



## Posts can help gather proclamations from across the state

With the 100th National Convention only about 100 days away, a grass roots effort toward getting cities and counties to pass resolutions or proclamations noting the event has begun.

That effort will be made through Minnesota's 540 posts. "It's something that can only be done at the local level," said Dan Williams, who is heading up the project to get resolutions passed for the Convention Corporation. "It will come down to members of a post going to their city council or county board meetings and making a request."

Williams said efforts to secure Congressional and leg-

islative resolutions is going well.

But, he said, a local effort to get city and county resolutions passed would raise the awareness of The American Legion throughout Minnesota and its communities.

The 100th National Convention will be held in Minneapolis the last week in August at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

The National Convention Corporation of Minnesota is planning several activities and efforts to make it a memorable convention. For instance, it is expected that there may be as many as 15 Minnesota High School Bands marching

in the annual National Parade on Sunday afternoon, August 26. There will also be a post-parade party featuring craft beers and the Ninth District Band.

Williams said local posts can approach their local city and county officials, city administrators, county administrators and request a proclamation or resolution.

"Wouldn't it be great if we could display 100s of resolutions at the national convention?" Williams said. Posts should forward any local resolutions to Department Headquarters, care of Al Zdon.

A sample resolution is located on Page 2.

### Commander's Testimonial



Commander Mike Schaffer and wife, Nina, react to a card at the Commander's Testimonial held at Jackpot Junction. More photos on Page 9.

## State Convention slated for Rochester July 19-21

The 100th annual Department of Minnesota Convention will be held at Rochester July 19-21, hosted by Rochester Post 92

An official registration form is on Page 6 of this *Legionnaire*.

The first Department convention was held in St. Paul in 1919. Much of the work at that convention was getting ready for the first national convention in Minneapolis a few months later.

The Auxiliary will hold its 99th convention beginning the same day. The Auxiliary

functions will be held at the Kahler Grand Hotel.

The Legion sessions will be held at the Mayo Civic Center.

The official hotels for the convention are the Kahler Grand, the Kahler Inn and Suites, and the Marriott. Those attending should make their own reservations.

Post 92 will provide shuttles, bands at the posts Wednesday through Saturday, Registration will be at the post Wednesday night, and special events are planned Friday to mark the 100th convention.

## Legion vs. Bog; major effort coming in next week or so

When the ice leaves North Long Lake near Brainerd, a major effort will be made to move a floating bog that has come ashore at the Legionville Safety Patrol Camp beach.

And it's not just any floating bog, but a four-acre hunk of peat and tamarack trees that has been loose on the lake since last year.

The plan, according to Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, is to encircle the bog with logs and chains, and then tow it about a quarter mile up the shore where it can be permanently anchored.

Volunteers are needed, and if you want

to volunteer, contact Tesdahl at 763-458-4726.

No date has been set for the bog project, but it is likely to be during the week of May 14-18.

Tesdahl said help is being sought to have some large front end loaders to push the bog from the beach. An armada of high powered boats will then attempt to move the bog.

The project is a combo effort of the Minnesota American Legion, the Lake Owner's Association, and the DNR.

Legionville Camp serves over 800 students each year.

## Oratorical winner 2nd in nation

Department of Minnesota Oratorical Contest winner Emily Parker of Lino Lakes, finished second in the National American Legion contest.

Parker earned a \$16,000

scholarship for her finish.

The winner of the contest was Carlissa Frederich from Kentucky.

Parker won the state contest in March.

She is home-schooled,

and was sponsored by Lino Lakes Post 566 and she was the 10th District champion.

Parker attends the University of Northwestern in St. Paul, and is studying accounting and music.

## Past National President Evelyn Starr dies at 91

Past National American Legion Auxiliary President Evelyn Starr died April 8 in Duluth. She was 91.

Starr was one of four national presidents that Minnesota has produced over the years, and she was the only one still alive. The others were Tess Carlson, Lee Hutton and Kris Nelson.

She served as National President in 1986-87. Her Legion counterpart that year was National Commander James Dean of Mississippi.

Starr was a longtime member of the Cambridge Unit and served as its president. She was 10th District President in 1957-58.

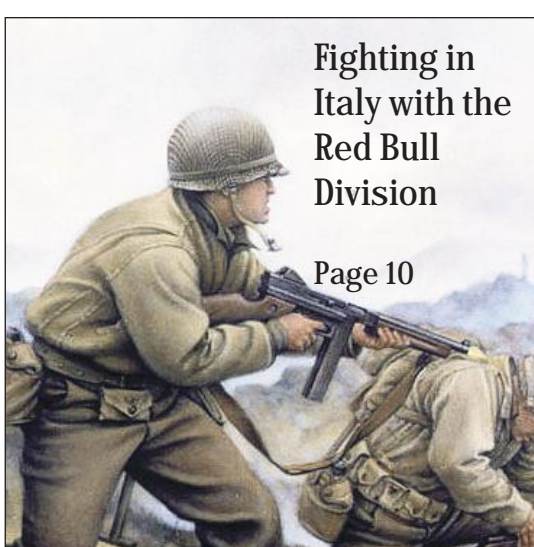
Starr served as Department President from 1970-71. Her theme was "Unity through

Involvement," and her project was to remodel the kitchen at

**Continued on Page 6**



EVELYN STARR



Fighting in Italy with the Red Bull Division

Page 10

# First War Stories book is now available again in 4th printing

The first War Stories book has been reprinted and is now available for sale again.

With the publication of War Stories III, interest in the first and second books increased. The first book sold out in February, but has now been re-ordered.

The first book was published in 2002, and was used as a fund raiser for the World War II Memorial at the Capitol.

Over \$70,000 was raised for the memorial from sales of the book.

As copies ran out, it has been reprinted. The book is

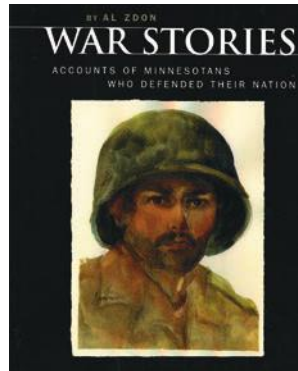
now in its 4th printing.

“There were quite a few who wanted to collect the whole set, but that became impossible when volume one sold out,” said Al Zdon, the author of the three books. “It can now be ordered in our office or through our website, mnlegion.org.”

The book contains stories on many Minnesota veterans including Charles Lindberg, George Washington Bentley, Mike Colalillo, Avis Dagit Schorer, Chuck Ferguson, Galen Bungum, Jon Hovde,

and Delbert Kuehl.

Proceeds from the sale now go to Legion youth programs including Boys and Girls State, Baseball and Legionville.



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All books are \$29 each including shipping.

## Sample resolution for cities, counties

**Whereas:** Minnesota veterans have been sacrificing their time, their skills, their service and their lives to defending liberty and country since the Civil War, and

**Whereas:** The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, the state's largest veterans' organization, is nearing a century of service to our veterans, our youth and our communities, and

**Whereas:** Over those 100 years, the Legion has developed such programs as Boys State, Girls State, Legion Baseball, Legionville Safety Patrol Camp, and three ongoing research chairs at the University of Minnesota, and

**Whereas:** The first national convention of The American Legion was held in Minneapolis in November, 1919, and

**Whereas:** The 100th national convention of The American Legion will be held in Minneapolis in August, 2018, and

**Whereas:** The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, and its members have put millions of volunteer hours plus their talent and treasure into projects that have made this state, county and city a better place to live,

**Resolved:** That \_\_\_\_\_ declares Aug 24, 2018, as American Legion Day, and, be it further

**Resolved:** That \_\_\_\_\_ congratulates The American Legion and The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, on its proud record of service, and its commitment to another 100 years of helping veterans, guiding our youth, and lifting up our communities.

# St. Louis park

# State Veterans Affairs stresses repairs to existing vets homes

With veterans in Preston, Montevideo and Bemidji knocking at the door requesting new veterans homes in parts of the state distant from the existing homes, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs is putting its emphasis on fixing up the five veterans homes already in place.

The MDVA is asking

\$13.1 million in bonding for projects in Minneapolis, Silver Bay, Fergus Falls, Hastings and Luverne.

To make its case, the state agency brought the press and the public to Hastings to show off bad plumbing, crumbling tunnels and other concerns.

A major concern is the aging boiler at Silver Bay, where at the present time

there is no backup.

MDVA Commissioner Larry Shellito said the Silver Bay project, at \$3.4 million, was the top priority.

At Fergus Falls, the foundation of the building is settling, causing cracks and water damage. The fix-it cost will be \$2.5 million.

At the Minneapolis home, which just dedicated

a brand new building, tunnel walls and ceilings and a new HVAC system for one building will cost \$4.1 million to complete.

At Hastings, crumbling tunnels and broken water pipes are a problem, and some campus buildings date back to 1911.

Shellito said it would be possible to fill three new veterans homes very easily, but the state first needs to make sure that the existing facilities are up to par and safe for the residents.

The push for the new veterans homes has been ongoing for about 10 years. The state is allowed by the federal government to have additional veterans homes beds.

And there is the possibility that there could be federal funding for building new homes, but Minnesota would have to get on a waiting list along with other states.

A new plan that has emerged would have the state pay for the three new homes by tapping into a fund associated with the construction of the new Vikings stadium in downtown Minneapolis.

The plan has received only lukewarm response from legislators because that wasn't the purpose of the fund when it was set up.

A state official said the government has identified more that 2,300 repair proj-

ects at the homes, and that about one fifth of them have been rated as critical/ unacceptable or poor.

The veterans home system is operated by the MDVA.

**OFFICIAL REGISTRATION  
AMERICAN LEGION & AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
2018 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA CONVENTION**

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

**REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN JULY 15, 2018.**  
Same day registration will be \$18.

<p>Mail registration forms and payment to:</p> <p align="center"><b>The American Legion Wm. T. McCoy Post #92 403 East Center Street Rochester, MN 55904</b></p>	<p>Make checks payable to:</p> <p align="center"><b>POST 92 CONVENTION FUND</b>  (credit cards not accepted)</p>
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# Minnesota Historical Society

**COMMANDER'S  
COLUMN****By Mike Schaffer**

Good morning Minnesota, hopefully spring has finally arrived and we have an end to old man winter and his shenanigans. Here at home we had a full blown, died in the wool blizzard, got 15 inches of the not so fluffy stuff. The storm raised more than a few problems for me as the Junior Conference was scheduled that day, as was a District Testimonial. Didn't make either one due to the blizzard, and yes they were held. Having been a rural mail carrier for 23 years, one doesn't question things when it comes to blizzards, you cancel events, safety first is my thought. No event is worth endangering a life so it can be held.

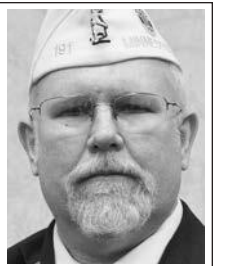
Had my Testimonial April 21st at Jackpot Junction. It was a roast, and boy did they roast me and royally if I do say so. But then with lots of hard work, comes some well-earned fun. Had 190 for the banquet, and quite a few others that came for the social hour. There were quite a few first timers and many good friends Nina and myself have made over the years also attended the evenings festivities. Thank you for coming. I hope you had some fun and enjoyed the evening, even if it got a bit too long.

My thanks go out to my MC Larry Ryan, and Tom Bock

a Past National Commander from Colorado was my guest speaker. They both did a fantastic job. In short they gave me the royal business. My Department Vice Commanders, Legion Riders & Critter Crew, the Junior Honorary President, et al each took their shots. It will be an evening Nina & myself will long remember & treasure. My State Vice Commanders and Officers gave me a guided Muskie fishing trip. District Commanders provided a Cabela's gift card. Thank you to Auxiliary President Donna Arends, Courtney Rogat, Honorary Junior President, SAL Detachment Commander Shawn Davis, and Legion Riders Director Chuck Stone. Thank you for your great gifts. My thanks to all that brought gifts & cards. Also to Dee Dee Buckley accompanied by John Weiss for singing. What a beautiful voice. And thank you to my wife.

May is almost here, so please give it one more shot at reaching goal, not only for your post, but Minnesota as well. Thank you for helping achieving the 95% national membership target not reached by the target date in many years. Legionnaires, divide up those rosters again, call, then visit those unrenowned members and renew that veteran. Sending cards is not what's needed now, personal contact is what I'm asking you to do.

It's election time at your legion post, with many new officers comes a responsibility to mentor them as they assume their duties. Remember this, if you want a smooth change of command, please take the time to work with the new officers until they are comfortable with their duties. An informed new post officer will stay in that office knowing you have their back when needed. As to those OIF/OEF veterans, both male and female, please remember they're wanting community and family events to go to, something to bring their spouse and children to. Invite them to an event or two first, then to a post meeting and make them feel welcome and part of whatever event your putting on. A welcome veterans family just may become a post and unit member that will stay and become involved.

**Chaplain's  
Corner****By  
Ralph Schneekloth**

A prayer for Memorial Day: Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask that Your blessings be bestowed on our friends and loved ones, We thank you for this opportunity to share with them this special occasion to honor our dead on this Memorial Day. Let us always honor the memory of those brave soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who made the supreme sacrifice, so we may live in a country that is free.

Heavenly Father, keep their families in Your kind care. Bless them and comfort them in their time of sorrow. Let us be reminded of life, liberty, justice, freedom and democracy that we may ever be grateful to You for these comrades who gave so much for their country.

**Psalm 91.** He who dwells in the shelter of the most High, will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes, and see the punishment of the wicked. If you make the Most High your dwelling---even the Lord, who is my refuge---then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

"Because he loves me," says the Lord, I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation."

1 Peter 5: 6-9 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast your anxiety on him because He cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert.

Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Finally, my fellow Legion family members, remember we are a family, a team and that when truly united in deeds as well as words that we are certainly more than just the sum total of our parts. Until next time, go with God and God be with you. For God and Country.

**Guest Editorial****VA needs to get on board marijuana testing**

*Reprinted with permission of the StarTribune, Minneapolis.*

Two common but unseen wounds of war — chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder — are notoriously difficult to treat. Both can linger long after a return to the home-front, affecting a veteran's ability to successfully readjust to life stateside.

With the deadly risks of frequently used pain relievers called opioids now exposed, it's understandable that many veterans are turning to an alternative — medical marijuana. Despite legality that varies by state, an October 2017 survey by The American Legion found that nearly one in five veterans were "currently using cannabis to treat a medical condition" in lieu of opioids and were reporting better outcomes. It's surprising the number isn't higher given how many aging veterans or those returning from combat suffer from chronic pain — 50 percent and 60 percent, respectively, compared with 30 percent of Americans.

These data from one of the nation's best-known veterans service organizations offer a compelling look at how an old and sometimes demonized drug could ease the suffering of those who have served. But far more rigorous study — meaning research that involves doctor-led trials and rigorously measured outcomes — is necessary before marijuana fully earns its spot in the medication tool box that providers can tap to help wounded warriors.

That's why Congress needs to act without delay in passing a new bipartisan bill championed by Reps. Phil Roe, a Tennessee Republican, and Tim Walz, a Minnesota Democrat who is running for governor. The duo's "VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act," announced this week, would clarify the authority that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has to research marijuana's role in treating veterans. "When a veteran tells me they're finding relief, I believe them," Walz said in an interview this week.

The bill has the support of The American Legion. And having two influential authors should help speed it through Congress. Roe, a physician, chairs the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Walz, a veteran, is the committee's highest-ranking Democrat. Sen. Jon Tester, a Montana Democrat, is expected to champion it in the upper chamber. Tester is the ranking member of the Senate's Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Still, it's unfortunate that these lawmakers need to draw upon their connections and goodwill to shepherd this through. VA leadership should have embraced the opportunity to research marijuana's potential benefits long ago instead of finding excuses not to do so.

One of these irresponsible foot-dragging episodes came to light late last year in an exchange of letters between Walz and former VA Secretary David Shulkin. Noting growing concerns about opioid risks, Walz and nine other House members called on the agency to wield its world-class research arm to study marijuana's potential to treat veter-

ans. Shulkin's terse and tardy reply in December said federal law restricts the agency's ability to do this — a conclusion a Brookings Institution expert called an "unfortunate combination of false information, incomplete analysis, and incomprehensible logic."

Shulkin was fired in March after a travel expense scandal. It is unclear if President Donald Trump's pick to replace him, Dr. Ronny Jackson, supports VA research on marijuana. But Attorney General Jeff Sessions, whose outdated views on marijuana likely influenced Shulkin's poor decision, will probably still hold considerable sway over the agency's future research direction. Having the Roe-Walz legislation passed or in the pipeline counters Session's antiquated notions. It also sends two strong messages to VA researchers — get going, and Congress has your back. All treatment avenues must be pursued to deliver the care veterans deserve.

**Mail Call****Go to the website****To the Editor:**

Enrollment should be in progress for this year's American Legion Minnesota Boys' State. Pass on [www.mnboysstate.org](http://www.mnboysstate.org), which has the registration application, as well as pictures from previous years. Each of the tabs on the site can provide answers to questions potential delegates might have. Legionnaires and Boys' State candidates will find much information of interest on this site.

We are looking forward to increased enrollment at St. John's for the 70th session from June 10 – 16. Thank you for your interest and help.

**Neil Kruse**  
Spring Lake Park

**Chuck Ferguson****To the Editor:**

It was good to see the salute to former Adjutant Chuck Ferguson in your April issue. As a former conduit between the MN Legionnaire and its longtime printer (Red Wing Publishing Co.), I recall his strong presence in the production of this publication. Ferguson never interfered with the Minnesota Legionnaire editor, but he was usually present to assess content, stories, opinion and even graphic design. He offered ideas, impressions, imagination and inspiration. I'd often ask him if he had a journalism background. And if he had ambitions to write. To that, he would just smile and change the subject. I did not know of his sacrifices in battle. And, as Dan Ludwig says, "He was a good man."

**James Edlund**  
Cannon Falls

**The Minnesota Legionnaire**

Official Publication of and Owned Exclusively by  
The American Legion, Department of Minnesota

**Al Zdon, Editor**

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**POSTMASTER:** Please send address changes to The Minnesota Legionnaire, 20 W. 12th Street, St. Paul, MN, 55155-2000. (USPS No. 013-679.) (ISSN No. 1644270)

# What's Happening

## New Ulm Fly-Over

The Air Force will conduct a fly-over in New Ulm on May 12 at the New Ulm City Cemetery to offer an aerial salute to Lt. Robert Niemann of New Ulm. Niemann was shot down over Korea in 1953 and is still listed as missing in action. Two F-16s from the 148th Fighter Wing will participate.

The fly-over is slated for 10 a.m. The ceremony will start at the cemetery at 9 a.m. and there will be a special exhibit at the Brown County Museum at 1 p.m.

## Mora Traveling Wall

The Veteran Traveling Tribute Vietnam Memorial Wall and the Eyes of Freedom Traveling Memorial for Iraq and Afghanistan vets will be on display at the Kanabec County Fairgrounds from Aug. 3-5. Mora Post 201 and the local DAV chapter are hosting the displays. There will be a special presentation on Aug. 4 at 1 p.m. including the unveiling of a statue of a Mora veteran.

## Tours of Ft. Snelling

The Minnesota Historical Society has a special opportunity for veterans groups. On Armed Forces Day, May 19, groups will be given a free 45-minute step-on bus tour of historic Fort Snelling. The tour will be followed by refreshments and conversation about the upcoming revitalization of the fort and visitor buildings. The tour is only open to groups. Please contact Caitlin McGowan at Caitlin.mcgowan@mnhs.org to reserve a time slot. The tours will go from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Legion Day at Twins

The 18th annual American Legion Family Day at the Twins is Friday, July 13, at 7:10 p.m. vs. the Tampa Bay Rays. Diamond View seats are available for \$21. There will be a scoreboard recognition for every post that attends. Commander Mike Schaffer will throw out the first pitch.

To order tickets, call 1-800-33-TWINS and hit 0 to speak to an attendant. Be sure to reference the special American Legion promotion. A \$5 service charge will be applied to each order. For more information, call Brian Bessler at 612-659-4083.

## Round Tables

The World War II History Round Table will meet May 10 at the Fort Snelling Visitors Center at 7 p.m. The program will be "To Save the Victory After Defeat" and will focus on post-war Europe. Veterans of the occupation will be on hand. The main speaker will be Benn Steil author of The Marshall Plan. Admission is \$5.

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will meet on Monday, May 21, at the Lowell Inn. The program will be "The Great Locomotive Chase" with speaker George Romano. This is a dinner meeting. For more information,

call Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268.

## Membership Online

All posts in Minnesota can now process their membership online. This feature utilizes electronic payment methods via mylegion.org and eliminates the need to send the National/ Department portion of the membership cards and paper checks to the Department Headquarters.

For mylegion.org users, simply use the process membership option in the left menu. Instructions are available. If you are not a mylegion.org user, go to the site and sign up using the "authorized form" located at the bottom of the web page. If you experience any problems, email jgalagher@legion.org or call 800-433-3318.

## Photo Contest

The Public Relations Committee is sponsoring an American Legion Family of Minnesota Photo Contest through July 19. Photos should include the entire Legion Family. Photos should come with identification of all in the photo, left to right, and a description of the event they are participating in. The prize will be \$100.

Pictures can be sent to americanlegiondepartmentmn@gmail.com with the subject line: PR Picture Contest. For more information, email Jennifer.havlick@outlook.com.

## American Legion College

The 2018 American Legion National Leadership College will be held Oct. 28-Nov. 2, 2018. Minnesota will have one nomination. Candidates should be from the Lebanon/ Grenada, Panama, Gulf War or War on Terrorism eras. Candidates should also have completed the American Legion Extension Institute.

Minnesota could have one other candidate from a war era prior to Lebanon/ Grenada, based on seat availability.

Deadline for submission is July 1. For more information contact Adjutant Randy Tesdahl at 651-291-1800 or email rtesdahl@mnlegion.org.

## VA mis-mailings

The VA has resumed sending rating letters on claims to power of attorney offices so that veterans can be notified of any changes. However, many of these VA letters are being sent to the wrong power of attorney offices. Many are being

sent to local posts.

If your post receives such a letter, from the VA in Janesville, WI, please forward it to The American Legion Claims Office, 1 Federal Drive, Room G220, St. Paul, MN 55111.

## Newman book

The book "Just War" by Tom Newman, the subject of an April feature story in the Minnesota Legionnaire, is available for purchase. The book is about Newman's experiences as a paratrooper in the Vietnam War. The book can be purchased from Newman at tom\_newman1@msn.com or through Amazon Books. Those interested can also call Newman at 612-306-8609.

## Flag Disposal

The Disposal Ceremony for Unserviceable U.S. Flags will be held at the Veterans Campground, Big Marine Lake, Marine on St. Croix, at noon on Saturday, June 9. It is a project of the Fourth District.

The ceremony will feature a speaker and the authorized Legion flag retirement ceremony. Following the ceremony, there will be a picnic/ potluck meal provided by campers and the Veterans Campground. Beverages will be available in the canteen building.

## MACV programs

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will sponsor several free Drop-in Legal Clinics in Minnesota. The clinics provide veterans with information on housing, employment, benefits, debt collection, expungement, and family law. For more information, call 651-200-4750. The clinics include:

June 14, Anoka County Government Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

May 8, Minneapolis VA Medical Center, Flag Atrium Balcony Room, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

June 6, Duluth American Legion Post 71, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In addition, MACV is sponsoring a Stand Down for veterans on Saturday, June 23, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kahler Apache Ballroom in Rochester. There will be a welcome ceremony at 11:30 a.m. Free services include meals, haircuts, clothing, housing, VA benefits, employment assistance and legal assistance. The entire family is welcome. For more info, call 507-345-8258.

## Minnesota officer wins regional award

David R. Watson of Burnsville has been selected as The American Legion Midwest Region Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

He had previously won the Minnesota Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

The Midwest Region includes Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Watson is a detective for the Lakeville Police Department for the past 25 years.

He is a native of Hibbing.

He has been involved in many community volunteer projects, and he earned the Legion of Purple Heart from the U.S. Police Hall of Fame.

Watson will compete with four other regional award winners for The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

Watson was nominated by Lakeville Post 44 and the Third District.

### Please Join the Posts Below in Supporting the 100<sup>th</sup> National Convention

The National Convention Corporation of Minnesota would like to thank the Posts below for sponsoring our convention and invite those that aren't on the list to consider participating. Contributions to the convention will be directed towards the Minnesota Convention Corporation's hosting responsibilities and other ways to make this the best convention yet.

<p><b>Posts of Distinction (\$5,000 and up)</b> Merton-Dale Post 80 North St. Paul Post 39 Rudolph Priebe Post 172</p>	<p>Audubon Post 339 Aviation Post 511 Backus Post 368 Beatty-Humphries Post 323 Becker Post 193 Bellingham Post 441 Bigelow Post 496 Billie Brown Post 627 Boyd Post 198 Bruno Post 563 Buffalo Post 270 Caledonia Post 191 Clinton Post 258 Charles Borak Post 45 Cold Spring 455 Coon Rapids Post 334 Currie Post 322 Dan Patch Post 643 Deer Creek 283 Dovin-Wilcox Post 313 Eden Valley Post 381 Eugene Earley Post 121 Falldin Post 555 Flensburg Post 136 Foster-Bernhardt Post 373 Franklin Post 308 Glenville Post 264 Gonvick Post 304 Gopher Post 440 Graceville Post 297</p>	<p>Grand Meadow Post 140 Gust F. Holden Post 253 Hackensack Post 202 Harris Post 139 Hastings Post 47 Hawley Post 382 Hills Post 399 Hopkins Post 320 Hugo Post 620 Ironton Post 443 Janesville Post 281 Jeffers 401 Joseph A. Gates Post 78 Kaleb E. Lindquist Post 24 Karlstad Post 445 Kramer Berg Post 507 Lake Crystal Post 294 Lamberton Post 41 Le Center Post 108 Lee Goldsmith Post 201 Lee-Osborn Post 59 Lewiston Post 90 Lismore Post 636 Madison Lake Post 269 Mc Veigh-Dunn Post 60 Melvin Daskam Post 38 Middle River Post 444 Monticello Post 260 Mountain Lake Post 389 New Germany Post 601</p>	<p>New Ulm Post 132 Nicollet Post 510 Northrop Post 522 Northside Post 230 Norwood Young Post 343 Okabena Post 608 Peter Leuze Post 420 Prior Lake Post 447 Prudent Van Risseghem 395 Public Safety Post 449 Richard Howard Ferrell 46 Richmond Post 292 Rosetown Memorial Post 542 Rush City Post 93 Sherburn Post 356 Silver Star Post 428 Spicer Post 545 St James Post 33 St. Paul Post 8 Stewartville Post 164 Taconite Post 301 Truman Blakesley Post 432 U of M Post 548 Underwood Post 489 Waldorf Post 587 West Duluth Post 71 White Bear Lake Post 168 Wm. T. Lewis Post 12 Wold-Chamberlain Post 99 Woodbury Post 501</p>
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We ask posts that want to give to make a check out to the National Convention Corporation of Minnesota and send to MN American Legion State Headquarters : Third Floor, Veterans Service Building: 20 W. 12th Street, Room 300A : St. Paul, MN 55155-2000.



### Do you know a company that may financially support the 100<sup>th</sup> National Convention through sponsorship or advertising?

There are sponsorship and advertising opportunities for businesses. We want to thank the companies below for supporting the convention through sponsorships. If you know of a company that may want to participate through a sponsorship or advertisement in the Legionnaire, please contact Michael Davy at (612) 247-9960 or mdavy@mnlegion.org.



## HELP WANTED

### Legionville Camp General Manager

The Camp GM will be responsible for the overall operations and maintenance of the camp.

Resumes can be sent to:

The American Legion  
Department of Minnesota  
Room 300A  
20 West 12th Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155-2000

Attn: Legionville Board

# Evelyn Starr

Continued from Page 1

Legionville.

She became active at the national level, and was Minnesota National Executive Committeewoman in 1971. After that she served on a series of national committees until getting elected National President at the 1986 convention in Cincinnati.

"I was always a bit in awe but also humbled that I had such a special mentor and friend," Past Department President Carol Holmgren said. "She was a very lovely lady."

Holmgren is from Cambridge, and she recalled she was attending a national convention in the late 1980s when Starr saw her in a hallway. "Carol, come with me," Starr said. She brought Holmgren backstage and introduced her to the author Erma Bombeck.

Over the years, Holmgren said, Starr introduced her to dozens of top leaders in the Auxiliary. "She always introduced me as 'from her unit.' She was very proud of her Cambridge beginnings."

"She was a classy lady," Past National Commander Dan Ludwig said. He recalled how Starr had joined in part of a walk through southern Minnesota to raise money for the Brain Science chair. "Wherever they went, Jim and Evelyn were a classy couple."

She was born on Jan. 30, 1927, and raised on the family farm just east of Cambridge. She lived in both Hopkins and Cambridge for several years, going to high school and working in a local bank, until she married James Starr in 1948.

She and Jim created a successful business and raised three children, Pamela, James and Katherine.

Starr was active in her church and community and helped establish the home meals program in Cambridge.

Her family said in a newspaper obituary that Starr's focus was always on helping others, and the American Legion Auxiliary gave her the platform to help people, especially children.

Her obituary said, "She was always there when needed and gave love and assistance without judgment or restriction. We have no doubt that her love and energy will live on in our hearts and we encourage all that knew her to feel her presence."

She lived the last 11 years in Duluth, close to family.

She was preceded in death by her husband, James, in 1999. He held many leadership positions in the Minnesota American Legion.

A memorial service is planned for late summer or early autumn in Cambridge. Memorial contributions can be made to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.



EVELYN STARR



Starr shows off a commemorative plate.



Taken at the 2002 National Convention in Charlotte, Darlene Wondra, who was Third District President at that time, had the honor of escorting Starr into the convention.

# How the Ninth District Band has survived thus far

By Bernie McKigney  
50-year band member and Vietnam veteran

As a long-time member of the 9th District Band, I've observed many things that have happened over the years to the band and how it survived. First and probably the most important, band members are very dedicated. An example of this was the recent Mid-Winter Meeting in Thief River Falls when 32 band members showed up at the Legion for a performance and a later rehearsal at Northland College despite the -25 degree temperature. For years the strength and heart of the band was the World War II veterans who took a lot of pride in belonging to the band. Another unique strength has been that many music teachers/band directors wanted to play in the band. For them getting together with other band directors and playing good music was fun and they could share their musical ideas.

Then we went through a period when we started to lose those WWII vets and our membership declined. For whatever reason, remaining band members just thought that musicians would somehow come out of the "woodwork" and join our ranks. That never happened. Therefore the band board decided to recruit from other community bands. The main selling point was that the time commitment wasn't huge because we only performed 4-5 times a year. The Thief River Falls Community Band responded with at least a half dozen new musicians.

We quickly realized how important Herschel Lysaker had been to the band as the Band Manager. Hersch, as we called him, knew people, coaches, and musicians. He's what I call "A Renaissance Man" talented in many areas. He attended Concordia College from 1928-32; was an All-College Tackle on the Concordia College Football team; and first chair clarinetist with the Concordia Orchestra and the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra. These are rare qualities for anyone. When Hersch retired from the 9th District Band it took many people to replace him. We created a Transportation Coordinator, a Housing Coordinator and asked the President to oversee the preplanning for conventions and advance work for upcoming performances.

Another way that this original all male dominated band increased its membership was by gradually accepting female players. It started with a few guys getting their wives to join the band. Today the 9th District Band probably has a 50-50 mix of male and female musicians. The present strength of the woodwind section is due in large part to the new female players.

In the "Old Days" the 9th District band recruited like this: I was teaching in Middle River, MN and I got a call from Don Hinsverk, the Roseau High School Band Director, on a Friday afternoon at the school. He asked, "What are you doing tomorrow, Bernie?" I said, "Nothing Much." "Good. I'm coming through Middle River and I'll pick you up. You're playing with the 9th District Band in Thief River Falls," I said, "Okay."

Financing the band over the years has had its ups and downs. Several years ago the 9th District approved financing the band by taking 50 cents out of every Legionnaire's annual dues and donating it to the band. This kept us alive financially for some time, but as Legion memberships declined, so did the amount of financial assistance to the band. To offset the decline in revenues, the board made the decision, based on the premise, that we were the only District Band still functioning, and when performing at the Department and National Conventions we represent the whole State of Minnesota. Therefore, the band started requesting funding from the Posts and Auxiliaries throughout the state. These added Posts and Auxiliaries have responded positively and generously. Though we may be perceived at times to represent the State of Minnesota, those of us that have survived the lean years are very proud to say we're still the "9th District Band."

Our District Commander, Tim Haugen, is a strong supporter of our band. He's extremely proud to have, under his command, a Band that is likely the only District Band left in the USA. The MN 9th District Band is a non-profit organization determined in Section 501 (a) of the IRS Code, section 501 (3) Our EIN Number is: 45-6037447. Individuals and organizations wishing to make a donation can send a check to:

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

In 2018 we've already performed in Thief River Falls for the Winter Meeting and plan to attend the District Convention in East Grand Forks, the State Convention in Rochester, and the National in Minneapolis. Hopefully we can also play for one of the main men's meetings and the ladies auxiliary at the National. If time permits and we can find a venue we would like to organize a mass band concert for the Legionnaires. We did this in Cincinnati and it was a highlight of our trip. The Minnesota Party, usually held after the parade, is always a lot of fun. What a hoot this is.

District	2018 Goal	Total 2017	Total 2018	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,953	8,895	8,368	20	58	15	93.47%	8,750
District 2	7,272	7,188	6,646	-9	84	25	91.39%	7,140
District 3	11,712	11,647	10,995	12	65	13	93.88%	11,445
District 4	2,420	2,402	2,207	3	18	5	91.20%	2,332
District 5	2,486	2,464	2,255	3	22	4	90.71%	2,387
District 6	11,811	11,740	11,079	-11	71	26	93.80%	11,566
District 7	6,398	6,322	5,940	-2	76	18	92.84%	6,235
District 8	4,252	4,212	3,892	0	40	5	91.53%	4,148
District 9	6,729	6,664	6,287	30	65	24	93.43%	6,585
District 10	10,066	10,012	9,290	-1	54	10	92.29%	9,843
District 11	401	2,358	2,053	0	2	1	511.97%	2,321
<b>Totals</b>	<b>72,500</b>	<b>73,904</b>	<b>69,012</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>95.19%</b>	<b>72,752</b>

Same Date Last Year

# District Commanders

## FIRST DISTRICT

**Les Shaunce  
Commander**



Greetings from the First District:  
Spring has finally sprung. I hope.

Membership has really slowed up. We definitely have to start knocking on doors. Telephone calls don't do the trick anymore. It takes face to face contact.

I had my Testimonial April 14th in Albert Lea. What a great evening. It shows we really are a Legion Family. A great big thank you to all who attended.

Commander Schaffer's testimonial April 21st was a huge success. No livestock and not too many gag gifts. A real nice turnout with great food and entertainment.

Department Auxiliary President Donna's Testimonial is April 28th in Willmar. Let's show her our deep appreciation for her successful year with a great turnout.

The fiscal year is coming to an end and all Districts are in the planning stages for their Conventions. Everyone please get involved and make your convention the very best one yet. Our Convention is set for May 18th-19th in Winona.

Don't forget to get your CPR's in as soon as possible along with your other reports.

For God and Country.

## THIRD DISTRICT

**Eugene Leifeld  
Commander**



Information has been received from Art Tobkin, Chairperson Department Americanism Committee. The Consolidated Post Report is ready to use (CPR). The National American Legion deadline is July 1. The Department of Minnesota has a deadline so Americanism Award winners need to be submitted to Department of Minnesota by June 1, 2018. Remember the 3rd District Convention will be at Silver Lake, Minnesota Post 141 at Silver Lake May 18-20, 2018. Your views and input are important, so please attend the convention.

Memorial Day is on Monday May 28. My thoughts: Memorial Day is special as we remember those who have served and are serving in our country in the Armed Forces. There are many units who are deploying this year, and we can best help these veterans and their families by letting them know as veterans they can call on us to help out with everyday needs.

As we continue to move forward to obtain the 100% in membership, I thank all Legionnaires, posts, Auxiliary units and Sons of the American Legion (SAL) for your dedication and continuous work in supporting the Department of Minnesota American Legion and the 3rd District American Legion. The National American Legion 100th Anniversary convention begins Friday, August 24th, through Thursday, August 30th, at Minneapolis.

Remember our veterans. Ask a veteran to join.

## FOURTH DISTRICT

**Lane Stunkel  
Commander**



Hello Fabulous 4th District.

Thinking positively, I am looking forward to more snow. Looking at the upcoming months; it is easier to shovel a path from the house to the garage than mowing lawn every three or four days.

As of Bulletin 42, the 4th District membership is at 91.07%, we are less than three percentage points out of 1st Place, let's keep the pressure on. Next month, make it one point or better. Please reach out to your Vice Commanders and Membership Director Mickey or myself. We are all here to help out. Let's work hard to find new members, and, most importantly, retain our existing members.

CPR reports – Post Commanders, Adjutants and officers – please complete the CPR report for your post and send them in. Right now, five Posts have submitted CPR reports – 27.8% - Outstanding. If you need help, please reach out to your District Vice Commander or myself – we are here to help out.

May 1st-3rd, Physically disabled veterans wild turkey hunt at Camp Ripley.

May 6th, 11:45 a.m. – Join "Carry the Load" at Gold Medal Park in Minneapolis – walk 3 miles along the Mississippi River and Stone Arch Bridge, ends at Able Brewery, 1121 Quincy St NE. To register go to [www.carrytheload.org](http://www.carrytheload.org)

May 21st – 24th, Ely fishing trip.

May 31st – June 1st, Trolling for the Troops on Mille Lacs Lake and or the Mississippi River.

June 1st – 4th District SAL Convention at Rosetown Post 542 – 6 p.m.

June 2nd – 4th District Convention at Rosetown Post 542, doors open at 8AM, Convention starts at 9 a.m.

God bless each and every one of you of the 4th District American Legion Family and please think of our ailing members in your prayers. Thank you all for everything you do in your post and community, and all of the volunteer work you do.

## FIFTH DISTRICT

**Walt Lyndley  
Commander**



Do you really believe that spring is breaking its way into our lives? The last week's snowstorm was the night of the 5th district testimonial. I wish to humbly thank those who endured the weather and showed up to support myself and 5th District President Sunny Dauphin. As usual, Becky Nelson hosts a superb roast beef dinner and although the crowd was small, it was an excellent time. The gifts we received were awesome and so much appreciated. Thank you so much. However, it wasn't much fun getting out of the parking lot when the vans wheels were spinning 90 miles an hour. Thanks to LeRoy Gonzalez and crew for the helping hands.

This past weekend, the weather was perfect for the 4th district's testimonial as well as Commander Mike's. We are preparing for our 5th district convention which will be held June 1st and 2nd at the Holiday Inn in Bloomington. This perhaps could be the last year of a two-day convention. Costs rise, membership doesn't. End of story. As we prepare reports and ready ourselves for the Department Convention in Rochester, may we have better weather and days ahead. Blessings to you all.

## SIXTH DISTRICT

**Ken Johnstone  
Commander**



Greetings from the Sixth District.

As I write this article, April is almost gone and these April snow showers are not going to bring us May flowers very soon, but nevertheless, the next month will bring us May Day on the 1st, Cinco de Mayo on the 5th, Mother's Day on the 13th, Armed Forces Day on the 19th and Memorial Day on the 28th.

I would like to wish all you mothers out there a very happy Mother's Day. May it be filled with family and friends, because there is nothing more important in life. Memorial Day is a day set aside to honor all the Veterans who served in our military to keep us safe here at home. For some, it may bring bad memories, others it engenders gratitude. On May 27, a program will take place at the Little Falls Minnesota State Cemetery, which is near Camp Ripley. It starts at 1:30 pm.

There are still about two weeks left in April at the time I am writing this column, and I am still going around my District visiting my Posts. I have been receiving great support from the Posts. Without that backing, we would not still be in first place for membership within the Department. My membership team and I thank you. Everything starts at the Post level, so keep up the good work, not only for the Legion, but also for the many good things you all do in your community. Once again, thank you all and keep up the good work.

For God and County.

## SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Richard Wog  
Commander**



Mighty 7th, May is here, the snow birds are back and they got a taste of Minnesota weather snow. Now is the time to find the ones that have not paid 2018 dues not just the snow birds also the other ones also. We are in the middle of the pack on the membership race. We are going to make one more pit stop, put new tires on fill the gas tank. It will be the last pit stop. Let's put the pedal to the floor and win the race.

The 7th district convention will be June 9th it will be held at the Ashby post. It has been a long time since we have been north. It is time we do. I am looking forward to seeing all of you there. The gavel will rap at 10 a.m. sharp. Registration will be from 9 to 10 a.m. The Ashby post has put a lot of work in this convention.

May is a busy month. It is time to send your CPR reports. We want to be 100% before June 1st. Take the time to get them in. Also your new officers reports in to Department. If you have questions please ask and we will

give any post help. It is a very important report to be sent in. Also the enlisted person of the year is due. There are many armories in our state. These men and women need to be recognized for the work that they do for our country.

Congratulations to all the posts that achieve the goal of 100%. They will be recognized at our Convention. There are many posts that are so close to 100%. Keep working and achieve your goals.

Keep our men and women who are serving our country in your hearts and prayers and their families as well.

## EIGHTH DISTRICT

**Donovan Goblirsch  
Commander**



May is upon us and many Legion programs are in the works. Poppy day is coming on May 25. The National Poppy Day is a day we all should wear a red poppy to show support and honor the fallen veterans and their service. The American Legion web site is [www.legion.org/poppy-day](http://www.legion.org/poppy-day). It offers many ways the American Legion Family can expand the Legion family locally and regionally.

Boys and Girls State programs are coming up. The programs are meaningful for our future leaders in the country. Great scholarships can be received.

Note Post Commanders: We are looking for outstanding enlisted men/women of the year who are serving in the National Guard; Reserve and Coast Guard. Applications should have been sent to your adjutant. Check your Post roster for a person that meets the application criteria and submit a nomination. This is a great program and a way to honor worthy individuals. These applications are due July 1.

Memorial Day is May 29. Make sure to attend the services in your community. We all know this is a day to remember and honor our fallen comrades who gave their lives for our freedoms. Put flags on the graves and participate in the ceremonies. God bless you all.

## NINTH DISTRICT

**Tim Haugen  
Commander**



Greetings from the Roaring Ninth,

Well I believe Spring has finally arrived and all I can say It's about time.

Even though membership has slowed down we continue to push on and make every effort to meet the National target goal. We're currently in 4th place but are continuing to close the gap on the 6th District. Congratulations to the 24 posts in the 9th District that made it to their 100% goal. That only leaves 40 more posts to make goal.

Sad news from the 9th Past District Commander & Current Law & Order Chairman for many years & current Post Adjutant for Post 53 Tom Matejka passed away on March 30th and his service was held in Breckenridge on April 5th. Tom will be greatly missed.

We will hold our District Convention on June 8th & 9th in East Grand Forks and prepare for the upcoming year. All Posts should be completing their Consolidated Post Report, Children and Youth, Blood, Post Officer Report & Rehabilitation to mention a few.

## TENTH DISTRICT

**Paul Hassing  
Commander**



Hello Mighty Tenth,

Even though I would love to be at home suffering through the snowstorms with all of you, duty calls. I am enjoying the nice weather down here at Fort Bragg, but it's not home.

Being away from home, and being surrounded by military personnel every day reminds me why the American Legion is needed. I run into so many that have no idea where their benefits come from. They have no idea that The American Legion family is there for their families when they are away from home. I come across so many Soldiers who are having issues with family, finances, employers of Reservist, and other things that most civilians would not understand.

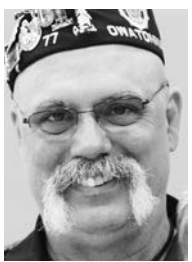
We tend to concentrate on the Military men and women who are deploying, but there are also those who are being reassigned on short notice. They have to decide if they are going to pick up their whole family to move across the country, or maintain two households. It's not easy for the children of Military members that have to change schools in the middle of the school year.

Military families need our help now more than ever. We need to let them know that we are there for them.

Thanks for listening.

## American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone  
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family:

I just love this time of the year. Not only because the bike comes out of its winter solstice but we get to honor, thank and most importantly roast those whom have given up so much of their time to serve and led the American Legion Family. I would like to thank one more time Commander Mike, President Donna, Commander Shawn and Junior Honorary President Courtney for all they have done this past year. Looks like Shawn will be hard at it one more year.

The 2018 Legacy Ride is coming together and the committee hopes to release the route to include stops and overnights soon. Watch Facebook for all the details. I will tell you to save Thursday, August 2nd and come to Forest Lake Post 225 for our Kick-off party. If you would like to be one of the first to hear how well we did on the Legacy run plan to be at Anoka Post 102 on Sunday, August 12, for our Stand-down party. It is promising to be bigger and better than anything ever held in the past. Come out one and all and celebrate with the Riders as they celebrate another glorious Ride. Steve (Mr. Sully) is already packing extra "Tear Towels" for the event.

I have recently met with organizers of the National Legacy Ride and I am told they will have a special offer to Minnesota Riders wishing to Ride the final day of the Legacy Ride. The final day will leave Onalaska, WI, travel north along the Mississippi River before crossing into Minnesota near Hastings and onto Anoka. Additional information on this will be released soon. The National Ride is taking on a slightly new format as they will be traveling back roads instead of the interstates as in the past.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

## Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By  
Jeremy Wolfsteller



### Tricare and the Federal Government's Secret

Upon entry into United States military, enlistees receive an entitlement package for their service to their country. Within that package it can include the GI Bill, VA Home Loans and a Tricare benefit to mention a few. Tricare can sometimes be overlooked by the younger single enlistees but not by those who may have a family; it provides a peace of mind knowing that their family's healthcare needs will be taken care of by the Federal government.

Over the years the Department of Defense has tried to increase the costs of Tricare for enlistees and have succeeded but not without pushback from The Veteran Service Organizations like The American Legion who has been an avid supporter of Tricare benefits -- advocating to keep the cost-shares and deductibles to a minimum. Recently changes were made to Tricare in the passing of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 (NDAA 2017). These changes went into effect January 1, 2018, and can be found here on the NDAA 2017 Impact to TRICARE Fact Sheet.

[https://www.tricarewest.com/content/dam/hnfs/tw/prov/resources/pdf/HNFS\\_T2017\\_NDAA\\_QRC.pdf](https://www.tricarewest.com/content/dam/hnfs/tw/prov/resources/pdf/HNFS_T2017_NDAA_QRC.pdf)

It's no secret that many people join the service because of the entitlements package offered upon signing that dotted line. But sometimes there is a secret in the fine print which if not caught can leave you with a bad taste in your mouth up the road. Exhibit A, let's talk about Tricare Reserve Select; it is a benefit plan available only for National Guard and Reservists. Tricare Reserve Select provides affordable rates with access to a large network of providers across the country. Those individuals serving in

our National Guard and Reserve Forces can choose this benefit plan for their family as long as they drill one weekend a month and have annual training two weeks a year. Because the rates are so affordable, the option of signing up for Tricare Reserve Select when you have a family is most likely going to be a better plan than your civilian employers. As of January 1, 2018, Tricare Reserve Select rates for a single service-member are \$46.09 (per month) or \$221.38 (per month) for a family. What the military does not warn you about is that you have to drop your Tricare benefits and select a healthcare plan from the Federal Employee Healthcare Benefits (FEHB) plan if you take a job with the Federal government.

What I'm seeing in Minnesota often because of being such a large Guard and Reserve state, that there are men and women who are serving in these branches with the Tricare Reserve Select plan for their family and looking for Federal employment. The problem is that the Federal Employer does not explain during the interview process that they will have to drop their Tricare plan and select one of their plans like HealthPartners through the (FEHB) plan upon being hired. It's not until the first day on the job where the employer goes over the new employee's benefits plan options and selections where they find out. Thus leaving them sometimes having to pay approximately \$250 more per month for a family plan.

I've confirmed this was the case with the VA here in Minnesota. Both the VA Regional Offices and Healthcare Facilities aren't disclosing this information up front because they claim they didn't know. What I've asked them to do is during the interview process to disclose the information with the service-member so they're aware before taking the job. I'll be following up with the facilities to make sure HR has implemented a new process for disclosing the information as they were all willing to assist. Also, I'm drafting a resolution that would eliminate this law that if you're eligible for FEHB plan that you can still elect to use your earned Tricare Reserve Select benefit. Please support this during the upcoming 2018 Department Convention.

## Sons of The American Legion

By  
Shawn Davis



As I write this, I think spring as arrived. May is here, and our attention goes to getting outdoors, and getting that cleanup done.

But we are not done. Membership. May 9th is 100% target. We are 1,531 members short of reaching this target. Now is the time to beat the bushes for renewals. The last report indicates that we are at 82.48% in renewals. Time to send those letters we have shared from myself and National to ask for members to renew. Time to call those members and follow up to those letters. This is crunch time with the cut off looming. Just as we plant flowers to bloom in the summer, the member that we recruit or renew, could be our next leaders.

Please welcome the newest squadron in the Detachment, Erwin March Squadron 64 in Slayton, MN. I participated in the Officer Installation for their squadron last month. It was a good gathering, and afterwards discussion turned toward growth, and the possibility of a new ALR chapter, and how that could help membership for the family there. We wish them well, and look forward to seeing them active and participating with the American Legion Family.

I also visited Langemo American Legion Post 295 in West Concord for a joint family meeting, with Detachment Vice Commander Tim Weaver, S.A.L. Advisor (South) Gary Weaver, and my wife Jill. We gave a presentation to them on the benefits of having a squadron as part of their family and the process in forming a new squadron. It was a good meeting, and I hope that we will have a new squadron there soon.

We also had a trifecta recently. I attended the American Legion Auxiliary National Presidents Tour at the Shaddrick-Labeau American Legion Post 303 in Fridley this past month. This is the first time that I am aware of (or at least in recent memory for those that have been around longer than I), that we have had all three National Leaders visit our State in the same year. Thank you to each of them for visiting our great state.

Consolidated Squadron Reports (CSR's) will be due at Campout (Detachment Convention) on June 23. Please plan accordingly and turn them in BEFORE then. I would love to see every Squadron turn in their report. Also if you are an officer or chairman who will not make Campout, please contact myself and Doug Bible to let us know.

I will see you at the District Conventions. Enjoy your Spring, and get those memberships in.

# Sons of the American Legion News Updates



**NEWEST SQUADRON** -- Slayton Squadron 64 has joined the Minnesota Sons of the American Legion. An installation of officers was held.



**MAJOR GATHERING** -- When Sons of the American Legion National Commander Danny Smith visited the Spring Conference, the entire Minnesota SAL leadership team posed for a group picture.

### Freedom in not Free

During the month of May we honor those brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives for America's freedom. This special day in May requires your help as an SAL member. There are graves to be decorated, assistance with firing squads, helping put up American Flags in your community and the list goes on. So please contact your Post and see how you can help. And when you are doing this, please remember to wear your SAL caps. The prepared speech from national headquarters for Memorial Day 2018 will bring tears to your eyes as you read about those that gave their lives for you and me.

Finally, thank you for all that you do for our Veterans.

### Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

I would like to introduce myself. My name is David (Chico) Jenkins. I am your V.A. & R Rep for the Detachment. A group from Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park Squadrons will be going to the St. Cloud V.A. to play Bingo on Friday, June 1st at 7 p.m. If your Squadron would like to sponsor and go to the V.A. in St. Cloud to play Bingo on a Friday night at 7:00 all you need is 5-6 volunteers and \$50.00 to \$60.00 in quarters, and if your Squadron would like to have snacks you will need to send a check there so they can provide them.

On August 21st I am planning a trip to the Minneapolis V.A. to play Las Vegas games. If you will be in the neighborhood let me know. We need to be there by 6:45. My email is [emailchico@aol.com](mailto:emailchico@aol.com) or call me at 612-618-3330.

It is has been an honor to spend some time with the Veterans who helped make it possible for us to enjoy our freedom.

### Web Master Wanted

Are you saavy working online? Can you work within the popular web templates? Our Detachment is looking for someone to invest a few hours each week updating provided content, forms and news on our website. Compensation is negotiable. Please email your qualifications to [joe@axtoninnovations.com](mailto:joe@axtoninnovations.com).

### Get this newspaper online

All paid up members of the Minnesota Sons of the American Legion are eligible to receive the Minnesota Legionnaire online.

Simply go to [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org) and click in the News box "Sign up to receive the Legionnaire Electronically." On the next page, click on the SAL logo and complete the application. You will need your SAL membership number.

Minnesota S.A.L. membership					
As of April 10, 2018					
District	2017 Total	2018 Goal	Total	% of goal	Rank
1	1884	1976	1615	81.69%	10
2	1309	1373	1227	89.30%	4
3	1920	2014	1825	90.48%	3
4	379	398	375	93.75%	1
5	414	435	357	82.26%	9
6	1425	1495	1361	91.16%	2
7	1007	1057	933	88.52%	5
8	563	591	505	85.59%	7
9	812	852	746	87.56%	6
10	1726	1810	1519	83.88%	8
11	9	0	7		0
<b>Detachment</b>	<b>11450</b>	<b>12001</b>	<b>10470</b>	<b>87.25%</b>	



Also known as the "thugs," the Department Vice Commanders made a fashion statement at the testimonial



Commander Mike Schaffer stole a kiss from wife Nina during the festivities.

# Commander's Testimonial



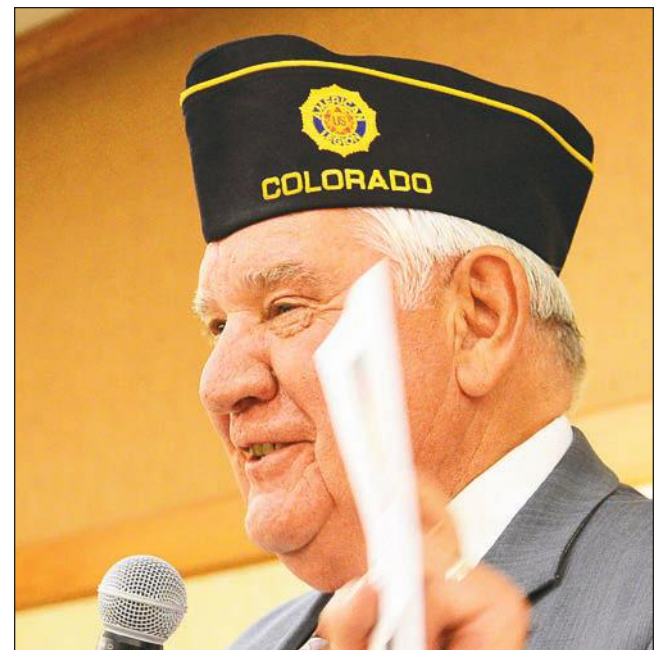
Larry Ryan was the emcee.



There were many threats of live animals at the testimonial, but generally the farmyard gifts were stuffed, inflated or carved.



Commander Mike Schaffer's Testimonial was held at Jackpot Junction Casino and Hotel with over 200 attending. The front table rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. From left, Chaplain Ralph Schneekloth, SAL Commander Shawn Davis; Speaker Tom Bock, Nina Schaffer, Mike Schaffer, Larry Ryan, Department President Donna Arends and Honorary Junior President Courtney Rogat.



Past National Commander Tom Bock of Colorado was the keynote speaker for the night.



Somehow a tyrannosaurus rex got into the building and collected money for Commander Mike's project.



Richard Abraham presented Schaffer, who recently retired as a rural mail carrier, a print of rural mailboxes.



Yes, the testimonial did go on kind of long. Actually Commander Mike and Nina were snuggling while Dee Dee Buckley sang to them, "The Wind Beneath My Wings."

# FIGHTING IN ITALY WITH THE 34TH DIVISION

*Don Halverson joined the 34th Division in late 1943 and got to see most of Italy the hard way as the Division slogged its way north for the next two years.*

By Al Zdon

Don Halverson slogged his way up the Italian peninsula in World War II, spending time at picturesque places like Naples, Anzio, Rome, Cassino and the Po Valley.

Halverson, now 95, remembers he only took two showers in over a year of combat. He remembers the trick of how the GIs kept their socks dry.

He remembers the friends he lost, and the times he almost got killed himself.

He remembers it all in amazing detail.

Pointing at his head, he said, "And it's all here in technicolor."

Donald Halverson was born in 1923 in Minneapolis, just a few blocks from Minnehaha Park. There were four girls and two boys in the family.

It was the Depression, and his dad, who was a construction foreman, sometimes had to travel to find work. "He spent time working on a federal prison in Kansas, and he'd come home once a month."

It was hard times, but he remembers it all fondly. "There was no TV and not much radio, and so we'd have to make our own fun. We'd play in the park, go swimming in Lake Nokomis, and, as we got older, we'd go down to Fort Snelling."

Until summer vacation came and then he'd be sent to a relative in Wisconsin, South Dakota or Minnesota to work on the farm. "I got sprinkled around a lot."

The work was hard, "but they had food, you know. I know there were days where you'd spend all day thrashing, and then come home in the dark and have to milk the cows."

Halverson graduated from Roosevelt High School and spent a year working at Munsingwear. "My sister was the Munsingwear queen and got to be in the Aquatennial Parade."

In April 1943, he got his notice from Uncle Sam. "I think it said somebody wanted to see me at the Minneapolis Armory."

From there, he was sent to Fort Snelling, and then to Camp Blanding in Florida for basic training.

"We had to crawl through this barbed wire while an officer fired a machine gun with live ammunition over our heads. But one of the guys who was a little taller stood up a little bit and got hit right in the helmet. Our sergeant went over and found out the machine gun was set up on sand bags and was jumping around. He told the officer that he had damn near killed a guy."

After more training in Arkansas, Halverson was sent off to the East Coast and on September 13, he boarded a liberty ship bound for Africa. "We were told there would be five hundred ships in the convoy, but when we left port, we were the only one. When I woke up in the morning and looked out, there were ships as far as you could see in both directions."

The liberty ship was not a luxury liner. "Below decks, they had row after row of hammocks, three deep. There were some poor guys who puked the whole way over."

At some point in the Atlantic, some of the convoy headed for England and some headed for Africa, via the straits of Gibraltar.

"That was where I saw my first action. There were half a dozen German fighters firing at us. They had us Army guys up on deck backing up the Navy guys in case one of them got hit. Suddenly there was a huge 'Bang!' and I

thought we'd been hit. But it was a three-inch gun on our ship firing back. With all the tracers, it looked like the 4th of July. It lasted about 15 minutes, and then there was no more trouble."

The next transportation was from Africa to Naples, Italy, where Halverson joined the 34th Division, a unit made up mostly of Minnesota and Iowa National Guardsmen. By the end of the war, the division had served more combat days than any other division in the American Army.

Assigned to Company G of the 168th Regiment, Halverson must have made a good impression because he was promoted to buck sergeant and put in charge of a machine gun and mortar section.

"If we were going into action, they would tell us to fill up our food pack and get plenty of water. We'd usually be driven in a truck to the defensive line, and then begin walking up a mountain.

"We'd attack just before dawn. First the artillery would pound the top of the mountain for about 10 minutes, and then as soon as it quit, we'd get up to the top quick. It would be just about dawn. We hoped we'd get there before the Germans got out of their dugouts on the back side. When they saw we controlled the top, they'd run down the back of the mountain.

"Day in and day out, it was the same old crap. But I don't remember us ever taking a mountain and giving it back."

Halverson's job was to set up his machine guns and mortars as fast as possible in case the Germans counter-attacked.

The Division crossed the Volturno River three times and then was assigned to capture one of the peaks of Monte



Pantano.

"It was our first major battle. The Germans had the high ground, and they liked it because they could see what was going on for miles. We were the second company to reach the top. It was very narrow and rocky, and both sides spent



**DON HALVERSON**  
At home in Brooklyn Center



**DON HALVERSON**  
During World War II

time flipping hand grenades at one another, and there were mortars coming in day and night.

“After a couple of days, we ran out of water. When we ran out of hand grenades, we’d put rocks in our C-ration cans and flip them at the Germans just to get their attention. After a week, our company was relieved.”

The entire Division was relieved in early December, 1943, but by January they were back in action at one of the deadliest battles in the Italian campaign — Monte Cassino. By this time, Halverson was the sergeant in charge of a platoon of 40 men.

“The officer in our platoon broke his glasses and so he couldn’t come with us. That meant I was really in charge of the platoon.

“I remember we were holed up under some evergreen trees, and they told us to get plenty of rest because we were going to pull out that night.

“There were four platoons and two tanks, and two platoons followed each tank, one in each track. The idea was to get across a mine field. The Germans had all kinds of mines. As the tank went over them, you could hear the pop, pop, pop of the anti-personnel mines. But then the tank we were following hit a big mine and it blew off a tread.”

Halverson was next to a good friend as they tried to negotiate the rest of the mine field. “But he stepped on a box mine, and it blew off his leg just below the knee. That was his ticket home.”

They got across the mine field and Halverson set up his machine guns on top of a hill, near a house. There, they dug in and took their rest.

“In the morning, a bunch of Germans came out of a cave behind the house. One of our guys popped up from his fox-hole, and the Germans yelled at him. But then all of our guys popped up, and the Germans surrendered. There were about 70 of them, and 165 of us.

“But from then on, it wasn’t so good.”

The company sent two patrols out, and neither one of them came back. “One of our guys was scouting and he went to the top of a ravine, and they just broke his legs with rifle fire. We started walking down there, very slowly. The castle (Monte Cassino) was about a mile away. It was like a big fortress with the monastery on a hill just behind it.”

The company soon encountered the Germans and the fighting was intense. “We had to go single file down this stretch. We tried to keep low, duck and zig zag, but they were just picking us off. Plus there were mortars coming in.”

Soon, Halverson realized he only had five men left in his platoon. “One of the guys who made it had a bullet hole that went in the back of his helmet, went all the way around the plastic liner, and then came out the front. But he was okay.

“As soon as it got dark, we got the hell out of there.”

The 34th earned great accolades for its effort at Monte Cassino, but in the end the division could not take the monastery. It was relieved and sent back to Naples to regroup and get replacements. It had suffered about 80 percent casualties in its infantry battalions. It eventually took five Allied divisions to capture the high ground and finish what the 34th Division had almost done on its own.

In March, the division got in boats and headed up the Italian Coast to Anzio, where it was thought the Allies could do an end run and cut off the German defenders.

“I remember I was sitting in the back of an LST and I watched Mt. Vesuvius erupt. It was spectacular.” The eruption, the last major eruption of the famous volcano, destroyed over 80 American bombers at a nearby airfield.

The division landed at Anzio on March 25 and joined the rest of the assault force pinned down on the landing beach, about 10 miles by 10 miles in area.

“It’s flat country and it was criss-crossed by these trenches the Italians had built to control the water. They were about five feet deep and five feet wide. In the days, all we would do is keep under cover. The nights were hell.”

At night the masses of men would come alive to resupply, get food, and go on patrols. The Germans would respond with mortars, artillery and patrols of their own.

Halverson’s most intense memory is the shelling, especially the shells that came from the huge German railroad guns. “The shells were about 600 pounds, and they could travel 37 miles. They’d go up and they had a kicker that fired and sent them even further.

“I remember the first one that landed just in front of us. You could bury a car in the crater it made. Another hit the ground just in front of us and went into the ground right under us. It was like an earthquake. But it never went off. It was a dud.”

And then there were the “screaming mimi’s.”

“They were like rockets that were on a big wheel. You could hear them getting that wheel going, it was like they were cranking up an old car. Then they’d launch the rockets, and they just screamed. There were five of them screaming, and you had no idea where they were headed for.

“The Germans had some amazing weapons.”

The Allies finally did break out of the Anzio beachhead and quickly moved to Rome. “There was a big crowd out in the streets. They were waving the Germans goodbye and waving hello to us.

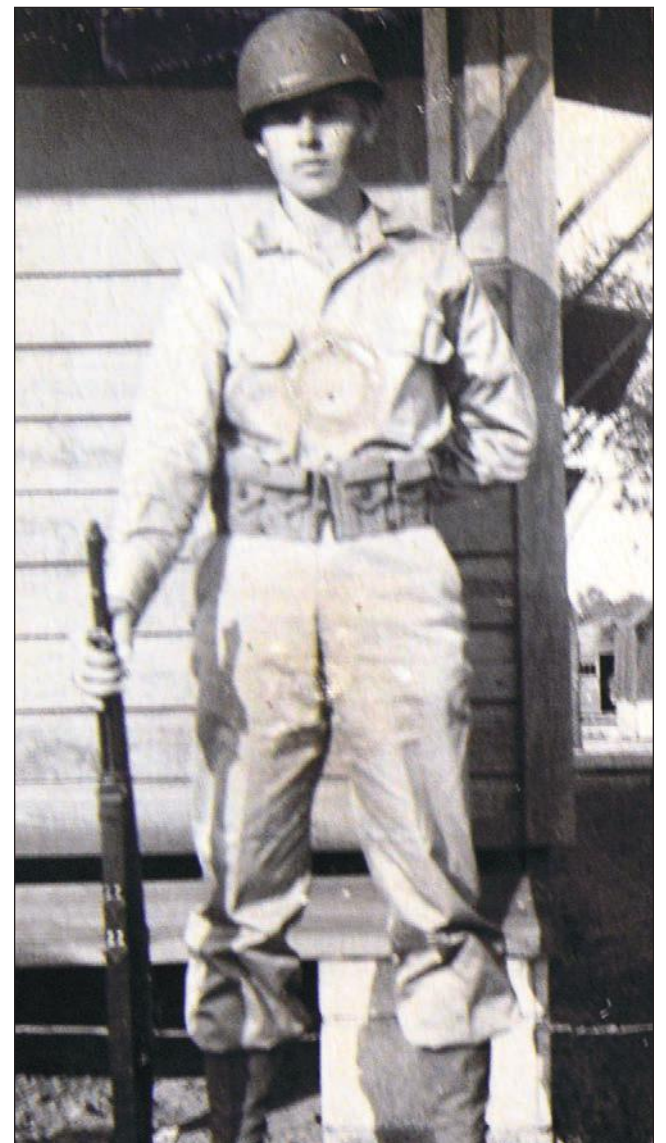
“There were some German snipers up in the buildings, but the Italian partisans took care of them. They’d go into the building, and they never brought anybody back. I don’t



Halverson saw his first major action at Monte Pantano. This painting of the 34th Division in action is titled, “The Red Bull in the Winter Line.”



Halverson was in the rear when this photos was taken in northern Italy on Feb. 14, 1945.



The young soldier looked sharp in this photo taken in training camp.



Along the way, he picked up this souvenir.



At home on leave before going overseas, Halverson posed with his sister, who was Miss Munsingwear in 1943.

think they believed in prisoners.”

The Division liberated Livorno in mid-1944 and Monte Belmonte in October before digging in for the winter south of Bologna. Halverson and several others got jaundice. “It was very painful, and they sent us back to the hospital. Then one day an officer came through and said that anybody who could walk, come on, let’s go. And so we went.”

In the spring of 1945, the offensive began anew and the 34th again headed north through the rugged territory. “It was just town after town and hill after hill.”

Conditions were dreadful. “Often it was raining, and we were wet. The trucks were up to their axels in mud. We didn’t have any cooking equipment, so imagine what it’s like opening a can of stew and eating it cold. We’d drink water wherever we could find it. Sometimes there were dead animals floating in it. We’d throw in a bunch of Atabrine pills to kill the disease, and then flavor it with lemon powder to kill the taste.”

Keeping your socks dry was an art form. “You’d wear one pair and put two pair up in your helmet where they could dry off. When you got a break, you’d take off your wet socks and put on a pair of dry ones. Some guys were too lazy or too scared to take the time to change socks. They got black feet and sometimes lost toes.”

Halverson was crossing a muddy stream one time and his foot sunk into the mud right up to his knee. “I wasn’t going anywhere, but a pack mule went by and I grabbed his tail. He hauled me right up the bank, but the mud just sucked my overshoe off. I just took off the other one and threw it back in the mud.”

Another time, Halverson hunkered down to avoid a shelling. Later that night, up in the hills, he took out his bedroll. “I opened it up and two pieces of metal just fell out. The shrapnel had just cut it into ribbons. My bedroll looked like a Venetian blind.”

At one point, one of the company’s men was out splicing wires that had been cut by the shelling when he was challenged by Americans on sentry duty. “They asked him the password, and he didn’t know it. So they shot him.”

Halverson headed out to get him. “You’d better believe I knew the password.”

Another time, someone in an American officer’s uniform came down the line. “He was asking the guys about how good the Yankees were doing and all that stuff. But nobody had seen the guy before, and so they captured him. Turns out he was a German officer wearing our uniform.”

Once, a tank stopped just short of a mine, and a demolition expert was called to remove the mine. “I remember the guy digging around the mine with a knife, and then slowly lifting it out. But the Germans had booby trapped it, and it went off. It was one hell of a sight. His hands were gone, his chest was all black, his face was torn up. The medics came and took him away. I’ll never forget that.”

As the division headed north, Halverson found himself one day under heavy fire. “A bullet makes a snapping sound if it gets close enough to your ear, and I was hearing a lot of snapping. I was running and hitting the ground, and I found some cover. I thought I’d take a drink, and I looked and my canteen had a bullet hole right through it. Two inches the other way, and I would have had my ticket home.”

As the division neared the Swiss border, they were crossing a field. “Pretty soon a German motorcycle came roaring up. We all just stood still. Then there were three touring cars, like Hitler used to ride in. And then there were trucks of soldiers. Because we weren’t moving, they didn’t see us until it was too late.

“Three German officers got out of the cars and met with our officers. I could hear them jabbering. Then the Germans went back to the trucks and screamed out some orders, and the men got out of the trucks and threw all their weapons in a pile.”

It was a classic moment during the war as the German 34th Division surrendered to the American 34th Division.

The Americans reached the Swiss border on May 2, 1945.

“It was the best day of my life. The captain told us that the war was over. I remember there was a blue sky and there was a beautiful little lake down below. We stripped off our uniforms and peeled off our long johns. They were like part of our skin by that time. We all smelled the same, and it wasn’t good.

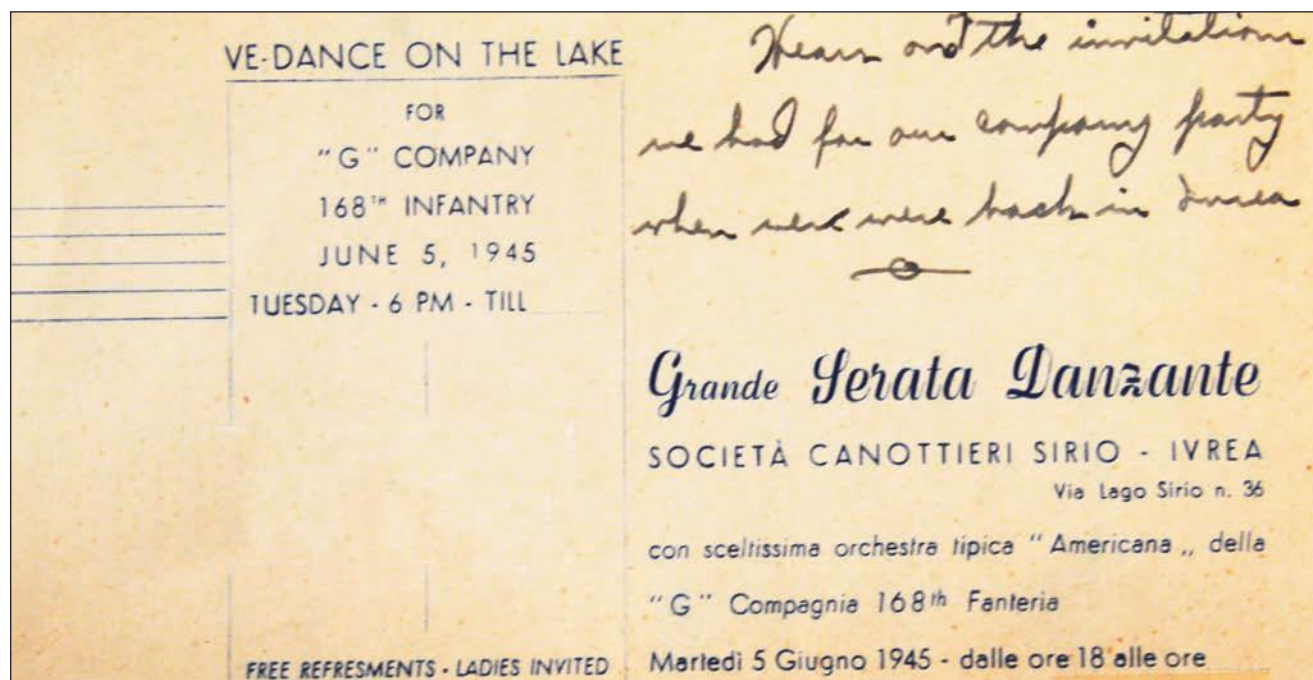
“And we all jumped in that lake. I think we killed all the fish.”

The men stayed on the border for several months, but were able to do a little touring. Halverson saw a lot of Switzerland and made a trip to Zurich. He also had a buddy in the motor pool, and they did a tour of the south of France including Nice and Monte Carlo.

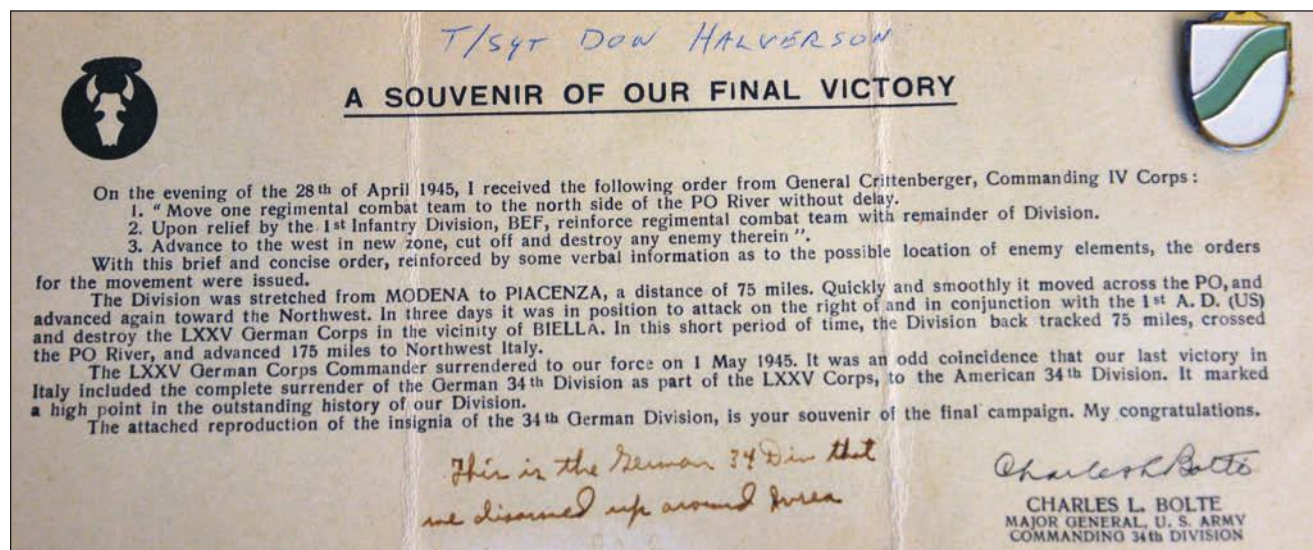
The engineers were working to repair the railroad tracks, and when the work was completed, the men got on board one of the cars and the boxcars were loaded with horses. “The Germans had confiscated all these horses as they retreated. As we headed south, at every stop they would drop off a few horses because the farmers needed them.”

The trip home was on an Italian troop ship, the Montecello. “When we got to New York and pulled up to the dock, all the guys ran to that side of the ship and we almost tipped it over. The officers were yelling at us to get back.”

The men were treated to a steak dinner and said their goodbyes.



Halverson still has the invitation inviting G Company to a Victory in Europe dance party at a local establishment. It was held on June 5, 1945 and the invitation noted: “Ladies Invited.”



The final campaign included the 34th German Division surrendering to the American 34th Division at the northern border of Italy. Gen. Charles Bolte provided this souvenir of the final victory.



Still in their teens or early 20s, two years of combat can be seen in this group photo taken in Biella, Italy at the close of the war. Halverson is second from right.

“You know you try not to get too close to anybody in combat because they might get killed. It was just here today and gone tomorrow. I remember guys who were so spooked when their buddy died that we’d just have to send them to the rear.

“But at the same time, whenever the mail came, everybody would read their mail out loud. So we knew about everybody’s family, their wives, their kids. You didn’t want it to get too damn personal, but you know how it goes.”

Halverson was mustered out at Camp McCoy. He was a tech sergeant by this time. He had earned a Bronze Star.

“I came into the Sioux Line Station in Minneapolis. My folks picked me up. It was the third time they’d come to the station to meet the train. All they knew was that the 34th Division was coming home soon.

“I got home, threw my bag in the closet, and that was the



Aboard the Italian troopship Montecello, the GIs relaxed on their way back to the United States. They almost capsized the ship in New York Harbor.

end of the war for me.”

There was little work for returning GIs, but Halverson eventually was employed by Downtown Chevrolet, a job he kept for 35 years until it closed. Then he worked for Midcontinent Engineering until he retired in 1988.

He and his wife Bernice had two boys and a girl. Bernice died eight years ago, and their daughter also died about the same time.

Halverson was out snow blowing during the recent massive snowstorm at his home in Brooklyn Center. “My boys don’t like it, but you’ve got to keep active.”

He still bowls in the senior league. When he turned 90, he bowled a 240 game. “I was hoping to do that again this year, but just before my 95th birthday, I bowled a 220 game. That was okay.”

## World War II History Round Table

## Truscott considered one of great generals

By Al Zdon

Rick Atkinson, a Pulitzer-prize winning author of World War II books, was once asked who America's top field general was in the war. Without hesitation, he replied: "Lucian Truscott."

Bill Mauldin, the GI's cartoonist in the war, compared Truscott to Patton, both of whom he knew. "Truscott could have eaten a ham like Patton for breakfast any morning and picked his teeth the man's pearl-handled pistols."

General Eisenhower said only Patton ranked ahead of Truscott on his list of extraordinary generals.

Lucian King Truscott Jr. was the subject of the World War II Round Table in April, with historian Harvey Ferguson, the author of *The Last Cavalryman, The Life of General Lucian K. Truscott Jr.* as the main speaker.

Truscott was born in Texas in 1895 and mostly raised in Oklahoma. Ferguson noted that Truscott's father was a country doctor, who had an addiction to laudanum. The family moved often, from small town to small town, whenever it was feared the father would be exposed.

At age 16, the younger Truscott lied about his age and high school graduation, and took a summer course, earning a teaching certificate. He taught in Oklahoma schools for six years before joining the Army in 1917 at age 22.

He applied to be an officer, again falsely claiming to be a high school graduate who had college training. He was commissioned and joined the Cavalry. He spent most of World War I patrolling the Mexican border.

Between the wars, Truscott had various jobs. "You have to remember that before World War II, there were only about 300,000 in the Army. By the time of the war, there were 2.8 million. They had to grow the Army very quickly, including the officer corps," Ferguson said.

Truscott was a colonel when the war started and soon became a one-star general in charge of developing an American commando unit styled after the British commandos. By November of 1942, he was a two-star general.

He led 9,000 troops ashore in North Africa as part of Operation Torch, and by early 1943, he was commanding the Third Infantry Division. At age 48, he was one of the youngest division commanders in the Army.

Truscott earned a name for himself in training the division, and in Sicily the 3rd Division gained a reputation for speed over rugged terrain. The troops were trained to march twice as fast as other troops, and the technique became known as the "Truscott Trot."

But not fast enough for Patton, who threatened to relieve his old friend. Truscott told Patton he could relieve him anytime he wanted, but he warned, "Nobody in the Army can follow bad orders better than I can."

He continued to move up the ladder. "He was good friends with both Patton and Eisenhower, and they were career accelerators for him."

Truscott continued to lead the division through the landings at Salerno and Anzio.

In the planning for Anzio, Gen. Clark wanted to only send one division – Truscott's. Truscott told him, "Well, you're going to lose one of the best divisions in the Army, because there will be no survivors." Clark redid the planning to include more troops.

At Anzio, he was bumped up to VI Corps commander when the attack bogged down and the Allies were hemmed in at the landing zone. "He was younger and had more skills than his predecessor, but the Allies were still stuck on the beach," Ferguson said. Eventually, Truscott's army did break out and was instrumental in the capture of Rome.

In August 1944, the VI Corps landed in southern France – a textbook beach landing. Bill Mauldin quipped, "It was the best invasion I ever attended." Medal of Honor recipient Audie Murphy later said the Truscott-led invasion "had the smooth precision of a machine."

Truscott himself, as he did in several battles, got out his old cavalry boots to wear. Ferguson said, "The troops had a feeling that when the general broke out his boots and britches, they were going to be okay."

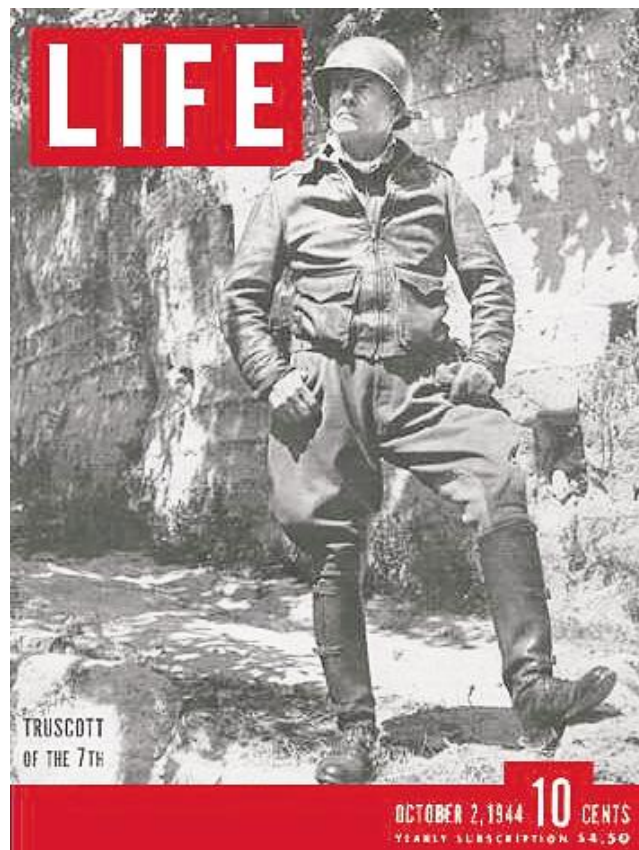
The Corps pushed across France in just a couple of months.

Truscott was elevated to three-star general in September of 1944 and appointed commander of the 15th Army, mostly a training command. In December, he took over for Mark Clark and led the Fifth Army for the next six months as they eradicated the German forces in Italy.

"For a long time in his career, Truscott didn't stand out. He just didn't need the attention other generals needed. It wasn't necessary to him."

A story was told that at one point a new American cemetery was being dedicated in Italy, and the usual dignitaries were there. But when it came time for Truscott to speak, he turned his back on the audience and spoke only to the graves behind him. He apologized to the heroes buried there and, in a quiet voice, asked their forgiveness.

At war's end, he succeeded Patton as head of the Third Army in occupied Germany. "But Truscott was a big time smoker, and there was probably no shortage of liquor at a



Truscott made the cover of Life Magazine in 1944.

general headquarters, and in the end he had a heart attack. He spent six weeks in a hospital, because that's what they did in those days."

After the war, he was appointed as a consultant to the CIA, and held various high level positions until he retired in 1958.

Truscott died in Virginia in 1965 and was buried at Arlington.

Steve Woodrich served in the 86th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, one of the most decorated divisions in the war.

He was asked about the strategy of taking on the Germans in the rugged mountains of northern Italy. "I was just a PFC, first scout. All that information was above my pay grade."

Woodrich did tell about one night mission in the mountains. "We had to go up 1,500 feet and it was very precipitous. We had to use ropes to pull ourselves up. But when we got there, we surprised the Germans. We surprised them good."

He said the division was able to hold the position, but their K-rations froze solid.

His job, he said, was to be about 50 yards ahead of his unit, checking out the terrain and the enemy.

"I remember one time when the screaming mimis came in. It was like having a telephone pole coming at you. I started about seven different fox holes and didn't finish any of them."

Woodrich recalls plenty of close calls during the war, including a mortar hitting the foxhole next to him and killing two comrades. "On April 14, we advanced with 170 guys, and 11 were killed and 35 wounded in one day."

The Americans broke through the mountains into the Po Valley in mid-April, 1945, and the fighting was close enough to where the men were throwing hand grenades at each other. "A phosphorus hand grenade blew up just a few yards in front of me. It didn't hurt me. I'd never seen a phosphorus grenade before. If it had been the other kind, it probably would have killed me."

In the Po Valley, with the war drawing to a close, the Americans were able to move at breakneck speed against the defeated Germans. "We went so fast that occasionally our planes would strafe us, thinking we were Germans. We weren't supposed to be that far ahead."

In one town, they found a whole building filled with German soldiers. The Americans brought up a Sherman tank. "You never saw so many white flags coming out of every window."

In late April, the 10th Mountain Division ran into tough resistance at Torbole and Nago, and had to cross Lake Garda on boats. "They brought in these 'ducks' (DUKWs, amphibious vehicles), and I didn't like that very much."

Woodrich said one of his best friends was killed two days before the war ended.

His division was on a ship heading for Japan when the war ended.

Al Jaeger served in the 345th Engineering Regiment in Italy. He arrived in March of 1945, and his unit's main job was to build bridges for the advancing American troops.



GEN. LUCIAN TRUSCOTT

"I thought I would be in the infantry," he said. "I know about that much about engineering," holding his finger and thumb about a quarter inch apart.

He said he felt like his regiment's main duty was to mop up, doing such chores as clearing land mines.

He remembers one bridge they built. "We had to make a pontoon bridge, and we used 80 boats side by side. The pontoons were made of this tough canvas material, and on top of that we put sections of roadway material. It took us 14 hours. I helped out on that one.

"It was a 650-foot span, one of the wider ones in the war, and it worked like a miracle."

He said he knew some German from grade school, and worked with the German prisoners. "They did all the cooking. I thought I was on vacation."

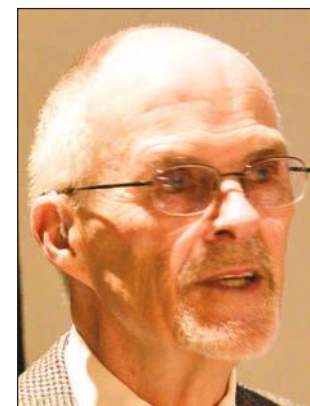
An additional speaker at the Round Table was Lucian Truscott IV, the grandson of the general.

He said the general didn't do a lot of interviews during the war like some other generals. "He didn't like reporters around because they slowed him down. He was in the business of moving quickly."

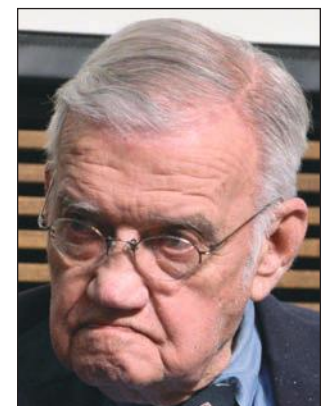
The younger Truscott said when he was at West Point, he and other cadets went on a skiing trip in New England. By chance, they encountered Will Penn, a reporter for Life Magazine, who got one of the few interviews with Gen. Truscott in the war.

The reporter said he asked Gen. Truscott about his job, and the general replied, "At my headquarters, you saw me moving pins on the map. Do you know that every time I move a pin, 200 of my men will be dead?"

"Guys had to be willing to give an order," the grandson said. "They did it knowing it might mean death for hundreds, thousands, even tens of thousands of men. They had a horrible task. War is a horrible thing."



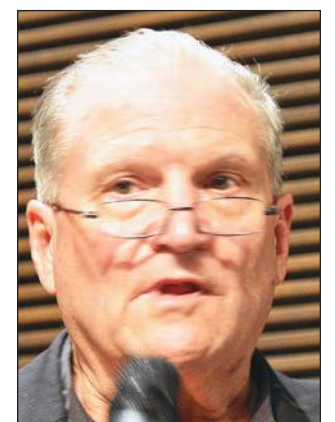
HARVEY FERGUSON



STEVE WOODRICH



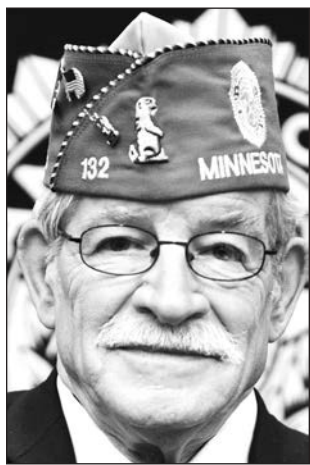
AL JAEGER



LUCIAN TRUSCOTT IV

# Taps

**Olsword, Eugene R.**, 73, Past Detachment Commander of the Sons of the American Legion, died April 24, 2018. Olsword served as commander from 2015-17, and he also served as Second District American Legion Commander from 2013-14. He was an Eagle Scout and served in the Navy during the Vietnam War. He was a sonar technician, stationed in Charleston and also aboard the USS Sellers. After active duty, he entered the Naval Reserve and served for 24 years. He and his first wife had three children. He began his American Legion service as a member in Osage, Iowa, and later was a member in Rochester and at New Ulm Post 132. He also belonged to the 40/8 and the DAV.



**EUGENE OLSWOLD**

**Brennan, Gene L.**, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died March 27, 2018. He was an engineer and gunner on a B-17 bomber in the 311th Bomb Wing. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

**Kemmerick, Joseph W.**, 98, Army veteran of World War II, died March 24, 2018. He served in the Pacific. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

**deCathelineau, Paul**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2018. He was a member of New London Post 537.

**Bratsch, Raymond**, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died March 24, 2018. He served in Korea. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

**Groendyke, John**, 99, Army veteran of World War II, died March 17, 2018. He was a member of Bigelow Post 496.

**Jenkins, James Lee**, 72, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 28, 2018. He was a member of Bigelow Post 496.

**Schmidt, Henry Arnold**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 28, 2018. He served in Germany. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

**Wallin, Vernon A.**, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 27, 2018. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

**Thoreson, Benjamin B.**, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died March 23, 2018. He served on B-17s and B-29s in the Pacific. He was a member of Bruno Post 563.

**Bennett, Orio**, 88, National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2018. He served in the 47th Division. He was a past commander of Lakefield Post 4.

**Foth, Walter**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 23, 2018. He served in the Seabees. He was a member of Lakefield Post 4.

**Collins, DeWayne Lee**, 86, Army veteran of World War II, died March 23, 2018. He was chief dispatcher in the 60th Truck Company. He was a member of Dent Post 148.

**Stoelk, Lyle E.**, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2018. He was a staff sergeant and flew 47 missions. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

**Petersen, Erik**, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 16, 2018. He was a member of Benson Post 62.

**Kruse, Vernon A.**, 90, National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died March 7, 2018. He served 16 years in the Guard. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

**Johns, James W.**, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 9, 2018. He was an engineer, a heavy-equipment operator at Thule, Greenland. He was a two-time past commander and member of the honor guard at Blooming Prairie Post 52.

**Malinski, James**, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died April 6, 2018. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

**Berglund, Darwin W.**, 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 20, 2018. He served in the USS Burleigh and the USS Maryland. He fought at the invasion of Okinawa. He was a member of Lindstrom Post 83.

**Berglund, Ralph W.**, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died April 3, 2018. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a member of Lindstrom Post 83.

**Schwanbeck, Norman**, 93, veteran of World War II, died March 15, 2018. He was a member of Elk River Post 112.

**Driessen, Donald**, 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2018. He was a member of Elk River Post 112.

**Anderson, James**, 89, veteran of the Korean War, died March 24, 2018. He was a member of Elk River Post 112.

**Montzka, Harold L.**, 88, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died April 1, 2018. He served in the Air National Guard for 20 years, retiring as a major. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

**Wilson, Norman L.**, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 28, 2018. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

**Marotzke, Kenneth**, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 23, 2018. He served in the demilitarized zone in Korea for 16 months. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Cool, Joseph**, 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 26, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Suedbeck, John**, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died March 18, 2018. He served under General Patton. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Swanson, Stephen**, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 7, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Eggen, Gene Loren**, 86, National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died April 8, 2018. He was a sergeant first class. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

**White, Todd Michael**, 48, Army veteran of the Gulf War, died March 25, 2018. He ran a Patriot missile crew. He was a past commander of Excelsior Post 259 and was a member of Delano Post 377.

**Madison, David E.**, 81, Coast Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 4, 2018. He also served four years in the Marine Corps. He retired from the Coast Guard as a Chief Electrician's Mate. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

**Stacken, Charles James**, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 29, 2018. He was a member of Chaska Post 57.

**Schulze, Leland**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 31, 2018. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

**Nelson, Rudolph G.**, 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 15, 2018. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Blade, Orlin Emanuel**, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 23, 2018. He served in Naval Air and was an aircraft engine mechanic. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Steidl, Marvin Lawrence**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 2, 2018. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Stoek, Raymond Henry**, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 6, 2018. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Hoffman, Ronald L.**, 69, National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 9, 2018. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Genz, William Herman**, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 3, 2018. He was an artillery surveyor. He was a member of Brownston Post 143.

**Sleeman, Mark R. Sr.**, 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 11, 2018. He was a past post treasurer of Clarissa Post 213.

**Grendahl, Richard Elmer**, 81, Minnesota National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died March 27, 2018. He was a member of Pine Island Post 184.

**Kniefel, Bernard**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 20, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

**Peterson, James**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 21, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

**Janda, Jerome**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 26, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

**Egelkraut, Don W.**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 15, 2018. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

**Christiansen, Jack L.**, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died April 3, 2018. He was an airplane mechanic. He was a member of Ashby Post 357.

**Aakhus, Ardean T.**, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died April 9, 2018. He served in the artillery in the Pacific, and was one of the first groups into Japan after the war as an ambulance driver. He was a member of Effie Post 182.

**Bolinger, Charles H.**, 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 25, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Harig, Eugene K.**, 81, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died April 1, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Waite, Homer "Dick," R.**, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died April 13, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Mathison, Donald R.**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 13, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Kalina, Roman**, 89, Army veteran of World War II, died April 12, 2018. He was a member of Lonsdale Post 586.

**Kohrs, Merlyn**, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died April 15, 2018. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

**Suedbeck, John T.**, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died March 18, 2018. He served under General Patton and fought at the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Duscher, Norbert Frank**, 77, Air Force Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 31, 2018. He served in

Detachment 32, 26th Weather Squadron. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

**Jochim, Robert J.**, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 2, 2018. He was a light vehicle driver in Germany. He was a member of Princeton Post 216.

**Peterson, Warren S., "Shelly,"** 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 20, 2018. He served in mortuary services in Germany. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

**Meier, Arthur T.**, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died April 20, 2018. He served in the Pacific and did carpentry, damage control, fire fighting, welding and was stationed at Johnson Atoll. He was later recalled into the Navy and served on the USS Jennings County and the USS Saline County which were LSTs. His ship landed troops at Wonson, Korea. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

**Houim, Richard B.**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 17, 2018. He was stationed at the Panama Canal with the military police. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Hageman, Richard B.**, 91, Navy veteran of World War II and Air Force Reserve veteran of the Korean War, died April 18, 2018. He served in the reserve for 29 years. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

**Schmidtbauer, Kenneth J.**, 71, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 16, 2018. He was a member of Keewatin Post 452.

**DeBrito, Frank L.**, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died March 19, 2018. He served in the Pacific and earned a Purple Heart. He was a member of Moorhead Post 21.

**Barth, Bruce R.**, 69, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 10, 2018. He served as a boilerman on the USS Colorado. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

**Otto, Dale**, 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 13, 2018. He was a member of Eden Valley Post 381.

**Wrobel, Henry J.**, 84, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 8, 2018. He was a member of Holdingford Post 211.

**Barthelemy, Roland**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 21, 2018. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

**Lee, Harvey**, 93, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died April 15, 2018. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

**Fennig, James F.**, 86, Navy and Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 17, 2018. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

**Melquist, Ronald Gilbert**, 98, Army veteran of World War II, died April 14, 2018. He earned a Bronze Star. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

**Bitzan, Edward F.**, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died April 12, 2018. He was a member of Millerville Post 527.

**Kasten, Hillery**, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died April 20, 2018. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

**Garberg, Harris P.**, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 15, 2018. He held many offices at Twin Valley Post 431 including Post Commander three times, and he was a member of the post honor guard.

**Brihn, Mary Ann**, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 29, 2018. She was a member of Bloomington Post 550.

**Avron, James O.**, 66, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 15, 2018. He was a member of Middle River Post 444.

**Hagen, Roger**, 84, Army Reserved veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 21, 2018. He was a member of New London Post 537.

## Corrections

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

**Stenson, Herbert Clark**, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 4, 2018. He served with the 752nd Anti-Aircraft Gun Battalion as a radar crewman in California. He was a member of Granite Falls Post 69.

## Obituary policy

Minnesota Legionnaire  
Updated: February 2006

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

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

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

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

The Legionnaire reserves the right to edit all obituaries for style and brevity.

# Listening Post

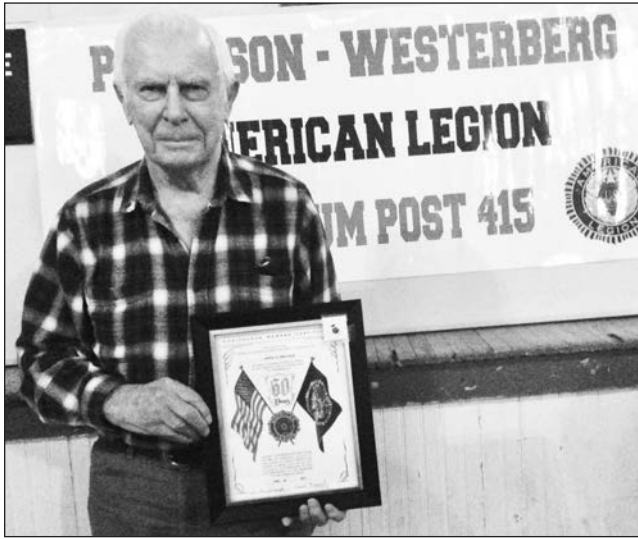
# News from around the State



**LAKE CITY COMMANDERS** -- Lake City Post 110 recognized past post commanders for their service. From left: Emery Fick, Dave McKenzie, Richard Farrington, present Commander Dan Smith and Adjutant Andru Peters.



**BRUNO AUXY HELPS OUT** -- The Bruno Unit 563 Auxiliary helped out with the first Veterans Four Wheeler Ride. There were about 60 riders on the four-hour run. The Bruno Bears Den was the host.



**BARNUM HONOR** -- Barnum Post 415 recognized Jim Prokosch for 60 years of membership recently.



**MONTEVIDEO GIFT** -- Montivedeo Post 59 Commander Marv Garbe presented Department Commander Mike Schaffer with an Air Force ornament.



**NORTH BRANCH TOP MEMBER** -- Tom Tallarico was recently awarded the North Branch Post 85 Member of the Year award by Commander Darcy Doble.



**WREATHS FOR THE FALLEN** -- Several thousand volunteers showed up to place 5,000 wreaths at the Little Falls State Veterans Cemetery. It took less than 28 minutes to complete the mission.



**REDWOOD FALLS GIFTS** -- Redwood Falls Post, Unit and Squadron 38 presented gifts at three local nursing homes to 22 veterans. From left, front: Don Wolling, David Schwartz, and Lloyd Erickson. In back: SAL Commander Steve Wiese, Auxiliary Secretary Catherine Nichols, President Carrie Warner, Chaplain Pat Schmidt.



**BUFFALO HELPS CAMPGROUND** -- Buffalo Post 270 donated \$5,000 to the Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake to help their ongoing efforts to support veterans. From left: Jerome Bradford, Buffalo Post, Kick Drude and Sheldon Sandman, veterans campground, Scott Edwards, Buffalo, Ken Larson, campground.



**MORRIS AUXILIARY** -- With meat raffle proceeds, Morris Unit 29 presented a check to Commander Mike Schaffer for his Commander's Project, suicide prevention. From left: Seventh District Commander Richard Wog, Schaffer, Pam Gades and Pat Kieffer, Morris Auxiliary.

# Listening Post

## News from around the State



**CLARISSA HONORS** -- Longtime members were honored with certificates. From left, Commander Butch Booker, Val Petersen, August Onken, Gary Hayes.



**LITTLE FALLS CEREMONY** -- Little Falls Post 46 conducted a Post Everlasting ceremony to honor members who had died in the past year.



**DEER CREEK CONTRIBUTION** -- Deer Creek Post 283 presented \$1,000 to the Minnesota Veterans Home at Fergus Falls. From left: Vice Commander Bob Palzine, Volunteer Coordinator Deanna Mounts, and Treasurer Loren Hayhtya.



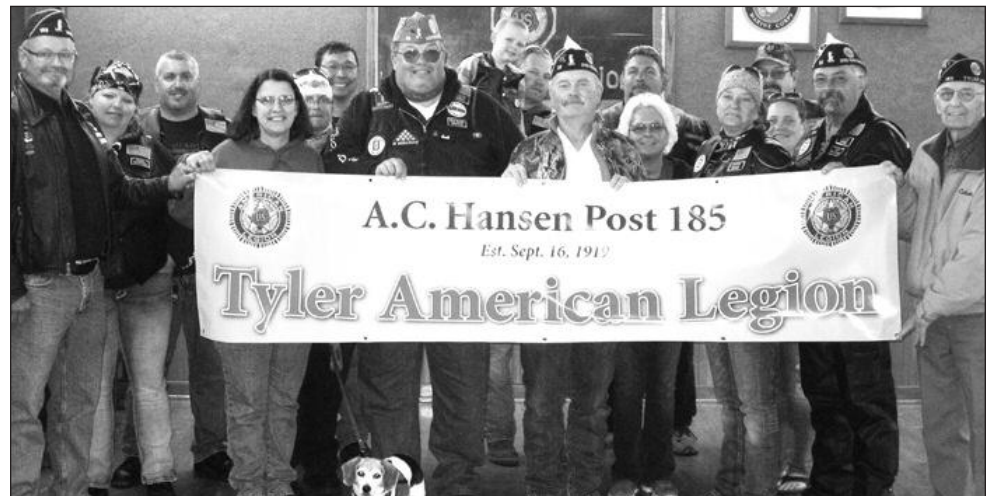
**ASHBY MEMBER SENIOR QUEEN** -- June Lynne Lacey, Ms. Senior Minnesota USA, a member of Ashby Unit 357, helped with Boots on the Ground in Fergus Falls. Also helping was Joyce Lacey, also an Auxiliary member.



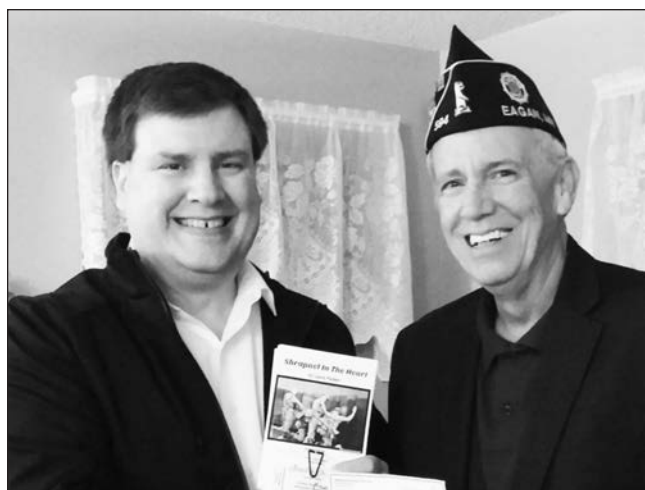
**MEETING AT RIPLEY** -- Department officers paid close attention at the National Security and Foreign Relations Committee meeting at Camp Ripley.



**BACKUS BREAKFASTS** -- The Backus 368 Auxiliary served breakfasts during the warm months to raise money for community and Legion programs. On right, from front to rear: Larry Kostka, Eugene Gagnon, Marty Whalen, Judy Johnson, Michie Durham, and Lynne Gagnon. On left: Tom Yurich, Sue Wolf and Larry Whalen.



**RIDERS AT TYLER** -- Legion Riders on their tour of the Second District made a stop at Tyler Post 185.



**EAGAN SUPPORTS THEATER** -- Eagan Commander John Flynn presented a check to Mike Obermueller of the Eagan Theater Company to support their production of "Shrapnel in the Heart" based on letters left at the Vietnam Wall.



**SPAM POST DONATES** -- Spam Post 570 made a presentation to the Disabled American Veterans in memory of SPAM member Fern Granle who died recently. Commander Mary Hanson presented the check to Ron Hanson of the DAV.



**LISMORE SIGN BACK** -- When the Lismore Post 636 opened in 1949, a sign was installed. The sign stayed until 1994 when it was removed during a remodeling. It was owned by Pioneer Village in Worthington for many years and also was used by the Worthington Post for several years. It came back to Lismore recently and was refurbished and repainted and now stands as a sentinel again in front of the post.

# Listening Post

# News from around the State



**FINALLY AT HOME** -- Fireman First Class Elmer Kerestes, who was killed on the USS Oklahoma at Pearl Harbor, was brought home and laid to rest with his family at the Highland Cemetery in Holdingford. The Melrose Legion and VFW and Holdingford Legion acted as the honor guard. Hundreds lined the route to the cemetery, waving flags.

**ELY MEMORIAL** -- After three years of planning and construction, the Ely Area Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 2017. It cost \$130,000. The memorial takes in wars from the Spanish-American to the present, and to the local men and women who served or who were killed in the wars.



**SLAYTON QUILT** -- Slayton Post 64 was given a quilt by the Piecemakers Quilt Club. In turn, the post raffled off the quilt to raise money for improvements to the Murray County Veterans Memorial.



**BACKUS WELCOMES RIDE** -- Backus Post 368 welcomed some 80 motorcyclists on the annual Ride for Vets originating at Walker. Sgt. Cooper, in sunglasses, is an annual participant in the Leech Lake ride.



**FALLDIN HELPS SCHOOLS** -- Falldin Post 555 delivered school supplies to Columbia Academy Elementary School and seven other schools. From left: Commander Don Ortell, Principal Duane Berkas, and Adjutant Ray Eiden.



**FOREST LAKE INSTALLATION** -- Forest Lake Post 225 installed new officers. From left: Rep. Bob Dettmer, Past Post Commander Robin Kunkel, Post Commander Terry Larson and Installing Officer Past National Commander Dan Ludwig.



**BEMIDJI MEMORIAL SERVICE** -- Bemidji Commander Claude Sand and the Post 14 Color Guard were part of a service honoring Ralph Gracie, a World War I pilot who was killed in action. He was the first Bemidji man to die in the war.



**MINNEAPOLIS VETS HOME POST** -- An installation was held at Minneapolis Veterans Home Post 581. From left: Adjutant Randy Hinson, Commander Steve Schultz, Vice Commander Robert Jacobson, Department Vice Commander Dan Williams, Chaplain John Miller.



**SHERBURN PRESENTS COVER-UPS** -- The Sherburn Auxiliary 356 presented 65 cover-ups to residents at the Minnesota Veterans Home at Luverne. Duane Mabon, the volunteer coordinator, models one of the cover-ups.



# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 18-10

President Donna Arends

May 2018

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

## The President's Column

By  
Donna Arends



Greetings Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary members and all. Since my last article, I have steadily been on the move. I get so many wonderful comments from many of you that enjoy hearing of my travels to so many great events, Posts and Units that I thought I would continue that route.

The middle of March was a very nice Birthday Dinner in Brownston. Wow, what great cooks for their Potluck Dinner. 3rd District Commander Gene and President Kat also attended. The next weekend was the Coon Rapids Unit Style Show fundraiser. CJ Banks outfits were modeled so of course my District Sister Sue Nunnelee and I went shopping at CJ Banks following the show. That evening was a Post Birthday dinner at the Anoka Post 102. Again, a great meal. Starting off the next week was another birthday dinner for the Stewart Post. It is wonderful that the Posts and Units are celebrating our American Legion's Birthday. Unfortunately Mother Nature and her upsetting weather did not allow me to travel to Hayfield for their Spelling Bee Contest. I was truly disappointed as spelling for children is a big priority to me. That week I was able to attend the dedication of Building 22 of the Minneapolis Veterans Home. Did you know that this is the first facility of its kind that will house a Dental Clinic in the near future? The Plainview Unit had to cancel their birthday celebration, again due to weather. I then traveled on to the Wells American Legion Unit 210 for their Legion Birthday Dinner. Commander Mike, Nina and I had a terrific time and again Great Food! I was then on to the Fergus Falls Veterans Home for their first ever Viet Nam Veterans Recognition Ceremony. It was a very moving tribute to a wonderful group of Veterans. Many of the Viet Nam Veterans from the community also attended.

I started April by attending the Rosetown Unit 542 Spring Style show along with Membership Mary, her sister Bev and Betty Underthun. Clothes modeled were from the Dress Barn and of course after the show we found the closest Dress Barn and shopped some more. Mid-April Mother Nature had another tantrum and gave us an eventful snow storm at the same time as the Department Junior Conference. I arrived in North St. Paul prior to the snow-storm and was very pleased to see such a great turnout despite the weather. Honorary Junior President Courtney did a terrific job as well as our Junior Activities Chairman Tamar Opland. Everyone did make it home safely. That week began our National President's Tour with President Diane Duscheck. Secretary Sandie will have details of that in this paper but I must say – what a time we had. I haven't laughed that much in a long time. What a true blessing to be with those wonderful ladies for three days in a car.

With that I will close. More about April in the next issue. This has been such a delight this year and I am so appreciative to have had this honor. Thank you all so much – until next time, God Bless Our Troops-Past & Present, the United State of America and you.

## Thank you

Thank you to the entire Minnesota American Legion Family for your notes, cards, memorials, and condolences after the recent passing of our father and grandfather Jerry Coleman. He epitomized "veterans working for veterans." For many years he has set a great example for his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to live by in service to The American Legion Family. Thank you for all your kindness during this difficult time.

Patti Coleman, Larry Woods and Kiana Coleman-Woods

## Northrup's Harley Donnelly Honorary Junior President

The 55th Annual Department Junior Conference was held on Saturday, April 14, hosted by the Fourth District at North St. Paul American Legion Post 39. Honorary Department Junior President Courtney Rogat lead the conference with lots of pride. New officers for 2018-2019 were elected and installed by Donna Arends, Department of Minnesota President. The newly elected Honorary Department Junior Officers are:

Honorary President: Harley Donnelly, Unit 522 Northrup, District 2

Honorary 1st Vice President: Emily Suess, Monticello Unit 260, District 10

Honorary 2nd Vice President: Eva Burket, Unit 309 Belview, District 2

Honorary Treasurer: Anastasia Donnelly, Unit 522 Northrup, District 2

Honorary Chaplain: Isabella Villette, Unit 455 Cold Spring, District 6

Honorary Sergeant-At-Arms: Kassandra Betterman, Unit 77 Owatonna, District 1

The appointed officers are:

Honorary Secretary: Megan Bruzek, Delano Unit 377, District 10

Honorary Historian: Morgan Bruzek, Delano Unit 377, District 10

Congratulations to these new Honorary Junior Officers, I know they will have a great year under the leadership of Harley.

A big highlight of many is the poppy contests and the beautiful use our poppy by our Juniors. The following are the winning entries for the poppy contests and scrapbook contest:

### Poppy Corsage/Boutonniere Contest

Class II First Place: Philesha Pfeifer, Bloomington 550 Dist 10

Class II Second Place: Samantha Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class III First Place: Johanna Welter, Stewartville 146 Dist 1

Class III Second Place: Ashley Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

### Poppy Centerpiece Contest

Class II First Place: Anastasia Donnelly, Northrup 522 Dist 2

Class II Second Place: Philesha Pfeifer, Bloomington 550 Dist 10

Class III First Place: Ashley Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class III Second Place: Harley Donnelly, Northrup 522 Dist 2

### Poppy Memorial Day Wreath

Class II First Place: Samantha Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class II Second Place: Ashley Koehn, Monticello 260 Dist 10

Class III First Place: Johanna Welter, Stewartville 146 Dist 1

Class III Second Place: Ashley Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

## Tolzmann endorsed for NEC 2018-2020

Unit 287, Minnesota Lake, has endorsed Raleen Tolzmann for NEC for the Department of Minnesota for the 2018-2020 year,

Tolzmann is eligible through her husband, Curtis Tolzmann, a Viet Nam era veteran.

Tolzmann has been a member of unit 287 for 29 years. She has served as president 5 times

On the District level, she was president in 2003-2004, and served on many committees.

At the Department level: Department President 2012-2013, Legislation Chairman, Membership Chairman, Americanism Chairman, Girls State Committee, Girls State Staff, Junior Activities Chairmen, Children Youth, National Security, Sergeant at Arms, Credentials, National Security Chairman. She is currently the Alternate NEC for Minnesota and on the president's Advisory committee.

At the National level, she

### Poppy Junior Membership Recruitment Board

Class II First Place: Samantha Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class III First Place: Ashley Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class III Second Place: Johanna Welter, Stewartville 146 Dist 1

### Poppy Jewelry/Accessories

Class II First Place: Samantha Stai, New London 537 Dist 7

Class III First Place: Johanna Welter, Stewartville 146 Dist 1

Congratulations to all those who entered – it was very hard to judge these as there we so many beautiful entries.

### NATIONAL PRESIDENTS TOUR

The National Presidents Tour kicked off with a blizzard. President Diane Duscheck did arrive at MSP only a few hours late. Nothing stops the American Legion Auxiliary. Our stops were the Hastings Veterans Home, Waseca Auxiliary and Post 228, Willmar Auxiliary and Post 167, Eagles Healing Nest in Sauk Centre and Anoka, Fridley Auxiliary and Post 303, the Minneapolis Veterans Home and Minneapolis VAHCS where the highlight was meeting with Dr. Georgopolous and Dr. Engdahl and being shown what the Brain Science area is all about. President Diane was able to see some of the things happening in the Department of Minnesota first hand and had the opportunity to speak to many of the American Legion Family members.

### SECRETARY SANDIE'S CORNER

We have lost two important members of our American Legion Family that just breaks my heart. All of my prayers go out to the family of Past National and Past Department President Evelyn Starr and also to the family of Past SAL Detachment Commander Gene Olswoold. I got to know both of them – two of the nicest people I ever met. They will be missed. Now back to my lighter side – we had the National Presidents Tour and I must admit that I had the most fun ever after the very snowy start and plane delays. National President Diane, Department President Donna, NEC Shirley who joined us Monday night, Membership Mary and I had so much fun together, even me finding a peeled, hard boiled egg, along with salt packets, in my purse. I just could figure out what that gushy thing was at first. I will let each of you try and guess which of the four ladies above was responsible. We got to tour the two Eagles Healing Nests in Sauk Centre and Anoka. Melanie Butler who heads the organization gave us the history and tour of the Sauk Centre facility. I have never met an individual with such drive and ambition as Melanie.

On a personal note, we get to travel to Texas once again to celebrate our Elizabeth's first birthday party. It seems like she was just born – again Father Time seems to keep beckoning me to the unknown at a real fast clip with time going by so fast. Hat's off to Commander Mike and Nina for a great Commanders Testimonial – went a little

has served as NEC, Alternate NEC, for the NW Division the following committee chairman – Membership, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Junior Activities, National Security Chairman, currently the Vice Chairman of Public Relations committee.

Tolzmann has always been involved in her community and church. Curt and Raleen have two daughters and one son,



RALEEN TOLZMANN

# Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

long, but I hung in there until the end and actually took money home from the casino. You will find the Scholarship Awardees in the next Legionnaire – just haven't had a chance to get all the letters sent to everyone so I will keep it a secret until next month.

## EAGAN UNIT 594 – NEW CHARTER

It is with great pride to announce the formation of the Eagan Auxiliary Unit 594. Much time and effort was put into venture and on April 23 it became a reality. There are 13 charter members at the present time. Many thanks to Post 594 Commander John Flynn and Adjutant Wayne Beierman for all of their help in coordinating, organizing and never giving up. The Department of Minnesota wishes them great success in growing their Unit.



**NEW CHARTER** -- Eagan Unit 594 is the newest unit in Minnesota. The new charter was celebrated with a cake. Eagan Commander John Flynn made the cake.



**EAGAN JOINS THE AUXILIARY** -- Legion and Auxiliary officials gathered for the presentation of the charter to Eagan Unit 594.

## UPCOMING AUXILIARY EVENTS

The month of May is Poppy Month – Governor Mark Dayton has issued a proclamation and all Units will receive a copy in the Unit Mailing

American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State – will be held June 10-16, 2018 at Bethel University in St. Paul – we still have room for girls to attend.

Department Convention – July 19-21, 2018 at the Kahler Grand Hotel in Rochester – a reminder to all members that Resolutions that are being brought to the Convention are posted on our website mnala.org under Department Convention. Please go in and review these, discuss them with your Units and tell your Delegates your feelings on them.

National Convention – August 24-30, 2018 in Minneapolis – watch for details

## Membership as of April 25, 2018

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 4/26/17
One	5,000	4,357	85.10%	4,594
Two	4,924	4,290	85.78%	4,499
Three	4,411	3,911	86.95%	3,995
Four	720	656	87.22%	679
Five	824	646	77.55%	697
Six	6,042	5,415	87.39%	5,633
Seven	3,934	3,455	85.79%	3,536
Eight	1,628	1,400	83.66%	1,442
Nine	4,344	3,734	83.45%	3,977
Ten	5,159	4,308	81.57%	4,712
1982	160	156	95.63%	155
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37,146</b>	<b>32,328</b>	<b>85.03%</b>	<b>33,919</b>



**PRESIDENT'S TOUR** -- The National President's Tour of Minnesota made a stop at the Veterans Cemetery at Little Falls. From left: Past Honorary Junior President Bryce Soltis, Mural Artist Charles Kaspner, National President Diane Duscheck.



**OUTGOING OFFICERS** -- President Donna Arends stood with Honorary Junior President Courtney Rogat and Honorary Junior Secretary Megan Bruzek.



**NEW OFFICERS** -- New Junior officers lined up at the Junior Convention held at North St. Paul Post 39.



**PRESIDENT'S TOUR AT WASECA** -- Who says the Auxiliary doesn't have fun? National President Diane Duscheck poses horizontally during at stop at the Waseca Unit.



**EAGLE'S NEST** -- National President Dian Duscheck talks with Melanie Butler of Eagle's Nest, a facility for veterans in Anoka.

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