

2018 Legion agenda

Support VA's suicide prevention efforts

As our nation deals with the effects of nearly two decades of war, the need for mental health services for our veterans will no doubt increase in the years to come. It is imperative to combat VA's staffing shortage by increasing recruitment and retention budgets, while also expanding direct hiring authority to medical center directors to expedite the hiring process of mental health professionals. (Resolutions 28 and 165)

Limit outsourcing, unify VA's programs

Continued focus is needed to ensure VA can meet challenges in delivering high-quality, timely benefits and health care to veterans. In 2018, critical policy choices must be made, primarily the future of the Veterans Choice Program, which expires in August. A community care option is now a basic expectation for enrollees in VA's health-care system. Excessive outsourcing would render VHA too small to function economically or preserve quality of care and essentially dismantle it. Congress should pass legislation to unify VA's multiple non-VA care programs with VA as the coordinator and guarantor of care. (Resolution 372)

Fully fund a superior national defense

It is critical to maintain a well-funded national security strategy to ensure a strong national defense. The United States must enhance foreign policy, improve military intelligence, and increase cyber operations and capabilities. The American Legion advocates for a good quality of life for our troops and an improved transition process from military service to civilian life. The Legion vows to fight against those who desire to reduce the benefits of veterans, servicemembers, and their families to obtain short-term budget gains. (Resolutions 17 and 86)

Create lifetime electronic health record

The American Legion supports VA in finally implementing a quality lifetime electronic health record (EHR) system that works in concert with the Department of Defense system to ensure that veterans' medical documents transfer seamlessly from active service to VA and community providers. (Resolution 83)

Reclassify cannabis for medical research

The American Legion supports increased research into cannabis as part of the larger effort to develop complementary and alternative treatments and therapies. Cannabis is classified as schedule I drug and drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine and methadone are classified as schedule II drugs. (Resolutions 11,160,165)

Institute gender-specific health care

Women veterans face remarkably different experiences than their male counterparts when transitioning in and out of combat roles, in between services or back to civilian life. VA must ensure an improved quality of life for women veterans with gender-specific health care to meet their needs. (Resolution 147)

Support those who care for wounded vets

There are 5.5 million caregivers who go unnoticed while they care for America's wounded. Military caregivers suffer higher rates of depression and health problems than others. The American Legion is committed to supporting these hidden heroes. (Resolution 146)

Defend veterans education benefits

As the primary author of the original GI Bill, The American Legion continues to focus on the sustainability of this important earned benefit, while ensuring that veterans receive the most benefit possible from it. (Resolution 349)

Repeal unfair offsets

Many military retirees must forfeit some of their retirement pay to receive their VA service-connected disability compensation. It is equally outrageous VA survivor benefits (DIC) are offset from military Survivor Benefit Plan annuities. The American Legion supports legislation to repeal both of these unjust offsets. (Resolutions 85 and 224)

Provide mandatory end-of-service exams

Active-duty servicemembers have the right to physical examinations when separating. After all, servicemembers retiring from active duty are required to have such examinations. This same right to an end-of-service exam is only partially authorized for reserve component servicemembers. This unfair treatment must be changed. (Resolution 85)

Ensure retention of re-employment rights

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act protects the rights of servicemembers to be re-employed after returning from active duty, including reserve or National Guard members. The American Legion wants to prohibit employers from pressuring a veteran into waiving his or her veteran's employment rights and protections. (Resolution 315)

End veterans homelessness

To fully implement VA's pledge to eradicate veterans homelessness, Congress must continue making responsible investments in affordable housing and programs such as Supportive Services for Veteran Families that move veterans and their families off the street and into stable housing. (Resolution 340)



Past National Commanders Dan Ludwig and Jake Comer take in the events at the Commander's Call at the Washington Conference.



Past National Commander Dan Ludwig, right, introduced Leading Commander Candidate Brett Reistad of Virginia at the Minnesota Caucus in Washington.

Washington Conference

Continued from Page 1

Veterans Affairs David Shulkin and several key Congressional lawmakers.

Shulkin outlined several areas where the VA has gained ground in the last year. "Without The American Legion's support we would not be seeing the progress we are in the VA."

Shulkin said the VA has plans to close or demolish 1,200 dilapidated facilities around the U.S. and use that money for newer, better facilities.

He also said that the VA is now scheduling 96 percent of its appointments within 30 days, and same day service has expanded for mental health and primary care cases. Progress has also been made in disability claims and appeals, he said.

And he said that the VA will now be using the same technical company that the Department of Defense uses for medical records. The goal is a seamless transition from military to the VA system for veterans.

Rep. Phil Roe, MD, (R-Tennessee), the chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said recent legislation that allows the VA more latitude in firing bad employees will improve medical care. "The bad actions of a few have tainted the reputation of the others for too long."

Roe said there was no effort in Congress to privatize of the VA. "Why would we spend so much money on the VA if our endgame was to shut it down?"

Sen. Jon Tester, (D-Montana), who serves on the Senate Veterans Committee, was stronger on the issue of privatization. "Let me be clear. Congress can forget any attempts to privatize the VA. Privatization would be more costly to taxpayers, and it would leave only a skeleton of a VA system, and the whole thing would just become another insurance program. It's a recipe for disaster."

Tester said it's time to update the Choice program, which allows veterans to seek our care closer to home, and make it better for veterans.

The Washington Conference concluded when National Commander Denise Rohan spoke to a joint committee of veterans affairs and talked about about veterans rights.



Theodore Roosevelt IV, the grandson of the founder of The American Legion, spoke at the Washington Conference.



Diane Carlson Evans received her Patriot Award from National Commander Denise Rohan and Honorary Chairman of the 100th Observance Committee Theodore Roosevelt IV.



Membership Director Larry Ryan gives the winning sign for reaching the membership goal -- or is it the Wisconsin sign? Ryan has a bet with the Department of Wisconsin, the commander's home state, and if he loses he will have to wear green and gold and sing "Go Pack Go" to the Wisconsin caucus at the National Convention. In early February, Wisconsin was first in the nation and Minnesota was fourth, about two percentage points behind. Ryan was speaking at Waseca.



The last day of the tour brought a striking sunrise with sunbeams flaring up from the rising sun as the van made its way to Waseca.

National Commander's Tour



National Commander Denise Rohan talks things over with World War II veteran Floyd Walter during a stop at Litchfield.



Commander Rohan walked down the street at Litchfield to do an interview with KLFD Radio on the main street.



Second District Vice Commander Pam Krill, Blue Earth Post 89, listened to the commander speak during the stop at Lake Crystal.



National Commander Denise Rohan was greeted at Bayport by Brigadier General Sandra Best, the first female to achieve the rank of general in the Minnesota National Guard. Best serves as chief of staff. In the center is Linda Dvorak, the adjutant of the Third District.



Rohan spoke at Osseo-Maple Grove.



Department Commander Mike Schaffer greeted visitors to the tour at Fulda, his home town.



NECman Marland Ronning introduced the National Commander at Osseo, his home post.

Tour of Minnesota

Continued from Page 1

fixed the kitchen, got a new water heater and put the family up at a hotel until the work was done.

"That's what we do, that's who we are. I'm proud to be part of a family that makes a difference. Everything you do in the American Legion is a statement of faith, that you believe in our family."

When a member doesn't renew, the post or unit or squadron should contact them, not to just get their membership, but to find out how they are. "We need to reach out. They need to know that someone cares."

"I believe God put us on this earth to take care of one another," Rohan said.

Rohan told the story about how when she first tried to join the Legion, she was turned away and asked to join the Auxiliary. "Now that post has a sign up on the wall with my picture that says, 'We could have had her as a member.'"

She said it was important to still reach out to women veterans. "They may have been turned away at some point. We need to apologize and welcome them to the family."

She reminded her audiences in Minnesota that the Legion is a service organization. "For God and country, we are doing our best. We are making a difference each and every day. You may not realize how many lives you touch and the difference you've made."

Traveling with the commander was Membership Director Larry Ryan, Commander Mike Schaffer and Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.

Along the way, she also talked to a television station, ten newspapers and a radio station. Her final stop at Osseo was live-streamed to the American Legion website.



Department President Donna Arends spoke during the stop at Spicer.



Legion Rider Steve Sullivan talked things over with the national commander at Wayzata. Sullivan is the director of the Legacy Run in Minnesota.

Semper Paratus

When it looked like he'd be drafted, Les Sanderson hitched a ride to Minneapolis and signed up with the Coast Guard. He had seen his uncle come home from World War I as a cripple, and he didn't want anything to do with the Army.

By Al Zdon

Not everybody who went to war put a flag at the top of Mt. Suribachi, or did the Bataan Death March or shot down 15 German airplanes.

In fact most Americans who went to war and simply did their jobs, did them well, and came home if they were lucky.

Les Sanderson left high school, joined the Coast Guard, protected our shores and came home with no stories about the enemy shooting at him on Iwo Jima. Well, there was that story where his ship almost blew up...

But Sanderson was like the vast majority of American veterans in World War II. They simply served their nation and they won the war.

Lester Sanderson was born in the wilds of Montana.

His dad, Lewis, was a pioneer of sorts, staking out a claim in Big Sky country with a homestead near Scobey, in the very northeast corner of Montana.

Alma Sanderson gave birth in 1921 to twin boys out on the prairie, and one of them died. Les was the survivor.

It was a tough go, and Alma finally said enough was enough. The nearest town was 52 miles away — a two days' ride by horse and wagon.

The family first moved back to Grafton, N.D., where Alma was from, and then all the way back to Minnesota to a farm near Florence on the western edge of Minnesota, where Lewis's family was settled.

Alma had eight kids in 10 years, including three sets of twins. Young Lester attended the country school, usually walking, but sometimes getting a lift from dad during the winter.

"We'd pile in a bobsled pulled by a team of horses. Sometimes those horses had to jump in order to get over a snow drift."

As Sanderson grew up during the Depression, times were hard, but the farm family had the necessities. "We sometimes had fairly new clothes, but it was strictly hand-me-down in the family. We had cows, sheep, hogs and chickens. We had plenty to eat all the time."

One thing they didn't have much of was heat. "The only stove was on the first floor, and there were registers in the floor. You had to sleep with so much quilt that you couldn't turn over. Of course, everyone shared a bed, and you needed that to keep warm."

There was no running water in the house, but Lewis tried to spoil Alma with the luxuries of the times. "He bought her a new wood-fueled range called a Home Comfort that had a water reservoir on the side. You could fill it up with a couple of five gallon pails and have hot water all the time."

Lewis next got her a Dexter gasoline-engine washing machine with a hand-powered wringer. "You had to run the exhaust line through a hole in the window to vent the fumes. When mom did the wash, that engine just roared away. It was really loud."

Sanderson completed the eighth grade and quickly ran out of schooling options. There was no high school.

The family figured out that he could attend the agricultural high school at Morris, if he worked and paid his own way. Sanderson was 19 years old by then, not uncommon for high school boys in the state during the 1930s.

"A lot of farmer's boys from Minnesota went to Morris to learn about farming. Dad couldn't afford to send me, but I got a job."

Sanderson would have to report to a local farm at 4 a.m. to clean the horse barn and feed the animals. He'd get back in time at 7 to have breakfast and go to school.

"Because it was outside work, they paid me 75 cents an hour. That was pretty good pay. I was able to pay the \$19 a month I needed for room and board."

When he went back for his sophomore year, he was hoping to get a farm job again, but the school had other ideas.

He was made an assistant preceptor for the freshman boy's dormitory.

"Now this was inside work, and so they only paid me 30 cents an hour. But I got by."

On a day in December, 1941, the school assembled all the students in the auditorium. "When we all got seated, the head of the school came out and told us the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. Most of us were farm boys, and maybe 21 years old. We knew war meant. We'd soon be drafted."

After completing that school year, Sanderson did farm work again during the summer of '42, wondering when Uncle Sam would call.

"There was a classmate of my sister's home on leave, and he was serving in the Coast Guard. After visiting with him, I thought I'd see about joining the Coast Guard. My uncle had been in the Army in World War I and had been crippled and spent five years in the veterans hospital. I didn't want to go in the Army."

The only place he could enlist was in the Twin Cities, but that was a long ways off and there was no money for travel. "I knew somebody who was in the sheep shipping association, and they arranged for me to go along with a shipment, getting a free ride in the caboose."

The recruiter signed him up, but sent him back home. "He told me that if I got drafted, I should come back right away." By October, 1942, he was in training at Manhattan Beach, New York.

"I didn't know what I was getting myself into, but I suppose everybody who served in the war could say that."

After training, he ended up in West Palm Beach, Florida. "The Coast Guard had leased boats to patrol the coast and waterways. A lot of these were luxury yachts or fishing boats."



He served on a converted yacht. "It was decked out with a .30 caliber machine gun up front, and a depth charge mounted in the back. I'm sure glad with never had to use that depth charge because it would have blown us up before we could get away."

The Coasties' job was to board any boat that left harbor and take an inventory of how many people were on board. When the boat came back, they counted heads again and checked to make sure nobody was hiding. The Germans



LES SANDERSON
At home in Tyler



LES SANDERSON
As a boatswain's mate third class during the war

were known to drop off spies from submarines and they would come ashore in fishing boats.

"We'd be wearing a .38 pistol on our side, so nobody messed with us."

His next duty was on Florida's inland waterway, radiating out from Lake Okeechobee. "That lake is so big, we lost sight of shore and had to find our way using a compass."

Next it was on to Everglades City. "A lot of guys who didn't want to go in the service were hiding out in the Everglades. We'd be checking boats and trying to find them."

Sanderson moved further south to Key West where he was assigned to a buoy tender.

The buoys were very important in those shallow waters, and they had lights on them. The lights were fueled by LP gas. "So we would have to travel around, pull them on board, clean them up, and put in a new gas tank. And then seal it all up again."

A hurricane blew into the Caribbean. "A buoy tender is a big ship, and we were anchored to the pylons. Normally, you could walk from the pier to the ship and it was level. But when this storm blew in, the boat rose up on the swell, and now it was 12 or 14 feet above the pier. We had to just keep playing out the lines. They kept the engines running at all times in case we had to make a dash for the sea."

Besides buoys, Key West was a major naval base, and it was protected by mines. When the hurricane swept by, many of the mines were moved. In fact, neither the Navy nor the Coast Guard knew where they ended up.

"Don't you suppose, our job was to go out there and find them, pick them up and move them where they ought to be."

The buoy tender, a metal ship, went to sea with three minesweepers, all made out of wood. "We just dropped anchor and waited. When the mine sweepers found them, we'd pick them up and move to the next spot. We were out there a long, long time."

The minesweepers, because they were wooden, would not set off the wayward mines, but the big tender could set one off just by coming close. They didn't know how close they came until they came in for the night and the captain gathered the crew around.

"The captain said, 'Well, boys, you don't know how close you came to being angels today.'"

Sanderson by this time was getting tired of Florida. It was 1945, and he was restless to see some more of the world.

"I had applied for a transfer several times, but nothing happened. I didn't understand that because I was a fairly good worker. But one night I was at a dance party, and I met this girl. She heard about my effort to get transferred, and she told me to come to the office she worked at the next day, and so I did. Three months later, my transfer came through."

While on duty on the tender, Sanderson, who was a third class boatswain's mate, had put on report a first class yeoman who wasn't showing up for work. The yeoman got his revenge by taking out all the leave time Sanderson had planned to use on his way to California and making him report early.

Sanderson was sent to San Pedro, California, to join the crew of USCGC Sebago, one of three new cutters being built there. Because he was in the original crew, he was considered a plank owner, a high honor in the Coast Guard.

Each new cutter would eventually build up a crew of 373 officers and men.

"We trained in San Francisco with the Navy. In wartime, the Coast Guard is under the Department of Navy."

The Sebago was finally commissioned, but on its first trial run it caught fire and had to be towed back to port and go back into dry dock. By the time the cutter was ready to go sea again, Germany had surrendered.

"While we were out on the next shakedown cruise, Japan surrendered. The war was over and I never saw any service in a war zone."

The cutter was sent to the East Coast, through the Panama Canal. "We were in no hurry, so they let us have plenty of liberty along the way. I remembered we went on liberty when we entered the canal and then again when we got through it."

When the ship got to Norfolk, all of its weaponry was removed, including all the five-inch shells and the depth charges. "We had two five inch guns. I think that cutter had more fire power than any other ship its size in the world."

They took the five-inch gun off the after part of the ship and replaced it with a building that weather balloons could be launched from. The conversion from war to peace was underway.

The Coast Guard was also over-staffed for a peacetime role, and advancement in the ranks came to a screeching halt. "I could pass all the tests and be recommended for second class, but nobody was being advanced."

Sanderson figured it was time to get out, but there was one little problem. He had just re-enlisted for three more years.

"One day I saw on the bulletin board that there were too many third class petty officers in the Coast Guard, and that they were having a lottery to see who would get out. I put my name in, and I won. I got discharged."



The USCG Cutter Sebago was commissioned just after the war ended. Sanderson spent a year on the ship and is a plank owner.



Sanderson was one of the 373 original crew of Sebago. He is the last survivor of cutter.



Sanderson is recovering from a stroke at a Tyler nursing home. His visitor was his special friend Velva.

Right before he got out, he and the captain of the ship had a missed communication while the Sebago was trying to dock, and several lines snapped. "I had my sea bags packed and ready to go, but I wondered if they were going to punish me. I hadn't followed orders very good. I was waiting for somebody to really chew me out. But nothing happened, and I just walked off the ship."

He was discharged in St. Louis in June 1946 and hitchhiked first to Rochester and then to his home in western Minnesota. "I served for three years, eight months and 13 days."

Sanderson went back to farming and tried the ag school again. By now, though, he was 25 years old, and by his own reckoning, too old for high school.

Along the way he owned both a 1942 Harley-Davidson, which he bought in 1946 still on its shipping container, and an Indian motorcycle.

Eventually, he got into the oil business in Tyler working for Mobil. He traveled the countryside as an agent, selling oil to the farmers. One day his boss called him in and asked if he would be a trainer for new agents.

"I said I didn't know if I could do that job, but he said, 'I wouldn't have asked if I didn't think you could do it.'" Sanderson trained agents in South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota for the next 20 years.

He retired at age 62 in 1983, worked at the Tyler golf course for six years, and then worked at the local funeral



Sanderson posed for a photo on a long jetty.

home for another 25 years before retiring again.

Along the way, he got his high school diploma through a special state program for awarding World War II vets the degree they would have earned had they not been called away to war.

And two years ago, he got a call from the Coast Guard. They were trying to find the plank owners of the Sebago, because they were going to dedicate a park with that name in Pensacola, Florida.

"There were three of us left, but by the time the dedication came around, I was the only one left." Sanderson wells up with tears as he thinks back on his shipmates.

In the end, the Coast Guard brought Sanderson and his whole family down for the ceremony. "They treated us like royalty. It was funny because no matter where I went, everybody knew my name and I didn't know anybody's name." During his stay, he was presented with coins by a Coast Guard admiral, and by Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Florida, who was the chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

Sanderson, who is 96, had a stroke recently, but he has been rehabbing with great determination at a nursing home in Tyler. He is transitioning from a wheel chair to a walker, and he intends to go home soon.

His wife died some years ago. They had two sons. Sanderson has a close friend, Velva, who is a widow, and they have been together for 21 years. "Oh, we used to love to go dancing."



FINALISTS -- The four finalists for the 2018 Minnesota American Legion Oratorical Contest posed after the finals. From left: Department Commander Mike Schaffer, Second Place Winner Ricky Erpelding of Kasson; Third Place Winner Zavion Dillard of Minneapolis; Fourth Place Winner Owen Mische of Minneapolis, First Place Winner Emily Parker of Lino Lakes, Department President Donna Arends.

Oratorical Contest

Continued from Page 1

Mersini and John Parker and has four younger siblings, Abigail, Benjamin, Nathan and Lydia.

She has been involved in speech for several years and the last two years has qualified for regional competition in the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association.

Her speech coach for four years has been Marti Ackland.

She has played the piano since the first grade. She attends Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mounds View.

Parker said she enjoys preparing for the oratorical contest, but it's a great deal of work. "I like to do a lot of research, reading books and watching movies, and studying government. You have to practice it, add this and take out that, and time it."

The Oratorical Contest is divided into two speeches, one a prepared oration on the Constitution of up to 10 minutes, and then a shorter speech on one of four topics -- with the students having to be ready to do any one of the four. This year's shorter talk was on the impeachment process.

Parker, who was sponsored by the 10th District and Lino

Lakes Post 566, had to come out on top of three other finalists: Ricky Erpelding, Kasson, First District, Albert Lea Post 56; Zavion Dillard, Minneapolis, Fifth District, Minneapolis Post 1; and Owen Mische, St. Paul, Fourth District, Christie-DeParcq Post 406.

Others who competed were: Jamie Jablonski, Jordan, District Three, Jordan Post 3; Ethan Marichalar, Baxter, Sixth District, Brainerd Post 255; Natalie Barka, Litchfield, Seventh District, Litchfield Post 104; Ann Stangler, Deer River, District Eight, Deer River Post 122; Aiden Begnaud, Lake Crystal, District Two, Lake Crystal Post 294.

"I'm really excited to to to the national contest," Parker said. "You get to delve into history, apply today's standards, look at values. It's wonderful to learn about the Constitution."

She said it's important for all citizens to understand our Constitution. "If we lose sight of what our founders created, we could lose the freedoms they gave to us.

The contest will be held April 13-15. The winner of the contest will receive an \$18,000 scholarship.

Ninth District Band has a long history, seeks funding

By Bernie McKigney
50 year Ninth District Band Member and US Army Veteran

The Minnesota American Legion 9th District Band was established in 1928 in Crookston. The original band director and organizer was Ted Thorsen of Fertile. Bill Pond of Bemidji also served as band director for many years. The band's current director is Bernie McKigney of Moorhead.

The band remained strong and active for years because of the dedicated efforts of band member and Business Manager, Herschel Lysaker of Crookston. The band currently has a roster of over 50 musicians from over 20 communities throughout the 9th District of Minnesota.

The band's annual schedule includes the Mid-Winter Conference, Commander's Testimonial, District and State Department Conventions, all of which the band has faithfully performed at every year since its first District Convention in Thief River Falls in 1929.

When financially possible, the band also attends the American Legion National Convention, approximately every other year.

The band has been able to stay active for nearly 90 years because of its dedicated musicians, yearly fundraising, and recruiting efforts. The band members are actively looking for new, good players for replacements. While the first priority is finding a veteran who's also a musician, the band also accepts relatives of veterans or musicians that want to join and support American Legion goals. Over the years, the band has been able to keep up its player strength by recruiting players from other community bands.

In June of this year the band will celebrate its 89th Anniversary Year. That longevity has been made possible because of the financial support received over the years from many generous donors. Recently, a letter requesting donations for financial assistance was sent out. The band's continued success weighs heavily upon the support received from the Posts, Auxiliaries, and individuals throughout Minnesota. The Minnesota 9th District Band is a non-profit organization, determined in Section 501(a) of the IRS Code, Section 501 (c)3. Our EIN Number is: 456037447. Individuals wishing to make a donation can send a check to:

9th District American Legion Band Elaine Borud, Treasurer 4808 Crystal Creek Drive Moorhead, MN 56560.

Besides actively participating in District events and State Legion Conventions, we are planning to take part in the National Convention Band Competition. Our first involvement in this event was in Cincinnati and proved to be such a positive experience that we decided to do it again! For the band, this is not an easy undertaking as our members live far and wide in the 9 District, making rehearsal's difficult, but we are up for the challenge. It will be a real privilege to represent the 9th District and the State of Minnesota at the Band Competition in Minneapolis this August.

Legion Day at Twins will be June

The annual American Legion Family Day at the Twins will be Friday, July 13, vs. the Tampa Bay Rays.

Tickets are \$21 and are in the Home Plate view section.

Tickets can be obtained by contacting the Twins by phone (612-659-3400) or on their website. Ask for the special group rate for the Legion.

For special orders, or for further information, call Brian Bessler at the Twins at 612-659-4083.

Commander Mike Schaffer will throw out the first pitch, and the American and Twins Territory flag raisers will be selected by The American Legion.



LEGION'S OLDEST DISTRICT BAND -- The Ninth District Band marches down Main Street in Mahanomen during the 2017 Department Convention Parade.

Taps

Wright, Wayne A., 68, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 1, 2018. He served as Fifth District Commander from 1989-90 and as Department Vice Commander from 1992-93. He was a member of Minneapolis Post 1.

Riehle, Pete A., 66, Coast Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 10, 2018. He served for 10 years and was stationed in Puerto Rico. He was a member of Litchfield Post 104.

Zerebko, Wolodomir "Walter," 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 16, 2018. He served in Korea and was wounded. He served in the National Guard until his retirement. He was a member of Chisholm Post 247.

Bast, Bertwin Ernest, 96 Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 19, 2018. He served in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, serving on the USS Oberon in the Pacific bringing Seabees to the islands. In the Atlantic, he was on board the USS Hughes which was torpedoed off Casablanca. He spent five days in a life raft. He was a member of Wold Chamberlain Post 99.

Klimek, James G., 81, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 2, 2018. He was a member of Parker's Prairie Post 219.

Hudspeth, Thomas A., 72, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 24, 2018. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

Usgaard, Lyle, 84, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 26, 2018. He was a member of Gary Post 505.

Cisar, Donald, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 19, 2018. He was a member of Denham Post 361.

Stark, Norman F., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 3, 2018. He served in the motor pool in Germany. He was a member of Millerville Post 527.

Whiteford, Joseph J., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 10, 2018. He was a paratrooper in Europe. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Maki, Jack B., 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 24, 2018. He was a member of Cambridge Post 290.

Allen, Gerald David, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 7, 2018. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Hess, Rolland Orval, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 9, 2018. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Danielson, Jack Wayne, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 9, 2018. He served in Vietnam. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Cutten, Horace W. "Bill," 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 7, 2018. He was a past commander and honor guard member for Eden Valley Post 381.

Riesgraf, Barney Joseph, 89, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Jan. 25, 2018. He was a member of Chaska Post 57.

Schulz, Herbert, 94, Army National Guard and Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 5, 2018. He served with the Seabees in the South Pacific. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Reesen, Waldo R., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 14, 2018. He was a member of Arlington Post 250.

Whittaker, Charles E., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 8, 2018. He served in the 106th Division and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Lien, Morrell, 96, Coast Guard veteran of World War II, died Jan. 19, 2018. He did 28 months of sea duty aboard the USS Grand Forks (PF-11) and the USS Van Buren (PF-42) in the Pacific and the Atlantic. He was a quartermaster first class. He was on the honor guard of Twin Valley Post 431.

Allen, James D., 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 11, 2018. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Wiita, Arnold E., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 25, 2018. He was a past Commander of Sebeka Post 456 and past District Vice Commander for the Sixth District.

Nelson, Victor L., 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 6, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Peterson, Robert F., 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 8, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Bachtle, Arliss, 82, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 28, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Morreim, Merton C., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 31, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Jacobson, Carroll "Tom," 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Feb. 4, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Schwarz, Dean H., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 4, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Kopecky, Donald W., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 7, 2018. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Pearson, Everett, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 1, 2018. He was a member of North Branch Post 85.

Wesselman, LaVern, 94, Army Air Corp veteran of

World War II and Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 6, 2018. He was a tail gunner on a B-17 and earned a Bronze Star in World War II for missions flown in Europe. He served in the 3944th Radar Bomb Scoring Squadron in Georgia in the Korean War. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Erickson, Dennis, 79, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 14, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Vogelaar, Lester T., 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 15, 2018. He served on LSTs, (Landing Ship, Tank). He was a member of Round Lake Post 461.

Wellhoff, Robert, 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 2, 2018. He was a member of Keewatin Post 452.

Denney, Darrel, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 3, 2018. He was a member of Tyler Post 185.

Roepke, Gerald Arthur, 85, National Guard veteran of the Korean War and Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 1, 2018. He did tours in Vietnam. He served in the Air Force for 26 years and retired as a Chief Master Sergeant (E-9). He was a past commander and chaplain of Park Rapids Post 212.

Thompson, Wayne, 82, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 7, 2018. He was a member of Faribault Post 43.

West, Robert, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 12, 2018. He was a member of Faribault Post 43.

Thorson, William, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 18, 2018. He was a member of Faribault Post 43.

Grafstrom, Lester D., Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 16, 2018. He was in Battery B, 20th Field Artillery Battalion and served in Germany. He was a member of Roseau Post 24.

Strey, Howard J., 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 27, 2018. He served in Okinawa as a communications and recreation specialist. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Clayton, Edwin Christianson, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 27, 2018. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Borchardt, Anton G., 84, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 25, 2018. He served in the Army Reserve for 30 years and retired as a master sergeant. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

Halverson, Gary L., 63, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 17, 2018. He was a member of Barnum Post 415.

Paulson, Russell, "Bud," 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 9, 2018. He served as a military policeman in Pusan with the 193rd MP Company. He was a past adjutant and finance officer for Barnum Post 415.

Hamborg, Ronald, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 20, 2018. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Taylor, Richard J., 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 6, 2018. He was a corporal in the 2nd Infantry Division and was a forward observer for the artillery. He was a member of Bruno Post 563.

Otterson, Lloyd S., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 18, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Bartz, Chester, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 11, 2018. He was a past commander and served in the drum corps and honor guard of Jackson Post 130.

Stone, Bill, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 1, 2018. He was a combat engineer. He was a member of Owatonna Post 77.

Hoehn, Linus Leo, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 12, 2018. He was a member of Janesville Post 281.

Holmgren, Merland A., 97, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 17, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Fronius, Jim, 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 26, 2018. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

Trebesch, Ferdinand, 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 10, 2018. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

Steinke, Melvern, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 15, 2018. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

Van Dam, Harry A., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 4, 2018. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

Kreun, Darwin G., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 11, 2018. He was stationed in Korea. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

Hagen, Donald Edwin, 69, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 21, 2018. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Ransom, Donald, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 13, 2018. He was a member of Marietta Post 156.

Redepinning, Truman, 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 31, 2018. He served in Germany for three years. He was a member of Marietta Post 156.

Peters, Thomas, 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 23, 2018. He was a member of Marietta Post 156.

Storner, Gary, 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 4, 2018. He was a member of Faribault Post 43.

Huseby, James, 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 21, 2018. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Guimond, Robert, 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 20, 2018. He served as a radio operator. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Nordquist, Lyle D., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 22, 2018. He served in the 52nd Battalion. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

McGinty, Emmet J., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 26, 2018. He was a lieutenant and earned a Star in the infantry. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Hecimovich, Norman E. 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm, died Feb. 21, 2018. He earned two Bronze Stars, serving both in the Army and the Reserves. He was a past commander and honor guard member of Lawrence Lake Post 476.

Beavens, Leon, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 25, 2018. He was in the infantry and served in Europe. He was a member of Bruno Post 563.

Robb, Ferris T. "Leonard," 80, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 9, 2018. He served for nine years. He was a past commander of Cleveland Post 207.

Tenquist, Luther Merle, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 17, 2018. He was a radio operator in Korea. He was a member of Sandstone Post 151.

Netherlands Memorial seeks Minnesota photos

The Faces of Margraten at the American War Cemetery in Margraten, Netherlands, is a project seeking photos of Americans who are buried there.

Over 4,100 photos have been collected thus far, but over 3,000 are still needed. The list below is for Minnesotans buried at the cemetery for which there is no photo.

For more information about the project, go to thefacesof-margraten.com.

If you have a photo or question, contact David Scharfbillig at david.scharfbillig@medtronic.com.

NAME	County	City
"ALDRICH, Louis T"	Jackson	
"ANDERSON, George R"	St. Louis	Ely
"ARNOLD, Levi A"	Lake of the Woods	Baudette
"BAJULA, John R"	Crow Wing Brainerd	
"BERGSTROM, Donald E"	Beltrami	Kelliher
"BERTELSON, John E"	Chisago	Rush City
"BOHLING, Erwin H"	Cottonwood	Great Bend
"BREN, Bennie F Jr"	Hennepin	
"BURMEISTER, Rueben B"	Faribault	
"BUTSCH, James A"	Owatonna	
"CASSELLIUS, Bernard E"	Wright	
"CHEADLE, Aaron C"	Stearns	
"CHENEY, Russell D"	Aitkin	
"CHESTER, Lewis H"	Polk	
"CHRISTENSEN, Holger R"	Pipestone	
"DETLEFSEN, John"	Brown	
"DODGE, Howard R"	Renville	Hector
"DODGE, William H"	St. Louis	Virginia
"EVANS, Roy W"	Crow Wing	Brainerd
"FARRELL, James H"	Dakota	Hastings
"GILCREAST, William L"	Wabasha	Plainview??
"GOOD, Floyd L"	Nobles	
"GOUGH, Robert F"	Yellow Medicine	Clarkfield
"HALLETT, Marvin C"	St. Louis	
"HALVORSON, Robert L"	St. Louis	
"HANSON, Leo E"	Watsonwan	
"HASTINGS, Winthrop N"	Blue Earth	Mankato
"HAUGEN, Rolf E"	Goodhue	Kenyon
"HEIBERG, Lowell M"	Norman	
"HELLERUD, John H"	Hennepin	Minneapolis
"HICKERSON, James O"	Beltrami	
"HILLSTROM, Rudolph E"	Wadena	Red Eye
"JENSON, Henry"	Goodhue	
"JOHNSON, Leonard M"	Lake of the Woods	Two Harbors
"KARGER, Harold E"	Otter Tail	Parkers Prairie
"KAYUTE, Marvin E"	St. Louis	Duluth
"KOBILKA, Richard T"	Ramsey	St. Paul
"KOSLOSKI, Paul L"	Hennepin	
"LAMBRECHT, Alexander"	Isanti	
"LEHMANN, Monroe J"		
"LIGAARD, Herburne W"	Hennepin	Paynesville
"LISTER, John J"	Stearns	Minneapolis
"LONGTON, Gordon T"	Hennepin	Redwood??
"MIADLE, Joseph J"	Morrison	
"MILLER, Harold A"	Mower	
"MOEN, Richard S"	Hennepin??	
"MUNN, David L"	Hennepin	Minneapolis
"NASON, Charles M"	Carlton	Moose Lake
"NELSON, Percy C"	Lac Qui Parle	
"NISSI, George M"	Otter Tail	
"OLSON, Leo G"	Pine	
"OLSON, Rudolph"	Wright	Cokato
"PECK, Robert F"	Hennepin	
"PETERSON, Lloyd M"	St. Louis	Duluth
"PHILLIPS, Hymen"	Hennepin	
"POWELL, Charles L"	Hennepin	Minneapolis
"REED, Norbert G"	Nicollet	
"REICHENBACH, Theodore"	St. Louis	
"ROBILLARD, Frank C"	Hennepin	
"ROTH, Wesley F"	St. Louis	
"RYAN, Edward J"	St. Louis	Markham
"SANDNESS, Ervin A"	Faribault	
"SCHAFER, Harlan E"	Todd	Germania
"SCHMITZ, Howard W"	Wright	
"SCHNEIDER, Elmer E"	Becker	Sugar Bush
"SCHULTE, Herbert F"	Renville	
"SCOTT, James W"	Faribault	
"SKUBE, Steve G"	St. Louis	Ely
"SMISEK, Milton C"	ille Lacs	Foreston
"STORCH, Lawrence A"	Redwood	
"TATE, Robert J"	Wantonmen	Madelia
"TWETTEN, Norman E"	Washington	
"WIRAK, Elmer"	Kittson	McKinley???
"WOLSTEIN, Isadore"	Hennepin	
"WORKS, George S"	Renville	Hector
"YONAK, Leo E"	Wright	Monticello
"YOUNG, Gerald E"	Ramsey	

Posts at Goal during the 2018 National Commander's Tour



APPLE VALLEY POST 1776



WEST CONCORD POST 295



RICHMOND POST 292



ADRIAN POST 32



AVOCA POST 576



DUNDEE POST 386



IVANHOE POST 194



LAMBERT POST 41



LISMORE POST 636



SLAYTON POST 64



PIPESTONE POST 6



BREWSTER POST 464



JACKSON POST 130



KINGSTON POST 483



SILVER LAKE POST 141



ST. JOSEPH POST 328



BRICELYN POST 165



MADELIA POST 19

Posts at Goal during the 2018 National Commander's Tour



MILLVILLE POST 579



ELYSIAN POST 311



ST. CHARLES POST 190



WALDORF POST 587



DELANO POST 377



MINNEAPOLIS POST 1



ZIMMERMAN POST 560



RUSH CITY POST 93



Commander Rohan poses with Fulda Post 318.

Veterans, service members rehab WWII vet's dilapidated property

By Henry Howard

More than two dozen volunteers, ranging from active-duty servicemembers in their 20s to veterans in their 70s, rallied to rehabilitate the property of a World War II veteran March 3 in Chula Vista, Calif.

"I don't even have words to describe what's going on here, it's so appreciated," said Michelle Miranda, daughter of Navy veteran Ernie Miranda, who is 94. "I am so happy that it is being done. My father — his mind is blown. He's skeptical in general. But to see this happening is amazing. He's from that old school where you don't ask for anything. You don't ask for handouts."

Volunteers removed debris from the yard, pulled large overgrowth of weeds that had decimated the lawn and performed general cleanup during the daylong project spearheaded by The American Legion and U.S. 4 Warriors. Afterward, a large dumpster along the curb was completely full.

"It's a hoarding situation," said Chuck Camarato, Department of California sergeant-at-arms and a member of American Legion Post 731 in Linda Vista. "He just got too old to do things. His support network is limited. If it weren't for veterans organizations, this is how he would have lived his final days.

"It's great to see our young military members out here, giving up their Saturday, to help a veteran. It says a lot about them."

The project began when Victor Graff noticed a leak along the wall he shares with Miranda, his neighbor of more than 50 years.

"I didn't realize how bad it had become because I had worked on cleaning up our shared side," said Graff, a member of American Legion Post 492. "I got sick and was in Balboa Hospital on and off for a while. After that, I noticed water was leaking through my wall. When I told Ernie about it, he said the sewer line in his bathroom was broken."

That's what prompted Graff to reach out to nonprofits. After several unsuccessful attempts with other organizations, he called Tony Stewart about three months ago. "That's when things started popping," Graff said.

Stewart, who lives in Chula Vista, is an American Legion member and a founder of U.S. 4 Warriors.

"Living here you hear about people who need help," Stewart said. "Vic contacted me about a distressed property of a World War II vet. The moment I heard that my ears perked up. This is taking care of one of our own. We have to make sure that this gets done. We're out to help people."

A team began to survey the property, meet with the fam-

ily, solicit volunteers, acquire the proper permits and other preliminary legwork that led to the transformation's first phase. Once the outside is cleaned up, volunteers will assess the inside of the home and work with vendors on repairs.

"The American Legion connection in the area is what solidified the deal," Stewart said. "The family felt comfortable with The American Legion and U.S. 4 Warriors is well-known in this area."

Stewart is a former commander of District 22. "That's the beauty of The American Legion," he said. "The American Legion has the best reach and warm handshakes with other groups so that we can make things happen and do what's really important."

Camarato underscored the importance of veterans organizations working together.

"In today's day and age, partnerships go a long way," he said. "It's one of the best ways to tackle issues that are facing us. I work closely with other organizations like U.S. 4 Warriors. Every organization is taxed to the maximum. So when you work together, you actually enhance your resources and your ability to do larger projects that you might not be able to do."

Angel Castillo, commander of Post 434, saw the property for the first time when he arrived to work in the yard.

"We're here to help and anything we can do, we will do our best to help out," Castillo said. "It's a surprise that it has gotten to this stage. But we have to understand that sometimes conditions — physical or mental — come into play and this can happen. But it takes the community to stand up and say, 'Hey, this gentleman needs help.' That's what being a veteran means — continuing to serve."

Lisa Miranda, the granddaughter of Ernie, says his health is good, given his age. His spirits were lifted when the team of volunteers showed up.

"He loves everything about today, he's amazed about how many people have come out," she said, noting her grandfather was looking outside from a window. "He made a joke about 'They are here for the food.' And I said, 'No, they are here out of the goodness of their hearts.'"

District	2018 Goal	Total 2017	Total 2018	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal
District 1	8,953	8,895	8,200	36	58	11	91.59%
District 2	7,272	7,188	6,541	34	84	24	89.95%
District 3	11,712	11,647	10,665	90	65	11	91.06%
District 4	2,420	2,402	2,130	3	18	2	88.02%
District 5	2,486	2,464	2,154	2	22	3	86.65%
District 6	11,811	11,740	10,840	26	71	23	91.78%
District 7	6,398	6,322	5,800	31	76	17	90.65%
District 8	4,252	4,212	3,788	17	40	4	89.09%
District 9	6,729	6,664	6,082	61	65	21	90.38%
District 10	10,066	10,012	9,043	37	54	6	89.84%
District 11	401	2,358	1,965	0	2	1	490.02%
Totals	72,500	73,904	67,208	337	555	123	92.70%



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 18-8

President Donna Arends

March 2018

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By Donna Arends



Greetings American Legion Auxiliary members Department of Minnesota and all.

As I am writing this February is fleeting by. That is A-OK with me. Those winter months can fly by quickly.

Since I last shared with you my travels, I have had a few more. Membership Mary and I traveled to Le Center for the 3rd District Midwinter. That was very good to see all the 3rd District Legion Family. Everyone was very kind and welcoming.

Unfortunately, we were not able to stay long as we would have liked as we were also invited to American Legion Arcade Phalen Post. There we joined the 4th and 5th District in walking in the St. Paul Winter Carnival Parade. We were honored to carry the 4th District Banner. What a fun experience with of course Great American Legion Family members there also. We have made plans to attend next year's parade again.

Next we were off to the Lino Lakes American Legion Post. There we attended the 10th District Snowmobile Rally Membership Banquet. Yes there were snowmobiles there, one actually driven there by the Snowmobile Rally organizer at age 90+. What an impressive event that was. That was my first in participating and I was impressed. Great Job 10th District. The Lino Lakes Unit was gracious enough to provide us hotel accommodations that night. So believe me when I say we dragged ourselves home the next day. We were exhausted but had many wonderful memories.

February 1st was a very impressive Essay Contest Winners Reception at the Elk River Post with their Unit. 6th District President Vicki Bibeau and I attended. What a great future we have with youth like those marching up to the plate. Thank you Elk River Unit for the invitation to that event. I enjoyed that very much.

February 3rd was the Sweetheart Membership Rally in North St. Paul. Roads were less than good, however Membership Mary was a very good driver and we arrived safely. There also was a very good turnout of American Legion Family Members despite the horrible roads. Thank you North St. Paul Post and Unit for a great meal and hospitality. A huge thank you to Commander Mike and Membership Director Larry for all the beautiful flowers they shared with Mary, Diane, Nina and myself.

Feb 7th was the Montgomery Sweetheart Dinner, served to the Auxiliary by the Montgomery Legionnaires no less. It was delicious and a great time was had by all. I sure enjoyed the reserved parking spot also right in front of their Post. Thank You Shorty.

Feb 10th was the 6th District Midwinter in Melrose. Again great Post and Unit dinner, informational Chairmen reports and a nice silent auction. Thank you 6th District.

An update on my flashlight project - I received word from St. Stephens, that in fiscal year 2017 they had served 1,717 adults and 671 families in street outreach, emergency shelters and multiple housing programs. 330 street homeless were helped and 235 veterans were served. The largest age group of people served were age 25-40 being at 41.4%. Age 55+ was 18.9%. So please keep those flashlights coming in. My other project of dividing funds for the five Veterans Homes and the Armed Forces Center at the Minneapolis St. Paul airport is currently at \$16,000+ so I am asking that any help you could contribute to that also would be very much appreciated. Poppy funds may be used as this is going to the betterment of our veterans at these facilities.

Until next time stay warm and keep all of our veterans and their families in your thoughts and prayers. God bless you all.

National President's Tour coming to state April 16-18

American Legion Auxiliary National President Diane Duscheck will be visiting Minnesota from April 16 - 18, 2018. As her stay is short, we will be conducting a mini-

tour of our state. Following is a daily itinerary that we will be following. Please make it a priority to attend one of the functions to welcome the National President.

Monday, April 16, 2018							
Location	Time	Event	Phone	email	Cost	Deadline	
Hastings Veterans Home Tour							
Waseca American Legion	11:30 a.m.	Social	507-833-9935				
700 So. State St.	12:00 noon	Lunch					
Mary Jo Knudson			507-521-4761	mjknudson44@gmail.com	\$10.00	4/13	
Fagen Falls WWII Museum Granite Falls							
		Tour					
Willmar American Legion	5:30 p.m.	Social	320-235-8136				
220 19th Ave SW	6:00 p.m.	Dinner					
Donna Arends			320-262-9321	donnaarends7@gmail.com	14.00	4/9	
Betty Underthun			320-235-3797	dbunderthun@gmail.com			
Tuesday, April 17, 2018							
Location	Time	Event	Phone	email	Cost	Deadline	
Eagles Healing Nest Sauk Centre							
	9:00 a.m.	Tour					
Camp Ripley National Cemetery							
	11:00 a.m.	Tour					
Little Falls Amer. Legion	12:00 noon	Lunch	320-632-5944				
108 1st St NE							
Carla Stewart Johnson			320-630-7047	jackcarla@charter.net			
Fridley American Legion	5:30 p.m.	Social	763-786-2150				
7365 Central Ave NE	6:00 p.m.	Dinner					
Sandy Locker			763-786-5415	lockerrg@comcast.net	\$12.00	4/11	

JUNIOR CONFERENCE

The 55th Annual Department Junior Conference will be held Saturday, April 14th at the North St. Paul American Legion Post 39, hosted by the Fourth District. We are hoping that a large number of the Junior members are able to attend and participate. If your Juniors have never attended a Department Junior Conference, plan to join us this year. Junior members will enjoy a "fun night" on Friday, April 13th, the night before the opening of the Conference. The 4th District and Junior Activities Chairman Tamara Opland have been working hard to make this a special evening for the Junior members.

On Saturday the Conference will be called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Courtney Rogat, the Department Honorary Junior President. This is a day when the Juniors become reacquainted with each other, make new friends, learn how to conduct a meeting and participate in it. This meeting is a Junior Conference and the Junior members run it. They are very capable young women.

ARENDS' TESTIMONIAL

The Willmar American Legion Auxiliary 167 will be hosting a Testimonial for Department President Donna Arends on Saturday, April 28 at the Willmar American Legion Post. Social hour will begin at 5:00 p.m., Dinner at 6:00 p.m., with a program to follow. The cost of the dinner is \$15.00 per ticket. Tickets may be ordered by calling Post 167 at 320-235-8136 by April 21. There is a block of rooms set aside at the Country Inn and Suites in Willmar (320-214-0300) at \$145 for a double room and also the Best Western in Willmar (320-235-6060) at \$124.99 for a double.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Our Department Convention is coming up fast and will be held July 19 - 21, 2018 at the Kahler Grand Hotel in Rochester, hosted by the Rochester American Legion Family 92. Further information will be forthcoming. Our appreciation is sent, in advance, to all The Legion and Auxiliary members who will be serving on the convention committee for their efforts to ensure another outstanding Department Convention. Circle these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. Don't wait to make your hotel reservations.

DIRECT BILLING INFO

All Units received a request for information on your Unit's 2019 dues. This information is due in the

Department office by March 15th. If your Unit has not yet responded, please send in the information. The form is on the mnala.org website under the Forms tab and select 2019 Unit Data Form Direct Billing. Also, please be sure and get your 2018/2019 Officers list to the Department Office as soon as possible.

2018 POPPY UPDATE

Poppy time is fast approaching. To date, 309 out of 438 Units have ordered their 2018 small and/or large Poppies. To the remaining 129 units, please place your orders now.

Keep in mind who assembles these poppies. They are made by our Veterans, many of which have disabilities. If the poppies you receive aren't as perfect as you would like, remember where they came from. Let people know who assembles these - I think you will be surprised at how many individuals don't know.

GIRLS STATE

Remember your application for reservation and your \$300.00 registration fee must be received by March 31st to reserve a place for your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen. If your Unit has not yet sent this in, please take care of it immediately. Reservations with the payment of the \$300.00 registration fee for each candidate will be accepted on a "first-come-first served" basis. Upon processing your Unit's reservation fee you will receive the necessary registration packet for each citizen you are sponsoring. American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State can accommodate 445 citizens.

A Unit may send as many young women to American Legion Auxiliary Girls State as they wish to. The candidate must be a Minnesota resident, attend a Minnesota school or home school.

The 2018 session of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be held at Bethel University in St. Paul, June 10-16. We look forward to the 72nd annual American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State week and another educational and successful session.

LEADERSHIP - FINAL WORKSHOP

You still have time to sign up for the last Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary Leadership Workshop for this Auxiliary year.

March 10, 2018 the Leadership Workshop will be held at the Community Center in Buffalo. The goal of the workshop is to keep Units, Districts and the Department strong.

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

This year the workshop will be with three programs working together to increase knowledge of our organization Leadership - Sandy Wersal, Membership-Mary Kuperus and Public Relations -Robin Dorf.

The workshops have been casual with shared ideas from the members attending. Times for the workshop is 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cost is only \$10 for material and lunch and the information you will receive is priceless.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Ah those Annual Reports. Annual report time is fast approaching. All Units should be preparing their reports covering the time period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. The Department copy of all reports must be mailed to the Department office on or before April 15th. Please mail one copy to your District President and keep one for your records. No matter how much or how little your Unit has been able to contribute in time, energy, resources and talent to our programs, it is important that everything be included in your reports. Your reports make up our Department and National reports. You have all received your forms - let's have a 100% turn in this year.

TROPHY AND AWARD ENTRIES

Entries for any trophy and award competition are due by April 15th, unless otherwise stated in the rules. Be certain to label each entry with the name of the award you are applying for. A separate entry is needed for each award unless the winning Department entry is being forwarded for National competition. See the rules for complete details.

You may apply for any award, whether your Unit has reached its membership goal or not, unless that requirement is stated in the rules. Please apply for awards - let's get the members recognition for the hard work they do for our Veterans. To save yourself some postage, just mail these right along in your Annual Reports envelope.

NEW FUNDRAISER – SCRIP

In order to continue to maintain and improve our American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State Program we are now enrolled in the Scrip Program for means of raising monies for the Girls State Program. There were instructions in the last Unit Mailing, but here in a nutshell is what you need to do to participate. Create your own account by going to www.shopwithscrip.com and click on register. Click on Join a Scrip Program and enter the following code: 19DBL2A159542, enter your information and click on register and you are ready to order. We do ask that you sign up for Presto Pay and use it when ordering. Your gift cards are charged directly to you and they are shipped directly to you. In setting up this program I found out what it is actually all about. What a wonderful program – everyone purchases gas, goes out to eat, buys groceries, goes to movies and many other things. There are tons of retailers participating so please take advantage – purchase your cards and use them as you need or give them for gifts. Our program receives anywhere from 2% - 14% of the gift card amount, depending on the retailer. There is absolutely no extra cost to you the buyer. If you order a \$100.00 gift card from Cabela's for instance, you pay the \$100.00 and Scrip gives us a credit of \$11.00 as Cabela's offers a 11% payback. You can then use your gift card as you shop until it is gone or give it as a gift – what a deal. We hope all of The American Legion Family participates in this wonderful program. The Girls State Committee does have a supply of some of the cards to sell as well.

Speaking of fundraisers, we now have our new supply of the 100th Anniversary Cookbook in the Department Office. Please call and order your book(s) today. They are \$25.00 each and if you need them shipped, the cost is \$6.00 extra per book. Please support this project along with our Auxiliary Emblem magnets and Military Bracelets. We have a supply of everything at this time.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

As promised in a past note, I have now completed entering all of the email addresses of Auxiliary members that I have on file in our Legionnaire database. If we have your email on file, you should have received this Legionnaire via email. If you didn't receive it, please give me a call or email me a note and I will get your address entered or corrected. With entering so many, I know it's hard to believe but I may have made a typo or two. There are some really strange email addresses out there.

There's not too much to report in the Deutsch's life right now. We will be motoring on down to Texas in April and become ranchers for a week. Life back on the farm – I can't wait and seeing all three Texas babies is an added bonus.

Don't forget to make your reservations for President Donna's Testimonial on Saturday, April 28 at the Willmar American Legion Post. In working with Donna the past 7 months, I can't believe how many events she has attended, representing our organization – let's go and honor her on the 28th.

Frederick withdraws NEC candidacy

With mixed feeling I am withdrawing my name as a candidate for Minnesota National Executive Committeewoman for the 2018 – 2020 term.

My years of service to you wonderful members of the American Legion Auxiliary are years I will always remember with pride and joy. Seven of the past 10 years I have been on the Department Executive Committee. Of the other three, one I campaigned across the state for 2nd vice president and the other I was your Alternate NEC woman. I know my limits and driving to the airport is cannot do. Thank you to Department Secretary Sandie for getting me there a number of times.

It is time to step back and mentor young women with new and fresh ideas for our programs and organization. I

will still be active on all levels and ready to help, volunteer, mentor always. Thank you American Legion Family for all the support and friendships.

-- Shirley Frederick

Fabulous 4th having a great new year

The Fabulous 4th District is off to a rousing start for 2018. Our Mid-winter Conference, that was held in January, was a roaring success with two dynamic speakers. Amy Callahan, a 24 year veteran of the Air Force, is currently the Executive Cemetery Director of the Ft Snelling National Cemetery. What a powerful presentation she delivered. Annette Kuyper is with the MN Department of Military Affairs, Director of Military Outreach. She spoke on "Beyond the Yellow Ribbon" program and had so much valuable information on other programs to help the veterans.



LYNN OLSON

Then on Saturday, January 27th, we had the honor of our Auxiliary Department President, Donna Arends and the Membership Chairman, Mary Kuperus, carry the Fabulous 4th District Banner, in the Winter Carnival Parade. After the parade there was a short rally and lunch served at the Arcade Phalen Post 577.

Arcade Phalen began hosting their Friday Night Fish Fry on Friday, February 16th. The newly renovated Post is beautiful. If in the area, stop by and enjoy a refreshment.

The 4th District ALA/VA Fun Night was held on January 16th and was Las Vegas Night. There were 15 veterans that joined in on the fun of playing bingo and cards (21). The next Fun Night will be April 17th, and it is Horse Racing Night. The veterans enjoy the games, but Horse Racing Night is their favorite.

Rosetown will be hosting our annual casino bus trip to Treasure Island on Sunday, March 11th. This is our Past Presidents Parley fund raiser for the \$500 scholarship provided each year. This is also the same day of the SAL Bone-in-Ham breakfast.

Then the next big Auxiliary event, at Rosetown, will be our Spring Style Show. This will be our 43rd year hosting this afternoon of fun, food and fashion.

Rosetown has Junior members but we do not have a Junior program. We are entertaining starting a Junior program and have a few new members willing to take this project on to see if we can get some interest at the post. They will attend the Junior Conference at North St Paul in April.

The North St Paul American Legion Post #39, is hosting a Caribbean Night on March 24th. It will be a Caribbean Inspired evening with dinner, games and music.

So many activities and events to attend and so little time.

Wonderful people out there

It was just your normal February road trip in Minnesota for two American Legion Auxiliary friends to hit the road early on Saturday morning to attend the Sweetheart membership rally at the North St. Paul Post. Shirley Frederick from Hackensack Unit 202 and Sharon Thiemecke from Bemidji Unit 14 made a couple stops on the Friday evening before to pick up membership for the rally the next day. Saturday we woke to a little snow and headed south out of Hackensack. We were glad to reach St. Cloud and stopped at a restaurant for brunch. We looked so sharp, both of us in our new purple membership shirts for the rally. When Shirley got up to pay for her meal a gentleman at a nearby table asked me about our shirts. I told him we were with the American Legion Auxiliary and on our way to a membership rally. He asked "what's that?" I started to explain briefly about being a volunteer veteran's service organization and how we helped veterans with things that the federal government does not provide. I talked a little about the gift shop as an example. When Shirley returned to the table we all continued a short visit and found out that Shirley knew some of the people that he knew from the St. Cloud Post. Before he left he came over to our table opened his wallet and placed a \$100 bill on our table. He told us to put it to good use. Shirley and I thanked him and said that we would do that. Once Shirley and I were back on the road again we talked and decided to give the money to the Gift Shop. Shirley and I shared our story with Department Secretary Sandie and handed her the \$100 for the Gift Shop. That's how two ALA members in their matching purple American Legion "family first" membership shirts sharing the spirit of good will with our message of service to anyone who asks received a \$100 donation from a total stranger.

-- Sharon Thiemecke

March is Community Service Month

The Community Service Program promotes the American Legion Auxiliary's visibility within our communities through our commitment to community, state, and nation. By being visible in our communities, the Community Service Program demonstrates who we are, what we do, and why we matter.



JOANNE JOACHIM

While building community awareness of the ALA and its mission, ALA members serve as brand advocates (Goal 5 of the 5 year Centennial Strategic Plan) through involvement in community activities.

What can you do – become visible within your community. Work with and invite other organizations to work on service projects to heighten awareness of the ALA's local efforts to support not only our veterans and service members and families as well as members of the community.

National Volunteer Week is coming up the week of April 15-21, 2018. It is an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers/members who lend their time, talent, voice, and support to causes they care about in their community. Their stories serve to inspire others to take action and discover their collective power to unite in making a difference.

National Volunteer Week in the United States was first established by Presidential Proclamation 4288 and signed by Richard Nixon in 1974. Former President George H.W. Bush showed his support of American volunteering in his 1991 State of the Union address, commending "a volunteer's generous gesture," and calling it "an idea that is simply right." A new National Volunteer Week proclamation is issued by the American president each year.

National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers/members who lend their time, talent, voice, and support to causes they care about in their community and around the world. Their stories serve to inspire others to take action and discover their collective power to unite in making a difference.

At your next meeting give yourselves a hand.

Keep track of your hours spent on Community involvement projects. Your hours do not have to specifically involve veterans or service members. I'd like to not see any reports with the dreaded "did not participate" on them.

Don't forget the ALA patches with the magnetic back. Check with the Department office; they had available 2" Auxiliary patches that would fasten to your shirt, blouse, sweatshirt with a magnet. They were \$5 each. So no need to buy a new shirt. Wear your patch when you are out in the community representing the ALA at a community service project.

I found this quote by Elizabeth Andrew in an ALA eBulletin: "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

Feb. 21, 2018, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 2/22/2017
One	5,000	4,076	81.52%	4,345
Two	4,924	4,068	82.62%	4,201
Three	4,411	3,722	84.38%	3,733
Four	720	587	81.53%	627
Five	824	615	74.64%	662
Six	6,042	5,159	85.39%	5,324
Seven	3,934	3,261	82.89%	3,347
Eight	1,628	1,308	80.34%	1,288
Nine	4,344	3,542	81.54%	3,747
Ten	5,159	4,078	79.05%	4,417
1982	160	151	94.38%	148
Totals	37,146	30,567	82.29%	31,839

4 seasons

I BUY AND COLLECT VINTAGE 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

Attention Veterans!

This is your northern Minnesota resort. Barrier-free and open 12 months a year. Gateway to the BWCA. 800-777-7538
email: vetlake@frontiernet.net
www.veteransonthelakeresort.org
All cabins have a lake view.

VETERANS on the LAKE RESORT

Ely, Minnesota

RESORT FOR DISABLED VETERANS, ACTIVE DUTY AND ABLE BODIED VETERANS, DISABLED GENERAL PUBLIC AND FAMILIES.

Minnesota DRIVE HOME YOUR SUPPORT!
SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

Purchase a "Support Our Troops" Plate.
Call: 651-4TROOPS
Visit: www.minnesotaveteran.org

Innovation Comes Standard
Driven to be Different
WE SUPPORT OUR VETERANS
CUMMINGS MOBILITY
VISIT OUR LOCATIONS
Alberville: 763-497-0103
Burnsville: 952-435-8889
Roseville: 651-633-7887
Des Moines 515-207-3555

Versatility Meets Value
BraunAbility
Life is a Moving Experience

Mailbox full?



Get your Legionnaire by email.

Go to mnlegion.org

Reverse Mortgages

The future doesn't have to be uncertain.

The lower the Margin, the more you qualify for. Our Margins start at 1.75%

Call or email me for a free consumer guide and a personal quote.

Let a retired active duty veteran you can trust show you how you may benefit from a Reverse Mortgage.



MIKE KRAUS
Loan Officer
NMLS ID #283509



Mike Kraus Serving MN and WI
7365 Kirkwood Court North, Suite 300
Maple Grove, MN 55369
763-355-8540 mkraus@muihomeloans.com

INSPIRED BY YOUR SERVICE.

For more than 90 years, USAA has supported the military community, and we're proud to honor the members of The American Legion. USAA is committed to stand alongside you wherever life, or the military takes you.

1-877-699-2654
USAA.COM/LEGION



USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. The American Legion receives financial support for this sponsorship. © 2016 USAA. 231644-0716