

tank, and had raised the bottom of the tank 18 inches.

The effect on Pittman's body was devastating. He had burns from hydraulic fluid or oil on his head, shoulders and back. His spine was damaged and he was paralyzed from the waist down. The bones below his knees were shattered.

"I never lost consciousness. Everybody on our side opened up and there was a big fire fight. I never did find out if they got the people who set off the mine. They figured it was detonated by remote control because it was the third time we'd been there that morning.

"It seemed to me like 15 minutes had gone by, but it was probably more like five. I remember there was some black smoke coming up through the hatch. I knew that guys who had been hit by mines often lost their legs. I couldn't feel anything down there.

"I slowly put my hands on my thighs and felt down to my knees to see if my legs were still there. They were.

"Then I started feeling lower. When I got down to my feet, they were facing the wrong direction. The bones had been broken in so many places, that my feet were completely turned around."

Help came, and the first sergeant and a couple of medics helped pull Pittman from the tank. "I looked down, and as my legs came free, my feet swung around and were facing the right direction again."

The medics attached plastic, blow-up casts to his legs and gave him morphine, although Pittman said he really couldn't feel any pain.

"I remember a Huey (small medevac helicopter) landed about 20 feet away and they put me on board. I remember being excited because it was my first helicopter ride. They took me to some MASH (mobile army surgical hospital) in the jungle."

He was there for four days, and then moved to Saigon where he stayed three or four more days. It was at Saigon that he almost died.

"I got pneumonia. My lungs kept filling up with fluid and they had to work on me all night long. It was very touch and go."

There, lying in his bed trying to breathe, was where he heard the nurses confide that he probably wasn't going to make it. But the night passed. "The doctors pulled me through. It wasn't easy."

Finally he was moved to a major Army hospital in Japan where he stayed for two weeks, then he was flown to the United States to Edwards Air Force Base, and finally to Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center in Denver.

"There was still something wrong with my spine at that point, and one of the doctors told me I would never walk again. I just made up my mind right there that I was going to walk. And I did."

The spinal cord finally began to heal, but the doctors were having great trouble with the broken bones in the legs. "Three times they set the bones, but they would always slide to the side. They did nine surgeries on my legs.

"Finally a doctor came up to me with a piece of paper. He said that they were afraid I was going to get gangrene, and he wanted me to sign a release to remove my legs below the knees. He said if I got gangrene, they probably would have to remove the legs above the knees.

"So I had this piece of paper in front of me. I said, 'No, I'm not going to sign it.' He got mad at me and walked out of the room."

Shortly thereafter, a Japanese doctor came into the room. "He said, 'We'd like to try something different.' He said if it didn't work I'd probably end up as an amputee. I told him to just keep trying, but I wasn't going to sign any papers."

The new technique involved setting the bones and then securing them with pins, like darning needles. The legs would then be secured with a cast.

It worked, and the bones began to heal.

Months later, Pittman was still on crutches, but getting better every day when an orderly came through the Fitzsimmons hospital and threw a large envelope on his bed. He was certain that it would contain his paperwork for a medical discharge from the Army. He still had a year to go on his enlistment.

Instead, the orders in the envelope commanded him to report to Fort Leonard Wood in Texas to resume active duty.

"I hobbled down the hallway to the CO's office, knocked on the door, walked in, didn't salute and threw my orders on his desk and said, 'What the hell is this?'"

The commanding officer first chewed him out for being disrespectful, and then answered his question.

"You can still lick a stamp, can't you?" he asked Pittman. "Don't worry, they'll give you some gravy job to finish out your last year."

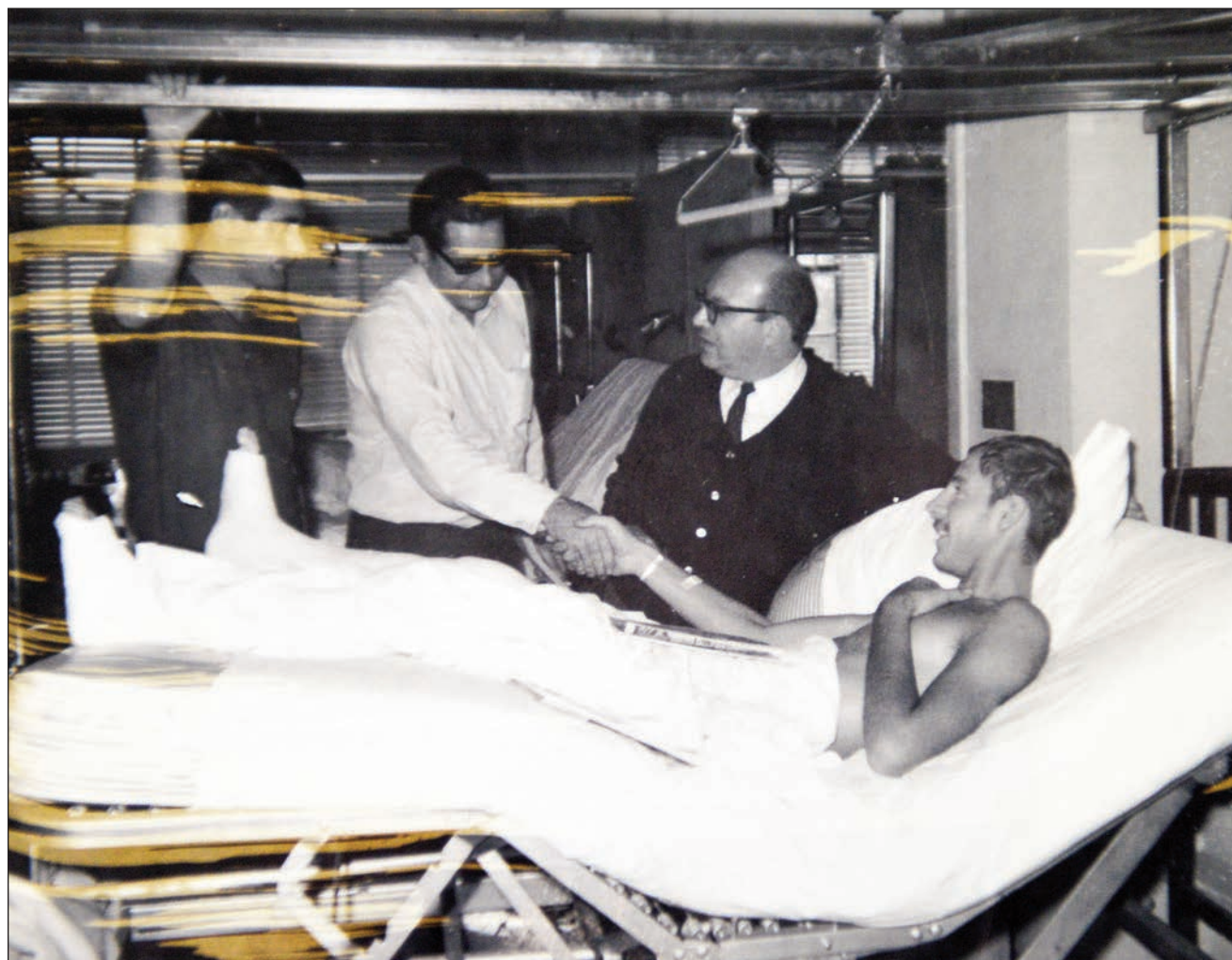
His first job at Leonard Wood was driving a truck, but it was too hard on his legs. He was then given a new Jeep and made the company commander's driver.

"I had fun with that Jeep. I put on chrome lug nuts. I put in red leather seat covers. I spiffed it up really nice."

But one day the group commander saw the Jeep and called him in. "I thought I was going to get my ass chewed out, but instead he requested me to be his driver."

Pittman now had a new Chrysler sedan to keep shiny, and his workload for the day often was only to drive the commander to work in the morning and then drive him home at night.

He got out in 1970. The healing had come a long way,



In a hospital in Japan, Pittman was visited by two professional sports figures. He doesn't remember who they were but he appreciated their kindness.



One of Pittman's many vocations and avocations since the Vietnam War has been aviation photography. One of his pictures of a Stearman trainer was used on the cover of a Time for Kids issue in 2015.



Pittman took a break from his usual job of driving a tank or APC to having his picture taken in a Jeep.



There was time on occasion to talk with the local citizenry.

but he still limped, had drop foot, and a great deal of numbness in his legs.

He went back to the railroad where he had worked before he joined the service and enjoyed the work very much. He was working his way up to becoming an engineer.

"But my girlfriend's parents wanted me to go to college before I married their daughter. I didn't want to do it. I had a great job, tons of money." In the end, he enrolled at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design to learn to be a photographer, an interest he'd always had.

He held many jobs over the years including running a photo studio, owning a novelty business, managing a drug store, and finally working for the state in their travel management department, where he retired in 2007. He never married.

He has mixed his love of aviation with his professional training and become one of the top aviation photographers

in the state.

As part of a reserve unit in the 70s, he began arranging flyovers at parades and other events in North Branch, Forest Lake and all across the state, a volunteer effort he still does. Several newspaper stories have been written about his ability to arrange flyovers of World War II planes, military helicopters, or other aircraft.

He also has one of the largest die-cast model collections in the United States, filling shelf after shelf of his home in North Branch. He has created his own models of Lake Superior ore boats, using the schematics provided by the mining company.

On the side, he sells those ore boat models, other novelty items, pins, and more. He's a busy guy.

And, except for the large bulges on his legs, he has fully recovered from that day long ago in Asia when his tank was blown up by a mine.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Sylvan Fix
Commander



Legionnaires,

I hope everyone had a safe and Happy Christmas. I want to thank all the Posts that extended an invite to their Veterans Day functions. I was particularly impressed with the Post Everlasting program that the Waseca Post had following their dinner. It was truly an awe-inspiring event.

I wish to thank Adams Post for hosting our Americanism/Membership Rally on Nov 19th. I never thought I would see the day where a bunch of adults would be standing in line to see who could toss the most rubber chickens in a wash tub our cow pies at a cardboard target. I thank Membership Director Denny Lewison and his wife Nancy for providing the entertainment as well as the Adams Post for the delicious all you could eat chicken and pork dinner.

I want to remind everyone to look for the special someone with the American Legion Family to mentor for our future leaders. Failure to find those persons could be the eventual loss of a Post. They are there. They just may need that encouragement and support.

The 1st District is planning a revitalization on Jan 13th, 14th and 15th in Rochester. If anybody is available to help we would greatly appreciate it.

SECOND DISTRICT

Mark Coney
Commander



Happy New Year Second District.

I am wishing everyone in the Second District a Happy and Prosperous New Year for 2017. December was quite a month for us. We were in first place for the Prestige Trophy for four weeks in a row. We had another district sneak up on us and took over the top spot, but for only one week. The Solid Second won the trophy by .01%! That is how close the race was this year at the end. Thanks to all of the Posts and the Vice Commanders and our membership director Mike Schaffer who worked very hard to recapture the lead and WIN the Prestige Trophy for the 2016 year!!

I am also happy to see that many of you have risen to the challenge of meeting the 95% goal early. Thank you for all of your hard efforts, I know this is not easy especially at this time of the year. Please keep up the great work.

We are having our mid-winter conference in Redwood Falls at the Legion on January 27 & 28 with the Executive Board meeting Friday night and the Conference on Saturday morning beginning at 8:00 a.m. with coffee and doughnuts at 7 a.m. Lunch will be served by the Post. I encourage everyone to attend and take part of the conference. It is a chance for everyone to learn and to have the input that matters, YOUR VOICE! Also, bring along any memberships you may have at that time as we will have a membership rally included on Saturday. If you cannot make it, please contact your Vice Commander so we can collect them and turn them in for you.

On December 10th, we had our Oratorical Contest at St. James. A big thank you to the Post for allowing us to have the competition there this year.

THIRD DISTRICT

Mike Maxa
Commander



Good bye old friend, 2016, and welcome our new friend, 2017.

Wow, another year in the books and another year to look forward to with new and old challenges to conquer. We have hit the infamous time of the year of resolutions. How are we going to lose those holiday pounds, find time to exercise, how can I be a better person, spend more time with family, and I need to get involved in my community. We all know too well what the result will be for most of us. We will all start out strong and we will feel good for the first month or so, and then life catches up to us. We begin to reprioritize our new years resolutions and tell ourselves next month I will get back on track. The one resolution I challenge you to keep or make the extra effort for, is to get involved. We are at a point within the American Legion and our communities, where we the American Legion family are needed now more than ever. Our country is more divided at the start of 2017 than I can ever remember. We need to educate and stress our core beliefs, the four-pillars of our organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. At this time Americanism needs to be at the fore front of our message followed closely by National Security to unite our country

and show the world we are strong. We as the American Legion have taken the first step in promoting Americanism by showing that respect to our National Anthem and our United States of American Flag must be upheld. The anthem and the flag that so many men and women have sacrificed for by wearing the uniform to protect. When President Ronald Reagan took office our country was not a proud country and was divided. President Reagan made us all feel good about being an American. He didn't apologize to anyone and we stood strong and united against any adversary. We are going to lead the way, as The American Legion family, showing the world why we are the largest Veteran's organization and our voice will be heard. 2017 will be a great year for the United States, we will make America great.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Randy Bastyr
Commander



Greetings to all members of the Fabulous Fourth. Happy New Year! I wish you all the very best in 2017. May this New Year bring you peace and good will and may all of our service men and women return safely to their loved ones.

The Shop, Ship and Share event was held at the Maplewood Mall on December 2nd & 3rd. It was another excellent event with us packing and shipping 1020 boxes to our active service men and women. Thank you to the many volunteers and Legion Posts that sent donations, that made it possible to mail this many packages.

We will be holding a Post Membership Revitalization on January 12, 13 & 14 at the No St Paul Post #39, beginning each day @ 9:00 a.m. I hope to see at least one member from each post there every day. We need help Membership Chairman Mickey Ostrum achieve 100 % for the third year in a row.

Upcoming District events: January 7th - Mid-Winter Convention, Arcade Phalen Post 577, 9 a.m. till done; January 12-14 - Post Revitalization No St Paul; January 15 - VA Hospital visitation @ 12:30; January 28 - Winter Carnival Parade/Membership Rally. Buses will depart at noon from Arcade-Phalen.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Ray Eiden
Commander



Greetings from the Fighting Fifth.

The holiday season is over and we are now into a new year. I hope the new year will be a healthy and prosperous one for all. December was a busy month as it started out with the Shop, Ship and Share when the 5th District joined with the 4th District to send care boxes to our Minnesota Veterans deployed overseas. It was a great event and we pledged our support again for next year. I want to thank everyone from our District who attended. Our District fundraiser with the pancake breakfast at Wold-Chamberlain Post #99 was successful and we got a good start toward the money we need for our project for the Veteran's home. We are planning on doing another breakfast in the near future and a spaghetti dinner in March.

Our membership is at 78.01% of goal. We are still behind last year's pace and need to pick it up and get those renewals in.

The St. Paul Winter carnival is coming up on Jan. 28th and we will join the 4th District and march in the parade. We will meet at the Arcade-phalen Post at noon. Our website is progressing nicely. The public relations board met with Shawn Davis to review what has been done so far and make suggestions for enhancements. Our next Hospital Visitation will be January 15 when we will join with the 4th District. We will meet at 1:00 p.m.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Vernonica Fernlund
Commander



Happy New Year. I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. Detachment SAL Sgt-At- Arms Michael was home from boot camp for Christmas. He is doing well and is now back in South Carolina finishing his training. The 6th District Midwinter conference will be held Saturday January 28, 2017 at Brainerd Post 255. Call to order will be 8:30 am at the Brainerd National Guard Armory. I want to thank everyone for all their hard work with membership. The membership program never ends, recruiting and renewing is continuous. There are a lot of veterans who would like to join our American Legion Family but are just waiting to be asked. All posts need to register and share their post

history on www.centennial.legion.org. If you do not have access to a computer you can contact me or if you attend the Midwinter Conference in Brainerd we will have assistance available. Let's continue to work on Storm'n for Membership and make 2017 a year to remember, 100% membership and 100% Consolidate Post Reports.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Kenneth Oliver Jr.
Commander



Happy New Year to the 8th District Legion Family

Commander Oliver has graciously allowed me to write your Legionnaire this month. We have an exciting year coming. Our Mid-Winter meeting for Legion/SAL and Auxiliary are on January 28th at Post 109 in Two Harbors. Executive Committee Meetings begin at 9:00 a.m. with our General Sessions beginning at 10:00 a.m. We need posts, squadron and units to participate. The district doesn't run without participates from its members. Next, we have Oratorical contest. If your post/squad/unit is holding an Oratorical contest, please let me know as soon as possible so we can plan on having a District level contest. Your winner's names and paperwork should be sent to me by February 3rd. If you need information on how to conduct an Oratorical contest, please let me know. Now on to membership. At this moment, the Legion side is at 80.85%, Auxiliary is at 67.94% and SAL is at 56.15%, I'm sure those percentages will increase greatly by the Department Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 4th at the Post 45 in New Prague. If your post, squad or unit need help please do not hesitate to call your district officers you can find their contact information by visiting www.americanlegiondistrict8mn.com. I look forward to seeing you all at our Mid-Winter Meeting. Jennifer Havlick, Past Dist. Commander

NINTH DISTRICT

Eric Wilkens
Commander



Greetings from the Roaring Ninth. In December, we held our annual Christmas rally in Waubun and had a great event sponsored by the Auxiliary. Everyone had a great time and we even managed to raise close to \$300 for the Commander and President's joint project. This year the Auxiliary President and myself have decided to join forces and raise money for the Woman's Waiting and Lactation Room at the Fargo VA. While many of you reading this already know of the many woman veterans who have served with you, there is still a misconception that those who need benefits and served with both honor and distinction are males. Many female veterans suffer from the same illnesses and internal scars that haunt their male counterparts. The toughest part of the membership year is fast approaching. The snowbirds have flown South and the easy memberships are already collected. Posts should use a personal connection, phone call, letter, email, text, visit, whatever it takes to reach those few members we all have. Even if your Post is at 100% of goal, try to find another member. Together we are strong and with a new administration coming in January, we as veterans need to stand strong and remind American that we are and were on the front lines so they could and continue to sleep in peace at night.

For God and Country

TENTH DISTRICT

Bonnie Hanson
Commander



Greetings from the 10th District.

Hope everyone had a great Holiday and now we are into a New Year. We have a lot of things going on just in January. Our Mid-Winter Convention is 7 January at the Edward B. Cutter Post 102 in Anoka Minnesota starting at 9 AM and hope to have a great turn out and hope the weather is good. We also have the Snowmobile Rally on the 27th and 28th of January ending up on the 28th at 6 pm in Lino Lakes. We still are slow in getting the memberships in and it's something we need to work on. All Post Commanders and their Membership teams please do the calling of ones that have not paid their dues yet. Remember most of the ones still out just want to be called and ASKED. We all need someone to talk to. The Consolidated Post Reports is the big one and I would like to see the 10th District have a 100% report this year. So look for it and please fill it out, sign it and mail it in. I am sure you will find your post did something on the report to fill out and if not please tell us and send it back. Just fill it out and don't discard it. It only takes a few minutes.

Listening Post

News from around the State



BACKUS PARTY -- Alexis Huesmann, four days old, meets Santa at the annual Backus Auxiliary Unit 368 Christmas Party. Over 80 attended.



WOODBURY WALL -- Henry Kolashinski and Tom Grezek and Santa Claus participate in the Woodbury Post 501 Wall of Thanks Fund Drive. Proceeds went to the post, the food shelf, Hastings Veterans Home and the Rest Camp on Big Marine.



LEGION GRADS -- Dan Williams, Fourth District, and Ralph Schneekloth, First District, recently graduated from Legion College held in Indianapolis.



BAYPORT HONOREES -- Bayport Post 491 recently paid tribute to members with 60 years or more service. From left: Les Krongard, Charlie Halberg, Irv Johnson, Eugene Bell, Ron Perl, Don Thron, Charlie Clesman, Richard Mockler, Gerald Nolde, and George Seigfried.



COAST GUARD TRIP -- Five Coast Guardsmen were on the Twin Cities Honor Flight for Korean War veterans in October. They were greeted on their tour by former Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas. The Minnesota veterans included Chris Kalogerson, Dick Anderson, Bill Anderson, Donn Latourell and Russell Olson.



PAYNESVILLE FLAGS -- The flags at the new Paynesville Post 271 Veterans Memorial flew for the first time on Veterans Day. The memorial began as an Eagle Scout project by Brockten Vavra that was adopted by the post which sold paver blocks to finance it. Pavers are still available. (Paynesville Press photo)



TYLER SINGS OUT -- Members of the Tyler Post 185 sang patriotic songs on Veterans Day at the Tyler Sunrise Nursing Home.



FALLDIN DELIVERS -- Falldin Post 555 delivered school supplies to Valley View Elementary School in Columbia Heights, one of seven schools the post brings supplies to every year. From left: Paul Soderberg, post sergeant-at-arms, Principal Willie Fort, and Adjutant Ray Eiden.



HILLMAN DINNER -- Hillman Post 602 hosted its annual Pheasant Dinner in October for local veterans from area nursing homes. World War II vets were also invited. The post provides the full pheasant dinner with all the trimmings.

Listening Post

News from around the State

Foundation donates to five vets homes

The Minnesota American Legion Foundation gave \$25,000 to the Minnesota Veterans Homes.

The grants were of \$5,000 to each of Minnesota homes in Luverne, Hastings, Minneapolis, Silver Bay and Fergus Falls.

Each home selected the project it would use the money for.

"I want to thank the individuals of the Legion, Auxiliary and SAL along with the posts, units, squadrons and districts who gave to Fund 85, the veteran assistance fund. Without your help, these donations could not have happened," said Lloyd Ricker, president of the Foundation.



LUVERNE -- Foundation President Lloyd Ricker presents \$5,000 to Duane Marbon, volunteer services coordinator for the Luverne home. Luverne will use the money to help construct permanent outside shading the the dementia unit.



FERGUS FALLS -- Foundation President Lloyd Ricker presented the check to Deanna Mounts, development and volunteer coordinator for the Fergus Falls home. The money will be used for a three-season greenhouse so residents can get the therapeutic value of gardening.



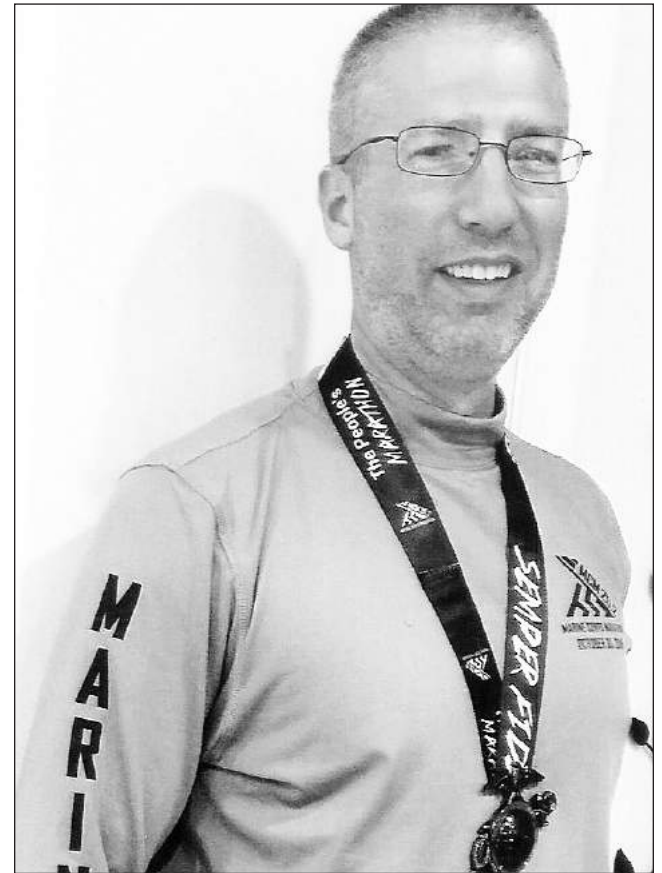
MINNEAPOLIS -- Foundation Vice President Bruce Kottom presented a check to Sandy Larson, public affairs director, and Cory Glad, director of the Minneapolis home. The project in Minneapolis is a circle of eight flags at the entrance to the home.



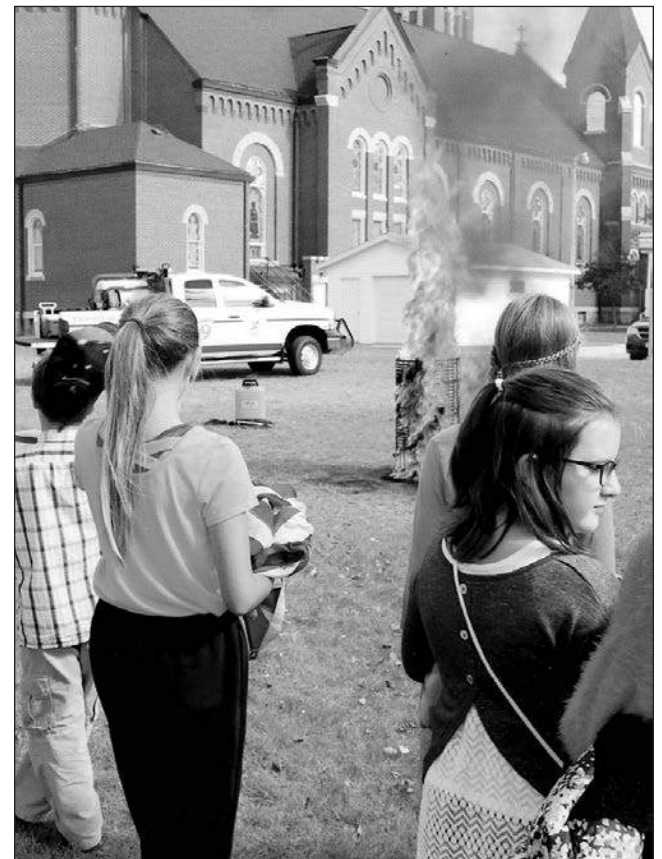
HASTINGS -- Wayne Hammon Jr., secretary of the Foundation, presented a check to Susan Register, volunteer services coordinator and Andrew Burnside, director at Hastings. The home will use the money to help buy a new bus to take veterans to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.



SILVER BAY -- Foundation Vice President Bruce Kottom and Department Commander Denise Milton presented a check to Ward Wallin, volunteer program administrator at Silver Bay. The money will be used to help construct a band shell to be used to entertain veterans and for other outside functions.



WILLMAR MARINE -- Willmar Post 167 member James G. Johnson ran the Marine Corps Marathon in Arlington, Virginia. His time was 4:35:55.



DENT CEREMONY -- Dent Post 148 conducted a flag retirement ceremony at a local school.



HONORED GUESTS -- Past Department Commander Dennis Henkemeyer brought his family to dinner at the Waite Park Rally. From left in front are father John Henkemeyer, brother Tom and mother Harriet.



HOUSTON SHOOTERS -- Houston Post 423 shooters set a new NRA national team record this year. The team consisted of Corey Kinstler (assistant coach), Madalyn Schutte, Ethan Kintsler, Haley Alfson, Eli Johnson, Lillian Carlson and Jay Johnson (coach.)



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 17-3

President Carol Kottom

January 2017

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Carol Kottom



Good bye 2016 – Hello 2017. My how time flies when you're having fun.

Got the OK from my doctor to get rid of the boot and drive again. What a relief. Still a little bit stiff but getting better every day. Thanks to all for putting up with me and my knee walker for so long, for the "get better" notes and for just being such good friends through the whole ordeal.

Congratulations to the 4th and 5th District on a fantastic Shop, Ship and Share. What a great thing to do for our veterans. All the goodies that are donated, pictures colored by our younger members (and Commander Denise and me), then packaged and shipped to veterans. I colored, wrote labels and rode the merry-go-round. What a great day. They broke their record in the number of packages mailed out again this year – Way to go.

I helped at Minneapolis VAHCS and Luverne gift shops. It's always fun to visit with the veterans and their families, wrap a few gifts and even had the opportunity to visit with a few veterans that I know at the hospital. Thank you to the gift shop committee, Raleen Tolzman and Vida Bacon for doing all the planning and shopping. Thank you to the American Legion Representatives at the hospitals and homes for putting it all together and making it work. You guys are all fabulous and I can't thank you enough.

Visited some of the VA hospitals and homes for pheasant dinners; St Cloud, Silver Bay, Minneapolis VAHCS, Minneapolis Home, Fergus Falls, and Fargo. The pheasant dinners were all fabulous but I enjoyed the tours even more. I didn't realize that Silver Bay had originally been a school. What a great conversion. And I will never, ever call our VA homes nursing homes. They are anything but. Our veterans are lucky to have places like the hospitals for their everyday needs and the homes for their major needs. The homes are going more and more to single person rooms, some have kitchen facilities for each section and some have pets there. It was wonderful to get the opportunity to see the facilities and visit with the directors and staff. Please stop if you ever have the opportunity as there are a lot of areas you can visit, or make an appointment to take a tour.

Freeborn Unit introduced a new concept to Bruce and me. It is a special Christmas event for them. They planted a tree and have a Set Memories Aglow sign and nativity scene by the tree. People donate to have names of deceased friends and/or family members read. After the reading of the names, the lights on the tree are turned on. The proceeds are donated to the Albert Lea Hospice program.

Thanks to all the Units for the invitations and the good times throughout the month. Each visit is unique and each is a learning experience. There are so many good ideas and so many friends presenting them.

Again, please help with membership. We are behind last year and last year was behind the year before and on and on. Thanks for all you have done to help us reach our goals and maintain our members. This is our most important program and hopefully we'll all keep working on it.

I know that everyone had a very Merry Christmas with friends and family and that we are all ready to begin 2017. Resolutions anyone? I don't make them because I've never quite figured out the secret to keeping them.

Remember during this time of the year to keep our veterans in your thoughts and prayers. Depression is the hardest illness to cure and is most common during the holidays.

God bless you and yours & "thanks" to all of our veterans. It is because of you that we have the freedoms we so enjoy. A special shout out to our veterans who are not home with their families over the holidays. Know that we are grateful for your service and you are always in our thoughts and prayers. May 2017 bring us all blessings and happiness.

Forest Lake will be site of 2017 Junior Conference

Saturday, April 8th is the date for the 54th Annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at the Forest Lake American Legion Post 225 with the Third District serving as our hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 7th. Complete information and the Call to the Junior Conference was included in the January/February Unit mailing. Be sure you share this information with your Junior Activities Chairman. Arrange now for your Juniors to attend. We need more Juniors to attend our Conference and share their successes with other Junior members so we can grow the program. Junior members are the Auxiliary's future and we must nurture and promote what they do. We have a wonderful Honorary Junior President, Kiana Coleman-Woods, who has done a great job of delivering socks and undergarments to Veterans and homeless. This is her project for the year.

GIRLS STATE RESERVATIONS

In the January/February Unit mailing, every Unit received the necessary information and reservation form to reserve a place for their candidate(s) to the 2017 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Please ask your Unit President for the necessary information.

After your Unit sends in the reservation fee (\$300.00 per girl) and it has been processed, your Unit will receive a packet of information including a complete registration packet for each girl you are sponsoring. This will be sent to the person who signed the reservation form.

Information will be mailed to each high school in January. The schools will be waiting to be contacted by you. Let them know now if you will be sponsoring a girl.

A Unit may sponsor as many girls from the same high school as it would like to. There is no limit. The candidate(s) must attend a Minnesota public, charter, parochial, private, home-school, or be a resident of Minnesota. All reservation fees will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis. Any person, business or organization may provide the fee to sponsor a girl but this must be run through a Unit.

This year the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will return to Bethel University. The session will be held June 11 – 17, 2017.

2017 POPPY ORDERS

Poppy orders are still being accepted in the department office. As of this writing, we have received orders from 269 Units. Please get your order into the Department Office. We need to know how many 2017 Poppies are needed so we can plan accordingly. If you have already ordered and need to place a second order, please do so.

Shipment of Poppy orders has been ongoing. Upon receipt of your order, please check it carefully and report any discrepancies to the department office immediately. Please do not wait until Poppy Day.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports have been sent to all Unit President's in the January/February Unit Mailing packet. Please make sure and go through the reports and instruction sheets. If your Unit doesn't participate in all of the programs be sure to fill out the ones you do participate in and return them. If your Unit is inactive and doesn't participate in any of the programs, please send them back stating "do not participate" on the form.

SECOND DUES NOTICES

The National organization will be sending out a second dues notice around January 15, 2017 to all Senior members whose 2017 dues were NOT received and recorded by the National organization by December 10. That means some of you will receive this second notice though you recently paid your dues.

If you have already paid your dues and receive another notice, please disregard it. We know that some of the dues and the dues notices cross in the mail.

Reminder: Any member who has not paid her 2016 dues by January 31 is considered delinquent and loses her rights,

privileges and benefits of membership. Payment of her 2016 dues reinstates her as a member in good standing.

MEMBERSHIP HELP

The Department Office, Executive Committee and Membership Chairmen are looking for your help. If any of you have any success stories or interesting ways of collecting you membership renewals, we are all ears. Our membership continues to decline and the Department Office needs this to stop. We need dues to be able to continue to give the best customer service we can as this is the only money we have to run the office. We are here for you and would like to continue working for this wonderful organization forever! Please contact Sandie at the Department Office via email; sandie@mnala.org or deptoffice@mnala.org or call 651-224-7634. We would love to hear from you and share these success stories.

2018 DIRECT BILLING

Another year has gone by and we are already looking for each Unit's 2018 dues - though the calendar just turned to 2017, it is already that time of the year when the National organization requires the necessary information for printing the 2018 dues notices. Every Unit will receive a notice asking for the amount of your Unit's year 2018 Senior and Junior dues, and the name and address of the person whose name should appear on the year 2018 dues' notices. The information and form was in the January/February Unit mailing. The information is due into the department office no later than March 31, 2017. We would appreciate your cooperation and getting this form back to us in a prompt manner. This form will also be on our website. Make sure and discuss this with your Unit at your next meeting and vote on your Unit dues so the form can be filled out with the correct amounts for 2018.

PROGRAMS THAT NEED SUPPORT

In reviewing the contributions to the various approved Department programs, we find there seems to be some questions as to what are our own Auxiliary programs; what are not.

Each year the Department Chairmen receive approval from the Department Executive Committee for those Auxiliary programs that need our financial support. These programs are listed on pages 12-13 of the Unit Guide. Those marked with an * are our own Department Auxiliary programs, namely: Junior Activities, Department Scholarships, Girls State, Past Presidents Health Care Scholarship, American Legion Auxiliary Hospital Program, \$5.00 Bill Shower, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and the Christmas Gift Shop. These programs cannot be carried on without the financial support of our Units and those Posts that have so kindly supported our programs.

Many Units are having difficulties financially. Every Unit should look carefully at what they are donating to. Many, many letters of solicitation come to the Unit from other organizations. Some Units feel that they "must" support these other organization in order to be carrying out the programs of the ALA. That is not the case. Too, some Units are supporting programs we are no longer involved with financially or that have been completed.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Question: What has your Unit done with the copies of the scholarship applications sent to you last fall? Are they sitting in your Unit's files, or have you taken them to your local schools and shared them with the students who are searching for ways to finance their education? If you are in need of additional copies for distribution, you may duplicate those you received or contact the department office for additional copies.

All scholarship applications are due into the department office by March 15, 2017. Let your schools and community know about these scholarships. There are seven (8) Department scholarship awarded each year at \$1,000.00 each. The Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarships are also \$1,000.00 each. All applications can also be found on our website. Our National organization has raised the

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

amount they are giving for scholarships as well this year.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

There is a very special group of people who serve our hospitalized veterans throughout the year. These are our Hospital/Home Representatives and the volunteers who work with them. Each month is busy for them as they make the stay of our hospitalized veterans a bit more pleasant and comfortable. During the month of December they are exceptionally busy with the Christmas Gift Shop and \$5.00 Bill Shower programs. Our appreciation and many thanks to all our representatives and the volunteers who serve with them:

Naomi Hill, Sioux Falls, Mary Ann Davis, Minneapolis, Jan Benson, St. Cloud, Jeannette Mertens, Luverne, Phyllis Mealey, Silver Bay, Sandra Gibson, Minneapolis, Carolyn Albertson, Fargo, Doris LaFayette, Fergus Falls, Darlene Wondra, Hastings.

Thanks, ladies, for all that you do.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

The 2017 Washington Conference will be held in Washington DC, February 26 – March 1, 2017. If any member is interested in attending, please contact the department office for details or go to the National website, www.alaforveterans.org. I was able to attend last year and I strongly suggest if you have the time, make sure and attend. I learned and saw much of our country's history in the short time I was there – it was amazing.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

My gosh, what a year it has been – saying good-bye to working with President Sandy and hello to President Carol has turned out to be such an easy transition. Both women are simply the best and very dedicated to the organization. I couldn't have asked for better.

I will step up on the pulpit for just a moment and ask each member who hasn't paid their dues to please do so – it is so easy, you can write a check to your unit or easier yet, go on-line to the National organization website, www.alaforveterans.com, log in and you can pay your dues right there. This is the money I use to run the Department Office to ensure all members have the tools and information necessary to serve our Veterans. Let's make this a real happy new year for President Carol and get to the top of the nation and meet our goals for this year.

Now for the personal side of things (no pulpit), just fun – this month's huge shout out goes to Patsy and Emil, who I seemed to have forgotten in the past. I don't know why after all the times Emil and Shorty have made Patsy and I wonder, what the heck. Oh those Fire Department days. A little bird (short one) told me Cletus, you know who you are, Gregor, that I was responsible for the horrible play of the Vikings last Sunday. I had to nearly mortgage the farm to buy the tickets and I do believe my grandson's 4th grade team in Texas could have beat them. If I wouldn't have been so darned high up I would have marched down on the field and kicked every one of those highly paid athletes right where the sun don't shine. I have been a fan since 1961, yes I am that old (almost), and there have been bad years, but I have never seen a team play so poorly. The stadium is gorgeous, but I don't know how they will fill it with teams like this. I guess I did get back on the pulpit.

Got the news, it's a girl, a brand new granddaughter coming in May. I still scratch my head in disbelief that my baby boy can be having a baby of his own. He was supposed to live with his mama his whole life and drive me around when I couldn't drive anymore.

I hope to see many of you 3rd District members at our Mid-Winter in Montgomery in January. Should be a good time, we have a great "Montgomery" District Commander in Mike Maxa – love him to death, and he is the son of Emil and Patsy, mentioned above.

I think that should be enough for this issue, from Shorty and myself - everybody please have a very happy and prosperous new year, keep on supporting our veterans. For those of you battling illnesses, or just down and out – I pray every day for you.

Dec. 15, 2016, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year
One	6,146	3,730	60.69%	3,910
Two	5,979	3,792	63.42%	4,099
Three	5,323	3,480	65.38%	3,559
Four	920	524	56.96%	589
Five	1,047	635	60.65%	670
Six	7,318	4,927	67.33%	5,017
Seven	4,859	3,171	65.26%	3,324
Eight	2,005	1,180	58.85%	1,286
Nine	5,232	3,601	68.83%	3,706
Ten	6,382	3,855	60.40%	4,211
1982	198	122	61.62%	105
Totals	45,409	29,017	63.90%	30,476



NORTHERN TRAINING -- Attendees to the American Legion Auxiliary Leadership Training Session held in Bemidji, led by Chairman Robin Dorf, weathered a very snowy cold day, but managed to still come to the leadership training.



FRIDLEY CHRISTMAS -- Junior Honorary President Kiana Coleman-Woods, Department Commander Denise Milton, Auxiliary President Carol Kottom and Riders President Chuck Stone enjoy Christmas at the Fridley post 303.

National Security Month

The National Security Program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military servicemembers and their families. We support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve and transitioning military servicemembers and their families. Units may find servicemembers and families independently or by working with the servicemember transition program of the U.S. Department of Defense, the military service branches, or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Members may provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family to which they come in contact. Refer to the ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide for additional information and specific steps.

Care packages and cards to our troops are always appreciated. Remember them throughout the year. Remember the family at home with visits, cards, and find out what kind of help they can use or need.

The POW/MIA Recognition Day is held the 3rd Friday of September every year. With the use of DNA and other ways of identification the remains of servicemembers from WW11, Korea and Viet Nam are being recovered, identified and returned to their families for proper burial and closure for the families.

The Armed Forces Services Center is an all free stop located at the Minneapolis/StPaul International Airport, for Active Duty military personnel, Reservists, National Guardsmen and their dependents. Also serves active duty DOD and PHS employees on travel orders, as well as other members of the uniformed services on active duty. They have a place to rest, food to eat, bed to sleep in and televisions and books to help pass time between flights at no cost to them. Thanks to donations from veteran's organizations, businesses and individuals and volunteers this is a free service to our military who are serving our country.

We keep our elected officials abreast of their needs.

Homeland Security is part of this program as well as knowing and working with our Police, and First Responders in cases of disasters from storms, floods, fires and other disasters.



SHIRLEY FREDERICK
Chairman

Correction

A photo on page 15 in the December issue showing Minnesota Auxiliary members should have said they were at the National President's homecoming.

President Carol Kottom's Testimonial Dinner, March 25

Buffalo Post 270

Your choice of: Stuffed Pork Chop - OR - Stuffed Chicken Breast, Served with: Baby red potatoes, Green beans and almonds, Cole Slaw & Dinner rolls
Coffee/Milk/Water, Dessert

\$16.00 per person

Karaoke to follow dinner

Name _____

Pork dinners _____

Chicken dinners _____

Telephone number _____

Amount enclosed _____

Tickets will be at the door on March 25th

DEADLINE: March 18th

Mail check and info above to: Marilyn Miller, President, 404 Division St., Buffalo, MN, 55313 Phone: 763-682-4796

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- Historic Train Ride
- Chicago Gangster Tour
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\$1,425.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

San Antonio Riverwalk
 February 19-26, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- 7 nights accommodations with 3 nights in San Antonio along the Riverwalk
- 13 meals: 7 breakfast, 6 dinners
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Market Square (San Antonio)
- Riverwalk District
- San Fernando Cathedral
- San Antonio history tour
- Riverwalk boat tour
- Dallas food and history walking tour

\$1,299.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Southern Charm of Savannah & Charleston March 31-April 9, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- 9 nights accommodations
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 20 meals: 9 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 7 dinners
- Historic tours of Savannah & Charleston, SC
- Dolphin Discovery
- The Golden Isles (Jekyll Island & St. Simons)
- Gospel Dinner Cruise
- Georgia Sea Turtle Center
- Charleston Tea Plantation
- Magnolia Plantation
- Biltmore Estate

\$1,950.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Canadian Rockies
 September 22-30, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Larry Alvey
- Delta Airlines flights Minneapolis to Vancouver, return Calgary to Minneapolis
- 8 night hotel accommodations
- 10 Meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 1 dinner
- Deluxe motor coach in Canada
- Tours of Vancouver, Moraine Lake, Lake Louise, Banff, Sulfur Mountain Gondola, Calgary, Glacier Tour
- Two day daylight rail, Vancouver to Banff, rail gratuities for Silver and Gold Leaf Service
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

\$4,249.00 Per Person Double Occupancy Silver Leaf Service

Minnesota Twins Spring Training in Florida March 2-12 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 10 nights accommodations including 3 nights in Cape Coral, FL and 2 nights in Nashville, TN
- 18 Meals: 10 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 7 dinners
- Anheuser Busch Brewery Tour, St. Louis, MO
- Coca Cola Factory Tour, Atlanta, GA
- 2 Spring Training baseball games or have a shopping day on the beach
- Best of Nashville Guided Tour
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

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Monuments of Washington D.C.
 March 31-April 4, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Sue Barber
- Round trip Delta Airlines flights Minneapolis to Washington D.C.
- 4 nights accommodations in the Washington D.C. area
- Evening guided Memorial and Monuments tour
- Two full-day guided tours of Washington D.C.
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