



St. Michael repeats as state champ

The Mikes advance to regional championship

By John Sherman

ROCHESTER — St. Michael Post 567 repeated as the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Division I Legion Baseball champion by defeating Eden Prairie 5-4 at Mayo Field in Rochester on July 30.

For the second straight day, St. Michael needed runs in the last inning to win the game. Trailing 4-3 going into the top of the seventh, the Mikes put two runs on the

board to pull ahead 5-4 on hits by Kurtis Lekatz and Mason Varley.

In the bottom of the seventh, Mikes' manager Levi Fry brought shortstop Matthew Maulik, his 5-11, 175-pound team leader, to the mound for his first appearance of the tournament. Maulik got the three outs he needed for the save, though Eden Prairie's Ashton Farris hit a double down the right field line to add a dash of suspense.

Maulik was named winner of the Fred

Wannamaker Award as the tournament's most outstanding player at the conclusion of the awards ceremony.

"Winning this award is very special," Maulik said. "All of the hard work has paid off. The last two games, we were able to get runners on base and move them around. We have only two players returning from last year's state championship team. But I was confident we could win it again. Every kid out there puts in a full effort."

Maulik described his relief appearance

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Department Commander Paul Hassing presents the Fred Wannamaker Award to shortstop Matthew Maulik. Behind them is Tournament Director Bruce Young.

A beer just for us

Warrior Brewing out of Duluth makes Legion Lager

By Tim Engstrom

DULUTH — There is a beer growing in popularity throughout parts of Minnesota under the name "Legion Lager," and the maker of it, Warrior Brewing, hopes this beverage corners the craft beer market for lagers.

The veteran behind it is Matt Caple, 38, who recently joined Lawrence Lake Township Post 476.

Actually, there are two veterans behind it. The other, Ben Gipson, is a member of West Duluth Post 71.



The label on the left is customized for West Duluth Post 71.



Matt Caple of Warrior Brewing holds up a glass of Valkrie Golden Ale in the taproom of Warrior Brewing in Duluth. Caple and fellow veteran Ben Gipson own the brewery that makes Legion Lager.

Is this Legion Lager affiliated with The American Legion?

Caple said it honors The American Legion. He did ask the Department of Minnesota permission to use "Legion." The answer: It is fine as long as he isn't using Legion imagery.

Warrior Brewing, he said, offers

Legion posts the opportunity to come brew beer and to even have special post-level labels on it and sell it at their own bars.

Caple graduated from Northfield High School in 2003. He attended St. Olaf College, where he played hockey, and about a year and a half into his

premedical studies, a feeling set in that he ought to join the military like some of his family members had.

"I had a calling and felt like I needed to do it, and I dropped out of college and joined the Army in 2005," he said.

His biological father was a combat
Continued on Page 10

What about pot at the posts?

New cannabis law raises questions

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Legislature in mid-May passed a bill that legalizes the use of marijuana for people 21 or older. Gov. Tim Walz signed the bill 10 days later.

Possession of up to 2 ounces of the cannabis plant (or 8 grams of its concentrate) became legal Aug. 1. To be sure, open containers of it are not allowed in motor vehicles.



Greg Colby

Licensed retail sales, however, are the next step on the horizon, and it raises key questions: Could bars that already sell liquor begin selling cannabis products? What about the bars in the posts of The American Legion? Could this be a new revenue stream?

The bill has several provisions
Continued on Page 3

Minnesota dedicates new veterans cemetery in Redwood Falls

REDWOOD FALLS — Veterans, servicemembers, their supporters, along with state and federal officials, gathered on a hot summer Saturday afternoon in what had once been a cornfield to dedicate the Redwood Falls State Veterans Cemetery.

"For now, as long as this nation stands, this cemetery will be here to honor our veterans," declared Gov. Tim Walz at the dedication.

Minnesota now has six veterans cemeteries.

He noted how each of the four state veteran cemeteries are in differing environments: Preston is in the Driftless Area. Little Falls is among the pines. Duluth is part of the North Shore.

Redwood Falls, he said, is in corn-and-soybean country.

The fifth one would be Fort Snelling National Cemetery in the metro. It is operated by the federal government. The sixth one is the Leech Lake Tribal Veterans Cemetery.

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar said \$11.2 million of the cost came from the federal government. Another \$4.5 million came from the state. Redwood County spent \$1.841 million — on purchasing the land to donate it to the state and on paving Nobles Avenue, formerly a gravel road.

Klobuchar said the site invokes the patriotism of Minnesota efforts in past
Continued on Page 2



Members of veteran service organizations and supporting groups provide a parade of flags at the dedication ceremony Aug. 19 east of Redwood Falls.

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Posting of the colors was handled by the Minnesota Army National Guard Funeral Honors Team.



The Redwood Falls Memorial Rifle Squad fired a three-round volley.



Matt Quinn of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs speaks while several officials behind him listen, including Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Interim Commissioner Brad Lindsay.

American Legion Veterans



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Annabelle Eriksen of Redwood Valley High School sings "The Star-Spangled Banner."



The Blue Star Program of National Garden Clubs honors all men and women who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. The Blue Star Memorial for the cemetery is unveiled.

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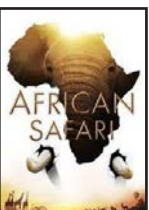


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Pricing to be announced



Minnesota exceeds U.S. standards for distances to veteran cemeteries

Continued from Page 1

wars. Among them, she cited Gettysburg, where the 1st Minnesota Infantry Regiment was crucial in preventing Confederate soldiers from splitting Union defenses, with casualties at 82 percent.

She mentioned how her father, journalist Jim Klobuchar, was laid to rest at Fort Snelling in 2021.

And she recalled a memorial in a field outside Kimball that honors the site where three Minnesota National Guard servicemembers perished in a helicopter crash in December 2019.

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, which runs the four state cemeteries, worked with county, tribal and federal interests to make the Redwood Falls cemetery happen.

"This will be a place of dignity and respect to honor those who served for years to come," said Interim Commissioner Brad Lindsay.

He thanked the Redwood County Board of Commissioners, Redwood County Administrator Vicki Kletscher and former Redwood County Veteran Service Officer Marty Caraway. Caraway now is a

strategic adviser with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and lives in the District of Columbia area. He returned for the dedication ceremony.

Lindsay said the three prior state cemeteries have won awards for excellence consistently and said it would not be long until the Redwood Falls cemetery also garners awards.

"Excellence is our standard here," he said.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Matt Quinn said this was the 122nd cemetery supported by the VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program, which is supervised by the National Cemetery Administration.

More than 95 percent of Minnesota veterans have a state or national veterans cemetery within 75 miles of where they live, which Quinn said exceeds the national goal.

"Congratulations to the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs," he said.

The ceremony recognized Rob Lesage, the former owner of the land. In addition to the property the county bought, Lesage donated an additional segment. He said his parents are buried at the veterans cemetery north of Little Falls.

David Swantek, deputy director of memorial affairs for the MDVA, said, "I like to encourage people to think of it not just as a cemetery but as a monument."

Scheduling of burials began Aug. 21.

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Minneapolis VA opens new specialty clinic

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minneapolis VA Health Care System opened what it calls the Specialty Care Clinic on Aug. 3 with a ribbon cutting, speakers and tours.

The new clinic is to the east of the main entrance. If standing in the middle of the traffic circle, it would be to the left.

Specialty services available at the new clinic are laboratory, allergy, cardiology, EKG, cardiac device, congestive heart failure, allergy, immunotherapy, pulmonary, spirometry, metabolic and endocrine, diabetes, sleep medicine, renal, pre-op medicine, infectious disease, dietitians, travel and clinical pharmacy.

The clinic is Building 79. (For reference, the main hospital is Building 70. There are under 20 structures on campus.) It is over 15,000 square feet with 28 exam rooms and two procedure rooms.

No further details were available. The Legionnaire was unable to attend in person because of a schedule conflict. Searching online, it seems no other Twin Cities media covered it and the VA did not issue a news release after the event to share construction costs, number of patients it can serve, impact on wait times or other information the public may seek.

Sandra Roy/VA

These images show the ribbon-cutting from the new specialty care clinic at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.



2023 Fall Conference Official Registration

Mail to:

Minnesota American Legion Convention Corp.
P.O. Box 166
Princeton, MN 55371

Registration sliding fee:

Registration received by Oct. 14: \$15
Registration at mnlegion.org: \$15 + \$2.85 service fee
(Online registration is available until noon Oct. 25)
Registration at the door: \$25

Only the pre-registered will receive a booklet.

Registration fees are for each person attending, except for Junior SAL and Junior Auxiliary members. Please copy and send a separate form for each person attending. Everyone must pay the registration fee.

Checks only by mail; bank cards are accepted online. Please indicate "Fall Conference" on the memo line.

Please make checks payable to:

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Conference dates:

Oct. 27-28, 2023
Various committees meet Oct. 26.

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Meals: Pre-purchased meals are available for \$15 each. The meals are breakfasts on Friday and Saturday and a lunch on Friday. Please indicate with your check which meals you desire. The deadline is Oct. 12. Meals are available to purchase at mnlegion.org until then, too.

Bars and restaurants are gearing up for changes from new cannabis law

Continued from Page 1

that begin to take shape over the course of two years up until March 1, 2025. Retail sales in stores will not begin until 2024 and possibly 2025, depending on local cities and counties.

That's because cities and counties have been given the authority to determine if and where they want to allow it, said American Legion Department of Minnesota Judge Advocate Greg Colby.

"It still is illegal to smoke either marijuana or tobacco products inside American Legion bars and pubs," he said. "Many bars and pubs allow their patrons to smoke outside the door of their building. There may be rules that state how far from the door patrons must stand if smoking. Those rules probably apply to all smokers whether it's marijuana or tobacco."

Owners of bars, restaurants and other retail establishments including Legion posts have the right to ban the use of marijuana, or specific forms of it, on the property, Colby said. If, say, the post allows edibles but not smokeables, they can put up a sign.

The same rules for removing policy violators apply.

As for selling the stuff, here's where it gets complicated.

The law indeed green-lights the sale and use of THC edibles, such as gummies and seltzers, in places where alcoholic beverages were already permitted. Minnesota is the first in the nation to take this step.

However, according to an Aug. 3 story from Minnesota Public Radio, there will not be mixing and matching.

"At some bars and breweries, such as Arbeiter Brewing in Minneapolis, patrons who opt for THC products will get a special wristband or stamp which will indicate to servers that they're not drinking beer,"

the MPR story says.

It later states: "As part of an attempt to add some guardrails this year, lawmakers passed new regulations that more clearly define what restaurants, bars and breweries can serve. A pending update limits use of both hemp-derived THC products and marijuana to adults age 21 and older, but it says establishments can't serve someone both alcohol and THC products during the same visit."

MPR spoke with Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association Executive Director Tony Chesak, who said, "If you as a bartender or an owner of a bar know that a customer has consumed an alcoholic beverage within five hours of them coming to your place, you're not legally allowed to sell them a THC beverage or a THC product."

He added these rules are slated to take effect in 2025.

The League of Minnesota Cities provides further insight on its website:

"Cities will be responsible for registering certain cannabis businesses once they receive a license from the state. These businesses include cannabis retailers, cannabis microbusinesses, and mezzobusinesses with retail-operation endorsements, medical cannabis retailers and medical cannabis combination businesses, and lower-potency hemp edible retailers.

"Cities may impose an initial retail registration fee of \$500 and a renewal registration fee of \$1,000, or up to half the amount of the applicable initial license fee for each business, whichever is less."

The League of Minnesota Cities says the law provides that local government will conduct compliance checks and can revoke licenses for businesses not in compliance.



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It's incredible all that the Legion does

Hello again, everyone, and thank you all for the amazing work that you do to make the lives of veterans, their families and the community better. As I travel around the state, I am constantly reminded of how truly blessed I am to be a part of the American Legion Family.

Patriotism, the kindness shown to others, the extraordinary things that get accomplished and the willingness to step up are truly remarkable. Thank you so much for all you do.

It has been a very busy but very rewarding month. The first weekend after our convention, I was invited to Slayton to participate in its annual motorcycle run. It was great seeing the great group of volunteers who provided food, water and soda along the way.

We were even able to stop and hang out with the residents and staff of the Luverne Veterans Home. Thank you, Duane Mabon, for putting this together, and thank you to the Slayton American Legion Riders for the hard work that went into planning this ride.

It was capped off with a great meal and a live band at the City Limits restaurant. I couldn't go on the statewide Legacy Run this year, but I was able to make it to the kickoff party at North Branch Post 85. Thank you again to all the volunteers who helped make this a great event.

After seeing the Riders off the next morning, it was off to the airport to catch a flight to Indianapolis for the National Membership Workshop, where — once again — a great group of volunteers, including our own Marissa LaCourt, were there to instruct.

A few points of discussion at the workshop were: What does your community think of your post? Would they care if your post closed its doors tomorrow? Would it be because they don't know everything you do, or is it that you are so busy having meetings that we forget about our local community?

These are questions that we must ask ourselves. Are we making a difference? Are we an asset to the community, or are we just another bar? Our mission is to take care of veterans, their families and to make our community a better place. Do

Commander's Column

Paul Hassing



we work together with our city? The more we can help our city, and be an asset, the more they can help us.

Are we going to city council meetings? Are we asking how we can help? Most veterans and their families want to make a difference. We need to be out there in our communities making that difference.

From the workshop, it was right from the airport down to Rochester for the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament. The hospitality and volunteerism were exceptional. The sportsmanship shown by these young men made me very proud to be a small part of it. Congratulations to St. Michael Post 567 for winning the state championship.

The next weekend I was able to attend the 934th Airlift Wing Family Day at Fort Snelling. It was a great day, and we had a great group of volunteers ready to answer any questions the families had about The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion. We had a lot of people asking about us and our programs. Thank you, 4th District Commander Theresa Ash, for setting this up. It was a great day.

I was once again invited down to Slayton for the Traveling Wall escort. Slayton American Legion Riders, and the whole Slayton American Legion Family really outdid themselves. This was a great example of how a small town American Legion Family can come together with their community and accomplish something incredible.

The streets were lined with people and flags, the children were standing at attention with their hands over their hearts. There were tears in the eyes of many as we came riding in behind the police, fire truck and ambulance escort. The high school teams that came right out to help set up the wall let me know that our future is in good hands.

The ceremony also brought tears to my eyes as the names of the those who gave the ultimate sacrifice were read, and

their families introduced. After the ceremony was over, while at the Legion booth, a couple walked up and said, "We need to join The American Legion, where do we sign?"

It was awesome. Thank you, Brad Pagel, and all the Slayton Post 64 family for inviting me.

The weekend at the time of this writing, I went up to Forest Lake to see the Riders off for the Fund 85 (Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund). Its always great to see the Riders and thank you to the volunteers who set up the ride and rode it numerous times to make sure everything was good. I know it takes a lot of time, and hard work to put a ride together.

Once the Riders were off, I went down to the Lino Lakes Blue Heron Days Parade where once again, the American Legion Family made me proud. It was great to be in the parade, but it really made my day watching all the volunteers working so hard and doing great things for the community.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for all that you do. Your commitment to this great organization does not go unnoticed. One thing I've noticed lately is that veterans are watching us, and their families are watching us. They are asking more questions, and noticing the things we do. They want to join us. They just need to know that it is the right thing to do.

My project this year as most of you know is Fund 85 (Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund) the fund is there to help Veterans in need of assistance. We've all been there at one time where we needed help. The fund is getting low, and we need your support to keep it going.

Thank you again, and please reach out if you need anything.

Paul Hassing of Bloomington Post 550 is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota. His theme is "The Road Ahead."

And, now, a word from our sponsor

Chaplain's Corner

Dean Knutson



When we try to organize and plan our days, it never fails that there will obstacles and situations that present themselves. These may cause us to detour from our best-laid plans for the day.

These obstacles or situations may be something that is said either to a loved one, a fellow employee at work or to a neighbor. They may present themselves in a way that we may need a word of encouragement or in some cases a word of comfort because of a hurtful word or because of an illness or the passing of a loved one.

It is in times like these that there two ways that go hand in hand to help make situations look brighter and go better. These two things are our *faith* and the *power of prayer*.

I refer to the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower who said, "Faith is our surest strength, our greatest resource."

Faith is described as the assurance of things hoped for and believing in the things not seen. This means that we need to believe in God's promises and know that if we ask for them through faith they will be answered.

The second way in which we can be encouraged and comforted is through the power of prayer. A prayer does not need to be a well thought out phrase or idea but should be prayed in a way like you are talking to

your best friend.

Just a word of thank you for his blessing or a prayer to help you through a situation that has presented itself unexpectedly. Our prayers are always answered but at times maybe not in the way we wanted. We need to keep in mind that God has our best interest in mind and provides for us as we are in need.

We all need words of encouragement and comfort at times so let us be a true friend to those around us at all times.

In the month of September, we honor and celebrate a major event that happened in American history. On Sept. 2, we celebrate V-J Day, as it was on this day that the announcement of the end of World War II was made by President Harry Truman. This day is honored as this was when the Japanese surrendered to put an end to the war.

We also remember the POW-MIA's this month and pray for their safe return from captivity or the return of their remains to American soil.

Remember that when we are feeling down, discouraged or depressed, we have your *faith* and the *power of prayer* to keep us strong.

In closing, I would like to quote a poem by Past National Chaplain Arthur Rustad in 1946-1947. This was written for a fellow chaplain, only known as Hal:

"Why are we living here, on this planet called Earth? Is life of no value or does it have worth? Some people waste their days as they were their own, but we must remember, God gave them to us as a loan. He tells us to use them for those who are in need, to speak a friendly word or to do a kindly deed. Visit the sick he says and feed the hungry too. Guide lost souls back to God and he will remember you.

Pray God for all peoples and for the land we love and for the Legion, ask his blessings from above.

These are some of the things a chaplain tries to do. And you have done them well, Hal, that's why we're saluting you.

Dean Knutson of Ashby Post 357 is the chaplain for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.

automatically considered for the 2023 National American Legion Baseball All-Academic Team, which was announced during the American Legion World Series in Shelby, N.C., on Friday, Aug. 11. I was chosen to be a member of that nine-man team, which resulted in an additional \$2,500 scholarship.

It was a great surprise to receive the phone calls — first for the state award and then a couple of weeks later for the national award. Mr. John Davis of West Virginia, chairman of the ALWS committee that selects the scholarship recipients, called me and my parents from the World Series to let me know I had been selected. He explained that my application received notice due to the community service I had completed.

American Legion Baseball, athletics, National Honor Society and church have given me a lot of opportunities for volunteerism and community service, including placing the Memorial Day flags out at Greenwood Cemetery in Virginia, Minn.

I am very thankful for the many years of summer baseball — first with Little League, then VFW and finally American Legion. Thank you for the support you give to youth on the Iron Range and across the state of Minnesota.

I am moving to Duluth this week to continue my education at Lake Superior College, where I will earn an Associate of Arts degree in aviation maintenance technology and become an airframe and powerplant mechanic. The state and national American Legion scholarships help me achieve my goal of graduating from college with as little debt as possible.

Thank you, again. I will work hard at Lake Superior College as I advance closer to my career goals. I will always have great memories of playing American Legion Baseball for Virginia

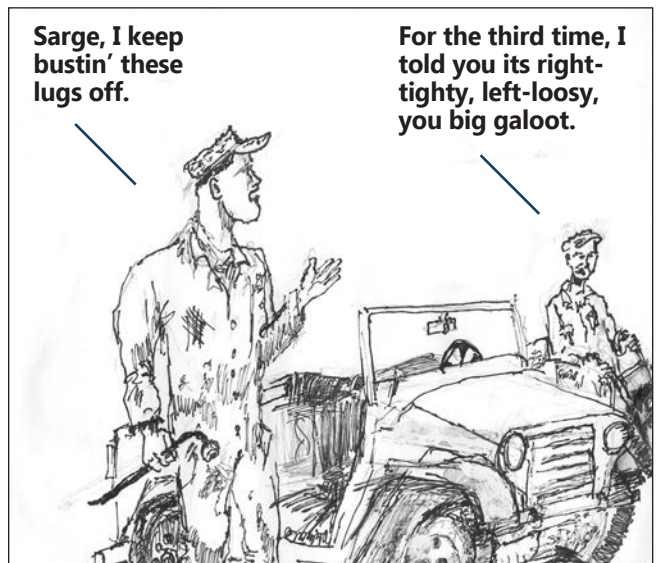
Post 239. It was an honor — and a lot of fun — to wear the jersey.

John W. Kendall
center fielder, pitcher
Virginia Post 239

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.



Sarge, I keep bustin' these lugs off.

For the third time, I told you its right-tighty, left-loosy, you big galoot.

Dan Morgan/North End Post 474

Virginia kid made AL World Series academic team

Dear Minnesota American Legion Baseball Committee,

Thank you very much for selecting me for the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Scholarship. It was an honor to be chosen to receive the \$1,000 scholarship. I am very grateful for your support of local students and athletes in our local community and the state.

As you know, after being selected as the overall winner in Minnesota, my application was

Taps



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

Name of Deceased	Age	Date of Death	Branch	Era	Cont. Years	Post
Anderson, Gerald	92	6/20/23	Army	Korea	30	Austin Post 91
Arens, David S.	74	7/25/23	Army	Vietnam	27	Graceville Post 297
Note: He served as an MP. With the post, he was the flag bearer for the post honor guard.						
Athmann, Reuben C.	90	6/25/23	Army	Korea	64	Lake Henry Post 612
Note: He was a past post commander.						
Baumgard, Donald	92	7/12/23	Coast Guard	Korea	3	Rochester Post 92
Bollman, Donald R.	91	7/21/23	Army	Korea	53	Dassel Post 364
Brunzell, John C.	75	7/18/23	Army	Vietnam	30	Bloomington Post 550
Note: He was a longtime employee at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.						
Bussman, Edward H.	86	7/26/23	Army	Cold	2	Melrose Post 101
Butler, Charles G.	84	6/10/23	Army	Vietnam	37	Austin Post 91
Carrier, James M.	56	6/26/23	Army	Panama	2	Elk River Post 112
Ciesman, Charles L.	90	7/11/23	Army	Korea	71	Bayport Post 491
Note: He was a long-serving member of the 40&8 and Stillwater's Last Man Club.						
Cooper, Jerry	74	7/18/23	Army	Vietnam	16	Richfield Post 435
Corcoran, Joseph K.	83	7/9/23	Navy	Vietnam	30	Kelliher Post 470
Note: He served aboard the aircraft carrier USS Lake Champlain as an aviation boatswain mate during the recovery of Freedom 7, which carried Alan Shepard.						
Dedrick, Gilman T. III	88	11/16/22	Army	Korea	36	Bloomington Post 550
Donais, Leroy H.	81	7/21/23	Air Force	Vietnam	6	Anoka Post 102
Eskuri, Howard L.	74	9/5/22	Air Force	Vietnam	34	Kettle River Post 360
Note: He was trained as a medic and was stationed in Alaska.						
Estenson, Richard J.	81	7/5/23	Army	Vietnam	54	Gaylord Post 433
Evenson, Dennis S.	74	7/19/23	Navy	Vietnam	20	Wayzata Post 118
Note: He served with the VA-52 Knight Riders, an attack squadron at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. (VA-52 existed from 1950 to 1995.)						
Farnes, Leroy A.	90	7/11/23	Air Force	Korea	58	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: He served in the Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Army National Guard.						
Fasen, Marvin P.	87	8/10/23	Navy	Korea	13	Paynesville Post 271
Fenrich, Verner E.	96	7/28/23	Navy	WWII	52	Litchfield Post 104
Note: He was a past post commander and past Litchfield mayor.						
Ferdinandt, Robert T.	89	7/19/23	Army	Korea	14	Springfield Post 257
Fugleberg, Alvin R. "Bud"	90	7/17/23	Army	Cold	49	Roseau Post 24
Note: He served in Okinawa and Iwo Jima as a mechanic and later worked for the Roseau County Highway Department.						
Giesen, William A.	95	5/17/23	Army	Korea	13	Fergus Falls Post 30
Note: He was a special agent who performed background checks for security clearances in the Army Counter Intelligence Corps. (It became the Army Intelligence Corps in 1961, then Army Intelligence Agency in 1967. It was disbanded in the early 1970s and restructured. Today its mission is performed by Army Counterintelligence).						
Gieser, Richard	81	11/10/22	Army	Vietnam	35	Hayfield Post 330
Goebel, Arthur F.	96	7/18/23	Army	WWII	62	Anoka Post 102
Graphenteen, Carl J. Jr.	83	6/19/23	Army	Vietnam	16	Lino Lakes Post 566
Gunderson, Steven D.	73	7/29/23	Army	Vietnam	11	Minnesota Post 1982
Note: He resided in Clara City, where Post 485 provided honor guard services. He was a past commander of Dunseith, N.D., Post 185.						
Gwost, Gerald J.	77	8/2/23	Army NG	Vietnam	57	Little Falls Post 46
Note: He was a past post commander.						
Hankins, Richard A.	78	10/16/22	Army	Vietnam	11	Anoka Post 102
Hanson, Lynn S.	92	3/12/23	Army	Korea	66	Madison Post 158
Harjes, Roger G.	83	7/13/23	Army Res.	Vietnam	35	Green Isle Post 408
Haustein, Jeffrey D.	72	6/24/23	Army	Vietnam	37	Red Wing Post 54
Note: He was a past member of the color guard.						
Heinrich, Orville L.	94	5/9/23	Army	Korea	60	Minneapolis-Richfield Post 435
Henry, Robert R.	unav.	8/4/23	unav.	Vietnam	27	Bayport Post 491
Hock, Robert H.	76	8/14/23	Air Force	Vietnam	4	Melrose Post 101
Holte, John	93	8/1/23	Air Force	Korea	35	Duluth Post 71
Note: He was a scout in the Korean War and once survived in the mountains for two weeks. He received the Bronze Star. He also served at Ladd Airfield in Alaska and Bergstrom AFB in Texas.						
Jasmer, Melvin H.	91	1/2/22	Navy	Korea	54	Alexandria Post 87
Johnson, Dean A.	90	7/23/23	Air Force	Korea	48	Austin Post 91
Note: He was briefly in the Army National Guard before joining the Air Force. Not counting training, his career brought him to Germany, Turkey, Michigan, Iowa, Thailand, Illinois, Guam and New York state.						
Kaltenhauser, Harold L.	81	6/29/23	Army	Vietnam	55	Bloomington Post 550
Note: He served in Vietnam. He was a founding member of the Bloomington Rescue Squad.						
Kirkeide, Merton H.	95	5/11/23	Army	Korea	71	Greenbush Post 88
Knish, Norman F.	97	8/5/23	Army	WWII	75	Elysian Post 311
Note: He was stationed in Leyte in the Philippines.						
Kraabel, Carlyn G.	81	6/7/23	Army	Vietnam	51	Spring Grove Post 249
Kuchman, James	89	8/5/23	Army	Korea	36	Mora Post 201
Kuelbs, Gardell E.	95	7/23/23	Army	Korea	59	New Ulm Post 132
Laxen, Vincent J.	89	7/17/23	Navy	Korea	63	Winsted Post 407
Lease, Bruce L.	92	7/2/23	Air Force	Korea	68	Worthington Post 5
Leland, Donald L.	98	1/5/23	Army	WWII	53	Alexandria Post 87
Lenz, Michael D.	77	3/29/23	Army	Vietnam	33	Elk River Post 112
Luinenburg, Marvin	96	7/29/23	Navy	WWII	58	Brewster Post 464
Note: He served on the USS Saratoga.						
MacKove, LeRoy G.	86	10/2/22	Army	Korea	30	Alexandria Post 87
Marsyla, Gerald L.	75	4/3/23	Army	Vietnam	7	Kettle River Post 360
Note: He was a member of the honor guard.						
May, Donald G.	84	8/14/23	Army	Vietnam	27	Austin Post 91
McMullen, Brian R.	79	7/25/23	Navy	Vietnam	2	Albert Lea Post 56
Meier, Duane A.	97	6/8/23	Army	Korea	12	Shakopee Post 2
Mestad, Sterling D.	94	6/16/23	Army	Korea	55	Rochester Post 92
Mickelson, John H.	74	7/28/23	Marines	Vietnam	13	Austin Post 91
Miller, Gary L.	81	8/4/23	Air Force	Vietnam	39	St. James Post 33
O'Brien, Jerry J.	75	7/28/23	Army	Vietnam	2	Lake City Post 110
O'Connell, Thomas J. Jr.	93	2/3/23	Air Force	Korea	12	Anoka Post 102
Okronglis, Phil S.	87	7/25/23	Army	Korea	6	Moose L. Post 379
Note: He was stationed in Germany.						
Onken, August L.	103	6/24/23	Army AF	WWII	66	Clarissa Post 213
Note: He served in the Marshall Islands with the 1564th Military Police.						
Quie, Albert H.	99	8/18/23	Navy	WWII	71	Wayzata Post 118
Note: He served as governor of Minnesota 1979-1983. He served as 1st District congressman 1958-1979. He also served in the Minnesota Senate 1955-1958.						
Redepenning, Willis A.	92	7/17/23	Army	Korea	56	Anoka Post 102
Roeder, John R.	92	7/28/23	Navy	Korea	41	Stewartville Post 164

All-Family Events Calendar

- Sept. 6-9:** Commanders' Task Force Leadership Summit, Camp Ripley
- Sept. 7-10:** Camporee, Legionville
- Sept. 9:** Harvest Rally, Legionville
- Sept. 9:** Fall Bombers Moon Ball, Fleming Field, S. St. Paul
- Sept. 10-13:** MACVSO Fall Conference, Grand View Lodge, Nisswa
- Sept. 11:** Patriot Day, local ceremonies
- Sept. 12:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Night at Target Field, Minneapolis
- Sept. 14-17:** American Legion Riders Romp, Legionville
- Sept. 15:** Minnesota Military Appreciation Fund Dinner, Bloomington
- Sept. 15:** National POW/MIA Recognition Day, Central Park, Greenfield
- Sept. 15-17:** American Legion National Security/Foreign Relations Weekend, Camp Ripley
- Sept. 16-17, 22-24:** Americanism Conference, Indy
- Sept. 17:** Auxiliary Dept. Finance Meeting, Legionville
- Sept. 17:** Camp Ripley Open House, Camp Ripley
- Sept. 17:** Groundbreaking, Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum, outside Camp Ripley
- Sept. 19:** American Legion Department of Minnesota Finance Committee Meeting, Elk River Post 112
- Sept. 19:** Fall Classic Charity Cornhole Invitational, Medina Entertainment Center
- Sept. 26:** Auxiliary Hospital Home Representatives Fall Meeting, Buffalo Post 270
- Sept. 30:** Minnesota American Legion Baseball Fall Meeting, Osseo Post 172
- Oct. 7:** MDVA Veteran Suicide Prevention & Awareness Day Event, Bemidji
- Oct. 3-8:** John Zgoda Memorial Deer Hunt, Legionville
- Oct. 9-12:** Fall Meetings, Indianapolis
- Oct. 12-15:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley
- Oct. 26:** American Legion Department of Minnesota Executive Committee Meeting, Kelly Inn, St. Cloud
- Oct. 26:** American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota Executive Committee Meeting, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud
- Oct. 26:** Meetings of various department committees for Legion and Auxiliary, River's Edge Convention Center & Kelly Inn, St. Cloud
- Oct. 27-28:** Department Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center & Kelly Inn, St. Cloud
- Nov. 11:** Veterans Day, local ceremonies
- Dec. 9:** Pearl Harbor Rally, Paynesville Post 271
- Feb. 3:** Sweetheart Rally, Forest Lake Post 225
- March 2:** Appreciation Rally, Montgomery Post 79
- July 11-13:** Department of Minnesota Convention, Willmar Convention Center, Willmar, hosted by Willmar Post 167

POW/MIA Recognition Day event is slated for Sept. 15

GREENFIELD — This Hennepin County community between Rockford and Loretto is hosting its 10th annual POW/MIA Recognition Day event.

It takes place at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15, at Greenfield's Central Park, 7200 Greenfield Road.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day is not a federal public holiday in the United States, but it is a national observance. There are more than 83,000 Americans who remain missing from World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Cold War and wars in the Mideast.

Color and honor guards from Hamel American Legion Post 394 and Hamel VFW Post 5903 will be present. Staging begins at 5 p.m. All are welcome to attend this event.

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Arthur Rosin

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Taps

Continued from Page 5

Rosin, Arthur W.	94	8/2/23	Army	WWII	52	Mankato Post 11
Note: He was post commander 1989-90 and 2nd District commander 1994-95. He was involved for many years in the Department of Minnesota's pheasant dinner program. He served in the U.S. occupation of Korea.						
Sanken, Timothy J. Sr.	76	7/24/23	Army NG	Vietnam	36	Brownton Post 143
Note: He served 35 years in the Minnesota National Guard, 28 as an officer, retiring as a colonel. He was inducted into the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame in 2000.						
Sexe, Arnold F.	98	7/20/23	Navy	WWII	35	Worthington Post 5
Sietsema, Robert M.	91	7/25/23	Army	Korea	53	Spicer Post 545
Sletten, Wayne M.	84	7/8/23	Navy	Cold	42	Two Harbors Post 109
Note: He is a retired county veterans service officer with Lake County.						
Smith, Paul G.	90	9/29/22	Army	Korea	4	Alexandria Post 87
Sorenson, Delton M.	86	9/28/22	Army	Cold	3	Bellingham Post 441
Stelling, Timothy S.	71	7/22/22	Air Force	Vietnam	20	Alexandria Post 87
Sundin, Samuel N.	82	7/30/23	Marines	Vietnam	10	Willmar Post 167
Svarvari, Gordon T.	72	7/20/23	Army	Vietnam	13	Deer Creek Post 283
Swanson, George C. Jr.	83	8/3/23	Army	Vietnam	14	Little Falls Post 46
Swenson, Franklin W.	98	1/2/23	Navy	WWII	52	Alexandria Post 87
Thoen, Merlin	83	8/16/23	Air Force	Vietnam	22	Lanesboro Post 40
Tvrdik, Alvin K.	93	1/20/22	Army	Korea	66	Alexandria Post 87
Uptagraff, Wayne R.	91	7/5/23	Army	Korea	23	Rochester Post 92
Van Winkle, Dean D.	87	8/3/23	Army	Korea	12	New Ulm Post 132
Vomhof, Walter	101	7/20/23	Navy	WWII	19	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: He served aboard the light cruiser USS Honolulu in the South Pacific and survived the torpedoing of the ship during the Battle of Leyte.						
Von Hagen, Frederick C.	93	7/27/23	Army	Korea/VN	45	Bloomington Post 550
Note: In his 20-year officer career in the Signal Corps, he served a year in Korea during the Korean War and another year in Vietnam during the Vietnam War.						
Webb, Byron D.	86	8/9/22	Army	Cold	22	Alexandria Post 87
Wellik, Edward D.	87	8/8/23	Air Force	Korea	42	Stewartville Post 164
Whiteford, Thomas R.	74	7/17/23	Air Force	VN/Gulf/Iraq	26	Mora Post 201
Williams, Patrick	88	7/26/23	Army	Korea	13	New London Post 537
Wright, Donovan E.	89	7/21/23	Army	Korea	21	Fertile Post 238
Note: He served as the post chaplain for many years.						
Wright, John L. "Jack"	72	11/23/22	Air Force	Vietnam	2	Apple Valley Post 1776
Wychor, James J.	91	7/14/23	Army	Korea	31	Worthington Post 5
Yachwak, David M.	73	9/2/22	Army	Vietnam	4	Minnesota Post 1982
Yocom, Glenn D.	94	8/4/23	Army	Korea	68	Austin Post 91
Zwart, James R.	87	7/22/23	Army	Korea	32	Lake City Post 110

Correction:

McCabe, Stacie W.	55	6/21/23	Navy	Persian Gulf	23	Coon Rapids Post 334
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Note: He was past post commander.

25TH ANNIVERSARY GUN AND GEAR RAFFLE

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What's happening?

Camporee is coming up

BRAINERD — The 57th annual Legionville Camporee is set for Sept. 7 to 10 at Legionville Education Center. Organized activities begin Thursday. There are RV-hook-ups, camping and dormitories available. Bring your own linens and blankets. The costs are \$10 per day per person Wednesday and Thursday, \$15 per day per person Friday and Saturday, \$100 family maximum, ages 3 and under free, all active military free on Saturday, \$5 per day for daytime visitors. The Camporee is a fundraiser for Legionville Education Center. All fees are non-refundable. The schedule is subject to change. The event is held rain or shine. Questions? Email legionvillecamporee@gmail.com.

Harvest Rally sure to be fun

BRAINERD — The Harvest Membership Rally will be held on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 9. Membership turn-in will begin at 2 p.m. ending at 2:45 p.m. Program will start at 3 p.m. The Harvest Rally meal will be served after the Membership

Rally. The menu will include chicken Kiev, potatoes, vegetables, bread and dessert. The cost will be \$15 per person. Please purchase meal tickets prior to Friday, Sept. 1. Tickets will be available at the Auxiliary DEC meeting, the Minnesota Party at National Convention, or can be ordered by sending a check made out to "Camporee" for the number of tickets desired to: Camporee 2806 64th Ave N Brooklyn Center, MN 55430 Questions? Contact Jill Davis at alajilldavis@gmail.com or 612-968-1172.

Which post is the best at cornhole?

BLOOMINGTON — My Credit Union Community Foundation is hosting the Fall Classic Charity Cornhole Invitational on Tuesday, Sept. 19, at the Medina Entertainment Center. The tournament benefits veteran-related nonprofit organizations. One of them is Minnesota American Legion Foundation's Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund (Fund 85). The first 16 American Legion posts to send teams will get to participate. Each team has two bag tossers. The American Legion portion of the tournament will determine a Legion cornhole state champion. The entry is a donation of \$400 or higher to the My Credit Union Community Foundation. Gambling funds may be used.

Tournament starts noon with the national anthem. There will be booths for the nonprofit recipients on site. The top teams might be there till around 4 p.m. but most teams will be out of contention by 2 or 2:30-ish. Beverages and food are available on site, too. To enter, send an email to Todd Barduson at toddb@mymncu.org. Last year, the invitational raised \$400,000 for charities. Posts also are welcome to inquire about being a corporate sponsor. Minnesota Military Radio will be present that day. There likely will be some teams from VFW posts as well as veteran charities from the state. My Credit Union has branches in Bloomington and Richfield.

Event aims to remember veterans lost to suicide

BEMIDJI — The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs hosts the state's official Minnesota Veteran Suicide Prevention & Awareness Day event on Oct. 7. Details are yet to be determined, but organizers are asking veterans to save the date. The event begins at 10 a.m. The flier says the event is "a time to come together in remembrance of Minnesota Veterans lost to suicide. We honor them by raising awareness and helping to save lives."

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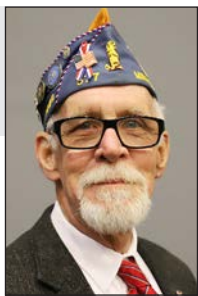
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Remember U.S. efforts on the homefront, too

Detachment commander

John Weiss



“Proud possessors of a priceless heritage.”

Those are the opening words of the Sons of The American Legion Preamble. Those words have a deep meaning to me.

I joined the SAL as a way of honoring my dad’s service in World War II and by way of that honoring the rest of the “Greatest Generation” who fought so bravely to protect our country and our way of life.

And while we honor our predecessors, let us not forget to honor those who also served on the homefront. Without those people, Rosie the Riveter, the farmers, the factory workers, the scientists and all of the rest of those folks, we would not have been victorious in our endeavor to defeat totalitarianism.

That’s the tie-in to the theme of my service as the commander of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Minnesota: “Honoring the Past, While Moving Forward.”

As a wise man once said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

I call on all members of the American Legion Family to remember all of those who have served our country in the many and various ways to protect our freedoms and honor their 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 “Honoring the Past, While Moving Forward.”



Think of your ‘Why?’ when recruiting members

Guest Column

Anthony Koop



While it is about looking forward in our membership year, it is also about getting back to basics.

Why?! Because I’m talking about the basics of “Why?” If we are asking people to join The American Legion, then we must ask ourselves “Why am I a member of The American Legion?”

My “Why?”

I have been a member of The American Legion since 2007, while I was still serving state-side for U.S. Army in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Why did I join The American Legion?

Because an American Legion recruiter outside the commissary asked me — and so I did!

Little did I know at the time what The American Legion was all about. Seventeen continuous years later as a member, I am still learning. There are many things this organization does, including programs, scholarships and benefits for veterans and their families, children and youth, and our local communities.

My “Why” has evolved over the years. From being asked to join to realizing the magnitude of what we do. From being part of an organization that supports veterans to being part of the “How” we support our veterans and our mission. From being a person attending meetings and interjecting my voice from time to time to being someone who saw the value in a program to push it forward and build it up for our mission.

From being a member, to being a leader.

One thing I know for sure is what The American Legion

means to ME. To me, it is an honorable and respectful (and fun!) way to continue serving our country and our veterans.

My eligibility comes from serving as a combat medic in the Iraq War Era 2003-2008, including one tour in Korea, and two combat tours in Iraq, in which I received the Purple Heart Medal.

I am also a proud dual member. My eligibility for the Sons of The American Legion is from my grandfather, Phillip Koop — U.S. Navy World War II — and my grandmother, Vonda Bongs — U.S. Air Force Korean War — and my grandfather, Bill Bongs — U.S. Marines Korean War.

Unlike Eagles, Elks, Moose, ATV clubs, bicycle clubs, garden clubs, Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc., where most anybody can join, The American Legion membership is earned through serving our country! It is a *privilege*. It is exclusive.

Remember your honor of serving this great country is the *reason* you are able to be a member of The American Legion.

As we focus on recruiting new members, think about “Your Why.” Think of the reasons you are an active member of this organization — for you to feel revitalized and to share that with the new recruits.

Anthony Koop is the commander of the 6th District and a member of Ironton Post 443.

Strengthen the Legion by standing up for it

VA & Rehabilitation

Janet Lorenzo



In a world filled with numerous causes and organizations seeking support, it’s essential to remember the impact and significance of local initiatives. The American Legion, a beacon of service and community spirit, holds a special place in our hearts. As we navigate the challenges of today’s fast-paced society, the call to support Legion programs takes on new urgency.

Legion programs aren’t just about raising funds; they encapsulate the very spirit of community service and unity. These programs are a testament to the Legion’s commitment to aiding veterans, their families, and the community at large. While financial contributions are vital, they’re just the tip of the iceberg. It’s about channeling the energy and empathy of our community members into tangible actions.

The heart of every Legion program beats with the desire

to create a positive impact. From assisting veterans in times of crisis to promoting patriotism and mentoring the youth, the Legion’s diverse programs touch every corner of our society. They remind us that the sacrifices made by veterans should be honored, and their struggles acknowledged.

At times, we might hear voices saying, “The post can’t afford it.” However, supporting Legion programs isn’t solely about financial investments. Volunteering hours translate into valuable dollars in terms of community enrichment. Your presence at events, your contributions, your advocacy — all of these elements contribute to the longevity and success of Legion programs.

Let’s stand up for the Legion,

not just because of its history, but because of its future potential. The legacy of service that has been cultivated for years should not fade away. By supporting Legion programs, we ensure that veterans’ needs are met, patriotism flourishes, and community bonds are strengthened.

So, let’s designate the spirit of community service, just as the Legion has done for decades. Let’s allocate our time, resources, and passion to programs that uplift the lives of veterans and their families. By doing so, we invigorate the Legion’s mission, ensuring it thrives and continues to impact

future generations. In a world that often moves too fast, let’s slow down and consider the profound difference we can make within our own community. Supporting Legion programs isn’t merely a financial transaction; it’s a statement of solidarity and gratitude. It’s an investment in a stronger, more compassionate future for all.

Let’s come together, stand up, and say, “We support Legion programs, because we understand their importance, we cherish their impact, and we value the spirit of community service they embody.”

Together, we can ensure that the Legion’s light shines brightly for years to come.

Janet Lorenzo is the assistant department service officer for The American Legion Department of Minnesota and a member of Hastings Post 47.

Summer has been a busy time for Legion Family

National Report

Bill Barbknecht



There was a great turnout at Legionville Camp this year under the leadership of President Carl Moon. This summer’s numbers were up. More campers could have learned many things in this weeklong camping experience.

Please spread the word about it.

Minnesota Boys State had an increase in numbers also. Baseball had a record number of teams. Thank you to Al Davis, Jeff Miller, Tim Engstrom and the entire committee.

Girls Fastpitch Softball had more teams participating this year also. Donna and I were able to attend the state tournament in New York Mills, not far from our home in Battle Lake. We were joined by Past Department Commander Tom Fernland and his wife, Past 6th District Commander Veronica Fernlund.

New York Mills did an outstanding job of hosting. We had a very crowded ball field with two games going on at one point. Congratulations to Fairmont Post 36 on winning.

Congratulations to St. Michael Post 567 for winning the Div. I state title and reaching runner-up in the Central Plains Regional Tournament.

Congratulations also go to Sleepy Eye Post 7 for winning

the Div. II state title, to Stillwater Post 48 for winning the Div. I Jr. state title and to Morris Post 29 for winning the Div. II Jr. state title.

Ever wonder what is the difference between Div. I and II? Div. I teams are from schools that have 10-12-grade enrollments of more than 400. Div. II teams are 400 or less. As for “Junior,” that means ages 17 and younger. The regular baseball program is 19 and younger.

I would like to thank all of our long-term serving adjutants and finance officers in the posts around Minnesota.

Personally, for me I would like to thank Scott Rocholl. He has been Underwood Post 489 adjutant and Children & Youth chairman for years, as well as Post 489 finance officer.

These two key positions in every post make a BIG difference if your post grows and survives in these changing times. With so many reports and accurate minutes of every meeting it can be a challenge, but it is so very important.

It’s time to start thinking about American Education

Week and honoring ALL our teachers, paraprofessionals, cooks, bus drivers and custodians. If I have forgotten anyone, please excuse me and include yourself in these thanks.

As this paper comes out, we will be attending the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. Dan Seehaffer, a Lutheran Pastor is on track to be elected national commander. He is from Wisconsin.

Legionville Camporee is open to everyone. It is Sept. 7-10. Come on up to see what a beautiful camp it is.

The Harvest Membership Rally will be Saturday, Sept. 9. The meal is \$15, and I am hearing Chicken Kiev is on the menu. Bring up those memberships.

A BIG thank you to the American Legion Riders for another Legacy Ride again this year. The grand total of funds will be announced at the National Convention. I am

certainly confident the Minnesota American Legion Riders will not be outdone on donations as usual.

Thanks to Bloomington Post 550 for its annual \$25,000 donation to the Legacy Run. Post 550 always leads Minnesota in donations to this effort and has given more to this cause than entire states have.

Donna and I attended the American Legion Auxiliary workshop in Melrose the weekend of Aug. 12-13. The American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota sure has their ducks in a row. It was very well-planned and informative on the coming year’s plans.

We also look forward to seeing all of you at our district and department rallies, training meetings and DEC meetings this year.

Be sure to make reservations for the Fall Conference at the Kelly Inn St. Cloud, Oct. 26-28. Find information about on Page 3.

See you there. As always if I can be of any assistance, please call 218-770-6264 or billb3350@gmail.com.

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

Be sure to watch livestream for Legacy turn-in

We had a very successful Legacy Run at the end of July. We raised over \$136,000.

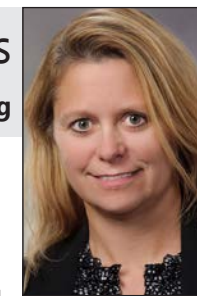
Thank you, Legion Family. We could not do this without you. On Aug. 19, we have the second annual Fund 85 Run. This year we started and ended at Forest Lake Post 225.

At the end of August, we went to Charlotte for the American Legion National



Legion Riders

Jody Hassing



Convention and turned in the money raised during the Legion Run. The turn-in will be Tuesday, Aug. 29. The American Legion media staff livestreams the convention, so even if you cannot be there, you can watch the turn-in.

After the National Convention is the Camporee (Sept. 7-10), and then the Romp (Sept. 14-17); both events are at Legionville. There will be a Riders meeting during the Romp at Legionville at 2 p.m.

Sept. 16. All Legion Family members are welcome to come to the Romp and learn more about your Legion Riders.

Congratulations to Austin American Legion Riders for receiving the “2023 Mower County Fair Pride of Mower Outstanding Service Organization” award. Thank you for

all you do! I know there are many other 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! The Riders will have a learning session at Fall Conference (Oct. 27-28), please join us in St. Cloud.

Information about registration is on Page 3.

God bless and keep the rubber side down.

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

A Minnesota Legacy

St. Michael Post 567 was one hit short of going to the American Legion World Series this year. If you get your hands on the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Rulebook, it has all kinds of history in the back.

Minnesota has produced five national champions:

- Minneapolis-Richfield Post 435 in 1943, defeating a team from Springfield, Ohio.
- Edina Post 471 in 1983, defeating Boyertown, Pa., Post 471. (A battle of two Post 471's!)
- New Brighton Post 513's Tri-City Red in 1999, defeating Kennewick, Wash., Post 34.
- Rochester Post 92's Rochester A's in 2003, defeating Cherryville, N.C., Post 100.
- Eden Prairie Eagles in 2011 (outside sponsor: Eden Prairie Baseball Association), defeating Medford, Ore., Post 15.

Also worth noting:

- In 2002, Excelsior Post 259 was the national runner-up, falling to West Point, Miss., Post 212.
 - In 2007, Eden Prairie was the national runner-up, falling to Columbia, Tenn., Post 19.
 - In 2010, Eden Prairie was the national runner-up, falling to Midwest City, Okla., Post 170.
 - A handful of Minnesota teams besides the ones listed above have qualified for the American Legion World Series: Burnsville Post 1700 in 2013, Woodbury Post 501 in 2005, Eden Prairie in 2004, Bloomington Post 550 in 1999 (yes, we had 2 teams in the ALWS that year), Excelsior Post 259 in 1998, New Brighton Post 513's Tri-City Red in 1997, Osseo Post 172 in 1995, Osseo Post 172 in 1993, Moorhead Post 21 in 1988, New Ulm Post 132 in 1985 (interestingly, they hosted and won the regional, reaching the ALWS without being state champ or runner-up), Edina Post 471 in 1982, New Ulm Post 132 in 1978, Minneapolis-Richfield Post 435 in 1973; St. Paul North End Post 474 in 1950, Austin Post 91 in 1948, Minneapolis-Richfield Post 435 in 1944, St. Paul Christie-DeParcq Post 406 in 1935, Minneapolis North Side Post 230 in 1932, St. Paul John DeParcq Post 406 in 1928.
 - In 1980, Ely hosted the ALWS; Honolulu defeated Boyertown, Pa., Post 471.
 - In 1955, St. Paul hosted the ALWS; Cincinnati Post 216 defeated Washington, D.C., Post 31.
 - In 1944, Minneapolis hosted the ALWS; Cincinnati Post 50 defeated Albemarle, N.C.
- The first year of the ALWS was 1926.



Team from Texas won the American Legion World Series

Continued from Page 1

in the championship game: "My elbow has been hurting all week. But I knew what I had to do. I went out there and threw the ball as hard as I could."

Eden Prairie's Nick Macheledt was the Rob Wassenaar Award winner as the tournament's outstanding pitcher. He threw a three-hit shutout in pool play to beat Minneapolis Post Office 2-0.

"The Wassenaar Award made me a little bit happier after losing in the championship game," Macheledt said. "It felt good to get a confidence booster. I really like how our team has come together this year. We get along well together, on and off the field."

Because Minnesota is among the six states with the most teams (in fact, it has had the most teams for 10 years running), two teams get to advance. St. Michael Post 567 and Eden Prairie advanced to the double-elimination Central Plains Regional Tournament in Rapid City, S.D.

The tournament is part of a national 64-team tournament. Only eight teams — one from each regional — reach the American Legion World Series.

As part of a long tradition, the champions attend Games 1 and 2 of the MLB World Series.

Eden Prairie lost its first game in Rapid City, and St. Michael won its first game. The Mikes then lost to Lincoln, Neb. Post 3 by a score of 3-2. EP won its next game, and the two Minnesota teams ended up facing each other in a win-or-go-home game. The Mikes defeated the Eagles 7-5.

The Mikes then hammered Fargo Post 2 17-7 to earn another shot at Lincoln Post 3. They won 12-9 to force a true title game, and the game was tied 7-7 at the end of the seven-inning game. At the bottom of the eighth, Post 3 won on a walk-off hit that sent the runner on second home.

The Mikes were that close to going to the American Legion World Series in Shelby, N.C. Minnesota hasn't had a team reach the World Series since Burnsville made it in 2013.

Lincoln Post 3 advanced to the World Series title game, where it lost 1-0 to League City, Texas, Post 554. It was the first team from Texas ever to win the championship in the 96-year history of the national tournament.

MINNESOTA DIVISION I SENIOR BASEBALL CHAMPIONS



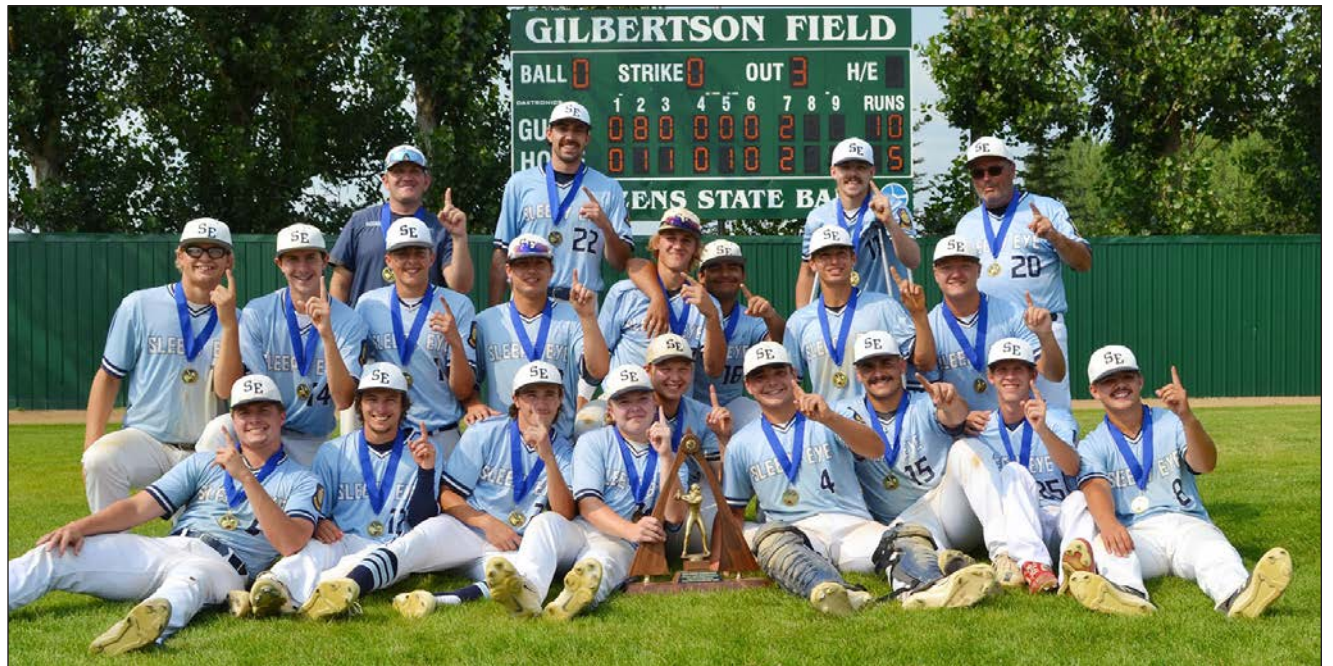
Tim Engstrom Department Commander Paul Hassing, left, and Div. I Sr. Tournament Director Bruce Young, right, stand with the players and coaches of the St. Michael Post 567 Mikes and the championship trophy on July 30 after defeating Eden Prairie 5-4 at Mayo Field in downtown Rochester. Mayo Field is a former Rochester American Legion Post 92 baseball field and is run by the city. The Rochester Honkers of the Northwoods League play there. The Mikes are coached by Levi Fry and Reed Brown. Read more about the Div. I Sr. State Tournament in The Gazette at mnlegion.org and see the tournament results bracket by going to minnesotalegionbaseball.com.

MINNESOTA FASTPITCH SOFTBALL CHAMPIONS



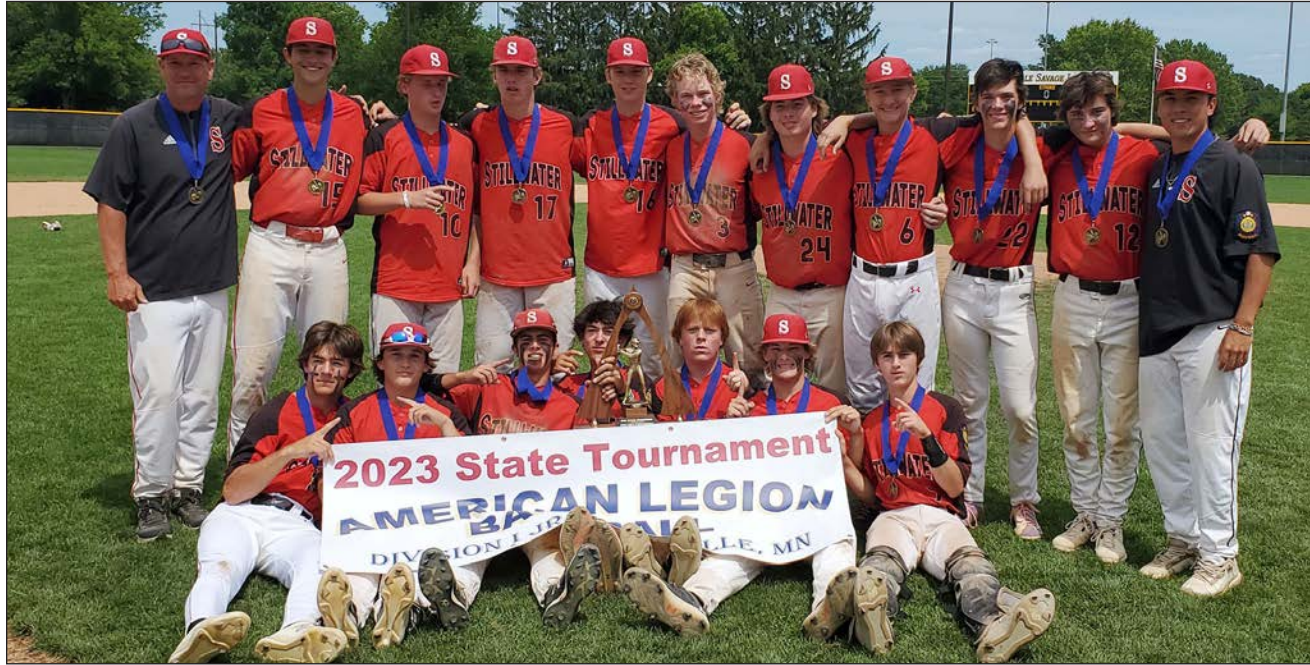
Mike Arvidson The players from the Fairmont Post 36 softball team line up next to the state championship trophy for Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball on July 30. They defeated Upsala Post 350 11-0 in New York Mills. Post 36 is coached by Cory Hainy, Aaron Lowry and Eric Muller. See the results bracket by going to minnesotalegionsoftball.com and scrolling down a bit. This was the second year for Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball.

MINNESOTA DIVISION II SENIOR BASEBALL CHAMPIONS



Chris Flaig The baseball players of Sleepy Eye Post 7 hold up the No. 1 sign as they pose with the championship trophy for the Div. II Sr. State Tournament title. Sleepy Eye defeated Eden Valley-Watkins Posts 381 & 453 by a score of 10-5 to capture the victory at Gilbertson Field in Roseau. The drive from Sleepy Eye to Roseau is more than six hours. Visit minnesotalegionbaseball.com to see a bracket with full results.

MINNESOTA DIVISION I JUNIOR BASEBALL CHAMPIONS



Stillwater Post 48 players and coaches gather with the Div. I Jr. State Tournament championship trophy and entrance banner on July 30 at Alimagnet Park in Burnsville. The coaches are Jon Koehn and Mike Parker. They beat Buffalo Post 270 by a score of 15-3 in the double-elimination tournament. Visit minnesotalegionbaseball.com to see brackets with full results.

MINNESOTA DIVISION II JUNIOR BASEBALL CHAMPIONS



The Div. II Jr. State Tournament champs are the 5039ers of Morris Post 29. At the tournament located at Richter Field in Granite Falls, the team won 2-0, defeating Montevideo VFW Post 380, which won the title in 2022. The nickname of 5039ers comes from the Morris VFW post, which also supports the team. (The town's Div. II Sr. team is the 29ers.) See full results in bracket form by going to minnesotalegionbaseball.com.

MINNESOTA AMERICAN LEGION PROSPECT SERIES



A little-known tournament is the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Prospect Series, where all-star Legion players form four all-star teams and have breakfast with college scouts. It shows how participating in Legion Baseball does more to get players noticed than does travel ball. The Prospect Series was held Aug. 4, 5 and 6 at Reynolds Field at University of Northwestern in Roseville. Like other statewide Legion Baseball tournaments, a representative from Scheels was present. Scheels is the official sponsor of Minnesota American Legion Baseball. Learn more about the Prospect Series at mnlegionprospects.com.

All-star players strut their baseball stuff at Legion Prospect Series

By John Sherman

ROSEVILLE — American Legion baseball players from all corners of the state gathered in Roseville and Eagan on the first weekend of August to compete in the third-annual Legion Prospects Series.

The event provided competition as well as college exposure for 128 Minnesota Legion players. State Legion Baseball Director Randy Schaub traveled to the Twin Cities to support the event, which offered round-robin games at the University of Northwestern in Roseville and Goat Hill Field at Eagan High School.

Mike Perry, the past state Legion baseball director and a member of Legion Post 320 in Hopkins, said the boys in the Prospects Series play on four teams. He noted another four teams called Junior Select play separately in Eagan.

"This gives more players a chance to compete and gain college exposure," said Bruce Barron, one of the founders of the Legion Prospects Series along with Perry, Charlie Becker and Omar Navarro.

Players at both sites were divided into four teams that each was scheduled to play three games — two on Saturday and one on Sunday.

Some of the west suburban Legion players competing in the junior division of the series were Michael Simonson and Jack McCoy of Hopkins, Elijah Stewart and Colin McGie of Hopkins, Harrison Boughton of Armstrong and the Eden Prairie trio of Keagan Meadows, Dawson Miller and Nick Thompson.

Boughton was impressive defensively as the White team's catcher in the first game of the tournament.

The Eden Prairie boys arrived home from the Central Plains Regional in Rapid City, S.D. at 2 a.m. Saturday and made it to Roseville before 10 a.m.

Director Charlie Becker, who is from Eden Prairie, said, "They made the commitment, and I knew they'd be here."

Once the games began, it was a fun time for everyone involved. The players competed hard, scouts watched and fans packed the stands.

"It was a long trip back from South Dakota," Eden Prairie catcher Miller said. "But I am happy to be here. I'll be myself and make some new friends."

Miller played on the Blue team and went against his Legion teammate, Thompson, who started at shortstop for the Gold team.

In a previous game, Edina Legion teammates Simonson and McCoy were on opposite sides with Simonson on the White team and McCoy on the Red team. McCoy and his teammates won that game 6-5.

"This is fun," Simonson said after the game. "Meeting new teammates, playing in a nice complex here at Northwestern. I didn't get a hit this game, but I was able to make a couple plays in the field. We have a lot of fans here, and they're cheering

loud. I was competing against Jack this game, but hoped that he would play well."

On McCoy's side of the field, he was on the Red team with one of his Legion rivals, Elijah Stewart from Hopkins.

"I like everything about the Prospects Series," Stewart said. "This is a great environment for baseball. I have been playing baseball against Jack's Edina team since we were 10 years old, and now he's my teammate."

There was one surprise for Stewart in Saturday morning's game. He was given the starting assignment at first base. And he just happened to have his blue-colored trapper mitt in his equipment bag.

"This is the first time in a year and a half that I've been able to play first," he said. "Thankfully, I remembered how."

Hopkins fans have become accustomed to seeing Stewart in the outfield, where his five-tool skills are apparent in every game. He batted .468 in the American Legion Sub-State 4 playoffs and was just about the .450 mark for the season. His throwing arm from the outfield is a cannon.

Eden Prairie's trio of Mead-



Outfielder Coby Brownlee of Marshall leans against the dugout fence.

ows, Miller and Thompson each played a big role in the Eagles' second-place finish in the State Division I Legion Tournament. Meadows pitched and also got some base hits. Miller caught almost every inning and supplied a solid bat in the middle of the order. Thompson hit in the lead-off spot and was among EP's leaders in hits and on-base percentage.

Simonson and McCoy led Edina Legion in hitting and were big RBI men for head coach Gene Larkin, as the Hornets made it to the finals of Sub-State 3 before losing 1-0 to state-bound Eden Prairie.

The Prospects Series included not only some of the state's best players, but also some well-known coaches. Heading the Red team was Southwest Christian High coach Rob Wassenaar, the winning pitcher for Edina in the 1983 Legion World Series title game. Todd Jahnke, the former Hopkins Legion coach and now coaching for USA Baseball, headed the White team. Osseo Legion coach Ben Johnson, who is also head coach at Dakota Wesleyan University, was in charge of the Blue squad.

'We got popular fast and needed to expand'

Continued from Page 1

medic in the Army Reserve. His stepfather was a communications technician in the Navy. Caple became a satellite communications operator.

Mom didn't take the news well.

"And I told her I was engaged that same day," he said.

After basic at Fort Benning and AIT at Fort Gordon, both in Georgia, Caple was assigned to the 53rd Signal Battalion's HQ Company at Peterson AFB in Colorado Springs.

However, he would work out of nearby Schriever AFB, east of Colorado Springs. Peterson to Schriever is a 13-mile drive.

There, Caple worked in communications and geolocation for missile defense. He went through Best Soldier for SMDC/ARSTRAT. That's Space and Missile Defense Command and Army Forces Strategic Command. (Life hack: Don't try to make sense of Army acronyms.)

Other companies of the 53rd Signal Battalion were scattered around the nation: Fort Meade, Maryland; Fort Detrick, Maryland; Camp Roberts, Calif. (now Oahu, Hawaii); Okinawa, Japan; Landstuhl, Germany. (Last year, the 53rd became a Space Force unit called the 53rd Space Operations Squadron. Schriever became a Space Force base and its headquarters.)

Caple had a top-secret clearance, and the HQ company had a special mobile mission that he isn't at liberty to explain.

He served the remaining four years of his five-year enlistment with the 53rd. In 2007, he and his then-wife had a son, Braeden. Caple used tuition assistance to finish his bachelor's degree, majoring in business administration with an emphasis in marketing.

Caple was offered the opportunity to attend officer candidate school, but he got out of the active-duty Army in 2010 because he didn't want his son to have to move all over the country. Caple's own parents divorced when he was 4. Born in Duluth, he had moved around the state many times before landing in Northfield. He didn't want Braeden to pick up and relocate over and over.

He got a civilian job and joined the Army Reserve 4th Space Company. Space Force wasn't a thing yet, but the mission was similar. They worked with NORAD supporting the tactical mission stateside and in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Caple's day job was for a defense contractor in Colorado Springs that today is known as Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, a satellite



Members of Lawrence Lake Township Post 467 stand with beer they brewed in early August at Warrior Brewing in Duluth. Matt Caple is in the red flannel. The post sold Legion Lager at the Itasca County Fair.



The taproom feels like a cross between modern breweries and old Legion posts.

communications firm doing interference detection, geolocation and triangulation in the U.S. civilian and military sectors.

"It was a fun job," he said.

He also completed his master's degree in 2011. It is in project management, and he got it at Colorado Technical University.

But the itch to uproot and return to Minnesota was there, and he and his family moved to Duluth. He took a job at a taconite mine. He spent two years as a dispatch engineer controlling GPS equipment for haul trucks and semiautonomous drilling.

He then got the job he has now. Caple works for Minnesota Power as a system operator managing the bulk electric system for the company's entire Minnesota footprint.

"The best way to describe what I do is: I am basically a lineman, but I work from a desk."

The job has 12-hour shifts with an unusual schedule over a seven-week rotation, but it



The brewery area features a display of some Warrior Brewing Co. products.

balances out with time off so he can pursue a hobby — like Warrior Brewing.

When he worked for that company in Colorado Springs, he won a prize at the annual holiday party. It was a homebrew kit. He got into it and joined a homebrew club. He was brewing so much he was giving it away.

"This was not really financially conducive," Caple said. "It was more of a hobby anyway."

Josh Bye, a friend in Colorado, asked whether he wanted to help start a beer company, and Caple declined because he was about to return to the North Star State. He brought his hobby back to Minnesota and joined the Northern Ale Stars Homebrewers Guild in 2013.

Bye's company, however, became Fossil Craft Beer Co., a popular hangout on U.S. Highway 24 on the west side of Colorado Springs.

By 2016, Caple drifted away from the hobby, and, meanwhile,

was feeling incomplete as a result of leaving the service. He helped found the Duluth Warriors, an ice hockey nonprofit for disabled veterans, part of Minnesota Warriors Ice Hockey, which has similar teams around the state. It is affiliated with USA Hockey.

Caple wanted to open up the program to all veterans but the board disagreed. Caple left. He co-founded the Lake Superior Warriors, a nonprofit using hockey as therapy for all veterans and active servicemembers. They play local and military teams across the country and internationally.

Caple was looking for a means to fundraise for the team and proposed a collaboration to local breweries.

He got crickets except for Canal Park Brewing Co. There, the head brewer, Ben Gipson, was a disabled veteran, and together they made a triple IPA in the fall of 2019. It went over well, and they made an oatmeal

stout in 2020. Both brews were called "Veterans Tribute."

Like all bars, breweries and restaurants, Canal Park had to close during the pandemic, and Gipson was let go in late 2020. He approached Caple with an idea.

"Hey, that collaboration, let's do that full-time."

Caple couldn't pass up the opportunity again.

"I thought, 'How often does one person in their lifetime get asked to start a brewery? I have to take advantage of this.'"

Warrior Brewing was born.

They got a bank loan, a name, a logo and a business plan where Warrior Brewing would raise funds for veteran causes. They were able to move into a space available when Lake Superior Brewing went out of business. By June 2021, they were production-only — no patrons, no taproom — because of the pandemic restrictions at the time.

They distributed the beer themselves to restaurants and stores.

"We got popular fast and needed to expand," Caple said.

They connected with Dahlheimer Beverage out of Monticello, which covered the St. Cloud, Iron Range and North Metro regions. Next up was Bernick's Beverage Supplier for the North Shore and northern Wisconsin. Then they signed with Locher Bros. for south-central Minnesota, and soon Dahlheimer purchased Locher anyway.

They opened a taproom in September 2022. Warrior expanded it in May 2023. It was in January 2023, though, when Legion Lager first came out.

Warrior's beers, such as Valkrie Golden Ale, aren't available in much of the tough Twin Cities market, but that's OK. It's

better to not get buried among all the other brands, Caple said.

If you go to Duluth, you can find Warrior Brewing Co. at 2711 W. Superior St. There, you will find plenty of Legion and VFW memorabilia, particularly from Duluth Zenith-Winsted Post 28. The place opens at noon daily except Sundays.

Last winter, when crafting Legion Lager, Caple had an idea. Approach American Legion posts about doing collaborations, much like he had done for the hockey program.

Send members to the brewery to brew. A month and a half later, come back to bottle it up. The post is cut a check equivalent to half of the potential sales revenue.

Of course, there is also the opportunity to sell Legion Lager at the post, too. You don't have to come brew it. Just be a customer, like with any other beer at the bar.

"You can take pride in a beverage that was crafted by Legion members in their own state," he said.

Lawrence Lake Township Post 476 bottled up 17 cases of Legion Lager on Aug. 6. That was \$612 for four hours of "work." The post doesn't have a bar, but it runs the beer garden at the Itasca County Fair, and they sold Legion Lager on tap.

They did the fundraiser, and they are a customer, too. Anyone with questions on Legion Lager can reach Caple at 218-721-7998.

Caple up and joined Post 476.

The entrepreneur and veteran recently found a new bride. Matt Caple and Jobi Troumbly of Taconite tied the knot on Nov. 11, 2022, at a hockey tournament in Las Vegas. The couple now live in Esko. He brings his son, who is now 16, and she has two children of her own.



Matt Caple stands with his loyal dog, Deacon, at Warrior Brewing in Duluth.



Among the decorations at the taproom are American Legion bass drums.

Fund 85 Run

Photos by Shawn Davis



The Fund 85 Run started out at Forest Lake Post 225 and went to Arcadia, Wis., and back on Aug. 19. The event raised \$5,200 that day. More money has come since.



Participants in the Fund 85 Run listen to a safety briefing that morning.



Tenth District Commander Matt Berens was among the ones who brought donations from a district or post.



Department Service Officer Ray Kane was on hand to brief the Fund 85 Run motorcyclists.



Department Commander Paul Hassing, 10th District Commander Matt Berens, and SAL Detachment Commander John Weiss relax prior to the ride.

Legacy Run

Photos by Amy Larsen



Pine City Post 51 provided a breakfast and granola bars for the journey. Who says Legionnaires don't like granola?



Riders head out from Pine City Post 51 on July 26 after experiencing hospitality and receiving donations.



This orange safety vest with a flag-winged eagle says, "Legion Riders" and says "Post 85 North Branch, MN."



These two mascots, Legacy and Loafer, always ride with the Minnesota American Legion Riders.



Bill and Mary Kuperus drive the chase vehicle away from the starting point, North Branch Post 85, on July 26.



The Legacy Run raised more than \$136,000 this time, according to Director Jody Hassing.

934th Airlift Wing Family Day

Photos by Teresa Ash



The Minnesota American Legion had a presence at the 934th Airlift Wing Family Day on Saturday, Aug. 5, at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Air Reserve Station adjacent to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Several members of the wing signed up for The American Legion and got to know the Four Pillars.



Listening Post



American Legion Riders escort the American Veterans Traveling Tribute on Aug. 15 in Murray County. The tribute was hosted by Slayton Post 64.



With them were Department Auxiliary President Sharon Cross, center, and Department Commander Paul Hassing, second from right.



Department Commander Paul Hassing, left, and others assisted with the assembly of the tribute's Vietnam Wall at the Murray County Fair in Slayton.



Some on hand at the Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament in New York Mills were, from left, Past Department Commander Tom Fernlund, Vice Director David Thompson, NECman Bill Barbknecht, Vice Director Luann McMahon and Director Michael Arvidson.



Woodbury Post 501 completed bottling and capping their own brand of beer at Warrior Brewing in Duluth. (See story on Page 1 if your posts wishes to raise funds by brewing beer.)



Members of Wheaton Post 80 and members of Rosholt, S.D., Post 48 rode together on a float in the Rosholt Area Threshermen's Parade on Aug. 20. First row: Francis Finke and Marv Bach. Second: Harry Fischer, Wally Johnson, Wayne Hervey. Third: Kim Kempton, Marsha Kempton, Gene Lundquist. Fourth: Ed Madsen, Roy LeClair, Ken Luebke.



Ben Krueger Post 49 in Pequot Lakes celebrated its 100th anniversary in June. Five local veterans received quilts from Quilts of Honor for their service. They were Rick Arrigonia, Alan Olson, Larrie Norris, Mike Thompson and Mike Sorvick. Members of Post 49 also rode on a float in the Stars & Stripes Day Parade in Pequot Lakes.



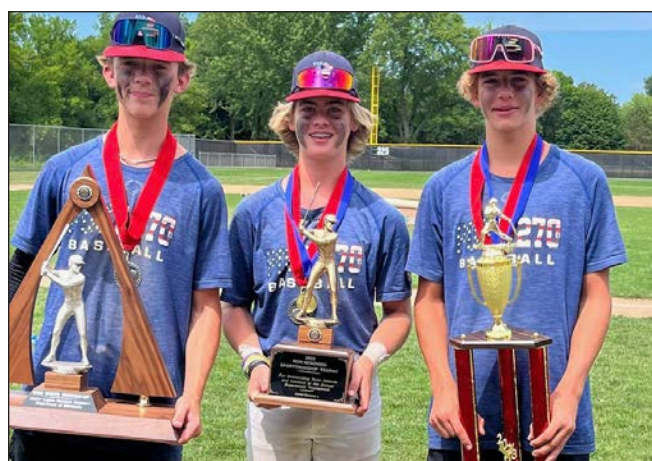
Department Service Officer Ray Kane and Assistant Department Service Officer Janet Lorenzo work with a car dealer and a veteran to provide a car so he can be employed.



Louis McCahill Post 110 in Lake City honored member Mel Blattner, who has been a coach or assistant coach with the baseball program for 41 years.



The 2nd District witnessed growth in its Junior Shooting Sports program. Redwood Falls Post 38 had a team for the 10th straight year, with three boys and two girls, and Pipestone Post 6 launched a team for its first season, having 11 boys and one girl. In the left photo, Mackenzie Zollner receives a Junior Shooting Sports medal from Post 38 Commander Denny Kissner. In the right photo, from left, are Post 38 teammates Shawn Matthews, Todd Deterling, Mackenzie Zollner and Griffin Deterling.



The Buffalo Post 270 baseball program brought home all kinds of hardware this season. The players hold the Runner-up Trophy from the Div. I Jr. State Tournament, the Ron Nenovich Sportsmanship Trophy from that tournament and a trophy for winning its substate tournament.



Lee C. Prentice Post 36 Girls Fastpitch Softball Team State Champions celebrated at the post home in downtown Fairmont with a pizza party with post members. Showing off the state championship trophy and tournament playoff brackets as a big poster are, front row from left, Ava Gillmore, Abi Sundeen, Kynlie Anderson, Reese Olson. In the back row, from left, are Coach Eric Muller, Ella Klunder, Emily Muller, Jayda Healy, Coach Cory Hainy, Makenzie Lowry, Makayla Lowry, Ilana Moeller and Coach Aaron Lowry. Not pictured are Mandy Pytleski, Emma Gudahl, Nevaeh Ragnar, Tiffany Lowry and Chloe Miller.

District commanders



1st District

Mark Maloney



My second month as 1st District commander has been busy. On July 22, I drove the chase vehicle for the Tour of the 1st District.

Thanks to the 1st District Riders for planning and organizing a great ride. The ride started at VFW Post 1215/American Legion Post 446 and ended at Saxon Hall in Brownsville, which is owned by La Crescent Post 595's Sy Fix.

The day was enjoyed by the American Legion Family. The following Sunday my wife, Sunshine, and I attended the omelet and French toast breakfast by the La Crescent SAL squadron.

Not only did we enjoy great food we got to spend time with our Legion family. We then went to Houston to see the Vietnam Traveling Wall hosted by the Houston Legion and community.

On July 26, I attended the Minnesota American Legion

Baseball Div. I State Tournament Banquet at the Rochester International Event Center and had good time at the table chatting with Past Department Chaplain Kelley Adelman and her husband, Mike.

On Aug. 13, we held our district picnic at the Plainview Legion. It is amazing to see 18 posts represented, coming together as a family and having fun. Not only did we have roasted ham and turkey by Jim Kellogg but sweet corn provided by Plainview Post 179.

We passed the hat and collected \$300 for Honorary Jr. President Taylor McElroy's Project, Believeit. The road to success has just begun. Let's keep up the great work and continue to set an example for the next generation to carry on where we left off.



3rd District

Rod Reifsteck



During the past two years being vice commander, my goal was to bring some substance of communication and lots of visits to help involvement because we are still recovering and struggling with the reinvigorating of our membership.

I am proud to announce District 3 has reached the Goose Egg percentage with congratulations to my vice commanders. We've had a couple of changes in my team already. We have added James Entinger as Area 2 vice commander. We appreciate his service and commitment.

One goal as I took on this commander role is to realize the importance of bringing all on board into a digital format. As of now 75 percent of the American Legion Posts nationwide are run by the Vietnam Era veterans.

In addition to my findings, 25 percent of the posts do not have strong WiFi to support computers. In some instances, they may have access but no computers. We have obligations to bring

our posts to use the MyLegion website without losing our old membership.

This also gives our older veterans purpose and "skin in the game" as to their post involvement when they can use a digital and handwritten format. Very easily, one can observe, during the past two years, attendance at conferences and conventions is declining.

I appreciate the talent, availability and willingness that keeps us all working together. I was taught the can-do attitude in the Marine Corps, and I have every intention to keep it going.

Thundering Third, please show our strength and make every effort to attend the National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., Aug. 25-31.

As always, thanks for your individual support of the American Legion.



4th District

Teresa Ash



The 4th District is on fire. We are doing amazing things.

We had a great installation; all the new officers being installed was exciting. They brought their families to see the ceremony, and their families were so proud of them.

All of them are still working and three of them are still in the military, yet they chose to still be part of this great organization.

Department Vice Commander Lynne Nottage did an amazing job. The Department Auxiliary President Sharon Cross and Department Auxiliary Membership Chairwoman Jenny Nelson were both at the ceremony. They all made it a grand event.

We are doing something

completely different for our next meeting. We will not be having a traditional 4th District meeting. We will be doing a traveling meeting.

The 4th District is holding its inaugural Meet your District and Department Family Leadership Tour. We will be taking a bus that will carry department and district family leaders (including Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and ALR) and going to the post homes around the district.

We are inviting posts, units, squadrons and chapters without a building to come to

their nearest American Legion post that evening to meet the department and district leadership. The time spent on the bus traveling will have each family group talk about what and how they do what they do



5th District

Dick Ward



Every late summer, we begin to look forward to the new American Legion year.

Summer has the Boys/Girls State programs, Minnesota American Legion Riders' Legacy Run, Department Convention, National Convention and Minnesota American Legion Baseball/Softball tournaments. There's the Minnesota State Fair, and sweet corn is in season. Schools open soon, and posts are beginning to gather for the upcoming year. Pancakes and omelet griddles are being prepared.

This past summer I was invited to several post activities including: the Minneapolis Post No.1 picnic, The Hellenic Post 129 picnic and the 75th Celebration of the Aviation Post 511.

It was great to get around and meet many of our Legionnaires on their turf and not simply at a district meeting. Think about traveling post to post. There

are lots of good things happening out there.

Thanks to all who helped get the Fighting 5th District get off the Goose Egg. It is a great start to our membership season, and we look to keeping up the momentum.

The COVID-19 challenge is, for the most part, behind us and folks are ready to resume their interpersonal activities as best they can. Post and district meetings are the two best places to start.

Note: Minnesota State Fair: Opening Ceremony for Day's events with the theme "Honoring Vietnam Veterans. Military." The event includes a flag-raising ceremony and a flyover at 10:25 a.m.

"To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."



6th District

Anthony Koop



Greetings and salutations from the *Big Sixth!*

As of this writing, I am looking forward to the 104th National Convention in Charlotte. The convention was the last week of August and will have come and gone by the time this publication reaches mailboxes.

I am excited to attend and expect to learn a great deal and meet many wonderful people.

We are now focusing on rejuvenating the Oratorical Program in the 6th, and we challenge the whole Department of Minnesota to do so, too!

So, it is time to gather up contestants with the new school year starting.

This means ALL POSTS need to start talking with everyone who will listen to you that can help find those kids that might just be interested in earning some scholarships!

Please, contact your Oratorical Contest chair, as well

as reach out to your local schools, and they will help find the students.

Put an article in the local newspapers and on Facebook. Consider offering a scholarship from your Post if the student is chosen to participate at the district level. The students need time to study the topics and prepare their speeches. If you wait, the time will be long past before they are ready.

Minnesota Legion College is coming up fast (Oct. 12-15), and I hope that the class is filled with members from all over the state. And before we know it, Department Fall Conference will be upon us (Oct. 26-28). The second membership renewal notice comes out mid-October. Let's try to keep too many of those from going out and get our members renewed early!



7th District

Jan Ekert



Greetings to all of the 7th District Legionnaires along with all Legionnaires from other districts.

Another month has come and gone, and I continue to work on learning new things as your 7th District commander. I am hoping that this finds all of you well and working on renewing your memberships and seeking out new members. Remember the membership year cutoff is in December; please try to get those 2023 memberships in.

I do have to talk briefly about

of course I can't forget Randy Schaub for making me feel so welcome. It was exciting to represent the 7th District and greet the players before the game. Congratulations to Morris Post 29 on winning the state championship.

The second event was the Kraut Parade in Eden Valley. I walked and threw candy following the Meeker County Veterans Service van.

In less than a week, I will be heading to the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, and I am hopeful that this will not only be a learning experience for me but will provide me with information I can share with all of you.

There are several upcoming dates to mark on your calendars; Camporee at Legionville Sept. 6-10, the Harvest Rally is also at Legionville on Sept. 9. The Department Fall Conference will be in St. Cloud Oct. 26-28. This is a time for you all to learn more about what the Minnesota Department of the American Legion is doing, and what we have accomplished. I would

encourage you to attend.

Please make sure that if you are needing help with something in your post, on a personal level, or just have questions I am available to assist you. I am only a phone call away.

In my last article I omitted a big part of what I hope to do this year, that being what my project is. My project is the Montevideo Veterans Home, for which I hope to raise \$5,000 to \$10,000 to help with essential needs of our veterans.

I want to earmark these monies for things like shampoo, soap, socks, most things all of us need for our personal grooming, and daily use. Be it clothing and things that you or I take for granted being able to obtain.

My theme is "Veterans Helping Veterans." Remember our Four Pillars when you think about helping our veterans young and old. This project falls under Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

Remember our strength lies in our numbers. Our voices are loud when we speak together.



10th District

Matthew Berens



Greetings to all from the Mighty Tenth!

I wanted to fill everyone in on my joint 10th District project for the year: We will sponsor the Operation Welcome Home military project at Ironwood Springs Ranch in Stewartville. They are doing great things for veterans, including family retreats, couples retreats, even a disabled veterans turkey hunt. Check them out at ironwood-springs.com/military.

I hope everyone is as excited as I am about the National Convention in Charlotte. I haven't been to this event since

it was held in Minneapolis in 2011. It's going to be a blast!

Lastly, I want to invite everyone to our 10th District Family Pig Roast at Legionville on Sept. 8 at 5 p.m. The cost will be \$10 at the door. Please join us, we'll have an epic time.

I hope everyone has a fantastic autumn. I look forward to seeing you all very soon. As always, don't hesitate to email me at mtberen@yahoo.com.

Groundbreaking planned for new military, veterans museum

CAMP RIPLEY — Members of the American Legion Family from across the state are invited to attend the dedicated and ceremonial groundbreaking for the future site of the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum.

The ceremony takes place 2-3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 17. An RSVP is requested by Thursday, Sept. 14. Participants can contact Director Randal Dietrich at rdietrich@mnmilitarymuseum.org or by phone at 320-616-6050.

The museum will be a 40,000-square-foot facility on 32 acres. Work begins in the spring of 2024, with completion expected in late 2025. A grand opening is planned for early 2026.

The museum presently exists on Camp Ripley. This construction will bring the displays out by the junction of state highways 371 and 115.

The groundbreaking comes immediately after the Camp Ripley Biennial Open House, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sept. 17. No RSVP needed.

Got a historic military vehicle? To participate in the convoy from VFW Post 1112 in Little Falls, RSVP to Paul Schwartz at kma_55414@yahoo.com.

WWII ball coming to S. St. Paul

SOUTH ST. PAUL — The Commemorative Air Force Minnesota Wing presents the Fall Bombers Moon Ball on Sept. 9.

This is a vintage World War II-era dance for all ages with live big band music from the Roseville Big Band. It takes place in a hangar at Fleming Field in South St. Paul.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Doors open at 6 p.m. There are free dance lessons from 7 to 8 p.m., and from 8 p.m. to midnight is all dancing.

Purchase tickets in advance at cafmn.org. Go to "Events," then "Dances."

There will be a vintage clothing contest, gourmet food trucks and professional photo opportunities with aircraft and vehicles.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 24 Vol. 2

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

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

Are you ready to dance into the hearts?

Let's put on our dancing shoes and dance right over to our first membership rally. Department Membership Chairman Jenny Nelson is taking us "Cruising the Sea for Memberships."

What fun we will have dancing the samba or the mambo as we cruise from island to island. Our target has been acquired. Minnesota's goal is 29,370 members. You do not have to wait for your dues notice to pay your dues.

Our first department membership rally is Sept. 9, 2024, at Legionville Camporee and every unit president and their leadership should be the first to get their dues paid to their unit membership chairman and get onboard our cruise ship!

Bring your camper or stay in the dorms. Can you imagine how great it would be if every member of our great organization brought in just one more member?! Every American Legion member, active-duty military and their families are welcome to join us at the rally. Come for a day or come for the weekend. All funds raised help support the Legionville Safety Education Center in Brainerd. The Legionville camp is unique to Minnesota and Camporee is a family event.

Save the date! Fall Conference is being planned. Thursday, Oct. 26, will have committee meetings including the Department Executive Committee, and on Friday, Oct. 27, the Fall Conference begins in earnest. Things wrap up by noon Saturday, Oct. 28.

Let's kick off our Fall Conference with an informative gathering. How will you get there, by plane, train, automobile, motorcycle, or trike? Friday morning join us for the opening

President's Column

Sharon Cross



session full of information on our programs. Plan on joining us for some fun for Junior and Senior Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, Legionnaires and American Legion Riders on either Thursday or Friday evening. More information to follow.

Afterward, you will be tripping the light fantastic as you sachet your way home full of information to share with your unit members. Remember to bring that new member or even an old member that hasn't attended a Fall Conference in a while.

Here's a little peek into our travels so far. Junior Fun Weekend at Legionville was very well attended. Everyone had a lot of fun mixed with learning. They listened to each other share what they do in their meetings. How they help in their communities and what they do for the veterans. They learned about Believet and flag folding from Department Honorary Junior President Taylor McElroy. They had icebreaker time to get to know each other, an afternoon of swimming, fun meals, games, snacks and smores by the campfire.

Were you ever lucky enough to take part in escorting, setting up or just able to see the American Veterans Traveling Tribute Vietnam Wall and Cost of Freedom as it travels and is displayed in Minnesota? What a humbling experience. A big thank you goes out to Legionnaire Randy Olson for being my escort on his trike as we participated in the escort for the AVTT Vietnam Wall.

Almost 70 motorcycles and trikes along with the police, fire, ambulance, a World War II Willy's Jeep and others in cars escorted the wall from Fulda to Slayton. We participated in the set up along with the local football team and girls volleyball team that also volunteered their time to help.

Department Commander Paul Hassing and I were treated like royalty by our hosts from the 2nd District. The wall was all packed up and moved to the Eagle's Healing Nest by Aug. 23. If my trike is up and running at that time, then I will have ridden with that escort, also.

Hassing and I were invited to participate in the Lino Lakes parade. Such a fun, well-organized community event, and again we were treated royally. What a beautiful Minnesota day for a parade.

August finished off with the National Convention in Charlotte. Minnesota did well and you will hear more on that at our Fall Conference in October. Anyone who joined the pre-convention committee meetings heard firsthand from our national officers.

Sharon Cross of Bemidji Unit 14 is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Be The One to Dance Into the Hearts of Veterans."



A Minnesota State Patrol trooper recites an oath with Legionville campers on Aug. 4. The campers pledge to be safe, follow safety rules and advocate for others to be safe, too.



During the graduation ceremony of the final session of Legionville on Aug. 4, campers raise their right hand and pledge to follow safety rules.



Legionville Education Center Camp Manager Adam Felton introduces the staff Aug. 4 as campers and their loved ones look on.



A group of boys hang out on the bleachers as they wait for the graduation ceremony to begin. They said they had a blast at Legionville.

Endorsements

Walker endorsed for NEC position

American Legion Auxiliary Warren Unit 27 and the 9th District Executive Committee proudly endorses Jean Walker for National Executive Committee for the years 2024-2026.

She has been an active member of Warren Unit 27 for 30 years. Her eligibility is through her late father, Joseph Penk, a World War II veteran. She is a PUFL (Paid Up For Life) member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

At the unit level, she has held many positions including president. On the district level, she has worked up the chairs to district president and chairman for several of the committees including, Membership,

Americanism, Education, Finance Chairman, Past President Parley, Legislation, District Advisor and current Parliamentarian.

On the department level, Walker has served as chairman for Memory Book, Americanism, Leadership, Girls State Counselor, Membership, VA&R, Legislation, Northwestern Division AEF Chairman, Department President 2018-2019, Girls State Chairman, Northwestern Division Education Chairman, Alternate NEC, Past Presidents Parley and current NEC. Walker



Jean Walker

has attended many district, department and national conventions and mission trainings.

Walker and her husband, John, have been married for 31 years and live in Warren. They have one son, Michael, daughter-in-law, Heather, granddaughter Arietta and a grandson Bennett.

All are members of the American Legion Family. She is retired and John is a dispatcher and corrections officer with the Marshall County Sheriff's Office. Jean is very active in her community.





The Clearwater County Veterans Memorial is next to Bagley American Legion Post 16. Ride for the Stones raises money for deceased veterans who have no family to recognize them. The ride is Sept. 2.

Ride for the Stones blasts off Sept. 2

By Pamela French
Bagley Unit 16

BAGLEY — The Clearwater County Memorial Ride for the Stones will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Saturday, Sept. 2, of Labor Day Weekend.

The ride raises funds to purchase paver stones in honor of deceased veterans in Clearwater County. The ride has grown significantly over the years, yet it started with the idea of one person.

Ride for the Stones has a very heartfelt beginning. In the early morning hours on Memorial Day 2014, longtime Bagley resident and Navy veteran Jeff Schermerhorn went out to the Bagley Cemetery, as he wouldn't be able to attend the American Legion program later that morning.

Schermerhorn wanted this time to visit the graves of people he knew. Even though he had been a Bagley resident over 40 years, as he walked the grounds, he noticed there were numerous gravesites of veterans that had been at rest in our cemetery for decades, and some over a century — veterans who get a flag once a year and their gravesite mowed — but nothing to really remember them.

After leaving the cemetery that morning on his motorcycle, Schermerhorn cruised passed the Veterans Memorial in Bagley. He noticed Gary Gesell was sitting at the memorial. Schermerhorn parked his bike and went to chat with Gesell.

Schermerhorn shared with Gesell that it was pretty sad that numerous veterans buried in the Bagley Cemetery, who didn't have family, would never get an engraved stone paver laid at the memorial. Schermerhorn asked Gesell if raising the money on his own with a motorcycle ride to buy the \$200 stones would be OK with him and the committee.

Gesell said yes, and the rest is history. Each year the ride continues to grow with the number of bikes in the ride and people attending the event. In the nine years of the annual ride, over \$55,000 has been raised.

Schermerhorn said 100 percent of the proceeds from the motorcycle rally goes directly into buying paver stones, and "absolutely nothing else."

That comes to 275 stones in nine years. Schermerhorn went on to say the ride wouldn't be possible without the members of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 16's hard work, dedication helping with the ride,

along everything else that goes on with the Bagley Post 16

Additionally, Schermerhorn stated there are "so many people" that help make this annual ride so successful, and have continued to do so for the past nine years.

"The dedication to getting stones for each deceased veterans is a labor of love from all those involved," he said. "'You Are Not Forgotten' isn't a bumper sticker to riders and supporters."

Schermerhorn added: "Sept. 2, 2023, will be our 10-year anniversary, and I will continue to do it until I'm too old, then I will pass it on to somebody else."

The 10th annual Ride for the Stones is coming up this Labor Day Weekend.

On Saturday, Sept. 2, motorcycle riders will gather at Post 16 for coffee, rolls and juice, the Pledge of Allegiance and a blessing of the bikes.

The group will travel through Clearwater County, making at least two stops, before returning to the post. The cost is \$25 per bike, \$10 for extra rider.

Upon returning to the post, all will gather for an all you can eat pulled-pork dinner. Non-riders are invited to join in the fun for \$10.

Help compile activity bags for children at VAMC

By Brandi Christensen
Children & Youth Chairman

ST. CLOUD — At the Department of Minnesota Fall Conference this year I am calling for units to put together small activity bags or get items for activity bags for children that come with veterans to the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.

The bags do not have to be

big or extravagant and can have handles or drawstrings, anything you can buy or make. The stuff inside can be coloring books, crayons and things like that. Anything that will keep kids occupied while the veteran is at their appointments.

Ideas for bags:

- Small drawstring bags
- Small handled bags
- School pencil bags

• Makeup bags

Ideas for items for bags:

• Coloring books (there are small about 5-x-7-inch books that the dollar stores have as well as Target, Walmart and Amazon. I buy them for my daughter all the time; plus, they come with three crayons, too!

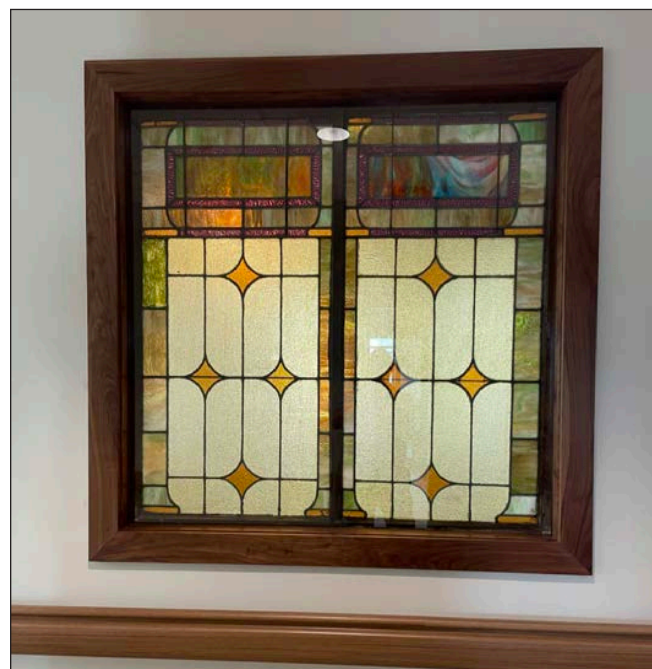
- Crayons
- Word finds (older kids)
- Sticker books (you can still

find them at Walmart)

- Small quiet sensory (fidget) toys such as Popits
- Small cars

Note: If you have trouble thinking of ideas check out activity bags at a church. Most churches have activity bags for kids to use during services.

Any questions reach out to me please brandichristensen21@gmail.com or 763-843-0875.



This stained-glass window has been installed at the new Bemidji Veterans Home. This was part of Immediate Past Department President Mary Kuperus' Project.



Fall Conference

ST. CLOUD — The Minnesota American Legion Family Fall Conference will be Oct. 26-28 in St. Cloud. The Auxiliary Department of Minnesota have a lot of information packed into these three short days for units to partake. A reminder to all that we will once again be holding a silent auction and Poppy Contests. Further details will be in the October issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire. Find registration form or how to register online on Page 3.

Hotels:
Headquarters hotel:
Best Western Plus Kelly Inn, St. Cloud
320-253-0606

Nearby hotel:
Courtyard by Marriott, St. Cloud
320-654-1661



Learn more about the Auxiliary Emergency Fund

By Margee Keller
AEF Chairman

CROOKSTON — The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis.

Members helping members — that's the American Legion Auxiliary's mission of "Service Not Self in Action."

Hard times can fall upon us at any moment. That's when the American Legion Auxiliary is committed to help.

AEF was established in 1969. Five decades later, the AEF is still helping fellow Auxiliary members get back on their feet. Since the Auxiliary Emergency Fund was established, more than \$6 million has been awarded to more than 6,500 members.

Learn more at AEF@ALAforVeterans.org. Applications are now only processed online at www.mnala.org. Go to forms for the ALA Emergency Fund Application.

Temporary assistance is considered under the following guidelines:

- Members whose dues are current and have maintained their dues for three consecutive years are eligible to apply. One grant per grantee in a 12-month period will be awarded.
- Natural disaster or weather emergencies leave a member without shelter or food.
- Financial crisis hits — leaving a member without resources for shelter, food, or utilities, and there is no source of assistance available.
- Extreme circumstances: educational training who is lacking the necessary skills for employment.
- Maximum award is \$2,400 on a case by case basis.
- Funds cannot be used for medical expenses or debts such as credit cards.
- The grant committee directs payments to a provider such as a utility or mortgage company.

Silent Auction

The annual Silent Auction will be bigger and better than ever. We hope we can count on you!

Thursday, Oct. 26 through Saturday, Oct. 28. We will be open for set up by 3 p.m. Funds raised will benefit our Auxiliary Emergency Fund coffers. Please bring items to donate such as theme baskets, patriotic items, quilts, pictures, jewelry items, jams, jellies, munchies, pies, bake goods, etc. The list is endless. Just use your imagination.

We will again have \$2 grab bags. I will have available paper bags so bring along those small items as well. So far, we have one generous donor of some large pictures — of watercolor, wildlife, etc.

Also, remember to bring donations of monies from individual members, units and districts. A special thank you gift will be given to individuals donating \$50 or more. Also, we will be doing a district challenge. Challenge will be posted at the auction.

Results of auction will be shared on Saturday morning.

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