

The Minnesota

Legionnaire



AMERICAN
LEGION
AND
AUXILIARY

Volume 100, Number 1

For God and Country

January 2018

National Cmdr.'s Tour will travel south this year

Minnesota will welcome our neighbor to the east during her National Commander's Tour on Feb. 6-8. National Commander Denise Rohan of Wisconsin will visit Minnesota just after the Super Bowl, making stops at nine Minnesota posts. The tour this year will take a southern swing through the state. It will start in Bayport for breakfast on Tuesday, Feb. 6, followed by lunch at Spicer Post 45 and dinner at Fulda Post 318. On Wednesday, Rohan will visit Windom Post 206, Litchfield Post 104 and Lake Crystal Post 294. On Thursday, the tour will conclude with stops at Waseca Post 228, Wayzata Post 118, and Osseo Post 172. A complete schedule of posts, times, events, and contact people is on page 2 of this issue. Meal reservations should be made by calling the contact people listed. All Legion Family members are welcome.

Centennial Convention nearing

Just seven months away, the pace of the planning picks up

When Minnesota found out it would be the site of the 100th National Convention of The American Legion, it seemed like a long ways off. That's not the case anymore. "I can't believe how quickly it's finally come around," said Randy Tesdahl, Department Adjutant. "It's coming along great. It's going to be a fun and educational experience for all who attend." The convention will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center beginning the weekend of Aug. 24. Many committee meetings will be held that weekend. The memorial service at the convention will be held Sunday morning at 11 a.m. featuring the Minnesota Boys Choir. The annual parade will be held Sunday later in the afternoon, and it will start at 5th Avenue and travel south down the Nicollet Mall. That will be the same street the parade was held on at the first American Legion convention in 1919. Parade Chairman Tom Schottenbauer said because the

Continued on Page 10

Bands wanted

Applications for high school bands will be accepted after January 1 for the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis. It is hoped that the national parade will feature a number of Minnesota's top high school bands. Posts are encouraged to urge their local bands to participate. It has been determined that charitable gambling money can be used for this purpose, to provide support to the school to offset the cost of sending the band. Also, the Convention Corporation of Minnesota at a recent meeting voted to provide an additional \$500 stipend to the first 10 bands that apply to march in the parade. In addition to that, the national American Legion will provide a \$200 stipend for every band that partici-

Continued on Page 12

Patients have more options at VAMC

By Al Zdon
In the last few years, traditional medicine has been joined by a host of non-traditional ways to help your body and mind. Veterans who get their care through the Minneapolis VA Medical Center can now take advantage of these whole person treatments such as Yoga, acupuncture, Tai Chi and using food as medicine. The Center for Integrative Health and Healing opened its doors at the medical center in December. Laurie Kubes, the co-director of the new center, said planning has been going on for the past two years. "We've spent a lot of time listening to veterans, what they would like to have offered to them. And we talked a lot to staff, what they would like. There's been a lot of preparation for the opening," Kubes said. The center doesn't focus on any one area like chronic

Continued on Page 12



The USS Ward, a Navy destroyer manned by Naval Reservists from St. Paul, was discovered off the coast of the Philippines in December. The ship fired the first shot of World War II for the United States on Dec. 7, 1941, and exactly three years later was sunk by a kamikaze attack in Ormoc Bay on the west side of Leyte. The photo shows the wheelhouse of the ship, found at 650 feet under water.

Historic USS Ward found at bottom of sea

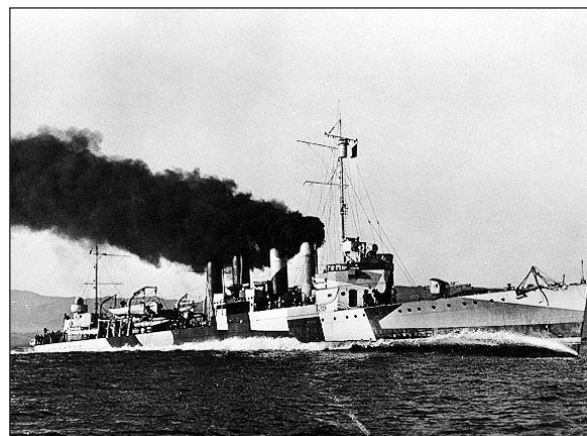
By Al Zdon
A ship primarily manned by Naval Reservists from St. Paul — that fired the first shots of World War II — has been located on the ocean's floor just off the

coast of Leyte in the Philippines. The USS Ward, a destroyer that sank a Japanese midget submarine just before the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, was located by a research team led by Microsoft founder Paul Allen in Ormoc Bay on the west side of Leyte Island. The research vessel Petrel, which had previously found five other U.S. warships near the Philippines, found the Ward on Dec. 5, just two days before the 76th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. The Ward, which had been sunk after a Japanese kamikaze attack exactly three years after Pearl Harbor, was found in 650 feet of water using sonar and an underwater drone. The Ward earned her

niche in history when she was cruising the bay outside Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Another destroyer needed repairs and the Ward was sent to the outer harbor to do a patrol, steaming back and forth before the entrance to the harbor where much of America's Pacific fleet was anchored. At four in the morning, Ward received a message that a minesweeper had spotted a submarine in the outer harbor. Lt. W.W. Outerbridge, who had taken command of the old World War I four-stacker just two days earlier, ordered that general quarters be sounded. The ship searched the outer harbor for about a half an hour, and then secured from general quarters. A couple of hours later,

the Ward's helmsman saw a conning tower in the harbor and general quarters was called again. The tower was spotted between the USS Anteres, a cargo ship, and a barge she was towing, and it was traveling at the same speed as the other vessels. A PBY Catalina, a Navy float plane, also spotted the conning tower and dropped smoke bombs to mark the spot. Outerbridge didn't hesitate and ordered full speed ahead and he also ordered that live ammunition be loaded into the Ward's four-inch guns. Crew members later reported that Outerbridge said, "I may be a bum tomorrow, but it doesn't belong there." He ordered the gunners to sink it. With the ship closing fast on the conning tower,

Continued on Page 2



The USS Ward as she looked around the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor. The ship was a four-stacker built during World War I. In World War II, the Ward was converted to an all-purpose destroyer, delivering troops to the island battles.

USS Ward found

Continued from Page 1

Gun 1 was the first to respond. Located on the bow of the Ward, its gun crew fired the first round – the first shot of the war – and missed.

Gun 3, on the starboard side of the ship, fired the second shot of the war from about 50 yards and made a direct hit on the conning tower. The 80-foot submarine slipped beneath the waves.

As the Ward sped past where the sub had been, it dropped four depth charges. The submarine, according to the crew, came to the surface, rolled over, and sank. It was found at the bottom of the harbor in 2005 by another research vessel.

The Ward immediately sent a radio message to fleet headquarters: “We have attacked, fired upon and dropped depth charges upon submarine operating in defensive sea area.”

The message was sent at 6:45 a.m., more than a full hour before the surprise Japanese air attack on Pearl Harbor. Despite the warning, the naval authorities took no defensive action, and the Japanese attack was a total surprise.

The Ward continued to steam around the outer harbor throughout the morning dropping its remaining depth charges on sonar readings that may or may not have been the other four Japanese midget subs assigned to the attack.

Two Japanese planes attacked the Ward, and the destroyer was unable to fight them off because the ship’s guns could only elevate to 45 degrees. Later in the day, the Ward was allowed into Pearl Harbor to pick up more depth charges and crew members were able to see the terrible aftermath of the attack.

The Ward had earned distinction before even going to sea. In the rush to create warships in the First World War, the Ward had been built in just 17 days at the Mare Island Navy Yard

in California. It’s doubtful that record will ever be broken for construction of a warship.

Ward was launched as DD-139 on June 1, 1918.

A year after Pearl Harbor, the ship was refitted as APD-16, or “all purpose destroyer” and the number 3 gun was removed and later sent to the Smithsonian Institution. It now resides just west of the Veteran’s Service Building on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol.

The Ward, with many of the St. Paul sailors staying on as crewmembers throughout the war, spent the next two years doing convoy duty and carrying troops to landings on enemy-held islands. In its final year at sea, the Ward made 15 such landings, many of them under difficult conditions.

On Dec. 7, 1944, the Ward was hastily heading back to sea after dropping off troops in Ormoc Bay on the west side of Leyte. The U.S. was in the process of recapturing the Philippines.

Three kamikaze planes, Japanese suicide bombers, tried to sink the destroyer. The first missed and crashed about 600 yards off the stern. The second missed and blew up about 200 yards off the starboard bow.

The third kamikaze smashed into the Ward at its waterline. The bomber hit so hard that one of its engines went clear through the ship and came out the other side.

A fire raged amidships, and the crew was unable to extinguish it. Less than half an hour after the attack, the order was given to abandon ship.

Some jumped in the water, others were able to scramble into small boats. Orville Eithier, a crewman on the Ward, told the Minnesota Legionnaire that despite three years of training, the effort to get off the ship was “mainly chaos.”

When all the men were

accounted for, the fleet admiral gave orders to fire on the Ward and sink the burning ship. The USS O’Brien, another destroyer, was tasked with the job.

The O’Brien’s commanding officer gave the order to sink the Ward. The O’Brien’s skipper? W.W. Outerbridge.

The Ward, despite its dangerous duty, only lost one man in three years’ of war. A sailor from Chisholm fell overboard during a routine replenishment.

And now, 73 years later, the location of the ship is once again known, and photos have been taken.

“I think it’s great that they found her,” said Dick Thill of St. Paul, who may be the last remaining member from the original crew from 1941. “We always knew where the Ward had been sunk.”

Thill, a cook, was on board during the Pearl Harbor attack, helping man a gun on the port side of the ship. “We knew that a war was starting on the other side of the ship.”

Thill, 94, had left the ward four months before the ship was sunk. “We were down by New Guinea, and they offered me the position of chief commissary steward, but I didn’t want it. So they sent me on 30-day’s leave.”

After leave, Thill went to firefighting school in Newport, Virginia, and was then assigned to the USS Savannah, a light cruiser with a strong war record fighting in the Mediterranean. Again he was offered the position of chief commissary steward, and again he turned it down.

“I told them to send me to chief commissary steward school in Florida, and they did. I was there when the war ended and the Navy kicked me out. I had so many points. I never made chief, even though they offered it to me twice.”

The Petrel is a 250-foot research vessel owned by Paul Allen. It is one of the few ships in the world that can explore up to 3.5 miles down.

Previously, Allen-led expeditions had found the cruiser USS Indianapolis, and a Japanese battleship, and the ship’s bell from the USS Hood.

R/V Petrel began searching for the Ward on Dec. 1 using naval documents that recorded where the ship had been sunk. It located the destroyer four days later.

The destroyer, which earned nine battle stars during the war, now sits peacefully at the bottom of the bay, covered with green vegetation.

2018 National Commander’s Tour

Post	Event	Day	Contact:
Bayport	8 a.m. breakfast	Feb. 6	651-439-5463, Judy
Spicer	noon lunch	Feb. 6	320-894-9402, Tammy
Fulda	6 p.m. dinner	Feb. 6	507-329-0500, Jim
Windom*	8 a.m. breakfast	Feb. 7	507-830-1440, Fred
Litchfield	noon lunch	Feb. 7	320-693-2350 Deb
Lake Crystal	6 p.m. dinner	Feb. 7	507-726-6050, Carla (call between 7 a.m.- 1 p.m. M-F)
Waseca	8 a.m. breakfast	Feb. 8	commanderpost228@gmail.com
Litchfield	noon lunch	Feb. 8	763-479-6405, Carol
Lake Crystal	6 p.m. dinner	Feb. 8	763-425-4858, Michelle

*The Windom breakfast will be at Jack Slades Steakhouse.
#Deadline for Wayzata lunch RSVP is Jan. 25.
A social hour for all dinners begins at 5 p.m.



SOLDIER’S WISH GIFT -- Soldier’s Wish, a non-profit group that helps veterans, made four large donations in Minnesota in December. Above, Soldier’s Wish executive Mark Ochsebein presented the Minnesota National Guard with \$18,000 in Walmart gift cards. The 900 cards were distributed to the troops. Other donations helped a woman veteran work through her cancer surgery, and another went to the Minnesota Assistance Council for veterans to help provide quality meals at Standdowns. That grant was presented at Target Field where MACV and the Twins combined to provide a meal to veterans.



SOLDIER’S WISH DONATES TRUCK -- A fourth Minnesota donation was to an Elk River veteran. He received a Dodge Truck which was provided at cost by Cornerstone Automotive of Elk River, plus three years of oil changes. From left: Elk River Post Commander Don Kulkny, Former Minnesota State Sen. Bob Lessard, Cornerstone Vice President Rob Powell, Soldier’s Wish exec Mark Ochsebein, and Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl. The Legion is a sponsor of Soldier’s Wish. The veteran chose not to be identified.

Veterans Linkage Line™

minnesotaveteran.org | 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)

Help for veterans and families



MONTGOMERY COMPLETES SET -- Montgomery Post 79 completed the set of War Stories books donated to the Montgomery Public Library by giving the library War Stories III. Post Adjutant Harvey Kierzek presented the last book of the trilogy to Librarian Nancy Noffke.

HOT OFF THE PRESS!



War Stories III is out. 31 stories of Minnesotans who went to war. Hundreds of photos and maps. You can also order online at mnlegion.org

Name _____

Address _____

Number of copies	Amount enclosed
War Stories I _____	\$ _____
War Stories II _____	
War Stories III _____	

All books are \$29 each including shipping.

mnhs ad

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Mike Schaffer



Christmas is now completed for another year. Hope you were able to celebrate the day with family and friends.

Did you also remember the true reason for the season and give thanks for your good health and that of your family. All is quiet at our house now, except for that infernal Karaoke machine my grandkids now have, and they're here all week. No it didn't come from Grandpa & Grandma. Help.

There are families in your communities that have someone deployed, serving somewhere in the world protecting all of us, and missing their families. Did you or your post see to the needs of the spouse and children of that soldier for Christmas? Sure hope you were able to make their Christmas just a little better by offering to help with whatever they might need while that soldier is deployed.

It's simply you and I, doing the right thing helping our currently serving veterans so they will have one thing less to worry about. Remember too, they are your future, care for them, they will long remember your kindness and the help you gave. After all, isn't this in part, what our

American Legion was founded on almost 100 years ago, caring for the soldier that bore the battle and their family.

Legionnaires, the next 100 years of our organization is before us, and I know full well we need to seek out the next generation of legionnaires. Talk to those non-members, ask those veterans in your community what they need and expect of your post and the American Legion in general. Then please remember to listen and follow through on what they tell you.

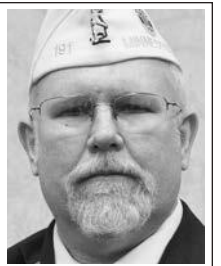
In January we start the many Mid-Winter Conferences. Plan to attend and listen to the chairmen as they make their reports about the many programs we the American Legion have. Much of the information about our many programs has been sent out to each post so far. Most deal with children and youth. What you learn can and should be brought back to your next post meeting and shared. Also, if you have membership to send in, why not bring it to the Mid-Winter since you'll be attending anyway. Right.

"Day on the Hill" is now set for March 12th at the State Capitol Rotunda, sometime late morning. There are plans in place to use those Park and Ride sites around the Twin Cities as staging locations. You need only get there and shuttles will transport you to the Capitol for the Day on the Hill event. Please start making your plans to attend. Some of the veteran issues we plan to stress are: Lifetime Homestead Market Value Exclusion, Military Benefits Protection, Veterans Courts, Reduced cost of hunting, fishing licenses for disabled veterans.

The yearly National Commanders Tour is set for February 6-8 with the sites listed elsewhere in your Minnesota Legionnaire. Sure hope you can attend and listen to our National Commander Denise Rohan speak about her plans for the remainder of her year as Commander. Please, please attend if possible.

Chaplain's Corner

By Ralph Schneekloth



Greetings, and Happy New Year to all.

May 2018 be awesome. It is my fervent hope that all had a great holiday season. While on the subject of the new year, the opportunity for renewal and resolutions to make things better, do we resolve to be better Legionnaires and Legion family members going forward, and are we resolute enough, i.e. committed, to the idea of being successful? Do you realize that approximately 86-90% of resolutions fail within the first month? There are many reasons, but most is we are just not committed enough to being successful, it is in our hearts that we find the motivation and determination to accomplish our resolutions.

What has your heart, what motivates each to serve in the position you currently hold, along with that which you might get elected/ appointed to in the future? Each has to look introspectively, into your heart, for that is where the answers are. Are you here for the betterment of the group and as a servant, or are you part of the "Look at me crowd?" Why are you marching son/ daughter?

Starting the new year off right, we should have a prayer. So here goes: Dear Lord, we thank You for these days wherein we are given the freedom to make decisions for the betterment of our American Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and Legion Rider programs- to obtain knowledge and the wherewithal to better care for our veterans and their families. How to combine these efforts for a better America, always being mindful that we are "One nation under God." We pray that this will be our goal, knowing that when we place our trust in You we are assured of Your blessing. We know, Lord, all things are possible with You. Help us to be worthy as we claim this blessing, Amen.

Getting back to service to Country: Not only must we prevent national spiritual decay, we must instill in our citizens a spirit of positive Americanism, with respect for the law, reverence for authority, and awareness of our God given rights and freedoms. This, in turn, reaps a spirit of service to community and nation.

Citizenship imposes responsibility. As American citizens, every Legionnaire (or Legion Family member) should provide an example of integrity, self-sacrifice, hard work and a life of faith. Devotion to mutual helpfulness means service to community. No one is an island, each post and Legion Family member should be eager to help their community be a good place to live, and to serve the community.

Isaiah 59: 20-21 says "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the Lord. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the Lord.

Again, God bless all and may we have a Happy New Year going forward, also keep those who lost loved ones, and those suffering physical and mental duress in our prayers during these difficult times. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Chaplain.

I also intend to do a short Four Chaplains Ceremony at the Sweetheart rally, and I challenge all Chaplains to consider doing one as well. Four Chaplains Sunday is the first Sunday in February.

Mail Call

Too old, too white, two male

To the Editor:

In 1996 I had the honor of serving on a national ad-hoc committee to look at where The American Legion would be in the 21st Century. The theme that is referenced above was heard time and time again. It wasn't until 20 years later that we elected our first woman national commander.

Take a look at the national commission chairmen and you will see that we are too old, we are too white, and we are too male. Also, if you look at the executive committee for both ANAVICUS and the Past Department Commander's Club, it is no different whether it be age, ethnic background or gender.

I read with great interest the December Legionnaire which included National Commander Denise Rohan's national appointments for the Department of Minnesota. Once again, it was the same old story.

In addition, age, gender and ethnic background aren't the only problems the Legion is facing. In Minnesota, we have a geographic problem. If you look at the appointments you will see if you live anywhere north of St. Cloud, with the exception of a single appointment to a commission, all the rest were "council" appointments. The 1st District has two appointments to a committee where they serve as the chairmen. The 3rd District has two appointments to a commission and four appointments to a committee where three serve as a vice chairman. The interesting thing here is that all three vice chairmen are from the same post. In the 6th District there are three appointed to committees where one serves as a vice chairman. It should be noted here that the vice chairman is the only woman to serve on a committee or commission in Minnesota. In the 10th District we have one that serves on a commission and one that is vice chairman of a committee. I have looked closely at the appointment book and it does not seem to include any persons of color.

Is this editorial sour grapes? Absolutely not, I am merely pointing out that nothing has changed in 20 years.

Dennis J Henkemeyer

Bagley

End of Boy's State week

To the Editor:

After Friday night's Boys' State concert and program, there is a short break for refreshments, followed by an evening of activities (open gym, movie....) until "Lights Out."

Saturday is a morning of mixed emotions. The guys are pumped to go home, yet are hesitant to leave the friendships that have evolved over the course of the week. Phone numbers, e-mail addresses and other ways of keeping in contact provide means for these life-long connections to continue.

The morning awards program includes medals to the top volleyball, basketball, and softball teams, and to the city with the highest test score average. Scholarships are provided to the top test scorer, each city's "Outstanding Boys' Stater" nominee, the runners-up of the Boys' Nation Senators, and Minnesota's Samsung Scholarship winner. Also announced are the two Minnesota Senators to Boys'

Nation. The young men go home with three Boys' State t-shirts, plenty of resources and links for school and job opportunities, and tons of memories.

They are charged with spreading the good word about this fine program when they return to their schools and communities.

Information about the 2018 session of Boys' State should be coming to posts soon. Posts can begin the process of selecting Boys' Staters for the upcoming session. Encourage boys to apply to "be the politician you want others to be."

Neil Kruse
Spring Lake Park

Cold War veterans

To the Editor:

I am a Legion member and a proud veteran of over 22 years of military service, most of which was during the Cold War. HR 1419 is the Bill in committee in the US House of Representatives which would formally and properly recognize military service during the longest and most costly conflict of our nation. The American Legion must support this legislation and work with the other veterans' organizations to insure its passage. Honestly, I am surprised the Legion hasn't already championed this well deserved award.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1419>

Kirk Wilmore
Fargo

National Judge Advocate

To the Editor:

As was announced at the Fall 2017 National Executive Meetings on October 10, 2017, Philip B. Onderdonk, Jr. will be retiring from the position of National Judge Advocate the end of December. He would like to personally thank you for your friendship, support and many conversations over the many years while he served as our National Judge Advocate for our great organization.

Replacing Phil will be Kevin J. Bartlett from Michigan. Kevin has been an attorney for over 20 years. As a 28-year member of the American Legion, he has been past Post and District Commander and has held numerous other Post, District and Department positions. He was the chairman of the National Insurance Committee and was a member of the National Finance Commission immediately prior to this appointment.

He will assume his new office on January 1, 2018. His direct email is: K.Bartlett@legion.org.

Philip B. Onderdonk
Indianapolis

Kevin J. Bartlett
Indianapolis

The Minnesota **Legionnaire**

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Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Round Tables

The World War II Round Table will meet at Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center on Thursday, Jan. 11, at 7 p.m. The topic will be "What Really Happened at Stalingrad." Jonathan House, author "Stalingrad," will describe the savage battle between the Nazi and Soviet forces that became a turning point in the war. Soviet military veterans will also be on the panel.

Admission is \$5. There will be a student outreach program in the lobby at 6 p.m. with veterans and historians.

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will meet Monday, Jan. 22, at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater. This is a dinner meeting, and reservations can be made by calling Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268.

The topic will be "The Bullocks and the Roosevelts, a Study of Two Families in America's Civil War," with speaker Ray Marshall.

Veterans Day on the Hill

The annual Veterans Day on the Hill for 2018 will be held Monday, March 12.

There will be a free pre-rally breakfast and information session on the Fifth Floor of the Veterans Service Building from 8-10 a.m.

The Rally will be in the Rotunda of the Minnesota State Capitol from 10-11 a.m.

Regional rooms where veterans can talk to their legislators will be set up at the Capitol. That will begin a noon, with the legislators coming to their constituents.

There will be Metro area park and ride stations where veterans can gather and then be bused to the Rally. Details on the park and ride are available on the DAV website: davmn.org.

There will also be buses offering free rides from outstate Minnesota.

Any questions, contact Trent Dilks at trent@davmn.org.

World War I Data Base

Minnesota families are encouraged to contribute to the World War I Centennial data base. Families who have information about a family member who served in World War I can go to worldwar1centennial.org, click on Commemorate

and then click on family-ties.

The site will include information on doing genealogical research.

Legion Bowling Tournament

The 71st Minnesota American Legion Bowling Tournament will be held at Sundance Lanes in Dayton, hosted by Osseo Post 172.

The tournament will run from Feb. 24, 2018, to April 8. Those eligible are Legion members, SAL members and Auxiliary members. All must be over 18.

Entry forms have been sent to all posts in Minnesota, and interested bowlers should obtain them there. For more information, call Bowling Secretary Cari Lamb, 612-968-4839 or email: crlmb74@gmail.com.

Twins Game in July

The annual Minnesota American Legion Family Day at the Twins will be held Friday, July 13, at Target Field. Tickets will be \$21 plus fees and will be in the Diamond View section. Commander Mike Schaffer will throw out the first pitch and Legion members will be doing the American and Twins Territory flag raisings.

Tickets will not go on sale until late February or early March, but mark your calendars.

Veterans Appreciation Ride

The 10th annual Veterans Appreciation Ride, sponsored by the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association and MSEAF will be held Saturday, January 13, at Paynesville.

All veterans are welcome to enjoy a day of snowmobiling, including one night's lodging and meals. Bring your own sled, or, if you don't have equipment, there will be snowmobiles, helmets and clothing available.

Pre-registration is required. Call 866-811-7669 or email mnaveteransride@gmail.com. The website address is mnaveteransride.org.

Drop-In Legal Clinics

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will sponsor two upcoming clinics for veterans seeking legal help. The clinics will feature information on housing, employment, benefits, expungement, wills, debt collection,

and family law including child support.

The clinics will be held at:

-- The Minneapolis VA Medical Center Flag Atrium Balcony Room 2S 114 on Thursday, Jan. 4, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

-- The St. Cloud VA Medical Center Auditorium, Building 8, on Tuesday, Jan. 16, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Veterans Outdoor Programs

The participating veterans organizations have announced the schedule for the Veteran Outdoor Programs for 2018. For more information, contact Dennis Erie, coordinator, at mn.service.orgs@gmail.com or calling 320-380-4569.

This year's programs include:

-- Disabled Veterans Turkey Hunt on May 1-3. This is a three-day event with two nights lodging and meals provided at no cost. There will be an application, lottery and notification process. Those hunting will have a partner who is an experience turkey hunter. It will be held at Camp Ripley.

-- Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt will be held on October 9-11 at Camp Ripley. It will be a three-day, two night event with free lodging and meals. They will hunt with a partner who is an experienced deer hunter.

In both the above programs, the hunter must be able to purchase their own turkey or deer hunting licences.

-- Disabled Veterans Ely Fishing Program will be held May 21-14. The program offers veterans a four-day fishing experience in Ely at Veterans on the Lake Resort. Lodging and meals are provided. Participants must purchase their own fishing licence.

-- Trolling for the Troops Fishing Program will be held on May 31 to June 1. Both veterans and soldiers can participate in a two-day event at Camp Ripley. Professional fishing guides will lead the boat outing, either on the Mississippi River or on Lake Mille Lacs. Lodging and meals will be provided.

Applications for all events can be found on the Legion's website: mnlegion.org. Other service organizations involved include the DAV, VFW, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the Minnesota National Guard and the Veterans for Veterans Trust Fund are major contributors to the outdoor programs.

Taps

Gustafson, Clifton Axel Jr., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 30, 2017. He was Fourth District Commander, 1986-87, and Department Vice Commander, 1995-96. He served as district adjutant for 20 years, and he ran for Department Commander. He was a noted parliamentarian. He was a member of Rosetown Post 542.

Surma, Jerome Francis, 83, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 7, 2017. He served as a flight engineer on active duty and as a plane captain in the reserves. He was a member of Waite Park Post 428.

Christiansen, Arthur, 81, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 25, 2017. He was on the honor guard of Waite Park Post 428.

Tedrow, Jerry, 83, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 6, 2017. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Hardy, Donald D., 79, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 7, 2017. He served in New Orleans. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Smith, Neil J., "Jack," 81, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 8, 2017. He was a member of Le Sueur Post 55.

Brinkman, Dwayne, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 28, 2017. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Nielsen, Donald "Tut," 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 8, 2017. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Peterson, Paul, 59, Army National Guard veteran of the Persian Gulf War, died Dec. 14, 2017. He served for 21 years. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Klemmetson, Bryon O., 83, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 27, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Mohler, Roland W., 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 3, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Koczur, Ronald M., 66, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 4, 2017. He was a member of Holdingford Post 211.

DeWold, Jerry C., 83, veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 23, 2017. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Kimball, Leo, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 22, 2017. He served in Alaska in the 66th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. He was a member of Lanesboro Post 40.

Johnson, Herbert, 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 7, 2017. He served in the Pacific Theater. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Liefert, George Albert, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 5, 2017. He was an aircraft mechanic serving in Texas. He was a chaplain and member of the honor

guard of Monticello Post 260.

MacDougall, John B., 87, Army veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, died Nov. 13. He served for 25 years, earning a battlefield promotion in the Korean War, and Purple Heart, CIB, and Silver Star while serving in Vietnam. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

Hill, James Russell "Russ," 88, Army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Dec. 4, 2017. He was a past commander of Milaca Post 178.

Schuld, Frederick W., 101, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 30, 2017. He was stationed at Pearl Harbor. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

Fredriksen, Ernest, 90, National Guard Army veteran, died Dec. 29, 2017. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Boelz, Thomas, 82, National Guard veteran of Korean War, died Nov. 20, 2017. He was a member of Post 354.

Flynn, Terry C., 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 2, 2017. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Trampel, Larry D., 75, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 20, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Hobbiebrunken, Melvin H., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 2, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Ylvisaker, Luther M., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 15, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Oman, Kenneth E., 99, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 21, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Nielsen, Robert E., 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 3, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Quesnell, Richard "Ditty," 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 4, 2017. He was a submariner who served in the South Pacific. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Gorden, Michael William, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 29, 2017. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Post, Erwin H., 79, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 2, 2017. He served in the 7th Fleet, Task Force 77. He served on rescue helicopters. He was a member of Dent Post 148.

Rudernick, Norman C., 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 22, 2017. He served as a squad leader in the 35th Infantry Division, 137th Infantry Regiment, C Company of the First Battalion in Normandy and central Europe. He was a prisoner of war. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Sather, Daryl, 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died

Nov. 21, 2017. He served for six years. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Gesinger, Ronald, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 20, 2017. He was a military policeman. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Johansen, Freeman, 89, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2017. He was a member of Cloquet Post 262.

Anderson, Ernest E., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 22, 2017. He was a member of Benson Post 62.

Beck, John T., 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2017. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

Hagen, Stanley, 98, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 4, 2017. He served in Northern Europe and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Hageman, Raymond A., 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 25, 2017. He served in the Pacific including occupation duty in Japan. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Ferguson, David Gordon, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 6, 2017. He served on the submarine USS Queenfish. He was a member of Cleveland Post 207.

Donahue, Daniel, 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 6, 2017. He was a member of Egan Post 594.

Barbour, Robert, 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 8, 2017. He was a member of Egan Post 594.

Petron, Gale C., 80, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 6, 2017. He was a weapons mechanic. He was a member of Rice Post 473.

Femlee, Dale L., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 23, 2017. He was a member of Le Sueur Post 55.

Plath, Albin John, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 14, 2017. He served in the Pacific. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Braun, Kenneth, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 25, 2017. He was a member of Le Sueur Post 55.

Watson, Forrest, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 20, 2017. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Mager, Clarence, 81, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 25, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Bussinger, Gary, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 14, 2017. He was a tech sergeant in Vietnam. He was a member of Blue Earth Post 89.

Schuette, Lyle Arthur, 80, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 29, 2017. He was a member of Chaska Post 57.

Larson, Alan C., 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 17, 2017. He served in Germany. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

World War II History Round Table

Veterans remember the Battle of the Bulge

For Americans, probably the best known battle of World War II is the Battle of the Bulge, Germany's last, desperate attempt to hold off the Allied assault from the west.

Four veterans of the battle and an author who has written extensively about the Battle of the Bulge told their experiences to a full house at the Fort Snelling History Center as part of the World War II History Round Table.

The battle began when the German Army launched 13 infantry divisions and seven armored division through the Ardennes Forest at a weakly held Allied position.

Opposing them, the United States had six infantry divisions, including two divisions that had just arrived and never seen combat, and two armored divisions.

Michael Collins, author of *Voices of the Bulge*, described the battle, the largest fought by the U.S. in World War II, from the standpoint of the 10th Armored Division.

Collins' grandfather served in the division. "My grandfather joined the army at age 17. He forged his parents' signature on the papers."

Collins said the line between the German forces and the Allied forces had been static for some time, and it was one reason the U.S. put the 99th and the 106th Divisions on that front. Neither had seen action. "The men in those divisions were told, 'You've got it easy.'"

The Germans broke through on December 16, 1944. The two green divisions and the other divisions along the 80-mile long breakthrough did their best, but were overwhelmed.

The 10th Armored, which was part of Patton's Third Army, was the first division to reach Bastogne on Dec. 18. Bastogne was a major city and road junction in the direct path of the Nazi offensive. The armored division was followed shortly into Bastogne by the 101st Airborne Division.

"The 10th Armored Division was called the 'ghost division' because they ripped off all their insignia so the Germans wouldn't know they had left Patton."

The part of the division that entered Bastogne was Combat Command B, usually known as CCB.

Collins said part of the CCB went north, part went east and the rest went southeast around the city.

Team Desobry, on the north side, was forced to withdraw to the west, and its leader, Major William Desobry, was wounded and captured. The Germans moved north and south around Bastogne and on Dec. 21, the city was surrounded.

On Dec. 22, a message from the Germans was brought to Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, commander of the 101st Airborne, asking about a surrender. "There was confusion at first. The Americans thought the Germans wanted to surrender."

When it was finally determined that the Germans were asking for a surrender, McAuliffe issued his famous reply, "Nuts!"

"Of course, the Germans had no idea what that meant," Collins said. "But on the American side the 'nuts' spread like a battle cry across the entire CCB sector."

Because of the cloudy weather, the Americans did not have air support. "Because they were cut off, the wounded couldn't get out and the supplies couldn't get in."

On the 24th, the skies cleared and a huge air drop of supplies and ammunition was made on Bastogne. The city was also attacked by air by the Germans.

Collins outlined the stories of several heroes of the siege, including nurses Augusta Chivy and Renee LeMaire. LeMaire was featured in the HBO series *Band of Brothers*, but Collins said that she and a combat medic for Easy Company never actually met. LeMaire was killed in the bombing of an aid station.

Christmas passed with the Americans still surrounded, but on the 26th, Patton's 4th Armored Division opened a corridor into Bastogne on the southwest side.

"The 101st later said that they didn't need Patton," Collins said. "Well, they did."

The second part of the story, Collins said, was the slow and deadly process of pushing the Germans back to their original line, which took many weeks.

Collins concluded his talk by urging veterans and their families to record their stories "so that future generations will know."

Wayne DeHaven was a corporal in the 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment in the 17th Airborne. "I was attracted to the Airborne when I saw a story about it in *Life Magazine*." He made 13 jumps in training and during the war.

He trained at Fort Benning and said Sunday nights were the worst, "because they only served cold cuts in the mess hall."

DeHaven, a radio man, was badly injured at the Battle of the Bulge when his unit was ambushed. "We were coming down a hill toward the woods and the next thing we knew we were being shelled all over the place, mortars and grenades, small arms fire. A shell landed right next to me.

"The radio saved my life. The blast cut the radio right in half like a knife. I saw one part fly one way and the other fly the other way."

He was evacuated by Jeep to an aid station. "I lost a few friends that day." He had shrapnel in the back of his head, in his shoulders and just above his buttocks. Much of that shrapnel is still there today.

Bud Helmen was drafted while he was still in high school and became a sergeant in the 10th Armored Division, serving in the 609th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

He was a replacement soldier toward the end of the Battle of the Bulge. "We were treated well by the older vets. Actually, they didn't pay much attention to us until we got into combat. Then they figured we were part of them."

At that point of the war, many in the German army were convinced the war was lost, and they felt fortunate they could surrender to Americans rather than the Russians.

"There was quite a bit of surrendering. Some of them were 14-year-old boys."

Holmen remembers a scene along the Autobahn toward the end of the war. "There were hundreds of Germans being marched to the rear, and there were maybe four or five guys guarding them."

When the Americans crossed the Rhine, Holmen had the thrill of driving an M18 Hellcat, a tank destroyer, across the river on a pontoon bridge at night. "All you could see were the little cat-eyes of the vehicle in front of you."

Bob Rupp said he could see the war coming and joined the ROTC at college. He ended up as an officer in the Ninth Armored Division, the 3rd Armored Field Artillery.

"We had a good commanding officer, a West Point graduate. Not that all West Point grads were good, but he was. He made sure we knew our jobs."

He recalled Thanksgiving of 1944. "The officers had been given a liquor ration, but not the enlisted men. I didn't think that was right. The officers used their allotment to spike a quantity of grapefruit juice. Every man got about three fourths of a canteen. I couldn't have moved my battery that night if I wanted to."

At one point, several artillery batteries were grouped around a courtyard, but they were under fire from somewhere. Rupp determined that it had to be a little patch of woods about 400 yards away.

He asked his commanding officer permission to shell the woods, and he was told "be my guest" if there was time between firing missions.

After shelling the woods, the Americans lifted the fire. "I walked out and said that we would hold our fire for a while if anyone wanted to surrender. About four or six guys came out of the woods, but then they were fired on by the other Germans. Two of them made it to our position."

"I sent them to S-2 for questioning. At this point we didn't really know what the Germans were up to."

Rupp remembered that several men became incapacitated by fear during some battles. "It can happen to anybody. There may come a time where you just can't function. But these were good men, and after a while they just got back to it."

Gunther Dierssen gave a different perspective of the Battle of the Bulge. He served in the German Army.

Dierssen was a German national, but he lived and was going to school in Denmark when he got his draft notice.

He was assigned to a parachute regiment that had been shot up badly during the landings at Normandy.

"My most memorable event in the war happened when we were in Holland. We had taken over a school that we were supposed to live in. But the only thing in it was some straw on the floor."

Dierssen and his comrades looked around for furniture, but all they found was a very large and heavy billiard table. He and his friends were hauling the table back to their room at the school when the Royal Air Force decided to bomb the school.

"They bombed it to smithereens. But I got under that heavy table while the whole school fell on top of me. I was okay."

Dierssen participated in the Battle of the Bulge and remembers Dec. 16 when the German Army attacked.

"Everywhere we went, we marched on foot. It had been reasonable peaceful for a while, but all of a sudden we were ordered to march off. We only marched at night, and in the morning we slept at farms.

"We never took our boots off. It was such a job to take them off and on, so we just slept in them."

His unit finally got into position, and on the 16th, they charged across the line toward the Americans. "The Americans were shooting at us and we were kind of ducking. Then the U.S. moved back and that was nice. Nobody was shooting at us for a while."

He said wherever his unit went, they kept in a strict formation. "That was the only way they could control you."

On the 17th, Dierssen and his comrades were marching down road when they saw a lineup of American Jeeps. "A couple of guys went over and started them, but we didn't have permission to take any Jeeps, so we just kept marching.

"As we got down the road, though, they began shooting at us from behind. The Americans hadn't abandoned the Jeeps, they were just sleeping in the basements of the farm houses alongside the road."

The German column reversed and captured many of the Americans. "Mainly we were interested in their C-rations. We weren't getting much food, and we were dependent on finding our own. I was very good at it.

"I found some C-rations, and they were so delicious. They even had little pieces of chocolate in them. We had a good time with those C-rations."

On Dec. 21, five days into the attack, Dierssen's unit came up against a group of soldiers from the 101st Airborne. He was hit.

"But this was a good time of the war for me to be shot, because everybody in my unit wanted to help me back to the aid station. I had on my steel helmet, and through all of this it never came off."

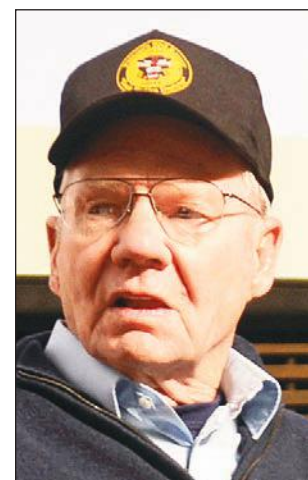
At the hospital Dierssen found out that he'd been hit by shrapnel in the helmet. The helmet had a hole in it and it was staying on his head because it was bent into his head. The dried blood also kept it on.

"I started thinking how lucky I was. Years later I had an x-ray and they told me there was metal in my head."

Dierssen was sent back to Germany after the war, but eventually made it back to Denmark. From there he emigrated to the United States and wound up working for 3M in St. Paul.



GUNTHER DIERSSEN



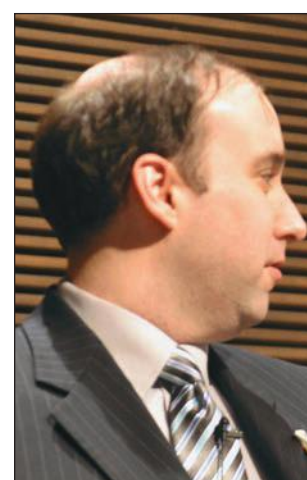
BUD HELMEN



WAYNE DEHAVEN



ROBERT RUPP



MICHAEL COLLINS

Shop, Ship and Share



AL DHAFRA AIR BASE -- Some of the Shop, Ship and Share packages found the United State Air Force in Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates. "We can't thank you enough. Packages like this make our time here so much more enjoyable." Over 1,000 packages were shipped this year by the Fourth District and friends.



Commander Mike Schaffer helped label a package at the Maplewood Mall.



GROUP SHOT -- Volunteers at Maplewood Mall made the Shop, Ship and Share program work. The group included Viking cheerleaders, 4th and 5th District Legion Family, postal employees and many more.



Somehow a red piggy on a carousel got involved in sending the packages to service people overseas.

Rally in West Duluth



The Legion Family gathered at West Duluth Post 71 for the Pearl Harbor Rally in December.



Chuck Stone and Santa's Helper Clint Betterman presented Department Commander Mike Schaffer with an \$8,000 check from Owatonna Post 77 to be used for the Pheasant Dinner project. Betterman is the SAL sergeant at arms for the squadron and district.



LARRY RYAN
Membership Director



MARY KUPERUS
Membership Chair



DAVE VULCAN
SAL Membership Director



COURTNEY ROGAT
Hon. Junior President

A large crowd gathered at West Duluth Post 71 for the annual Pearl Harbor Rally.

Topping the Sons of the American Legion at the rally was the Fifth District with 70.35 percent. The total for the year for the SAL thus far was 53.8 percent.

Leading the way for the Auxiliary was the 6th District with 71.55 percent. Overall, the Auxiliary was at 67.44 percent which was good for 7th best nationally and 4th best in the Northwest Division.

The champion of the Legion was the 6th District also, racking up 81.81 percent. Overall, Minnesota was at 81.04 percent, good for third in the nation.

Minnesota was still trailing Wisconsin in the contest between the two states. There was a side bet involving NFL teams between the membership gurus for each state. Membership Director Larry Ryan proclaimed, "I will not wear a Packers' jersey and sing, 'Go, Pack, Go,' at the National Convention."

Taking the point

By Al Zdon

There were two ways to handle the real threat to one's life while patrolling the countryside in Vietnam.

"Well, you could use fear and caution," said Dan Notley, who spent 15 months in-country in 1969-70.

"Or you could be more aggressive. You could have the attitude that 'We are invincible.' There's a saying and it's called 'run to the chaos.' That's what some of us did, and I think it was a better survival technique.

"Oh, yeah, it's dangerous for sure."

Danny Spencer Notley grew up all over Oklahoma.

"My father was a school administrator and the way you advanced was to move. I never lived in one place more than four years, and that only happened once."

His mother was an English teacher and later a school librarian.

Notley graduated from Skiatook High school, not far from Tulsa, in 1965, the only year he lived there. He played football, basketball and baseball in high school. He moved on to the University of Oklahoma in Norman and continued his education.

"I didn't know how I felt about Vietnam. I remember lying in bed one night listening to the radio when they passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. I wondered what it all meant."

He stayed at Oklahoma until his junior year in 1968. "Those were tumultuous times, especially if you were in college. There was a lot of confusion, and I was really wrestling with it.

"I didn't even declare a major until they made me. Here I was racking up all this college loan debt. I didn't know about that war in Vietnam, but I knew I was a patriot."

Notley's father had been a Seabee in World War II, serving on Okinawa, and later served in Korea when his National Guard unit was called up.

Notley quit school and headed north to Minnesota to live with a friend for a while. "I knew the draft board would find me sooner or later, and sure enough my mom called me and said I needed to come back to report."

He reported in August of 1968 and was sent to Fort Polk, Louisiana, which was also called "Tigerland." More soldiers went to Vietnam from Fort Polk than any other military base. Its climate and foliage were similar to Vietnam.

While there, Notley took the usual tests and did well. He was offered helicopter pilot training. "I told them 'No.' They said, 'What?' I said I wanted infantry. They said, 'Well, we have one of those jobs available.'"

At the end of basic, he and a good friend were told they would be learning how to shoot mortars. "Then they said we could get into recon. It was dangerous work and strictly volunteer. My buddy and I looked at each other and said, 'That would be us.'"

By Christmas, Notley was on the West Coast preparing to depart for Vietnam. He boarded a Braniff commercial airlines flight. "They had these stewardesses, and that was cruel and unusual punishment for us soldier boys."

He arrived at Bien Hoa Air Base not far from Saigon, and the soldiers boarded a bus that took them Long Binh to the 90th Replacement Battalion, a holding area for GIs before they were assigned.

"I remember my first day and night in the reception area: the tropical smells, the outgoing artillery, and they would send up these huge flares. It was very eerie. I was thinking, 'This is starting to get real here.'"

After a few days, he was sent to Chu Lai, about halfway up Vietnam along the coast where he was assigned to the 23rd Americal Division.

"We did about 10 days of training, going out and doing patrols and the like. I remember the sergeant told us, 'All that stuff you learned in basic and AIT, forget it. It don't mean nothing here.' That was an eye opener."

Next stop was Duc Pho in the center of the narrow strip of Vietnam where Notley joined his platoon.

"That first night we got there, the guys had just come in from being out in the bush and they were drinking and smoking and being rowdy. Here we are in our new fatigues, and they're wearing these nasty old fatigues, dirty boots, unshowered. They didn't say much to us, but you know you're being checked out. The guys are wondering how long you're going to last."

The first thing Notley learned from the others was that you didn't wear a helmet. "The helmets were worthless, and so they just went into storage. We just wore our bush hats. Later on we wore tiger-striped fatigues. It wasn't legal, but nobody stopped us."

As the new guy, Notley was issued an M-79 grenade launcher. "I objected, but they said, 'You're the new guy and you get the grenade launcher. You're at the bottom.'"

Notley carried the weapon for the next three or four months as his unit did reconnaissance work along the coast, and also in the mountains to the west.

"Nobody liked the coastal areas because there were so many civilians and so many Viet Cong. You couldn't tell one from another. We spent most of our time in the mountains. There was no question there whether somebody is friendly. You knew they were the enemy."

One thing Notley learned about his grenade launcher was that if you put the butt on the ground, you got more range out of it. "It was almost like a mortar."

His platoon set up one night on a mountain top. "What we didn't know was that it was where the North Vietnamese had their guns registered. The first round they shot came right into our camp and killed our first sergeant."

Time went by, and one day a new guy showed up and they gave him an M-16. "I said, 'No, no, no.' I told them if they gave me the M-16, I'd walk the point. So I walked the point for the next six months."

Walking the point meant being the lead man in the platoon heading down trails or through the jungle. "I knew it was dangerous, but it was sort of like how you feel safer

Dan Notley spent 15 months in Vietnam, much of it walking the point for a recon unit. The work was so dangerous, that he advanced from E-2 to E-6 in 10 months mainly because of casualties in his platoon.



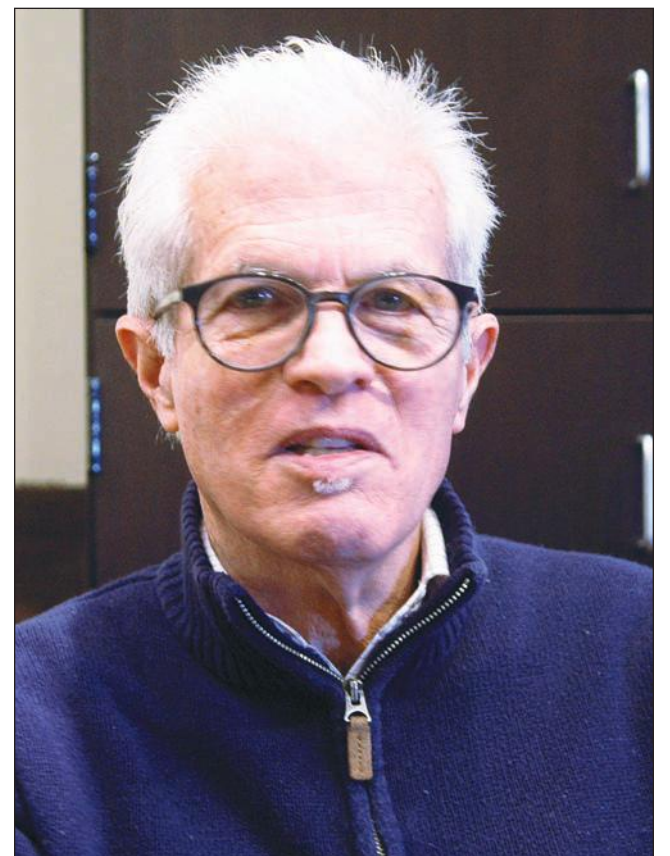
sometimes driving than being the passenger. I could trust my instincts."

But it didn't start well. "My first day on point, I headed out and just caught a gleam on the dew of a trip wire. I hadn't gone a hundred feet. It turns out it was one of our own trip wires. Our guy had put it out the night before and forgot about it. I said, 'Dude, you're going to get me killed.'"

The platoon got past the trip wire and not far up the path Notley suddenly came face to face with a VC soldier. "We were both surprised. I opened up but he disappeared into the bush. That was my first hour in walking the point."



DAN NOTLEY
As a soldier in Vietnam



DAN NOTLEY
Now does missionary work in Thailand

He said he learned quickly to use his peripheral vision. “You can see movement out of the corner of your eye better than straight ahead sometimes.”

Other senses had to be also fully attuned. “You had to have situational awareness. In a human being, your senses are meant to be much more awake. But living in America, you don’t pay attention to anything.”

One sense they used was smell. “We were up in the mountains where the air is fresh, and you could smell their cook fires or the fish they ate. One of our guys was a logger from northern Wisconsin, and he used to say, ‘I can smell a gook.’ Sure enough, about 10 minutes later we’d run into something or be ambushed.”

Another key was to slow down and take it all in. “Yeah, you pay a price at some point for that high level of continuous attunement and expenditure of adrenaline. Your body has a fight or flight mechanism, but it’s meant to be temporary, not on all the time. The eventual result I suppose is PTSD.”

Soldiers in combat, Notley said, rarely feel fear after the first few seconds. “After that it’s pure adrenaline. And it can be addictive. Guys would sign up for another tour just to get that adrenaline high.”

His platoon would go out for a day or two sometimes, and then go out for two weeks. They carried whatever they needed. “I always erred on the side of carrying too much ammunition rather than food. You can survive a while without food. One time we got into a situation where we ran out of ammo. That wasn’t good. A helicopter finally arrived and they didn’t dare land; they were just dumping boxes of grenades out the door.”

Notley had arrived in Bien Hoa in February of 1969 as an E-2, or private. By October, he had advanced to E-5, or sergeant. “Stuff happens. People get wounded or killed and you just move up.”

At the same time, he was brought back to base camp to take over tactical ops command, or the job of securing the perimeter of the base each night. “I’d be up all night just monitoring radios.”

He lasted about a month on the job. “I hated being in the rear echelon. You have to dress right and act right. And I didn’t like the politics back there. I wanted to be with my guys out in the field.”

“By Thanksgiving, I was back in the field. By December I made E-6.”

He had two R&R vacations during that first year, one to Australia and one to Hong Kong.

By January, his year was up. “The clerk was a friend of mine, and I asked him where they were going to send me. He told me it was Fort Benning and they were going to make me a drill sergeant. All that spit and polish, I couldn’t stand it. I hated the Army, but I figured I’d take my chances.”

At that time, soldiers could extend their time in Vietnam to get out of the Army sooner, and Notley chose that option. He would stay in country until March, but then he would get out several months early.

In the end, he spent about 15 months in combat. Did he have any close calls?

“One time we were heading back to Duc Pho, and it turns out they were firing rockets into the base. They wanted us to go on this mountain top and report where they were firing from so we could call in the artillery.”

The platoon loaded into three Huey helicopters and headed for the mountain top.

“We were in the first helicopter and we were just coming in for a landing when the pilot veered off. So the second chopper landed and then the third. The men on those choppers secured the perimeter. And then we came around again.”

The Huey Notley was in was about 10 feet in the air and just about to land when a very large bomb blew up, killing or wounding most of the men in the platoon and destroying the helicopter.

“I was not next to the door, my buddy was, and he took most of the shrapnel. But I got sprayed all up and down my right side. Our helo dropped like a rock and burst into flames. I dragged my friend away and I went around looking for others. By this time the enemy had opened up with small arms fire.”

What Notley found was not good. “Our platoon sergeant had just come back two days ago from R&R with his wife. I found his torso hanging from a tree, and the rest of him was in two or three pieces here and there.

“And then I found our officer, and he had a bullet hole right in the middle of his forehead. There were only three or four of us who were still able to do anything.”

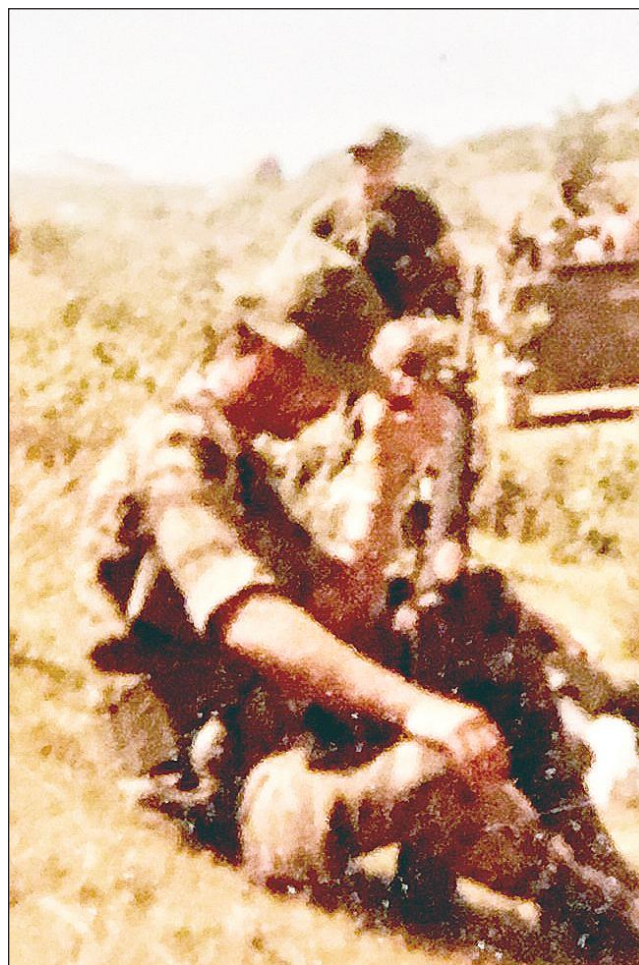
Meanwhile the men hustled to get everyone away from the helicopter. “When that JP4 (aviation gas) begins to burn, it’s something. All that was left of the Huey in a few minutes was the engine and the tips of the rotors.”

Later the Army figured out that it was probably a 250-pound bomb that had been triggered by the enemy just as the third chopper was set to land. “Guys were just sitting there in shock. It happened so quick.”

American gunships were in the vicinity and quickly laid down a fire around the mountain top, and other choppers



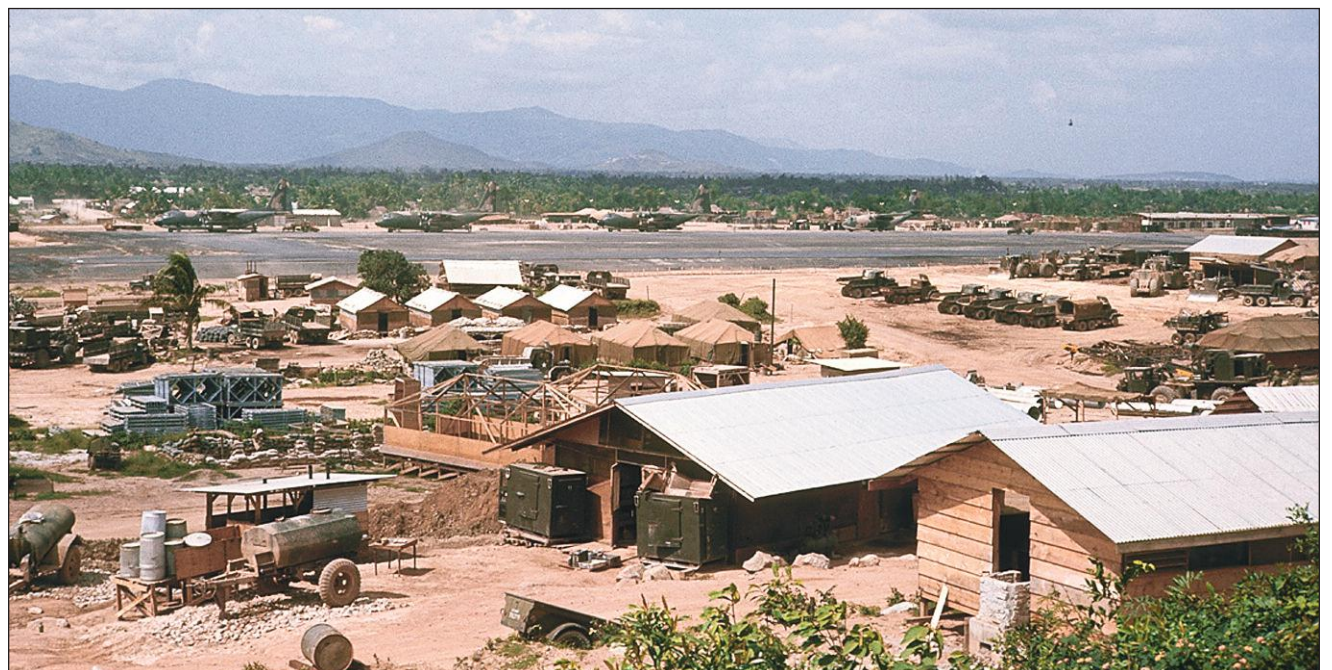
Notley, second from left, and his comrades lined up for a picture while on a mission. Everyone in the photo was wounded or killed in action except for one man.



Notley takes a break on a recon mission.



Recon units were issued these types of topographical maps as they did their missions.



Duc Pho was the main base that Notley’s unit operated from. It contained a large airstrip.

came in to evacuate the troops. In about 10 minutes, it was quiet.

Another attack was expected, though, and the men were hustled off the hill leaving their guns and three dead comrades behind.

"It really puzzled us how Charlie knew we were going to be there. But then again when we were in camp, we'd buy Cokes from these local kids and they'd ask us where we were going. We'd tell them we couldn't say, and they would then tell us where we were going, and they were always right."

Years later, Notley found out that his helicopter had veered off instead of landing because the lieutenant, who was on the second Huey, proclaimed that he must have boots on the ground first.

"After it was all over, our platoon was wiped out. We had to wait around for a month to get replacements. We got 12 new guys all at once, and that was scary. I was the new platoon sergeant, and we didn't have an officer.

"That first night we went out on a mission, I thought, 'If we get hit, we're in a world of trouble.' But we didn't."

Notley earned a Purple Heart for the mountain top mission.

On another occasion, Notley's platoon was in point position for a company.

"We were going down the trail. We had been there before and we knew it pretty well. We stopped for a break."

Notley decided to head down the trail by himself a ways "just to see what was going on."

Patrolling on your own is not encouraged by the Army. "But I had done it before a couple of times. I went down the path a ways, and then about 300 yards away I saw two VC cross the trail with machine guns. So I knew something was going on in the area."

Undeterred by the presence of the enemy, Notley trudged on. "Doing a one-man patrol was not bright, but, like I say, I'd done it before. Suddenly there was a VC in the trail ahead of me. It happened so fast. I fired at him, but he disappeared. But he dropped a satchel he was carrying.

"I went a little further, and in my peripheral vision I could see a VC standing in the woods with an old carbine, maybe an M-1 or M-2. He was just standing there looking at me. He must have thought I couldn't see him."

Notley shot at him, and he too disappeared. They later found his body at a camp the VC were using not far away.

It turned out that the first Viet Cong that Notley had encountered had been a courier, and the satchel was full of messages. "I heard it was pretty significant, but I never found out what was in it."

Notley's unit at one point decided to change the uniform of the day. "We were kind of going rene-gade, and we were all wearing black t-shirts."

The clothing move may have helped their morale and maybe their camouflage, but it backfired on them twice.

Once they were working their way up a tiered rice paddy when an American shell came in and hit the paddy just below them. The second shell hit the paddy in the tier above them. The radio man quickly communicated with headquarters, and the shelling ceased.

"They were bracketing us, and the next shell would have been right on us. These were 175s, the big stuff. It turned out that some South Vietnamese had seen us hiking and because of the black shirts, they thought we were VC. They called in the artillery."

On one other occasion, the South Vietnamese called in a mortar attack on the black shirted platoon. Again, it was quickly called off.

Sometimes officers would request combat duty so it would be on their record, even if they weren't qualified for very good at it.

"We hated working in the lowland. You couldn't tell the VC from anybody else. One night we began to set up camp just outside a village"

The platoon had a brand new officer. "He had gone to Green Beret school and he had his shiny, new butter bars (second lieutenant). He didn't know anything, but he told us to dig in.

"We were totally exposed, and every gook in the country knew we were there. We told the lieutenant that we couldn't stay there, but he said we were okay. We told him we weren't okay and we weren't staying.

"So we sat around, smoking and joking, pretending we were settling in. But as soon as it got dark, we moved. We hadn't gone far when machine guns and RPGs hit the spot where we had been. It just rained down."

The enemy soon figured out they had been tricked, though, and took off. "But we could follow their position by the dogs barking.

"The lieutenant grabbed the radio and called in the artillery all by himself. The first shell, a white phosphorus shell they used to find the range, came right down on top of us. Our forward observer grabbed the radio and told the officer, 'You're not doing this.'

"Then the lieutenant started putting claymore mines around our position, and it says right on the mines, 'This side toward the enemy.' He had them all backwards.

"Two days later, that officer was gone. I'm sure they

found him a nice job in the rear somewhere."

When the platoon hunkered down for the night, they would place trip flares around their position.

"This was a very tense night, and we didn't get much sleep. We were sure we would get an ambush. But morning came and we hadn't been attacked.

"We went out to get our trip flares, and the VC had replaced the triggers with bamboo shoots. They were just screwing around with us. They were saying, 'If we want to come and get you, we will.' It was kind of freaky."

Notley also earned a Bronze Star, a CIB, and an Air Medal for his service.

"I left Vietnam on March 16, 1970, and that was right in the middle of the anti-war movement in the U.S. They flew us to Sea-Tac in Seattle and we landed in the middle of the night and they bused us to Fort Lewis. I remember they fed us steaks at 2 a.m. The next day they started processing us out."

They gave Notley a dress uniform and he took a taxi to the airport and then headed for Tulsa to surprise his parents. He hadn't told them exactly when he'd get out.

"My dad was a principal at Will Rogers High School in Tulsa and I walked into his office with my E-6 stripes. He had been an E-6 when he got out too. He was so proud."

His experience of walking around the high school wasn't so pleasant, though. "As you walked by you'd hear the kids say stuff like 'baby killer.'"

Notley didn't have an easy transition back into civilian life. "I'd be at parties and realize I was the only one not having any fun. I drank too much and did other stuff. I got married, and that was a really big mistake."

In November, 1971, about a year and a half after he got out of the Army he went to church. "I had been raised a Southern Baptist, but I had never been a practicing Christian. That morning I got saved. I knew if I didn't do something I would not survive. That day turned everything around."

In 1972, he headed for his hometown of Tulsa and went to Oral Roberts University. In 1977, he decided to become a full-time missionary and he moved to Thailand. "I wanted to go back to southeast Asia and fight a different kind of war."

He became a church-planting evangelist.

Along the way, he got divorced and became a single parent with two teenage daughters. He decided to return to the United States.

In 2007, he married Trish "the second best thing that ever happened to me." They live in Plymouth.

In 2008, Trish had a vision that they should return to Thailand to help combat the epidemic of women and children being sexually trafficked in that country. "Some of these kids are really young. Thailand is the Disneyland for pedophiles."

The two established two orphanages and they travel back and forth three times a year.

Their ministry is called Courageous Love, and their website is at www.icourageous.org. They can be reached at info@icourageous.org.

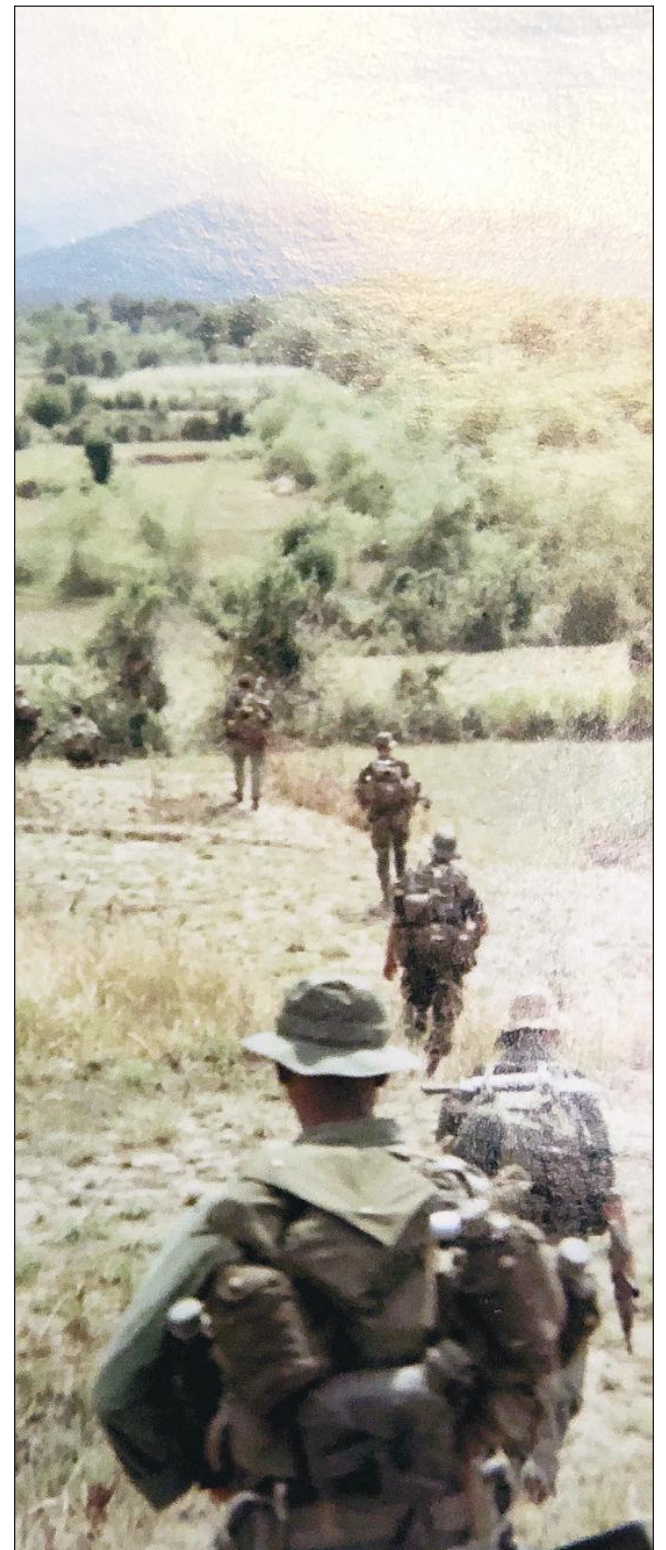
As for his battle with PTSD, Notley says he's "still in the process."

"I like to say," Notley wryly smiled, "that Vietnam is the gift that just keeps on giving. You can take the soldier out of Vietnam, but you can't take Vietnam out of the soldier."

He said he has one major item on his bucket list. "I want to ride in a Huey just one more time. But I don't want to just ride in it, I want to ride with my legs hanging out like we used to. I don't suppose anybody would let me do that."

He returned to Vietnam with a group of other servicemen in 1990, and got a chance to go to his old base at Duc Pho.

"I got to sit on top of the fire base and look out into the valley. When I had been there before, there was always traffic and choppers and outgoing artillery. This time there was total silence. It was surreal."



Notley's platoon heads down a trail looking for the enemy in Vietnam.

National Convention nears

Continued from Page 1

Mall is not as wide as a normal street, the parade may look a little different. "It will be a longer, narrower parade."

The parade will end near the convention center, and the marchers and others will congregate at the convention center for the post-parade party. The tentative plans for the party will include big bands and craft beer vendors.

Schottenbauer said it's possible the time of the parade could be changed to accommodate a Twins game being played that afternoon.

The Legion will have to provide Legionnaires to help police at various points along the parade route to let cross traffic through. Boys Scouts will provide water stations along the way.

The Department is hoping that many Minnesota posts will bring their flags for the massed colors the Department has done at national parades for many years. The record number of American flags in the parade was over 700 for the 1994 Minnesota contingent.

The Department, under the direction of Dan Williams, is hoping to gather proclamations declaring an American Legion Day during the convention from elected officials, cities, counties, and state government.

The convention will official get underway at the convention center on Tuesday, Aug. 28 and run through Thursday. National Commander Denise Rohan of Wisconsin will preside.

The Department is also planning many extracurriculars for the convention. Plans are moving forward to provide each conven-

tion-goer with a metal badge, almost an exact replica of the original convention badge of 1919. Wording will be added to not this is the 100th convention.

Other plans include creating at least one display case that will contain the uniform and other information about George Washington Bentley, the last living founder of the organization. Bentley, from Montgomery, Minnesota, attended the Paris Caucus where the Legion was conceived.

There will also be two Department of Minnesota booths in the exhibition area during the convention.

Past Department Commander Jim Kellogg, co-chair of the Department's ad hoc committee for the 100th convention, said he will be attending the mid-winters meetings to get some excitement going for this summer's event.

The Sons of the American Legion have created a coin for the event that is being sold for \$10 each. Already, over 500 coins have been sold. They can be purchased at any Legion event from the SAL.

The National Commander's Banquet, which will be held Tuesday night, will feature Three Dog Night as the entertainment.

The national organization is also working with the Twins to have Legion Family Night at the Twins event that weekend.

Shuttle buses will be available from all the downtown hotels.

Listening Post

News from around the State



MARSHALL SUPPORTS SCOUTS -- Marshall Post 113 recently presented a check to the Marshall Cub and Boy Scouts to help with their fall recruiting. The check was presented by Post Commander Ken Versaevel, at right.



WHEATON HONOR FLIGHT -- Veterans from Wheaton Post 80 took part in the November Honor Flight from Fargo to Washington D.C. From left: Marvin Bach, Wallace Johnson, Harry Fischer and Robert Johnson stand in front of the Korean War Memorial.



ALEXANDRIA FLOAT -- Alexandria Post 87 took part in the 62nd annual Glenwood Waterama Parade by pulling their float "They Do it For Us."



EAGAN FLAG RETIREMENT AT BCBS -- Eagan Post 594 Color Guard conducted a flag retirement ceremony at Blue Cross/ Blue Shield, Minnesota. The ceremony was attended by employees, post members and police. From left: Air Force Bugler Johnny Holiday, Frank Caldwell, Jerry Skala, BC/BS Vice President Kelly Bengston, BC/BS CEO Michael Guyette, Frank Russomanno and Dan Seanoa, and BC/BS Vets ERG Jody Hassing, who coordinated the event.



BRICELYN CONTRIBUTES -- Bricelyn Post 165 Commander Lars Helland and SAL Commander Scott Gebel present checks totaling \$1,500 to Blue Earth Post 89 Rider Scott Phillips for the Legacy Run.



SPRING GROVE MEMORIAL -- The Spring Grove Area Veterans Memorial Group recently dedicated a new memorial honoring over 1,000 veterans, living and dead. The Spring Grove Post 249 and the City of Spring Grove were partners. Over 750 attended the dedication, including eight World War II veterans.



STEARNS FAIR VOLUNTEERS -- Legionnaires from the area volunteered at the Stearns County Fair. From left: Sauk Centre Post members Bruce Hegg, Dave Doubrava and Jeff Quistorff and Melrose Post 101 member Rick Cross. Cross is a Sixth District Vice Commander.



BASEBALL POST OF YEAR -- Montevideo Post 59 accepted the American Legion Baseball Post of the Year Award, presented by Director Randy Schaub, left. From right are Post Commander Marv Garbe, Baseball Assistant Doug Broich, and coaches Tim Epema, and Brandon Raymo.



RIBBON CUT -- The new Center for Integrative Health and Healing opened at the Minneapolis VAMC recently. From left: L-R: Chief of Staff Kent Crossley, Chief Experience Officer Martina Malek, nurse practitioner Judy Wagner, Chief of PM&R Mike Armstrong, nurse practitioner Laurie Kubes and Director Patrick

New Center opens

Continued from Page 1

pain or PTSD, Co-Director Judy Wagner said, but instead just focuses on the patient's health in general. She said, though, that some therapies may have an obvious benefit, such as yoga for lower back pain.

She noted that many of the therapies used at the center are not new, but have been around for thousands of years and have proven their efficacy.

"We want to be clear that this does not replace a veteran's treatment," Wagner said. "If it has benefits, that's fantastic. But it does not take the place of good medical treatment."

"It just might mean a patient might have a little less pain, or might be able to sleep without pills."

Any veteran interested in integrative health should first talk to their doctor about it. Only referrals are accepted at the center.

Wagner and Kubes said it's important the veteran's doctor be part of the process.

Once a patient has been referred, they must attend a 90-minute class to get an overview of the integrative health program. The class at this time is offered twice a week.

The class goes over all seven programs now being offered at the center, and after that it's up to the veteran to sign up for the class or classes he or she wants.

Wagner said it's possible other treatments could be offered in the future, but these have been chosen for now based on the interviews with veterans and staff. She said the center is limited by its own space and staff restrictions.

The seven treatments include:

Whole Health Group: A series of 8 classes designed to guide you in creating optimal health. Attend one 90-minute group weekly for 8 weeks.

Tai Chi: Slow, guided movements designed to increase flexibility, ease pain, and improve balance and agility.

Yoga: Gentle movement to release discomfort, increase balance and improve overall health.

Group Acupuncture: Acupuncture to address a variety of conditions as well as overall wellness, in a group setting, fully clothed, seated in chairs.

Mindfulness: Practice and develop mindfulness based skills for use in daily life.

iRest Yoga Nidra: No movement involved. This is a form of meditative self-inquiry to induce deep relaxation, decrease stress, improve sleep and release self-limiting beliefs.

Integrative Nutrition: These classes focus on using food as medicine. The foods we choose affect how our body functions. Learn more about the power at the end of your fork.

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
Department Director



Greeting American Legion Family,

I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year. Hopefully with all the festivities the past couple of weeks everyone had a Merry Christmas.

Now that the new year is here we have much work to do as the excitement builds towards the kickoff of the American Legion's centennial celebration. This will be taking place right here in Minnesota at the National Convention in August. Now is the time to start getting your motorcycle ready.

I would like to see as many of the Minnesota Riders in the National Parade with American flags. The flags can be mounted on the motorcycle and/or the passenger can be holding the flag. Minnesota is known for having a very large number of folks marching in the parade with American flags. Scoot along and add to the count.

To borrow a quote from the late John F. Kennedy and slightly modified, "Don't ask what the American Legion can do for you, but what can you do for the American Legion."

You may be wondering just what can I do for the American Legion? The answer would take more space than what I have room for here. Each and everyone of us is a salesperson for the American Legion. By telling people what the American Legion is about we are selling the Legion. In the process we just might recruit a new member, bring back an old member or even get a donation for one of our many programs.

Sometimes we don't have to say anything. An example would be the vest we all wear. I have had people come up to me and say "I read about you guys in the paper and I think what you are doing is wonderful, please accept this donation." as they had me a few dollars. Make your presents know and be ready to explain, people out there what to know about us.

Okay, the cat is out of the bag. Our goal on the Legacy Run this year is \$250,000. I challenge each Rider to ask no fewer than five business for a donation.

If everyone asks and receives something from one or more of the places they visit we will easily achieve our goal, maybe even surpass it.

Hope to see you at an upcoming mid-winter or the Sweetheart rally. Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

Bands needed

Continued from Page 1

pates -- up to 25 bands.

Bands who wish to march in the national parade should go to mnlegion.org/convention and click on the yellow box, "view information."

In the 1994 national parade in Minneapolis, there were high school bands from Irondale, Litchfield, Monticello, Pipestone, Anoka, Princeton and Bloomington Kennedy.

"We want as many bands as possible," Convention Corporation President Jeff Olson said. "We want this to be the best parade in recent memory."

Olson noted that Minnesota has a reputation for having some of the best high school bands in the nation.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By James Miller



Women Veteran's Advocacy

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Field Operations Division welcomes the newest Women Veterans Program Coordinator Kim Dobler. Representative Dobler comes to the Agency from the Federal Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Service Center. Kim is a 17-year veteran of the Minnesota Army National Guard which includes a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Kim is an active member in several state and national veterans organizations and brings a wide range of experience and expertise to this position. MDVA looks forward to Kim guiding the Gold Star Family Recognition and Women Veteran Assistance program forward and improving the lives of Minnesota's women Veterans.

The mission of the Minnesota Women Veterans Program is to ensure Women Veterans have equitable access to federal and state benefits and services. We respond to the gender specific needs of Women Veterans and ensure Women Veterans are treated with dignity and respect. MDVA disseminates information geared to improve the awareness of available benefits, services, and eligibility criteria for the women who served in the United States Armed Forces.

With the increasing membership of Female Veterans in the American Legion we have the unique opportunity to partner with Posts across the state to provide services to your members at your meetings or events. If you have questions please contact us directly at 612 970 5787.

If you have questions on any Veterans Benefit, we encourage you to contact your local County Veterans Service Officer (<http://www.macvso.org>) or our Claims Office at 612 970 5662. We look forward to bringing you more information about the many programs that MDVA Field Operations Division provides and about our advocates who are on the ground working hard every day for you.

James Miller is the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Outreach Supervisor.

Sons of The American Legion

By Shawn Davis



Happy New Year. Welcome to 2018. This New Year will be a big one for the SAL and the whole American Legion Family. We will celebrate 100 years of the American Legion and the National Convention will be back in Minneapolis this fall. All will have a grand old time and you are all welcome to the celebration! But a lot of work has to happen between then and now.

With the New Year, our membership targets each month get more aggressive. December's target was 45%, but January's jumps to 60% by the 18th. February's target falls on Valentines Day and is 75%. By March 14th, we want to be at 80%, and 90% by April 11th. So while we have done well making goals so far, this is where we need to roll up our sleeves, and start making this phone calls to members who have not renewed, or send out that personal letter inviting the member to renew now. Additionally it has been noticed that all the squadron targets agreed to at that meeting did not get entered into the membership roster, so we will be updating that since our goal is 12,000 members. Something I know we can do if we all work together.

And speaking of membership how is the new recruiting going? Has your squad brought in 5 new members into The American Legion Family? If you brought in 5 new SAL members, have you submitted your pin request?

This time of year is also time for midwinters. I and/or Membership Chair Dave Vulcan will try to attend as many as we can. But to be successful, be sure to invite as many members from your district to attend as well. This is the event to help educate your members on what the District does, how the District can help the Squadrons, and also see who might be interested in helping grow into the District leadership of tomorrow. Send out that mass mailing, those emails, and flyers, and fill up those midwinters.

My Commanders project is going well. Thank you to Squadrons from Maple Grove/Osseo, Fridley, and everyone else who has donated to my project of \$5 for Minnesota. I would love to see 100% participation by all the membership in the state. \$5 per person will be divided up between The American Legion Legacy Scholarship, The American Legion ROTC Scholarship, and the American Legion Family Hospital Association. All worthwhile causes you can be proud making a donation to. If you are not sure where to send the checks, feel free to send them into Department, made out the Detachment of MN, and place SAL Commanders project in the memo line.

Membership Chart, as of Dec. 27, 2017

District	2018 Goal	Total 2017	Total 2018	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,953	8,895	7,628	254	58	7	85.20%	8,044
District 2	7,272	7,188	6,097	239	84	17	83.84%	6,683
District 3	11,712	11,647	9,803	385	65	9	83.70%	10,481
District 4	2,420	2,402	1,962	54	18	2	81.07%	2,113
District 5	2,486	2,464	2,018	136	22	1	81.17%	2,205
District 6	11,811	11,740	10,085	300	71	12	85.39%	10,648
District 7	6,398	6,322	5,428	229	76	10	84.84%	5,742
District 8	4,252	4,212	3,543	149	40	5	83.33%	3,813
District 9	6,729	6,664	5,620	162	65	13	83.52%	6,000
District 10	10,066	10,012	8,465	391	54	6	84.09%	8,913
District 11	401	2,358	1,796	128	2	1	447.88%	2,076
Totals	72,500	73,904	62,445	2,427	555	83	86.13%	66,718

Same Date Last Year

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

**Les Shaunce
Commander**



Greetings from the 1st District:

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Can you believe 2017 is already over. Every year seems to go by quicker. It must be the age.

We had a great turn out at Duluth for the Pearl Harbor Rally. Post 71 did a very good job of hosting the rally.

Our District Midwinter Conference is going to be held in Albert Lea, January 6th. Our District Oratorical Contest will be held in conjunction with the conference.

Membership is coming in at a steady rate. We continue to be in second place but edging close to first.

This article will be published by February 3rd which is the date for our annual Sweetheart Rally. This year the rally will be held at North Saint Paul Post 39. Please plan to attend this rally. Bring lots of memberships so we can surpass Wisconsin.

God Bless America and God Bless our Troops.

SECOND DISTRICT

**Randy Olson
Commander**



I hope our Legion Family has/had a Very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. Where has the time gone? I want to thank everyone for their contributions to help out all of our programs this last year. We have made a difference in the lives of many veterans and their families. I couldn't be more proud of all of you. Thank you all for your support. The New Year starts soon. It's now time to stop procrastinating the paying your Legion Membership. We will March on Capitol Hill Soon and every last member is needed to be able to lobby for the needs of all of our Veterans! Please renew now or ask those that haven't to. We need you.

Don't forget the Oratorical Contest is January 6th at St. James, Mn. at the American Legion at 9:00 a.m. Call your Schools in your Districts & ask them to send their representatives there. If they need rides or a Legion to sponsor them, you can call me and I will arrange it.

THIRD DISTRICT

**Eugene Leifeld
Commander**



To all, have a happy and prosperous New Year for 2018. January is a busy month and there are several Districts who are having their Mid-Winter conferences. Please support your districts by registering, attending and learning more about the American Legion programs. 3rd District's Mid-Winter is Saturday January 27, 2018 at Le Center Post 108.

Membership Department of Minnesota Bulletin 23 shows the 3rd District at 80.41%. January 18, 2018 is the 80% Target. We all need to keep moving forward with membership. State membership Director Larry Ryan would like to have posts at 90% by the Sweet Heart Rally which is Saturday February 3, 2018. District Vice-Commanders and Membership volunteers, we can reach this goal by working with our posts and districts for membership renewals and new members.

Saturday January 20, 2018 is the 1st and 3rd No Ice Fishing contest at Montgomery Post 79. We will have games and prizes so please plan on attending. Support the district Oratorical Contests. The purpose of the Oratorical is to develop knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States of America. Students who are selected will compete at the Semi Finals State Oratorical contest on Saturday March 3, 2018 at the Osseo American Legion. Finals are held Saturday March 3 2018 at the Anoka American Legion Post 102.

The American Legion's 100th Anniversary is August 24-30th, 2018 in Minneapolis, MN. Plan on attending and carrying American Flags and receive a special banner for your flags.

FOURTH DISTRICT

**Lane Stunkel
Commander**



Happy New Year to the Fabulous 4th District. Finally we have snow here; now we have to contend with the snow and the cold.

As of Bulletin 24, the 4th District membership is at 78.84%, we are only 4 percentage points behind the 6th District, last month we were 5 points behind, that number is

getting smaller, let's keep the pressure on, next month 3 points behind. Please reach out to your Vice Commanders and Membership Director Mickey; they are available to work with you on membership. Congratulations to Dayton's Bluff for making goal – 100%

Consolidated Post Reports – last year every Post in the District submitted a CPR; let's do the same thing again this year, if your Post needs help please reach out to your District Vice Commanders or myself, we are all here to help out.

To all the Volunteers who helped out with Shop, Ship & Share, I thank you – once again a tremendous success, at last count 970 packages were boxed and shipped, and that number is still growing. The letters that we have received back with pictures really shows the appreciation the service members have receiving the packages.

To all of the Volunteers who help with Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army – another great year for a great cause – thank you to all and also to the JROTC cadets.

God bless each and every one of you and may the New Year bring you happiness, prosperity and good health to all members of the 4th District American Legion Family and please think of our ailing members in your prayers.

FIFTH DISTRICT

**Walt Lyndley
Commander**



A Happy and healthy New Year to you all. We helped the 4th District with Shop, Ship and Share at the beginning of December. The work we do with them is always so rewarding and time just flies. We received pictures of some of the servicemen opening their package and it's such a pleasure to see. The same week-end was the Pearl Harbor Rally in Duluth. What a great evening. Thank you to the auxiliary members who helped with the gift shop which was set up at the Veterans Home. Julie and Bonnie always find it to be such a fun experience. The Richfield Legion, Post 435, set up a bingo night at the Minneapolis Veterans Home. I don't know who has more fun, the helpers or the vets. And the vets are always so appreciative of receiving a two-dollar bill. I wish everyone good health as we march into 2018.

SIXTH DISTRICT

**Ken Johnstone
Commander**



Greetings from the Sixth District!

By the time you get this article, Winter will officially be here, along with Pearl Harbor Day, the ending date of the Iraq War, Christmas and the end of 2017. I hope everyone had time to spend with friends and family.

It has been a good year for me, being able to get around to my different Posts and meeting with the Post Officers and especially with the members throughout the District. It seems to me that each area has a little different culture, which is good. What works for one area doesn't mean it will work for other areas in the District.

At the Pearl Harbor Rally, I could visit with some members from the other nine districts. I believe it was a very successful rally, with the Department of Minnesota moving into second place. Good job, everyone. Now, let us set our efforts to achieve first place. I know we can and will do it.

January is setting up to be another busy month. I will be attending more post functions, getting ready for our Mid-Winter Conference and preparing for what the new year will bring us.

Once again, I hope everyone had a safe and wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. In closing, keep your thoughts and prayers for our military personnel, who were not able to be with their family for the holidays.

For God and Country

SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Richard Wog
Commander**



Mighty 7th, Christmas has passed and it is a time for all of us to reflect on the blessing we have received. As we think about our blessings such as family, friends and the freedoms we have today. Also a New Year is here, a time we look back at what has happened this past year and begin to look to the future, make plans for vacations and upcoming special events in our lives. I want to talk about one event coming up in January 27th. The midwinter conference being held at the Morris post starting at 10 am sharp. We will have a joint opening and then break off in the afternoon session for the auxiliary and the sal. We are going to

have speakers in the morning session and in the afternoon we'll have working sessions with a lot of information given out and there will be time for open discussion as well. It will be well worth your time to attend this conference. I am looking forward to see you there. There will be a registration fee of 15 dollars which will include morning coffee, donuts and also a lunch at noon. The best part is that it will be a time to see old friends and meet new ones. Please plan to attend.

Membership is moving well. We are kind of behind last year but there is no hill too high to climb. We will keep working on the ones we have as well as the new members we need to grow. Let's grow together.

Wishing each of you a happy and prosperous New Year. For God and Country.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

**Donovan Goblirsch
Commander**



Hello to all Legion Members!

A new year is upon us. Midwinter meetings are in the works. The 8th district midwinter is Saturday, January 27. The meeting is in Hibbing, MN. Start time is 9 a.m. at the Hibbing Memorial Bldg. Our adjutant Carl is sending out a format of the day. Vice Commander Larry is making food preparations. All committee chairmen will make presentations. Our membership is coming along. Keep sending the memberships in to department when you receive them. Remember to visit the veterans in the hospitals and the nursing homes. If a local veteran needs help in finding a ride to the clinics or the shopping areas, please offer your services. Note our Department Commander, Mike Schaffer may be here to visit during our midwinter. All members please come and enjoy our one-day midwinter.

Thank you, Jennifer Havlick, for writing this column when I was indisposed due to illness and hospitalization. The whole 8th District team has been nothing but helpful and supportive during this time. I am deeply appreciative.

NINTH DISTRICT

**Tim Haugen
Commander**



Greetings from the Roaring Ninth

Happy New Year American Legion Family!! I wish you all the very best in 2018. Now that 2017 is in your rear view mirror we need to continue to promote our Legion programs and continue to work on membership and achieve our goals.

In December we held our annual District Christmas party and I want to give a big shout out to the Waubun Auxiliary as well as other Auxiliary members for the outstanding job in making it another successful event. What a great turnout we had.

I had the opportunity to attend Breckenridge Post 153's annual Membership dinner along with Dept Commander Schaffer and his lovely wife.

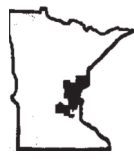
Our Mid Winter conference will be held on Saturday January 6th with meetings starting at 9 am at the Thief River Falls Post 117.

Membership is going extremely well, we have surpassed all of our National target dates. I would like to extend a big thank you to the posts that have already reached 100% goal. Argyle, Strandquist, Hitterdal, Euclid, Gully, Beltrami, Ulen, Henning, Deer Creek and Rothsay.

Until next month, I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year. God bless our Troops & their families and our Veterans.

TENTH DISTRICT

**Paul Hassing
Commander**



Hello again Mighty Tenth,

Can you believe it is a New Year? That means it is time to really ramp up the membership. Start calling those that you know have not renewed. I am really looking forward to the weekend of the snowmobile rally. It is always a great time, and we get to see a lot of the district members. If you get a chance, please come to one of the stops. If you need a schedule of stops, please contact me, or Patty Coleman.

Please take the time this Holiday season to remember those less fortunate, and also the troops and their families that are separated. Reach out to those that may need a little help. Little gestures can make big impacts. If you run across someone who needs anything, let the rest of us know. There is bound to be someone who has the right knowledge, skills, or ability to help with whatever is needed.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 18-6

President Donna Arends

January 2018

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By Donna Arends



Merry Christmas & Happy 2018 to all of our American Legion Family.

I have had a very eventful 2017. It started by losing two of my very favorite veterans, one in March and one in April. With my American Legion Family immediate and friends, I have survived.

I went on to join the ranks of many of my peers to have the distinct honor of being in a leadership position of this great organization.

My companions in the Leadership Team, Commander Mike, Detachment Commander Shawn, The Riders Director Chuck and Honorary Junior President Courtney have become very special people in my life. These friendships and memories, God willing will last a lifetime.

I am so very proud to be serving with Courtney, our Northwestern Division Honorary Junior President. She will go on to create memories in her experience in the Air Force, which many of you already have. Thank you Courtney for your service now and into the future.

Since last I wrote to you, I have attended the 4th & 5th Districts Shop, Ship and Share at the Maplewood Mall. What a very well-orchestrated event with many volunteers doing outstanding work for our deployed Veterans.

I was at the Pearl Harbor Rally in West Duluth, where a very informational, membership, leadership and public relations training was held prior to the rally.

Thank you Membership Chair Mary, Leadership Chair Sandy Wersal, and Public Relations Chair Robin Dorf. Also thank you West Duluth Post and Unit for a delicious meal and great hospitality.

Another very exciting fun-filled event for me as well as their community children, was when I attended the St. Michael Unit's Children's Christmas Party. Great job St. Michael Unit.

My faithful traveling companions, Department Membership Chair Mary and sister Unit 167 Willmar member Chair Betty and I have had great camaraderie with Units in Cosmos and Ogilvie (where President and Commander Jody and Paul were also).

The Department office staff and officers attended a Christmas Party in Burnsville. Then the next day of that weekend, I was fortunate enough to be asked to the Eagles Healing Nest grand opening of a newly refurbished building in Anoka along with two friendly Fridley Unit members Anita Costello and Sandy Locker.

Then on to the Fridley Post and Unit Christmas Dinner. All of the 2017-2018 Leadership Team was in attendance and a great time and delicious food was had by all. Sunday I attended the Fridley Post and Unit's annual community Children's Christmas Party. Fantastic job of inviting the public to see just who we are and why we matter and what we do. Thank you all.

Next was the Cokato Post and Unit Christmas Potluck. What a wonderful month. Again great food and camaraderie.

This is an experience you can only live to appreciate fully. January 2018, will bring Mid Winters and I am so looking forward to those.

Thank you Everyone for the support you have shown and given me either money donations or flashlights for my projects, or your warm hospitality and friendships.

I will borrow a line from a very popular and great individual at this time of year "Merry Christmas to All and to All A Good Night."

Junior Conference will be held at North St. Paul in April

Saturday, April 14th is the date for the 55th Annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at North St. Paul American Legion Post 39 with the Fourth District serving as our hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 13th. 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. Make arrangements 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, Courtney Rogat, who has done a great job promoting Juniors and what they do for our Veterans.

2017 dues reinstates her as a member in good standing.

AUXILIARY PROGRAMS

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, 2018. Let your schools and community know about these scholarships. There are eight (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 amount they are giving for scholarships as well this year. There are many opportunities for our young people to receive monies to further their education.

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, Lynette Andel, Fargo, Doris LaFayette, Fergus Falls, Darlene Wondra, Hastings

Thanks ladies for all you do.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

I have begun a new project to benefit all members who have their emails on file with the Department Office. You will start receiving the Legionnaire at no cost via email every month if we have your email address on file. It is quite a project and right now I have completed through Unit 92. I should have quite a few more in before this issue goes to print. The online version is incredible – the pictures are so clear, it is worth reading them online. Many thanks to The American Legion for providing our Auxiliary with this benefit.

At this time I would like to thank all of the Auxiliary members for supporting the fund-raisers that have been put

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 2018 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 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 be held at Bethel University. The session will be held June 10-16.

2017/18 POPPY ORDERS

Poppy orders are still being accepted in the department office. As of this writing, we have received orders from 246 Units. Please get your order into the Department Office. We need to know how many 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 along with Trophy and Award information 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, 2018 to all Senior members whose 2018 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 2017 dues by January 31 is considered delinquent and loses her rights, privileges and benefits of membership. Payment of her

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

into action. The 100th Anniversary Cookbooks were received so well that we have ordered another 250 books. There is an order blank in the Legionnaire so don't hesitate to get your books ordered. They make wonderful gifts. We still are selling the military bracelets and also the Auxiliary Emblem magnets. We have plenty of those in the office, so please call and order as you need. The last fund-raiser is the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota mailing labels. The first 15,000 members received their labels already and the balance will be mailed out shortly. Please be sure and support this fund-raiser.

Another year has passed and we are all still here enjoying our jobs immensely. It has been a great year, finishing up with President Carol and starting out with President Donna, both of whom are incredible assets to our organization. We are still struggling with membership but the slide seems to be lessening each year. Mary Kuperus has brought the fun back in to membership – thanks Mary.

On a personal note, my year couldn't have been better. We were blessed with baby Elizabeth in May and she has become the star of the family. I haven't seen a happier baby in my life. Our children and grandchildren are all happy and successful and we can't ask for more than that. I have made many more friends over the year within the American Legion Family. You are all incredible. I have gotten to know Commander Mike's wife Nina better and what a hoot she is. She is also a very warm and loving person – glad to call her my friend. With the New Year here Shorty and I have lots coming up – a real vacation to Mesa and then off to Texas in the spring. We will become ranchers for almost a week, watching the grandkids and tending to the animals – haven't done that in years, just can't wait. After that we are back into another Convention and then the big National Convention in Minneapolis. Make sure and take time to come see the National Parade which will be on August 26 on the Nicollet Mall. Minnesota will be hugely represented.

My wish is for everyone to have a very Happy, Blessed New Year with only good things happening. Until next month, Sandie.

Seventh District report

As that favorite children's book, "The Little Engine That Could", have you in your adult life, ever reflected upon that story? When it's going up that hill, pulling and chugging along, hoping to make it to the top. That story has come and gone in my mind these last few months, as 7th District President. For the fact that, you are always learning what you can do to better the life of our Veterans, experiencing things that are out of your comfort zone, and enjoying the great benefits of being part of the Legion Family.

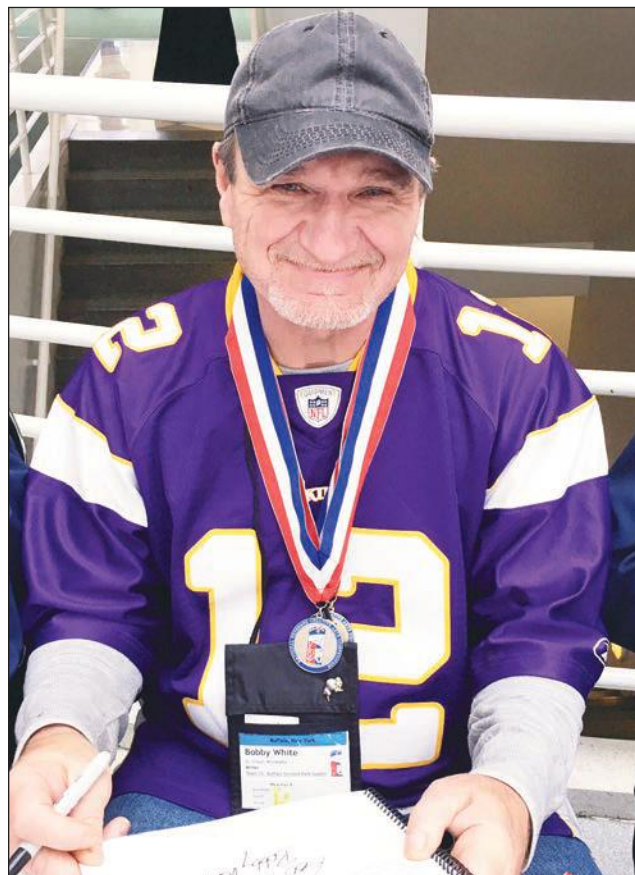
Now as we are almost to the top of that hill (1/2 way thru the year). Getting ready for Mid-Winter Conferences, the time will seem to whiz by.

So with that let us keep our Veterans always on the top of that priority list, and within our prayers. Remember our Auxiliary



KARLA MINNICK

Sisters that have come before us, and those that will follow, lend that hand to our SAL, and Legion Riders. In closing, I am so thankful for this opportunity. Always in huge AWE of the hard work and dedication that is shown in the Legion Family throughout the great State of Minnesota.



AT NATIONAL FESTIVAL -- Bobby White of Minnesota was able to participate in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in Buffalo, N.Y., with help from the American Legion Auxiliary. He participated in the creative writing seminar.

Eighth District report

The 8th District would like to thank all the Auxiliary members that came to the Workshop on the 2nd of December. Thank you to Sandy Wersal – Leadership Chairman, Mary Kuperus – Membership Chairman, & Robin Dorf – Public Relations Chairman for having their "first" workshop in the 8th District. A lot of great information was given to all.

As Auxiliary members we need to remember that when someone is taking care of a sick veteran be it at home or in the hospital we need to ask that person if they need any help. Would they like you to pick up their mail; let the dog out; sit with the person so they can have a few hours to get things done? The Veteran and their families are part of our Legion family and should be treated that way.

Important Dates to remember:

The 8th District will have their Mid-Winter on January 27 at the Veterans Memorial Building in



ANNA EELLS

Hibbing. Meeting start time will be 10am, Executive meeting at 9am.

The Commander and Presidents open house will be on April 7th at the McVeigh-Dunn Post #60 starting at 1pm.

We in the 8th District lost two long time members – Bill & Lou Hall from Moose Lake, our hearts and sympathies go out to the family and The American Legion and Auxiliary.

Dec. 20, 2017, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 12-21-2016
One	5,000	3,598	71.96%	3,846
Two	4,924	3,600	73.11%	3,681
Three	4,411	3,231	73.25%	3,251
Four	720	488	67.78%	518
Five	824	536	65.05%	538
Six	6,042	4,596	76.07%	4,785
Seven	3,934	2,902	73.77%	2,998
Eight	1,628	1,128	69.29%	1,108
Nine	4,350	3,180	73.20%	3,387
Ten	5,159	3,326	64.47%	3,759
1982	160	113	70.63%	114
Totals	37,152	26,698	71.87%	27,985



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Three Department Leadership Workshops coming up

The Department Auxiliary will be sponsoring three Leadership Workshops coming up. They will be held Feb. 10 in New London, Feb. 24 in Waite Park and March 10 in Buffalo. They will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The cost is \$10 for materials and lunch. A minimum of 12 attendees is necessary. Junior members are welcome. The deadline is Jan 15. Please fill out the form below to register.

Unit # _____ Unit Location _____ District # _____ Date you will attend _____
 Name: _____ Senior Junior
 Mailing Address: _____ Cell phone # _____
 Phone: (____) _____ Email Address: _____
 Amount enclosed: \$ _____ Make checks payable to: Sandy Wersal
 Mail to: 16667 Co Rd 9 NE, New London, MN 56273

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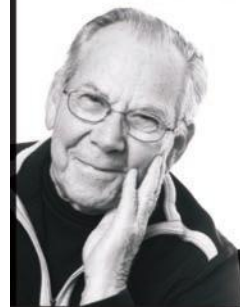
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