



National Commander's Tour slated for March

This year's National Commander's Tour of Minnesota will be a shortened version, hitting Northeastern Minnesota before ending in the Twin Cities.

National Commander Brett Reistad will visit posts in Two Harbors, West Duluth, Pequot Lakes, Brainerd and Anoka.

He will also be making side trips to the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth and to St. Cloud State University.

The tour will begin Sunday, March 10, with a dinner in Two Harbors and end on Tuesday, March 12, with a dinner in Anoka.

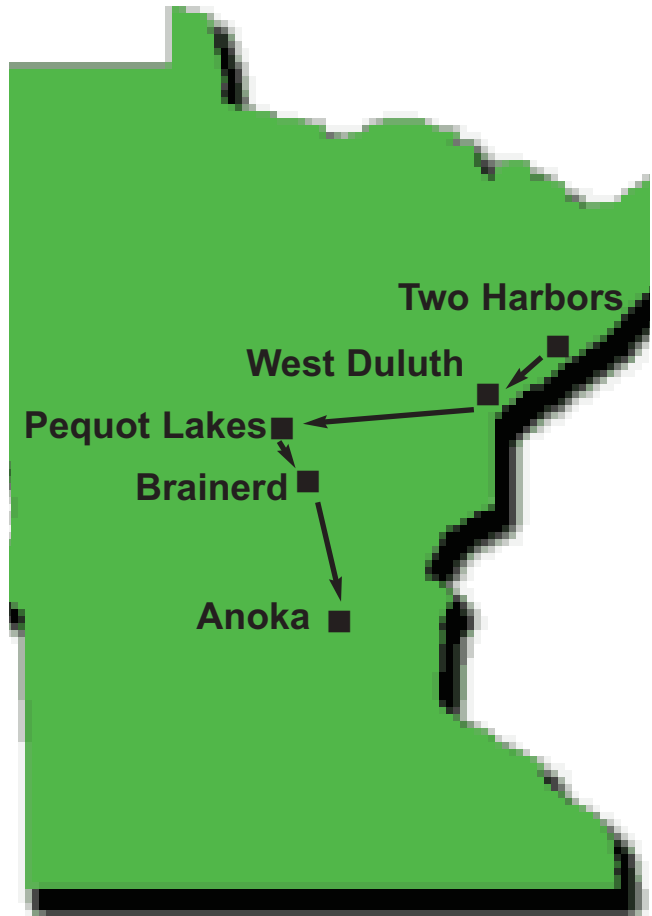
Reistad was elected National Commander at the national convention this past year in Minneapolis.

Also on the tour will be Commander Darrel Redepenning, Membership Director Mike Maxa and Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.

A list of exact times and RSVP phone numbers for the posts is on Page 2. Reservations are needed for meals.



RALLY CHRISTMAS — Officers of the Legion Family showed off their gifts at the Department membership rally at Faribault. From left: Commander Darrel Redepenning, SAL Detachment Commander Shawn Davis, Junior Honorary President Harley Donnelly, Riders Director Chuck Stone and Auxiliary President Jean Walker.



Montevideo receives a major donation for its planned Minnesota Veterans Home

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has announced a \$2.8 million donation from the estate of late Vietnam veteran, Steven Williams, for construction of the Montevideo Veterans Home. This is the largest single private gift benefiting a Minnesota Veterans Home.

Although Williams retired in Nevada, he grew up near Montevideo and stayed involved in Veteran issues in his home state. Williams' brother, Jim, who still lives in the area, contacted him in early 2018 to share the news that the Minnesota Legislature was considering funds for a State Veterans Home in Montevideo.

"It was pretty exciting," said Jim. "When I called Steve to tell him, he said, 'Keep me posted, keep me posted. That's a really good thing.' Steve was very interested in this project."

Steven Williams died in March, and a few months later the Minnesota Legislature approved \$9.4 million towards construction of the Montevideo Veterans Home. The financial model for construction includes a portion of community fundraising. Williams' donation brought the final community total to \$7.4 million. If approved for construction through the Federal VA's Construction Grant Priority List, the federal matching dollars could total \$31.5 million. The application for the federal matching grant will be submitted in April, 2019. The planned 72-bed facility in Montevideo has a total project budget of

\$48.5 million. Currently in the pre-design phase, the Home would open in the summer of 2021.

"We want this to be the best Home in the country," said Jim. "And if [Steven] knew that for every dollar he donated, he would have gotten nearly two more, he would have been just ecstatic."

Although Williams passed away before the community fundraising kicked off, his brother Jim worked as the estate trustee to best reflect his brother's wishes. Williams had dedicated a portion of his estate to Veteran organizations. All of these Veteran organizations agreed to pass on a percentage of their donation to the Montevideo project, which will total \$2.8 million.

"The idea that these organizations were willing to work with us and not only fulfill Steve's wishes, but to serve Veterans – even if it meant some donation funds would be redirected, is a testament to their selfless focus on serving Veterans" said Todd Bauman, Williams' financial advisor.

Williams joined the Army in 1968, and left for Vietnam that same year. He served in the 3rd Ranger Company, and his military decorations included the Bronze Star.

After returning from Vietnam, he enrolled in college, graduating from Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall. Shortly after, Williams accepted a sales job for Hormel Foods. Over his 30 years with the company he moved all over the country, eventually retiring in Nevada.

Minnesota veterans given Tribute Bell

A "Spirit of Minnesota Tribute Bell" was dedicated in December. The bell honors Minnesota's past, present and future veterans.

The bell is on a mobile platform and will travel the state and raise awareness of veterans and military.

The bell was sponsored by Wells Fargo and donated to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans. It was made in 2018 by the Verdin Co. of Cincinnati.

Minnesotans donated military items such as dog tags and medals that were used in the creating the bell.

The bell was dedicated at Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis.

A photo of the bell is on Page 2 of this issue of the Legionnaire.



Driving a tank in World War II

Pages 8-10

Endorsements

Brockberg endorsed for DVC

Charles-Flentje Post 461 in Round Lake endorsed Bill B. Brockberg for Vice Commander, Second and Seventh Districts, Department of Minnesota.

Brockberg is a past Commander, vice-Commander, adjutant and membership director of Michael-Boock Post 6 of Pipestone and past Commander and vice-Commander of the Second District.

In his current American Legion Post, Brockberg serves as the adjutant and second vice-Commander.

A graduate of Bemidji State University, Brockberg entered the US Army in April of 1982 and served 24 years total in the Army, Army Reserve and Active-

duty Reserve program.

At the District Level of The American Legion, Brockberg has served as Chairman of the Rehabilitation and Public Relations committees. Currently he is the Second District Judge Advocate.

Brockberg is the County Veterans Service Officer for Nobles County in Worthington

He's a member of the Sons of the American Legion—Squadron 6 of Pipestone and the 40 and 8.

At Department, Brockberg has served on the Post Revitalization and Legislative committees. He was Department Chaplain two years ago and currently is serving as Chairman on the Department



BILL BROCKBERG

Rehabilitation Committee. Brockberg is on his second year on the National Rehabilitation Committee and is a graduate of the American Legion National College.



SPIRIT OF MINNESOTA — Wells Fargo, the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans and the Minneapolis Downtown Council sponsored a Tribute Bell, the "Spirit of Minnesota" and a dedication was held during the holidays. The bell is on a mobile platform and can be used throughout the state. It was cast by the Verdin Company in Ohio using metal from Minnesota veterans.

2019 National Commander's Tour

Post	Event	Day	Contact:
Two Harbors	6 p.m. dinner	March 10	218-834-4975 or 218-206-5796 Jennifer Havlick
West Duluth	8 a.m. breakfast	March 11	218-628-2181, post
Pequot Lakes	6 p.m. dinner	March 11	218-820-7683 218-568-9881 in February Ken Meyer
Brainerd	8 a.m. breakfast	March 12	218-829-2249
Anoka	6 p.m. dinner	March 12	763-421-0883, Denise

All meal stops require a reservation at the above numbers. Commander Reistad will also tour the 148th Fighter Wing and St. Cloud State University. These events are not open to the public.



SHIP SHOP AND SHARE — Packages were sent out in early December from the Ship, Shop and Share program sponsored by the Fourth District. Shown is the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, Combat Logistics Detachment, stationed in Norway. "We are all very fortunate for receiving the packages your team has put together. We all appreciate the Americans whom we serve for and are thankful for their generosity."



LEGION AT MACV EVENT — American Legion leadership attended the MACV, WCCO and Minnesota Twins Christmas luncheon, "Home for the Holidays." Veterans were served at the Target Field ballpark. From left, Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, Assistant Service Officer Heather Larson, Commander Darrel Redepenning, Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller.



TWINS HELP — Former Twin Justin Morneau helped serve homeless and other veterans at the Home for the Holidays event at Target Field.

Northeast Minnesota group reaches goal

The Northeast Minnesota Continuum of Care (CoC) announced they have cleared their housing waiting lists for homeless Veterans.

The Northeast CoC consists of six counties (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, and Lake Counties) and three Tribal Governments (Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage of Lake Superior Chippewa and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe) that surround St. Louis County.

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, HUD, and VA determined the six counties and three Indian Reservations served by the Northeast CoC have effectively ended homelessness among Veterans, becoming the fourth jurisdiction in the state of Minnesota to do so.

The West Central, Southwest and Northwest CoC's all declared an end to Veteran homelessness in 2017.

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Phone: _____ Birth Date: _____

DOES YOUR LIBRARY HAVE THESE BOOKS?

THE BAND OF BROTHERS EASY COMPANY

Little did Herb Suerth know when he joined the Army as a young man that he would become famous in his 80s. Suerth was a replacement in the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne — the legendary Band of Brothers. He served for 23 days before a German shell almost killed him.

HERB SUERTH SAID ONE REASON HE HAS SUCH A CLEAR MEMORY OF HIS TIME IN COMBAT IS THAT IT WAS SO BRIEF. HE SERVED 23 DAYS DURING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE BEFORE A GERMAN ARTILLERY SHELL ENDED HIS MILITARY CAREER.

"Other guys in the 506th might have a tough time remembering because they had over 200 days in combat."

Army and the Corps of Engineers. He was sent to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for basic training as a combat engineer.

"I didn't like it at all, but of course you weren't going to get out of it just by saying you didn't like it."

What Suerth disliked the most was learning how to deactivate land mines. "I don't know how they ever got guys to do that job."

saw the The ne' arriver Mary "We length o it was just gorgeous. long, summer days."

Suerth ended up in a replacement depot with about 1,000 other engineers, some of whom were anything but eager to get into the fighting."

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2 EXPLORE FAKE NEWS

Hear a historical perspective on fake news during *History Forum: The History of Fake News in the US*, Jan 12, Minnesota History Center.



3 SEE 1968 BEFORE IT'S GONE

Civil rights. Free love. Space race. Last chance to see *The 1968 Exhibit*, closing Jan 21, Minnesota History Center.



4 SEARCH MILITARY RECORDS

Research MNHS's collection of military service records. Explore either in person or online. Admission to the library is always free! Gale Family Library at the Minnesota History Center, mnhs.org/library.



COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Darrel Redepinning



Greetings Legion Family and happy new year.

Well it's finally here, the highly anticipated centennial year of The American Legion. As I've traveled the state visiting posts large and small, one thing is certain, The American Legion is alive, strong and proud. We may see our numbers decreasing but not our spirit or devotion. I especially enjoy taking part in the recognition of their continuous Legion membership. One gentleman named Bud in Breckenridge proudly showed me his card with 75 years of membership. I shared the story with my dad who said, "You can never go wrong with a guy named Bud."

So, whether your name is Bud or not, we owe the long time members of this great organization a ton of gratitude. Their devotion is the main reason we're still here 100 years later. Veteran's organizations in general are the reason why we have veteran benefits. As we move forward in celebrating this year, be sure to thank our senior members for their

long time commitment. Let them be our example of how important it is to continue to be involved and continue to make a difference.

The month of January also brings us a start to our District Midwinter Conferences. It's a great opportunity to get updated on District and Department activities. It is also a time to break up the winter and have a little fun with all your Legion friends. Please plan to attend, bring membership and new members with you. Midwinter's are often our last big opportunity to increase membership. Some of our members like to renew at the beginning of the year, so it's also time to collect all those renewals. I plan to make it to as many as time and Mother Nature will allow. Hope to see you there.

Before I close out this month, I would like to inform you about a change in one of my projects. This year I am committed to getting donations for Legionville and the Anoka Eagles Healing Nest. As of mid-December the Anoka facility has changed its name. The new name is "Haven for Heroes." It will continue to be dedicated to veterans experiencing homelessness and crisis in their lives. I attended their name change and volunteer kick-off meeting. Over 125 energetic volunteers signed up to help finish renovations and assist in managing the facility. All money they raise will go exclusively to the "Haven for Heroes." Some of the management team and leaders are still being determined, but by the sign of the crowded City Hall room, they certainly have a lot of support. I hope our generous Legionnaires and Legion Family can help bring this to a reality. I will update you more in my visits to your post. Till next month, thanks for all you do and please keep doing it.

Mail Call

Thanks for help

To the Editor:

On behalf of our residents and staff, the Minnesota Veterans Home in Luverne would like to say "thank you" to the 2nd District American Legion Family as well as to the State of Minnesota American Legion Family for all your support this past year and especially during this past holiday season. A tremendous amount of love and kindness was shown to us over the past twelve months and for that we are truly grateful and humble for your generosity. We wish all of you a wonderful 2019 filled with joy and happiness, but especially LOVE for our nation's heroes and their families.

Duane Mabon, Volunteer Services Coordinator
MVH-Luverne

LIT plan

To the Editor:

Re: The LIT's LegionCare No Cost to You Accidental Death Insurance Plan

Your members' current Legion Care Accidental Death Insurance provider has recently made a decision to no longer market or service this product to Legion Department members.

We are pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2019, Securian Life Insurance Company, an affiliate of Securian Financial Group (Securian) will become the new provider for LegionCare Accidental Death coverage previously provided by Transamerica Life Insurance Company*. Securian Life Insurance Company is an A+ Superior company as rated by independent rating organization A.M. Best.

Eligible claims incurred prior to January 1, 2019, will be processed in accordance with the terms and conditions of your Transamerica coverage, while claims incurred on or after January 1, 2019 will be the responsibility of Securian.

We look forward to this new relationship with Securian and to continuing our commitment of service and protection to you.

J. Christopher Burke, FLMI
President & CEO, AGIA Affinity

Brain Sciences

To the Editor:

This letter is to convey a very big Thank You for the Brain Science article that was in the December Legionnaire. It refreshes and enlightens all the veterans that didn't or don't know about this great program that is in our Veterans Hospital here in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The American Legion, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis funds a research chair for the investigation of brain, and brain related disease

Corrections

There are two corrections to the story "Spotting Artillery in Okinawa" in the December issue:

The story indicates that Wally Haider's brother's ship was torpedoed twice. Instead, it was his ship that torpedoed two enemy submarines.

The story also indicated at one point that Haider was at Iwo Jima, but it should have said he was at Okinawa.

We are honored to have Dr. Georgopolus in attendance. If you have any questions about the Brain Science committee 2018-2019 Chair president Gary Olson and vice president Bob Locker can assist you.

Rosemary Niesen, Brain Sciences Secretary
Cologne

Veteran's shadow box

To the Editor

I need a little help from the Legionnaires on an item that has turned up in a cleaned-up rental unit in our community. See the attached picture. I think the box was stolen; and given the empty center section, something was taken out of it. (just my opinion)

Ely Post 248 Commander Tyler and Adjutant Zahn cannot think of any veteran who has passed away that matches the items in this box. There are no additional clues within; there's just the fact that he/she was an Air Force master sergeant with latest service in Afghanistan. The fact that a folded flag is part of it gives us the idea that they died. We don't remember any funerals in Ely or surrounding area.

I will continue to query people regarding this; in the meantime, the box will remain at the Legion Post.

I want to get this to the family member who it belongs to. My guess is they're somewhere in our 8th District.

Thanks for your help.

Anne Koskinen
Ely



Chaplain's Corner

By Bonnie Hanson



Let's give thanks for the New Year 2019

I hope that everyone had a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. It is now trying to get the year right when we sign anything. But we will do it or use up the erase ends.

I was looking up who the Chaplain is as it pertains to me. And I found this and wanted to share it.

"The chaplaincy has many purposes. One of its major purposes is to help persons grow in their relationship with God and one another. Also, we serve as a reminder of the transcendent and seek to develop an environment within which Legionnaires are encouraged in their personal and collective moral and spiritual growth. We are to remind *all Americans that God is the source of all rights and privileges.

"The American Legion is comprehensive in nature embracing all religions, faiths, and denominations within its ranks. The chaplaincy being non-denominational and non-sectarian, wishes to minister to the spiritual needs of all without regard to either affiliation or nonaffiliation.

"Chaplains seek to minister to people wherever there is a need. For many, chaplains are the only ministers they will ever know, as they have no affiliation with church, synagogue, or other religious institution. The role of the chaplain is ever increasing due to the aging of our membership. Each Legionnaire should be alert to the physical and spiritual needs of his/her comrades. The chaplain should be notified when there is death, illness, or special concern in the membership. At that point the chaplain should provide all ministry and service available."

Time

Time ticks by and memories are made.

The young wait eagerly for time to pass, yet old folks pray for time delayed, that they might stop the hourglass.

Time moves too swiftly, but then again it moves too slowly, it would seem, when we are faced with grief and pain or harboring a broken dream.

The clock may stop, but time moves on, too much of time is wasted. The years go by and soon are gone with the joys we've never tasted.

Time makes flowers bud and bloom, changing seasons as it goes to rob the trees of colored leaves, consuming all in their repose.

Time is kept by marching feet tuned in harmony, A metronome to gauge the beat of prose and symphony.

Time is measured by the sun, making magic in the sky. We cannot capture any day no matter how we try.

The love we've shared with others And accomplishments we've made and the moments and the memories that time will never fade.

— **Patience Allison Hartbauer**

I will leave you with this prayer: "As the old year comes to an end, let us ponder on how it has helped us. Let us be thankful for the rich experiences it gave us—for every sympathetic smile, for every tear—for moments which brought laughter's melody—for nature's loveliness, and for friendship's beauty. As we stand on the threshold of a New Year—let us be thankful for the opportunity to stand and peer intently, eagerly beyond the door to so many challenges that lie ahead. May we have the courage, truth, and faith to meet them without flinching and thought of self." Amen.

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Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Bemidji Bonspiels

Bemidji Post 14 will host its annual curling bonspiels in February and March. With the help of the Sons of the American Legion, the post will host:

Leroy Zarling Memorial Men's Bonspiel, Feb. 15-17. Entry fee is \$180 with a three-game guarantee. Four meals will be served during the weekend. Entries are required by Jan. 31. This is a novice Bonspiel with one regular or league curler allowed on each team.

The Mixed Bonspiel (two men two women) will be held March 15-16. Entry fee is \$170 and there is a three-game guarantee. Three meals will be served over the weekend. Entries are due by Feb. 28. It is a novice bonspiel and one league or regular curler is allowed on each team.

Bemidji is challenging other posts to send a Legion or SAL team to the bonspiels. For more information, contact Doug and JoAnne Zarling, dzarling@paulbunyan.net or 218-444-4420.

Health Care Fairs

Veterans will be encouraged to sign up for VA health care at two Veterans Health Care Enrollment Fairs. The first will be held Jan. 15, from 3-6 p.m. at the Sauk Rapids VFW Post 6992 in Sauk Rapids. The second will be held Jan. 24

from 3-6 at the Rum River Events Center in Isanti. Veterans should bring their DD214s and a statement of annual income.

The events are co-sponsored by Benton and Isanti County Veteran Service Officers and the St. Cloud VA. A presentation on veterans health care will be done at both sites at 4 p.m.

Legal Clinics

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is sponsoring a series of free drop-in legal clinics for veterans. The clinics include information on housing, expungement, employment, benefits, debt collection and family law including child support.

A clinic will be held Tuesday, Jan. 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Cloud VA HCS Auditorium.

A clinic will be held Thursday, Jan. 10, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room 2S 114.

Upcoming conventions

In the next two years, major meetings will be held at: 2019. Minnesota Convention, Willmar, July 11-13.

National Convention, Indianapolis, Aug 23-29. Fall Conference, Mahanomen, Oct. 24-26.

2020. Minnesota Convention, Redwood Falls, July 16-18. National Convention, Louisville, Aug. 28-Sept. 3. Fall Conference Nisswa (Breezy Point), Oct. 22-24.

History Round Tables

The World War II History Round Table will be held at the Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center on Thursday, Jan 10, at 7 p.m. The program will be "What Made the Nazi Military Work" and will feature Geoffrey Megargee, author of Inside Hitler's High Command. German war veterans will also participate. Admission is \$5.

The Vietnam War Roundtable will be held Monday, Jan. 21, at the Concordia University Beutow Auditorium in St. Paul at 7 p.m. The program will be on the Navy Destroyer Operations off the coast of Vietnam. It will feature veterans who served on the destroyers. Admission is free.

The St. Croix Valley Civil War History Round Table will feature a program on British-American relations during the Civil War on Monday, Jan. 25, at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater. This is a dinner meeting with dinner at 6 and the program at 7. Those attending do not have to participate in the dinner. The speaker will be Doug Johnson. For more information, contact Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268.

Taps

Plumhoff, Donald L., 89, Minnesota National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a drill instructor and a marksmanship instructor. He was a past commander and honor guard member of St. James Post 33.

Haler, Edward A., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Cropper, David, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of St. Stephen Post 221.

Narverud, John "Joe," 79, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 3, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Anderson, Russell O., 96, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died December 9, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Basgaard, B.W., "Bud," 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Martin, Todd, 48, Army veteran of Operation Desert Storm, died Dec. 13, 2018. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Stein, Joseph R., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Townsend, George Keys, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 2, 2018. He was a corporal. He was a member of Bloomington Post 550.

O'Malley, Roger W., 82, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 13, 2018. He served in Japan. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Sjostrand, Glen D., 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 17, 2018. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Grussing, George E. "Elwood," 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 7, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Olson, Leroy C., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 26, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Peterson, Wallace, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 14, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Niece, Donald, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Kvam, Robert E., 72, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War and National Guard veteran of Desert Storm, died Dec. 1, 2018. He served two tours in Vietnam, served in the Marine Reserves, and spent 25 years in the Minnesota Army National Guard. He deployed with the Indiana National Guard. He was a member of the honor guard and the Legion Riders of Austin Post 91.

Schleppegrell, William, 95, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 29, 2018. He flew P-47 fighters in Europe, and was a prisoner of war for four months. He was a member of Minnesota Post 1982.

Ward, William, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 4, 2018. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Arnesen, Paul Musaus, 95, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 21, 2018. He served as a medical officer. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Zeithamer, Archie Eugene, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 29, 2018. He served in the First Armored Division at Fort Hood as a technical sergeant. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Erickson, David O., 81, Army veteran of the Korean

War, died Nov. 5, 2018. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

Suskovic, Robert, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Buesgens, William F., Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 3, 2018. He served at Moses Lake, Washington, as an aircraft mechanic. He was a member of Jordan Post 3.

Leen, Arnold, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 7, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

Klegstad, Dean E., 74, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 20, 2018. He served in Guam as a heavy equipment operator. He was a member of Middle River Post 444.

Jones, Mark S., 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 27, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Hansen, Raymond, 95, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 28, 2018. He saw the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima. He earned a Purple Heart at that battle. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

Roemhildt, Wayne, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 1, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

Suckow, David, 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 19, 2018. He was a member of Eagan Post 594.

Perron, Maurice A., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 24, 2018. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Reinke, Roger D., 79, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 18, 2018. He was an aircraft mechanic in Texas. He was a member of Granite Falls Post 69.

Nehring, Weston Craig, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 7, 2018. He was a past commander and member of the honor guard at Paynesville Post 86.

Pflipsen, Alfred H., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 11, 2018. He was a member of St. Joseph Post 328.

Dennis, Richard Paul, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 17, 2018. He was a Spec 4 in Battery B of the 15th Artillery. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Branstad, Hubert Davis, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 9, 2018. He served in the Aleutian Islands. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Kalpin, Robert J., 77, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 20, 2018. He was a member of Parker's Prairie Post 219.

Johnston, Robert J., 90, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 14, 2018. He was a past commander of Parker's Prairie Post 219.

Petry, Calvin S., 75, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 30, 2018. He was stationed at Key West, Fla. He was a member of Sandstone Post 151.

Murrell, John Ward, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 30, 2018. He served in the Philippines and Japan. He was a member of Lakefield Post 4.

Lundstrom, Rudolph E., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 18, 2018. He was a member of Cloquet Post 262.

Anderson, Dean R., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 23, 2018. He was a member of Jackson Liberty Post 130.

Kirtz, Gerald Anthony, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War. He served at Camp Rucker. He was a member of Hector Post 135.

Voight, Harlan Albert, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a past commander of Green Isle Post 408.

Parpert, Walter "Shorty," 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 11, 2018. He served in the Philippines. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Biesanz, Mark J., 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 26, 2018. He served in Vietnam and earned three Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Zittel, Anthony E., 89, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 1, 2018. He was a staff sergeant. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Long, Patrick B., 85, Air Force Veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a member of Rosetown Post 542.

Calkins, Maurice Gene, 93, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 1, 2018. He was a member of Deerwood Post 557.

Wenz, Donald J., 91, Army Air Corp veteran of World War II, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a finance officer at Chaska Post 57.

Stueve, Elden August, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a member of Graceville Post 297.

Henning, Larry, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 6, 2018. He served in Germany. He was a member of Elk River Post 112.

Wilson, Thomas, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 3, 2018. He was a past commander of Elk River Post 112.

Weibye, Stephen Q., 71, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a Specialist 4. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 112.

Maurer, Keith H., 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 21, 2018. He was a member of St. Augusta Post 621

Obituary policy

Obituaries of members of the Legion will be published in the Minnesota Legionnaire in a monthly column under the heading "Taps."

Obituaries must be recent, within the last two months prior to the publication of the new edition of the Legionnaire. For example, the February edition would only contain obituaries from January and December.

While the obituaries are brief, the Legionnaire does seek certain information for our readers:

1. Complete name of deceased.
 2. Age at death.
 3. Branch of service and war or wars the veteran served in.
 4. Exact date of death.
 5. Additional information about the veteran's service background including unit, type of service, place of service, medals, etc.
 6. The post, unit or squadron the deceased belonged to.
 7. Additional information about Legion service including officer posts held.
- The Legionnaire reserves the right to edit all obituaries for style and brevity.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By Ron Quade



Pre-Hearing Conference

Your American Legion Claims Divisions are at the cutting edge of Advocacy at a local, State, Federal and National level. In previous segments you learned about the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) and American Legion Claims Division involvement in the program named Pre-Hearing Conference (PHC). We have an exciting report on program and progress made, developments and changes in qualifications.

In 2015, MDVA was contacted by the National American Legion to discuss participation in PHC. Local Regional Office Power of Attorney (POA) Offices would communicate directly with Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) judges to determine cases most easily granted or remanded. Cases in VA Veteran Benefits Management System (VBMS) could be considered for resolution without a year's long wait for formal hearing. Our office was selected as a test site based on our reputation for education, quality argument and development of VA-646 addendum or legal brief attached to the Claims file upon certification to the BVA.

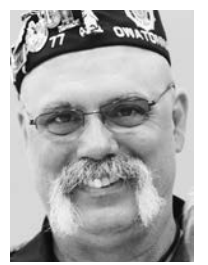
The program known as Pre-Hearing Conference Pilot program has been hugely successful. To date we have a 100% success rate with some claims paying out decades of retroactive payments to claimants. All of these actions taken years before they would have been decided under the normal BVA process. We are proud to announce this program has gained attention and support of the Secretary of the VA and specifically the chair of the Board of Veteran Appeals. We have even moved to a more direct contact with the assigned BVA Judge in where contact is made on a case by case basis as well as the hearing structure. It is our understanding PHC will now become a permanent mechanism in the new Appeals Modernization Act set to be implemented in February of 2019. PHC is a big win for the veterans in the State of Minnesota.

Please contact your local County Veteran Service Office or contact the AL Claims Division directly at 612 970 5662 if you are interested in the PHC program or any claims or benefits information.

Ronald D. Quade II, Director
American Legion Claims Division

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family.

I would like to thank everyone who turned out for the Pearl Harbor Rally in Faribault. It was a nice afternoon for the Family to gather, honor the service of veterans that have paid the supreme price and share a laugh or two. If you missed it you missed one very special afternoon. I would like to once again thank our guests that day, Karla & Don Madden. Karla is a Gold Star Mom who delivered a very touching speech. Gene Kispert, U.S. Navy veteran, presented the U.S. Navy flag. Dan Bruester, U.S. Navy, retired, sounded taps. Clint Bettermann sounded taps echo.

I hope everyone had a merry Christmas. Now it's time to roll up our sleeves go out and recruit new members to the Legion Family, get the ones that haven't done so to renew their memberships. I would like to issue a challenge for

everyone to find one new member and bring that new member to the Sweat Sock, I mean Sweetheart Rally in Royalton on Saturday Feb 9th.

The Department Legacy Ride committee is starting to put together the 2019 ride. If you would like the Riders to stop and visit your post please contact Steve Sullivan, Jody or Paul Hassing, Shawn Davis, Ted Berg or myself. The dates for the first weekend are kick-off party Thursday August 1st, ride Friday, Saturday & Sunday August 2nd, 3rd, & 4th. The second weekend we will ride Friday, Saturday and Sunday August 9th, 10th & 11th. Don't forget the stand down part on Sunday August 11th. I would like to point out that after the 2019 ride, Minnesota will become the first department nationally to have contributed over one million dollars to the Legacy Fund.

The 2018 year has ended, and I reflect on some of the events that have made their mark on the year. The year started out on a sad note with loss of my dad but better times followed with the 100-year kick off celebration of The American Legion in Rochester at Department Convention, a record setting Legacy Ride collecting \$252,000, and Nation Convention in Minneapolis, the site of the first Nation Convention.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy, prosperous new year. Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

Membership Chart as of Dec. 20, 2018								
District	2019 Goal	Total 2018	Total 2019	Months Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,553	8,495	6,822	319	58	4	79.76%	7,374
District 2	6,793	6,709	5,573	229	84	2	82.04%	5,858
District 3	11,262	11,197	9,166	390	65	4	81.39%	9,418
District 4	2,281	2,263	1,844	88	18	4	80.84%	1,908
District 5	2,340	2,318	1,880	158	22	2	80.34%	1,882
District 6	11,342	11,271	9,374	462	71	6	82.65%	9,785
District 7	6,089	6,013	4,940	183	76	9	81.13%	5,199
District 8	3,998	3,958	3,178	192	40	3	79.49%	3,394
District 9	6,482	6,417	5,185	264	65	5	79.99%	5,458
District 10	9,539	9,485	7,553	363	54	2	79.18%	8,074
District 11	2,009	2,084	1,550	124	2	0	77.15%	1,668
Totals	70,688	70,210	57,065	2,772	555	41	80.73%	60,018

Same Date Last Year

Minnesota Sons of the American Legion News

Sons of The American Legion

By Shawn Davis



Happy New Year! While the calendar gives us a new year with new expectations, we are actually in the middle of our year of working towards our goals. And things speed up from here.

It is membership crunch time. If we are to reach 12,000 members, we need to do two things. 1. Get all our members to renew. Reach out to every member and work on that renewal. Get that renewal turned in to Department ASAP. 2. Keep recruiting. A new member brings in new life to the squadron, new energy and new possibilities. Ask people if they are eligible and then to join. Ask if they want to make a difference. Allow them to join and make a difference. Remember every membership is important.

We also begin the season of midwinters at the District level. I ask everyone to try to attend, to participate, and to learn. If you want to make improvements to this organization, you have to participate. Going to these events is a step in that direction. Stepping up to take on a role in the organization is the next step. And with every step we make progress, every step a little closer to success.

It is time to do what we have to do to reach our goals. 12,000 members. \$2,000 for CWF, Brain Science, and Legionville. Together we can make wonderful things happen.

Thank you for all the work that you do.

Cdr. Shawn Davis: salshawndavis@gmail.com
Adjutant Doug Bible: saladjmn@gmail.com
Website: www.mnsal.org

Activate Your Squadron

With the new legislative year just around the corner, there are a couple of things that we encourage squadron members to take an active part in. Many posts, units and squadrons rely on charitable gambling to support our communities, our children and youth programs and our veterans. The amount of taxes has become a huge burden on charitable gambling here in Minnesota. That is where you come in. On December 6th, 2018, the State of Minnesota released a budget forecast that predicts a \$1.5 billion-dollar surplus. This is in addition to \$2 billion dollars that is in reserves. Please take the time to contact your state senators and representatives and tell them that it is very important for tax relief for charitable gambling be a priority item on the agenda. Please do so as soon as possible.

Also, please encourage the veterans in your posts to our United States Senators and demand that the Senate passes H.R. 299. The Senate must not delay passage of this important bill while Blue Water Navy veterans are sick and dying from diseases related to exposure to agent orange.

Legislative Points

The SAL Legislative Committee Chairman working in conjunction with the American Legion Department of Minnesota Legislative Committee is supporting these legislative goals:

A Veterans Omnibus Bill. A Revision to the current Property Tax Exclusion to recognize the Contributions of Surviving Spouses, In that there is currently an 8 year expiration date on the property tax exclusion for the surviving spouses of those who die during or as a result of their service in the U.S. Military. Spouses of our most severely disabled veterans often leave working life early to become full-time uncompensated caregivers for their disabled veterans, resulting in better care for our veterans and saving U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars. After their veteran passes away many surviving spouses see a 60% or more reduction of income. We seek to have the the Property Tax exclusion a life time event. Also to create a one-time transfer ability to a property of equal or lesser value. We also seek to change the date on which the veteran or spouse must apply for this exclusion. Currently one must contact the County by July 1 for the following year. We would like the veteran to file with the County at any time and have the

County Pro-rate the Tax liability immediately. We would also seek the ability of CVSO's to automatically share the data with the County.

Further more, we would seek a tax credit for businesses that employ disabled veterans.

The Department of Minnesota would also like to initiate a bill that would increase the amount of the MDVA grants to Veterans Service Organizations to \$1 million. The current funding level is approximately \$300,000 that is divided nine ways.



SAL Commander Shawn Davis and Auxiliary President Jean Walker share a Christmas moment at the Pearl Harbor Rally in Faribault.

RALLY AT FARIBAULT



President Jean Walker presents 6th District President Sharon Thiemecke with a membership star as 9th District President Lynn Carr looks on.



Auxiliary officers and their signs formed a line at the Pearl Harbor Day Rally in Faribault



An antlered Honorary Junior President Harley Donnelly addresses the rally.



Membership Director Mike Maxa presents 5th District Commander Joe Bayer with a membership certificate. All photos by Department Historian Dennis DeLong.



Commander Darrel Redepenning and Past National Commander Dan Ludwig share holiday greetings.



Riders Director Chuck Stone and Clint at the rally. The Riders provided the program for the rally.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE GOPHERS



Bob Mace salutes as the rest of the Waite Park Color Guard presents colors at the Minnesota Golden Gophers men's basketball game vs. North Carolina A&T at Williams Arena just before Christmas. It was the annual American Legion Family Christmas with the Gophers outing. Waite Park is the Department's official color guard for this Legion year.



The Gophers shoot a free throw during the game.



Legion Family Gopher fans enjoy themselves as the Gophers went on to win the game.

DRIVING A TANK IN WORLD WAR II

Dick Pinckney said he was just an ordinary GI doing his job in World War II. But the Tyler resident did manage to make sergeant major in three years, and he was one of the first Americans to liberate the Dachau Concentration Camp.

By Al Zdon

He was born in 1919.

Dallas Pinckney, who has always gone by the name Dick, was born in Garvin, Minnesota, where his dad ran the livery.

Pinckney was the third son in the family, and his parents were hoping for a girl. Thus the name Dallas, which at that time was either a boy's or a girl's name.

"But grandmother said she'd always wanted a grandchild named for her brother, Dick. So she pinned Dick on me, and I never remember anybody in my family calling me anything else."

His father's brother owned the bank in Garvin. "He told my dad that there was no place for him with those three sons except out on the farm. So the bank loaned my dad the money. He went way in debt to get that farm, and he never came back out."

The farm had 21 cows that the boys milked every day at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sometimes the dad would take the older boys to the Sunday baseball game. "And then I got to milk all the cows. I wouldn't get done until after 8 at night sometimes. There wasn't any air conditioning in those days – you just slapped away the flies."

Pinckney has a remarkable memory for a man 99 years old. As he thought back on those years growing up on the farm, every year is strikingly different for him.

"In 1931, there was no crop. In 1932, there was a bumper crop, but corn was 8 cents a bushel and hogs were 2½ cents a pound. 1933 was really the beginning of the dirty 30s. There was no crop. In 1934, there was absolutely no crop. In 1935, there was small grain, but no crop. In 1936, there were some crops."

Pinckney's dad would sometimes try to earn some money playing baseball. "He called himself a semi-pro. He didn't care who he played for, as long as they paid him. He'd charge them by how many hits he got, runs, runs batted in, and so forth."

Pinckney went to school through the eighth grade at the four-room Garvin School, and then it was off to Tracy High School for the next several years.

"There was a man in Tracy who converted a 1928 Chevrolet into a school bus, and he made two trips a day, one to pick us up and one to drop us off. He charged us 35 cents a week, and he could get about 20 kids in the back of that bus. So I suppose he made about seven dollars a week."

Pinckney waited every day at the first stop. "It was the Pinckneys, the Jones, the Linds and the Nelsons. We were also the last stop at night. But no matter what time you got back, the chores were waiting."

After chores, it was time for dinner and then school work. "We didn't have electricity, so we had a gas lamp that hung directly over the table for light. Trouble was, it cast a shadow on the table and you couldn't see your homework."

It was nice to go to the big school at Tracy, but the reception wasn't always that friendly. "The smart kids in Tracy called us the six hicks from Garvin."

And with the bus schedule, there was no time for sports or other activities at school.

In 1936, he transferred over to Russell High School, and Pinckney graduated from there in 1937.

For the next couple of years, Pinckney stayed home and helped his dad on the farm, but in 1939 in the fall, after the harvest was in, he heard from the manager of the H.W. Ross

Lumber Co. that he needed a second man.

"I asked my dad about it and he was okay with it. I took a job that winter and never went back to the farm again."

In 1941, he was transferred to the Ross Lumber Co. at Cottonwood. "The manager there had a reputation of not getting along with his help, but he and I clicked right away and got along great. He expected you to work and that's what I was there for."

On Dec. 7, 1941, he and his boss were doing the inventory when a neighbor came over and told them the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. "We were in the back office, and Tom turned to me and said, 'Dick, you'll have to go.'"

Pinckney was not quite ready for military life yet, though, and so he waited for the draft. "I liked civilian life."

He didn't have to wait long. On June 12, 1942, he got his draft notice. "Some of us went over to Milbank (South Dakota) and got on the Hiawatha to take us to Fort Snelling. We got there in the evening, and the next day was taken up in physicals."

"A couple days later, about 10 or 12 of us were herded into a small room and told to raise our right hand. After we swore to uphold the Constitution, they told us all to take our clothes off."

"Then they told us to take our clothes and proceed through a door. It was not well lit, and we really couldn't see where we were going. Well, it turns out there were three corpsmen there as soon as you went through the door. The one in front took a blood sample from your finger while the ones on either side stuck you with a needle. So it was finger, shot, shot."

"Then I was told to sit in a chair and the next thing I know a guy yells '9 Chicago' and it was hit in the chest with a pair of shoes. And that was my induction into the army."

The men were also issued army pants and other gear, but nothing fit. "My fatigues were about a foot too long. You had to try and find guys to trade with, and that took a little time. The only thing they fitted was the blouse. They wanted that to look good."

The Army also gave him several sets of khaki underwear. "I never did like khaki."

Then it was back on the train for a journey to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for 13 weeks of basic training.

"I know in the first two or three weeks I learned the nomenclature of a machine gun. But then they called four of us out of the room. We were with a first sergeant, and we were wondering what the hell we had done."

They found they were being sent to record school, to learn to be Army clerks. "One nice thing was that when we came back to the barracks at night, the first sergeant couldn't touch us with KP or anything."

Pinckney recalls that he only went to the firing range once. "And then instead of giving me a gun they gave me a stick. There were kids from out East that had never seen a gun, and they were afraid of them. So we got sticks."

After boot camp, it was on to Fort Knox Admin School for more clerk training. "That school was tough. We were in class from 5 a.m. to noon, and then it was off to the obstacle course for the rest of the day. I was in really good shape, but some of the other guys really suffered."

The men only got Thursday afternoons off, and Pinckney used one of those Thursdays to bus into Louisville to marry his fiancée, Doris.

"We were getting \$21 a month, and after they took out \$6.60 for insurance and two or three dollars for laundry, there wasn't much left." Then one day, the Army changed

the pay to \$50 a month. The privates were very happy.

In December, Pinckney was sent to the 405th Armored Artillery in the 8th Armored Division. If he thought he was going to spend the war as an army clerk, he was quickly disabused of that idea.

"The master sergeant saw that I had two clerk schools and that my MOS was 'admin.' He looked at me and said, 'We're loaded with admin. You're from the farm, did you ever drive a tractor?' I told him I had. 'Great,' he said. 'I need tank drivers.'"

The tank he was assigned to was known as a 105mm Howitzer Motor Carriage M7 Priest. It was a self-propelled artillery vehicle that looked something like a tank with the large gun on top and a gun ring in the back.

It was nicknamed "Priest" by the British Army because the gun ring looked like a priest's pulpit.

Besides the Howitzer, it had a .50 caliber and a .30 caliber machine gun. The crew was made up of a tank commander, driver, radio operator and two loaders.

The unit was moved to a just-opened Camp Campbell, also in Kentucky. "Boy was it new. It was just solid mud. The only place where it you didn't get mud on you boots



Pinckney shows of his Eisenhower jacket with the six stripes indicating a Sergeant Major. He achieved the rank in less than three years of service in the Army, starting at buck private.



was the wooden walkway behind the barracks that led to the latrine.”

In late January, 1943, the unit was transferred from the 8th Armored Division, and they soon became the cadre, or forming group, for the new 20th Armored Division. Pinckney was promoted to T-5, the equivalent of a corporal, as a tank driver. His pay went up \$16 a month.

He said the work was hard. “We’d go out on a problem every day, and come back and that damned tank had to be cleaned. The only tools we had were a bucket and a broom. A lot of nights, the mess sergeant had to keep the chow hall open late to feed us supper.”

As time went by, the tank commander on Pinckney’s vehicle was sent to officer candidate school, and Pinckney moved up to tank commander. “So, by May I was a buck sergeant. I had been in less than a year, and now I was someone of authority.”

The biggest incident for Pinckney when he was with the training division happened one day while the tank was out on maneuvers. An ammunition truck arrived and delivered ammo to the Priest.

“The ammo sergeant was picking on my men, so I told him to lay off. He had no cause to be picking on the guys. So he said, ‘Well, why don’t we go off in the woods and settle this?’ And I told him that probably wasn’t necessary. And so he said, ‘Oh, you’re yellow.’”

“I turned red. Nobody could call me yellow. So we headed off to the woods. I had about 30 seconds to think about my strategy as we walked over there. He was quite a bit bigger than me, and if he had combat training, I was in trouble. But I was taking a chance that he was just a street fighter.”

“When I was in high school, our gym teacher was the Upper Midwest Golden Gloves champion. He taught us a little bit about boxing. He told me one time, ‘Pinckney, you’ve got quick hands, but you’ve got to get your feet to cooperate if you want to go somewhere.’”

“So we got to the woods, and just as I thought, he took a wild swing at me. I wasn’t there. I got a left to his temple, and down he went. He tried to get up, and I knocked him down again. He tried to get up again, and I knocked him down. Finally, he said, ‘Enough.’”

Winning the fight wasn’t the end of the incident, though. The ammo sergeant reported Pinckney to his commanding officer.

“The next day I was arrested by a guard with gun. He said he was taking me to the colonel. I remember the officer’s name was Col. Arthur P. Callahan.”

“Col. Callahan said to me, ‘Okay, sergeant, what’s the story?’ I told him that the other sergeant was picking on my men, and I was defending them. He looked at me and said, ‘Go back to duty, sergeant. I wish I had more men like you.’”

Pinckney and the others continued to train new men through late 1944, long after the D-Day invasion. “Training gets damned old after a while. We thought it was our turn to go fight.”

They finally received an infusion of new soldiers who had been drafted but allowed to stay in college.

“I felt sorry for those troops that came in in late 1944. They got three weeks of artillery training, three weeks of infantry training, and three weeks of tanks. They trained until sometimes nine at night, and they took it. They got to go home for two weeks, and then they were headed overseas.”

By December 1944, the division was in France.

“I remember going through St. Lo. There was absolutely nothing left. I recall the first time we got shot at in France. Hitler had a rail-mounted artillery piece about 20 miles away, and they had us picked out.”

“It was our first encounter with being shot at, and it was at night. I just got the hell away from any vehicles. I was just out in the dark by myself.”

“We got to Belgium right after the Battle of the Bulge, and we just did mop up activity.”

They were assigned to Patton’s Army. “I didn’t like Patton and nobody else did either. He had all these Patton rules. We called them chicken shit. One day you had to wear a patch, and the next day you didn’t. One day you had to wear a necktie, and the next day you didn’t.”

After the Bulge, the 20th Armored joined the rest of the Army in pushing into Germany and pushing the German Army east.

Pinckney’s unit was mobile artillery. “We moved mostly at night, and some prisoners we picked up called us the ‘Ghost Division.’ We would go down a road single file, but then we’d get an order to deploy to fire.”

“One tank would go to the left and one to the right all the way down the line and we’d prepare our howitzer to fire.”

When word came from forward observer where the target was, often a small city, the tanks would follow a procedure. “We send out smoke shells. The first one was deliberately aimed beyond the target, and the second one short. The third should have been right on if everything went as planned.”

It was Pinckney’s job as the commander to convert the yardage given by the forward observer to the degrees in aiming the howitzer.

If the target was a small town, the tanks would fire until



DICK PINCKNEY
At Home in Tyler



DICK PINCKNEY
At Camp Knox during the war



Pinckney used an afternoon pass to marry his fiancée Doris in 1942 in Louisville.



On a train to Camp Lucky Strike at war’s end, a photo was taken of displaced persons along the tracks.



An M7 105 mm howitzer motor carriage Priest preserved in Maryland.

those in the town started waving white flags to indicate surrender. "We wanted them to wave those white flags."

One of the scariest moments of the advance into Germany was crossing the Rhine River on a pontoon bridge. "Where we crossed the river, it's about a half mile wide. But that night it felt like it was five miles wide."

When the heavy tanks would go out on the bridge, they'd sink down close to the water line on the pontoons. "It was one hell of a ride. I was never so glad to see land again."

The tanks headed toward Berlin, but then headed south into Bavaria.

"The Germans had these two-stage rockets then that would go right over our heads. You could always hear when the second stage kicked in. One time a couple of quartermaster guys brought us a new vehicle, but they didn't have a way back so they were stuck with us. One of those rockets went over, and they were ducking. One of them said, 'Did you hear that? Those (expletive deleted) are double-clutching.'"

In April, the unit's sergeant major left. The same Colonel Callahan who had complimented Pinckney for defending his men, called him to headquarters and informed him that he was the new sergeant major.

"I've still got my Eisenhower jacket with those six stripes on it. I went from \$78 a month to \$138 a month, and I never had better duty. I would get up early and get the orders of the day, and then have a first sergeants' call and give them the orders of the day."

On the 29th of April, 1945, the forward element of the 20th Armored advanced on a little town about 10 miles northwest of Munich.

"In the wee, wee hours of the morning, we stumbled into Dachau. Our forward artillery observer knocked down the first gate, the east gate, going into Dachau. He was the first American there.

"You'll hear about a lot of other units and divisions that liberated Dachau, but we were the first. I was one of the first 10 men to enter Dachau."

What they found was beyond human belief. There were piles of bodies, and the survivors were so emaciated as to look like walking skeletons. Nearby were 30 box cars full of corpses.

"No one knew about Dachau. After the war, Patton went to all the mayors of the towns around it, and they swore they had no idea Dachau existed. I saw starved prisoners. I saw a gondola train car full of skulls. I didn't see the ovens.

"But we had to move on. We were still fighting a war, and we were moving into Munich which was the headquarters of the SS.

"We left all our rations behind at Dachau for the prisoners."

At a reunion of his division many years later, the group of tankers was addressed by a woman who had been a young girl at Dachau when it was liberated. "She told us that she was so dirty and so malnourished that she wondered how anybody could touch her."

Pinckney recalls that a group of SS guards at the camp were captured. "They were taken out and shot. A captain and a colonel were both court martialed for that. They were relieved of command but not demoted.

"You've got to understand that after the massacre at Malmedy (during the Battle of the Bulge) by SS troops, I don't think anybody in the Army was taking SS prisoners anymore.

"When we'd capture a German soldier, they all said the same thing. 'No SS. No SS. Too young to die.'"

The Division finally ended its pursuit of the German Army at war's end about 50 miles beyond Salzburg, Austria. "I thought we get to meet the Russians, but we didn't."

Two armored divisions were singled out for immediate transportation to the Pacific for the invasion of Japan: The 11th and the 20th. Pinckney and his comrades took a train to Camp Lucky Strike on the coast of France to take a boat ride back to America.

"I remember three things about the end of the war. First, the quartermaster came to our camp and set up a large tent, and 15 men at a time could take showers.

"Second, when we were on the ship, for lunch they always served the same thing: Lettuce and two Polish sausages.

"And third was when the transport ship came into New York Harbor and we passed the Statue of Liberty. There wasn't a dry eye on that ship.

"We were maybe the first division to come back after the war, and the scene when we were docking was unbelievable. The tugboat horns were tooting. There were boats in the harbor with girls dancing. What a celebration."

The division had one month to go home and visit families, and then gather in California for the trip to the western Pacific. The division reassembled at Camp Cook, California, just in time for the war to end.

Pinckney got discharged on Dec. 19, 1945, at Fort Douglas, Wisconsin.

"You couldn't buy a train ticket out of Fort Douglas. The defense workers had bought all the seats on the trains. So another guy and I decided to hitchhike. They were short



The troops enjoyed a Bob Hope USO show, probably in Germany or Austria.



"I don't know where this was. Someplace along the way on the way back to Kentucky on a furlough."



Pinckney and a buddy at Camp Campbell.



Pinckney is an avid gardner and canner.

rides, but people would pick up servicemen then. We finally made it Sioux Falls and then we took a Jack Rabbit bus to Brookings. That's where we split up."

Pinckney finally got home in Western Minnesota on Christmas Eve afternoon. "It was at my wife's home, and there were 21 of us and only three beds. Doris and I slept on the living floor on Christmas eve."

He went back to his old job at the lumber yard in Cottonwood. After a while, his work ethic and skills caused the company to make a him a relief man, a worker who would travel to one of the Ross lumberyards to take the place of someone temporarily.

Pinckney did that for a while, but didn't like it. One day, he just refused an assignment. The company eventually offered him the manager's job at Estelline, South Dakota. "There was great hunting and fishing there, and so I took the job. I was there 10 years."

In the mid-50s, H.W. Ross began selling its yards, and Pinckney started looking around for his future. He became the manager at the Tyler Lumber Company. "When I took over, it was doing between a hundred thousand and two hundred thousand dollars a year in business. I got it up to over \$4 million a year."

Pinckney was working partly on a commission basis, and so these were good days for him. He retired in 1985.

He and Doris had two boys. Doris died in 2003 after 60 years of marriage.

At 99 years old, Pinckney is always busy. "Don't ever think you're old."

He has a 32 by 60 foot garden at his home in Tyler, and he canned over 200 jars this past year. His zucchini soup is legendary in the area.

Sometimes, he'll jump in his shiny, black Chevy Equinox and head out for a cribbage game in Russell.

World War II History Round Table

Dec. 7, 1941, Day of Infamy, is recalled

And then there was one.

Richard Thill, the last survivor of the USS Ward crew that fired the first shot of World War II, recollected that day of infamy 77 years ago at the December World War II History Round Table.

Thill was part of a program on the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

"We were just patrolling, trying to keep people from getting into Pearl Harbor," Thill said. He was one of a group of St. Paul Naval reservists that manned the USS Ward, a World War I vintage destroyer.

There were reports of a Japanese midget submarine trying to sneak into the harbor. The Ward crew spotted the intruder trying to slip into the harbor following an American ship.

"The first shot missed, it went over the top. The second shot hit the conning tower."

The submarine was punctured and went to the bottom. The Ward radioed in what it had done – over an hour before the first Japanese plane arrived on Dec. 7, 1941.

"They asked us for proof. We said our proof was down at the bottom of the ocean. We were kind of upset about it. We were doing the best we could, and they didn't believe us. We couldn't convince them."

The action might have given the U.S. forces in Hawaii an hour to prepare, but instead the carrier-based Japanese aircraft arrived at 7:48 a.m. as a total surprise.

"Later on we were attacked by two Japanese aircraft. They were in formation, side by side, wingtip to wingtip. When they dropped their bombs, one went on one side of us and one went on the other. If they had flown in single file those 600 pound bombs would have done us in."

Thill smiled and said, "So the first shot of the war was done by us and not the Japanese. I guess you could say the Ward started the war."

The Ward, he said, continued to patrol the harbor for a few days before it was relieved.

In one of the more astounding coincidences in the war, exactly three years later on Dec. 7, 1944, the Ward was hit by a kamikaze plane and crippled. The crew abandoned ship, and the ship was sunk by an American destroyer so it would not fall into Japanese hands.

The commander of the other destroyer was W.W. Outerbridge, who had been in command of the Ward when it sank the midget submarine. Outerbridge had the duty to order the sinking of the Ward.

"He was a good man even if he did sink his own ship," Thill said.

Michael Wenger was the military historian at the Round Table session. He is the author of two books on Pearl Harbor, with five more planned in the series.

Wenger, from North Carolina, is considered America's leading authority on Japanese carrier operations in World War II, but in recent years has turned his attention to the attacks on Hawaii that brought the U.S. into the war.

His talk at Fort Snelling was specific to the attack on Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, a facility at the south side of the island that mainly housed patrol planes.

Wenger gave a brief history of the island, which was owned by the Honolulu Plant Company until it was taken over by the government to build an Army air field in 1917. The Navy also built a base in 1919 and the two branches shared the island after that.

He said that Dec. 7, 1941, was just another day. "There was little to anticipate anything but a normal morning. A report from a PBY, a navy patrol plane, talked about sinking an enemy submarine one mile from the Pearl Harbor entrance. Another report from the USS Ward indicated the same."

The officer on duty at the air station could hear the noise of an aircraft diving on the base, and he turned to another and asked if he got the identification of the offending aircraft, thinking it was an American plane skylarking. The other officer replied, "I think it was a squadron commander because I saw red on it."

It was one of nine Japanese dive bombers, part of the 183 in the first attack wave from the carriers, that began dropping bombs on the harbor. As the bombs went off, the first officer said, "Never mind, it's a Jap."

The officers called the commanding officer who replied, "You wouldn't kid me about a thing like that?"

Eventually the bombing knocked out the power, and the air station had to use a radio on an aircraft for communication with the outside world.

A second wave of bombers came in, and one errant bomb hit a dispensary that was serving as a temporary hospital. "It was a miracle that no one was hurt or killed." In the whole attack only one sailor was killed at the naval air station.

The base was able to send out its PBYs in search of the Japanese fleet, but they were sent in the wrong direction. One search plane did encounter a Japanese fighter that was

protecting the fleet.

Bud Nakasone was a 14-year old civilian living about 15 miles from Pearl Harbor when the attack came.

"I was eating my breakfast, Kellogg's Corn Flakes," he told the Round Table audience. "I looked out at Kolekole Pass and saw 25 planes screaming down at Schofield Barracks."

The American planes were parked in clusters which made them easy pickings for Japanese attackers. "They were parked that way because they didn't trust people like me."

Nakasone is a Nisei, or second-generation Japanese-American. "They were in a tight compact circle so that the Jeeps patrolling could make a fast circle around them."

Instead of parking the planes spread out to protect from an air raid, they were clustered to protect from sabotage from the local residents.

After the attack, Nakasone went back in the house and turned on the radio. "I remember the announcer on KBMG radio saying, 'This is the real McCoy.'"

He remembers one Japanese plane flying overhead. "The cockpit was open, and the pilot was wearing a white scarf that streamed back. He looked like Snoopy."

Nakasone watched dogfights, and saw one Japanese plane go down. "They took the body and buried it over in potter's field."

Later on, Nakasone studied at the Japanese Language School at Fort Snelling. After the war he moved to Minnesota and taught high school and college for over 30 years. His son, Gen. Paul Nakasone, is now the director of the National Security Agency.

In a question and answer session, the panelists fielded a variety of questions. One was whether a lot of the damage on Oahu was due to American anti-aircraft fire.

Wenger said it probably was. "I've seen pictures where the anti-aircraft guns are aimed straight up. What goes up must come down."

Wenger declined to get into a debate over whether President Roosevelt knew about the Japanese attack ahead of time, saying his was a military historian not a political historian.

Nakasone was asked if the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii were sent to internment camps as those living on the West Coast were. He said that for the most part they were not. He did say that over 2,000 who were suspected of having too close ties with Japan were arrested and incarcerated.

He noted that the highly decorated 442nd Regimental Combat Team ("Go for broke") was mostly recruited from Japanese Nisei living in Hawaii and on the mainland.

Wenger was asked if the Japanese should have mounted another attack, one that could have taken out the oil storage units that would have really crippled the fleet.

He said that by the time the second wave got back to the carriers, it was already late afternoon. "If they had launched then, they would have had to come back at night, and they were sorely lacking in night carrier experience."

He also said the Japanese hadn't had time to look over their planes for damage or to check out the strike photography to see what they had done. He said they were afraid of American submarine attacks on the carrier fleet and decided to retreat.



Dick Thill, the last survivor of the USS Ward, the ship that fired the first shot of World War II, is interviewed by Don Patton at the World War II History Round Table.



MICHAEL WENGER



BUD NAKASONE



W.W. OUTERBRIDGE
Skipper of the Ward



Pearl Harbor was engulfed in smoke at the Japanese attack on Dec. 7, 1941.

Listening Post

News from around the State



ONE TIRED SAL MEMBER — When Past 10th District Commander Paul Hassing spoke recently at the Waseca Veterans Day Dinner, grandson Ryland wanted to be with his grandpa.



FIFTH DISTRICT REACHES OUT — Fifth District Commander Joe Bayer and Wold-Chamberlin Unit member Kathy Teichrow manned The American Legion table at Home Depot on Veterans Day.



SCHROEDL HONORED — Longtime NECman Don Schroedl was honored for his work on the National Convention Corporation preparing for the Minneapolis Convention this summer. Joe Bayer presented.



VETERANS DAY WALK — St. Paul Post 8 and the Fourth District turned out to do a Veteran's Day walk in downtown St. Paul. The organizer of the event was George Hunkins, in the center of the picture.



WOODBURY PRESENTS PAVER — Woodbury Post 501 presented a paver to Jon Beltz honoring his father, Robert, who served in the Navy during the Korean War. Jon and Marti Beltz had donated Robert's war memorabilia to the post.



LEGION FOUNDATION — The Minnesota American Legion Foundation donated \$3,000 to the Quilts of Valor, Minnesota Chapter. From left, Lloyd Ricker, president; Jenny Caughey, QOV; Bill Barbknecht.



BACKUS WINNERS — At the annual Backus Post 368 Halloween Party, Pam and Jim Kichler won the costume contest representing the Hamms Bear and Wally the Bearman.



FALLDIN APPLES — Falldin Post 555 delivered apples for the teachers to Valley View Elementary in Columbia Heights. From left: Principal Edward Fellows, Commander Donovan Ortel and Ray Eiden.



NORTH BRANCH AWARDS — North Branch Post 85 recently awarded Law Officer and Paramedic/EMT awards for the year on Veterans Day. From left: Doug Volin, Lakes Region EMS, and Past Commander Randy Koivisto. At right Sgt. Matt Beckman of the Chisago County Sheriff's Department.



EAGAN DONATION — Eagan Post 594 presented a flag collection box to the Sam's Club in Eagan. Sam's Club has been very supportive of the post through the years with donations. The flags will be collected regularly by the post, and saved for an annual flag retirement ceremony.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Gary Miller
Commander



Welcome to the new year.

Hope everyone had a great holiday, and got safely back home. It's hard to believe it's the new year already. Where did the year go? It goes faster the older you get, so they say. (I quit counting years ago.)

Faribault had a great program (Thanks Chuck) and all the speakers looked great in their nice hats. And the dedication to Pearl Harbor was also very touching and thanks to the Gold Star Mother for showing us the other side of the coin as they say.

Membership is coming in very well, but still needs to be a little better. It can always be better. Don't forget that Dist. 1's Midwinter is in Leroy. Dist. 1's Oratorical Contest will also be at this time too.

Just had 1st Dist.'s Christmas Party at the Eyota Post and was a good turnout. The kids saw Santa, played some bingo, ate great food and had lots of conversation. It was also a very beautiful day, temperature-wise. I hope everyone had a good time, (I know Hammon's grandkids did).

May God Bless America and God put a Special Blessing on our troops.

SECOND DISTRICT

Cindy Brunk
Commander



Hello American Legion Family Members,

If someone wishes you a "Happy New Year" I hope you take a moment to really reflect on what does make you happy. 2018 is over and the calendar page turns to 2019. Have you made any resolutions? What personal goals have you made for yourself, your family, your community, The American Legion? Think about your time, your talents, your gifts, your interests, what could you offer to make a change, donation, set a goal on what you can do to help our Veterans and the future of The American Legion. We really need to grow our organization so we can continue to help our Veterans, their families and our communities.

Please read the newsletters, Legionnaire paper, and the national magazine — all are full of people sharing their stories. I hope that will inspire you to get fired up and become the light for The American Legion.

Upcoming events:

January 11-12 Mid-Winter Conference/Oratorical Contest Legion Post Bricelyn.

February 9th, Sweetheart Rally, Royalton Post 137

February 16th, District Rally, Legion Post Lake Crystal.

Thank you for all contributions to my projects the Luverne Veterans Home and Legionville.

Thank you for your service to our country. Have a very happy new year.

THIRD DISTRICT

Carla Tappainer
Commander



New Year's Greetings to everyone.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year. I know I certainly did. Lots of friends and family and way, way too much food. I swear everyone gains weight during the holidays. I've made a few New Year's Resolutions and I'm going to try to stick with them this year. It gets harder and harder every year... heavy sigh.

Now is the time to focus on the new year ahead and what it means for The American Legion. I know that everyone is harping on membership but honestly that is the only way for us to succeed is by getting more members and getting them involved. Not only that, but we need to educate the people on what The American Legion is. I run into so many people that think we are just a bar and we need to change that ideology. Pass the word about us. Contact your local schools and volunteer with the students. You won't be disappointed. Children are hungry for knowledge and if we make an impact early and often, we will hook them for life. They will tell their parents, friends and family about The American Legion and all the wonderful things we are doing. Get out there. Don't be shy.

Remember, the new year stands before us like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by making goals and seeing them through.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Lane Stunkel
Commander



Greetings Fabulous 4th District.

Happy new year.

To all of the members of the Fabulous 4th — thank you. As of bulletin 24, the 4th District is still in 5th place. Let's keep it going; let's work hard to retain our current membership and to find new members. Post Commanders and Adjutants, and Post Membership Officers please reach out to your District Vice Commanders, Mickey or myself for assistance, we all are here to help each Post make 100%.

Keep these dates in mind:

— Mid-Winter Conference — Arcade Phalen (4th and 5th District's Family) January 5th doors open at 8AM, conference starts at 9AM. We have some great speakers lined up for the day including some of our American Legion Graduates.

— King Boreas Parade — January 26th, Arcade Phalen, 11:30 Buses leave for the Parade, all American Legion Family members are invited, a short membership rally between the 4th and 5th Districts to follow parade.

— The National Security/Foreign Relations Committee is looking for Outstanding Enlisted Soldiers from the Guard and Reserve Units, if you know of an outstanding soldier that is in the Guards or Reserves please let me know and I will put you in contact with the District Committee Chair.

To all of you who helped with Shop Ship & Share — thank you. There are so many people to thank, I don't have enough space. You were able to send to Minnesota Reserve and Guard Units, 1,421 boxes around the world and state-side. Thank You to the Posts, Auxiliary Units, and SAL Squadrons that sent in donations from around the state, V4V, and so many personal and other donations. This was our 12th year and I am looking to next year with great enthusiasm of putting smiles on the faces of Minnesota Guard and Reserve Members.

God bless each and every one of you of the 4th District American Legion Family and please keep our ailing members in your prayers. Thank You ALL for everything you do in your Post and Community, and all of the Volunteer work you do. God bless America.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Joe Bayer
Commander



Congratulations Fifth District on going over 80% for membership. Congratulations also go out to Joe Smith Post 468 for reaching 110% and Minnesota Veterans Home Post for reaching 100% of goal. Just goes to show what happens when we all work together. Don't forget there is a combined midwinter with the 4th District at Arcade/Phalen Post #577, on January 5, 2019. Doors open at 8, program starts at 9 am. The 5th District oratorical contest is January 19th at Minneapolis Post 1 at 8:30 a.m. I encourage all of you to watch this program in action. The St. Paul Grand Day Winter Carnival Parade on January 26 is also a great time to show your patriotism and have a good time with friends. January is also the month for looking at 'Outstanding Enlisted' candidates, catching the snowbirds before they leave and make sure they pay their dues, watching our legislators as the new session starts with new leaders looking to work on their agendas. I'm sure our Department legislative committee will ask to have Legionnaires there with their caps on at the state capital and I'm asking all that are available to answer the call. It's amazing how much our legislators take notice when we're there. Stay warm and work those programs that make The American Legion great.

Our next 5th District meeting is February 5th at Minneapolis/Richfield Post 435 at 7:30 p.m.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Richard Cross
Commander



Hi Legion Family.

President Sharon and I have been on the move. But now is the time for family, both our family and our Legion families across the 6th District. We recently attended the Pearl Harbor Rally in the Faribault post. We will do better next time.

Again, as usual, it is the slow time for membership, but we must keep the membership coming in. This time of year, if you are a snow bird, it is easy to mail in your membership from your nice and warm location. Don't wait pay the 2018 now and the 2019 in January and have it done with for the

year. If you just haven't turned in your membership do it now, and in January, you don't have to wait to the last day.

To my Legion family, have a happy new year. Remember, membership is everybody's job. May God bless the veteran.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Jeffrey Gay
Commander



The turkey's been eaten, the presents have been opened and the cheers have been toasted. 2018 is merely a fond memory.

It's a new year, 2019. Now that the holidays are over it's time to focus on moving forward. With each day we make new memories and I ask that we consider last year's memories with a learning eye. What could we have done better, what worked, what didn't work and how can I use this knowledge to make 2019 a stellar success?

Many times we get stuck in a rut and are unable to move beyond that. We fail to see how change, however subtle or grandiose, is needed to keep the forward momentum in our favor. It's a new year, a new beginning of sorts, let us make changes that will help grow our Posts as we grow ourselves.

The first order of business is to openly accept change and make it happen building your legacy for tomorrow. Secondly we need to acknowledge the fact that we must all work together as a true family, a Legion Family. Sharing the load as a team and communicating together as an organization with no bias or individual special interests. We must be one with each other to survive.

With that said, happy new year, and let's roll-up our sleeves and get down to business making our Legion an organization that others will want to be part of.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Wilbur Swanson
Commander



Greetings to the 8th District family. I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Now we look forward to the New Year. We need to stay committed to working on our membership. Recruiting new members should be a strong point, but we cannot forget to get those renewals. The National Commander is looking for an all-out push for membership with significant rewards. The National Commander will be in the 8th District in March 2019. I encourage all Legion, Auxiliary and Sons who can, to come out to meet with him. He will be in Two Harbors, Post 109, for a dinner on 10 March 2019 at 6 p.m. He will also be in Duluth, Post 71, for a free member breakfast on 11 March at 8:00 a.m. Post 71 is asking for RSVPs to get an idea of how many to prepare for. You can contact Post 71 at (218) 628-2181 with your RSVP. This is a chance to hear the National Commander and get information as to where the American Legion is headed during his term in office.

The 8th District Mid-Winter Meeting will be held January 26, 2019 in the Hibbing Servicemen's Quarters Memorial Building. Meetings will start at 9 a.m. I encourage those 8th District members who are able to make every effort to attend the meetings.

I want to send a special thank you to all Legion family volunteers who contribute their time and effort to promote our various operations and programs.

God bless the Legion family and the U.S.A.

NINTH DISTRICT

Arlo Rude
Commander



Greeting and happy new year.

It is time for new year resolutions. I suggest you resolve to assist the membership director of your post in contacting members who have not paid their dues and usually have by this time in the membership drive. A casual word from a fellow veteran may cause them to pay their dues. Give it a try.

Though partaking in the amenities of the post club is enjoyable another resolution can be to review the pillars and programs of The American Legion and select a program of interest. Though your past experience in the program may be none, learning with on the job experience in the program will increase your knowledge and skills within the program. Don't worry about failure or being uncomfortable to start participating in a program. We are all volunteers and a lot of your fellow veterans have gone through the same experiences and can give advice.

The 9th District Mid-Winter is Saturday January 12 at Bagley Post 16 starting at 8 a.m. The Executive Committee meets Friday at 7 p.m. Come to Bagley and enjoy the mild winter. All are welcome. For God and Country.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 19-4

President Jean Walker

January 2019

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By Jean Walker



Happy New Year. I would like to say that 2018 was an awesome year for me personally to have the great honor of being your Department President. I am so humbled.

The year has flown by and I am starting my second half of my term as your president. It has been very busy. I wouldn't have traded it for anything in the world. Traveling the state, meeting with our members, and visiting with our veterans has been the best part of my year.

This last month I traveled to the 4th District for their Membership /Potluck Dinner, helped at the Shop, Ship & Share at Maplewood Mall, attended the DAV/DAVA Holiday Gathering in Crookston, Waite Park Holiday Potluck, Fergus Falls Veterans Home Pheasant Dinner, Our Pearl Harbor Membership Rally in Faribault, Ogilvie Unit meeting and Family Christmas Potluck, Fridley Post Family Christmas Dinner and Bagley Post Family Christmas Dinner and meeting.

I would like to thank all the Posts and Units for their great hospitality and also for their donations to my project.

Now on to the tasks at hand. January is going to be busy with District Mid-Winter Conferences. This is a great time to learn more about our programs as our District Chairman give their reports. So, take time if you are able and plan to attend your District Mid-Winter Conference. Then, please share the information with your unit members that were unable to attend.

January is also Legislative and National Security month. This is the time to write, call, or email our elected officials to remind them of the needs of our veterans. That is what we do as we advocate for our veterans. To assure they are getting the help they need.

They went beyond the call of duty and protected our country. So now it is our turn to help them get the help that is needed. More information will be in this month's Legionnaire regarding both of these programs by our Department Chairman.

I would like to thank all of who participated in this year's Gift Shop program and \$5 bill shower. Whether you donated money, items or helped distribute the gifts. It was appreciated by our veterans that you made their day.

As the New Year begins let us not forget Veterans that are in arms way. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers to keep them safe and that all will be home soon.

Again, thank you for all you do for our veterans, their families and our communities.

Happy New Year to all.

56th Junior Conference will be at Richfield on April 13

JUNIOR CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 13th is the date for the 56th Annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at Richfield American Legion Post 435 with the Fifth District serving as hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 12th. 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, Harley Donnelly, who has done a great job promoting Juniors and what they do for our Veterans.

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 2019 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Please ask your Unit President for the necessary information.

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

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

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

This year the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State be held at Bethel University. The session will be held June 9-15.

2018/2019 POPPY ORDERS

Poppy orders are still being accepted in the department office. As of this writing, we have received orders from 232 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, 2019 to all Senior members whose 2019 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.

Reminder: Any member who has not paid her 2018 dues by January 31 is considered delinquent and loses her rights, privileges and benefits of membership. Payment of her 2018 dues reinstates her as a member in good standing.

MINNESOTA V4V TRUST

The Minnesota Veterans 4 Veterans Trust granted our \$ Bill Shower \$10,000.00 this year. This enabled us to give each of our Veterans in the homes and hospitals and little Christmas cheer in the amount of \$10.00 instead of \$5.00. The Legionnaires who are currently on the Board of Directors are Marland Ronning and Don Pankake. The American Legion Auxiliary can't thank them enough for their support. Please give them a shout out of thanks if you see them.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

Another Christmas season is in the history books and I sure hope that Santa was good to you. We had a marvelous Christmas. The Pearl Harbor Rally was really well attended and everyone was decked out in the Christmas finery (is that a word?). It was so much fun and thank you Chuck Stone for the preparation and presentation of the program. You did good buddy! President Jean overdid it with gifts as usual and we had the best time. I really am happy that the Auxiliary still uses this as a membership rally – we had a whole bunch of turn-ins – 402 to be exact. That really boosted us up. Now I am asking you to try and make the Sweetheart Rally which will be held at the Royalton Post on February 9. Chairman Robin is in charge of this one so God only knows what surprises she will have for us. I guess my shout out this month is to all of you who attended the rally in Faribault. It is so much fun to get together and visit – and the biggest surprise was that Shorty went with me. I just still am wondering how Don Hayden ended up at the "important person" table – still love you Don. Hi to Leon – he is my most faithful reader ever. Everyone have a safe and prosperous New Year in 2019.

100th AUXILIARY ANNIVERSARY EMBLEM

We will have a small supply of a 3" 100th Auxiliary Anniversary emblem/magnet available to anyone who would like to purchase one. They will also be \$5.00 each plus a small shipping charge. If interested, please call the Department Office.



APPLES FOR TEACHERS — Gaylord Unit President Barb Muchow provides apples for the teachers during National Education Week.

Dec. 19, 2018, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 12/20/17
One	4,907	3,080	62.77%	3,598
Two	4,924	3,413	69.31%	3,600
Three	4,422	3,093	69.95%	3,231
Four	720	478	66.39%	488
Five	788	462	58.63%	536
Six	6,042	4,375	72.41%	4,596
Seven	3,934	2,691	68.40%	2,902
Eight	1,628	990	60.81%	1,128
Nine	4,344	2,919	67.20%	3,180
Ten	5,129	3,090	60.25%	3,326
1982	160	120	75.00%	113
Totals	36,998	24,711	66.79%	26,698

Hello from Good Thunder

Unit 616/District 2 – Good Thunder

Good Morning, Ladies

Over the past few years many of our members have passed away reducing our membership drastically. It occurred to me that we needed to tap into the next generation.

My dad was a proud WWII veteran. He and my mom had 31 grandchildren which included 17 girls. My 2 daughters were already members but that left 15 eligible to join due to his service. I reached out to them and 8 of them are now members! Some of them also signed up their daughters as members! I also asked several other daughters or wives of current legion members.

I am now looking for projects that our Sr members can do with the Jrs. I welcome suggestions!

Thank you for your kind words. Happy Holidays to all of you!

Maureen Hollerich

Legislation has become a 'hot button' subject across America in recent years

Once viewed as a "ho hum" subject, legislation has in recent years become a "hot button" for discussion among individuals and organized groups across America. Legislation is very important to all of us. Legislators have an amazing amount of control over such areas as your health costs and benefits, the state of the environment, property and personal income taxes, the strength of our military and our national security level. Each year, 300-400 resolutions (with legislative intent) are brought before the American Legion at National Convention! After reviewing each resolution, the American Legion Legislative Division narrows it's focus down to 20-30 key issues.

The American Legion Auxiliary's legislative purpose is to support the key issues determined by the American Legion. It's important to remember the ALA doesn't "take a stand" on an issue unless it is the official position of the American Legion. We also do not endorse any particular political candidates.

WHAT CAN YOU DO AS AN AUXILIARY MEMBER?

1. Obtain a copy of the ALA LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY GUIDE. It can be viewed and downloaded from our National website (www.alaforveterans.com)
2. If you have a computer, get the most up-to-date American Legion legislative news at www.legion.org/legislative Share the information with your unit at a meeting.
3. Signup for your legislator's newsletters or "e" newsletters. You can quickly scan and discard/delete,

unless there is an issue that "pushes your buttons" and deserves a quick note, telephone call or email from you as a voter in their district.

5. Sign up for LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERTS at:

6. When an important vote is imminent on a piece of legislation affecting veterans, military or their families, you'll receive an email urging you to immediately contact your legislator.

www.capwiz.com/Legion/mlm/signup

7. Hold a "Meet the Candidate Night" or coffee and cookies gathering before the next election to hear the candidate's views on various issues of interest to veterans, military and their families.

8. Consider attending "Veterans Day on the Hill" in March 2019. It's inspirational and a wonderful opportunity to meet with the legislators representing your area of Minnesota.

9. Most importantly, be a regular voter, either by absentee ballot or by going to the polls.

Mary Hendrickson
Department Legislation Chairman



MARY HENDRICKSON



EAGAN AT HASTINGS — Eagan Post and Auxiliary 594 participating in the Trim a Tree at the Hastings Veterans Home. Eagan graciously donated holiday treats and refreshments to everyone while there.



ADOPT A VET — Eagan Post and Auxiliary 594 participated in Adopt-a-Vet program at the Hastings Veterans Home. Each group adopted a veteran for the holiday season. Wayne Beierman and Sue Flynn delivered the wrapped gifts to Sue Register who is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Veterans Home.

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PASSPORT REQUIRED

Savannah March 29-April 6, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Vacations Tour Director, Cindy Peterson
- 7 nights accommodations
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 11 Meals: 7 Breakfast, 2 Lunches, 2 Dinners
- St. Louis Arch & Museum
- Gospel Dinner Cruise
- Historic tours of Savannah
- Jimmy Carter Library and Museum
- Opryland Hotel
- Luggage Handling for on suitcase per person
- The Golden Isles (Jekyll Island and St Simons)

\$1,599.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Panama Canal February 28- March 17, 2019

Tour Includes:

- Services of 4 Seasons Tour Director, Larry Alvey
- Roundtrip air from Minneapolis to Ft. Lauderdale and return for Los Angeles to Minneapolis on Delta Airlines.
- All transfers to and from the airport, hotel and pier
- 1 pre-cruise night in Minneapolis
- 1 pre-cruise night in Ft. Lauderdale
- 15 Day Cruise on the CORAL PRINCESS
- All meals and entertainment onboard the CORAL PRINCESS
- Luggage handling at the hotel and on the ship (1 suitcase per person)
- Visiting 8 ports of call including Ft. Lauderdale and Los Angeles
- Onboard ship gratuities

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New York Your Way June 25-29, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Larry Alvey
- Delta Airlines flights, MSP to New York City
- Transfers
- Hotel in Times Square
- Lunch at VIRGIL'S BBQ

2,599.00 per person double occupancy

San Antonio Riverwalk February 11-18, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Vacation Tour Escort Linda Andersen
- 7 nights accommodations
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 13 meals: 7 breakfasts, 3 lunch, 3 dinners
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person
- Oklahoma City National Memorial
- Magnolia Market at the Silos in Waco, TX
- Riverwalk district for shopping and dining
- San Fernando Cathedral "The Saga" music and light show
- Private tour of the Alamo
- San Antonio history tour w/lunch at the Historic Menger Hotel
- Riverwalk boat tour
- LBJ Ranch "The Texas Whitehouse"
- Sixth floor Museum at Dealey Plaza in Dallas, TX

\$1,399.00 per person double occupancy

Monuments of Washington D.C. May 17-21, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Tammi Haney
- Round trip Delta Airlines flights Minneapolis to Washington D.C.
- 4 nights accommodations in the Washington D.C. area
- Evening Guided Memorial and Monuments Tours
- 4 Breakfasts, 4 Dinners
- Tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery
- Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Garden
- Two full-day guided tours of Washington D.C.
- WWII Memorial, Capitol Hill, Embassy Row, the Korean War, Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, the Smithsonian, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and much more!

\$1,649.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Heart of Alaska July 11-18, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Tammi Haney
- Round trip Delta flights between Minneapolis & Anchorage
- 13 Meals (including an Alaska Salmon Bake)
- Iditarod Trail Headquarters
- Denali National Park Natural History Tour
- Riverboat Discovery Cruise
- Chena Indian Village
- Travel the Alaska Railroad between Talkeetna & Denali National Park
- Sled Dog Demonstration
- Pan for gold at the Gold Dredge #8
- Prince William Sound Cruise
- Meares Glacier
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

\$3,499.00 Per person double occupancy

The Best of Italy September 17-28, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Tammi Haney
- Round trip deluxe motor coach to Minneapolis airport
- Round trip Delta Airlines flights Minneapolis to Rome
- 10 nights accommodations in superior hotels
- Full breakfast buffet daily, 5 three-course dinners
- Local expert guides all along the way in 11 magical cities
- VIP access to must see sights and headsets throughout the tour
- Transportation included deluxe motor coach, private boat rides in Venice (optional gondola serenade), jetfoil boat, funicular railway, open top taxi and boat cruise in Capri

\$5,399.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

I BUY AND COLLECT MILITARY ITEMS

Including insignia, hats, helmets, and uniforms from WW I, WW II, Korea, Vietnam, (I have not started my collection on Southeast Asia yet). I collect Army, USAF, USN, USMC patches, pins, pictures and souvenirs from all periods. CALL JOE, 612-801-4673 AFTER 6

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