

Minnesota's Al Davis is elected National Vice Commander



Tess Davis, a delegate from Princeton, Minnesota, nominated her husband, Al, for the National Vice Commander position.



Davis was sworn into the national position.



National staff pinned the new National Vice Commander.



The 2015-16 leadership staff for National Commander Dale Barnett of Georgia included, from left: Jimmy Lane, Arkansas, John Hargreaves, Maine, Barnett, George Cushing, Arizona, Al Davis, Minnesota, and David Gough, Wisconsin.



Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl was in the front row during the Swing Dolls concert at the National Commander's Banquet. When they asked for all Marines to stand up, Tesdahl was front and center.



The Fernlunds, Tom and Veronica, got a chance to meet with their daughter, Kaitlyn, in Baltimore. Kaitlyn, a former Junior President, now serves in the Navy.



National Vice Commanders Al Davis of the Legion and Dennis Henkemeyer of the SAL posed for a photo.



Delegation Chair Peggy Moon spoke on the floor of the national convention.



Past Department Commander Peggy Moon handed off the gavel to Department Commander Jim Kellogg at the Minnesota Caucus in Baltimore.



Past Department Membership Director Pat Logan enjoyed the boat cruise in Baltimore Harbor.

He flew them all

(The following story is based on an interview with Gordon Fisher at his home in Red Wing, and on two autobiographies about his war experiences he wrote some years ago at the behest of his daughters. The biographies are titled, "Wings" and "It's a Whole New World.")

By Al Zdon

He flew every kind of plane America had in World War II, and a couple that they didn't have.

He flew under the Eifel Tower on VE Day. And that wasn't the scariest thing he did that day.

And he saw, as few Americans did, the absolute horror of the war in Europe.

Gordy Fisher grew up in Waukesha, Wisconsin, the son of a prominent engineer at the Waukesha Motor Company. The youngest of three kids, he admits to a pretty wonderful childhood. He never had to work, and he could put all of his energy into his high school passion: volleyball.

"We won the state championship twice in a row, and I was the team captain the second year. I was a little guy, so I was a setter."

Fisher went to the University of Wisconsin for two and half years, where he participated on the track team, but in January 1942 he could see the handwriting on the wall. "I was about to be drafted. The fact that we were at war really opens your eye and changes your mind about things. I wanted to be in control of my own destiny, so I enlisted. My folks didn't put any pressure on me. It was my decision."

The decision was to join the U.S. Army Air Corps and try to become a pilot. He was accepted into the pilot training program and sent to Texas where he did all his training.

"Three of us from Wisconsin rode the train together to Texas." The three were sent to Kelly Field, San Antonio, to begin their schooling to become pilots.

"Bill Howe, a six-foot, four-inch farm boy was one of the three. On his first flight, 400 feet after takeoff, he froze on the controls in the PT-19 trainer, and drove it straight into the ground, killing himself and his instructor. It was a harsh awakening for the rest of us."

Fisher toed the mark and made it through primary training. "Flying with an instructor pilot was not thrilling. I was mostly nervous and apprehensive about screwing up. Too many errors, and the Air Corps could wash you out as a pilot. These flights would be a nervous, sweaty experience and not from fear of flying, but from fear of failing."

In basic training on the BT-13, often called the Voltee Vibrator, the work was still hard and not much chance to spread one's wings, so to speak. But in advanced training on the AT-6 Texan, the pilots got more leeway. "It was pure joy. Lots of power and a strong, responsive airplane put me back among the birds." He began to have fun, maybe too much fun.

"On solo flights, a particular pleasure was to follow a freight train along the winding tracks, bouncing our wheels off the tops of freight cars. Of course, we had to watch out for tunnels and telephone lines."

Probably less innocuous was the pilots' trick of scaring Texas car drivers. "We would swing down to a highway, turn on our landing lights, and watch the cars peel off the road thinking we were going to land. Of course, word would get back to base and we'd spend our weekends walking full-pack tours around the parade grounds."

One of the scarier experiences in training was when Fisher was practicing landings on a dimly lit remote field. An experienced pilot was assigned to fly over the field and monitor the weather. As Fisher descended toward the field, he happened to glance over his left shoulder.

"There was a black mass hurtling at me. I jerked the stick back, and I felt the other plane slam beneath me. I continued my landing, got out of the plane and sat down. My knees would not hold me up. Later, the pilot in the weather plane apologized. He had not seen me until he flashed

beneath. You soon learn to keep your head on a swivel."

About a third of Fisher's class was washed out in training and a few more were killed. Fisher earned his wings though and was sent to Florida for fighter pilot training.

"I think the Army chose the small guys to be fighter pilots and the big guys to be bomber pilots."

The training at Tampa was in the P-43 Lancer, a fighter not loved by the pilots. "It was a death trap. They had made about 200 of them, and by the time we got to them only about 16 were flyable. Within a week, we were down to seven airplanes."

In September, 1942, Fisher took off on a practice flight in a P-43. Almost immediately, the propeller automatic pitch control failed and the aircraft crashed into a wooded swamp just beyond the runway. Both wings and the canopy were sheared off, "but fortunately not my head."

"When a prop fails like that, the engine winds up pretty fast and they could hear that in the control tower. They knew I was in trouble, and they sent out the rescue vehicles."

The plane ended up wrapped around a big mangrove tree. "By the time they found me, I was wondering around in the swamp up to my hips in the water. I reeked of gasoline, my forehead was laid open, and I was shouting and hollering. I had hit my head on the gun aiming device in the plane."

They took Fisher to McDill Hospital, sewed him up and put him to bed. He became conscious two days later, and to this day, he has no recollection of that weekend. After ten days in the hospital, and a short medical leave, he was ready to fly again.

"By then, all the P-43s had crashed and they gave us P-40s. It was a real fighting plane, the one they were using in China with the Flying Tigers. We lost several more guys and our outfit was cut in half, but we were ready for England and the war."

Fisher and his group traveled across the Atlantic on the converted luxury liner, the Queen Elizabeth. There were 18,000 troops aboard, and 23 in the stateroom Fisher was assigned to. As an officer, he was assigned as a military policeman and had the run of the ship. It was the last time he slept in the crowded stateroom.

"We slept on the deck, under stairways, on hatches, behind ventilators, anywhere but stuck inside." One night to avoid the chill air, he found an open door and climbed through and lay down to sleep. "In the morning I awoke to

Gordy Fisher of Red Wing flew nearly every American aircraft in World War II and a couple that weren't American. His exploits include flying under the Eiffel Tower on VE Day and being one of the first Americans to witness the Buchenwald death camp.



find myself on a narrow platform, 80 feet up, with nothing to keep me from rolling off. I had climbed into the ship's funnel. I was glad that I hadn't rolled over in the night."

Fisher arrived at his base at Burtonwood, England, as a fighter pilot replacement. "But the 8th Air Force at that time needed planes more

than pilots so a new service was initiated."

The new service was called the Air Transport Command. The pilots would travel to the places where the new planes were being assembled or delivered, flight test them if needed, then deliver them to operational Army Air Corps bases in England. The pilots picked up planes in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Liverpool, Preswick and at their own base.

Fisher's first delivery flight was somewhat memorable. At that time the weather had been bad and there were few planes arriving from America, and so the pilots sat and waited. "My operations officer, feeling sorry for me, gave me, of all things, a Piper Cub to deliver to a bomber base near London."

He was somewhat embarrassed, but glad to be flying again. The weather forced him to fly low, and he was soon lost in the English countryside. "I ran low on fuel, but found an RAF field and landed. It was Sunday, and the base was closed, but I found a gas truck, figured out how to run it, drove it to my Cub which was parked among the Spitfires, filled up and was on my way again."

He followed a group of huge B-17 bombers into a base and was home free – except in taxiing to a parking spot he ran his wing into the windshield of a truck. "This did not please the base C.O." But after a good meal at the officer's club, he was on his way via train and was back at Burtonwood at four in the morning, his first mission accomplished.

The first "real" plane Fisher delivered was a P-39 Airacobra fighter. It was his initiation into the problem the transport pilots had with flying airplanes they had not trained in.

As he lowered his wheels, he noticed a yellow marker appear in a side window. Taking that as a caution, he raised



GORDY FISHER
At home in Red Wing. (Photo by Debbie Fisher)



GORDY FISHER
In training during World War II

and lowered his landing gear several times, but each time got the yellow marker.

"I notified the tower of my gear malfunction, and I flew past them for a visual check. It looked okay. I then did a cautious, uneventful landing. Later, I had to buy drinks for everyone at the bar, as I was informed that yellow meant the wheels were down and locked."

One his next delivery, he left his prop control in manual and the noise of his shrieking engine alarmed the control tower so much they called out the ambulance. Straightening that out, he flipped the wrong switch and was running the plane off the battery and not the generator. Just before the engine quit, he remedied that mistake. "I finally landed at the fighter base, relieved and tired."

He once errantly flew into London and was flying through the barrage balloons. "I slowed almost to stall speed, dodged a couple of balloon cables and retreated to the countryside. Lost again."

The planes to be delivered often had serious problems and had not been fully checked out. It was one of the reasons the Air Transport Command had as high a ratio of fatalities as many fighter or bomber squadrons.

"Planes had coolant problems, oil leaks, loose canopies, fuel leaks and low batteries. The question was not whether the planes were safe, but how unsafe were they?"

Two of Fisher's closest friends collided in P-47s. "Both chutes got tangled in the falling wreckage. It was tough duty packing belongings and notes to return to their families."

When the pilots were not delivering planes, they did what they loved the most. They went flying.

Near the base Fisher worked from was a Royal Airforce Base that had a Polish squadron flying British Typhoon fighters. "They were fearless pilots and loved to dogfight with us. We would bomb their tower with paper bags of human waste, then wait for them to come up and dogfight. I blew an oil line in one of these dogfights and had to land my P-47 at their base. The windshield was black with oil so my landing with side vision was not very smooth. There was much good natured ribbing by the Poles who shot me down."

At other times, Fisher and three others would borrow L-5 Sentinels, a highly maneuverable observation plane, and fly in an absolutely tight formation as they buzzed around steeples, chimneys and other obstacles at high speed. "At the end, if there weren't markings on our wing tips from bumping together, or if the propeller on the rear plane hadn't chewed up the tail of the lead plane, we considered our formation too loose."

Even when delivering fighters, the pilots liked to tap wingtips just to say "Hi."

On one trip from Belfast, Northern Ireland, to Blackpool in England, Fisher's P-39, considered the worst of the planes they had to fly, had major engine trouble over the Irish Sea. Fisher just barely made it to the coast and he landed at a British field meant for small training planes.

"The English didn't think I would be able to get in, and they were sure I would not be able to get out, but they worked on the engine anyway." With the ambulance and fire truck waiting, Fisher took the plane to the far diagonal part of the grass and mud field to maximize the amount of runway. "I brushed the bushes on the far side of the field, but I was headed north again. The engine immediately malfunctioned again, and I could only get it up to 500 feet. If I could have got it to a thousand feet I would have headed the P-39 toward the sea and bailed out."

"I landed straight in, downwind with the brakes locked. I burned out both tires, climbed out and told operations where they could shove this particular airplane."

The pilots were called upon to do other jobs as well. Fisher's unit was asked to fly over Liverpool and its harbor so the Brits could test their tracking gear. Suddenly a burst of flak blossomed right in front of Fisher's windshield, and a second burst hit right behind him. A ship in the harbor had not been informed of the practice run.

"This ticked me off so I rolled the P-38 over, dove straight down, and dropped a wing tank on each side of the ship. I think I scared them more than they scared me."

One co-pilot assigned to Fisher was a new pilot, almost 40 years old, named Ray Moore. The new man turned out to be the creator and artist behind the comic strip "Phantom," one of the most popular strips in America.

Leaving an airfield at Newcastle in Ireland, Fisher got to the end of the runway and instead of gaining altitude, simply retracted the landing gear and headed straight out to sea, skimming feet above the water.

"I glanced at my new co-pilot. He had a firm grip on his armrests." Fisher got to England and continued his low level flying past smokestacks and ridges, and finally landed the plane. "Ray had not said a word. He just watched and sweated clear through his uniform. It was a rough welcome to the war. I apologized, but he went out and got drunk. But he flew with me again."

In Northern Ireland, Fisher for a time had his own "personal" plane, a P-39. The plane had come back from the African campaign as a reject, and Fisher removed the guns, armor and much of the radio equipment to make it lighter, and painted "Slugger," his girlfriend's



Gordy Fisher, left, describes an air maneuver with his comrades during basic training at Goodfellow Field at San Angelo, Texas. In the back is the Vultee BT-13 Valiant, often called the "Vultee Vibrator" by the students.



Fisher is second from the right in front of a BT-13 trainer in Texas.



Movie stars Ann Miller and Linda Darnell visited Fisher's base to help support the troops.



For a time in Northern Ireland, Fisher had his own plane, an expendable P-39 which he named "Slugger," his girlfriend's nickname.

nickname, on the side along with some appropriate artwork. It still had the desert camouflage paint job.

The British were getting ready for the Anzio assault and needed practice for their Spitfires. A variety of American planes tried to attack a target, but the Spitfires intercepted them each time. "But I never flew higher than the tallest trees, and I could pop into that target time and time again. I could hear the British on the radio saying, 'We just got hit by that P-39 again.' Later that evening at the RAF base, they gave me good natured hell. It was a memorable day."

Fisher also saw the grim side of the war. "Often I would be at a bomber base when they would come back from a raid deep into Germany. I would watch as the ambulances would cluster around the shot up planes. The wounded and the dead were removed, and then fire hoses would be used to wash out the debris and parts of human bodies."

One of Fisher's fellow pilots took off from Wharton, England, one day and immediately crashed into a local school. In all, 59 people were killed including 35 children. "The Air Corps, the base, the town and the British were devastated. The wounds of that tragedy scarred that small town permanently."

Fisher and an English transport pilot happened to meet each other at a base one day and found that they would both be delivering fighters to forward bases the next morning. They concocted a plan where they would take each other's airplane instead of their own.

"We just decided to trade airplanes. He gave me a cockpit check in the Mosquito (a British fighter) and I gave him a check in our fighter. That was kind of fun. The Mosquito was an amazing plane. I wish more Americans could have flown it."

The Allies invaded Normandy on June 6, 1944, and soon



Fisher stands in front of a P-51 Mustang fighter, one of his favorite planes to fly.

begin establishing air bases in France. The Air Transport Command followed a few months later, setting up its headquarters near Paris.

While happy to be in France, the pilots were dismayed with the furnishings in their new enlisted man's club they set up. The group arranged a raid back to England to an RAF base that was noted for its splendid club. Fisher volunteered to fly a C-47 transport plane and parked it on the far side of the English runway. "We were soon stripping the RAF club of 5,000 pounds of chairs, tables, sofas, lamps, radios and several cases of British ale. Much of this had to be quietly snuck below the lighted windows of the MPs. I do not believe the English ever did find out how their club disappeared."

A new role for Fisher and the other pilots was to begin delivering gasoline to Gen. Patton's Third Army as it raced across France toward Germany. "Tanker trucks brought most of the gas, but some of the truckers were selling it on the black market in Paris and it wasn't getting through."

The bombers were fitted with 300 gallon bladder tanks in the bomb bay, and any leftover room was filled with 5-gallon jerry cans. "They leaked all the time and the bomb bay just reeked of gas fumes. One spark in there, and it would have been all over."

Was Fisher nervous about such a volatile cargo? "We never thought about it. We were young. We were invincible."

Patton's plan was to have the gas delivered by plane directly to the front. The trouble was, when they were planning deliveries, the airfields in question were sometimes still in German hands. "He would tell us what airport, what time, and he'd give us a route to fly in on so we didn't fly over German lines. He cautioned us to never come early because he might not have the airfield secured yet."

The gas deliveries sometimes arrived minutes after an airfield was taken by Patton. Fisher remembers refueling Sherman tanks that were on the edge of the airstrip still firing at the enemy.

"I know Patton was not well liked by everyone. But I talked to people on his staff, and they all thought the world of him. He might have been a little short tempered."

The planes carried a nurse with them, and after delivering the gas, they would pick up wounded to bring them back to the hospitals in Paris. It was one of the first medical evacuations by air done in any war.

During the Battle of the Bulge, Fisher got a new assignment. He and a radio operator would fly a C-47 to battle lines every day. During the first days of the Bulge, the weather prevented any Allied bombing, strafing our resupply runs by air, greatly helping the German advance.

"We would fly in on top of the weather until we got to where we thought the action was, and then we'd head down. We'd go all the way down to the treetops trying to find if

there was a break in the weather."

Finally on Dec. 23, 1944, Fisher found clear skies over the battle ground. The information was radioed back, and a great American air armada was launched. "It was like flying back into a swarm of bees."

Fisher earned an Air Medal for his work at the Bulge.

As the war wound down, Patton's Army liberated the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany. Patton was stunned by what he found, and wanted to make sure everybody knew about Buchenwald.

"He called us up and said we should bring as many journalists as we could right away. So we loaded up all the reporters and photographers that were in Paris at the time. I know on my plane, we had 14 or 16 reporters. One was Margaret Bourke-White and another was Marguerite Higgins."

Bourke-White was America's first female war photo-journalist and worked for Life Magazine, and Higgins later earned a Pulitzer Prize as a war correspondent.

"We landed in Weimar and took a truck to Buchenwald. My co-pilot and I were able to just walk around for two days. Most of the German guards had fled, and the ones that were left were dead with their SS insignia on their chest."

"The ovens were still warm when we got there. They could burn two prisoners at a time, putting one in from each end. They had a room with hooks on the wall. They would hang the prisoners upside down, still alive, on the hooks and then break their bones with clubs. It made it easier to stuff them in the ovens."

He said he and his comrade felt little emotion as they walked around. It was just too unreal. "We didn't appreciate the immensity of it. We didn't know how evil these guys could be to do stuff like that."

Back in Paris not long afterward, he and a friend found a Messerschmitt 108 airplane in a French garage. They slowly figured out the controls, and then flew the little sport plane around. "We were trying to figure out how to dismantle it, crate it up, and ship it home when the colonel in charge of the base found out about it. He said, 'That's my plane.' And that was that."

When Germany surrendered, Paris went wild with celebration and the sky was thick with American planes. The pilots were having fun. Fisher was not to be left out, and flew a P-51 Mustang fighter up and down the streets at roof level, culminating with dash under the Eiffel Tower. "You had to watch out that nobody else was trying to do that from a different direction at the same time."

Landing his P-51, Fisher encountered some military policemen at the base who were feeling left out of the celebration. The pilot and others loaded the MPs on a C-47 transport along with flare guns and cases of flares and headed back to Paris.

"We found the Champs-Elysees, the main street of Paris, and it was curb to curb with Frenchmen and women and soldiers. Just skimming the tree tops, I told the MPs to fire away. The flares were shooting out, bouncing off the sides of the buildings. The MPs were yelling."

At the end of the grand boulevard was the huge Arc de Triomphe. "We were well below its top. We came roaring towards it with flares arcing out of the plane. There were people on top of the arc, journalists with newsreel cameras looking down on us. I peeled up and over their heads as they ducked for safety."

"The next day Ike said there would be no more flights over Paris."

After the surrender in Europe, plans were made to move the Air Transport Command to the Pacific. "By that time, I was in charge of the squadron, and we had a lot of new, young guys coming in. I wasn't unhappy that we were going to China. The war was still on, and we had work to do."

The group of pilots got as far as Marseille and were about to get on a ship when the war with Japan ended. Fisher went home instead.

The first thing he did was marry his longtime sweetheart, Janet Kramer. For a time, he became a commercial airplane pilot based out of New York, a job he did not enjoy.

His wife's father was operating a chicken brooder operation in Red Wing and Fisher joined him in the business.

When the business slowed down, and the company couldn't sell its newly-hatched chicks, it began raising chickens. A building on the edge of town was purchased, but the local foxes were taking a toll on the chickens.

"I was sitting on top of the building with my .32 caliber rifle, and I had just about taken care of the fox problem, when Bill Sweasy came by."

Sweasy was the president of Red Wing Shoes, and he was disgusted with flying commercial airlines. He asked Fisher if he would like to become the company's official pilot. "He told me to go out and pick an airplane, so I got an Aero Commander. It was an ideal job for me you might say."

Fisher had a heart attack in 1977 which ended his flying career. He was hired on in the advertising department at Red Wing Shoes where he worked until he retired.

He and Janet have three daughters, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

At age 95, Fisher still has a razor sharp memory of the war years. During that time he piloted 17 different American aircraft and two foreign planes. He amassed over 4,500 hours in the air during the war. He flew assignments to 20 different countries.

"I was lucky. Even today, I think about those who weren't so lucky."

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By
Tom Newman



Minnesota Congressmen Nolan and Walz recently hosted a joint community roundtable event on the topic of Veteran Rural Healthcare. I had managed on the skin of my teeth to attend one of the two stops at the prompting of our Department Commander, Jim Kellogg. Commander Kellogg was aware the subject matter is of importance to our Minnesota Veterans as it's estimated that over 35% of us live in what's defined as a rural/highly rural area and are often uniquely impacted when attempting to access VA healthcare.

I believe both Congressmen should be commended for their good faith effort to explore the topic of rural healthcare, while also making a concerted effort to hear directly from affected Veterans. On hand were subject matter experts from the Veterans Health & Benefits Administration, area County Veteran Service Officers, Veteran Service Organizations leadership, as were several independent Veterans enrolled within VA Healthcare System who had been encouraged to share their personal experience utilizing the new VA "Veteran Choice" program. For those unaware, the Choice Act provides certain Veterans the opportunity to access outside healthcare within their local communities, closer to home, in the event a Veteran can't get a medical appointment within 30 days of their clinically indicated date or they live greater than 40 miles driving distance from a VA Healthcare facility. I'll add that the new Veteran Choice program was intended to be a short term fix until the VA could get their house back in order and to ensure ALL Veterans were removed from any VA healthcare wait lists.

At the roundtables conclusion I wasn't left all that optimistic that a practical comprehensive solution is on the immediate horizon – as it's a complicated problem. In my opinion the VA had last, most significantly, enhanced access for all Veterans back in the mid 1990's when they transitioned from a Hospital based model of healthcare delivery to a Community Based Model by establishing a network of

VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's), which continue to expand to more and more communities, particularly over the past ten years. The VA really deserves positive acknowledgement for making the move to do so. Of course CBOC's have to be funded – and that's still up to members of Congress to approve come budget time.

Towards the end of the roundtable, an impromptu mini brainstorming session ensued. Unfortunately, it was the kind of brainstorming session where your boss tells you look; we're interested in certain ideas so we may address this one really big problem. You boss continues on by telling you there are no bad ideas, simply share your thoughts, impressions and ideas and we'll see what sticks. Except in this scenario your boss didn't hang around for your idea part, but instead rushed off to listen to the random guy down the hall who works in a completely different and unrelated department of the company.

I leaned in and listened intently to the dialog exchange, which at times got a bit theatrical, and I remember thinking that as the scheduled meeting time was nearly up, as Veteran advocates, we really hadn't even begun to scratch the surface of "practical" strategies which could be implemented to improve access for Veterans residing in rural Minnesota. At no time had the topic of the VA Office of Rural Health get discussed, nor the VA Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 – which directs several things be done to improve VA Healthcare for Rural Veterans, not much discussed on Telehealth, or VA budget models and algorithms used to determine the distribution of resources, much of that discussion was forgone. Instead, significant final minutes of the meeting was spent entertaining an idea that the Veterans Choice Act "Card" should be made to be used freely by all eligible Veterans, at will, to any provider they wish to see, and in their local communities. Trying to remain positive, I thought maybe that's just the kind of audacious and bold mindset we could use to build from, but first someone please hand me a calculator so I can show you what that might cost because that dollar figure is going to be astronomical. Yes, other more "practical" ideas will be needed it seems.

What perhaps captivated me the most during this public exchange of ideas, aside from the brainstorming session, was the energy spent chastising the VA as being a failure in meeting the healthcare needs of Veterans – and an "off with their heads" attitude towards the VA for good measure. Somehow the VA was being blamed, not exclusively, for the poor execution of the VA Choice Program despite members

of Congress having been the responsible party who created it, be it as a response to legitimate failures of VA in Phoenix and elsewhere in the country. One courageous County Veteran Service Officer shared a memory of a time that it once took over a year to get a Veteran enrolled into the VA healthcare system and well over two years to get an initial VA Disability Claim processed, which at the time was an accepted standard of only ten or more years ago. Today, the VA is vastly better than it was just ten years ago – and yet they're still being framed as an imperfect and therefore unusable system for Veterans. *And some Veterans are jumping on that message as true? I read in a recent article published by the Minnesota State Office of Rural Health located within the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services that I found interesting. The article reported that rural healthcare in the private market has problems too. It reported there are difficulties with long wait times for appointments, shortage of specialist and primary care doctors, barriers due to lack of public transportation, lack of public health education, etc. In short, the private healthcare market, with few exceptions, has many of the same problems experienced by the Federal VA in meeting the needs of those living in rural areas. Of course private healthcare wouldn't tell you that themselves directly, as the private market is licking their chops at the idea of receiving federal Veteran healthcare dollars, which would be a real boost to this interested sector of healthcare. That is, if the price is right.

The American Legion completed a comprehensive report on the topic of Rural Healthcare for Veterans, which was released in 2012. Included in the report were several "practical" recommendations for making improvements in the area of rural healthcare. Recommendations can be found in the executive summary at the end of the report. Recommendations included: Adjustments to the VA Office of Rural Health, VISN investment in more telehealth capabilities, Expansion of CBOCs and Mobile Clinics, VISN Rural Health Consultants need to be a full-time position with a standardized job description with minimal collateral duties, Rural Health Resource Center should expand breadth of services by translating research to clinical practice, provide education to VISN rural health consults and other facilities rural health staff, etc.

See the full report at:

<http://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion-publications/sws-rural-healthcare-report-2012-web.pdf>
tnewman@mnlegion.org

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

**Roland Hanson
Commander**



I attended the National Convention in Baltimore. The much needed dues increase from National was approved. It keeps our programs solvent on the National level. Each post should review their dues to be sure they stay solvent.

Next was a membership rally at Legionville with a rededication of the facility.

Membership is doing well but we need to speed up a bit if we want to be number one. Remember to check your local armory for potential members.

I attended a day of instruction at Camp Ripley. Included were a lecture on pain management, discussions on Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, financing the ROTC program, and scholarships. We discussed awards for top reservist, top policeman and top firefighter. Every district should have a nominee. Keep your eyes open for candidates.

Mark your calendars for Fall Conference at Breezy Point on October 22 to the 24th about noon. Remember to thank a veteran.

SECOND DISTRICT

**Ryan Hill
Commander**



National Convention in Baltimore was an eye-opening experience for the three new vice-commanders from 2nd District. There were committee meetings they could attend as observers and many new people to meet.

We all came home with enthusiasm and new ideas for promoting Legion programs in our district.

Past 2nd District Commander Ferdie Haberman carried his post colors in the parade for the 50th consecutive parade, so the Brewster Post colors pole will get its 50th flag pole band to commemorate his feat. Wow-what an accomplishment and he's still soldiering on.

Second District held its annual picnic at the Luverne Veterans Home on September 9th. Accordion maestro Galen Benton entertained the veterans in the morning. 2nd District volunteers supervised by master chef Bill Brunk grilled hamburgers for lunch and then veterans played bingo and cards in the afternoon. A good time was had by all.

Our next membership rally for the district will be held on September 26 at Dundee Post 386 at 4 p.m. October's rally will be at Hardwick Post 478 on October 17 also at 4 p.m. I'm looking forward to our annual learning school at Fall Conference at Pequot Lakes and hope to see many of you there. Keep on fishing for veterans.

THIRD DISTRICT

**Don Skow
Commander**



Congratulations to the Third District for being number one in membership and leading the Department in the Premier Race. However we don't have time to rest yet, we are in this for the "Long Haul" so we will be able to take a break in January when we are at Goal. Our Department membership team wants 100 more new members in our District than we had last year, so every post has to come up with a couple extra new members. We can do this.

The Third District "Oratorical" contest will be held on January 9th at the Montgomery Post 79. We need more posts to participate in this great program. Information on scholarships, American Education week and Law & Order will be sent out soon.

The Fall Conference is one of the best learning tools the American Legion has for its members. This year it will be held at Pequot Lakes. Join us for some information and fun. We will be having a hospitality room for your enjoyment.

The County Veterans Service Office dinner in Lonsdale on October 13th is also open to all Post VSO's. The cost is \$15. Hope to see you there.

FOURTH DISTRICT

**Dan Williams
Commander**



Great news. The Fourth and Fifth Districts will hold Revitalization Events October 15th, 16th and 17th. The Fourth District will meet at Rosetown Memorial Post 542 Thursday and Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, October 17th both districts will join together at The Hilton Garden Inn located at I-694 and Lexington in Shoreview, Minnesota. The Saturday Revitalization will be 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. A brief education session will start at 1:30 and con-

clude with an American Legion Initiation Ceremony. If you are a Legionnaire and have never participated in one of these it will be well worth your time to come and take part. We look forward to seeing you at the Revitalization Event.

World War II veterans residing at Episcopal Homes are being recognized in a soon to be published book telling their individual stories. Episcopal Homes extended a wonderful invitation for The American Legion Family to get involved with these "Greatest Generation Veterans." Please contact Julie Niewald of Episcopal Homes at (651) 272-4953 or JNiewald@ehomes.org for specific details.

Calendar: October 10th 10:00 AM Leadership Education Clearwater Post 323; October 15-17 Revitalization (see above); October 18th VA Hospital Visitation 1:00 PM; October 21st Shop, Ship and Share Meeting 6:30 PM - Post 39; October 22nd through 24th Fall Conference Breezy Point, Pequot Lakes.

FIFTH DISTRICT

**Gary Martin
Commander**



Now that the National Convention has concluded, Post and District Assemblies are in full swing. It's time to put a real effort on membership.

Congratulations to Al Davis being elected National Vice Commander, James Copher being appointed National Historian and Dennis Henkemeyer elected National Vice Commander of the SAL.

Congratulations are also in order to Minnesota's American Legion Riders. They raised \$103,754.98 for the Legacy Foundation.

"Looking Forward", to the 5th District Revitalization Program, October 15-17 at Minneapolis-Richfield #435. We need to have all Posts in the 5th District involved. This is an opportunity to grow your Post. The 4th District across the Mississippi is gearing up and fine tuning their strategies as we are in the 5th. Both Districts have two Revitalizations under their belt and we have learned it to be successful. The Vice Commanders will be contacting their assigned Posts and lining up volunteers. Congratulations to Membership Director Ray Eiden and his membership team taking second place at the Harvest Rally. As a reminder, don't sit on any memberships, process and forward to the Department ASAP.

SIXTH DISTRICT

**Dewayne Collins
Commander**



6th district Legionnaires made me proud at Legionville membership rally. We went from 8th place to 4th place, what a great accomplishment. A big thank you for getting your dues paid now. Little Falls Post 46 had the highest membership turn in at the rally. I owe them a round of drinks, as I will be visiting their Post on October 7th.

I attended the National Convention in Baltimore MD, what a great experience that was.

The 6th district school of instruction has been set for October 17th. There are two different classes that day. The morning session will be held at Little Falls Post #46 from 9:00 to 11:00. The afternoon session will be held at the Brainerd Post 255 from 1:00-3:00 pm. I encourage all commanders, Vice Commanders, Adjutant, Membership Directors and anybody else that is interested.

Some important dates to remember:

October 10th, 6th & 9th District joint membership rally in Bagley at 10 a.m.

October 11th, 6th District Executive board meeting in Park Rapids at Post 212. Lunch will be at 12:00 p.m., meeting 1:30 p.m.

October 22-24th, Department Fall Conference will be at Breezy Point Resort.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Karen Welander
Commander**



October will feature two excellent learning opportunities for training of the American Legion Family. I know all will learn something at one of the three one-of-a-kind regional training days and at the annual Fall Conference. Get a group together from your post and take a day trip to learn what others in the state are doing and get blown away with what other posts are doing in their communities and their fellow veterans.

The community activities these posts do are what we are about as Legion members. This is what we should be promoting when we ask someone to become a member of our organization. Membership is an important part of The American Legion. Don't forget to be proud and just ask a

veteran to join.

Let's help those soldiers and their families they are leaving behind as they deploy to Kuwait with the Willmar Army National Guard. The devotion these servicemen and woman bring to the community can not be overstated. Your being a part of the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon creates awareness by providing a resource to their families. The only things you need to remember is that you can make a difference to those families and the veteran will appreciate it.

Each of the 76 posts in district play a very important role in the district. We are a family. We work and play as a family. We support each other in the family. Our families success if measured in how much we help veterans and their families and the good we do in the community. Keep up the good work and continue to strive for success.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

**Jennifer Havlick
Commander**



News from National Convention: the delegates voted to increase the National Dues by \$5. That means effective January 16th the line on your transmittal forms will go from \$13.50 to \$18.50. Posts should contact any member that has not paid their 2016 dues yet and urge them to pay their 2016 dues before January.

The 8th District Fall Meeting is set for October 10th, at the Anderson-Claffy Post 109 in Two Harbors. Executive Committees will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. with the joint meeting to begin promptly at 11:00 a.m. All 8th District Family Members are encouraged to attend. Department will be holding one of three of its Membership Enrichment training on October 17th at the Grand Rapids Post 60 beginning at 10:00 a.m. All Legion family members are also encouraged to attend this training. Wrapping up October is Department Fall Conference at Breezy Point Resort at Pequot Lakes October 23rd and 24th. This conference will be a joint Legion family conference.

NINTH DISTRICT

**Denise Milton
Commander**



The highlight of the National Convention was the election of Dale Barnett of Georgia as our National Commander and our own Minnesota grown Al Davis of Beroun as a National Vice Commander. Also, Jim Copher as National Historian, Marland Ronning as NEC and Bill Barbknecht as Alt. NEC. Minnesota is well represented on the national level. Congratulations to all and I wish you the best.

Fall conference is just around the corner and it should prove to be very exciting/interesting-for the first time it is being conducted as a family event. Each 'member' of the family will participate and share in what the other is doing.

I want to thank all of the 9th District Posts for working so hard on membership, we have met our first National goal. I want to remind all of you that the national portion of our dues is going up by \$5.00 on 20 January 2016-that means that they must be received by National on that date.

Upcoming events- Revitalization. It is coming to the 9th district, watch for upcoming dates. The 6th & 9th District rally will be 10 October 2015 in Bagley 10a-2pm. I challenge each post to bring membership and lets have some fun with the infamous "leg."

Please feel free to contact me with your questions/concerns at kuuky@hotmail.com or 218-694-2017

TENTH DISTRICT

**Bill Johnson
Commander**



September has been a busy month for the District, starting with our participation at the State Fair. Next came Legionville where Membership Director Bonnie Hanson announced her intention to run for District Commander. After that it will be on to Camp Ripley for the National Security/Foreign Relations Committee Training, and finally a trip back to Legionville where our American Legion Riders will be putting on the second annual romp to raise money for the camp.

In October we will be participating in the Departmental Post Training. I have personally invited every Post in our District to participate. I believe this is critical to developing the next generation of leaders, to lead our organization.

On a personal note, I had the opportunity to go to Washington D.C, while attending the National Convention. There Mary and I visited the Vietnam Wall. Needless to say it was an emotional moment for me having seen my friend's names on the wall.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 16-2

President Sandy Fredrickson

October 2015

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

Department Headquarters, Veterans Service Building, St. Paul, MN 55155 651-224-7634

The President's Column

By Sandy Fredrickson



The year has started out as a "whirlwind." The pace started out fast—it just seems to get a little faster every week. It seems I no more than finish one newsletter and another one is due. Any member that has been involved in their Unit may feel the same way. We all have new things to do and learn. My better half tells me I need to slow down a bit—take a little time to smell the roses. All I know for certain, the one thing that is constant in my life is "change."

With this being said, I want to invite every member to Fall Conference. Come see the changes being made. The American Legion Family will be working together to host a full "joint" conference. The conference will be on the 4 pillars of The American Legion. We, the Auxiliary, built our mission and programs on these pillars. Come see competitors of the Creative Arts program—our veterans—Veterans from Minnesota. The conference promises to be creative by our chairmen and invited guests. PowerPoints will be used along with different ideas for changes within our programs. Thursday evening will be a learning session on the 990's, Finance/Audit, Social Media/History and Strategic Planning.

Auxiliary members—this information is information needed to run effective, efficient units and districts. We can't speak to it all, but we can give you the basics and lead you to the sites needed to get the rest of the information. This conference is for all members, not just officers.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you at National Convention in Baltimore. So much information was presented. The break-out sessions were very informative. Ladies, we need to work on securing our Units, the Districts, the Department of MN, for the next 100 years as well as our National organization. The only way to accomplish this is for our units to work the best way they know how! Work membership, one member at a time. Make people feel welcome. Treat people as human beings—not as targets.

As our National President Sharon Conatser stated in her acceptance speech, "Is your decision good for yourself and the American Legion Auxiliary? It is the little things that make success possible."

Remember, October is Education month and Constitution By-Laws month. What is your Unit doing special for these programs? Every unit needs to review and update to the Department and National Constitution & By-laws. It is our hope you take the time to do it this year and make changes in your Units. Please make sure you read the messages from our Department Chairmen.

Until next month, prayers to those who may have lost a loved one, prayers for those in distress or dealing with illness. God Bless our troops, and God Bless you!

Sharon Conatser, Illinois, elected National President

The 95th annual National Convention came to its conclusion in Baltimore, Maryland on Thursday, September 3, with the election and installation of our 2015-16 National officers. A total of 34 delegates were in attendance to carry on the business of the American Legion Auxiliary. Minnesota was represented by 34 delegates, 16 alternates and a number of guests.

Janet Jefford, National President, presided over the busy five days as the National Chairmen gave their reports, resolutions were considered and the newly elected officers were installed. Our congratulations to:

- National President – Sharon Conatser, Illinois
- National Vice President – Mary Davis, Washington
- National Chaplain – Bird Derrick, Idaho
- National Historian – Debra Noble, New Jersey
- National Vice President of the Northwestern Division – Judy Twete, North Dakota

National President Conatser has chosen as her theme: "Keeping the Promise." We need to let our own members know what great things this organization does for veterans, children and our communities.

NATIONAL AWARDS

Minnesota proudly accepted the following National awards at our 2015 National Convention:

- Children & Youth, Best Overall Department Chairman Award-Northwestern Division - Raleen Tolzmann
- Community Service, Outstanding Department Award-Northwestern Division - Mary Hendrickson
- Education, Outstanding Department Award - Northwestern Division - Norma Tramm
- Legislation, Outstanding Department Award - Northwestern Division - Sandy Fredrickson
- Outstanding Unit Award - Northwestern Division - Glenville Unit 264, Louise Attig, Chairman
- Membership, Milestone #1 (60%), - Department of Minnesota - Judy Ackerman

Silver Brigade Award - Jeanette Rabe, Unit 320 - Hopkins

National Security, Outstanding Department Award - Northwestern Division - Wanda Anderson

Public Relations, Unit Website Award - Red Wing Unit 54 - Deb Perich; Unit Website Award - Chaska Unit 57 - Jenny Hiltner; Unit Website Award - Plainview Unit 179 - Cheryl Nymann

Congratulations to all of you for your outstanding accomplishments in the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.

FALL CONFERENCE

The 83rd annual Fall Conference will be held October 23-24 at the Breezy Point Resort, hosted by the Pequot Lakes American Legion Family #49. This will be a first for the Department of Minnesota as it will be a completely "joint" American Legion Family Conference. Main sessions will be held in the Minnesota Ballroom

On Thursday, October 22, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM there will be workshops that will run consecutively. There will be a workshop on how to fill out 990's and information on EIN's, how to work with Social Media, Strategic Planning and the History Program. Everyone is invited to attend.

Plan your arrival so you can attend these most informative Thursday night presentations.

A reminder that all membership must be turned in by noon on Friday, October 23, to be counted in the membership counts. When you arrive at Fall Conference bring your membership directly to the Department Headquarters. We'll be ready and waiting! Let's make this a real successful rally. We will be headquartered in the Heartland 3 & 4 Rooms.

If your Unit is not able to be represented at Fall Conference, be certain your Unit's membership is mailed so it arrives in the department office no later than Monday, October 19, so it can be counted in your totals. We have a long way to go.

NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Following are the National Appointments that National President Sharon Conatser made to serve with her this 2015/2016 Auxiliary year. Lori Skallerud was named the National Poppy Chairman, Kris Nelson was named National Chairman of the Implementation Team, Norma Tramm was named National Leadership Vice Chairman, Marie Goede was named National Children & Youth Vice Chairman, Carol Barbknecht was named National Audit Committee Member, Shirley Frederick was named National Community Service Committee Member, Jennifer Havlick was named National Security Committee Member, Peggy Tesdahl was named Northwestern Division National Security Chairman, Raleen Tolzmann was named Northwestern Division Junior Activities Chairman, Chris Ronning was named Northwestern Division Legislation Chairman, Sandy Fredrickson was named Northwestern Division Americanism Chairman and Tamara Opland was named Northwestern Division Poppy Chairman. If you see any of these ladies please take a moment and congratulate them. This is a very large responsibility they have taken on along with their continued involvement with our own Department. Minnesota is well represented with the National Organization.

REMINDERS - FALL CONFERENCE

Don't forget the Poppy Contests at our Fall Conference. Any member, senior or junior, may enter these contests with as many entries as you want to make. See the first Unit mailing for complete particulars and rules. Entries must be at the Conference no later than 9:00 a.m. on Friday, October 23rd for judging.

Our Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairman, Pam Hoshal will be holding a silent auction at the Conference to raise funds for this program. Items donated should be something you would want to receive as a gift yourself. Any member of the American Legion Family is invited to bring items. All items should be brought Thursday or early Friday morning. Bidding will be on Friday only. Bring your items and check them in upon your arrival. We are looking for "Theme Baskets" – they can be from individuals, Units or Districts. There will be a bake sale also held at Fall Conference. There will also be an "Eagle" District Wall for everyone's donations. Pam urges everyone to be sure and bring cash.

Sept. 12, 2015, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year
One	6,146	161	2.62%	312
Two	5,979	351	5.87%	517
Three	5,323	373	7.01%	362
Four	920	86	9.35%	94
Five	1,047	111	10.60%	119
Six	7,318	629	8.60%	720
Seven	4,859	177	3.64%	264
Eight	2,005	79	3.94%	187
Nine	5,232	519	9.92%	283
Ten	6,382	686	10.75%	657
1982	198	1	51.00%	22
Totals	45,409	3,173	6.99%	3,537

Ronning endorsed for NEC Woman

Osseo Unit 172 and the 10th District Past Presidents have endorsed Chris Ronning for National Executive Committeewomen for the year 2016-2018. She is eligible through her husband Marland, a Vietnam era veteran and her son Craig, a Desert Storm Veteran.

She has been a 25-year member and has served as Unit President two times and held most offices and

chairmanships.

At the District level, Chris has served as President and served in all offices and held most chairmanships.

At the Department level she has served as Legislation Chairman 3 times, VA&R Chairman, Home Service, UD&R Chairman, Membership Chairman, Leadership Chairman, and Department President. She is currently

serving the Department as National Security Chairman and she is also the Northwest Division Legislation Chairman. She now represents the Auxiliary as its National Executive Committeewoman.

Chris and her husband reside in Maple Grove and have a blended family of 3 sons, 2 daughters, 14 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.



CHRIS RONNING

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

2016 POPPY ORDERS

Orders for the 2016 Poppies are now being accepted. An order form will be in the next Unit mailing. Prices are: small Poppies - \$20.00 per 100 if ordering 500 or less; \$18.00 per 100 if you order 501 or more; large Poppies - \$18.00 a dozen. We will start shipping the poppies according to the dates you enter on your form.

Orders have been coming in and we have already shipped some out. Remember that the Department Office no longer is accepting orders for the Poppy Display Cards. Either order the card Emblem Sale offers or come up with your own display cards.

"SOARING TO THE TOP"

Dues notices have been sent out by the National organization. Be certain to make that personal contact with your members, letting them know how important they are to your Unit and to the American Legion Auxiliary.

If you haven't received a notice it means that National Headquarters has your email address on file and it was emailed to you - check your in-box. Remember - you don't have to wait for that notice to pay your dues.

Share your enthusiasm and what your Unit does with your community. Ask others to join you. Use every member's skills to make for a successful membership campaign. Involve all your members in Unit activities. Remember, every member has her own special talents to bring to your Unit. She is important.

2015-16 SCHOLARSHIPS

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Minnesota, will again offer eight (8) \$1,000.00 scholarships to deserving students who wish to further their education, attending any institution of higher learning. They must be a resident of or a member of the Auxiliary, Legion or SAL.

There is also the Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship of which up to ten \$1,000.00 scholarships are available to Minnesota Auxiliary members who are furthering their education in any health care field.

Our National organization is again offering three National scholarships this year, i.e., the National President's Scholarship, Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior members, and a scholarship for Non-Traditional Students.

The American Legion also offers a Legacy Scholarship. All of the forms will be included in an upcoming Unit mailing.

Be certain you use the current application forms. Share these with your schools and members and assist eligible persons to apply. If you are in need of additional forms, please duplicate those you received or request copies from the Department office. You can also find the forms on our website mnala.org.

MEMORIES

Memory Book Chairman Diane Hayes is encouraging all Auxiliary members, when our Department President Sandy has attended any Auxiliary functions, to take pictures, write newspaper articles or even write a memory regarding her visit and submit them to Chairman Diane as she will be putting together a Memory Book for President Sandy. National functions are welcome as well.

If at all possible, Diane would like these on a monthly basis. Please mail to Diane Hayes, 30595 Pleasant View Road, Frazee, MN 56544 or email - papadon@arvig.net.

MINNEAPOLIS VAMC

At this time Mary Ann is in need of heart pillows and neck pillows.

Also, please call Mary Ann Davis at 651-690-3272 before coming to the VA to bring items. She wants to be sure and have somebody there to help you out.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

Another Fall Conference is around the corner and we are busy preparing. I am very excited to see how this one turns out. It is the first time we will be holding a joint conference. The purpose is to educate all of our American Legion Family members on what each of the organizations do for our veterans. We run some of the same programs but don't really know how each other handles them.

We will also be having a program on Friday at 1:00 during the conference featuring some of the veterans who are competing in the Creative Arts Festival. Make sure not to miss it.

It is hard to believe October is already here. I keep thinking of that darn white stuff that will be falling before we know it. I am now into year number five - I just can't believe it has been that long, time does fly when you are having fun, so they say.

As always - the Department Office is here for you. Just give a shout.

Happy Halloween to all.

Kittock honored by Wright County

Wright County's Outstanding Senior Volunteer Selection Committee, in cooperation with the Minnesota State Fair Board and the Wright County Fair Board, selected Bernice Kittock, of Delano, as a 2015 Wright County Outstanding Senior Citizen.

Kittock has been involved with many volunteer activities. Some of her many volunteer activities include working at Golden Living Center nursing home in Delano and being an active member of the General Federated Womens's Club helping with community projects. She has worked with Meals on Wheels, Delano Food Shelf, Delano Royalty Committee, Relay for Life, and Delano Legion working with Girls and Boys State. In 2014 she received an award from the Delano Teaching Association for her work.

Kittock was recognized at the Wright County Fair July 27, and traveled to the Minnesota State Fair Sept. 3 to be recognized.

The purpose of the Outstanding Senior program is to recognize that the senior citizen population is a very valuable resource to the communities as they continue to give back of their time and talents to the residents of our communities. The eligibility criteria for the outstanding senior are that they are a Minnesota resident and must attain the age of 70 by Aug 1.

Only volunteer activities after the age of 65 for which there is no compensation (except for reimbursed expenses) are considered. The committee looks for leadership, diversity of accomplishments and the variety of services performed.

She has been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary since 1956 and was 10th District President in 1999. She is extremely involved in the ALA MN GS program.



BERNICE KITTOCK
Award winner

Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution & Bylaws program is fairly new to our Department and its purpose is to inform and educate our members on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies, and procedures at all levels of our organization.

I am asking all Units to appoint a Constitution & Bylaws Chairman. Standing rules should be reviewed annually and updated when necessary. The following is a guide for your Unit to use when writing or updating their standing rules. Not every item will apply to every unit, and other items may be added to suit your unit; this is only a guideline for your use. After approved at your Unit meeting, please forward a copy to me and to the Constitution & Bylaws District Chairman. I am available and will try to answer any question you may have when updating your Units Standing Rules.

The (UNIT NAME AND NUMBER) of the _____ District, American Legion Auxiliary, hereby adopts the Unit Constitution & Bylaws as prescribed by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Minnesota.

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition, in all questions not governed by articles of the National, Department and Unit Constitution & Bylaws, shall govern this unit.

State time (day and hour) of meeting, place of meeting and information on notification of meeting. Are you meeting all 12 months? If not, what months do you meet.

Dues - List your Senior, Junior, Gold Star Mothers, Life Members and others your unit may pay for.

Process for selecting Life Members.

Election -

When will election be held?

Secretary and/or Treasurer - elected or appointed?

A nominating committee - yes or no. If elected use Robert's Rules or Order



KAREN THYGESON
Chairman

5. Election of delegates for department convention, fall conference, district convention. When and how selected.
 6. Installation of officers. When, where, who is in charge.
 7. Equipment - Rules for loaning, maintenance, etc.
 8. Finances
- (And so forth. The entire document cannot be printed because of space limitations.)

Children and Youth has bank project

Thank you to all the Districts and Units that participated in the Piggy Bank project that the Children and Youth program had this last year and was collected at Department Convention. A total of \$138.09 was collected and will be put into these funds as follows:

- Forgotten Children - \$55.45
- Children Welfare Fund - \$44.40
- Legionville - \$31.71
- Operation Military Kids (OMK) - \$6.53

The money that is remaining in the Operation Military Kids funds at Department will be donated to the National Guard Family Readiness Groups that work with military children. These funds will be earmarked to be used for Military Kids activities and/or for supplies they may need for school or clothing.

Raleen Tolzmann
2014-2015 Children and Youth Chairman

Junior Activities

The 2015 Junior Fun Weekend was held the first weekend in August with 40 Juniors in attendance. Department Honorary Junior President Bryce Soltis had the Juniors busy with tie dying t-shirts, making patriotic luminaries, great team building activities, swimming, s'mores bar, movie at the training center on the big screen with popcorn.

This year the Juniors had two service projects that they worked on at Legionville. Everyone worked really hard as they planted new plants by the Legionville sign with the help of Department President Sandy Fredrickson and they picked up brush from the storm damage behind the mess hall. Department Commander Jim Kellogg addressed the Juniors Saturday evening and had supper with them. A big thank you to Ninth District Commander Denise Milton for speaking with the Juniors about her service experience.

The Juniors also worked the Mean Stinks program which is empowering them to end the girl to girl bullying that is happening and to bring nice into the equation. They did this through the Blue Pinky Swear Promise by painting their pinky nails blue, wrote inspiring quotes and sayings in blue chalk outside the mess hall and dorms for each other, and they created the Department of Minnesota Wall of Nice.



ROBIN DORF
Chairman

United States Postal Service
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- Hosted by KATE/KAUS Radio personalities Darrel Amundson and John Wright
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- Guided tour of Motown
- Henry Ford Museum
- Gangster Tour

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- All meals and entertainment while onboard
- Onboard Service Charges

Starting at **\$4,229.00**
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Monuments of Washington D.C.
 April 8-12, 2016

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Director, Jenny Gilbertson
- Roundtrip Delta Flights from Minneapolis to Washington D.C.
- 4 nights accommodations in the Washington D.C. area
- 4 continental breakfasts, 4 dinners
- Evening Guided Memorial and Monuments Tour
- Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens
- Two full-day guided tours of Washington D.C.
- WW II Memorial, Capitol Hill, Embassy Row, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Smithsonian, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, and much more!

\$1,399.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Mexican Coastal Cruise
 March 11-19, 2016

Tour Includes:

- Fully escorted by a 4-Seasons Tour Director
- Roundtrip United Airlines Flights from Minneapolis to Los Angeles
- Overnight at Marriott Los Angeles Airport with breakfast
- 7-Night Cruise on the CROWN PRINCESS
- All meals and entertainment while onboard ship
- All transfers to and from the airport, hotel and pier
- Cruise Gratuities

PASSPORTS REQUIRED

Starting at **\$2,249.00**
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Panama Canal Cruise
 February 17-March 4, 2016

FULL TRANSIT including Central America, Panama City, South America and the Caribbean

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Director, Sue Barber
- Roundtrip Delta flights from Minneapolis to Los Angeles and return from Ft. Lauderdale to Minneapolis
- All transfers to and from the airport, hotel and pier
- 1 pre-cruise night at the Marriott in Los Angeles
- All meals and entertainment while aboard the ISLAND PRINCESS
- Visiting 7 ports of call
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PASSPORTS REQUIRED

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