



NATIONAL COMMANDER — Brett Reistad, the national leader of The American Legion, spoke at five Legion posts, including this speech at Brainerd.

Dodge Center teen is top Eagle Scout

Rhylan Peterson, a senior at Triton High School, has been named Eagle Scout of the Year by the Minnesota American Legion.

Peterson, the son of Kevin and Karen Peterson of Dodge Center, will represent Minnesota in the national contest for Eagle Scout of the Year.

He is a member of Troop 58 of West Concord and earned his Eagle Scout designation this past December.

His project was a soft-ball field renovation and outfield fence fundraising, design and installation project.

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RYLAN PETERSON

National Commander Reistad tours state

National Commander Brett Reistad gave Minnesotans a little history and a little preview of the future during his tour of the state.

Reistad visited five posts, a military installation and a state university during his two and one-half day visit to Minnesota in March.

“Those soldiers who gathered in Paris in 1919 to create The American Legion had a couple of visions in mind,” Reistad said at Pequot Lakes. “One was to promote Americanism. The other was to build an infrastructure to take care of their comrades coming home.”

The Legion, he said, was crucial in developing the Veteran’s Bureau, later the Department of Veterans Affairs. Later on, the Legion was the prime mover behind the GI Bill, the legislation that allowed World War II returning veterans to go to school, buy houses and start businesses. “The bill fostered a time of great prosperity in America.”

These days, the Legion is fighting to make sure that Blue

Water veterans, Navy Vietnam veterans who served in ships at sea, get the same VA benefits as their comrades on the ground.

“We will continue to knock heads with Congress to get veterans the benefits they deserve,” he said.

Reistad said the Legion sometimes has a public relations problem with the younger veterans. “We don’t have the word ‘veteran’ in our name, so we have to tell them who we are.”

Earlier this year, the Legion gave grants to over 2,000 Coast Guardsmen who stopped getting paychecks because of the government shut down. “They didn’t know who we were, but they know now. They know what we did.”

One other bill before Congress, called “The Legion Act,” or Senate File 504, would allow the Legion to pick its own dates for eligibility. This would allow the Legion to open up membership eligibility for any veteran who served since

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‘We couldn’t cry on duty, you could only cry afterwards’ Vietnam nurses speak out

By Al Zdon

When American soldiers were wounded in Vietnam, they often ended up at military hospitals in the care of nurses.

In the coming years, the soldiers would heap high praise on those nurses, and many would say the nurses saved their lives.

Five of those nurses gathered at the Vietnam War Roundtable in March at Concordia University to talk about their experience. The moderator was Dr. Kim Heikkila, who had written a book about Vietnam War nurses called *The Sisterhood of War*.

Heikkila filled in some of the statistics from the war. About 11,000 women served in Vietnam and about 80-90 percent of them were nurses.

In January of 1965 at the beginning of the war, there were 15 women nurses in Vietnam. By November of 1968, with the war in full throttle, there were 24 hospitals and over 900 nurses.

The average age of the nurses was 23 and one-half years old. Only one third of them had more than two years of nursing experience. Ten nurses died in Vietnam.

Heikkila noted that the survival rate of soldiers who made it to the hospitals was 98 percent. “Those nurses provided outstanding medical care.”

The five nurses, now mainly in their 70s, took turns telling their stories, sometimes laughing, sometimes too emotional to continue.

Joan Paulson, who served in the 67th Evacuation Hospital, said she joined the Army with the thought of paying back her parents who had financed her nurse training. “Plus they had a crackerjack recruiter down in Rochester. He signed up about 30 of us.

He told us that no one would go to Vietnam unless they were asked.

That wasn’t necessarily true.

Her initiation to Vietnam was to find that her “hooch” or living quarters was only 30 feet from the runway where C-130s were taking off and landing 24 hours a day. “I thought I’d never sleep again. But in a week I was sleeping just fine.”

She found out in the hospital that the nurses were

Continued on Page 9



The Vietnam Women’s Memorial in Washington D.C. was spearheaded by Minnesota Army Nurse Diane Carlson Evans.

State Convention headed for Willmar

The 2019 Department of Minnesota Convention, the 101st since the founding in 1919, will be held in Willmar on July 11-13.

The Department Executive Committee will meet at 7 p.m. on July 10.

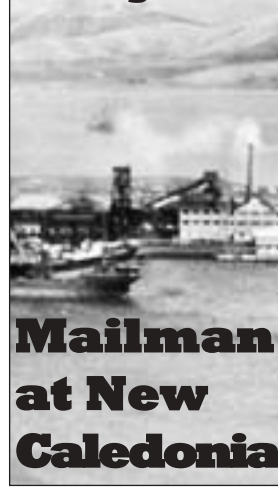
Official registration materials are on Page 2 of this issue. Registration is \$15 per person or \$18 at the door.

The official hotels for the convention will be the Best Western Plus and the Holiday Inn Express. Those planning on staying in Willmar should make their own reservations.

The phone number for the Best Western is 320-235-6060 and for the Holiday Inn is 320-231-2601.

The Auxiliary and SAL will also be holding meetings at this time.

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Legion Day at the Twins June 14th

The 19th annual American Legion Family Day at the Twins will be held at Target Field on Friday, June 14, at 7:10 p.m.

Diamond View seats on the Terrace Level, will be on sale for \$22 each, while Field Box High Seats will sell for \$38 each. There will be a service fee added to each order.

Commander Darrel Redepenny will throw out

the first pitch.

To order by phone, call 1-800-33-TWINS and hit 0. At the start of your call, please reference the American Legion promotion. A \$5 mailing fee will be added to each order if it the tickets are mailed.

To order online, go to <https://groupmatics.events/event/AmericanLegion561>.

For groups of 20 or more, contact Brian Bessler at 612-659-4083.

Three Legion Mint coins now on sale

Honoring the 100th anniversary of The American Legion, the U.S. Mint has produced three collector coins: A half dollar, a silver dollar and a gold \$5 coin.

The \$5 coin will go for \$421 each, the silver dollar for \$51.95 each, and the half dollar for \$26.95. Proof versions of these coins are available for slightly more per coin.

The entire set can be purchased as a proof set for \$501.50.

They can be ordered by going to the national website: legion.org/coin.

If the entire run of coins is sold, The American Legion will realize \$9.5 million from the U.S. Mint.

More than half of the three-coin sets have already been sold. The coins went on sale March 14.

Prices are expected to go up after April 15.



Dodge Center teen is Eagle of the Year

Continued from Page 1

ect at Dodge Center. The project included trimming and edging the infield, leveling the outfield, dragging the field, fertilizing and overseeding the turf, and raising money and constructing an outfield fence.

The project brought in a Minnesota Twins Grant to help finance the field restoration. Volunteers helped out to a great extent.

Peterson is active at Faith Lutheran Church in Dodge Center, and has been a worship assistant.

He is considering a future in music education, computer science or mechanical engineering.

The support letters in his resume included several community people noting Peterson's leadership qualities.

Through his school career he has been involved in theater in lead roles, and in the musicals. He has earned high marks at vocal musical competitions.

He has a 3.9 grade point average, and he has been involved in Math League, Knowledge Bowl, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Honor Society, and the jazz band. He was on the cross country team and is a member of the golf team.

He is class president at Triton.

His eligibility comes from the service of his grandfather, Julius Wedman Jr.



POST RENAMING — Eagan Post 594 was officially renamed Daniel R. Olsen Post during a renaming ceremony on March 15 at Eagan High School. The post is named for a Marine who deployed to Iraq in 2007. He was killed by a sniper at Saqliwiyah, Iraq. Participating in the ceremony, from left: Wayne Beierman, Daniel's sister Shelcy Kamrud, Daniel's parents Gwen and Wayne Olsen, and Post Commander John Flynn.

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION
AMERICAN LEGION & AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
2019 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA CONVENTION

I am registering as a representative of: (check only one and write in number)	I am registering as a: (check only one)
<input type="checkbox"/> American Legion Post #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate
<input type="checkbox"/> Auxiliary Unit #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate
<input type="checkbox"/> SAL Squadron # _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate at Large (Auxiliary Only)
District #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Guest (No Vote Allowed)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

A \$15 registration fee and separate registration form is required for every person registering to attend the convention. If you are registering as a **voting member** of both the American Legion & American Legion Auxiliary, a separate registration form and \$15 fee is required for each organization.

Registration at the door will be \$18

Mail registration forms and payment to: Legion Post 167 Attn: Greg Krause 220 19th Ave. SW Willmar, MN 56201	Make checks payable to: AMERICAN LEGION POST 167 (credit cards not accepted)
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Veterans on the Hill Day

Several hundred veterans from across the state gathered at the Capitol in March to lobby for veterans legislation.

The veterans came to "Veterans on the Hill Day," first enjoying a lunch and a pep talk at the National Guard Armory, then marching up to the Capitol en masse led by a bag piper.

In the Capitol Rotunda, they heard from Gov. Tim Walz and several legislators. American Legion Commander Darrel Redepenning, as chairman of the Commander's Task Force, introduced the leaders of the other veterans organizations.

The event was planned and largely paid for by the Disabled American Veterans.

Walz looked out at the sea of veterans, many of them wearing service organization headgear, and said, "You know, my colleagues work in this building, but my peers are sitting in this room."

Walz was a command sergeant major in the Minnesota National Guard and served as ranking member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee before leaving Congress to run for governor.

He said veterans' benefits "are not a gift from the government, and it's not like winning the lottery. There is an expectation that the rest of the country who did not serve will take care of you."

He said veterans could help in the current climate of animosity in Congress and the Legislature. "There's a difference between being political and being partisan. Vets lift us up to another place."

Walz said that it was a goal for state government to become the 4th state in the nation to eliminate veterans' homelessness.

Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Larry Herke said it was his job to try and make the vision that Walz projected come true. He praised the veterans who took time out for Hill Day.

"Some of you came from just up the street, and some of you got up early this morning to get on a bus and come here. I want to thank you for advocating for veterans."

He said the fight against homelessness could be helped in two ways: One is for people around the state to identify homeless veterans so they can be helped, and the other is to let the MDVA know about affordable housing, particularly in the Twin City area.

Sen. Jerry Newton, ranking member of the Minnesota Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Committee, noted that

he also was a command sergeant major and a Vietnam veteran.

He said veteran's issues should be non-political. "Regardless of the political party, we have each other's back, and we have your back."

Rep. Bob Ecklund, the chair of the House Veterans and Military Affairs Division, advocated for the state's veterans courts. "Many veterans are too proud to ask for help, but the Veterans Court has stepped in."

The court tries to resolve veterans' legal problems without sending the veteran to jail.

Rep. Bob Dettmer, the ranking member of the House veterans committee, said the number one priority is to eliminate the eight-year limit on the exclusion given to surviving spouses of veterans who died in service or because of their service. The exclusion would have no limit until the house was sold.

"Contact your lawmakers. We need to speak with one voice," Dettmer said.



Department Commander Darrel Redepenning had the task of introducing the other members of the Commanders' Task Force. Redepenning is the chairman of the group, which represents the major veterans service organizations in the state.



Hundreds of veterans marched up to the Capitol.



Rep. Bob Dettmer



Gov. Tim Walz



Rep. Rob Ecklund



Sen. Jerry Newton

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

4 FANTASTIC WAYS TO EXPERIENCE MNHHS

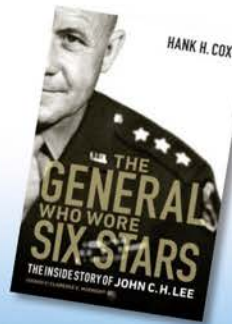
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1

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Learn about the workers who built and restored the State Capitol on the **Capitol Builders Tour**, Apr 13, Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul.



2

EXPLORE WWII HISTORY

Join Hank Cox, author of *The General Who Wore Six Stars*, at **WWII Roundtable: Lt. Gen. JCH Lee**, Apr 11, Historic Fort Snelling, St. Paul.

3

ATTEND RAMSEY AFTER DARK

Discover St. Paul's 1881 red-light district at **Ramsey After Dark: Angels & Madams**, Apr 26, Alexander Ramsey House, St. Paul.



4

VISIT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Come for the views and meet live falcons at **Peregrine Falcons on the North Shore**, Apr 20, Split Rock Lighthouse, near Two Harbors.



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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Darrel Redepinning



Greetings Legion Family,

I wouldn't swear to it but I think the winter of 2019 is finally in the rear view mirror. I want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding on canceling the Appreciation Rally on March 9th. It's a big reminder that you just can't fight Mother Nature. Thankfully, we've been able to reschedule the rally for April 13th in LeCenter. It will now be an earlier event, with DEC's starting at 10 a.m. and the meal at 1 p.m. and program to follow.

March was certainly a busy month for your commander. With the National Commanders Tour, Veterans Day on the Hill and the Legion Birthday Dinners galore. Thanks to all



Mail Call

Oratorical Staff

To the Editor:

We would like to thank everyone who assisted with the 2019 Department of Minnesota Oratorical contest. It is our volunteers and participants that make our programs a success. A special thank you to President Jean and Commander Darrell for attending and giving the kids a word of encouragement. Also, to the Toastmasters who judged the finals. They are interested in continuing this relationship into the future. The two posts who did a magnificent job hosting the contest, Osseo/Maple Grove Post 172, and Anoka Post 102 who also provided everyone with a wonderful lunch. There is one person who did so much of the work behind the scenes and sent out the letters to the contestants, made room reservations, made sure the certificates and travel funds were available, just to name a few of her tasks so, thank you Jennifer Kelly. And last and certainly not least, Al Zdon for always being at the ready with pictures and interviews. Thanks so very much each and every one of you.

Sy Fix

Department Chairman
Cliff Newman
Vice Chairman

Letter to a veteran

To the Editor:

My 14-year-old granddaughter wrote this letter to her veteran friend.

Lester J. Wellentin
Lonsdale

Dear Mr. Don Jones,

I have been reflecting on the eight years of our friendship and how you have made such an impact on my life. It started when my parents brought me to the Rochester Airport to see you after the return of the World War II Honor Flight in 2011. At that moment I found out what it meant to be a United States soldier. You and many others made the ultimate sacrifice to our wonderful country. That evening, as we were chanting "USA! USA!" while you and many WW II Veterans were returning from Washington DC, tears came to my eyes; it was such a powerful moment.

I am eternally grateful for the presence of men and women like yourselves, who believe liberty is always worth fighting for. I want to say thank you for your service to our country. As I write this powerful statement, I would like to explain my personal definition. I thank you for your bravery, to leave friends and family behind to risk your life to

of the posts that hosted meals for the National Commander. You all rolled out the red carpet and showed Minnesota pride. Different this year were noon time visits with the 148th Air Wing in Duluth and St. Cloud State College. Both gave us the opportunity to bring the American Legion story to young veterans and they were all impressed. Everyone in the traveling party agreed that we need to do more of this. Kudos goes to Membership Director Mike Maxa for trying something a little different.

The last stop of the tour was my home post in Anoka, providing a special moment for my dad and I. Dad had a rough winter but thankfully he keeps bouncing back. I wasn't sure if he would feel up to coming to the dinner, but earlier that day he decided he wanted to come. I asked him to bring his 1986 Department Commander's cap. When I introduced him, I motioned for him to change caps. He received a prolonged standing ovation and sat with a big smile on his face. Thank you all that participated, it was a very special moment for my dad and I.

Veterans Day on the Hill was a great success. An estimated 400 veterans came for lunch at the Armory and joined in on the march to the Capitol Rotunda. Everywhere I looked I saw Legion caps. We are the largest veteran service organization and it certainly showed. I saw familiar faces from all over our great state. Once again, we are showing Minnesota and Legion pride. I hope everyone there also had an opportunity to meet with their elected representatives and share all of our concerns.

April is traditionally the month that we start testimonials and look ahead to new officers and district conventions. But I would be remiss if I didn't remind you that we still have some work to finish with this membership year. The April 13th Appreciation Rally is an opportunity to finish our scheduled rallies with a big push on membership. When I look at membership numbers, I see several posts that are 1, 2 or 3 members short of goal. What a shame to finish a year short when you're so close. Some may consider a gift of membership for possible new members or to help out a needy delinquent member. It's a win-win; you help your post make goal and help out a fellow veteran at the same time.

Finally I would also like to remind everyone of Consolidated Post Reports (CPR's). It's a very important report that needs to be done every year. Be proud of all that your post does every year. Look at it as a chance to brag about how relevant your post is to your community and all its veterans. It is the centennial year and after 100 years we're still making a difference.

protect our freedom. I cannot emphasize how amazing it is that a person would put themselves in harm's way to protect people they have never met. I admire how you took the role of a U. S. soldier with dignity. I appreciate the things you sacrificed during your time in the Service: your family, time away from your home and the everyday life you once lived. This was all put on hold when you went into the Service, I truly thank you for that.

Mr. Jones, when we started to have lunch every month, you told me stories of your time in Europe and your time as a Signal Corps member. You explained to me how you rode a train to Washington D.C. and walked along the boardwalk. The next day you boarded a ship and two weeks later you arrived in Europe. You spent the next two to four years clearing villages and putting up telephone lines to strengthen the communication for the Allies. After Germany surrendered, you and your jeep went to a concentration camp. You told how you distinctly remember the smell and the sight of innocent people laying lifeless after the Nazis put them into a gas chamber.

You witnessed so many unimaginable things and have a miraculous story to tell. I believe one of my jobs as an American citizen is to share your story, so history doesn't repeat itself. I promise I will never forget our monthly lunches because I was speaking with my hero. Mr. Don Jones, I thank you for your dedication, for your sacrifice, for your hard work and your long hours protecting our great country. Thank you for your service.

Gold dog tags

To the Editor:

I was very disappointed when my wife and I went up to the military museum at Camp Ripley. I read the article in the Legionnaire in 2015 about the Gold Dog Tags. In the summer of 2016, we were there and I gave them the name of my dad, my brother-in-law, my brother and myself, all veterans. That was \$100 for the four of us.

Last summer, we drove up again to see it. I thought they were going to put these tags up and send us one also, which I was going to put in a frame.

When we got there, we had to ask where they were. They were in a dimly-lit room, and the wall they were on looked like it had come from a dumpster. It was very hard to even find them to read the names. Feels like I spent \$100 for nothing.

I was quite upset, and my wife was upset. I just had to let you know how we feel about this deal.

Henry P. Wieland

Chaplain's Corner

By Bonnie Hanson



Here we are into April and I know that we are praying that we have so much better weather in the upcoming months. Yeah.

First I want to thank the Legionnaire that was at the Oratorical Contest in Anoka who came up to me and gave me the Medallion of the 100 year Anniversary of the American Legion. I want to thank him very much if I didn't at that time. And I am sorry I didn't get his name or Post number.

Many of us recall what your yesterdays or even days ago were. We tend to forget the worst of them, just because we don't think anyone would be interested. Just give it a try some time when you're in a mixed group of people. Maybe just among the family or even at an event of different ages, just people at a gathering. You would be surprised what you might learn, or as a matter of fact, what you might already know. Let's all share something with the next generation. Express yourself. Our stories or facts might even surprise you.

Also, in April POW Recognition day is 9 April, Persian Gulf War Official Cease Fire was on 11 April 1991, Patriot's Day Minutemen is celebrated on the third Monday in April. It commemorated the Battle of Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts. Paul Revere rode 16 miles from Olde North Church in Boston to Lexington. The British arrived in Lexington in the early dawn of 19 April 1775. It was there that the Patriots or 'Minutemen' and British confronted each other on the green and "the shot heard round the world" was fired.

The month of April offers spring showers, and many opportunities for the Christians to connect with God through prayer. Keep all our service men and women safe from harm's way. Help and protect those within the ravage of rising rivers and floods. Good Friday is 19 April and on 21 April have a Happy Easter. I was going to all my Legionnaire papers and Legion Magazines trying to get things in order and reading some articles and I came across what you just read from Chaplain that I have known for a long time so I want to say thank you for teaching me something more about our American Legion.

THANK YOU

When you receive a gift from a neighbor or a friend, you do the proper thing—A thank -you note you send.

When you need some assistance for a task that you must do and someone lends a hand, you gladly say, "Thank you."

If ever you're rejected, if there's sadness you must bear, to those who ease your burden, Just say "Thank you" for their care.

And when your trails are over and devotedly you pray, don't ask for many other things, just say "Thank you" for this day.

Each blessing is a gift that comes from up above, God knows exactly what you need, just say "Thank You, Lord," with love. And don't forget the greatest gift – on the cross you've been forgiven.

Just say "Thank you, Lord, for Jesus, thy Son sent from Heaven.

The Minnesota Legionnaire

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Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Round Tables

The Vietnam War Roundtable will meet Monday, April 15, at 7 p.m. at Concordia University's Buetow Auditorium. The roundtable is sponsored by the Minnesota Military Museum and Twin Cities Public Television and Concordia University.

The program is "Reporting on the War, Impact of the News Media." The guest speaker will be Don Shelby, former WCCO newsman and a Vietnam War veteran.

The World War II History Round Table will meet April 11 at the Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center at 7 p.m. The program will be LTG JK.C.H. Lee, the chief of Logistics in the European Theater. The speaker will be Hank Cox, the author of "The General Who Wore Six Stars." Veterans who participated in logistics are expected to speak. Admission is \$5.

Fort Snelling Rifle Squad

The Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad will be celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Members must be veterans or members of a veterans organization. For more information or to volunteer, go to www.memorialriflesquad.org.

Film to premiere

A Minnesota documentary, *Stalag Luft III, One Man's Story*, will premiere at the 38th annual Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival.

The film will be shown on April 9 at 7 p.m. at the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis, on Sunday, April 14, at 4:15 p.m. at the St. Anthony Main Theater in Minneapolis and on Friday, April 19, at 7 p.m. at the Marcus Rochester Cinema in Rochester. Tickets can be purchased from mspfilm.org/festivals/mspiff.

The film is about Charles Woehrle as he relives his experiences at Stalag Luft III during World War II. The Nazi POW camp was made famous by the film "The Great Escape."

Woehrle was one of about 10,000 prisoners at the camp. He grew up in Pine City and was a bombardier in the Eighth Air Force.

The film's director is Charles Woehrle's niece Louise Woehrle, who has won several awards for filmmaking.

MACV Low-Income Clinics

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will host two free legal clinics for low-income veterans. The clinics will deal with housing, employment, benefits, expungement, wills, debt collection, and family law including child support.

A clinic will be held at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center on Tuesday, April 9, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room.

A clinic will be held at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center on Tuesday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Auditorium in Building 9.

For more information, call 651-200-4750.

Camp Ripley Run

The annual Camp Ripley Motorcycle Run to benefit deer and turkey hunts at Camp Ripley will be held on Saturday, June 29. Registration will be from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and the route will begin at the VFW Post in Jenkins. Kickstands up at 11:30-noon.

A \$15 donation is expected from riders and \$10 from passengers. Activities include coffee and rolls, touring the Military Museum at Camp Ripley and after-ride refreshments and lunch at a site to be determined.

For more information or to let the organization know about your group's involvement, call Jim Hesselgrave at 612-599-9149 or vfwmn.aol.com.

Military Ball — corrections

The 15th annual Military Ball will be held Saturday, April 27, at the Fest Building in Spring Grove. The speaker will be Dr. Eric Evenson who served with the Army Medical Corps.

The cost is \$27 per person and the dinner will include pork and chicken. Attendance is by RSVP only.

The social hour and photos will begin at 4:30 p.m., with dinner at 5:45 and dancing at 8. The Cheers Big Band will play.

For more information, call Gary Buxengard at 507-498-

3461 or email gnjlbux@springgrove.coop.

Volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed to mentor a fellow veteran as they go through the Veterans Court in the Duluth area. Female volunteers are especially needed.

For more information, contact Jim Booth at 218-393-1998 or email jeb2301@gmail.com.

Legion College

The National American Legion College will be held Nov. 3-8 in Indianapolis. Applications are being accepted.

Minnesota can nominate one candidate who has served in the Lebanon/Grenada war era or later. A second candidate can be submitted from any war era, depending on availability of seats. The deadline is July 1, 2019.

Applications can be obtained from Jennifer Kelley at the Department Headquarters, 651-291-1800.

Civil War Symposium

The annual Civil War Symposium will be held Saturday, April 6, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Fort Snelling History Center. The theme will be "Working Women and the Civil War."

Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. with opening remarks by Steve Osman at 9. Annette Atkins will present "Working Women in the Civil War at 9:15.

At 10:30, Carol VanOrnum will present "Exiled North: The Confederate Mill Workers of Roswell, Georgia." At 11:15, Elizabeth Topping will present, "Horizontal Refreshments: Desperation or Prudence. Prostitution and the Civil War."

At 1 p.m., Daniel Hoisington will present, "This Holy Fight: Women and the Battles of New Ulm." At 1:45, Mary Bakeman will present, "Minnesota Family Surviving the Terror." And at 2:40, Amy Barger will present "A Visit with Clara Barton."

Registration is \$10 per person and students are free. A buffet lunch will be available for \$15, or people can avail themselves of local restaurants.

To register, go to tccwrt.com or send a check to CWS, 5540 Sanibel Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55343.

Taps

Anderson, Dennis L., 79, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 2, 2019. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Rader, Robert James, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 7, 2019. He served at Camp Desert Rock in Nevada and was a CBR non-com officer for this regiment as an instructor/cadre sergeant. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Zehowski, James, 80, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 5, 2019. He was a member of Bowlus Post 642.

Noeske, Arthur Michael, 71, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 26, 2019. He retired in 1991 as a chief petty officer. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Pass, William A., 84, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 20, 2019. He served on the USS Wasp, an aircraft carrier. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

Czech, Methodie "Toby," 93, Army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Feb. 28, 2019. He was a member of Bowlus Post 642.

Langlie, Stephan L., 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 27, 2019. He served in Iran. He was a member of Chisago City Post 272.

Kronek, Joseph A., 97, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Feb. 21, 2019. He belonged to the 354th Pioneer Mustang Fighter Group. He was a member of Robbinsdale and Crystal Post 251.

Jorgenson, Paul F., 69, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 6, 2019. He was a Seabee. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Erickson, Don, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 8, 2019. He was past commander of Anoka Post 102.

Brown, John W., 83, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 28, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Kostka, Franklin V., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 3, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Lindquist, Arland L., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 19, 2019. He served on the USS Princeton. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Gilbertson, Eldon A., 75, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 15, 2019. He served in Germany and Lybia. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Evers, Thomas J., 80, National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 5, 2019. He was a member of

New Ulm Post 132.

Macho, Richard H., 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 12, 2019. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Muchlinski, James, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 22, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Gesme, Donald, 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 11, 2019. He was stationed in the Philippines and Japan. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Maeyaert, Donald, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 10, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Pryor, Rev. Robert G., 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 1, 2019. He advanced from private to colonel. As a chaplain, he visited nearly every Air Force base in the U.S. and Europe. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Nelson, Willard L., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 1, 2019. He was in the V-12 program at Gustavus Adolphus. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Sazama, Wayne J., 72, Army Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 2, 2019. He was deployed to Vietnam in 1968. He was a member of Round Lake Post 461.

Geier, Ralph H., 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 3, 2019. He was a KC-97 Stratofighter pilot and a B-29 bomber pilot. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Gayken, Kenneth G., 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 27, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Jerdee, Ronald D., 77, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 3, 2019.

Anderson, Herbert K., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 7, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Kroehler, Frederick H., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 12, 2019. He was stationed in Japan and Korea. He was a member of Le Sueur Post 55.

Fredrickson, Duane L., 72, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 26, 2019. He was a member of St. Peter Post 37.

Then, Alphonse J., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died March 4, 2019. He was a member of St. Stephen Post 221.

Ahrendt, Norman Keith, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 7, 2019. He was a major who served in combat in the war, earning a Bronze Star. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Swanson, Virgil, 96, Marine veteran of World War II, died March 9, 2019. He served in the Pacific. He was a member of New London Post 357.

DeGroot, Nicholas B., 82, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 14, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Hanson, Lyle K., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 11, 2019. He served in the 11th Airborne Division as a paratrooper. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Goedeke, William, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 17, 2019. He served in Okinawa and the Philippines. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Thicke, Glen E., 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 3, 2019. He served in Vietnam and was an SP4. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Henning, Joseph, 67, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 19, 2019. He was a member of Adrian Post 32.

Schmitt, John T., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 14, 2019. He was a member of St. Leo Post 534.

Jacoby, John D., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 6, 2019. He served in military intelligence and visited 17 countries. He was a member of Cleveland Post 207.

Lembke, William R., 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 12, 2019. He was a cook on the USS Ontario (AT-13). He was a member of Cass Lake Post 284.

Cuperus, Loren, 82, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 13, 2019. He served at Fort Hood, Fort Sill and Fort Rucker. He was a member of Lakefield Post 4.

Fettig, Leo, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 21, 2019. He served on the USS Nicholas. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Forman, Willis "Bill," 93, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died March 19, 2019. He served as a navigator on a bomber. He was a member of St. Paul 15 Grand Post 583.

Wielinski, Albert P., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War and Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 24, 2019. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Gary Miller
Commander



Maybe Spring will get going and we can get the Appreciation Rally in, because our Vice-Commanders do deserve a hand for jobs well done. Here's also to a great day at the Veterans Day on the Hill.

March was still a very busy month with some cancellations and postponements. Attended the Jr. Girls Conference 3-16-19 in Owatonna Post 77, not a very good turn out. But they did very well with the ones that were there, so when you see any of these girls always give them some encouragement and support for the work they are trying to do. The night before I was in Blooming Prairie Post 52 for a Legion Birthday Dinner, very good meal and program and also a good turn out. I was also at the Rally in Millville Post 579, 3-23-19.

On April 27th is the Department Commanders Testimonial, so don't forget if you plan on attending.

And again I can not say it enough times to get your reports in on time. Also membership renewals and new members is getting close for time being up. So get them in also so we can be around for another 100 years....

SECOND DISTRICT

Cindy Brunk
Commander



The Appreciation Rally has been rescheduled for April 13th in Le Center Post 108.

Membership cards and Rosters for the 2020 membership year will be extracted from the National database as of April 9th. Please make sure Your Post gets as much membership and any changes to the Department prior to that date.

Consolidated Post Reports have been sent out and are due June 1st so please fill them out and returned to Department.

Questions, need help, please contact me.

Many Posts will be celebrating their 100 year Centennial. Congratulations. Get the Legion Family and your Community involved. Remember you don't have to do everything but you can do something. Have fun, keep making memories, as you move forward into the next 100 years.

I cannot thank all County Veterans Service Officers enough, who work very hard each day, helping our Veterans and their families. To the CVSO's that were able to bring a bus load of Veterans to "Veterans Day on the Hill" and have our voices heard in our house a big thank you. I had so much fun on the bus, meeting new friends that have served our country and moved forward working and providing for their families. To Paul Wojahn, 97 years old from New Ulm, who we all sang Happy Birthday to, thank you so much for coming.

Please read 2nd District Newsletter for complete listing of up coming events.

THIRD DISTRICT

Carla Tappainer
Commander



We are still in first place for membership and I want to thank all of you for doing an excellent job! We still have one last push to get to 100% and I'm depending on you to get that done! April 9th is our deadline!! We still need members to meet our goal for the year. Please be doing your Buddy Checks and calling all the members that have not renewed yet. Let them know that we all care about them and ask them if they need anything. This is what we are here for...we need to help our fellow veterans. A simple phone call could brighten someone's day.

I would really like to see everyone at the rally that was rescheduled due to snow on April 13th in Le Center and then please consider coming to my testimonial that evening in Apple Valley. A great time will be had by all. Please contact me for tickets to my testimonial.

Here is something for you to think about..... "The two most important days of your life are the day you were born and the day you find out why." Albert Einstein

FOURTH DISTRICT

Lane Stunkel
Commander



Thank you for renewing your memberships and thanks to the new members of the 4th District. As of Bulletin 37, the 4th District slipped to 9th place, let's work hard to retain our current membership and to find new members. The

District is at 90.57%, Post Commanders and Adjutants, and Post Membership Officer please reach out to your District Vice Commanders, Mickey or myself for assistance, we all are here to help each Post make 100%.

Keep these dates in mind:

— Appreciation Rally Rescheduled – April 13th, Le Center Post 108 – Tickets are \$18.00, the DEC will be held at 10 a.m. Lunch at 12 noon and program to follow, please let me know ASAP how many tickets you would like, I will give them to you at the Rally.

— 4th District RCCC – April 10th Arcade Phalen, hosted by Christie DeParcq Post 406 – E Board will meet at 6, general meeting starts at 7p.m., Guest Speaker Dan Petrosky, retired Army with 28 years of service, he will speak about the Black Market in South Korea.

— UVC Goodwill/Awards Dinner – April 16th at Arcade Phalen, social at 5 p.m., dinner at 5:30, Awards at 6:30, tickets will be sold at the door.

— 4th District Testimonial – April 26th at Arcade Phalen – more information to follow shortly.

— Consolidated Post Reports have been sent to Post Adjutants; please send them to Department ASAP.

Membership cards and rosters for the 2020 membership year will be extracted from the National database as of April 9th, please make sure your Post gets as much membership and any changes to the Department prior to April 9th.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Joe Bayer
Commander



I heard our National Commander speak at the Anoka Post 102 about all of the things The American Legion has done over the last 100 years and the things we need to do over the next 100 years. I have to congratulate the Fighting Fifth on membership. I know that it's been a while since we've been in third place this late in the membership year. For that I want to thank you. Now for the other programs. We should be completing our Children & Youth, Community Service and Service officer reports. We need to show what we do and get credit for it. We should have an 'outstanding enlisted candidate' from the National Guard and Reserve. I'm hoping that we all have Boys Stators ready for this summer as well as school safety patrollers for the opening of Legionville. Now is also the time to start looking at the future leaders of our Posts, District and Department. Do we have qualified prospects and are we mentoring them like we should? The future of this great organization depends on it. I almost forgot to congratulate Johnathon Vickers, sponsored by Falldin Post 555 for placing third in the Department portion of the high school oratorical contest. Stand tall 5th, you're doing well.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Richard Cross
Commander



We as a Legion Family can't wait for years to increase our membership. The Legion must convert to a different, more modern way of processing the way we work for the Veterans. I know that I have been beating this to death, but we are literally running out of time. If an organization doesn't have new members to fill the start up positions no one is trained to fill the next higher position and so on up the line to the top. Our organization must conform to the new way of community involvement and development of our future leadership, and we have to start now, not a few years from now. If you look at the age group of the Minnesota Legion Family Department, we will be out of the trainers to train the new members in five to seven years, either due to death or health problems, or folks just moving to a different climate. This is getting to be a critical problem for the Legion as an organization. Think of new ways to encourage new members into the American Legion Family at your post level. It is important to maintain our ability to help Veterans in the future and to ensure a more effective Legion, through better education in leadership.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Jeffrey Gay
Commander



As County Veteran Service Office I called a meeting with reps from all of our county's Legions and VFW's as well as their Auxiliaries and SAL's. We met with Mr. Joe Steck from Congressman Hagedorn's office to discuss what my office is doing for Veteran outreach in Jackson County. Also participating was 2nd District Commander Cindy Brunk.

It was a positive meeting unencumbered by the "800#

membership elephant" in the room as we discussed simply outreach, parades, community events, VA issues and, most importantly, how we can all work together to bring a better understanding of what we all really do.

I had a booth at an event last Saturday and invited them to participate. Lo and behold I had all of them there. The booth was aflourish with their Post flags, the military branch flags and old glory. We spoke with many vets and non-Vets and got our story out there.

I cannot go it alone reaching out to all the county Veterans so I am depending on help from the local Posts and I will support them in all I do.

Commanders can get together and do much the same with all of the Posts in their counties, having fun and commiserating as the story is told and, as a bonus, probably get more memberships! But first all Commanders must undertake a difficult task, that of coming together and meeting to lay the foundation. It can be done, just call each other, only one of you has to take that first vital step.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Wilbur Swanson
Commander



We want to thank our National Commander for his visit to our District. The dinner at Post 209, Two Harbors, was well attended by members and vets from the Silver Bay Veterans Home. Many thanks to Jennifer Havlick for her work and preparation.

The breakfast held at Post 71, West Duluth, the next morning had visitors from several posts and some had traveled quite a distance. Thanks to John Bonlender and staff for an excellent meal. On both occasions, the National Commander gave out information that was important to all of us. Now the idea is to get that information out to our members who could not attend these functions. I would like to put out a call for members to make an effort to attend our District meetings. Help us to get out information and let us know what we can do for your posts. Your input is needed and we will listen to your concerns. We need to keep our efforts up to increase membership at the top of our to-do list.

NINTH DISTRICT

Arlo Rude
Commander



Thank you to the 9th District Auxiliary for again providing the St. Patrick Day doughnut making and sharing with the veterans at the Fergus Falls Veterans Home on Saturday March 16. The forty dozen doughnuts were enjoyed by the veterans. The doughnuts were enjoyed warm after the cooking with a cup of coffee during the morning. In the afternoon at the coffee break, we helped the staff provided St. Patrick cookies, doughnuts and soft serve ice cream. The 9th District Legionnaires and Auxiliary shared information with the veterans concerning the activities of the 9th District and our local Posts. A very good example of an American Legion Family project well done. Thank you to Deanna Mounts and the caring and helpful staff at the Veterans Home for making this a success.

It is time to send in various reports to the Department and National. Check the time schedules and provide the reports on time.

TENTH DISTRICT

Paul Orson
Commander



What a busy and special month the Legion had in March. The highlight was our 100th birthday on the 14th celebrating the start of the Paris Caucus. Posts around the district and state celebrated with special events and birthday cakes. Thanks to those who hosted events and I enjoyed each of the events I attended.

Those of the greatest generation, our WWII veterans, are less in numbers each month. Take a moment to think of them and maybe find time in your busy schedule to go and visit them, sit by them and say thank you for your service. With each passing, we are losing part of our proud and long heritage.

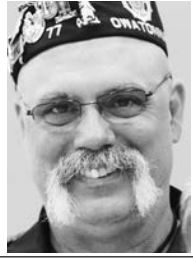
Our combined District Testimonial for Commander Orson and President Locker is Saturday May 4th at Fridley Post 303. Hope to see many of you there.

District Convention is hosted by Fridley Post 303 on Saturday June 1st with banquet on Friday night. Registration will be soon sent out.

Department and district Post reports are due in March or April. Make sure each post gets yours turned in. The CPR, Consolidated Post Report, is especially important and is available online at mylegion.org.

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family,

I am back and better than ever. Took a little timeout the later part of February to have a tuneup on my heart. Thank you to everyone for your prayers and well wishes. I must say the doctors and staff at Mayo really know how to take care of a person.

Thanks to Mother Nature, the snow, wind and cold, our latest rally had to be put on hold. Hopefully a new date, time and location will be forthcoming. By the time you are reading this the 2019 Donnie Smith Bike show will have been entered into the record books. A special thanks to Kevin and his team for the work they put into the ALR booth at the show.

With the temperature on the rise the snow is melting away, maybe a little faster than we would like, but just the same it will all be gone soon. I have already seen a number of bikes out and about. If you are one that must get that early ride in, please be watchful of the many hazards out there left from winter. There are a great many potholes, cracks and frost heaves in the road surfaces. Additionally, large amounts of sand is still on the roadway, especially at corners and intersections. If you are in a car, PLEASE exercise extra awareness for those out on motorcycles. For that matter kids will be out running around or on bicycles too.

If your chapter is having an event please get it sent in and posted on our web page. I am pretty certain that a number of chapters already have their summer activities on their calendars. The Department Legacy Ride is slated for August 2, 3, 4 and 9, 10, 11. The Kickoff Party is on August 1st.

Having saved the best for last, I recently received a very special coin in limited supply. This coin is our "1M" coin as this year the Department of Minnesota will surpass the one million dollar mark in contributions to the Legacy fund. We are the first Department to do so. Truly an awesome job, Minnesota. Minnesota Nice at its best.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By Ron Quade



Big changes in VA Appeals

Your American Legion (AL) Claims Divisions are working to provide the most professional advocacy on a local, state, and federal level. In previous segments you learned about upcoming changes to Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) and the Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA). We are now operating with new processes and rules surrounding veteran's appeals. These changes are some of the most significant in VA history.

Starting February 19th of this year VA implemented the new Appeals Modernization Act (AMA). This program, the first of its kind, changes VA appeals process from what we knew, a one lane system of hierarchy and single decisions on multi-issue claims to a multi-layer or "Appeals Lanes" process. The new modernization allows for claimants or Power of Attorney Representatives to select different lanes for separate appeals yet makes the tracking of issues and appeals a much more complex process.

Once a claim is denied the AMA will provide a claimant, or their POA, a selection of three lanes in the initial selection process. "Supplemental Claims Lane" will offer an opportunity to submit additional evidence not previously considered in the decision making process. "Higher Level Review Lane" sends the appeal back to another decision maker who has more experience than the original decision maker. Both Supplemental and Higher Review are

Relief efforts underway by posts in Midwest flooding

American Legion departments and posts in the states impacted by the recent devastating flooding are working to help those affected.

In Nebraska, Post 32 in Papillion was holding a relief drive Thursday, March 21, where anyone wanting to drop off donated goods could do so, Department of Nebraska Adjutant Dave Salak noted in an email. He also said Post 339 in Bellevue was coordinating with Sam's Club for

processed by Regional Offices (RO). The third option is the "Board Appeal". In the Board Appeal option, or "Fast Track", a claim will be considered by the Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) and will offer the claimant three options within the Board consideration. "Evidence Only Docket" allows the claimant to submit additional evidence within ninety days following the submission of their appeal. "Direct Docket" provides a BVA review of evidence considered by VBA previously and "Hearing Docket" allows the claimant to schedule a hearing with ability to submit additional evidence within ninety days of scheduling a hearing.

AL Claims Division Staff will continue representing appeals through this new process and in cooperation with local representatives, our Minnesota County Veteran Services Officers (MACVSO's or CVSO's). We will continue to promote and process well developed claims with the best chance of approval. MDVA will also continue emphasizing the importance of service and providing education to our partners, Minnesota CVSO's. Our partnership with your CVSO is crucial and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs highly encourages any claimant, veterans or their qualified family members to contact your CVSO. Work with CVSO's on current issues and even if it's been a while since a claimant may have re-visited claims or issues for any worsening or aggravated issue.

***Side note, VA is currently considering an appeal to a recent decision allowing for benefits for blue water Vietnam Veterans. MDVA is watching closely this new and incredible development. Stay tuned for more information.

Please contact your local County Veteran Service Office or contact the AL Claims Division directly at 612 970 5662 for claims or benefits information. I look forward to bringing you more information about important claims information and the Claims Divisions on the ground for you every day.

donations of water, fruit and toiletries, and with Hy-Vee to provide catered meals to displaced families in the area.

"I have received calls from Legionnaires as far away as New Jersey offering to truck in donated goods to help in the relief effort," Salak said.

"NEF applications have been forwarded to all district commanders so that they are ready to assist Legionnaires when called upon," Salak said.

Minnesota Sons of the American Legion News

Sons of The American Legion

By Shawn Davis



April showers bring May flowers is the saying, but April membership calls result in May renewals.

Hi there from your Sons of The American Legion Commander. Hope this spring finds you well. This is the beginning of crunch time for so many of our projects and programs, I hope you are using the extra daylight to get ready.

We are doing well with membership, but as stated above, it is crunch time to make those calls. We have met all our goals so far this spring, will we be able to meet the upcoming dates? April 10 we are to be at 90%. And May we should be at 100% We are in 25th place in the nation currently. Can we have a turn-in that propels us to the top ten?

Have you considered a Paid Up For Life (PUFL) membership with the SAL? After putting this program on hold at Fall Conference, it has been reopened for new members as of Spring Conference earlier this month. PUFL Chair Tim Weaver's goal is to have 1% of our membership have a PUFL, so consider this opportunity to make a lifetime commitment.

It is time to think about those Consolidated Squadron Reports (CSR). Each squadron (that we have a mailing address for) will be getting this form. The expectation is that each squadron will complete this form and have it turned in prior to Detachment convention at the end of June. Even if you have nothing to report, complete the demographic information, sign it, and send it in. I would love to have 100% turn in this year. All this information is compiled and shared with the American Legion to show Congress and the public the impact we have with veterans, their families, and our communities.

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

How can your squadron help the post?

April is Children and Youth Month.

Where do I begin?

To start, consider:

Obtaining a speaker on one of our areas of concern or other pertinent topics.

Conducting a community project with and for children.

Forming a Community Committee on Children & Youth to discuss current problems, generate solutions and then take action.

Sponsoring a carnival or show featuring young people to raise money for a community project.

Featuring a youth panel at a local school where participants can discuss some of their concerns.

Using videos, if applicable, enlisting the aid of an individual familiar with the subject matter to both present it and be available to answer questions following the viewing. Use these suggestions, or develop your own projects, but get involved.

Remember: The only limitation you have for youth programs and activities is your own imagination!

Legislative Action

Legislation to improve conditions for children is a focal point of The American Legion's Children & Youth program. By working on behalf of sound legislation, the Legion, in

Reminder that April is Children and Youth month. What are you doing for Children and Youth this month? Please share.

The Sons of The American Legion (Detachment of Ohio) made a donation recently to the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) that eclipsed the \$8 million mark in donations by the SAL. That is one of my projects this year, let's start building to the \$9 million mark. I am also raising funds for Brain Science and Legionville. Please donate to these worthy causes, and let me know if you send them in directly to Department. Thank you for your support.

With spring here many in our communities will be needing help due to flooding. Consider gathering members of the American Legion Family to help out. Wear your shirts or hats to show we are here for them. And take a picture to share. And above all, thank you for all you do.

accordance with mandated positions, strives to bring into enactment the laws necessary to meet the needs of all children. Whether the legislation involves a local matter, pertains to a problem of a particular state or is an item of national concern, it requires the efforts of all interested in the well-being of children and youth if it is to become law. Most state assemblies begin their sessions early in the year. This is the best time to present legislators with any new legislation or changes needed in current laws. Within each community, there is a great deal of local legislative action, which deserves continued attention: city ordinances affecting children and youth, appropriations for schools and school budgets, immunization, child abuse and neglect statutes, juvenile courts, local public welfare departments, playgrounds, traffic regulations and other such matters relating to the health and welfare of children. There is a great need for informed public participation in local government matters.

Promote your activities

You should publicize your programs and activities. Have the mayor or other local official issue a proclamation declaring April as Children & Youth Month. The post commander and squadron commander should issue a news release proclaiming April as Children & Youth Month and list what the post will be doing for its annual observance. (For a sample news release, see www.legion.org/youth.) Remember, programs affecting the children and youth of your community are news. Invite the news media to your activities and keep them informed.

Report Successes

Following the observance of Children & Youth Month, the Children & Youth chairmen need to turn their attention to the annual reporting of expenditures and activities. Be sure you have an accurate record of all money spent for the benefit of children and youth by your post/unit/squadron during the current year. Shortly after the first of the year, American Legion departments receive copies of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) for later distribution to posts. It is the responsibility of the post Children & Youth chairman to report his/her program activities to the individual designated in the post/squadron to complete the Consolidated Post Report.



NURSES TELL OF EXPERIENCES — Five nurses who served in Vietnam comprised the panel at the Vietnam War Roundtable held in March at Concordia University. They told of their time in Vietnam — sometimes funny, sometimes tragic experiences. From left: Moderator Kim Heikkila, Joan Paulson, Jeanne Mahaffey, Elaine Heiss, Mary Lu Brunner, and Mary Breed. The Vietnam War Roundtables are held every month at Concordia University in St. Paul.

Vietnam War nurses share their stories

Continued from Page 1

helped greatly by the patients themselves. “The GIs really took care of each other, they really cared for each other.”

The ward itself, though was grisly. “Most of these guys came in with open wounds, and most were dirty and we could not close them up. So the wounds were just there. It was like an anatomy class, you could see all the layers of muscles exposed.”

The men were given penicillin and streptomycin to prevent infection. “The drugs came in little bottles and we had to be very careful in how we disposed of them. Otherwise they’d end up in the cathouses with chalk in them, and they’d sell them as having streptomycin or penicillin.”

Paulson said the nurses were treated with great respect by the soldiers. “We were officers and most of them were enlisted men. There was this divide, this respect.”

An average stay at an evacuation hospital was 30 days, and the soldier would either be sent to another hospital for more care, or back to the fighting. “That was the most we got to know any of the patients, 30 days. And then they went back and we never heard from them again.”

She recalled the Tet Offensive in 1968. “It was scary. The tracers were going right by the windows. You could hear the mortars on both sides. We spent 72 straight hours in the hospital.”

She said the helicopter medics would apologize for the condition of the wounded they brought in. “I’d say, ‘You got them to us. They lived because of you.’”

When she got out of the service she said the hardest part of adapting to civilian hospitals was that most people had their own rooms. “I was used to looking this way, and looking that way and seeing all my patients.”

Jeanne Mahaffey was a Navy nurse who served aboard a hospital ship, the USS Sanctuary, just off the coast of Vietnam.

“I was a Navy brat and lived all over.” She joined up in Philadelphia. “My father swore me in. It was one of the proudest days of his life.”

She went to Great Lakes Naval Hospital and requested a hospital ship. She got her wish. “I wasn’t prepared for the surgical and medical wards, but I quickly learned a lot.”

She arrived in Danang. “It was just me and the guys on this big plane. What I remember was that as we were getting off the front of the plane, the guys going home were getting on the back. They didn’t want those planes to hang around long.”

On the ship, there was a matter of getting her sea legs. “Within a week, I got it down pretty good, but then when I went ashore I had a different problem. Where’s the ground?”

One advantage she liked was that the ship was air conditioned.

“We had to wear our white dresses and white hats all the time. The corpsmen liked to go ashore with us because we could get rides. We had skirts.” She said the soldiers in the hospital were very respectful of the nurses.

Elaine Heiss served with the 85th Evacuation Hospital.

She enlisted in part for the chance to travel, and ended up in Landstuhl, Germany, a major Army hospital. “I met a young lieutenant, and we got married. He got orders to Vietnam, and I went too.”

She remembers getting off the plane. “The smell, the heat, the humidity, it was truly overwhelming.”

Like the other nurses, Heiss said she wasn’t prepared for

what she found. “There was a lot of on the job training in Vietnam. I worked in the surgery and the recovery room. War wounds are dirty wounds. They can’t be closed for a time. There was a lot of wound care.”

She noted that the hospitals took care of everyone. “You might have an American in one bed and a Viet Cong in another bed. We gave the same care to each. But they were two people in very different situations.”

Heiss later worked in the POW compound of the hospital. “You learn a lot. You see a lot. The odors were horrific. We’d start the day by going around the ward and cleaning all 64 wounds.

“A traveling orthopedic surgeon told us that sugar helped, and so we sent someone to the mess hall to get a bucket of sugar. We tried it out, and, lo and behold, the wounds began to heal up.

“Sometimes there were maggots in the wounds, and sometimes we’d just leave them there because they were cleaning the wounds.”

She said she had no problem being a woman surrounded by men. “But of course I had my husband there. People would point out that I outranked him, but he’d just say he laughed all the way to the bank.”

She said the enemy soldiers she cared for were very respectful. “But they would get upset when I’d wear my skirt outside the hospital. They thought women should wear pants.”

She treated both North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. “For the most part, they were kids. They had a lot of camaraderie and helped each other. People are people. But we couldn’t let their families visit them, and they didn’t know how their son was doing.”

“I remember one Vietnamese told me to go home and have a lot of babies. And I did.”

She earned a Bronze Star for her work in the POW compound.

When she and her husband left Vietnam, they both decided they would leave the Army as soon as they arrived in the United States. “So we only packed one uniform, and then we missed our plane. When we finally got a plane, they let us board first, and we thought that was great. But there was no air conditioning on the plane, and if you thought it was hot outside... We were ripe.”

Mary Lu Brunner served in the 71st Evacuation Hospital.

She learned to be a nurse at the Little Falls Hospital, and joined the Army in 1967. She said when the nurses found out they were likely to go to Vietnam, “Some of them started looking for a cute guy to marry, get pregnant and get out.”

She went into Vietnam at Long Binh and served in the Central Highlands.

“There were rockets all night long. I volunteered to work nights so I could sleep during the day.”

She said all she knew of war was from watching World War II war movies. “But those movies were black and white and Vietnam was vivid technicolor.”

Brunner said the corpsmen she worked with were outstanding, a view shared by the other nurses.

She said the proudest moment of her life was attending the dedication of the Vietnam War Women’s Memorial in Washington D.C. in 1993.

Mary Breed served in the 95th Evacuation Hospital.

She enlisted in the Army after a close friend was killed in Vietnam, and her brother was wounded. “The war was very personal to me. It was my generation going over there, and I wanted to be part of it.”

At first she didn’t get orders to Vietnam. “My dad’s heart was in the right place. He told me to do my two years and get out.”

But then she did get orders to the war.

She worked 12 hours a day. The corpsmen, she said, “were like brothers. If ever in my life I needed someone to support me, that was our corpsmen.”

She said some wounded soldiers they couldn’t help at their hospital, and could only transfer them to another. “We fill them up with blood, and send them along. I pinned a note to one soldier asking that the nurses let me know how he did. I got a note back from a nurse in Japan that he was still alive, but I didn’t hear after that.”

“We couldn’t cry on duty, you could only cry afterwards.”

She talked about the burns and the suffering of the men. The white phosphorus was the worst.

She praised the work of the medics in the field and helicopter pilots who brought the wounded in.

Breed said she went back to Vietnam in later years to visit.

To my unknown Soldier Boy

Your bleeding wouldn’t stop
the doctor kept yelling for blood
but I was frozen
your hand in mine
you kept calling for your mother.

I regret I didn’t know you.
I can’t tell your mother I was there.
Perhaps
she would feel some comfort.
I felt none.

I regret I didn’t take your
dying, broken, dirt covered body
Into my arms for her,
for you,
for me.

Your wounds
your crying for help,
your pleading eyes,
will haunt me until
my own death.

It was only a matter of minutes,
then another wounded soldier
took your place.
Then another and another
and another

Yet, perhaps
somehow
You knew I was there.
For you.

Mary Lu Ostergren Brunner
1984

Posts at goal or all-time-high during the tour



ANOKA POST 102



FRIDLEY POST 303



MINNEAPOLIS POST 1



MONTICELLO POST 260



NORTH BRANCH POST 85



RAYMOND POST 420



ST. LOUIS PARK POST 282



ZIMMERMAN POST 560



HILLMAN POST 602

National Commander's Tour

Continued from Page 1

World War II.

Reistad noted that there have been over 1,600 casualties in the military involving veterans in the gaps of membership eras.

And, at all the stops, the national commander urged Legionnaires to buy the newly released U.S. Mint coins that are dedicated to the Legion. If all the coins are sold, the organization will realize a \$9.5 million windfall.

Reistad also emphasized his program of calling Legion members who may be slipping away. "Call them up, find out how they are. See if there's anything they need. It's not just a renewal call, it's a call from a buddy."

Reistad made stops at posts in Two Harbors, West Duluth, Pequot Lakes, Brainerd and Anoka.

He also visited the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth, an Air National Guard outfit that flies F-16s.

Over 1,000 Air Guardsmen serve in the wing, and over half of them were deployed this past year.

Command Chief Lisa Erickson told Reistad that the wing is one of only five fighter wings in the nation that are in constant deployment.

Reistad also was told that the 148th has some of the best pilots in the world, especially in flying under adverse weather conditions.

On the final day of the tour, Reistad and Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke were welcomed to St. Cloud State University. St. Cloud is regarded as a national model for welcoming veterans, and has 622 taking classes.

The commander had lunch with student veterans and with members of the ROTC program.

Reistad later spoke at a reception and told the young veterans of the Legion's part in passing the GI Bill. The new GI Bill, which allows veteran students to use it for as long as they want or pass the benefit along to a family member, is named the Harry Colmery Bill, for the Legion past commander who wrote the original GI Bill.

On the trip, Reistad greeted about 350 American Legion



RICHMOND POST 292



BAGLEY POST 16

Family members and talked to seven members of the press. Minnesota was the 30th state that Reistad and his aide, Ken Knight, have visited. The other members of the travel-

ing party were Commander Darrel Redepenning, Membership Director Mike Maxa and Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.



VISIT TO ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY — National Commander Brett Reistad heard about the veterans program at St. Cloud State University. From left: MDVA Commissioner Larry Herke, Reistad, Department Commander Darrel Redepenning, Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, Jason Woods, vice president of Strategic Enrollment Management, Daniel Gregory, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.



Department Commander Darrel Redepenning, left, and National Commander Brett Reistad, third from left, pose with veterans at a special event at St. Cloud State University. The university has 622 veteran students and is recognized nationally for its work with veteran students.

National Commander's Tour



The 148th Fighter Wing flies F-16 fighters, and the traveling party got an up close look at the jets. Commander Reistad, his aide Ken Knight, Commander Redepenning, Membership Director Mike Maxa and Col. Troy Havener, the wing's vice commander are shown.



Commander Reistad got a briefing at the 148th Fighter Wing from Commander Chief Lisa Erickson and Major Troy Hendrickson, the wing's executive officer.



Commander Reistad received a cook book from Two Harbors Unit Past President Nancy Hopper during the tour's stop on the North Shore.



Department Commander Darrel Redepenning talks things over with his dad prior to the National Commander Tour event in Anoka. Bud Redepenning served in 1986.



Past Department Commander Bud Redepenning salutes the crowd when the National Commander's tour made its final stop in Anoka.