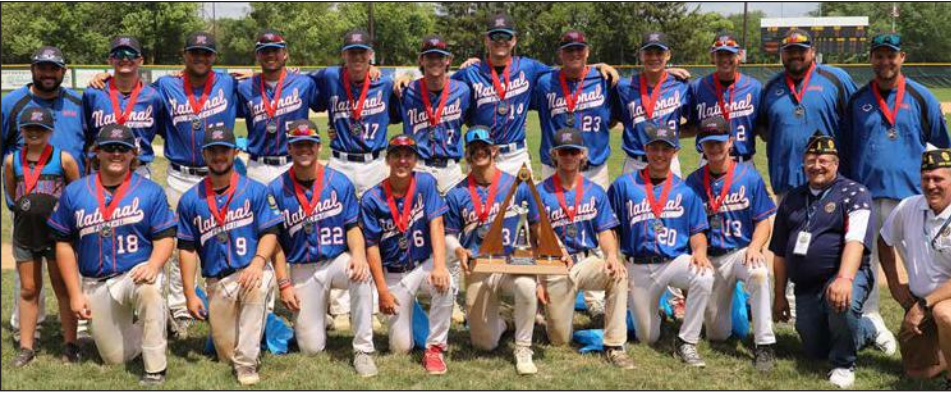




If you win a state baseball title, you get your picture in The Minnesota Legionnaire, and the St. Michael Mikes of Post 567 did just that as Div. I champs on Sunday, July 31, at Alimagnet Park in Burnsville. They are coached by Jesse Hackenmueller.



The Div. I runner-up team, the Mankato Nationals of Post 11, also get their picture in the paper, because both teams go to the regional tournament. Mankato Post 11 is coached by Jamie Mulvihill.

The 16-team Div. I State Tournament was hosted by what's called Burnsville Association 191. (The local school is ISD 191.) This cast of baseball characters was led by Robert Weber, third from left. Read more about the tournament in The Gazette, downloadable at [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org).



## Boys Nation was 'life-changing'

I had the pleasure of presenting recognition plaques in Marshall for one of the Boys Nation senators from Minnesota.

He explained what he did while in D.C. for 10 days in July with young men from 48 other states. This included discussion of bills that each senator brought with them, visiting historic sites, running for or helping campaign for an executive office, and visiting with Minnesota senators and representatives.

At the same meeting with the local Legionnaires, both Minnesota Boys State reps from Marshall detailed their week at St. John's in June. Both felt their time was "life-changing," with the relationships developed as being key to that

### Minn. Boys State Neil Kruse



description.

I believe if more young folks and their parents heard that message, we'd have a larger group of participants each year. Homecoming Week at high school will be another opportunity to share about Boys State experiences. The sooner returning seniors recruit upcoming Boys State candidates, the longer those potential attendees have to ask questions about what's in store for them.

Many of our attendees tell us they didn't know what to

expect.

Referencing the website [www.mnboysstate.org](http://www.mnboysstate.org) to those interested will provide further information about the program.

Thanks again for all you do to support the Minnesota American Legion Boys State program!

*Neil Kruse is a counselor for Minnesota American Legion Boys State.*

## Fund 85 Ride bigger than expected

Greetings, Legion Family. Again, we had a very busy month with a lot of rides.

Thank you, St. Peter Riders, for putting on the inaugural Fund 85 Run, I was expecting 10 to 15 bikes, and we started with over 45 bikes and a great turnout at the Hutchinson stop, and we got to see their new and beautiful memorial park.

Along with the other rides in the 10th District and the 1st District, and I know there were others, thank you to all involved in making them happen

On Aug. 14, I was asked to participate in the ground-breaking ceremony for the Forgotten

### Legion Riders Ted Berg



Heroes Range & Retreat in McGregor. This range is being built to accommodate veterans with physical disabilities such as amputation or being confined to a wheelchair. Anywhere on the range will be accessible to all veterans.

If you have questions about the range or would like to donate to help us get it built, you can contact me via phone or text.

As I close out this letter we

are preparing to kick off the 2022 Legacy Run, then ride on to Milwaukee for National Convention.

Till next time, ride safe and have fun.

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

# How to transfer a member to new post

## Membership Moment

Linda Dvorak



As the department membership director, I will be doing a series of articles in the Legionnaire pertaining to frequently asked questions about membership.

Q: What is the proper way to transfer a member from one post to another post?

A: No transfer shall be made unless the member requesting the transfer has a membership card showing they are a member in good standing. No member may transfer to another post if the member has disciplinary actions within their post and the post has notified National Headquarters of the situation.

If a member has paid their current year's dues, the post adjutant will complete the Member

Data Form. The adjutant of the new post must sign the Member Data Form. Mail the form to the Department HQ. While over this past year, Jennifer Havlick and Linda Dvorak have transferred people with just an email or phone call, the Department HQ needs a copy of the Member Data Form for their files.

If a member has not paid their current year's dues, you will need to collect the dues for the current year, complete a Member Data Form and you can either do the transfer in MyLegion or you can mail a copy of the Member Data Form along with

a transmittal, the membership card (parts 1 and 2) and a check for the dues.

When completing the Member Data Form, mail copies 1 and 2 to the Department Office, send copy 3 to the losing post and keep copy 4 for your records.

*Linda Dvorak of New Prague Post 45 is the membership director for the Department of Minnesota.*

# War wasn't all blood and guts; it involved toxic chemicals, fumes, too

When I joined the U.S. military, it was clear I was going to war. What wasn't clear is that during my deployments, I'd be exposed to environmental hazards, like JP-8 jet fuel, diesel fuel and burn pits, daily. Honestly, it wasn't even on my list of concerns compared to improvised explosive devices, small arms fire, 130-degree temps, sleeping in my Bradley (armored personnel carrier) or on a military-issued cot for a year, dust storms, limited water and only eating MREs.

Well in March 2003, it happened. I went to war and shortly after arriving to Iraq as a PFC, I found myself on trash detail once a week. Not what I pictured war would be like. My fellow soldiers and I went picking up trash bags around the compound from living quarters, loading up a heavy expanded mobility tactical truck we call HEMTTs.

Once full, we then exited the compound and drove a couple hundred yards to a burn pit, which was exactly that, a pit dug by engineers that was maybe the size of a basketball court full of waste smoldering in fumes doused with JP-8 fuel.

Now, almost 20 years later, many of my fellow brothers and sisters who made it out alive find themselves fighting another war, suffering from health complications due to those toxic environmental exposures. Health complications like respiratory conditions and cancers which were not recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs for access to healthcare or disability benefits.

After too many have suffered long enough without action from Congress, on Aug. 10, the president signed into law

## VA & Rehabilitation

Jeremy Wolfsteller



the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022. The new law comes as no surprise after decades of veterans and lobbyists fighting for benefits addressing military environmental exposures.

The VA Secretary writes, "The PACT Act is one of the largest health and benefit expansions in American history. It recognizes toxic exposure as a 'cost of war' by addressing the full range of issues impacting toxic-exposed veterans, ensuring generations of veterans who suffer from toxic exposure-related conditions get the benefits and care they've earned. This new law also expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for veterans with toxic exposures and veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era and Post-9/11 era."

A list of cancers related to Gulf War era and post-9/11 veterans exposed to burn pits includes brain cancer, gastrointestinal cancer, glioblastoma, head cancer of any type, kidney cancer, lymphatic cancer of any type, lymphoma of any type, melanoma, neck cancer, pancreatic cancer, reproductive cancer of any type and respiratory cancer of any type.

Illnesses related to burn pits include asthma, chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic rhinitis, chronic sinusitis, constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis, emphysema, granulomatous disease, interstitial lung disease (ILD), pleuritis,

pulmonary fibrosis and sarcoidosis.

As the secretary mentioned this law also expands new benefits to Vietnam veterans suffering from Agent Orange. High blood pressure (also called hypertension) and monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) was added to the AO presumptive list.

It also updates locations related to Agent Orange presumptive eligibility including any U.S. or Royal Thai military base in Thailand from Jan. 9, 1962, through June 30, 1976, Laos from Dec. 1, 1965, through Sept. 30, 1969, Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province from April 16, 1969, through April 30, 1969, Guam or American Samoa or in the territorial waters off of Guam or American Samoa from Jan. 9, 1962, through July 30, 1980, Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from Jan. 1, 1972, through Sept. 30, 1977.

If you think you could be affected by this new law, please reach out to your local County Veteran Service Office, American Legion Department Service Officer or American Legion/MDVA Claims Office.

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

## Want more baseball?

Have you ever read The Gazette? Did you even know about it? It is 27 years old. It's the Minnesota American Legion Baseball publication handed out to fans at the Div. I State Tournament. Now you can read it by downloading it from [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org).



# AMERICAN LEGION

## DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA

### Committees for 2022-23

Cut these pages out and save them at home or the post for quick reference. This information also is found at [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org).

These are mainly the completed or nearly completed committees. Some appoint officers and make changes this fall. They will be printed in coming months.

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Past Department Commander Mark Dvorak, right, of New Prague Post 45 passes the department colors to departing Department Commander Tom Fernlund of Waite Park Post 428 near the end of the Department of Minnesota Convention in July in Willmar. Both are Air Force veterans.



Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby of Northfield Post 84 addresses the Department Convention in Willmar in July. He also oversees the election of officers. Behind him, in a red cap, is NECman Bill Barbknecht, and in a white cap, then-Department Commander Tom Fernlund.

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Marty Howes, president of the Minnesota Association of County Veteran Service Officers, speaks at the American Legion Department of Minnesota Convention in Willmar in July. He is a CVSO in Roseau County and a member of Warroad Post 25. He is an Army veteran.

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(The remaining members of the V4V Trust Fund Board of Directors are from other veterans service organizations. Find its website at [mnv4v.org](http://mnv4v.org).)

\*Position to be elected by the committee but unlikely to change.

## Thank you!

Department Commander Jennifer Havlick gives her sincere gratitude to all volunteers in this volunteer organization who give their time and efforts to make The American Legion Department of Minnesota so great. It truly is rewarding to see some of the differences made in the lives of veterans and youth across Minnesota.



Jennifer Havlick of Duluth Post 28 addresses the Department Convention in July after she was elected commander. She is the second department commander from Post 28. The other was A.B. Kapplan in 1929-30. Interestingly enough, according to the book "Legion 50" by Ben Gimmestad, Kapplan was a Jew who was nominated for the role as commander by Catholic priest David Moran of Farmington Post 189, for whom the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I sportsmanship trophy is named.



Then-Sgt.-at-Arms Ken Gibson for the Department of Minnesota escorts then-Auxiliary Department of Minnesota President Patti Coleman into the American Legion side of the convention in Willmar.



Photo by Lou Michaels

New Prague's Ashton Farrell slides as his dugout watches the action at the Div. I Jr. State Tournament at Red Haddox Field in Bloomington.

# Wadena, New Prague and Montevideo take home baseball titles

LUVERNE — It was another record year for Minnesota American Legion Baseball. There were 383 teams in all four divisions.

That breaks the record of 371 set last year and 366 in 2019.

Wadena Post 171 won the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II State Tournament at Redbird Field in Luverne 14-3, defeating Morris Post 29.

In the third-place game, the Sibley East team, tied to Gaylord Post 433, won 13-2 over Tri-Town, which is from the Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City area and is with Atwater Post 375.

It was a double-elimination tournament, and that means there is bracket in the other direction. The consolation champ was Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton of Dilworth Post 397, defeating Jackson Post 130 by a score of 7-6.

The baseball program tied to

Bloomington Post 550 hosted the Div. I Jr. State Tournament for the third time in a row. It was at the city's popular Red Haddox Field.

The Junior Baseball program is for ages 17 and under. Regular Legion Baseball is 19 and under. Think of it as a summertime version of junior varsity and varsity. Also, if you don't know, Div. I is based on big schools, and Div. II is from small schools.

New Prague Post 45 won it. The tournament was double-elimination, and no-loss New Prague faced one-loss Delano Post 377 in the title game but lost 16-8. That meant a second game was in order, and so New Prague up and decided they had better not lose twice, and they won 6-1 to take the title.

Hutchinson Post 96 claimed third, having lost to Hutchinson and to Delano before each of those teams advanced to the title game. Bemidji Post 14 also

excelled that weekend.

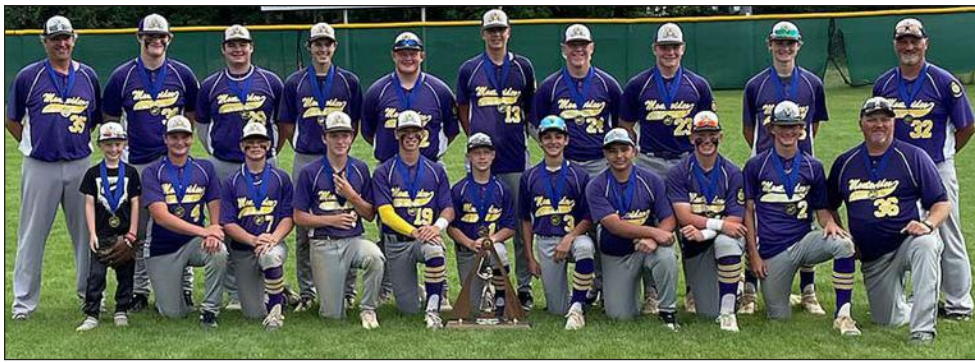
Finally, up north in Ely, Minnesota American Legion Baseball held the Div. II Jr. State Tournament.

There, Montevideo VFW Post 380 took home the hardware, beating Le Sueur-Henderson Posts 74/55 2-1 in the final.

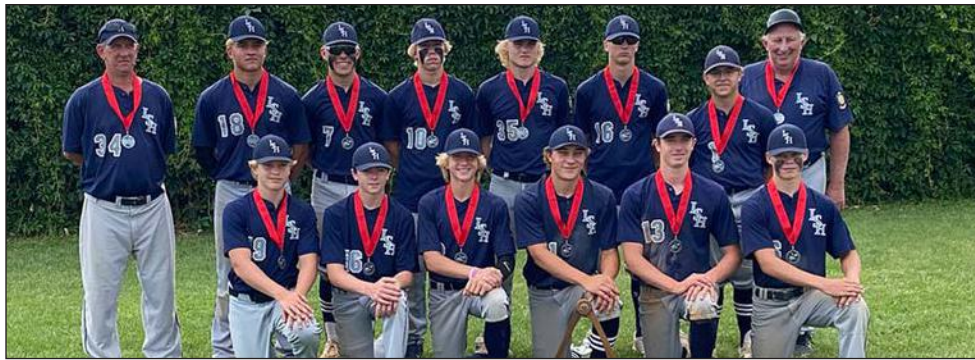
(It is common for VFW posts to play Legion Baseball in Minnesota. For example, in Montevideo, the Legion sponsors the main Legion Baseball team and VFW the Junior Legion Baseball team. Baseball associations sometimes are the sponsor, too.)

That championship victory meant Post 380 went 18-0 on the season.

Esko, of the Esko Baseball Association, claimed third place, beating always-strong program from the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton area, which was awarded the sportsmanship award. Sleepy Eye Post 7 captured the consolation title.



Players with Montevideo VFW Post 380 line up beside the Div. II Juniors State Championship Trophy. The team went undefeated in regular season and postseason play.



Players with Le Sueur-Henderson Posts 74/55 line up for a photo beside their trophy as the Div. II Jr. state runner-ups. (Now, does Post 74 or Post 55 display it?)



Payton Rondstvedt of Wadena, center, was named the outstanding player at the Div. II State Tournament in Luverne. With him are Scheels representatives David Young and Haley Kiffmeyer. Scheels is the official sponsor of Minnesota American Legion Baseball.



Veterans from the Luverne Veterans Home arrived at the Div. II State Tournament via a three-bench golf cart. Redbird Field is on the other side of the city from the home, but the staff was able and willing to bring these five veterans to the game. The one in the middle sports a Chicago Cubs Champions 2016 cap.



Photo by Lou Michaels

Past District 10 Commander Tom Allen, left, and present District 10 Commander Bill Gordon, right, stand with Kathryn Sands and Jamie Mortland of the Scheels store in St. Cloud in front of trophies for the Div. I Jr. State Tournament in Bloomington.



Scouts frequent the American Legion Baseball Tournaments. Here are some on the first day of the Div. I State Tournament. The main two fields were in Burnsville, but the other two were in Prior Lake and Shakopee. These scouts were at Tahpah Park in Shakopee on Thursday, July 28, watching the youngsters play. Next year, Div. I is in Rochester. Div. I Jr. is undetermined and will be decided in mid-October. Div. II is in Roseau. Div. II Jr. is in Granite Falls.



Slick Miller of Detroit Lakes Post 15, Al Davis of Beroun Post 347, Bob Nistler of Albert Lea Post 56 and Joe Bares of Jordon Post 3 comprise the "DII Crew" who oversee the Div. II State Tournament.

# Listening Post



Hillman Post 602 provided a dignified disposal of unserviceable flags on June 14. From left are Sgt.-at-Arms Ron Piechowski, Loren Tomala on the U.S. flag, Chaplain Bill Stave, Commander Jim Blaisdell, 1st Vice Commander Keith Carter, 2nd Vice Commander Roger Rudnitski and Jim Brown on the Post 602 flag.



Woodbury Post 501 Commander Bob Dolan and Vice Commander Joanne Kramer present a check to Chris Drossel for the Woodbury Legion Baseball teams. Also, it should be noted, Post 501 recently commissioned a quality membership video. Find it on their Facebook timeline for Aug. 9.



Minnesota Boys Nation Senators Evan Schotzko of Marshall and Nathaniel Janssen of New Ulm stand beside the Minnesota pillar at the National World War II Memorial in Washington.



Heaven's Table Martin County Food Shelf representative Lynn Reeve accepts a donation of \$5,000 from Fairmont Post 36 Commander Steve Fosness.



Rochester Post 92 Commander Chris Gilmore (right) presents Army veteran Richard J. Dahl his American Legion 50-year certificate and pin.



Albany Post 482 and Avon Post 538 sponsor a sign at the Avon Lakers Baseball Park, where the Albany American Legion team plays. From left are Post 482 Commander Ray Fuchs, baseball coach Sam Jerome and Post 538 Commander Herman Gangl.



Many apples and thanks were delivered to surprised and grateful teachers at St. Rose of Lima Catholic School in Roseville. From left are University of Minnesota Post 548 2nd Vice Commander Mike Wybierala and middle school and science teacher Sarah Puga. Yes, it was from a post in the 5th District to a school in the 4th District!



Legionnaires from Barnum Post 415 participated in National Night Out in the Barnum City Park on Aug. 2.



On July 30, North St. Paul Post 39 teamed up with Gray Duck Vodka and the Minnesota Twins to help former Twins Manager Ron Gardenhire celebrate his induction into the Twins Hall of Fame. He was inducted with player Dan Gladden during the Aug. 20 game against the Texas Rangers. Gardenhire's father served in the military for over 20 years, and Ron is a member of Squadron 39. Gray Duck created a special bottle honoring Gardenhire and The American Legion. Gardenhire autographed collector bottles and posed for pictures. About 175 fans came.



Two Eagan Post 594 members, Wayne Beierman, left, and Wayne Olsen, escort the Wall That Halls from St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights to Eagan when it arrived on July 19. Olsen is a Gold Star parent whose son was killed in Iraq. Beierman is a Vietnam veteran and Post 594 commander. The Wall That Heals is a scale model of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.



St. Leo Post/Unit 254 held a groundbreaking ceremony for the St. Leo Veterans Memorial on July 25. The project, however, began in 2021. It will be done in 2023. From left are Vice Commander Jim Hoffman, Adjutant Brian Zitzmann, Finance Officer Ralph Jelen, Commander David Antony, Auxiliary Treasurer Shirley Jelen and Auxiliary President Paulette Jelen.



Minneapolis North Side Post 230's Steve Kozicky, his son Aron, a teacher at Patrick Henry High School, and grandson Noah, a student there, spent a few hours on a recent Saturday morning giving a facelift to a marker for 12 Henry students who lost their lives in World War II.

# District commanders



## 1st District

Mary Hanson



**"This One Was for the Girls"**  
I am extremely proud of the Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball Program and Director Michael Arvidson and Vice Director Luann McMahan. A lot of blood, sweat and tears went into making this inaugural season a reality.

There were eight teams statewide that qualified for the state tournament in Mankato. Two were from the 1st District — Adams and Hayfield. I was honored to throw out the first pitch for the first game in the district between these two teams.

I was allowed to throw out first pitches at the tournament on July 30 for these two teams as well, with Hayfield the next day winning the state title over

Browerville.

Congratulations to all the girls who played this season. It is my hope that they use life lessons learned from playing the game, such as working as a team, a strong work ethic and dealing with success and failure to help them in the future.

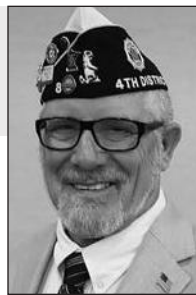
Who knows, maybe one of our players will be in the National Softball Hall of Fame someday?

I am looking forward to the future of the Minnesota program — to seeing it grow and to be as dynamic as the boys' baseball program.



## 4th District

David Dahl



We've just had a primary election and the general election is coming soon. One of the most important responsibilities we have as citizens is to make our voices heard via the polls. Voting is the way to make our government of the people, by the people and for the people.

My other topic this month has to do with your involvement in the programs of The American Legion. My Commander's Project is not to extract more money from you, but to get you more involved.

Please reflect on the words of the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion. This should elicit in your heart a desire to serve veterans and your community. Focus on these desires and find an American Legion program where you can serve.

At every level of The American Legion, there are ways to serve. Volunteer to serve on a committee!

These are the committees

of the 4th District: Americanism, Armed Forces Service Center, Baseball, Bell Ringing, Blood Donations, Scouts, Boys State, Children & Youth, Constitution & Bylaws, Endowment Fund, Education Week, Employment, Finance, Law & Order, Legionville/School Safety Patrol, Legislative, Memorial Day Association, National Cemetery, National Security/Foreign Relations, Oratorical, POW/MIA, Post Development, Public Relations/Media & Communications, ROTC/JROTC, Fastpitch Softball, Sons of the American Legion Liaison, Service Officer, United Veterans Council, VA Hospital Visitation, VA Volunteer Services, Veterans Camp, Veterans Home, Vocational Rehabilitation and The American Legion Riders.

Join us at a meeting to start serving.



## 2nd District

Pam Krill



Greetings from the 2nd District, "Second to None!"

As we start to watch the warm days of summer coming to an end, we were blessed in the 2nd District to be fortunate to host two wonderful events.

First, we hosted the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Division II State Tournament in Luverne. There were some great games, camaraderie and sportsmanship.

Second, we were also fortunate enough to host the inaugural Minnesota American Legion Fastpitch Softball State Tournament in Mankato. Again, another great group of teams were helping build a foundation for future tournaments to come.

Being able to watch the motivated and dedicated players, coaches, parents and the overall baseball and softball families, it reminded me of our American Legion Family. We are here to support each other, provide guidance, and as a family we are even coaching one another on how to be a better Legionnaire.

With the coordinated efforts of everyone, it truly shows our

commitment to the community and our youth. As a family, we can accomplish anything, and we will continue to be successful in the 2nd District.

We have several new district officers this year, with a wide variety of experience, and we are here to serve you as the 2nd District. We will work hard to keep the lines of communication open between the posts, the district and the department. As many of us prepare to head to Milwaukee for the National Convention, I am looking forward to the opportunity to take advantage of training and learn what other departments are doing to help build their districts.

Again, I am proud to be the commander this year, I have been out and done several visits and I will be out there once I get back from convention visiting more posts. Let's have a great year!



## 6th District

Karen O'Bar



Hello, my Legion Family.

First off, let me share the passing of a fellow Legion Family member. Dolly Zitur, our newly elected 6th District president, passed away Aug. 3. I had the privilege to attend her funeral on Aug. 12. Dolly was active in Brainerd American Legion Auxiliary Unit 255 as well as the entire Legion Family. Take the time to remember our passing legacies.

I am looking forward to the National Convention in Milwaukee and making new connections throughout this great country.

We have the Camporee at Legionville Sept. 8-11. Make sure you come out for our 6th District fish fry. I will attend a National Security Conference on Sept. 16-18 at Camp Ripley.

I had the pleasure of attending my first Guitars for Heroes at the St. Cloud Stand Down building.

Warehouse Supervisor Andres Rodriguez gave Mike and me a tour of the facility. I'm learning so much about the opportunities out there for veterans. I had my first guitar lesson.

A couple of the veterans were out this day but the few who were made for an interesting class, taught by Don Burge.

Once you attend four classes, you are given a guitar to take home and practice on. I told Bob Behrens, director of Stand Down, that I had decided to learn guitar and learn at least two songs before May 2023. One veteran stated he read about this program through the Legionnaire paper, which is great. At the end of the two-hour class, I am training my left hand for the G chord. Time and patience.



## 3rd District

Gary Richardson



At the time of this writing, I am preparing to depart for the National Convention in Milwaukee. I ask for safe travels for everyone from across this country.

Ask yourself: What can I do to interest a new veteran to join our great organization or get a past member to rejoin?

1. Get their families involved (SAL, Auxiliary, Legion Riders).

2. Help them to better understand how the Legion works to get resolutions passed in Congress for their benefit. Think of the recently signed PACT Act. Think of the G.I. Bill, Agent Orange, the VA itself and other legislative efforts the Legion has been involved in, including veterans courts right here in Minnesota. Remember, without the

voice of our membership it's hard to get legislators to listen.

There is strength in numbers!

I will be setting up the rest of my post visits for the coming year and hope to visit with as many posts in my district as possible.

For everyone, think of some things that you would like passed on to the department for the betterment of The American Legion and get that information to your commanders and vice commanders.

More minds thinking toward the same goals can do some pretty amazing things.

"Membership. The backbone of our American Legion!"



## 7th District

Karen Welander



Greetings, Mighty Seventh.

Our communities always expect we will honor and celebrate Memorial Day and Veterans Day, but are we showing our communities that they are important to us on Patriot Day by recognizing and telling them we are there for them.

Volunteering and service opportunities on this day are often held including speaking at school and other community programs to instill a sense of patriotism in communities.

The last Sunday of September is recognized as Gold Star

Families Day and should be a time to honor the tragedy and sacrifice that occurred.

We quickly forget the family left behind are a vital part of our country's military community and history. Take some time to say thank you to the family.

The 7th District Family would like to say thank you for all you do and let you know that you do make a difference.

God bless.



## 9th District

Terry Buraas



The VA medical system is the greatest safety device for the veteran. I wish to thank them for saving my life. I had heart surgery in April 2018, which saved my life and has given me a quality of life that I did not have before.

Before the surgery if I was walking somewhere, it was "stop every block and rest," which I thought was COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Finally, a cardiologist said I had a leaking aortic valve. I went to the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis, where they decided I needed two valves unclogged.

Surgery was done with a pig valve replacing the aortic valve. Wow! What a difference!

The next day I was up and

walking better than I have done in years. By the time of full recovery, I was able to walk three miles without resting. Now, the rest of the story:

No bill. That's because I was in Vietnam and presumed to be in contact with Agent Orange.

If you served your country and have not filled out the paperwork for service at the local VA, check with your county veterans service officer. Do not assume you do not qualify. You may be missing out on much-needed medical assistance and possibly a veteran's pension.



## 10th District

William Gordon



When was the last time you were totally awesome?

Come on now be honest. Was it yesterday, last week?

I only ask this because: When you are the best, you are the best!

You can leap tall buildings with a single bound, run faster than a speeding bullet. Was that Superman, or was that you?

Now let's get out our calendars and take good hard look at what we are going to do this year. First, let's make sure we have all the dates we want to set aside for our deity. Next, wife, husband, significant other and family. Make sure we have filled in all the dates and times we will be making memories with those who we hold closest to our hearts. Date nights, recitals, games, birthdays and other family events.

Third, let's make sure our workdays are mapped out. This gives us an amazing view of how our time is used up so far. Now write in all the events, meetings, conferences, conventions and even rallies you will be attending.

How many of these will you attend accompanied by a family member? Yes, unless your significant other is also a veteran, it will be hard for them to attend the post meeting.

However, they can attend the Auxiliary meeting, SAL meeting, Juniors meeting, Riders meeting or even the 40&8 La Société meetings.

Did you know that at our conferences, conventions, rallies and other events, you can bring family members? It's not all business. There is lots of time for fun and to enjoy family

time. In fact, your family can enjoy time with your Legion Family.

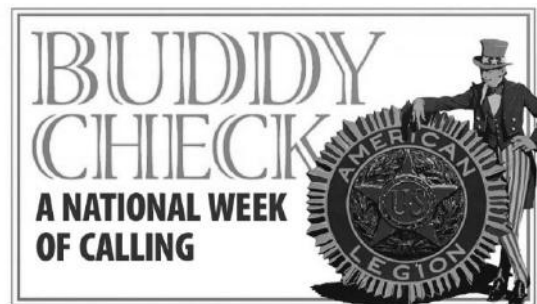
Think now how many times you have heard someone saying: "My mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, encouraged me to join, and I am proud I did."

I genuinely want to visit every post in our district this year and I want each of the Subdistrict vice commanders, post adjutants and or commanders to please email me at wgordon2494@hotmail.com or text me at 320-491-5665. You can even call and leave a voice mail for me at 1-763-515-3686. Let me know the date, time and location of your meeting so I can schedule it.

Vice commanders, if you can visit these posts with me that would be awesome. I will be looking forward to meeting and visiting our members to hear all about what you and your post are doing in your communities.

We also want to hear your suggestions and recommendations on how we can make our organization stronger. PLEASE send in your newly elected, re-elected and or appointed officers' names and contact information to your subdistrict vice commanders and District Adjutant Paul Orson at paulorson@comcast.net or me.

My address is 10107 Karston Curve NE, Albertville, MN 55301. You know what? Looking at the calendar we just did together, you truly are an awesome superhuman. It's my honor to know you. I hope to see you in person very soon.



# Scenes from the Fund 85 Ride

Photos by Shawn Davis



American Legion Riders gather at the St. Peter Veterans Memorial. The Fund 85 Ride raises funds for the Minnesota American Legion Veterans Assistance Fund.



Minnesota American Legion Riders Director Ted Berg speaks to the group. The ride raised \$7,900.



St. Peter ALR Chapter 37 hands over a check for \$5,000. The ride was based out of St. Peter on July 30.



With a patriotic headcover, John Weiss of St. Paul Arcade-Phalen Chapter 577 pulls up to the ride.



The morning began at St. Peter's William R. Witty Post 37.



The riders visit the Hutchinson Veterans Memorial.



On her purple Harley-Davidson, Jody Hassing gets set to head out on the highway.



St. Peter Chapter 37 Director Tom Christensen addresses the group during the lunch stop.



Hutchinson Post 96 Commander Diane Jankowski addresses the crowd during the lunch stop.



Hutchinson Auxiliary Unit 96 serves lunch to the participants of the first Fund 85 Ride.



Riders roll out from St. Peter Post 37. About 45 bikes participated.

## SIGN UP FOR THE 2023 DEPARTMENT CALENDAR!



You get all the important dates for the Minnesota American Legion, Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Riders — in one place.

And you get really cool photos. **Just \$20!**

We are taking orders in advance to determine how many to print. We plan to have them for you at the Fall Conference to hand out or to mail out.

We will not be selling any after the press prints them, most likely close to Oct. 1.

Simply provide a check made out to "Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 85." Proceeds benefit the Department's **Veteran Assistance Fund.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**And mail to:**  
Minnesota American Legion Foundation  
Attn: Fund 85  
20 W. 12th St. Room 300A  
St. Paul, MN 55437



### Handy guide for new people

#### Local-level organizations

Post = The American Legion  
Unit = American Legion Auxiliary  
Squadron = Sons of The American Legion  
Chapter = American Legion Riders  
The number stays the same, so Post 37, Unit 37, Squadron 37 and Chapter 37 are all tied to St. Peter.

#### Leadership

Commander = The American Legion and SAL  
President = American Legion Auxiliary  
Director = American Legion Riders



# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 23 Vol. 2

President Mary Kuperus • Treasurer Cathy Radil, cathy@mnala.org

Dept. HQ: Veterans Service Building, St. Paul, MN 55155

651-224-7634

September 2022

## Summer is the busiest time for the Legion Auxiliary

### President's Column

Mary Kuperus



As I write this column, I am recovering from the New London-to-New Brighton Antique Car Run and our American Legion Auxiliary Department Chairman Workshop and Department Executive Committee meeting.

I am so proud of the 10 district presidents, Vice Presidents Sharon Thiemecke and Judy Ackerman, Past President Patti Coleman, NEC Jean Walker, and all other members of the DEC. They heard from department chairman on how they have planned the 2022-2023 American Legion Auxiliary.

Thank you to all who attended!

Junior Fun Weekend was held on Aug. 5-7 at Legionville. What a wonderful place for our Junior members to meet new friends, re-unite with others, learn and have so much fun. American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Jennifer Havlick was able to spend some time with the Junior members and to tell them about her plans for the year. Yes, we did get the commander to join in some games. We have pictures!

My husband, Bill, and I agreed to drive the chase vehicle for the Minnesota American Legion Riders Legacy Scholarship Run. Congratulations to all ALR members on a great year. I am looking forward to the donation turn-in at the National Convention.

The 2023 membership year has started. The first membership rally will be on Sept. 10 at Legionville during Camporee. Bring memberships with you or send them to the Department Office before then.

Please ask eligible members to join our patriotic organization. We can do so much for our military, veterans, their families and our communities. New members bring new ideas. Don't forget that the American Legion Auxiliary now has male members. A spouse of a female veteran can now join us! Many units already have male members and would encourage more to join. The Department of Minnesota has a goal of 28,957

members for the 2023 year. Will this be the year we make 100 percent? That would be awesome if we did!

Many Minnesota American Legion Family members will have attended the National Convention in Milwaukee. Our two granddaughters were excited to attend their first National Convention out of the state of Minnesota.

Fall Conference will be held at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud on Oct. 27-29. The American Legion Auxiliary will offer two different classes on Thursday evening. One session will be about membership. We will explain the process on how a unit can set up an account on ALAMIS, our membership database.

The other class will include information on the use of the National Year End Impact Reports and Annual Reports. What information goes where, how to fill out the form, and the use of a new fillable report form. More information will be in the October unit mailing.

The Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary webpage is in the process of being updated. It is a work in progress.

Unit mailings will now be a monthly mailing. Please consider receiving the unit mailing by email. This will save money on printing and postage. Once the website is up and running, the unit mailings will be posted each month. The Department of Minnesota ALA website is: mnala.org.

May you all have a wonderful September! Please take care of yourselves, our military, their families, and veterans. Let's "Serve and Honor Every Day."

*Mary Kuperus of New London Unit 537 is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Serve and Honor Every Day."*



American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Jennifer Havlick, in the white cap, sits with American Legion Auxiliary Juniors and, fifth from the left, American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota President Mary Kuperus. Between the two, in red, is Juniors President Sydney Borntreger. The girls and women were at Legionville near Brainerd for Junior Fun Weekend, which, according to reports, was fun.

## Junior Activities strengthens member efforts

By Renee Suess  
Junior Activities Chairman

We are extremely blessed to have an outstanding group of Juniors working in the various programs of the American Legion Auxiliary in the state of Minnesota. It is very important to keep revitalizing, recruiting and promoting our Junior program at the unit, district and department levels. Including our Junior members at each level will prompt great potential for our organization as a whole.

We have many senior members, who have previously been Junior members, taking on various leadership roles at all levels and giving strong mentorship throughout Minnesota. The Junior Activities program strengthens our membership program as we get to take our junior members' membership and continue it on into senior membership. The Junior Activities program ensures that we give Juniors enough information about the American Legion Family so hopefully they develop an interest to further progress in the American Legion Auxiliary.

Not many organizations have members who've enrolled since birth nor members who've grown up in that organization. That is how we stand out and make a difference.

It is vital to continuously include our Junior members in the various events occurring throughout our Legion Family. Our Juniors are always willing to help out and learn new things.

Honorary Department Junior President Sydney Borntreger is a leader who is raising funds to help the adaptive sports program for physically limited or disabled veterans at the VA Healthcare System in Sioux Falls. She is an example of one of the ways Juniors are serving our veterans.

Other things Juniors may do throughout their communities is poppy distribution, participating in events in their unit or post, leading in various ceremonies (Veterans Day, Memorial Day, etc.), and so much more. As mentioned previously, if we include our Juniors in as much as we can throughout all levels in the Legion Family, they are guaranteed to learn so many



Juniors put their hands on their hearts as the flag at Legionville is raised during Junior Fun Weekend.

new things about the program.

One Junior mentioned that she learned how to properly fold the flag by attending Junior Fun Weekend at Legionville. Even asking them to attend a meeting will let them gain

insight into the fine works and incredible things we do as an organization.

This year, the Junior Activities program is aimed to increase knowledge of how our juniors are working the programs of the ALA.

We will be spotlighting each District Junior group in the Department of Minnesota in our monthly unit mailings. This is a great way to showcase ideas with other districts and promote the amazing work of our Minnesota Juniors. We will also be sharing information about the various Honorary Department Junior Officers.

Knowing more about the various offices a Junior can hold at the state level will be a focus and will help our junior members become informed on decisions about their leadership interests. Sharing ideas and empowering one another is the focus this year. Our Junior program holds a part of our American Legion Auxiliary future, so we as senior members need to do our part of mentoring, including, and providing as many opportunities for our Juniors this year and beyond.

## Endorsements

### Dorf endorsed for Dept. 2nd Vice President

Monticello Unit 260, 10th District Past Presidents Parley, and the 10th District Auxiliary has endorsed Robin Dorf for Department of Minnesota 2nd Vice President for 2023-2024.

Dorf has been an active member of Unit 260 for 47 years and is a PUFL member. Her eligibility is through her father, Emil W. Dorf Jr., who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

At the unit level she has held many positions, including President two terms. On the district level, she

has served as St. Cloud VA Social Activities, Junior Activities, Education, Girls State, Legislation, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Children & Youth, Poppy, Leadership, Membership, Past Presidents Parley, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee member, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and served as 10th District President 2014-2015.

On the department level, she has served on the Strategic Planning Committee, past Girls State Counselor, Junior Activities, Leadership,

Public Relations, Membership, Children & Youth, Chaplain and is currently serving as Community Service Chairman.

On the national level, she served as the 2018 ALA National Convention Vice Chairman, Northwestern Division Membership Chairman, and will be the 2022-2023 Children & Youth Committee Vice Chairman.

Dorf is the Wright County Health and Human Services Kinship/Child Foster Care Recruiter Case Aide for Wright County.



Robin Dorf

## See you in Milwaukee

The American Legion Auxiliary National Convention is our largest gathering of members, guests and distinguished speakers. The weeklong event is held annually in cities across America at the same time and place as the convention of The American Legion for the purpose of electing officers, receiving reports, conducting other ALA business — and most of all — having fun while celebrating our accomplishments from the administrative year.

The 101st National American Legion Auxiliary Convention is Aug. 27-31 in Milwaukee



# This is going to be a Paul Bunyan year: BIG!

By Sandy Wersal  
Membership Chairman

The American Legion Auxiliary will be using Paul Bunyan as our theme, so get out your flannel shirts Legion Family!

We will promote the traits Paul was well known for: strength, speed and skill. Paul's larger-than-life folklore story is depicting a

person that did not quit. He used his strength; we will have plenty of strength if we work together.

We have speed to get the membership in on time, and the skill to mentor new members. Sept. 10 Harvest Rally at beautiful Legionville.

So, pack that flannel shirt, wear it on Saturday and to all rallies this year. Let's kick off a great 2022-2023 membership year.

## Auxiliary provides leadership paths

By Pam Gades  
Leadership Chairman

"If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then you are an excellent leader."

— Dolly Parton

This year, the American Legion Auxiliary's National President Vickie Koutz's and Minnesota President Mary Kuperus's themes both include the focus of honoring our veterans every day. The American Legion Auxiliary programs honor veterans and have been successful due to many strong and dedicated leaders with our organization.

Familiarize yourself with the American Legion Auxiliary by utilizing the many resources

available on the national website: [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org).

You will learn who we are, our mission and vision, our impact, history, membership eligibility, organizational structure, legion family information, the Unit Guide, and much, much more. The Department of Minnesota ALA website is in the process of being rebuilt, but it will soon be available/updated at [mnala.org](http://mnala.org). Here you will be able to find current events, announcements, program information, forms, and the now-monthly unit mailings.

### Facebook Leadership Group

ALA Committee Facebook Groups are spaces on the social media network for ALA members to discuss or

share about topics related to each committee.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALALeadership>

### ALA Academy

The American Legion Auxiliary is providing all members with the tools they need to help grow the organization as a team. The Academy courses are designed to help members learn online at no cost to them. Two options are offered:

1. Self-paced courses that you can take from any device. These are designed for you to take whenever you have time with no need to pre-register.

2. Live virtual webinars. These are free but are offered live and you will need to register in advance. <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/online-training>

## What is Auxiliary Emergency Fund?

By Kollett A. Kaehlert  
Emergency Food Chairman

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis. Members helping members – that's the American Legion Auxiliary's mission of Service Not Self in action. Hard times can fall upon us at any moment. That's when the American Legion Auxiliary is committed to help.

Established in 1969, the AEF was created with a bequest from the estate of Auxiliary member Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wis. Five decades later, the AEF is still helping fellow Auxiliary members get back on their feet. Since the Auxiliary Emergency fund was established, more than \$6 million has been awarded to more than 6,500 members.

Learn more at [AEF@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:AEF@ALAforVeterans.org)

An Auxiliary Emergency Fund grant may provide immediate emergency assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members in areas devastated by a natural disaster such as fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or other severe weather. The applicant must have received damage to the primary residence and/or been displaced or evacuated from the residence and had out-of-pocket expenses for food, clothing, and shelter.

An Auxiliary Emergency Fund grants may provide temporary assistance to eligible members during a time of financial crisis when no other source of aid is readily available to pay for shelter, food, and utilities. Grants may be awarded up to \$2,400 with the intent to help members who have suffered a financial setback and offer a helping hand until financial stability is reestablished. Assistance will not be granted to pay medical expenses or credit card debt.

The applicant must be an American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) member. Applicant

must have maintained ALA membership for three consecutive years (the current year and immediate past two years). One grant per grantee in a 12-month period will be awarded.

Applications are now only processed online at [www.mnala.org](http://www.mnala.org). Go to forms for the ALA Emergency Fund Application.

To carry on the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, we need your generous support. During Fall Conference in St. Cloud, Thursday, Oct. 27 through Saturday, Oct. 29, we will be holding the annual silent auction to benefit the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. Please bring items to donate for the silent auction such as: theme baskets, patriotic items, pictures, clothing, jewelry items, jams, jellies and bake goods, or anything else that a member may need or want.

We will have the \$2 grab bags as well; I will have paper bags to place the items in, so don't forget those small items. All proceeds will go the American Legion Auxiliary Emergency Fund.



The Elk River American Legion Auxiliary Unit 112 presented a check for \$1,200 to Magnus Veterans Foundation on July 27. This donation will sponsor two veterans for a year to the services provided by Magnus. Executive Director Jay Calhoun accepted the donation from Unit 112 Secretary Sharon Mendenhall and President Cathy Artman. These funds were made possible from the many generous Poppy donations received from Legion members and the Elk River community.



On Aug. 1, Lesley Heimer was installed as Adams Unit 146 president. She was installed by her mom, Past Department President Darlene Wondra of Montgomery Unit 79. It was a proud mama moment. Darlene stated: "I've been waiting a long time to do this."



Edna Thayer of Elysian Unit 311, left, smiles as she is recognized in July at the Department of Minnesota Convention in Willmar as the Unit Member of the Year. Standing with her is Past Department President Darlene Wondra of the 3rd District.

## POW/MIA Day is coming

Sept. 16 is set aside to commemorate and honor the commitment and sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those still missing in action, as well as their families.

We must continue to urge and demand the fullest accounting of all POW'S and MIA'S from all wars and conflicts. Units should work with Post members to hold a program for this year's POW/MIA Recognition Day.

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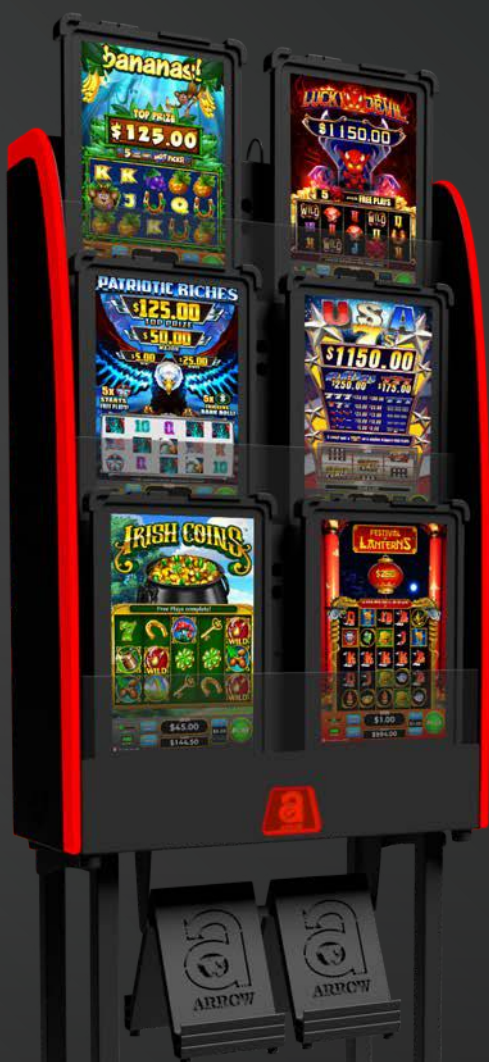
**12.3" HD DISPLAY**

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**RUGGED PROTECTIVE CASE**

**LIGHTWEIGHT & PORTABLE DESIGN**

**6-BAY CHARGING STATION**



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