



Legionnaire

Volume 99, Number 8

For God and Country

August 2017

Schaffer elected 101st state commander

Davenport wins Sergeant-at-Arms contest; Larry Ryan named membership director

Mike Schaffer, 66, a retired rural mail carrier from Fulda, was elected Commander of the Minnesota American Legion at the 99th annual convention held in Mahanomen in July.

Schaffer defeated Gary Olson of Moorhead 487-149.

In the other contested election at the convention, Garylee Davenport of Atwater won the Sergeant-at-Arms position. He totaled 413 votes and defeated Joe Niesen of Cologne (145) and Ryan Hill (71) of Brewster.

There was also an election for delegates-at-large to the national convention. Four people were nominated for the three open positions.

The final vote was Jim Kellogg of Taopi, 596; Bob Roe of Prior Lake, 479; Paul Orson of Circle Pines, 374; and Arlo Rude of Thief River Falls, 339.

Schaffer selected Larry Ryan of Oakdale as his membership director. Ryan said his theme for the year was 100 percent for the 100th year. His motto for the year will be: "Find 'em, thank them, ask them."

"The membership slide stops right here, right now." He promised a fun year.

Schaffer and Ryan will head a membership team that includes Department Vice Commanders Rosemary Niesen, Cologne; Steven Klinkner, Madelia; Dan Williams, St. Paul; Eric Wilkens, Detroit Lakes; and Bill Stump Jr., St. Louis Park.

Others elected at the convention included Marland Ronning, Maple Grove, for National Executive Committeeman, Bill Barbknecht, Battle Lake, Alternate National Executive Committeeman; Ralph Schneekloth,

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NEW COMMANDER -- Newly-elected Commander Mike Schaffer got a hug from his wife, Nina, after she placed the white hat on her husband. Installing officer Marland Ronning looks on.

Wanted: Your local band at the 100th parade in Minneapolis

Want to send your high school band to the 2018 National Convention Parade in Minneapolis?

"Wouldn't it be great to have the top Minnesota bands marching all through the national parade?" Convention Corporation President Jeff Olson said. "It would be another way to show off our state."

Bands, however, find it difficult to participate in events in late August. For many, it is a financial burden they cannot afford.

But there is a potential solution.

Minnesota Posts that have charitable gambling can donate part of their proceeds to high school bands.

Posts can make a legitimate lawful purpose donation

Continued on Page 2

Destinations:

Willmar

The Fall Conference this year, Oct. 27-28, will be held in Willmar. It will be the first time Willmar has hosted the event.

The conference is the annual school of instruction for the Department. **Story on Page 6**

Reno

The 99th annual Convention of The American Legion will be held in Reno, Nevada, Aug. 22-24.

The convention will feature the election of Wisconsin's Denise Rohan as the first woman leader of the organization.

Story on Page 6.

Department will have training committee

The Minnesota American Legion will have a new committee this coming year.

One of the five resolutions that passed the convention will establish an Education and Training Committee that will plan future training for the Department.

There had been an ad hoc committee for training established this past year, but the resolution will make the committee permanent.

There will be three members of the committee serving staggered three-year terms. The committee will elect its own chairman.

The commander will appoint the committee.

Lloyd Ricker of Dawson asked from the floor if the new committee would be duplicating the work of the Post Development Committee, also charged with training.

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Want trouble with gambling officials? Here's how

MAHNOMEN — Tom Barrett looked out over the large audience at the Gambling Seminar at the state convention and smiled.

"Charitable gambling in Minnesota is a \$1.7 billion industry," he said. "It's all cash. It operates at 2,800 locations, most of which serve alcohol."

"What could go wrong?"

Barrett, the state director of charitable gambling, said the Gambling Control Board keeps a close eye on American Legion posts and others who participate in this type of fund raising.

With that in mind, Barrett outlined the "top ten ways to get the attention of the Gambling Control Board."

10. **Cash shortages or late deposits.** "You've got to know where you cash is. You've got four days to get the money in the bank. Theft usually comes when money is not secured."

9. **Don't file monthly reports.** "If we see a

repeat pattern, we'll wonder what's going on. Don't blame the accountant."

8. **Let Elvis play pull tabs.** Posts will sometimes have fun with the law by entering the name of Elvis Presley or President Trump as a player. "Know who your customers are." Barrett also said that the GCB will sometimes find time-stamped receipts from 2:30 in the morning. "We suspect there may be gambling after hours. Also we see cases where the scanner mysteriously stops at midnight and mysteriously comes back to life at 8 a.m."

7. **Send in your license renewal with only one signature.** "One signature makes us wonder. We want to have a couple of eyes on program."

6. **Say something bad about the Gambling Control Board.** "If you have a problem, call me," Barrett said.

5. **Overstock your games.** Games are tracked by serial number, and operations that overstock will catch the GCB's attention. "We watch your inventory; you should also watch

Continued on Page 3



TOM BARRETT
State Gambling Director

Mike Schaffer elected commander of Minnesota American Legion

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Mabel, Chaplain; Glenn Mueller, St. Charles, Historian; and Bob Locker, Fridley, Board of Publications.

Schaffer has been active in The American Legion for 44 years, holding a number of officer positions at the post, district, Department and National levels.

He was commander of Currie Post 322 twice, was Second District Commander in 1998-99, and Department Membership Director in 2007-08. He also was a Department Vice Commander and Sergeant-at-Arms. He served on numerous committees and was chairman of

Trophies and Awards and Children and Youth.

He has been an assistant Sergeant-at-Arms at many national conventions, and currently serves on the National Security Committee. He is a dual member of the Sons of the American Legion.

Schaffer served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War, and was stationed in Alaska and in the Philippines.

He was employed by the U.S. Postal Service as a rural mail carrier for over 23 years, retiring in 2015.

He and his wife, Nina, have three children and four grandchildren. He has been active in the community, serv-

ing in the Lion's Club, the Knights of Columbus, and he is a member of St. Gabriel Catholic Church.

His theme for the year is learning from the past and mentoring in the present to prepare for the future. He will work on special projects including scholarships to the Boys State program and raising money and awareness to help prevent veteran suicides.

Attending the convention was National Vice Commander Douglas Boldt of Nebraska. He stayed for the entire convention and spoke several times.

The convention was held at Shooting Star Casino and Event Center.

New training committee resolution passed

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Commander Denise Milton replied that she didn't think so.

New Commander Mike Schaffer will appoint the committee. All his appointments will be announced at the new Legion year's first Department Executive Committee to be held at Elk River on Aug. 5.

The Department also gained a new one-person committee that will serve under the Americanism Committee. A Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee will have a one-person membership. The committee will attempt to develop and coordinate a youth cadet program. The person appointed should have a law enforcement or education background.

Other resolutions that passed the convention included:

— The Minnesota Legion's constitution was changed to

change the number of posts represented needed for a quorum at a state convention from 20 percent to 10 percent. The convention in recent years has come close to not having the requisite 20 percent. If that happened, the convention could not conduct its business.

— Calling for the mandatory issuance of all correspondence, paper and electronic, to be sent from federal agencies to the original power of attorney for a veteran.

— And calling for the establishment in the law calling for rating decisions review to be defined as 48 business hours before any rating may be automatically expired.

Rejected by committee at the convention was a resolution that would have allowed district officers to take their positions before the state convention.

Gambling money can be used for bands

Continued from Page 1

under the Gambling Control Board's designation "A6" (Activities recognizing military service.) There is no limit on the amount of the donation.

The donation can cover the expenses of the band.

The parade will be held

on Sunday, Aug. 26, 2018, and will proceed down the Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis.

The Minnesota convention group is also seeking pipe bands and drum and bugle bands from Minnesota to march in the parade.

The Minnesota delegation has a tradition of having massed flags at national parades, and it is hoped that posts from across the state will march in the parade in the Minnesota group providing a spectacle of hundreds of American flags.

Posts do not have to be registered for the convention in order to march in the parade.

The Convention Corporation held a meeting at the Mahnommen Convention, and discussed many of the plans for the 2018 convention, now just over a year away.

Olson said that 14 hotels will house the convention, and he said it's the best hotel block he's seen in 25 years. Olson was the chair of the national convention committee for many years.

He said the fact that the Super Bowl was being held

in Minneapolis in February caused many of the hotels to invest millions in renovations.

Current plans for the after parade party will be for it to be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center in partnership with the Minnesota Craft Brewers Association.

V4V lists latest donations

The Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund has announced its latest series of grants:

-- \$5,000 for Middle River Veterans Outdoors Inc. to provide free outdoor opportunities for veterans.

-- \$5,000 to the Hugo Yellow Ribbon Network. The grant will help veterans who missed hunting opportunities while they were deployed.

-- \$10,000 to the ARS Bellum Foundation. The organization provides creative arts therapy for veterans with PTSD.

-- \$7,000 to the Free Funeral Urns for Veterans Program. The grant will help provide urns for deceased veterans.

-- \$5,000 to the Minnesota Military Family Foundation to assist families whose veteran is deployed.



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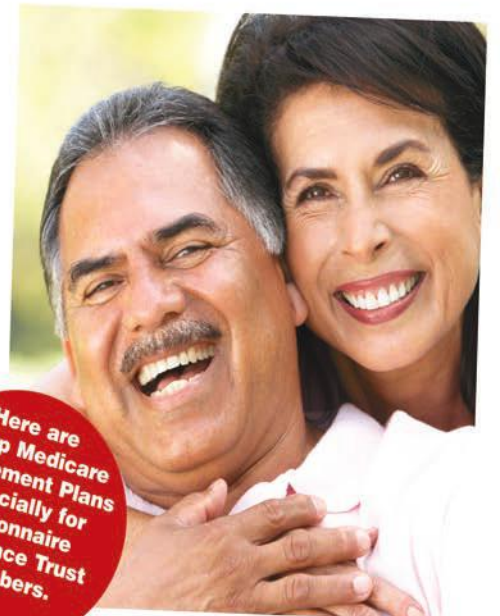
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Endorsements

Redepenning endorsed for commander

Darrel Redepenning has been endorsed by Edward B. Cutter Post 102 in Anoka and the 10th District for Department Commander for the 2018-2019 year.

Redepenning is eligible through his service in the Army from 1970-1973. He is a 45 year honored life member at Anoka and has served as Commander (two terms), Executive Committee (15 years) and is currently the Post Judge Advocate.

On the District level, Redepenning served as the Tenth District Commander

2010-2011.

On the Department level, Darrel has served as the Department Membership Director 2012-2013, Vice Commander 2015-2016, Trophy and Awards Chairman for nine years and currently serves on the Rehabilitation Committee.

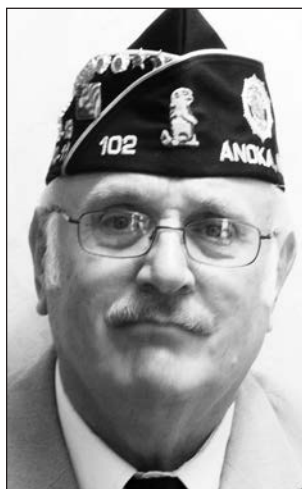
On the National level, he serves on the Veterans Employment and Education Commission and has attended two National Membership Workshops.

Redepenning is a member of the Sons of the American Legion, 40/8,

DAV Life Member, NITTB-NTI and will be inducted into ANAVICUS at the 2017 National Convention in Reno.

He retired in 2016 after 25 years in Orthopedic Surgery at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis.

He and his wife Donna (past 10th District President) have been married 41 years and reside in Fridley. They have two sons and two grandchildren. Darrel's father Bud was Department Commander 1986-1987.



DARREL REDEPENNING

Don't let Elvis Presley play pull tabs

Continued from Page 1

your inventory. If games aren't coming off your shelf, something's wrong."

4. **Pay top dollar for pull-tabs.** "Don't be afraid to ask the distributor is this is the best price you can get."

3. **Live outside the averages.** The GCB monitors expenses, inventory and other reports. "If you are more than 80 percent above the average for expenses, you will be on our radar."

2. **Don't file your taxes.** "We work closely with the Department of Revenue, and they are quick on the spot to alert us."

And finally,

1. **Ignore us.** The GCB will send out notices of upcoming inspections, hoping that posts will prepare and send in paperwork. "It's amazing how many people don't respond, even if we send three letters. We wonder what it takes to get their attention. We can call for a surprise inspection. If it's an emergency situation, let us know and we'll work with you."

Barrett said there was one golden rule for running a gambling operation. "Do the right thing."



EPA recognizes Minneapolis VA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized six federal facilities, including the Minneapolis VA Health Care System (Minneapolis VA), for efforts to improve efficiency, save resources and reduce costs as part of the Federal Green Challenge (FGC).

"Federal agencies across the country are doing their part to minimize their environmental impact, in doing so saving American taxpayers millions of dollars," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "Their efforts resulted in an estimated cost savings of \$17 million across the federal government."

FGC participants reduced the federal government's environmental impact by reducing fuel oil consumption by more than 500,000 gallons, sending 310 tons of end-of-life electronics to third-party certified recyclers, saving 9.2 million gallons of industrial water, and diverting over 336,000 tons of waste from landfills.

The Minneapolis VA received the EPA's top award for environmentally preferable purchasing practices. In FY 2016, the Minneapolis VA decreased its printer and copier paper purchased by 44 percent from the previous year, saving \$125,600. Specifically, the facility reduced white paper usage from 340,000 pounds in FY15 to 191,000 pounds purchased in FY16. This is a savings of more than 74 tons of paper and more than 10,000,000 standard sheets of white paper saved.

George Johnson, manager of the Minneapolis VA's Green Environmental Management System (GEMS) program, said, "This reduction was achieved by encouraging staff to set paper saving printer settings include automatic defaulting to duplex and choosing one-sided printing only when necessary. We encouraged staff to save more documentation in electronic formats, relying on electronic, rather than

printing on paper and storing hard-copies. Our facility also uses paper containing at least 30 percent recycled content."

He added, "There was also a substantial savings in energy and waste disposal costs related with paper reduction due to less document printing and disposal. A major portion of the credit goes to Sid Bell, Chief of Logistics; Kimlyn McVay from Nursing Education; and Kurt Virnig from OIT for their leadership in implementing the Rite-Fax initiative."

The FGC has six categories. Here are recipients in the other five categories:

- **Waste:** The Department of Defense, Vermont Army National Guard (Jericho, Vermont) increased its composting efforts by 2,217 percent from the previous year, saving nearly \$4,000 in tipping fees.

- **Electronics:** The Department of Energy, East Tennessee Technology Park (Oak Ridge, Tennessee) increased its Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)-registered equipment by 1,328 percent and sent 11.6 tons of used electronics to third-party certified recyclers.

- **Energy:** The Department of Veterans Affairs, Connecticut Health Care System (West Haven Campus, West Haven, Connecticut) reduced the amount of fuel oil it consumed by 58 percent, saving \$59,456.

- **Water:** The Department of Energy, East Tennessee Technology Park (Oak Ridge, Tennessee) reduced its potable water consumption by almost 94 million gallons, saving \$375,412.

- **Transportation:** The Department of Veterans Affairs, The James E. Van Zandt Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Altoona, Pennsylvania) increased its hybrid vehicle fleet size by 125 percent.

Scholarships announced

The 2017 Minnesota American Legion Foundation scholarships have been announced:

Garrett Scheel, Dilworth, Minnesota State University, Moorhead, Dilworth Post 397.

Jules Efta, Stephen, Minnesota State University, Moorhead, Argyle Post 353.

Olivia Gerbracht, Bagley, University of Minnesota, Duluth, Bagley Post 16.

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"FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION, I WILL."



Minneapolis is hosting the 100th national convention in 2018. Our great state was the site of the 1st convention and will now host this historic event. The National Convention Corporation of Minnesota is inviting all Legionnaires and posts to say "For The American Legion, I Will" and contribute towards our **Beginning the Second Century of Service** Campaign. Gifts can be directed towards Minnesota's hosting responsibilities for the convention or The American Legion Minnesota Foundation to support programming throughout our state. For more information, please visit www.mnlegion.org and click on 100th National Convention Information.

DO YOU KNOW OF A COMPANY THAT MAY FINANCIALLY SUPPORT THE 100TH CONVENTION THROUGH SPONSORSHIP, ADVERTISING OR GIVING?

There are sponsorship, advertisement and giving opportunities for businesses. If you know of a company that may want to take part in the 100th convention, please contact Michael Davy at (612) 247-9960 or mdavy@mnlegion.org.

National Convention Corporation of Minnesota

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Mike Schaffer



Our 2017 Department Convention is now history. This Legionnaire was given a great honor when you chose me to serve as your Commander. I thank you for this. But I believe with this title comes a great responsibility, one that I do not take lightly. Congratulations to Denise Milton for the outstanding job she did representing The American Legion this past year.

There are so many people to thank that it would fill this column I'm writing today. Thank you to those that mentored and encouraged me as I sought this office. A special thank you to my bride of 39 years, Nina, because without her blessing I wouldn't have gotten active in even my home Post 322 of Currie 43 years ago. And many thanks to the post for its wonderful support, this year and through the years.

Congratulations to new Department Auxiliary President Donna Arends, Detachment Commander Shawn Davis and Director Chuck Stone of the Legion Riders. I look forward to working with the Legion Family this year.

For my Commander's project I've decided on dual projects, Veteran Suicide Prevention, and Boys State. I chose Veteran Suicide Prevention because far too many veterans are taking their own lives. If I can help fund the recovery

program and extra needs at the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA hospitals, while the veteran recovers, then I will gladly do so. I also chose Boys State after serving 11 years as a district chairman and three more as a counselor. Project funds would sponsor those who want to attend but lack the funds to do so.

Legionnaires, many of you as well as myself, grew up in a different age from the one our children and grandchildren live in today. We must adapt to meet the wants and needs of the next generation of the American Legion Family. We all need to not only educate our current members, but mentor our future leaders, for without this effort we may not have as bright of a future as we could have.

We The American Legion have much to be proud of. However, we must improve on visibility in our communities. I've asked for information on what the younger veteran wants and would like to see our organization doing. They came back with a short list: 1. Lack of mentoring in Posts. 2. They don't see us in the public wearing something that shows our Legion affiliation or military organization we were part of. 3. They don't get asked to do things. 4. They have no voice in change within the post. 5. And they are concerned about a lack of community service projects and family activities they can bring their spouse and children to. They do see us on Facebook and the Legion websites.

We need to keep the best of our tried and true ways of recruiting and communication with our current seasoned members, but we need to face the fact that we are "in a transition period," moving from a paper and pen system to electronic means of communication. We must combine the old 'snail mail' with the email, smart phone and website generation of today. Both are very important and needed as I see it.

I look forward to a productive, service-filled year culminating with the 100th National Convention here in Minnesota. I look forward to our Membership Team reaching our goal by then. I look forward to visiting with as many of you as I can in the coming year.

Veteran-based. I would like to tell the membership of the Legion that you have an outstanding person in that position. When you see him thank him for his work and service to veterans. On behalf of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 470, Anoka County, I want to thank Al for his commitment to Minnesota.

Richard V. Bergling
VVA 470 Anoka County

Boys State Encouragement

To the Editor:

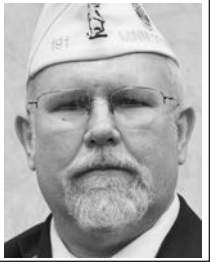
The summer parade season is soon over, but for those with opportunities remaining, sponsor or encourage your Boys' and Girls' State representatives to be in the local town celebration parade. A booth at the same event or the local county fair is another way to promote Boys' and Girls' State attendance in the future. Plant the seeds before the young men and women get caught up in fall sports and other school activities.

The starting point at Boys' State is city government. As the young men arrive on Sunday, they have been randomly assigned to one of 10 cities. (At the peak of enrollment, there were 14 cities.) Reading is assigned about city government workings, but actually becoming the city officials provides a better understanding for all. Campaigning by creating posters, as well as giving speeches to convince fellow citizens of the city for their votes, ends with an election on Monday night. Ballots are counted for mayor, city clerk, city treasurer, and five city councilors. Appointments are then made for police chief, city attorney, city recorder, an election judge, and two election clerks. City business is conducted throughout the week.

Neil Kruse
Spring Lake Park

Chaplain's Corner

By Ralph Schneekloth



Greetings to my fellow American Legion and American Legion Family members and associates. I am extremely humbled and privileged to be your Department Chaplain. For me, this is the highest call. I will strive to be available and to help when/where I am able. I also hope to be able to assist the District and any other level, County, Area or Post Chaplains or anyone that asks.

The American Legion is a great organization, of that there is no doubt. The first four words of the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion are "For God and Country" which is very telling about our founding.

"Service to God and Country," yes this is an American Legion program, but the saying describes our attitude and way of life. We are nondenominational and nonsectarian, the American Legion's support for religion in the public square is basic Americanism. Rather than acting independently of religious groups, we desire to cooperate with and join them in reminding the American people with one voice that God is the author and architect of our "Land of the free." Without God, there is no Americanism. Because the Legion embraces all religions, faiths, and denominations in our ranks, I am here to care for and help everyone, if you believe or don't. Source Chaplains Handbook, page 1.

A part of how I try to conduct myself is along the lines of Philippians 2:3,4 to set a positive example "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. I believe that in team building, especially in our volunteer American Legion, that we are privileged to serve. Each contributes to the betterment of all. I'd like to think that each year we get stronger, because of the team building, and strengthening our base, our foundation as it were. It is true, we cannot allow ourselves to tire in doing good, that which is taking care of our veterans, those still serving, along with their families. I would personally like to say "Thank you" to all who serve, from top to bottom, your service and the jobs you all perform are very valuable and necessary.

Til we meet again, go with God and God go with you.

Schmidt sends well-wishes to Arizona Senator McCain

American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt sent the following message to Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who was recently diagnosed with brain cancer:

Dear Sen. McCain,

From your service as a Naval officer to your career in the Senate, you have always been a fighter. You fought a brutal enemy to keep faith with your fellow POWs, you fought for veterans and you fought for a strong national defense. On behalf of 2 million American Legionnaires, we pray for your recovery and well-being. Keep on fighting, Sen. McCain. America needs you

God Bless,
Charles E. Schmidt
National Commander

Mail Call

Boys State thanks

To the Editor:

(Used with permission of the writer)

Mr. Thomas Nelson
Director, Boys State

Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in Boy's State, the honor of being 1st alternate to Nationals, the Director's Award, and the \$250.00 Scholarship.

I had an amazing week at Boys State. I honestly wasn't sure of what I was getting myself into when I arrived at St. John's, but after only a few minutes of meeting the other members of my city, I knew that it was going to be a week that I enjoyed. Even after a week of learning about my local government, running for office, bonding with the young men in my city, and yes, being nominated for Boys Nation, I do think that the best part of the entire week was actually losing the race for Attorney General. I think that really shows a lot about Boys State-that even in losing, there is always a chance to learn, to grow, to develop, and of course, to tilt your hat to a guy that is willing to rap in front of over three hundred people. It truly was an amazing week, and I'm incredibly thankful for the opportunities and the experiences that you and the rest of the counselors at Bo's State gave to me.

Henry Bird

Memorial Day Speaker

To the Editor:

Thank You.

On Memorial Day of this year we were privileged to have your editor to be our keynote speaker. When asked he stepped up and delivered a good and informative talk. Al has always been open to our chapter and all issues that are

Credentials Committee
Saturday, July 15, 2017

Final Report

District	Total Posts	Posts Registered	Persons Registered	Voting Strength
First	58	20	27	96
Second	84	17	21	64
Third	65	20	46	101
Fourth	20	6	16	28
Fifth	22	9	21	37
Sixth	71	19	40	102
Seventh	76	10	18	41
Eighth	40	5	11	29
Ninth	65	19	34	74
Tenth	54	18	39	98
TOTALS	555	143	273	670

The Minnesota **Legionnaire**

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

Al Zdon, Editor

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SUBSCRIPTION: \$10 for non-members. Members receive the Legionnaire as part of their dues.

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What's Happening

Band Blitz

A benefit for Greencare for Troops and the Delano American Legion will be held Saturday, Sept. 9, at the Riverfront Park in Delano. It will feature three bands, the Delano Six, Little Chicago, and Delano River Band.

The event will go from 6-11 p.m. Greencare for Troops provides complimentary lawn service for the families of deployed troops.

Vendors Needed

Apple Valley Auxiliary is seeking vendors for the Fall Flea Market on Sept. 23. Household items, a variety of crafts, wood products, furniture, antiques, keepsakes and jams will be featured. For more information, call Marlene at 651-423-2493.

Coffee Talk in Brainerd

Veterans are invited to stop by at the Brainerd VA Clinic on Saturday, Aug. 26, at 9 a.m. for morning coffee and conversation about VA health care. It's an informal gathering to provide veterans with a chance to learn more about VA health care services available in Brainerd.

Veterans who are not enrolled and who have questions can bring their DD214 and apply.

Drop in Clinic, StandDown

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will be sponsoring a legal clinic and a StandDown.

The clinic will be held Tuesday, August 15, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Fargo VA in the Third Floor Auditorium. Topics will include housing, employment, benefits, wills, debt collection and family law. Attorneys, MACV staff and others will be present. For more information, call 651-200-4750.

The StandDown will be held at the Boy Scout Base Camp at Fort Snelling in Minneapolis on Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 1-2 starting at 8 a.m. each day.

Free services available for veterans include housing, veterans benefits, clothing, meals, haircuts, state services, VA healthcare and employment assistance. There will be StandDown court and legal clinic both days.

There will be a welcome ceremony at 11 a.m. Tuesday. For more information call 612-726-1327.

Disabled Vets Deer Hunt

The annual Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt will be held Oct. 3-5 at Camp Ripley, near Little Falls. Applications are being accepted after July 15 until Aug. 25.

For information, write MN Veterans Outdoor Programs, Box 953, St. Cloud, MN, 56302.

The event is sponsored by the veterans service organizations in Minnesota.

Information on the deer hunt will on the Minnesota American Legion website: mnlegion.org.

Legionville Camp-O-Ree

The 48th Annual Camp-O-Ree at Legionville will be held Sept. 7-10 at the camp on North Long Lake near Brainerd.

The event will include a full bar, pull-tabs, bingo, live music, movie night and camp fires.

Food will include the First District Steak Fry on Thursday; the SAL breakfast, SAL lunch and 10th District Port Roast Dinner on Friday; SAL breakfast, Sixth District Fish Fry Lunch and Harvest Rally Dinner (by ticket only) and the SAL hot dog and hamburger dinner on Saturday; SAL omelet breakfast on Sunday.

Boxes of firewood will be available for a \$10 donation.

People can stay in campers, tents or lodge in camp's dormitories.

Arrival on Thursday is \$10 per person, \$75 family maximum. Active duty military and families are free. Harvest Rally only is \$5 per person, plus the cost of the meal.

Mental Health Summit

The 5th annual VA and Community Mental Health Summit will be held Friday, Sept. 22, at the Bishop Whipple Federal Building from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.. Several keynote speakers will be on hand.

Information tables will be available in the lobby.

If you would like an information table or if you have other questions, contact Amy Wood, 612-629-7614.

Veterans free at Hamline

Starting this fall semester, veterans eligible for the Post 9-11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program will have their Mitchell-Hamline School of Law education paid for in full.

Veterans who have served at least three years of active duty since 2001 can have their law school fees paid by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the Yellow Ribbon Program, and Mitchell Hamline.

For more information, go to the school's website, mitchellhamline.edu.

Department Events

The 2017-18 calendar of rallies and events has been announced.

The list includes:

-- Aug. 5, Department Executive Committee meeting at Elk River Post 112 at 11 a.m.

-- Sept. 9, Harvest Rally at Legionville. Program at 4:30 p.m.

-- Oct. 27-28, Fall Conference at Willmar.

-- December 2, Pearl Harbor Rally at West Duluth Post 71. Dinner at 5 with the program to follow.

Feb. 3 -- Sweetheart Rally at North St. Paul Post 39, with program at 2:30 p.m.

Early February -- National Commanders Tour in Minnesota.

March 10 -- Family Appreciation Rally at Owatonna Post 77. Dinner at 5 with the program to follow.

April -- Spring Rally, to be announced.

July 19-21 -- Annual Department Convention at Rochester.

The dates for the testimonials of the Department Commander and the Department President have not yet been announced.

The National Convention will be held on August 22-24 in Reno, Nevada.

The 100th National Convention of the American Legion will be held in Minneapolis in August of 2018.

Notes from the 2017 Department Convention

The 99th annual convention of the Department of Minnesota was held at Mahnommen in July. News from the convention included:

— The American Legion is seeking through Congress a commemorative coin to honor the 100th anniversary of the organization. Three Minnesota Congress people have not signed on to the legislation thus far: Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Eric Paulsen and Rep. Rick Nolan. It was urged that Legionnaires contact these elected officials to urge them to support the coin. Only two are created each year.

— National Vice Commander Douglas Boldt told the convention that Minnesota was the top membership state in the Midwest region.

— Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Shellito said it has been a good legislative session with the passage of bills for the new Duluth veterans cemetery, the extended GI Bill, the money for Legionville and the fixing of the truss bridge leading to the Minnesota Veterans Home at Minneapolis.

— Newly appointed Director of the St. Cloud VA Health System Stephen Black said he had inherited the best VA medical center in the nation. He said the goal of the institution was to provide immediate care. "We want you to have it today, not tomorrow, not next week." He said volunteers to the medical center provided over \$3.2 million in donations and in-kind donations this past year, allowing the system to not hire 33 people and use those resources elsewhere. He urged all veterans to get into the VA system. If you tried before, try again. You've earned it." He said that the number of veterans suicides are a major concern to the VA. "There are on average 20 veteran suicides a day, and 14 of those veterans never had contact with the VA. We need you to help us get those veterans into our care."

— Public Relations Committee member Ralph Schneekloth encouraged posts to submit their post histories to the national website. "Past National Commander Dan Foley said the most important work done by the Legion is done at the post level. It's a story worth telling."

— Green View Inc. was named the Legion's Employer of the Year. Don Knutson, the executive director of the company, said that it has hired 8,000 employees since 1969 and half of them were veterans. The company staffs maintenance at rest areas and state parks. Knutson encouraged veterans to apply to become a valuable resource and earn some money.

— Outgoing SAL Detachment Commander Gene Olsword said that the SAL will be constructing its own building at Legionville to store its equipment for its annual deer hunt and other activities.

— Lloyd Ricker, the chair of the Minnesota American Legion Foundation, said that the foundation had donated \$6,600 to a veterans cemetery at Princeton for a aerator. He paid tribute to the John and Catherine Buessler Foundation that has donated a large amount to the Foundation, thanks to John's surviving brother Mel Buessler of Hillman. Mel talked to the convention about his brother's life.

— Lee Tallakson noted that Boys State has moved to St. John's University in Collegeville and is more centrally located in the state. He said, however, that numbers were down in the program and he encouraged Legionnaires to work through their schools to send more high schoolers to the one-week government program.

— Don Pankake said the V4V Foundation started with \$5.3 million and still has \$5.3 million in the bank after dishing out more than \$1.25 million in grants to veterans causes.

— Wayne Gilbertson, president of the Legionville Corporation, said a new Four Pillars display has been put up at the camp. He said the camp will proceed cautiously with the \$222,000 provided to the camp this year through the Legacy Fund. He said experts on heating and air conditioning were coming to Legionville to make an assessment.

— Chuck Stone said the Pheasant Dinner Program would be distributing 75th anniversary pins, two per post.

— Marie Goede, president of the American Legion Family Hospital Association said the organization had provided \$13,400 in grants this year and still has \$262,000 in assets.

— John Torma announced that he was retiring as secretary of the Bowling Tournament after five years, and candidates for the position were being sought.

— Adjutant Randy Tesdahl auctioned off four commemorative World War II knives with proceeds going to the Department. Dennis Henkemeyer won the bidding and donated the knives back to the Department to be put on display.

— Convention Committee Chair Pat Logan said there was concern that the major renovation being done in Rochester would not be finished in time for next year's convention, planned for that city. The latest word, though, is

that the convention is still on. The Fall Conference this year is slated for Willmar, Oct. 27-28.

— Membership Director Mark Dvorak gave his final report, and noted that the state was unable to stop the membership slide this year, even though Minnesota fared well in comparison to other states. Minnesota won the Big 12 competition and was first in the region.

— John Lenvik of Apple Valley Post 1776 again won the Gold Brigade Award as the top recruiter in the state.

— New Webmaster Shawn Davis said the Department's website looks old, and will be improved in the coming months. He urged committee people to look up their program on the site and create new text for the website. "Tell me what needs to be updated. If your program doesn't have a page, talk to me."

— Richard Skillstad won the Centennial Committee's contest and was awarded a weekend cabin at Legionville. Jim Kellogg said that flag ribbons for the centennial would be on sale soon for \$20. He said volunteers were needed to man the Minnesota booth at the Reno National Convention this month. Anyone who would like to volunteer should call him at 507-438-1123.

— Three World War II veterans who attended the convention were given a standing ovation: Wayne Glanton of Minneapolis, Charles Halberg of Bayport and Robert Holmstrom of North St. Paul.

— It was announced that Don Walser, the longtime judge advocate for the Department, and who acted as temporary judge advocate at the convention, has been selected as one of the three parliamentarians for the national convention. Walser will be on the dais throughout the convention.

-- The LIT announced that \$76,000 had been provided to the Legion from insurance that was sold during the year.

-- Paul Hassing reported that there were now 70 chapters in the American Legion Riders in Minnesota.

-- The DEC accepted the turn in of charters for Lester Tjernlund Post 451 and St. Paul Memorial 533 post.

-- It was announced that Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos will be honored at the Reno National Convention. He heads the Brain Sciences Center at the Minneapolis VA.

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

Destinations:

Fall Conference: Willmar

This year's Fall Willmar Conference, the Legion Family's "school of instruction," will be held in one roof.

A conference registration form is just below this story.

There are several motels in the area including The Best Western Plus, Holiday Inn and Express, Days Inn, Country Inn and Suites, AmerInn and Super 8.

A complete list of hotels, rates, phone numbers and additional information can be found on the Legion's website: mnlegion.org.

All hotel reservations must be made by the individual.

For more info call DuWayne at 320-894-8991 or dbunterthun@gmail.com

National Convention: Reno

The 2017 National American Legion Convention will be held in Reno, Nevada, from Aug. 22-24.

The Legion also held a convention in the "Biggest Little City in the World" 10 years ago.

The Minnesota delegation will be housed at the Peppermill Resort Spa and Casino, and 90 rooms have been set aside. The base rate is \$156.81 per night for two people. Reservations must be made through Department Headquarters.

The headquarters hotel for The American Legion

national organization will be the Atlantis Casino Resort. Most business sessions for the Legion will be held at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center and the Atlantis.

The Sons of the American Legion will hold its annual convention on Friday-Sunday, Aug. 18-22.

The Legion convention will be held Aug. 22-24, but many activities will begin

the weekend before including the parade on Sunday.

The Minnesota Party, including a country-fried chicken dinner, will be held Monday evening, Aug. 21, at the Peppermill.

The cost is \$40 per person with a cash bar, and will feature line dancing, swing dancing, and country fun. Tickets must be purchased through state Headquarters.

Official Registration – Mail to:

**Legion Post 167 Fall Conference
220 19th Ave SW
Willmar, MN 56201**

Pre-registration sliding fee:

- Registration received by 1 Oct: **\$15**
- Registration after 1 Oct: **\$18**
- Registration at event HQ: **\$20**

Registration is for each person attending, with the exception of Junior SAL and Junior Auxiliary members. Please copy and send a separate form for each person. **Make checks payable to:**

'Fall Conference Committee'

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY – NO CURSIVE

CONFERENCE DATES: 26-28 Oct 2017

DISTRICT POST UNIT SQUADRON

NAME (This will be the name on your name badge)

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

E-MAIL

CELLULAR PHONE

SPECIAL NEEDS OR CONSIDERATIONS

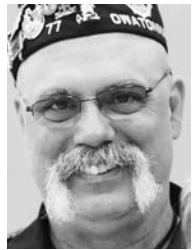
(i.e. first floor room or elevator, specific equipment, handicap accommodations', etc.)

ADDITIONAL PRE-REGISTRANTS: A separate form is required for each additional registration accompanying this request. This form may be photocopied. **The registration fee must be enclosed for each person (except Junior Aux.).**

Local reproduction of this form is authorized

American Legion Riders

By **Chuck Stone**
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family, Congratulations to our new Department Commander Mike, Auxiliary President Donna and SAL Detachment Commander Shawn on being selected to your new positions. I look forward to working with each of you as we start the new American Legion year. One would like to say "Let the games begin" but I believe there is also a fair amount of work that will be accomplished along the way.

The Riders also held elections during their meeting at convention. Steve "Sully" Sullivan was reelected Assistant Department Director, Jody Hassing was reelected as Department Secretary and yours truly was reelected as Department Director. Thank you to all the Riders for your support this past year and I hope that together we can make the upcoming year even better. The Riders were the lead element in this years parade and after viewing the photos and films I must say they did an excellent job.

By the time you will be reading this the 2017 Legacy Ride will be a part of the history book. Our goal is to have one mighty big check for turn in out in Reno. Speaking of Reno, I would like to wish everyone going safe travels. Those of you making the trip by bike be sure to bring your helmet as Nevada is what is called a universal helmet law, meaning everyone on a motorcycle must wear a helmet. Depending on the route you choose to take you may also encounter other states requiring helmets, Nebraska being one of them.

Just a quick reminder the MNALR Romp will be (Sept 15 - 16) the weekend after Camp-O-Ree this year. Beds in the dorms, a nice patch of grass to pitch a tent or park a camper are available. I am told there will be a class on riders safety, motorcycle skills test course and a few games, but mostly good friendship and camaraderie. Rumor has it the food being served is award winning.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

Sons of The American Legion

By **Shawn Davis**



Thank you to all the members of the Detachment of Minnesota for electing me as their Commander for the next year. It was a humbling experience being in front of so many that attended Detachment Campout, and witness the transition of leadership.

I would like to thank my wife Jill for all her support. To my parents, Lee and Joanne Davis for placing my cover on me, and pinning the Detachment Commander pin on my lapel. To Jim Munson, thank you for mentoring me these years, and presenting me with the Commander gavel. Thank you to Alternate NEC Dennis Henkemeyer for presiding over the installation ceremony. Thank you to Terri Munson, Merv and Penny Becker, Joe and Wendy Starr, for coming up and showing your support from Minneapolis-Richfield American Legion Post 435 Family. Thank you as well to the membership of the 5th District, and to all the members of this great family we call The American Legion for the support and encouragement.

My eligibility is through my Grandfather, Les Davis, who served with the U.S. Navy during W.W. II, and through my father, Lee Davis, who serve with the U.S. Army during Vietnam. I honor their service with my volunteerism.

My theme this year is 5 for Minnesota. Five what you may ask? Let me say, we have a mission this year. To be the best Detachment in the United States of America by the time the National Convention comes to town in 2018. Not asking for much, am I? But with teamwork, communication, education, and support, we are capable of great things. And to have a successful mission, we need objectives.

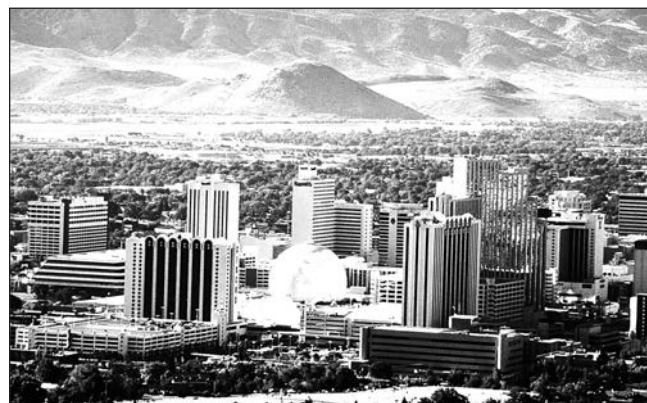
In the membership area, I challenged each Squadron to recruit 5 new members of The American Legion Family (any combination of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, or The Sons of the American Legion). I have proposed an award for the 12,000th new member of The Sons of The American Legion, an additional award for the person who recruits that member, and a final award for the home squadron the member is recruited into.

Another objective I have laid forth is a challenge to raise \$5 per member for my Commanders project. I asked them to give up one thing, a pack of cigarettes, that fancy coffee, whatever, and contribute that \$5 to the Commanders project. At the end of the year, 50% of what is raised will go to The Department of Minnesota Foundation, Fund 84 – The Legacy Scholarship. The American Legion Family, with the American Legion Riders as the spear tip, have a lofty goal for the 2018 fundraising target. And it will only succeed if we work together as a family to reach it. 25% will go to the Department of Minnesota ROTC Scholarship. So both of those objectives involve education. The last 25% of the Commanders project will go to the American Legion Family Hospital Association, to continue to aid the membership of this Department.

My other theme is communication. I included a mailing to all Squadrons in their membership packets to open up a line of communication with them, the Districts, and Detachment. I have also begun to deliver video messages on Facebook, and the web to reach out to our membership to keep them informed, and involved.

So as the year goes along, and as I see all of you at rallies, meetings, Camporee, and conferences, you will hear more about the objectives that the Detachment of Minnesota will be striving for in order to be the best.

Until next time, 5 for Minnesota.



Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By **Jeremy Wolfsteller**



CRSC

It's no secret that when service-members are called to war, there will be combat related injuries sustained on the battlefield. The thought of the possibility of getting injured for these men and women is something they think about and accept prior to deployment. Its characteristics and attributes like selfless service, honor, duty and patriotism that is instilled in our armed forces that currently remains an all-volunteer force. If you're injured and fortunate enough to survive through your injuries and make it back stateside, your battle has only just begun. Hospitalization, surgeries, therapies and then a long medical board process determining if you're still fit for duty or to be considered for a medical discharge can take several years.

I recognize firsthand that this whole process is very difficult and life changing. The motivation to get better comes from your fellow service-members, family and friends. Another unexpected boost of morale is that you'll be taken care of by your country. Entitlements are in place through legislation formed by Americans and passed by Americans to ensure our brave men and women who sign the dotted line are shown appreciation and taken care of when they finish their service to this country.

In 2002 legislation was passed that amended title 10 USC 1413a to include Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) payments for certain combat injured service-members that were retired with 20 years or more of service. This is a payable tax free benefit by The Department of Defense finance and accounting systems that a veteran can receive in conjunction to their VA service connected disability compensation. Years later in the passing of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act amended the 2002 law that included chapter 61 medical retirees to be eligible to apply for the CRSC payments. These changes in 2008 were a much needed morale boost for those that were combat injured and medically retired veterans with less than 20 years of service.

To meet the basic eligibility requirements a veteran must be receiving military retirement pay for one of the following: 20 year retiree, Medical Chapter 61, Temporary Early Retirement Act, and Temporary Disabled Retirement List Retiree. Have a 10% or greater VA rated injury that is combat related; have military retired pay reduced by VA disability waiver. Lastly the veteran must provide documentation that their injury was a result of one of the following: Training that simulates war, hazardous duty, an instrumentality of war or armed conflict. Presumptive conditions also apply as a result of hazardous duty.

If you think you may be entitled and benefit from CRSC you can meet with your county veteran's service officer or your assigned veterans service organization assigned as your POA representative. Applications take approximately 180 days to process and have a statute of limitation of 6 years for retroactive payments.

wolfsteller@mnlegion.org

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Les Shaunce
Commander



I would like to thank the 1st District for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Commander for the upcoming year. I look forward to the challenge ahead and with the help of a great slate of officers, we will have an outstanding year.

Membership, as always, will be the main focus in the year ahead. We just cannot continue to lose members like we have for the past few years.

Our first task is to get off the Goose Egg. There is really no excuse for not making this challenge.

By the time this article is published we will have had our District Picnic. It was held July 23rd at Todd Park in Austin. It's always a great event with lots of good food and visiting.

The Department Convention will also be history. I hope it will be greatly attended and an overall enjoyable experience for all.

August 5, Elk River Post 112 will host the first Executive Board meeting and Membership Program kick-off. Let's have a good turn out and turn in.

THIRD DISTRICT

Eugene Leifeld
Commander



Thanks to everyone who voted and elected us as officers to represent the 3rd District Legionnaires.

Thank you to Past 3rd District Commander Mike Maxa for your leadership this last year. My theme for this year is "Remember our Veterans Ask a Veteran to join". My District Commander's project this year is to build a gazebo at the Big Marine Vets camp. I will have more information coming on this in the immediate future.

2018 Officers' reports and Off the Goose Egg must be submitted to Department of Minnesota American Legion by Wednesday July 26, 2017. If your Post has not signed up for Centennial Post please consider signing up. Congratulations to Mike Schaffer of the 2nd District who was elected Minnesota American Legion Department Commander for the 2017-2018 year.

3rd District Vice-Commander Carla Tappainer's first Family Gathering will be on Wednesday evening August 9 at 6 p.m. at New Prague Post 45 in New Prague. We look forward for everyone to join the 3rd District family as we begin our new year with Membership. Officers' are looking forward to meet Legionnaires' Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion (SAL) in the 3rd District at the family gatherings.

SECOND DISTRICT

Randy Olson
Commander



Greetings from the 2nd District Commander! My name is Randy Olson. I belong to Post 82 Winnebago. I am an American Legion Rider of Post 89 Blue Earth, and am a Sons Of The American Legion Post 165. My wife's name is Robin Olson. She is an Auxillary member & an American Legion Rider of Post #89. She currently accepted a position in the District on the Executive Board. Together we strongly support all the Legion Family.

I'm excited to be taking on this Second District position. We (Auxillary President Kristen Donnelly, Honorary Jr. Auxillary Natasha Donnelly, SAL Commander Larry Helland, ALR Director Corey Walters & myself) are busy putting together a strong team. Lucinda Brunk is Our Awesome Membership Director. Deb Grote, Roxanne Zoet, Pam (Krill) Ekert & Brad Pagle are your Vice Commanders. Alberta Marth-Wohlfeil is my Adjutant. Dennis Strassburg Chaplain.

I have requested a 2nd District training session for all Post & District Officers & for anyone seeking a position in the future, if seating is available. Our excellent trainers Barry Madson & Jeff Gay have an exciting training for all, with some new ideas to help us all out. They are working on dates, times, & place for this to happen.

Some food for thought, I have heard that there are some posts out there that would love to hold midwinter and membership rallies and the convention but feel they are too small to accommodate that. We have been putting some thoughts together and think that it would be a super exciting plan if we could put it on as a County-wide Midwinter or County-wide convention. Hosting the convention in a larger town with ample Motel capability and either larger Legion Post or Convention Center. Sharing the cost of expenses, but also sharing any proceeds, if there were any. Talk it over amongst yourselves.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Lane Stunkel
Commander



Hello 4th District American Legion Family Members. I want to thank the members of the 4th District for electing me as your Commander. My goal this year is to work with the Posts in the District, with Auxiliary, SAL and ALR to increase membership and involvement in the various activities, such as the rallies, Post activities and our District RCCC meetings. My project for this year is to continue with Shop, Ship & Share, December 1st and 2nd at Maplewood Mall.

The 4th District Family needs to work together showing support and offering to help out in any way needed. An example, if a Post is having a breakfast - go there, or if another Post has a fund raiser - please go there, to support their Post. By supporting each other, our District Family will get stronger.

Upcoming Events:

August 1-2, Stand Down at Boy Scout Base Camp on Ft Snelling, 8am-5pm (8/1/17), 8am-4pm (8/2/17)

August 9, 6:30 p.m. E-Board, 7 p.m. General Meeting, RCCC @ Arcade Phalen

August 20, VA Visitation at VAMC 1:00 p.m.

September 6th, 4th District SAL Meeting 6 p.m. N. St Paul.

Go to this website to see the various events Posts are having: <http://www.uvcramseycounty.org/>

I want to thank Commander Randy for leading the way in getting more membership involvement in our RCCC's, Auxiliary, SAL and ALR monthly meetings. Randy with your assistance, District Officers, and all the members of the 4th District family, we will be stronger.

Duty, Honor, Country.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Walt Lyndsley
Commander



Greetings from the fighting Fifth. We just wound up the Department Convention in Menomin, MN and are attempting to get established for the upcoming Legion year. Congratulations to our new Department Commander, Mike Schaffer. The 5th district won 3rd prize in the Legion parade. I enjoyed waving from the golf cart, thanks to Joe Bayer. The National Convention will be held August 18-22. Our past commander, Ray Eiden will be attending. Thank you 5th district for your support in electing me to be your commander for 2017-2018. I hope we can do great things for our veterans.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Ken Johnstone
Commander



Greetings from the Sixth District Commander. It is the beginning of a new year for me and my new slate of officers. I am looking forward to a fun-filled year working the programs for the Legion and meeting with others in the District throughout the upcoming year.

Have a good rest of the Summer.

For God and Country,

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Richard Wog
Commander



First of all, I want to thank you, the members of the 7th District for giving me the honor of serving as your Commander this 2017-2018 year. This will be my second term as your Commander and I am so looking forward to serving again. We have a big job ahead of us this year. First of all is membership recruitment for The American Legion. However, we are also spokespersons for The American Legion. We need to tell people who we are and what we stand for. Helping Veterans is our goal and keeping the American legion in the forefront. We are a legion family and family always comes first, so let's roll up our sleeves and get to work. I am looking forward to coming to your posts so just invite me. Your Vice Commanders will be there to help as well if you need it. I am sure you will see them throughout the coming year.

We just completed the Department convention July 13-15. It was a very good convention. Congratulations to our new Department Commander Mike Schaffer and to our own Gary Davenport or being elected Sergeant At Arms and to all the newly elected officers. In closing, I want to thank

Gary Davenport for doing a wonderful job as Commander for our district this past year. Always remember our men and women who are serving our country today. God bless you and God bless America.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Donovan Goblirsch
Commander



All of the Posts have now received membership packets. Our 2018 Eighth District goal, as determined by the Department, is 4,241. We're on the way to getting our District off the "goose egg" for the coming year. If you know veterans that qualify for membership, but are not members, please make every effort to invite them to your local post meetings. "Early Bird Kickoff" is Sept. 13 and we would like to be at 50%.

Our Eighth District project for this year will be to purchase a 4-wheel electric golf cart for the Veteran's Home in Silver Bay. This will be a joint project with the 8th District Legion Auxiliary.

There will be a Camporee at Legionville in September. We are hoping that we will have a good contingent of 8th District Legion members at this event.

I plan to visit most of the 8th District posts this year. My Vice Commanders will contact their Posts often as we hope to send memberships in weekly on Mondays. Anything that I or the Vice Commanders can do to help with membership, please let us know. Call me at 218-780-2233 or e-mail me at Gobjul@msn.com.

NINTH DISTRICT

Tim Haugen
Commander



I want to thank the American Legion Family of the Roaring 9th for having faith in me as we start the New Year. I'm looking forward to getting out and visiting the Posts in the 9th.

Our Organizational meeting is scheduled for August 12th and will be held at Post 181 in Lake Park. This is open to anyone who wants to learn and share information on The American Legion. Post Commanders and Adjutants are encouraged to attend.

Our membership team which will be lead by Arlo Rude from Post 117 in Thief River Falls is anxiously waiting to roll up sleeves and get started. We'll be setting up a couple District membership revitalization dates and plan to reach out to all Posts to help in this effort.

My motto is going to be "Honoring those that have served" and my Commander's project this year is the WDAY Honor Flight, which currently is sending WWII & Korean Vets to Washington, DC. It costs approx \$750.00 per Veteran and it is all free to them. To send 1 plane for 1 1/2 days costs roughly \$150,000.

In closing, I want to wish all the newly elected Dept of MN Officers a successful year and let's make 100% in membership at the 100th National Convention next year in Minneapolis.

TENTH DISTRICT

Paul Hassing
Commander



Hello Mighty Tenth. I am truly honored to serve as your Commander for the 2017-2018 membership year. It is going to be a fun year, and I hope to do you proud.

We are going to start the Rally season with a picnic in Coon Rapids on August 13th. I will keep you updated on the rest of the Rallies throughout the year. There will be some changes to this year's Rallies. I understand the importance of membership, and how it drives the many programs the American Legion offers. That being said, I don't want the focus of the Rallies to be on membership turn in. I would prefer all membership gets sent to department right away. We will have a box set up to turn them in, but we will instead be learning about the programs and history that this great organization has to offer. Don't worry, we hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. If we are to open dialogue with potential new members, we need to be able to talk about the many different things the Legion offers.

I look forward to working with 10th District Auxiliary President Jody Hassing (not to brag, but I know her), along with Sons of the American Legion Commander Steve "Sully" Sullivan, and Riders director Diane Sullivan. I think the entire American Legion Family needs to work together if we are going to bring the 10th back to where it was.



As usual, the Legion Riders led off the parade with sound and color.

Annual Parade at Mahanomen



Police Officer of the Year David Watson waved a large flag along the parade route in downtown Mahanomen.



National Vice Commander Douglas Boldt waved as Membership Director Mark Dvorak looked on.



Flags, candy, a parade -- what could be better?



A group of Auxiliary women were very enthusiastic as the parade rolled by.



Girls State Governor Evelyn Humphrey greeted the throngs along the sidewalk.



The Ninth District Band was in tune and in step as they marched down Main Street.

Memorial Service



Fort Snelling Chapel Chaplain Kenneth L. Beale Jr. was the keynote speaker.



Honorary Junior President Kiana Coleman-Woods lit a candle as part of the ceremony for the Memorial Service at convention. Looking on were Gene Olsword, Carol Kottom and Denise Milton.



Flautist Lauren Wander and Pianist Patricia Nelson performed for the Memorial Service.



Past Department President Dee Dee Buckley performed several songs during the service.



Lee Tallakson and Dennis Delong raised their arms while singing "God Bless America."

Hospitality



Pat Logan, right, conversed with Linda and Mark Dvorak at the annual hospitality event at convention.



Billy Underwood on guitar and Bobby White on spoons were part of the entertainment at President Carol Kottom's Family Reception.



Districts provided food and beverages as the Ninth District Band entertained on Friday night.



Steve Sullivan was talking up the Legacy Ride during the hospitality event.



Fourteen veterans were presented with Quilts of Valor by the Quilts of Valor Foundation at the Department Convention in Mahanomen. State Coordinator Jenny Caughey told the attendees about the quilts, and Alternate NECman Bill Barbknecht announced the quilt recipients. From left, front: Commander Denise Milton, highly decorated Vietnam veteran Peter Thompson, John Hovde, Al Davis, Curt Norenberg. In back, Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, Patrick Blue III, Teddy Redwing, Bill Goede, Dennis Henkemeyer, Peggy Moon, Mike Ash, Paul Hassing and Al Zdon. White Earth Reservation provided a color guard.

99th Annual Convention



Newly-elected Commander Mike Schaffer addressed the delegates.



President Carol Kottom welcomed Commander Denise Milton when she visited the Auxiliary Convention.



Delegates listened attentively when National Vice Commander Douglas Boldt spoke.



Adjutant Randy Tesdahl turned auctioneer briefly.