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For God and Country

September 2024

Kellogg elected nat'l vice cmdr.

Convention featured 'Be the One,' Space Force, Katrina's general, Army-Navy game, Taiwan

NEW ORLEANS — James C. "Jim" friend was a past commander for the 1st a national vice commander at the 105th American Legion National Convention.

He shared the stage with Gary Leach of California, Charles Robbins of New Jersey, Joe Lysaght of South Carolina and Roger Mathison of Wisconsin. They raised their hands and took an oath.

Past National Sergeant-at-Arms Tom Schottenbauer of St. Louis Park Post 282 nominated Kellogg. He described how his

Kellogg of Adams Post 146 was elected District and the Department of Minnesota and a past department vice commander, historian and sergeant-at-arms.

Schottenbauer said Jim and his wife, Brenda, have four children and 12 grandchildren, all members of the Legion Family.

Kellogg is the chairman of the Department National Security/Foreign Relations Committee. Nationally, he serves on the National Security Council.

He has served in numerous chairmanships

and committee assignments and even has been gambling manager at his post.

He served as an aircraft radio repairman in the Air Force from 1969 to 1973 and today makes his living as a farmer.

National vice commanders may preside over meetings of the National Executive Committee or the National Convention, and perform other duties for the commander. including speaking in various states about reasons to join the Legion.

Space Force

The convention's first speaker was Gen. B. Chance Saltzman, chief of operations for **Continued on Page 8**



At the 105th National Convention, Jim Kellogg, left, holds his right hand up and takes an oath as one of five national vice commanders. Next to him is Gary Leach of Woodland, Calif. Find their bios at legion.org/vicecommanders.

Legion-hearted

Recent 6th District commander served as a medic and was shot in Iraq

By Tim Engstrom

Legion Family know Anthony Koop from statewide get-togethers — rallies, conventions and conferences. He's smiling, making jokes and, when he was 6th District commander this past year, usually winning membership awards.

Few of the Legionnaires at the department level know what the members at Ironton Post 443 knew all along: Koop was shot in Baghdad in 2007 and is a Purple Heart recipient.

If you didn't glance at his license plate, you probably wouldn't know. He doesn't bring it up, but if you bring it up, he is OK with sharing.

"I've learned that the best thing to do is to just tell what happened," he said.

Koop, 42, graduated from Crosby-Ironton High School in 2000. He worked at Rutger's Bay Lake Resort in the conference center as the conference center supervisor. He enjoyed working with his high school buddies.

April 2003, and the resort announced Iraq. He joined. Why the Army?



Anthony Koop is an Army veteran who was wounded in the Iraq War and is active in at post, district and department levels of The American Legion. He is 42. He says more young veterans should join the organization, because it gets them around other veterans and gives them a sense of purpose.

it would not be bringing back its full staff. A few months earlier, in Febemergency medical technician.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Army was Business at the resort was slow in tracking down Saddam Hussein in

"They had medics. The Air Force Patrol as a kid and wanted to be an ruary, Koop had been certified as an don't have medics. The Navy might put me on a ship; I don't like tight quarters," Koop said.

That Air Force recruiter missed an in five minutes. opportunity. Koop was in Civil Air

recruiter was on vacation. The Marines airman. He waited and waited for the Air Force but no one called him back. The Army recruiter knew a friend of his father's, so Koop signed with him

Continued on Page 11

Anthrax resolution stalls in **Big Easy**Gender-neutral cap

proposal brings up uniform discussion

NEW ORLEANS — There were six resolutions from Minnesota that were sent to the 105th National American Legion Convention for review. None was passed.

It was the second year of inaction for a resolution calling for federal agencies to investigate the anthrax shot given to troops during the Persian Gulf War, whether deploying or staying on base. The shot was given to about 10,000 civilians after the 9/11 attacks, when menacing anthrax-laced letters killed five and sickened 17.

After the resolution was sent back for further study at the 2023 National Convention in Charlotte, Department Service Officer Ray Kane revised the language and worked closely with staff at National HQ on phrasing.

In short, the resolution calls on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Food

Continued on Page 10



Minneapolis VA Women's Clinic Director Alisa Duran speaks Friday, Sept. 13, at the groundbreaking for the clinic on the east side of the hospital building. The new clinic is expected to be finished by spring 2026.

VA Minneapolis breaks ground on new Women's Clinic bldg.

MINNEAPOLIS — Doctors, nurses, at the Minneapolis VA. "It will represent federal politicians, veterans and their spouses, VA officials, state officials and media crews gathered on the east side of the Minneapolis VA Medical Center on Friday, Sept. 13, to break ground on construction of the long-awaited Women's Clinic.

"This new clinic will not just be a building; it will be a symbol of our commitment to providing comprehensive, compassionate and personalized care to the women who have served our nation with distinction and dignity," said Dr. Alisa Duran, the women's health director

our recognition of the evolving needs of female veterans and our dedication to addressing those needs with the highest standards of medical excellence.'

She shared a timeline of women's health care at the Minneapolis VA.

In 1985, it opened a breast cancer detection clinic. She said the Minneapolis VA was the first VA to perform on-site mammography.

In 1988, the Minneapolis VA established the Women's Preventative Medicine Clinic, which, thanks to a grant,

Continued on Page 12

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Endorsements

Barbknecht endorsed as NEC representative

and the 9th District at their district convention for the office of National Executive Committee member representing the Department of Minnesota for the 2025-2027 executive term.

Barbknecht, a 54-year member of The American Legion, has served as 9th District commander, department vice commander, department

Bill Barbknecht, a member of the membership chairman for two con-Adamson-Norman Post 30 Fergus secutive years and department com-Falls, has been endorsed by his post mander. In addition to his national appointments, he presently serves as the Legionnaire Insurance Trust chairman for the Department of Minnesota.

> He has served as chairman of the Rehabilitation Committee, Finance Committee, National Security and Community Service.

Barbknecht served in the U.S. Marine Corps 1968-1970 and 24 years in the North Dakota Air National Guard in Fargo. He retired after 38 years with the U.S. Postal Service.

Barbknecht is married to Donna Arends-Barbknecht. She served as Auxiliary Department President 2017-2018. They reside in Battle Lake. He has a son and daughter who are both veterans as well as their spouses.

Together they have five children, many grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



Barbknecht

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What's Happening? **Fall Conference** is coming up

ST. CLOUD — The Fall Conference is planned for Oct. 25-26 with committee meetings on Oct. 24.

A meeting of the Department Executive Committee takes place on Oct. 24.

Like in recent years, the conference will feature breakout sessions on Friday and Saturday

It takes place at the Best Western Plus Kelly Inn in St. Cloud. The program and registration form are on Page 13. Read about all the breakout sessions.

Rallies planned for this year

SPICER — Save the dates.

be Saturday, Dec. 7, at Spicer Post 545 and will be hosted by the American Legion Riders. It starts with an 11 a.m. social hour and a noon meal, followed by a program.

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

The Appreciation Rally is set for Saturday, March 8, and it will be at Chanhassen Post 580. The time has not been set, but the meal is typically a supper.

Legion helping out Fisher House

MINNEAPOLIS — The American Legion Department of Minnesota's Veterans Affairs &

The Pearl Harbor Rally will Rehabilitation staff is asking for volunteers to help with outdoors work at the Fisher House on the campus of the Minneapolis VA.

On Oct. 17, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the volunteers will mulch, pull weeds, move rocks, trim trees, plant flowers and garden.

The Home Depot Foundation is providing the materials.

'We are hoping to make this an annual clean-up day with Home Depot," said Department Service Officer Ray Kane.

To volunteer, people can email Kane at dso@mnlegion.org. He hopes to get Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and ALR members.

Prevention of suicide is goal

DULUTH—The sixth annual Veterans Suicide Prevention & Awareness Day will take place Saturday, Oct. 5, at The Depot in Duluth.

This event, organized by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, aims to raise awareness and save lives.

This annual program always includes sharing of impactful stories and experiences from speakers who have family or personal experience with Veteran suicide or mental health struggles, as well as highlighting resources for support and messages of encouragement from veteran organizations, community leaders and elected officials. The connections and camaraderie during the social hour are equally impactful for many.

Social hour is 9-10 a.m., with the program 10-11 a.m. Visit minnesotaveteran.org/events.

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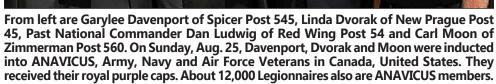
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Seeing results of Legion efforts is key

I just want to say how honored I am to be your commander this year.

That said, It saddens me when I hear about a veteran who is asked to join or to renew their membership say: "What's in it

As we know, it's not about us, it's about our servicemembers and veterans, their families and the freedoms we all enjoy.

our Department Convention and in the eight weeks since, I wish that those members who have not renewed or considering not renewing their membership could have experienced just some of what I have in this short period of time.

From attending two days at Boys State in June, the American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament in August, Legionville School Safety Patrol Camp graduation, the Jr. Auxiliary Fun Weekend, various posts' community activities, and the 105th National Convention in New Orleans, I have gained so much appreciation for the dedication and enthusiasm shown by not only the participants but more importantly by the staff and volunteers of these programs.

Commander's Column

Carl Moon

participants represent not only the future for our children and grandchildren, they represent our freedoms, morals and our continued way of life.

Congratulations to immediate In the brief time just before Past Commander Paul Hassing on a very successful year and for exceeding the goal for his project: Fund 85.

> I also feel that as the Minnesota delegation chairman at the National Convention in New Orleans, Paul had good participation and fellowship from all of the delegates. I know he is looking to more road time on his Harley this next year.

> I have reviewed the classes recommended by our department staff and approved by our Training Committee for the Fall Conference in October. It looks like there will be some great opportunities for district officers and their committees to learn more about the Legion programs and responsibilities.

The leading candidate for national commander, Dan Wiley Our programs and their from Kansas, will attend and

speak. invited repre-

sentative from my Commander's Project, Veteran's Defense Project, to give a presentation about their program.

Again, I am hoping to raise \$60,000 to support their efforts to expand excess for veterans living in underserved areas.

My theme is "ACT: Accountability, Communication, Transparency." It represents the responsibility of department officers and committees to assist the district officers and committees in any way we can to help your posts be successful.

I look forward to meeting and working with all of you this next

Carl Moon of Zimmerman Post 560 is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota. His theme is "ACT: Accountability, Communication and Transparency."

Mail Call

A word from the editor

You know me. I edit this publication. However, I am a member, too, and I am in the 10th District. Keep that in mind as you read this piece.

I just want to say a few words about the story on Page 7 of the August 2024 issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire about which district has the most baseball and softball titles.

The story divided the numbers by division.

However, when a reader with a calculator nearby adds up all the titles, the 10th District actually has the most, with 35.

Way to go, Mighty 10th!

The 4th is in second place with 32. The 3rd is in third with 23. The 6th has 17. The 5th District has 16. The 1st has 15. The 7th has 11. The 2nd has 10. The 9th has six, and the 8th, has two.

> **Tim Engstrom Bloomington Post 550**

OK, so what **is Fund 87?**

Fund 87 is a special fund dedicated to assisting American Legion posts and Junior Shooting Sports teams throughout the state of Minnesota to organize, teach, practice, and compete in one of the fastest growing sports

in the United States — 3 position Air Rifle Shooting.

Fund 87 was started a number of years ago by some great people that believed that the future of the American Legion Americanism program Junior Shooting Sports could use some help, and in turn help the young people in their community and the state.

Junior Shooting Sports teaches young students' gun safety, dedication, self-control and builds their self-esteem all while having fun. The American Legions and Clubs that have Junior Shooting Programs try and do it on their own, but this sport is very expensive, on average it cost somewhere around \$1,800 to outfit a single shooter with the equipment needed to practice and compete if they so desire.

This doesn't count the miles of travel, the hotel rooms for those competing out of their local area, the list could go on. The clubs that are affiliated with the American Legion can request support from Fund 87, and some have over the years, and now the seed money that those great people started years ago is starting to decline. I have decided to write this article in hopes of letting everyone know about the desperate need to bring Fund 87 up too and possibly pass the point that it was years ago.

If you or your post would like to donate to this wonderful fund, simply send the donation to American Legion Department of Minnesota at 20 W 12th St., Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155.

Make the check out to "Minnesota American Legion Foundation" and note in the memo "Fund 87."

I would also like to remind everyone that this fund is eligible to accept gambling funds as the foundation is a separate nonprofit from the Legion itself.

Its goal is to support many Legion programs, such as Junior Shooting Sports, Baseball, Softball and more.

Thank you for all you do.

Carl Wilson Chairman **Department Junior Shooting Sports Committee**

Father will turn 100 years old

My name is Marlon Wilde. I am writing to you in regard to my father, Leonard Wilde. He is a member of Plainview Post 179. He will turn 100 years old on Feb. 4, 2025, and we are planning a lunch reception at the Plainview post on Sunday, Feb. 2, from 1 to 5 p.m.

A little about Leonard: He is an Army veteran of the Korean War, and as of the day of his birthday, he will have been a member of The American Legion for 71 years. I also believe at one time he was part of

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Harvest is a good time to give thanks

Harvest season is here. Street corners across our Minnesota landscape will soon have sandwich boards posted inviting us to a church fall meal. I invite you to partake in a church meal that men and women prepared who want to be of good in this world.

Even though we can buy fruits and vegetables out of season, the fall harvest remains a ritual of importance reminding us of our dependence on a sustaining earth. What can be grown is determined by seed/ soil health, seasonal weather and the climate one lives in. We rely upon others' expertise and ability to grow and harvest, and for these reasons we give thanks.

I think of many Legionnaires who are farmers and ranchers. In the spring and fall, I give thanks for Brad and Tricia Pagel of Slayton Post 64. They grow and harvest crops. Thank you, Pagels.

Seeds need the right conditions to grow to their potential, and we do, too. Not one of us flourishes on our own accord. Our interdependence is hard for us to admit but is necessary. Each of us needs to sharpening and shining. Compassion grows by acts of care; forgiveness needs a wounded relationship; grace first needs an insult slung. Love grows by

Isn't it ironic for love to grow the ugly and harmful need to

doing acts of love.

as the gambling committee chairman.

To make his birthday memorable, I am asking your readers to mail birthday cards to Leonard in advance. Please mail them to Plainview American Legion Post 179, 215 Third St. SW, Plainview, MN 55964.

Thank you.

Marlon Wilde Plainview Post 179

Div. I Jr. ran like clockwork

I hope this letter reaches the right people.

As the Chanhassen Legion Post 580 Legion Baseball Team, we wanted to express our heartfelt gratitude to Bloomington Legion Baseball for hosting this year's Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I Jr. State Tournament.

Jack Strong (of Buffalo), your exceptional leadership and meticulous planning did not go unnoticed. Having organized numerous tournaments myself. I recognize the effort it takes to create a seamless experience.

Your team's preparedness, even in the face of unpredictable weather, was commendable. It's evident that this isn't your first rodeo, and we appreciate the attention to detail. Our community in Chanhassen had a fantastic time, thanks to both our substate hosts, Brady Cramer, and you,

Minnesota American Legion Baseball Committee, we know that selecting Bloomington as the host and entrusting Jack as the tournament director was a deliberate choice. As our squad's journey in the tournament comes

Chaplain's Corner

Kelley Adelsman

be present? Redemption needs one to redeem and a redeemer (Unfortunately, I have to put a disclaimer in here and remind each of one us that we do not need to seek out harming another human being, somehow it comes naturally to us — it is doing good that we need to seek out and put into practice).

In August, I was the chaplain for the Southeast Women Veterans Retreat in which women veterans gathered to nourish goodness in ourselves and one another. It was at Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center in Farmington.

Part of our events included Apple Valley Post 1776 Honor Guard saluting and honoring those present.

I want to give thanks them for their



practice of selfless service. Thank you: Bernie Baumann, Jim Hoffman, Gene Moon, Mike O'Brien, Rich Peltier, Denny Perro, Jay Peterson, Dick Presley, Bill Quintus (Color Guard Commander), Al Schaffer, Terry Sventek and James Thompson.

May the Godly gifts of compassion, love and peace be yours.

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



The Apple Valley Post 1776 Honor Guard at the Southeast Women Veterans Retreat.

the post honor guard and served to an end today, we want you to understand just how much we value your commitment to youth baseball. Your dedication leaves a lasting impact on our players, and we're grateful for the camaraderie you foster.

Thank you for everything you do for kids and for doing it exceptionally well.

Shawn Cameron Chanhassen Legion Baseball

The Minnesota

<u>-egionnaire</u>

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

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

Taps ==						egion.org/taps. Thank you.
Name of		Date of			Cont.	
Deceased	Age	Death	Branch	Era	Years	Post
Albrecht, Kenneth A.	94	8/30/24	Army	Korea	49	Paynesville Post 271
Alley, Calvin J.	88	8/26/24	Army	Korea	40	Milaca Post 178
Note: He served as an intelli	igence	specialist	in occupied (Germany. He	e was a pa	ast post vice commander.
Anderson, Lawrence E.	98	8/2/24	Navy	WWII		Cloquet Post 262
Anderson, Wayne L.	77	9/9/24	Army	Vietnam	31	Litchfield Post 104
Note: He served with the 25	8th an	d 172nd T	ransportation	n Detachme	nts in Tha	iland. He studied Arabic at the Presidio
of Monterey, Calif.			·			
Armstrong, Paul L.	96	7/2/24	Coast Guar	d WWII	29	Anoka Post 102
Armstrong, Thomas E. Jr.	89	8/3/24	Army	Korea	50	Lanesboro Post 40
Baker, James A.	87	7/30/24	Marines	Korea	45	Waite Park Post 428
Banken, Paul W. Jr.	76	4/27/24	Navy	Vietnam	9	Montevideo Post 59
Beckendorf, Donald J.	88	7/31/24		Korea	40	Blue Earth Post 89
Bernier, Timothy C.	89	1/12/24	Marines	Vietnam	40	Chanhassen Post 580
Blackstad, Joseph O. Jr.	92	8/6/24	Army	Korea	31	St. James Post 33
Blondeau, James F.	78	5/10/24	Navy	Vietnam	33	Ashby Post 357
Note: He received three Bro	nze St		service in the	Vietnam W	/ar.	-
Boesch, Billy J.	93	8/4/24	Army	Korea	72	Amboy Post 276
Note: He was stationed in A	ustria.					
Rolstad Sheldon F	74	4/1/24	Navv	Vietnam	54	Fertile Post 238

Bolstad, Sheldon E. Fertile Post 238 Vietnam Navy 4/1/24 Bottem, Floyd L. 97 6/24/24 WWII 50 Lamberton Post 41 Army 82 Brandt, Robert P. 7/13/24 Air Force Vietnam 36 Aitkin Post 86 Note: He was a past post commander and a color guard member. Brolsma, John A. 7/3/24 Korea 62 Bloomington Post 550 Army 79 Brown, Dale R. 6/20/24 12 Sanborn Post 286 Army Vietnam Montevideo Post 59 Christensen, Ivan 89 6/2/24 Army Vietnam 23

79 Army Clancy, Thomas J. 4 Bloomington Post 550 unk. Vietnam 90 42 Nicollet Post 510 Compart, Louis E. 8/5/24 Army Korea Cox, John W. 86 7/31/24 Army Korea 5 Fairmont Post 36 28 89 Crabtree, Lonnie M. 1/23/24 Army Korea Lake Park Post 181 1/12/24 Finlayson/Sandstone Post 151 Defeyter, Roland D. 94 19 Army Korea 90 47 Delage, Harvey J. 2/3/24 Army Korea Thief River Falls Post 117 Douma, Delmar J. 93 4/9/24 Air Force 22 Lake Lillian Post 615 Korea **DuHoux**, Richard A. 70 8/3/24 Air Force Vietnam 50 Willmar Post 167 Ashby Post 357 Ellington, Michael C. 80 6/21/24 Army 46

Note: He served 20-plus years in the Signal Corps, which took him to Kentucky, New Jersey, Washington state, Italy, Thailand, Honduras, Iran and Germany, earning decorations along the way, retiring as a sergeant first class.

Vietnam

Erickson, Duane A. 72 9/5/23 Army NG Vietnam Lamberton Post 41 8/15/24 Navy Fierst, Lesley J. 53 **GWOT** New Prague Post 45

Note: He was a 1993 graduate of the Naval Academy. He served for 30 years, retiring as a captain, serving primarily in weapons, tactics and countermeasures. He earned his Wings of Gold at Pensacola, Fla. Being stationed at Whidbey Island, Wash., he went on two deployments for Operation Southern Watch aboard the supercarrier USS Constellation and an expeditionary deployment to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. From Naval Base San Diego, he served aboard the carrier USS Nimitz in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In 2004, he transferred to the Navy Reserve, working as a weapons analyst. In 2012, he was mobilized to active duty, serving at MacDill AFB, Fla., before returning to Reserve status in 2013, taking on various assignments. He retired in 2023 from a command in Hawaii.

8/26/24 Air Force 79 Vietnam Elk River Post 112 Finck, Charles J. Sr. 35 Note: He served as post commander for two years, finance officer for 10 years and chaired the convention committee when Post 112 hosted the 6th District.

WWII/Korea 55 Fonss, Norman 93 3/27/24 Army Lamberton Post 41 Note: He "exaggerated" his age and enlisted at age 16, serving nine years. He became a Lutheran minister in his civilian career, serving as a chaplain at VA medical centers near his pastorship, lastly at the St. Cloud VA.

Fortmeyer, George W. 96 8/27/24 WWİI Rosetown Memorial Post 542 33 Navy Foss, David A. 75 8/16/24 Army Vietnam 53 Greenbush Post 88 Army Frisch, George F. 96 7/15/24 96 Caledonia Post 191 Korea 80 Glackler, Richard F. 8/1/24 Army Vietnam 28 St. Peter Post 37

Note: He completed two tours in Vietnam. He served six years in the regular Army and seven in the Army Reserves. In the Reserves, he was the motor pool sergeant and earned the nickname "Motor Daddy." He was involved in last man clubs in his part of the state.

Glander, Gary A. 8/14/77 Army Vietnam Lake City Post 110 Goldesberry, James 82 1/11/24 Army 57 Thief River Falls Post 117 Vietnam Note: He served in the North Dakota National Guard. Gruis, Darrel W. 9/10/23 39 Park Rapids Post 212 Marines Cold 85 Gullickson, Edward D. 93 7/24/24 Marines Korea 59 Austin Post 91 Hager, Thomas J. 89 6/22/24 Korea/VN 40 Mankato Post 11 Marines Halpaus, Harvey C. 102 9/9/23 Mer. Mar. WWII 4 Lake City Post 110 11/19/23 Army Lamberton Post 41 Halter, Harlan J. 91 64 Korea Hamilton, Bernard Y. 88 5/1/24 Navy Vietnam 43 Chanhassen Post 580 Note: He served in the Navy 20-plus years, and three in the National Guard. He was a past post commander, adjutant,

Vietnam

vice commander and membership director.

80

Heldt, Stanley C.

68 Marines Hance, Dave J. 8/2/24 Vietnam 11 Bloomington Post 550 Note: He was a member of the post honor guard. 6 Winona Post 9 Haney, Robert F. 78 8/1/24 Vietnam Navy Note: He served in Pearl Harbor and aboard the fleet ocean tug USS Lipan. 3/28/24 Navy Thief River Falls Post 117 Vietnam Hanson, Jeffery L. 81 Note: He served aboard the destroyer USS Damato. 87 Hibbing Post 222 Haugen, Orrin A. 41 1/8/24 Vietnam Army Heinen, Ronald E 72 9/13/24 42 Army Vietnam Melrose Post 101

Note: He was involved with the Carver County Veterans Memorial. Persian Gulf 33 Herke, Larry J. 9/13/24 Army 61 Sauk Centre Post 67 Note: He was the commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs from January 2019 to September 2023, stepping down after receiving an ALS diagnosis. He served in the Army and Minnesota National Guard for more than 30 years, retiring in 2016 as a colonel. (Before he

died, Larry had planned to write a guest column in the Legionnaire about how ALS affects servicemembers and veterans at twice the rate of the civilian population.) Hinkley, Neil A. Winona Post 9 93 8/8/24 Army Korea 13

5/23/24 Army

Note: He served in Korea and was wounded. He was awarded the Purple Heart. Hockinson, James P. 69 8/16/24 Armv Vietnam 46 Albert Lea Post 56 Hoffman, William H. 90 6/9/24 Army Vietnam 23 Mankato Post 11 Hollen, Gordon K. 6/25/24 58 **Brooten Post 288** Army Korea Hommes, David G. 82 25 Aitkin Post 86 9/11/24 Navy Vietnam Note: He served in Minneapolis; Alameda, Calif.; Glenview, Ill.; Rota, Spain; Point Mugu, Calif.,

retiring as a chief yeoman after 23 years. Hultgren, Joel M. 8/27/24 Vietnam 47 82 Army **Hunnicutt, Gary D.** 76 8/22/24 Army Vietnam 14

Note: He was a Purple Heart recipient for wounds sustained in Vietnam.

40

New Germany Post 601

St. James Post 33

Albert Lea Post 56 Continued on Page 6

Larry

Herke

All-Family Events Calendar

Oct. 1-6: John Zgoda Memorial Deer Hunt, Legionville Oct. 1-31: Jefferson Highway Convoy, Military Vehicle Preservation Association, East Grand Forks to New Orleans, several stops in Minnesota the first week Oct. 5: Veterans Suicide Prevention & Awareness Day, The Depot in Duluth

Oct. 7-10: Fall Meetings, Sheraton Hotel, Indianapolis Oct. 8-10: Minnesota Veterans Outdoors Deer Hunt, Camp Ripley

Oct. 24: Department Executive Committee meeting, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud

Oct. 24-26: Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud

Nov. 11: Veterans Day, local ceremonies

Nov. 11: Minnesota Official Veterans Day Program, Veterans Community Center, Inver Grove Heights

Dec. 7: Pearl Harbor Rally, Spicer Post 545

Jan. 11: 1st District Mid-Winter Conf., Winona Post 9

Jan. 11: 4th & 5th District Mid-Winter Conference,

Arcade-Phalen Post 577 Jan. 11: 9th District Mid-Winter Conf., Warren Post 27

Jan. 11: 10th District Mid-Winter Conf., Anoka Post 102 Jan. 18: 6th District Mid-Winter Conf., Melrose Post 101

Jan. 18: 7th District Mid-Winter Conf., Olivia Post 186 Jan. 18: 8th District Mid-Winter Conf., location TBD Jan. 25: 3rd District Mid-Winter Conf., Lonsdale Post 586

Feb. 8: Sweetheart Rally, Royalton Post 137 **Feb. 15:** 2nd District Mid-Winter Conf, Bricelyn Post 165 Feb. 22: Minnesota Oratorical Contest,

Osseo Post 172 & Anoka Post 102 March 2-5: Washington Conference, D.C. March 8: Department Executive Committee,

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

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

May 5-9: Spring Meetings, Indianapolis May 17: 1st District Convention, Lake City Wild Wings

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

June 7: 2nd District Convention, Pipestone Post 6 June 7: 5th District Convention, location TBD June 7: 8th District Convention, location TBD

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

June 14: 9th District Convention, E. Grand Forks Post 157 June 15-21: Minnesota Girls State, Bethel University

June 27-28: SAL Detachment of Minnesota Convention, Morris Post 29

July 9: Department Executive Committee, Willman July 10-12: 106th Department Convention, Willman Aug. 22-28: 106th National Convention, Tampa Bay, Fla.

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HELP IS HERE FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



Page 6 The Minnesota I	Legion	naire	September 2	024		
Continued from Page 5	•		•			
Isenberg, Rande L.	73	7/13/24	Navy	Vietnam	36	Fairmont Post 36
Note: He was a Navy corpsn					30	Tallillone 1 03t 50
Johnson, Larry B. "Butch"		7/13/24			42	Waconia Post 150
Johnson, Richard B.	92	9/6/24	Army	Korea	66	Fairmont Post 36
Johnson, Robert G.	87	9/16/23	Air Force	Vietnam	48	Mankato Post 11
Karvonen, Daniel S.	79	5/26/24	Air Force	Vietnam	9	Mankato Post 11
Kelzenberg, Alfred H.	86	8/10/24	Army	Korea	10	Flensburg Post 136
Kilen, Jerel A.	73	8/21/24	Army	Vietnam	53	Greenbush Post 88
Note: He served with the 10				Victiani	33	Greenbash rose oo
Koopmeiners, Gilbert H.	93	6/13/24	Army	Korea	17	St. Augusta Post 621
Kopacek, Gerald	92	6/16/24	Army	Korea	44	Willmar Post 167
Koudela, Thomas H.	72	8/15/24	Army	Vietnam	12	Lowry Post 253
Kronback, Eric V.	61	8/13/24	Army	Panama	35	Lamberton Post 41
Krueger, Richard H.		7/19/24	Army	Korea	70	Mankato Post 11
Larson, Richard H.		1/21/24	Army	Cold	12	Effie Post 182
Larson, Roger F.	93	9/2/24	Army	Korea	70	Bigelow Post 496
Lee, Donald H.	84	5/11/24		Vietnam	22	Bloomington Post 550
						in Turkey, Ethiopia and New Jersey
and often served on drill tea				iic. iic was so	ationica	in rankey, Ethiopia and riew sersey
Lenarz, Richard E.	88	6/5/24	Army	Korea	36	Chanhassen Post 580
Note: He was stationed in G			7 dilliy	Rorca	50	Charmassen i ost 500
Liimatta, Steven V.	75	7/26/24	Mar./Navy	Vietnam	11	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He became a petroleu						
Loewen, Robert D. Sr.	91	8/28/24	Navy	Korea	25	Austin Post 91
Note: He served as a torped					23	Additi 1 Ost 5 1
Longtin, William R.	89	3/1/24	Air Force Ko	rea	13	Minnesota Post 1982
Lowe, Rodney B.	82	5/14/24		Vietnam	33	Mankato Post 11
Ludolph, Robert W.	89	8/4/24	Army	Korea	15	Pipestone Post 6
Luhmann, Carroll D. "Lefty		4/6/24	Army	Cold	43	Jackson Post 130
Lund, Jack P.	85	7/4/24	Army	Vietnam	33	Hibbing Post 222
Lundquist, Frank	82	9/1/24	Army	Vietnam	32	St. Paul Professional Post 450
						ructor with the 5042d ASARF School.
Lundquist, Raymond		8/8/24	Marines	WWII	5	Minnesota Post 1982
					_	years, then returned to Gustavus.
He was on the undefeated 1	946 te	am	ere to serve ii	T the mannes	, 101 (111	years, then retained to eastavas.
Manney, William J.	89	3/8/24	Army	Korea	68	Hibbing Post 222
						ommunity College team that was
runner-up in the 1952 NICA	A Div	I men's ha	skethall tourr	nament They	lost the	e title game by just two points.
McDowell, Larry H.	81	unk	Army	Vietnam	8	Chanhassen Post 580
McNeely, Robert P.	91	6/9/24	Air Force	Korea	59	Ashby Post 357
Menk, Ronald D.	84	8/13/24	Navy	Cold	24	Paynesville Post 271
Mesarchik, Robert J.	93	2/3/24	Army	Korea	8	Rochester Post 92
					-	ided missile (MGM-5 Corporal) at
Caltech, then as an instructor of guided missile technology in Huntsville, Ala. His civilian career led him to IBM, where, among other projects, he worked on the Air Force's early air defense system computer called SAGE, which						
directed the NORAD response to a possible Soviet attack.						
Meyer, Fred W.	83	8/10/24		Vietnam	48	Windom Post 206
Note: He was a past post co					.0	
Title in the same post to						Continued on Page 7

Bottom rockers must be removed from vests

Legion Riders

Jody Hassing

Hello, Legion Family! It was fun to see everyone at Camporee and the Romp the DEC first two weekends of September! I hope to see many of you at the Harvest Rally at Fridley Post 303 on Sept. 21.

On Dec. 7, the Riders will Spicer Post 545. Please plan to attend!

During the Romp, the representatives and all present reviewed the revised Constitution and Bylaws. The district representatives voted to approve the Constitution and Bylaws after adding a clause that no lower rockers, bars or ribbons will be allowed. This approved Constitution and Bylaws has been sent to the leadership of The American Legion and will be presented for approval to

The

American Legion soon possible.

I want

to reiterate, all chapters/individuals host the Pearl Harbor Rally at with the lower rocker should now remove it. Riders who do not remove the lower rocker will not be allowed to ride on either of the state rides going forward. Thank you to those of you who have already removed the bottom rocker.

If you would like assistance setting up a chapter at your post, please let me or your district Riders representative know so we can help you get things going. If you are interested in having me talk to your chapter or district or attend one of your meetings or events, please con-

tact me at jodyhassing@ gmail.com I would love to see what you are all doing.

God bless and keep the rubber side down.

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

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September 2024

The Minnesota Legionnaire

Page 7

Make plans for the coming fall schedule

National Report

Congratulations to Jim La-Coursiere Jr. of Connecticut on being elected national commander for the 2024-25 American Legion year. I thank the nearly 300 Legion Family members from Minnesota who attended the National Convention In New Orleans. It takes time away from home and dollars with sacrifices

being made.

Legionville summer session will be history as you read this, but I am sure a great time was had by all. Another great Camporee was held, too.

I hope some of you enjoyed the Harvest Rally at Fridley Post 303. We separated this rally from the Camporee, so it can stand as its own event.

Have you called the Kelly Inn and made your room reservations for Fall Conference? Send your reservation and meal choices into Al Davis today as meal tickets will not be available at the conference.

The caterer needs to be aware of the number of meals to plan for. Registration forms are in this Legionnaire issue.

Fall Conference dates are Oct. 24-26.

National Fall meetings are Oct 5-11 for me, in Indianapolis. Dates may be shorter for some of you attending.

www.VeteranShredding.net

DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION

I hope your post has planned tive Committeeman.

Bill Barbknecht

La- for a post
ut on membernand- ship gathrican ering. "Be
early the One" to
obbers
do buddy

checks.
Remember, it is not the price you pay to belong. It is the price you paid to belong. Be PROUD to belong to the largest veterans organization.

It is time to make plans for your Veterans Day program in your community. Nov. 11 is a Monday. Go to your school to make a plan now.

Please contribute to Commander Dr. Carl Moon's project soon. Be a Leader, Character, Competence and Commitment. As Past National Commander Dan Ludwig would say, "Are you a leader or follower?"

And like I often say, "Focus on the positive."

Donna and I look forward to seeing you all at the upcoming district rallies, and post membership dinners as well as the Fall Conference.

It's always great to be among fellow veterans. A veteran is a veteran is a veteran.

Bill Barbknecht of Fergus Falls Post 30 is the Department of Minnesota's National Executive Committeeman.

Park Rapids Post 212 Miller, Everett W. WWII 102 7/5/24 Army Note: He served with the Army Air Forces in the war. Vietnam Fairmont Post 36 Milow, Gerald W. 8/31/24 Army 11 Moechnig, John W. 8/16/24 30 Red Wing Post 54 Army Vietnam Note: He served with the 544th Ordnance Company that was sent to Fort Polk, La., during the 1961 Berlin Crisis. He was a past post adjutant for Lake City Post 110. Mulhern, James A. 8/30/24 Air Force Cold Anoka Post 102 Myers, Harold T. 5/31/24 Ada Post 26 Army Vietnam 26 Note: He served as a paratrooper with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, serving as a clerk in Vietnam. Nelson, Gordon H. 8/6/24 Lanesboro Post 40 Army Cold 8/29/24 Nelson, Joel P. Navy 51 Korea St. James Post 33 Neuberger, Larry P. 8/9/24 Army Vietnam 45 Lake Benton Post 10 Oien, Lyle E. 88 36 Park Rapids Post 212 4/27/24 Navy Korea Olson, Daryl E. "Barney" 6/19/24 Jackson Post 130 Army Vietnam Olson, Harold V. 46 98 8/12/24 Army WWII Fertile Post 238 Olson, Lyle A. 5/22/24 Montevideo Post 59 Army Vietnam Perry, Jimmy R. 79 7/5/24 Navy Vietnam 45 Pine River Post 613 Note: He served aboard the aircra ft carriers USS Oriskany and USS Hancock as an aviation electronics technician. Peters, Duane J. Pine City Post 51 85 8/13/24 Army Vietnam 33 Middle River Post 444 Peterson, Gordon E. 87 7/15/24 51 Army Korea Pomeroy, Roger H. 95 49 Bloomington Post 550 unk. Navy Korea Ranum, Ferri L 95 11/11/23 Navy Korea 35 Thief River Falls Post 117 Note: He served aboard the hydrographic survey ship USS San Pablo. Raschka, Joseph F. 6/29/24 48 Lamberton Post 41 76 Army Vietnam Note: He received a Purple Heart for wounds sustained in Vietnam. Richter, Wallace D. 7/19/24 Mankato Post 11 Army Vietnam Rosetown Memorial Post 542 Navy Ristow, Harold G. 92 8/11/24 Korea Roelofs, Robert D. 8/10/24 13 Willmar Post 167 Army Vietnam Rowe, Jerome O. Oakdale 26 N. St. Paul Burt Post 4444 WWII Army Russell, James G. 7/19/24 Lake Park Post 181 Army Korea Schmidt, H. Brad 93 8/20/24 51 St. James Post 33 Army Korea Schneider, Michael C. 8/11/24 Army Vietnam Finlayson/Sandstone Post 151 Note: He was stationed in Germany. He was a past member of Spring Grove Post 249. Shepperd, Howard E. 8/28/24 Air Force Stewartville Post 164 Korea Shepperd, Howard E. 90 8/28/24 Air Force Stewartville Post 164 31 Korea Skibicki, Mark A. 4/8/24 Thief River Falls Post 117 Navy Cold Note: He served aboard the frigate USS Gray and destroyer USS Cushing. Solberg, Donald P. 9/8/24 Air Force Korea Zumbrota Post 183 Sorenson, Oliver J. Jr. 93 Ada Post 26 6/6/24 61 Army Korea Sorum, Arlen A. 8/24/24 Thief River Falls Post 117 Navy Vietnam Note: He was a flight simulator instructor. Spence, Jack A. 5/10/24 Army Vietnam Hibbing Post 222 Note: He was an engineer equipment mechanic. Steenerson, Allan D. 11/24/23 Air Force Thief River Falls Post 117 29 Korea Note: He was stationed in Rapid City, S.D., and in Newfoundland, Canada. Stenberg, Melvin C. 12/4/23 Thief River Falls Post 117 Army Cold Stepien, Lawrence J. 101 8/15/24 Army WWII 16 Glencoe Post 95 Note: He landed in Normandy on June 8, 1944. He was presented with the Victory Medal for European/African

Veteran and Family

Owned and Operated



American Legion achieves a 100 percent membership goal nationally

Continued from Page 1

the U.S. Space Force.

He began with: "This is what a Space Force uniform looks

He praised The American Legion for its dedication to the cause of liberty, which, in turn, aids the military in its lagging recruitment efforts. He asked the Legion to continue talking to young people about how military service is a great opportunity.

"It's not about choosing a job. It's a calling," Saltzman said.

Space, he said, is more congested than ever.

In 2011, there were 1,000 active satellites and 17,000 manmade objects, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

In 2019, there were 2,000 active satellites and 25,000 manmade objects, and now, he said, there are 9,000 active satellites and 45,000 manmade objects.

"In 2022 and 2023, the world launched more satellites than all the previous years combined. Most are in low-earth orbit," Saltzman said.

After a pause, he added, "Space is not just congested. It is also contested.'

With China and Russia advancing swiftly in their space programs, a new space race has formed, and standing up Space Force, he said, was needed to defend U.S. interests in space.

He bid farewell by saying "Semper Supra," which is the Space Force motto. It means "Always Above." It is also the name of the Space Force song.

Medal of Honor recipient

The convention always features Medal of Honor recipients who stand in the photos with the youth programs and military honorees. They say a few words, too.

This year, one man standing in photos was from the Upper



Gen. B. Chance Saltzman is the senior uniformed officer for U.S. Space Force. He hails from Kentucky.

Midwest. When given the microphone, he had little to say.

He was Michael John Fitzmaurice of Post 7 in Huron. S.D. He joined the Army from his hometown in Jamestown, N.D., and was a specialist-4 in the 101st Airborne Division on March 23, 1971.

Knowing his story, one asks, How is this man alive standing here today?"

That day, Fitzmaurice was part of a firefight in Khe Sanh, Vietnam, in a bunker with three other soldiers, with North Vietnamese sappers infiltrating their AO. He noticed three explosive charges had been thrown into the bunker. He hurled two out of the bunker and threw his flak vest and himself over the remaining one. Seriously wounded and with partial loss of sight, he continued to fight the enemy. He charged out of the bunker until his rifle was damaged by a hand grenade. He overcame an enemy sapper in hand-to-hand combat to obtain the man's rifle, then returned to his fighting position and inflicted additional casualties on the attackers. He refused medical evacuation.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1973.

National Commander's Report





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National Commander Dan Seehafer, whose term ended

at the end of the 105th National Convention reported that, nationally, The American Legion achieved 100 percent membership.

"This is what happens when you have purpose and relevance," he said. "Imagine what a more powerful American Legion could do for this country.'

He said 38,000 people took advantage of the three-year membership plan.

He joined the Legion back in Horicon, Wis., after someone in his congregation asked him to join. The reverend thought it would be good to have a place to relax, away from the church life.

At the post meeting, no one wanted to be adjutant.

"I thought I'm good at taking notes," he said to laughter. "I then learned what it was all about."

Seehafer praised posts who perform Buddy Checks, and he said the VA now is copying the Legion's model for doing them.

This is what I mean when I say The American Legion is changing lives and saving lives," he said.

He spoke against claim sharks and scammers. He called on Congress to fund the Coast Guard during government shutdowns.

The PACT Act gave a long overdue means for many veterans to have their claims recognized, he said. Now, he understands there is a funding shortage.

"My message to Congress is: Thanks for passing it. Now pay for it," he said.

He encouraged Legionnaires to tell their lawmakers to take action on funding the VA. He encouraged members to visit legion.org/action and tell Congress to fund the VA shortfall. He was worried veterans might not receive their VA disability payments in October.

Seehafer thanked everyone for coming to New Orleans.

blessed with people like you. of veterans, giving him the in-All of you."

Gen. Russel Honoré

Being born free is an accident. To live free is a privilege. To die free is a responsibility.

This was the message of the general President George W. Bush sent to command the military relief efforts across the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina.

A Creole from Louisiana by birth, he also is known as the Rajin Cajun. His message was fiery and well-received by the convention audience.

After a poor performance by state and local agencies, as well as FEMA, Honoré and his

military response was praised for taking humanitarian action and getting the work done after Katrina, including pushing New Orleans police to change their approach toward civilians.

Be the One

Auxiliary President Lisa Williamson said the more veterans are willing to talk about the issue of suicides, the more lives are saved.

"It's OK to not be OK," she said.

Seehafer said Legionnaires were aware of veteran suicide and now are more aware of how to talk about suicide than they were just a few years ago.

"The American Legion is moving the needle and doing something about it," he said. 'The American Legion had made it so it isn't uncomfortable to talk about suicide.'

He said it is important for Legion members to care for one another, even when we may disagree at times.

'Your life matters," Seehafer

Women veterans

President of the Military Women's Memorial Phyllis Wilson, an Army veteran, asked female veterans to share their stories of service in the military at the MWM Register. The Register presently has 308,500 military women's stories and aims to collect 2.7 million.

Visit womensmemorial.org. The memorial exists at Arlington Cemetery. However, it is not federally funded. The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are among its major supporters.

Army-Navy football game

A big announcement was made on the second day of the convention. The American Legion has become the official veteran service organization of the Army-Navy football game. Seehafer said this will amplify the message of "Be the One."

The 125th meeting of the two academy teams is Dec. 14 on CBS. The American Legion is the first VSO to sponsor the

Student Veterans of America

Jared S. Lyon, president of Student Veterans of America, praised The American Legion for its work with SVA. The first SVA headquarters was in the Legion's D.C. office. The new SVA office in D.C. has the desk that the first G.I. Bill was drafted on, reminding them of the link between the two organizations.

He said the Legion was a "The American Legion is place where he found a group get the best and brightest. clusion and camaraderie he had in the military. SVA now exists at 600 colleges.

Louisiana governor

An Army veteran, Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry said he feels the military today is setting the entrance bar too high. It hurts recruitment and the military might lose out on talented recruits.

He said he isn't a fan of aimless wars.

"We should never engage in a military conflict unless we intend to win," Landry said.

The American Legion's mission of energizing citizens keeps the country strong, he said.

"Patriotism is the very essence of our national identity," he said. "Never apologize for love of country.'

POW/MIA

There are 5,300 MIA remaining in North Korea, reported Kelly McKeague, director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). It's a federal agency The American Legion is responsible for fighting for its continued existence.

The DPAA budget received a boost in FY2024 from \$150 million to \$190 million, he said.

The agency, he said, receives strong cooperation from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and it works with partner organizations including the World War II Museum in New Orleans.

In 2018, North Korea turned over 55 boxes of remains. From those remains, 93 Americans were identified. During his term, President Donald Trump got North Korea to commit to the endeavor of finding American remains.

"Now, silence," he said.

McKeague reported that China has resumed cooperation, and it has American remains from World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Taiwan

Taiwan Veterans Affairs Council Deputy Minister Chen Chin-Kung thanked the veterans in attendance for the service. He said the U.S.-Taiwan alliance is the guarantor of security in the Taiwan Strait. He presented a medal to Seehafer.

Military recruitment

A panel of four experts was assembled to discuss the military's lagging recruitment numbers. Of them, the comments of author and Air Force veteran Ethan Brown stood out as the most outspoken.

He said political scientist Samuel Huntington, in 1957, for his book "The Soldier & the State," described how universal support for the military resulted in military heroes welcomed in America. Small town. Big cities. College campuses. This, in turn, increased America's military capital.

Brown said the Global War on Terrorism spent that capital, borrowed credit and abused that resource for two decades. The No. 1 reason: politicization of the U.S. military.

To rebuild faith, the military needs to stick with tried-andtrue military traditions based on merit and remain apolitical. He said the military doesn't want to barely make goal. They ought

He also said the military suffers from the REO Speedwagon Effect.

"The young people heard it from a friend who heard it from a friend who heard it from another that there is wokeness in the military," Brown said.

He said a DOD study found there isn't an uptick of radical ideology in the U.S. military. Instead, the study found the military to be a microcosm of the USA.

"But the youth get their information from their cellphones," he said. "If I come from a demographic that is less in touch with facts about the military, I don't think I want to be radicalized."

Brown said the Marines are successful in recruitment because they put a high value on being a recruiter. The Army has moved to do that. The Air Force and Navy have not.

"In the Marines, there's not that stigma of being a recruiter," he said.

Other panelists brought up factors like: 23 percent of eligible-age Americans cannot join the military because of the obesity epidemic; 77 percent of today's recruits come from military bloodlines; praise for the Legion for supporting young people going into the military.

Panelist Patrick J. Murphy, former undersecretary of the Army, moderated. He said there are many positive results that can be said for veterans: Not victims, more likely to be employed, more likely to volunteer, more likely to start a small business. Major companies like FedEx, Wendy's, Nike and Walmart were started

"We need to tell our own story, get it out there," he said.

Resolutions going nowhere

At the Minnesota Caucus on Monday, Aug. 26, many delegates talked about their frustration with resolutions being referred or even dying in place.

They said they wished all committee chairs would provide copies of resolutions beforehand (some did; some didn't). Sometimes, they said, there was no explanation why an action took place.

One delegate said, "We wanted them to tell us why."

Adjutant Mike Maxa said he would bring their frustrations up at the next meeting of department adjutants.

New national commander

On the final day, the convention elected Jim LaCoursiere national commander.

"Be the One' is personal and meaningful to me and not a slogan or catchphrase. It is a mission statement," he said.

In 2017, he was in a dark place, he said, and headed in a bad direction in life. He got arrested for drunken driving, which cost him his national chairmanship and almost cost him his job. His wife was livid, so he went into VA rehabilitation.

The American Legion members in his home state of Connecticut reached out and said they would be there to support him when he got out. LaCoursiere has not consumed a drop of alcohol since Oct. 21, 2017.

He hails from Post 91 in Moosup, Conn.



Tom Schottenbauer reads the nomination for Jim Kellogg to be national vice commander.



Ricker presented a \$1,000 check for the WWI Museum.



Minnesota American Legion Foundation President Lloyd National Commander Dan Seehafer scurries about the



New American Legion National Commander James A. LaCoursiere Jr. of Connecticut stands with new Auxiliary National President Trish Ward of Kansas and SAL National Commander Joseph Navarrete of New Mexico.



Several Minnesotans attended the NEC meeting following the close of the convention on Thursday, Aug. 29. From left are Carl Moon, Bill and Donna Barbknecht, Veronica and Tom Fernlund and Anthony and Erin Koop. A few others, such as Delegation Chairman Paul Hassing, were in the room, too.



Russel Honoré livened up the crowd on Wednesday, Aug. 28, in New Orleans. He is remembered for his fastacting response after Katrina.

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The Minnesota 9th District American Legion Band performed on Sunday, Aug. 25, at the National World War II Museum.

The Minnesota American Legion Riders raised \$9,500 for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. The national fundraising mission is now VCF.

Minnesota DAV is in Immediate Need for Additional Volunteer Drivers

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

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

Minneapolis: 612-467-2050 St. Cloud: 320-255-6365 www.dav.org/help-dav/volunteer/drive-a-van

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



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

The Minnesota Legionnaire

Continued from Page 1

& Drug Administration and the Department of Health "to initiate a thorough and independent investigation to evaluate the effects of anthrax vaccinations on veterans."

It calls on that research to be provided to the VA and to be made public, with authorities taking steps to provide appropriate medical care to veterans affected by the anthrax vaccination.

What started this resolution?

On April 13, 2023, Dr. Brian Engdahl of the Brain Sciences Center met the Minnesota American Legion Brain Sciences Foundation. The Minnesota Legion and Auxiliary raised the funds to create the center, which was dedicated in 1991.

Engdahl told the foundation board that the center had researched Gulf War illness, with a finding that Gulf War veterans show an accelerated brain atrophy compared to the normal population, as well as some other areas of health, such as respiration issues and bowel dysfunction.

Engdahl said the Brain Sciences Center made the connection between the military's anthrax shot, given to Mideast-bound servicemembers, and the illness.

"This science center cracked the code for Gulf War illness," said Engdahl. "Unfortunately, not enough people have the right genetic makeup to fight the anthrax vaccine.'

Then-Commander Jennifer Havlick asked, "Why don't all Gulf War veterans qualify for VA medical care?"

Engdahl replied that the findings never made it into VA policy.

Kane and the Minnesota American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (aka VA&R) Committee have pushed for the past two years to get that research into policy by having the federal government look into it.

What now?

At the National Convention in New Orleans, the resolution was No. 16: "Investigation of Anthrax Vaccinations."

It went before the VA&R Convention Committee, which had 14 resolutions from across the nation to consider. Without discussion, the anthrax one was quickly referred it to the VA&R Commission for further study.

Kane said the resolution is not dead. It is stalled. He said language a past national staffer had him insert into the resolution now is being suggested by that person's replacement to come out. Plus, that new staff member wants Kane to put the Brain Science findings into the resolution with scientific details, such as the vaccination having 127 extra proteins.

"The problem is, it's a dirty vaccine," Kane said. "That's why we need more research on this resolution. Senators took this. Troops on base took it. Some postal workers took it."

He is working with national staff to adjust the resolution in time for the National Executive Committee meeting second week of October.

"It's just a roadblock, but I don't accept no," Kane said. "It's a bump in the road, and I'm going after it. It passed twice in

Minnesota, and our Legionnaires believe in it, so we are going to pursue this.

Here are the results of the other five resolutions, along with the numbers assigned to them:

No. 17: "Gender Neutral Cap Regulations"

This resolution calls for removal of language in the Legion's Officer's Guide & Manual of Ceremonies that separates female cap practices from males. The Department of Minnesota approved this resolution at its July 2024 convention on a divided vote, so narrow that hands had to be counted.

In New Orleans, it went to the Internal Affairs Convention Committee, which referred it to the Internal Affairs Commission. The commission may talk about it at its next meeting or it might go nowhere.

Presently, the Legion's uniform rules allow women to leave their caps on during the Pledge of Allegiance, prayer, meals, POW/ MIA recognitions and other situations where men remove their caps. Resolution author Kelley Adelsman of Pine Island Post 184 said the U.S. military no longer requires different cap standards for men and women.

At the convention committee meeting, Past National Commander Denise Rohan of Wisconsin said it conflicts with a post-World War II resolution and possible others. She said The American Legion needs to revise all of its uniform guidelines, saying they were due for a change, not just the cap.

Past 6th District Commander Anthony Koop attended the committee meeting in New Orleans and reported back to the Minnesota Caucus at Monday, Aug. 26, during the convention. He said the resolution brought out discussion on uniforms and said it is common for resolutions in any national organization to take several years to pass.

Adelsman said she learned a lesson to share at Minnesota Legion College: It is good to attend the meeting where your resolution is heard.

She spoke to Maine's Matthew Jabaut, chairman of the Membership & Post Activities Committee at the national level. He also told her the Legion needs to begin revision uniform standards.

No. 18: "Five Year Income **Look-Back Period for Pension Benefits from the Department of Veterans** Affairs.'

This one was referred to the VA&R Commission for further study. Kane said it got pushback over needing two edits.

"These have to be spot-on," he said.

Kane is working with the Minnesota congressional delegation to draft a letter to be sent to the VA secretary. There is urgency, he said, because the long lookback only encourages veteran

suicide. The VA's disability pension program provides monthly payments to wartime veterans 65 years or older meeting certain criteria, which includes income. Presently, there is not a limit on how far back the VA can look at a veteran's income to determine eligibility. However, with Social Security, the look-back period is generally five years.

Resolutions are how the Legion changes This resolution notes the VA has been known to look back as

far as 30 years, causing hardships. It calls for the VA to set a limit of five years for looking back at income.

Kane said the end goal is not merely to get the VA to change its policy — because it could be changed back — but to get it in law, so that five years remains the maximum.

No. 19: "Interest on **Retroactive Payment for Department of Veterans** Affairs Claims Delayed for More Than One Year.

This resolution was received and recorded. What's that mean? They will sit on it. They could bring it up next year, but probably not. It's like a motion dying for lack of a second.

In July, the Department of Minnesota passed this, urging legislation that requires the VA to pay interest on retroactive payments owed to veterans for claims delayed a year or more.

"It won't be dead in Minnesota," Kane said. "We approved it, and we are going to take action."

No. 20: "Compensation for Veterans Requiring **Hearing Aids for Service-Connected Hearing Loss**"

This one was referred to the VA&R Commission for further study. It calls for amending the VA's rating schedule to ensure veterans with service-connected hearing loss who require hearing aids receive a minimum rating of 40 percent.

Kane said the compensable ratings are across the board, while audible findings are consistent. If hearing loss is enough to need aids, it ought to be at least 40 percent, he said.

No. 21: "Increase the Grant **Amounts Authorized in the Specially Adaptive Housing** Program"

This one was sent to the Veterans Employment & Education Commission for further study. It urges Congress and the VA to review and adjust the rates for federal adaptive housing programs in light of rising construction costs.

"The money wounded veterans get to adapt their house isn't enough," Kane said. "The modifications are more expensive than what they used to be."

Did anything pass?

A single resolution passed at the 105th National Convention, according to Howard Trace, director of the American Legion Library & Museum, which tracks the organization's resolutions.

That was No. 10: "Post-Secondary Credit for Military Ser vice," originating from South Dakota and was heard by the convention's Veterans Employment & Education Committee.

It calls on all colleges and universities to work with the Department of Defense to develop and implement a framework for assessing military training and experience for college credit. It urges Congress to enact legislation requiring colleges and universities that receive federal funding to adopt policies that recognize the educational value of military service and provide the appropriate credit in accordance with the American Council on Education.

A CAMARADERIE ORGANIZATION

Scenes from the National Commander's Banquet

The American Legion is not all business. It brings together family and friends.



Paul and Susan Edwards of Nisswa Post



Gary H. and Becky Olson of Moorhead Post and Unit 21.



Pat and Becky Logan of Bayport Post 491 and Unit 491.



Bill and Donna Barbknecht of Fergus Falls Post 30 and Willmar Unit 167.



Linda and Mark Dvorak of New Prague Post 45.



Tom and Veronica Fernlund of Waite Park Post 428.



101 and Bemidji Unit 14.



Paul Hassing of Bloomington Post 550 and Garylee Davenport of Spicer Post 545.



Carla Tappainer of Apple Valley Post 1776 and Kelley Adelsman of Pine Island Post



Norma Tramm of Cold Spring Unit 455 and Patti Coleman of Lino Lakes Unit 566.



Koop is past 6th District commander and is dept. liaison for Legionville

Continued from Page 1

"It was a decision I was making right then and there. If I had waited, I might have changed my mind," he said.

His MOS was 91W, which is a medic. The Army later converted the number to 63W and titled it "health care specialist."

Basic was at Fort Jackson, S.C., with AIT at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. His AIT was shortened because he already was an EMT.

The Army sent Koop to Camp Hovey, South Korea, to serve with Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. Five months later, the 2nd Brigade, 2nd ID was deployed to Iraq, including medical support.

In August 2004, Koop set foot in Ramadi. The Army reclassified his unit as 2nd Brigade Combat Team, which brought in medics, signal, artillery and so forth under one command. He and his medical team provided support for all operations in Ramadi and sent support troops for the Second Battle

Koop was in Evac Platoon. They would take an M113 APC (armored-personnel carrier) out with the grunts. They hung on the backline and treated the wounded, stabilized them and got them back to the clinic. The clinic prepared them for flight to a CSH (pronounced "cash," for combat support hospital). They would go to Balad Air Base or Baghdad International for a flight typically to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

The first casualty Koop handled was a soldier shot in the belly. His buddies brought him to the 113, which then took him to the clinic, but he didn't make the 7- to 9-minute flight to the CSH.

The man appeared ready for transportation, but it turned out the bullet hit all his organs except the left kidney.

"The doctor said if he fell on the operating table after being struck by the bullet, they still would not have been able to save him," Koop said.

For that, Koop earned his combat medical badge. His 113 did take fire, but it wasn't hit.

The Evac Platoon would rotate tasks, and when not at the 113 he would spend time at the aid station, putting the wounded on flights or doing triage. There weren't many mass casualties like on the TV show "M*A*S*H."

One soldier's leg was mostly amputated by a rocket-propelled grenade's fin. Koop helped him get in the clinic, packed him on a chopper to the CSH and eased his worried mind by talking to him. When his unit returned to the



Ironton Post 443 has one of the best signs of any Legion club in the state. Koop is a real estate agent but spends a great deal of volunteer time helping out with his post, too.

United States after one year in Iraq,

It also meant Koop had circled the

they went to Fort Carson, Colo., and that man was present to greet them when they exited the airplane in August

earth: Minnesota to South Carolina to

2007 Jun 09 lm: 1/1 Acq Tm: 19:28:16 **KNEE** OTHER

An X-ray image from June 9, 2007, shows the bullet hole and subsequent fracture in Anthony Koop's tibia.



Ironton Unit 443's Erin Koop, left, at the World War II Museum in New Orleans sits next to Past 6th District President Patti Gunderson of Upsala Unit 350 and Patty's husband, David.

Texas to Korea to Iraq to Colorado.

The 2nd ID's 2nd Brigade new duty station would be Fort Carson. not Korea. He was living on base in that post-combat environment when, in March 2006, he was moved from his support battalion to being a line medic with Baker Company of 2/12, which is 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Infantry Regiment, one of the oldest and most decorated units in the Army.

He still was part of the 2nd BCT, 2nd ID. Same unit shoulder patch as before. 'In my opinion, it is the best job in

the military. You get all the fun whether you like it or not," Koop said.

Line medics, also known as combat medics, go out with the infantry guys and hope to earn the title "doc" from

"I wanted to be a combat medic to save lives. It was the whole point of joining, rather than rotating jobs among 30 medics," he said.

They deployed in June 2006 to a southern Baghdad neighborhood called Al Dora.

"They were crazy. We got nicknamed IED hunters," he said.

In fact, one guy would borrow Koop's scissors and use them to cut wires. They would put Koop behind

"My job was to stand back and be out of the way," he said.

On June 2, 2007, on routine patrol, they were door-knocking and asking about suspicious activity. He had learned enough Arabic to talk to locals.

On this day, they were parking Humassigned to rear defense, making sure vees on the street in a herringbone formation. He was in an unprotected truck in the back, and he sat in the rear seat on the driver's side. He was getting ity claim before finishing his service. in the truck, and he couldn't find the door handle by memory because of new handle placements.

door, then felt something odd.

"I realized I was shot," he said.

He grabbed the door and felt air woosh across his face at eye level, even though he had safety glasses on. The second shot missed. It was a bullet passing close to his head.

The first shot had struck him right below his left knee. He got in the Humvee and shouted, "I'm shot!"

"What?" was the driver's reply. "I'm shot!"

The driver turned down the Army

Koop repeated a third time: "I'm shot!'

He began cutting his pants and treating himself. The truck's gunner began laying cover fire, and the platoon sergeant came over to his door, dangerously exposing himself to the source of the bullets. Fortunately, no

A street vendor pointed to the source - a sniper in a building. Immediately, the sniper shot the vendor in the chest.

gunfire came his way.

bring Koop and the street vendor to Ibn had ideas, but they didn't care for his Sina Hospital inside the Green Zone. The vendor didn't make it.

Koop spent three days there and underwent surgery. The Air Force flew him to Balad Air Base, then flew him to Landstuhl for a second surgery. After a week of recovery, they flew him statea clinical recovery place in Maryland before moving him to Fort Carson.

Again, he had circled the planet.

Interestingly, his mother, godmother and grandparents were on vacation in Germany, and his mother and godmother drove four hours to visit him at Landstuhl. Jokes were made about getting shot just to see relatives.

The bullet was a .556 round fired from an M-16A1, probably one America gave Saddam's military during the eight-year Iran-Iraq War. It broke the he experiences today is residual unless it gets hit directly. Koop also has bad knees, he said, so that doesn't help. You notice it when he hobbles up

Later, he learned that Charlie Company soldiers two days later found the sniper and took him and other insurgents into custody, then transferred them to the Iraqi Army.

Koop wore a full-length leg cast, which he was supposed to wear for eight weeks. After three weeks, the doctor switched him to a brace, which he described as "a godsend."

In July 2007, he was promoted to sergeant. At Fort Carson, he was pole barn and pine trees.

other wounded soldiers made it to appointments. His time in service ended April 7, 2008. He began his VA disabil-He initially was rated 60 percent. Now, it's 80 percent.

Koop married Erin Johnson-Lind-Koop turned his head to look at the berg on July 30, 2011. They were in the same schools in high school and junior high in the 1990s. She graduated Crosby-Ironton in 2003. She went off to Central Lakes College, then University of Wisconsin-River Falls. At the time Koop got out, she was living in St. Paul and would come up on weekends. They would hang out together.

Soon, she got a job with Northern Pines Mental Health working at Aitkin High School as a mental health counselor. Now, she works at Crosby-Ironton at a grade school. Koop works as a real estate agent for Coldwell Banker's Crown Realtors Crosby office.

He joined The American Legion in Colorado outside the PX. A guy had a table, and Koop signed on with the atlarge Minnesota post. He knew Ironton had a Legion post. He had been there when he was 21, and he had experienced a welcome-home celebration

When he got back to Minnesota, he transferred his membership to Ironton Post 443. By the fourth meeting, they It took 10 minutes for the soldiers to made him first vice commander. He ideas. He stopped going.

Then he realized they really needed help, and he wasn't going to just give up. Koop returned and explained that meetings are on the same days he has darts league. They changed the date of the monthly meeting. Koop then got side, where first the Army had him at a buddy to join so he wouldn't be the only young buck in his post.

He was good with numbers. He became the finance officer. Then he was the membership director. If there was a need, he chaired it, including

Koop was the commander for the Aitkin-Crow Wing County Council from 2017 to 2023. He served as 6th District commander 2023-24. Koop is the service officer, judge advocate and gambling manager for Post 443. He's been gambling manager since 2016, plate at the front of the shin. Any pain and he set to work to modernize the system, like using CG Made Easy software to produce monthly tax returns.

The post handles gambling for the bar at the post and at the Town Tavern

In the 6th District, Koop is the post development chairman and assists with media and membership. At the Department of Minnesota, he is the liaison to the Legionville Board of Directors.

Anthony and Erin have two children. Marek, 10, is their son, and Maren, 8, is their daughter. They live on a deadend road in the country, surrounded by a farmer, a retired cop, retired CPA, a doctor, a retired teacher, corn fields, a



Anthony Koop holds up a Twins plush bear who is holding up a No. 1 foam finger at the Appreciation Rally at Montgomery Post 79. Koop was 6th District commander last year and his district placed first in its membership efforts.



From left are Sen. Tina Smith, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Betty McCollum, VA Director Pat Kelly, VISN-23 Director Robert McDivitt, Women's Clinic Director Alisa Duran, Woman's Program Manager Emma O'Brien and VA nurse and Air Force veteran Tracy Farley. They participated in the groundbreaking of the Women's Clinic at the Minneapolis VA. The hospital has a clinic for women inside, but by 2026 it will have one roof and its own entrance.

New clinic to open in spring 2026

Continued from Page 1

became the Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Care Center, opening in 1993. Services such as primary care, gynecology, psychology and others were added over time.

The clinic last year celebrated 30 years since then. It exists inside the hospital, but the new Women's Clinic will provide it with an exterior entrance and the room to expand services.

"In 2026, right here, we will offer a wide range of services, from primary care, gynecologic and reproductive health consultation, whole health coaching, peer support, maternity care coordination and mental health support," Duran said. "Our goal is to create a nurturing environment where our veterans feel understood, respected, and empowered to take charge of their health."

Minneapolis VA Director Pat Kelly said 17.5 percent of veterans nationwide are women, and it is a fast-growing demographic.

He said 105,000 veterans come to the Minneapolis VA for care, and 9,000 of them are women.

"A lot of our women veteran advocates didn't think we were really going to do this," he said.

Kelly extolled the Minneapolis VA's five-star rating from the CMS Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings (see box). He said there are about 170 VA medical centers, and Minneapolis was one of 35 to get five stars.

"They can be guaranteed they can get the highest quality care anywhere," Kelly said.

U.S. Sen. Tina Smith said she likes that women veteran advocates "refused to accept a project that was nice to have but necessary to have.

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar said the federal government promises equipment for the troops and it must provide health care for them, too, including National Guard and Reserve. She thanked the women veterans for their patience on getting funds for the new clinic.

U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum said the most diverse field is the military.

"The institution that broadly reflects all of America is our armed forces," she said.

She said she has been active in the Legion and VFW auxiliaries, and she said the women veterans she knows were hamstrung by the services available at the VA, because those services were oriented toward male patients.

As ranking member of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, she said the Department of Defense needs to work on the handoff of servicemembers from military to VA



St. Thomas University Air Force ROTC Cadets Ann Nelson and Kaitlyn Morgenstern sing the national anthem at the groundbreaking.

What are these hospital ratings?

CMS means Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which performs annual ratings on 4,000 hospitals nationally. You can go to this website, click on "hospitals" and find the star ratings for acute care hospitals.

medicare.gov/care-compare/ Here are star ratings of some wellknown area hospitals:

Mpls. VA Medical Center: 5 Mayo Clinic Hospital Rochester: 5 Sanford Medical Center Fargo: 5 Essentia Health St. Mary's: 5 Mayo Clinic Mankato: 5 Mayo Clinic Franciscan: 5 Mayo Clinic Albert Lea & Austin: 5 Sioux Falls VA Medical Center: 5 M Health Fairview Woodwinds: 5 Lake Region Healthcare: 5 Buffalo Hospital: 5 Cambridge Medical Center: 5 Avera Marshall Regional: 5 Fargo VA Medical Center: 4 Essentia Health Fargo: 4 M Health Fairview Southdale: 4 M Health Fairview St. John's: 4 M Health Fairview Ridges: 4 Abbott Northwestern: 4 Allina United: 4 St. Francis Regional: 4 St. Cloud Hospital: 4 Essentia St. Joseph's: 4 Sanford USD Medical Center: 4 Gunderson Lutheran UW Health: 4 Sanford Bemidji: 4 Centracare-Rice Memorial: 4 Owatonna Hospital: 4 Maple Grove Hospital: 4 Lakeview Memorial: 4 Mayo Clinic Red Wing: 4 M Health Fairview U of M: 3 Park Nicollet Methodist: 3 St. Lukes Hospital: 3 North Memorial: 3 Regions Hospital: 3 Mercy Hospital Coon Rapids: 3 Fairview Lakes Health Services: 3 Altru Hospital: 3

Hennepin County Medical Center: 2 St. Cloud VA Medical Center and Tomah VA Medical Center: Not available. (There are too few measures. Medicare won't pay for services at this hospital except in very limited circumstances.)

In this year's CMS Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings, more than 58 percent of VA hospitals included received 4- or 5-star ratings compared to 40 percent of non-VA hospitals.

The CMS website also provides patient satisfaction survey results (as a separate star rating) for many kinds of facilities: critical access hospital, psychiatric facilities, children's hospitals and more. This allows patients to evaluate where to get care.



Joe Bares stands with his wife, Holly, and son, Zach, at the Div. II State Tournament Banquet on Aug. 1 at Redwood Falls Community Center, where he was inducted into the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Hall of Fame.

Joe Bares inducted into Baseball HOF

played baseball. He never coached baseball. At the Div. II State Tournament Banquet in Redwood Falls on Aug. 1, he was inducted into the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Hall of Fame.

Wait? What?

The community of Jordan had a strong baseball program in the mid-2000s; however, Jordan Post 3 wasn't all that active. Bares said it had around 15 members. In 2008, three members held a revitalization. They wanted the post to exist for baseball and for the veterans.

Jordan hosted a district tournament. Bares got to know 3rd District Baseball Director Bob Zellmann and started helping him.

Meanwhile, Jordan coach Ron Beckman was producing great Jordan Post 3 teams, ones that featured the legendary Tanner, Tyler and TJ Oakes. The Oakes boys were named Graduates of the Year at the Div. I Banquet in Osseo on July 31.

In 2013, Bares was at the Div. II State Tournament in Bird Island, and State Director Darwin Berg and 2nd District Director Rocky Wedin were watching a game. Bares asked, "Need help?" And since then, he's been helping out at the Div. II state tourney annually. He also helps 3rd District Director Bruce Young with substate action.

"I'm just a veteran who wanted to help with the program," Bares said.

Post 3 membership went up, and it presently

REDWOOD FALLS — Joe Bares never is at 54 members. It does more than just baseball, too. It sends boys and girls to Boys/Girls State, and it sends kids to the Oratorical Contest, too. It helped raise funds for Jordan's Veterans Park and is involved in Veterans Day and Memorial Day observances.

Bares was Post 3 commander for eight years and now serves as membership director. He is involved in the 3rd District. At the Department of Minnesota, he sits on the Credentials Committee, which organizes and tracks voting strength of delegates at conventions.

Bares grew up on a farm near Tyndall, S.D. He has three older brothers and three younger

He served five years in the Navy, never on a ship. He worked security in Italy, at Naval Air Station Sigonella. He was stationed there during the Achille Lauro cruise ship hijacking in 1985. Next, he was at Jacksonville, Fla., at NAS Cecil Field. After some schooling, he worked for eight years in South Dakota before coming to Jordan for the past 25.

"Jordan was a great community to raise a family," he said. "We had an opportunity to move to Sioux Falls. My family was against it, and I am glad I stayed."

Legionnaires can find him voluntarily attending Baseball Committee meetings and helping out with Pheasant Feed Committee efforts. Now, they will find him in the Baseball Hall of Fame, too, listed near the back of the rulebook.



From left are Assistant Department Service Officer Janet Lorenzo, Apple Valley Post 1776 member Carla Tappainer, Department Adjutant Mike Maxa and Kathy Bachman with Dakota County Elks Lodge 2832. The lodge donated \$800 in food certificate to aid the Department of Minnesota in its efforts to help homeless veterans.



Emma, a service dog belonging to **Rochester Post 92 Commander Robert** Schmidt, spent most of her time at the New Orleans **Convention Center** lying down in an aisle. However, she did enjoy the walks to and from the hotel. Such a good girl!

PROGRAM for the Fall Conference

It is considered the Legion's School of Instruction

THURSDAY, O	CT. 24	
Time	Session	Room
Noon-5 p.m.	Blood Drive	State
2 p.m.	Gambling Seminar	Ballroom
<u>3-5 p.m.</u>	Committee Meetings	
3 p.m.	Convention Corp. Committee	Poolside
3:30 p.m.	Legionnaire Insurance Trust	State
4 p.m.	Americanism	Senate
4 p.m.	Children & Youth	Poolside
4 p.m.	National Security & Foreign Relations	Congress
4 p.m.	Strategic Planning	Sunwood
4 p.m.	American Legion Foundation	Boardroom
5 p.m.	Training Committee	Senate
6:30 p.m.	Membership Seminar	Auxiliary Ballroom
	National President Trish Ward	
7 p.m.	Department Executive Committee	Ballroom

FRIDAY.	OCT.	25

Time Session Room
8-8:20 a.m. Opening Ceremonies & Greetings
Commander

6th District Commander
Area Department Vice Commander
Mayor of St. Cloud
St. Cloud Convention & Visitors Bureau

8:30-9:25 a.m. Breakout Training Sessions

Instructor(s)	Room
Carla Tappainer	Senate
K. Adelsman, J. Lorenzo	University A
Greg Colby	Congress
Training Committee	University B
	Carla Tappainer K. Adelsman, J. Lorenzo Greg Colby

9:30-10:25 a.m. Breakout Training Sessions

Announcements

DIDO TOLLO GIALLI DI CORCOGO I TOLINITA DESSIONO			
Topic	Instructor(s)	Room	
Voter Outreach	Secretary of State	Senate	
Resolutions	Paul Edwards	University B	
Cannabis: Know the Law	Greg Colby	Congress	
Post Service Officer Responsibilitie	es Janet Lorenzo	University A	
'		,	

10:35 a.m.	General Session	
Time	Session	Room
10:35-11:20 a.m.	NSFR Outstanding Enlisted Service Members	Ballroom
11:20-11:35 a.m.	NEC Reporting Nationally and Introduction	
11·35-11·55 a m	Leading candidate for National Commander	

Noon Lunch Break

11:55-noon

1-1:55 p.m. Breakout Training Se	<u>essions</u>	
Topic	Instructor	Room
MyLegion.org Help	Carla Tappainer	Senate
Be the One	K. Adelsman, J. Lorenzo	University A
Protect Your Post	Greg Colby	Congress
American Legion Resources	Training Committee	University B

2-2:55 p.m. Breakout Training S	<u>essions</u>	
Topic	Instructor	Room
Programs & Awards Resources	Training Committee	Senate
Resolutions	Paul Edwards	University B
Cannabis: Know the Law	Greg Colby	Congress
Post Service Officer Responsibilities	Janet Lorenzo	University A

3 p.m.	General Session	
Time	Session	Room
3:05-3:25 p.m.	Keynote Speaker: Brock Hunter	Ballroom
	Veterans Defense Project	
3:25-3:30 p.m.	Adjutant Updates & Commander Com	ments
3:30 p.m.	Recess	
4 p.m.	Legislative Committee Meeting	State
4 p.m.	Hospital Association Meeting	University B
Evening	Legion Family Event	•
5:30 p.m.	SAL Detachment Finance	University A
•	& Executive Committee meetings	•

SATUR	DAY.	OCT.	26
37101	DAI,	oc.	

Time 9:00 a.m.	Session Opening Ceremonies & Greetings	Room or Speaker Ballroom
9:05 a.m.	Legion Family Greetings	
	Department Auxiliary President	
	Honorary Department Jr. President	
	Sons of the American Legion Detachme	
	Department American Legion Riders Di	
9:25 a.m.	Committee Chair Responsibilities	Training Committee
9:45 a.m.	Legislative Agenda 2025	Kristy Janigo
10 a.m.	Fund 85 Application Post Involvement	Janet Lorenzo
10:20 a.m.	Why Legion College, Minn. & Nat'l?	Training Committee
10:35 a.m.	Department Membership Updates	Carla Tappainer
10:55 a.m.	Media Awards	Tim Engstrom
11:15 a.m.	Why Should You Belong?	Training Committee
11:45 a.m.	Commander's final comments	
noon	Adjournment	
8 a.m2 p.m.	SAL Detachment General Session	University A
1-3 p.m.	American Legion Riders Mtg.	University B

Subject Synopsis:

MyLegion.org: For our members who need assistance on how to use MyLegion. How to find members that have not renewed and retain them or bring them back. Reports that are available to manage membership.

Be the One: An explanation of the national organizations suicide prevention program. How the districts and posts can bring awareness to their members. Resources available for awareness from the national website.

Voter Outreach: Resources available to get out the vote in your communities. Voter programs tailored for veterans and their families.

Post Service Officer Responsibilities: The responsibilities of the post service officer to bring awareness to all veterans and their families on the rights and benefits granted to them. Resources available to help veterans in need and instruction on how to properly complete the annual "Post Service Officer" report.

Resolutions: How to write a resolution. The process, where to start, next level of approvals. The do's and don'ts when writing a resolution.

Protect Your Post: Why should your post incorporate. The constitution & bylaws are the governing documents on how the post operates. Record keeping and the accuracy of meeting minutes.

The American Legion: Why revitalizations are important to your post. Promote The American Legion and your post. Resources available to make your post and membership successful. Engage veterans to join The Ameri-

can Legion and an active post in your community.

Cannabis: Know the laws and permits needed if your post is going to sell cannabis.

Committee Chair Responsibilities: The responsibilities of a department, district, and post committees and chairs. How to run a successful committee.

Legislative Agenda: The 2025 American Legion Department of Minnesota's legislative agenda to take back to your posts. How to get involved and support the agenda.

Fund 85: Why it's so important for the posts to be involved in assisting veterans in need. The process starts at the post level. An overview of the process.

Why Legion College: Why our Legionnaires should attend Minnesota American Legion college and the National college. Subject matter taught at the college. The application process for both Minnesota and National.

Why Belong: Why you should belong to The American Legion and the programs of The American Legion. Our four pillars and the importance of them.

Veterans Defense Project: Their mission is to restore veterans involved in the criminal justice system to the communities they served. Along with The American Legion Department of Minnesota, VDP was key in the passage of the Veterans Restorative Justice Act by our state legislators in 2021. VDP is Commander Carl Moon's project for his year, with a goal of raising \$60,000.

How to attend the Fall Conference

To attend the Fall Conference, clip out the registration form on this page. Mail it with your check as instructed on the form.

Registration desk is open 1-6:30 p.m. Thursday at Kelly Inn and 6 a.m.-noon Friday. SAL registration will be available through Friday afternoon.



2024 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. 18)
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:

Minnesota American Legion Convention Corp.

Conference dates:

Oct. 25-26, 2024 Various committees meet Oct. 24.

Contact the hotel directly for your reservations:

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

<u>Nearby hotels:</u> Courtyard by Marriott, St. Cloud 320-654-1661 Grand Stay Residential Suites St. Cloud 320-251-5400

	District	Post	Unit	Squadron
Name _.				
Addre	ss			
City			State	Zip

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. 11. Meals are

available to purchase at mnlegion.org until then, too.



CARL MOON Walker COMMANDER

Minnesota's 2024-25 Dept. Leadership Team





DON SKOW Lindstrom VICE COMMANDER 1&3



PAM KRILL Blue Earth VICE COMMANDER 2&7



JOE JANSEN New Brighton VICE COMMANDER 4&5



VERONICA FERNLUND St. Cloud VICE COMMANDER 6&9



BILL GORDON Albertville VICE COMMANDER 8&10



CARLA TAPPAINER
Apple Valley
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



KAREN O'BAR Verndale HISTORIAN



KELLEY ADELSMAN
Pine Island
CHAPLAIN



BETTY JASS

Lake Crystal



AL DAVIS Princeton TREASURER

District Commanders



MARK MALONEY
Winona
DIST. 1 COMMANDER



JAMES OLSON Amboy DIST. 2 COMMANDER



JOE TAPPAINER
Apple Valley
DIST 3 COMMANDER



JON HAWORTH Minneapolis DIST. 4 COMMANDER



LYNN NOTTAGE Minneapolis DIST. 5 COMMANDER



FRANK GRITTNER Elk River DIST. 6 COMMANDER



Elbow Lake
DIST. 7 COMMANDER



PHILIP BODLE Chisholm DIST. 8 COMMANDER



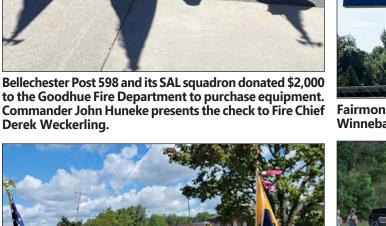
STEVE NASALLE Fergus Falls DIST. 9 COMMANDER



Maple Grove
DIST. 10 COMMANDER

Listening Post





St. Michael Post 567 and Cub Scout Pack 767 participated in the St. Michael Days Parade.



Dawson Post 177 Commander Paul Iverson, right, presents 50-year certificates to, from left, Dewayne Kellen, Mark Larson and Keith Christensen at the August meeting.



Fairmont Post 36 installed a new scoreboard at the Winnebago Avenue Sports Complex in Fairmont.



Bellechester Post 598 Commander John Huneke and Project Hero organizer Todd Setter are followed by Post 598 Finance Officer Steve Welscher and a Project Hero cyclist. The post and squadron provided a reception of grilled ribeyes, baked potatoes, coleslaw and other food. Project Hero organizes bicycle rides for the cause of aiding veterans and first responders with trauma through exercise as wells as building adaptive bikes for others.



Dent Post 148 held a fishing trip and fish fry on June 14. Eight veterans from the Fergus Falls Veterans Home attended. A 50-year certificate was presented to Al Fresonke.



Congressman Brad Finstad meets with American Legion National Legislative Council Member Steve Fosness and Vietnam veteran Steve Chase to discuss veterans issues.



St. Cloud Stand Down President Robert Behrens presents **Auxiliary Past 6th District President Patti Gunderson with** guitars and other instruments for the Bemidji Veterans Home's music therapy program. Assisting in the donation are the Little Falls Post 46 American Legion Riders.





A crowd of more than 500 gathers at the Sept. 8 dedication of Kanabec County Veterans Department Commander Carl Moon and 10th District Commander Kristy Janigo, sitting Memorial in Mora. The memorial is a joint effort of Mora Post 201 and Ogilvie Post 640. on the left above and shown below, were among the speakers at the dedication in Mora.







District commanders



1st District **Mark Maloney III**

As I sit here thinking about less than 1 what to write about this month's article, all that comes to mind how great most of the 1st District posts are doing with their new officers and, I can say: Keep up the excellent job you are doing in helping to get new members in and raising money for the great causes you do.

If I offended anyone at some posts I visited, I do apologize. If I used foul langue and if you thought that I was yelling, I have a loud voice. Now to those posts that try to change the vote of the membership body who put those younger officers in to run the post and the older members to run them off or making it hard for them and they quit, that is not what The American Legion is all about. It is about helping veterans get help in Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth.

That is why we are here, not to pick each other apart or keep score in something they did the

Did you know that in 1925, the percentage of veterans in the population was around 10 percent? By 1955, it was around 11 percent. By 1995, it was approximately 7 percent. In 2022 (latest available figures) it was around 6.2 percent.

Those are the veteran percentages. Here are the servicemember numbers. People confuse the two a lot: There is being patriotic.



serving in the military today. There was about 10 percent of the population who served during World War II.

I know there are posts that need officers and the commander asked members to come and help him and everyone he asked to be voted in as transfer members to help fill in as officers because the post members would not step up. Also, there were a few ladies that were going to transfer over to help get their Auxiliary unit back active.

Now the Vietnam veterans talk about how tough it was when they came home and how tough it was that older veterans made it hard for them to belong. Now you are the veterans giving the younger veterans the same grief you have gotten to the younger veterans — but remember one thing. Most of the veterans coming in to the Legion are ones who have been deployed.

Also, remember, some of them want to change things too suddenly and not heed the preamble or four pillars. So there has to be a balance between giving them some leeway and keep us The American Legion. For instance, we never will stop



2nd District **James Olson**

Greetings, 2nd District! The National Convention is behind us. Congratulations to new National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. from Connecticut and to National Vice Commander Jim Kellogg and to all of the other national officers on your elections. I look forward to the upcoming year!

The 2nd District Auxiliary is hosting a 2nd District membership rally on Oct. 19 at Okabena Post 608. There will be some training and information available that day. More information to follow in the next district newsletter.

Fall Conference is coming up in October in St. Cloud. It looks like there are going to be some fantastic opportunities for Legionnaires to get great training and information. I hope to see

many Legionnaires from the 2nd District there!

My project for this year is the flagpole renovation at the Luverne Veterans Home. The flagpoles currently at the home were installed 30 years as the project of the 2nd District commander and president.

At this time, the poles need to be replaced, and there will be some renovations and revamping of the area in front of the home that will make the area more accessible and more enjoyable for the veterans who are living at the home. More details can be found in the 2nd District newsletter.

Keep on pushing to get those memberships in.



3rd District **Joe Tappainer**

Membership.

Today I'm going to address American Legion membership and why it is important.

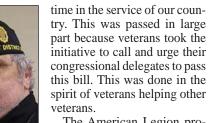
I think of the vision of the veterans who worked so hard to get us the G.I. Bill in the 1940s and the far-reaching effects of this legislation. Many of us received higher education because of the G.I. Bill.

It bettered and broadened our lives in so many ways. Not to mention that ultimately, it is

one of the bills that has paid back for 🔀 itself by

putting us in higher tax brackets.

In recent history, because of veterans supporting the PACT Act of 2022, it was passed by Congress. This is to compensate the women and men who were exposed to burn pits and other toxic chemicals during their



The American Legion programs and influence are significant. To find out how large, I urge you to take the online Amerian Legion Basic Training Course that covers five topics: history and organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism: and Children & Youth.

This helped me understand and address the wide breath of good programs the American Legion covers and supports. These aren't just to support lives. Until next time.

veterans, but our local communities as well. These are terrific selling points we can offer new, perspective and returning veterans.

We need to get that message out there, for others to know, to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the American Legion. And to carry on the legacy that allows veterans to live with dignity.

Remember we have a 65 percent membership goal to match by Veterans Day. Let's use our time and talent as a team to surpass this goal.

I look forward to seeing and meeting you all at the different functions and events throughout the 3rd District this year.

Still serving and changing



4th District Jon Haworth

It's been an eventful month assessor's with our recent RCCC and National Convention, and I want to extend a huge congratulations veterans to Commander Aaron Towner of Rosetown Post 542!

Not only did he achieve bronze level for membership, but he also organized a successful blood drive. Well done, Aaron!

Our National Convention in New Orleans was truly inspiring.

National Commander Jim Lacoursier delivered some powerful and motivational speeches that left a lasting impression. My personal highlight was hearing lieutenant general, the commanding officer during Hurricane Katrina, share his experiences.

His words were both impactful, enlightening and humorous. One key takeaway from the convention is a new strategy for growing our membership. We can connect with veterans who may be looking for us by reaching out to your county more together.

office for receiving property

tax exemptions. With this list, we can start visiting and inviting them to ioin us.

In other exciting news, North Carolina's American Legion Cruisers are raising about \$1,500 per car show for their

Their success is a testament to what we can achieve, and I believe we can surpass that amount with our Legion Cruisers, especially since we allow newer performance vehicles in addition to classics.

If you're interested in joining our Legion Cruisers, now's the perfect time to get involved! Let's continue to build on our momentum and make a difference. Keep up the great work, and let's strive to achieve even



6th District **Frank Grittner**

Greetings from the BIG 6th of District. We are back from the National Convention and the Legionville Camporee.

National was a wonderful time. We had an opportunity to spend some time at the National WWII Museum. I heard several people say they could have spent a whole week there. I wholeheartedly agree with them. That whole place was just amazing! And we were only able to see a small fraction of what was there.

Camporee was also just great. We here in the 6th District really showed up. We had a lot of campers, and many more showed up on Saturday. The fish fry on Saturday was a big success.

I am so grateful for all of the workers, and for those that attended. We will be making a nice donation back to Camporee.

We also had the 6th District Family meeting after the fish fry. I was happy to welcome all of our Department of Minnesota leadership. I love it when we can do things as a District Family. Because as my theme says "Together We Can."

So now we get into the heart

Legion year. Lots of mem-

bership dinners and other events are coming up. We had National Security/Foreign Relations Weekend at Camp Ripley, followed by the Harvest Rally in Fridley.

Next up is the Fall Conference in St. Cloud on Oct. 24-26. I hope we have a big turnout for these events. I'm looking forward to meeting and seeing many of you from around the 6th District at these events, along with our friends from all over the Department of Minnesota. Thursday night American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward will be speaking, so I'm looking forward to that. There is so much to be learned, and the only way you have a voice is if you are there.

Membership is in full swing and we here in the Big 6th are doing well. While we still have work to do, we have started out well. Many of you already have heard, but I must confirm, that Jim Lucas has stepped down as our membership director due to health issues.

However, Jim has graciously agreed to help our new membership director Kasey Krautkremer from Park Rapids. Let's all make sure we give Kasey a Big 6th District welcome. As of

Sept. 4, we are at 57.38 percent, so we are on track and ahead of the schedule that has been published.

Until next time, have a safe, blessed fall and remember to Be



7th District **Carl Wilson**

Hello from the 7th District! The new membership year is in full swing, and many posts are having their membership dinners and renewing their memberships. The 7th District is moving along and has reached the 50 percent goal by Sept. 11, 2024, set by national, so I would like to congratulate the 7th District for achieving that goal.

I would also like to remind everyone that Department Fall Conference is coming up on Oct. 25-26, at St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, and would like to see all of you there. The conference will have breakout sessions that everyone can go to and learn different things to assist them at their local post.

It is also a great time to meet other Legion members from around the state and learn from

them what workis ing or not working their

area in growing and keeping The American Legion a great organization serving the veterans of this great nation.

I would also like to invite all of you to come and hear the 2024-2025 National Auxiliary President Trish Ward, she will be speaking Thursday, Oct. 24 at 6:30pm in the main auditorium of the convention center. I will be attending this presentation to support the Legion Auxiliary because without them I don't think I could accomplish many of the things that I do for the Legion.

Legion Members, thank you for all you do.



8th District **Philip Bodle**

9/11 changed us. We were to the loss shocked. We were numb. Then we were enraged.

To the public, the war began with horse soldiers in the mountains of Afghanistan. The Global War on Terrorism then spread to Iraq, Syria, the African continent and beyond. We found vengeance. We lost many of our own. We left pieces of our souls across the globe in tiny places regular Americans will never know about.

It ended, if we are to believe it has ended, in the city of Kabul, with a final evacuation effort of many of our allies. That effort led mean the fight wasn't worth it."

of thirteen American souls. many

which were not born on 9/11.

Twenty-three years ago, a multi-generational war started. We will never be the same for it. Hopefully, we will move on from it.

As many of you wrestle with the last 23 years, please consider these words:

"Just because you fight cancer for twenty years and lose, doesn't



9th District **Steve NaSalle**

Hello, Roaring 9th District! make I hope everyone is doing well. the new Now that we are beginning a member new year, and the National Convention has past, we need to hit the ground running.

Though we had a good previous year, we were last overall in the department in memtheir dues in on time, we are still having some issues getting new members to join our posts.

Therefore, we need to look at opportunities that would best benefit our posts to get new members to join. One benefit at our disposal is contacting those members on our 1982 lists. All it takes is a phone call.

When you contact a potential new member, let them know the benefits of belonging to your post. Most of the time, members of the Department's 1982 list, don't realize the benefits of belonging to a post, so please let them know.

Then, after inviting the new member to your post meeting,

feel welcome. Some-

times we

miss great opportunities to recruit new members, by not bership. Now I realize we all speaking to them or making have worked very hard getting them feel like part of your team. our current members to get Please keep this in mind when you are recruiting

A few dates for our 2024-25 fiscal year. Our Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for Jan. 10-11 at Warren Post 27. and the District Convention is scheduled for June 13-14 at East Grand Forks Post 157. Please continue to refer to our district newsletter or our 9th District Facebook page for times and updates.

Though we had a good turnout at our previous conference and convention, I know we can do much better. Please do your best to have at least one representative from your post to attend our district events. Not

Continued on Page 17



District Commanders

Continued from Page 16

only is it a great opportunity to catch up with old friends, but it's a great opportunity to make new friends, and receive updated information that will benefit your posts. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Remember, if you have any questions, or concerns, please contact your area district vice commander for any guidance. Your district executive team is here to assist you, so please

reach out if you need our help. As always, please continue using the buddy check system, and awareness in our local communities. Remember our veterans who may live alone, homebound, or in assisted living facilities.

"There's likely a place in paradise for people who tried hard, but what really matters is succeeding. If that requires you to change, that's your mission." Ret. Army Gen. Stanley *McChrystal*



10th District **Kristy Janigo**

Several of us from the 10th abundance District American Legion Family traveled to New Orleans for the National Convention. The best part was the local cuisine, fresh seafood!

The 10th District had dinner at Tommy's Cuisine, Italian-Creole fusion. Props to Past District Commander Matt Berens for the selection, and gratitude to restaurant staff for accommodating our large group, including the singing of "The Doxology" before the meal and "God Bless America" afterward. Music, especially singing, is embedded in the culture of The Mighty 10th.

Another highlight from the trip was a visit to the World War II Museum. My granddad was a WWII Army logistics E-6 in Okinawa. My commander's theme is "Do Your Part," a WWII slogan to recruit women. I'm a huge fan of Rosie the Riv-Rosie the Riveters were seen in

museum.

I attended Legionville Camporee

for the first time.

My husband, Chip, an Auxiliary member, put a lot of heart into the Friday meal! I had a chance to speak at the dedication of the new veterans memorial in Mora on Sept. 8 as well as at the POW/MIA Day observance in Greenfield on Sept. 20.

I have mailed out letters to every post in the district about my project to request donations to Every Third Saturday, a nonprofit near the VA Medical Center that helps homeless and justice-involved veterans. The organization's founders will visit our Mid-Winter Conference on Jan. 11 at Anoka Post 102 to share their story, how eter imagery. Photos of real life they got started and their cur-



Howard Ledin, in the driver's seat, celebrated his 99th birthday on July 27 at Pine City Post 51 with friends and family. Ledin currently lives at Rushseba Assisted Living in Rush City.

Ledin served in the Navy 1943-1946, shortly after he graduated from North Branch High School in May 1943. Howard graduated from Bainbridge Naval Training Station as a radioman. For the next two years, Ledin was stationed within the state.

During his third year of service Ledin was deployed to the Philippine Islands along with troops in a transport ship. The intended mission was to invade Japan. On the journey over, the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. On Aug. 9, the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Shortly after, Japan surrendered.

The troops ship stopped at the Marshall and Caroline islands. The rest of his time was spent on LST 1058. From this point in his service, Ledin delivered necessary supplies to the islands of Leyte, Samar, Mindoro, and city of Zamboanga on the island of Mindanao.

After serving, Ledin went to law school and graduated in 1950 from the University of Minnesota. Ledin was able to open the Hinckley Law Office in 1955. In 1959, Ledin and his family moved to Pine City where he served as Pine County attorney 1960-1974 and continued practicing law until age 85.

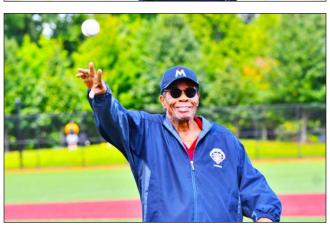
Pictured in the WWII-era jeep with Ledin is his family. A special thank you to Paul Dorow of Pine Cty, owner of the jeep, a Willys MB from February 1945.

Listening Post



Owatonna Post 77 sponsored 17 kids (pictured are 14 of them) from St. Mary's School and Owatonna Public Schools for the Legionville session July 14-19. Owatonna Bus Co. provided transportation.





At the American Legion Prospect Series at University of Northwestern in Roseville and at Bethel University in Arden Hills, 150 boys representing 80 American Legion posts competed Aug. 9-11 before college scouts, parents and fans. Throwing out the first pitch was Twins legend Rod Carew, above, and Vietnam War hero Vic Lewis of Minnetonka, top, was part of the opening ceremony. Lewis was wounded twice in battle and received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star.



Members of Eagan Post 594 presented a new flag box to the city at the Eagan Community Center. This is the second flag box provided by the post. The first box, located at the Eagan Sam's Club, generates over 1,400 flags per year. From left are post member Gary Stanull (who constructed the box), Adjutant Cindy Yanchury, ECC Maintenance Supervisor Mike Sipper; Commander John Rayman and ECC Manager Lindsey Rague.





Redwood Falls Post 38 donated digital photograph frames to inpatient veterans at the St. Cloud VA Hospital. he digital frames will allow veterans and families to upload multiple pictures to share and reminisce. Presenting the digital frames to Associate Nurse Manager Annie Toner is Post 38 Adjutant Jim Mertens.



Stewartville Post 164 Commander Ron Moore, right, and Past Unit 164 President Wanda Prescher stand with Matthew Watters, who representated the post in the 1st District American Legion Oratorical Contest with an oration titled "Our Duty, Our Destiny."



Woodbury Post 501 celebrated veteran Paul Esparza's 100th birthday. He served in World War II in the Army and was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge. He received a Purple Heart. He went on to serve 35 years in the Air Force, retiring as a command sergeant major.

Wheaton Post 90 and Rosholt, N.D., Post 48 led the Rosholt Threshermans Parade on Sunday, Aug. 18. Pictured from left, first row, are Wally Johnson and Harry Fischer, second row, Francis Finke and Marv Bach, third row, Ken Luebke and Ed Madsen, and, fourth row, Kim Kemton, Ron Braun and Gene **Lundquist. Pulling the float is Jim Burlison from** Fairmount, N.D.

The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 25 Vol. 2

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

Dept. HQ: Veterans Service Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

651-224-7634

September 2024

National President Ward to visit Minn.

ST. CLOUD — Fall Conference will be held Convention Center (where the Auxiliary holds at River's Edge Conference Center in St. Cloud Oct. 24-26.

The Department Executive Committee will meet at 11 a.m. Oct. 24. Besides the annual Poppy Contests and the AEF Silent Auction, National President Trish Ward will speak Thursday, Oct.

their main sessions). All of the Department of Minnesota American Legion Family are invited to hear Ward's message.

She is an engaging and dynamic speaker. Department President Judy Ackerman is thrilled Minnesota is able to host her Thursday evening. 24 at 6:30 p.m. in the main auditorium of the Registration and hotel information is on Page 13.

Let's give national president a big turnout

October will be here in the blink of an eye. Fall is definitely in the air. Fall Conference is fast approaching, and there are some fun events to participate in, learn new things, get together with old friends and meet new friends.

I am so excited to have American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward here for our Thursday night education. I encourage every member you know to come hear President Ward as she will be "Leading the Way." Let's give her a great Minnesota turnout for her presentation to us.

Friday night at Fall Conference will feature a couple of events. There will be an opportunity to participate in a poppy-making challenge. Please refer to Poppy Chairman Lorinda Kies's information regarding the teams. There will be a prize for the winning team. There will also be an opportunity to help pack the personal care kits for the female veterans at the Women's Clinic at the Minneapolis VAMC. Please bring donated items for the personal care kits to Fall Conference.

Items needed for the personal

President's Message

Judy Ackerman

care kits are listed below. Zip- Constitupered pouches will be provided.

Required items:

Shampoo Conditioner Deodorant (non-aerosol) Bar soap Body wash

Toothbrush Toothpaste Lip balm Chapstick

Emery board Large comb Hairbrush Lotion

Optional items:

Travel-size Kleenex Small journal/notepad Word search/puzzle book Stress ball/fidget item Slipper/cozy socks

Handwritten note of thanks/ encouragement

Pen/pencil



tion and Standing Rules Month.

Take the time to

review these programs and see what your unit and you can do to promote these programs.

Thank you to the units that have sent invitations for a department president's visit. I will do my best to attend your events.

The Auxiliary National Convention was held in New Orleans. It was fun to see pictures of Minnesota members on the big screen. It was an honor and privilege to take the oath of office as your department president with the other department presidents.

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

Department of Minnesota delegation to the 103rd National American Legion Auxiliary Convention in New Orleans.



President Judy Ackerman and Minneapolis VA Representative Janet Thompson were at the groundbreaking for the new Women's Clinic at the VA medical center on Friday, Sept. 13.



Department of Minnesota President Judy Ackerman, after being installed at the 103rd ALA National Convention in New



Molly Magnuson of Argyle Unit 353 was recognized at the 103rd National Convention, in New Orleans, at the annual luncheon. Magnuson on the far left is pictured with the 2023-2024 National Leadership chairman.

The good news, then the bad news

By Hope Wilson

Membership Chairman

Membership is the building block of our organization. Without our members we cannot

I have been tracking the renewal numbers as we are getting close to Harvest Rally. We have a goal of 40 percent for Sept. 21. As of Sept. 13, we have 21 units that have met that goal.

The nice thing about this as well. number is that I also pulled this same report yesterday and only 11 units had met goal. So, with a week left until the rally, I am expecting to see many more

units make their goal.

And I would like to give a huge shout-out to District 8 Unit 379 Moose Lake. They are at 103.57 percent and District 4 Unit 451 St. Paul they are at 100 percent.

District 1 Unit 552 Freeborn is closing in quickly with 96.36

Now these are the *happy* numbers that have reached goal, receive them, not only when but we must look at the *sad* side

We are almost 11 weeks into the 2024-25 year, and we still have 107 Units at 0 percent.

Yes, I said *zero*. We need to call and remind

our members that they don't need to wait until the renewal cards are mailed by national to start paying their membership dues.

We need to reach out to our members who did not renew last year and find out why. Hopefully, we can convince them to rejoin. And units need to be sending the dues in when they they receive them all.

Just a few phone calls or a few questions can start making a lot of difference. Just ask. Look for new members in everyday spots. I found some at our Jr. Shooting Club the other day. I just asked.

National officers elected and installed

NEW ORLEANS — The 103rd National Coninstalled: vention was Aug. 24-28 in New Orleans. The convention ended with the election and installation of the 2024-2025 national officers. Minnesota was represented by 28 delegates, 16 alternates and several guests. Alaska's Lisa Williamson, the 2023-2024 national president, presided over the busy five days as the national chairmen gave their reports. Resolutions were considered, and the newly elected and appointed officers were

National President: Trish Ward, Kansas National Vice President: Pam Ray, Illinois National Secretary: Kathy Daudistel, Kentucky National Treasurer: Marybeth Revoir, Ill. National Chaplain: Monque Batiste, Louisiana National Historian: Daraanne Oliver, Florida National Vice President of the Northwestern Division: Debra Albers, Nebraska

Help me make a book for the dept. president

Cari Lamb

Public Relations Chairman

It's time to share all we do. This year, I am creating a press book to give to Department President Judy at the end of her year. I need the help of all the Units and Districts! Please, send me all the articles that your Unit or District is in. Newspapers, Facebook, pamphlets, anything

media related. As President Judy travels one side of to the other side of the state, she can see how we're going "Back to the Basics". Let's make this year memorable. Just send the pages that the ALA is in, not the whole newspaper.

3217 19th Ave S, Mpls, Mn 55407 Crlmb74@gmail.com 612-968-4839



Poppy-making fun at the Fall Conf.

By Lorinda Kies Poppy Chairman

Minnesota ALA has the tradition of holding two poppy contests at Fall Conference. There will be prizes for first, second, third and people's choice. The funds from the people's choice will go to Department President Judy Ackerman's project.

Poppy entries must be brought to the Department Fall Conference at the River's Edge Convention Center by 10 a.m. Friday, Oct. 25.

President Ackerman and Commander Carl Moon have decided not to have a grand march on Friday night. But some fun will still be had by all. We use President Ackerman's theme

will do a poppy-making contest "Back to the basics: Recognize, instead. This fun event is for the Respect, Remember." whole American Legion Family.

Gather up your best or worst poppy makers and let's see which districts will come out

Teams will be made up of sister districts. The teams are 1 & 3, 2 & 7, 4 & 5, 6 & 9 and 8 & 10. They will work together to see which team will come out ALA Poppy.

Contest 1

able to wear it, as there will be a crown parade.

Won't that be fun? Try and Family Event!

White tags must be removed.

Contest 2

To go along with the crown, using any poppies of any color or material, as long as it can be

Be creative! White tags must be removed if you are using the

Contest 3

Gather your poppy makers Using the ALA Poppy, create and team up with your sister a crown, not a hat. You must be district and let's see which team can make the most poppies.

This is an American Legion

Know available Auxiliary scholarships

By Sharon Voltz Education Chairman

Your journey to a better life starts with an education. One of the American Legion Auxiliary most prestigious programs is our Education Program, which offers a variety of scholarships to students wishing to further their education. Here are a few of the scholarships we offer with a brief description:

Nontraditional students returning to the classroom after some period in which their formal education was interrupted or a student beginning their education at a later point in life. Applicants must be a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship is offered to Junior members who have been members for the past three consecutive years and have their current membership paid.

They must continue their membership

scholarship period. This scholarship is intended for the traditional college student with no interruption in education who Legacy Scholarship provides is at least in the first semester of college or technical school but has not yet attained a bachelor's degree.

Spirit of Youth Scholarship is another program offered to our Junior members. With this scholarship the student must be in their senior year of high school. This scholarship is to attend an accredited institution of higher education with requirements such as grades of at least 3.0 GPA using the 4.0

Department of Minnesota Scholarship is awarded to deserving sons or daughters, grandsons or granddaughters of a veteran who need financial assistance.

Department of Minnesota Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship designed to help students or adults who wish

to further their education in any health care field.

The American Legion scholarship money to children of post 9/11 veterans who have died or have a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or more. More information can be found at legion.org/ scholarship/legacy.

Don't forget about the trade schools. Connect with people you may know in the trades that interest vou. Ask them about tasks, skills used, challenges and rewards.

Some trade schools offer paidon-the-job training working as an apprentice. If you don't wish to attend a four-year college, a trade school is the ideal solution. High-paying trade school jobs are in great demand currently. The possibilities are endless!

For more information, please feel free to contact me: Sharon.voltz@gmail.com or at 218-259-4711.

2024-2025 National Appointments

Jean Walker, National Executive Committee, Warren Unit 27 Raleen Tolzmann, Alternate National Executive Committee, Minnesota Lake Unit 287 Norma Tramm, National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Cold Spring Unit 455 Patti Coleman, Northwestern Children and Youth Chairman, Lino Lake Unit 566 Robin Dorf, Northwestern Division Leadership Chairman, Monticello Unit 260 Mary Kuperus, Northwestern Division Poppy Chairman, New London Unit 537 Tamara Opland, Junior Activities Committee Member, Duluth Unit 71

2023-2024 National Awards

Minnesota proudly accepted the following national awards at the 2024 ALA National Convention in New Orleans:

- Americanism, Best Overall Department Americanism Program in the Northwestern Division: Mary Kuperus
- AEF Department Award, Department Contributing the Largest Amount per Capita
- AEF Department Award, Department Contributing the Largest Amount
- Community Service, Best Department Community Service Program in the Northwestern Division: Wanda Seidler • History, Best Overall Department History in the Northwestern Division: Renee Suess
- Leadership, Best Overall Department Leadership Program in the Northwestern Division: Karla Otterness
- Legislative Program, Best Overall Unit Legislative Program in the Northwestern Division: Hackensack Unit 202
- Legislative Program, Best Overall Department Legislative Program in the Northwestern Division: Robin Dorf
- Poppy, Poster Contest Class II,

in the Northwestern Division: Lilly Quaife

- Poppy, Best Most Outstanding Unit Program in the Northwestern Division: Argyle Unit 353
- Poppy, Best Overall Department Program in the Northwestern Division: Marsha Bible
- VA&R, 2024 VAVS Meetings, Perfect Attendance Award: Rebecca Olson & Carol
- VA&R, 2023-2024 Volunteer Recruitment & Service Award, Largest Increase in Active Regularly Scheduled Volunteers & Volunteer Hours, Janet Thompson
- Unit Member of the Year Department of Minnesota, Molly Magnuson, Argyle Unit

Project to remain veterans assistance



Hello again, Minnesota American Legion Family.

I'd like to thank the members of the Detachment of Minnesota for re-electing me to be the detachment commander at the SAL Detachment Convention held at Forest Lake Post 225 on the weekend of June 28-29.

I'd also like to give kudos to the Forest Lake Legion Family for hosting the convention. They did a fantastic job! I hope that I can do a better job than I did in my first year. The learning experience is quite intense, even with the outstanding mentoring that I received from PNC and

Detachment commander

John Weiss

Adjutant Doug Bible and the American past detachment commanders.

I intend to keep the Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund (Fund 85) as my project. Your ongoing support is something that I would ask you all for.

The MVAF is very near and dear to my heart. The thing that I love about it is that the money that's raised stays here in Minnesota to help our local veterans in need. And any help that we can give to a veteran and their family takes a lot of stress off of that veteran and their family.

Thus, it helps to curb the rash of veteran suicides. Being in tough financial straits is incredibly stressful and can lead to all sorts of complications in one's life.

I have been asked by Auxiliary members if Poppy money can be used to make a donation. The answer I have received is, yes, it can be used to donate as the MVAF is a support program for veterans through the Minnesota American Legion Foundation.

Legion Founda-

tion" and put "Fund 99" in the memo.

Fund 99 always is the SAL Commander's Project.

I'm looking forward to working with Commander Carl Moon and President Judy Ackerman in the coming year to support the programs of the American Legion Family. I'm also looking for to seeing you all as I travel throughout our beautiful state attending the various events that are upcoming in the future.

Thank you all for all of the things that you do in support of our veterans.

Yours in service.

John Weiss of St Paul Arcade-Phalen Squadron 577 is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion. His theme is "Honoring the Past, Make the check to "Minnesota While Moving Forward."



Lou Michaels

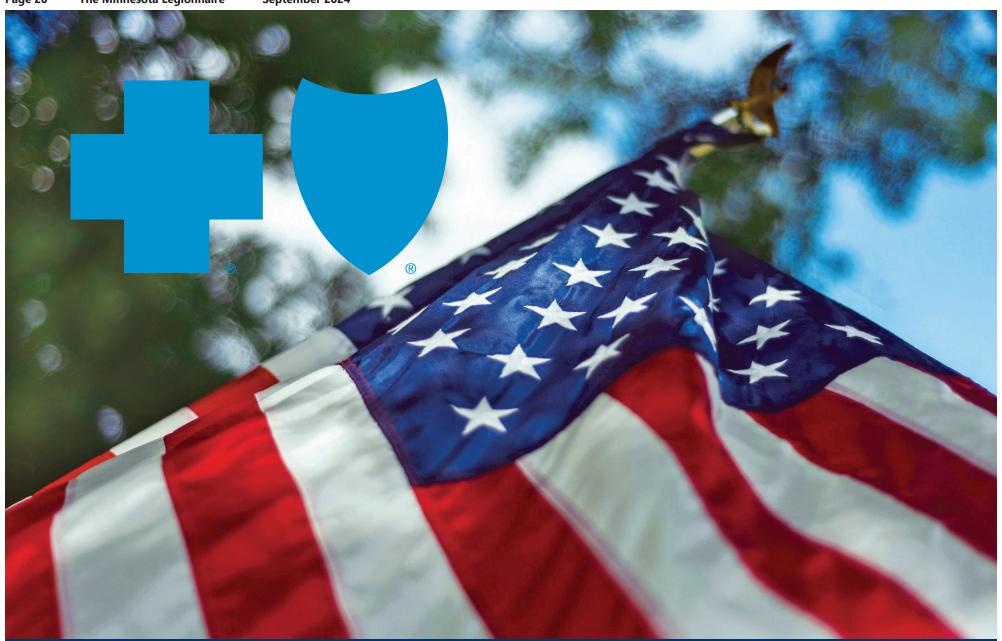
Detachment Commander John Weiss, left, and Department Commander (at the time) Paul Hassing spoke at the Detachment Convention in June at Forest Lake Post 225.



Continued from Page 7

service, the Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon, and the Silver Battle Star. In 2002, he was presented with the French Jubi-

lee of Liberty commemoration.								
Strong, David K.	94	11/5/23	Navy	Korea	44	Thief River Falls Post 117		
Note: He was stationed in Memphis and the Hawaiian island of Oahu.								
Sundlee, Dennis J.	79	2/2/24	Army	Vietnam	57	Montevideo Post 59		
Suvanto, Clarence W.	86	5/7/24	Air Force	Vietnam	52	Sebeka Post 456		
Swanson, Jacqueline L.	97	4/20/24	Army	Korea	45	Park Rapids Post 212		
Tischer, Robert C.	83	5/10/24	Army	Vietnam	54	Montevideo Post 59		
Tong, Lawrence E.	79	8/29/24	Army	Vietnam	26	Anoka Post 102		
Trahms, Jon A.	80	7/14/24	Army Res.	Vietnam	46	Janesville Post 281		
Tretbar, Rueben	90	6/1/24	Army	Vietnam	41	Park Rapids Post 212		
Vogt, Russell R.	79	8/13/24	Army	Vietnam	41	Milaca Post 178		
Note: He was stationed at Birkenfeld Air Base in Germany as an officer driver and courier.								
Walentiny, Paul R.	75	unk.	Navy	Vietnam	53	Chanhassen Post 580		
Wegman, Donald E.	94	5/12/24	Army	Korea	63	Jackson Post 130		
Weibel, Martin L. "Les"	99	1/14/24	Navy	WWII	78	Winsted Post 407		
Weick, Loren J.	84	8/5/24	Army	Vietnam	15	Little Falls Post 46		
Welchin, James J.	87	8/24/24	Army	Korea	38	Fairmont Post 36		
Werre, Joseph W. Jr.	95	8/10/24	Army	WWII	23	Rochester Post 92		
Wilkinson, Milton H.	82	5/24/24	Army	Vietnam	6	Moorhead Post 21		
Williams, Gary L.	87	7/28/24	Navy	Vietnam	7	Aitkin Post 86		
Williamson, James P.	91	7/9/24	Army	Korea	22	Austin Post 91		
Note: He served in the war.								
Wilstermann, Donald J.P.		7/26/24	Army	Korea	54	Springfield Post 257		
Witucki, Leonard	80	8/19/24	Army	Vietnam	58	Little Falls Post 46		
Wohlhuter, James A.	94	3/19/24	Army	Korea	2	Fairmont Post 36		
Note: He served in Korea with the infantry, earning two campaign stars.								
Yonker, Edward G.	92	4/26/24		Korea	25	Jackson Post 130		
Young, Walter E.	84	8/10/24	Army	Vietnam	6	Benson Post 62		
Zimmerman, Gregory S.	75	6/26/24	Army	Vietnam	14	Morris Post 29		
Note: He was exposed to Agent Orange at age 21 during a one-year tour in Vietnam, affecting his health for life.								



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¹Medicare-contracted doctors compared to internal Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota data, April 2024. Some network limitations may apply. ²Quarterly balance does not carry over. Blue Cross Medicare Advantage is a PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Blue Cross Medicare Advantage depends on contract renewal. Each healthcare provider is an independent contractor and not our agent.

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