



It was a big day for check passing Legionville getting repairs it needs

By Tim Engstrom

BRAINERD — The 2020 Legionville Camporee had some big checks being passed around.

For one, the 10th District American Legion Riders raised \$30,000 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, all in one weekend ride, Aug. 22-23.

“You raise more money in your district than most states do,” said National Executive Committeeman Bill Barbknecht.

For two, Bloomington Post 550 donated \$10,000 to Legionville School Safety Patrol Camp. And they used one of those giant checks.

“Let’s get it cleaned up and get campers back in here,” said Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Minnesota Commander Dave Vulcan.

And American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak handed a check for \$11,973 to Wounded Warriors Guide Services, which provides outdoor hunting and fishing therapy to veterans with service-connected disabilities. It was part of his Commander’s Project for the past year. (The other was Legionville: \$3,991, given in July.)

“We are grateful for The American Legion, and it’s support,” said Wounded Warriors Guide Services President Justin Lightfoot.

The Camporee, Sept. 10-13, brought Legion Family members, and their families, to the 610-acre campground on the south shore of North Long Lake about five miles north of Brainerd. Funds raised benefited the camp. Fun benefited the participants.

More than \$13,000 was raised
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GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

‘Tip of the spear’

David Nguyen served in Iraq and Afghanistan; now he houses veterans

By Kara Hildreth

ST. PAUL — One time, a couple showed up at the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans office in St. Paul after the husband, a veteran, lost his job.

His wife quietly told MACV staff that her husband was let go because he lacked sleep. He suffered from mental health issues related to his military service.

“He has been staying up all night doing guard duty, watching the window, waiting for anything to happen,” the wife said.

Another time, a young veteran — and his wife with six children — showed up after he lost his job. They were going to be evicted. He had been drinking to cope with surviving combat overseas and possibly suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome.

These are the struggles facing veterans, and Legionnaire David Nguyen, 40, helps them daily in his job on the front line of ending veteran homelessness in Minnesota.

He is the metro housing team leader for St. Paul-based MACV. The 29-year-old nonprofit agency has a mission of ending homelessness in Minnesota and has forged many partnerships throughout the state to connect veterans to resources.

The American dream

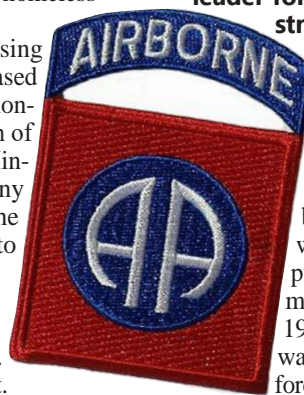
Nguyen is a member St. Paul Post 599, the 3M Post. He was born in St. Louis Park and grew up in Plymouth. He is the son of parents who were first-generation immigrants to the United States.

“My dad came to the United States after 35 years serving in the Air Force



Photo by Kara Hildreth

A former Army paratrooper who was deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, today Legion member David Nguyen finds reward in building trust and improving the lives of veterans as the metro housing team leader for the nonprofit Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans in St. Paul. The MACV team strives to fulfill its mission to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota while aiding men and women veterans with legal and employment services.



for the South Vietnamese after the Tet Offensive,” he said.

The Tet Offensive began in 1968 and was North Vietnam’s push to end the stalemate of the war. By 1975, South Vietnam was falling to northern forces, and many people any means possible to avoid living under communism.

That’s when his father, Hein, and mother, Van, left with son, Huy, and daughter, Lynn.

“My Dad’s and Mom’s story is

unbelievable after the mass exodus from Vietnam,” he said.

Due to limited capacity, only women and children were accepted on boats. His mother and young sister left on a boat, and his dad and brother were still in Vietnam.

“My dad gave my brother to an American soldier, who took my brother, who was a year old, and they exchanged addresses and my dad slipped it into his pocket, and Lord knows how many times he wrote the address down, and that was before smartphones or the cloud,” he said.

“It was quite the odyssey because my mom and sister ended up in

Thailand and ended up working in a seamstress shop, and my mom said this is not where we are supposed to be,” he recalled.

His mother and daughter ended up taking a boat to Hawaii, where they were considered political refugees. His father managed to reach Guam before reaching the mainland United States as a refugee. The Hopkins American Red Cross and Lutheran Social Services played a part in placing the father with a foster family in Minnesota.

At the time, his father spoke no English, and he made a living cutting grass.

Continued on Page 8



Gov. Tim Walz, left, salutes Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke during an installation ceremony in St. Paul.

National Guard has a new leader

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota National Guard held an installation ceremony Aug. 31 at the Veterans Service Building in St. Paul, officially welcoming Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke as the organization’s 32nd adjutant general.

“It’s a time for us to reflect as an organization on the past and a time to look toward the future,” said Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz. “There are few institutions that have the credibility and the trust of the American people as the National Guard; and that comes from the quality of the people who are there and it comes from the leadership.”

Manke had been the assistant division commander of the 34th Infantry Division based in Rosemount. He also has served as chief of staff at Joint Force Headquarters in

St. Paul. He has served in deployments to Kosovo and Iraq.

Manke, of Cambridge, takes on this position during a time when the Minnesota National Guard has been busier than usual with several state activations in addition to planned training and deployments.

“It is almost unimaginable this summer,” said Walz, who served 24 years in the Guard. “Troops were helping us test for COVID-19. They were doing their annual training. Some of them were going to the National Training Center. Some were preparing to serve in missions overseas — and in the midst of all of that, we ask our National Guard to help restore order in our great state. That is an incredible

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Seventy-five percent of the Commander's Project the past year went to Wounded Warriors Guide Service, which takes disabled veterans hunting at no cost to them. On Sept. 12 at Legionville, Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak handed over a check for \$11,973. From left are Deer River Post 122 member Dan Essig, Wounded Warriors Vice President Todd Grewe, Dvorak and Wounded Warriors President Justin Lightfoot. The other 25 percent went to Legionville.



Bloomington Post 550 donated \$10,000 to Legionville Safety Patrol Camp. From left are Post Commander Luis Campero, Post 550 member Paul Hassing, Legionville Camp Manager Adam Felton, Post 550 Sergeant at Arms Richard Walker, Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Dave Vulcan, American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak. Post 550 member Tim Engstrom could not be in the photo because he was taking it for The Minnesota Legionnaire.

Doing good, taking names up north

Continued from Page 1

for Legionville (including the Post 550 donation) during the Camporee.

Vulcan welcomed the audience to the Harvest Rally, held on the Saturday of the Camporee. The meeting was held with cloudy skies under canopies because of the COVID-19 restrictions.

"My heart is full of love because you are all here," he said.

SAL National Commander Clint Bolt was to attend the Fall Conference, Oct. 22-24, at Breezy Point Resort, but his plans were canceled because of COVID-19.

Vulcan said \$16,000 has been raised to repair the ceiling of the dining hall at Legionville. The work should be completed this fall. He said his Commander's Project is Legionville: 1. Fix the Bauer Cabin. 2. Fix the Main House.

Dvorak described how busy Legion members have been, from delivering masks to Minnesota Veterans Homes to feeding people in their communities to raising funds for scholarships to paying homage to victims of the 9/11 attacks.

"I thank you for all the volunteer work you've done," he said.

Thanks to the work of the ad hoc COVID-19 Committee and the Membership Committee, the districts all have Zoom video conferencing. Dvorak urged districts to carry on the work of the Legion.

He described a statement the Department of Minnesota sent to the Minnesota Vikings and to newspapers statewide, saying that the national anthem is no time for political protests. (p. 11)

"We're all veterans. We're a patriotic organization, and we don't like it," he said.

American Legion Riders Department of Minnesota Director Paul Hassing said 10th District Ride Captain Matt Berens put together a great ride and 10th District ALR Director Linda Deschene did a good job.

He urged American Legion Post commanders to know their Riders program and vice versa. Don't just say they do their own thing.

"Some American Legion

Riders forget they are a Post program. Some Posts forget American Legion Riders is a program. It goes both ways," he said.

He said Austin Post 91 Legion Riders deserve attention for raising \$7,000 for nursing scholarships on Aug. 29.

Barbknecht said dwindling patriotism in America is everyone's fault. He said reaching out and educating people is important. He urged members to prompt schools to hold Veterans Day ceremonies, even if they must be outdoors.

He said, with it being an election year, be sure not to appear in photos with candidates wearing the Legion cap or clothing. He encouraged everyone to vote. The general election is Nov. 3.

He said National Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford of North Carolina plans to tour Minnesota, tentatively planned for April 5-9, 2021. He toured southern Minnesota on Feb. 17-19.

The National Convention is slated for Aug. 27 to Sept. 2, 2021, in Phoenix, Barbknecht said.

Minnesota Vice Commander for Districts 4 and 5 Teresa Ash, chairman of the COVID-19 Committee, urged people to reach out for new members.

"COVID is challenging, but getting new members is not challenging," she said.

Any member who signs up a new member gets a water bottle and a tote bag. Also, any member who brings a new attendee to a Department event will receive a water bottle and a tote bag. Some Department vice commanders have additional goodies.

She encouraged people to participate in 100 Miles for Hope.

Legionville President Eugene Liefeld thanked Legionville Camp Director Tom Sanford and Camp Manager Adam Felton.

"Safety is in the name, so it is important that Legionville is safe," Felton said.

Many Districts and Posts turned in donations ranging from \$50 to \$1,000.

Iowa Sons of The American Legion Judge Advocate Mike Deacon was there, and he donated \$100.

Bayport Post 491 was

recognized for donating \$3,000 to fix the hot water heater at Legionville.

Minnesota Auxiliary President Mary Hendrickson said she raised \$23,000 for the President's Project, and the funds went to new golf carts at Veterans on the Lake in Ely and a new big-screen TV at the Silver Bay Veterans Home.

In the coming year, she hopes to purchase gift cards for county veteran service officers.

She mentioned that National President Nicole Clapp of Iowa is coming to the Fall Conference at Breezy Point Resort.

The Auxiliary's membership

Continued on Page 3



Sons of The American Legion gather for a meeting Sept. 12 at Legionville.



Dvorak gives the 2019-20 Appreciation Award to 6th District Commander Paul Edwards. The award is given for turning in the highest percentage of memberships at an event.



Dvorak gives a 2019-20 Recruiter Award to 1st District Membership Director Myron Ehrich, right. At center is Department Vice Commander for Dist. 1 and 3 Pat Logan.



Dvorak presents his wife, 3rd District Commander Linda Dvorak, with the 2019-20 DMS Award for 3rd District Membership Director Joe Tappainer. DMS is direct mail solicitation.



Dvorak presents 7th District Commander Dean Knutson a 2019-20 New Member Award for Sacred Heart Post 180 Commander Chris Dunsmore, for percentage of new members.



Dvorak presents 1st District Commander Dale Wellik a 2019-20 New Member Award for Winona Post 9 Membership Director Dar Troke, for the amount of new members.

Continued from Page 2

skirts will have a rodeo theme. She congratulated Honorary Junior President Emily Seuss for being elected National Junior vice president for the Northwest District.

Seuss said Juniors raised \$6,965 to help out the five Minnesota Veterans Homes.

Awards intended to be given at the canceled Appreciation Rally in March in La Crescent were handed out.

Appreciation Award

This went to 6th District Commander Paul Edwards. The District took the prize with 3.76 percent of membership growth between the Sweetheart Rally on Feb. 8 and the Appreciation Rally that had been set for March 21.

District Vice Cmdr. Awards

District commanders award these to vice commanders for excellent work in membership and outreach. They would have been awarded at the Appreciation Rally:

1. Mary Hanson of Austin Spam Post 570.
2. Steve Fosness of Fairmont Post 36.
3. Paul Busch of New Prague Post 45
4. Dave Dahl of St. Paul Post 8
5. Wade Larson of Minneapolis Gopher Post 440.
6. Karen O'Bar of Bertha Post 366.
7. David Manson of Spicer Post 545
8. Marvin Ott of Grand Rapids Post 60
9. Tim Haugen of Moorhead Post 21
10. Bob Larson of Buffalo

Post 270

The remaining awards were originally planned to be presented at the canceled Department Convention at Jackpot Junction in July in Morton.

New Member Award

This one, for the percentage of new members, went to Sacred Heart Post 180 Commander Chris Dunsmore and Membership Director Earl Pederson.

New Member Award

This one, by amount of new members, went to Winona Post 9 Membership Director Dar Troke.

DMS Award

This went to 3rd District Membership Director Joe Tappainer. DMS is for direct mail solicitation, and the award is for percentage of transfers from

Post 1982 AD.

Recruiter Award

This went, for signing up new members, to 1st District Membership Director Myron Ehrich and Department Vice Commander Pat Logan. The 1st District had 336 new members.

Premier Race Award

This is a plaque that moves among the District commanders as they compete for growing membership. This time, it went to 3rd District Commander Linda Dvorak.

Goose Egg

This one is about getting off the goose egg, not for being on it. Districts must have had at least one membership and one officer report turned in between July 1 and Aug. 5.

Winners, all membership directors, were Myron Ehrich of the 1st District, John Flynn of the 3rd District, Mickey Ostrum of the 4th District, Wade Larson of the 5th District and Mike Costello of the 6th District.

Department vice commanders also were recognized for being off the goose egg. They were Pat Logan of the 1st and 3rd Districts and Teresa Ash of the 4th and 5th Districts.

Harvest Gathering Award

Department Membership Director Sy Fix formed a competition to recognize the District with the highest percentage of Post 1982 and Post 1982 AD transfers. (Post 1982 is the at-large holding Post.)

The winner was Tim Haugen, 9th District membership director.



Legionville President Eugene Leifeld of Red Wing Post 54, left, and Camp Manager Adam Felton speak during the Harvest Rally on Sept. 12 at Legionville.



Winners of the District Vice Commander Awards (or their substitutes) pose for a photograph. See the story for who won. From left are Department Commander Mark Dvorak, 1st District Vice Commander Mary Hanson, 6th District Commander Paul Edwards, 2nd District Membership Director Randy Olson, 7th District Commander Dean Knutson, 3rd District Commander Linda Dvorak, 4th District Vice Commander Dave Dahl, 8th District Membership Director Jennifer Havlick (and dog Dakota), 5th District Commander Wade Larson, Past Department Commander Denise Milton for the 9th District, 10th District Commander Tom Allen, Department Membership Director Sy Fix.

Department of Corrections

A reprint on Page 6 of the September issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire of a photo from the Redwood Falls Gazette in November 1968 mistakenly described the relation of William Schottenbauer (fifth from the right in the top row) to Tom Schottenbauer of St. Louis Park Post 282. William is Tom's uncle, not grandfather.

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BRIAN TURNER

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Values remain the same then and now

Greetings, American Legion Family.

As we enter our 102nd year, our belief in law and order, 100 percent Americanism, promoting peace and goodwill on earth, transmitting to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy have not wavered.

One of the items that our founders discussed and decided when forming our American Legion was that all Legionnaires, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or politics, had equal say and were a voting member of The American Legion. Women could vote in The American Legion before they could vote in elections in America. Our foundation remains strong and we continue to promote and educate our principles to fellow Legion Family members and our fellow citizens that do not know the history of The American Legion.

Below is an article from Past National Commander Dan Foley, and I would like to give you a brief history about him. The Hon. Daniel F. Foley was from Wabasha. He could be gruff, and he was always ready for a fight, but he also had a heart as big as Minnesota.

He was a World War II veteran and received his law degree from Fordham University. He was elected National commander in 1963 in a contested election, and during his year in office he met with Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. For years he served with John Geiger of Illinois and Richard Pedro of New York as the Legion's National Leadership Team. He served as a judge until his death in 2002.

I have heard the following or similar saying many times over the years "Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it." Please take the time to read the below article by Past National Commander Dan Foley.

For God and Country, we, The American Legion Family continues it's mission!!

Mark Dvorak is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota.



Dan Foley

Weapons of fear and hate divide America

By Dan Foley
National Commander
The American Legion
January 1964

At a time of rapid change and recurring crisis in national affairs, one factor remains constant. The loudest noise and the

Commander's Column

Mark Dvorak



most confused counsel continue to come from extremists.

By extremists I mean those individuals who would save America by forsaking its free institutions. I mean not just communists and neo-fascists who openly assail our system but, more especially, those who, in the conviction that theirs is the only right view, have lost sight of — and faith in — the fundamental processes of self-government.

You know the type as well as I do. They claim to have the one true answer to every problem. They talk of setting aside the law when the law offends them. They are quick to cry treason, slow to admit error and indifferent to arguments and facts that do not support their beliefs. They are not really leftists or rightists — but simply modern anarchists — though many of them would be shocked at the idea.

There are two basic flaws in this brand of extremism. It violates the spirit and traditions of real Americanism. It seeks a course of action that is bound to fail. As Legionnaires we bow to no one in our concern and zeal for the future security and greatness of America. Because we are Legionnaires, we share a special responsibility to observe and uphold the institutions which alone can be the means of realizing that future.

Now, more than ever before, Americans need to keep their values in clear focus. Our resort must be to reason, not to emotion; to persuasion, not to violence; to perseverance, not to panic.

It isn't necessary or desirable that we all think alike. It is essential that we espouse our differences reasonably with good will and due regard for other opinions.

Honest disagreement honorably expressed cannot divide Americans. But disagreement waged with weapons of fear and hate and bad faith can cost us not only our unity but our character and purpose as a free people. Abraham Lincoln in a previous era of strong feeling said, "There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law."

By the same token, there is no grievance now that cannot be voiced and fairly met within the tested channels of the democratic system. I often wonder if those who advocate extremism really understand the enormity of their disservice to their country. Nikita Khrushchev is fond of stating, as he did recently in the presence of visiting American businessmen, that the capitalist system is headed for an early collapse.

He's not basing that hope altogether on the thrust of communist military and economic power. The communists believe as an article of faith that human beings are incapable of governing themselves — that a free society such as ours inevitably will generate excesses and frictions that will destroy it. The citizen who defies the law or falsely de-

of governmental institutions is helping Khrushchev's cause — not America's.

The citizen who seeks recourse to hatred or violence as the answer to the nation's problems is turning away from an acceptable and workable American solution. The American Legion has always asserted its right to speak out vigorously and candidly on public issues. We've never shied away from controversy or from criticism of policies we believe to be wrong — and I am confident we will continue on that course. At the same time, I assure you that our criticism will be constructive and responsible.

The United States Supreme Court in recent years has rendered decisions specifically in the areas of law enforcement and religious expressions in schools, with which The American Legion strongly disagrees. We formulated our position in the democratic way — through discussion at the local, state and national levels.

We've stated our views plainly and with force, but without impugning the motives of those who disagree or attacking the authority and prestige of the courts. We believe the national interest warrants increased American efforts to neutralize and eliminate the communist regime in Cuba. But while insisting upon a new policy, we question the wisdom of our present policy, not the character and good faith of its architects.

We champion the needs of disabled and aging war veterans whose past services are too soon forgotten by many of their countrymen. But our difference with those who oppose us is one of judgment, not of patriotism; and the best hope for our cause lies in education and persuasion, not vindictiveness. This is the American way. It's the only way that works in a free society.

By practicing responsible Americanism this American Legion of ours has served as a stabilizing force in the nation's life. We stand today as a buffer against extremism of both the left and the right. This is a position in which every Legionnaire may take pride and which every Legionnaire should consciously seek to strengthen. We neither need nor want rigid conformity. Nor can we permit a few over-zealous and unreasoning individuals to overbalance the common sense and judgment of the people.

Ours is a big country with big and perplexing problems. The answers do not come easily. They will not come at all if substantial numbers of Americans permit themselves to be led into extravagances of hate and fear.

Dan Foley was the National commander of The American Legion in 1963-64. He was a member of Wabasha Post 50.

He served in the Army during World War II. He was a retired state appeals court judge who died Aug. 17, 2002.

Fall is a time for patience, preparedness

Chaplain's Corner

Betty Jass



Last month we had the Minnesota Camporee at Legionville, and even though the temperature varied with peeking sunshine and cooling clouds, everyone in attendance seemed to enjoy each other. Fall just seemed to sneak in around the corner while we were there.

Why not immerse yourself in the beautiful changing foliage and the coziness of a blazing campfire and the honking geese traveling south? I think God wants everyone to enjoy fall. God and other spiritual authors have shared their thoughts on it.

"The seasons come and go, so focus on the God who remains unchanged and unchanging. "Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (Psalm 90:1-2).

There's a lot of unwelcome change in our world. Moral and societal changes bother us most when we turn on our television or glance at the magazines. We're painfully aware our kids are growing up

in a world far different from the one we knew as children.

And personal changes — children leaving home, the passing of dear friends, and the slow, steady decline in our vitality and health. Sometimes we feel outdated at work. But amid all the changes, one thing, one person, never changes — our eternal God. The fall is often a season of waiting — waiting for winter, waiting for the holidays, waiting for the Super Bowl, and so on.

The apostle James captured this theme with a farming metaphor to remind us of the importance of waiting on God's timing.

"Therefore, brothers, be patient until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the Lord's coming is near." (James 5:7-8)

Sam O'Neal is the co-author

of "Bible Stories You May Have Forgotten" and "The Bible Answer Book."

He had this to say about fall: "Like all seasons, the season of fall is marked by profound changes. Autumn winds break the summer heat and provide a pleasant coolness across most of the world. Leaves change their hues in lovely bursts of color, then fall gently to the ground. The sun begins its annual retreat, bringing less and less light to each new day. Because even in a season of great change, the Scriptures remain a firm foundation for life."

God wants everyone to enjoy fall and the wondrous changes it has to offer. We can always count on God being with us in our lives.

Betty Jass is the chaplain for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.

Mail Call

Thank you for the memories

In April 1993 I applied for a job and was hired at The American Legion, Department of Minnesota. Through the next 17 years, I was the membership administrator. In 2010 I became finance liaison for the Department.

That means I have worked for The American Legion Department Headquarters for 27-plus years. I have worked with five different adjutants, four different comptrollers and 27 different commanders, as well as many different staff members, not to mention the District and Post officers.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege. I want to thank the hundreds of volunteers and officers I have worked with. Your support and the confidence you have had in me and my work here has made all the difference.

As I retire at the end of this September, I have no idea what I will be doing, but I know that you will all continue with the excellent work you have done and will continue to do in the coming years.

Thank you all.

Laura Weber
Post 1982
Stillwater

Anthem piece was excellent

Thank you, Commander Mark Dvorak, for a very well-written article. Though I'm not a veteran, nor have I ever served, I have a deep appreciation for those who have served. It's time we unite behind our great country that offers the ability for change.

Standing for the national anthem, removing your cap and placing your hand over your heart is the least we can do for those who have sacrificed.

Scott Kellett
Esko

Meet my Legion Family

My children live some distance from here, and my

dear wife recently passed away. Our local Legion Post has always been a haven of friendship and social networking, but in recent years it has given support in many ways, not merely physical or social.

During my wife's lengthy illnesses and since my recuperation from a recently broken hip, we were able to access many of the Post's stock of home health aids, wheelchairs,

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The Minnesota

Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

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What's happening?

Fall Conference to feature big hitters

BREEZY POINT — The Fall Conference is weeks away.

The registration form and information have been in the past three issues of The Minnesota Legionnaire. If you need to sign up, visit mnlegion.org/fall-conference and the form and information are available there.

The dates are Oct. 22-24 at Breezy Point Resort on Pelican Lake. While it may seem rural, the resort is in an

incorporated city called Breezy Point, about four miles east of Pequot Lakes and six miles northeast of Nisswa (nine by road).

Please note that the Department Executive Committee meeting at 7 p.m. Oct. 22 takes place in Nisswa, not at Breezy Point.

To participate in the blood drive, schedule an appointment at redcross-blood.org and enter "Legion Conference" or call 866-236-3276.

Schedule

Oct. 22

10 a.m.: Registration starts

Noon-5 p.m.: American Legion

Family Blood Drive, Lakeside B Hall

2 p.m.: Gambling Seminar

Committee meetings:

3-4 p.m. LIT, Heartland Room 1

4 p.m.: Americanism, MN Room Conf. Hall

4 p.m.: Children & Youth, Heartland Room 2

4 p.m.: NS&FR, Heartland Room 1

4 p.m.: Legislative, Lakeside Room B

4 p.m.: Strategic Planning, Lakeside Room A

5 p.m.: American Legion Foundation, Heartland Room 1

7 p.m.: DEC Meeting at Nisswa Post 627

(Membership Meeting immediately following DEC)

7 p.m.: ALA's Law & Order Panel, White Birch I and II

Oct. 23

7 a.m.: Registration opens

8 a.m.: General Session

10 a.m.: Finance Committee, Heartland Room 1

11:30 a.m.: Bowling Committee, Conference Center Lobby

Noon: Lunch

1 p.m.: General Session reconvenes

3 p.m.: Convention Corporation, Heartland Room 1

(Convention Committee immediately following corporation meeting)

4:30 p.m.: Hospital Association Annual Meeting, Minnesota Room Conference Hall

5:30 p.m.: Hospital Association Board Meeting, Minnesota Room Conference Hall

6:30 p.m.: Membership Challenge, White Birch 1 and 2, Second Floor

(Hospitality Night, Breezy Point Inn & Suites, immediately following)

Continued on Page 16

Taps



Bennett, Enoch D. "Pinky," 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 21, 2020. He served as an aircraft mechanic. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Benusa, Joseph S., 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 28, 2020. He served aboard the USS Quincy CA-71 and the USS O'Brien DD-725. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Bierl, Linus "Pete," 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 10, 2020. He managed the Wanda Legion Hall and softball fields for many years. He was a 49-year member of Wanda Legion Post 385.

Brandenburg, Rodney V., 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 21, 2020. He served on the USS Newport News CA-148 when it was part of the U.S. blockade of Cuba in the Bay of Pigs. He was a member of the Royal Order of the Blue Nose. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Carity, Gordon L., 92, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 26, 2020. He was a past commander of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Casey, Richard M., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 14, 2020. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Christeson, Ernest R., 77, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 17, 2020. He was stationed at Davis-Monthan AFB in Arizona and maintained underground Titan II missiles. He was a member of Graceville Post 297.

Defries, Lenis A., 71, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 23, 2020. He was 39-year member of Windom Post 206.

Dilley, John, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 21, 2020. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Engstrom, Bill C., 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 13, 2020. He was a 46-year member of Anoka Post 102.

Erickson, George B., 96, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Aug. 12, 2020. He was in the 2530th AAF Base Unit. He was a member of St. Cloud Post 76.

Fingarson, John B., 89, Marine veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 20, 2020. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Fox, Arthur R., 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 9, 2020. He served as a cook with the XXIV Corps in the postwar occupation of Korea. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Glotzbach, George L., 89, Air Force veteran of the Korean War. He served at the 658th Guided Missile Squadron at Holloman AFB in Alamogordo, New Mexico, and at the Anchorage Courier Transfer Station at Elmendorf AFB in Alaska. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Gohman, Gerald J. "Jerry," 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 20, 2020. He was twice a past commander and a 47-year member of Waite Park Post 428.

Gorecki, Harold A., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 1, 2020. He was stationed in Germany. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Gruenes, Peter W., Army veteran of the Cold War, died Aug. 29, 2020. He was a member of Eden Valley Post 381.

Hagen, Kenneth G., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 7, 2020. He was a 47-year member of New Richland Post 75.

Heger, James, 79, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died June 11, 2020. He was a member of Monticello Post 260.

Hiipakka, Everett, 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 24, 2020. He served as a military policeman. He was a member of Grand Rapids Post 60.

Hjelm, David "Sonny," 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 6, 2020. He was a member of the Lowry Legion Post 253.

Obituaries

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

Please send to tengstrom@mnlegion.org or in the mail to the Department of Minnesota.

Hoffman, Ronald, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 7, 2020. He was a 70-year member of Walnut Grove Post 267.

Holewa, Henry, 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 30, 2020. He served on the USS Newport News as a deck hand and the USS Missouri as a boilermaker and diesel mechanic. He was a 34-year member of Hillman Post 602.

Holmbo, Clyde E. "Sonny," 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 15, 2020. He served as a radioman on the USS Norton in the Pacific Theater. He was a 73-year charter member and past Post commander of Champlin Post 600.

Jensen, Howard G. "Howie," 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 30, 2020. He was a 51-year member of Eden Valley Post 381.

Job, Edward M., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 16, 2020. He was a paratrooper. He served 15 years as chaplain and was a 43-year member of Albany Post 482.

Joel, Maurice H., Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 8, 2020. He was a 65-year member of Wood Lake Post 556.

Kahnke, Eugene, 91, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 19, 2020. He served as the comptroller for the Department of Minnesota for more than 26 years, with one year as the Department treasurer. He was a 64-year member of Janesville Post 281.

Kardell, Randy, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 30, 2020. He was stationed in Germany. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Klaseus, Verne R., 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 6, 2020. He was stationed in Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. He was a 34-year member of Chaska Post 57.

Koprek, Lloyd A., 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 30, 2020. He was a 67-year member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Krebsbach, Curtis, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 13, 2020. He was a 69-year member of Austin Post 91.

Lamote, Joseph, 80, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 25, 2020. He served in the Army Corps of Engineers. He was a member of Balaton Post 237.

Lange, Henry F., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 18, 2020. He was a 62-year member of Monticello Post 260.

Lerche, Donald, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 28, 2020. He was a member of Eagan Post 594.

Loch, Steve, 67, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died June 27, 2020. He was a past Post commander and adjutant for St. Augusta Post 621.

Louwagie, Laurance, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 19, 2020. He served as a company clerk in the Army National Guard. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Meyer, Arthur A., 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 19, 2020. He was wounded in Vietnam and spent time in the hospital in Japan and in Denver. He was a 46-year member of Round Lake Post 461.

Miner, Marvin, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died April 29, 2020. He served in Japan. He was a 76-year member of Adams Post 146.

Morgan, Leo P., 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 17, 2020. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

Nelson, Dale F., 88, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 7, 2020. He served in North Africa. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Olinger, Ralph A., 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 30, 2020. He was a 41-year member of

Chanhasen Post 580.

Pemberton, Loren D., 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 6, 2020. He served as a medic. He was a 42-year member of Monticello Post 260.

Pemberton, Loren D., Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 6, 2020. He served as a medic. He was a 42-year member of Monticello Post 260.

Platz, Joseph L. "Joe," 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 8, 2020. He was trained as an engineer equipment mechanic and served with the 3rd Engineer Battalion. He was a 47-year member of New Ulm Post 132.

Priddy, Gerald T., 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 25, 2020. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Quarnstrom, Warren, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 22, 2020. As an attorney, he was on the committee that successfully brought Southwest Minnesota State University to Marshall in 1964. He was a 75-year member of Marshall Post 113.

Rand, Kenneth L., 71, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam and Grenada/Lebanon wars, died Aug. 24, 2020. He served in England, Thailand, Korea and the U.S. during a 20-year career. He was a member of Green Isle Post 408.

Reisdorfer, James, 91, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 4, 2020. He was a member of Lismore Post 636.

Sandberg, Larry G., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 6, 2020. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Schlumpberger, Eldor E., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 14, 2020. He was a 31-year member of New Ulm Post 132.

Silker, Neil R. "Curly," 88, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 12, 2020. He was a 62-year member and served on the Honor Guard for Windom Post 206.

Speltz, James S., 83, Air Force veteran, died Aug. 7, 2020. He served in electrical and mechanical crypto maintenance. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Stucky, Larry E., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 15, 2020. He was stationed in Korea and Georgia. He was a member of Ogilvie Post 640.

Stull, Leland, 72, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 13, 2020. He was a 31-year member of Anoka Post 102.

Sustacek, Myron, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 26, 2020. He was a 57-year member of Marshall Post 113.

Tesch, Don "Junior," 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 26, 2020. His father signed for him to join at age 17. He stayed in after the war and retired after 20 years, then worked for Westinghouse for 24 years, before returning to Blue Earth. He was a member of Blue Earth Post 89.

Truebenbach, Kenneth, 75, Army Reserves veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 17, 2020. He was a 35-year member of Gaylord Post 433.

VanBuren, Shirley, 97, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 17, 2020. He was in the Seabees. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Veld, Darwin F., 72, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 10, 2020. He served as a Seabee in Vietnam. He was a past commander and 44-year member of Lismore Post 636.

Vickstrom, Gordon, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 15, 2020. He served as a cook. He was a 31-year member of Cambridge Post 290.

Weber, Allie J., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 15, 2020. He was a member of Arlington Post 250.

Wendolek, John T., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 18, 2020. He was a 63-year member of Silver Lake Post 141.

West, Gary L., 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 29, 2020. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

West, Gary L., 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 29, 2020. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

VA expanding caregiver benefits to pre-9/11 veterans, as of Oct. 1

Do you remember a \$52 billion piece of legislation called the VA MISSION Act? It was signed into law on June 6, 2018. It was the greatest reform to VA Health Care in history.

Two reforms within the multilayered legislation stood out to veterans and VA stakeholders like The American Legion.

One was an overhaul to VA's community care program, which took effect June 2019, allowing veterans more choice to care in the community.

The second major reform, taking effect Oct. 1, 2020, is an expansion to VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC). This reform is expanding caregiver benefits to World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Persian Gulf War veterans.

The current Program of Comprehensive Family Caregivers is only available for post-9/11 veterans. I believe it was designed and implemented during the Global War on Terrorism, where a primary instrument of war used by the enemy was improvised explosive devices, known as IEDs. The use of IEDs left many men and women critically injured, resulting in amputations and traumatic brain injuries. Upon returning home, these young men and women struggled with their activities of daily living on their own and would need caregiver assistance.

VA's eligibility criteria for PCAFC is that a veteran has sustained serious injury in

VA & Rehabilitation

Jeremy Wolfsteller



the line of service on or after Sept. 11, 2001, require personal care services to perform one or more activities of daily living or require supervision and protection based on symptoms of residuals of neurological impairment or injury and require the assistance of a family caregiver to live safely in a home for a minimum of six months.

If approved for PCAFC, veterans can select one primary caregiver and up to two secondary caregivers. Secondary caregivers serve as a backup support to the primary caregiver when needed.

The services you receive will depend on whether you are the primary or secondary caregiver. Primary caregiver receives a monthly stipend (paid directly to you as the caregiver); access to health care insurance through Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA), if you do not already have health insurance; mental health counseling; certain beneficiary travel benefits when traveling with the veteran to appointments.

Note for specific details, speak to your caregiver support coordinator and at least 30 days of respite care per year, for the veteran. Respite is short term relief for someone else to care for the veteran while you take a break.

Starting Oct. 1, 2020, the expansion portion of PCAFC under the MISSION ACT will start in a two-phase expansion. First, VA will be enrolling those seriously injured in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975. Then two years after the first expansion, VA will further expand PCAFC to those seriously injured in the line of duty between May 8, 1975, and Sept. 10, 2001.

For those veterans already enrolled and receiving PCAFC benefits, they are considered "legacy participants" and will have one year to be reassessed under the new program. Between Oct. 1, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2021, if veterans wish to stay in PCAFC, an appointment will be scheduled to be reassessed under the new eligibility criteria set forth in the final rule.

If you're interested in this expansion or a legacy participant and have questions, please contact your local caregiver support staff and ask about PCAFC.

https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/support_benefits.asp

Jeremy Wolfsteller is the Department of Minnesota service officer. His email is jwolfsteller@mnlegion.org.

Why be patriotic? Let's not take living in a democracy for granted

All American

Tim Engstrom



We talk about wanting to educate people about why they should be patriotic. Let me share some words on why people ought to be patriotic, regardless of your political stripes.

I get it. You don't have to be. It's a free country.

But are you a citizen or a subject? If you are a citizen, be grateful. Be patriotic. Hear me out.

When the United States of America came into existence in 1776 as a democracy, it sent shockwaves around the world. Giving power to the people threatened monarchies, aristocracies and oligarchies. Authoritarian regimes do not want to surrender their vast advantage.

When this new country defeated the British Empire in 1783, it sent more shockwaves. Liberty was given a chance. By 1791, it established the Constitution with its "We the people" Preamble and a Bill of Rights. These, too, surprised the planet. Then it survived a second war with Britain in 1812-15.

Would more people of the world see this new country and desire the same freedoms?

I think a lot of Americans know U.S. history but not world history. That contrast is missing, and contrast is a great teacher.

Well, in a nutshell, tyranny and oppression were the order of the day. People didn't leave Europe for the New World steadily for centuries because Europe was hunky-dory. Much of the rest of the globe was subjugated by colonial powers.

No, the United States was not perfect. One problem was not all adults could vote. Don't own land? Too bad for you. (Most white males could not vote until between 1828-1860, depending on your state.) Woman? Too bad

for you. Black? Awful for you. Native American? Sorrowful for you. I'm not saying America was Utopia.

But the Founders made a major step forward from a British nobility system where your birth determined your life status.

That taste of freedom, of democracy, of liberty was a beginning. It was a spark lit in a world of darkness.

This flicker of hope, this notion of equality, grew. It spread to the people within the United States, as we expanded and extended our rights, and it spread to other countries.

Another thing Americans forget: Democracy and freedom are fragile. Most fail. France is now on its fifth attempt, for example. Imagine if ours failed, and we all lived in an autocratic country. Americans would dearly miss our liberties.

By 1900, there were only 11 democracies.

That's it. World War II diminished the number to nine: United States, Canada, Costa Rica, Uruguay, United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand.

By 1974, there were only 39. The West still felt fairly isolated in our cause for freedom.

By 1993, the number boomed to 77, and by 2000, it reached 120.

My numbers are from the nonpartisan Freedom House, and it says in 2020 there are 115 democracies out of the 195 countries of the world.

And it all started with one flicker of hope — the United

States of America.

That's a solid reason to feel patriotic.

Freedom House's 2018 Freedom in the World report (the most recent available) describes the recent decline in democracies. It also notes many democracies have gone down in freedoms. It says:

"Perhaps worst of all, and most worrisome for the future, young people, who have little memory of the long struggles against fascism and communism, may be losing faith and interest in the democratic project. The very idea of democracy and its promotion has been tarnished among many, contributing to a dangerous apathy."

It also notes:

"The retreat of democracies is troubling enough. Yet at the same time, the world's leading autocracies, China and Russia, have seized the opportunity not only to step up internal repression but also to export their malign influence to other countries, which are increasingly copying their behavior and adopting their disdain for democracy."

Need I say more?

This why we veterans share our patriotism. It's not political. It's understanding the world we live in.

Tim Engstrom is the director of communications for The American Legion Department of Minnesota.

Mail Call

Continued from Page 4

etc., etc. Additionally, the Post sends me — free — three large lunches a week.

Several members visited my wife in our living room hospital bed the day before she died. Our Post chaplain and my pastor son from St. Joseph, Missouri, co-officiated at her funeral. Her Legion Auxiliary Unit did an impressive ritual.

My neighbor, past commander of the Sons of The American Legion, mows my lawn and plows my long driveway if I

don't beat him to it — which I seldom do anymore. (He even confiscated my truck key for a while). He also drives me to medical appointments.

Yes, this Post, with its outstanding officers, both male and female, are family and every bit as close as actual relatives can be. God bless them.

Richard F. Doyle
Forest Lake Post 225

Many good reasons to vote

A lot of times having coffee

with my friends and in other conversations one often hears the comment made that I'm not going to vote as my one vote doesn't count! Well, I beg to differ! Your vote does count! With some simple research, I found two examples where the difference of one vote made a world of difference. In one case World War III was averted!

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, World War III was averted by one vote when Commodore Vasily Arkipov, the flotilla commander, voted no, opposing Soviet submarine B-59 Captain Valentin Savitsky and political officer Ivan

Semonovich Maslennikov. In order to fire a nuclear torpedo, it would have taken three yes votes to fire that nuclear-tipped torpedo!

In the 2008 the election between Al Franken and Norm Coleman, Franken was elected by 312 votes! There are 4,012 precincts in Minnesota! If one more person in every precinct had voted for Norm

Coleman, he would have won the election!

If you happen to live in a precinct where you are blessed with mail-out, mail-in voting I would take my completed ballot to your local county auditor's office and hand it to them personally to make sure your vote is counted!

So, yes, your vote does count and with the upcoming

election, we need every vote counted.

And if you haven't registered to vote, you need to get registered, which you can do when you vote.

And if you don't vote and don't like the results, don't cry to me!

Earl Pederson
Renville Post 180



The American Legion Department of Minnesota 2021 District Membership Report as of Sep 23, 2020

District	Commander	New 2021	PUFL 2021	Online Ren 2021	Trad Ren 2021	Paid 2021	HQ Trans 2021	Total Mbr 2021	Goal 2021	%Goal	HQ Trans 2020 (As of)	Total Mbr 2020 (As of)
01	DALE P WELLIK	21	856	432	3,655	4,964	4	4,968	8,009	62.03	2	4,977
02	BRADLEY PAGEL	19	644	274	2,847	3,784	0	3,784	6,189	61.14	2	4,002
03	LINDA DVORAK	54	1,549	916	4,859	7,378	9	7,387	10,938	67.54	13	7,236
04	JOSEPH M JANSEN	8	286	155	933	1,382	1	1,383	2,091	66.14	17	1,408
05	WADE A LARSON	5	301	219	573	1,098	0	1,098	2,164	50.74	2	1,312
06	PAUL D EDWARDS	47	1,099	611	5,058	6,815	3	6,818	10,598	64.33	4	6,820
07	DEAN KNUTSON	14	696	222	2,737	3,669	1	3,670	5,646	65.00	19	3,730
08	GERRIANNE KOSKINEN	8	316	215	1,713	2,252	0	2,252	3,591	62.71	1	2,238
09	STEVEN G SUNDSTROM	17	547	331	2,693	3,588	20	3,608	5,953	60.61	10	3,733
10	THOMAS H ALLEN	37	904	754	3,950	5,645	4	5,649	8,780	64.34	2	5,630
99		3	176	210	973	1,362	0	1,362	2,997	45.45	0	1,170
Total:		233	7,374	4,339	29,991	41,937	42	41,979	66,956	62.70	72	42,256

By Tim Engstrom

A mortar exploded. It was the first round of the second barrage of Fire Support Base Ripcord by the North Vietnamese Army around 6:15 the morning of July 1, 1970, in the A Shau Valley of South Vietnam.

The explosion threw Army soldier Bill Cochrane through the air. He had gone to get gasoline from the generator after the first barrage but didn't make it. He landed and realized he was alive.

He first noticed his leg had been broken as though someone dropped a cinder block on it. It had hunks of metal in it.

Then he felt the pain of a massive headache and was struggling to breathe. He looked down and noticed his chest was open.

Cochrane survived triage, and a man nicknamed "Bear" was assigned to care for him. Cochrane was going into shock — something the body does naturally when severely wounded. It was taking every ounce of energy for the soldier to draw breath.

Bear, meanwhile, was tending to Cochrane's bandages, pulled one off, uttered an expletive, then vomited.

The medevac helicopter arrived and Bear made sure Cochrane was on it. The helicopter was taking fire, and Cochrane thought it would blow up like the previous one had. It flew away, and Cochrane faded into a white light and a peaceful, calm feeling.

He thought of his fiancée, whose brother had drowned in shallow water in Eden Prairie after a car crash in 1968. He was to marry her. He thought about how he couldn't die.

"I couldn't do that to my poor wife," Cochrane said.

He arrived in a Marine hospital in Quang Tri and doesn't recall much from being there except being hungry. He had to recover enough — about a month for the collapsed lung — before being transported to Japan. A C-130 cargo airplane took him to a bigger hospital, and in the airplane he saw soldiers with more severe wounds than his, particularly lost limbs. He was in Japan for a couple of days, then off to Travis Air Force Base northeast of Oakland, California.

He witnessed one severely injured man who was taken off the plane, smelled the air, realized he was in the United States, then suddenly died.

Cochrane was sent to Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Colorado. His records were lost during the chaos, delaying his discharge. He told the



Bill Cochrane stands on the deck of his home in Eden Prairie in 2017. He has been the vice chairman for the Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund for many years. It manages the trust fund stemming from the 2006 sale of a 56-acre Big Island Veterans Camp in the middle of Lake Minnetonka. It is now Orono's Big Island Nature Park.

Survivor of Battle of Ripcord shares his story

Bill Cochrane today serves on Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund

authorities he would just walk out, that he had no further obligation to the Army.

Before the Army, Cochrane had worked in Milwaukee, but his boss now worked in Minneapolis. He made room for the wounded veteran in the company — Ford Motor Co., which has a strong track record of hiring veterans.

He had a four-day whirlwind. He got a job, got a car and got married. Susan, his bride, planned it all.

"All I had to do was show up,"

Cochrane said.

They were married at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Edina in 1970. Susan passed away in May 2014. Cochrane spent most of his career in the Twin Cities and Detroit working for Ford in sales and marketing, though the company sent him to St. Louis for a stint. These days, the recipient of the Purple Heart and Bronze Star resides in Eden Prairie.

Cochrane grew up in Richfield and is part of the Richfield High School class of 1964. His parents moved to Minnetonka while he was in college.

Cochrane has been going to Big Island in Lake Minnetonka since he was a Cub Scout. He has been there as a veteran, too. His brother used to have a home on St. Alban's Bay, and Susan's brother lived on North Arm. Both brothers had boats, and the family would enjoy spending time on the water.

Cochrane, on behalf of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, is the vice chairman of the trust fund that manages income from the 2006 sale of the 56-acre campground on Lake Minnetonka's Big Island to the city of Orono. The group is called Veterans 4 Veterans,

and it provides funds for projects that benefit veterans all over Minnesota.

Veterans have been visiting the island for more than 90 years. Thanks to sponsors such as IBM and former Orono Mayor Gabriel Jabbour, who owns and runs Tonka Bay Marina, area veterans once a year get to enjoy a three-hour boat ride on Lake Minnetonka with a lunch and a stop on Big Island. Excursions have been privately funded for more than 30 years.

Cochrane went to college at the University of Wisconsin-Stout for engineering. He had worked in Milwaukee but had some indecision of what he wanted to do and enlisted in the Army for two years. After basic and learning to be a combat engineer, he sought to get the commitment behind him.

His combat engineering unit was attached to the 82nd Airborne Division and sent to an airstrip in South Vietnam. After one look at his background in mathematics, a personnel officer assigned him to do calculations for artillery fire. He was assigned to a battery that had about 35 percent of its unit remaining.

Cochrane experienced uneventful missions for a spell and, eventually, his unit was sent to join the 101st Airborne Division at Camp Evans near Hué north of Da Nang and eventually to Gladiator Base in the nearby mountains. His artillery unit had accurate 105 mm guns, but not as far-reaching as the Soviet guns the NVA had. At Gladiator, he experienced a zipper attack — a suicide attack where American soldiers at the guard points had to shoot the enemy down or be killed.

Cochrane didn't sleep well. "You have the realization that these people are trying to kill us," he said.

For the clandestine offensive Operation Texas Star, his unit was at Ripcord, built on top of a hill and used to destroy enemy supply lines.

On July 20, though Cochrane was no longer there, a soldier in an infantry platoon scouting a nearby hill tapped into an enemy communication wire. Thanks to a translator, they learned there were 6,000 to 8,000 NVA soldiers dug in around Ripcord on all sides. Between that knowledge and the artillery fire they had taken through the battle, Gen. Sidney Berry on July 22 made his decision to evacuate Ripcord. Amid fire, helicopters extracted soldiers and weapons from the hilltop base.

In all, 75 Americans were killed at the Battle of Ripcord that July, but the total rises to 139 in the A Shau Valley when counting from March to July. It was the last major confrontation of the war between the NVA and American ground forces.

Gen. Jensen becomes director of Army National Guard

Continued from Page 1

ask. And each and every time this organization rose to the occasion."

Manke assumed the responsibilities of adjutant general from Lt. Gen. Jon Jensen, who in July was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as director of the Army National Guard. He was sworn in on Aug. 10 in Arlington, Virginia, and promoted to lieutenant general.

Jensen served as Minnesota adjutant general since November of 2017.

Jensen attributed the success of the organization to the continued support at all levels of government and from individual citizens for the soldiers and airmen of the Minnesota National Guard.

"We serve in your communities," said Jensen. "And I'm deeply

appreciative of the trust that you give us and the support that you give us every single day."

During the ceremony, Walz promoted Manke up from brigadier general. Walz had announced Manke as successor to Jensen in mid-August. The adjutant general serves for a term of seven years and is a state employee appointed by the governor of Minnesota.

"Our state and nation are going through some challenging times," said Manke. "But I hope you can sleep a little easier at night knowing how seriously I take this assignment. I am engaged and committed to the Minnesota National Guard and the success of Minnesota as a member of your team."

Manke and his wife, Mary, have two children, Kalie and Lucas. They are both lieutenants in the Army.



Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke speaks after being sworn in as leader of the Minnesota National Guard.

To schedule an appointment in advance go to RedCrossBlood.org enter legion conference for zip code or call 1-866-236-3276



Legion Conference Blood Drive
Breezy Point Resort
Lakeside B
Thursday, October 22—12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Please Bring Photo ID or Donor Card

To save time at your appointment complete RapidPass before you arrive at the drive.

1-800-Red-Cross | 1-800-733-3767 | RedCrossBlood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

MACV staff driven by their personal journeys

Continued from Page 1

His father founded a Vietnamese-language publication, which served as a pamphlet to help reunite refugees in the United States

"This was a place where people put ads for loved ones they could not find," he said.

He posted a photo of his mother in the pamphlet, and they connected. Nguyen joked that he is the happy ending after all the heartache, worry and separation.

"We have a newspaper clipping with my dad in his bellbottoms and his mustache," he said.

His father passed away in 2005, but he did live the American dream of raising a family in the United States, alongside his mother.

His father worked at Honeywell at first. He took his passion for civic engagement, and he applied for a job with Hennepin County in the social services area. His father worked in the food support program for more than 30 years.

Enlisted on Sept. 10, 2001

Little did David Nguyen know that, when he enlisted, it would be the day before the 9/11 attacks, the day the world changed.

He went through basic at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, in November 2001, followed by jump school at Fort Benning, Georgia.

From there, he served until 2004 with the 82nd Airborne Division, as a supply specialist for the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The famed division is not just about jumping out of airplanes. As a rapid-deployment force, the 82nd goes anywhere in the world in a moment's notice. The saying goes: "Wheels up in 18 hours or less."

Nguyen was with the 82nd Airborne for 17 days before he deployed to Afghanistan for about eight months. He was among the first to go.

"When we arrived, it was really a barren desert."

They set up tents by an airstrip near Kandahar.

"It was as authentic to the movies as you can make it, and we slept outside some nights," he added.

In 2003, he came back and was home for four months before he was then deployed to Fallujah, Iraq, a hot area of combat.

"It was a totally different deployment than Afghanistan, and I spent more time deployed overseas than I spent with my unit stateside," he said.

Nguyen worked primarily as a supply clerk, helping provide supplies to soldiers going out on missions.

In Fallujah, he was promoted and selected as the commander's driver.

"My main responsibility was taking care of the commander's vehicle and driving the commander. It was a completely different deployment for me because I drove conduits and our company drove with the line companies, and so I probably went on just as many missions with our entire battalion," he said.

Nguyen witnessed violence and rocket-propelled grenades that were fired, as well as firefights and mortars launched into camp that exploded at night.

"We were based close by — west of the actual city," he said.

Pride of patriot son

"In the Vietnamese culture, the big focus is going to college, and you choose among the profession of becoming a doctor, lawyer or engineer," Nguyen said.

It was a shock and surprise when he told his father how he decided to enlist in the Army. He did so without the permission or blessing of his parents.

The decision to enlist came from a



The family photograph shows David as the baby, alongside his mother, Van, and his father, Hein, his older brother, Huy, and his sister, Lynn Lynh.



David Nguyen's family relaxes for a family photo. David holds son Oliver, 4, while Elizabeth holds son Leo, 2.



In fall of 2003, he was a young soldier in Iraq photographed at the Falluja railway station during a convoy mission alongside his friend and platoon sergeant, Freddy Cruz.

wanderlust place in his heart, Nguyen said, and was somewhat impulsive at 20 years old after he had spent two years at Normandale Community College.

"After I joined, I came home and said, 'Dad, you are going to have to have a seat,'" he said.

Now that he works on behalf of veterans at MACV, his decision makes sense in the rearview mirror and gives him a sense of purpose.

"I have always felt there has been some kind of higher power just coaching me along, and I think about the veterans we serve and sometimes the thing that you need, you are not able to see or recognize that thing, and only until you are able to recognize that, then do certain things happen," he said. "For me, I needed to go, and I think because I chose to sign up, I think it set the stage for the deployments."

A short time after he told his father about the enlistment, his dad said to him: "You have chosen your path and I am proud of you. That was really my passion — to want to get out and to explore the world."

"I think, for me, I needed to go, but I also think since I chose to sign up, it set the stage for the deployment, and I was like, 'Let's do this!' and I was ready to defend my country and fight as a patriot, and I was proud to be what we called at the time, 'America's Tip of the Spear' in the 82nd Airborne rapid-deployment cycle, and I was in Afghanistan within four months of signing up to be in the Army," he said.

Military service "was what I needed, and I feel like being as far away as we were in Afghanistan, it felt right for me because I had the energy and the motivation," he said.

The deployment was hard for his parents.

"My dad would go into my room and turn on the night light every night when I was deployed, every night," he said.

During his deployment to Iraq, his brother succumbed to an aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It was November 2003.

Nguyen left the active-duty Army in October 2004. In January 2005, his father died. It was tough to lose two family members in a short span.

Showing love to his mom was important to him since he understood how she had endured such devastating loss of her older son and husband.

This period of his life was a crossroads, like it can be for many veterans. He faced deep grief and needed to address his own mental health.

"I had to work many challenges, and I was brought to MACV, and in 2005, I had been struggling to integrate back into community, and I was living with my mom and became a student at the University of Minnesota," he said.

He experienced times where he was looking for areas where a bomb may go off. He was also serving as the man of the house, wanting to take care of his mother with the household grass and winter snowfall.

In 2005, he bumped into folks in military uniforms, and he told them he was a student now. But he eventually began talking with them.

"I felt like I kept getting drawn back to it, and because of the Army, I felt very comfortable talking with officers about the ROTC program that trains officers," he said.

Nguyen joined the Minnesota Army National Guard and began training to become an officer. He was commissioned as an officer where he would lead a platoon in the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade.

He earned a bachelor's degree in literature and went on to earn a master's degree in public and nonprofit administration. He left the National Guard in 2009.

"I was on an odyssey trying to find my real path in life and, at times, I was struggling with life and resources, and I had my own housing crisis after I helped my mom move to Iowa, and just like every person who comes to MACV, they have their own personal journey that has brought them here, and I say that because we are a nonprofit, and nonprofits are driven by their mission," he said.

Full circle

Before he came to work for MACV, he faced his personal challenges and volunteered to work with veterans who were incarcerated or just out.

"That was the first time I have come into contact with this entire ecosystem of veteran services because I had never reached out ever," he said.

His volunteer work meant he began receiving letters from veterans coming out of jail or prison, and he needed to gather resources like the networking services that are offered at MACV.

"The stories of our veterans are the most valuable thing that we need to understand and cherish like we do at the MACV, and for me, to have my own personal struggles kind of helped me identify with them," he added.

Nguyen began working at MACV in June 2013.

"In many ways, my personal odyssey brought me full circle back to my enlistment paperwork," Nguyen said, who shared how he works with the man who enlisted him into the military years ago.

Nguyen loves his fulfilling career helping lift veterans via the MACV.

"Our job at MACV is to be the best guides for our veterans, and sometimes for veterans that means we need to walk with them, and sometimes they are not at a place where they can walk with us," he said.

"Other times, and many times, they are walking with us and we help them get back to stable housing," he said.

In addition to housing agencies and property owners, MACV works in partnership with the federal VA and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, which maintains the Minnesota Homeless Veterans Registry.

"We identify each veteran on the list to make sure no veteran falls through the cracks," he said.

Many agencies provide veteran names and referrals to MACV.

"We are positioned in Minnesota to be the fourth state in the nation to declare a functional zero in regards to veteran homelessness, and we work to effectively end veteran homelessness, and our goal at MACV is to end veteran homelessness in the state of Minnesota."

"I think a measurement of MACV is all the homeless veterans you do not see on the street because we do so much work on the streets, and because veterans are coming to us, and they go into housing and so no one ever sees them," he said.

"That is why The American Legion has been so instrumental because they will deliver food to our homes and help veterans," he said.

Many of the MACV staff are driven by own personal journeys and each staff member embodies their own skill set and personal and professional qualities that make the team work well together, Nguyen said.

The pandemic has meant MACV staff has needed to work even closer to help veterans during the uncertain times and health challenges that may be present during the COVID-19 in the past six months.

"MACV is even more relevant because we can disperse into our remote work environment seamlessly with Zoom meetings, database platforms unlike some other nonprofits that have

Continued on Page 9

By Anne Sonnee
Minnesota Department
of Veterans Affairs

MINNEAPOLIS — Carolyn Mowery is bored. The dedicated volunteer at the Minneapolis Veterans Home has been unable to donate her time supporting chaplain services, a role she has played since 2005, because of coronavirus restrictions.

In March, the home, along with long-term facilities across the state, implemented visitor restrictions that have prevented hundreds of volunteers from supporting the staff and helping some 300 veterans at the Minneapolis facility.

On Aug 28, she celebrated her 100th birthday. Mowery remains eager to return to her role at the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

"I miss the schedule of meeting with and getting to know people and getting their ideas on life and sharing mine. They are pretty good guys," Mowery said. "I have become friends with residents' families, and for me to be included in their families is very, very nice. I feel part of something, and the staff is pretty darn nice, too. I miss everyone at the home."

And the home is eager to have her back.

Chaplain Jim Leith described Mowery as "a kind, gentle, Christian woman who brings hope to many of our residents. She has a keen sense of where they are at and a great awareness of the world around here. She has always been an inspiration to me, and I look forward always to her Wednesday visits."

"Carolyn," said resident Bill Cox, "is a very caring person and jumps hurdles to find the people she can reach. Carolyn has been a constant presence here and is an excellent listener and friend."

Mowery moved to Minneapolis in 1962 and is originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She became a dual Canadian/American citizen in 1997.

Mowery served in the Royal Canadian Air Force from September 1942 to December 1945, as a pilot officer, flying officer. When discharged, she was a flight lieutenant, the equivalent of a captain in the U.S. Air Force.

The RCAF came to the University of Manitoba, where I



Carolyn Mowery stands in front of birthday cakes, celebrating her centennial.

WORLD WAR II

Mpls. Veterans Home volunteer celebrates 100

Carolyn Mowery, a Canadian veteran, misses her vets

was a student and I joined the RCAFWD, or the Royal Canadian Air Force Women's Division," she said.

"I was the 158th girl that joined the Royal Canadian Air Force from the province. As the years progressed, with constant education, training and promotions in the field, my assignment had a very special interest: planning for our prisoners of war returning from Europe, mostly from Germany. I traveled to London for a six-month period in 1945. As Canadian soldiers were released from POW camps, I helped process them from hospitals in London to go to medical facilities in Ottawa, Canada, for whatever follow-up was needed."

She finished her bachelor's degree after her wartime service. The Canadian government

covered the costs of her graduate degree in psychology in Chicago, where she met her husband John, an American student who was a former American WWII pilot. They married in 1958.

Carolyn Mowery remained in the Reserves. She was called up in 1950 to respond to major flooding in Winnipeg and the Red River Valley. A state of emergency was declared, and the Canadian Army and Red Cross were brought in.

Over the course of the flood, 100,000 residents — one third of Winnipeg — were evacuated from their homes. It was the largest evacuation in Canadian history until the 1979 Missis-sauga train derailment.

The Mowerys moved to Minneapolis so John could attend the University of Minnesota and complete his doctorate in

psychology. They also lived in Indianapolis and Toronto. Carolyn retired from Lutheran Social

Service, where she worked for 21 years as a therapist. She loves to travel, and she and John made many winter trips to Hawaii. She also would regularly travel without John to spend April in Paris — 11 trips in all.

The year she retired from LSS, she enrolled in the University of Saint Thomas where she studied French for a year. She has a nephew in Texas and nieces and nephews in Winnipeg. Her "baby brother," 93, and his wife live in Winnipeg as well.

Volunteering at the veterans home has allowed Mowery to extend her "military career." "I like volunteering because of the contact with the veterans. My military experience was very satisfying. I really got to know the guys and become a real military Joe. They were great guys," she said. "It is nice to be back amongst them. John (my husband) was in the military, too. I like being around the veterans

now, very much."

While an in-person birthday party is not possible, the Minneapolis Veterans Home celebrated Mowery's milestone birthday with a shower of cards and well wishes from residents, staff and other volunteers. The team looks forward to Mowery and her fellow 344 volunteers returning.

"Carolyn was one of the first volunteers I got to know when I started at the veterans home 3 1/2 years ago," said Administrator Thomas Paul. "It was at her annual birthday party she puts on for all staff and veterans. Over the years, I have got to know her as a very gracious host and volunteer. She is a very humble and dedicated volunteer. Everyone always looks forward to her great party. I wish her the very best on her 100th birthday and hope to be able to again see her on our campus. She is deeply missed by all of us."



Carolyn Mowery served as an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War II.



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Continued from Page 8

gone out of business," he said.

"Our service-based platform has never skipped a beat, and we are still meeting with veterans, and we are utilizing all of our equipment," he said.

"We have made a big effort to move veterans out of congregate living to keep them safe during the pandemic because we do not want them in shelter living elbow-to-elbow, and we have established partnerships with key hotels," he said.

MACV has been able to perform its regular outreach and serve as connectors to the VA and county veteran service officers, Nguyen said.

"Hotels have become our indirect pipeline that is now formalized to better serve veterans during this challenging time for the country," he added.

"Our transitional housing has been a great tool to get our veterans from the streets," he said.

Monetary donations and gift cards are always welcome by veterans and veteran families.

"You would be amazed at what that can do for veterans, and we are a passionate group of people," he said.

If you are a veteran in need of housing, employment or legal help, call 612-255-8695, or visit mac-v.org, or contact Nguyen directly at dnguyen@mac-v.org.

That same contact info can be used for anyone wanting to donate or partner with MACV.

Even small gifts, such as handknit children's scarves knitted by volunteers from Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance company, are appreciated, he said.

"You could tell by the look of their faces that it was comfortable and a stable thing at a time of uncertainty," he said.

The Tremendous Trio

Today, Nguyen makes a home

in Eagan with his wife, Elizabeth, and their three energetic boys, whom he affectionately calls the Tremendous Trio. There is Oliver, 4, Leo, 2, and baby Max, 9 months. His wife works as a yoga teacher and reflexologist.

Each son, he said, exhibits his own personality.

"Oliver is an extrovert, and Leo is so interesting with his mannerisms, and he is so cautious and does not like trees and does not like listening to NPR," Nguyen said, jokingly.

In his spare time, Nguyen finds way with his wife to air out the boys and spend time as a family together outdoors at parks and hiking. They strive to have fun together while disengaging their children from screens and technology. Personally, he likes to run and work out to maintain good health. Staying active, just like in the military, serves as a way to decompress.



Farmington Post 189 Commander Doug Taube stands at the Farmington Area Veterans Memorial, dedicated in 2014. Post 189 won the 3rd District's Post Excellence Award. He said he grew membership by being visible and available in his community, working through at-large Post 1982 lists and asking people about their military service.

We're open for Legion business

Farmington Post 189 rises from the ashes, keeps growing

By Tim Engstrom

FARMINGTON — Google might claim Farmington American Legion Post 189 is “permanently closed” in white letters within a big red streak.

But Google doesn't know much about the resiliency of The American Legion. A Post is not a building. A Post is the members. Farmington proves that.

In 2008, Post 189 caught fire. The insurance coverage didn't cover enough, so they took out a \$760,000 loan to make repairs. The place was active, with many weddings and banquets, and was making money in a city of 23,901 people. But employees were putting money in their pockets and not in the till. What's more, monthly financial documents were not filed, and a lender requested payment in full by the end of the year.

In the end, Post 189 declared bankruptcy and sold its building. The Legion members who had spent much of their time running a business now didn't even meet in the summers. The Post had a low profile.

“For a long time, Farmington residents thought there was no Legion anymore,” said Post Commander Douglas Taube.

In September 2018, Taube was invited to a Legion meeting. The members discussed turning in their charter and joining another Post. Taube, who grew up in Lakeville but calls Farmington home, opposed closing.

“If you do that,” he told them, “I am backing out completely, and I will not become a member of this American Legion Post.”

He went to a second meeting in October. He walked out as the new commander of Post 189.

Service to country

Taube, 57, served in the active-duty

How to ask someone to join the Legion?

Farmington Post 189 Commander Doug Taube isn't shy about asking veterans to sign up. Here are his tips:

1. Ask anyone who seems like a veteran if they are a veteran.

2. If you have a Legion business card, carry it with you wherever you go. Hand it to them and say, “If you feel like you want to join, I would be more than happy to bring you on board.”

3. Explain what the Legion does. You can explain the Four Pillars or even simply state the Legion is veterans helping other veterans and their communities, whether it is in their town or at the VA or in the halls of Congress.

4. Follow up with people. Don't be afraid to ask directly, help them with the form and collect the dues.

Air Force from June 1982 to January 1990. He was stationed at Ellsworth AFB in South Dakota until 1987. For the first four or five years, he was in a transportation squadron, working with aerospace ground equipment, like big generators and air compressors. Then he went into transportation and drove everything from staff cars to tractor-trailers to 15-ton wreckers.

In that role, he sometimes took VIPs to Mount Rushmore. President Ronald Reagan came in September 1987, and Taube met him and Nancy in person when they arrived. Taube took Secret Service agents on three different trips

to Rushmore.

That same year, he put in for base of preference. He chose Holloman AFB in New Mexico but got Little Rock AFB in Jacksonville, Arkansas. He is glad the Air Force sent him to Choice No. 2.

“I visited Holloman. I would not have liked living there,” he said.

From Arkansas, he went on temporary duties to Texas, Louisiana and some other places stateside but nothing overseas. After he got out, he was in the Reserves for a year until back problems ended his military career.

A special recognition

When Taube became commander, Post 189 had 53 members, down from 280 in 2011, when the building was sold.

The building, along Highway 3, became a Carbone's Pizza. The owner closed it at the end of 2019 to seek a smaller location. The property was sold to the Holiday Station Stores chain. Construction is happening now.

Taube was sworn in as new commander in November 2018 by Eagan Post 594 Commander John Flynn.

Taube told him: “I will hit the pavement hard and give it 110 percent. I will work on increasing membership and work on getting more women involved and being involved in the community.”

He has fulfilled his promise. The membership count is now 116.

“By the grace of God, I had a lot of help,” he said.

The 3rd District had planned to honor Taube and his crew of Legionnaires at Farmington VFW Post 7662 on Aug. 19 with the Post Excellence Award, but those plans were shifted to Sept. 16.

At the presentation, 3rd District Membership Director John Flynn said Post 189 was one of four Posts in Minnesota to earn the recognition and all four are in the 3rd District.

The others are Cannon Falls Post 142, Eagan Post 594 and Bellechester Post 598. There were 185 Posts nationwide to receive it.

Flynn said membership must be at 103 percent of the previous year, with a renewal rate of at least 90 percent. Post 189 was at 103.8 percent and at 96 percent for those two marks.

They also must file the Consolidated Post Report by July 1, have one officer attend District meetings and hold a community event.

He recalled the strife the Farmington Post faced and enjoyed seeing it grow. “It was a blast to watch it,” Flynn said. “This is what the Legion does.”

Taube gave credit to his Post. “It is not an individual award,” he said. “It is a Clifford Larson Post 189 award.”

Third District Vice Commander Kelley Adelsman noted the presentation happened on American Legion Day. The organization has been helping veterans for 102 years.

“People have poured their livelihood into The American Legion,” she said.

She told of past successes and the need to build the organization for the future.

Third District Commander Linda Dvorak said: “I want to thank each and every one of you.”

Growing membership

He said the secret to growing membership in Farmington was being involved in the community and raising the profile of the Post.

In June last year, the Post hosted a sensory zone during Dew Days, so named because, back when pop was big, Farmington had a high consumption rate of Mountain Dew. PepsiCo, maker of Dew, withdrew from Dew Days in 2006, but the event lives on.

What's a sensory zone? For the last three blocks of the parade route, there are no sirens, musical instruments, horns or revving of engines, making it more friendly for dogs, children and some seniors. It's an area parade watchers can sit without being overwhelmed. Farmington and Post 189 were the first the state to do it. There was a lot of

press attention, and Fastenal of Lakeville donated 4,000 earplugs, too.

Taube was on the Dew Days Committee, and, most visibly, Legionnaires were spread out through the sensory zone interacting with townspeople.

The Post hosts a Wall of Honor on Independence Day, and it holds Memorial Day events at two elder care centers in town. Whenever he is out and around town, he is promoting the Legion.

“People know I am the commander,” he said. “Veterans, believe it or not, have come up to me and said, ‘I would like to join.’”

Taube is a firm believer in working off the Post 1982 list. That's where you find local at-large members and ask them to join your Post.

“I've done it numerous times and have had the best success with that,” he said.

He gave credit to Post 189 Adjutant Jason Kohlbeck for being thorough.

“He has been with the Legion for 17 years and is good at it. If I have any questions whatsoever, he has been tremendous.”

Right now, the Post has three officers, and the goal is to increase officers as the membership grows. They meet at the VFW in Farmington at 7 p.m. every third Wednesday.

Taube is disabled as a result of his back. He has had five major back operations and a sixth is planned for October. He is not working and has the time to be out and about for the Legion. In addition to military service, he was a volunteer firefighter for five and a half years and has a hard charging attitude about him that inspires others.

“When I say I am going to step up to the plate, I am going to give it 110 percent,” he said.

He credited his time in the Air Force, especially the NCO prep courses, for teaching him to be a good supervisor. He liked to be hands-on and get the job done.

His advice to new Post commanders is this: Have big shoulders. Be able to listen, take it in and move on. Even if a member is directing a complaint at a commander, he or she should not take it personally.



Third District Membership Director John Flynn, Commander Linda Dvorak and, on the right, Vice Commander Kelley Adelsman present Farmington Post 189 Commander Douglas Taube with a Post Excellence Award for “Devotion to Mutual Helpfulness” on Sept. 16 in the banquet hall of Farmington VFW Post 7662. The local newspaper was there to document the achievement.



A paver at the Farmington Area Veterans Memorial recognizes Doug Taube. He grew up in Lakeville and now calls Farmington his home.

Longtime Legion comptroller dies

The longtime comptroller for The American Legion Department of Minnesota died Sept. 19 after a long struggle with heart disease. Services were Sept. 26.

Eugene Kahnke, 91, served as comptroller for more than 26 years. In addition, he served 1996-97 as the Department treasurer.

He served in the Navy during the Korean War and was honorably discharged with a heart disability.

He lived in West St. Paul and was a 64-year member of Janesville Post 281 in southern Minnesota, where he grew up. Initially a farmer, he studied

at Mankato Commercial College in the mid-1960s. He then worked as an accountant in Owatonna before he came to work for The American Legion. He retired in 1995.

He worked with numerous Legion programs: Lyle Mickelson Fund, Heart Research Foundation, Legionville Corp., Kidney House Fundraiser and the Brain Science Foundation. He also was a member of VFW, ANAVICUS and the Disabled American Veterans.



Eugene Kahnke

He volunteered considerably with many veteran organizations, including Beyond the Yellow Ribbon. Because of his tireless efforts as an advocate for veterans, Gov. Arne Carlson declared July 8, 1995 as Gene Kahnke Day in Minnesota.

Memorials are preferred to Legionville Safety Patrol Camp. Send to Legionville, The American Legion, 20 W. 12th St., St. Paul, MN 55155-2000. Flowers were sent on behalf of the Department.

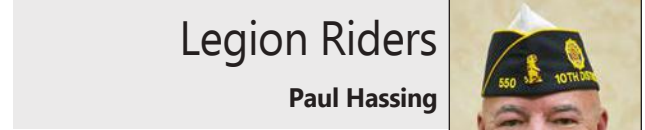
Thanks for great times this summer

Greetings, American Legion Family.

Well, the summer is at an end officially. I hope the weather holds out for a little while longer to get more riding in, but it is inevitable.

I have had a great couple of weekends with the Legion family lately. First was at the annual Camporee at Legionville, and second was the annual Riders Romp also held at Legionville.

I really wish we would get more participation at these events. It is a great way to have some fun, and pick the brains of other chapters. Find out what has worked, what hasn't, and why. It is also a great way to meet new friends from all over



Legion Riders

Paul Hassing

the state that have the same interests.

For next year's Romp, I would like to see each district try to get as many people as they can to attend. This year's winner for the most was the first district. They came the farthest, and had the most people.

Thank you, Roe Naylor, and the Austin Chapter 91 for all of the cooking. Great job!

The Minnesota American Legion Riders will have another meeting on Dec. 5 at

the North St. Paul Legion.

It will be at 10 in the morning, followed by the Department Pearl Harbor Rally, which the Riders will be hosting.

Thank you all, and continue doing great things.

Paul Hassing is the director of the American Legion Riders for the Department of Minnesota.

Let's respect the flag and those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom

The following commentary was sent to newspapers statewide. Among others, it was printed in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Fargo Forum, Albert Lea Tribune, West Central Tribune (of Willmar), Duluth News Tribune, Crookston Daily Times, Mankato Free Press, Austin Daily Herald, Rochester Post-Bulletin and Fairmont Sentinel.

By Mark Dvorak
Department of Minnesota commander

The American Legion Department of Minnesota recognizes the nation's divisions are laid bare during a difficult year for all Americans, and we hope to explain why the national anthem should not be the time and place for kneeling or other forms of protest.

The playing of the national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner," is intended as a time for unity. It is a time when we can be one United States of America. After all, despite divisions over race, criminal justice, employment, health care, economy, elections and, of course, contentious partisan rhetoric, we, as Americans, all want the same thing — a more perfect union.

The song's history at sports contests dates back to the seventh-inning stretch of Game 1 of the 1918 World Series in Chicago. The World War I death count was at 100,000, and a day before a bomb had exploded in the Windy City, killing four and injuring dozens. Like now, America

was in turmoil. The Chicago Cubs decided to play "The Star-Spangled Banner" during their contest with the Boston Red Sox at Weeghman Park, now Wrigley Field. The song became the national anthem in 1931, and playing it before sporting events grew and especially proliferated during World War II.

This tradition of a moment of oneness and national pride continued after the war. Like the word "United" in our country's name, this solemn time allowed us to reflect and put away our differences.

It pains us, as veterans, to see time for honoring the flag become politicized because so many of us have risked our lives or died for this country, so that we may secure the blessings of liberty — such as free speech and the constant back-and-forth dialogue on important issues of the day. We aren't opposed to improving the lives of America's people, no matter race, ethnicity, gender or politics. Veterans served with people of all backgrounds and were willing to die for them. Wear whichever message you wish to convey. Support whichever cause you desire. Push for change. That's America.

But, for brief moments in our lives, let's recognize that there are brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, mothers and fathers, grandfathers and grandmothers, sons and daughters, who have given their lives for this nation. Respecting the flag respects them.

Veterans Restorative Justice Act passes again

ST. PAUL — In September, the Minnesota Senate unanimously passed the Minnesota Veterans Restorative Justice Act again.

And, again, it went nowhere after that because of the state government's fiscal quiet period for bond-rating companies. Until Sept. 21, it could not pass laws that impact the state's fiscal picture, even if they save money.

The Minnesota Management and Budget's fiscal note shows the act saves \$1.3 million in the first two years and \$2.3 million the next two years.

The Senate and House met on Sept. 11.

Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka and House Speaker Melissa Hortman have assured The American Legion, VFW and other members of the Minnesota Commander's Tasks Force that the act will pass after the quiet period. Gov. Tim Walz has said he will sign it.

The date of the Minnesota Legislature meeting in October has not been set, but it typically has happened on or near the 12th day of the month.

The act allows judges to hold pleas for low-level crimes and instead send a veteran to veterans-oriented treatment, such as VA counseling, if the actions can be tied to military-related trauma.

The SAL Update: Camporee was a successful gathering

Greetings to the American Legion Family from your SAL Detachment Commander Dave Vulcan.

As we move through the coronavirus and working things out, I would like to thank all the volunteers who showed up and helped out with Camporee and Fall Harvest Rally. It was a home run. We had lots and lots of American Legion Family members show up for the whole weekend. It was certainly a good time. It was a beautiful weekend at Legionville.

We are now looking forward to Fall Conference at Breezy Point. If you have not made your reservations and/or sent your registrations in you should probably do that now.

I would like to bring up my

Detachment commander

Dave Vulcan



commander's project for this year. It is a joint effort of trying to get the Legionville house in order and try to fix the Bauer Cabin. So if any family members with extra money would like to donate to the Legionville House and Bauer Cabin please reach out to me. It would be much appreciated. I know the Legionville Board would appreciate it and so would I.

I know with all the things that are going on fall is moving fast but we still have to think about membership. I hope you can get out there and help the Legion

Family get all the renewals done. And let's not forget we need new members as well.

So until I see you all at Fall Conference, stay safe, healthy, and we will see you all at Fall Conference.

God bless America.

Dave Vulcan is the commander of the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.

CAMPOREE CHEER



Photos by Shawn Davis

ALA Bloomington Unit 550 member Jody Hassing with her grandson, Ryland, a member of Hopkins Squadron 320.



John Weiss, Legion Riders member and SAL member from Roseville, sports a Legionville sweatshirt.



Detachment Commander Dave Vulcan accepts a \$100 personal check from Adjutant Dennis Henkemeyer at the Harvest Rally on Sept. 12 for the SAL Commander's Project, which aims to fix or replace the Bauer Cabin.



Membership Chairman Tim Weaver and Detachment Commander Dave Vulcan at the SAL meeting Sept. 12.



SAL Past National Commander Michael Deacon of Iowa attended Camporee.



Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Roundtable organizer Don Patton stands in front of a famous Navy photo of carrier planes flying over the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on Sept. 2. The Missouri was chosen as the place of Japanese surrender because it was the 3rd Fleet's flagship, not because it was named for President Truman's home state. MacArthur wanted the massive flyover to show America's military strength to the Japanese officials on board.

WORLD WAR II

Was an invasion of Japan possible?

Authors speak on the war plans and Japanese indecision that led to the dropping of two atomic bombs

By Tim Engstrom

ST. PAUL — The Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Roundtable resumed its presentations the evening of Sept. 8 at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul.

It was the first since March, but it wasn't like you could park and just waltz in.

Organizer Don Patton and his crew sent out feelers to regular attendees asking them to request invitations. If they made a request, the invitations were sent as postcards through the mail. Attendees had to show postcards and wear masks to enter. Spacing in the auditorium was required.

Normally, there are 200 to 300 people. This time, there were 37.

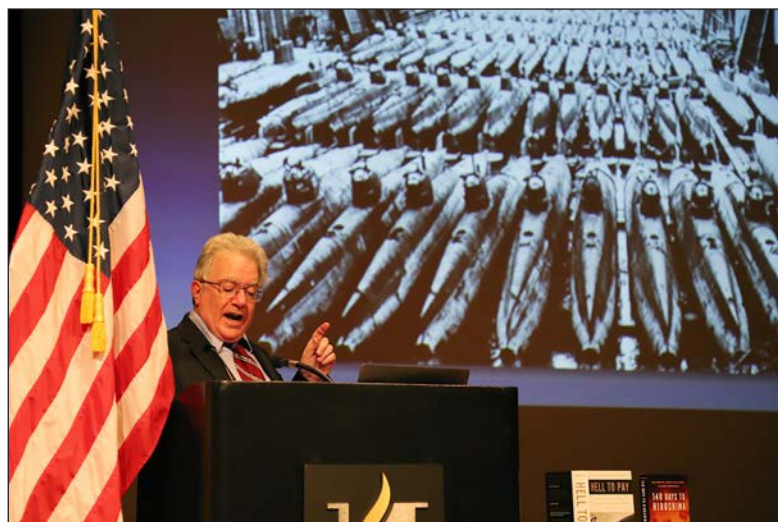
Doug Raney, director of the Minnesota Historical Society's metro locations, said the Minnesota History Museum was glad to welcome back programming. He said the first three programs will follow a similar protocol for attendance before possibly expanding. The next two are the Army's role in the Navy-dominated Pacific Theater, with author John McManus, on Oct. 13 and strategic mistakes by the Nazi leaders by author Andrew Nagorski on Oct. 27.

OK, back to the front.

On Sept. 8, author D.M. Giangreco of "Hell to Pay" spoke about Operation Downfall, the planned invasion of Japan, and author David Barrett of "140 Days to Hiroshima" spoke on the indecision of Japanese leadership that resulted in the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Invade or bomb?

By the Potsdam Conference of July 1945, U.S. casualties had exceeded 1.25 million in the war, said Giangreco. That's killed, wounded, diseased, the whole ball of wax. Most happened in the previous year in fighting Germany. America, he said, certainly was weary of war as it prepared to invade Japan.



Author D.M. Giangreco stands in front of a photograph of Japanese submarines produced out of sight of American aerial reconnaissance.

Operation Downfall comprised two invasions. Operation Olympic would be an invasion of the southern third of Kyushu, the southern island of the Japanese chain. This would provide runways for air assist in the fight on Honshu, the main island. X-Day was Dec. 1, 1945.

Operation Coronet was an invasion into Tokyo Bay and the Kanto Plain on Honshu, sending in more divisions than were used in Normandy. The beach landing sites were named for automobiles: Austin, Buick, Cadillac, so on. Y-Day was March 1, 1946.

Most advisers to the Army felt the invasion of Kyushu alone could bring Japan to its knees, Giangreco said, but no one could tell Gen. George Marshall how long it would take.

When Gen. Douglas MacArthur learned of the A-bomb, he thought of it as a tactical weapon.

Admiral Chester Nimitz, upon learning of it in February 1945 in Guam, famously told Commander Frederick Ashworth, "Young man, this is all very interesting, but August is a long time from now, and in the meantime, I have a war to fight."

The Japanese were rapidly reinforcing southern Kyushu, upping the

contingent of 20,000 men to 80,000, along with changing strategies for defense. Marshall still felt it would have been a walkover.

Giangreco said some say a B-29 bombing campaign would have been more humane than dropping the A-bombs. But, he said, that would have reduced Japan to a country without cities, killing 300,000 (triple the deaths of the two big bombs) and making 8 million people homeless.

The Navy blockade, under the plan, was to force starvation and, thus, surrender.

Giangreco said the starvation aspect might not have been so clear. Most of the population back then lived in the countryside. They grew vegetables and crops such as rice, wheat and barley. The military's notion that Japan would have run out of food has since been derided.

He said Japan never figured out central control of artillery but that would have been irrelevant in the tactics needed on Kyushu. He said the Japanese were able to accurately predict where Americans were invading, and the island's landscape made for a target-rich environment.

Some historians, he said, are confident about the American ability to

pulverize the Japanese defenses. Giangreco disagrees.

Every square inch of Iwo Jima and Okinawa were within range of Navy guns, yet the Japanese mounted strong fights. Most of Kyushu was out of range, and Japanese supply and communication lines were short.

"The Japanese demonstrated they could succeed with the right terrain," he said.

The plan to invade the Kanto Plain, Giangreco said, assumed snow was gone and assumed the Japanese would not flood the fields. No bridges, besides a few railroad bridges, were capable of holding vehicles over 12 tons.

A late start, he said, would enter the monsoon season, and U.S. soldiers could risk fighting much like they did a generation later in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam — but without helicopters.

On Kyushu, planners wanted to take over 11 airfields, with an invasion stopline 110 miles long after three and a half months, all with little terrain information available. It became immediately apparent, Giangreco said, that the timeline was too severe. The invasion of Honshu could not be moved back into the wet season, so X-Day for Kyushu was moved one month up to Nov. 1, 1945.

That meant less time to prepare.

U.S. leaders, he said, were afraid of making the next generation fight Japan all over again. Failure to conquer the mainland could have resulted in a lengthy war that "would have made Vietnam look like a firecracker."

Japan had highly defensible terraced rice fields, where the imperial army's Type 97 antitank rifle would have had a field day as tanks rose up over dikes exposing the soft underbelly. After losing Saipan, the Japanese increased production of the Type 97.

In fact, the country had stockpiled arms months in advance as part of its defensive plan, Operation Ketsu-Go, and kept much of its firepower and industry hidden from aerial photographs, he said. Many U.S. reports on Japan were rosy and political, aiming to be pro-Air Force. Postwar photos revealed hidden operations.

Operation Coronet would have been a quagmire. Giangreco said there was no way to take the Kanto Plain in a timely fashion before the monsoons, even if the Japanese didn't flood the fields, and the left flank was headed dangerously between foothills of the Kanto Range and the Tone River, the second-longest in Japan and the largest watershed. It would have been easy picking for Japanese artillery.

"This is just a balls-up mess no one would have anticipated," Giangreco said.

Defeat or surrender?

Most wars do not end in unconditional surrender.

When they met in Casablanca in January 1943, the Allies, at the urging of President Franklin Roosevelt, agreed to require unconditional surrender from their foes: Italy, Germany and Japan.

FDR told the American public: "We are fighting this war, because we did not have an unconditional surrender at the end to the last one."

World War I ended with an armistice. Germany then received harsh terms at the Treaty of Versailles, including losing its military capacity at a time the nation was facing militant communist rebels. The stab-in-the-back notion, which became popular postwar, was that civilians who overthrew the monarchy and signed the armistice betrayed the German military.

FDR, Barrett said, felt the lack of unconditional surrender led to the rise of Hitler and World War II.

President Harry Truman inherited this policy after Roosevelt's death in April 1945.

On May 11, 1945, Emperor Hirohito

and the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War — a superset of the Imperial Cabinet called the Big Six — discussed German capitulation. One of Big Six members, Minister of Foreign Affairs Shigenori Togo, wanted to end the war. Other members sought new ways to continue. They opted to befriend the Soviets to fight against America.

Via the Japanese diplomat in Moscow, Togo learned the Soviets only would accept unconditional surrender. Togo replied Japan could not consent to those terms under any circumstances.

In July, America tested the first atomic bomb in the New Mexico desert. Truman green-lighted the bomb. The Allies issued the Potsdam Declaration — unconditional surrender and the installation of a democratic government, disarming of the military and human rights reforms.

No reply came.

On Aug. 6, the Enola Gay, a B-29 Superfortress, dropped the "Little Boy" atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

Gen. Marshall, reading intelligence on the Japanese buildup of Kyushu and with three months until Nov. 1, considered using as many as nine atomic bombs as tactical weapons, three for each of the major landing areas.

By Aug. 8, there was only silence from Japan's leaders. The 20th Air Force sent 245 B-29s to bomb Yawata on northern Kyushu, scorching 22 percent of the metropolis.

But in Tokyo, Togo met with Hirohito, asking him to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration. Hirohito agreed. He told Togo to inform Admiral Kantaro Suzuki, who calls for an emergency session of the Big Six.

The meeting was delayed until the next day "because a member of the council decides he has more pressing business," Barrett said.

They met Aug. 9, and talks descended into a stalemate. Japan had its own atomic weapon program — to the point of feasible on paper but lacking time to build — and the Big Six concluded no country could produce enough fissile material to create more than one A-bomb.

Big Six members Admiral Soemu Toyoda, Minister of War Korechika Anami and Chief of the Army General Staff Yoshijiro Umezu were confident of Operation Ketsu-Go. They demanded either continuing the war or four conditions to end it:

- Preservation of the imperial system.
- No or limited occupation of Japan.
- Japanese control over disarmament.
- Japanese control over war crime trials.

That very day, the "Fat Man" bomb ravaged Nagasaki, and Russia entered the war with Japan in Manchuria. Suzuki was stunned, Barrett said, but the Big Six's demands remain unchanged.

Early on Aug. 10, the Emperor expressed his desire to end the war. Tokyo signaled a peace message to Washington with two conditions: preserve the imperial system and do not compromise the Emperor as the sovereign ruler.

The Allies counter:

- The Japanese government and authority of the Emperor shall be subject to the supreme commander of the Allied Powers.
- The ultimate form of government shall be established by the Japanese people.

Deadlocked, the Big Six bickered for two more days. Hirohito, on Aug. 14, intervened to break the impasse.

It became clear Anami wanted to stop the surrender. He cornered Umezu after the conference and asked: "Do you believe that the war should be continued even at the risk of launching a coup d'état?"

Umezu responded: "No, it is impossible, because the decision of His Majesty the Emperor has already been given."

Continued on Page 13

Winners of patriotic art contest named

The 2020 American Legion Department of Minnesota Patriotism and Purpose Art Contest had 26 entries from across Minnesota. The entry deadline was Sept. 1, and Department staff members from The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary judged the contest.

“The winning artwork will best reflect the impact our veterans have on our communities and our nation, particularly in inspiring patriotism and love for our country among Minnesota’s youth,” the entry rules state.

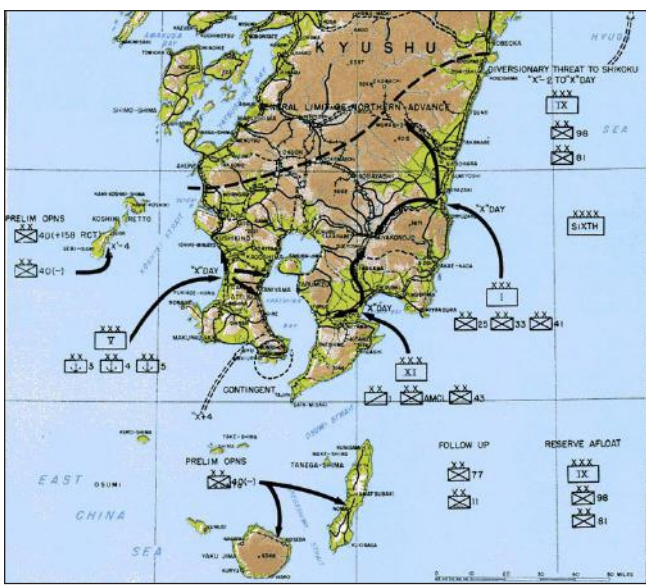
The winners in each of the two age categories received \$500 each. Here are the results:

Ages 13-17

1. Micah Bonick, Waconia
2. Kendra Harris, Sandstone
3. Taylor Radaich, Prior Lake
4. Carolyn Mangan, Pine City

Ages 5-12

1. Keira Radaich, Prior Lake
2. Reagan Radaich, Prior Lake
3. Finn Radaich, Prior Lake
4. Bree England, St. Paul



Public domain/Wikimedia

Plans for Operation Olympic. There are several X-Day marks where beach landings would have commenced.

Continued from Page 12

Amani then goes to his secretary, Col. Saburo Hayashi, asking to attack the U.S. fleet in Tokyo Bay with everything they have. (The fleet wasn't in Tokyo Bay.)

Hayashi said: “In the first place, it’s only a rumor that the U.S. fleet is outside Tokyo Bay. Secondly, the Emperor has just demanded an end to the war.”

Then he goes to his brother-in-law, Col. Masahiko Takeshita, who, after a talk, asked Anami to resign the cabinet instead. It would prompt a dissolution of the government and halt the war termination.

“Get me some ink,” he said. “I will write my resignation.” Then he vacillated. “And if I resign, I will never see the Emperor.”

On the night of Aug. 14, the eve of the broadcast to the people of the war’s end, Anami’s Ministry of War staff attempted a coup d’état, using lies to convince some members of the Imperial Guard to join them. Though they held the palace, they failed to find the two vinyl records of the surrender. The men holding them were in a vault beneath the palace. By dawn, Gen. Shizuichi Tanaka’s troops had surrounded them. The failed coup is now known as the Kyujo Incident.

Emperor Hirohito’s message was broadcast by national radio at noon Aug. 15. Barrett noted he never used the word “surrender.”

Instead, he said, the war “developed not necessarily to Japan’s advantage.”

He said Japan had “not fought to aggrandize its territory but, rather, to ensure Japan’s self-preservation and the stabilization of East Asia.”

On the atomic bomb, he said: “The enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is indeed incalculable. ... Should we continue to fight, it would not only result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also it would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.”

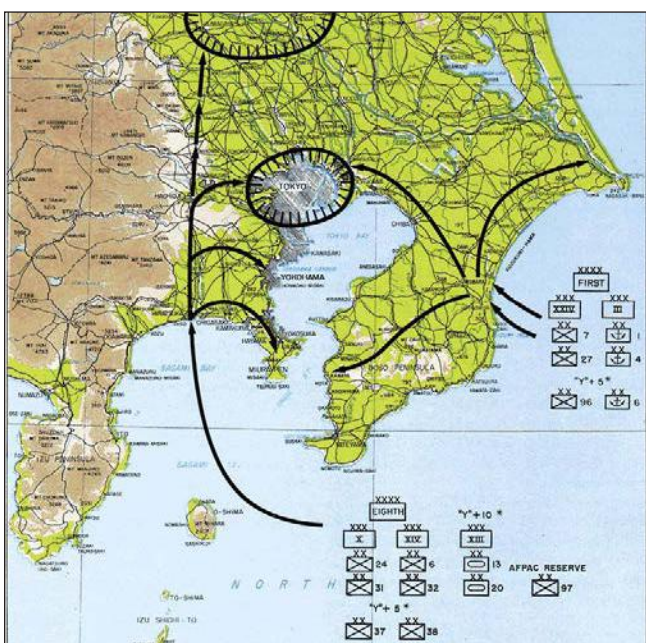
“Emperor Hirohito,” Barrett said, “ended the war because of the atomic bomb, and he said so four times.”

On Aug. 8, when speaking to Togo. On Aug. 15, in his speech to the people. On Sept. 6, in a letter to his son. On Sept. 7, to Gen. Douglas MacArthur. He told the American: “The peace party did not prevail until the bombing of Hiroshima created a situation which could be dramatized.”

Barrett made his point on defeat vs. surrender by quoting Japanese historian Sadao Asada.

Asada noted some people argue that Japan was a defeated nation by August 1945 and that atomic bombs were unnecessary.

“This argument confuses ‘defeat’ with ‘surrender.’ Defeat is a military fait accompli; whereas surrender is the formal acceptance of defeat by the nation’s leaders — an act of decision-making. After the loss of Saipan in early July 1944 brought Japan within range of B-29 bombers, its defeat had become certain, and Japan’s leaders knew this. But because its governmental machinery was, to a large extent, controlled by the military and hampered by a cumbersome system that required unanimity of views for any decision, Japanese leaders had failed to translate defeat into surrender.”



Public domain/Wikimedia

Plans for Operation Coronet. The left flank pushes dangerously between foothills and bodies of water.



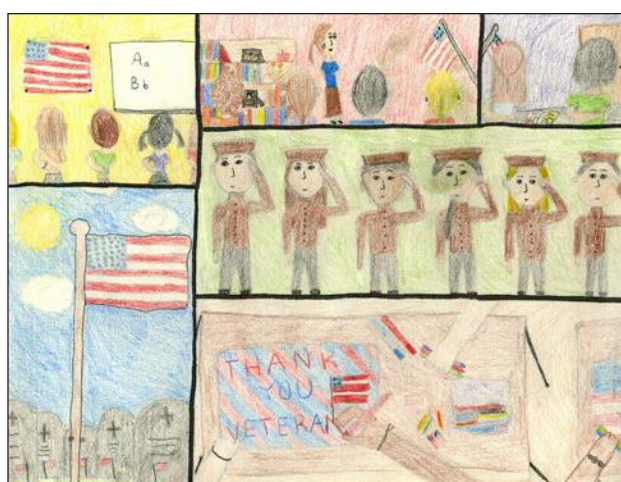
1st Place: Micah Bonick, Waconia



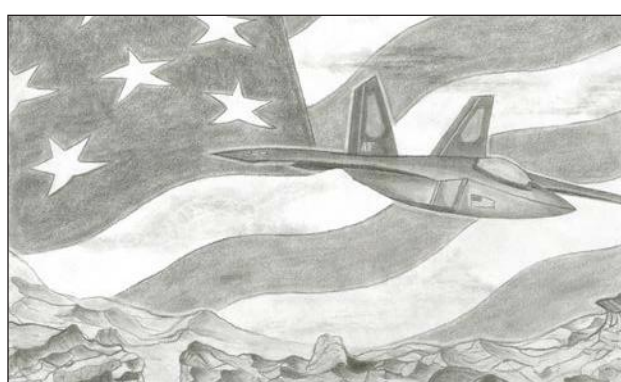
1st Place: Keira Radaich, Prior Lake



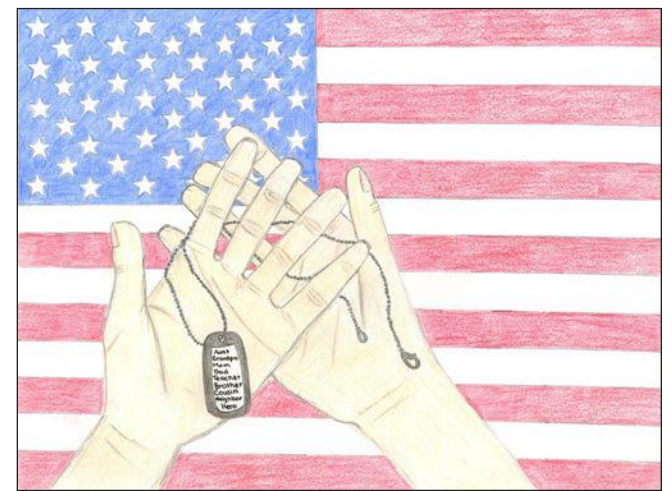
2nd Place: Kendra Harris, Sandstone



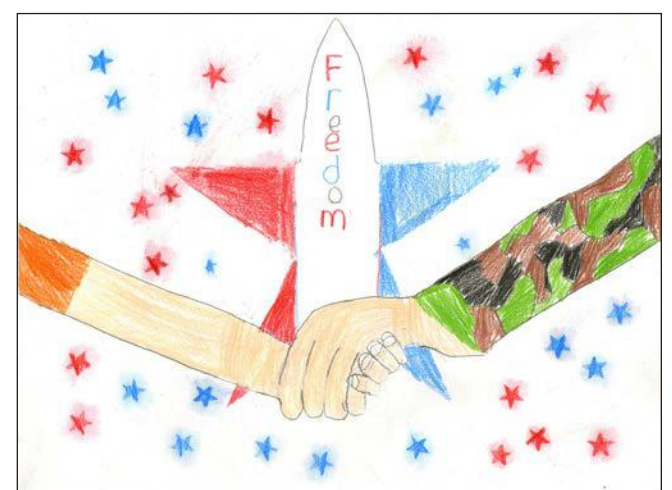
2nd Place: Reagan Radaich, Prior Lake



Editor’s Honorable Mention: Janik Wagner, Lonsdale



3rd Place: Taylor Radaich, Prior Lake



3rd Place: Finn Radaich, Prior Lake



4th Place: Carolyn Mangan, Pine City



4th Place: Bree England, St. Paul

Listening Post

EAGLE-EYED



Paul Warmka of Boy Scout Troop 270 in Monticello wanted to thank Monticello Post 260 for its support of Troop 270. For his Eagle Scout project, he led the painting of a patriotic mural on Post 260's building. It took him and his fellow Scouts about 3 1/2 days to finish.

ACTING LEGION



Iver J. Anderson, father of Minnesota Navy League member David E. Anderson, celebrated his 98th birthday Sept. 9. Anderson is a World War II Coast Guard veteran and a Korean War Navy veteran. A drive-by birthday celebration was held Sept. 12 in his honor, at Newton Manor, a Presbyterian Homes facility in Bloomington. Members of the Minnesota Navy League, the United States Submarine Veterans Incorporated, Minnesota Submarine League, United States Naval Academy Alumni Association, former crew of the USS Sproston (DDE 577), U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, Bloomington Police and Woodbury American Legion Post 501 participated in the parade. In the photo above, Dave Anderson congratulates his father on his military service.

A NEW MEMORIAL IS COMING



A group of volunteers got together Aug. 29 to lay new sod and spruce up the new Isanti County Veterans Memorial Park. They were from the Cambridge-Isanti Bluejackets football and girls' soccer teams, Legion Post 290, parents of veterans and grateful citizens. Supplies were provided or purchased by local businesses or veterans groups. The memorial dedication is tentatively set for 6 p.m. Oct. 9.

9/11 FLYOVER



Honor Flight Twin Cities and Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Charity, in coordination with the T-6 Thunder Pilots Association, held a flyover as a tribute to the victims of the 9/11 attacks 19 years ago. In the photo above, you see six airplanes in formation, but this is one of the two formations, and there was a Huey helicopter.

Department Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller rode in a T-34 Marine Warbird. He snapped the top picture. Communications Director Tim Engstrom snapped the bottom one. He stood in Fort Snelling National Cemetery near the Columbarium, when members of the Patriot Guard showed up with flags moments before the airplanes.

Listening Post

HAPPY CENTENNIAL!



Kanthak-Matthies Post 441 in Bellingham celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sept. 12 at the community center. Sixty current Bellingham Legion and Auxiliary members and their spouses attended. A free catered stuffed pork chop dinner was served. Door prizes and meat raffles were held. Pictured are some current Bellingham Legion members with war eras and continuous years of membership:

Front row from left are Dave Borgerson, World War II, 16 years; Roger Reiffenberger, Vietnam, 50 years; Wally Norby, World War II, 64 years; Willard Rakow, World War II, 67 years; Stan Olson, Vietnam, 50 years.

Back Row from left are Dave Christopher, 7th District commander in 1986-87, Vietnam, 51 years; Jack Bormann, Vietnam, one year.

REMEMBERING 9/11



Eagan Post 594 Family held a Patriot Day remembrance at the Eagan Tribute Plaza in Central Park to honor the victims of the 9/11 attacks. Post Commander John Flynn served as emcee. Members of the Eagan Junior Girl Scouts led the audience in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. Auxiliary Unit 594 member and Eagan High School teacher Kim Hanson Ashland delivered a moving speech recalling the events of Sept. 11, 2001, and how that day changed America. Flynn led a moment of silence. Auxiliary Unit President Susan Flynn and the Junior Girl Scouts led everyone in singing "God Bless America." John Flynn provided a benediction. Past Post Commander Tom Mullon performed "Taps" while the Post 594 Color Guard raised the U.S. flag, as well as the city's flags for fire and police, to full staff.

EASTMAN'S KODAK MOMENT



Waite Park Post 428 presented a certificate to Kermit Eastman on April 21 for being a 75-year member of The American Legion but could not get together for a photograph until Sept. 3. He is now a 76-year member. From left are Post 428 Adjutant Tom Fernlund, member Kermit Eastman and Commander Dennis Schiffler. Eastman served in the Navy during World War II.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLOBE ...



Photo by Kelby Sanders/U.S. Navy

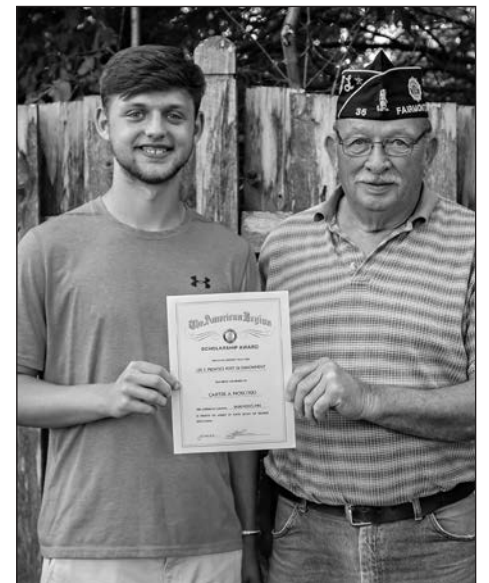
Navy Lt. Matthew Sindelar, from Shakopee, records the distance between the amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18) and the dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) during an underway replenishment on Sept. 3 in the Philippine Sea. New Orleans, part of the America Amphibious Ready Group assigned to Amphibious Squadron 11, along with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, is operating in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility to enhance interoperability with allies and partners and serve as a ready response force to defend peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

9/11 FLAG-BURNING CEREMONY



Rushford Post 94 held a flag-burning ceremony on Sept. 11. It was led by Acting Commander Rick Brand. Also participating were First Vice Commander Larry Bartelson, Second Vice Commander John Petersen, Sergeant at Arms Ron Petersen and Chaplin Lyle Svenningson. Included in the ceremony were VFW members Doug Humble and Shannon Bowen. Representing the Sons of The American Legion were Commander Jason Danielson and Vice Commander Kevin Barr. National colors were carried by Allen Heiden and post colors by Maynard LaFleur. SAL member Derek Berg played "To the Colors." Also participating were 14 Scouts from the Rushford Boy Scouts Troop 53 led by Scout Leader Tina Darr. Ceremony held in conjunction with memorial service to remember victims of the 9/11 attack. Memorial Stars were presented to each participant.

FAIRMONT TIMES TWO



Fairmont Post 36 donated \$2,400 to purchase an intensity electrotherapy system for the Therapy Department of Heartland Senior Living in Truman. Pictured are Administrator Heather Hardt and Director of Nursing Susan Rock.

Carter Mosloski received a \$1,000 scholarship from Fairmont Post 36 & Auxiliary Unit 36. It was presented by his grandfather, Bob Altman, a member of the Post's Executive Board.



THE AMERICAN LEGION



Do you want to join?

Here's why:

- We push for laws on behalf of veterans in St. Paul and in Washington. From veterans treatment courts for Minnesota or getting the VA to care for victims of toxic burn pits, among many issues, we don't give up until the job is done.
- We ensure your benefits continue to exist. The American Legion serves as the VA's biggest supporter but also as a watchdog for when it doesn't hold up what Congress intended.
- We mentor young people in communities, whether through sports, speech programs, even local holiday activities. Many veterans like the family aspect of the Legion.
- Most importantly, we provide mutual aid for each other. One day, you are helping a veteran. Another day, you might be the one who needs help. We have each other's backs.

Here's the eligibility:

Are you an honorably discharged veteran? Then you are eligible. It's that simple. These days, we all fall into one wartime era or another.

Here's how:

Go to mnlegion.org, click on "Click here to join today," then fill out the form. The cost is \$45. You're done. Easy as pie.

In a few weeks, you will get a membership card in the mail. You will be an at-large member, and you can decide later whether to join one of the 550 Posts we have across Minnesota.

You'll find most don't even have bars and restaurants. All are committed to serving veterans.



What's Happening?

Continued from Page 6

Oct. 24

8 a.m.: General Session reconvenes

Session presenters

Greetings on the morning of Oct. 23 will be given by Department Commander Mark Dvorak, General Chairman Ray Dezurik, Nisswa Post 627 Commander Susan Edwards, 6th District Commander Paul Edwards, Department Vice Commander Tim Haugen, Nisswa Mayor Fred Heidmann, Breezy Point Mayor Tom Lillehei.

Quilts of Valor will present at 8:30 a.m., followed by Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke.

At 9:15 a.m., Jim Kellogg, chairman of the National Security/Foreign Relations Committee, will preside over the Military Achievement Awards. Brigadier Gen. Sandra Best will speak at 10:15 a.m.

At 10:30 a.m., the audience will hear about Minnesota American Legion College and myLegion.org training from Denise Milton and Linda Dvorak, both chairs of the respective subcommittees.

Bob Mace, chairman of the Bowling Committee, will give a report at 11 a.m.

That will be followed by a presentation from Chief Operating Officer Jim Bradshaw of Upper Lakes Foods.

By 11:30 a.m., Department Adjutant Mike Maxa will give updates.

Commander Mark Dvorak will make comments after lunch at 1 p.m. He is followed by reports from several committees.

At 2:15 p.m. Department Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller will report on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, then present the Pat Cliff Award. The VA&R speaker will be Robert P. McDivitt, executive director of VA Midwest Health Care Network (VISN 23).

Maxa will make a few announcements prior to a recess.

Greetings at 8:15 a.m. Oct. 24 will be given by American Legion Auxiliary Department President Mary Hendrickson, Auxiliary Department Secretary Marsha Bible, Auxiliary National President Nicole Clapp, Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Dave Vulcan and American Legion Riders Department Director Paul Hassing.

At 9:15 a.m. committees will give Department awards and presentations.

At 10:15 a.m., NECman Bill Barbknecht will give a report on the National Executive Committee. His comments will be followed by National Vice Commander Bruce Feuerbach of Iowa.

Department Membership Director Sy Fix will give membership awards at 10:50 a.m.

Maxa and Dvorak will give final thoughts at 11:30 a.m.



Veterans Service Building

St. Paul Post 8 to host walk on Veterans Day

ST. PAUL — Sponsored by St. Paul American Legion Post 8, this walk starts at 1 p.m. Nov. 11 and begins and ends at the Veterans Service Building, 20 W. 12th St., at the Minnesota Capitol Complex in St. Paul. It is the building directly across the lawn from the Capitol on the south side

of the grounds.

The walk will be on the sidewalks of downtown St. Paul: Down St. Peter Street to Kellogg Boulevard, then back up Wabasha Street. Walkers are encouraged to bring a flag to carry. The walk honors all veterans, living and dead, of all eras.

Post 8 Adjutant Dave Dahl said World War II Navy veteran George Hunkins is the inspiration for this year's Veterans Day Walk. The 93-year-old is a 49-year member of The American Legion.

MDVA introduces learning grant

ST. PAUL — To assist Minnesota Veterans impacted by distance learning expenses, MDVA recently introduced the COVID-19 Distance Learning Support Grant. The purpose of the COVID-19 K-12 Distance Learning Support Grant is to mitigate the negative financial impact a family experiences by implementing their school district's distance learning or hybrid learning plans by providing a one-time grant in the amount of \$3,000.

Applicants for the COVID-19 K-12 Distance Learning Support Grant must demonstrate a negative financial impact on or after Aug. 1, 2020. A closing date for the K-12 Distance Learning Support Grant will depend on the availability of funding but not later than June 30, 2021.

For more information, visit the MDVA website at MinnesotaVeteran.org/COVIDRelief or inquire with your county veteran service officer.

Minnesota Veterans Homes follow new COVID requirements

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Veterans Homes follow the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services COVID-19 testing requirements for long-term care facilities. All CMS-certified facilities across the country must comply with a new requirement for mass testing of residents and staff.

CMS criteria to implement mass testing includes active COVID-19 cases at a facility and a Community Case Rate (calculated by CMS). Based on these criteria, Minnesota Veterans Homes are conducting mass testing of residents and staff.

"I appreciate the support and cooperation of everyone as we meet this new requirement to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus," said Commissioner Larry Herke.

The Minnesota Veterans Homes have a recording people can call to get updates on COVID-19 in the homes. As of Wednesday, Sept. 23, there were three cases in Luverne, one in Minneapolis, one in Hastings. There was zero in Fergus Falls and Silver Bay. The number is 651-757-1599.

Because of privacy laws, the veterans homes cannot say whether the cases are residents or staff.

Event to showcase veterans topics

ST. PAUL — A free virtual gathering of veterans, their families, providers and supporters takes place over the Internet 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 29.

Called E2020, 25- to 55-minute sessions will address benefits, health, economic stability, employment, education, training, housing, social connections, service in the community, among other topics.

The event also plans to showcase veteran-owned businesses.

The kickoff ceremony is at 10 a.m. Gov. Tim Walz and congressional leaders have been asked to speak. Their time will be followed by informational sessions on 50 topics of interest to military-connected people.

"There is something here for any American Legion member," said Allison Alstrin of the Minnesota Military and Veteran Exchange.

To register, go to mnme.us or to www.acelevents.com/e/mnme2020.

Department leaders show support for Commissioner Herke

ST. PAUL — Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak, Adjutant Mike Maxa and Communications Director Tim Engstrom, as The American Legion's representatives on the Minnesota Commander's Task Force, signed a letter in support of the Minnesota Senate confirming Minnesota Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke.

The Senate has been holding confirmation hearings on the Minnesota Cabinet.

The letter was sent Sept. 9. Dvorak has said he would be willing to testify on behalf of Herke should the Senate hold a hearing on his position.

The letter says Herke has made it a point to be available and to listen to stakeholders.

"He has been firm in his resolve to address veterans' issues, from homelessness and suicide to educational and health benefits to employment, among others," the letter states.

It also praises his leadership of a health care organization — the Minnesota Veterans Homes — through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"He largely remains above the fray of politics and focuses on what's good for Minnesota veterans."

Other member organizations of the CTF also wrote letters of support.

Herke has expressed his gratitude.

Alexandria Post 87 assists local scholars

ALEXANDRIA — Alexandria Post 87, for the 27th constitutive year, gave out a Post scholarship to a senior from Douglas County.

Post Commander Alan Gerlach said the Andy Jacobson Scholarship was started in honor of Andy Jacobson, who was wounded twice during the Battle of Okinawa, Japan. After healing from his wounds, Jacobson was on 100 percent disability but was able to return to Japan in 1977 to attend the "Reunion of Peace"

The \$500 scholarship has some restrictions applied to it. The recipient must be a senior in high school and be physically or mentally handicapped and have no more than a 3.5 grade-point average. Though Jacobson had his disability to contend with, he was never without a smile on his face and always eager to help others.

Roundtables are planned for October

ST. PAUL — There are two World War II History Roundtable presentations slated for October. They begin at 7:30 p.m. and happen at the Minnesota History Center. Participation is by invite only because of COVID-19 restrictions. Masks and spacing are required.

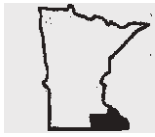
The first is Oct. 13. John McManus, author of "Fire and Fortitude," will focus on the Army's role in the Pacific Theater, which was a Navy-dominated operation.

The second is Oct. 27. Andrew Nagorski, author of "1941," will demonstrate the evidence that the Nazi cause was lost early because of strategic mistakes and miscalculating the resolve of the Allies.



Larry Herke

District commanders



1st District

Dale Wellik



Greetings from the Mighty 1st District American Legion Family. Thank you for your service and support.

We must thank the Sons of The American Legion for the great Harvest Rally at Legionville, and for all the work they put into this, abiding by the many new rules. Many people came on Saturday for the rally.

Local Post meetings and District rallies are beginning again to be more regular and only attend if you feel comfortable with the COVID-19 rules that should apply.

The 1st District Rally is Oct. 3 in Dodge Center at The American Legion hall beginning at 10 a.m. The rally will be in person and over Zoom.

Breezy Point is the place to be

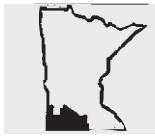
Oct. 22-24 for the Department Fall Conference.

Membership needs to be on our list of needs to continue to do. Many Posts and Districts are over the 50 percent mark.

Our American Legion programs are a way to get members involved. Many of our programs that we do all the time don't get reported so we don't get credit for doing them.

Remember to pray for our deployed and their families back home. Pray for the young and old now during these trying times of COVID-19. Pray for our leaders so the correct decisions are made.

For God and Country!



2nd District

Brad Pagel



Well, well, well. The fall and harvest time is upon us.

Some of us will be very busy over the next few weeks, so keep a look out in your travels and give plenty of room. Soon there will be white stuff on the ground called snow, for some of you who are snowbirds, we need to remind them to have their dues paid in full before they go, wherever they go.

Social media is running rampant right now with the current state of affairs. Do not let personal feelings get in the way of the true focus and mission of The American Legion. We are nonpartisan, but yet I see pictures and videos of members wearing American Legion covers and other attire at partisan functions.

To outsiders that can be

misconstrued very quickly and slanted in opinions. Do we really want that? No, we do not, as then the mission and focus of the organization gets pushed to the side. A veteran is a veteran, let's remember that, and ask the direct questions on what priority the veterans have in the current state of affairs.

We all need to put feelings aside and remember what we are all part of this organization for.

And, please, when attending partisan functions, remember to leave your American Legion attire at home, for the good of the organization we need that positive image promoted for the veterans we are fighting for.



3rd District

Linda Dvorak



Hello from the 3rd District. The new year has begun, and we are finally getting back to having in-person events. The Camporee was great. It was so good to see people again and catch up on all that is going on.

Are your Posts getting the recognition they deserve for their hard work? There are several opportunities for the Posts to receive awards — Post Honor Ribbon, Post Membership Retention Award, Certificate of Meritorious Service, Five or more Consecutive All-Time High Post Awards, Pioneer Award and Post Revitalization Recognition Letter.

These plus the District, De-

partment and individual awards are covered in the National Membership Program Manual.

Third District was able to award four Post Excellence Awards this year. Two of these posts were in danger of turning in their charter just a few years ago, but the District worked with them, and we were able to get them turned around.

Don't let a Post go unnoticed. Did you register for the 100 Miles for Hope? I registered, got the shirt, and completed my 100 miles.



4th District

Joe Jansen



Greetings to all the 4th District Legion Family members.

In September we continued our dual meeting format with physical and Zoom members at the Ramsey County Central Committee meeting. We refined

some of the vice commanders' duties, and with the help of Department Vice Commander

Teresa Ash, the Zoom part of our meeting went very well.

Some of us from 4th District joined our fellow Legion Family members at Legionville for the annual Harvest Rally.

David Dahl was presented with an award for his efforts as a District commander. While the award contained a check, Dave seemed to be much happier with the bag of gifts (which included a sweatshirt) he received as a 1st time visitor to Legionville.

Mickey Ostrum also received an award with a check for his outstanding work on membership. Since Mickey wasn't able to attend, I have the award and check for him. Someone asked at the last RCCC meeting how much money the 4th District received from the Department for moving off the Goose Egg. (That means that each Post has submitted a membership

before a certain date in the new American Legion year.) The dollar amount of the check will be \$100. Yes, the "check is in the mail" as they say.

The weekend of Sept. 18 to 20 was the annual National Security and Foreign Relations meetings at Camp Ripley. Lane Stunkel, Dave Dahl and I represented the 4th District at that meeting. Things are really coming along on Minnesota's Legion College, with students meeting each other and their instructors on a Zoom meeting the night of Sept. 16.

District Auxiliary President Sandy Gibson has once again stepped up and taken the initiative on planning for the Hospitality Room at the Fall Conference Oct. 22-24 at Breezy Point.

The next RCCC meeting will be held at the North St. Paul American Legion Post 39.

God bless all the members of the American Legion Family.



5th District

Wade Larson



As I write my first article for the Legionnaire as a District commander, I want to start out by thanking the Legion Posts of southwest Minnesota — Okabena, Heron Lake, Lakefield, Windom, Brewster, Jackson — where I spent a few summers with my grandmother playing in the bingo circuit at Legion Posts. I would often win and locals were glad to see me return to the Cities.

Little did I know 40 or so years later I would become a Post commander and District commander later in life.

As our District transitions from Vietnam-era leadership to Desert Storm-era leadership, we will be trying some new ideas out.

A huge *thank you* for everyone's effort in achieving the Goose Egg Award as a District. We were one of five districts to achieve out of the 10 districts.

To all the hard-working members and officers who make up the Post programs and community outreaches, the additional challenges during COVID-19, the blood drives, helping veterans in need, active-duty assignments, raising funds at grocery stores, connecting on Zoom calls, adding restrictions of being in Minneapolis, keeping the Posts moving forward, goes a huge *thank you!*

The JR. ROTC military high school Gen. Colin Powell

Leadership Academy sustained severe damage in the Minneapolis fires. According to KSTP, their location had 19 attempted fires and looting to their location. Keep them in mind for their needs.

Looking forward to the Fall Conference coming up Oct. 22-24 at Breezy Point. If you haven't attended in a while or haven't attended one previously or especially as a member of a state holding post, I want to personally invite you.

The pride in our American Legion Family accomplishments and updates we receive from the various veterans issues keeps us updated. One of the highlights is the hospitality evening with all Districts featuring their food specialty. Even if you can only attend Saturday, please reach out to me.

As we are rapidly approaching Veterans Day, I would like to receive photos from when you were in the military and send to me via email looking to have a collage to add to our District Facebook page.

Encourage your communities to have some form of poster wall or social media of veterans in their communities leading up to Veterans Day.



6th District

Paul Edwards



Greetings to the 6th District Legion Family.

The Department Camporee and Harvest Rally went well with reportedly more than 200 in attendance. All of the meals provided by the SAL and different Districts were outstanding. I am especially proud of Dave Doubrava and his entire fish fry team for their work and the donation to Legionville of almost \$2,900 from the proceeds.

Even if they did have to call and remind me to bring them beer. The District received an award for the most memberships turned in before the Appreciation Rally. West Subdistrict

Vice Commander Karen O'Bar was designated Vice Commander of the Year and our Membership Chair Mike Costello received an award for getting the entire district off the Goose Egg.

We are ahead of the membership power curve. We have a target of 55 percent by Oct. 15 and as of the Sept. 3 report, we are at 59.88 percent. While I am proud of that, let's keep it up.

My District Commander's Project for the 2020-21 Legion year will be to raise funds to

purchase a yard tractor with a snowblower attachment for the Eagle's Healing Nest to allow the staff to clear the sidewalks more efficiently.

The 6th District will have a

hospitality room at the Fall Conference at Breezy Point. Hope to see a bunch of you there. If we have never met face to face, please stop by and introduce yourself.



7th District

Dean Knutson



Greetings to the Mighty 7th! I would like to thank all the posts in the District for all their hard work with membership. With the last report sent out from the Department, the 7th District was in 3rd place at 64.74 percent. Congratulations to Franklin Post for hitting 100 percent.

Even though it looks good so far, there is still work to be done to get the 100 percent goal for the District. We need to work through the Post 1982 list of members and get them to transfer to a Post in the District.

I attended the Harvest Rally that was held in Legionville and it was good to get together once again with old friends. If you have not been to Legionville, you should try to see it. Very beautiful place.

Congratulations to Grant County as they were proclaimed as a Yellow Ribbon County within the State of Minnesota.

A special thank you to Grant County Veterans Service Officer Robert Larson for all his hard work.

November is American Education Week, so the question is: What can we as a Legion Post in our community help to educate the students in the area schools about the importance of education and proper respect for the American flag and national anthem?

Also, there is a myLegion.org training session scheduled for Oct. 10 in Alexandria to be held at the Eagles Club at 1 p.m. and going until 3. I would encourage all who can, please attend, as I feel we have some good information to present.

As the election comes upon, please practice your right to vote.

Serving America's Veterans.



9th District

Steve Sundstrom



Hello, everyone. I hope everyone is doing well and enjoying the end of summer. Hopefully we'll have a long warm fall.

I attended the National Security and Foreign Relation meeting at Camp Ripley. I felt very privileged to be there with such a very dedicated and knowledgeable group. I went there to learn and that I did, now I just need to remember what I learned, take it home and apply it.

One item hit close to home. It was mentioned how important it is that when someone turns 18 to get in and register for the Selective Service. If they don't, they can lose out on student loans and possible government jobs. Having a grandson that just turned 18, I will be making sure that he does this as soon as possible.

We had a quest speaker from Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Outreach Coordinator Rachel Johnson. I was surprised by the size of the organization and all the benefits they provide for our active duty, Guard and Reserve members.

I urge you to take a look at its website at mnbtjr.ng.mil. There is a lot of information there.

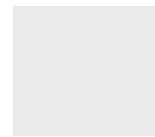
Minnesota is the first state to start this program and other states are contacting them to set up their own programs. They are a 501(c)(3), and I believe they will be sending information to Districts and Posts. It is a very worthwhile cause to donate to, if possible.

I would like to give a special thanks to Camp Ripley and its staff. Everything they did for us was A-1 service. I was aware of a little about what they do, but I found out how wide ranging their involvement is with local, state, national and other countries. It's very impressive, to say the least. We were given a tour of the camp, and that was very impressive, too.

It was utterly amazing what they have there. If you ever have the opportunity to take a tour there, I highly recommend it. You will not be disappointed.

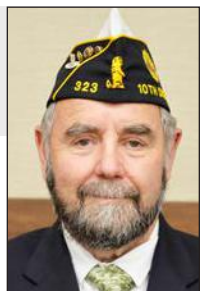
Fall Conference is this month. I hope everyone has sent in their reservation, and I'm looking forward to seeing all of you there. God bless and see you there.

For God and Country.



10th District

Tom Allen



Greetings, 10th District Legionnaires.

Our first District get-together with the Legion Family was held at the Legionville Camporee weekend. Friday night we had a chili feed with mild and hot chili. We served the chili until it was gone. Saturday at 1 p.m. we held our Family Celebration. Had a good turnout,

even with COVID-19. We are still debating a get-together in November, but it still is under discussion.

I would like to thank the SAL for a smooth-running



The Auxiliary Bulletin

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President Mary Hendrickson • Secretary Marsha Bible, marsha@mnala.org

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August 2020

Start rounding up those cowboy hats and boots

President's Column

Mary Hendrickson



It's just past mid-September and time to write my October column for The Minnesota Legionnaire. A modified fall schedule has returned to most Units and Posts.

My West Duluth Unit 71 met last night for the first time since November 2019! (We only meet in October, November, April and May).

There was a great turnout of members with social distancing in effect. We were all happy to see each other and get out of the house! I hope your home Unit can start either meeting again or communicating with each other using some other method.

The Sept. 10-13 Camporee held at Legionville was a rousing success. There was a nice turnout of American Legion Family members. It felt like a family reunion seeing many familiar faces and special friends I've been lucky enough to acquire through my participation in this great organization.

Thank you, SAL, for engineering this event. You were definitely "hitting on all cylinders" and guaranteeing that a good time was had by all who attended one or more of the days. I know you had a lot of extra work and responsibility in ensuring a healthy and safe environment for attendees.

As you know, Camporee is our first membership turn in Family event of the 2020-21 year. Thank you to everyone who brought memberships or mailed them to the Department Office just before Camporee.

Department Treasurer Jan Lauby emailed our first membership report of the new year this week. We have 3,478 Unit members, which is 1,284 more than last year currently!

This is even before our National Office has sent out the first official renewal notice. They should arrive in mailboxes

the third or fourth week of September. Thank you, mem-

bership chairmen, from the Unit and District levels.

Remember our membership theme: "Mining for Members ... Each One is a Gem."

We will have a rodeo theme membership skit Friday night at Fall Conference. The conference is Oct. 22-24. Start rounding up those cowboy hats, fringed shirts, spurs, etc. for a fun night. Hee haw!

Speaking of Fall Conference, we will be honored to have National ALA President Nicole Clapp as our special guest. She hails from the neighboring state of Iowa. You will enjoy her personality and have a chance to get one of her official pins honoring our centennial. It features poppies and fireworks and is truly a "wow" pin for your collection.

I'm sorry to report I haven't received any invitations yet to visit Units this year. I know this will change once the coronavirus has been contained better. The health and safety of our members is foremost in my mind.

Tomorrow (Sept. 19), I will meet with our Hospital and Home reps at Waite Park. We have some difficult decisions to make regarding gift shop and other matters. At this point, only our Minneapolis VA Medical Center rep is allowed in her facility. She is restricted to her office. Our reps are a very caring group of ladies and are very anxious to return to their facilities.

I hope to see you at Fall Conference. Stay safe and hopeful.

Mary Hendrickson is the president of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

Law & Order Panel set for Fall Conference

National President Nicole Clapp to speak

Fall Conference will be Oct. 22-24, hosted by the Nisswa American Legion Family 627.

Our meetings will be at Breezy Point Resort's conference rooms in Whitebirch I and II on the second level.

On Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7 p.m., there will be a Law & Order Panel in Whitebirch I and II featuring a county attorney, county sheriff, a county truancy case aide and possibly a judge. This session is open to the entire American Legion Family.

Our special guest for the event will be National ALA President Nicole Clapp from Gladbrook, Iowa. We will also recognize and honor retired Department Secretary Sandie Deutsch since we didn't have a convention in July when she retired.

Prior to the hospitality rooms on Friday evening, we will have a Legion Family Membership Roundup, including our National guests.

Membership Chairmen Sharon Thiemiecke, Sy Fix and Tim Weaver have quite a program planned. Everyone is invited to attend. Department Convention Awards and a few National awards will also be presented on Saturday morning.

As always, please remember to bring memberships and turn them into the office by noon Friday.

A silent auction for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund will be held on Friday, Oct. 23. This is every member's opportunity to help fellow members in their time of need by either donating items to the auction or being the highest bidder or both!

Chairman Joanie Krantz is requesting new or gently used items. Theme baskets are also very welcome. All items should be brought to the Governors and Pelican Rooms on the second floor on Thursday evening or early Friday morning. Bidding will be Friday only from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Be sure to bid and bid often! The items are always quite nice.

Gift Shop program active despite COVID pandemic

The American Legion Auxiliary has a program that very few members are aware of, and that is the Gift Shop. The Gift Shop began in 1923 with ALA members assisting with decorating wards and providing food and entertainment for the veterans in the VA hospitals. Over the years the Gift Shop program has evolved to become one of our member's favorite programs that supports our mission of caring for veterans, military and their families.

The Gift Shop program is primarily funded by Auxiliary Units and members generous donations. We also receive donations from the Pheasant Dinner Fund and grants from Minnesota Veterans 4 Veterans. The budget for this program in 2020 is \$75,000! The Gift Shop committee consists of a chairman, Mary French, and



2020 Hospital and Home Rep met Sept. 19 at Waite Park. Front row from left are Phyllis Mealey, Silver Bay; Janet Benson, St. Cloud VA; President Mary Hendrickson; Mary Ann Davis, Minneapolis VA; Linda Kroppeunsk, VA&R chairman.

In the second row are Marsha Bible, Department secretary; Mary Kuperus, second vice president; Doris LaFayette, Fergus Falls; Carol Kottom, St. Cloud; Mary French, Gift Shop chairman; Sandy Gibson, Minneapolis veterans; Sandra Locker, Service to Veterans chairman; Darlene Wondra, Hastings; Patti Coleman, first vice president.

Missing are Lynn Olson, Gift Shop; Lynette Anandel, Fargo VA; Linda Gibson, Fargo VA; Jeannette Mertens, Luverne; and Diane Strassburg, Sioux Falls VA.



Willmar Unit 167 assembled bags of lap robes, body wash, socks and a tabletop flag for veterans, men and women, at an assisted-living center in Willmar. Two members shopped and the bags were put together on an Auxiliary Unit meeting night. These items were purchased from their Poppy Fund distribution this year.

a committee member, Lynn Olson.

Gifts are provided free of charge to each residential veteran to keep one for him/her, one gift for their spouse or significant other, and one gift for each dependent member of his/her immediate family.

In a non-COVID world, gifts were purchased by our Gift Shop Committee and distributed to the VA Health Care Centers in Minneapolis, St. Cloud, Sioux Falls and Fargo and to the Minnesota Veterans Homes in Fergus Falls, Minneapolis, Silver Bay, Hastings and Luverne. Unit members from surrounding communities volunteered to assist at the Gift Shop and helped veterans "select" gifts for themselves and their families. ALA volunteers wrapped the gifts, added gift tags and the veterans were given the gifts to give to their families at a later date.

COVID has changed our Gift Shop program for this coming year. Auxiliary hospital representatives have not been able to enter the facilities they serve since early

March.

The big question was "How will we handle Gift Shop?"

Secretary Marsha Bible said, after talking with the appropriate people at each of the facilities, ALA members have determined that there is no cookie-cutter solution.

"So, this year only, Gift Shop will look different in every facility," she said.

"Our volunteers will not be able to go into the hospitals and homes, but the gracious employees know how important this program is to our veterans and they have agreed to distribute the gifts on our behalf. Most of the gifts will be gift cards and most of the facilities have staff members who have agreed to volunteer to work with the veterans on their off time to help select the gifts they wish to purchase with their cards. We are most thankful to everyone who donates to this program and/or has agreed to assist this year to make Gift Shop work for our veterans!"

Upcoming events

Oct. 22-24: Fall Conference at Breezy Point Resort

Nov. 15: American Legion Auxiliary 101st Birthday

Dec. 5: Pearl Harbor Rally at North St. Paul

Feb. 6: Sweetheart Rally at Paynesville

March 6: Appreciation Rally & DEC Meeting at LaCrescent

March 14: The American Legion 102nd Birthday

April 9-10: Department Junior Conference, 6th District, location to be determined

June 13-19: American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State at Bethel University

July 14: DEC Meeting at Redwood Falls

July 15-17: Department Convention at Jackpot Junction, Morton

Aug. 27-Sept. 2, 2021: National Convention at Phoenix

October is a time for education

By Pam Gades
Education Chairman

The Education Program promotes the American Legion Auxiliary's role in providing quality education for children and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion and support of education beyond high school, with a special emphasis on children of veterans and servicemembers.

National Programs Action Plan

(Please watch for detailed information and reminders on these in the Unit Mailing).

1. Enhance respect for the sacrifices of our military heroes among Veterans in Community

Schools programs at local schools.

2. Promote American Legion Auxiliary scholarships, and award local scholarships at the department and unit levels. Scholarship applications are available for download on the national website (www.ALAforVeterans.org/scholarships). Do not forget the Department of Minnesota Education Scholarship as your unit prepares your annual budget. Please budget funds for this, to support eight \$1,000 scholarships.

3. Support Give 10 to Education, American Education Week (Nov. 16-20, 2020) and Teacher Appreciation Week (May 2-8, 2021).

4. Assist and support veterans pursuing higher education and

vocational education.

5. Assist and support military children with educational opportunities.

Box Tops for Education

Download the app!

Encourage participation in the Box Tops for Education. No more clipping, no more sending Box Tops to school. Download the app for your phone, choose a local school, and scan your receipts! The school will receive 10 cents for each qualifying item. For more information, go to www.boxtops4education.com and find the Box Tops Product List here: <http://bit.ly/2lZrOzS>

Join the facebook group: ALA Education Program

(www.facebook.com/groups/1489034401420831/)

Membership is off to a solid start

By Sharon Thiemiecke
Membership Chairman

Congratulations are definitely in order to the District chairmen, our Unit membership chairmen and our members. After all, membership is everyone's job!

The first Department membership rally was held at Legionville in September. After the Harvest Rally, the Auxiliary is 1,284 members ahead of our total at this time last year. This is before members even received their first dues notice. *Awesome job everyone!*

The winners of our drawings were:

- 40 percent of goal by Harvest Rally for \$50: Wykoff Unit 369
- At least one membership turned in: Maple Plain Unit 514

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 9/9/19
One	3,994	333	8.34%	176
Two	4,015	383	9.54%	286
Three	3,870	427	11.03%	278
Four	581	76	13.08%	51
Five	572	68	11.89%	55
Six	5,170	848	16.40%	489
Seven	3,197	308	9.63%	177
Eight	1,302	196	15.05%	112
Nine	3,445	332	9.64%	267
Ten	3,978	462	11.61%	298
1982	193	45	23.32%	5
Totals	30,317	3,478	11.47%	2,194

Congratulations to both of these units!

Let's keep the momentum going as we "Round Up Our Gems" at our Fall Conference Legion Family membership gathering from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Breezy Point Resort. Hand-carried memberships must be turned in by noon Friday.

Know the ALA Constitution, Bylaws

By Carol Kottom
Constitution & Standing Rules Chairman

The Constitution and Bylaws are the foundation of our organization.

What is the Constitution? The dictionary defines it as follows: The basic principles and laws of a nation, state or social group that determine the powers and duties of the government and guarantee certain rights to the people in it. A written instrument embodying the rules of a political or social organization. The Constitution is seldom in need of revision.

What are Bylaws? A bylaw (by-law, by law) is a rule or law established by an organization or community to regulate itself, as allowed or provided for by some higher authority. Bylaws are the rules and principles that define your governing structure. They serve as your nonprofit's architectural framework. Although bylaws aren't required to be public documents, consider making them available to the public to boost your nonprofit's accountability and transparency.

The ALA makes changes to these two documents by

resolution at our annual convention. The resolution is presented, and the delegates vote on each resolution. The last thing in each document should be instructions on changing the content.

Remember, the governing documents cannot conflict with National's. It is the Unit's responsibility to review these documents and when changes are necessary, a resolution can be initiated by a Unit, passed on to their District and if approved by the delegates at the District Convention, it is forwarded to Department. There it is presented to the delegation by the Constitution and Standing Rules Committee.

Standing Rules are the rules of a society or organization for details of its government that are created by a majority vote and remain in force until repealed or annulled by a majority vote. These are unique to your Unit and generally are adopted by a majority vote at any general meeting with previous notification or by two-thirds majority without previous notification unless the Bylaws stipulate otherwise. The last rule should state how you revise your rules.

The most recent edition of

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the constitution, the bylaws, or any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

Refer to www.alaforveterans.org for the National documents; www.mnala.org for Department and Unit documents. Your District can furnish you with their documents and your unit should be able to furnish a copy of your standing rules.

There are many other reference guides available beginning with the Department Unit Guide, National Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules and Department Operations Guide are available on their site for download.

The following are available through National Emblem Sales: Policies and Procedures Manual, Unit Guide Book, Parliamentary Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, C&B program page at www.ALAforVeterans.org, ALA Department Operations Guide at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Please contact me if you have any questions. I'll be happy to try to help in any way I can.

About those 2020-21 scholarships ...

ALA Department of Minnesota Scholarship has eight \$1,000 scholarships. They are available to graduating seniors, who must be residents of Minnesota and members of the Auxiliary, American Legion or SAL.

Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship has 10 \$1,000 scholarships. They are available to Auxiliary members who have three or more continuous years of membership and wish to further their education (including graduating seniors) and are entering the health care field.

Children of Warriors

National President Scholarship has up to three \$5,000 scholarships offered in the Northwestern division for undergraduate study at a four-year accredited college or university.

Spirit of Youth Scholarship has one \$5,000 scholarship in the Northwestern Division offered for Junior members of the ALA who have three or more continuous years of membership and current dues paid. Applicant must be a senior in high school.

Nontraditional Student Scholarship has one \$2,000 in the Northwestern Division. Applicants must be members

of the American Legion Family with two or more continuous years of membership and current dues paid. Applicant must be a nontraditional student returning after interruption in education or beginning education at a later point in life. Applicants must be pursuing training in a certified, trade, professional or technical program or a two-year or four-year degree program.

Application for these scholarships begin at the local unit. Applicants submit their application to the local unit level. All the forms will be in the next Unit Mailing.

Does anyone know a pianist?

The Department of Minnesota is looking for an Auxiliary member willing to play piano for Fall Conference and/or Department Convention.

If interested, please contact Department Secretary Marsha Bible at 651-224-7634 or marsha@mnala.org.

Endorsements

Unit 14 endorses Sharon Thiemiecke

The 6th District American Legion Family, the 6th District Past Presidents Parley and Ralph Gracie Post and Unit 14 of Bemidji proudly endorse Sharon Thiemiecke for the position of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota 2nd Vice President for the 2021-22 year.

Sharon's eligibility is through her father, Charles A. Ruckoldt, a Korean War, Marine veteran. She is also eligible for membership through her grandfather, Frank Moskal, a World War I Navy veteran and past commander of Portage Park Post 183 in Chicago; her son Robert S. Haas II, a 24-year veteran retired from the Air Force; son Matthew Haas, Army National Guard; daughter Jennifer Lowry, an Air Force veteran and son Kristopher

Thiemiecke, an Army veteran.

Born in Chicago and raised in Arlington Heights, Illinois, she grew up an active Junior member of Portage Park American Legion Auxiliary, making items for the VA hospital in Chicago and attending many Legion and Auxiliary events. Sharon transferred to Bemidji Unit 14 in 1999.

In her Unit, she has held chairmanships as Historian, Memorial, Children & Youth, Poppy, Education, Leadership, sergeant at arms and is the Unit secretary/treasurer. She was the Unit president from 2006 to 2008 and 2015 to 2017.

At the District level, Sharon



Sharon Thiemiecke

served as District president in 2011-2012 and 2018-2019. She has held many chairmanships in the District. At the Department level, she has been the Leadership chairman, served on the Audit Committee, Girls State Committee, Poppy chairman, Department Membership chairman and also as a board member of The American Legion Family Hospital Association.

Sharon has served as a counselor at the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State and attends Fall Conferences, Mid-Winter Conferences, District, Department and National Conventions.

2020-21 National appointments

The following are the National appointments that National President Nicole Clapp has made to serve with her this 2020-2021 Auxiliary year:

- Norma Tramm, National Legislative chairman
- Sandy Fredrickson, National Poppy vice chairman
- Tamara Opland, National Security Committee member
- Raleen Tolzmann, Northwestern Division Auxiliary Emergency Fund chairman
- Jean Walker, Northwestern Division Education chairman
- Peggy Tesdahl, Northwestern Division Junior Activities chairman
- Carol Kottom, Northwestern Division Leadership chairman
- Shirley Frederick, Northwestern Division Membership chairman
- Dee Dee Buckley, Northwestern Division National Security chairman

Please congratulate and thank these members.

In loving memory ... McGowan, Barbara Joan, 76, died Sept. 3, 2020. She was 3rd District president 2000-2001 and a member of Pine Island Unit 184.

Larry Johnson of Golden Valley Post 523, an advocate of the Veterans Resilience Project, which fights to make eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy available to Minnesota veterans, walked on Sept. 11 from Golden Valley to a clinic in Bloomington, then to a farm, then the Mall of America. He walked on Sept. 21 at Lake Harriet. He will walk again Oct. 14 from Minneapolis Children's Hospital to a 3 p.m. Save Our VA from Privatization Vigil at Fort Snelling Park & Ride. On Nov. 4, he will walk down Como Avenue in St. Paul to the Como Avenue Layrinth.



Know your CVSOs

Heidi Fier has been the Lyon County veteran service officer since October 2017. For more than 20 years she served as an Air Force electrical engineer and program manager for various programs such as the B-2 Bomber, Minuteman III and various space systems.



Heidi Fier

She is a member of the Taunton American Legion Post 604, DAV Chapter 33 and the Military Officers Association of America. Fier enjoys being outdoors, volunteering and living on

the family farm with her husband of 32 years, in Taunton.

Throughout her military service, she found that her most rewarding times were helping her fellow servicemen. When she retired and moved back to Minnesota, the opportunity was presented to continue serving others by working with veterans and their families as a veteran service officer.

This chance was more than she could have hoped for.

Josh Beninga joined the U.S. Army Reserve his senior year of high school. He served in a Special Operations unit out of Arden Hills as a psychological operations specialist, was sent to the Defense Language Institute to study Korean in April 2001, graduating in July 2002.



Josh Beninga

He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

in 2003 and was honorably discharged from the Army Reserve in the fall of 2004.

Beninga has been the Lac qui Parle County veterans service officer since January 2010 and belongs to Bellingham American Legion Post 441, Madison VFW Post 1656, DAV Chapter Western 24 and the Wounded Warrior Project. He lives in Madison with his beagle, Rupert.

10th Distict


Continued from Page 17

Camporee weekend. They did something with nothing.

Congratulations to 10th District President Brandi Christenson on the birth of a little girl. I believe that this is the first time in the 10th District or the Department history that a District president gave birth while in office. Wow!

I'm glad to hear of all the activity going on in our Posts, and that they are getting back with our Legion programs. A big congratulations to our 10th District Riders Legacy for a highly successful run.

Our next get-to-gather will be at Breezy Point Oct. 22-24 for the Department Fall Conference.

Are you the son of a veteran? Maybe you are a veteran *and* the son or grandson of one? Either way, join your local Sons of the American Legion.

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24-hour NurseLine	Optum	N/A	N/A
Diabetes Management	Liberty Medical	15%	N/A

GOLD PLAN - \$60/year			
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Vision	Cole Managed VisionCare	45% - 60%	9,000
Hearing	HearPO	30% - 62%	1,600
24-hour NurseLine	Optum	N/A	Unlimited Access
Diabetes Management	Liberty Medical	15%	N/A
Dental	CAREINGTON POS	20% - 50%	24,000
Chiropractic & Alternative Medicine	American WholeHealth	10% - 30%	25,000
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Podiatry	DDS	20% - 50%	3,500
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