

The Minnesota American Legion and Auxiliary



Legionnaire

Volume 97, Number 5

For God and Country

May 2015

New theme for contest: Historic post photos

With the centennial of The American Legion approaching, this year's calendar photo contest will have a new theme: historic post pictures.

The National organization is encouraging all posts to create their own post history in the next couple of years as part of the 100th birthday of the Legion.

The contest will follow the centennial theme. The contest will be judged on the quality of a photograph from a post's history. Emphasis will be on those photos that reach back into a post's history, and to recent events.

An entry could be a post event, a talent contest, a drum and bugle corps, a parade, a picnic, a charter signing or any-

thing else that portrays the post's history in a serious or humorous way.

The winner will receive \$300 for first prize. The second place will be \$200 and third place will be \$150.

All 12 winners will have their photo in the 2016 Department of Minnesota calendar.

Entries are due by July 1.

Entrants can submit up to three pictures. Those entering must be a paid-up member in the American Legion Family: Legion, Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion.

As in past years, entrants should not submit original photos. They should be scanned. No photos will be returned.

All photos that are submitted electronically should have a resolution of at least 200 dpi. The technical quality of the photograph will be part of the judging.

"With the emphasis on our history and our future as part of the centennial celebration, this seemed like a natural change to the photo contest," Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl said. "As posts are looking for these old, classic photos, maybe they can start researching their post histories."

In the past few years, members were asked to send in photos they took in the service. Before that, it was a gener-

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Convention slated for Redwood Falls on July 16-18

The 2015 Department Convention will be held at Jackpot Junction Casino near Redwood Falls. The Legion and Auxiliary Conventions are sponsored by Redwood Falls Post and Unit 38.

The convention will begin Thursday, July 16, and conclude Saturday, July 18, with the election of officers. A gaming seminar will be held at 2 p.m. July 16.

A registration form is on Page 3 of this issue.

Registration is \$15 per person until July 1, and \$18 thereafter.

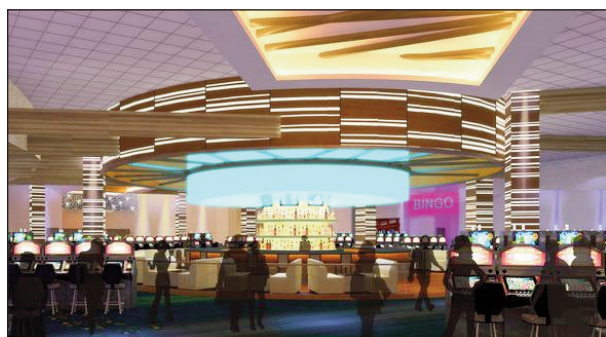
The official headquarters for the convention is the Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel. Those attending the convention must make their own housing arrangements with the hotel, 507-697-8000 or 800-946-2274.

Room reservations are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Rooms will be \$75 per night plus tax. Deadline for reservations to get the Legion rate is June 15.

The hotel also has RV sites. There are other hotels in the Redwood Falls area.

The convention will conduct the annual business of the Minnesota American Legion.

There will be a Department Executive Committee meeting preceding the convention at 7 p.m. Wednesday on July 15. A parade will be held Friday.



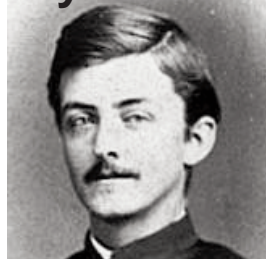
The annual convention will be at Jackpot Junction.

Minnesota AAA donates \$50,000 to Legionville



AAA DONATION -- Minnesota AAA recently made a \$50,000 donation to Legionville Safety Patrol Camp near Brainerd. From left, front: Sandie Deutsch, Auxiliary Secretary; Chris Ronning, Auxiliary President; Jesse Garbow, Minnesota State Patrol; Gail Weinholzer, Director of Public Affairs, Minnesota AAA; Wayne Gilbertson, President of Legionville; Gene Leifeld, Vice President of Legionville; Dennis Henkemeyer, SAL Commander. In back: Marland Ronning, Alternate NECman; Joe Jansen, 4th District Representative; Richard Zahn, Eighth District Representative; Randy Tesdahl, Department Adjutant; Bruce Harms, 40/8 Representative; Jim Blakesley, School Patrol Chairman; Dennis DeLong, Fifth District Representative. Story on Page 2.

Minnesota American Legion Military Hall of Fame

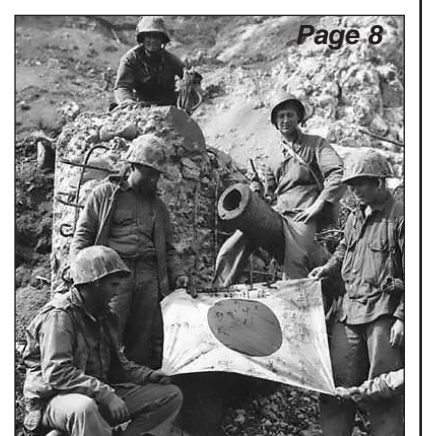


Thomas Gere
of Chatfield

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A MARINE IN THE PACIFIC

LEFTY LEE OF WINONA



Page 8



SGT. MARK FICCADENTI

Peace officer, fireman of year chosen by Legion

Public servants from St. Paul and Clear Lake were chosen as the 2015 Minnesota American Legion Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer and Outstanding Firefighter.

Sgt. Mark Ficcamenti of the St. Paul Police Department was sponsored by North End Post 474.

Ficcamenti has served on the force since 1984, and he is currently a supervisor in the Western District Patrol. He is a 1979 graduate of St. John's University.

His work at the St. Paul Police Department includes a long stint as a lead trainer for police dogs. He has trained hundreds of handlers and dogs from all over the country.

His patrol area includes an area of high West African and East African immigrant population. He has been instrumental in urging young Somalis and Oromos to consider police work as a career.

He has also worked at bringing the community and police together through a traditional cookout, and he has reached out to the local

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CAPT. BARRY SCHULD

New photo contest

Continued from Page 1

al photo contest with a patriotic theme.

The winners will be announced in the August issue of the Legionnaire.

The rules include:

1. All photos must concern the history of a specific post. Family members can submit photos from an immediate family member, as long as the person submitting is a current member of the Legion, Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion. For instance, a Legion Family member can submit a photo taken by a grandfather several decades ago. Photos can be submitted by a current member, even though the photographer is unknown.

2. Photos may be entered by mailing them to the Department: Room 300A, 20 West 12th Street, St. Paul, MN 55155. Or emailing to azdon@mnlegion.org. Again, do not send original photographs. Photos will not be returned. Please mark the outside of the envelope or the subject line as "Photo Contest."

3. Entries will be judged not only on the unique quality and interest in the photo, but also by its technical merit.

4. All entries must be postmarked by June 30, 2015, or have been emailed by July 1, 2015.

5. All photos must be original and copyright free and be available to be printed in the calendar without legal encumbrance.

6. All entries must contain as much relevant data as possible, such as who, what, where and when. If there's a story that goes with the photo, please send it along.

7. Photographs may be from any time frame, but older photos will be given priority judging.

8. The limit per person is three photographs.

9. Those submitting must include their name, which Legion organization they belong to, their Legion, Auxiliary or SAL ID number, their address, and their contact information including phone or email.

10. The person who took the photo should be identified, and any entrants should submit any other information that is available.

Any questions, please call Al Zdon at 651-291-1800 or 1-866-259-9163. Or email: azdon@mnlegion.org.

VA eliminates net worth as determiner of priority group

The Veterans Administration has eliminated net worth as a method of determining health care priority group assignment.

A veteran's net worth could determine if they were in Priority Group 5, 7 or 8.

Letters will be sent to veterans whose status may change because of the elimination of net worth. Some veterans may now be eligible for higher priority status, which would eliminate the co-pay requirement.

Veterans can fill out form 10-10EZ for new consideration. Net worth was the market value of land and buildings, cash in the bank, retirement money, and other assets.

Officers of the Year

Continued from Page 1

mosques to strengthen a relationship with the city.

"Sgt. Mark Ficcadenti has demonstrated and displayed exceptional leadership, initiative and a professional competence and unusual devotion to duty to effectively plan and execute multiple projects in 2014 to further the SPPD's core fundamentals of pride, professionalism and partnership," said Police Chief Thomas Smith.

Ficcadenti has two sons who also serve in the St. Paul Police Department. He is a member of the Cathedral Parish and has been active as an usher and in security.

He was vice president of the United States Police Canine Association.

Barry Schuldt is a captain of the Clear Lake Fire Department. He has been a member of the department for 35 years, and has been captain for over 20 years. He recently became an assistant chief.

He is known in Clear Lake for his mentoring skills, helping junior firefighters learn the job and responsibilities.

He is certified in over 20 areas of fire fighting training.

"He has helped shaped this fire department to make it the exceptional fire department it is today," said Ron Koren, fire chief.

He and his wife, Brenda, have three children and two grandchildren. He grew up in Clear Lake and attended St. Cloud Tech High School.

Professionally, he is a carpenter foreman for Braxton and Sons. He was recently named Firefighter of the Year for his Department.

Both Ficcadenti and Schuldt will be invited to the Department Convention this year at Redwood Falls to receive their awards.

Both will also be candidates for the national peace officer and firefighter awards given by The American Legion each year.

AAA contributes \$50,000 to Legionville

The Auto Club Group's AAA Minnesota/Iowa presented a \$50,000 check to the Legionville Board of Directors for the facility's new learning center.

Legionville has been constructing the new center for the past three years, and it is nearing completion. It will be used this summer for the Legionville Safety Patrol Camp.

Legionville is located on North Long Lake near Brainerd and each year brings in over 800 middle school-aged campers to learn about Safety Patrol, bus safety, patriotism and other skills.

The campers also participate in team sports, swimming, canoeing and other recreational activities.

The new center replaces the old barn facility that had to be torn down for safety reasons.

The center is also used for disabled veteran outdoor events, scouting events and Legion meetings.

Begun in 1956 as a program of the Minnesota Department of The American Legion, Legionville is the only school patrol camp in the nation. Many of its classes are taught by the Minnesota State Patrol which has supported Legionville since its inception.

The AAA School Safety Patrol program began in the 1920's and has since spread not only across the country, but to at least 30 other nations as well.

The weeklong camp has been kept quite inexpensive

at \$250 for first time campers and \$300 for alumni campers by contributions by local Posts and Auxiliary Units.

"AAA Minnesota/Iowa is thrilled to be able to support such a worthwhile school safety patrol camp which is operated by the American Legion and supported by the Minnesota State Patrol," said Gail Weinholzer, director of public affairs, The Auto Club Group.

"The AAA School Safety Patrol program is a key program for our national organization and one of the first and best opportunities we have to build leadership skills with youth in our society."

"The Minnesota Department of The American Legion is pleased to accept this generous gift from AAA Minnesota/Iowa. It will support our mission of educating youth in school safety patrol skills as well as help them develop leadership skills to take back to their communities," said Wayne M. Gilbertson, president, Legionville School Safety Patrol Training Center.

"The Minnesota State Patrol appreciates the assistance of AAA Minnesota/Iowa in our efforts to educate and train the youth across our state. It is through this collaborative effort, that the American Legion and the Minnesota State Patrol, can provide safety patrol training to students in our state," said Lt. Tiffani Nielson, public information officer.



LEGION PROVIDES TABLET -- Operation Comfort Warriors provided a Samsung Galaxy Tab Pro to Perrish Stark, who was on active duty with the Army when he was in a vehicle accident. He is at the Minneapolis VA Hospital undergoing treatment for traumatic brain injury. The Tab Pro will be used to assist his cognitive development and rehab. Assistant Service Office Jeremy Wolfsteller, right, presented the Pro Tab. Minneapolis VA Director Patrick Kelly is on the left.

VA DISABILITY APPEALS



TOM HAGEN
ATTORNEY & VETERAN

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Help for veterans and families

Endorsements

Wog endorsed for Department Chaplain

Spicer Post 545 has endorsed Richard Wog for 2015-16 Department Chaplain.

He served in the Army during the Vietnam era and retired from the National Guard in October 2001 as a Command Sergeant Major.

Wog has been a member of Spicer Post for 37 years. He served as an officer of all the chairs and served as

Commander for three consecutive years (2008 through 2011) and is currently serving on the Executive Committee.

Richard also served as Seventh District Sergeant at Arms, Area C Vice Commander and Vice Commander at Large. He served as District Commander in 2011 and 2012 and is currently serv-

ing a five year term on the Strategic Planning Committee.

He has been actively involved in the Eagles. Wog is an active member of Calvary Lutheran Church.

He is currently with Henry's Foods. He has been married to his wife Cheryl for 51 years and they have four sons and eleven grandchildren.



RICHARD WOG

Johnson endorsed for 10th District Cdr.

Rudolph Priebe Post 172 has endorsed Bill Johnson, a 20 plus year member of the American Legion, for the position of 10th District Commander.

Johnson has served as Post Commander, Historian, as well as 1st and 2nd Post Vice Commanders.

At the district level, he is currently serving as Membership Director, and

prior to that as the District Adjutant for 3 years.

He has also served as a Vice-Commander, Children and Youth Officer, and Employment Chair.

At the Department Level, Bill served as the Children and Youth Chairman.

Besides being heavily involved in the Legion, he is also a member of the VFW and DAV. As the a

representative, he served three years on the Board of Operation Military Kids.

While attending Hennepin Technical College, he was elected President of the Veterans Student Organization.



BILL JOHNSON



County restores Boy in Blue

On May 30, 1893, the citizens of Blue Earth County dedicated a Civil War monument at Lincoln Park in Mankato. Over the years, storm damage and vandalism took a toll on the Boy in Blue statue that paid homage to the Civil War veterans from the county. It was torn down in 1927. On May 30, 2015, a brand new Boy in Blue monument will be dedicated in Lincoln Park at 10 a.m. Over \$180,000 was raised in the county to create an exact replica of the original Boy in Blue (above). The new monument will recognize the sacrifices of all Blue Earth County veterans and will honor again the Civil War veterans. There will be a short parade just before the dedication. Mankato Post 11 has been strongly involved in the project.

American Legion Riders

By Scuffy Paulson



Greetings from the Minnesota American Legion Riders. My name is Scuffy Paulson, president of the MNALR. The MNALR is a board of representatives from the ten American Legion districts. Each district has an ALR representative that relays information back and forth between the districts as well as Department. Jody Hassing is the secretary of the MNALR. We as a collective are known as the MNALR.

Our primary purpose is communication and bringing awareness to veteran issues. We provide a number of different services to veterans and their families in our communities.

Our goal is to honor every veteran's service to his/her country and acknowledge the sacrifices families have made while their loved ones served our great country and to assist them with anything they may need while their loved one is deployed.

The American Legion Riders were originally formed in 1993 in Garden City, Michigan. Since that time ALR chapters have been popping up all over the nation as well as

abroad. Deer River American Legion Post 122 is home to the 1st ALR chapter in the state of Minnesota formed in 2002. ALR chapters throughout the state of Minnesota have been popping up ever since.

You can see them standing in flag lines at veteran funerals, in parades, doing toy drives, making donations to multiple different organizations, cancer telethons, local food shelf, adopt a troop, DAV, Wounded Warrior Project and local schools -- just to name a few.

We also participate in several charitable runs/benefit rides throughout the year including our own American Legion Legacy Scholarship run to raise money for the children of our veterans who have given the ultimate sacrifice. It is with great pride I can say that Minnesota has set the bar raising over \$87,000 last year to turn in at National convention (#1 in the nation). Great job, Riders, and all American Legion Family members who support the ALR and the Legacy Scholarship Fund.

We will be writing a small column every month in the Legionnaire to attempt to keep everyone up to date on the latest and greatest in the MNALR world. Next month will feature the MNALR Legacy run with stops and dates that we have so far. Legion posts can make donations to the run from their gambling accounts when using Fund 84 in the memo line. The checks must be made out to the Minnesota American Legion Foundation, Fund 84.

The run will be going through each District at some point. If you would like more info on the MNALR Legacy run contact Steve Sullivan, 952-237-8592. We have a web

page and we are always updating it (mnalr.org). Facebook American Legion Riders-Minnesota and MN ALR Legacy run.

1st district rep is Junkyard, 507-450-0955; 2nd, Chris 507-276-1717; 3rd, Robin, 651-238-4873; 4th, Wingbob, 612-801-0336; 5th, Shawn, 952-445-4516; 6th, Duane, 218-821-7314; 7th, Paul, 320-226-0259; 8th, Jeff, 218-349-5648; 9th, Gary, 701-314-0260; and 10th, Sully, 952-237-8592.

These Rep contacts are the best of my knowledge. Sometimes things change that I'm not aware of but I will do my best to update this list ASAP.

Thank you for your understanding if something on this list of reps is wrong. If you have questions about the MNALR feel free to call me at 507-450-8493.

Keep the shiny side up, brothers and sisters.

OFFICIAL CONVENTION PRE-REGISTRATION

A registration fee of \$15 for each person attending, whether a delegate, alternate or a guest, must accompany this form. Make this check payable to AMERICAN LEGION POST 38 with "Department Convention" in memo line. No credit cards will be accepted.

Registration at the door and after July 1 will be \$18.

Mail to:
Carrie Werner, Redwood Falls Post 38, Box 354, Redwood Falls, MN 56283.

Legion Post # _____ SAL Sqdn. _____ Auxiliary Unit _____

District _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____ Zip _____

Delegate Alternate Guest

Delegate at Large (Auxiliary)

(Please check one of the above.)

If additional pre-registrations accompany this request, this pre-registration form should be photo copied for each person. The \$15 registration fee should be enclosed for each person.

Please, only one registration blank per person.

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Peggy Moon



Happy Spring Legionnaires. The warmer weather has finally arrived, and we can put this long, cold winter behind us.

As I travel around the state visiting posts, I have listened to all of you plan your Memorial Day activities, and the true dedication to honor our veterans we have lost through the years. It's a time to say, "We miss you, and we won't forget you." Like many of you, I remember the veterans from my own little town who continued to "Serve America" after they returned home. They were the true leaders who reminded us each day the price paid to live in this wonderful land. They sacrificed much, and when they returned home, dedicated themselves to "God and Country." They volunteered on City Councils and in our schools. They were veterans helping veterans, and neighbors helping neighbors. May they rest in peace.

While traveling through Northern Minnesota this past weekend, I had the privilege to stop by a very unique memorial service in Mahanomen for a former Korean POW who died in captivity in 1951. His remains were finally identified in January of this year, and his family was notified. Can you imagine receiving that phone call? Sergeant Arnold Andring was only 24 when he died. The city of Mahanomen certainly put their caring arms around the family during this difficult time, and there was a strong presence of veterans paying their respect. I had the opportunity to talk with his sister, tell her The American Legion offered their sincere condolences, and are thankful that he is now at home. May he rest in peace.

We are at that time of year when we conduct our annual district conventions, and our posts are electing new leadership. Before you make that transition, have you completed all the work for this year? Have you filed your Post Consolidated Report? That's the record of your accomplishments and donations, and it is so important to pass this information to our National Organization. Show your pride, and complete the paperwork.

Also, where are you at in your membership program? I'm already hearing reports that some Posts are holding new memberships for next year. Why? We are still about 3,000 members short of our goal for this year. What message are you sending out to these new members? I can't imagine signing up for an organization, paying my dues, and having them tell me they don't need me until next year! I'm not sure that business model exists anywhere else. Please,



Commander Moon is recognized at the Joint Female Professional Development Training Symposium.

invite them into your Post Membership Program with open arms, and let them know they're appreciated. I'm sure we need their help! We still have seven months left to this year, and they are entitled to full membership!

Also, think about this. The Air and Army National Guard just held their first ever Joint Female Professional Development Forum recently at Metropolitan University. This was a one-day networking and mentorship program attended by approximately 350 soldiers and airmen. With the pending opening of all military occupations to women fast approaching, they want to retain females in the force, groom them for positions of greater responsibility in their careers, and recruit more women than ever before. Currently, there are about 500 female airmen in the Air National Guard, and 1,875 female soldiers in the Army Reserve National Guard. Minnesota wants to be ready for the next chapter. It was an honor to meet them.

It's time to get on the road again. As I've stated at all the Posts I have visited this year, you are The American Legion in Minnesota. With over 550 posts in our great state alone, the work that you do, the dedication to your communities, and the help you offer your fellow veterans represent the best of our Organization. I am so very proud of each and every one of you. Thank you for your service.

Now, back to the gas station to refuel. I just passed 31,000 miles on the car, and for the record, have gone through two tires, and have completely maxed out one GPS. Let the conventions begin. Until next month...

Chaplain's Corner

By Steve Klinkner



Our neighbor's son died, only 21 years old, a very outstanding young man. Anything he did, he gave his achievements 100% or more. As I was sitting in church, filled with his family, friends, and classmates, it was so hard to witness the sadness, and for his parents to have to say good-bye to their son. My father-in-law told me once that parents should never have to bury their children in their lifetime. I do have to agree with him on that statement. I haven't had to experience it and I hope I never have to, but only the Lord knows when he is going to call us to his Heavenly home.

We all know that a new Spring season is on the way following Easter with First Communions, Confirmations, Graduations, Weddings and Anniversaries. And of course with Spring, the new little "baby chicks" arrived! The grandkids have named the chicks and are always inquiring how they are doing. We have lost a few chicks but I told them, don't get discouraged, for it is the way of nature.

Discouragement is universal. No one is exempt from the dark cloud it casts over our lives. Great men of God - David, Job, Jeremiah, and even Jesus became discouraged. Discouragement can take on many forms and be caused by many things in life, such as family matters, relationships, or illness. There are moral failures in the battle between the flesh and the spirit and many times the flesh keeps winning. One may have among other things, a weakness to alcohol, drugs, dishonesty, or laziness. When we lose a battle, we lose heart and often become discouraged.

As shocking as it may seem, faithfulness to God and His word do not guarantee that one will not become discouraged. As matter of fact, the more one is involved in the work of the Lord, the greater, at times, his discouragement may be. Those who endeavor to teach God's truth to live faithfully as a Christian encounter many and varied discouragements.

We must remember that others before us have had their disappointments and discouragements. Jeremiah was met with almost unimaginable discouragements (Jer.9:2). Yet, in spite of all his longings to leave, he stood at his post of duty through the weary years, faithful to God even to the last. Jesus and his apostles faced many discouragements. He always told them to "lift up your eyes" no matter what happens in our lives; all will ultimately turn out well if we are faithful in doing the Lord's will. So must we.

Discouragement, you see, is a condition of mind, not one of outside circumstances. Happiness does not depend upon where you are, but upon what you are. Keeping in good spirits is not a question of circumstances about us but, rather, a question of what we are within ourselves.

We must be people of Prayer. Jesus always prayed when faced with a crisis situation. In the midst of many discouragements, Jesus calmly, serenely and thoughtfully, kept right on proclaiming the great truths of Heaven, doing the will of God and living the proper life. So must we.

The month of May brings about many Memorial Day programs, parades, and remembrances of honored Veterans. May we never forget the Freedom we enjoy each and every day because of the efforts that so many Veterans have sacrificed for us. Always keep our men and women that are serving our Country in your Prayers. "For God and Country."

Mail Call



Shadow Box
To the Editor,

My dad was a BM2 in the Navy stationed in Pearl Harbor when WWII ended in August of 1945. He was on the aircraft carrier USS Corregidor, CVE58, part of Carrier Division 24.

During his time in the service he accumulated many small items which he kept in a cigar box in his navy bag. The things he collected were novelties such as 5 cent tickets good at the NCO club in Honolulu, various pictures of the chaos in downtown Honolulu after the war ended, chevrons with different ranks on them, ribbons with battle stars on them, tobacco ration coupons, liberty passes. There was a ticket to the Breakers Dance on Aug 8, 1945 which was 2 days after the bombing of Hiroshima and 1 day before the Nagasaki bombing.

There were also some of his ships papers (the Corregidor

Boomerang) published monthly on mimeograph paper for the troops' entertainment. Included in the cigar box was a tattered top stripe of a flag that the Corregidor flew, perhaps in the Gilbert Islands, Guadalcanal, or Marshal Operations.

All of these items and many more treasures remained in his Navy bag until I recently resurrected them and made a shadow box which is now on display at the Pine City American Legion Post 51 where my dad was a 40-year member. Every time I go in the Legion and look at the items I get a feeling of satisfaction knowing that others can now admire the treasures my dad thought to preserve in his cigar box.

I encourage any of you out there that may have military items that could be of interest to others to display them proudly in your Legion instead of letting them sit unnoticed in a basement or attic.

John Hoyny Jr.
Pine City Post 51

Bowling Secretary
To the Editor:

John Torma is the current Secretary of the State Bowling Tournament. During this year's tournament, he also served as the chairman of the host site Osseo-Maple Grove Bowling Committee.

As some of his volunteers, we have seen first-hand how committed he was toward making this a success. His responsibilities were overwhelming at times when he also had personal and work challenges. Our feelings, along with other bowlers who participated, lead us to believe that his efforts were very successful. Thank you, John, for your leadership and efforts in making this year's tournament a success.

Tom and Cindy Kolm
Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172

The Minnesota **Legionnaire**

Official Publication of and Owned Exclusively by The American Legion, Department of Minnesota

Al Zdon, Editor

First published in 1920 as the Hennepin County Legionnaire, the Minnesota Legionnaire is now in its 95th year of publication. It is published monthly by The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, Room 300A, 20 West 12th Street, St. Paul, MN 55155-2000. Periodicals postage is paid at St. Paul, MN, and at additional mailing offices. The Legionnaire is a member of the Minnesota Newspaper Association and the National American Legion Press Association.

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What's Happening

VA Choice Seminar

The Minneapolis VA will be holding "Choice Classes" on May 15 from 9-10 a.m. at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and at all 13 CBOCs. The meeting will be in Room 1B 102 at the medical center with a teleconference connection to all the CBOCs. Experts will explain the choice options and will take questions from veterans.

Monument to be Dedicated

A monument honoring those who died in the wars will be dedicated on Memorial Day in Morris. The black granite monument has over 100 names engraved on it and it is placed next to the Veterans Memorial at Seventh Street and College Avenue. The dedication will be at 10 a.m. followed by ceremonies at the Armory and at the Memorial.

Tenth District Follow-up

The Tenth District will hold a follow-up revitalization on May 16-17. It will be held at the Osseo-Maple Grove Post from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday and noon-8:30 p.m. on Sunday. At-large members need to be transferred into local posts in the district.

From Monday, May 18, to Friday, May 22, the district will be contacting members who have let their membership lapse. The times and location of this event will be announced later.

If you would like to participate in either event, contact Bill Johnson at billdtm@yahoo.com or call 763-424-2229.

Family Day at Twins

The annual American Legion Family Day at the Minnesota Twins will be held Friday, May 15, at 7:10 p.m. vs. the Tampa Bay Rays.

The event will featured discounted Home Plate View seats for \$23, and scoreboard recognition for each post represented.

Department Commander Peggy Moon will throw out the first ball, and the flag raiser will be chosen by The American Legion.

To order tickets, call 1-800-33-TWINS and hit O to speak to an attendant. Make sure to reference the special American Legion promotion. All major credit cards are

accepted, and there will be a \$5 service charge for each order. Tickets will be mailed.

For more information, call Nick Corcoran at 612-659-4083 or email nickcorcoran@twinsbaseball.com.

Lift Available

A veteran wants to donate to a veteran in need a chair lift for transport from one level of the house to the next. It was rarely used. It's a Citia BOS chair with 15 feet of track. Call 763-561-7442.

Mentors needed

Ramsey County Veterans Court is seeking mentors who are assigned to veterans going through the veterans court process. The role of the mentor is to coach, guide and act as a role model and advocate for the participant.

The veterans court offers veterans who are charged with a crime in Ramsey County an alternative to the regular court process. Those who participate in the court are provided with a coordinated support team.

Mentors must be veterans. Contact Donn Lindstrom at 651-266-2545 or email donn.lindstrom@co.ramsey.mn.us for further information.

Legal Clinics Planned

Free drop-in legal clinics are planned in May for Minneapolis and Anoka.

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will host the clinics which include assistance on housing, employment, benefits, expungement, wills, debt collection, and family law including child support.

-- A clinic will be held Tuesday, May 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Anoka Government Center, Room 237.

-- A clinic will be held Tuesday, May 12, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room, 2S 114. Free parking.

For more information, call 651-200-4750.

Alexandria StandDown

The Alexandria Technical and Community College, Law Enforcement Training Center, will be the site of a StandDown for veterans and legal clinic on Thursday, May

14, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There will be a clothing distribution at 10 a.m., welcoming ceremony at 11:30 a.m. and free services throughout the day including meals, benefit info, housing, legal assistance, employment assistance and chaplaincy.

For more information call MACV at 218-722-8763. All veterans are welcome.

Round Tables

Military history round tables in Minnesota have announced their May schedules:

-- The Rochester Veterans Round Table will be held on May 11 at 7 p.m. at the Autumn Ridge Church and the subject will be Indians Serving our Country with Bernie Melter, Trudell Guerue, Shirley Greising, Betty Smith. Admission is \$5.

-- The St. Croix Valley Civil War Round Table will meet at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater on May 18 with a program on Slave Revolts with Michael Hansen. This is a dinner meeting, and for more information contact Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268.

-- The Veterans Open Round Table in Owatonna will meet May 12 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church at 7 p.m. with a program on Flying Jet Aircraft from an Aircraft Carrier in the Vietnam War with Captain Fred Kruger.

-- The World War II History Round Table at Fort Snelling Visitor Center will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 14 with Retrospective Look at the Goals of 8 World War II Leaders with Dr. Gerhard Weinberg as the main speaker. Admission is \$5.

Salute to Women Veterans

The Salute to Women Veterans will be held at Cragun's Resort on Saturday, May 16, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Department Commander Peggy Moon.

There will be workshops on art therapy, meditation, entrepreneurship, and VA healthcare for women. The conference will also feature networking, benefits information, vendors and resources and holistic health practitioners.

All ages, eras and branches of military women are welcome. For more information, contact Jennell Stai at 612-970-5787.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By Tom Newman



VA standard forms

During my time in the Army very few tasks were either given or assumed without also understanding the standards which must be met. In most instances, standards were emphasized no matter how small or trivial the task. Army leadership doctrine defines standards as "formal, detailed instructions - describable, measureable, achievable, and which provide a mark for measuring performance to assess execution of a task."

You may recall during your own experiences in the military that in many cases no matter how well intended a young new troop, their often highly susceptible to getting dogged for not meeting one or more of the obscure standards which are known to exist in the military. For example, the standard of not walking on the grass unless your mowing it. Weren't we all at some point corrected at the cost of a few push-ups in the service? Eventually, these phenomena change. Standards are soon learned, met, and in most cases even exceeded. In fact, some troops thrive so well in an environment of standards a considerable number will challenge themselves even further by accepting yet even higher standards in either leadership and/or as team members in certain specialized units.

So you may be asking, what's the point? The Department of Veterans Affairs now requires the use of standard claim and appeal forms - and Veterans need to know this. Specifically, there are two claim actions which now require the use of standard forms - applications for Veterans and survivors' disability compensation or pension, and notices of disagreement to initiate appeals of compensation claim decisions. Several options for filing are available, which imply that a few choices be made when considering how best to file. Under the new process Veterans can file electronically, by using the correct standardized form, or by calling a VA representative. In addition, a new intent to file process has also been established for applicants who need additional time to gather all of the information and evidence needed to support their claim.

The informal claim process no longer exists. For exam-

ple, prior to 24 March 2015 a Veteran could declare a disability due to military service by simply writing a statement on the clean edge of a paper napkin. This was an incredibly easy standard to follow and favorable to Veterans. No more - gone.

Veterans who are unable to submit an electronic application for disability benefits must now use VA Form 21-526EZ, Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits. Wartime Veterans filing for needs-based pension must use VA Form 21-527EZ, Application for Pension. Survivors filing a claim for dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), survivor's pension, and accrued benefits must complete VA Form 21-534 EZ, Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits. These forms are not new, and were previously used on an optional basis for Veterans and survivors applying for benefits.

So I hope you get my point. I could go on, but this is just a glimpse of some of the new standard veterans will need to follow - but which you really need to know. For more detailed information on the new standards for filing a claim, please visit the following website at <http://explore.va.gov/intent-to-file>. Before making any choice, it's advisable that you contact your County Veteran Service Officer as it's not E.Z.

VA changes requirements for Veterans Choice option

WASHINGTON - In order to expand eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it will determine eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program based on the distance between a Veteran's place of residence and the nearest VA medical facility using driving distance rather than straight-line distance.

This change has been published in the Federal Register and is effective immediately.

"VA is pleased to announce the distance calculation change from straight-line to driving distance for the Veterans Choice Program," said Secretary Robert McDonald. "This update to the program will allow more Veterans to access care when and where they want it."

The change from straight-line to driving distance roughly doubles the number of eligible Veterans. Letters are being sent to the newly eligible Veterans to let them know they are now eligible for the Veterans Choice Program under this expansion.

Sons of The American Legion

By Dennis Henkemeyer



By the time that this month's Minnesota Legionnaire reaches your mailbox or computer, the Detachment of Minnesota will be less than two months away from our detachment convention/campout. I hope that a lot of SAL members are planning on joining us that weekend for a lot of fun, great food and terrific friendship. Oh, and we will also be conducting the detachment business and electing new detachment officers for the upcoming year.

I want to thank The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Minnesota for your invite to attend the Department Juniors Conference in Stewartville of the 1st District. Also a huge thank you goes out to the Honorary Juniors President Jules Efta of Argyle for her year of service to our veterans. I would like to wish all the best to incoming Honorary Juniors President Bryce Soltis of Waite Park. The American Legion Auxiliary will continue to be successful in the years to come because of the Juniors program.

Our membership program is still going strong with the detachment meeting and far exceeding every national target this year. There is no doubt in my mind that the detachment will not only get an all-time high again this year, but also for the first time in the detachment's history we are going to break the 11,000 member ceiling. We have also chartered four new squadrons so far this year with talk of more to join our ranks. I would like to welcome the following squadrons from the 2nd District: Lake Wilson and Adrian. I would also like to welcome the following squadrons from the 6th District: Becker and Clear Lake. Even though the next national target (100%) is not until 13 May, National SAL Commander Michael Moss put out a challenge to be at 100% by our NEC Spring Meeting on 02 May. A call has gone out to everyone in my database for as much help as possible to meet or exceed this challenge.

Finally, just a quick comment about my project this year, which as you know by now, is the Minneapolis Fisher House. We have raised over \$25,000.00 to date and still more donations coming in. If you have an extra few dollars that you would like to donate, please remember this very worthwhile project.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT Myron Ehrich



As the old saying goes, April showers will bring May flowers.....So maybe, April snow storms will bring even more flowers.

In April, we had Department Commander Peggy Moon visit the Owatonna Post 77 for a meeting as well as a post-sponsored birthday party. Thank you, Commander Peggy for coming to visit.

As we all know, April is Children and Youth Month. There are many activities going on for them. One is the Spelling Bee to be held at Hayfield Post 330 on April 16th. This is open to children in grades 4 thru 6. Good luck to all those that participate.

My Testimonial was held on April 11th at Dodge Center Post 284. I had a fantastic time. Thank you to all those that came.

In May, we will have our District Convention in Waseca at Post 228. If you have not signed up yet, please do so soon.

This means that my time left is growing shorter. I have had a wonderful time as your Commander for the last year.

The un-official start to our summer season is Memorial Weekend, which is fast approaching. Make sure to attend the many local Memorial Day programs.

SECOND DISTRICT Jennifer Kafka Commander



As we go through the next few weeks we will be preparing for Memorial Day speeches and programs. Others will be getting ready for the kick off of summer. This is the difference between the Legion family and others. We put our country and fallen Comrades first. So many have given so much and sadly other than family they are slowly forgotten by a grateful nation. That is why Memorial Day is so important and that is why we should be teaching our youth about the importance of this holiday.

As Legionnaires and family members we have all lost family and friends and we become their story tellers, without someone to share the life and beliefs of these men and women our history is lost. We go on but, we get to go on because of those that have gone before us. They lived a life worth sharing and we owe it to our younger generations to share these stories and beliefs.

THIRD DISTRICT Duane Anderson Commander



In just a short time we will be attending the Third District 2015 Convention in Hutchinson. I am looking forward to this time of comradeship and fellowship between Legionnaires, Auxiliary, SAL, and Legion Riders. Electing new officers to take up and continue the mission of the Legion Family is an exciting and challenging time. The past year has literally flown by with involvement in the many activities that a District Commander is involved in. This last week I was honored at my testimonial that was held at my home post, "Post 311, Elysian". I would like to thank all the comrades, auxiliary, friends, family and neighbors that attended and helped make this a special time and memory. It is at this time of the year that we have a tendency to sit back and feel we have accomplished all we could. I don't, however, think that is the right thing to do. I challenge the 3rd District and the other nine districts of the Department of Minnesota to continue working on membership and committee tasks to the completion of the year. Every little additional effort can bring big results.

FOURTH DISTRICT Dan Williams Commander



The last Monday in May is "the unofficial start of summer." Too often the latter is simply glossed over. Memorial Day is much more than a perch on the horizon of picnic and vacation season. This is a time when we should remember that this country went through a horrific civil war resulting in more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers being buried together in Arlington National Cemetery, years before the war was ended. Thousands more were buried across the country. The first recognition of this special day was called Decoration Day. Dedicated volunteers placed flowers and memorials on the graves of our fallen. After that, our country began to honor our dead from World War

I also. The day gradually became known as Memorial Day. This year, let's take time to reflect on our fallen comrades. We continue to receive remains with dignity and respect. Consider those whom, in battle or POW camp, gave their last full measure of devotion for this great country and her future.

Calendar: May 13th, Joint District meeting, 7 p.m. – Post 39; May 17th, VA Hospital 1 p.m.; May 20th Shop, Ship and Share kick-off meeting 6:30 p.m. – Post 39; May 23rd, Fifth District Joint Testimonial; June 6th Fourth District

FIFTH DISTRICT Wayne Glanton Commander



The state of Minnesota has Billions in surplus and looking for some good reason to return it to people. The American Legion is a good place to start. We have programs and we have help, now all we need is money. Such as Legionville and Veteran Homes. Write your district or state officials to find out what may be the best way to go about getting some of these projects funded. The Legion has a large membership which means votes. I would like to thank our membership rally team for meeting our goal for 2015. Baker Post is one of two posts that have turned in the Consolidated Report. Our final rally was in Duluth on the 25th of April.

Sick List- Past Post Commander Otis Jenkins had to have an operation on his left leg, but is doing fine. Otis you are in our prayers. ALRiders got their SOP -- good for them. I asked one of the riders "how many miles do you ride in one day?" His answer was he averages 300 miles more or less to the next designated stop.

SIXTH DISTRICT Carl Moon Commander



The Sixth District Revitalization went very well. There were 11 Posts represented and between the morning training session at Brainerd and the evening training session at Little Falls, there were over 40 volunteers present. The numbers are still coming in but there were many transfers from the Dept. Post at Large and over 20 new members signed up. We had a table at Camp Ripley on Friday the 10th and the two teams we had covering felt that it was great exposure for the Legion. I believe they were able to sign up 7 new members. Our guest and trainer from National, Billy Johnson, who just happens to be the National Membership Director, felt that the Revitalization went very well, not because of the numbers but because of the involvement and participation from the Posts.

My testimonial/ roast was held on Saturday April 11th at my home Post in Zimmerman. It was a great evening with friends and family and I actually survived. My Post was very kind as they could have really roasted me over all the inside information they've had on me over the years. The highlight of the evening was when our Department Commander, i.e. Mrs. Moon got up and spoke about how we met and how proud she was of me. Wow. What a great and wonderful Commander she is.

I hope everyone has a great District Convention and keep working hard to get that Membership in and help make Minnesota #1 at National.

SEVENTH DISTRICT Victor Gades Commander



May is the month of a new season – summer -- and we kick it off with Memorial Day. How many of us observe this day of remembrance. All too many Americans think that this day means the beginning of summer. Unfortunately in our haste, we forget the sacrifices of our deceased Veterans who gave their lives, so that we can enjoy the freedoms many take for granted.

Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States for remembering the people who died while serving in the country's armed forces. On Memorial Day, the flag of the United States is raised briskly to the top of the staff and then solemnly lowered to the half-staff position, where it remains only until Noon. It is then raised to full-staff for the remainder of the day.

The half-staff position remembers the more than one million men and women who gave their lives in service of their country. At Noon, their memory is raised by the living, who resolve not to let their sacrifice be in vain, but to rise up in their stead and continue the fight for liberty and justice for all.

The American Veteran, living or deceased, raised their

right hand and instantly became part of something larger than them individually. We all gave a part of our lives to serve our country. Now in our later years, it is not the time to forget our brothers that did not come back, but it is the

EIGHTH DISTRICT Wilson Spence Commander



This year's Consolidated Year End Report should have arrived at all posts in the Eight District and all of Minnesota Posts. Please spend some time and complete your report. I would like to see each and every post in the district complete the Consolidated Year End Report and send to the Department of Minnesota. If any post in the district has any difficulty with the report, please contact me and I will provide help with the report.

This is budget time for the state of Minnesota. Our governor and legislature are negotiating a budget for this fiscal year. I would like you aware of the political battling to make sure that our Minnesota Veterans Homes are adequately funded. Speak to your state elected officials and ask him/her to adequately fund our nursing homes. We must keep our veteran residents of the homes cared for. Do not forget on May 16, 2015, a Salute to Women Veterans is scheduled at Cragun's Resort. All ages, eras and branches of military women are welcome to this free retreat. Our Department Commander Peggy Moon is the featured speaker. Please make every effort to attend. To register call Jennell Stai at 612-970-5787.

I want to thank Sixth District Commander Carl Moon for his kind words toward the Eight District and me last month. All the districts have the goal of successfully recruiting membership for The American Legion. Commander Moon and the Sixth District is to be congratulated for their success in recruiting this year for they have consistently had the most recruited this year.

NINTH DISTRICT Thomas Norgaard Sr. Commander



April was not too busy but May will start out with a bang. The 2nd is the 9th District Joint Testimonial in Crookston, then on the 4th I will be in Rothsay to see about revitalizing the Post there. May 9th is a day I had better not miss as my oldest daughter is getting married. May 13th is the last Membership cutoff of 100%. We are sitting in 5th place at 95.06 as of April 15th. Now is the time to start making phone calls and personal visits. My project this year is to raise money to purchase a handicap assessable pool table for the Veterans Home in Fergus Falls. They have set a cost of about \$6,000.00 for it and are getting donations from other area organizations as well as from the 9th District. My goal is \$2500.00 and I think that we could go beyond that. I would like to see every Post in the District contribute something, even if you can only afford \$10.00. The last report I have is that they have ordered the Table and are waiting for it to arrive.

Last year's project, a Bingo Machine, was a success as it is set up and working perfectly. Jen Morken, last year's 9th District President and myself will have to set a time to go down and have a photo taken with the new Bingo Machine.

Put the 12th and 13th of June on your calendar as those are the dates for the 9th District Convention in Moorhead.

TENTH DISTRICT Tom Sanders Commander



I can't believe it is May already. This year has gone so quick as we head into another month. With Testimonials and now District Conventions coming up, the time is really getting shorter.

The combined District Project "Helping Paws" has gone over our expectations that all of us are so tickled. We want to thank again all of the American Legion Family that have been so generous in donations to our project. We can help out quite a few veterans with PTSD with these well trained canines. Donation are still being accepted for our project.

I want to thank all the "Bluecappers" in the "Mighty" Tenth District for getting us to second place in membership at Department at this time. We can still get those members out there that have not renewed just by asking, calling, or the "personal" touch, face to face. Keep up the good work and let us remember all that have gone to the post everlasting before us. For God and Country.

Rally in Duluth

Speakers at the Spring Rally at West Duluth Post 71 heard a common theme: Don't quit on membership now.

"We've done the easy work," Commander Peggy Moon said. "Other states don't quit at this point, why do we?"

The Fourth District breathed some rare air as they accepted the prize for top membership. The district for some time has been closer to the bottom of the heap, but this year has been chasing the 6th District for several months and finally earned first place standing at the rally with 97.57 percent.

For the Auxiliary, the Third District was in first with 86.59 percent. In the SAL, the Second District was first with 107.86 percent.

A total of 396 Legion memberships were turned in.



FOURTH DISTRICT TAKES LEAD -- The Fourth District, after many years of being in the league basement, took home the prize at the rally at West Duluth Post 71. The rally had a Yogi Berra theme, and first prize was Yogi Berra memorabilia. From left: Commander Peggy Moon, Membership Director Pat Logan, Fourth District Commander Dan Williams and Fourth District Membership Director Mickey Ostrum.



93rd BIRTHDAY -- Fifth District Commander Wayne Glanton received birthday greetings at Duluth. Unfortunately, one of his gifts was a baseball footstool because the district is in last place. At left is Logan, and at right is Vice Commander Dennis DeLong.



CAMBRIDGE DUO -- Past Department and National President Evelyn Starr and Past Department President Carol Holmgren sat together at the Duluth Rally. Both are from Cambridge Unit 290.

Membership Chart As of April 27, 2015

District	2015 Goal	Total 2014	Total 2015	Percent of Goal	Same Date '14
1	9,976	9,918	9,466	94.89	9,748
2	8,110	8,026	7,693	95.02	7,919
3	12,486	12,421	11,949	95.70	12,258
4	2,554	2,530	2,492	97.57	2,483
5	2,959	2,936	2,782	94.02	2,843
6	12,698	12,627	12,345	97.22	12,509
7	7,245	7,167	6,862	94.71	7,081
8	4,768	4,727	4,552	95.47	4,653
9	7,443	7,378	7,104	95.45	7,286
10	11,243	11,189	10,903	96.98	11,015
At-large	2,340	2,338	2,614	82.77	2,296
Totals	81,822	81,257	78,762	95.32	80,153

Revitalization in 6th



National Membership Director Billy Johnson helps Bataan Death March survivor Walt Straka from the podium. The revitalization team took part in a ceremony honoring the Bataan veterans at Brainerd.



Members of the revitalization group set up shop at the base exchange at Camp Ripley to talk with National Guard veterans. From left are Eileen Espelien, adjutant for Pierz Post 341, Membership Director Pat Logan and revitalization organizer Lloyd Ricker. Seven new members were signed up including four women.



The revitalization team met at Brainerd Post 255 to get their training from National Membership Director Billy Johnson.

A MARINE IN THE PACIFIC

By Al Zdon

When Medal of Honor recipient Woody Williams of West Virginia was speaking at a seminar in Indianapolis recently, he stood in front of the crowd without his medal.

Williams had earned the nation's highest valor medal in the battle for Iwo Jima in 1945 when he attacked a series of pillboxes under withering enemy fire, and destroyed them with demolition charges and his flame thrower.

He told the audience that the only way he would wear the medal that particular night would be if it was placed on him by one of his fellow Marines who also exposed themselves to danger by covering his heroic action with small arms fire.

Williams' comrade and friend Darol "Lefty" Lee of Winona came forward and placed the Medal of Honor around Williams' neck.

It was a touching moment for the audience and for both Marines, now in their 90s.

For Lefty Lee it was a chance for some recognition of a combat career that included two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star with the V for Valor, and participation in four island invasions during the war.

□□□□□□□□

Lefty Lee was born in Houston, Minnesota, and moved to Winona after the eighth grade. He worked weekends delivering groceries, and he graduated from Winona High School in 1942.

He said the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 caught everyone by surprise. "We knew there were rumblings of war in Europe, but we didn't anticipate the Japanese would get involved."

He was eager to get into the Marine Corps, but his mother required that he finish high school. Under the pretext of going to a basketball game on Lincoln's birthday, he and three friends went to Minneapolis and tried to enlist.

"I had a brother in the Army Air Corps, another brother in Navy, and another in the National Guard. I thought I'd just round it out. I hadn't seen any pictures of Marines in their dress blues or anything like that."

The recruiter, like Lee's mother, told Lee to graduate from high school and the Marines would call him up in June.

Boot camp at San Diego didn't get off to a good start. "It was a shock. The first day was a hassle. That night I went walking the fence line to see if there was a hole to crawl through, but I couldn't find one. Two or three weeks later, they couldn't have dragged me out of boot camp. They had indoctrinated us so much."

After boot camp was more infantry training, and then additional time at Camp Pendleton. "They knew we were going to the jungle, but they had us training out in the desert."

He left the States bound for New Zealand in early November, 1942. Lee was assigned as a rifleman to Company C, First Battalion, 21st Marines, Third Marine Division. "We spent a month climbing mountains."

The division went to Guadalcanal in 1943 to relieve the First Marine Division which had been hit hard in the battle for the island. "Guadalcanal was pretty secure by that time, but there were still Japanese around. They would try to get at our provisions because they were starving. We spent time patrolling the jungle and trying to eliminate some pockets. Now and then we'd run into some pretty heavy stuff."

"It was good training. It prepared us for what was coming. We learned how the Japanese operated. They were

fanatics for fighting, and they wouldn't give up. They were pretty good fighters. They were fighting for the emperor."

One after-effect of his time on Guadalcanal was that Lee contracted malaria.

In November, Lee's unit landed on Bougainville. "There was no resistance on the beach. I remember it rained every day. We just pushed into the jungle and established sort of a big line of resistance. The Seabees came in and built an airfield. We never did take the whole island. MacArthur wanted an airbase for the upcoming battle for New Guinea."

Lee said the Americans would fight during the day, and the Japanese would attack at night. "Mostly it was wet. After two or three days your socks would just fall off you. I got a severe fungus on my feet, and they brought me in and removed my toenails. I still don't have any."

"Oh yeah, and there was also an active volcano, and we had a typhoon. If the whole island had dropped into the sea, I couldn't care less."

In January, the 21st Marines headed back to Guadalcanal for some rest and recreation and to pick up fresh replacements. "We needed a lot of replacements."

On June 1, 1944, the Marines went back aboard ships. "I remember on June 6, they announced the D-Day invasion of France on the PA system."

Lee's unit was called a "floating reserve" for the Battle of Saipan. They stayed on the ship near Saipan, ready to go ashore at any time. "Turns out they didn't need us, so it was back to the Marshalls."

By this time, Lee had become a Browning Automatic Rifleman. "The BAR weighed 18 lbs., and you'd carry 13 clips of ammunition in a bandolier with 20 rounds in a clip. Another rifleman would help and carry more clips." The BAR had a lot of fire power, and was usually in the forefront of any action.

On July 21, the Third Marine Division landed on Guam. Lee was in the fifth wave. "The Amtraks went in first and they could drive right up on the beach, but we were on the Higgins Boats. They dropped us in the water, and we had three or four hundred yards to go. It was pretty hairy with

Lefty Lee joined the Marines after high school in Winona. Over the next three years he earned a Bronze Star with the valor device, and two Purple Hearts at places like Guadal Canal, Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima. He was one of four Marines providing covering fire when Woody Williams earned his Medal of Honor at Iwo.



snipers trying to pick us off and mortars dropping down, but we did get to the beach."

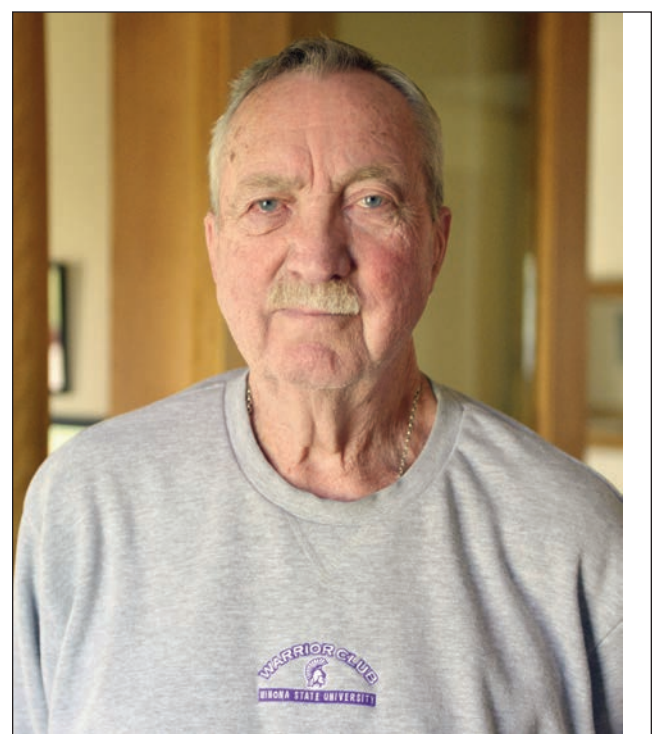
Beyond the beach were rice paddies. "The only cover was in the drainage ditches for the paddies, and they had about two feet of water in them."

Lee was negotiating one of the ditches when a mortar shell landed about four feet away. "Thank God it was muddy. I think that absorbed most of the impact. I got hit by a piece of shrapnel in my chest right under my left arm. It was about the size of a quarter. It knocked me down, and I was bleeding quite a bit. I think they call it a sucking wound."

A corpsman made his way through the heavy fire and started treating Lee. "He said he didn't have anything in his



DAROL LEE
As a Marine during World War II



DAROL LEE
At home in Winona