

total of a case and so by now, I am starting to feel rather pickled... I got in a little crap game. Ten dollars was the least you could bet. I came out OK. The winner won \$490 and the game was then busted.

Feb. 13 - I noticed on the bulletin board today that I finally made PFC. About all it amounts to is \$4.80 a month, but I guess I can always use a little extra money, even if I am in the bead making business. It takes me about two hours to fully complete a string of beads and I get from \$15 to \$20 a string. I have been making a string a day for the last nine days.

Feb. 14 - Freundt and I took McGuire to Mass with us this evening which completed our nine-day novena. The priest advised us not to give up shows or smoking [for lent] because our entertainment is already very limited.

Feb. 15 - The accident happened this morning by a fellow who lives only about 200 yards from us. While he was going to shoot the bazooka, it went off in the weapon instead of going out, instantly blowing him to pieces, and wounding six others.

Feb. 22 - Blitz time is very near, hence everybody is in a trance, because there is so much work to do.

Feb. 24 - We had a lecture today on our next operation, and it sounds pretty rugged. [Knaus was in the First Marine Division.]

Feb. 28 - [On board ship] We fellows are sure getting fed good for a change... The nice clean mess hall with the music they play is certainly a treat to us marines.

March 1 - Life aboard ship is rather dull unless you can always keep your mind occupied. Freundt, Pelesky, Barnes and I have been playing 500 practically all day.

March 2 - We disembarked into Higgins Boats and then we went around and around for three hours. The fellows driving the boats must have been amateurs because they would run into each other and hit waves and most everything else.

March 5-6 - We went ashore on the Canal [Guadalcanal] today and we landed where the Marines and Japs had done some heavy fighting. We found wrecked Jap transport ships and submarines and smaller boats on the shores. Lying all around were bones and skulls, so we were convinced the fox holes and other devices the Japs built were not strong enough to hold the Marines off.

March 15-16-17 - [At sea] According to the radio reports, the Marines were slowly securing the island of two Jima. So far, the number of Marines killed is rather high, so as we travel on this trip many things are going through our minds. We are going to perform one of the most daring stunts ever pulled in the South Pacific. We realize that it will be much worse than Peleliu or two Jima, so sometimes our conversation isn't any too merry.

March 22-23-24 - Today we reached our first destination of the journey. It is hard to explain the number of ships in the rendezvous area, but it was a ghastly number.

March 25 - One finally begins to realize the dangers that are in store for us. I wrote a long letter to my wife and mother today, and that winds up all the letter writing until after the blitz.

March 30 - We were issued our ammunition today, so we had to fill our belts. A person has to carry 35 to 40 pounds of gear into combat.

March 31 - We had a big, thick steak banquet this evening and we are now getting all set for the Easter parade that takes place in the morning.

April 1 - [Just off Okinawa] We had early reveille at 2:30 this morning and then ate chow. We watched the destroyers bomb the island and shoot down Jap Zeros until we made our successful debarkation. We marched through the destroyed city of Lovo. About 4 o'clock we dug in for the night on top of the cemetery.

April 2 - Last night we were spotted by a few Jap Zeros. Several were knocked out, and one just went directly over us which was very low. Ski gave it a bloody go with his BAR. We advanced about two miles today and after we were dug in, Freundt and I went souvenir hunting. We made a good haul and I got a Jap flag, coins, pictures and a Jap wristwatch.

April 3 - We started on the march early this morning, and were held up only a few times by snipers. About 4 o'clock we reached the front lines and we were scattered on the road when we were fired on by heavy Jap guns. My gear was on the road plus the machine gun. The bullets were zooming only a few inches above us so we had to get out without our gear. We then threw a smoke grenade there, and Chick Stienet and I got our gear.

Private Lane, nineteen years old from Oklahoma, was killed today. His fox hole was only about 10 feet from Freundt and me, and he was with his buddy, Lacking, when the accident happened. He will always be remembered by all the fellows in the third platoon as a curly red-haired happy-go-lucky fellow.

April 4-5 - We flanked the town and with the help of many planes we had the Japs headed for the hills. It was a hunter's paradise, the Japs were running up the hills like rats, they were even trying to swim the river but with no success. The mulberry patches that we were in were covered with dead japs. The battle lasted only about one hour and back to the area we started. I was completely exhausted so I crapped out for the day.

April 6 - Today we marched back to about the center of



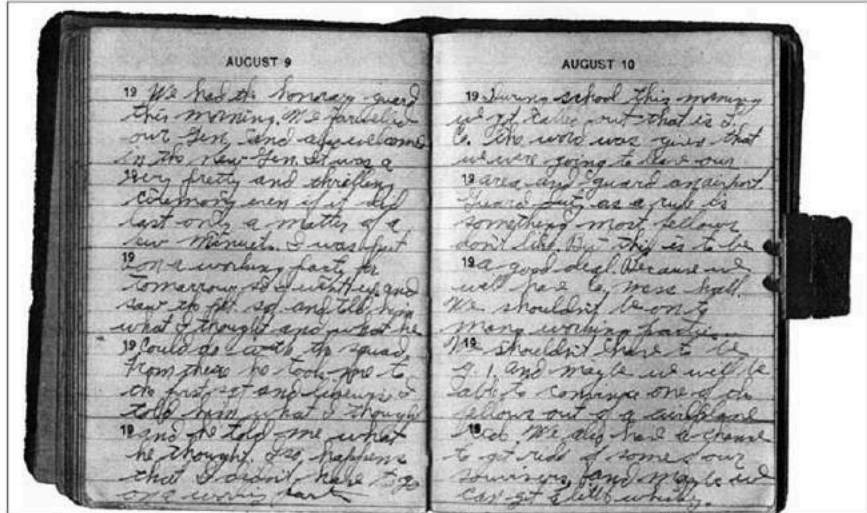
A Marine in the First Marine Division aims his BAR during action on Okinawa in 1945.



Knaus had a formal picture made in uniform during World War II.



While in China, Knaus had his picture taken with a Chinese child.



The actual diary shows Knaus' careful handwriting and how he tried to fill a page each day. He kept the diary for one full year.

the island and set up our area so we can start our patrol. This is necessary because there are so many caves and places where snipers can hide that have to be cleaned out, because they are giving us plenty of trouble.

April 7 – By now us Marines are wearing very dirty clothes, extra long beads and dirty socks. Don't think it would be possible to comb our hair for dirt.

April 8 – We went on patrol today and we cleaned out a few caves. We got two Nip soldiers and about 20 civilians. The civilians were at first rather scared because they thought we were going to kill them, but after we gave them candy, they went into the rest of the caves and brought out the small children and aged people.

April 11-12 – A year ago today I was forced to leave my home, wife and children to be drafted into the Marine Corps... This year I traveled about twenty thousand miles and slept in a building only about a dozen times.

April 13 – We listened to the war news and we got the report that President Roosevelt died. We also listened to Tokyo Rose and she certainly fed us a line. This is supposed to be a moral buster, but the line she feeds us and the music they play is a morale builder.

April 14 – Regardless how serious anything may seem, the Marines will always think up something to laugh at.

April 17 – We found two hogs... I cut up the chops and hindquarters, and we ate until we were filled. They sure were good, maybe because I was the cook.

April 18 – As we would be on our march, different groups would go in the valleys to check on Japs. We found places where Japs had just recently been because of the fresh food lying around and the clothes that were hung up to dry.

April 24 – Today is my 28th birthday and my second birthday I have spent in the Marine Corps. When I got up this morning, the fellows sang "Happy Birthday" and breakfast was all set to go.

April 27 – Today, Lt. Dunney was the fourth in our company to be added to the death list. Because of his readiness to talk to us and his everlasting smile, he was well liked by all. He was killed by a sniper and the truck driver he was with was also seriously wounded.

May 1 – Today the Army has been passing by here, truck upon truck. Now that the northern part of the island has been secured by us Marines, the Army is pulling in on a large scale. The Marine Corps is criticized in the manner which they fight, but never-the-less, when problems arise that seem uncontrollable the Marine Corps is called upon to take the situation in hand.

May 3 – [Knaus' platoon is sent 65 miles to the southern part of the island where the Japanese resistance is still very strong.] Sleep was rather impossible last night. The rain, the condition red that lasted practically all night, the noise that was continuously made by our heavy artillery plus the small arms ammunition. The front lines are about 500 yards up and could easily be seen and heard. It looks like the shit is about to hit the fan.

May 4 – The sound of our machine guns makes a person feel much safer.

May 5 – One's imagination can easily get the best of one for you hear strange noises as the many flares are dropping all around. I always recite my rosary twice and renew several pledges that I will keep if God permits me to return to my lovely wife and children.

May 7 – After we marched for a mile we threw our packs and hit the trail. The sound of all the ammunition didn't sound any too welcome, but by running and hitting the deck often, most of us made it okay. It started to rain about three in the afternoon, and it continued all night.

May 8 – Every now and then mortars are thrown at us and again we have to dive in our water-filled holes. After being wet for a day and a half, one feels like he is almost froze.

May 9-12 – Last night a nip slipped through the lines throwing a hand grenade, but Chick, one of the machine gunners, got him on the dead run. Having your gear on and being in a skirmish line waiting for H hour is a scary feeling. But the heavy barrage that they are throwing on the hill makes a person feel rather safe that nothing could live on the hill that just in a few more minutes we were to take.

The signal was given and off we started down the hill and across the field across the river to the bottom of the hill for only a moment's rest before going to the top. From the hill we started to the other hill which was about 1,500 yards and a hell of a lot can happen in that distance. The first sight I witnessed was a Marine that has been hit in the face with the bullet coming through the bottom of his jaw. Covered with blood, he came running back trying to call for a corpsman.

After we got to the bottom of the hill we rested a minute or two and the third squad and my fire team started up the steep hill. It was so steep, you'd have to grab a root or stump and pull yourself with one hand and hold your weapon with the other. But after we got on top and in some of the trenches and lobbed a few grenades over, we felt pretty safe and proud of the big and dangerous gain we had made.

Duke assisted the corpsman and one of the Marines while in Duke's arms, said, "I don't want to shut my eyes because I am afraid I won't open them again." But he closed them, and he was right.

May 14 – We started for the lines rather late and it was

just getting dark when we got there. It was necessary to relieve one man at a time because of the many snipers that were firing upon us. It is surprising how fast a man can run and dive in a foxhole without getting hurt.

May 15 – It doesn't take you long to learn to keep low. We have to eat, sleep, sit and even [urinate and defecate] in our foxholes. One of the new fellows, Walter, was hit in the shoulder this morning.

May 16 – Today was Zinkan's lucky day. A sniper got him right through the shoulder and with a shit-eating grin on his face he said, "I got it." Doc fixed him up and high-tailed it to the C.P. [command post] sixty miles an hour, taking his Jap souvenirs with him.

May 17 – Kerns was rather proud because he got his first nip and, of course, he told me all about it. He also gave me a Jap pipe that they use to smoke opium in.

May 18 – We were standing by today to go on bloody pinnacle. Finally about three o'clock we started, and it didn't take long before I realized why they called it that. It was rather exciting to be so close to the nips that you could hear them talk. After the top was reached we would throw hand grenades over and also into the pillboxes and sometimes the Japs would throw them back plus a few potato mashers [Japanese grenades].

May 20 – We went down to the stream and washed and shaved for the first time in three weeks. We also got a clean issue of clothes and a meal of 10-1 rations.

May 27 – Mud, mud every place you look is mud. Everything you touch and eat is mud, and by the looks of the clouds it will get worse.

May 31 – Some of the fellows were trying their luck at hair cutting today. Poor Duke looks like one of the top stooges, and Red's haircut, which was done by Duke, doesn't look much better.

June 2 – This morning we relieved the 29th Regiment and so went straight to the front lines. From here Naha can clearly be seen.

June 3 – On the way over we passed a great deal of Jap supplies. We also came upon some civilians that were lying on the ground covered up. They were wounded and weak. We offered them water and food, but instead they wanted to be shot in the stomach.

June 4 – We crossed three ridges very early and when we tried to reach the fourth we were stopped by a deep and swift flowing river and machine gun fire. While we were held up, our squad had to mop up a village close by. It was necessary to kill a few civilians, and we also got nip soldiers. Barnes and I saw a small baby pulling on its dead mother's dress and crying. We got it and carried it to one of the other civilians. We were forced to use smoke and many W.P. [white phosphorus] grenades to get back out of the valley.

June 5 – All night we were fired upon by machine gun fire, so about midnight Barnes and I were forced to move and dig a deeper fox hole.

June 7 – This morning early, a Jap came out of a cave directly in front of us and started for the hills. Barnes got a BAR and while he was trying to sight in, I grabbed my M-1 and squeezed one off and he immediately fell to the ground. My name now is "Dead Eye Abbie."

On the way over, my group had to clean out several caves. One had civilians in it and the only way I could get them out was to go in after them.

June 8 – We passed a building where a mother and father were watching over their two dead girls, a dead son, a sick boy and another dead man. We gave them water and came back to our officer to get permission to assist them to bury the dead. Actually, just knowing of this tragic incident that happened to them, we felt it was our duty.

June 10 – I was only on guard about a half hour when I heard two nips whispering that sounded like only a few feet in front of me. I then saw the head of one of them coming towards me. I shot one. I jumped on top of little ledge that I was hiding under, and then shot again. By that time, most of the squad was down to help me. All you could hear then were two moaning nips. In the morning we found two dead nips about 10 feet in front of me.

June 14 – After eating C rations for the past 75 days, it's getting to be rather tasteless and the sickening smell of the dead nips does not increase one's appetite. About noon today, several pieces of Japanese artillery fell in our area killing two and wounding three in our platoon.

June 19 – We got word this morning to get your gear on to mop up this big coral hill, Finushi Ridge. We are all pissed off because we were supposed to be relieved.

Being a squad leader carries a heap of a lot of responsibility. More than I have ever anticipated. I worried more about my twelve men than I had ever of myself.

June 21 – Island secured at 1:15 p.m.

Barnes was clear on top of the ridge and while he went by a big chunk of coral, a nip threw a grenade at him but it was a dud. Barnes let him have it with his tommy. In several of the caves you could hear grenades going off which sounded like they were committing hairyary. The patrol lasted for four hours and we accounted for 14 nips, my squad getting six of them.

June 22 – We went out on another patrol today and we went through the cane fields hunting nips like we used to hunt rabbits back home. Willy almost stepped on one and the nip threw a grenade at him and hit him on the foot, but

Willy ran fast enough to get out of the danger zone. We got seven nips before our patrol was over.

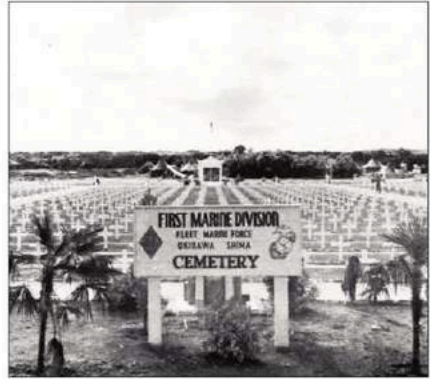
June 23 – Last night about five o'clock we were issued four eggs, two oranges, rolls and butter and we sure feasted. We spent another Fourth of July fire fight last night and our squad got six nips.

June 25 – We got back about noon and just in time to get a new issue of clothes that we needed so badly. We got in another big pinocle game today, only the stakes were much higher. What money we had left, they took away from us by playing poker.

July 1 – We received ten in one rations plus a canteen half full of 180 proof alcohol. We finished the night by singing.

July 7 – We went out on patrol today and our platoon got seven nips. My squad got six of them. The only trouble of killing nips is we have to bury them.

July 15 – We had our dedication of the First Marine Cemetery today and it was a very colorful event. There is a good 1,500 white crosses each with its flag fluttering briskly. [The division lost 1,655 men on Okinawa.]



July 17 – Our first sergeant gave us a very snappy talk and informed us that the little blitz is over and we again get very GI.

Aug. 14 – A lot of scuttlebutt has been going around that the Japs have surrendered, and about four o'clock this afternoon the Army fellows that are just aside of us started shouting and jumping up and down and yelling that Japs have really surrendered. Of course, we are all excited but none of us are too overly happy because as yet we can't quite believe it.

Aug. 31 – It was reported that Sunday will be the end of censoring mail in the Pacific. It sure will be a relief to be able to write a letter to my wife and know that my lieutenant hasn't read it first.

Sept. 2 – On my way to church this morning the radios were going full blast and so we listened to the Japanese surrender which was taking place on the battleship Missouri.

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Knaus' diary continued until the end of the year.

The First Marine Division was sent to China, and Knaus was finally discharged in early 1946. He eventually returned to Kimball where he owned the family meat market. He and Laverne had seven children.

Carlyle Knaus died on Jan. 28, 2006, and he had a Marine color guard for his funeral.

Thanks to Dolly Zitour for providing a copy of the diary.



The opening pages of the diary where Knaus glued in a photo of his wife Laverne (Sunshine.)

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Roland Hanson
Commander



Hello Comrades. Well the revitalization gained the district over a hundred members through transfers and new members. Many thanks to Jim Lucas and all the volunteers who helped with the revitalization. We are thankful for the new members but we still could use more.

Membership dinners at Eyota and Kellogg were well attended. I was asked to speak so I gave a talk on the Four Pillars of the American Legion.

Department President Sandy Frederickson's testimonial was well attended. The eagles were in good supply.

Remember the Pearl Harbor Rally coming up on December 5 hosted by Post 43 in Faribault.

Remember to thank a veteran and have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

SECOND DISTRICT

Ryan Hill
Commander



Veterans Day 2015 is history and we're closing in on the Christmas holiday. Remember our shut in veterans during this festive time of year. It can be the loneliest time of the year for those who are house bound or in a nursing home or the hospital. Our American Legion Auxiliary has a wonderful program called the Gift Shop which attempts to make sure that no veteran in any of our Minnesota VA facilities is forgotten at Christmas time. The Legion family makes a difference in veterans and their families lives every day.

Membership continues to be a challenge it seems we read about another veterans death every day and we're not replacing them. Ask in your communities who might be eligible and then ask them to belong-our mission is way too important to fall by the wayside. We can accomplish a lot by working together on the programs of our organization. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

THIRD DISTRICT

Don Skow
Commander



Congrats to everyone in the Third District on your membership efforts, we are over 80% as of November 18th. Our next big goal is 90% by December 5th Pearl Harbor Rally. It is going to be a big push, but we already have 20 Posts at 85% or better and 4 Posts at 100% of goal.

Our 3rd District Mid-Winter Conference will be at Silver Lake Post 141 on January 30th. This is a great opportunity to talk with other veterans and share experiences and even find some answers to issues at your posts. I am looking forward to meeting and talking to everyone. If there is something special you would like to address at this conference please let me or Linda Dvorak, our district adjutant, know.

My Commanders Project for this year is improving the beach for the handicapped veterans at the Big Marine Vets Camp. Anyone interested in donating to this project please make checks out to "Commanders Project B.M. Vets Camp." Thank you for helping me with this project. The Vets are excited about being able to use the beach even if they are in a wheelchair.

Our Veterans make up a small percentage of the American population but no group of people have made a bigger difference in the lives of the American people. Thank a Veteran and Remember "Attitude is Everything".

FOURTH DISTRICT

Dan Williams
Commander



(This month's column is written by District Adjutant Mike Ash.)

With the recent attacks in Paris, we are reminded once again that "Freedom is Not Free" and "Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Liberty." Two of the pillars of The American Legion come into play with National Defense and Americanism. As veterans we have been trained to spot things out of the ordinary that the uninitiated may miss. So when you're out and about, especially in the busier areas of the cities, use that ingrained "Spidey Sense" to make sure everything is as it should be - and as we're reminded of by TSA officials "If you see something, say something."

Remember our upcoming annual Shop Ship and Share event at the Maplewood Mall will be Friday, Dec 4 (Noon-5) and Saturday, Dec 5 (10am-5pm). Shop, Ship and Share is the event where and when we send gifts to Minnesota troops who are deployed. This allows our troops to have a

touch from home during the holiday season.

The Fabulous Fourth District will also partner up with the Salvation Army on Dec 12 and ring bells at and around the Maplewood Mall. If you'd like to pull a 2-hour duty, call Ray Saunders.

The holiday season can bring added stress and pressure to our veterans and families of the deployed - so please be extra aware and offer whatever assistance you can. Pray for peace on earth.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Gary Martin
Commander



The Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Day Program at the Inver Grove Heights Armory/Community Center was well attended as was the VFW Veterans Day Program at the Minneapolis Veterans Home. Both were outstanding programs honoring all Veterans.

Vice Commanders Ray Eiden, Walt Lyndsey and John Austin: "Thank You" for working with your posts on membership. Keep up the good work. Post Commanders and Membership Directors please continue to make that personal contact, the fruits of your labor will be forthcoming.

As we enter the Holiday Season let's remember those who are protecting our nation serving overseas and away from their home and families, our Veterans in care facilities, who are home bound and our homeless. Reach out to them and make their Holiday Season as joyful as possible. Remember them in your thoughts and prayers.

To all a Blessed Holiday Season, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. If you are traveling, travel safe.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Dwayne Collins
Commander



Department Fall Conference went very well. Lots of good information was given out and everyone had a good time. Sixth district membership turn in has been very good. We have made department goal for the Pearl Harbor Rally. Thank you to all of you for getting your dues paid, as of Jan 1, dues will be going up.

This last month I attended all three county council meetings, and will be attending one in Pine River on December 2nd. I attended St. Joe's Legion Post 328 on November 14th for their veteran day program, it was a very well attended. I also went to Fergus Falls on November 20th for their pheasant dinner program. It was a very nice program and great meal.

This is a busy time of year with all the holidays, please be safe and don't try walking on thin ice. Those lakes are too cold to be swimming in this time of year.

My family and I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Enjoy time with family! I will be busy visiting clubs and playing Santa, and visiting kids as well. If you have any special events at your post and you would like me to attend, please contact me at dcollinsr@yahoo.com or 218-821-7314

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Karen Welander
Commander



Greetings to all in the Mighty Seventh District.

We need to continue working hard on membership, as the December deadline is fast approaching for dues increases. We need to call unpaid members personally and get them on board. This is where the real work begins. This is where the District Membership and Post Membership directors earn their keep. This is where the Vice Commanders - both District and Post - go out and talk to members about why they should pay their dues.

The past month had a flurry of post activities and I am sure they will continue with the holiday season approaching. I have had the pleasure of meeting many people at the post level and enjoyed their dinners and programs. Thank you to all who invited me to attend and for the opportunity to see what you have to offer in support of the American Legion Family. Thank you so much for all you do. Keep up the good work.

Plan to attend our Mid-Winter Conference in Cosmos, January 16 at 9 AM. This is a great time to learn about the programs of The American Legion and how these programs impact our military, veterans, and communities.

I want to wish each of you and your families a very blessed and happy holiday season and happy new year. God bless you and God bless America.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Jennifer Havlicek
Commander



Hello 8th District Legion Family,

Well here we are in closing weeks of 2015. The 8th District is currently at 75.70% of its District goal with zero posts reporting 100% of goal. I still believe that we can be at 100% by the close of 2015 but I need your help. I realize this a busy time of year coming with the Holidays approaching but I'm asking post adjutants and officers to get out your membership list and start calling members who have not renewed yet. Remind them that the strength of our organization comes from its members. Without a strong membership, veteran's issues get ignored. Our current and future veterans and their families are counting on us to get the job done. I would like to say that I am thankful for those who came before me in the fight to maintain the benefits and assistance our veterans and their family need and have earned. As Commander of the 8th District what I would like for Christmas is for our District to be at 100% by December 31st. Let's ring in the New Year at the top of the pack.

NINTH DISTRICT

Denise Milton
Commander



The 9th District had its first-ever post revitalization during the month of November and I feel that it was a success. On the first day we were at Crookston Post 20 and on the second day we were at Moorhead Post 21. I want to thank all the volunteers that showed up to help, especially Department Membership Director Jim Lucas and 9th District Vice Commander Tim Haugen. Both of these Legionnaires showed up both days and gave it their all.

Post commanders and adjutants, recently you received a mailing from department regarding Legion scholarships that are available. I would encourage you make sure that they are delivered to the high school counselors in your area.

A reminder to all posts that if you are planning on adjusting your post dues because of the national dues increase, you must return the special post data report to department headquarters no later than 09 December. As of this writing, there are almost 50% of our posts in the 9th District that have returned the form.

A very special thank you to Deanna Mounts for the invitation to the annual Pheasant dinner at the Fergus Falls Veterans Home. As usual, the food was great. Speaking of the FFVH, I will have a basket at the 9th District Mid-Winter for the collection of Hotel sized toiletries for distribution at the Home. I am asking all posts to please encourage their members to bring whatever they can.

Upcoming events: 12 December: 9th District Christmas Party Waubun; 9 January, 9th District Mid-Winter at Detroit Lakes

TENTH DISTRICT

Bill Johnson
Commander



On December 14th, at 3 p.m., we will be having our annual Christmas Rally, featuring Santa Claus, Christmas Carols, and our second annual Ugly Tie and Sweater Contests.

This is always the most enjoyable rally of the year. It is a time of good cheer and fellowship for our entire Legion Family.

For myself, I look forward to attending the Pearl Harbor Rally on December 5th in Faribault, and Christmas Parties at Maple Plain and Kokato.

A special thanks goes out to the Clearwater, Anoka, Fridley, Harris, Delano Posts for allowing me to attend dinners at their Post. Unfortunately, I had to miss the Pumpkin Carving Contest at the Wayzata Post, and the Silent Auction at the Hinckley Post.

Next Month in January we will be hosting our Mid-Winter conference on January 16th, at the Anoka Post, and an activities program at the St. Cloud VA on Sunday January 24th from 2 - 5 PM. Even if you are not a member of the 10th, you are more than welcome to join us.

In closing I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. I know it rings hollow in this time of sorrow, and turmoil, but we must never give up hope.

Listening Post

News from around the State



POST 1 DONATION -- Minneapolis Post 1 recently made a major donation to the Armed Forces Service Center at the International Airport. The post will donate \$25,000 over the next three years to the center. From left: AFSC Assistant Director Fred Crawford, Legion Representative to the AFSC Joe Jansen, Post 1 Commander Bob Meyer, and Post 1 members Joyce Rose, Del Rose, Larry Schoppe and Herb Hastings.



SILVER LAKE MEMORIAL DEDICATION -- Silver Lake Post 141 recently had a dedication ceremony for its new veterans memorial at the Silver Lake Park. The memorial was paid for from donations by a host of veterans and civic organizations. Personalized bricks were also sold, and those interested in buying one can call 320-327-2404.



POST 1 RIDERS CHAPTER -- Minneapolis Post 1 has established an American Legion Riders Chapter, the third one in the Fifth District. This year on the Legacy Run, the post was honored to ride with the oldest chapter in the state, Deer River Post 122.



MONTICELLO HONORS COUPLE -- Monticello Post 260 honored Cindy and Gordy Hoglund, owners of Hoglund Transportation, for their contribution of a van and expenses to transport the post's honor guard to the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery at Little Falls. At right are Art Duran and Post Commander Ted Farnam.



LAKE CITY POSTERS -- Lake City Post 110 has installed a series of historic war posters in its clubrooms.



TYLER FUND RAISER -- Tyler Post 185 and the Russell/Tyler/Ruthton High School History Club pose during their joint organization pancake fund raiser. The history club is planning a 15-day World War II and Western Front European tour this coming year.

Listening Post

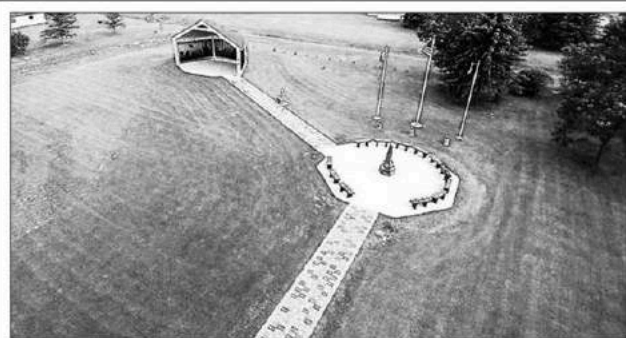
News from around the State



DENT FLAG DISPOSAL -- Members of Dent Post 148 had a session teaching local grade school students how to properly dispose of a worn-out flag.



COAST GUARD REUNION -- Veterans who served in the Coast Guard from 1942-46 were part of the Third Annual Minnesota Coast Guard Reunion held in Hopkins recently. The next reunion is planned for June 25, 2016. Seated, from left: John Seiberz, Harold Neuman, Hugh Van Hatten, Bernie Reistad, Iver Anderson, Bob Barthel, Donald Hecker, Tom Duffy, Russ Olson.



Goodrich dedicates memorial

Goodrich, a community near Thief River Falls, this summer dedicated its veterans memorial, a project that began four years ago. The memorial, seen in an aerial shot above, has a walkway, memorial, flag poles, marble benches, another brick walkway and a bandshell with a patriotic art tableau. About 240 black granite blocks are in the walkways commemorating local veterans.



ALEXANDRIA HONOREES -- Alexandria Post 87 honored longtime continuous members recently. From left are Bill Beery, 70 years; Commander Allan Gerlach; and George Ketter, 60 years.



EDEN VALLEY VETERANS -- Eden Valley Post 381 held its membership dinner recently. From left are Adjutant Jim Haag, Dave Braegelmann, 50 years; Paul Anderson, 45 years; Mike Dockendorf, 40 years; Post Commander Steve Schmitt.



Aitkin names field for veterans

The Aitkin Football Association named its field Veterans Field in a ceremony held recently. Members of the Aitkins Gobblers celebrated a win that night in front of the new sign at the field, left. At right, veterans and others formed an American flag tunnel to welcome the teams on the field the night the venue was dedicated to veterans.





The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 16-5

President Sandy Fredrickson

December 2015

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Sandy
Fredrickson



Wow, what a beautiful Saturday, November 21 was. Thank you, to each of you who attended my "homecoming/testimonial." It was awesome. To know you have many, many friends who want to celebrate the good we do for our organization is a wonderful feeling. I thank each of you for your kind words, the gifts, and your friendship.

I have no words to express my feelings for the awesome job Unit 264 and the helpers from the Women of Today did. Phenomenal. Thank you.

By the time you read this, Thanksgiving will have gone by. It's my hope each and all had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We as Americans have so many things to be grateful for.

Now, as we prepare to celebrate the beauty of the season, "Christ's Birth," let us remember he is the "reason for the season."

To each of you—"from the bottom of my heart, thank you," for what you have done and continue to do in your Unit. The grassroots to our organization is you. It is you that keeps the Unit intact, it is you who step out of the box to be involved in our Districts and Department.

Each of you members has your own contribution to this wonderful organization. Know that we are like spokes in a wheel. We all have to contribute to make sure we have/keep an even balance.

Hats off to those of you who are working hard to make change within your Unit, District, and even Department. Survival in our organization falls to you -- you are the leaders in your Unit -- you are the member that shows and acts out "a culture of good will." By changing attitudes and working for the good of the organization instead of ourselves we will grow our organization. Members will want to be a part of this great organization.

May I challenge each of you to tell your stories. Tell the good things your Unit does. Send pictures to our Department PR Chairman Michelle Leonard. We will see them/view them at Department Convention next July.

Next, will you ask/seek out one person to join our organization--join your Unit? Membership is the lifeblood of our ALA. Even if they do not become active, give them time to allow themselves to learn what our organization is and why we matter. They will let you know when they want to get involved. Remember, units should be at 75% membership by December 5th. Give your membership chairman Jean an early Christmas present.

Maybe you could give a gift of membership. This would make a wonderful Christmas present.

Don't forget December is Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Month. This is the time of the year our hospital reps are busy in our Veterans Homes and Hospitals. Our Gift shops in each facility will put smiles on the faces of many veterans. Make sure your Unit contributes to this most important program--you can give donations all year long, not just now at Christmas.

God's blessings to each of you. Prayers go out to those who have lost a loved one and those who need his healing hands.

From our home to your home--have a very "Merry Christmas."

Fredrickson endorsed

Glenville Unit 264 has endorsed Sandra Fredrickson for Alternate National Executive Committeewoman for 2016-17.

Fredrickson has held many positions at the unit, district and state level, and is currently the Department President.

December has many special programs for our veterans

December is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation month. There are a number of special programs the Auxiliary is involved with this month, such as Gift Shop, our \$5.00 Bill Shower, Christmas parties, etc. These are in addition to the regular activities our Hospital/Home Representatives and their many volunteers sponsor at their respective facilities. Is your Unit planning on doing something special for our veterans? If you are able to help out, please contact one of the hospitals and/or homes in your area to see if our Reps need any help with the annual Gift Shop. It is a very humbling and rewarding experience.

Don't forget the veterans in the local hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities as well as those who are shut-ins in your community. Make December a special month for them.

Volunteers are needed. Our veterans answered the call when our country was in need. Won't you answer the call when they are in need? Become a volunteer at one of the VA Medical Centers, a Field Service volunteer or a Home Service volunteer and assist our veterans. They need you! Contact the Department Office if you are interested in volunteering.

American Legion Hospital Program

We have nine facilities in which the Auxiliary carries on extensive programs for our hospitalized veterans. This takes funding as we provide many of those extras to our veterans. Your financial support is needed. Please send your contributions to the Department Office earmarked "\$5.00 Bill Shower" and "American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Program". Thank you for your support. Please call the Hospital Home Reps to see what their needs are at this time.

MINNEAPOLIS VAMC

Our hospital representative Mary Ann Davis wants to let everyone know that she does not need non-stick slippers, as the hospital now hands those out. She has quite a few in her inventory and doesn't need them. If anybody knows of a facility that could use these slippers, please contact the Department Office and we will get them there.

GIRLS STATE INFORMATION

Information needed to reserve a place for your Girls State citizen(s) for the 2016 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be included in the January Unit mailing. Please make sure and go through all the information. The Committee has made some very exciting and positive changes to this year's session! It will include an American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State informational brochure, a cover letter from the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Chairman and a reservation form. After the department office receives your reservation form and your registration check of \$300.00 per girl, a packet will be sent to the Unit. This packet will include a set of registration forms for each girl you will be sponsoring. It will include the enrollment card, information sheet, pledge, brochure, dress code, order form for the polo shirts, etc. The packet will be sent to the person who signs the reservation form. The registration materials must be returned to the department office on or before May 1. If you have any questions, please contact the department office. This year the Girls State week will be

Arends endorsed for First Vice President

Willmar Unit 167 and the Seventh District American Legion Auxiliary have endorsed Donna Arends for Department First Vice President for the year 2016-2107.

She has been an active member of Unit 167 for 27 years. Her eligibility is through her father, William Sommerville, a veteran of WWII.

At the Unit level, she has held many positions includ-

ing President. On the District level, she has been District President in 2008-2009, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Executive Committee Member, chairman for U.D. & R., V.A. & R., Junior Program, and Membership twice.

On the Department level, Arends has served in Children & Youth, V.A. & R., Membership, and was a Girls State Committee

held at Bethel College in St. Paul.

PRESIDENT'S PROJECTS

Department President Sandy Fredrickson has chosen as her special President's Projects, the Minnesota Creative Arts Program for Veterans. She also has chosen the Emergent Needs fund and the Journeys Program which is an intensive outpatient treatment program for PTSD patients. These programs depend on donations to function. Your support of our Department President's projects is appreciated. Please send your donation to the department office earmarked for the Department President's Project and indicate how much should go to each part of her project. Please make your donation today - these are such wonderful programs for our Veterans.

GOING UP, UP, UP

How is your Unit doing in membership? Every Unit should be at/above 75% of their Unit's membership goal by Saturday, December 5, the date of the Pearl Harbor Department Membership Rally in Faribault. Turn in starts at 3:00 and dinner is at 5:00. These rallies are really a lot of fun and everyone should attend one - hope to see you in Faribault.

Our membership with National has again gone way up to number 4 - this is wonderful. Now, the negative Nelly in me has to say that we seem to do this every year and come March we start falling to the end of the list. Each Unit needs to come up with a "strategic plan" to get your membership dues paid. If you need any assistance please contact Department Membership Chairman Jean Walker or contact the Department Office and we will all help get you going.

MEMORY BOOK

When our Department President Sandy visits your Unit please send any newspaper clippings, pictures and snapshots to the Memory Book Chairman Diane Hayes, or to the Department Office for our Department President's memory book. Your help in making this a special remembrance for President Sandy is appreciated. Diane wants to make this a very special book for the wonderful job President Sandy is doing.

SCHOLARSHIPS

What has your Unit done with the department and national scholarship application forms you received in the Unit mailings? Remember putting the application forms in your file won't help those who need assistance. Get those applications into the hands of those who are eligible to apply.

If you need additional forms, duplicate those you received or contact the department office for additional copies. The forms are also on our website. Please look under the Scholarship tab and they are all listed. You can download them from there.

DONATIONS

Please see the Unit Guide for a list of those programs the Department Executive Committee has approved for the

member for three years. She was a Girls State Counselor in 2013 and 2014. She is currently serving as 2nd Vice President and the chairman of the Children & Youth Program.

She has two daughters, 1 son, and six grandchildren.

Arends is retired from the Willmar hospital and is currently working part time as a resident assistant at Copperleaf Sr. Living in their Memory Care Unit.



DONNA ARENDS

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

solicitation of funds. Please keep in mind those showing an * by them are our own Auxiliary programs within the Department of Minnesota. We need to support these causes – no one else does. Remember also that the Brain Science Foundation and the Legacy Scholarship Fund has been added to our list of funds to solicit for. We no longer solicit funds for Operation Military Kids as it is no longer in existence but we now have the Military Children of the National Guard, which was inadvertently omitted from the Unit Guide. It is included on the green donation sheet each Unit received.

POPPY POSTER CONTEST

Please encourage your schools to participate in the Poppy Poster Contest. There are classes for all grades. All of the rules will be in the January Unit Mailing included in the Trophy and Awards booklet. All of this information is also on our website mnaa.org. This is a great way to teach our youth all about the Poppy, our Memorial Flower. Last year the entries were very good. We have many talented children - let's do our best to promote the contest at our schools. Last year we had a very disappointing turn out. Let's make every effort to get this back into our schools.

ANNUAL REPORTS TROPHIES & AWARDS

The Department Office is trying something different this year because of the downturn of Units submitting entries in our Trophy and Awards program. The Units do so much wonderful work, they should be rewarded. In the January packet that is being sent it will include the January Unit Mailing, Annual Report Forms and Trophy and Award packets. The awards work hand in hand with the Annual Reports so I thought it might help if they were sent out together. Our Chairmen do such a good job on our programs so let's give them more work with lots of entries to judge.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

On behalf of the office staff at the American Legion Auxiliary, Sandie, Jan and Julie, we want to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and hope Santa brings you everything you ask for. We are sure you have been good all year. Enjoy quality time with family and loved ones. If you can, do something special for those that are in need.

GIFT SHOP DISTRIBUTION DAY

Sally Strasser, Department Gift Shop Chairman assembled her crew to sort and distribute all of the Christmas Gifts for our Veterans and their families to be given out at all nine VA facilities during their Gift Shop days. The gifts that were purchased by Sally and Raean were all very nice and we are sure the Veterans will be pleased. Even with membership continuing to decline, our Finance Committee and Executive Committee took a very big leap of faith and again approved no decreases to this budget. Our veterans are what our organization is all about and this small act of kindness at the holiday season is very important. Our Units have really stepped up and increased the amount they are donating to this program. Thank you so much for your help in making this program a success.

Here is a reminder of the Gift Shop Dates:

- Fargo VAMC - December 7
- Fergus Falls Veterans Home - December 14
- Hastings Veterans Home - December 10
- Luverne Veterans Home - December 10
- Minneapolis Veterans Home - December 2 & 3
- Minneapolis VAMC - December 8 & 9
- Silver Bay Veterans Home - December 11
- Sioux Falls VAMC - December 17
- St. Cloud VAMC - November 30, December 1 & 2

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

It is very hard to believe that we are in the last month of 2015 - what a year it has been in the Department Office. Jan has transitioned into her bookkeeping job and has taken to it like a duck to water. What an asset she is to our Department.

Julie has been here almost a full year now and keeps learning new things every day. She is transitioning into the membership area and has taken over the entire Poppy operation.

After trying to do this on my own, while training two people into their jobs I guess I lost pretty much the entire year. With these two ladies on board and doing such a good job I can now sit back, put my feet on my desk and eat bonbons. I sure hope President Sandy doesn't read this. All kidding aside, I can now concentrate on working on our Strategic Plan, growing membership and things that will help keep us going for generations to come.

Shorty and I would like to wish each and every one of you a Very Merry, Blessed Christmas and the best New Year ever.

As you are reading this, the Deutsch Christmas is

This is Veterans Affairs and Rehab Month

So December is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation month. That's a hard concept for me. I consider every month to be Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation month, don't you?

Spirits are high this time of year. Thanksgiving and all that fabulous food and gathering of families and friends, Christmas with the gifts and smiling faces all around us. What a great time of the year. For most of us...

We were in Duluth for the gambling seminar and it was cold. Bruce and I went for about a 10 block walk to a store we love. I was so bundled up I couldn't believe it. Hat, gloves, hoodie, long winter coat. My coat hood over my head. It was windy and it was cold. I couldn't help but wonder how many veterans were out there with no place to go. No shelter, blankets or food. None of the things that we take for granted. This is a difficult time for some of our veterans. Thanksgiving comes and goes and for our homeless veterans that is a trying time emotionally. Then comes Christmas. We are all very busy shopping, sending cards, baking and preparing for the big day. Church services on Christmas Eve and gift exchanges with friends and families. But what about our veterans?

Be sure to include at least one extra gift on your shopping list to help a veteran in your area. Your church may know of a veteran's family in need; the Human Resources Department or Service Officer in your County may have information regarding families in need. Make a conscious

effort to help the veterans and their families in your area who may not be as comfortable as you are.

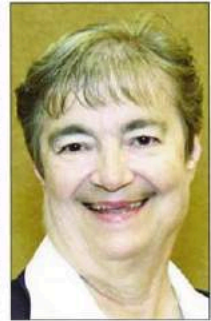
Have you been able to visit one of the Veterans Affairs Health Care Centers or Homes yet? Now is a great time to stop by. Check with the Voluntary Services area and see where you can help. The veterans would love to see you and your daughter, son or grandchild.

VA Hospitals and Homes will be holding the SS bill shower and the annual gift shops. Is your Unit doing anything special for the local facilities and shut-ins this year? Please make it a point to do so. Our veterans and their families need you.

Our Service to Veterans Chairman this year is Vida Bacon. Remember, this part of the program used to be Field Service and Home Service. Your visits to the VA homes or local nursing homes, sewing and baking fall under this part of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. Hospital and home representatives for the Auxiliary are Fargo VAHSC, Carolyn Albertson; Minneapolis VAHSC, Mary Ann Davis; St. Cloud VAHSC, Jan Benson; Sioux Falls VAHSC, Gloria Lindquist; Fergus Falls, Doris Lafayette; Hastings, Darlene Wondra; Luverne, Judy Kumerow; Minneapolis Home, Sandy Gibson; and Silver Bay, Phyllis Mealey. Thank you to these ladies who are doing a great job with and for our veterans, and are fantastic volunteers to work with.

As you go about your normal routine this holiday season, remember not only our veterans and their families, but also those who lost friends and family members in Paris in your prayers. France, as did the United States after 9/11, has had the greatest number of people in history signing up for military duty. Terrorism is a horrible "disease" that has afflicted many nations and affected many families. We can only hope and pray that we have seen the worst of it.

Carol Kottom, Chairman
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation



CAROL KOTTOM

Fall poppy winners listed

CONGRATULATIONS to the Fall Conference Poppy Contest winners:

Poppy Hat
1st place: Vicki Bibeau, Walker Unit 134, District 6
2nd place: Sam Wickert, Delano Unit 377, District 10
3rd place: Betty Schlueter, Hutchinson Unit 96, District 3

People's Choice: Vicki Bibeau, Walker Unit 134, District 6

Poppy Memorial Wreath
1st place: Sandy Wersal, New London Unit 537, District 7

2nd place: Sam Wickert, Delano Unit 377, District 10
3rd place: Sharon Barnes, Wayzata Unit 118, District 10

People's Choice: Sam Wickert, Delano Unit 377, District 10

First place won \$25, 2nd -\$20, 3rd-\$15, and People's Choice \$20. Only \$53.00 was raised from the People's Choice voting.

This money will be donated to the Department President's fundraising for the Minnesota Creative Arts Program. The judges for the contests were: Annette Bray, Bonnie Wagner, Cathy Newman, Anna Ells, Wanda Prescher, Mary French and Sharon Voltz.

We had a Poppy Hat Parade with members from the American Legion Family modeling. The men that participated were: Steve Sullivan, Darrel Redepenning, Cliff Newman, Rick Oelschlager and Jim Lucas. They looked silly in the ladies hats; it was quite a show, with everyone having a good laugh.

Letter from St. Cloud

The following was sent to Department President Sandy from BJ Gross, who brought a few Veterans to perform at our October Fall Conference at Brezzy Point:

Dear Sandy,
Loved your "thank you" letter. The Veterans were so pleased to be honored, and loved the exit, with audience members reaching out their hands and providing kudos. It meant so much to us. I'm very grateful to work with the Veterans and believe wholeheartedly that creativity can be the way out of dark and dismal times. One Veteran brought in a copy of the Legionnaire to show me the article and pictures. This was a meaningful encounter for all of us, and I so appreciate your passion towards the Creative Arts.

If there is anything else that I can do to promote our Veterans and their creativity, please let me know. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Beverly (BJ) Gross, MA, MT-BC
Saint Cloud VAMC

Auxy member sought for manager

A part time gambling manager for a meat raffle is being sought by Minneapolis Richfield Post. The applicant must be an Auxiliary member in good standing for at least one year and be bondable. Contact Sherry Morris, Richfield Post, 6501 Portland Ave. S., Richfield, MN 55423.

already in the record books as we celebrated with all our children over the Thanksgiving weekend. It is almost scary how fast our grandchildren are growing and watching them turn in to young adults just brings tears to my eyes. Each one of them have talents that I can't even explain and will be so successful. I guess they get that from their grandma right? Just remember to treasure every day you have with family and friends. Until 2016 - enjoy.

Nov. 24, 2015, Auxiliary Membership

| District | Goal | Membership To Date | Percent of Goal | Membership Last Year |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| One | 6,146 | 3,528 | 57.40% | 3,397 |
| Two | 5,979 | 3,461 | 57.89% | 3,778 |
| Three | 5,323 | 3,161 | 59.38% | 3,385 |
| Four | 920 | 491 | 53.37% | 566 |
| Five | 1,047 | 612 | 58.45% | 588 |
| Six | 7,318 | 4,595 | 62.79% | 4,600 |
| Seven | 4,859 | 3,006 | 61.86% | 3,111 |
| Eight | 2,005 | 1,131 | 56.41% | 1,127 |
| Nine | 5,232 | 3,393 | 64.85% | 3,430 |
| Ten | 6,382 | 3,548 | 55.59% | 3,925 |
| 1982 | 198 | 117 | 59.09% | 104 |
| Totals | 45,409 | 27,043 | 59.55% | 28,011 |

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- Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum

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April 8-12, 2016

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- 4-Seasons Tour Director, Jenny Gilbertson
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