

## Department purchases car for veteran in need

**Veteran and mother Brandy Steller hugs New Prague Post 45 Commander Linda Dvorak on Feb. 4. This story appeared on the National American Legion website, too.**



**NEW PRAGUE** — An Army veteran and mother of two fell on hard times, then her 2005 Buick Terraza van with over 200,000 miles on it needed thousands of dollars in repairs.

She didn't know what to do. On Friday, Feb. 4, The American Legion came to Brandy Steller's rescue.

For \$4,500 it bought her a 2000 Nissan Maxima with 90,000 miles

on it from The Car Lot in New Prague. In addition to knocking \$1,000 off the price, it donated \$500 to her.

"I am going to drive it everywhere," she said. "I can go places without worrying about breaking down. I have heat! I am so happy."

In the paperwork, Steller explained her military service, her difficult family situation and her mounting bills to Scott County

Veteran Service Officer Marissa LaCourt, who brought the matter to New Prague American Legion Post 45 Commander Linda Dvorak.

Dvorak then filed paperwork to request funds from Minnesota American Legion Foundation's Veterans Assistance Fund. The fund is set up to address situations just like this.

Department Adjutant Mike Maxa  
**Continued on Page 2**



Fairmont Post 36 members are hanging classic and contemporary decorations at the new post home.

## Fairmont stands up new post home

The American Legion was recipient of a very special donation

**FAIRMONT** — Lee C. Prentice Post 36 of Fairmont will celebrate its new home on Wednesday, April 13, during a dinner stop on the National Commander's Tour of Minnesota.

Members are busy moving belongings from storage and into the new post, hanging decorations on the walls and setting up TV sets, flags, tables, chairs and the works at 300 Downtown Plaza, getting  
**Continued on Page 3**

## Battle of broken knee

Afghanistan veteran endures tumors and surgeries during time in service

By Tim Engstrom

**B**OVEY — Some battles are fought on the operating table. Such is the story of Peter Dubey, a Legionnaire leading a post way up in God's Country, where the lakes are abundant and the woods are all-around.

He is the commander of Lawrence Lake Post 476. It's a rural post — rural as in not in a city — to the northeast of Grand Rapids. It's in Lawrence Township, and there is a scenic body of water called Lawrence Lake.

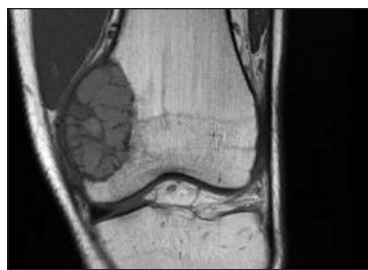
Dubey, 39, graduated from Appleton East High School in 2001. If you visit his country home, you find he's a major Green Bay Packers fan.

He joined the Wisconsin National Guard in 2000 because he had a longtime interest in the military. His mother is from Poland, and, as a boy, he often heard of the freedoms they didn't enjoy under communist rule.

His father, an American linguist fluent in Slavic languages, met her in the 1980s when he stopped at an apple orchard while working for the federal government on American-Polish relations. When he was able to stop in, he would leave contraband, such as vinyl records. They wed, and she came to Wisconsin.



Peter Dubey smiles while standing in the center of his home along Itasca County Road 59. He served in the military intelligence field while in the Army. He is the commander of Lawrence Lake Post 476.



MRI imagery on Feb. 7, 2011, showing a giant cell tumor.

**D**ubey's basic training was the summer before his senior year of high school. The summer after his senior year, he went to training to become a mortarman. He drilled in Appleton with the 32nd Infantry "Broken Arrow" Division's HQ Company.

In 2006, Dubey wanted to go into radiology, and he signed on to the Army Reserve's Medical Corps. However, after three months, word

came: "We have too many."

He opted to go active duty instead. But at MEPS in Milwaukee, he found out the Army didn't need radiologists, either, but it did need intel.

"My concern was I wanted something I could use when I got out," Dubey said.

He became a 96B, military intelligence analyst. That could translate to future work for a three-letter acronym  
**Continued on Page 10**

## Video-gaming veterans ask questions of service officer

**PLYMOUTH** — A little over a month after The American Legion took its first step into a new arena, American Legion Department of Minnesota Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller was introduced to a new audience hungry to learn about the benefits they may be entitled to — or have been previously denied.

On the evening of Friday, Feb. 4, Wolfsteller joined with Regiment Gaming VA Officer @Blackjack\_DVC more than an hour on Twitch for a Department of Veterans Affairs assistance workshop for military veterans and servicemembers. The pair talked about

various benefits available to veterans, as well as how to get them or reapply if previously denied.

Regiment Gaming founder/CEO Chris Earl, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who left the military in 2020, said Regiment's Discord server has a VA health channel that receives around 100 questions weekly about using VA for care and benefits.

"Any kind of question you can think of. Just so many," Earl said. "So, I was like, why not make it a live event and bring on somebody that's probably a little bit more knowledgeable, a little  
**Continued on Page 2**

## TAL's Physician of the Year is doctor at St. Cloud VA

**ST. CLOUD** — The American Legion Headquarters in Indianapolis on Jan. 31 notified Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough, several VA officials and Minnesota American Legion Commander Tom Fernlund — of St. Cloud — of some news.

Dr. Joel N. Syvrud of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System has been selected as The American Legion's 2021 Physician of the Year. The award will be announced at the annual Washington Conference, which is happening virtually this year. It takes place Feb. 27 to March 2.

The physical award will be presented

at a later date.

Syvrud has been a podiatrist there for 22 years. He was nominated by Dr. Alfonso Alarcon, the director of surgery and specialty care at the St. Cloud VA.

"He treats every patient as if they are family. He listens to their concerns, answering any questions they have. He is a compassionate provider," Alarcon wrote in the nomination. "He provides excellent palliative foot care for complicated patients who have diagnosis such as diabetes and neuropathy. He is attentive to detail and notices subtle changes in veterans' conditions."

## Department of Corrections



In the February issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire, the back-page answer code to the Page 9 insignia quiz was missing Oklahoma. The answer for Oklahoma was P. We hope you enjoyed the quiz.

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## 'It gives me hope where I thought there wasn't any'

Continued from Page 1

and his staff verified the paperwork and cut the check directly to The Car Lot for the Maxima.

Steller, who lives in New Prague, has a boy, 13, and a girl, 9, and now she can drive them to school and activities, and she can get to work at Dairy Queen. She is a 2005 graduate of Prior Lake High School. She served as an MP in the Army in 2006-07.

She described The American Legion as a generous organization. She is now a member of Post 45 and intends to volunteer with the Legion helping other veterans and the community.

"It gives me hope where I thought there wasn't any," Steller said. "I am excited to volunteer to pay it back."

LaCourt, a Navy veteran, said it is the CVSO's role to make connections to where help is available. Knowing resources available with veterans organizations is critical to the job.

Steller shed a few tears and hugged LaCourt and Dvorak.

"That was so amazing," Dvorak said. "I am so thankful we were able to help her out and get her going in the right direction."

Rob Krautkremer, owner of The Car Lot, said the \$4,500 price tag includes the tax and all. He said his dealership typically offers discounts to veterans.

"I do as much as I can to help the veterans," he said.



From left are The Car Lot owner Rob Krautkremer, Army veteran Brandy Steller, Post 45 Commander Linda Dvorak and Scott County Veteran Service Officer Marissa LaCourt.



Army veteran Brandy Steller hugs Navy veteran Marissa LaCourt while Air Force veteran Linda Dvorak reacts.



Veteran Brandy Steller hugs Rob Krautkremer after his business gave her \$500, in addition to selling the car the Legion purchased for her.

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## Legion teams with Regiment Gaming

Continued from Page 1

more experienced. I figured (The American Legion) was the organization to talk to."

The American Legion and Regiment Gaming previously had teamed up on a successful online gaming tournament collaboration. Wolfsteller, a service-disabled U.S. Army combat veteran, said getting in front of a new, younger audience presented a great opportunity for both sharing information and raising awareness about The American Legion.

"I think this is a pretty neat opportunity to reach that younger demographic: currently serving military members who might be under the age of 30 ... that are not engaged to understand what (veteran service organizations) are chartered by Congress to do," Wolfsteller said. "That network is already established through the Regiment Gaming community. For The American Legion to partner with such a nonprofit ... and present to them using their platform is just genius. That's just my opinion. Who else is going to put a network of young veterans to together, allowing The American Legion to come in to present to them nationally?"

Wolfsteller said once he and



Department of Minnesota Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller, right, takes questions over the video gaming platform Twitch.

@Blackjack\_DVC started the conversation, the workshop began to roll. "And as soon as the dialog started, the comments just started rolling in, like, 'hey, I've been through that scenario. What do we do if we get a denial? What are the appeal lanes?'" he said. "And I talked about how the Legion supports legislation and why you should be a member to grow our numbers and make our voice stronger. It was pretty cool."

The video of the workshop has been viewed more than 270 times, while dozens watching the live stream either commented or asking questions.

"We had this event planned, and then we brought (the Legion) on last minute," Earl

said. "I'd love to do more of these events, maybe a once-a-month-type workshop that's an hour or two-hour event. I think with more notice we'd have had a lot more viewers. We had about 48 hours. On events like this I typically advertise for two weeks."

Earl said events like the workshop with The American Legion can fill a void for those transitioning from the military to the veteran community. "There's so much information out there, and a lot of these (veterans) aren't real well informed," he said. "You're really not set up for success when you get that veteran status, so I think events like this are very beneficial to current servicemembers and veterans."

# American Legion National Commander's Tour

Please call or email to reserve your spot.

Location	Meal	Time	Contact
<b>Monday, April 11</b> Arcade-Phalen Post 577	dinner*	6 p.m.	651-329-7369, mrman48@comcast.net
<b>Tuesday, April 12</b> Red Wing Post 54	breakfast	8 a.m.	(see email address below)
Dodge Center Post 384	lunch	noon	RWPost54NationalCmdrBreakfast@gmail.com (by April 1)
Owatonna Post 77	dinner*	6 p.m.	507-259-7241 507-213-7517 (Chuck Stone, leave msg.)
<b>Wednesday, April 13</b> Austin Post 91	breakfast	8 a.m.	507-437-1151
Blue Earth Post 89	lunch	noon	507-525-1052 (daytime, ask for Paul) 507-525-7713 (between 5-8 p.m.)
Fairmont Post 36	dinner*	6 p.m.	stevfosness@gmail.com
<b>Thursday, April 14</b> Brewster Post 464	breakfast	8 a.m.	605-310-8013 (Curt Luitjens)
Pipestone Post 6	dinner*	6 p.m.	507-825-3211 (leave message)

\* includes 5 p.m. social hour



Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness and member Tim Mailahn hold an American Legion Preamble display while unpacking boxes at the new post home.

## Continued from Page 1

set for the special event. "This location is for the veterans. We will not depend on the public coming in drinking and eating," said Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness, who this year is the 2nd District commander, too.

For example, the VA had sought telehealth centers. The new post home will have a telehealth room set up with a high-def TV set, cameras and speakers so veterans can speak with VA doctors.

The American Red Cross will use the main room for blood drives. The post home will act as a resource center, with information on how veterans can access benefits and come to American Legion events.

"It's kind of a work in progress," Fosness said.

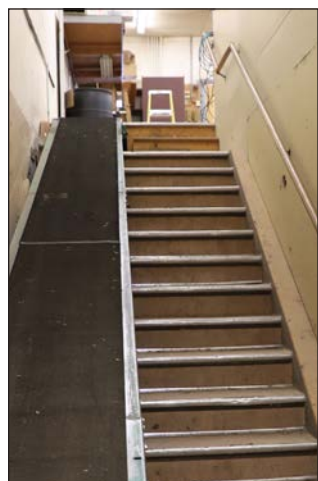
The first event is March 5, when Post 36 hosts a 2nd District training session by the Department of Minnesota Media & Communications Committee's Kristy Janigo of Osseo Post 172.

So how did this new home come to be? It all goes back to the incredible story of Thomas Jerome Krumholz, who lived in Fairmont until he was 4 years old.

Fairmont once had one of the largest post homes in the state, maybe even the largest.

At 1101 N. State St., there was the main hall that could seat 850, plus its bar. There was the side hall, seating 450 plus its bar. And then there was the front bar, which could hold 250. There were 38 people on the payroll.

"Our liquor delivery was bigger than the city-owned liquor store," Fosness said. "In its heyday, Fairmont had two liquor licenses — the VFW and Legion. Now there are 32 in town."



Having a conveyor belt to the basement sure helps.



**Talk about old furniture. Post 36 members found a table with "G.A.R." written beneath a drawer and The American Legion emblem on its tabletop. GAR stands for Grand Army of the Republic, a veterans organization of Union soldiers and sailors who served in the Civil War. It is best-known for its push for veteran pensions and making Memorial Day a national holiday. Five presidents were GAR members. It peaked at 410,000 members in 1890.**

Post 36 sold the property in 2005. It was just before charitable gambling rules changed to allow the use of funds for building upkeep. The front bar became a Pizza Ranch. The rest is occupied by an agricultural sales company.

Post 36 leased space at 106 E. First St. to operate a restaurant and bar, and it served as the post home. Their time as restaurateurs came to an end in 2016. The space today is the Blazer Bar & Grill. Post 36 began meeting at a rented facility and focused on the Four Pillars.

In 2018, the post learned of a Marine from California who was to be buried in a Fairmont cemetery: Krumholz. Members provided an honor guard.

Two months later, an attorney called and said Krumholz left part of the estate to Post 36, Fosness said. In fact, it was half the estate. The other half was to go to Krumholz's wife.

"What?!" was the general reaction.

The total was \$650,000 in cash, with \$1.7 million in property.

Since, the \$650K has grown to \$1 million. Fairmont Post 36 became part owner of a holding company that has property in California and Arizona. Part of its holdings include shares of the Huntington Beach, Calif., waterfront.

Fosness gets reports from the harbor master on things like how the piers are holding up.

"We turned into a corporation overnight, and it's like, 'Holy mackerel!'"

Member Tim Mailahn said there is more. The post is on track to receive the half Krumholz's wife has after she passes.

"We are very blessed as a post," he said.

Post 36 purchased 3 1/2 acres of land on the north end of town that future veterans could use for a new post home if they choose, Fosness said. The land is on the main road through the city and not far from the Interstate 90 interchange and could be valuable for development in the future.

The new post home, however, is downtown. Post 36 has

a five-year lease with the first option to buy at the end of the lease. The location had been a plumbing shop. It can be used for community gatherings, too.

The post is hanging speakers, wall displays such as the Preamble, TV screens and, in the windows, patriotic decorations.

"To me, this is a weird Legion hall," Mailahn said. "You can't come here for lunch."

After the land purchase, from the rest of the funds, the post spends the interest.

"He gave it to The American Legion because he was a veteran. We put the Four Pillars as what we need to give money to," Fosness said. "We gave \$46,000 in \$1,000 scholarships to students from the five high schools in Martin County."

Post 36 supports trap shooting, softball, baseball, basketball, football and other local teams, and Post 36 has exceeded membership goals the past two years. It donates Hy-Vee grocery store gift cards to local veterans. It helps veterans struggling with problems. One time, they paid for car repairs. Another time, the post helped a veteran catch up on utility bills. A veteran who recently was released from prison fell behind on rent. The post helped him.

The post aids a local soup

kitchen called The Shepherd's In. (Yes, it spells inn like "in.") In addition to nourishment, the place offers temporary shelter.

The Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce has a program to bring non-teachers to teach about the community and Americansim at local schools. The post sponsors part of that program.

"When we had Veterans Day at the high school, every one of those kids thanked us," Fosness said.

The post also visits Legion members in area rest homes, giving \$50 to their spending accounts three times a year. If they are struggling to pay a Legion

membership, the post helps out.

The post typically has revenue from charitable gambling machines, but right now it is searching for a new location to install them.

The new Post 36 home has 3,400 square feet on the main level, with 2,600 for the main meeting space and the rest for offices. Another 3,400 square feet are available in the basement, with a conveyor system to aid with bringing items up and down the stairs.

"We are looking forward to hosting the national commander in our new post home," Fosness said. "It's going to be a special night."



This nondescript building will have windows decorated with American Legion emblems as American flags. It doesn't look like a post, but it will by the end of March.

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# Legion makes difference on daily basis

Each year, district and department commanders and presidents choose a project to raise money and awareness of a charity or program.

The decision can be easy for some and stressful for others.

My project decision is related to being the department commander and having the honor of promoting and sharing the great things our organization is doing every day. Charity starts at home.

The American Legion has numerous programs and projects that are in need of funding and promoting at national, department, district and post level.

One very important note is that donations go directly to the program or project. Post and district officer elections are coming up fast. Consider stepping up and getting involved in the future of The American Legion.

Post and district members should also be actively promoting the benefits of being

## Commander's Column

Tom Fernlund



involved in leadership positions. My wife and I recently made a trip to California to help an active-duty military family member with plans for being away for an extended time.

Every day our military men and women deal with the possibility of their normal daily lives being put on hold to travel in support of defending our country. The American Legion has a large network of members throughout our country available to assist our military members and help reduce some of the stress.

Families are left behind. Bills still need to be paid, and many things we take for granted are put on hold.

Veterans Day on the Hill is scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, at the State Capitol in St.

Paul. Make plans to attend this important event. This is a very important event and opportunity to stand up and show your support and interest in veteran issues.

Happy 103rd Birthday, American Legion! It happens Tuesday, March 15.

American Legion members play important roles in the positive direction of our communities and nation daily.

Veterans Strengthening America!

*Tom Fernlund of St. Cloud is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota.*

# Mail Call

Send letters to the editor for Mail Call to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org).

*Editor's note: All letters are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily The American Legion or The Minnesota Legionnaire. We do favor dialogue as key to the American form of government.*

## There is a serious blood shortage now

This letter to the editor contains information I have come across from the American Red Cross and is pertinent to our mission as Legionnaires:

**Donate Blood to Save Lives:** There may be different reasons behind the blood requirement of an ill person. Maybe he has met with an accident, has undergone an operation or is suffering from an illness like anemia or cancer. Your donated blood goes on to help this affected person in overcoming his critical situation and regain new life. It symbolizes a helpful and responsible gesture not only to the person in need, but also toward society at large.

**Advantageous for the Body:** Blood donation is not at all harmful for the body; rather the four or five pints of blood that can be donated every year by both men and women ensures that you remain fit and fine. Firstly, the cell depletion that occurs due to blood donation, forces the body to produce new cells. Plasma, the fluid portion of blood is replenished within 24 hours. Red Cells need about four to six weeks for complete replacement. Secondly, the body is armed against a host of diseases ranging from liver and heart problems to even cancer. This benefit comes from depleting extra iron deposits through blood donation. Thus, donating blood is in another way, a step toward revitalizing your body. Thirdly, giving blood is an act of selfless volunteerism, proven to uplift one's psychological well-being. Knowing you are helping others has been shown to have a positive effect on happiness.

**Blood Donation is the Sole Way of Obtaining Blood:** Blood can neither be artificially produced nor can it be stored beyond a definite time.

Amid the three components of blood, plasma can be preserved for years (frozen), red blood cells can be stored for 42 days, and platelets can be kept only for five days. Consequently, the demand for blood is always on the high in hospitals. The only way to meet this critical patient need is through voluntary donation.

Blood drives in your post are very important, and there is a severe shortage with everything going on. This is due to the continuing pandemic, to staff shortages and to an increased need. Right now, we are facing an emergency blood shortage. Hospital demand continues to outpace donations — your help is vital.

It's important to know that all individuals at blood drives must wear a face mask regardless of vaccination status.

Donors may still donate after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Knowing the name of the manufacturer is critical in determining blood donation eligibility.

**Terry Larson  
Chairman  
Department Blood Donor  
Program Committee  
Forest Lake Post 225**

## Letter provides facts and good explanation

Many thanks to you for choosing to print Mr. Bruce Montplaisir's letter to the editor in last month's "Mail Call." It was about U.S. military withdrawals, beginning with Vietnam through the Afghanistan withdrawal last August.

Moreover, I much appreciated his various detailed explanations. That he illustrated his presentation with factual anecdotal evidence and data made his opinion piece both more understandable and persuasive. And this set it apart from, in my

observations, a majority of letters in various newspapers.

Another crucial value of this letter is how well it calmly and clearly serves as both a response and a reminder to the numerous, strident critics of said recent U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

**Jim Cox  
Lino Lakes Post 566**

## Let's not argue over way 'Taps' is formatted

After a 20-year career in the military spanning both Army and Air Force, I see repeated challenges within the ranks of The American Legion and VFW posts for that matter. By ranks I mean everyone, and it comes at a cost of alienating members and potential ones.

I also fully support members rights to express their disagreements and suggestions for changes or compromises. Though, at times I see discussions such as the uproar over the new way "Taps" is being displayed in this publication as being time spent unwisely.

Everyone who serves is an equal in my eyes. Whether one has medals or was a past commander is worthy of praise, but it doesn't make someone more valuable than another. We all did our respected roles in the military, and we all do today with varying degrees of participation at the posts.

The point of "Taps" is to recognize that we lost a fellow comrade — a comrade who gave service to their country and is being honored in front of all to admire. It's a simple task and a list that I read every month. I look at the ages, period and branch of service and affiliated post. I don't dwell on the continuous years because it doesn't matter to me. What matters is their name.

# Power can be found in blessings

If you know an Irish person or have Irish lineage, you might know these benevolent words: "May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine gentle upon your face, the rain fall soft on your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand."

It is a blessing. Blessings are more than a hope or a wish; they have influential power.

How many of you still hear positive acknowledgements from childhood? You're such a nice girl; you are good at school; you did a fantastic job today!

Affirmations mold you. These types of blessings inspire hope; increase safety, build trust, and layer on love.

The verbalized written language is comprised of organizing letters into words to express thoughts, ideas, wishes, intent. They can be ordered in a multitude of way. There is power in the syntax.

Written words are not the end of extending a blessing (or a curse). How many of you think in color, music, words or maybe images? Last month our thoughts might have been

## Chaplain's Corner

Kelley Adelsman



expressed in colors of white, pink and red. We might have bestowed flowers and chocolates upon another.

Many American Legion posts have yummy steak and shrimp dinner events around Valentine's Day. On Fridays, we are encouraged to wear red to convey are solidarity and support of those in our U.S. Armed Forces.

At the other end of our thoughtful intents are curses. These thoughts pushed out into air are aimed to harm. There is power in the word.

When I recount the curses I have heard throughout my life, not one is lined with blue skies, green pasture and sunshine.

What we think about who we are to God is shaped by our historical religious culture; current belief practice and life experiences.

Is God a source of blessing or cursing for you? What do we want to convey to the world through our words?

When I hear Legionnaires

speaking, it is apparent we are a hopeful group. At my

monthly post meetings, the chaplain invokes blessings upon the meeting, those present and the work that we aim to do.

We are an organization founded on communal hope and healing. Blessings heal curses and curses destroy blessings.

I have seen many hug, laugh, hold one another's hands and be present when words are not needed — all blessings. When we come together and recite the precious words of the Preamble: "For God and Country we associate ourselves together," may they always be a blessing to ourselves and others.

*Kelley Adelsman of Pine Island is the chaplain for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.*

It represents something that I was raised to respect by my parents as a young boy. Memorial Day wasn't just a day — it had meaning. And "Taps" in this publication has the same meaning to me no matter what format.

Let's concentrate on the names and what they represented rather than their medals, awards, office held, or rank while they served, etc.

In the end, we're all the same! At a time when memberships in Legion and VFW posts are declining, let's be aware that change isn't always a must, but at times it's needed to propel survival of the future ranks.

Too many times I see new service members at posts alienated or turned off by "this is how we always have done it."

I learned this the hard way in 2005 as a 42-year-old soldier in Iraq sharing a sleeping space with three 20-somethings. Over time, I also learned to adjust some of my old ways of doing things to better serve alongside the 17- and 18-year-olds I was leading. Hopefully, some of what I taught them becomes part of their career just as the things they taught me as a leader who failed at times.

I salute all of you and especially those listed in "Taps" — even in this new format.

**John Giese  
Golden Valley Post 523**

## A poem for today's motivation

Thank you for 02:49  
Thank you through my next finish line.

For Never saying Never.  
And for never saying, "Can't" Always a new Challenge.  
You always lead the chant.  
You pushed me on to victory.  
The likes of which most never

see.  
My Winning Lap, among the Stars.

I even got to race fast cars.  
My Duty now to Thank You.  
So, with all of me I say,  
"Thank you for my three right feet,  
My Joy;  
and your help to guide my way."

**Keith Deutsch  
New Prague Post 45**

## Why vaccinate against virus?

It's been reported the the CEO of Moderna Stéphane Bancel has admitted that so-called vaccine may not be effective against the latest variant! Well, surprise surprise!

But yet they still want to keep injecting us with their poison! Follow the dollars.

How many more variants will there be and how many more  
**Continued on Page 6**

# The Minnesota Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Official publication of  
The American Legion  
Department of Minnesota

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# Taps



Please send "Taps" entries to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org) or mail to 20 W. 12th St., Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155, or visit [mnlegion.org/taps](http://mnlegion.org/taps). Thank you.

Name of Deceased	Age	Date of Death	Branch	Era	Cont. Years	Post
Aakre, Davis V.	93	1/23/22	Air Force	Korea	17	Rochester Post 92
Alger, Richard H.	89	1/15/22	Army	Korea	4	Austin Post 91
Allhiser, LaVern "Lefty"	89	1/31/22	Army	Korea	44	Rochester Post 92
Anderson, William V.	unavail.	1/20/22	Army	Vietnam	28	Apple Valley Post 1776
Avery, Kenneth J.	75	1/18/22	Army	Vietnam	28	Coon Rapids Post 334
Baer, Roger M.	87	1/30/22	Marines	Vietnam	3	Lewiston Post 90
Baker, Bernard E.	89	2/10/22	Army	Korea	66	Edgerton Post 42
Bartosh, Leo A.	92	2/5/22	Army NG	Korea	70	Windom Post 206
Beck, Robert J.	76	1/22/22	Navy	Vietnam	3	Shakopee Post 2
Berry, David A.	55	12/29/21	Navy	Persian Gulf	21	Evansville Post 188
Blattner, Lloyd A.	84	1/18/21	Army	Vietnam	17	Millville Valley Post 579
Blawat, Rafine A.	92	2/9/21	Army	Korea	66	Greenbush Post 88
Borrell, Daniel J.	82	12/31/21	Air Force	Vietnam	16	Waverly Post 305
Boser, Milton G.	90	12/24/21	Army	Korea	32	Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
Bourgoin, Stanley J.	71	12/29/21	Army	Vietnam	8	St. Paul Park Post 98
Bronk, George J.	81	1/9/22	Army	Vietnam	34	Millville Valley Post 579
Buschena, Arthur J.	96	2/2/22	Navy	WWII	30	Fulda Post 318
Cameron, Robert P.	87	10/13/21	Army	Korea	65	Hallock Post 63
Note: He was the Kittson County veteran service officer for 17 years.						
Carlstrom, Lawrence G.	91	1/21/22	Army	Korea	54	Aitkin Post 86
Christensen, Allen E.	82	1/24/22	Air Force	Vietnam	4	Albert Lea Post 56
Cutting, Lloyd A.	82	11/7/21	Air Force	Vietnam	48	Millville Valley Post 579
Dahn, James	unavail.	unavail.	unavail.	Vietnam	26	St. Paul Park Post 98
Derewenko, Fred D.	80	9/9/20	Navy	Vietnam	30	Grand Marais Post 413
Dewald, Edwin E.	88	1/22/22	Army	Korea	41	Moorhead Post 21
Dobmeyer, Delmar J.	89	7/3/21	Navy	Korea	40	Alexandria Post 87
Doyce, Robert O.	79	1/1/22	Army	Vietnam	46	Easton Post 569
Drabek, James	83	7/18/21	Air Force	Vietnam	24	Shakopee Post 2
Drussell, Gerald L.	81	1/22/22	Navy	Vietnam	25	Winona Post 9
Note: He served aboard the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt.						
Engels, Gordon L.	87	1/23/22	Navy	Korea	52	Anoka Post 102
Enger, William O. Sr.	92	1/18/22	Army	Korea	55	Janesville Post 281
Erickson, Rodney C.	80	3/16/21	Army	Vietnam	42	Greenbush Post 88
Erstad, Donald D.	93	2/10/22	Army	WWII	26	Alexandria Post 87
Espelund, James O.	68	1/27/22	Army	Vietnam	16	Litchfield Post 104
Feltman, Donald L.	76	2/15/22	Army	Vietnam	17	Round Lake Post 461
Ford, John H.	76	DOD	Navy	Vietnam	47	Walker Post 134
Fredrickson, Robert D.	89	1/19/22	Army	Korea	47	Hector Post 135
Gay, Jeffrey L.	68	1/26/22	Army	Vietnam	34	Marshall Post 113
Note: He was 7th District commander 2018-19 and 7th District adjutant 2015-17. He had been a Jackson County veterans service officer since 2018. For 10 years, he had been a Department of Defense contractor assisting military families and servicemembers for deployment, absence and return.						
Gerdes, Glenn	87	1/4/22	Navy	Vietnam	47	Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
Gertsema, Alfred H.	89	1/14/22	Army	Korea	53	Slayton Post 64
Goblirsch, Francis J.	94	1/28/22	Army	WWII	47	Wabasso Post 263
Goerke, Theodore E.	91	1/14/22	Army	Korea	45	Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
Greenwood, Harold W.	89	11/19/20	Navy	Korea	30	Grand Marais Post 413
Gronner, Eric W.	76	1/3/22	Navy	Vietnam	52	Underwood Post 489
Hajek, Roman J.	65	9/12/21	Army	L-G/P. Gulf	26	Glenville Post 264
Heinrichs, Robert J.	88	1/29/22	Army	Korea	18	Lismore Post 636
Helgeson, Wayne H.	94	1/8/22	Navy	WWII	56	Lyle Post 105
Herrnberger, Maximilian II	82	12/29/21	Navy	Vietnam	32	Cambridge Post 290
Hinkle, Max E.	76	12/25/20	Marines	Vietnam	3	Grand Marais Post 413
Hodge, Donald L.	79	1/22/22	Army	Vietnam	50	East Grand Forks Post 157
Hoyme, Clayton M.	89	1/21/22	Army	Korea	4	Moorhead Post 21
Huber, John A.	96	2/5/22	Navy	WWII	5	Austin Post 91
Hudalla, Andrew E.	76	1/13/22	Army	Vietnam	10	Long Prairie Post 12
Hunstad, Larry D.	81	1/20/22	Army	Vietnam	31	New Ulm Post 132
Jensen, Eugene E.	85	2/4/22	Navy	Korea	18	New London Post 537
Jensen, James E.	91	7/12/21	Navy	Korea	20	Alexandria Post 87
Johannes, LeRoy E.	77	1/25/22	Army	Vietnam	19	Holdingford Post 211
Johnson, Michael D.	57	11/19/21	Marines	Persian Gulf	11	Minnesota Post 1982
Kalahar, Patrick J.	81	1/25/22	Army NG	Vietnam/Gulf	52	Little Fall Post 46
Kalla, Gerald A.	91	1/4/22	Air Force	Korea	51	Waite Park Post 428
Kapphahn, Keith F.	94	6/5/21	Army	WWII	47	Greenbush Post 88
Kennedy, Jay M.	54	1/28/22	Army Res.	Persian Gulf	26	Walker Post 134
Ketchmark, Franklin D.	89	1/9/22	Army	Korea	39	Denham Post 361
Kirchewitz, Charles C.	79	1/30/22	Navy	Vietnam	36	Dent Post 148
Note: He was a radarman on an admiral's staff during the Cuban Missile Crisis.						
Kirkland, Dean W.	89	2/12/22	Air Force	Korea	38	Red Wing Post 54
Klinski, Lyle G.	91	2/6/22	Army	Korea	23	Caledonia Post 191
Koch, Lowell	87	1/17/22	Army	Korea	40	St. James Post 33
Kruger, John P.	53	1/21/22	Marines	Persian Gulf	8	Austin Post 91
Kucera, Burton D.	93	1/19/22	Air Force	Korea	70	Brownton Post 143
Kukowski, Dennis R.	74	1/11/22	Marines	Vietnam	53	Lewiston Post 90
Kyostia, Robert C.	71	2/8/22	Army	Vietnam	6	Walker Post 134
Labeau, Christopher T.	72	1/15/22	Army	Vietnam	12	New London Post 537
Lauermann, Alan L.	66	1/26/22	Army	GWOT	27	St. Francis Post 622
Lawrence, Sidney B.	94	1/18/22	Army	WWII	47	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He was an Army MP in Kitzingen, Germany, then was a Minnesota game warden for many years.						
Lee, David M.	81	1/27/21	Army	Vietnam	39	Anoka Post 102
Lee, James M.	74	12/15/21	Navy	Vietnam	51	Mpls.-Richfield Post 435
Legatt, Harvey V.	74	1/30/22	Army	Vietnam	4	St. Stephen Post 221
Note: He served a tour in Korea/Thailand and two tours in Vietnam, earning two Bronze Stars.						
Lembke, Charles H.	87	1/29/22	Army	Korea/VN	44	Cloquet Post 262
Note: He served two tours in Vietnam and later was active in historical reenactments.						
Loechler, Edward P.	79	2/11/22	Air Force	Vietnam	53	Hackensack Post 202
Lund, Duane W.	98	11/18/21	Navy	WWII	54	Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172
Mahoney, David F.	72	2/5/22	Army	Vietnam	9	Red Wing Post 54
Manbeck, Keith P.	101	11/24/21	Army	WWII	58	Little Falls Post 46
Martin, Richard J. Sr.	70	1/25/22	Army	Vietnam	30	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He served two tours in Vietnam and was charter member and captain of the Post 212 Legion Riders.						
McAllister, Patrick T.	unavail.	unavail.	Army	Vietnam	18	St. Paul Park Post 98
McCullen, Timothy L.	88	10/21/21	Air Force	Korea	7	Minnesota Post 1982
Miller, Edwin F.	91	2/18/22	Air Force	Korea/VN	53	Northfield Post 84

Continued on Page 7

## All-Family Events Calendar

**Feb. 27-March 2:** Washington Conference, virtual  
**March 12:** TAL & ALA DEC meetings and Appreciation Rally, Forest Lake Post 225  
**March 15:** American Legion Birthday  
**March 15:** Start of Buddy Check Week  
**March 19:** SAL Spring Conf., St. Augusta Post 621  
**April 9:** Department Junior Conference, Willmar Post 167  
**April 11-14:** National Commander's Tour of Minnesota  
**April 21-24:** Minn. American Legion College, Camp Ripley  
**April 22-24:** National Oratorical Finals  
**April 23:** President's Testimonial, Osseo Post 172  
**May 4-5:** Spring Meetings at Legion HQ, Indianapolis  
**May 8:** 8th District Convention, location TBD  
**May 21:** 1st District Convention, Albert Lea Post 56  
**May 21:** 3rd District Convention, Forest Lake Post 225  
**May 21:** 4th District Convention, North St. Paul Post 39  
**June 3-4:** 2nd District Convention, New Ulm Post 134  
**June 3-4:** 6th District Convention, Ironton Post 443  
**June 3-4:** 10th District Convention, Milaca Post 178  
**June 11:** 7th District Convention, Montevideo Post 59  
**June 12-18:** Minnesota Boys State, St. John's University  
**June 12-18:** Minnesota Girls State, Bethel University  
**June 18:** Commander's Testimonial, Moose Lodge 1400, Waite Park  
**June 24-26:** SAL Detachment Convention, Legionville  
**July 13-16:** Department Convention, Willmar  
**July 28-31:** Div. I Baseball State Tournament, Alimagnet Park, Burnsville  
**July 28-31:** Div. I Jr. Baseball State Tournament, Red Haddock Field, Bloomington  
**July 29-31:** Div. II. Baseball State Tournament, Luverne  
**Aug. 3-7:** Div. I Baseball Regional, Rapid City, S.D.  
**Aug. 5-6:** Div. II Jr. Baseball State Tournament, Ely  
**Aug. 5-7:** Department Junior Fun Weekend, Legionville  
**Oct. 12-13:** Fall Meetings at Legion HQ, Indianapolis  
**Oct. 27-29:** Department Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud

## What's happening?

### Participate in Legion College

CAMP RIPLEY — The next session of Minnesota American Legion College is Thursday, April 21, to Sunday, April 24, at Camp Ripley. The cost is \$200 per student. The link to apply is: [mnlegion.org/legioncollege/](http://mnlegion.org/legioncollege/). For questions, email [trainingcomm@mnlegion.org](mailto:trainingcomm@mnlegion.org).

### Appreciation Rally is around the corner

FOREST LAKE — The Minnesota American Legion Family Appreciation Rally is the next membership get-together on the Legion Family calendar. It is slated for March 12 at Forest Lake Post 225. Cost is \$20. To make reservations, contact rally chairmen Terry Larson and Don Skow. Larson can be reached at 651-464-2600 or [tooloseto@aol.com](mailto:tooloseto@aol.com). Skow can be reached at 651-399-0452 or [donnyskow@gmail.com](mailto:donnyskow@gmail.com).

The meal is pork tenderloin, mashed potatoes with gravy, green beans, salad and dinner roll. The Department Executive Committee meets at 1 p.m. in Hall D. The Auxiliary Department Executive Committee meets at 11:30 a.m. on the south side of Hall A. Membership turn-in and social time is at 3:30 p.m. Dinner is at 5 p.m. in Hall A, with programs from The American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and Legion Riders to follow. The Appreciation Rally is a

time department and district commanders recognize vice commanders for their hard work.

The address for the Post 225 home is 355 W. Broadway Ave, Forest Lake, MN 55025.

Two nearby hotels Skow suggested are Country Inn & Suites, 651-982-9799, and Running Aces Casino, Hotel & Race-track, 651-925-4450.

### Veterans Day on the Hill planned

ST. PAUL — Veterans Day on the Hill is back on track. Organizers say is going ahead for 2022.

April 20 is scheduled for the annual day to rally lawmakers in St. Paul to pass veterans-related legislation. The event is part of the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force. Its 2022 legislative agenda can be found at [mncf.org](http://mncf.org).

Lunch is slated for 10:30 a.m. Assembly will be at 12:45 p.m., with the main rally at 1:30 p.m.

Trent Dilks, director of legislative affairs for the Minnesota Disabled Veterans of America, said Veterans Day on the Hill is later in the session than the years it was held prior to the pandemic.

That's because in 2020 and in 2021, though canceled both years, it was going to be permanently moved to April.

"It is later so it can be more of an event to drive home our legislation. Going too early doesn't have the same effect," he said.

Details on the location of the assembly are being worked out.

Continued on Page 7

# Mail Call

Continued from Page 4

We all served to protect our freedoms. I'm sure they all are rolling in their graves over what has and is happening not only in Minnesota and America! We're seeing tyrannical leaders using the so-called pandemic to take control by whatever means possible! How many businesses and lives will they have to destroy before they wake up?

My father served in World War I with a scoop shovel in his hands stoking the boilers on a troop transport ship. Two of my older brothers both served in World War II, and both were wounded.

Two other brothers of mine served in Germany and France during the Cold War. I served in Vietnam with my boots on the ground.

We all served to protect our freedoms. I'm sure they all are rolling in their graves over what has and is happening not only in Minnesota and America! We're seeing tyrannical leaders using the so-called pandemic to take control by whatever means possible! How many businesses and lives will they have to destroy before they wake up?

America is slowly becoming a two-tiered society: vaxxed and unvaxxed. If you're not vaxxed, you are treated as a second-class subject! "Papers, please."

Liberty is never given; you must fight for it every day!

**Earl Pederson**  
Renville Post 180

## Suicide prevention is top priority for Legion

### National Commander

Paul E. Dillard



To my fellow Legionnaires in Minnesota,

This is a critical time for our organization. A recent report revealed a 15 percent increase in suicide among active-duty troops. Preventing suicide among veterans is a top priority for The American Legion and it should be a top concern for all Americans.

You do not need to be a first responder or a professional counselor to help a veteran in need. You just need to be informed. Please memorize and share the number to the Veterans Crisis Line with anybody whom you think could benefit from it. That's 1-800-273-8255, extension 1. Veterans in crisis can also chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text 838255.

A large and strong American Legion can ensure that our elected leaders in Washington hear our concerns. That means not writing off any generation of veterans. The LEGION Act not only opened our membership to Cold War veterans, but it also tore down walls that may have existed between various war eras. Last summer's events in Afghanistan continue to be particularly hard for many

veterans of that war. We must be accessible to these men and women who may be experiencing a whole range of emotions.

I am extremely proud of the opportunities that The American Legion offers through our job and career fairs. Veterans and their spouses are disproportionately impacted in the job market due to their frequent address changes and other challenges associated with transitioning back to civilian communities.

At its heart, The American Legion is a grassroots community-service organization. The American Legion posts in your department prove it with their constant devotion to our four founding pillars.

I thank you for your service to America and The American Legion. Best wishes for a productive time at spring gatherings.

*Paul E. Dillard of Texas is the national commander of The American Legion.*

## Sign up those veterans from recent war eras

### National Report

Bill Barbknecht



As I write this on Feb. 17, we are that much closer to spring. After this cold winter, we are all anxious for that season.

The American Legion Birthday is March 15-17th. Year of 1919. I hope your post is doing something special for our veterans during that time. Do a Buddy Check. Go see that member that you have not seen or talked with in some time. Also, maybe it is a chance to promote a special at your post home.

Feb. 28, 1991, designates the end of Operation Desert Storm. I hope every post has signed up some female or male veterans of that war. As always, they are our future.

March 19, 2003, was the start of Operation Iraq Freedom. There are a lot of younger veteran women and men of that era that should be asked to join also. Go see them.

March 12, 2022, is our Department Executive Committee meeting at Forest Lake Post 225. There are very important changes coming.

On April 10-13, 2022, National Commander Paul Dillard will tour our state. Check out his itinerary and if he is somewhere in your area, please let's have a good showing for him from our state.

Past Commander Dan Ludwig, Alternate NEC Peggy Moon and I have a goal to

meet for raising funds for the Foundation of Hope with The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. These funds are used for household utilities, food, and other basic needs for families with minor children at home. This fund covers all 50 states in our United States. Please send a check to:

The American Legion  
% Hope  
P.O. Box 1055  
Indianapolis IN 46206

Please try to sign up a new member. We need them as they need The American Legion also. If your wife, daughter or son is not a member, we have the Auxiliary, Jr. Auxiliary and SAL (Sons of the American Legion) that makes up our Legion Family so please have them all members too.

Of course, our Legion Riders may be of interest to some of them also. Must be a member of one of our family first.

As always if I can be of any assistance or questions, please feel free to call me or text me at 218-770-6264.

*Bill Barbknecht of Underwood Post 498 is the Department of Minnesota's National Executive Committeeman.*

## Have we Legionnaires forgotten our why?

### Adjutant's Corner

Mike Maxa



Are we in a permanent full-moon phase? The number of phone calls I have received these past few months is staggering on how the posts in the Department of Minnesota are conducting themselves.

Have we lost our way and forgotten how to conduct ourselves under the Preamble, and why we belong to The American Legion?

Last year on our website and social media, we defined a Preamble clause each month, for 10 months. I highly suggest we all review that document and understand what each of those clauses mean to us as Legionnaires, especially the key one about "comradeship and mutual helpfulness."

So why have I sat down to write an article on the phone calls I and some of our officers have received?

We have some post commanders acting like dictators not listening to the membership of their posts. Finance officers are not providing financial reports at post meetings. Executive/housing committees are making major expenditures without telling membership or seeking their approval. Members are disrespecting the officers of the post, other members and staff.

Staff are disrespecting customers and the officers of the posts. There are reports of illicit and even illegal behavior and, finally, appointing post officers without the knowledge and approval of the members.

The general membership has the final vote and approval on all activities, expenditures and the constitution and bylaws of the post! We are transparent.

How are we going to resolve the problems that are happening in our posts? The post constitution and bylaws are the governing documents for the post and members.

If the post doesn't have one, you need to develop one and the department can help. Post officers are elected by the membership, and they are to adhere to the post, district, department and national constitution and bylaws, and the Officer's Guide.

If and when committees are formed, again the post constitution and bylaws provide the rules on how committees will operate and conduct itself. All committees of the post are to

provide reports, documents to the general membership during

post meetings or when asked for by the membership and post leadership, and the documents are made available.

*No exceptions!*

I feel some have forgotten why we belong to The American Legion and the good of The American Legion, and it's not for the bars and restaurants. The business side is a decision made by the post members to fund the good of The American Legion programs and the Four Pillars.

Again, the final say on the business of the post falls on the shoulders of the membership.

Now, your post may have a housing committee, executive committee, or whatever the post calls it, voted in by the membership, to oversee the day-to-day business operations. Committees report to the membership on the financials, issues and major expenditures needing approval from the members.

As you read this, are you starting to see a pattern? Membership and the constitution and bylaws.

We are all veterans, and we all have served to protect this great country of ours. We may not always agree, and it's OK to agree to disagree, but when the vote is cast and counted, we move forward.

After you have stated your position and whether you win or lose, we should be able to get along, respect each other and sit down to enjoy time and conversation with our fellow veterans.

Our country and our politicians are divided enough, and we cannot fall into similar trappings. Legionnaires are the positive influence in our communities, and we need to lead by example. As we conduct ourselves with dignity and respect for each other, I hope our positive actions would influence our politicians, community leaders, teachers, city councils, school boards and our children to do the same.

Respect, catch it!

*Mike Maxa of Montgomery Post 79 is the adjutant of The American Legion Department of Minnesota.*

## Schedule is not going to be same as past years

### Legion Riders

Ted Berg



I would like to start off with a "thank you" to the posts that have invited me to your rallies and programs. This has given me a chance to get out and meet new people and get a lot of great ideas for the future of the Legion and the Riders.

As we all know, Mother Nature has been on a little bit

of a bad mood and cannot make up her mind on the weather.

With that said, there have still been a lot of great events going

**Continued on Page 7**

## Commander's Project

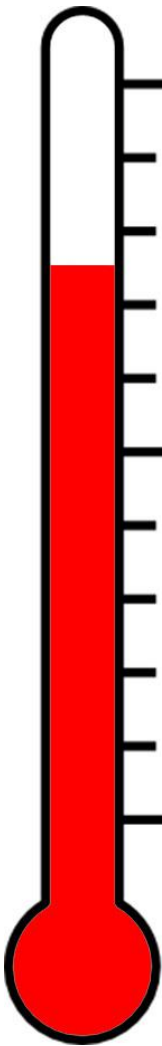
4 months to go!

Department Commander Tom Fernlund's Project raises funds for Legionville and for recreation at the 5 Minnesota Veterans Homes.

The portion for Legionville is intended to fund a dishwasher and 24-foot trailer for hauling wood. The recreation side is intended to lift spirits during these tough times.

Make checks out to Minnesota American Legion **Foundation Fund 82.**

Mail to American Legion Dept. of Minnesota, 20 W. 12th St. Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155-2000



Goal: \$60,000

Present: 79% at \$47,480

(Gambling funds are allowed, you know.)

You donated \$5,325 in the past month. Let's hope spring weather picks up the rate. July 1 is the deadline.

Date of graphic: Feb. 14

"Learn as much as you can while you are young, since life becomes too busy later."  
— Dana Stewart Scott, American logician



# Taps



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Minske, Delbert E.	87	10/2/21	Army	Korea	25	Hackensack Post 202
Moore, Michael M.	69	2/1/21	Air Force	Vietnam	7	Alexandria Post 87
Newton, Earl W.	74	1/12/22	Navy	Vietnam	29	Villard Post 175
Nielsen, Virgil H.	81	2/11/22	Army	Vietnam	55	Rochester Post 92
Ode, Roy N.	90	9/25/21	Army	Korea	56	Greenbush Post 88
Olson, Kenneth L. Sr.	96	7/9/21	Navy	WWII	55	Alexandria Post 87
Olson, Lyle M.	78	12/20/21	Army	Vietnam	8	Thief River Falls Post 117
Olson, Norbert C. Sr.	95	7/11/21	Navy	WWII	20	Alexandria Post 87
Olson, Roy D.	90	1/10/22	Army	Korea	34	Parkers Prairie Post 219
Olson, Vernon A.	95	12/2/21	Army	WWII	76	Alexandria Post 87
Ott, Ronald H.	71	1/30/22	unavail.	Vietnam	48	Green Isle Post 408
Overgaard, Paul P.	91	2/4/21	Army	Korea	24	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: He commanded a platoon of the 101st Airborne Division in the war. He was awarded a Purple Heart and a Silver Star. After returning, he led a company of the 82nd Airborne Division.						
Pelkey, Warren G.	55	1/10/22	Army	Iraq	2	New London Post 537
Petersen, Larry E.	unavail.	unavail.	Marines	Leb./Gren.	18	St. Paul Park Post 98
Peterson, Ernest W.	95	1/24/22	Navy	WWII	12	Cambridge Post 290
Phillippi, Patrick J.	74	12/25/21	Air Force	Vietnam	11	St. Stephen Post 221
Piechowski, Stanley T.	92	2/6/22	Army	Guam	16	Breckenridge Post 53
Pierson, Robert J.	42	1/31/22	Army	Persian Gulf	18	Chaska Post 57
Pletcher, Freeland H.	95	2/18/22	Navy	WWII	32	Moorhead Post 21
Poppitz, Kenneth G.	87	1/25/22	Army	Cold	57	Chaska Post 57
Radenbaugh, Dale C.	83	1/12/22	Army	Vietnam	34	St. James Post 33
Razink, Delmer R.	81	2/1/22	Army NG	Vietnam	5	Benson Post 62
Reiser, Willard W.	93	2/15/22	Army	Korea	28	New Ulm Post 132
Sautbine, Donald D.	77	2/13/22	Navy	Vietnam	25	Walker Post 134
Schafer, Duane P.	89	1/22/22	Air Force	Korea	22	Lake City Post 110
Schmidt, John M.	98	1/14/22	Army	WWII	14	Waite Park Post 428
Schoen, Charles W.	75	1/13/21	Army	Vietnam	24	Watkins Post 453
Simonson, Gerald F.	74	1/23/22	Navy	Vietnam	45	Albert Lea Post 56
Smith, Arthur W.	82	1/23/22	Navy	Vietnam	38	Albert Lea Post 56
Super, Frederick L.	86	11/15/21	Air Force	Korea	9	St. Paul Park Post 98
Swanson, Dean K.	75	1/31/22	Army NG	Vietnam	54	Park Rapids Post 212
Therkildsen, Alva D.	98	2/8/22	Navy	WWII	4	Tyler Post 185
Thompson, Jerry W.	84	12/1/21	Marines	Korea	45	Storden Post 391
Turbes, Paul J.	92	2/10/22	Army	Korea	50	New Ulm Post 132
Turner, August W.	97	1/8/22	Army	WWII	74	Windom Post 206
Note: He piloted a B-26 bomber on 38 combat missions in Europe.						
Turner, Robert E.	95	1/6/22	Army	WWII	43	Windom Post 206
VanMinsel, Kenneth J.	83	2/4/22	Army	Vietnam	41	Caledonia Post 191
VanSickle, Donald A.	85	1/14/22	Army	Korea	43	Cambridge Post 290
Vehrenkamp, Melvin G.	94	2/1/22	Navy	WWII	15	Rochester Post 92
Wagoner, James R.	72	1/18/22	Army	Vietnam	6	Austin Post 91
Walter, Floyd W.	96	1/14/22	Navy	WWII	37	Litchfield Post 104
Watland, Richard O.	84	1/9/2	Marines	Korea	44	Apple Valley Post 1776
Note: He was a past post commander.						
Weiss, Darryl E.	81	1/14/22	Army	Vietnam	15	Echo Post 204
Wester, Donald H.	84	1/8/22	Army	Vietnam	25	Elk River Post 112
Wieck, Dale J.	88	2/14/22	Army	Korea	34	Rochester Post 92
Wierson, Bernard L.	96	2/13/22	Navy	WWII	45	Northfield Post 84
Note: He experienced two typhoons off the coast of Okinawa, one of which he and his shipmates had to abandon ship. He was the last man of his WWII Last Man's Club.						
Williams, Robert C.	88	8/10/21	Navy	Korea	2	Alexandria Post 87
Wiskow, Melroy F.	90	11/3/21	Army	Korea	11	Greenbush Post 88
Witzke, Richard R.	79	2/9/22	Navy	Vietnam	25	Rochester Post 92
Wurzburger, Kenneth W.	87	1/25/22	Army	Korea	32	Austin Post 91
Zack, Wilfred P.	87	2/15/22	Army	Panama	30	Little Falls Post 46

# Every veteran deserves a place to call home

## MDVA Update

Larry Herke



During the cold Minnesota winters, we are reminded of the importance of a warm and safe place to live. Sadly, for hundreds of Minnesota veterans, homelessness has become a way of life.

Since 2014, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) and dozens of community partners have collaborated to effectively end veteran homelessness in our state, with the goal to become the fourth state in the nation to do so.

We have made great progress. Seven of 10 Continuums of Care (CoCs) across the state have already declared an end to veteran homelessness in their communities. These CoCs make up 84 of the 87 Minnesota counties. The most recent was the Central Minnesota CoC that celebrated this milestone in November.

The three remaining CoCs that continue to work toward this goal are Hennepin, Ramsey and St. Louis counties.

We define effectively ending veteran homelessness as communities adopting a comprehensive response system that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible. If it cannot be prevented, homelessness will be rare, brief and a one-time experience.

After seven years, MDVA has learned many lessons that have allowed us to move closer to our goal.

**Secure housing where veterans desire to be housed:** A crucial step to a successful housing placement is ensuring that veterans find affordable units where they want to live.

**Work with local communities and landlords to secure housing:** MDVA is working to increase understanding and awareness of our mission and veteran resources available to secure buy-in from the community.

**Subsidize housing and services with state and federal resources:** MDVA relies on veteran subsidy and grant programs to provide rental subsidies and supplemental wrap-around services to veterans who qualify. In April, MDVA, in collaboration with community partners, will launch a comprehensive program that funds additional rental assistance and services

to veterans who are unable to access federal resources.

**Close gaps, address barriers by connecting veterans to mainstream resources:** Not all veterans on the Homeless Veteran Registry are eligible for all veteran-specific state and federal assistance programs. MDVA seeks to connect veterans with mainstream resources where available.

**Stabilize at-risk veterans with additional MDVA programs:** MDVA's State Soldiers Assistance Program's (SSAP) Subsistence Program, SSAP Special Needs Grant program and SOAR (SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access, and Recovery) program provide additional benefits to Veterans who qualify.

**Provide incentives for landlords and partners:** Lack of available rental units is one of the biggest challenges. MDVA is addressing this shortage by incentivizing landlords to offer a veteran a home.

**Align with the statewide "Heading Home Together" plan:** This plan uses shared goals, principles and strategies that spur actions to prevent and end homelessness in Minnesota.

**Address diversity, equity and inclusion:** There is a clear overrepresentation of veterans of color experiencing homelessness compared to the general population of veterans in Minnesota.

**Seek legislative support:** During the current Minnesota Legislative session, MDVA is seeking new funding for three initiatives:

- Tenancy supports and landlord engagement activities.
- Low-barrier, permanent supportive housing for veterans.
- Increased engagement and outreach activities.

To learn more about our efforts to end veteran homelessness, visit [MinnesotaVeteran.org/EndHomelessness](http://MinnesotaVeteran.org/EndHomelessness).

*Larry Herke of Sauk Rapids is the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. He is a member at Hastings Post 47.*

# What's happening?

Continued from Page 5

Look for more details in the April issue of the Legionnaire.

Items the CTF is hoping to get passed this year are:

- Increase the state grant given to veterans service organizations.
- Pay a bonus to post-9/11 veterans, much like Minnesota did for veterans of other wars.
- Give property-tax relief to post homes of veteran service organizations.
- Reduce the cost of hunting, trapping and fishing licenses for all veterans, or at least disabled veterans.
- Modify the definition of a veteran to match the federal definition.
- Require county recorders to document discharge papers for all branches of the military.
- Eliminate the two rule for recipients of VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.
- Provided a percentage-based change to the Homestead Market Value Exclusion.

## Montevideo to host band

MONTEVIDEO — Montevideo Post 59 is hosting live music on March 18.

Mankato-area band IV Play is a cover band playing mainly rock but also country and pop. The band members told the Montevideo American-News IV Play has made a name for itself playing around rural Minnesota more than in the Twin Cities.

The show begins at 9 p.m. and runs three hours.

## WWII programs coming up

ST. PAUL — The Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Round Table is hosting two programs this month — at 7 p.m. March 8 and 22 at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul.

The first one features Gregory Peterson, founder of the Robert H. Jackson Center. He will discuss the trials of Nazi

leaders at the Hall of Justice in Nuremburg and the details of their sentencing on the 76th anniversary of the events.

The second one has Susan Tate Ankeny, author of "The Girl and the Bombardier" and has Barbara Wojcik, author of "Bud's Jacket." They will reveal the story of 8th Air Corps B-17 crews shot down over France and the French Resistance that saved the lives of survivors. It is part of Women's History Month.

On April 12, there is a program, same place and time, on the Doolittle Raid and its Minnesota connection.

Michel Paradis, author of "Last Mission to Tokyo," will discuss the April 1942 raid and the subsequent trials of the captured crews. Special focus will be given to the modification of Doolittle's B-25s in Minnesota.

## Spring Mtgs. planned

INDIANAPOLIS — The American Legion Spring

Meetings take place at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel on May 4-5.

Watch [legion.org](http://legion.org) for details and proposed resolutions.

## Check out 'Tango Alpha Lima' podcast

LOS ANGELES — Want a podcast about veterans and related issue?

The American Legion podcast called "Tango Alpha Lima" comes out almost every Tuesday. All 115 past episodes are available pretty much wherever you get your podcasts, such as iHeartRadio, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts or Amazon Music.

You also can watch hosts Jeff Daly and Ashley Gorbujja-Maldonado record "Tango Alpha Lima" on YouTube. Just search for "Tango Alpha Lima." Subscribe to the "americanlegionHQ" channel. You will see all the other videos coming from the HQ.

Continued from Page 6

on in the state. There are a lot of American Legion Riders chapters doing breakfast, lunch and dinner events to raise money for many different charities and families in need.

Fingers crossed the weather will be getting warmer and I see a lot of rides already scheduled for April and May. We have started planning the Legacy Run and the new Fund 85 run and there will be more details coming out but I can fill you in on a few changes to the Legacy Run.

The Legacy Run will not be the first two weekends of August. It will be Aug 20-23. We are going to try to repeat the very first Legacy Run in Minnesota. With that said, we are asking all districts to do their

own runs and during the state run we will stop in every district.

After the run a group of us will be riding to Milwaukee for the 103rd National Convention.

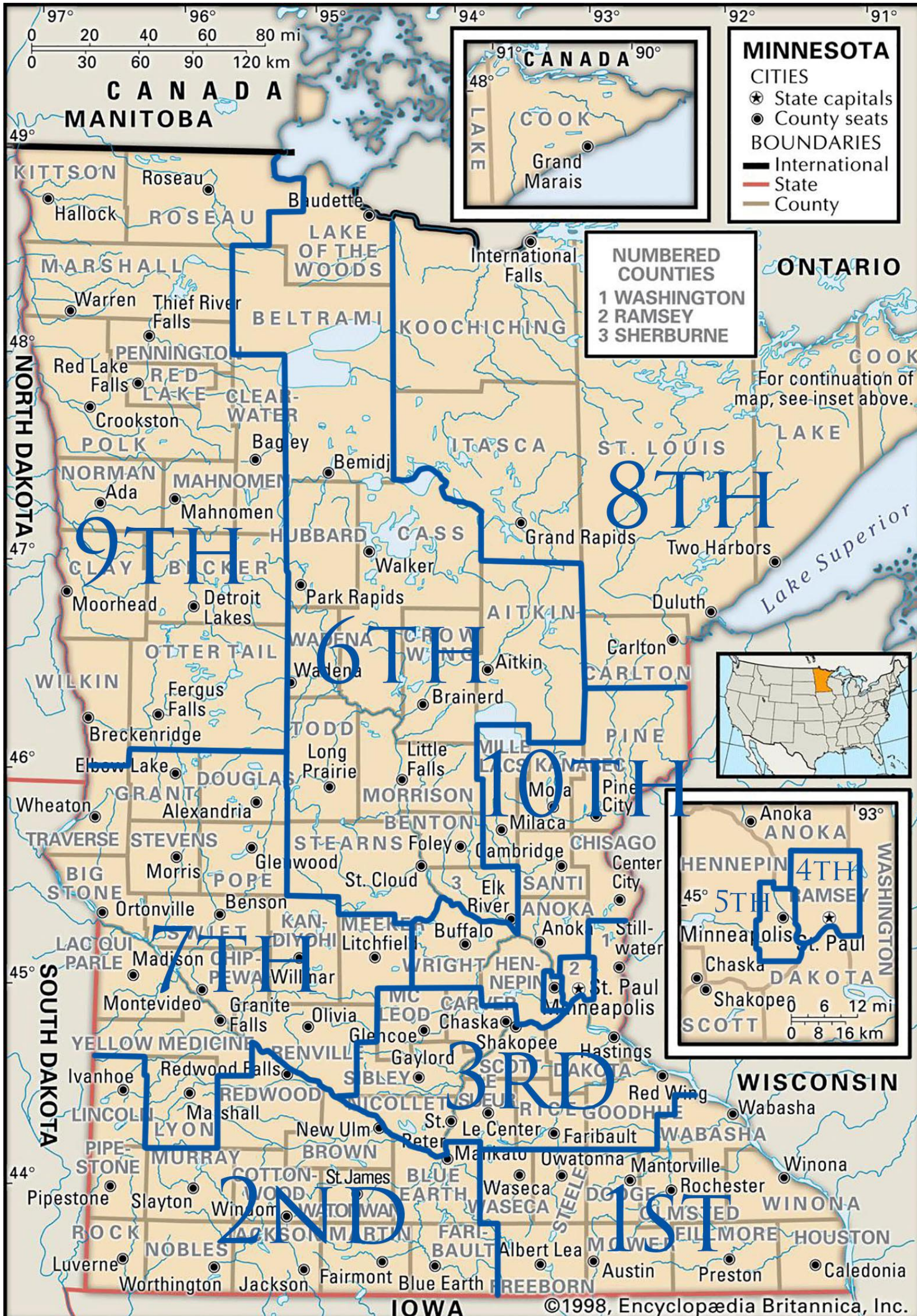
Fund 85 Run will be July 30 starting in St Peter riding up to Hutchinson and back to St. Peter for a meal and entertainment. So we don't imitate the Legacy Run, the Fund 85 run will be a one-day event. Questions on this can be directed to me via phone text or email

Looking forward to better weather and riding season so everyone take care and make sure you have your bikes up and running when the weather permits.

*Ted Berg of Bloomington Post 550 is the director of the Minnesota American Legion Riders.*

# Know the districts of the Department of Minnesota

American Legion structure is good to know for the sake of understanding how we can help each other



- 1st District**  
 Counties of Wabasha, Waseca, Steele, Dodge, Olmsted, Winona, Freeborn, Mower, Fillmore, Houston
- 2nd District**  
 Counties of Lincoln, Pipestone, Murray, Redwood, Brown, Cottonwood, Watonwan, Blue Earth, Rock, Nobles, Jackson, Martin, Faribault
- 3rd District**  
 Counties of McLeod, Sibley, Carver, Nicollet, Scott, LeSueur, Rice, Dakota, Goodhue, Washington
- 4th District**  
 Ramsey County
- 5th District**  
 Cities of Minneapolis and Richfield
- 6th District**  
 Counties of Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, Hubbard, Wadena, Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin, Todd, Morrison, Stearn, Benton, Sherburne
- 7th District**  
 Counties of Traverse, Grant, Douglas, Stevens, Pope, Big Stone, Swift, Kandiyohi, Meeker, Lac Qui Parle, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Lyon, Renville
- 8th District**  
 Counties of Koochiching, Itasca, St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Cook
- 9th District**  
 Counties of Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Pennington, Red Lake, Polk, Clearwater, Norman, Mahnomen, Clay, Becker, Wilkin, Otter Tail
- 10th District**  
 Counties of Mille Lacs, Kanabec, Pine, Isanti, Chisago, Anoka, Wright, and Hennepin, except for the cities of Minneapolis and Richfield



# Training for new officers is available

By Michael Ash  
Training Committee

One of the loudest things we hear today from districts and posts is how hard it is to get participation — whether it's getting new officers or program chairs and members.

There could be a simple reason for it.

For those of you who hold or have held positions in either the district or post, how many of you were trained, mentored or even given a rough outline of what the position you were assuming entailed?

Yeah, I'm guessing about 10 percent, and that's only because I'm a positive kind of individual. I'm also guessing that if you asked what was involved in the job, you got something like, "Don't worry about it. You'll learn as you go." Or, "It's a piece of cake." Or, "Here's the post guide. It gives you all the

information you need."

You soon learned those answers were nothing but bologna, and you may have struggled through or you may have just thrown up your hands and said, "I'll carry the title, but do the minimum or less."

And so here we are.

We need well-trained members to carry on the future of this outstanding organization and the training IS available to everyone. Some of the benefits of training include building confidence in our members, boosting their morale and motivation, reducing turnover, making our members into knowledgeable recruiters and making for a more efficient post or district.

It's OK to start off with a preliminary set of instructions, such as a job description and information from the Post/District Guide (remember, it's just a guide), but each position should be adding to it throughout their

term to include specific duties that occur and when they happen (such as cut-off dates for turning in reports, etc.).

The Department Training Committee can help. We will train any (or all) of your officers, chairs or members either in-person or via Zoom — just let us know. You can email us at trainingcomm@mnlegion.org. (See ad on Page 2.)

Shameless plug: The Department of Minnesota Training Committee also conducts an outstanding (just ask any of our graduates) Minnesota American Legion College at Camp Ripley. It contains information valuable for all Legionnaires.

This year it will be held from April 21 (late afternoon) through April 24 (late morning). The cost is \$200 per student and can (or should) be covered by the post or district. The link to apply is: mnlegion.org/legioncollege.

# Endorsements

## Ash endorsed for national vice cmdr.

Michael Ash has been endorsed by Christie DeParcq Post 406 and the 4th District for national vice commander.

The next election for a Minnesota candidate for national vice commander is expected to be in 2024.

Ash has been a member of The American Legion for 50 years and is currently serving as the chair of the Department Training Committee. At District level, he has held positions of Public Affairs chair, historian, vice commander and commander. He is currently

the 4th District adjutant and finance officer.

At the department level, he has served as historian, vice commander and commander, as well as serving on several committees, including Education, National Convention Corporation and representative for the Armed Forces Service Center at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.



Michael Ash

At the national level, he has served on the Americanism Council and currently serves as a member of the Media and Communications Council.

Ash is eligible for membership in The American Legion through his 20 years of service in the United States Air Force. He is a graduate of the National American Legion College.

# Legionnaires and VA questionnaires

Veterans filing for service-connected compensation need to provide very specific information to corroborate a current medical condition and its severity. In 2010, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced issuance of its first three Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) that would assist collecting that information.

The VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) found in 38 Code of Federal Regulations Part 4 outlines specific requirements for rating conditions claimed by Veterans. If the required information is not properly recorded during the examination, it could delay the claim while VA goes back to gather the necessary information, or it can lead to VA assigning the incorrect rating percentage. DBQs help prevent this by standardizing and guiding what information is required for each condition per diagnostic code.

In March 2015, VA reported it had increased its DBQs to 80 and covers 15 body systems including, cardiovascular, dental & oral, dermatological, endocrinological, ENT, gastrointestinal, genitourinary, gynecological, hematological & lymphatic, infectious diseases, musculoskeletal, neurological, nutrition, ophthalmological, psychological, respiratory and rheumatological. Within these body systems VA provides a diagnostic code for each condition and then use a DBQ to collect the symptoms and severity required by the diagnostic code to assign the correct rating percentage.

In March 2016, The Department of Veterans Affairs announced the award of twelve major contracts that will

## VA & Rehabilitation

Jeremy Wolfsteller



enhance its ability to deliver timely disability benefits claims decisions to the nation's Veterans. The contracts make up a \$6.8 billion enterprise-wide Medical Disability Examination Program under Public Law 104-275 and represent a major step forward in improving the disability examination experience for Veterans. This was a major shift from VA conducting compensation & pension exams internally to now contracting approximately 90% of them out to vendors like QTC, LHI and VES.

In my opinion, VA created DBQs knowing C&P exams were going to be outsourced to vendors that had little to no understanding of VA laws and regulations when determining on a service-connected disability claim.

This system was designed to make it easier for private examiners contracted by the VA and other private physicians to quickly conduct a disability medical examination and provide specific information on the condition like symptoms and its severity to the VA rating specialist, who could then make a disability rating decision without having to request more information from the examiner.

In April 2020, abruptly removed its public facing DBQ's from its VA.Gov website. It took everyone by surprise especially during the height of the COVID19 pandemic.

VA's released the following statement:

VBA is currently more than

half-way through the process of updating all body systems in the VASRD. This is the first complete update of the VASRD since the 1945 Schedule. As each body system is updated, so are the corresponding DBQs. For DBQs used internally by VA, the updated forms are available immediately.

However, for DBQs available publicly, VA must engage in the formal process required any time a public-facing form is modified, which can take more than a year. This has resulted in outdated forms being available publicly, which can result in a Veteran submitting a DBQ from a private doctor and then being scheduled for a VA C&P exam to gather more information.

The American Legion Department of Minnesota took swift action formulating a resolution which was adopted by National HQ as a position to have VA reinstate public facing DBQs for veterans to access prior to an exam. If an outdated DBQ is used VA must accept it. By the end of 2020 congress included language in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), that required VA to reinstate public facing DBQs.

Jeremy Wolfsteller of Hopkins Post 320 offices at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and is the service officer for the Department of Minnesota.

# Time for Minnesota Boys State is approaching

By Neil Kruse

Information about the 2022 session of Minnesota American Legion Boys' State should be coming to posts soon. Posts can begin the process of selecting/recruiting Boys' Staters for the upcoming session in June at St. John's University. Encourage boys to apply to "be the politician you want others to be".

Listening to speakers, campaigning, making educated decisions about voting, and serving as elected and appointed officers of city, county, and state governments are some of the activities in

which these young men are involved. Sport and music options may be affected by Covid protocols set by the state and university.

Director Kyle Oldre and his staff are working to increase enrollment and appreciate your help in this process. Boys that are currently juniors in high school can visit www.mnboysstate.org for information on registration, expectations of delegates, pictures of past attendees, and more.

Recent attendees of Boys' State could ask permission at most schools for an opportunity to spread the word about the program to their classmates.



At the the Sweetheart Rally at Pine Island Post 184 on Feb. 5, 8th District Membership Director Jennifer Havlick received the 2022 Sweetheart Award. She won it for having the greatest percentage of membership turned in at the rally. Presenting the certificate is Department Membership Director Paul Hassing.



We want to recognize our primary partner Zak and Scott over at Happy Sleeper in

Waite Park (happysleeperfurniture.com) for their generous donation of a queen bed and frame to a veteran in need.

We would like to also say thank



you to the veteran-friendly Minnesota-based MyPillow company as their

customer service came through to donate a queen mattress to another veteran in need.



As a nonprofit 501c3, the St. Cloud Stand Down helps hundreds of Veterans with clothing needs and resources to get their boots on the ground and be mission-ready for life. Contact us: standdownstcloud@gmail.com

Continued from Page 1

agency: CIA, NSA, DEA, FBI, etc.

About eight months before going to MEPS, Dubey met his wife-to-be: Kailey Simon. His buddy was dating her best friend.

“He was my best friend, so we hung out all the time,” Dubey said.

Intel also appealed because, back in 1984, his father had joined the Army. He was headed to intel, too. MEPS in Milwaukee sent him to Pittsburgh, and there he found he couldn’t get in because he was married to a Pole. Poland was on the other side in the Cold War.

Dubey went to intel school at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., then the Army assigned him to be stationed at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. Kailey drove his vehicle to Fort Huachuca, and they together drove it to San Diego, where it would be shipped to Hawaii.

There, space was tight. They discovered his rank, which was E-5 sergeant, and lower could not live outside the barracks — unless he was married.

They got married on Magic Island in Honolulu on Oct. 21, 2007. They ended up in 500 square feet of housing at Hickam Air Force Base. It was a duplex with a Jack and Jill bathroom and a great view of Pearl Harbor from the backyard.

Dubey worked at U.S. Army Pacific G-2 and did a lot of information engagement with allied militaries from around the Pacific Ocean: Japan, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, the Philippines and others.

He got to travel to Japan, Korea and the Philippines, too, and he collected many challenge coins along the way. For an E-5 to spend a good deal of time at a major command was good for his career. In 2008, Dubey applied to be a defense attaché.

Attachés serve at embassies around the globe as part of the Defense Intelligence Agency. It’s an elite role. They even enjoy diplomatic status and immunity.

He went through the lengthy application, and DIA selected him. However, the Army Military Intelligence Corps would not allow him to go because he had no deployment on his record.

Dubey tried to go to Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines (JSOTF-P), where there was an intelligence unit providing intel to fight terrorism on Mindanao.

The G-2 colonel at Fort Shafter said no.

“I was one of two people in the G-2 shop whom he trusted to do the job,” he said.

Meanwhile, Gracie, their daughter, was born on Oct. 23, 2009, at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. It’s that famous coral pink Art Deco hospital.

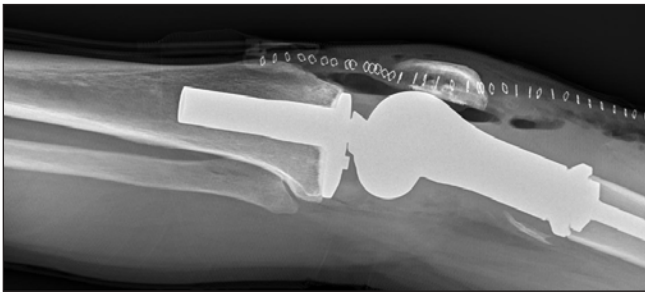
He re-enlisted in late 2010 and was assigned to the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command at Fort Knox, Ky. It was a logistical unit.

During his final month in Hawaii, he was diagnosed with runner’s knee, a dull pain around the knee. At Fort Knox, the docs put him on profile — no running for a month.



Lawrence Lake Post 476 Commander Peter Dubey sits with one of his dogs as another, to the left, enters the photo. Dubey served in military intelligence in the Army.

## Commander leading during a time of transition for Lawrence Lake Post 476



This X-ray shows the endoprosthesis in Peter Dubey’s left knee. Staples used to close the incision are visible.

Then another. Then another. After 90 days, he asked for an MRI.

Back at Knox, the MRI revealed a giant cell tumor of the left distal femur. Doctors scheduled a biopsy and a surgery. They used two screws to set a cadaver bone in his knee. However, a miscommunication between the doctor and the therapist resulted in him being in a locked brace for 30 days — not good for his therapy. The two screws began backing out.

They opened his knee up again and inserted four screws and what Dubey called a “Cheerio plate” to secure the cadaver bone.

“It looks like a chain of Cheerios,” he said.

In March 2011, Dubey found out the 3rd ESC would deploy in April 2012 to the Middle East. He had a year to rehab to get himself in proper shape to deploy. In March 2012, he cleared that hurdle.

When he left, Kailey was pregnant. The couple didn’t know the baby’s gender yet either. The 3rd was stationed in Kandahar, Afghanistan, for three weeks, then to an undisclosed location outside Afghanistan. Dubey was promoted to E-6 while deployed.

The mission was to provide intel for the drawdown of troops and removal of equipment, such as MRAPs and Humvees. Complicating matters was, for a time, Pakistan shut down the two main southern entries to Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, Dubey began experiencing more and more pain. His doctor flew from Afghanistan and decided to have Dubey medevac to Fort Knox. Three days after Dubey arrived, Kailey gave birth to a girl they named Karlie. It was Sept. 5, 2012.

In November 2012, doctors found a big hole where the cadaver bone had been.

The doctor thought perhaps his body had rejected it, which

would be not normal. In December, he had what was to be reconstructive surgery, but they found a tumor. They took out the hardware and sewed him up.

“The doctors didn’t know what to do. They were going to reassess after the surgery,” he said.

The case was sent to a specialist in bone tumors. Dr. Shawn Price of the Norton Cancer Institute went over his file and found not all the tumor had been removed.

He recommended Denosumab, a monoclonal antibody therapy that strengthens the bones and halts the breakdown of bone cells. Dubey said it calcifies bone tumors. At the time, it was a trial medicine, so he needed the green light from the Army to take it.

Dubey went to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to see an orthopedic oncologist, who agreed with Price’s decision.

Then it was back to Fort Knox, where Dubey received one injection every 28 days for six months. He had surgery again in September 2013 with a synthetic bone and a plate with seven screws.

After, they did a CT scan of his chest to check if anything metastasized to his lungs, even though the tumor was considered noncancerous. They found a small nodule.

Doctors monitored it for a year, and they found it grew. They performed a biopsy to remove it from his right lung.

In 2014, the Army had moved him to a transition battalion. In February 2015, Dubey experienced pain in his leg again. Doctors removed the hardware and found the bone calcified. In his profile, they determined he needed to be near an orthopedic oncologist, but the Army decided he would go to Fort Polk, La., or Fort Drum, N.Y., and neither location offered an orthopedic oncologist within a four-hour drive. He chose Fort Polk for the warmer climate.

After 30 days at Polk, he was sent to Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for a follow-up appointment with an orthopedic oncologist.

APET scan found a giant cell tumor again had returned to his left knee. It also found additional nodules in his left lung.

Dubey got to experience a biopsy on his lung while he was partially awake, and, during the procedure, his lung collapsed. They found the nodules were not tumors.

He also was awake for a biopsy on his leg.

“They used Lidocaine, and they drilled into my bone. That was fun,” he said.

By fun, he means, not fun. “While at Walter Reed in 2013, to get approval for the clinical trial, the doc said if it returns a third time they would amputate,” Dubey said.

Fortunately, new technology was out, and it was going to prevent any need for amputation.

On June 22, 2016, at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, the doctors cut out all bones from the bottom of his femur to the top of his tibia and fibula and installed an endoprosthesis — like a prosthetic knee attached to his bones.

From there, he did physical therapy at the Center for the Intrepid at Fort Sam Houston. It’s a 65,000-square-foot, \$50 million rehab center for disabled servicemembers built entirely through private donations.



Peter Dubey’s family two weeks before deploying to Afghanistan.

Things were looking up.

“I was reaching for my water bottle, and I heard my leg snap. I even tried to walk it off, but my physical therapist wouldn’t let me walk to the hospital. Instead, they put me on crutches,” Dubey said.

He had snapped the femur where the prosthetic and bone met. Doctors put him in a wheelchair and decided to let the bone heal as the fracture did not proceed far enough up to the anchor or the prosthetic.

The stabbing pains continued, and, three weeks later, an X-ray revealed a pin had come loose.

The next day, he was allowed to return to Fort Polk for four days to clear for changing his duty station to Fort Sam Houston.

“We had four days to have the movers come and pack and clear the post. Being in a wheelchair in a two-story home was not the most ideal situation on top of the stress of trying to clear the installation,” Dubey said. “That put a lot of work on my wife.”

During the move, he ended up with a staph infection from the removal of the bad pin.

Surgery again. This time, they replaced the entire endoprosthesis in his femur and gave him seven weeks of antibiotics. He was on 150 mg of prescribed Oxycontin a day and had been on some type of opiate to manage pain for the last six years.

Three months after surgery, Dubey started reducing 10 mg a week and felt the withdrawal impacts for three to four days each time.

“Opiates are powerful, but I only was dependent on them when I was prescribed,” he said.

While at physical therapy using an anti-gravity treadmill, the hardware in his knee broke where it was attached to his femur, so now the dosage went back up.

Doctors operated again in March 2017. They extended the prosthesis halfway up his femur into bone not previously touched by metal. It was the 10th and final surgery.

Thirty days later, he read about ketamine’s effect on resetting opiate receptors. Each time cells in the body get an opioid, receptors get plugged, so they make new receptors, and it is why patients continually need an increased dosage.

“I had lived in constant fear of being in pain,” Dubey said.

At Brooke, he received a ketamine infusion, and he went through five days of treatments and mild hallucinations in the ICU.

During this, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson, commander of the hospital, and his wife, Paula, visited him and mentioned bringing the Army chief of staff by the next day.

“I had no idea whether I imagined this or not, and I texted my wife to ask Paula if it was real,” Dubey said.

Kailey and Paula knew each other through the Warrior Family Support Center, a Warrior Transition Battalion support facility.

Dubey and his family indeed met Gen. Mark Milley. He still has his challenge coin. Milley is now the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Dubey came out of the ketamine treatment on zero opiates and in less pain.

After six months of rehab, he

felt he couldn’t be the leader he wanted to be. He couldn’t move like he once could. He couldn’t even kneel.

“How am I going to ask my soldiers to do something I physically can’t do?” Dubey asked.

He decided to pursue a medical discharge, and he left the Army in July 2018, with a 100 percent VA disability rating. During his final year of service, he did an internship with the DEA administration.

“That was really cool. I got to see how they did all their stuff,” he said.

Dubey applied to be an intel analyst for the DEA, but he couldn’t get a timeline for hiring or training. His family had decisions to make and couldn’t wait on the agency’s drawn-out hiring process. He and his family were participating in Operation Homefront, a nonprofit that helps servicemembers become financially independent after the military. The organization put the Dubey family in an apartment and paid the utilities, too, while they figured out their next steps.

The program allows a family to stay for 12 months or until the disability rating is determined.

Kailey’s father lived in Hibbing, and she scouted the homes in the area. They wanted a place with land. She found a nice one north of Bovey, and in December 2018, they went from the warmth of the San Antonio area to the cold of the Grand Rapids area in northern Minnesota.

One day, Dubey was speaking with an HVAC guy who invited him to attend an American Legion meeting of Lawrence Lake Post 476. He joined the Legion and the post’s honor guard, too. Three months later, they held elections, and he became the commander. He wanted to help change the public’s image of the organization.

“When I think the Legion or the VFW, I think of old guys in a bar drinking and smoking cigarettes,” he said. “I want our Legion to be family-oriented. I think it will help younger veterans get more involved.”

It was March 2020, right at the start of the pandemic. He would face a challenge.

The post did not have its own building and met at the local bar, which previously had been owned by the post.

Post 476 now has an agreement in place to join forces with a local snowmobile club, which also has many members of the post and its SAL squadron. The club is building a place along the Don Rudolph Medal of Honor Byway, across from a local gas station. Post 476 will pay to lease space.

“We will have a place to meet, a place where we feel comfortable,” he said. “I hope we can host more family functions and community engagement activities at this new building.”

Dubey loves helping people and enjoys his role in the honor guard. Lawrence Lake Post 476 is active in many ways, such as the essay contest, scholarships, fishing contests, a big buck contest, Memorial Day ceremonies, Bovey Farmers Day and running a beer garden at the county fair.

He plans to further his involvement and seek a role as vice commander in the 8th District.

# SCENES FROM THE SWEETHEART RALLY



Department Commander Tom Fernlund dances the "Grandpa Dance" while Jenny Nelson of North St. Paul Unit 39 dances the "Grandma Dance" on Feb. 5 at Pine Island Post 184 during the Sweetheart Rally. The dancing was part of a dance-off competition being run by the Department Media & Communications Committee at recent gatherings. Winners will be announced at the Appreciation Rally on March 12 at Forest Lake Post 225.



Department Membership Director Paul Hassing cuts a rug. The song played was "Old Town Road" by Lil Nas X. The song climbed country and hip-hop charts in 2019.



Department Commander Tom Fernlund, right, and 1st District Commander Mike Parry move to the groove at the Sweetheart Rally.



Apple Valley Post 1776 member Sue Register, volunteer coordinator at the Hastings Veterans Home, gives a presentation on the Hastings Veterans Home and how it is a domiciliary while others in the Minnesota Veterans Home system primarily serve as nursing homes, though Minneapolis campus also offers some domiciliary beds.



District 7 Auxiliary President Wanda Seidler, right, and her husband, Keith, from Spicer Post 545, dance to the music.

# The SAL Update: Mark Spring Conference on calendar

It appears that winter has hopefully gone away and with the warmer weather is approaching. I would like to remind everyone that district conventions are coming up. Please let us know when your district convention is and also where it is located. If possible, I would like to be able to attend.

The Detachment Spring Conference is rapidly approaching on March 18 and 19 at St. Augusta Post 621. The finance committee and executive board will meet on Friday night starting at 7 p.m. with the general session

## Detachment commander

Tim Weaver



on Saturday morning starting at 9 a.m. If you can attend, please do so, as this is our last meeting before our convention in June.

The Appreciation Rally will be in Forest Lake on March 12. This is the rally where we celebrate the accomplishments that have been made within the last year with your leadership team.

As always, please keep our service personnel, both do-

mestic and abroad, in your thoughts and prayers.

*Tim Weaver of La Crescent Squadron 595 is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.*



Detachment of Minnesota Commander Tim Weaver, left, and Membership Director Matthew Verkuilen were causing no trouble whatsoever down there at the end of the table during the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 5 at Pine Island Post 184.

## Detachment membership as of Feb. 19

2021 Results as of 6/30/2021	10577
2022 Goal from National	11091
2022 Detachment Goal (approx 3%)	10895
2022 105%	11440
Current Received as of 2/19/2022	9041
Current Percentage	82.98%

81.52%

\*includes both traditional and online renewals

Vice Commanders	2021 Results	2022 Goal	105%	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st and 3rd	3511	3617	3798	2999	82.91%	3
2nd and 7th	2033	2095	2200	1708	81.53%	5
4th and 5th	702	724	760.2	614	84.81%	1
6th and 9th	2311	2381	2500	2015	84.63%	2
8th and 10th	2016	2078	2182	1705	82.05%	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10573</b>	<b>10895</b>	<b>11440</b>	<b>9041</b>	<b>82.98%</b>	

Districts	2021 Results	2022 Goal	105%	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st District	1578	1626	1707	1384	85.12%	3
2nd District	1196	1232	1294	1025	83.20%	4
3rd District	1933	1991	2091	1615	81.12%	7
4th District	359	370	388.5	297	80.27%	9
5th District	343	354	371.7	317	89.55%	1
6th District	1493	1538	1615	1331	86.54%	2
7th District	837	863	906.2	683	79.14%	10
8th District	507	523	549.2	421	80.50%	8
9th District	818	843	885.2	684	81.14%	6
10th District	1509	1555	1633	1284	82.57%	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10573</b>	<b>10895</b>	<b>11440</b>	<b>9041</b>	<b>82.98%</b>	

## We don't talk about Bruno in the family

It seems that in every family structure there is at least one aspect of the family that isn't talked about — or at least not talked about often.

Either it's due to something that's happened, something taken for granted or even because, well, we see them all the time. Recently, Disney released the movie "Encanto" about the family Madrigal (with amazing music by Lin-Manuel Miranda).

One particular scene of the movie and it's corresponding song has taken the world by storm. The song, "We Don't Talk About Bruno," as well as the theme of the movie itself depicts a family who for various reasons has overlooked some of their family members.

In fact, the main character is overlooked almost entirely

## Membership Director

Matthew Verkuilen



because she wasn't given a "gift" like the rest of the family. This movie got me thinking: How often are we overlooking our family within The American Legion? How are we branching out of our comfort zone to include people that perhaps have something to offer that we had no idea of because we didn't take time to ask.

Perhaps, you are an aging post that is not able to be as active as you were in the past. Perhaps, you have the same members doing everything and those members are starting to feel burned out.

If any of these scenarios sound familiar, have you considered

starting an SAL squadron? Have you reached out to your Auxiliary unit or started an Auxiliary Juniors program? Maybe starting a Riders chapter is the answer. There are so many options to keep your programs alive, and to get people involved.

But sometimes, we have to talk about Bruno.

*Matthew Verkuilen is the membership director for the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.*

# Listening Post



The Albert Lea Post 56 Riders presented \$500 scholarships to four Albert Lea High School seniors. Presenting the scholarships were Scott Kallberg, Duane Thomas, Larry Luebke and Arlyn Anderson. The four recipients were Aaron Farris, photo on left, Caden Jensen, above, Maddie Schneider, right, and Aaron Bauers, below left.



Dave Mazzara of Arcade-Phalen SAL Squadron 577 and his granddaughter Charlotte in the Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade.



Denham Post 361 Commander Don Otwell honored Ronald Nowacki with a 60 Year Continuous Member Certificate.



On Sept. 30, a crew of veterans from Dent American Legion Post 148 and Perham VFW Post 4020 raise the headstones of veterans buried at St. Henry Cemetery in Perham.



At the District 7 Workshop in Marshall, Woodlake Post 556 Commander Larry Peterson was recognized for reaching the 23-gallon blood-donation level. That equates to 185 pints of blood.



District 7 Commander Chip Manson awards Megan Blonigen her 2022 Oratorical Contest Champion certificate. She is a sophomore at Eden Valley High School and sponsored by Eden Valley Legion Post 381. She earns a \$700 scholarship from District 7.



Devon Selmon, center, of the St. Agnes School won the 4th District Oratorical Contest. On the left is Historian Lou Michaels. On the right is 4th District Commander Dave Dahl. He earns a \$300 scholarship from the 4th District.



Members of the 4th and 5th Districts march in the Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade in St. Paul.



Accepting Certificates of Commendation during District 7's Mid-Winter Conference were, from left, Sgt. Craig Lange (accepting for Willmar Police Department), District Commander Chip Manson and Willmar Fire Department Chief Frank Hanson and Deputy Chief Matthew Grave. In the background is District 7 Sons of the American Legion Commander Jim Stock. Manson said, "The American Legion has a long and honorable relationship with law enforcement officers and fire fighters. We appreciate their efforts to keep all of us safe — especially during these trying times we live in."



Commander Jefferey Van Galder (center) and Executive Director Member Reid Oberle (far left) of Rochester Post 92 present a donation of \$22,000 to several youth baseball programs in Rochester on Jan. 27. The checks were presented to the coaches of four Rochester American Legion Baseball teams and a check to Rochester Youth Baseball Association.



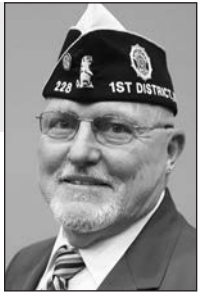
A celebration of life for Roman Hajek of Glenville Post 264 was held last fall. Hajek passed Sept. 12. He retired a sergeant first class after 20 years in the National Guard. These guys were in his unit.

# District commanders



## 1st District

**Mike Parry**



I've noticed the whispers around The American Legion posts growing as convention time is right around the corner. "Hey, whose running for commander, the vices, chaplain" and so on.

Or maybe you're hearing: "Who can we get to fill these positions?"

I would ask you to think of the following question: "Who do I know that has demonstrated leadership qualities in their personal and professional lives?"

When you think you've found a person then do a checklist of the following five leadership qualities.

Effective leaders focus on developing their emotional intelligence. Leaders that work to refine this quality are more adaptive, resilient and accepting of feedback from others. They are also effective listeners and open to change. They set goals, prioritize goals, and take responsibility for accomplishing them.

Also, take responsibility for falling short of your stated goals or making mistakes along the

way. The leader will focus on the big picture, avoid distractions and don't get bogged down by small, tactical details. You'll find that they set boundaries between their personal and professional lives, remembering that their organization will follow their lead.

The leader will be aware of his or her strengths, weaknesses and any potential sources of bias that may impact his or her thinking and decision-making. The leader will focus on developing others and has a flexible mindset and be willing to try new ideas.

Leaders are ethical and civic-minded. Leaders use their power and authority appropriately.

Remembering the old saying: Honesty is the best policy and to be open, transparent and authentic. Leaders take responsibility for your actions and mistakes and are humble in successes.

missing, there will be under-performance. We live with that for now — the army we have.

We know that many hands make light work; thus, we need to re-imagine how we can make some of our positions less

burdensome to build the army we want going forward. Perhaps you can lend your own time and talent to our cause.

Do you know how hard it is for a Marine to write "army" that many times?



## 4th District

**David Dahl**



I was recently browsing through the American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales website and came across this Basic Training Graduate pin. I am now wearing it proudly on my American Legion hat. I think that every Legionnaire should take the course and wear this pin on their hat.

The Basic Training course is completely online ([legion.org/alei](http://legion.org/alei)) and should take less than two hours to complete. It covers the following topics:

- **History and organization:** This is the why and how The American Legion came into existence after WW I.
- **Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation:** Learn how The American Legion is dedicated to compassionate care, timely delivery of benefits, career development and other areas of advocacy for veterans.
- **National Security:** This includes The American Legion's position on a strong, well-equipped and effectively

deployed U.S. military, including a decent quality of life for those now in uniform and retirees of the Armed Forces.

• **Americanism:** Learn of our advocacy for respect for the nation, from proper treatment of the U.S. flag to voter education to youth programs that make life-changing differences.

• **Children & Youth:** This includes such programs and initiatives that aim to help children and youth follow their dreams, no matter their circumstances.

• **Course Conclusion:** Find out how all the pieces of American Legion service and advocacy fit together to best serve our nation and learn where other committees and commissions play vital roles.

Are you proudly wearing your Basic Training Graduate pin?

Still serving veterans and serving our communities!



## 5th District

**Wade Larson**



You can renew your membership under members then drop down to renew membership. You can also sign up for Dispatch and newsletters from national American Legion at [legion.org/dispatch](http://legion.org/dispatch).

There is also an app to renew your membership at the Google and Apple app stores.

Keep in mind Minnesota Legion College at Camp Ripley is April 21-23. March 12 is our Appreciation Rally at Forest Lake Post 225.

The American Legion birthday is March 15. Stay tuned for a speech from the National American Legion. The SAL Spring Meeting is 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. March 19 at St. Augusta Post 621. The bowling tournament gets rolling March 20 at Sundance Entertainment Center in Dayton.

We are looking for more volunteers for the VA Suicide Prevention Coalition and have Zoom conferences online one a month. It is just starting, and we would be glad to have you be a part of it.

Visit: [mnlegion.org/suicide-prevention-webinar-warning-series/](http://mnlegion.org/suicide-prevention-webinar-warning-series/).

Buddy Checks with your buddies and post fellow members. To keep informed of the latest information, join our district e-flash. We are looking for people to let us know if they will be attending 5th District convention on June 4, as well as banquet.

You can reach me at [wadealarson@yahoo.com](mailto:wadealarson@yahoo.com).



## 6th District

**Jim Lucas**



Hello, my friends, these last three months have been hectic with me and my family being sick and the darn-old cold weather. But I am here to say we are back to normal and starting to travel again.

Well, I will do membership first. The Great 6th District is working its way to the top of the heap again. We now have six posts at goal and about 20 really close within 10 of reaching their goal. We just need to call, visit and send out those renewal cards. I know some are having fun in the sun down south, but you will find they are very

much in tune when it comes to your post. They like to see that their post is at 100 percent in membership, so give them a call. You will find they are willing to help to achieve this goal.

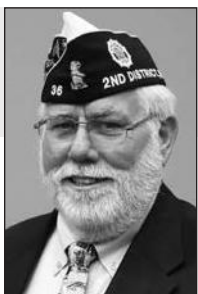
In my post, we have about five people helping me get this done, and I expect with everyone's help we will be at 100 percent. Go Walker Post 134. I do have a great support system, *Thank God*.

The district project is still going great. I believe at this



## 2nd District

**Steve Fosness**



Happy Birthday American Legion! What an eventful 103 years with "Veterans Strengthening America."

Part of strengthening America is veteran assistance. How are your post members coping? Don't answer, "Everything is fine," or "It's not my problem."

The following are excerpts of letters from a recently deceased 2nd District Legionnaire: "When we got back to the world, we thought we were safe, but we weren't. We brought the war home with us. We were warned not to talk about what we went through or seek help.

"The nightmares started my first night home. I felt like I had lost my soul in Mogadishu. Sad thing was, I was on the suicide prevention team. A lot of my friends came to see me. They were looking for help. They were going thru the same thing I was, but I was instructed to tell them if they sought help, they could be discharged. How could I help them if I couldn't help myself? ... My demon was alcohol. It

helped get rid of the ghosts if only for a short time. ...

"I look around the dark, silent room. I'm alone, just me and my addiction. I've done so much wrong I hardly know what's right anymore. The grave is calling me, and it sounds tempting.

"I know there has to be a better way. I was a good soldier, one of America's best. I was a good father. What went wrong? I was a good son, a good brother and a good friend. My addiction pushed all of them away. I told myself that's what I wanted. It would be better that way, just me and my addiction."

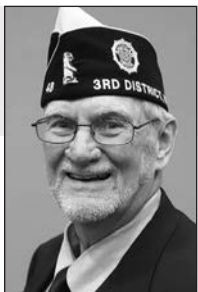
Which veteran have you "Buddy-Checked" lately? With a veteran taking their own life every hour, nationwide, all it takes is a conversation. The most important part of a conversation is to listen, then take action!

The Veterans Crisis Line is 800-273-8255.



## 3rd District

**Bob Hart**



"You go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you want or the Army you wish you had at a later time."

Donald Rumsfeld caught a lot of flak for saying this in 2004, but it was a simple truth.

It comes to mind now because we are struggling with reinvigorating our membership after a couple of years of relative inactivity due to COVID restrictions. We have not reduced our programs or priorities and have no intention of doing so.

That said, we have a lot of positions to be filled at the post,

district and department levels if we are to achieve our worthwhile goals. That has to be done with the "army" we have. Currently we have a number of our members that wear several hats, sometimes at various levels.

We ask for a lot of time and talent from available willing workers. Please note the five variables in that sentence: time, talent, availability, willingness, the work. If any of these are

moment we are about to turn \$35,000 for Homeless and Wounded Warriors. Emily, I just received a call from them and they are helping veterans and their families.

This is the best project there is and that is veterans. Veterans all over Minnesota are in need of help, and that's what they are about. I want to thank Walker Post 134 Auxillary for its donation last night of 1,134. This was unexpected, but you know

every little bit helps.

You guys remember Jr. President Chloe Dragon? Well, I was reading the district newsletter, and I was shocked of all The American Legion Posts that gave to her project. At Midwinter, Chloe topped over 4,000 and guess what? It is still growing. She has rocked over 5,900 and still growing. See, it doesn't take much. It just takes a lot of posts that do what they do for veterans, and that is support.



## 7th District

**David "Chip" Manson**



Hi, District 7!

We're heading into a very important time of our American Legion year, the election of our officers for the coming year.

Traditionally, March is when nomination committees announce their nominations. April is the call for additional nominations and the election of officers, and May is when these officers are installed. (Some post timelines are different. Please check with your post).

Post, district and department elections are the members' chance to set the stage for the coming year. The officers you elect will set priorities and guide the post's efforts in veteran programs, community relationships, and Americanism and youth programs.

At every level of the Legion, new people are vital to our future. New people bring new ideas, different ways of doing traditional activities, new and renewed

enthusiasm for Legion ideals, different personalities presenting programs differently, etc. No matter the size of your post, appealing to veterans in your area is vital to your future.

Many Legion posts keep the same officers year after year. While we understand why this happens, posts that never elect new officers often become stuck in the quagmire of "tradition," never look for different ways to appeal to new members, and members become so discouraged they quit paying dues or attending meetings.

The annual election is your opportunity to change the direction of your post. Are you willing to help your post move forward? Or, better yet, step up and volunteer to help your Legion move forward?



## 9th District

**Terry Buraas**



Americanism is key to being a good American. By voting and honoring the American flag, we as a nation need to honor our form of government. Everyone needs to be a better American by leading by example.

Do not sit back and do nothing; show by doing something.

At parades show respect to Old Glory by placing your hand over your heart.

Explain to your children and grandchildren WHY you do this. I

spent my military time following the American flag in formations and in the guard trench. Everyone needs to be reminded *why* we honor the flag. Lead by example.



## 10th District

**William Gordon**



Greetings, Mighty 10th District. Wow! We got to have our Mid-Winter Conference.

COVID threw us a curve ball, yet we made it happen.

It was great to see so many of you again. To hear about all the exciting and wonderful things we are doing in our district. Our Legion Family is strong because of you.

Our federal charter requires us to submit an annual report to Congress on our activities for the year. The Consolidated Post Report, or CPR, is a discriminator and weighs heavy on requests for National Emergency Fund support.

Did you know that over one-third of all American Legion activity has not been captured and reported to Congress?

Please make sure you submit your post CPR to national no later than July 1.

We can see the 100 percent mark; I know together we can make that goal a reality.

Did you know the 40&8 La Société (Honor Society of The American Legion) has a ritual team ready to install your newly elected, re-elected and or appointed officers?

Contact our correspondent Roger Stoick at [rstoick@aol.com](mailto:rstoick@aol.com) or our Retiral Team Leader Marland Ronning [marland1942@gmail.com](mailto:marland1942@gmail.com) to arrange for a team. Donations for these teams are greatly appreciated. They go to support the Nurses Scholarships. We all know how important these nurses are to our medical system and us.



No. 22 Vol. 8

# The Auxiliary Bulletin

President Patti Coleman • Secretary Marsha Bible, marsha@mnala.org

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651-224-7634

March 2022

## Dues for the Auxiliary might increase in 2024

### President's Column

Patti Coleman



Happy birthday, American Legion! The Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary is grateful for your sacrifices, your service, and your continued dedication to serving others.

We are humbled to partner with you in so many of our American Legion Family initiatives and look forward to spending the month of March celebrating you!

I hope our ALA members took advantage of completing the member survey that was put out in February via email and social media by our national organization. You had the opportunity to have your voice heard concerning the national level of our organization and on your unit.

Your feedback will help tailor ALA programs and training offered, improve member benefits, re-examine recruiting plans, design a marketing strategy, and develop diversity, equity, and inclusion training and awareness programs. The ALA is evolving, and it is my hope that you have played an active role in our guiding our direction.

Speaking of national, we were informed at the national convention last August to look forward to a resolution requesting an increase in membership dues for our members. This request must be voted on by the delegates at the national convention in Milwaukee later this year. This is a national membership dues increase, not a department dues increase, and it is not a done deal yet.

The increase would take effect for the 2023-2024 Auxiliary year if it is passed at the convention. One of the ways we can decrease the amount of the requested increase is to recruit new members. We must get out there!

It's not going to happen from our homes or within the walls of our post home. We need to be visible in our community, be creative, be inviting, and be ALA-branded.

Be prepared by always carrying applications for the entire Legion Family with you so you can distribute them to eligible applicants. This is a call to action for our Minnesota units. March is Community Service month which makes it the perfect time to start networking with other civic organizations

in your surrounding area. Plan to have a Legion Family

information table at the craft fair, the county fair, and your city celebration.

Once eligible individuals see what we do and the impact that we have on the lives of veterans, active military, kids, and our communities, they will want to join the American Legion Auxiliary. Growing the ALA is everyone's responsibility and if we are good enough at it, we will reap the rewards.

Many of the districts will be hosting their Junior Conferences this month. I urge you to attend and provide support to these young ladies as they learn how to be good ALA members. They are so willing to learn. Then they mentor those that are younger than they are. It really is a joy to see them presiding, working on their committees, executing the responsibilities of their offices, and having fun together.

You will be amazed by their enthusiasm and the talent they display. My thanks are extended to our members who stay dedicated to our Junior Activities program. Having been a junior member, the memories you make will last the junior members a lifetime. The Department Junior conference will be hosted by the 7th District in Willmar April 8-9. Plan now to attend. Registration materials were in the Jan/Feb Unit Mailing.

Our Department Honorary Junior President Ashley Stai will preside at the conference and I am so excited to be there to witness the culmination of her year of dedicated service.

It's been a long winter for many of us, my prayer is that Minnesota now be blessed with an early spring and tons of sunshine!

Happy St. Patrick's Day to each of you and may your days be filled with the luck of the Irish!

*Patti Coleman of Lino Lakes Unit 566 is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.*

## Sweethearts



From left are Raleen Tolzmann, Vida Bacon, Kollett Kaehlert, Judy Ackerman and Emily Sueß, who smiled for Robin Dorf's camera at the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 5 in Pine Island.



From left are Emily Sueß, Abby Henderson, Ashley Stai, Samantha Stai and Taylor McElroy.



Pine Island Unit 184 sure came through, making a well-liked meal at the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 5.



The meal was served, not set out on a table, which was appreciated. Even a few children helped out.



Wayne Hammond reacts as Taylor McElroy laughs. On the right is Sharon Hammond. In the background are Gary Weaver, Tim Weaver and Jean Clark.



Department of Minnesota President Patti Coleman speaks during the Sweetheart Rally at Pine Island Post 184 on Feb. 5. In the background are Minnesota Honorary Junior President Ashley Stai of New London Unit 537 and Sons of American Legion Detachment of Minnesota Commander Tim Weaver, of La Crescent Squadron 595.



Department President Patti Coleman, of Lino Lakes Unit 566, introduced her partner, Larry Woods of Hopkins Post 320. Woods sat at a table with Past National Commander Dan Ludwig, of Red Wing Post 54.

## Sending in content

When sending in photos and write-ups for the Auxiliary Bulletin part of the Legionnaire, please send JPGs and Word docs to Marsha Bible at marsha@mnala.org. Thank you.

See Page 5 for the All-Legion Family Calendar.

# When recruiting members, talk less, listen more

By Linda Kelly  
Membership Chairman

## Membership as of Feb. 23

I asked the attendees at the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 5 to visit at lunch about what works for their post/unit/squadron to convince renewal, recruitment, and rejoining.

I put a poster on an easel ready for their ideas, but no one stepped up to the poster. As we finished dessert, I asked if anyone had ideas, and a few came to light. They included: recruit across the Legion family, stay enthusiastic, communicate, share responsibilities, and keep asking.

Two more went together and were shared by Minnesota American Legion Riders Director Ted Berg. I understand that he is retired from a job of 19 years. Both his job for those 19 years and our job to work the membership program are alike — recruitment. His suggestion

DISTRICT	# of Units	Goal	Period Gain	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal
One	48	3,802	42	3,175	83.51%
Two	72	3,745	19	3,218	85.93%
Three	46	3,671	33	3,237	88.18%
Four	7	563	10	444	78.86%
Five	7	509	2	408	80.16%
Six	62	4,855	17	4,263	87.81%
Seven	60	2,970	22	2,577	86.77%
Eight	25	1,214	12	1,015	83.61%
Nine	49	3,239	16	2,717	83.88%
Ten	44	3,765	53	3,075	81.67%
1982 Dept	1	203	2	174	85.71%
<b>District Totals:</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>28,536</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>24,303</b>	<b>85.17%</b>

was to “find their need” and “know the benefits of your organization.” The need and the benefits of the two are different, but the concept is the same.

We should know what our potential members need in the organization we are asking them to join, and can our organization

provide that need?

I encourage all to print a list of the benefits of our organizations and be able to answer their questions. Thank you to all members who work membership. The Northwestern Division is ahead of the rest, but there are two divisions hot on our trail.

Our division set our own goal of 90 percent by April 1 (we are at 85.36 percent) — so make those calls to unpaid members. The next goal is 95 percent by National Poppy Day, May 27. If we make that goal our department would receive \$250.

## Minnesota Girls State to celebrate 75 years

ST. PAUL — ALA Minnesota Girls State will celebrate its 75th anniversary this year. Girls State will be June 12-18, 2022, at Bethel University in St. Paul. All reservations must be submitted no later than March 31, along with the registration fee of \$300.

Units will then have until May 1, 2022, to submit the names of the girls being sponsored.

The first Minnesota Girls State was in June 1947 at the Agricultural Building (4-H) in St. Paul. There were 98 high school junior girls in attendance along with 25 staff members. The registration fee was \$30 per girl and that included transportation.

The rental for the 4-H building was \$465.65 and the food cost was \$622.30 which fed each person for under 75 cents per day! It sure would be nice to have some of those prices today.

The first governor of Minnesota Girls State was Kathryn LeRoy representing Alexandria Unit 87. Kathryn was also fortunate to be selected to represent Minnesota as a senator to Girls Nation in Washington, DC. Kathryn is now Kathryn LaBrasseur, age 91, and is currently serving the Alexandria unit as the membership chairman.



Minnesota Girls State Chairman Sandy Wersal, left, sits with Kathryn LaBrasseur, the first Minnesota Girls State governor. She was elected in 1947.

Last fall, Department Girls State Chairman Sandy Wersal and Zandra Kessler visited Kathryn and members were fortunate to watch a video of her talking about how Girls State changed her life forever.

Girls State has a lifelong impact on girls

that participate. We are so proud that Minnesota has had the opportunity to do this for 75 years and hope to continue it for many more to come. If your unit has never participated in Girls State, now is the time to sponsor a girl. You may change someone's life.

## March is Community Service Month

By Sally Strasser  
Community Service Chairman

What is community service? Why do we participate with the program in the American Legion Auxiliary?

The community service

program promotes visibility of the American Legion Auxiliary in our local communities. We are here to assist with the care of our veterans, active-duty service members and their families.

To assist those in our local

units and communities as they need it. When we are out there, we are wearing our Auxiliary pins and apparel so we are visible.

To also get involved with programs in the community like Make a Difference Day and 9/11

Remembrance Day. There have been so many good things going on around Minnesota for all.

March is Community Service Month and volunteer week is in April.

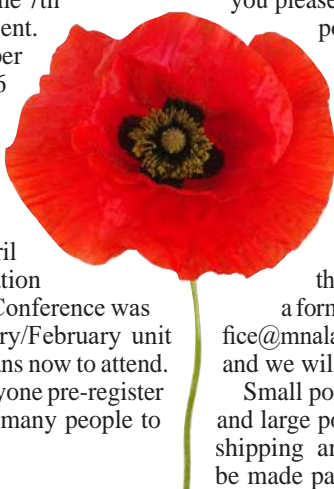
Continue the good work American Legion Auxiliary.

## Junior Conference set for Willmar

WILLMAR — The 58th Annual Department Junior Conference will be held on Saturday, April 9, at the Willmar American Legion Post 167 with the 7th District hosting the event. Registration is \$15 per person and begins at 6 p.m. on Friday.

Juniors do not have to be from an active unit to participate. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 8. Complete information and the Call to Junior Conference was included in the January/February unit mailing. Make your plans now to attend.

We request that everyone pre-register so that we know how many people to plan for.



## It's not too late to order poppies

ST. PAUL — Before you know it, Poppy distribution time will be here. Has your unit ordered their poppies yet? If not, could you please submit your order as soon as possible. We need to make sure that our current inventory is adequate to cover our orders or if we should have our poppy makers keep going. We currently have orders from 204 of our units, which is not quite halfway.

Poppy order forms were in the first unit mailing. If you need a form, feel free to email us at deptoffice@mnala.org or call us at 651-224-7634 and we will get you one.

Small poppies are \$25 per 100 poppies and large poppies are \$18 per dozen plus shipping and handling. Checks should be made payable to ALA Department of

Minnesota to purchase your poppies.

## Leadership training planned for April

Department of Minnesota Leadership Chairman Mary Efta has one more Leadership Training scheduled for Saturday, April 30.

It will be held at Elk River Post 112 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Registration includes coffee, rolls, lunch, and course handouts.

Deadline for reservation is April 25. Cost is \$10. Send reservation to Mary Efta, 31883 300th Street NW, Argyle, MN 56713.



## Happy birthday to The American Legion



Happy birthday to The American Legion. March 15 marks the 103rd birthday of the organization.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Betty Radeke Carter, department president 1979-80

Betty Radeke Carter of Red Lake Falls passed away on Jan. 30 in Warren. Betty was a 64-year honorary life member of Red Lake Falls Unit 22. She served in many offices in her unit and the 9th District and served as 9th District president in 1969-1970. She served as Department of Minnesota president 1979-80.

Betty was active in the Red Lake Falls community and enjoyed golfing and playing cards. After her first husband, Gene, died in 1985, she moved to Long Beach and worked in a hospital there for seven years. Betty met and married Nick Carter and moved to Seal Beach. When Nick died in 2010, Betty returned to Red Lake Falls to be closer to family.

Betty is survived by her sons Jeff (Colleen) Radeke and Don (Donna) Radeke as well as seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren and her brother John Turner. She was preceded in death by husbands, Gene Radeke and Nick Carter; son, Douglas Radeke and her three sisters, Pauline, Maxine and Evalyn.

Betty's theme when she was president was “60 Years of Caring: We've Answered the Call” and her project was items for the patient picnic area at the Fargo VA Medical Center.



Betty Radeke Carter

# Legionville has a new logo

BRAINERD — Registration is open for Legionville Educational Center and Summer Camp.

And this year, Legionville presents a new logo highlighting the things to do at the camp on North Long Lake north of Brainerd.



Visit [legionville.weebly.com](http://legionville.weebly.com) to register your son or daughter for the camp. Seven sessions of camp begin June 12.

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