 257 was named the Rider of the Year. He is the immediate past director of the Minnesota American Legion Riders and presently serves as road captain.

Minnesota Legion College

The Training Committee's Paul Edwards encouraged members to send new Legionnaires and potential officers to Minnesota American Legion College. The next session is at Camp Ripley April 24-27. The deadline to register is April 1.

Participants must first take American Legion Basic Training for free at legion.org/alei. Visit mnlegion.org/legion-college/ to apply for Min-

nesota Legion College. Edwards said the Training Committee also can come to posts to give instructions about Legion matters. His email is pd-

edwards@charter.net.

The SAL Update:



The Sons of The American Legion annually name a Legionnaire of the Year and Rider of the Year. The awards are announced at the Fall Conference. Above, from left are, SAL National Vice Commander Mike Monserud, Rider of the Year Ted Berg of Springfield Post 257, SAL Detachment Commander John Weiss, Legionnaire of the Year Kristy Janigo of Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 and SAL Adjutant Jason Voss. Janigo is dressed in a Wonder Woman costume in order to win a bet with 4th District Commander Jon Haworth. Berg and Janigo were recognized for their participation in many aspects of the Legion at the state and local levels.

Leadership can be hard to define

Greetings, Minnesota American Legion Family. I hope you all had an enjoyable Halloween and are now looking forward to seeing family and friends during Thanksgiving.

I'd like to thank all of you who came to Dee Dee Buckley's celebration of life and even those of you who could not attend for many and varied personal reasons and yet had good thoughts in you for Dee Dee. Thank you all for your love and support. I truly do appreciate you all, my Minnesota American Legion Family.

So, the subject of this month's column is ... leadership!

Yes, I know that the dictionary has a definition in it. But do we know what it is? I know that we know what bad leadership is, as that becomes evident over time, but do we know what good leadership is? I can cite many examples of good leadership, Dee Dee Buckley being one of them. You all know plenty of examples in your own lives and even down through history.

I look to the prior leaders of the American Legion Family for

Detachment commander **John Weiss**

my inspiration and as examples to me. So, to follow. The one thing that we must remember is that our leaders are human and as humans we make mistakes. Making a mistake isn't so bad, as long as we take responsibility for the mistakes that we make and endeavor to not repeat those mistakes. So, accountability of self and

to the membership is a primary tenet of good leadership.

The next indicator of good leadership is follow-through.

It's simple, really. If you say that you are going to do it, just do it. Otherwise, don't make the commitment to do something.

My dad, from whom I get my SAL eligibility, always used to say, "If you are going to take on a job, do it to the best of your abilities and then you have no

Dee Dee used to say that very same thing. Well, actually, all of my mentors have made that same point one way or another

paraphrase a Supreme Court jus-"It's tice,

hard to define but you'll know it when you see it." When it comes to leadership, that's the way it is.

Page 11

I'll leave you with another quote (borrowed from Paul Hassing): "May you be proud of the work you do, the person you are, and the difference you make!"

With a new year, I have a new theme. SAL commanders serve two years now, not one. My second-year theme is "Stepping Up For Veterans."

Yours in service,

John Weiss of St Paul Arcade-Phalen Squadron 577 is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion. His theme is "Stepping Up For Veterans.



Shawn Davis/Minneapolis-Richfield Squadron 435

The Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Minnesota hosted the Harvest Rally at Fridley Post 303 on Sept. 21. This was the first year in many years that it wasn't held in conjunction with the Camporee at Legionville. Commander Carl Moon had the same problem all commanders of all levels seem to have — remembering to tap the gavel so people can sit down. Assisting Commander Moon in this effort are Auxiliary President Judy Ackerman and Detachment Membership Director Gary Richardson.

Listening Post



Erling Berger celebrates 70 years with Alexandria Post 87 on May 21. Erling passed away June 10. Presenting the framed certificate is Commander Charlie Olson.



Forgive the fuzzy photo. The Minnesota American Legion Family Brain Science Foundation awarded scholarships to Samantha Brunson, right, and Rebecca Younk, left. At center is Foundation President and Past Department Commander Mike Schaffer of Currie Post 322. (Editor's note: Forgiven.)



Minneapolis Falldin Post 555 delivers school supplies to Valley View Elementary School in Columbia Heights on Sept. 12. In the picture, from left, are Adjutant Ray Eiden, Commander Donovan Orttel and Principal Jason Kuhlman.



Fairmont Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness thanks Ray "Bubba" Sorenson for designing and painting the Martin County Freedom Rock, sponsored by Post 36. The American Legion rock is in recognition of all veterans and depicts Post 36 namesake WWI KIA Lee C. Prentice, an Army soldier from Fairmont, and also pictured is WWII Silver Star recipient Maj. Gen. August Larson, a Marine from Sherburn.



Minneapolis Falldin Post 555 received gratitude from the Ukrainian American Center in Northeast Minneapolis for a flag-dedication ceremony the post performed. From left, in the center of the photo, are Commander Donovan Orttel, Adjutant Ray Eiden, Ukrainian American Center Outreach Manager Iryna Petrus, Sergeant-at-Arms Mel Robinson and Chaplain Fred Schilling.



Alexandria Post 87 Commander Charlie Olson presents a 60-year framed certificate to member Gary Swendsrud on May 21.



Marietta Post 156 Commander Lyndon Fitzpatrick, left, presented member Duane Jurgens with a certificate and 70-year continuous membership pin. Jurgens has been very active in the Legion including being a part of the Marietta American Legion Honor Guard and he still helps with the monthly pork chop suppers. Duane turned 94 in July.



During a recent visit to North St. Paul Post 39 as part of the 4th District Leadership Tour, Commander Jon Haworth talks with World War II veteran Bob Holmstrom about his book, "Warbirds in the Cloak of Darkness." The book is a true story of Holmstrom's experiences as a member of a B-24 bomber flight crew flying secret nighttime missions as part of "Operation Carpetbagger," dropping supplies, propaganda and agents to resistance fighters in Europe. At 98, Holmstrom is the oldest member of Post 39.

November 2024

Listening Post





Above are images from the Fallen Heroes Football Game held Oct. 4 in New London. On the left, colors were presented by New London, Spicer, Glencoe and Silver Lake American Legion families and the New London Scouts and Cub Scouts. On the right, a huge U.S. flag was displayed by the New London and Spicer fire departments.



Here is the New London & Spicer Color Guard at the SpiceFestForVets event held on Sept. 21 in Spicer. Proceeds went to the Eagle's Healing Nest.





Raymond Post 420 Adjutant Larry Macht, left, and Post Commander Ron Schueler, right, visit with the post's World War II member, Elmer Kienitz, on his 98th birthday.



Herb Gager Post No. 581, entirely comprised of residents of the Minneapolis Veterans home, recently organized a cookie sale to benefit their fellow Minneapolis Veterans Home Residents. Proceeds from the sale were used to sponsor a lively bingo session. The initiative brought joy and camaraderie to the veterans, with Post 581 demonstrating the strong community spirit that exists within the home. They created a memorable event for all involved. Post 581 continues to showcase the power of veterans helping



George C. Johnson Post 460 in Russell held its annual membership drive on Sept. 20. Members of St. Michael Post 567 participated in the Daze & Knights Parade on Aug. 10.





Doug Taube/Farmington Post 189

From left are Farmington American Legion Baseball Coach Kevin Conrad, Farmington Post 189 Commander Jeremy Plaster and Church of St. Michael Father Nicholas Froehle. They participated in the induction of Father David Moran into the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Hall of Fame on Sept. 29 at the Parish Fall Festival. The Div. I State Tournament Sportsmanship Award, which Conrad is holding, is named for Moran.

Legion Baseball acknowledges one of its founders with HOF induction

By Tim Engstrom

FARMINGTON — Father David Moran was the very first baseball director from the 3rd District. District.

Baseball directors also serve on the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Committee. He was instrumental in establishing Legion Baseball across the 3rd District and the state of Minnesota. Today, the Div. 1 State Tournament's sportsmanship trophy is named for Father Moran.

Just two years ago, Farmington Post 189's team won the Father Moran Sportsmanship Trophy. This year, Farmington Post 189 Tigers won the Div. 1 state championship. They went on to represent Minnesota in the regional tournament in West Fargo.

Most folks might not realize this, but Minnesota American Legion Baseball has been around since 1923, and its postseason tournament started in 1926. The Minnesota State High School League's state baseball tournament didn't begin until 1947. American Legion Baseball is the world's oldest youth baseball program, thanks to people like Father Moran.

Moran's grave has an American Legion emblem carved into the stone. He was born Feb. 4, 1881, and died March 9, 1944. The tomb says, "Pastor, Humanitarian, Legionnaire" and it says, "Dedicated to his memory by the Legionnaires of the State of Minnesota." He was the priest for Church of St. Michael, and he was revered – much so that the cross that was atop St. Michael's old church at Fifth and Walnut streets from 1903 to 2002 now adorns his grave in St. Michael's Catholic Cemetery (see photo).

Moran wasn't just about baseball. He was instrumental in the early American Legion, attending conventions around Minnesota. Following the Austin Convention in 1929, newspaper Austin Herald wrote an article about the election of the state commander. It says, "Father David Moran, a Catholic, nominated Stafford King, a Mason of high degree, for department commander." The story says there were two other candidates and noted how nominees and nominator backgrounds didn't seem to matter. The implication of the newspaper story was that the Legion was about being veterans, regardless of differences. Father Moran clearly liked that about The American Legion. Stafford King went on to win the election. post commander at Deer River Post 122 and at Legion Baseball."



Father David Moran's grave at the Church of St. Michael Cemetery in Farmington.

St. Paul Post 8.)

Farmington Post 189 began on Sept. 22, 1919, and elected its first officers in 1920. Though Moran was active in the Legion across the district and state, he didn't take an office at the post level until 1931. Moran served as service officer from 1931 to his death in 1944. The post service officer's job is to provide expert assistance free of charge to veterans and their families, often linking them to where they can find help with their situation. I am certain he helped many veterans in the Farmington area.

For his service to American Legion Baseball and to The American Legion, the Minnesota Baseball Committee voted in 2022 to induct him into the Hall of Fame in 2023, but the ceremony was postponed to fall 2024.

Farmington Post 189 Commander Jeremy Plaster, Past Commander Douglas Taube and coach Kevin Conrad, along with the entire staff and congregation of the Church of St. Michael, deserve credit for their roles in making this honor

The list of Hall of Fame inductees is printed near the back of the Minnesota American Legion Rulebook each year. The rulebook is downloadable as a PDF at minnesotalegionbaseball.com (King had been a past state adjutant and former or can be viewed on the mobile app "Minnesota



The plaque given to the Church of St. Michael will be hung inside the structure. The church is at 22120 Denmark Ave., Farmington.



Motorcycles and people fill the parking lot for the 11th annual Ride for the Stones in Clearwater County.

Ride for the Stones raises \$19,000

By Pamela French

BAGLEY — The 11th Annual Clearwater County "Ride for the Stones" was a huge success, breaking the previous record of money raised from over \$16,000 last year to over \$19,000 this year.

On Saturday, Aug. 31, the weather was sunny but a bit windy, yet riders came out in large numbers. When the ride took off at noon from the American Legion Irvin Blix Post 16 in Bagley, there were 122 bikes, with a total of 180 riders.

The ride continued throughout Clearwater County, making a couple stops along the way for breaks. The ride ended back at Post 16 at 4 p.m.

Once back, the riders were treated to an "allyou-can eat" pulled barbecue pork dinner with all the fixings, which was included in the price of the ticket to participate in the ride. Non-riders were able to join the festivities for a small fee. There was a raffle as well; that's always a crowd favorite.

The raffle included numerous items from individuals and businesses all over Northern Minnesota. Attendees could purchase tickets for the individual item or items they hoped to win.

All proceeds from the ride, the dinner and the raffle go toward the purchase of paver stones for veterans who served in the military from World War I through the present and are laid to rest in a Clearwater County cemetery. These are deceased veterans who have no family to purchase stones in their honor.

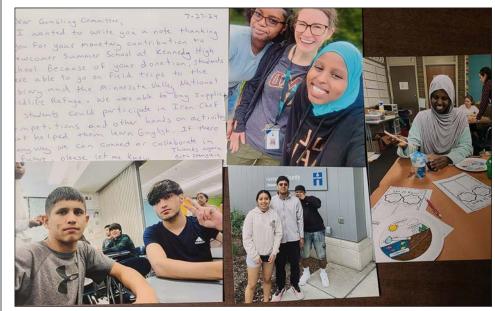
Each paver stone costs about \$200. The veterans name and branch of service is engraved on each stone. The stones are then placed in the Clearwater County Veterans Memorial in Bagley. Each year after the ride, the name of each veteran without a paver stone are drawn at random, and \$19,000 will buy a lot of pavers!

In 2024 the Clearwater County Veterans Memorial was re-dedicated after the completion of the wall depicting a veteran (each veteran is raised off the wall) from each branch of the military, located on the northeast wall of the memorial site.

Visitors to the memorial are able to walk the grounds of this inspiring memorial and view the pavers laid. Additionally, visitors may use the kiosk located on the northwest side of memorial to search for specific veterans and where their stone is located.



The 12th annual "Ride For the Stones" will be Aug. 30. 2025. Mark your calendars! Let's break \$20,000!



Because of budget cuts, a Bloomington Schools program to teach newcomers English during the summer months was short \$3,000 in funding. Bloomington American Legion Post 550 provided the money to the school district so the program could continue. This is an example of the good that charitable gambling performs.

Listening Post



Minnesota Junior Shooting Sports Chairman Carl Wilson, left, receives a \$200 check from Redwood Falls Post 38 Dennis Kissner for the Minnesota American Legion Foundation's Fund 87. Post 38 held a Junior Legion Shooting Sports familiarization and fun shoot for members of the American Legion Family. Posts sponsored members of the Legion, Auxiliary, Legion Riders and Sons of the American Legion. Registration fees were dedicated to Fund 87, which supports the Minnesota American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program. Top shots were 7th District Commander Carl Wilson of Brandon Post 278, Post 38 Rider Kevin Kvistero, Post 278 Auxiliary member Hope Wilson and Squadron 38 member Jerry Ludwig. Post 38 will start its Junior Shooting Sports program in November. Any youth 12-18 may participate. For more information, contact Post JSS coach Jerry Ludwig at illudwig@arvig.net.



Chip Manson/Spicer Post 545

In back from left are Spicer Post 545 Finance Officer Doug Dietz, Service Officer Keith Seidler, Adjutant Norm Malacek. In front seated are Vietnam veteran Gary Dietz, and SAL Squadron 545 member Noah Dietz.

'I answered the phone'

By Chip Manson

Unusual as I often do not answer calls from private or unknown people. I wait to see if they leave me a message. This time I answered the phone — and I'm so glad I did!

On the line was a lady that sounded quite desperate. It turns out she lived in the Twin Cities, and her mother lives in Arizona. Her disabled Vietnam veteran dad was in need of help. Unfortunately, the family was not getting much support through official channels.

I ended up on a conference call with the daughter and ex-wife. The veteran had to move into an apartment in our area. They could not find any help, and they needed to find furniture for him.

I'm proud to say Spicer Post 545 stood up!

We picked up furniture the family purchased from a Habitat for Humanity Restore, stopped at my favorite furniture store and the manager gave me a big discount for a bed and mattress, and arranged with American Legion members to help deliver and set up the gathered items.

I'm proud to say our post purchased and donated the bed and mattress. (It's very hard to find used beds and mattresses!)

The veteran was very grateful for what we did for him. He became a member of our post! After all was said and done, I received this message from the daughter:

"Dear Commander Chip and American Legion Volunteers,

"Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Your time, assistance and all your efforts you spent helping our disabled Vietnam veteran father on Sept. 20 did not go unnoticed. You went above and

beyond in organizing volunteers to assist our dad to get settled in. We had checked other resources within the Kandihoyi County for the veterans in the area but had doors closed in our face.

"With your broad knowledge, Chip, you helped us with locating him items, giving our dad the sense of being home. Your help and assistance were so heartfelt and overwhelming because of our dad's situation. You and your team stepped forward to support another veteran in need. When we had no idea where to turn, you took us under your wing. Forever will we be so grateful and thankful throughout this process.

"Since dad has taken over being a new renter, and one thing we didn't share with you was that prior to you guys arriving, our father was sleeping n the floor. We have finally had a chance to if he is all settled into his new place and he is so happy and restful. It's the happiest we have seen him in a long time. This brings tears to our eyes because his exact words were, "this is the best sleep I've had in a long time." Commander Chip and your team, it is literally all because you guys took time out of your busy schedule to help out another brother in need. We are so glad we decided to make the call to you last week because without any of this, none of this would have been possible. Our father would have not been one to have reached out because of his pride. But we are so glad we reached out for him because we feel as if he has met some very awesome people that can be lifelong friends.

"With miles separating each of us, we were not able to be there in person, together we made this journey happen. Someday our wish is to thank you face to face as you have really touched our hearts."



Members of Woodbury Post 501 participated in the Woodbury Days Parade in August.



On Tuesday, Aug. 13, the Walker American Legion Riders Chapter 134 visited the new Minnesota Veterans Home in Bemidji. The visit included a donation of two big-screen TV sets with mobile stands. This donation was decided upon after conferring with the staff and learning some of the needs. Not only was the donation meaningful, it was also a solution to enhancing the facility's portability of educational and entertainment programming anywhere in the facility.



Presenting the donation is Chapter 134 Director Brad Taylor. He is presenting to Bemidji Veterans Home Recreational Therapy Director Dawn Huseby.



In back from left are Fred Otto, Ron Benesh, Steve Hoopman, Brad Taylor, Rob Albrecht. In front are Nancy Albrecht, Deb Benesh, Bobbi Taylor, Patty Whade and Mark Whade. Walker ALR Chapter 134 takes great pride in supporting veterans. The chapter recommends veterans to take a tour of the home if they are in the area.

District commanders



1st District **Mark Maloney III**

As I am sitting here thinking organizaabout what to say in my November article, all that comes to mind is that the holidays are coming, and we have some members who are not with family. We should help each and every one in the 1st District feel like they are with family, for that is what made us who we are — our military family, then our veteran family.

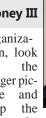
Yes, we hear a lot about PTSD. Yes, there are many stages of it.

When we put our hand on a hot stove, we learned not to touch the stove again. But with combat, they often didn't have a choice to go again. They may not have thought about or fully realized their inner wounds yet.

I know there are many causes of PTSD, and I would like to talk about the PTSD caused by combat. What a person sees firsthand makes you think they were tough, but you don't know what they had to do just to survive. We the veteran population dwindling in this country and changing in how we treat veterans, we need to make The American Legion a pleasant place to be. Reduce the fighting. Reduce the picking each other apart over little things.

So let us remember that if you are an officer of this than mutual helpfulness?

tion, look bigger picture stop



personal politics because the personal politics are ripping The American Legion apart. To those who don't think that because you have a disability or condiction, think again. This article was written by a person who has a brain disability I am also the district commander for the second year. My goal is to reduce drama and focus on our

If you think you can't do it because of your disability, think again, and remember most people in history had disabilities. In spite of them, they did great things. It is OK to not be OK. Check on one another. We are our brother's keeper.

We are open to all religions, and if you are Christian, I remind you that Christ died for our sins. He does not keep score, so why do we need to keep score? How hard is it to one help another? We say it at the end of the Preamble, "to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

What can be more Legion-like



6th District Frank Grittner

Greetings from the Big 6th District.

As I write this, it looks like we are finally turning the page heading into fall. The leaves have turned and cleanup has begun. It seems like every time we get the leaves picked up, we get another windy day, and they all come back.

Oh well, that's one of the many reasons I love the state of Minnesota. Just when you think you are getting used to the weather, it changes.

The American Legion year is in full swing. I am thoroughly enjoying all the membership dinners and events going on around the Big 6th District. It is such a privilege and pleasure getting out to our posts and being able to meet the leadership and members out there.

There is so much good work going on that it recharges my batteries to see it all. I keep getting to see what a vital part our posts and members play in our communities.

By the time this reaches you, the Minnesota Department Fall Conference and Halloween will be over. Hopefully everyone

had a wonderful time and learned

things at the conference and had a safe trip home.

I also hope that all the little ghosts, goblins and superheroes had a wonderful time. Next up many will be headed out for various hunting trips. I wish all hunters a safe and successful hunt.

As of Oct. 16, our membership efforts are going well as we are at 66.62 percent. While we are on track and ahead of the schedule that has been published, we still have a lot of work to do. I know that together we can accomplish great

One other reminder is that we are heading into the holiday season. Let's make extra sure we are checking in on folks. This can be a lonely time, so let's be sure that everyone is remembered.

Until next time from the Grittner family to all of you, have a safe, happy Thanksgiving. Remember to Be the One!



A message about stressful times, suicides and youth programs

National Commander

James LaCoursiere Jr.

To my fellow Legionnaires in Minnesota, The American Legion is America's voice for veterans. We are that voice not because of any statements that I make from national headquarters but because of the work performed daily in posts and communities throughout your department.



When hurricanes, floods and tornadoes devastated much of the southeast, Legion Family members from coast-to-coast collected supplies and relief items to support those in need. Donations to our National Emergency Fund increased as generous Americans reached into their pockets to help people who, in some cases, lost everything. I'm asking that you continue to show compassion and remember that re-building and recovery doesn't take days or weeks, but months and years.

Stressful times require us to be even more vigilant in conducting frequent buddy checks. Not only can a buddy check potentially save a life, but the interaction can strengthen bonds and foster close friendships.

The American Legion has no greater priority than the prevention of veteran suicide. I urge you to visit www.BeTheOne.org for the latest about our mission to save lives. On our website, you can read about The American Legion's partnership with Columbia University. We have joined forces with their mental health experts in developing training to interact with and respond to veterans who may be in crisis. You can register on the website for a free online training session. Facilitators use role-play and open discussion to identify warning signs for high-risk individuals.

Whether your post excels in youth programs, or you focus on transitioning veterans, just know that you have a national commander who is constantly impressed by the fantastic contributions and tireless work put forth by American Legion Family members throughout your department.

I thank you for your service to America and The American Legion. Best wishes for a productive conference.

For God and Country.



9th District **Steve NaSalle**

Hello, Roaring 9th District home but American Legion Family!

Welcome to October 2024, which comes with fall right around the corner. With that in mind, let's remember to stay on top of our membership goals. Let's keep things moving in the right direction as we move into the fall and winter months.

In addition, this is a good time for planning future fall and winter events for successful fundraising opportunities. Remember, teamwork is still your best key to moving forward into the future, and success.

Let's continue to be mindful of our members who are homebound or in assisted-living facilities and remember our Buddy Checks. Remember our Mid-Winter will be held at our Warren post on Jan. 11, 2025, so if you are traveling a long distance, please plan ahead for

As always, please be safe during your travels. Please visit our 9th District Facebook page or our 9th District newsletter for updates.

Just a note: Last year, as your sages. God bless you all! district commander, my projwhich had a great turn out, but that we can do? Please contact ect was to raise money for our Fergus Falls Veterans Home. However, this year, I am raising

our Honor Flight well.

Since I had to

two spinal surgeries this year, my travels will be a bit limited, and I apologize for any inconvenience. Therefore, I am asking each post, who wishes to donate to my Commander's Projects, to present it to me at our district mid-winter conference or our district convention.

Otherwise, you may mail it to me directly to my home. As you may know, spinal surgeries are very hard to recover from quickly, and it takes time for your nerves to heal. However, I do plan on making post visits throughout out district as much as I am able. I appreciate everyone's understanding.

A special thank you to all of you that kept my wife and I in your prayers during and after my surgeries. We truly appreciate all the calls, and text mes-

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless."

Hennepin County's announce—
ment of reaching the federal

In service. Sherry Anderson



10th District **Kristy Janigo**

It's been a busy American govern-Legion year so far, but I'm having a lot of fun, and I hope

Since my last article, I've been to a lot of places: Fridley for their Early Bird Dinner, Chester Bird (Golden Valley) for an event honoring Hennepin County Sheriff's Deputy Jennifer Lacy, Princeton for an omelet breakfast, Anoka for the Halloween parade, and Osseo for the Trunk or Treat. I'll be keynote speaker for the Anoka post Veterans Day event, and I'm planning to attend several others.

Veterans issues have made the news several times the past couple of months. The Minneapolis VA Medical Center broke ground on the Women's Clinic in September. You may have heard me on MPR or KARE-11 talking about its significance.

ment of reaching the federal

United States Interagency Council

on Homelessness (USICH) definition of an effective end to veteran homelessness.

For my day job, I am a frontline worker in this space. I want to thank the posts which came alongside me to serve homeless and justice-involved veterans with emergency funding from your gambling revenues. This is your victory, too. We'll continue to serve our veterans with steadfast support.

Last month, I sat down with Every Third Saturday founder Tom McKenna and veteran advocate Eric Geesaman to record a podcast about veterans health, benefits, and building a strong community. Sup-You may also have seen port my commander's project



3rd District Joe Tappainer

separate

The summer is over, and the that it was membership races are hot and heavy. The 2nd District was in first place at the Fall Conference, and the 3rd District was in fifth place. However, it is early had such a and we have a few months to go. The percentages are very close. We hope to catch up.

sit on our haunches. We need to hit the 1982s and 1982ADs. The races are important, but it is more important to help the struggling posts.

The vice commanders should be trying to visit each post at least once by the midwinter get-togethers. It is understood that that is not possible in some areas because posts meet on the same night; however, that doesn't stop you from picking up the phone and talking to that post you can't visit. Stay ahead of the game by being proactive and contacting each and every



great time at Camporee! That is something to consider.

Do these rallies serve a pur-That doesn't mean we can pose anymore? They cost time and money. Do we really get a return on investment or are these rallies just a remnant from the past? Before MyLegion.org, these rallies were the place to

turn in membership. Eight years ago, commanders were pushing to not hold onto the membership to turn in at the rallies but mail it in right away. Then six years ago the push was to use MyLegion.org. So, the question I put before you is: Do the rallies still serve a purpose? Do we get a good return on investment?

This is something that we should talk about and discuss. I attended the Harvest Rally, Are there possibly other events many of the people didn't like it me if you have any ideas!

money, not only for the veterans Respectfully yours in service, BETHEUNE

JOIN THE **AMERICAN** LEGION AT MNLEGION. ORG



JUDY ACKERMAN Northrup PRESIDENT

Minnesota's 2024-25 Dept. Leadership Team





ROBIN DORF Monticello 1ST VICE PRESIDENT



LINDA KELLY
Pine Island
2ND VICE PRESIDENT



JEAN WALKER Warren NEC REPRESENTATIVE



RALEEN TOLZMANN Minnesota Lake ALTERNATE NEC REP



ROBIN OLSON Winnebago SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



VIDA BACON New Ulm CHAPLAIN



PATTI COLEMAN Lino Lakes HISTORIAN



CHRISTIE AVANT Lino Lakes SECRETARY



SHANNON BROWN
Coon Rapids



SHARON CROSS Bemidji PAST PRESIDENT

District Presidents



MICHELLE WEAVER La Crescent DIST. 1 PRESIDENT



KOLLETT KAEHLERT Mankato DIST. 2 PRESIDENT



TAMARA THAYER Elysian DIST. 3 PRESIDENT



SANDRA GIBSON White Bear Lake DIST. 4 PRESIDENT



CARI LAMB
Minneapolis
DIST. 5 PRESIDENT



DORI HAMILTON Kimball DIST. 6 PRESIDENT



SANDY WERSAL Ashby DIST. 7 PRESIDENT



TAMARA MARTIN Duluth DIST. 8 PRESIDENT



DONNA RAE JACOBSON Clearbrook DIST. 9 PRESIDENT



BETHANY DICKERT Fridley DIST. 10 PRESIDENT

The Auxiliary Bulletin

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President Sharon Cross • Secretary Christie Avant, christie@mnala.org

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November 2024

It was great hosting national president

October has gone by in a blink of an eye. Let's recap what has happened in the last four weeks or so.

Several members from Minnesota (including me) attended National President Trish Ward's homecoming in Wichita, Kan., Sept. 26-29.

We drove down to Kansas and then were entertained by the American Legion Family of Kansas. Friday took us to the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene. What a fabulous morning that was.

We went on to have lunch in Legacy, Kan., and shopped at the Russel Stover's Candy Outlet store. We saw much chocolate and other types of candy.

Saturday took us to the Veterans Memorial Park and the Botanica. Attendees had the deceased veterans and their opportunity to go to the Kansas Aviation Museum or Old Town Shopping Excursion. Saturday ended with a Western-themed gala at the Exploration Place for dinner and then we watched the "Ring of Fire" around the spectacular "Keeper of the Plains" statue located on the magnificent Arkansas River. It was a great time making new friends and getting reacquainted with old friends.

I was able to attend the 8th District's Fall Meeting at West Duluth Post 71, a membership dinner in Brainerd and the 2nd District's membership rally.

National President's Tour

On Monday, Oct. 21, National President Trish Ward landed in Minnesota for her visit. NEC Jean Walker and Membership Chairman Hope Wilson met her at the airport and then went on a tour of the Armed Forces Services Center at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

President Ward also instructed Snoopy on the National ALA's Constitution and Standing Rules at the MSP airport. I joined them Monday night (that's what happens when you still work).

On Tuesday, we were off bright and early to tour the Minneapolis Veterans Home. White

President's Message

Judy Ackerman

Bear Lake's Sandy Gibson, our our comrepresentative for the home, joined us for this part of the day. Ward even joined a couple of our veterans in a game of pool.

Then we were off to see different areas of the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, including the Spinal Cord Injury & Disorder Center and also the Fisher House. We stopped at the Department Office for lunch with our staff and a walking tour of the memorials on the Minnesota State Capitol Mall.

The afternoon took us to the beautiful Fort Snelling National Cemetery. It was so humbling to see all of the stones for our family members. What a great history lesson. (I can't wait to go back on Dec. 14 to participate in Wreaths Across America.)

On Wednesday, we went to Eagle's Healing Nest in Sauk Centre. Its mission is to help our veterans and the best part is, there is not government red

The St. Cloud Stand down is a great place for our veterans to go for assistance if they need it. No judgment. No questions asked. Thank you, Bob, John and all your volunteers for what you do.

On Thursday morning, we started the day at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center, learning about their services for our veterans.

Fall Conference

I hope you were able to attend Fall Conference in St. Cloud. What a great weekend! The department chairmen shared their information with the attendees. I hope you came away with new ideas and were re-energized to keep working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

National President Ward shared her vision for this year. We need to end the backward slide of membership to ensure that we keep serving our veterans, active military and their families and



Kies implemented

Chairman

Lorinda

the Poppy Making Challenge on Friday night. The sister districts were paired together to form a team for a total of five teams. The teams worked together and made 3,729 poppies in two hours. Operation Poppy was a great success. One hundred fifty-four American Legion Family members came to together to visit and learned to make poppies.

The personal care kits for our female veterans coming into the Women's Clinic at the Minneapolis VAMC was a phenomenal success. Thank you to all the units and individuals that donated money or items for these kits.

The Juniors used this project at their Junior Fun Weekend in August and had packed 139 kits then. Members were busy sorting these items to form an assembly line for packing these kits. More than 300 additional kits were packed on Friday night.

Thank you to those who helped box up the kits, pack them into the vehicles to be taken to the Minneapolis VAMC for distribution. The leftover supplies were given to several of the Minnesota Veterans Homes representatives for their facilities and to the St. Cloud Stand down.

The Minnesota American Legion Family rocks. The participation in the Poppy challenge and the personal care kits warmed my heart. Thank you so much.

Judy Ackerman of Northrop Unit 522 is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Back to the Basics: Recognize, Respect, Remember.'



American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward of Kansas speaks on Oct. 24 at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud during the Fall Conference. Members of the Auxiliary were joined by members of the Legion and SAL to hear her words.

President Ward issues challenge to units

By Jill Davis

ST. CLOUD — National President Trish Ward of the Department of Kansas addressed the Fall Conference in St. Cloud on Thursday Oct. 24. President Ward is a retired corporate trainer and used her skills from her professional life to teach the Auxiliary throughout the country.

She is a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians. She spoke to an audience of about 150 Legion Family members for over an hour and half about a variety of topics that challenged and inspired the audience about how to improve the organization.

Ward shared that her focus this year is on the grass roots of the American Legion Auxiliary with the introduction of the Department Excellence initiative and Department Merit

Medallion Recognition if five you look at the American Legion areas of focus are completed by a department.

Those areas are: 85 percent membership benchmark by March 2025 (which she acknowledged would be the hardest to achieve); completing the Department Impact Report by July 1; Governance Excellence, which includes a review of the Constitution & Bylaws and board responsibilities; Financial Policies and Process Excellence; Financial Donation Obligations, which is donating to various programs of focus.

The national president was blunt about the direction it has been going. In the last 10 years countrywide, 2,099 units have turned in their charters and lost around 166,000 members in that time. She explained what we as members can do to turn things around and get people to join the organization. She said that if

posts that are surviving and thriving. They have one thing in common — The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion work together as a team.

The presentation also included a wealth of information and resources. Many of the challenges that the American Legion Auxiliary are facing are things that have been written about and there are solutions out there.

She said it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel; there are books, articles, and classes that can help address the challenges of the organization. The Auxiliary Department Office will work with the national president to get a copy of her presentation and post it on the department website as a resource for everyone.

IN MEMORIUM



Dee Dee Buckley

Dee Dee Buckley, 76, succumbed to a long and courageous battle against cancer on Sept. 1. Buckley served as department president 2006-07 and Northwest Division national vice president 2021-22. She was a member of Pequot Lakes Unit 49.



Marie Goede

Marie Katherine Goede, 78, of Plainview passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Sept. 23. Goede was department president 2007-2008 and held several appointments in the Northwestern Division. She was a proud and committed member of Plainview Unit 178.



Ardis Stone

Ardis Stone, 96, of Glenwood, died Oct. 7 at the Glenwood Retirement Village. Ardis was department president 1995-96. Stone's theme during her year was "Bee All That U Can Be." She was a member of Unit 1982; prior to that she was a member of now-closed Glenwood.



ALA, SAL and TAL members alike assembled poppies at the Fall Conference. Here, from right, 7th District Commander Carl Wilson, ALA Department Membership Chairman Hope Wilson and their granddaughter, a member of the Junior Auxiliary, make poppies.

121

-18

10th

Last Year 10/29/24

1,564

1.693

266

138

2,711

1,182

Period Gain

120

168

Goal

3,476

514 463

4,469

of Units

46.12%

48.25%

38.66%

55.69%

47.77%

Dorf endorsed for dept. president

Monticello Unit 260, 10th Rehabilitation, Chil-District Past Presidents Parley and the 10th District Auxiliary has endorsed Robin Dorf for Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary President for 2025-2026.

Dorf has been an active member of Unit 260 for 49 years and is a PUFL member. Her eligibility is through her father, Emil W. Dorf Jr., who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

At the unit level she has held many positions, including President two terms. On the district level, she has served as St. Cloud VA Social Activities, Junior Activities multiple years, Education, Girls State, Legislation, Veterans Affairs & President and Veterans Affairs

dren & Youth, Poppy, Leadership, Membership, Past Presidents Parley, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee member, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and served as 10th District President 2014-2015.

On the department level, she has served on the Strategic Plan-

ning Committee, past Girls State Counselor, Junior Activities, Leadership, Public Relations, Membership, Children & Youth, Chaplain, Community Service, Legislation, and is currently serving as First Vice



Robin Dorf

Rehabilitation Chairman. On the national level,

she served as the 2018 ALA National Convention Vice Chair-Northwestern man, Division Membership Chairman, Children & Youth Committee Vice Chairman, Junior Activities Committee Vice Chairman, and is currently serving as the

Northwestern Division Leadership Chairman.

Dorf has been employed by Wright County for 17 years and is currently the Wright County Health and Human Services Kinship/Child Foster Care Recruiter Case Aide.

Kelly backed for 1st vice president

Linda Kelly has been endorsed by Unit 184 of Pine President for the 3rd Island and the 3rd District Executive Committee for Department of Minnesota, 1st Vice President for the year 2025-2026.

Kelly is an active member of her unit, having been a member for 26 years. She is eligible through the service of two brothers, Stanley and Melroy Kundert.

She has served her unit in many ways including President two terms, Vice President, Executive Committee, and is currently their Chaplain. She works on many of the programs and is passionate about working with the local school to educate students about our programs and encouraging Americanism in

Kelly served as District for two years due to the pandemic, working her way up from Executive Committee. She has also served as Chairman of Membership, Children and Youth, Education, Girls State, Leadership, Public Relations, and Community Service and

is currently the District Poppy Chairman.

Kelly has served as Department Chairman for Membership, Poppy, Girls State, and is the current Legislation Chairman. As the Legislation Chairman, Linda has been attending the monthly meetings of the



Linda Kelly

Commander's Task Force. This group of several veteran organizations works together to determine what bills they want our legislators to support, and they ask for your support in their endeavors. She feels that all Legion Family members, along with members of all veteran organizations can

work together to get these bills passed for the betterment of our

She attends numerous events throughout the year such as District, Department, and National Conventions, Fall Conferences, and Mission Training Workshops.

Hassing backed for 2nd vice president

Bloomington Unit 550 proud- Servicemen Center ly endorses Jody Hassing for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota 2nd ice President for 2025-2026.

Hassing has been an active man, Executive Commember of Bloomington Unit 550 for 17 years. She is currently serving as Unit President. She is eligible for membership through her husband, Paul Hassing, Past American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander, retired with 32 years of service in the Army Reserve.

On the Unit level, Hassing has served in many positions including president for several terms, membership chairman, sunshine chairman, 1st/2nd vice president, and several committees. At the district level, Hassing has served as

Dorothy

Redepenning, a

of Marietta and

of the Marietta

Auxiliary Unit

longtime resident

an active member

156, Marietta, was

presented her 75-

certificate by Betty

Engebretson, the

year continuous

membership

previous unit

membership

chairman.

Poppy chairman, Chairman, National Security Chairman, Membership Chairmittee, and District Treasurer for several years. She also served as 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, and 10th District President 2017-2018.

She is currently serving on the Finance Committee for the 10th District. Jody has served at the Department level as Secretary, Finance Committee member for four years, and Finance Chairman



Jody Hassing

Director. Jody is married to Paul Hassing. They have five children, and 10 grandchildren all are members of the American Legion family. She has been employed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota for 15 years and is

2023-2024. In addition, she is currently a Principal Business Analyst in active with the American Legion

Riders at the Department, District, and Chapter levels. Hassing was Chairman of the Legacy Run for 4 years and is the current Chair-

man of the Fund 85

Run. She is current-

ly serving her 2nd

year as Department

of Minnesota American Legion Riders

Medical Management.

13 118 Eight 1,076 Nine 45 2,944 1,569 53.29% 1,578 3,391 46.71% 1,626 1982 & 0476 219 65.18% 396 718 12,840 49.30% 13,179 -339 **Department Tota** 26,045 Group 1 (Even) 197 6,82 inda Kelly Group 2 (Odd) 197 356 6,155 12,803 6,20 48.469 Robin Dorf

Membership as of Oct. 30

'Finding Members in Everyday Places'

To Date

248

2,489

Membership needs to hit 85 percent

By Hope Wilson Membership Chairman

DISTRICT

One

Three

Four

Five

Six

Sever

The Fall Conference was a hit once again. Since Oct. 21, I have had 21 units come off the 5 percent-or-less membership list. This is fantastic. This being said, there are still 71, yes 71, units that are at zero or under 5 percent of goal.

50.43%

Please reach out to your members and check on them. Are they doing OK? Do they need some help? Can anyone in your unit pay it forward for a member? Can your Legionnaire's help sponsor a member's dues?

Please keep the memberships rolling in. We have a national goal of 85 percent that we are trying to hit by March 15. As soon as the memberships are paid, send them into the Department Office. Do not hold on to them.

Unfortunately, we had four units turn in their charters at Fall Conference. Even more distressing, there are 16 more units that are in the process of turning their charters in as well unless we can turn them around and get them some leadership

Our next rally is coming up soon.

What: Pearl Harbor Rally When: Saturday, Dec. 7

Where: Post 545, 155 Lake Ave. South, Spicer Who: Hosted by American Legion Riders

What else: Social hour and membership turnin at 11 a.m., meal at noon, program to follow.

Learn more: See information on Page 2 under "What's Happening?"

Do your past presidents parley hardy?

Bv Shirley Frederick Past Presidents Parley Chair

What is the Past Presidents Parley? What do they do? Does my unit have one? Who can belong? So let's go "Back to the Basics" as our President Judy Ackerman's theme says.

For many of our members, the answer is easy, but what about new members, longtime members that have not been as active. Does your unit have one and do all members know about it?

Sometimes we forget that not all our members know about some of the programs and committees we have in our units.

A Unit Past Presidents Parley is made up of members who have served their unit as president. A District Past Presidents Parley is made up of members who have served as a district president. And a Department Past President's Parley is made up of members who have served as department

The purpose of the Past Presidents Parley is for their members to use their experience, knowledge and training to mentor the unit members by answering their questions of the who, what and why of our organization. Encourage them material in a unit mailing.

to take part in committees, chairmanships and leadership by asking them to be part of a project with you. Make them feel comfortable at meetings and activities and with the members are all part of good mentoring.

If your unit does not have a Past Presidents Parley, how about going back to your unit and start one? Set a meeting date, time and place and then send out invitations for all your past presidents to come.

All Past Presidents Parleys should have dues and encouraged to contribute to the Past Presidents Parley Healthcare Scholarship Fund. And encourage the unit to do the same.

Past Presidents Parley Healthcare Scholarship is not just for nursing, it is for any course of study in the medical field. It is open to any American Legion Auxiliary member who has been a member for three years and their current dues are paid. It is a \$1,000 scholarship and up to 10 are given each year, if the donations received from units to the Department Office have enough funds to do so. The September Unit Mailing has more information. The applications will be sent out to units with the 2024-2025 plaques and awards

Know constitutions, bylaws and rules

By Marsha Bible Constitution & Bylaws Chairman

The Constitution & Bylaws program assists and educates members about the need to have proper governing documents at all levels. The Constitution and Bylaws for units, districts and the department are approved by Department Convention action. The Department Standing Rules are also approved by convention

Standing rules are detailed administrative policies that spell out how districts and units operate. Every district and unit should have its own unique set of standing rules. Unit standing rules may be changed as your unit needs change but

vote. Without prior notice to all families. members, the vote needs to be a two-thirds majority vote. These rules cannot be determined by the Executive Committee.

Why are governing documents so important? The ALA is an incorporated, nonprofit organization and can be held accountable if it does not follow state nonprofit laws and the unit's own standing rules. The laws of the state supersede everything. It is the responsibility of each unit, district and department to make sure that their governing documents comply with the laws of their state.

Keep your governing

there are guidelines that must documents up to date and make be followed. With prior notice them available to all members so to all members, standing rules that we can continue to support may be changed by a majority our veterans, military and their

> One key item to be aware of is that department, district and unit constitutions, bylaws and standing rules cannot be in conflict with national governing documents. When National Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules change, departments, districts and units should automatically update their governing documents. No vote is necessary on these levels to make these changes.

> It is highly recommended that all units review their standing rules annually and then send a copy to the Department Office to be on file.

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