

would land two-and-one half hours before the rest of the 82nd and 101st regiments and try to secure the landing zones.

In the plane at 11:30 p.m., Harrigan was finally going to get his first combat jump. As the plane came over the coast of France it started taking heavy fire. "My thought was that I've got to get out of the plane. It was a big target. In my parachute, I'm a small target."

Hannigan weighed himself before he got on the plane and found that his total with all the gear was 274 lbs. "That means I had about 100 lbs. of stuff on me."

He was to be the third man out the door. As the paratroopers got ready to exit, Hannigan looked out the window and saw the plane carrying his buddy get hit. "A few guys got out, but not all of them."

On the way down in the bright moonlight, Hannigan looked over and saw a fellow paratrooper get hit by a high caliber shell. "I saw his guts just come out of him. Except that his guts were white. Later, when I was on the ground I found out it was our medic, and what I'd seen was all his gauze and medical supplies come out. The medic was okay."

"After we landed I went over to where the plane carrying my friend had crashed in the water. I found my buddy. He was dead and he was all burned. He never got out of the plane. I was amazed, and I was saddened. I really liked this guy."

The pathfinders were some of the few paratroopers that landed in the right place on June 6, 1944. And so the nice, dry ground they were supposed to secure really didn't matter as thousands who followed two hours later were scattered all over a section of Normandy.

Slowly the troops tried to find each other, using their "cricket" clickers to identify themselves as friendlies. "First there were two of us, then four of us. By morning, there were 18 in our group, and we became a combat unit. We moved out."

Hannigan joined a group from the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and helped capture the French town of Sainte-Mere-Eglise. On about D-Day plus 17, Hannigan was sent back to England to rejoin the 504th.

All through the summer, the 504th prepared to jump, but the American advance kept overrunning the drop zones. It was one false alarm after another.

Hannigan was one of the few from the unit who had made the drop on D-Day and he was one of a smaller group who came back to the regiment. His status didn't stop him from getting into scrapes.

"While I was in, I was reduced five times from sergeant to private. I had a lot of fun. I got in a lot of fights, and I sometimes didn't get back to base on time. It cost me dearly, but it was worth it. As soon as we'd head into combat, they'd make me a staff sergeant and squad leader again."

Constantly getting ready to jump and then getting canceled wore on the men. "But you couldn't let it rule you. You had to shake it off. Besides I had a girlfriend in England."

Finally, on Sept. 17, the 504th did jump, this time into Holland as part of Operation Market Garden. The plan was to secure a series of bridges and allow an English tank division to advance all the way into Germany. It was thought the plan could shorten the war by months.

"The jump went well. There weren't many Germans around, and I didn't fire my rifle the whole first day. We just headed for the woods and some cover. Everything looked good."

But it wasn't. Market Garden bogged down, and the tanks were held up from heading up to Arnhem, the furthest bridge (subject of the movie, A Bridge Too Far) because a bridge at Nijmegen was still held by the Germans. It was the 504th's job to secure that bridge.

"We had to cross the Waal Canal, but all we had were these canvas boats. I'd had enough combat experience by this time to see it was a foolish plan. But you do what you're told to do."

Hannigan was in the same boat with Lt. James Magellas, the commanding officer of H Company and the most decorated soldier in the 82nd Airborne. By the end of the war, Magellas had earned the Distinguished Service Cross, three Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts.

"He never sent us anyplace, he always led. He was a fighter. We had a lot of confidence in him."

The boat they shared was one of 13 out of 26 that made it across through the blizzard of German firepower. "I just remember keeping pretty far down in that boat." Once on the far shore, it didn't get any easier.

"We were supposed to have a smoke cover, but the wind blew the smoke away. The Germans were dug in and opened fire. We had to make a frontal assault on the German positions. It was brutal. We lost a lot of men."

But Companies H and I prevailed, took the German positions, made a left turn and captured the bridge at Nijmegen. "They sent a signal to the British tanks that they could advance, but the British signaled back that they weren't going to. They said they had no infantry support. I took that as a personal slam."

To be part of one of the most heroic achievements by an American unit in the war, and then to have the British refuse



The 504th was the first regiment dropped into Holland at the beginning of Operation Market Garden. Gliders, in the foreground, had landed earlier.



Hannigan, far left, trained at Fort Benning, Georgia, where he earned his wings.



Hannigan, second from right, sitting, was happy to oblige an English boy in Nottingham who wanted "some American soldiers" for his birthday.



With their faces darkened, men from the 504th get ready for a jump, posing with the crew of their airplane.

to cross the bridge was the low point in the war for Hannigan. "Fifty years later I was still ticked off."

In mid-November, The 504th and the rest of the Airborne regiments were sent back to France for some well-deserved rest and recreation. The stay at Camp Sissone was cut short.

"I was sleeping when they woke me up. They said there was a German breakthrough, and that we were being sent to the front." It was the Battle of the Bulge.

"We were in summer gear, and we were being sent to the north with the cold and snow. We had no idea where they were sending us."

They were transported through Bastogne and ordered to take up a defensive position to protect the strategically critical town.

"Early in the battle, one of my guys, Charlie Thompson, was hit. I sent two people out to get him, and they were hit. I had to write him off as a dead man. But the British came down the next day and found him and sent him back to England.

"Years later at a reunion, the door opened and there was Charlie. He said, 'I hear there's some son of a bitch named Hannigan here.' I was so delighted. I hadn't seen him since that day at the Bulge."

The shelling from the Germans at Bastogne was deadly. "We had a lot of guys killed and hurt. We just moved where they told us."

The unit eventually did get some winter clothing. "But the best thing was to kill a German and get his white snow suit so that we could wear them." Did Hannigan get a snow suit? "You bet."

There was a small problem of wearing the enemy's gear in a battle. "When he had to move, we just warned everybody. It worked."

After Bastogne was rescued, the 504th kept pushing east, attacked the Siegfried Line in February, 1945, and pushed into Germany. After a brief respite back in France, the regiment was back in Germany and crossed the Rhine in early April.

Hannigan had one more interesting experience along the way. An American tank had been hit by a shell and was burning. The tank driver was trapped. "He was hollering and he was on fire. I tried to get him out.

Hannigan's first effort was pushed back by the flames. But he tried again. Again he was forced to retreat. The third time, he was able to rescue the driver. Why would he go back three times? "Because the guy was alive and he was on fire." As Hannigan dragged the driver to safety, the tank blew up.

Hannigan later got a certificate from the 504th for his heroism.

Thanks to his service in the Guard and because he had earned a Bronze Star at Normandy, Hannigan was one of the first in his unit to have enough points to go home. He walked and scrounged what transportation he could, got to the French coast, and took a luxury liner transformed into a troops ship back to the United States.

"All that time and all that combat, and I never got hit. Upstairs, He was looking out for me."

In Boston, Hannigan and four comrades got off the ship and found a small restaurant. "We ate all the eggs that guy had."

Back in Minnesota and discharged from the Army, Hannigan got his GED and enrolled at St. Thomas College. Four years later he got his degree. Along the way, he married Agatha, and they had seven children, 17 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren. Agatha died 18 years ago. "Before I married her, they called me Wild Bill. After I married her, they called me Sweet William."

Hannigan went into the trucking business and was a vice president in charge of a depot. "I never drove a truck in my life, but I sent a lot of them out."

He now lives in Woodbury, and his life is still busy. He works out at a fitness center three times a week and goes to the VA daycare program the other two weekdays. "You've got to stay active."

What was his most harrowing time in combat?

"It was when they were picking guys to go on a patrol at night. I hated that. I was always the point man because I was good at it. I was a crouched shadow out there. I traveled really low to the ground. But when they were picking the men to go, that was the worst. But when it was your turn, you went."



Hannigan received a Certificate of Merit from the 82nd Airborne for rescuing a tank driver from a burning tank. He had to go back three times.



Sometimes the Airborne was transported by aircraft, but often the mode of conveyance was by truck. Hannigan is second from right.



It usually didn't take any urging for Hannigan to get into a fight, but in this photo he is at center and is being pushed toward one of his comrades during training at Fort Benning.



After being a standout player in high school, Hannigan qualified for an Army team. He is standing, fifth from the left.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

**Brian Medinnus
Commander**



Greeting from the Frozen 1st District.

Mother Nature continues to raise havoc with the weather but I am proud of the members of this district and all the hard work that they do to make this district as great as it is.

Remember Commander Dellinger will be visiting the 1st District on Feb. 4th in Waseca and the 5th in Rochester. I would love to see as many posts as possible who made goal have their picture taken with the National Commander.

A big thanks to Commander Mike, Membership Director Tom, Honorary Jr.'s President Kaitlyn who attended our Mid-Winter Conference in Adams on January 4th. That following Wednesday we found out the 1st District had climbed to the top of the Legion membership race. Maybe Commander Mike needs to stop down and visit more often.

Remember a district is only as strong as the members who are part of it.

SECOND DISTRICT

**Eugene Olsword
Commander**



By the time you read this, we will have had two great events. The first being the Sweetheart Rally in Waite Park on February 1st and National Commander Dan Dellinger visiting two Second District posts, Pipestone for breakfast and Redwood Falls for dinner on February 3rd. I anticipate we had a good showing for the Commander's Minnesota visit.

Membership renewals have been strong these last few weeks and should have many posts at goal or exceeding goal. At the time of this writing, we currently have 14 posts at goal and from looking at the figures and talking with post commanders, I can easily see 10-15 more posts very shortly. Seven of the 14 posts have exceeded goal which tells me they are out there just waiting to be asked. Always have a few membership applications on you so you can get them to sign up now. Recruiting is easy to do.

Now is the time to be thinking if you want to get involved in the District for the year 2013-2014 either serving on a committee or as an officer in the district. There are always plenty of openings to fill and there might be one just for you. Let either myself or any district officer know and we will help you with what you need to do. This is your American Legion and an opportunity for you to serve on a higher level and work with your fellow Legionnaires. Step forward and let us hear from you.

Upcoming events include the Appreciation Rally on March 8th in Richfield. Posts should be at 90%.

On April 26th we have the Department Spring Round-Up Rally in Montevideo with target goals at 95%. Mark your calendars for these rallies.

Remember all our troops in harm's way and keep them safe with your prayers and their safe return home.

THIRD DISTRICT

**Mark Dvorak
Commander**



Thank you Patti Black and Vice Commander Lori Jarrett for doing an outstanding job of organizing and running the Third District Oratorical Contest held at the Montgomery Post 79 on January 12th. All contestants were amazing and congratulations to the 1st place winner and good luck to you at the Department Oratorical Contest. Montgomery Post 79 was an excellent host.

Cleveland Post 207 hosted the 5th rally of the membership year on January 4th and provided outstanding hospitality. Thank you Vice Commander Dan Lee for organizing the rally. Training Chairperson Barry Madson and his team provided training on various Legion subjects and did an outstanding job. The next district rally will be the "Has-Beens" rally on Tuesday, March 4th and will be organized by past 3rd District Commander Pat Logan.

Applications for "Outstanding Enlisted Man/Woman of the Year" will no longer be sent to each post. Each post will be sent a letter telling them to contact the District National Security/Foreign Relations Chairperson (Pat Logan) or Department Headquarters for an application. Applications are also available on the Department website mnlegion.org under post resources and forms.

FOURTH DISTRICT

**Carroll Partridge
Commander**



Hello 4th district,

I want to thank everyone that came to the Mid-Winter conference. It was great and I want to thank our guest speakers. It made for some good information.

The main event of the conference was Robert Holstrom (from North St. Paul Post 39) receiving the French Legion of Honor Medal. It was presented by Secretary of State, Mark Richie. Thank you Mr. Secretary of State. It was also Bob's birthday. (Great cake.)

The next exciting happening was the first official meeting of our new Post 1975.

Next I had the honor of swearing in the new officers of our first chapter of the ALR (American Legion Riders) Chapter 577.

Many of our Legion family started out the Sunday of VA Visitation at the lunch put on by North End Auxiliary. A lot of food. A visit by Klondike Kate was a boost for all.

On Jan 25th the 4th and 5th districts (walked) in the Winter Carnival Parade. A good time was had by all.

The next 4th district meeting is Feb. 12th at Rosetown.

Also at Rosetown on the 6th of Feb, we are honored to have the National Commander. Come and have dinner and meet the Commander. 5 p.m. to get started. Dinner at 6 p.m. You will pay for dinner at the door.

This has been a great year thanks to all of you.

Stay warm at Creekside.

FIFTH DISTRICT

**Robert Johnson
Commander**



Greetings from the Fighting 5th. February means major league baseball spring training commences. Twins' pitchers and catchers report February 16, 2014. Spring is just around the corner.

Chairman Craig Deneen hosted a wonderful Oratorical Contest last month. Thanks to Craig for his efforts and to Wold-Chamberlain Post #99 for their hospitality. High Schools represented were: Hope Academy, Minneapolis Southwest High School and Gen. Colin L. Powell Leadership Academy.

Membership continues to be a challenge in 2014. As of January 15 we were at 2,639 memberships lagging the same time last year of 209 memberships. I am asking each post commander and each post membership director to make an extra effort to reach our Legionnaires who have not yet renewed their membership. One phone call per week, from both of you, to members who have not renewed their membership will get the ball rolling. You may be surprised at the affect that effort has on the overall membership renewals. Membership is the 'life's blood' of The American Legion and it is everyone's responsibility. Thanks to all of you for your efforts so far this year. Let's keep it up.

Our remaining 2014 meetings as follows:

- March 4 at Wold-Chamberlain Post 99
- April 1 at Richfield Post 435
- May 6 at Northside Post 230 at Minneapolis Post 1.

See you at Wold-Chamberlain in March.

SIXTH DISTRICT

**Vern Massie
Commander**



Well by the time you all get this Mid-Winter will be over; Sweetheart Rally will be over; National Commander Tour and winter will be half over? Hope everyone is safe and in good health and that your 2014 will be a great year. My year as Commander is about half over. It doesn't seem like it, but time flies.

Got to thinking the other day back when I was in the service during Vietnam era and how we were told if we went on leave to dress in civilian clothes because we didn't want folks to know we were in the service. That was fine and good but everyone else had long hair and beards and we were clean shaven and clipped short. I am glad that our veterans today are treated with the respect they deserve and I hope everyone thanks those young men and women when you get the opportunity to meet them. Want to do something for them find out whom locally are serving and send them a note thanking them for their service.

I noticed a sign the other day on one of the social media sites and thought every Post in the Country should have this on their sign. It reads "Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier

who died protecting it." Something to think about and remember.

Starting in March many posts will be celebrating the Legion Birthday and for many another opportunity to renew those members that wait until the year matches the card. So many won't renew until then but get them when you can. I know it probably won't break the rut but for many posts it is more and more difficult to reach goal when the goal keeps increasing every year. If a veteran hasn't joined the Legion or one of the other veteran organizations in these smaller towns it is likely they just won't so smaller posts really struggle to keep meeting goals with veterans passing away and new one's not joining. But I hope every post will keep trying as there are veterans out there that will join we just need to ask.

Keep your eye out for the Consolidated Reports and other committee reports as they will be arriving soon. Please take time and fill them out and return them to committee chair or department. Remember just writing same as last year doesn't cut it as last year is long gone. Even if you think you didn't do anything, review the forms and sign and send them back. 6th District should be 100% on reports. Let's break some ruts and get them filled out and returned. Think Spring.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Harold Meyer Jr.
Commander**



Due to all of the call ins and the bad weather I had to postpone the midwinter conference. The new date will be February 15th at Browns Valley Post 58 at 0930 hours. I hope to have at least one person from each post to attend this conference and to have all of my committee's Chairmen to have a report.

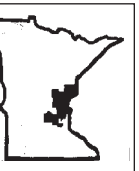
Membership is still coming in steadily, but we still have a few posts that need to get their membership up to speed. By the time you get this the sweetheart rally at Waite Park Post 428 will be over and I would have hoped that a lot of the 7th District members went. These rallies mean a lot to the district and the state department membership.

If any of the posts want me to come and visit. Please call me and if my date book is empty on that date I would like to visit your post. My number is 507-865-4518 or 507-530-4412 or email is hal.meyer@frontiernet.net.

God bless America the greatest land in the world, and God bless our troops in harm's way.

TENTH DISTRICT

**Richard Juhl
Commander**



Ah, February. It's that month when we're tired of Winter (especially after our reminder around the 1st of the year), and we can see Spring off in the distance. We're thinking about Valentine's Day and sweethearts and loved ones. It's all good, right?

While you are relaxing and enjoying your life, I would like you to take a few moments to reflect on a couple of significant events in history that happened in February.

The first is often referred to as "The Four Chaplains." On February 3rd, 1943, a troop ship was transporting 900 troops to Greenland when it was torpedoed by a German U-Boat. In 20 minutes, the ship sank in frigid waters. During the evacuation, there were many injuries and panic among the passengers. There weren't enough life jackets to go around, so, four chaplains, of different faiths, gave theirs to needy soldiers. They then linked arms, prayed and sang hymns and stood on the deck as the ship went under. They couldn't be awarded the Medal of Honor, so Congress awarded them a one time award called the "Chaplains Medal for Heroism."

The second event, which has been called "The Most Famous Photograph of WWII," occurred on February 23rd, 1945, on Iwo Jima. On the fourth day of the battle, a group of Marines finally reached the summit of Mt Suribachi and raised the American flag at 10:30 a.m. to inspire the advancing US troops (this included Minnesota native Chuck Lindberg). A photograph was taken by Marine photographer Lou Lowery. A second flag raising took place about an hour and a half later when a larger flag replaced the earlier one. This photo was taken by Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press, and it was later used as the model for the Marine Corps statue at Arlington Cemetery.

During these two events, thousands of Americans gave their lives. Please take time to remember them and spend an afternoon on the internet to learn more about these events and the heroes that were there.

For God and Country.

Taps

Schattschneider, Donald, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 24, 2013. He was stationed in Alaska. He was a past Ninth District Commander (1990-91), Ninth District Adjutant (2005-06) and a Department Vice Commander (1992-94). He was a long-time member of the Legionville Board of Directors and was active in promoting the summer camp. He was a member of Detroit Lakes Post 15.

Schepers, Thomas J., 67, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 6, 2014. He was wounded in action and received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He was best known in recent years for his long-distance runs carrying the American Flag and POW/MIA flag in honor of veterans causes. He once ran from California to Washington D.C. to support the World War II Memorial. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Redden, Robert, 80, past department vice commander and district commander, died Jan. 11, 2014. He was 10th District Commander from 1981-82 and he was Department Vice Commander from 1989-90. He was a member of Osseo/ Maple Grove Post 172.

Stark, Glen W., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 1, 2014. He served in both the European and Pacific theaters. He was a member of Princeton Post 216.

Walch, LaVerne M., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 27, 2013. He served in the Pacific. He was a member of Plainview Post 179.

DeVetter, David L., 76, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 13, 2013. He was a corpsman who served in the Aluetian Islands and Greenland. He was a member of Millville Post 579.

Carter, Harold C., 88, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 23, 2013. He was a past commander of Plainview Post 179.

Walker, Charles, 81, Army Reserve veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 29, 2013. He was a member of Villard Post 175.

Vold, Irvin, 81, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 20, 2013. He was a member of Graceville Post 297.

Liners, Henry L., 84, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 7, 2013. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

Elling, Wallace J. "Dick," 87, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 22, 2013. He was a motor machinist's mate third class. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Jirak, Edwin George, 76, Army veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, died Dec. 18, 2013. He was a member of Lonsdale Post 586.

Johnson, Kenneth Carl Sr., 88, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 27, 2013. He served on the USS Kimberly in the Pacific and was in Tokyo Bay for the Japanese surrender. He was a member of Morris Post 29.

Flaherty, Robert M., 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 11, 2013. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

Danzeisen, Boyd K., 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 29, 2013. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Schmidgall, Clarence D., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 1, 2014. He served in Germany. He was a member of Morris Post 29.

Wolf, Raymond P., 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 6, 2013. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Loux, Virgil M., 83, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 5, 2013. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Ploof, Berwyn, 78, Army veteran of the Korean War,

died Dec. 7, 2013. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Fleiner, Albert H., 88, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 7, 2013. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Weis, Leo C., 89, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 30, 2013. He was a past commander of Austin Post 91.

Osmonson, Donald R., 81, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 31, 2013. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Paggen, David, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 7, 2013. He was a member of the color guard and a former manager of St. Stephen Post 221.

Kruger, LeRoy "Bud," 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 7, 2014. He was a member of Morris Post 29.

Sunder, Richard Albert, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 2, 2014. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Dallman, Virgil W., 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 4, 2015. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Lillegaard, Kermit, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 1, 2014. He served in Europe and earned a Bronze Star. He was a member of Windom Post 206.

Hermes, Leo, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 21, 2013. He was chaplain of St. Paul Post 8.

Knapper, Henry, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 13, 2013. He served in Germany and France. He was a member of Clara City Post 485.

Weber, Charles, 86, Navy veteran of World War II and Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 25, 2013. He was a member of Paynesville Post 271.

Nelson, Dale E., 79, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 11, 2014. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Grotte, Luther, 85, army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Jan. 14, 2014. He was a past commander of Fergus Falls Post 30 and a past adjutant of the Ninth District.

Messick, Donald M., 93, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Jan. 16, 2014. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

Breck, Alan Lee, 73, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 5, 2013. He was a member of Waseca Post 228.

Thompson, Richard Dean, 78, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 26, 2013. He served on a Navy ship that crossed the Arctic Circle. He was a member of Dodge Center Post 384.

Gonsorowski, Hubert, 86, Army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Jan. 11, 2014. He served in a motor pool surveying the 49th Parallel. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

LaValla, Clifford Fabian, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 4, 2013. He served as a medic and an ambulance driver in Africa, Sicily, Anzio Beach and southern France. He was a member of North St. Paul Post 39.

Schmidt, Norbert Anton, 94, veteran of World War II, died Dec. 12, 2013. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Olson, Wallace Marvin "Pete," 91, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 17, 2013. He was a flight instructor. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Wenner, Cyril John Henry "Sonny," 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 29, 2013. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Abts, Norris P., Army veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, died Jan. 12, 2014. He ended his 38-year career as a brigadier general. He served on three continents, earned the Distinguished Service Medal, and was known as an expert in logistics and NATO. He was a member of Winona Post 9.



HPNC Richard Pedro

Richard M. Pedro, 87, longtime adjutant for the Department of New York, died Jan. 10, 2014. Pedro was strongly involved in the national American Legion and was considered one of the policy makers of the organization. In 2013, he was named an Honorary Past National Commander, an honor accorded to only a handful over the years.

Pedro was a Navy veteran of World War II serving aboard the USS Weiss. He joined Owego Post 401 in New York in 1949. He retired as New York's adjutant this past year.

Fyten, Ronald, 71, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 3, 2014. He served as a machinist. He was a member of Pierz Post 341.

Veit, Leo, 89, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 3, 2014. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Veigel, Don, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 21, 2013. He served on both sides of the ocean. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Brinkmann, Delbert, 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 17, 2013. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Martin, Richard E., Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 15, 2014. He was a member of Blue Earth Post 89.

Katchmark, Bernard J., 80, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 26, 2013. He was a member of Sturgeon Lake Post 361.

Kruger, Donald R., 81, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 31, 2013. He was a member of Apple Valley Post 1776.

Becker, Robert J., 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 18, 2013. He was wounded in action in April 1945 and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. He was a member of Blooming Prairie Post 52.

Schnitzer, Lloyd, 77, Army Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 13, 2014. He was a member of Villard Post 175.

Forsberg, Maynard "Dave," 89, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 11, 2014. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Asmus, Ordel Paul, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 17, 2014. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Sova, Jerome A., 81, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 19, 2014. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Listening Post



VETERANS RIDE -- Nearly 100 veterans and family members and club trail guides took part in the 2014 Veterans Appreciation Ride at Madelia. The Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association sponsored the event. The Madelia Legion Post commander is holding the flag.

News from around the State



OWATONNA SHOOTERS -- Members of the Owatonna Top Shots competed in the U.S. Army National Junior Air Rifle Championships in Mendota Heights. The shooters are sponsored by Owatonna Post 77 Junior Shooting Sports. From left are Parker Adams (16th) Tanner Cummins (20th) and Cody Rehman (13th).

World War II Round Table at Fort Snelling

So why did Germany lose World War II?

So why did Germany lose World War II?

Jonathon House, a professor of military history at the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, said historians have mostly got the answer to that question wrong through the years.

House, speaking at the January meeting of the World War II Round Table at Fort Snelling, said there are generally three explanations why, four years after the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, the Soviet flag was flying from the Reichstag in Berlin.

- ◆ Hitler was an amateur who constantly interfered with his generals and disregarded their advice.
- ◆ The weather and terrain were too much to deal with.
- ◆ The outnumbered German Army was overcome by wave after wave of Red Army soldiers.

House, the co-author of *Clash of the Titans*, a history of the war between Germany and the Soviet Union, said that often Americans don't understand the scale and importance of what is generally called the Eastern Front.

"Eight out of 11 German soldiers who were killed in the war were killed at the hands of the Soviets."

Even the fact that the conflict in the west is called the Eastern Front is a puzzle to House. "Doesn't the winner usually get to name the war? Shouldn't it be the 'Western Front' or what the Russians called it: 'The Great Patriotic War?'"

House first takes on the notion that Hitler was to blame. "You would believe that nobody else ever made a decision in Germany. Generally, heads of state create overall policy, but do not make all the decisions."

He used the example of the Holocaust, the extermination of the Jewish people in Europe. "Hitler may have made the policy, but there were an awful lot of people involved."

Moreover, House said, there is considerable evidence that Hitler did listen to his commanders, including their advice on invading the Soviet Union in June of 1941. "All the generals agreed that the Soviets could be knocked out in a matter of weeks. The only people who didn't agree were the logisticians."

"The supply guys looked at the map. Amateurs will usually talk about tactics, but the professionals talk about logistics. The German logisticians determined that the advance into Russia would run out of supplies at about 700 kilometers, or about 500 miles. They would run out of ammo, fuel, spare parts. The armor would have to stop and wait for the infantry to catch up."

Which was just about exactly what happened.

A major problem for the Germans was the vast area of the Soviet Union that the Nazis were trying to conquer had few major highways. Compounding the supply problem was that the railroads in Russia were a different gauge. "They had to rebuild every foot of that track. And, as the Soviets retreated, they destroyed all the water towers, tracks and rolling stock."

So, unlike the earlier Blitzkrieg, where the German tanks rolled through parts of Europe in a matter of weeks, the 1941 Operation Barbarossa was described as "lunge forward. Stop. Lunge forward. Stop again."

House also blames the Germans for having a weak notion of what they were trying to accomplish. "How do you conquer a country that spans 12 time zones? What was their goal? Even if they captured Moscow, there's no indication the Soviets would have quit. Napoleon captured Moscow, and that didn't mean anything. The Germans had a very vague mission statement."

House argues that at both Kursk and Stalingrad, two massive battles that pretty much turned the tide of the war, Hitler did listen to his generals. They were wrong. Goering told Hitler that the army, encircled at Stalingrad, could be supplied by air. It couldn't. Sometimes the experts make mistakes."

Another factor in the fighting between Germany and the Soviet Union was brutal hostility between the sides. "Neither side could tolerate the other side's survival."

House said the Germans were so confident, they were not ready for a winter campaign. "With the poor supply lines, they could either send winter gear and equipment or they could send fuel and ammo. They couldn't do both."

Sure enough, he said, the Germans ran out of gas, literally, when they reached Smolensk, almost exactly 700 kilometers from the starting point – just as the logisticians had predicted.

House said the armored lead element could have pressed forward, but it would have exposed the rear elements to flank attacks. "The whole thing was pretty unrealistic if you think about it."

As for being outnumbered, there was never any doubt that a nation of 80 million that's attacking a nation of 165 million would be outnumbered. "But you never hear anything about Germany being outnumbered when they were winning."

The only thing that allowed Germany to have such easy



Hitler reviews the troops early in the war as the Nazi Army blitzkrieged through Poland. Hitler has been blamed for poor military decisions throughout the war.

success early in Barbarossa was that the Soviet Union was totally unprepared for war. There had been a major purge of senior officers during the prior two years. Junior officers were commanding large groups of soldiers.

"The junior officers, as would be expected, were cautious, by the book. It was the only way to protect yourself when you were at your own court martial."

Every other aspect of the Red Army was also caught in flux at the time of the invasion. "You name it, they're in transition. They were constantly adjusting. It's amazing they held it all together."

But as the war ground on, those junior officers became senior officers. "It was pure Darwinism, survival of the fittest. Those Soviet commanders who survived knew what they were doing. The easy German victories disappeared."

The longer the war went on, the more the numbers favored the Soviet Union. "Germany basically had no reservists while the Soviet Union had 14 million reservists. You can continue to make war as long as you have 19-year-olds who think they are bullet-proof."

By the later stages of the war, the average age of a German officer was 58 while the average age of a Soviet officer was 44. "A lot of the German officers weren't up to it anymore, while the Soviet officers were just hitting their prime."

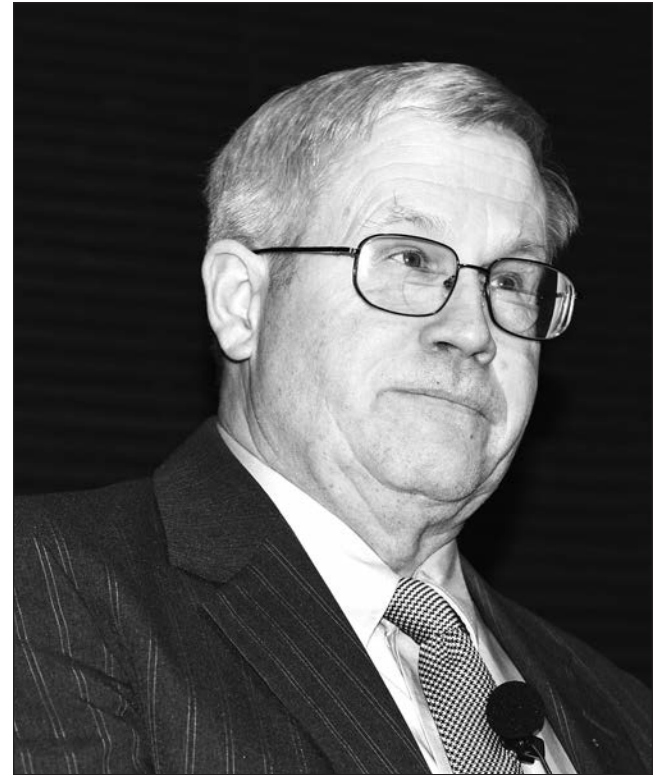
House said it wasn't just lack of numbers that did in the German effort. In large part it was because the Red Army used superior tactics and strategy. The Soviets were able to concentrate their forces where they needed to be concentrated.

And, in the end, the Soviets turned around the German blitzkrieg strategy for their own benefit. "The Soviets called it 'rapid exploitation of the rear.'"

At the conclusion of the war, it wasn't Hitler's blundering, the weather or the numbers that necessarily defeated Germany. It was poor decision-making in the field and in planning the attack, it was the mistake of not listening to the

logisticians who foresaw the limits of the attack, and it was the ability of the Soviets to survive the initial onslaught and use their youth and on-the-job experience to outmaneuver the German Army as time went by.

"The Red Army's skills were just as important as their numbers. The Soviets simply caught up."



PROFESSOR JONATHON HOUSE
Speaker at the January Round Table



Soviet Army soldiers display their flag in Berlin in 1945.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 14-7

President Shirley Frederick

February 2014

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Shirley Frederick



As I am writing this the wind chill is -35 and going deeper in the icebox. So am hoping that as you read this we are back to a more normal winter temperature and that each of you have a winter survival can in your car and keep it updated on a regular basis.

Our Department National Security Chairman Raleen sent out a flyer with this information on it in an earlier Unit Mailing. If you did not see it please ask your Unit President for a copy of it. Make copies and post around town also.

Our veterans and service men and women need us to keep contacting our elected officials until they get it right.

We cannot let them balance the budget on the backs of the ones that have been and are serving our Country to keep us safe in a free Country. They gave and are giving of themselves not knowing when or if they would come home ok or not.

February is Americanism Month, a great time to take those educational comic books to your schools. Read them at home to your children and grandchildren.

Talk with them about Americanism, patriotism, freedom, our Flag, the Liberty Bell, the Statue of Liberty, The Constitution of the United States of America, the Bill of Rights and our responsibility relating to each of these.

It is Mid-Winter Conference time, Sweetheart Membership Rally, and time to be contacting your schools with information about the Girls State Program.

What a great gift to our young ladies to be able to attend this wonderful program teaching them hands on about how our government works.

All scholarship applications are due March 15th. March is Community Service Month. Give a helping hand to our veterans, service men and women and their families in your community.

How often do you stop to thank a veteran for his/her service. Remember not only the injured veteran in the VA Hospital but the family also needs comforting and help and a kind word. It is also the American Legions Birthday.

Patriotism: Thank out veterans -- teach our children.

Auxiliary Membership as of Jan. 22, 2014

District	1-22 Total	Percent	Goal
First	4,561	80.33	5,678
Second	4,559	83.61	5,453
Third	3,935	80.92	4,863
Fourth	646	76.90	840
Fifth	815	77.99	1,045
Sixth	5,508	80.01	6,799
Seventh	3,631	82.09	4,423
Eighth	1,484	77.21	1,922
Ninth	4,079	84.59	4,822
Tenth	4,453	77.13	5,773
Depart.	109	65.66	166
Total	33,780	67.88	41,784

Department Junior meeting to be held at Hopkins Post

The 51st Annual Department Junior Conference will be held April 11-12 at the Hopkins American Legion Post 320 hosted by the Tenth District.

We are hoping that a large number of the Junior members are able to attend and participate. If your Juniors have never attended a Department Junior Conference, plan to join us this year. Junior members will enjoy a "fun night" on Friday, April 11th, the night before the opening of the Conference. The 10th District has been working hard to make this a special evening for the Junior members.

On Saturday the Conference will be called to order at 9 a.m. by Kaitlin Fernlund, the Department Honorary Junior President. This is a day when the Juniors become reacquainted with each other, make new friends, learn how to conduct a meeting and participate in it. This meeting is a junior Conference and the junior members run it. They are very capable young women.

The "Call to Conference" was included in the January Unit mailing, giving you all the details. Junior Activities Chairmen, please obtain this information from your Unit President so you can make your plans to have your Juniors attend. You do not need to have an organized Junior group to participate. All Juniors are welcome. The information is also posted on our website mnaala.org

Housing is available at the Minnetonka Marriott Southwest, as per the information in the Call to the Conference.

The Department Honorary Junior President Kaitlin has chosen to raise monies for craft kits for the St. Cloud Veterans Home to be used for the Creative Arts Festival. Please bring your donation to the Conference so Kaitlin can finalize her project.

AMERICANISM MONTH

February is Americanism month. Chairman Jean Walker has put various aspects of this most important program in the February Unit mailing. All members should strive to be a patriot through Unit involvement in community events. Encourage and get involved with your youth to teach them the importance of Americanism. Work closely with The American Legion and their Americanism programs.

POPPY CARDS AND POPPY DAYS

Those Districts within the Twin City seven-county area met in September with the VFW to determine Poppy Card Days and Poppy Days for all Units and Posts in the area.

Poppy Card Days will be held April 18 - 27, 2014, inclusive for closed territories, starting at 12:01 a.m. on April 18. Beginning April 28 Poppy Cards maybe distributed anywhere right up until Poppy Day. Poppy Cards may be distributed within the confines of one's own Post home to members and patrons only on Thursday evening, April 17 - if the Cards are hung on the wall of the Post Home and NO distributed Cards leave the building on Thursday evening.

Poppy Days will be May 16 - 17, 2014, beginning at 12:01 a.m. on May 16. Closed territories are in effect until noon on Friday, May 16.

This "gentlemen's" agreement involves the VFW, VFWA, the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Posts and Units. Everyone's cooperation is necessary to ensure a successful Poppy program. Please do not distribute any Poppy Cards and/or Poppies prior to these dates. This applies to all Posts and Units in the seven-county metropolitan area (Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota, Carver, Scott and Anoka counties).

POPPY ORDERS

Shipping of 2014 Poppy orders began last fall as orders were received and Poppies were available. All orders are shipped according to the "need by" date indicated when the order was placed. Orders are shipped by first class mail.

Upon receipt of your Poppies please check it carefully. Contact the department office with any discrepancies. If your Unit has already ordered Poppies, but needs more, please order again. Units may place as many Poppy orders as they want to.

If you haven't placed your Poppy order yet, please do so. We need to finalize the number of Poppies needed for this year's Poppy distribution so we can plan accordingly. Let's have 100% Unit participation in the Auxiliary Poppy program. Remember our Poppies are made by our veterans and they receive a small compensation for their work. Let's support their efforts.

Don't save your Poppies just for Poppy Day. Use them throughout the year. Let's make this a Poppy year in recognition of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice to keep America free.

RENEW, RECRUIT, REJOIN

It's time to turn our attention to winding up our 2014 membership drive. By now, every Unit should have at least 80% of their Unit membership goal, and be well on their way to 85% which is milestone number 4 - February 1. Congratulations to the 203 Units who have already exceeded the 85% milestone and more importantly the 43 Units who have reached 100% or more. Let's have the rest of the Units reach/exceed its membership goal by April 15th, the same date annual reports are due. It can be done with every member making personal contact and finding missing members. Thank you to all the Units that brought membership to their Mid-Winter Conference or have sent membership in on a regularly weekly basis. Even one or two members per transmittal are important. Don't hold on to them.

Our Department Membership Chairman, Barbara Klehr, asks every Unit and District to use "Renew, Recruit and Rejoin" and make the February 1st milestone. Let's show Barbara what we can do! Keep up the good work!! Keep sending the membership in on a regular basis. We have been holding on to 2nd place in the Nation for quite a while and don't want to give up our spot. We are currently in 1st place in the Northwestern Division!

The National organization has sent out second notices to those Senior members who had not renewed their membership for 2014. Please disregard this notice if you have now paid your 2014 dues. We hope every Unit will once again contact their non-renewals and remind them their "dues are due". If your District President and Membership team can be of assistance to your Unit, please let them know. They are most willing to help.

UNIT TREASURERS

If your Post has gambling funds and has voted to support Auxiliary program such as Girls State, ALA Hospital Program, \$5.00 Bill Shower, etc, please note. All post gambling checks must be made payable to "The American Legion Foundation - Fund 83," not to The American Legion, not to the American Legion Auxiliary. If a check is not made payable to The American Legion Foundation - Fund 83, the check will be returned to the Unit so it can be reissued payable to The American Legion Foundation.

2015 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Gosh, it seems that these months go by so fast — in the February Unit mailing, every Unit received a notice asking for the amount of your Unit's 2015 Senior and Junior dues, and the name and address of the person whose name should appear on your Unit's 2015 dues' notices. Please make sure this information gets back to Sandie at the Department Office by March 15. There are no increases in dues at either the National or Department level this year.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Just a reminder all applications for any Department and National scholarships must be received in the department office by March 15. Let your schools know they are available and provide them with the application forms. They are also posted on our website for your convenience. If additional copies are needed, you may duplicate those you have received or contact the Department office.

SOS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed in all phases of our programs. Do you have a few hours you can donate to a veteran and his/her family? If so, contact your Unit Veterans Affairs

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

and Rehabilitation Chairman, your Field Service Chairman or the Hospital/Home Representative in your area. The needs are great and growing all the time. A few hours working in your own home under our Home Service program would be appreciated, i.e., cutting/sorting stamps, sewing items for our hospitalized veterans, etc. This is what our organization is all about so let's each do our part.

PRESIDENT'S MEMORY BOOK

If our Department President Shirley has attended an Auxiliary or Legion function in your community, be certain to share with her through her Memory Book Chairman any pictures, newspaper articles, etc. that pertain to her visit. You may send these directly to: Wanda Anderson, 28037 Everton Creek Rd. NE, Blackduck, MN 56632 or email them to Wanda at cwander@paulbunyan.net. You can also send them to the department office and we will forward them for you. With your help Shirley will have many memorable moments to look back on and enjoy for years to come.

UNIT ANNUAL REPORTS

Unit Annual Reports have been mailed to each Unit in January. All reports, instruction sheets and history paper will be in one envelope. If you don't receive this envelope, contact the department office immediately. Please note: The Unit reports cover the period from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

Reports should be distributed to your Unit Chairmen now so they can familiarize themselves with them prior to report time and be ready to write their own report. The reports are very different from the past, same information different format. Please read the instructions and if you have questions please call the Department Office.

All Unit reports are due on or before April 15. Reports are important. Let's hear from every Unit.

GIRLS STATE

Now is the time to send your \$300.00 fee to reserve a place for your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen(s). Cut-off for reservations is March 31. Upon receipt of your reservation fee (\$300.00 per girl) you will receive the needed registration packet(s).

Enrollment is limited to the first 445 applications received. The name of the girl, information sheet, enrollment card, pledge and order form for the citizen's Capitol Day polo-shirt must be into the Department office by May 1.

There is no restriction as to the number of delegates a Unit may send to American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State from their high school(s). The delegate must be a Minnesota resident, or attend a Minnesota school.

Each high school principal has received a mailing pertaining to American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Contact your high school now and let them know if you will be sponsoring a girl. High schools may not register a girl on their own. All American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizens must be sponsored by an American Legion Auxiliary Unit.

American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held June 15-20, 2014 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. This year will be very exciting with many new changes in store.

TESTIMONIAL DATES

The following are the District Presidents' Testimonial dates.

- District 1 - Jill Mueller, March 23, LaCrescent
 - District 2 - Jeannette Mertens, April 12, Redwood Falls
 - District 3- JoAnne Joachim, June 7, Chanhassen
 - District 4- Paula Davis, April 25, Eagles Club-St. Paul
 - District 5- Annette Bray, May 3, Mpls.-Richfield Post
 - District 6-Diane Gustad, May 3, Park Rapids
 - District 7-Pat Ecker, May 3, Browns Valley
 - District 8-Betty Manginen, June 30, Grand Rapids
 - District 9-Jen Morken
 - District 10-Donna Redepning, May 4, Anoka
- Contact the District President listed for more information.

Our Department President Shirley Frederick's Testimonial will be held on Saturday, May 31 at the Northern Lights Casino in Walker, Minnesota. Information was put in the February Unit Mailing and will again be in a future mailing. Please, let's all support our wonderful President Shirley and make this a very special day for her. She puts her heart and soul in our organization and all the programs we support.

Girls State will be held from June 15-20

Information about the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State June 15-20, 2014 session was mailed to each high school on January 7th. The schools are waiting to be contacted by your Unit American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State chairman, so don't keep them waiting. If you have not contacted the high school guidance counselor or principal yet, please do so as soon as possible. American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State is a unique patriotic program that is only sponsored through the American

Legion Auxiliary. Contact your local newspaper and write an article about what American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State is, in order to inform your community about the great opportunity that is just around the corner for a girl (s) in your community to have an experience of a life time by participating and working together to learn how local and state government works. The registration fee is \$300 per girl. If your Unit does not have the funds, consider a fundraiser such as; a bake sale, a dinner or silent auction, etc. Perhaps your post has gam-

bling funds that they might be willing to use for the registration fee. The best way to promote the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State program in your community is to let the public know about our program. The "news" this year is that the location of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State has moved to the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul and the girls will be going home on Friday evening rather than Saturday. Our goal is to have at least 400 girls attend this year. Please help us meet our goal.



SUZETTE MALUCHNIK
Girls State Chairman

February is always Americanism Month

February is Americanism Month

The love of country, patriotism and responsible citizenship.

American Legion Auxiliary is dedicated to promoting patriotism in the community through a variety of activities and programs, including the observance of patriotic holidays, flag etiquette and distribution, education of our youth about history and voting and support of veterans, service members and their families.

Here are some of the programs we support:

Promote community awareness of yellow ribbon reintegration programs more information at www.armyfrg.org.

Participate in the Pocket Flag project by providing flags for deploying troops

at pocketflagproject.com or write Pocket Flag Project PO Box 740847 Arvada, CO 80006

Participate in the Get Out The Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns more information at www.legion.org/vote and www.kidsvotingusa.org.

The American Legion Americanism programs: American Legion Baseball, Oratorical Contest and the Junior Shooting Sports.

The American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Awards: Americanism Essay Contest, Department Awards, Dorothy Pearl Plaque, and Junior Americanism Award more information on these awards are in the Unit Guide. Our National website www.alaforveterans.org has an abundance of information on Americanism, go

to the programs tab and then go to the Americanism tab and you will find all kinds of helpful member resources and Web Links.

The American Legion Auxiliary's number 1 objective: Promote the American Legion Auxiliary's values of Americanism through community education about flag etiquette and respect by demonstrating leadership in support of our country and our military.

Proud to be an American I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.



JEAN WALKER
Americanism Chairman

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