



# Legionnaire

Volume 96, Number 9

For God and Country

September 2014

## Helm takes the helm of Nat'l Legion

Nebraska's Mike Helm was installed as the National Commander of The American Legion at the annual convention held this year in Charlotte.

Helm is an Army veteran of the Vietnam War, and he served with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. He also earned his Ranger tab.

He is a member of Lebanon, Neb., Post 313.

He is a retired rural mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Service.

Also at the convention, the Department of Minnesota won the coveted William F. Lenker National Service Trophy.

It is given annually to the Department doing the best welfare and rehabilitation work for war veterans and their dependents. It is the 11th time Minnesota has won the trophy.

Department Service Officer Tom Newman accepted on behalf of the Department.

The convention featured speeches by President Barack Obama and new VA Secretary Robert McDonald.



**MIKE HELM**  
National Commander

Minnesota's American Legion Riders presented a check for \$87,000 to the National Legacy Fund, for scholarships to children of those military and public servants killed since the 9-11 attack.

The convention next year will be held in Baltimore, Maryland.

More pictures and stories on the national convention are located in this issue.

### Safe at home



Eagan's Zach Seipel sits in the dust near home plate as Lakeville North players Ben Jensen and Wes Ahlers question the call during the Division I State Tournament in Eagan.

## Lakeville North and Plato are 2014 state Legion baseball tourney champions

Lakeville North and St. Cloud Chutes finished one-two in the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Tournament at Eagan, and both advanced to regional play.

Plato won the Division II Tournament at Luverne and went on to win its regional tournament.

The Division I tourney featured 16 of the best teams in the state in a double-elimination format at four fields in the Eagan area.

Excelsior came into the tourney as the favorite, rated

first in the state. After the first two days, the four unbeaten teams were Excelsior, Lakeville North, Hutchinson and host Eagan.

Excelsior and Lakeville North reached the finals of the winners' bracket and Lakeville outlasted the favorites 6-4.

Meanwhile St. Cloud, after losing its first game 10-0, was working its way back through the losers' bracket.

**Continued on Page 9**

## Walser ends 20 years as Judge Advocate

In its 96 years of existence, the Minnesota American Legion has had 98 state commanders.

In that same span, there have been only seven judge advocates. The sixth of those, with 20 years of service, retired this year.

Don Walser of Hutchinson did not run for re-election in August, and was replaced by the seventh Judge Advocate, Tom Lannon of Prior Lake.

Walser will continue to be active in The American Legion, and he will continue as the liaison between the

Department and Heart Research Foundation.

Walser grew up on a farm near Mountain Lake, Minnesota, and attended a country school there. "We had no electricity, no phone, no water, and, for three years, I was the only student in my class."

He graduated from the then College of St. Thomas with a degree in economics and worked in farm mortgages before enlisting in the Army. Walser served nearly three years in Germany, finishing his tour in 1969 as an E-5 han-

**Continued on Page 2**

**Happiest Birthday All for Welch Soldier Freed as Prisoner of War**

A birthday on which he was liberated from a German prisoner of war camp will be long remembered by Pvt. Albert Kenneth Axelson. For 90 days he was confined to a prison camp, finally...

**Ken Axelson's Story, Page 14**

### Fall Conference will be held in Mahanomen

The 2014 Department Fall Conference will be held at the Shooting Star Casino in Mahanomen from Oct. 23-25.

The conference will be sponsored by Bagley Post and Unit 16.

The annual conference is the organization's school of instruction. Dale Barnett of Georgia, leading candidate for national commander, will be attending.

To make reservations for rooms, please contact the casino/ hotel at 218-936-2621 and request The American Legion block of rooms. Reservations for that block may be made from Oct. 21-26. The block code is 632397.

Preregistration for the conference can be done by using the blank located at the bottom of Page 2.



**NEW NW VICE PRESIDENT** -- Lori Skallerud, Madison, Minnesota, was installed as Northwest Division Vice President at the Charlotte Convention. She was introduced to the convention by outgoing Vice President Patricia Steranka of Colorado.



## Photo contest winner selected

A photo of a small dance band, taken by Harold Brau of Chaska Post 57 in late 1944, was the winner of the annual Minnesota American Legion Calendar Contest this year. Brau is playing trombone in the photograph. He will be the winner of the \$250 first prize, and the photo will be featured in the 2015 Department Legion calendar.

The second place winner of \$150 was Allie Kronberg of Wayzata Post 118, and the third place winner of \$100 was Kevin Rofidal of Chanhassen Post 580.

In all, twelve winners were chosen, and all will be part of the annual calendar which will be mailed out later this year.

Other winners were:

Mike Walsh, Eyota Post 551; Jerry Fisher, Faribault Post 43; Rodney Hatle, Owatonna Post 77; Douglas

Mathwig, Stewartville Post 164; Daniel Beckius, Albany Post 482; Richard Lindsey, Red Wing Post 54; Ron G. Helm, Kelliher Post 470; Arthur Spronkl, Edgerton Post 42; and Don Orttel, Minneapolis Falldin Post 555.

There were over 120 entries into this year's contest. The pictures are those shot or collected by veterans during their time in the service.

The calendar is a fundraiser for the Department, and it is not sent to all members. It will be announced when it is mailed, and those who wish to get one can do so for free. Donations are accepted.

### MINNESOTA'S JUDGE ADVOCATES

- Albert Pratt, Anoka, 1922-28
- Raymond Scallen, Minneapolis, 1928-44
- Harold Rogers, Minneapolis, 1944-49
- John T. Kain, Minneapolis, 1949-59
- John Kressel, Minneapolis, 1959-94
- Don Walser, Hutchinson, 1994-2014
- Tom Lannon, Prior Lake, 2014-

## Walser steps aside after 20 years on job

Continued from Page 1

ding classified documents.

Back in Minnesota, he graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School and joined a law firm in Olivia. He worked for the firm for 39 years before retiring two years ago.

He has been a member of three Minnesota posts: Hutchinson, Olivia and Minnesota Lake -- each in a different district.

In 1989, he moved to an office in Hutchinson, and it was there, in 1994, that he was approached by Department Commander Bill Barbknecht about being a candidate for Judge Advocate.

John Kressel had retired after a 35-year stint as the Department's legal expert.

"Bill suggested and cajoled and talked me into being a candidate."

Barbknecht said it was one of the best things he did as commander. "Don was a post commander, and we wanted somebody with a Legion background."

There was one hitch in the plan, though. Past National Commander Dan Foley also had handpicked a candidate. Walser found himself running against the established power structure. When the votes were counted, though, Walser prevailed.

He said there was a certain amount of scrutiny the first few years. "Judge Foley, Don Miller and Bob Flaherty gave me a lot of good advice and made me a better Judge Advocate. And, if I did anything wrong, I heard about it."

Probably the toughest challenge in the two decades was a dramshop suit, involving a Minnesota post, brought against the Department. "They were looking for the deep pockets, of course. I was amazed at the number of documents they came up with to show the connection between the post and the Department and the national organization."

The suit was a tragic case involving the selling of alcohol to a person who then was involved in a fatal accident. The national American Legion joined in the suit, and an outside law firm was hired to represent the Department.

In the end, the state appeals court ruled that the Department was not responsible for the actions of the post. The Supreme Court also drew a line between the post and the Department, but its reasoning was that the Department was not licensed to sell alcohol and thus couldn't be sued.

As time went by, Walser said the job became easier in some ways. "When you've been around longer than anybody else, you learn some things."

One of the toughest parts of the job was telling posts that he could not help them. "For about 90 percent of the calls, I had to explain that I could not give advice." (See the lawsuit above.)

His main job was to advise the Department on legal matters and on Legion rules and bylaws.

"Part of my greatest value was to give the adjutant somebody to discuss things with. You try to exercise your judgment in a helpful way."

One major accomplishment in his tenure was to work with Department leadership in changing to a secret ballot at conventions. Historically, the Department had voted by post, with each post announcing its vote on the floor of the convention.

"I think it's a good change, though it took out some of the drama and excitement. But it allowed people to vote for the best person and not have to think about who they owed something to."

Because there were no candidates with a law degree at the Executive Committee meeting in August, the DEC elected Lannon, who is a parliamentary procedure and Legion bylaws expert, as the new Judge Advocate.

Legal matters will be referred to Mary O'Brien, an attorney with the firm of Meagher and Geer in Minneapolis. That's the same firm that represented the Department in the dramshop trial.

Walser said it was a good experience for him. "I was glad that my experience and training in a certain field could make a unique contribution to The American Legion. It felt good to make that contribution."

**LAW OFFICE OF**  
**TEJEDA**  
**GUZMAN**

**Antonio Tejada Guzman**  
Attorney at Law  
A Veteran serving Veterans

- ◆ Worker's Compensation
- ◆ Social Security Disability
- ◆ VA Disability Appeals

**320-262-3669**  
**877-544-3164**  
214 4th St. SW, Willmar  
[www.tejada-guzman.com](http://www.tejada-guzman.com)

**Veterans Linkage Line™**

[minnesotaveteran.org](http://minnesotaveteran.org) | **1-888-LinkVet**  
(546-5838)

**Help for veterans and families**

**Purple Cross™**

**Funeral Plans for Veterans**

**Purple Cross** has been serving America's Veterans since 1948 and continues to offer the best funeral plans available. With **Funeral Pre-planning** – you:

- Protect your burial funds from nursing home expenses.
- Protect your family from financial burden in time of grief.
- Gain peace of mind by knowing your funeral is taken care of.

**Yes, I would like to know more about:**

Traditional Funeral Cost    Cremation Cost  
 Payment Plan Options    Discount Plans

For a free **Funeral Pre-planning Cost Analysis & Consultation, & Review of New Veterans Benefits:** Please return this coupon to Purple Cross, 15116 Manitou Rd NE, Prior Lake, MN 55372 or call Jerry Albrecht at 952-226-6393. **Absolutely no obligation!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thinking of

# Viagra?

\*Viagra is a registered trademark of Pfizer & is not associated with Great Health Nutrition.

**Try 'The Silver Bullet'**  
**It only takes one!**

**No Prescription needed · Low Cost · 36 Hour Performance**

**Great Health**

**"LOOK GREAT, FEEL GREAT"**  
Vitamins · Herbs · Supplements

1360 University Ave.  
651-645-2315  
5192 Central Ave. NE  
763-571-5544  
1668 Robert Street  
651-453-9150

**PATCHES: I BUY PATCHES THAT I NEED**  
I AM LOOKING FOR OLDER AIR FORCE, AIR NATIONAL GUARD, NAVY, NAVY AIR, SHIPS, COAST GUARD, ARMY, MN NATIONAL GUARD, USMC, JACKETS, HELMETS, CALL JOE, 612-801-4673 AFTER 6

# August DEC decides against endorsing Riders' constitution

The Department of Minnesota Executive Committee voted to not endorse the state's American Legion Riders constitution and bylaws.

The constitution had been tabled from an earlier meeting of the DEC, when Richard Oelschlager, the Riders liaison with the Department, said it was difficult to plan events and take care of other business without a statewide organization as defined by the constitution.

At the August meeting of the DEC, though, only two people spoke to the issue, and both spoke against the passage of the constitution.

Judge Advocate Don Walser said that making a legal connection between the Department and the Riders could create a situation that could expose the Department to lawsuits.

Walser reminded the committee that the most dangerous and most expensive lawsuit in his 20 years as Judge Advocate came when a family sued an American Legion Post, after someone who had been served at a local post killed a member of the family, and lawyers tried to connect the state organization to the post.

The Department was only spared that connection by a 4-1 vote in the Minnesota Supreme Court. Even so, the lawsuit cost over \$70,000.

It was a "big lesson," Walser said. "We have to maintain a separation from the posts. We dodged the bullet that time."

He called the Legion Riders a "great organization," but he advised against the state Legion becoming a "sponsoring organization" that would set up a legal tie between the two.

Walser said insurance coverage for Riders events would be cost prohibitive.

Department Adjutant

Randy Tesdahl said a connection between the Riders and the Department would put a strain on an office staff that is already busy. Tesdahl said the Riders were designed as a post program, and that's how it should stay.

"The Riders are very effective, and they are a vital part of our organization. They have done some awesome things," he said. A constitution, though, would "clearly tie" the Riders to the Department.

A motion was first made to table the constitution again, but that motion failed. Dan Williams, Fourth District Commander, moved to reject the constitution, and it passed on a voice vote with no opposition.

Commander Peggy Moon said that the Department did not "want to hurt those people in any way. I just spent an entire day with those people. I want them to continue to do what they do. It's best for the Legion."

In other business:

-- Tom Lannon, Prior Lake, was elected Department Judge Advocate. Lannon, a past state commander, is not an attorney, but is an expert on parliamentary procedure and Legion governance. He replaces Don Walser, who had served for 20 years.

-- Bob Locker, Fridley, was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Publications, the committee that oversees the operation of the Minnesota Legionnaire.

-- Pat Logan, the new Membership Director, outlined his plans to send "scout teams" to the 65 armories and Army Reserve bases in Minnesota to talk to the soldiers about The American Legion. He said he wants to see similar scouting missions to the state's police and fire stations.

-- Wayne Gilbertson said there were 658 campers at Legionville this year, down from 708 last year. He said Legionville is continuing to work with Minnesota AAA and with the Department of North Dakota about becoming partners with the safety patrol camp. He said the correct pavers have been delivered and will be installed at the camp. The pavers were a fund raiser.


-- Alternative National Committeeman Marland Ronning said he had lost a briefcase at the Rochester state convention, and asked Legionnaires if they have information on it to contact him.

-- The next rally will be Sept. 6 during the Camp-O-Ree at Legionville. Rallies will also be held at Apple Valley on Dec. 6, Chanhassen on Feb. 7, and Duluth on April 25. The March Appreciation Rally is still being organized.

-- New SAL Commander Dennis Henkemeyer said that the Fisher House adjacent to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center would be his project for the year. He made Commander Moon an honorary member of the Sons of the American Legion.


## LOSE 25-45+ LBS IN 40 DAYS

Real People Real Result




NUTRIMOST

GUARANTEED!




### The Ultimate FAT Loss System



BECAUSE OF OUR TECHNOLOGY  
**ROBIN LOST 73 POUNDS!!**

**IT'S UNIQUE-FAST-SIMPLE AND IT WORKS!!!**

You can begin to lose 1-2 lbs. per day IMMEDIATELY. With no radical change in lifestyle and without surgery or harmful drugs. It's our exclusive, safe and effective natural weight loss. Real results guaranteed.



START NOW **844-232-8287**

ULTIMATEFATLOSSMN.COM

### Living with VISION LOSS?

*Experiencing vision loss from Stroke or Macular Degeneration? Find out if special glasses can help you see better.*

Call for a free phone consultation and schedule your appointment.

Chris Palmer, Optometrist  
Toll Free: 888-882-2040



www.LowVisionofMN.com



Purchase a "Support Our Troops" Plate.  
Call: 651-4TROOPS  
Visit: [www.minnesotaveteran.org](http://www.minnesotaveteran.org)

### Official Pre-Registration

Mail to:  
**Bagley American Legion Post 16**  
**Attention: Fall Conference**  
**Box 159**  
**Bagley, MN 56621**

A registration fee of \$15 for each person attending is required. Please copy and send a separate form for each person. Make checks payable to "Bagley American Legion Post 16"  
 Registration at the door will be \$18.  
 Post # \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_ Squad # \_\_\_\_\_

District # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

One registration blank per person.

ADVERTISEMENT

# Live Pain Free

## INSTANT RELIEF POSSIBLE WITH NEW LASER THERAPY!

- Herniated and Bulged Discs
- Spinal Stenosis • Arthritis Pain
- Failed Back Surgery
- Car Accident Injuries
- Neuropathy
- Chronic Back/Leg Pain
- Degenerative Disc Disease
- Sciatica



Dr. Robert Shelton, D.C.

Lasers Proven to Heal Injuries!

LASERS ARE PROVEN BY NASA TO HEAL TISSUE DAMAGE. TAKE THE SERIES - SEE FOR YOURSELF



RECEIVE 2 FREE VISITS

You must be one of the first 25 callers to qualify/ Other promo restrictions apply.



CALL 612-879-9500

**COMMANDER'S COLUMN**

By Peggy Moon



The 2014-2015 year has officially begun, and I have already put over 2000 miles on my new vehicle, and, as I write this, we are preparing to leave for the National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. Yes, Carl and I are driving. My first major outing with the new car involved joining our Minnesota American Legion Riders on the northern leg of their Legacy Run. What a thrill. As most of you know, The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund provides college tuition to those children who have lost a parent on active duty since September 11. Our most current information teaches us that there are now 11,000 kids on this list of all different ages. I was privileged to join the Riders in Little Falls. We proceeded to Brainerd, Aitkin, Cloquet, West Duluth, Bovey, Cass Lake, and Walker, collecting donations and the goodwill of our members all along the way. We also ate, courtesy of all the Posts. Thank you. The highlight of the trip was in Bovey, Minnesota. Bovey lost a cherished son, Phil Windorski, in Afghanistan in 2009. They have since erected a beautiful granite monument to him. When you arrive at this location, you are greeted by all the local officials and community members, as well as his family, which includes two lovely little cherub-faced daughters. It is an emotional visit, and definitely a "Why do I do this?" moment. There are also plen-

# Mail Call

**Editor's Note:**

The letter below was sent to the St. James American Legion Baseball Program. St. James was the winner of the sportsmanship trophy at the Division II Minnesota American Legion Baseball Tournament held this year in Luverne.

**Respect for the game**

I do not claim to be an expert in evaluating baseball programs for what success they achieve, but have spent the last 25 years in the game as a professional baseball scout, so do feel that I have some knowledge to what the qualities are for a team to be considered "first class." I had the opportunity to watch your team on the field and off the field for several days at the Minnesota State American Legion Baseball Tournament. I can say that I have never seen a team, coaches, and supporters conduct themselves in such a very professional manner at all times. I observed all showing such great respect for the game of baseball, respect for all the umpires, respect for all the opponents at all times. I have never enjoyed watching a team play more than I did watching your team throughout the entire tournament. You all really represented the city of St. James in fine fashion, and they sure can be very proud of your play on the field, and actions off the field. It was easy to see why the tournament committee chose your team to receive the Best Sportsmanship Award for the 2014 American Legion State Tournament. I happened to spend some time in the class room before moving in to the professional game, and when a student of mine performed their assignment or project in such an outstanding manner, I awarded them a 100. Therefore, I have enclosed a 100 for your efforts in awarding your team what they earned in Luverne recently.

**Jerry Raddatz**  
Scout  
Los Angeles Dodgers  
Winona, MN

**Post program**  
To the Editor:

I just got the Legionnaire with the article about the ALR and can't believe Don Pankake's (who I rode with on national rides) remark. I am writing this so people attending the Aug 9, DEC will realize why there will be a lack of MNALR present. I have been a member of the Illinois state chapter of the ALR (American Legion Riders) for a couple years. I was the only participant from Minnesota in the original national motorcycle ride to raise money for an American Legion Fund that had very little visibility. The patch I wear says American Legion Run since it was put together fast and the pony express out of Texas was going to handle the structure requirements ( I lobbied that first year to use the ALR since

ty of tears. All along the way, I was impressed with the professionalism, the total focus on safety, and the dedication of our Minnesota Riders. They know what they are doing, and they represent this organization well. The last I heard was that they had raised over \$70,000. The final amount will be announced in Charlotte. What can you say about an organization that is capable of raising this kind of money, and attracting new members as well. Way to go Riders. Job well done. Thank you for allowing me to participate.

I've also had a couple meetings with Patrick Kelly, Director of the Minneapolis Veterans Health Care System, and Barry Bahl, Director of the St. Cloud Veterans Health Care System, as well as meetings with our County Veteran Services Officers. I can assure you that they are all working very hard to attend to all of our veterans' needs. If you know of any veteran in need of medical care, they want to know. With all the frustrating publicity surrounding care at the Veterans' facilities, please note that 95% of the staff are very dedicated and attentive to our needs. They certainly care about our veterans. A nice word of support would go a long way.

Randy Tesdahl and I also had the opportunity to meet with Senator Amy Klobuchar and her staff to discuss veterans' issues. We talked about the need for primary care physicians, as well as our concern to not hurt our VA facilities when seeking solutions to this health care crisis. After all, this is a "System Worth Saving" and we need them to remain strong. Appropriate funding is crucial.

After returning from Charlotte, we will soon be meeting at Legionville for our annual Camp-O-Ree. We will also be having our first Membership Rally there on Saturday, Sept. 6. Please take some time to tour the property and discover what still needs to be accomplished. This is my project for the year, and we can actually complete Legionville this year. I am so very proud that we have tackled this project without going in debt, and that it will be there for years to come to educate our children. What a fine legacy we are leaving for future generations.

Gotta Go - Need to gas up the car! Till next month....

MNALR chapter 1 Post 122 rode from Deer River to Owatonna to help Aviation Post 511 escort the moving Vietnam Wall to Crystal). I have ridden in seven national rides and three instate rides as an American Legion member to help raise funds for your American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund

Over the past couple years I have attended Minnesota ALR constitutional creation meetings and I don't agree with some things (you know me), but it will allow them to set up a state director, and area directors with a structure that works in every department. National has a staff position and a committee which was created from one rider who has been on every national ride and resides in the region created. A single structure exists to handle the Multi-State Motorcycle Ride.

The statement that all departments are not the same is very accurate. The Department of Minnesota is different. They want to control a program that is part of a post. The ALR is not a Department function, it is a post function, and the post responsibility. A department liaison was appointed for some reason, but apparently they put in place a person they don't respect or listen to, why don't you just get rid of that assignment, and listen to the state director the MNALR agrees to. Ten people (district directors) report directly to the state director. the post's respect the chapter directors who report directly to the district directors. that's the way the departments work, get over it.

Your instate American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund Motorcycle Ride has created a windfall of new American Legion Family members, as Scuffy Paulson proved, at the Rushford stop this past weekend, with two new members.

We are American Legion Family members, not just motorcyclists that just have a knack of raising money and making the American Legion Family look good. So do me a favor on August 9th, don't talk about a constitution, accept a structure. Trust me, even CEO's ride motorcycles.

All members of the DEC are hereby required to hand a dollar to the Department Finance Officer for the MNALR yearly ride for the scholarships for making me write this email.

The 40/8 grande promenade, dollar at a time, coughed up \$175. (Joyce and Del Rose wrote out a check for \$50, now you have an example.)

In closing, the legacy run will reach its goal of \$20,000,000. The ALR is a program of the American Legion at a post level. The only ALR rule is, you must be an active member of the American Legion Family and you must own a motorcycle. (My HD Road King is 29" long, 13" wide, and 18" tall, with an operable radius of 500 feet (controller included.))

**Dave Adam**  
Minneapolis

**Chaplain's Corner**

By Steve Klinkner



We have all received a "Note of Thanks" at some time in our life, long after we had performed the favor. When that "Thank You" note arrived, it warmed your heart because it shows that our action was remembered and that someone was still appreciating the effects of your gesture.

I would like to Congratulate Alberta "Bert" Marth-Wohlfiel of New Ulm, and a member of New Ulm Post 132, for being awarded the "Outstanding Senior Citizen for 2014" at the Brown County Fair. Bert is a great example of giving her time and energy to choose to make a difference thru dedicated service to the community and The American Legion programs. We are grateful for her and want to say "Thank You, Bert."

On a sad note, John Affolter, Past MN Detachment Commander of the Sons of the American Legion, recently passed away. He will be missed at the Department, and District meetings and membership rallies as attendance was of great importance to him. We can still say "Thank you, John" for your commitment to the veterans.

The month of August was filled with Wedding Anniversaries. My wife Donna and I went to my Aunt/Uncle's 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration at Paynesville Post 271, Brother/Sister-in-law's 25th Anniversary at Eagle Lake Post 617 and dancing Friends' 40th Anniversary at Wabasso Post 263. What a great opportunity to reconnect with many relatives and friends. Just like our Lord wants us to experience the joy that comes from knowing that we are loved by him without limits or conditions - we enjoyed the warmth of smiles, laughter and hugs from relatives and friends. We are so thankful for the friendships and memories developed throughout the years. Take time to think of your relatives and friends and when you have experienced the warmth you received back from those individuals.

This month, let's warm someone's heart by saying "Thank You" for their service to our God, communities, and country. We owe a debt of gratitude to so many people who have brought us to this point of our life. Remember to "thank" our parents, our teachers and coaches; all those people who dedicated themselves to us in our years of education; our first boss who was patient with us and gave us a second chance; coworkers who support us thru tough times by just being there like family, the relative or neighbor who inspired us with their good example; the soldiers who fought to protect our freedom; the law enforcement, fire-fighters, and civic leaders who dedicated themselves to keeping our communities safe and prosperous; and the list goes on. Make this your quest to continue to add to this "Thank You" list. This list should never end as you enter into a new day of encounters. If you start writing them down each day, you will be surprised how many opportunities the Lord gives us to experience such warm feelings you receive from giving of your helping hand or smile.

The Lord just wants every one of us to discover His friendship through His people and is asking us to give Him a hand to make that happen. So this month, let us go out and say "Thank You" or send a note of thanks, even if it was just for a little thing to someone who quietly offers a helping hand. And let us not forget to "thank" our veterans, active troops and their families for the sacrifices that they have given for our daily freedom. Keep them in your prayers.

# Legionnaire

The Minnesota

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.

**SUBSCRIPTION:** \$10 for non-members. Members receive the Legionnaire as part of their dues.

**PHONE:** 651-291-1800, 866-259-9163, **FAX:** 651-291-1057  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The American Legion, 20 W. 12th Street, St. Paul, MN, 55155-2000. (USPS No. 013-679.) (ISSN No. 1644270)

**ADVERTISING RATES:** Contact Al Zdon, 651-291-1800

**E-MAIL:** azdon@mnlegion.org

**WEBSITE:** www.mnlegion.org

**BOARD OF PUBLICATION MEMBERS:** President Peggy Moon, St. Paul; Vice President, Bob Locker, Fridley; Secretary Randy Tesdahl, St. Francis; Treasurer, Richard Horn, Melrose. Board Members include: Don Amundson, Blue Earth; Bob Locker, Fridley; Clinton Burt, Slayton; Joe Bayer, Minneapolis; Pat Logan, Bloomington; Virgil Persing, Columbia Heights; Chris Ronning, Maple Grove; Sandy Fredrickson, Glenville.



# Appointments announced for 2014-15

Commander Peggy Moon announced her Department of Minnesota committee appointments for 2014 at the Executive Committee meeting held in Osseo.

Art Tobkin of Bagley was reappointed to a three-year term on the Americanism Committee and will serve as chairman. Larry Pocrnich of Hibbing will replace Tom Kunkel, who resigned, for a one-year appointment.

Tom Hallett of Mankato will serve as Boy Scout chairman, Bob Locker of Fridley as Community Service chairman, and Gary Weaver of LaCrescent as Education chairman.

Mike Bredeck of Madison will serve as Boys State Director, and Leon Dahle of Morristown will be chairman of Junior Shooting Sports. Tess Davis of Princeton will chair the Oratorical Contest and Debra Norman of Northfield will be vice chairman.

James Blakesley of Aitkin will chair the Safety-School Patrol chairman. Joe Jansen of Arden Hills will be the representative to the Armed Forces Service Center. Denise Milton of Bagley will chair the Blood Program.

Terry Buraas of Grand Forks, N.D. will chair the Children and Youth Committee and Doug Wendtland of Red Wing will serve as vice chair.

John Bey of Baudette will chair the Citizens Flag Alliance, and David Heidebrink of Hutchinson will chair the Employment Committee.

Tom Schottenbauer of St. Louis Park was appointed to a five-year term on the Convention Corporation. David Bode of Nicollet will be parade coordinator.

Chuck Kruger of Bryon was appointed to a three-year term on the Credentials Committee. Lynn Nottage will be chairman. Carl Hendrickson of Cloquet will chair the Energy and Conservation Committee.

Bill Goede of Plainview will begin a new five-year term on the Finance Committee. Tom Mullon of Eagan will represent the Legion on the Fort Snelling Cemetery Association.

Michael Maxa of LeCenter will chair the Fund for Hospitalized Veterans. Others appointed to the committee will be Wes Thompson, Sartell, Mark Dvorak, LeCenter, Eugene Olsword, New Ulm.

Tom Conway was named chair of the Law and Order Committee. Richard Abraham of Mankato and Jeff Brokaw of Winona will serve on the committee.

Bill Barbknecht of Underwood will chair the Legionnaire Insurance Trust Committee. Cal Van Horn of Morris was appointed to a three-year term.

Roger Myren of Eagan will continue as the Department's representative on the Legionville Board of Directors. Robert Hart of Oak Park Heights will chair the Legislative Committee and Mike Ash of St. Paul, Gary Larson of

Stillwater and Bill Brockberg of Worthington will serve on the committee.

Tim Sanken, Hutchinson, and Rosemary Niesen of Cologne were named to three-year terms on the Brain Sciences Foundation. Richard Magraw of Spring Lake Park will be consultant and Dan Ludwig of Red Wing will be the Commander's Advisor.

Don Walser of Hutchinson will be the liaison to the Heart Research Foundation.

Lloyd Ricker of Dawson was re-appointed to a five-year term on the Minnesota American Legion Foundation.

Richard Gosse of Wabasha was re-appointed to a five-year term on the National Security/ Foreign Relations Committee. Curt Norenberg will serve as chairman. Col. Richard Hayes, Brainerd, and Gen. John Vessey, Garrison, will be special advisors.

Glenn Mueller of St. Charles will chair Operation Post Home. Chuck Stone of Owatonna will chair the Pheasant Dinner Committee, and Arnie Troe of Emmons and Fuzz Martin of Owatonna will be vice chairs.

David Ecker of Browns Valley was appointed to a five-year term on the Post Development Committee.

Ralph Schneekloth of Mabel was appointed to a three-year term on the Public Relations Committee. Jennifer Havlick of Two Harbors was appointed to a one-year term replacing Teresa Ash who resigned.

Darrel Redepenning of Fridley was appointed to a five-year term on the Rehabilitation Committee. Don Smith of Backus was named to a two-year term replacing Lauri Brooke of Detroit Lakes who resigned.

Bob Hirmer of Marshall was appointed to a three-year term on the Resolutions Assignment Committee. Jeff Olson of Stillwater will chair.

Ray Ozmun of Northfield was reappointed advisor to the Sons of the American Legion. Brian Medinnus of Austin will be vice chairman, south, and Walt Folendorf of East Grand Forks will be vice chairman, north.

Steve Nelson of Chaska was named as vice director with a three-year term on the Baseball Committee. Bob Mace of Waite Park will chair the Bowling Committee and John Torma, Brooklyn Park, and Irv Tooker, Akeley, will serve.

Dan Williams, Vadnais Heights, was appointed to a five-year term on the Strategic Planning Committee. Tom Fernlund of St. Cloud will replace Commander Moon with a one-year term. Fernlund will be chairman and Roger Olson, Hutchinson, will be secretary.

Mike Schaffer, Fulda, will chair the Trophies and Awards Committee, and Larry Ryan, Oakdale, will be vice chair.

Marland Ronning of Maple Grove will serve a new two-year appointment on the Veterans 4 Veterans Committee.

## Sons of The American Legion

By Dennis Henkemeyer



As I sit here this morning trying to think of something profound to say about our dear friend John Affolter, it finally occurred to me that it does not have to be profound. All I need to say is that we lost a very dear friend in John. John was a proud veteran that took great pride in his service to his country and great pride in his involvement with The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion. He is someone that will be truly missed and had a heart of gold. I want to thank PNC Joe Mayne for sharing my letter with those in attendance at his wake. Rest in Peace John.

Denise and I are less than a day away from leaving for the national convention in Charlotte. This event marks the end of a year and the start of a new one. I am excited about the year ahead and know that the Detachment of Minnesota will make huge inroads when it comes to our programs and our membership. I look forward to working with Commander Moon and President Ronning.

There are a couple of big events coming up in the next month or two that I would like to touch on. First is the annual Legionville Camp-O-ree which will also include our first department membership rally of the year. I look forward to seeing many campers at this very enjoyable weekend. The Sons of The American Legion will be providing many of the meals at very reasonable prices.

Also, the Detachment of Minnesota has its annual John Zgoda Memorial Deer Hunt for Disabled Veterans. The event will take place from the 3rd of October and run through the 5th. We are limited to the number of deer hunters that we have that weekend, so I would encourage you to make your application as soon as possible. Also, volunteers are needed in the kitchen and to sit in the deer stands with the hunters.

As I have mentioned previously, my project for the year is the Fisher House in Minneapolis. We want to stack the shelves and pack the pantries. Checks for this worthwhile project should be made payable to "MVAHCS" and make sure to put "Fisher House" on the memo line. A donation to the Fisher House serves our military and their families in times of need. You can either present your check at any upcoming department or detachment event or if you would prefer to send it, please mail to: Detachment Adjutant Doug Bible, 5602 West Oakes Drive, St Cloud, MN 56303.

Together, let's propel to the top.

# Mayo doctor honored with American Legion's highest award

Dr. Donald Jenkins, who is director of the trauma center at the Mayo Clinic, was honored at the National Convention in Charlotte for his work with wounded veterans.

Jenkins, a former Air Force trauma surgeon who pioneered innovative ways to stop battlefield bleeding, was presented with the highest honor the Legion can bestow, the Distinguished Service Medal.

Jenkins and others pioneered a different type of battlefield transfusion, and also reintroduced the use of tourniquets on the battlefield.

He is a member of Rochester Post 92, and he mentioned the post during his remarks.

Jenkins praised the work of battlefield medics. "A lot of lives were saved before they got to us thanks to the medics."

National Commander Dan Dellinger presented Jenkins with his medal.

In other convention news, Lt. Col. Oliver North, told the conventioners that America must keep its defense strong. "Our adversaries must at least respect us if not fear us."

He praised the Legion's leadership. "The American Legion reminds our country that we are still the home of the brave."

President Barack Obama brought with him his new VA Commissioner Bob McDonald, who spoke after he did at the convention.

Obama said progress was being made in correcting the problems with the VA health care system, but much work remains. "The misconduct we've seen," he said, "is outrageous and inexcusable."

He acknowledged that the Legion had been in the forefront of the effort to fix the VA problems. "We're focused on this at the highest levels. We are going to get to the bottom of these problems. We're going to fix what is wrong."

He said there would be a new culture of accountability in the VA. He also said he was not promoting a voucher system.

The Legion honored Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-

Vermont, and Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Florida, with the annual Patriot Award.

Sanders, who chairs the Senate's Veterans Committee, told the convention that "the cost of war is much greater than most Americans think it is. The cost doesn't end when the last bullet has been fired or the last missile launched."

He recounted the plight of the veterans flooding our hospitals with brain injuries and who are suffering from

post traumatic stress. And he talked of the widows of the 7,000 Americans killed in recent wars.

"If you are not prepared to give the veterans the benefits they have earned, then don't send them to war."

He said the VA problems must be fixed, but noted that system generally provides very high quality health care. "It's not a question of quality, it's a question of timeliness."



**JENKINS HONORED** -- Dr. Donald Jenkins, a surgeon at the Mayo Clinic and former Air Force combat surgeon, was given the Legion's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award. He is shown, from left, with members of the Minnesota delegation: NECman Ray DeZurik, Past Commander Mike Ash, Commander Peggy Moon, Jenkins, Past National Commander Dan Ludwig, Past Department Commander Bill Goede. Jenkins is a member of the Rochester Post 92.

# Membership Chart

## As of August 27, 2014

| District      | 2015 Goal     | Total 2014    | Total 2015    | Percent of Goal | Same Date '13 |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1             | 9,976         | 9,918         | 4,897         | 49.09           | 4,679         |
| 2             | 8,110         | 8,026         | 3,529         | 43.59           | 3,666         |
| 3             | 12,486        | 12,421        | 5,637         | 45.15           | 5,010         |
| 4             | 2,554         | 2,530         | 1,283         | 50.23           | 1,265         |
| 5             | 2,959         | 2,936         | 1,392         | 47.04           | 860           |
| 6             | 12,698        | 12,627        | 5,771         | 45.45           | 5,490         |
| 7             | 7,245         | 7,167         | 3,271         | 45.15           | 3,210         |
| 8             | 4,768         | 4,727         | 2,416         | 50.67           | 2,441         |
| 9             | 7,443         | 7,378         | 3,661         | 49.19           | 3,741         |
| 10            | 11,243        | 11,189        | 5,318         | 47.30           | 5,671         |
| At-large      | 2,340         | 2,338         | 1,474         | 46.68           | 1,278         |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>81,822</b> | <b>81,257</b> | <b>38,649</b> | <b>46.78</b>    | <b>37,311</b> |

**CONCRETE WORK**

by Tom Seemon

Steps, sidewalks, patios and driveways

Licensed, bonded, insured

**612-721-2530**



With all the teams on the field for the Division I opening ceremony, Eagan Post 594 Commander Tom Mullon led the players in the Legion code.

# Baseball 2014

## Eagan and Luverne



The St. James team went in the stands after a game and shook hands with the crowd. St. James won the Division II Tournament's Sportsmanship Trophy.



Members of the Excelsior team try to prolong a rally with an arm salute to their players on the bases at the Division I tourney in Eagan.



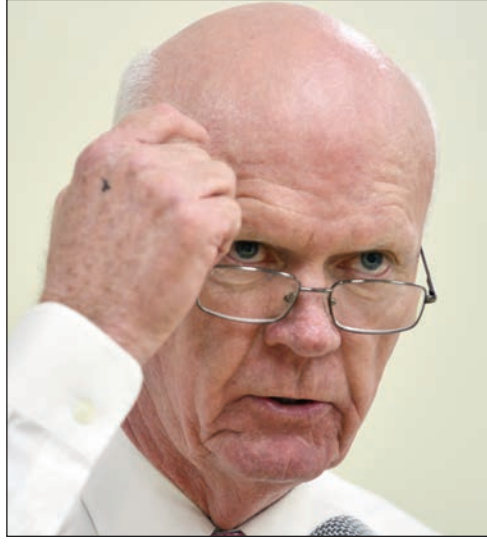
Foley players in the Division II tourney placed their hats on the ground and held their hands over their heart during the playing of the National Anthem.



The Eagan players saluted their teammates with a thumbs up signal during Division I action in Eagan.



**COMMANDER MIKE ASH**  
Division I banquet speaker



**TWINS GM TERRY RYAN**  
Division I banquet speaker



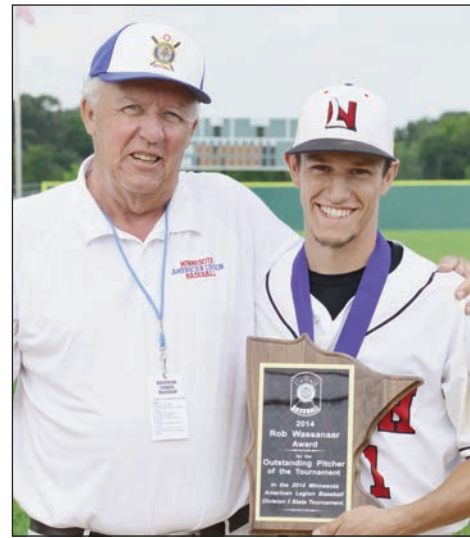
**SCOTT HACKETT**  
Coach of the Year



**DENNIS FREY**  
Legion Baseball Hall of Fame



The field at Luverne was decorated to note the Division II state tournament.



The pitcher of the year for Division I went to A.J. Sayer of Lakeville North.



Dean Atchison, center, was given the Graduate of the Year Award by Al Davis and Slick Miller.



Walker Froehling of St. James was presented the game ball for his perfect game by staff member Bob Nistler. Froehling was named the outstanding player.



Luke Pettersen of Excelsior shows that baseball can sometimes be a dirty game.

**Many of the Division II photos were provided by Digitell Studio in Luverne.**

# Baseball 2014

They beat Hutchinson 12-11 in 10 innings to advance to the semifinal game against Excelsior.

St. Cloud prevailed 7-3 and qualified for regionals, since Minnesota sends its top two teams. It was the first time in five years that a team outside the Twin Cities had earned a regional berth.

In the title game, Lakeville North defeated St. Cloud 5-1.

St. Cloud's Jeff Fasching was named the outstanding player of the tournament, and the outstanding pitcher was A.J. Sayer of Lakeville North. Hutchinson won the sportsmanship trophy.

Fasching batted .516 in the tourney with an .806 slugging percentage. He had 16 hits, the most in the tournament, and 10 runs batted in. Sayer had a win and a save, and opposing batters batted .188 against him. He had seven strikeouts and allowed only two earned runs in the tourney.

Lakeville North and St. Cloud went on to the regional at Fargo, N.D., where they took on six other teams in the Central Plains Regional. Lakeville North defeated West Des Moines, Iowa, 7-3, but then lost to Bismarck 12-2 and Omaha Creighton 10-2 to fall out of the tournament.

St. Cloud, however, continued on a roll and defeated Omaha Creighton 10-1, Fargo 4-3, and Bismarck 5-0 to get to the final games undefeated. The Chutes were in the catbird seat as the only undefeated team.

Unfortunately, they lost to Omaha Westside 16-6, and then, in the title game, lost to the same team 5-3. St. Cloud loaded the bases in the ninth and scored a run, but Omaha prevailed. Steven Neutzling, who also played very well in the state tournament, went 3-4 with two runs and an rbi in the final game.

In the Division II Tournament, Plato advanced through the first two games of the single-elimination eight-team tourney by beating Dilworth 5-3 and Foley 9-1. Also coming through to the final game was St. James who won over International Falls 1-0 and Luverne 5-1.

Foley topped Luverne 3-2 in the third place game, and International Falls defeated LaCrescent 8-4 to take the consolation title.

In the championship, Plato shutout St. James 6-0. Tanner Grack pitched a one-hitter for the win.

In the third game of the tournament, St. James' Walker Froehling pitched a seven-inning perfect game. He also pitched two inning of hitless relief in the next game. He was named the tourney's outstanding player.

The sportsmanship trophy went to St. James.

At the regional tournament in Milbank, S.D., the cradle of American Legion Baseball, Plato defeated Waupan, Wis., 5-1 in the final for the championship. Teddy Peterson was named the tourney most valuable player as he went 8-10 batting. Cole Peterson picked up the win in the final game.

The Division I tournament was kicked off by a banquet. Dennis Frey of Howard Lake was named to the Hall of Fame, and Bird Island and Olivia were named co-Posts of the Year. Scott Hackett of Eden Prairie was named Coach of the Year.

Terry Ryan, general manager of the Twins, was the featured speaker.

At the Division II banquet in Luverne, Dean Atchison of Moorhead was honored as Graduate of the Year.

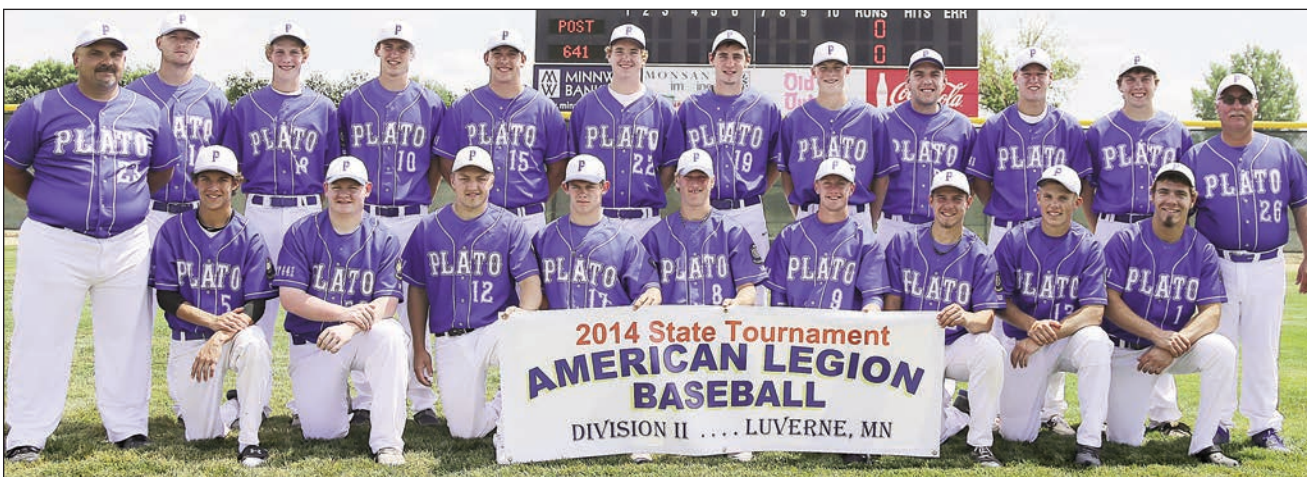
Next year's Division I tournament will be held in Chanhassen. The Division II tournament will be held in Morris.



**LAKEVILLE NORTH, DIVISION I CHAMPIONS** -- Lakeville North won the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Division I Tournament at Eagan. Front Row (Left to right): Wes Ahlers, Joey Larson, AJ Sayer, Nick Dorfman, Matt Petrick, and Kyle Rhodus. Back Row (Left to right): Jared Simon (Head Coach), Nick Oblak, Drew Stewart, Brett Herber, Angelo Altavilla, Cole Nonweiler, Ben Jensen, Billy Riach, and Brandon LaRue (Assistant Coach).



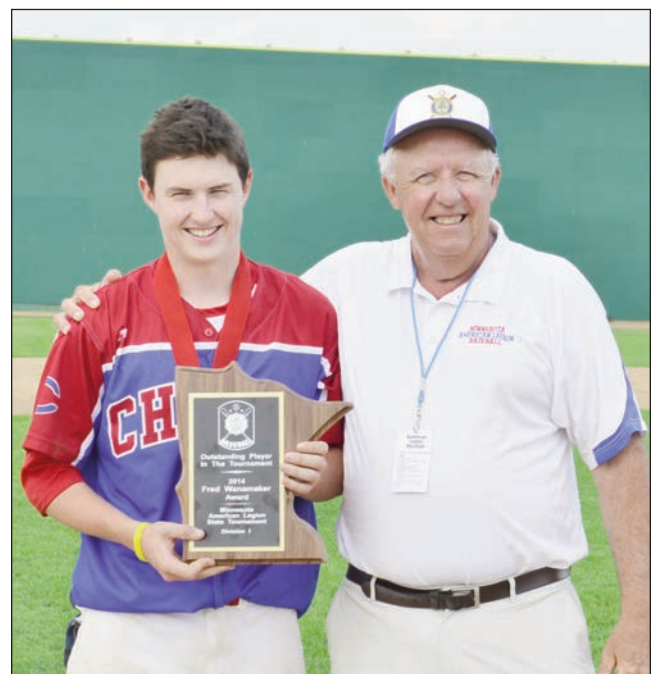
**ST CLOUD CHUTES, DIVISION I RUNNERS UP** -- St. Cloud Chutes came in second in the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Division I Tournament at Eagan. Front Row (Left to right): Tom Imholte, Brian Minks, Camren Dehler, Jeff Fasching, Nathan Giamb Bruno, Jack Schramel, Jeremy Hartung, Dominic Austing. Back Row (Left to right): Erik Ellingboe (Assistant Coach), Zach Sufka, Bryant Bohlig, Steven Neutzling, Brindley Theisen, Tommy Auger, Jake Spaniol, Jake Gross, Brady Yoerg, Dave Wenner (Manager & Head Coach).



**PLATO, DIVISION II CHAMPIONS** -- Plato won both the Minnesota Division II championship and the title at the Central Plains American Legion Regional. Players on the team included: Colton Lueders, Tyler Chap, Bennet Bielke, Reed Wawrzyniak, Carter Pinske, Levi Vorlicek, Teddy Peterson, Zach Jungclaus, Mason Goetti, Nolan Lepel, Tristan Weber, Tanner Grack, Jacob VonBerge, Mitchell Pinske, Cole Peterson, Alex Romano, Aaron Boraas, Josh VonBerge. Coaches were Matt Odegaard, Tim Lepel, and Tom Chap.



**ST. JAMES, DIVISION II RUNNERS UP** -- St. James came in second in the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Tournament at Luverne. Members of the team were: Walker Froehling, Jacob Ziemer, Tyler Witcraft, Bransen Petersen, Zachary Brandts, Derek Meyer, Simon Beck, Christopher Jones, Derrick Shupe, John Olson, Justin Stevens, Evan Mortenson, Ryan Menssen, Devin Wolfe, Brady Halvorson, Johnathon Peterson, Jaren Skarphol, David Bradley.



**MOST VALUABLE PLAYER, DIVISION I** -- Jeff Fasching of the St. Cloud Chutes was chosen as the Division I Outstanding Player, winning the Fred Wanamaker Award. Fasching led the tournament in hits with 16 hits.



**PEGGY MOON**  
St. Joseph  
COMMANDER



# Minnesota's 2014 - 2015 Leadership Team



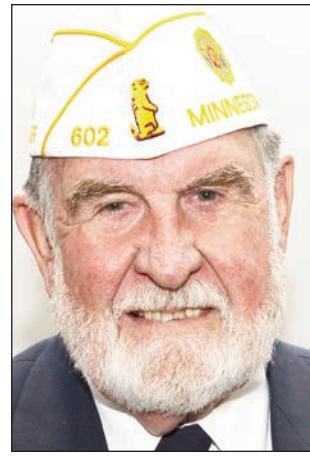
**GLENN MUELLER**  
St. Charles  
VICE COMMANDER



**ARNE GYNILD**  
Willmar  
VICE COMMANDER



**DENNIS DELONG**  
Bloomington  
VICE COMMANDER



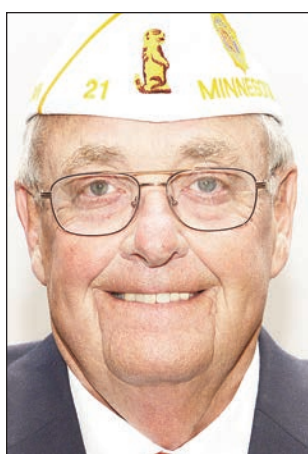
**MEL BUESSELER**  
Hillman  
VICE COMMANDER



**CARL HENDRICKSON**  
Cloquet  
VICE COMMANDER



**PAT LOGAN**  
Bloomington  
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



**GARY OLSON**  
Moorhead  
HISTORIAN



**STEVE KLINKNER**  
Madelia  
CHAPLAIN



**CLINTON BURT**  
Slayton  
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



**MYRON EHRIK**  
West Concord  
DIST. 1 COMMANDER



**JENNIFER KAFKA**  
Blue Earth  
DIST. 2 COMMANDER



**DUANE ANDERSON**  
Elysian  
DIST. 3 COMMANDER



**DAN WILLIAMS**  
Vadnais Heights  
DIST. 4 COMMANDER



**WAYNE GLANTON**  
Minneapolis  
DIST. 5 COMMANDER



**CARL MOON**  
St. Joseph  
DIST. 6 COMMANDER



**VICTOR GADES**  
Morris  
DIST. 7 COMMANDER



**WILSON SPENCE**  
Duluth  
DIST. 8 COMMANDER



**THOMAS NORGAARD**  
Shevlin  
DIST. 9 COMMANDER



**THOMAS SANDERS**  
Pine City  
DIST. 10 COMMANDER