



## New state adjutant will start Jan. 1

Adjutant Randy Tesdahl, Elk River, has announced his retirement at the end of the year. He will be succeeded by Mike Maxa of Le Center.

In a statement from Department Commander Mark Dvorak to the membership, the commander said, "Adjutant Randy informed senior leadership that his doctors have recently advised him for health reasons to step down from his position."

Tesdahl recently announced that he has been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

Dvorak said several meetings were held to talk over the situation. "After much discussion and reviewing several possible candidates for the adjutant position, it was decided on Sept. 16 that Mike Maxa... would be offered the position."

Maxa accepted the position the following day.

Maxa is currently a Department Vice Commander representing the First and Third Districts. Last year, he served as Department Membership Director.

"The senior leadership was unanimous in this decision," Dvorak said.

Maxa will serve as assistant to Tesdahl until he takes over the job at the first of the year.

The Department Executive Committee will meet on Oct. 24, prior to the Fall Conference, to vote on the remaining two years and 10 months of the adjutant's position. Officially, the adjutant's position is voted on every three years by the



MIKE MAXA

DEC.

"I feel Mike Maxa will do a great job in this position," Dvorak said in the statement. "Let's all welcome Mike in his new position and help him in any way we can."

Dvorak also said the DEC will have to vote on an individual to replace Maxa as vice commander.

Tesdahl said, "Everyone please welcome Mike aboard. Give him the same respect and dedication that you have given to me, not only in my 10 years as Department Adjutant, but during my five years as a fellow employee in my position as Department Service Officer."

Tesdahl added, "This is a time of transition for our offices and we will get through it as we always have, as a family. We will keep the veterans and their families, our families, and

Continued on Page 2

## Fixing the Veterans Home bridge



The truss bridge on the west side of the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis that crosses over Minnehaha Creek was declared unsafe a few years ago. The American Legion and other VSOs campaigned to have the state fix the bridge, both for the bridge's beauty, and to provide a second entrance into the veterans home grounds in case of an emergency. The Legislature approved the construction this year, and work has been ongoing at the bridge since July. The new southern approach girders are in place, and the northern approach girders are being set in place. Repair welding continues on the center span and painting has begun. The bridge is on schedule and expected to re-open to vehicle traffic in December.

## New state veterans cemetery dedicated for the Duluth area

Minnesota's third veterans cemetery was dedicated recently at a site just northwest of Duluth.

The new cemetery is expected to serve the northeastern part of the state. It will join existing cemeteries at Little Falls and Preston.

Gov. Tim Walz participated in the ceremony. "Here in Minnesota, we honor our veterans. The addition of the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Duluth provides an option for veterans and their families in Northeastern Minnesota to choose a final resting place closer to home."

Planning for the cemetery began a dozen years ago, and a grant proposal was made to the National Cemetery Administration in 2008. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs acquired the 104 acre parcel, about 14 miles

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**TRAINED IN  
CANADA; 152  
MISSIONS  
FOR THE U.S.**

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## Fall conference slated for Oct. 25-26 in Mahanomen

The Fall Conference, the Legion's annual school of instruction, will be held Friday and Saturday, Oct. 25-26, at the Shooting Star Casino in Mahanomen.

It will be sponsored by Bagley Post and Unit 16.

The conference will feature an appearance by National Commander Candidate Paul Dillard of Texas. Dillard is in line to become commander in 2020-21.

Also scheduled to speak will be National Vice Commander Bruce Feuerbach of Iowa. Feuerbach is from Keystone, and he is a past commander of the Department of Iowa.

Some of the planned topics for speakers or panels at the conference include:

- A session by Past 5th District

Commander Dick Ward on how to navigate the Mylegion.com website.

- An overview of Minnesota State Veterans Cemeteries.

- A session on veterans and suicide by Tammy Monsebroten, Suicide Prevention Coordinator at the Fargo VA.

- At 6:30 on Friday night, there will be a membership challenge put on by the Auxiliary. A hospitality session will follow.

- The Auxiliary will also be holding its traditional silent auction and members of the Legion family are urged to bring their donated items.

- Al Zdon, who is retiring as Legionnaire editor, and Randy Tesdahl, who is retiring as Department Adjutant will give a farewell

addresses.

- An overview of the State Veterans Homes.

- A report on the new Minnesota Legion College.

A registration form for the Fall Conference is on Page 3 of this issue of the Legionnaire. Those planning to attend should contact the casino/hotel directly to make reservations. The number is 1-800-453-STAR.

Those calling should reference the Legion room block: 6536.

A hospitality event will be held Friday evening and country singer Connie Lee will perform. She often performs for veterans with her band.

# New director announced for Fargo VA HCS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the appointment of Breton M. Weintraub, M.D., F.A.C.P., the new director of the Fargo VA Health Care System.



**BRETON WEINTRAUB**

“Dr. Weintraub has sound leadership qualities and proven experience,” said Robert McDivitt, VA Midwest Health Care Network Director. “I am certain he will be an asset to our VISN, our employees and volunteers, our health care partners, the community, and importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve.”

Weintraub has been with the Department of Veterans Affairs for over 17 years. He currently serves as the Chief of Staff for the VA Health Care System, Fargo, North Dakota.

Weintraub holds a Medical Degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, OH and a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

The Fargo VA Health Care System (HCS) is a Joint Commission accredited medical/surgical hospital with 36 acute care beds, a 38-bed Community Living Center, Primary Care and Specialty Clinics, and 10 Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).

Fargo VA HCS CBOCs are located in North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. The Fargo VA HCS oversees the provision of health care to more than 33,000 Veterans. The Medical Center is affiliated with the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, providing training to medical students, and Internal Medicine, Psychiatry and Surgery Resident physicians.

The facility is also a training facility for nursing and allied health care students.

The VA Midwest Health Care Network, also known as Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23, is one of 18 Health Care Systems in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration.

The Network serves more than 440,000 enrolled Veterans residing in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and portions of Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Health care services are delivered through an integrated system of 9 hospitals, 69 community-based outpatient clinics, 8 community living centers and 4 domiciliary residential rehabilitation treatment programs.

The Network employs over 15,000 full-time employees and has an annual operating budget in excess of \$3.3 billion.



Dignitaries, including Gov. Tim Walz, gathered in a forested place northwest of Duluth recently to dedicate the new Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery.

# New vets cemetery dedicated

**Continued from Page 1**

from Duluth on Highway 53, in 2016.

The cemetery received a grant from the National Cemetery Administration totaling 8.35 million. The total cost of the project is about \$9.8 million including property acquisition, design, construction and construction management.

The cemetery has been in use since Veteran’s Day this past year, and 176 veterans have been laid to rest there. The cemetery will serve about 32,000 veterans who live within 75 miles of the site.

The cemetery will have initially 850 crypts, 407 traditional burial sites, 1,078 cremains sites and 720 columbarium niches.

The 19-acre site will include a main entrance, an administration building, a maintenance facility, roads, an assembly area, a committal shelter, and landscaping.

The cemetery will accommodate 32,000 gravesites when all the future phases are implemented.

For more information on the cemetery, contact Cory Johnson at 218-520-0120 or you can email him at [cory.johnson@state.mn.us](mailto:cory.johnson@state.mn.us).

Celebrate 75 years since the end of World War II

This tour is already 30% sold!

Tour designed originally by Dr. Brooks Ranney, Medical Officer WWII, who served in Europe

## World War II Tour

*12-Day tour departing June 2, 2020*

- **FRANCE:** Paris city tour and three days in Normandy, Pointe du Hoc, cemeteries, villages, Utah Beach, Omaha Beach & more
- **BELGIUM:** Battle of the Bulge area
- **GERMANY:** Nuremberg, Dachau Concentration Camp, Hitler’s Eagle Nest & more

**Only \$3,295 from Chicago O’Hare**

**\$100 OFF TOUR**

for veterans

# Legion College class named

The 2019 Minnesota selectees into The American Legion College have been named. They are:

Kelley Adelsman, Pine Island Post 184.

Susan Edwards, Nisswa Post 627.

The college prepares students for future leadership.

# New Adjutant

**Continued from Page 1**  
The American Legion in the forefront.”

Maxa will begin his time as assistant adjutant on Oct. 7.

Department Communications Director Al Zdon will also be retiring at the end of the year, and Department Finance Liaison Laura Weber will be retiring next year.

minnesotaveteran.org | **1-888-LinkVet**  
(546-5838)

## Help for veterans and families

## JOIN A STATEWIDE CONVERSATION

While the name of the 1820s fort will remain Fort Snelling, we would like your thoughts on the broader name of the entire 23-acre MNHS property, currently called Historic Fort Snelling. Does the name reflect the history of the place and the many different people who have crossed paths there throughout time?

**What do you think?**  
Learn more and tell us your opinion at [mnhs.org/naming](http://mnhs.org/naming).

# Endorsements

## Dr. Carl Moon endorsed for Department Vice Commander

Dr. Carl Moon has been endorsed for 6th and 9th Department Vice Commander by Kriesel Jacobson Post 560 in Zimmerman.

Moon served in the Air Force from 1976-1984. He is a Paid-Up-For Life Member with 31 years of continuous Membership.

He served as Post Commander two terms.

On the District level he served as District Commander, Vice Commander, County Council Commander and is currently the District Chaplain.

On the Department level he has served as Employment Chairman for four years.

On the National Level he is the National Commander's

Representative to the VA&R Commission and is one of only four members appointed to the TBI/PTSD Committee.

He is a member of ANAVICUS, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 560, 40 & 8 Voiture 414, and has a life membership in the DAV.

Moon has been employed at the St. Cloud VA as an Optometrist for 19 years.

Carl and his wife Peggy (Air Force Veteran and Past 6th District and Department Commander) have been married 45 years, have two daughters, two grandsons, and four granddaughters.



DR. CARL MOON

## Department Executive Committee to meet

The Minnesota American Legion Department Executive Committee will meet prior to the Fall Conference in Mahnomen.

It will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24, at the Shooting Star Casino and

Hotel in the Bejou/Detroit Lakes Room.

The DEC is comprised of this year's and last year's district commanders and many of the officers of the Minnesota Legion.

The committee will be voting on a new

Department Adjutant and Third District Commander, and it will also be voting on replacing two members of the Department's Board of Publications who had to resign to take vice commander positions.

### 2019 Fall Conference Official Registration

Mail to:  
Dennis J Henkemeyer  
PO Box L  
Bagley MN 56621

#### Preregistration Sliding Fee:

Registration received by 01 Oct **\$15.00**  
Registration received after 01 Oct **\$18.00**  
Registration at the door **\$20.00**

Registration is for each person attending except for Junior SAL and Junior Auxiliary members. Please copy and send a separate form for each person attending. Please make checks payable to:

**Bagley American Legion Post 16**

**Conference Dates:**  
25 – 26 October 2019

**Headquarters Hotel:**  
**Shooting Star Hotel**  
777 SE Casino Road  
Mahnomen MN  
1-800-453-STAR

Contact the hotel directly to make your reservations

District Post Unit Squadron

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# 4 FANTASTIC WAYS TO EXPERIENCE MNHHS

JOIN. MEMBERS GET THE BEST DEAL IN HISTORY.

**1 TELL US WHAT YOU THINK**  
Take our survey online and attend a public meeting to provide input on whether the current name of **Historic Fort Snelling** adequately reflects the expanded stories being shared there. Find meeting dates, times, and locations at [mnhs.org/naming](http://mnhs.org/naming).

**NEW LOCATION**  
**2 ATTEND WWII ROUND TABLE**  
Hear presentations on topics in World War II history. Upcoming: **Diplomacy for the Atomic Bomb** (Oct 8) and **Difficulties of Coalition Warfare** (Nov 12). Minnesota History Center, St. Paul.



**3 VISIT THE FORT**  
Come learn about the expanded stories being shared at **Historic Fort Snelling**, see a demo, take a theme tour. Open Saturdays through October. Veterans and their families always receive free admission.



**4 RESEARCH MILITARY RECORDS**  
Visit the Gale Family Library at the Minnesota History Center to research records of Minnesotans' military service in conflicts of the 19th and 20th centuries. Some items are available online at [libguides.mnhs.org/milservice](http://libguides.mnhs.org/milservice).



PLAN YOUR VISIT OR PURCHASE ONLINE • MNHS.ORG • 1-844-MNSTORY

**COMMANDER'S  
COLUMN****By Mark  
Dvorak**

Greetings Minnesota American Legion Family.

Our National Commander, Bill Oxford, during the Membership Workshop in Indianapolis, set the following goals for all Departments: Nationwide membership renewals are 82% - increase renewal rate to 90% by personal contact with each individual that has not renewed their membership, transfer 75% of Post 1982s/ADs to a local post - the 75% transfer rate is part of our overall membership goal for Minnesota, 100% completion rate and turn-in of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) - I'm asking Department and District Leadership to make a concerted effort to achieve 100% CPR turn-in for Minnesota.

## Mail Call

**Legionville****To the Editor**

We all know of the jewel of the state Legionville, but do we really know what it is and what it does. Legionville has been around for around 75 years. It has been moved a few times to different locations until it ended up by Brainard, Minnesota. It is the only operation like this in the United States. It is the only Legion facility like its kind.

The Department of Minnesota has control over Legionville through the Legionville Corporation, which is run through the Legionville Executive board that has a representative from each District in Minnesota. Although the location of Legionville is in the 6th District, it is the responsibility of all the Legion Districts. Legionville provides various events and programs throughout the year from the Safety School, use of the area by the police and the Army National Guard of Minnesota and other events for The American Legion.

Legionville is an aging facility and needs some major repairs on the buildings and equipment. As we all know repairs cost large amounts of money and labor. The labor can be provided by all the districts and posts. Legion volunteers that have all sorts of life skills that can help on repairs,

## Editorial

A recent editorial in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune nailed one aspect of the terrible veteran suicide rate on the head.

The editorial said it cannot just be the responsibility of the Department of Veterans Affairs to combat this national tragedy, it has to be all of us.

While the VA certainly has to play a huge role in reducing these suicides, it cannot take on the problem alone. It's a grim statistic that more than half of veterans who take their own lives never have contact with the VA, at least about their mental challenges.

Over 6,000 veterans commit suicide each year, and the number is not getting any lower despite the fact that there are fewer veterans. While the number of younger veteran suicides increased last year, still nearly 70 percent are veterans aged 50 and over. About 97 percent of the suicides were male.

So what can we do? Throwing money at the VA will be a tidy political response to the tragedy, but the fact is that the whole nation needs to be more strongly involved.

Part of it is simply taking care of our neighbors and our families. All of us need to be more aware of the symptoms of depression that can lead to suicide. So many stories you read in the press about how neighbors, friends and family had no idea that their loved one was about to do himself in. Maybe we should have an idea. Maybe we all need to be a little better trained and sensitive to what propels a person to commit suicide.

Before that, much of the responsibility should be shouldered by the military. Are we sure we're recruiting the right people all the time to send around the world and be exposed to extreme stress and danger?

In the military, is the training sufficient for the situations the warrior finds himself or herself?

And when the veteran leaves the military, are they properly screened for potential signs of future depression? It's legendary that many who leave the service are so eager to get out that the last thing they will tell anybody, including a military doctor or psychologist, is that they're having some problems. It might delay their getting out.

Several Districts have requested Revitalizations through National and some have been approved. Please continue to consider posts that could use help in having an Open House/Revitalization. Keep monitoring through MyLegion.org the 1982s/ADs. Continue to get the message out about the Legion Act to the general public. I'm hearing about exciting things getting done in the Districts, keep up the great work.

Update on my project: Two individuals from Wounded Warriors Guide Service came to the Harvest Rally in Legionville on Saturday, September 7th. Their nonprofit was explained by Justin Lightfoot, who is the current Director of this nonprofit. There are 11 board members and are all volunteers and take no money for their services. All donations go toward helping disabled veterans through outdoor activities, providing all equipment for up to a five day outing. This past June they were able to provide outings for almost 100 veterans. The various events happen throughout the year, which include ice fishing. This nonprofit is a 501c3 and operate solely on donations, grants and fundraising. This organization has been helping disabled veterans since 2009. After Justin was done with his presentation, he received a standing ovation. 75% of donations for my project will go to the Wounded Warriors Guide Service, 25% will go to Legionville, unless a donation is specified to go to only one of my projects. Please be generous with your donations.

For God and Country.

just call up Legionville and coordinate times and dates to come up, we have cabins to stay in for your stay, just a weekend can make a big difference.

The last request is directed to all the Minnesota Department, districts and posts, S.A.L. and Riders: FUNDING, FUNDING, FUNDING. If the funds do not come in Legionville will be forced to close in the not too distant future. So please donate so we as a Legion can continue to use this wonderful facility for our children well into the future.

**Richard Cross  
Melrose**

**The Chief****To the Editor:**

Thanks so much for your great article on Howard Nathe. I was a huge Gopher Baseball fan when Dick Siebert coached the Gophers. And I personally got to know him when I worked at the Bierman Athletic Building from 1973-76. Chief Siebert was the best.

**Jim Hassing  
St. Paul**

PTSD is a strong indicator of a potential suicide. How well are we identifying those who have traumatic stress?

The Minneapolis VA is to be commended for beginning a new "#Be There," campaign that will encourage those in the community to take a stronger stand on veterans suicides. It will encourage community leaders, colleagues and veterans' families and friends to help prevent suicides by showing support for those who are going through a rough time.

Patrick Kelly, the director of the Minneapolis VA, said, "One act of thoughtfulness can make a big difference and may even save a life."

The support can be as simple as reaching out to veterans in your life to show them you care. We can all educate ourselves on some of the warning signs of suicide.

The VA has tools to help including training videos and a toolkit to learn the signs of danger on social media. A host of help is available at [mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/resources.asp](http://mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/resources.asp).

But like most major social problems, government is not the solution. It will take all of us exercising discernment and love to cut down these frightening numbers.

We need to take care of our brothers and sisters.

## Thank you

I want to thank the DEC and the entire Department of Minnesota American Legion Family members for your generosity, the many cards, phone calls, visits and prayers during my recent medical issues. Your prayers saved my life, and for that I am grateful to the entire American Legion Family. It has been a tough three months for my wife Mary and family. I am getting better and I look forward to seeing all of you in the near future at upcoming events and rallies.

Thank You Again,  
**Lane and Mary Stunkel  
St. Paul**

**Chaplain's  
Corner****By  
Betty Jass**

Some of the most quoted words we hear come from the Book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 1-8:

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

A time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace."

You may remember these words in a song by Pete Seeger in the late 50s. The song "Turn, Turn, Turn" was later recorded by the Byrds, and it was often used during important changes in our lives. Some are happy times, others sad; some are productive while others seem wasteful; some inspire peace and others bring pain.

All of them are necessary for us to learn, grow, and evolve as spiritual beings. Their appearance is not by accident. If we look close enough, each experience can teach us to trust and requires our undivided time and attention for successful passage.

Some are easy to identify: the spring moments of new beginnings; the summer moments of easy, carefree living; and the autumn moments of bountiful harvest. Others, not so easy to identify, such as the transitional storms that often usher in a new season, the oppressive heat of summer, or the bitter cold of winter. During these times God requires us to look beyond the appearances and peer much deeper for their significance.

Reaping a harvest may be preferred over the preparing, planting, and tending a crop or garden, but we cannot enjoy one without the other. Sometimes we must modify the old ways of thinking and consider new ways to fully experience the next seasons of our lives. Nothing in life is static for very long. Time is the process of life as we "grow and go." As soon as we grow to the next higher level in our evolutionary, it is time to go to the next level

If we remember that in every season of life—we learn to trust that loving, divine purpose behind it. Then the current of life can carry us off to new adventures, more rewarding and more exciting experiences than we thought could happen in our lives.

# The Minnesota Legionnaire

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

**Al Zdon, Editor**

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

# What's Happening

## Legal Clinics, Stand Down

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will sponsor two legal clinics and a Stand Down for veterans.

The legal clinics are open to low-income veterans and feature counsel on housing, employment, benefits, debt collection and family law. The clinics include:

— VA Medical Center, Minneapolis, Tuesday, Oct. 8, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room.

— St. Cloud VA Medical Center, Tuesday, Oct. 15, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Auditorium in Building 8.

The Stand Down for veterans will be held Saturday, Oct. 26, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a welcoming ceremony at 11:30 a.m. It will be held at the Mankato Civic Center and will feature free meals, VA benefits, clothing, housing, haircuts, employment assistance and legal assistance. It is a kid-friendly event.

## Round Tables

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will be held Monday, Oct. 28, with the subject "Chickamauga, Sept. 19-20, 1863" with speaker Kevin Hampton. These are dinner programs at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater. There's a social period at 5:30, dinner at 6, and the program at 7 p.m. Reservations can be made through Steve Anderson by calling 715-386-1268.

The World War II History Round Table will be held at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. The program will be "Diplomacy for the Atomic Bomb" with author Philip Padgett. It will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. The program is free, but parking is \$6. A second program slated for October has been canceled.

The Vietnam War Roundtable will be held Oct. 21, at 7 p.m. and the subject will be Medevac pilots. It will be held at Concordia University in St. Paul and admission is free. Several pilots and medical staff will discuss their work

between the battlefield and the hospitals.

## Rummage Sale

Deer Creek Unit 283 will hold a rummage and bake sale on Oct. 10-11 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Deer Creek Community Center. Donations will be accepted Oct. 8-9 at the center.

## New Historical Exhibit

The Minnesota Historical Society will open a new exhibit on Dec. 7 titled "Our Home, Native Minnesota." It will highlight the resiliency and strength of the native nations in Minnesota. The exhibit will open with a free family day on Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. featuring music, hoop dancing, and traditional games. The Minnesota History Museum is located in downtown St. Paul.

## Bingo

Money will be raised for a New Prague Veterans Memorial with a bingo fundraiser on Sunday, Oct. 27, with doors open at noon and bingo beginning at 1:30 p.m. It will be held at the New Prague Park Ballroom. Thirteen games will have prizes of \$150 cash or more plus there will be other prizes such as a big screen TV, Roomba or cooler. The overall prize will be \$1,000. Admission is \$35 per person for 14 games.

## Hellenic Anniversary

Minneapolis Hellenic Post 129 will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Saturday, Nov. 9, at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church in south Minneapolis. Social hour and hors d'oeuvres will begin at 5:30 p.m. with the grand banquet dinner at 6:30. All are welcome. Tickets are \$20. For

more information, email nkootsikas@gmail.com or lindan-njoe@comcast.net. Post memorabilia will be on display.

## Apple Valley Event

The annual Apple Valley Auxiliary Craft/Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, Oct. 26, at the post from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be a variety of vendors. For more information call Marlene at 651-423-2493.

## Willmar dinner

All veterans in the Willmar area are invited to the annual Veteran's Day Dinner at the post home. It will feature locally-grown turkey and wild game. It was served from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 11. For more information, call 320-235-0342.

## Retirement Party

A retirement party for Al Zdon, the Legionnaire editor, will be held Friday, Nov. 15, at Anoka Post 102.

The cost is \$30 per person. The dinner will be a buffet of pulled pork and brisket, buns, garlic mashed potatoes, green beans almondine, garden salad and dessert.

There will be complimentary beer and soda until gone. There will be social hour from 5-6 with the dinner and program to follow.

Nearby motels are the Country Inn and Suites, Coon Rapids, 763-780-3797 and the AmericInn, Coon Rapids, 763-323-0010.

Checks should be payable to The American Legion and sent to: Attn: Jennifer Kelley, The American Legion, 20 West 12th Street, Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155. Tickets should be reserved by Nov. 1.

Please indicate number of tickets at \$30 and your name.

# Taps

**Lucking, Ritha Mae**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 29, 2019. She was Third District Commander from 1982-83. She served as District Adjutant 11 times. She was a Department Vice Commander in 1991-92. She was a member of Rosemount Post 65.

**Altermatt, Harold C.**, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 16, 2019. He served on the hospital ship USS Hope in the Pacific. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Anderson, Norris I.**, 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 21, 2019. He was in the infantry. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Arsers, John A.**, 93, Merchant Marine veteran of World War II, died Sept. 18, 2019. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

**Ausen, Charles**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 4, 2019. He was a pharmacist's mate third class. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Bach, William Neil**, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 21, 2019. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

**Barrett, Roland Lewis**, 87, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 12, 2019. He was a member of Elgin Post 573.

**Beyer, Herbert Oscar**, 98, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 14, 2019. He was one of 92 survivors on the USS Leary which was sunk in 1943. He was a past commander of Dumont Post 591 and a member of Graceville Post 297.

**Boggs, Larry**, 81, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 6, 2019. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

**Bohlback, Delores Marie**, 89, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 17, 2019. She was a member of Austin Post 91.

**Boushey, Gerald**, 88, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 3, 2019. He was stationed in Korea. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Carney, John**, 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 5, 2019. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Diederich, William B.**, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 26, 2019. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

**Drenth, Gerald Arthur**, 72, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 23, 2019. He was a sergeant in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and earned an Army Commendation Medal for heroism. He was a member of Lismore Post 636.

**Effhauser, Louis**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 13, 2019. He served in the 187th Airborne in Korea. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Fox, Frederick**, 70, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 16, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Haas, Victor**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 15, 2019. He was a member of Princeton Post 216.

**Haines, John**, 84, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 14, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Hancock, Jerome**, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War,

died Aug. 28, 2019. He was in the Guard and Reserve for 16 years. He was a member of Windom Post 206.

**Hanson, Milton C.**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 7, 2019. He was a corporal in the 32nd Infantry in Korea and was awarded the Purple Heart. He was a member of Wayzata Post 118.

**Hinze, Ilo V.**, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 4, 2019. He was very active and a past commander of New Ulm Post 132.

**Holm, Wilfred, "Bob,"** 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 15, 2019. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

**Jacobs, Donald J.**, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 30, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Jewison, Donald**, 67, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 13, 2019. He was a member of Waseca Post 228.

**Kakos, Nicholas Thomas**, 94, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Sept. 16, 2019. He was active in American Legion Baseball and served as 5th District Director. He organized the Memorial Service at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis for many years. He was a past commander of Hellenic Post 129.

**Kiecker, Charles R.**, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 19, 2019. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

**Krueger, Gerald John**, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 30, 2019. He was lieutenant commander and fighter pilot stationed in England, North Africa, and many other air stations. He was a member of Osseo Post 172.

**Kruschke, Donald G.**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 16, 2019. He was a member of Princeton Post 216.

**Lane, Ronald S.**, 77, Army Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 13, 2019. He was a member of Spring Grove Post 249.

**Malecha, Roman Emil**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 10, 2019. He was a member of Waseca Post 228.

**Matros, George A, Sr.**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 17, 2019. He belonged to Little Falls Post 46.

**Meyer, Rueben**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 12, 2019. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

**Milan, Leon A.**, 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 15, 2019. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

**Morsching, Sylvester**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 12, 2019. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

**Mott, Francis**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 18, 2019. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

**Mullenbach, Leon, "Bud,"** 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 12, 2019. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

**Olson, Arnold Wayne**, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 30, 2019. He was a member of Windom Post 206

**Olson, Earl E.**, 95, Army veteran of World War II, died

Aug. 17, 2019. He landed on D-Day plus 16, fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and met the Russians in Berlin. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Olson, Raymond P.**, 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 31, 2019. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Otremba, Richard A.**, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 19, 2019. He served on the USS Siboney (CVE-112), an escort carrier. He was a member of Waite Park Post 428.

**Ponto, Ervin W.**, 69, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 19, 2019. He served in Vietnam. He was a member of Plainview Post 179.

**Radoush, Roger M.**, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 4, 2019. He was a member of Silver Lake Post 141.

**Romball, James Philip**, 74, Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 29, 2019. He earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

**Ruplinger, Robert L.**, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 7, 2019. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Schiro, Herbert**, 92, Navy and Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 14, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Schmidt, Laurence**, 72, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 22, 2019. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

**Schmidt, Sherman**, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 26, 2019. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

**Steuck, Edwin**, 89, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 16, 2019. He was an electrician's mate. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Sturtz, William R.**, 94, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Sept. 2, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Taylor, Duane R.**, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 30, 2019. He served on the USS Holmes County (LST-836.) He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Town, William M.**, 88, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 31, 2019. He was a past commander of Cass Lake Post 284.

**Urbanski, Lawrence E.**, 93, army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 14, 2019. He served in the Pacific with the 381st Infantry, 96th Division as a field telecommunications Specialist and rifleman. He was wounded at Okinawa and received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

**Warnke, Ronald**, 70, Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 7, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

### Correction

**Hermes, Ralph Anthony**, 89, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died July 8, 2019. He was a past commander, member of the honor guard and Minnesota Rifle Squad member at Monticello Post 260.

## American Legion Riders

By Paul Hassing  
Department Director



Hello American Legion Family:

Thank you so much for the privilege of serving as your Rider's Director. I know that there are big shoes to fill, but with your help and support, we will have a great year.

When you see Chuck Stone, thank him for everything he has done for the last three years.

We had a great time at our Rider's ROMP in September. It was great to see everyone there having a good time. We use that time to get to know one another, and to see how other chapters and districts do things. New ideas are always good. Thank you Peggy Moon for conducting the installation.

There was also a lot of work done at the ROMP. The riders were able to get the benches set up, and three new deer stands were placed (thank you Austin Legion Riders for the awesome job that was done on those), trails were cleaned up, and a lot of dead and hazardous trees were cut down and removed. We estimated over 180 person hours were put in over the weekend on various projects. It is a great example of the entire Legion family coming together for a common goal.

In the next year, I look forward to hearing about all of the things the Riders do. I know the Legacy run gets a lot of recognition (as it should), but we also do so much more. I would like to hear from all of the chapters. Let us know what you are doing.

We will be sending out a Riders chapter report questionnaire. It will only be five questions, but it will help us get the word out about all of the things we accomplish during the year.

Lastly, I would like to thank Steve "Sully" Sullivan. If I wouldn't have run into him at a fall conference so many years ago, I wouldn't have this opportunity.

Here's to keeping the storms in the rearview mirror.

## New director named at St. Cloud VA HCS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the appointment of Brent A. Thelen as the new director of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System.

"Dr. Thelen possesses sound leadership qualities and proven experience," said Mr. Robert McDivitt, VA Midwest Health Care Network Director. "I am certain he will be an asset to our VISN, our employees and volunteers, our health care partners, the community, and importantly, for the Veterans we are honored to serve."

Thelen has been with the Department of Veterans Affairs for over 16 years. He currently serves as the Director, Quality Management Systems/ISO Consultant Division (QCD-ICD) in Washington D.C.

Thelen holds a PhD in Engineering/Industrial Management from Columbia University, Master of Science in Business Administration from Central Michigan University and a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology from Southern Illinois University.

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System is headquartered at the St. Cloud VAMC in St. Cloud. VA Clinics are located in Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo, Minnesota. Services are delivered through outpatient clinics. The HCS provides primary and subspecialty medical, urgent, specialty and mental health care; acute psychiatry services; and extended care and rehabilitation services. The HCS also

provides a number of special emphasis services including residential and outpatient mental health and substance abuse programs, a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) treatment program, a Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program, outpatient programming for serious mental illness, homeless Veterans programs, a suicide prevention program, a Post 9/11 Transition and Care Management program, a Women Veterans program, an Incarcerated Veteran Program, and a Veterans Justice Outreach Program.

Extended Care and Rehabilitation services include Home-Based Primary Care, Adult Day Health Care, Memory Care, Hospice Care, Short Stay and Nursing Home Care, including ventilator care.



DR. BRENT THELEN

## Legion Membership Chart as of Sept. 24

District	2020 Goal	Total 2019	Total 2020	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,149	8,091	5,065	224	58	1	62.15%	4,961
District 2	6,497	6,413	4,142	215	84	1	63.75%	4,300
District 3	11,021	10,956	7,157	175	65	1	64.94%	7,236
District 4	2,136	2,118	1,403	60	18	0	65.68%	1509
District 5	2,346	2,325	1,295	20	22	0	55.20%	1446
District 6	10,891	10,820	6,868	275	71	3	63.06%	7,259
District 7	5,778	5,702	3,762	139	76	2	65.11%	3,816
District 8	3,788	3,748	2,305	96	40	0	60.85%	2,363
District 9	6,124	6,059	3,759	148	65	4	61.38%	3,899
District 10	9,108	9,054	5,666	263	54	0	62.21%	5,878
District 11	3,655	1,897	1,119	43	2	0	30.62%	1148
<b>Totals</b>	<b>69,493</b>	<b>67,183</b>	<b>42,541</b>	<b>1,658</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>61.22%</b>	<b>43,815</b>

Same Date  
Last Year

# Minnesota Sons of the American Legion News

## Sons of The American Legion

By Dave Vulcan  
Detachment Commander



Hello from the Sons of The American Legion. It has been a very busy month as we all traveled to Indianapolis for the National American Legion family convention. A lot went on at the convention. The one thing that I think I should tell everybody about was the Sons of The American Legion voted to increase dues at the National level from \$2 to \$5. It seems like a lot of money but if you look at that we have not had a dues increase at National level for 30 some years. I feel that the organization will be stronger overall to be able to help support our organization at the National level.

Just two weeks after national we all traveled to Brainerd Minnesota to Legionville School Patrol Camp for Camporee and Fall Harvest Rally. A lot got done for the camp and it was very well attended. I would like to say thank you to Commander Mark, President Mary, Honorary Junior President Emily, and State Director Chuck for attending the rally on Saturday. We all had a very good time standing and watching the Forest Lake Legion do a flag retirement ceremony before the rally started. I've only ever seen this done once before. It brought tears to my eyes to see all the Legion family standing there for this event. I also would like to say a big thank you to the Camporee Committee from the Sons of The American Legion and the other volunteers that worked so hard to put that event on, and get so much done at the camp.

The very next week, I traveled back to Brainerd to take part in the Minnesota American Legion Riders Romp at Legionville School Patrol Camp. I also would like to say thank you to all the Legion Riders that helped work on the trails and put out some new deer stands for the John Zgoda Memorial SAL Disabled Veteran Deer Hunt. Thanks. A big



Volunteers move logs to clear the trails for the John Zgoda Deer Hunt at Legionville Camp.

Cdr. Dave Vulcan: [dhvulcan@gmail.com](mailto:dhvulcan@gmail.com)  
Adjutant Dennis Henkemeyer: [dennish56621@hotmail.com](mailto:dennish56621@hotmail.com)  
Website: [www.mnsal.org](http://www.mnsal.org)

thank-you goes out to APR Chapter 91 of Austin for donating three new deer stands. Until next month, thank you to all for your hard work



The Legion leadership gathered at Legionville for the Camp-O-Ree and the Harvest Rally. From left: Riders' Director Paul Hassing, Auxiliary President Mary Hendrickson, SAL Commander Dave Vulcan, Honorary Junior President Emily Suess and Commander Mark Dvorak.

### September 11, 2019 Membership Report

District	2019 Goal	Total 2018	Total 2019	Week's Gain	Total Squads	% Of Goal	
District 1	1,849	1,808	230	41	19.36%	245	
District 2	1,376	1,342	102	78	7.41%	85	
District 3	1,999	1,963	490	229	24.51%	169	
District 4	411	404	68	66	16.55%	98	
District 5	403	396	53	49	13.15%	11	
District 6	1,525	1,492	284	213	18.62%	101	
District 7	1,054	1,033	84	29	7.97%	47	
District 8	564	548	54	44	9.57%	44	
District 9	839	821	144	88	17.16%	92	
District 10	1,691	1,657	143	66	34	8.46%	230
District 11	9	7	0	0	2	0.00%	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11,720</b>	<b>11,471</b>	<b>1,780</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>15.19%</b>	<b>1,122</b>

Same Date  
Last Year



Quilts of Valor presented quilts to honored Legion members.

# Harvest Rally at Legionville

The Harvest Rally was held at Legionville as part of the Camp-O-Ree experience, and sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion.

The Legion honored posts in each district for achieving the best percentage thus far. The membership directors and posts honored included:

Mary Fargen, Post 570; Duane Blake, Post 185; Timothy Sellner, Post 380; Jim Hassing, Post 406; Larry Anderson, Post 396; Donald Imberi, Post 443; Earl Pederson, Post 180; Omar St. Lawrence, Post 138; Ron Hendrickson, Post 31; Tenth District, no report.

Photos by Dennis DeLong



Auxiliary Chair Sharon Thiemecke looked on as Honorary Junior President Emily Suess spoke.



Commander Mark Dvorak had Justin Lightfoot explain one of his projects, the Wounded Warriors Guide Service.



Riders Director Paul Hassing brought greetings as Membership Director Sy Fix looked on.



Commander Dvorak spoke to several district gatherings. Sixth District Commander Paul Edwards listened in.



Auxiliary leaders showed off their posters and how far their mining for members had progressed. From left: First District, Wanda Prescher; Second District, Raleen Tolzmann; Third District, Kim Carlander; Fifth District, Jill Davis; Sixth District, Bev Grose; 8th District, Jennifer Havlick; Ninth District, Jan McDonald; 10th District, Betty Brown.



Adjutant Randy Tesdahl provided some musical entertainment prior to the rally.

# 'TRAINED IN CANADA

By Al Zdon

**B**oyd Sorenson started life as farmer, and retired 84 years later as a farmer.

In between, he flew 152 combat missions for the United States in two wars.

He learned how to fly by joining the Royal Canadian Air Force.

He and his family lived through the Great Depression.

And he once gave a lift to Mickey Rooney along the Korean front lines.

**B**oyd W. Sorenson was born on the Minnesota/South Dakota border near Pipestone in 1922.

"We had a typical farm. We had cows and hogs and chickens. We raised crops for the cows mainly, corn, oats and barley. We had no running water, but we had a windmill so the water came into the house in pails.

"I remember the straw piles. They stood about 10 feet high and we used the straw for the cows. But the hogs would get into them to have their little ones. And in the winter, the pheasants would sit on top of them because they knew nobody would shoot at them."

His education was at a country school house about a mile and a half away. At some point in his early educational career, his mother signed him up for piano lessons with a neighbor who lived a half mile in the other direction. "That made for a pretty long walk every day."

The school was taught by those who had just graduated from high school and had taken an additional class on teaching. "They didn't make much money, and they often lived at the farm home of families who had kids in the school."

His teen years were during the 1930s. "I remember bad weather, a bad deal, and a big depression. But families helped families. I know there was a lot of moving around as the farms failed.

"For a few years, we did everything by hand. We butchered our own cows and chickens. There were two really tough years I remember and then it got a little bit better."

High School was at Pipestone, and Sorenson played track, football and basketball. In the summers he would work for neighboring farmers. "And there were always chores: Milk the cows by hand, feed the chickens, bring in the water. In 1937, REA (Rural Electrical Association) came in and then we had running water."

After high school, Sorenson attended Mankato State Teachers College for a year. "I enjoyed playing football, but after the football season I got a little lax on going to class. Finally the Dean of Men called me in and said if I didn't attend every class the rest of the year, there would be no football next year. That got my attention."

He washed dishes and scrubbed floors at a Mankato restaurant, working three hours a day and getting no money but three meals. It was a good arrangement until he was fired for missing work when he was caught at his parent's home during the Armistice Day Storm in 1940. "I didn't get back to Mankato until Wednesday. My boss got caught in the storm and didn't get back to town until Friday, but when he found out I had missed those days, he fired me on the spot."

He got a job at another restaurant working two hours a day for two meals.

**A**s he finished his year at college in 1941, he got a letter from his brother saying he should come out to California because there were plenty of jobs. "So I hitchhiked out to California. The first place I applied at hired me."

It was a can company in Los Angeles, and it was

Sorenson's job to glue the tops and bottoms on the cans.

He met some friends, including one who was a stunt man in Hollywood, and the friends were taking flying lessons. "I met the instructor, and he took me up a couple of times. I'd never been in an airplane and it was fun."

Someone heard that the Canadian government was recruiting pilots and the four of them, the three young men and the instructor, decided flying military planes was their destiny. Canada and England had been in World War II for two years, and pilots were needed.

The Canadian recruiting station was at the legendary Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. "The problem was that my friends we all 21 and didn't need permission to join the Canadian Air Force. I had just turned 19, and I did."

The four of them drove north. "There were no motels in those days, but people would just take you in and you slept in their living room or whatever."

They ended up in British Columbia. "I wrote my folks asking for permission to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, and they wouldn't do it. So I just hung around for a couple of weeks while my friends started school."

One night, he was out with some locals. "They decided they could work with my birth certificate and make it say I was 21. And you know what, it worked just fine."

He signed up and the Canadians sent him to the University of Edmonton for three months. But in December, Pearl Harbor happened, and now the United States was in the war.

"Word got around that all Americans should go down to Calgary and sign up for the U.S. Army Air Corps. So some of us drove down, but I celebrated a little too much the night before. In the morning I took my physical, and I flunked because my blood pressure was too high."

So it was back to the RCAF and flight school. The school was located at the High River airport in Alberta, and

*Boyd Sorenson wanted to get into the war in 1941 and so he traveled north to Canada to train in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Before he could fly a mission for Canada, he transferred to the U.S. Army Air Corps. Sorenson flew 152 combat missions for the United States in two wars.*



the trainees flew Tiger Moths, an English bi-plane that was the primary trainer for the Canadians.

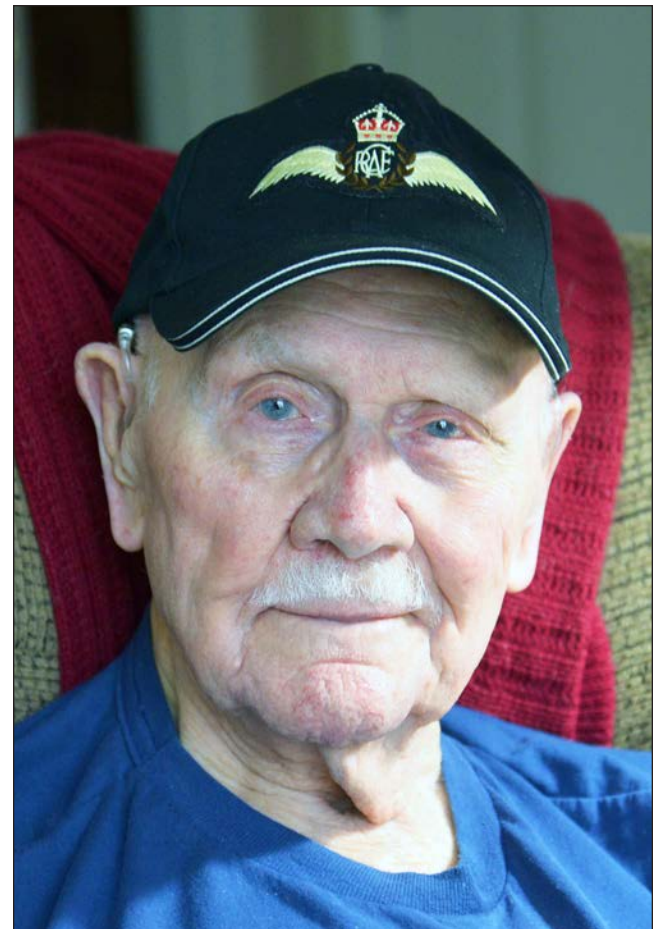
Sorenson was eager to learn to fly, but there was one problem. His instructor hated Americans with a passion. "He wanted to wash me out right away, but I tried not to pay much attention to that. But the other students, who were Canadian, were flying every day, and I was only flying every other day or so. I was getting behind."

On one training session, the instructor told Sorenson to take off, something he hadn't done before. "I was a little



**BOYD SORENSON**

In training with the Royal Canadian Air Force



**BOYD SORENSON**

At home in Waite Park

erratic, and he was barking at me, yelling at me, saying, 'If you can't do better, I'm going to whup your ass.'

"I replied, 'When we get on the ground, we'll see about that.'

"I made a half-assed, decent landing and he told me to park the airplane. After I parked it, he was nowhere around."

But evidently, the mid-air altercation had been reported, and Sorenson was called in to see the chief instructor. He was told that another instructor was short a student. "I said, 'That's fine if he wants to teach me to fly.'"

Sorenson finally soloed, but he was still behind his fellow students. "On the day we were to leave, I had to go up and fly for two hours to get in my required time. The bus was waiting for me."

After that, training went much better. Flying now was in the Harvard II, which was the British version of the A-6 Texan, the standard trainer for the U.S. Army Air Corps, or the SNJ, the Navy trainer. The training base was in Weyburn, Saskatchewan.

"I graduated above grade. In fact I ended up as the squadron leader. Half the students in my group were from Trinidad."

**S**orenson had over 200 hours of flight time when he got his wings and orders to England. To that point, he had been a "leading aircraftman" or a sergeant, and now he became a "pilot officer," the equivalent of a second lieutenant.

His transportation to the war was on the HMS Queen Elizabeth, the one-time luxury liner that had been converted to transporting troops. "I think there were 15,000 of us on board. I was in a small stateroom with 15 other guys. I had the top bunk, and my nose was just a few inches from a lightbulb. I threatened to take it down, but the guys needed light in the room. In the end, I was so tired I slept anyway."

The trip on the high-speed liner only took five days, and the new pilots were sent to a hotel in Bournemouth, along England's southern coast.

Lord Haw Haw was a German radio propagandist who tried to hurt the Allies' morale during the war. "The day we got to Bournemouth, Lord Haw Haw gave us a welcoming speech on the Radio. He said there would be another greeting for us soon.

"Later that day, the air raid siren went off, and I looked out my second floor window and saw three German Me-109s coming at us. I ducked behind the radiator in the room, but I don't know how much good that would have done."

Fortunately, the German attack did not cause any casualties, but two days later the German fighters came again and riddled the hotel with bullets. "The English got us out of there and put us in a private home."

The new pilots were not assigned yet, but could fly their old friends the Tiger Moths at a local airport for practice. "It was something for us to do."

Next stop was Wales, where they began training on a British fighter, the Hawker Hurricane. The new base was something of a culture shock for the Americans.

"I was surprised. Nearly all the work at the base was done by women. The men were off fighting, and the women took over the other jobs.

"I had a private room, and the women brought warm water every morning. They pressed our clothes, and shined our shoes. All the meals were prepared by the women and girls. They drove us out to the airport. And they pulled the planes out so we could fly them."

Sorenson took an immediate liking to the Hurricane. "I loved that plane. It was so easy to fly."

It was now the beginning of 1943, and once the new pilots were checked out on the Hurricane, they waited expectantly for their orders. When the orders came, it was a major letdown. Instead of joining the fighting in Europe, they were all sent to Burma.

"All the pilots got a week off before shipping out. The English went home to their families, and the Canadians all seemed to have somewhere to go. I just went down to London and stayed at a big hotel."

**W**hile drowning his sorrows one night at the hotel bar, he ran into two American majors who worked for the U.S. Headquarters in London. "I talked to them about my problems, how I really didn't want to go to Burma. So they said to me, 'Why don't you just transfer to the U.S. Army Air Forces?' I said it was kind of short notice to be doing something like that, and they said, 'Well, we'll take care of that.'"

And they did. The next day, Sorenson took his physical, resigned from the Canadian Royal Air Force, joined the Army Air Corps and went down and purchased U.S. Army officer uniforms.

Sorenson was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Air Corps and sent back to Wales for more training. His new plane was not anything like the sleek Hurricane. It was the P-47 Thunderbolt.

The Thunderbolt was a heavily armored American fighter that was called "The Jug," by pilots, because its profile was much like a milk jug. "It was an odd looking plane. But it was a lot of airplane, and it had a lot of protection for the pilot."

He joined the 78th Fighter Group, 83rd Fighter Squadron which was based out of Duxford, a major air base



As a squadron leader while training in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Sorenson is in the middle, in back.



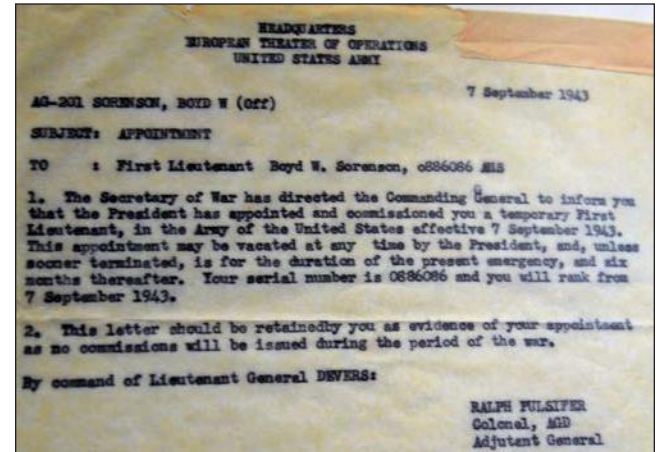
Sorenson poses in front of the 50 caliber machine guns on his P-47 Thunderbolt.



Sorenson and his friend Lt. Peel. Peel disappeared on a flight and many suspected it was a suicide.



Sorenson accepting his Air Medal.



How do you transfer from the Canadian Air Force to the U.S. Air Corps in one day? This memo shows how fast paperwork can be done if necessary.



The 73rd Fighter Squadron posed in front of a Thunderbolt at Duxford, England, in 1944.

just south of Cambridge.

"We were practicing low flying when the engine quit. I managed to level off the aircraft and tried to switch fuel tanks, but that didn't work."

The P-47 narrowly missed several trees as Sorenson tried to maneuver a landing without landing gear. "I finally crashed into a tree that was about eight inches wide. If it had been much bigger, it probably would have killed me.

"But the tree was on my canopy and I couldn't get the canopy open. I was worried about a fire. But some local people came and pulled the tree away."

In any crash, Army pilots had to appear before a board, and Sorenson was called to Blackpool. While he was waiting, he was assigned to the local airport to fly the English Lysander, towing targets for other pilots to shoot at.

The Army board concluded that Sorenson was not at fault, and he went back to Wales for more training.

He flew his first mission in January 1944 — a fighter sweep over German-occupied France. The schedule after that, leading up to D-Day in June, was hectic.

"Sometimes we flew three times a day, and then we'd go four days or so without flying at all."

**A**t age 97, Sorenson can recall many of those missions clearly.

"One time I was the wingman for the leader, a pilot named Barnaby. It's a wingman's job to stay with the leader no matter what. Barnaby was about to engage with a German fighter when the German pilot dropped his landing gear and throttled back.

"That was kind of a signal of surrender, and Barnaby wouldn't go after him. I didn't know what to do. But a wingman stays with his leader, and that's what I did."

Later, Sorenson was brought before a board to give testimony on the incident. "They asked me about it, and they wanted to know if he should be given a kill. I told them it wasn't up to me. In the end, they gave Barnaby a kill, but then they assigned him to headquarters and he never flew again."

Sorenson said there were bullet holes in his Thunderbolt after several missions, but the most frightening experience he had was on a mission that never made it to the target.

"It was a maximum effort to Berlin. We had a lot of aircraft. We flew on through this light brown haze at about 10,000 feet. We had to fly close together because it was hard to see the other planes.

"Then they gave the order to abort the mission, and the whole air force had to turn at the same time in that haze. I was never so scared in my life. You just couldn't see the airplanes around you and we were all turning.

"We lost some airplanes that day."

What troubled him the most as the squadron flew mission after mission was when one of his fellow pilots, often a friend, got shot down. "I remember one pilot I knew, he had kind of a high pitched voice, he was on the radio screaming. You could hear the glass breaking in his canopy over the radio. He was just hollering. To hear him get shot down was almost more than I could take."

On another mission, the squadron went through a dense group of black clouds and the P-47s began to ice up. "All you could see was the wing tip of the plane next to you. All of a sudden I was so iced up that I went into a spin. I was just going round and round, and there wasn't much I could do. I was so iced up my engine was quitting. At 2,000 feet, I descended into some warm air.

"The ice just broke loose. I could feel the jolt as the ice fell off. The plane jumped. And then my engine came back to life, and I could control the airplane again."

Sorenson often flew as the last plane in the formation, one of the most vulnerable positions. "I don't know if someone didn't like me, or maybe they thought I was a good pilot and could handle myself.

"One day I was in the ass-end Charlie position when I saw there was a white puff by my plane. It finally dawned on me that that there was a German behind me and he was shooting at me. I slowed down, and all of sudden he was next to me. I looked at him and he looked at me.

"Then, bang, the cable to my elevators snapped. The German must have hit me. I pulled the stick right into my belly with all the force I had, but I was still going into a spin. I got my knees up for the stick and got my hands free to pull back on the throttle and level off.

"I was going awfully slow, and I wondered if I could get all the way back to Duxford like this. I had my canopy back, and I was ready to jump if anything else happened."

He managed to muscle the Thunderbolt all the way back to England. "My legs and my hands were asleep. I had no feeling in them. To this day, I have a slight tremor in my right hand from that. But I made an emergency landing and taxied up to the tower.

"There were little holes in the plane from the machine gun fire and bigger holes from the 20 millimeter cannon. I was so nervous and exhausted, I pulled out a cigarette, lit it, threw the cigarette away and tried to smoke the match."

Sorenson was running out of missions, and he was relieved from flying combat for a time so he would be available for the invasion of France. His lone air kill came on D-Day on a flight near Vienna.

"We had to fly at 17,000 feet to stay above the clouds, and then we spotted two German fighters who were flying

just below the cloud tops. The one on the right tipped over, and then the one on the left started to dive. I took off for the one on the left. I didn't shoot at it as we went down, I just tried to stay with him.

"Visibility was not too good, but then we got below the clouds and he made a big turn. I had a great shot at him, but I missed him. But I had a pretty good angle on him and I shot again. And I missed him again. And then I missed him again. I had the same shot three times, and I missed him every time.

"But now we were very close to the ground, and he just bailed out. But his chute never opened. I had it on my gun camera, him hitting the ground."

Later, near Koblenz, Sorenson was leading a mission and his group destroyed 20 German Junkers 188s on the ground. Sorenson got credit for three of the kills.

It was during this time that he lost a good friend. "His name was Lt. Peel, and they had sent him home to get married. When he got back he wasn't ready to fly anymore. He was drinking heavily and he threw himself out of a second story window, but he was so drunk, he didn't even hurt himself.

"But then a few days later, he disappeared into some clouds and he never came back. We all figured it was a suicide."

Sorenson who had told his stories calmly to this point in the interview, teared up and his voice broke as he recalled Lt. Peel. "He was a hell of a nice guy."

**A**fter D-Day, Boyd "volunteered" to do skip bombing, the bright idea of some American strategists. The Germans would hide their trains during the day in railroad tunnels, and the plan was to fly in low and skip the bombs into the tunnel.

"The problem was that if you came in too low, the bomb would just bounce up and maybe hit the aircraft. If you released too high, it would just hit the mountain side. Either way it was very dangerous.

"I was the last guy in the formation, and I watched how they released their bombs, too low or too high. I thought I had it figured out by the time it was my turn."

Did he skip his bomb into the tunnel? "I don't know, I was the last guy. I couldn't see it and nobody else could. We did skip bombing one more time, and then they called it off entirely."

Sorenson said there was a premium at one point in 1944 to blow up the locomotives on enemy trains, but the practice was halted. "We were killing too many Frenchmen."

By this time Sorenson had over 300 combat hours and 89 missions. He was finally taken off the line.

"They had me talking to new B-17 crews that were coming in, giving them a first-hand account of what they were in for. I did two crews in the morning and two in the afternoon."

An old P-47 was put at his disposal so he could still get his flight time in. "They had removed all the armor and plating, and you know what, it was a beautiful plane to fly."

At one point, he even got to be a co-pilot on a B-17, a huge four-engined bomber.

On one flight taking off from Ireland, an engine quit and the crew was barely able to get the plane stopped before it ran out of runway. The tires were shredded from the emergency stop. "We had two nurses on board, and I remember one of them jumping out of the plane and she was talking a mile a minute. I looked at her and she was peeing at the same time. They weren't there the next day."

His next job was to help form a unit of officers and men that would take over German airports as they were captured by the advancing Allied troops. "But the Battle of the Bulge put an end to that. There were no captured airports."

**I**n December, 1944, Sorenson was sent home and spent time in Arizona, California and Texas. Just before the war ended, the Army announced its points system for getting out, and Sorenson had plenty of points.

He went back to Pipestone and ran his own flight school for a time. The local people wanted an armory in Pipestone, but they had to have an officer in charge. Suddenly Sorenson was an officer in the National Guard infantry.

When the Korean War broke out, Sorenson was called up and given orders to Germany. At the time his wife, Phyllis, was pregnant. "My mother-in-law was incensed that they would send me away when my wife was pregnant."

"She said I should do something about it. I told her that even if they did keep me at home, as soon as the baby was born, they'd send me to Korea."

In this case, he was a prophet. The Army allowed him to stay home, and the week the baby was born, he was off to Korea.

By this time, the war had stalemated along a static line in much of Korea. Sorenson's job was to fly a small plane, the Cessna L-19, over enemy lines. He was in the 5th Regimental Combat Team and later flew for the 25th Division.

Sometimes the mission was having another soldier in the back who threw out surrender leaflets to the enemy. Otherwise it was spotting for artillery.

Did the enemy take pot shots at him? "Oh, yeah, all the time. But what bothered me was that our own guys would shoot at us too. I don't know what they were thinking. They would even hit us once in a while."



Boyd and Phyllis were married during the war.



Sorenson doffs his cap near the Punch Bowl in Korea.



Sorenson gets ready to climb into his Cessna L-19 to do a leaflet mission over enemy lines in Korea.



Sorenson in England during World War II.

Probably his most memorable mission was to fly the actor Mickey Rooney from one spot along the line to another so he could do a USO show. "He was all business. He just got in the plane, got strapped down, and didn't say a word to any of us."

Back home, Sorenson ended his military career. He had flown 152 missions, earned an Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters in Europe and two more clusters in Korea. He had served his country in two wars.

He went back into farming, and Phyllis worked at the National Monument in Pipestone. They had four children.

Sorenson lives in an apartment in Waite Park.

# Listening Post

# News from around the State



**SECOND DISTRICT PICNIC** — The Second District held its annual family picnic and invited the residents and staff of the Luverne Veterans Home. The event was held at the East Side Acres near Round Lake. The picnickers enjoyed pontoon rides.



**BACKUS INSTALLATION** — The Backus Auxiliary Unit 368 installed new officers.



**FALLDIN HONORS** — Minneapolis Falldin Post sponsored Charles Astedt as a guardian for his father on an Honor Flight this year. George Astedt, right, is a World War II and Korean War veteran.



**QUILTS OF VALOR** — The Quilts of Valor group recently presented a quilt to John Henkemeyer, a World War II Navy veteran. Presenting were Paul Evenson and Linda Novotny.



**EDEN VALLEY FLOAT** — Eden Valley Post 381 had a 100th anniversary float in the Valley Daze Parade.

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# Listening Post

## News from around the State



**FAIRMONT HONORS** — Fairmont Post 36 honored longtime members with plaques. From left: Commander Steve Fosness, C.V. Smith, Ellis Saxton, Richard B. Johnson, Second District Commander Cindy Brunk.



**PARTNERSHIP** — The American Legion, through its Rehabilitation Committee, partnered with the Hopkins Elks to help a veteran secure and furnish a place to live. Above is a sample kit household presented to a veteran.



**EAGAN LEADS THE WAY** — The award winning color guard from Eagan Post 594 leads the way in the Eagan 4th of July parade.



**MILLERVILLE HONOR** — Commander Jim Otto presented a membership award to Dennis Otto for 50 years of service.



**DULUTH DEDICATION** — The City of Duluth recently dedicated a new memorial to World War I veterans.



**SAVAGE SCHOLARSHIPS** — Savage Post 643 presented nine \$1,000 scholarships to graduates from the area. The recipients also were entertained at a banquet.



**NEW WORLD WAR I PLAQUE** — Gov. Tim Walz signed into a law a bill that will create a new plaque for the Court of Honor at the Capital. Attending were veterans from across the state including Commander Mark Dvorak, second from left.



**RIDERS AT RALLY** — The Minnesota American Legion Riders turned out at the Harvest Rally at Legionville to help support the safety patrol camp.

# District Commanders

## FIRST DISTRICT

Dale Wellik  
Commander



Greetings from the First District American legion family.

The national convention is now in the history book. What a great gathering of American Legion family members throughout the whole 55 departments.

The Legionville Camp-O-Ree is also now behind us. A wonderful place to have a big gathering for fun, food, fundraising, work, camaraderie and a rally. The dorms bring back memories of staying in open bay barracks.

Things are getting busy. Fall rallies, membership dinners, school programs and soon Veteran day programs are coming.

Membership-the Legion Act has opened up eligibility for many: Legion, Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and the Legion Riders.

Anyone with questions or comments bring them forward. That may be what gets someone to join or become active.

Get speakers to come to rallies, talk about forms of communication, email, Facebook, Twitter, Newsletter.

Talk about the four pillars, the foundation of The American legion, the programs of The American Legion.

Pray for our deployed around the world that are helping keep peace. Help the families of the deployed.

Veterans, thank you for your service, Families: thank you for your support.

## THIRD DISTRICT

Linda Dvorak  
Commander



Hello Fellow Legionnaires.

The Third District just finished up its first rally (Family Gathering) of the year. We played Legion Jeopardy, which was a very good learning experience.

As of the last bulletin, the Third District is in 1st place in membership. Keep working the 1982 lists that were provided at Packet Pick-up, also print new lists as they can change. One of the Commanders in the Third District has started calling 2-3 members of his post per week, some that have not renewed and some that have renewed, just to keep the contact with the members of his post. This is a great idea, hopefully other posts will do the same.

Several posts are having anniversary dinners or parties this fall, this is a great way to get the Legion name into the community and tell our story. Not only is the Legion 100 years old, but the Auxiliary will be 100 on November 10, 2019. Not many organizations can boast this milestone, so keep telling our story.

## FOURTH DISTRICT

Joe Jansen  
Commander



Fellow Legion members,

I was able to go up to the Legionville Camp-O-Ree this past weekend. If any of you have never attended one please consider doing so next fall. It was great to see all of the members of the legion family organizations present checks and cash to Wayne Gilbertson. He is the President of the Board for the Camp.

Please ask any of the veterans you know who are now able to join The American Legion to your post for a meeting. That way they can see what you do for your fellow veterans and the community.

My two projects for the year are Legionville and the Armed Forces Service Center. (AFSC) I am asking each post to sponsor one child or grandchild for a week stay at Legionville. For the AFSC I am asking each post commander to talk with your members about becoming a volunteer at The Center. If each post could get one person to volunteer that would be great. If you have any questions about the Legion Act, Legionville, or the AFSC, please see your Post Commander.

## FIFTH DISTRICT

Andrew Rose Sr.  
Commander



The 5th District is pleased and utmost proud to welcome a new Post, Patrick M. Novack Post 5222 into its ranks, with Teresa Huberty as its Commander.

Their work which included a successful fundraiser, and

donations to the Veterans Home shows that they will be a welcome addition to the District. She and the new Comrades can be welcomed at tmhuberty@gmail.com.

We finished last at the Legionville rally, but Membership Director Wade Larson along with the 5th District will rectify this short-term condition. We are now gearing up for our revitalization program(s).

We now have to say goodbye to our friend and long time Comrade Nick Kakos, who passed away on September 16th.

Those of you who knew him, remember him for his work with Legion baseball and his leadership at the Minneapolis Veterans Home and Memorial Day programs, that he was so proud of. I haven't touched on many of the works, Nick has done but I will say, Life Well Done, TWO.

Don't forget to visit the hospitals, nursing homes and those convalescing at home.

## SIXTH DISTRICT

Paul Edwards  
Commander



Greetings to the Sixth District Family,

Several good things came out of the National Convention. The details have been reported in other places, so here are some highlights.

- The implementation of the LEGION Act.
- The change in the Auxiliary membership rules from "wives" to "spouses."
- Minnesota's ALR donations to the Legacy Scholarship fund tops one million dollars.

We have several new people on District staff: District Adjutant Susan Edwards. SGT at Arms Jim Lucas. Boy's State Chair Don Smith, ALR Liaison Officer Leslie Krufts. Thanks to all for stepping up.

Keep working on membership. I know that some folks look at membership numbers and goals as just a play to get more money for National's coffers. I can understand that feeling, but I know that it takes money and people to do what we do. It takes people to welcome Veterans to our Post homes, to stand honor guard for a Veteran's funeral, to teach children about flag etiquette, to talk to people about The American Legion programs. Sometimes, it takes people to serve breakfast, wash dishes or mow the lawn. The more members we have, the more likely Congress will listen when we talk about Veteran's concerns.

Last item for this month: As District Commander, I receive the National Security reports. In every report, a list is included of the number of remains that have been identified and repatriated. I encourage Commanders and Chaplains to add to the POW-MIA ceremony a moment of thanks to Our Creator for bringing these honored warriors home.

Have a great month. Be active. The Legion needs you.

## SEVENTH DISTRICT

Dean Knutson  
Commander



Our membership year is off to a good start and even though not all Districts were able to get off the Goose Egg, we need to strive to always work for the good of The American Legion. As we talk to potential new members, I have heard from numerous people that they feel that The American Legion talks membership issues too much and that some of them feel that we are forgetting their concerns, interests or what we can do to help rhythm in their everyday life. They may be dealing with health and need some guidance as far as who they can turn to or a hardship issue or educational. We always need to connect with whoever it is that we are talking and take their interests to heart and remember we are working together as The American Legion Family which involves not only the Legion but the Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion. I would like to take this time to say a very heartfelt Thank you to Adjutant Randy for his many years of service to The American Legion.

## EIGHTH DISTRICT

Anne Koskinen  
Commander



Greetings from your 8th District Commander. I apologize for not having a September posting, but there was a death in my family and I had to go to Florida. It was too hectic for me to post that column.

My email is: koskinen@earthlink.net

I encourage District, Posts, Adjutants or Commanders to contact me with their regular meeting schedule, and I will

try to attend the Post meetings that I am able. I also encourage our rank and file members to contact me with suggestions and comments about Legion and veteran issues. There are many things going on and up-coming. I'm sure the rank and file are interested and have some input.

The 8th and 10th Districts meeting is coming on the 19th of October at the Fridley Post. The Department Fall Conference is on the 24th to 26th of October in Mahanomen at the Shooting Star Casino. Legionnaires are encouraged to attend these events; greater attendance provides more context in discussions; contact me if needed for any details.

With the passage of the LEGION Act, members are encouraged to talk amongst your veteran friends to offer membership in the Legion now. We truly need these veterans to be among our ranks for their valuable insight.

## NINTH DISTRICT

Lowell Philp  
Commander



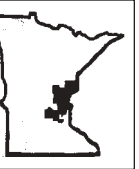
Membership is very important to our American Legion family. I am asking that everyone approach veterans as well as other family members. I urge all district commanders and membership directors to have the new applications available. The new application will have Legion Act across the front. They can be found on the website mylegion.org also. The legion is asking that we use these forms from now on.

There are many veterans that need our help. For example, those that are homeless, ones suffering from PTSD and physical illnesses. The VA has increased its availability and is able to see more patients. We need to be their eyes and ears.

I would like to see as many of you as possible at the Fall Conference in Mahanomen at the shooting Star Casino on October 25th & 26th.

## TENTH DISTRICT

Tom Allen  
Commander



Legion Family:

September is almost gone, time is flying by. Almost time to buy pumpkins.

Went to National in Indianapolis and had a good time. I learned a lot and ate a lot of good food.

I came home and headed for Legionville. We had steak dinner Thursday night put on by 1st District. Pig roast on Friday by 10th District. Saturday noon fish fry put on by 6th District. Saturday night dinner by SAL, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday breakfast by SAL. Thank you for all the good food. Too bad for those who didn't make it to Legionville this year. You missed a lot of fun and good food.

10th District had a gathering on Saturday at 1:00 pm and seven Quilts of Valor were handed out. I was one of them to receive the honor Quilt. All Department officers showed up and gave greetings. Thank you.

Veronica's husband Tom Fernlund showed up and announced he is running for Department Commander next year. Good luck Tom.

The following week October 25-26 is Fall Conference in Mahanomen, Shooting Star Casino. Until next time.

Honoring our veterans.

## National WWI memorial gets nod

The design for the new National World War I Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., received final approval on Thursday from the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA).

"This is a day that all who have worked hard to bring the National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C., from concept to reality are very happy to see," said Terry Hamby, chairman of the U.S World War One Centennial Commission. "This final approval takes us a giant step toward beginning the construction of this long-overdue tribute in our nation's capital to the 4.7 million Americans who served in America's armed forces in World War I."

The memorial design now goes for final review by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). With the CFA and NCPC design approvals in hand, the commission will coordinate with the National Park Service to finalize the construction permit so that work can begin this fall to restore Pershing Park and build the memorial.

The memorial is being built under the commission's authority by the Doughboy Foundation. In 2015, The American Legion passed a resolution supporting the memorial's construction.



# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 20-3

President Mary Hendrickson

October 2019

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

## The President's Column

By Mary Hendrickson



September proved to be a very busy, but fun-filled month. It began with three days spent at Legionville for the 50th annual Camp-O-Ree. Carl and I enjoyed "cabin life" and all the wonderful meals that were served up both in the main building and in the dining hall.

It was fun to talk to so many people one-to-one in a casual setting. It was a little disappointing to play thirty games of bingo and not win one. Carl and I have to admit we drove in to the Brainerd American Legion on Thursday night to watch the Twins play and see a little of the Packers vs. Bears football game.

Thank you to SAL Squadron Commander Dave Vulcan and his crew for organizing a very well run event.

The Harvest Rally on Saturday afternoon ran a little long, but had some special moments. Past Department President Dee Dee Buckley brought us some exciting membership news.

Many of you know Past Department Commander Mike Ash from St. Paul. He became the first "Quad" member in the Department of Minnesota. Quad is my name (not the official term which still hasn't been determined) for someone who is a member of The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Riders and the American Legion Auxiliary.

At the National Convention held in Indianapolis, The American Legion changed the wording from wife to spouse of a veteran as one of the categories eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. Mike's wife, Teresa Ash is a veteran. Therefore Mike is eligible for membership in the ALA. Welcome aboard, Mike.

A day after returning home from Legionville, it was off to the Moorhead American Legion for an evening meal honoring the volunteer workers at the Fargo Veterans Hospital. It was amazing to hear about the myriad number of activities offered there thanks to their many volunteers and donations from organizations such as the Department of Minnesota American Legion Family.

I enjoyed spending time with our ALA Representative there, Lynnette Andel, as well as Vice Commander Tim Haugen and District 9 Commander Lowell Philp. My counterpart, the Department of North Dakota President and I had a chance to visit and pose for photographs.

I'm writing this article mid September, but on Saturday, September 28th, it will be a pleasure to meet with all our hospital/home representatives at a meeting at the Forest Lake American Legion. Thank you, ladies, for your service.

As a member of West Duluth Unit 71, Saturday, September 21st brought an event near and dear to my heart. The new Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Duluth was dedicated in ceremony that day. It's actually located just north of Duluth off Highway 53 in Saginaw.

Long anticipated, it will be an honorable final resting place for many of Northern Minnesota's veterans. I was honored to be asked to be there that day representing the Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary.

Two other September invitations on my calendar include a membership dinner at Lewisville 561 in the 2nd District and a Past President's Parley Luncheon in Park Rapids. I know both of these events will be enjoyable and a welcome addition to my memory book for 2019-2020.

My October calendar is filling up fast. I look forward to visiting units and posts, Mission Training in Sioux Falls and Fall Conference in Mahanomen.

I hope to see you somewhere along my route. Thank you, everyone, for what you do for veterans, their families and your communities.

## National awards were given at Indianapolis Convention

Minnesota proudly accepted the following National awards at our 2019 National Convention.

**Legislation**  
Best Department Program – Northwestern Division – Mary Hendrickson, Chairman

**Children and Youth**  
Most Outstanding Unit Program - Northwestern Division – Hayfield Unit #330

**Public Relations**  
Outstanding Department Program – Northwestern Division – Cheryl Nymann, Chairman

**Education**  
Best Department Program – Northwestern Division – Linda Kropuenske, Chairman

**History**  
Best Department History – Northwestern Division – Karla Otterness, Chairman

**Poppy**  
National Poppy Poster Contest – Paytin Nelson – Northwestern Division Special

**Education Class**  
VAWS – Perfect Attendance Award  
Jan Benson, Betty Swenson, Jeanne Williams, Mary Ann Davis, Jan Dykema

Congratulations to all of you for your outstanding accomplishments in the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. Remember to apply for these awards in April. All awards will be handed out at Fall Conference.

Raleen Tolzmann Chairman	Northwestern Division AEF
Jean Walker Education Chairman	Northwestern Division
Peggy Tesdahl Activities Chairman	Northwestern Division Junior
Carol Kottom Leadership Chairman	Northwestern Division
Shirley Frederick Membership Chairman	Northwestern Division

Please congratulate these fine ladies when you see them. They devote much of their own time to both the National and Department organizations.

### FALL CONFERENCE

Fall Conference will be held October 25-26 in Mahanomen, hosted by the Bagley American Legion Family #16. Our meetings will be held at the Shooting Star Casino.

## Thiemecke endorsed for Second Vice President

Ralph Gracie Unit 14 in Bemidji has endorsed Sharon Thiemecke as the Department of Minnesota Auxiliary Second Vice President for 2020-2021.

She has been Unit President, 6th District President and held Chairmanships at Unit, District and Department levels. She is presently the Department Membership Chairperson.



SHARON THIEMECKE

## NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Following are the National Appointments that National President Nicole Clapp has made to serve with her this 2019/2020 Auxiliary year:

Norma Tramm	National Legislative Chairman
Sandy Fredrickson	National Poppy Vice Chairman
Marsha Bible	Eastern Division Americanism Chairman
Tamara Opland	National Security Committee Member

## Tolzmann endorsed for NECperson

Fred K. Werner American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 287, Minnesota Lake, has endorsed Raleen Tolzmann for the office of National Executive Committeeperson for the Department of Minnesota for the 2020-2022 year.

She is eligible through her husband, Curtis Tolzmann, a Vietnam era veteran.

Curt and Raleen have two daughters and one son, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

They attend St. Paul's Lutheran Church on German Lake.

On the Unit level she has been a member of unit 287 for 29 years and served as president 5 times.

On the District Level: she was President in 2003-2004.

On the Department Level: Department President 2012-2013, Membership Chairman, And many others. She is currently the National Executive

Committeeperson for Minnesota.

On the National Level: NEC, Alternate NEC, National Community Service Chairman (2018-2019), Vice Chairman of Public Relations, the following committee chairman in the Northwestern Division— Membership, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Junior Activities, National Security. Raleen is currently serving at Northwestern Division Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chair.



RALEEN TOLZMANN

## Kuperus endorsed for 1st Vice President

New London Unit 537 and the 7th District American Legion Auxiliary have endorsed Mary Kuperus for the position of Department First Vice President for 2020-2021.

She is a 37 year PUFL member. She is eligible through the service of her late father, Earl Manson, who served during WWII and her husband, Bill Kuperus, Retired SFC of the US Army serving during the Persian Gulf War.

Kuperus has served all

offices and most committee chairmanships at the local level, including unit President for multiple years.

In the 7th District, she has held many offices and served as the 7th District President in 2010-2011. She was Secretary for five years.

At the department level, she has held chairmanships in Children & Youth, Community Service, Junior Activities, Poppy, Membership Chairman, and

Girls State Chairman. She has served as a counselor for three years. She is currently serving as the Leadership Chairman.

For the past 27 years, Kuperus has been employed with the New London-Spicer Elementary School as a Title I Paraprofessional.

She belongs to Peace Lutheran Church in New London. She and her husband have three adult children, one son-in-law, and seven grandchildren.



MARY KUPERUS

# Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

in the Richwood/Pine Bend Room. On Thursday, October 24, at 7:00 p.m. there will be a presentation by our Department DSO Jeremy Wolfsteller and other County Service Officers from the area. After the presentation, the 100th Anniversary Committee will be having a cupcake social for all to partake in.

Please bring as many memberships as you can to Fall Conference. Membership Chairman Sharon Thiemecke is continuing the Membership Skits and has quite a program set up. You just can't miss it. The entire American Legion Family will be involved. On Friday, after the skits are over we have a great evening in store for you. The Districts will have their hospitality tables set up with food and drinks.

We have another surprise in store for you - Connie Lee and her band will be performing for everyone. Connie has toured with the Grand Ole Opry and now is dedicating her life serving Veterans. This should be a great show - bring your dancing shoes, or Second District, whatever you can come up with.

Just a reminder to bring all of your items to Fall Conference for our Silent Auction. There will also be a District Wall contest for Department Mary's project. All proceeds from the Silent Auction will go towards the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. We are also looking for the popular baskets to sell at the auction as well. Everyone, please contribute and bid.

## 2019-2020 SCHOLARSHIPS

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Minnesota, will again offer eight (8) \$1,000.00 scholarships to deserving students who wish to further their education, attending any institution of higher learning. They must be a resident of Minnesota or a member of the Auxiliary, Legion or SAL.

There is also the Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship of which up to ten \$1,000.00 scholarships are available to Minnesota Auxiliary members who are furthering their education in any healthcare field.

Our National organization is again offering three National scholarships this year, i.e., the National President's Scholarship, Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior members, and a scholarship for Non-Traditional Students.

The American Legion also offers a Legacy Scholarship. All of the forms will be in the next Unit Mailing and are all posted on our website mnala.org under the Scholarship tab.

Be certain you use the current application forms. Share these with your schools and members and assist eligible persons to apply. If you are in need of additional forms, please duplicate those you received or request copies from the Department office.

## SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

Boy, I thought my last year would drag on and on but we are already at the end of September as I am writing this. First I want to introduce our new Administrative Assistant Jocelyn Yasis to you all. Jocelyn left her position at the South Metro Federal Credit Union to join Jan and myself. What a blessing she is turning out to be. She is taking her position like a duck to water. She is handling all of the incoming phone calls and is learning the membership area. For those of you coming to Fall Conference, stop in our office to say hi. Shorty and I are planning a short trip to Texas the end of October as our first born granddaughter is the lead majorette in her marching band of 300 members. What an honor. Frankie worked very hard at getting that position. Our grandson Cade plays football (imagine that in Texas) and we will get to see him play as well. Not to mention seeing our baby Elizabeth for four days - can't wait. Those kids grow up so quick and we seem to stay the same age. I just can't figure that out. Hope to see you all in Mahnommen at Fall Conference.

Also, a quick reminder that we still have a supply of the 100th Anniversary Cookbooks available for purchase for \$25.00. This is a great Christmas gift for friends and family members. We will have those at Fall Conference along with the Auxiliary Emblem magnet patches.



**JOCELYN YASIS**  
ALA Administrative Assistant



**HILLMAN 4TH OF JULY PARADE FLOAT** — "A year for firsts" included the first 100 years being celebrated by the American Legion Auxiliary, and the first float in many years for the Wojciak-Talberg Auxiliary Unit 602 in Hillman. The city of Hillman, with a population of 37 residents, hosts an hour long parade every July 4th and suddenly has a population explosion up to 300+ people for a day.

## REMINDER FOR FALL CONFERENCE

### TWO POPPY CONTESTS



#1 - Centerpiece for a table with the Auxiliary 100 year birthday theme

#2 - Build a cake with Auxiliary 100 year birthday theme - Make your cake out of Styrofoam

Entries must be on the Poppy tables on Friday, October 25 by 9:00 a.m. for judging

Also looking for handmade items with poppy fabric, something painted with poppies on it, poppy handbags poppy jewelry, etc. Bring the items to Fall Conference and drop those off at the Poppy tables as well.



**WILLMAR CENTENARIAN** — Willmar Auxiliary Unit 167 recently honored Eleanor Nelson on her 102nd birthday.

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## Sept. 18, 2019, Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 9/19/18
One	4,177	339	8.12%	452
Two	4,191	524	12.50%	746
Three	4,064	499	12.28%	616
Four	624	58	9.29%	111
Five	603	55	9.12%	92
Six	5,393	658	12.20%	898
Seven	3,369	202	6.00%	332
Eight	1,363	173	12.69%	144
Nine	3,618	367	10.14%	447
Ten	4,304	461	10.71%	613
1982	178	11	6.18%	29
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31,884</b>	<b>3,347</b>	<b>10.50%</b>	<b>4,480</b>

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**Holiday Branson 2**  
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- 4 nights accommodations
- 7 Meals: 4 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners
- National Toy Museum
- 7 Shows: Daniel O'Donnell, Dutton Family, Clay Cooper, Hughes Brothers, Miracle of Christmas, Yakov Smirnoff, and Christmas Wonderland
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**The Monuments of Washington D.C.**  
 May 15 - 19, 20

- 4 Seasons Tour Director Tammi Haney
- Roundtrip Delta flights
- 4 nights accommodations
- 8 Meals: 4 breakfasts, 4 dinners
- Guided Memorial and Monument Tours
- Tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery
- Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Garden
- Two full day guided tours of Washington D.C.
- WWII Memorial, Capital Hill, Embassy Row, Korean War Veterans Memorial, The Smithsonian, Martin Luther King Jr National Memorial, Lincoln Memorial
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**Rhine River Cruise**  
 June 17 - 27, 2020

- 4 Seasons Tour Director Tammi Haney
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 June 19 - 26, 2020

- 4 Seasons Tour Director Cindy Peterson
- Deluxe motorcoach transportation
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- 15 Meals: 7 breakfast, 5 lunches, 3 dinners
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