



Youth leaders speak at Fall Conference

The Fall Conference in Willmar came to a strong conclusion with talks by three individuals about three Legion youth activities: Oratorical, Boys State and Baseball.

Isaac Winnes of Minneapolis, who won the 2016 Minnesota Oratorical Contest, brought the 200 in attendance at the conference at the Willmar Convention Center to their feet with his thoughts on America's future.

"I truly believe our nation is in a precarious position," he said. "And I can sum it up in three words: We are divided. We forgot how to have a discussion. We don't know how to talk issues and not personalities."

Winnes, who is now a college student, urged Americans to return to the Constitution and study it to see where we have come from.

"We are all obsessed with our rights, but forgetful of our responsibilities. This is a nation of justice for all, and not just the people we agree with.

Winnes said the change back to our better selves, "must come one conversation at a time."

He praised the Oratorical Contest because it drives stu-

Continued on Page 2

The bog that ate Legionville



A monster bog broke loose from its moorings, floated around North Long Lake for a while, and then settled right in front of the Legionville School Safety Patrol Camp. The bog, about five acres, needs to be moved back to its original site, about a quarter of a mile away, but the massive chore must be done before the lake ices in. A story is on page 3. (Brained Daily Dispatch photo by Jim Stafford.)

DEC looks at 2017-18 Department budget

The Department Executive Committee got a chance to look over the Department's budget for the coming year at its meeting in Willmar during the Fall Conference.

The budget had been approved by the Department Finance Committee on Sept. 30.

The projected income for the year 2017-18 was listed at \$1.37 million, a major increase from last year's income of \$1.25 million.

Robin Picray, St. Paul, a member of the Finance Committee, said the jump was due to the dues increase this past year. The dues income for the Department was projected to rise about \$140,000 to \$893,000.

The biggest loss in income was a \$15,000 drop from the Legionnaire Insurance Trust.

The expense budget was projected to increase from \$1.24 million to 1.27 million. This past year, the income over expenses was expected to be \$1,230. It is expected, however, that the department will actually gain \$98,000 because of under-spending by committees and less actual expense than had been budgeted for.

This coming year, the income over expense was listed as \$95,000.

A major change in the expenses included a \$20,000 increase in the allocation for the Legionnaire as the newspaper was granted additional dues income. The Department allocated \$248,000 for the publication.

Employee salaries are projected to rise about \$13,000 to

\$321,000.

The DEC approved six changes to the Sons of the American Legion constitution and bylaws. The changes had been approved by the Detachment in June. The changes included:

SAL advisors will now be ex-officio members of all SAL committees.

SAL business (call for meetings, etc.) can now be done by email.

SAL disciplinary action will now need approval of the DEC.

The Detachment commander will now issue the call for the Detachment convention.

Five districts will constitute a quorum at meetings.

The Detachment Fall Conference will now be held in conjunction with the Department Fall Conference. Only education shall take place, with no business coming before the body.

In other business:

-- The DEC was given an informational report from new Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby, Northfield. He noted that he does not give legal opinions to districts or posts, only to the Department.

-- Past National Commander Dan Ludwig, Red Wing, urged districts to find places in their district where there is a high school but no Legion post and to establish a post

Continued on Page 11

Marshall vet gets his WWII awards

By Jeff Gay

On October 2, there was a birthday celebration like none ever expected for Peter B. "Pete" Labat. It was his Monday routine as usual, spending time with his friends drinking coffee, talking smart (as guys generally do) and playing cards at the Marshall Adult Community Center.

He knew they were going to have a small birthday get-together at the Center that afternoon but other than that, it was certainly not a usual Monday for him.

Pete Labat was in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II primarily serving in the Asiatic-Pacific theater of war. He was an airplane Engine Mechanic with the 87th Airdrome Squadron 56.

Upon processing out at the end of the war Pete was never issued the awards he had earned during his time in service.

His daughter Joyce (Labat) Persoon visited their local County Veterans Service Officer who assisted in acquiring documents to substantiate the awards he should have received. They ordered the awards and

Continued on Page 2



Hardcore Recondo, Page 8

Author O'Brien and film maker Novick talk about Vietnam series

A few weeks ago, many of America's Vietnam veterans tuned in to watch the Public Television series on Vietnam, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

A couple of weeks later, two of the principal characters in the documentary, Novick and Minnesota author Tim O'Brien, came to Macalester College for some more straight talk about Vietnam.

Novick told the group of several hundred that the program took ten years to create and involved interviews with over 100 veterans, from both sides of the war. "Every time I sat down and talked to anyone, it was a revelation. I leaned what it means to be a patriot."

One of those people interviewed exten-

sively in the show was O'Brien, a native of Worthington. He has written *The Things They Carried* and other books about his experiences as a soldier in the Americal Division, 46th Infantry.

For O'Brien, it was a homecoming. He graduated from Macalester as class president in 1968, was drafted and sent to Vietnam in 1969. His books have been considered among the best ever written about the Vietnam soldier.

He talked about growing up in Worthington. "I didn't know what a communist was, but I associated communism with evil."

He said the atmosphere and culture of

Continued on Page 11

Marshall veteran gets his military awards 72 years later

Continued from Page 1 when they arrived she called The American Legion Post 113 for guidance on how they should be awarded.

A plan was in the works. The afternoon of October 2nd, as he had finished with cards, he was ready to have some birthday cake. He was turning 97 that day.

Suddenly, through the doors marched The American Legion Post 113 Honor Guard and, with pomp and ceremony, posted

the colors on either side of the podium. There were approximately 100 people in the room at the time including his wife of 70 years, family, friends, local dignitaries and members of the local Army National Guard full time staff. KEYC TV News from Mankato, MN was there to cover the event as well as local media sources.

He was presented with the following awards: American Theater Service Medal; Asiatic-Pacific

Theater Service Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Army Good Conduct Medal; Meritorious Unit Award; Honorable Service Lapel Pin.

David Sturock of the Marshall City Council read, and presented to Mr. Labat, a proclamation stating "Peter B. Labat Day."

A local group of quilters in the Marshall area makes Honor Quilts for veterans and presented him with one during the presentation.



CPL. PETE LABAT



Helping honor Pete Labat were Seventh District Vice Commander Jeffrey Gay, Col. Doug Simons and Major Kelly Wasberg.

Fall Conferees learn about youth programs

Continued from Page 1

dents to study the Constitution. "You are equipping young people to lead this next generation. I know when I was in the contest, it forced me to think hard and wrestle with big ideas."

He thanked Wold-Chamberlain Post 99 and he recalled the great pancake breakfasts. "I had to compete against many others at the district, state and national level. We were all passionate and dedicated to liberty. We were all united by the Constitution. We had to think hard about it in order to speak about it."

Winnes was followed by Dale Swanson of New Brighton, who has been a counselor at Boys State for the past two years.

Swanson, a retired high school chemistry teacher, said both his sons attended Boys State. They both became counselors and he joined them in 2016.

He recalled when his city gathered on the opening day of Boys State. "Here you have 22 teenage boys who don't know each other, from all over the state, all with different backgrounds, and now they all have to work together. I thought, 'This will be interesting.'"

He said a bane of high school teaching these days is that the kids are also on their cell phones. "I noticed after a couple of days at Boys State that there wasn't a phone in sight."

He said the days are long and intense. "No pain, no gain." By the end of the week everyone in the city knew everyone else. "Friendships were formed that will last long after Boys State."

Starting from scratch the boys had to learn the various

processes of politics and government.

Swanson strongly recommended that Legionnaires around the state get more involved in the process with the schools in finding high quality candidates for the program.

"The learning experience at Boys State is second to none. These are our future leaders."

The third youth speaker was Steve Agre, an American Legion Baseball coach from Sacred Heart.

He said the program is not just about baseball. "We try to connect with the boys, teaching them how to be good people in future years. On my team we teach them how to win with class and lose with dignity."

In his area, he said, Legion Baseball brings six small towns together to root for one team. "It has brought these communities together. There have been a lot of new friendships."

Sacred Heart has hosted two Division II tournaments, and is in line to host another. "What this tournament does for a community is priceless. People from age five to 90 are working together, helping out."

Agre noted that Legion ball puts safety in a high position and has rules about safe sliding and pitch counts to protect young arms from injury.

He encouraged posts to get more involved in their Legion baseball teams.

"It's always for the kids."

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Legion working on plans to move bog blocking Legionville

There's Plan A, Plan B, Plan C, and many more as time is running out to move a massive bog choking the shoreline of Legionville School Safety Patrol Camp on North Long Lake Near Brainerd.

The bog broke loose from the shoreline, about a quarter mile away on Legionville property, and floated across Merrifield Bay on North Long Lake.

Apparently not content with its new home, the bog, pushed by the wind, floated back across the bay and settled in directly in front of Legionville camp -- blocking the swimming beach.

It's not small. "It's about three football fields long by about a football field wide," said Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl. "It's got trees and everything."

After it got to its present position, the Lake Owners Association staked it down to keep it from wandering futher, destroying docks as it went.

The ideal solution would be to put it back where it came from, about a quarter mile away adjacent to some undeveloped Legionville land.

But that's easier said than done. First of all, whatever plan is chosen, it all must be done in a hurry. Once the lake ices in, the water level will drop, and the bog may permanently attach itself to that shoreline.

North Long Lake has been known to ice in as soon as mid-November.

As this issue of the Legionnaire went to press, Tesdahl was considering a half dozen options for moving the bog.

-- Contact has been made with the Evinrude Outboard Motor Co. to bring a number of high powered motors and boats that could drag the bog to its intended spot. Evinrude could use the project to garner publicity for it's engines.

-- Another plan would be to assemble Minnesota's top fishing pros and their boats to move the bog.

-- Contact has been made with the Minnesota National Guard for them to do a training exercise using Chinook helicopters to pull the bog.

-- Hiring a professional bog mover who would come in with tractors and barges to push and pull the bog. The service, however, could cost as much as \$80,000.

Tesdahl said the Department of Natural Resources has been very helpful. "They have bent over backwards to help us out."

Once a bog has been staked, the DNR can close the permit and allow no futher action, but the DNR has indicated to Tesdahl that it will keep the permit open as the Legion tries to move the bog away from Legionville proper.

It's estimated that the bog weighs a thousand tons, and once it's adrift, the wind can move it quite easily.

Getting it moving is the problem, and may need massive power equipment to both push it from the beach and pull it down the shoreline to its former home.

A story in the Brainerd Daily Dispatch quoted a homeowner near Legionville. "I feel so bad where this bog landed, said Nicole Zoschke. "Where are these kids going to swim, where did their beach go, and where did their nice big lake go?"

The bog is made up of marshland, dead plant material and a row of tamarack trees. A major problem is in trying to attach any kind of tow rope to the bog that would hold and not tear free.

Plan F or G, Tesdahl said, might be to break the bog into smaller pieces and move those to a different spot.

In the meantime, the project goes on. Stay tuned.

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Mike Schaffer



For those that attended the just-completed Fall Conference, a big thank you for taking the time to attend. You learned plenty to take back to your home post. Please pass what you learned to all. For those unable to attend, you missed a great event, with excellent presenters and speakers that brought with them a great deal of very interesting information.

Your commander was honored with a Quilt of Valor at the Conference. To say I was floored when my name was called would be the understatement of a lifetime. On top of that your commander was serenaded with Happy Birthday by the Legion, Auxiliary, S.A.L., and my five vice commanders and Department officers. It was absolutely cool. Thanks to all, it meant a lot to this slightly over-the-hill 67 year old commander.

The winner of the Kaisersatt Derby was decided at the Fall conference as well. My Congratulation to Cindy Brunk and Randy Olson, membership director and commander of the Second District, for winning. The point total they amassed was awesome. Hard work does have its dividends.

Back in the mid-1980s, we had a great deal of volunteering within our posts as I recall. If we wanted to make a donation to something we raised the money the hands-on way, we held that steak fry or fish fry, or raffled off something. We've found it far to convenient and easy to let the gambling funds cover the donations we make today. This is not what we, The American Legion, is supposed to be about. Volunteering, community projects, and family-type events is what made us a vital part of our community then, made us grow and be attractive to nonmember veterans. Those are the same veterans that now say we don't do any-

Mail Call

Great speakers

To the Editor:

Any opportunities to have the Boys' and Girls' Staters speak at their school or at a community event? How about the Veterans' Day convocation?

On Thursday of Boys' State week, the House of Representatives and the State Senate convene. Officers of each are elected. Discussion of bills that are introduced first takes place in committees, then progresses back to each body. Some are passed, then presented to the other body. If passed there, on to the Governor for signing or a veto!

Lobbying by special interest groups has an effect on the bills' outcomes, as it does in our own State Legislature. Groups of young men prepare a stand on an issue, then visit with Legislators presenting convincing facts and opinions about their passion.

Those not in the legislature are busy with county business, some which stems from real events throughout the state of Minnesota.

Neil Kruse
Spring Lake Park

No sympathy for OTH discharges

To the Editor:

I'm afraid that your recent article on the OTH discharges has generated some concern for our post members, and it's becoming apparent that it's going to make our membership goal much more difficult to achieve this year.

Simply put, our membership has expressed little if any compassion for veterans discharged for other than honorable conditions.

I believe I sum up our memberships' responses when I say that The American Legion has far more deserving veterans' issues that need addressing than qualifying those with OTH discharges for veterans benefits.

Tom Grezek, Commander
Woodbury Post 501

NFL protest

To the Editor:

As a 40-year legion member I read and agreed with the Mail Call letter entitled "Protest the NFL" in the October issue. This would be the opportunity to contact all of our MN Federal legislators to find out where they stand on the subject. I would ask for a clear answer and not the political babble. I can already tell who will show their true colors for Veterans and American Legion. I feel this would be very important.

Wayne Sanderson
Glencoe

thing anymore. In short, we need to get out of our easy chairs, Legionnaires, and restart having the fun we used to have.

My theme for this year as I mentioned in past issues, is "Learn, Mentor and Prepare," meaning that we need to first learn from our past as to what we've done and how it got done. Because if we don't learn from and remember our past, how can we mentor the present members and future post members so as to have them prepared for the future of The American Legion and your post. Do you remember that country song "Who's gonna fill their shoes?" Well, that who is I. All of us will not live forever and will eventually have to step down from your current office someday.

My post, like yours, has out of state members, and members that, because of jobs or family events that cannot attend meetings. My post sends out our post minutes by e-mail for all that want it that way. Ever consider combining the newsletter and minutes into one and sending it out by both paper and email methods, you'll have a more informed post membership and informed members to my thinking are happier and there's a better chance they'll volunteer and also pay their membership more willingly.

Each Department Commander selects a project to raise funds for. Mine will be a dual project, Boys State and Veteran Suicide Prevention. For Boys State I'm raising funds to cover the registration fee of boys that want to attend but have no post to sponsor them. Boys State is a program that teaches hands-on style about city, county and state government. I'm hoping to reach \$5,000 for this cause.

Veteran Suicide claims over 20 veterans daily and anything I can do to reduce this number is worth it in my eye. The funds raised here will go to the St. Cloud and Minneapolis VA hospitals, specifically to their Emergent Needs Fund. Donations here will be used to support the emergency needs of homeless and indigent veterans after all other resources are exhausted. The Emergent Needs Fund is used not only for inpatient veterans, but also for indigent and homeless veterans.

These funds can be used for things like transportation support, personal needs items, housing applications, rental deposit for those transitioning out as they near completion of the program. It also covers domestic violence for veterans who need to get out of a dangerous home situation, they often involve kids. I am hoping to raise \$20,000 for this part. Please be generous.

Til next month, Minnesota.

Ken Burn's Vietnam War Saga

To the Editor:

I'm a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and Vietnam War veteran. I watched Ken Burn's Vietnam War documentary with great interest. I believe that it presented a realistic image of the failures and successes of the ground war and the widespread violent anti-war protests. However, it did not fully recognize the role that fixed wing aircraft provided. Except for a few brief clips of Douglas A-4 Skyhawk jet fighters being launched from aircraft carriers, the North American F-100 Super Sabre Sandy Mission, modified Fairchild C-123 Providers spraying Agent Orange and Boeing B-52 Stratofortress dropping bombs, the outstanding part that the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps air wings played was ignored.

In September 1962, I was a 34-year-old Air Force major and sent to South Vietnam for a 120-day tour of duty. I was not assigned a job and for ten days just enjoyed the sights and sounds of Saigon (which at that time was still referred to as the "Paris of the Orient"). When I complained of not having a job, I was told. "Quit your complaining major, just being here you're doing your job. You're one of President Kennedy's 17,000 military advisors." However, an Air Force colonel, recognizing my Fairchild C-119 Boxcar background sent me to Bangkok, Thailand, to work with a newly arrived C-123 Troop Carrier Squadron. Their mission was to create an air transport support system for the building and updating of seven front line Thai airports, which would be used in the forthcoming air war. Regrettably, the aircraft and their crews that made this essential mission possible were not mentioned in Ken Burn's Vietnam War Saga.

I felt a personal affront when the Douglas C-133 Cargomaster was not mentioned. From 1965 to 1970, I flew more than 4,000 pilot hours in combat support missions in this large four-engine transport. The C-133s delivered critical war material to our fighting forces and returned battle damaged goods destined for overhaul back to the U.S.

According to established records, the U.S. lost about 2,251 fixed-wing aircraft in the Vietnam War, along with hundreds of pilots. I realize that it was not possible, in an 18-hour video, to cover all aspects of the air war but considering that the Air Force lost about 1278 aircraft, the U.S. Navy about 705, and the Marines Corps about 268, it would have presented a better historical account if we had cut-back on the repetitive ground war battles and repetitive anti-war demonstrations and paid more homage to our air war heroes.

Louis J. Martin
Apple Valley

Chaplain's Corner

By Ralph Schneekloth



"Service to God and Country" – it's an American Legion program, yes, but the saying describes just as well our members' attitude and way of life.

Nondenominational and nonsectarian, the Legion's support for religion in the public square is basic Americanism. Rather than acting independently of religious groups, the Legion desires to cooperate with and join them in reminding the American people with one voice that God is the author and architect of our beloved "land of the free." Without God, there is no Americanism.

Psalm 33: 12-22. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen for his inheritance. From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth---- he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.

No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength.

A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.

May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you. This is a general Psalm of thanksgiving, for His blessings, for helping his faithful people in all kinds of distress, and for not letting them perish.

Are we as a nation still thankful for all our blessings? I hope so, but so many look to the "state" as an entity to give them their needs, replacing and supplanting God in their lives. Therein lies a real danger, that as more give up on "God and Country," just remember, a government that is big enough to give everything, is also big enough to take it all away.

We as a nation need to return to our roots, find out again what made America exceptional in the world. We as an organization need to be proactive in training and teaching the youth who will follow us.

They need to be taught what is America? What ideals do we stand for? We have to be much more than just having the ability to destroy the planet. The nation worshiped the Lord and we were blessed, we have turned away at our peril.

Romans 3: 10 There is no one righteous, not even one. Ephesians 2: 8-10.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith---- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God---- not by works, so that no one can boast.

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Let us move forward and execute the programs of The American Legion with all the earnestness and zeal we can muster, for if we don't teach, lead, and set the example, someone else will.

Thank you for allowing me to humbly serve.

Legionnaire

The Minnesota

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

Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Shop, Ship and Share

The 4th District, with help from the 5th District, will be presenting its annual Shop, Ship and Share program at the Maplewood Mall on Dec. 1-2.

Boxes are packed with Christmas gift items for those serving overseas. Legion Family members can contribute to the program by donating for postage, and also by supplying the program with names and addresses of those deployed from our area.

Area schools will be collecting items for the packages. To donate, send to the 4th District, Packages for the Military, Box 17035, St. Paul, MN 55117-0035.

1968 Returns

"The 1968 Exhibit" will return to the Minnesota History Center on Dec. 23 following a five-year national tour. The exhibit was created by the Minnesota Historical Society, and now will be home for the 50th anniversary of that pivotal year in American history. That year included such events as the Tet Offensive, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, women's rights, the Democratic National Convention and Apollo 8.

It also includes a reconstructed Huey helicopter that was put back together by Minnesota veterans.

For more information go to mnhs.org.

Still time for funding

The 100 Cities/100 Memorials project has extended its deadline for a second round of funding. The Pritzker Military Museum and Library and the United States World War One Centennial Commission have offered \$200,000 in matching funds to restore World War I memorials.

Any local government or Legion post that can put up \$2,000 will receive \$2,000 in matching money.

For more information, go to ww1cc.org/100Memorials.

Military Appreciation Dinner

The Lakeville Yellow Ribbon and Trinity Evangelical Free Church will present their 9th annual Military Appreciation Dinner on Friday, Nov. 10 from 6-9 p.m.

It will be held at the church, 10658 210th Street in

Lakeville.

The evening will include dinner, entertainment and prizes. It's free to every veteran and a guest, but reservations are required. Go to www.lakevilleyellowribbon.com or call 612-382-4022 for more information.

MACV events

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will present several events in the coming weeks.

There will be a StandDown for veterans on Tuesday, Nov. 14, at the Verizon Wireless Center in Mankato. Free services provided include noon meal, VA benefit info, clothing, haircuts, ID cards, chaplaincy, employment assistance and legal assistance. For more information, call 507-345-8258.

A free drop-in legal clinic will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 14, at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room. There will be attorneys, county veteran service officers, and child support officers available. The clinic will deal with housing, employment, benefits, wills, debt collection, and family law. It will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call 651-200-4750.

Another legal clinic will be held Thursday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Anoka County Government Center. Call the number above for more info.

Pearl Harbor Rally

The Department's Pearl Harbor Rally will be held on Saturday, Dec. 2, at West Duluth Post 71. Membership turn in is from 3-4:30 p.m. with dinner at 5 and the program to follow. Tickets are sold through the district commanders and need to be purchased before the event.

Round Table events

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will have "The 2nd Battery Light Artillery, Minnesota Volunteers, 1861-1865" with speaker Daryl Duden. The meeting will be held at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater with the dinner at 6 and the program at 7 p.m.

To make reservations, contact Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268.

The World War II History Round Table will meet on

Thursday, Nov. 9, at the Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center at 7 p.m. The subject will be "Allying for Victory" with author William T. Johnson who wrote "The Origins of the Grand Alliance." It will discuss the partnership between Churchill and Roosevelt to plan the Allied victory over the Axis in World War II. Admission is \$5. This will be the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch Lecture for the year.

Flag Raising Ceremony

There will be a flag raising ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2017, at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Regional Maintenance Facility in Eagan.

The American Legion will participate in this event and speakers will include Lane Stunkel, Fourth District Commander and Teresa Ash, Fourth District Public Relations Chair.

The program will begin at 7:45 a.m. and will include a collection of retired flags.

For more information, call Ann Hadel, 651-602-4504.



CENTENNIAL COINS -- Sons of the American Legion Adjutant Doug Bible sells a centennial coin to Ray Ozmun at the Fall Conference. The commemorative coins, on sale for \$10, will be available throughout the centennial year from the SAL.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By
Jeremy Wolfsteller



Warning: Separation authority abused

I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense. This is Article I of the Code of Conduct for members of the Armed Forces of the United States. As a veteran it reminds me of the pride I have in the service I provided to my country. Is there anything more honorable than serving your country in its military? I remember the first time I earned the right in basic training to don the uniform was euphoric.

Unfortunately, many veterans don't feel the same way. Due to the nature of their military service, countless service members are plagued with mental conditions that contribute to misconduct resulting in a discharge with a less than honorable characterization of service. Since World War II nearly 900,000 veterans have received a discharge under Other Than Honorable Conditions (OTH).

For years, veterans' advocates have said that the Pentagon uses the diagnosis of personality disorder to discharge troops because of misconduct. These are veterans the military considers troublesome. There have been reports of military commanders pressuring clinicians to issue unwarranted psychiatric diagnoses like personality disorder. This is a quick way for the Department of Defense to give someone the boot, some have even been required to repay enlistment bonuses. The military considers personality disorder a pre-existing problem that emerges in youth, and as a result, troops given the diagnosis are often administratively discharged sometime with an OTH without any responsibility of the service for their mental health condition. Personality disorder is not service connectable for disability compensation through the VA.

From 2001 to 2010, the military service branches dis-

charged more than 31,000 service members due to alleged diagnoses of personality disorder. Veteran advocates know that many of these discharges were improper and a way for the military to save money and discharge quickly. In fact, a Government Accounting Office report from 2008 concluded that "DOD does not have reasonable assurance that its key personality disorder separation requirements have been followed." Countless service members wrongfully diagnosed with a personality disorder or an adjustment disorder may be suffering from a traumatic brain injury (TBI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which could've contributed to their misconduct.

Consequently, these improper discharges can bar a veteran from accessing VA benefits like GI Bill, home loans, service connected disability compensation and healthcare. As you can imagine this leaves a stain on a veteran's pride and a life sentence of endless problems to include employment difficulties resulting in homelessness, self-medicating to deal with mental health conditions and suicidal ideations.

What the military has struggled to do is identify if their service members pattern of behavior has changed. If a pattern of administrative misconduct happens, setting up medical appointments with the unit physician to evaluate them to see if a mental health treatment plan is necessary. Assigning a profile limiting their job duties and, if the condition becomes permanent, orders are cut for a proper medical board evaluation administered through the integrated disability evaluation system (IDES). The medical board process is in place to evaluate a service member that acquires a permanent health condition (mental & physical) that prevents them from performing their military occupational specialty and meeting retention standards. The boards make recommendations to unit leadership to ensure the service member is afforded a proper medical separation. This includes a medical retirement, or medical chapter with severance pay to include an honorable discharge.

Unfortunately, many service members, dating back to WWII, were given an improper or inequitable discharge. One of the largest group of veterans were those deployed to Vietnam. Many of these veterans returned from deployment struggling with a mental health problem that was not yet established in the diagnostic statistical manual (DSM). That condition is now known as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This condition can change the behavioral pattern in veterans and consequently lead them into a pattern of misconduct. Rather than the military treating these veterans for their psychiatric conditions, and administering a medical board with benefits, they would discharge for personality disorder/misconduct and give them an OTH.

Today with pressure from The American Legion along

with Congressional support, the Secretary of Defense has issued multiple directives, guidance and regulations to the military branches in regard to discharging for personality disorders vs. evaluating service members for mental health conditions which could have contributed to their misconduct. If any misconduct happened due to the service member's mental health condition, they should be given treatment, a profile if needed, and a proper medical board and honorable separation if the condition is permanent.

The Secretary of Defense has also made changes to the way the Discharge Review Boards and Board for Correction of Military Records handle a request for an upgrade. Prior to these directives, the boards were only upgrading an average of less than 10% nationwide annually. Recently three DOD Directives from the Secretary starting in 2014, 2016 and again in 2017 were to give liberal consideration to upgrade requests that involve misconduct related to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for all eras, military sexual trauma (MST) and military sexual harassment (MSH). The process for applying for an upgrade to the Department of Defense is very difficult. There are some law firms that assist veterans with these cases but sometimes with a fee. The American Legion is one of the only Veterans Service Organizations that has National and Department staff that are trained and provide free upgrade assistance. With the new directives, we are seeing a higher percentage amongst the different branches of service boards. The American Legion Dept. of Minnesota has taken it a step further to identify these OTH cases that could have been because of a mental health condition developed in service by starting a pilot program consisting of local attorneys that provide free pro bono assistance putting together an application for an upgrade.

jwolfsteller@mnlegion.org

Cemetery set for Cass Lake

The National Cemetery Administration has awarded the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe at \$3.3 million grant to construct the Leech Lake Veterans Cemetery in Cass Lake.

The grant will fund the construction of a main entrance, an administration and maintenance facility, roads, an assembly area, a committal shelter, grave sites, a memorial walk and landscaping.

The cemetery will serve 2,959 tribal veterans and families.

The project will develop about three acres of land.

The next closest national cemetery is at Fort Snelling, 224 miles away.



Fellow teammates look stunned as Third District Commander Gene Leifeld gives an answer during the Family Fued activity on Friday night. From left: Mary Kuperus, First District Commander Les Shaunce, First District President Cheryl Nymann, Department Commander Mike Schaffer, District 3 President Kat Benjamin, Liefeld.



When it was discovered there was no gavel at the podium, the American Legion Riders presented Commander Schaffer with a substitute, which he continued to use even after the gavel was found.

Fall Conference at Willmar



We wuz framed. First Vice President Jean Walker, President Donna Arends and Second Vice President Mary Hendrickson provided their own frame for a Fall Conference photo.



Leading Candidate for National Commander Brett Riestad of Virginia was a special guest of the Fall Conference. He got to see his first snowflakes of the year.



Author Alan Duff spoke on Americanism at the conference.



Membership Director Larry Ryan congratulates Second District Membership Director Cindy Brunk and Commander Randy Olson for winning the Kaisersatt Derby. Ryan informed them that instead of a plaque, they were winners of catfish fillets. Brunk took one look at the catfish innards and said, "Where's my plaque?"



Holly Soria of the National Magazine staff told about events surrounding the Legion's Centennial event which begins next year with the 100th National Convention in Minneapolis.

Outstanding Enlisted Persons honored by American Legion



SFC DAVID MORSE
Army National Guard
Hqs2 136th Cb. Arms Bn.
Moorhead
Moorhead Post 21



SSG ERIC WILKENS
Air Force National Guard
119th Wing, 119th OSG
Fargo
Detroit Lakes Post 15



CPO MARY STRAUSS
Coast Guard Reserve
Marine Safety Det.
St. Paul
Minneapolis Post 1



AME2 JEFFREY GRAND
Navy Reserve
Navy Ops. Supp. Cent.
Minneapolis
University Post 548



SSG CASEY LUDEWIG
Army National Guard
Fox Co., 134th BSB
St. Peter
Minneapolis Post 435

Not able to attend

TSGT CHRIS SEGUIN
Air Force Reserve
934th Airlift Wing
Minneapolis
University Post 548



Quilts of Valor were presented at the conference. From left, front: Karen Welander, Heather Larson, Bert Marth. In back, John Grams, Myron Ehrich, Carl Hendrickson, Mike Schaffer, Darrel Redepenning, Carl Moon, Rollie Hanson, Tom Conway, Ray DeZurik.



Kandy Reagan and Sandy Fredrickson created and sold cookbooks for the Auxiliary.



Bill Goede, Plainview, was named Legionnaire of the Year by the Sons of the American Legion. Detachment Commander Shawn Davis presented.



ISAAC WINNES
Minneapolis
Oratorical Contest



DALE SWANSON
New Brighton
Boys State



STEVE AGRE
Sacred Heart
Legion Baseball



Department President Donna Arends presented Honorary Junior President Courtney Rogat.

Hardcore Recondo in Vietnam

By Al Zdon

Bruce Peters goes to reunions of his fellow Vietnam combat veterans now and then.

Often they will go as a group to a local restaurant for a meal, but this presents a dilemma.

None of the veterans likes to sit with his back to the open space in the room. None of them feels comfortable unless they're facing the situation.

"The problem is that there's usually not enough wall space for 25 guys."

Peters was born in Morris, Minnesota, but the family soon moved to land in the country so his dad, who ran a dry cleaning business, could indulge his real passion: bee keeping.

Peters graduated from Alberta High School in their last class before the school closed. "I always told my kids that I was proud to have graduated in the top 20 of my class. Of course, I didn't tell them there were only 19 in the class."

He spent his spare time hunting and trapping. "I paid my own way in those years by trapping in the fall in winter, mainly mink and foxes. My dad was an old trapper and he taught me."

He left home just after graduating from high school in the spring of 1967 and went to work for a plastics company in Willmar.

"I was taking classes at the local community college, but I was working and dating this little gal, so school came third. Guys were getting drafted hot and heavy and I knew my name was going to come up. I didn't know anything about Vietnam except what I saw on the news."

Peters went to the local recruiter and asked what kind of a deal he could get if he enlisted, and ended up signing up for a two-year hitch. He reported to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, for basic training in July 1968 and then was off to Fort Lewis, Washington, for Advanced Infantry Training.

"I wrote on a test somewhere that I liked to go for long walks in the woods carrying a rifle. That was probably a dumb thing to write down. Of course they sent me to infantry school."

He was due to finish the school in late November, and he and Claris, his betrothed, set a wedding date for Dec. 6. Of course, the Army had other ideas and kept him at the school after graduation.

"I arrived home on the morning of December 6th, ready to get married, but of course they had postponed the wedding." They married on Dec. 20th and 10 days later, Peters was on his way to Vietnam.

"I took a commercial flight. At the beginning of the trip there was a lot of joking around and bravado. We were just young guys. But afterwards it got pretty quiet on the plane.

"When we got there, the airplane captain announced that we were in a holding pattern because they were shelling Ton Son Nhut Airfield. So we all looked out the windows and we thought we saw puffs of smoke down below."

The plane finally landed, but the attack was still going on and the men descended the ramp and ran for a nearby bunker. "The two flight attendants stood on either side of the stairs. They were the last ones in the bunker. I thought that was pretty brave for civilians."

The first thing the men noticed about their new home was the stench. "We thought it was just the bunker that smelled that way, but when we came out, it was the same thing. What is that stink?"

The stink stayed with them for a while. "The farmers used animal and human waste for fertilizer, and it was the wet season. The only time you got away from it was when you went up in a helicopter and the air was cleaner."

Peters was sent to Dong Tam Base Camp in the Mekong Valley, south of Saigon, a land of endless rice paddies and endless mud during the rainy season.

"What the guys had the biggest problem with was what we called immersion foot, or paddy rot. They called it trench foot in World War II. There were also ringworms and leeches.

"You'd sleep in the mud, walk in the mud, do everything in the mud. Every morning when you got up you'd have your buddy check you over for leeches, and you'd do the same for him. They might be small when they got on you, but they could get four inches long when they were gorged with blood. You could get them off with a lit cigarette, and bug repellent burned like crazy too."

The new infantryman was also instructed about varieties of booby traps, including hand grenades hooked up to a thin wire, either down below or in the branches above. "They'd take the fuse out, so it was instantaneous. The ones in the ground usually killed you, while the ones in the branches usually only maimed you."

Another trap was a punji pit, razor-sharp bamboo poles in a shallow pit tipped with buffalo or human manure, and covered so you couldn't see them until you stepped into the pit.

"This was guerilla warfare, and they wanted to put fear into the enemy. Even if they only wounded someone, it meant that a helicopter would have to be called in while everybody waited."

Peters had arrived on Jan. 3, and by Jan. 10th he was assigned to the Ninth Division, 39th Infantry, 4th Battalion, Company D, 3rd Platoon.

Peters was given the job of carrying the radio for the platoon leader, but within days was promoted to being the RTO (radio transmission operator) for the company commander. "Sometimes we were like kids with CBs, teasing each other on the two-ways. The NCOs would put an end to that."

Coincidentally, he arrived at almost the same time as the battalion's new commander, Col. David Hackworth, one of the most decorated soldiers in Vietnam and who had a reputation as a tough leader. It was Hackworth's job to make a fighting force out of the 4th of the 39th, which up to that

Bruce Peters loved hunting and trapping, and says he put on an Army test "enjoys walking in the woods with a rifle." He was sent to Vietnam as an infantryman and he became the radio operator for his company. For a few minutes in a ferocious fire-fight, he became the company's de facto commander.



point had a poor reputation in combat.

Hackworth later became famous as a television military commentator.

"One of the things with Hackworth was when you saluted an officer you said, 'Hardcore Recondo.' That's what we called ourselves. And the officer would reply, 'No f---ing slack!'"

The unit encountered small arms fire on its first mission, and Peters asked his lieutenant if he had earned his Combat Infantry Badge yet. The answer was no. It was the same thing on his second outing, and the answer was no again.

"Then we went out on a night that was so black that you had to keep your hand on the guy in front of you to keep going. Then we got into a real fire fight. This was a lot of



BRUCE PETERS
At home in Buffalo



BRUCE PETERS
During his time in Vietnam

excitement for kid that hadn't been in combat before. A piece of mud got kicked up and hit me in the back of the head, and I thought my head had been blown off.

"When it was over and we were sitting around having some C-ration coffee, the lieutenant came by and said, 'Hey, Pete, you got your CIB today.'"

One day, he was asked by a friend and fellow RTO nicknamed Smitty if they could switch places for a day, with Peters going back to the platoon, and Smitty doing the company job. Peters checked with the company commander, and he said it was fine.

"That day, Smitty got hit and was killed. I saw it happen. I saw the radio go flying. I've always had some survivor's guilt about that. That was my first real wakeup call that maybe I could be next. I realized that this can happen really quick. In fact, after that I expected it would happen to me."

One day in March, the company advanced to the Co Co Canal to set up an ambush for the Viet Cong. "We had a new platoon captain, Captain Spiegel. I think he was the heir to the Spiegel Company. He was new but he didn't want to listen, even though he had been told to pay attention to his NCOs because they have all the experience."

The canal was about 30 or 40 feet wide, and when it was the dry season the U.S. forces could put mines in the bank. The enemy used the canal to transport goods from the Ho Chi Minh Trail to the Mekong Delta.

"We had one guy in our outfit who liked to carry a .45 pistol. We don't know why. It's not very good in combat and it's heavy. Most of us couldn't hit anything with a pistol even from a few feet away, so we didn't see much value in it, but this guy thought he was cool. Hey, if he wanted to hump the extra weight, that was fine with us."

The soldier with the pistol, who needed to take a leak, ventured a little ways away from where the company was setting up the ambush.

"Suddenly a Viet Cong came diddly bopping around the corner. He had no idea we were there. He and the guy taking a leak were only a few feet from each other and they were both surprised. Our guy got out his .45 and emptied the clip at this guy, and the VC had an AK-47 and emptied his magazine at our guy.

"Nobody hit anything."

Everybody hit the ground expecting a Viet Cong attack. "We were all digging a trench with our noses in the dirt, and the VC got away.

"The sergeants told Capt. Spiegel that the unit couldn't stay there because our position had been compromised. They know we're here. But the captain dug his heels in, and said we were staying."

Peters said what an American unit would usually do in that situation was to send a few men a distance away to set up another camp, while the rest of the group stayed there and pretended to dig in for the night. When darkness came, the unit would steal away to the new camp and have U.S. artillery coordinates set for the old camp.

"At low tide, they just overran us. We lost Captain Spiegel right away. I think he took seven bullets in the chest. He still was able to call in air support before he went down."

Peters took over the radio and began to coordinate an attack by Cobra gun ships and artillery.

The medic who was treating Spiegel asked Peters to help, and he had to hold the officer down while the medic did a tracheotomy so the officer could breathe. "He was a big guy, and he was thrashing around."

The Americans fought off the attack, and then fought off another. They indicated their position to the helicopters by putting strobe lights in their steel helmets and holding them over their heads. The helicopters could see the signal, but not the enemy.

"They said they could see the strobes, and I told them to shoot at anything on the other side of the blue, the canal. They did and the ground was literally shaking."

Peters described the firefight as "total confusion, total craziness," but at least one miracle happened during the hour or so the fighting went on.

"One of our guys had his gun jam, and he couldn't fix it. He kept trying and trying, but nothing worked. All of a sudden, a VC was right on top of him. Without even thinking, he raised that jammed gun and pulled the trigger. There was one round left in the chamber and it fired, and it killed the VC. Like I say, it was a miracle."

Three Americans were killed and 14 wounded in the attack.

On another mission, Peters and his comrades were walking through an area of the countryside that had been napalmed and bombed. "They had just knocked the snot out of this area, and we were walking on ashes. But as I was walking along I kept hearing this crackling sound.

"At first I thought it was just the ashes below my feet, but that didn't seem right. It was this crackling sound, kind of like a popping."

Peters finally asked one of his superiors what the sound was. "It turns out we were walking through a minefield. The sound I was hearing were the blasting caps going off. But the mines themselves had been destroyed by the napalm. Not one of them went off."

Snipers were a constant danger for the troops. "We had one guy out there who was pretty good. We never caught



Peters re-enlisted to change his MOS to truck driver. It meant he didn't have to hump into battle anymore, but now he had to drive these massive trucks down mine-laden roads and through places like "Ambush Alley."



Peters pride and joy is this Victory motorcycle, covered with original patriotic art work and quotes. He volunteers for the Patriot Guard.



Peters, with the weapon, and buddy hunker down for the night in a barracks.

Peters part of war book

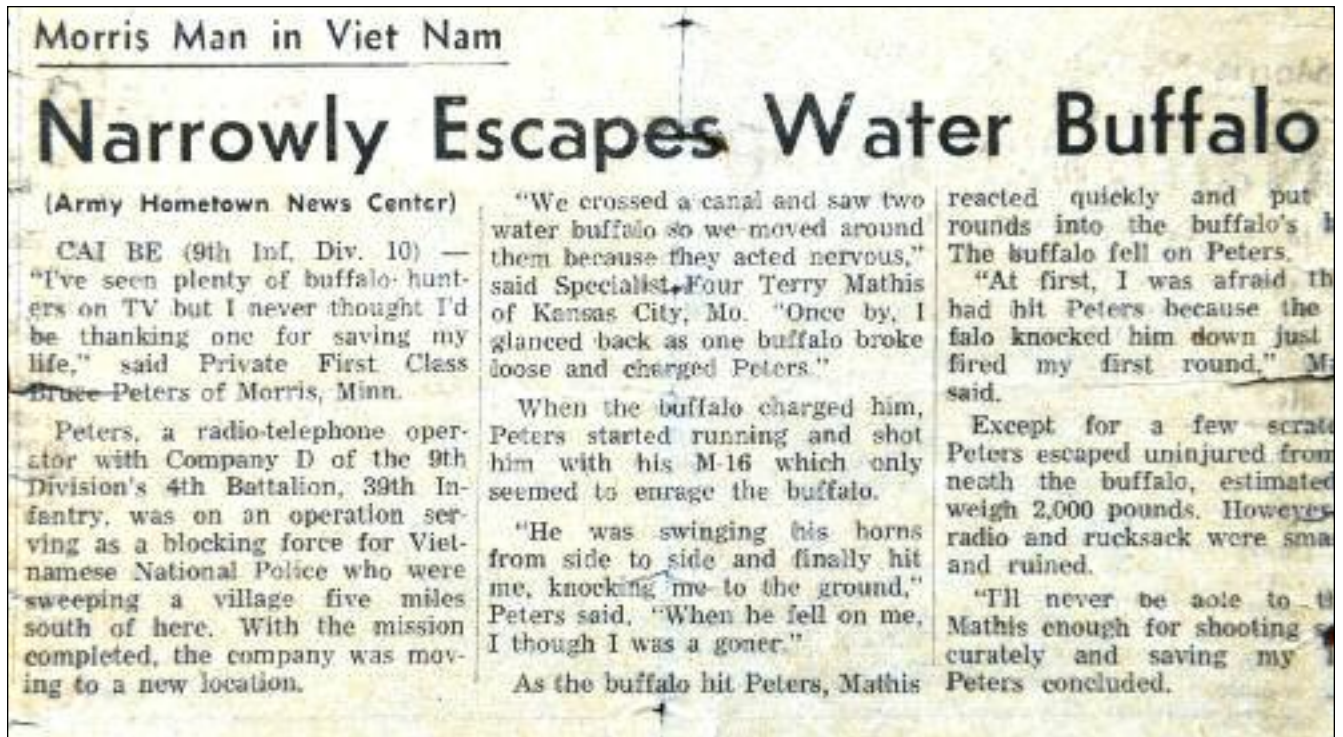
Bruce Peters has several parts in the book *Steel my Soldier's Hearts* by Col. David C. Hackworth. During the fighting at the Co Co Canal, Hackworth wrote:

"Private First Class Peters instantly became the acting company commander. He called in gunships that blistered the attacking VC while Spooky lit up the battlefield. Peters kept me informed back at Danger and handled the besieged company like an old pro. Without a damned competent draftee PFC who'd been smart enough to pick up Tactics 101 from his previous COs, the outcome of this fight would have been even more tragic."

Hackworth only got one thing wrong. Peters had enlisted in the Army.



Back at Fort Collins, Colo., Peters was able to reunite with his wife, Claris, and family.



A clipping about the buffalo attack in the Morris newspaper.

him. I always say I only smoked one healthy cigarette in my life.

"We had stopped for a while, and sometimes you try to ease the weight of that radio. The straps cut into your shoulders. So I was leaning up against a tree, and I got out a cigarette and my faithful Zippo, but it didn't light.

"So I leaned forward trying to light it again, and suddenly I was lying face down in the dirt. It turned out the sniper's bullet had hit the tree right where my head had been before I leaned forward to light the cigarette. The shock of the bullet hitting the tree had knocked me to the ground.

"You just came to realize how vulnerable you are out there, and that at some point it would happen."

And then there was the buffalo attack. "We were going through this paddy and we were on our way to our truck that would take us back to the fire support base. We were all pretty giddy and happy and not thinking about much.

"There was a buffalo about 30 or 40 yards away, and he was making this sound like 'pew.' So I phewed right back at him. He looked at me like I had said something about his mother, and all of a sudden I had this 2,000 pound buffalo charging at me.

"I aimed my M-16 at him, but it was just like a pea shooter for an animal that big. I remember seeing one bullet hit him right between the eyes and it just bounced off. 'Oh, oh,' I thought. 'Now I've really ticked him off.'"

With Peters in full retreat, the buffalo quickly closed the ground. "I remember getting hit in the back and there was this audible 'plop' sound. Then everything went black."

As it turned out, one of his comrades, armed with sniper rifle and larger bullets, had fired twice at the buffalo just as the beast was reaching Peters. The sniper yelled, "I got him, I got him," but he wasn't sure if he had hit the buffalo or Peters.

"It turned out it was one great shot. He told me later that both me and the buffalo were in his scope at the same time.

"Everybody wanted to know if I was hurt because I was just covered with blood. My radio was destroyed. But it was the buffalo's blood. I couldn't wear those clothes, and we never wore underwear in the jungle, so I had to go back to the base camp naked."

After a period of pretty steady front-line combat, the company was pulled back to Dong Tam for an overnighter of rest.

"And we were joined, of course, by Jim and Jack. That is, Jim Beam and Jack Daniels, but a lot of us were afraid to get drunk in that situation."

Peters was talking with a friend about the seniority in the platoon. "I suddenly realized that I was the senior guy in my platoon. I'd only been there two-and-one-half months, but I had been there longer than anyone else. Some had finished their tour, some had been wounded, some had been killed.

"But I got to thinking, if I'd only been here two-and-one-

half months and I had the least time left on my tour, seriously, what were my chances? I went to the sergeant and told him my concerns, but he just said, 'Don't worry about it.' But I knew better."

Peters asked what he would have to do to not go back out there, but the sergeant just said, "You're going back out there."

Then the sergeant reconsidered. "Well, you could re-enlist."

By re-enlisting, Peters would add another year onto his obligation to the Army, but he would also be given the option of changing his MOS, or job classification.

"I don't know if it was the Jack Daniels or whatever, but this was all starting to make sense to me."

Peters went down immediately and raised his right hand, extending his time in the service.

"They asked me what I wanted to do. Just then a semi drove by, and I said, I could drive one of those.

"When I woke up in the barracks the next day, everybody had left. The barracks was empty. I reported to headquarters, and they assigned me to the transportation group. I started driving semi-trucks."

If Peters thought this was going to be easy duty, he was quickly disabused of that notion. The trucks were used to haul supplies between bases, and they were often under attack.

Still he liked driving. "The roads supposedly had a 30-mile-an-hour speed limit, but we never knew if they were going to be mined or if we'd be ambushed, so we'd drive them at full throttle, maybe 45 miles an hour."

On one of the routes was a stretch called "Ambush Alley," and the drivers could expect bullets or more nearly every trip as they roared down the roadway.

"It was lucky for us that none of the Viet Cong had ever done any duck hunting and didn't know how to lead a target. If they were aiming at the star on my door — and we could hear them firing at us — the bullets would always hit the flour bags in back. We'd pick them out for souvenirs. If they had ever figured out how to aim ahead of the truck, they could have shot us up pretty good, but they never did."

Often Peters would have to haul aviation gas in a large tank behind his semi. "The one consolation I had was that I'd be dead very quickly if I got blown up."

The drivers would sit on their flak jackets as they drove. "We were more concerned about protecting our vitals than the other stuff like the heart or brain or lungs."

One mission called for Peters to load his semi and trailer, loaded with gasoline, on a barge heading up the river.

His training with the recon unit in the infantry had taught him the value of stealth. "We called it snooping and pooping."

The United States Navy, however, was not on a reconnaissance mission. "I couldn't believe how loud the Navy was. They didn't care. I was never overly confident around the Navy." He was able to drive his truck off the noisy

barge, deliver his load, and re-board the vessel.

The Ninth Division was the first division that President Nixon called back from Vietnam in August of 1969. The men rode on buses back to the Ton Son Nhut base, and Peters said there were no commercial flights this time, but large military transport planes instead.

He spent the last two-plus years of his enlistment at Fort Carson, Colorado. "I was thinking of making the Army my career, but the war was winding down and chances for advancement were not as good."

Peters and family came home to Minnesota. He drove a semi over the road for three years, and then worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 26 years, including jobs as postmaster in Zimmerman and Montrose. He retired in 2004, but still drove a truck for several years, retiring when his son, who later died, developed cancer.

He and Claris had three children, and they have 10 grandchildren.

Like many servicemen and women who came home at that time, he said he didn't feel welcomed by the traditional service organizations. "The World War II guys didn't think we were the same kind of veterans. And the Korean guys, that really was a forgotten war. Those veterans were also forgotten."

On one trip to the Vietnam Wall in Washington, Peters was able to figure out the full name of his comrade: Charles Earnest Smith, who he simply knew as Smitty. With that information, he was able to track down the family and visit.

"They took me to the cemetery, and that was neat. I was able to tell them that he had died instantly, and not suffered some horrible death."

Peters got involved with the Vietnam Veterans of American Chapter 447 out of Anoka and served on their color guard. He also belongs to The American Legion.

He is a member of the Patriot Riders, helping provide security and honor at military funerals. He owns a Victory motorcycle that has hand-crafted patriotic paintings on nearly every square inch of its surface.

Did he ever suffer from PTSD? "I don't like to call it that, because I don't think it's a disorder. I think with the violence of war, that's a natural reaction. The first time you look down at a body, it's no longer a gook. We're all created in God's image. You realize you've just killed somebody that was created in God's image. There's a lot of conflict there.

"Anybody who went through combat and was not affected, that would be a disorder. When you put a label on people, you take away their humanity."

He was given a test that had ten signs of PTSD. "I thought I had two of them, but Claris said there were only two I didn't have."

Sons of The American Legion

By Shawn Davis



Greetings from the Detachment of Minnesota. Keep up the hard work, and be prepared for changes. That was the message heard at the Fall NEC meeting.

They are working on improvements to MySAL, promotional materials for the Sons of The American Legion, and other changes. So more to come there.

Squadron Officer Reports. These are now over due. We need to get 100% reporting from all squadrons in order to function and support each other.

If you are reading this, check with your squadron and see if it has been turned in. We would love to know who to send information to, and whom potential new members should talk with.

Speaking of membership, we had a great turn in at the Harvest Rally. Keep working that membership, that renewal. Do not wait for a mailing from National. Send out a letter from your squadron asking for that renewal. See if you can make 100% by December 31.

The New SAL shed at Legionville is coming along, and should be done by the time you read this. Thank you to all for your support in getting this built. This is a great example of how when we get together, we can make great things happen.

And thank you to all the members and squadrons who have donated to my Commander Project. All I ask is for an average donation of \$5 per member. Would it not be great to have 100% participation! The funds will then be split between The American Legion Legacy Scholarship, The MN ROTC Scholarship, and The American Legion Family Hospital Association Fund.

So thank you all again for your support, and remember 5 for Minnesota.

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family, Hopefully everyone had a good time at Fall Conference in Willmar. Looking ahead we have Veterans Day. A great many programs and events will be taking place over the few days before and during November 11th.

I have no fewer than six appearances over a three day period. I will not rank them as I feel all are equally important.

Between dinners, school programs, ceremonies and home visits I will be kept very busy. It is truly an honor and privilege to meet with fellow Veterans and to hear some of their stories.

I will be traveling on four wheels as my bike has been put away for the winter. Wherever you are please take some time to attend and or take part in an event honoring veterans

Congratulations to Eyota Post 551 on their chartering a new Riders Chapter. I look forward to taking part in a few of their upcoming activities.

Thanksgiving will be upon us in a few short weeks. Please keep those that can not be with their families in your hearts and prayers.

Hopefully all deployed service members will be able to return safely home to their families and loved ones.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

New rules listed for baseball program

The National Executive Committee of The American Legion approved a number of rule changes for the American Legion Baseball program following the Baseball Committee's extensive page-by-page review of the program's rule book.

Listed below are some of the major rule changes approved, all of which demonstrate American Legion Baseball's commitment to player safety and improving the quality of play.

National tournament play will feature seven-inning games

Departments will still have the option to play nine-inning games during the regular season, however, beginning at the state tournament and all the way through the American Legion World Series, games will be seven innings. This proposal passed with overwhelming support of the department baseball chairmen and the Baseball Committee.

Changes to pitch count

After a tremendously successful first season with pitch count rules under the PitchSmart program, the Legion Baseball Committee, with the support of the department baseball chairmen, adjusted the pitch count chart ahead of the 2018 season to be more in line with the suggestions from Major League Baseball and USA Baseball.

Pitchers will have a daily maximum of 105 pitches per day, down from 120.

Pitchers may only make two appearances in any three consecutive days. Players will be charged with two appearances if they leave the pitching position and return as a pitcher in the same game.

Courtesy runner and re-entry

In regular season play only, departments may have the option to allow for courtesy runners and re-entry. Courtesy runners may be permitted for pitchers or catchers.

Graduate rule

Language has been removed from the rule book that required 19-year-olds to be former Legion players.



JENNIFER HAVLICK
Two Harbors



ROBERT BRISTO
Minneapolis

Two elected to Hospital Association

Two new members were elected to the American Legion Family Hospital Association Board at the annual meeting in Willmar.

Robert Bristo, Minneapolis, was elected an SAL member without opposition. Jennifer Havlick of Two Harbors was elected to a Legion slot on the board defeating Eugene Olswood of New Ulm. The vote was not announced.

The treasurer's report, from Roger Myren, revealed that there were only 18 claims for medical financial help this past fiscal year, compared to 38 the year before.

The total payout to claimants was \$20,519 including \$5,887 to the Legion, \$10,767 to the Auxiliary and \$3,865 to the Sons of the American Legion.

The net assets of the association rose to \$256,000, an increase of \$11,000 from last year.

A motion to limit only two elected members from any one district was passed. The meeting also made changes to the Constitution and Bylaws that had been recommended by a lawyer to bring them up to date.

DEC meets

Continued from Page 1
there.

Lynn Nottage, Minneapolis, speaking for the Convention Corporation, said the applications for high school bands in the annual national parade in Minneapolis in August, 2018, will be taken by National in January. Nottage said the Department will accept information earlier though, by sending it to centennial@mnlegion.org. Those supplying info should send the name of the band, the director, number of musicians and contact information.

The DEC was informed that the SAL has purchased 1,000 commemorative coins to note the centennial and will be selling them for \$10 apiece.



CAMP RIPLEY DEER HUNT -- Sponsored in part by The American Legion, the annual deer hunt at Camp Ripley brings in disabled veterans for time in the woods.

Notes from the Fall Conference

— Leading Candidate for National Commander Brett Riestad of Virginia gave a history lesson to those attending the Fall Conference at Willmar. "As we approach our Centennial, we need to celebrate our legacy. We need to talk about what we've done and talk about where we're going." He also urged Legionnaires to support a strong law and order program, and to strongly support public service officers. "We can do more to show our law enforcement personnel that we have their backs."

— Speaker Alan Duff said that America is the greatest experiment ever designed by man, but that most people now think the next generation of Americans will not have it better than this generation. He said the greatest threat to the U.S. is our dissatisfaction with government and politicians. "Many of our politicians think more about personal power than doing genuine public service. The private in the military does it for love of country. The politician is in it for a different kind of love." Duff urged people to get more involved in their government, and he urged government to have more transparency, for people to review government budgets, for term limits to be imposed, and to get more veterans involved in the process. Duff is a retired Army officer. "We need the courage to do the right thing."

— Teresa Ash, St. Paul, asked support for the Fourth District's Shop, Ship and Share program that last year sent over 2,000 packages overseas to deployed service members. She said the Legion Family can help by making donations to the program, and also by letting the program know the addresses of those who are deployed. She said anyone who wants to know more, to donate, or let the district know about deployed military should call her at 612-499-1403.

— John Knapp who works at the Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, said veterans cemeteries are considered a national shrine by the Veterans Administration. There are 30 to 35 burials a day at Fort Snelling, and it is the fourth busiest federal cemetery in the nation. He noted that the VA employs over 300,000 people, but the cemetery section only has 1,800 people "and 87 percent of them work outside Washington, D.C." He said the national cemetery section has a goal to make it easy for the families of veterans to get the benefits the veteran has earned, such as a gravesite, open and closing of the grave, a grave liner, a headstone and perpetual care. The national cemeteries have a goal of opening 14 new federal veterans cemeteries, including one in Fargo and one in Rhinelander, Wis., in the next few years. Veterans can now do their paperwork early so it won't be a burden of families later on. And, Knapp said, Fort Snelling will be trying Saturday burials.

— The Sons of the American Legion sold Minnesota American Legion coins at the conference for \$10.

— Holly Soria, from the National Magazine staff, talked about posts doing their post histories and submitting them to the national website. "We need to connect with our legacy of what we've done for the past 100 years, and our vision of what we'll be doing for the next 100 years. Use your history to tell a story, to build awareness of the Legion." She said a GI Bill history display, which is now at the World War II Museum in New Orleans, will be on display this coming summer for the 100th national convention in Minneapolis. She said historical wall displays are being created for posts to put on the walls of their post homes.

— Jeff Gay, on the Department's training committee, said posts and districts can call him or other committee members, Mike Ash and Barry Madsen, if they would like a training session in their areas. He said each session can be tailored to the local request.

— Convention Corporation Chairman Pat Logan said that Brainerd has got the bid for the 2018 Fall Conference. He noted that 426 Legion, Auxiliary and SAL attended this year's conference. He said the corporation is talking with Bagley about the 2019 Fall Conference, and Redwood Falls about the 2019 or 2020 Convention.

— Rich Oelschlager invited posts that want to be part of The American Legion Riders Legacy run in Minnesota next year to contact the Riders. He said the goal for next year is to raise \$250,000.

— Wayne Gilbertson, speaking for Legionville, said posts should seek to send more campers to the School Safety Patrol program. He said the camp is dealing with the five acre bog that blew in front of the camp's shoreline. Cliff Teigland, representing the SAL, said this year's Camp-O-Ree drew a large crowd and over \$7,500 was raised.

— Peggy Moon gave the Legislative Committee report and said that the Legislature is still considering a new home or homes to join the Minnesota Veterans Homes group. She said there were bills introduced for a 120 bed home at Fillmore Co., and for two 70-bed homes at Bemidji and Montevideo. She said Legionnaires need to be strongly involved in talking to their legislators about veterans issues. "You have something I don't have. You vote for them."

— Membership Director Larry Ryan said Minnesota was still third in the nation, trailing France and Wisconsin. He said it was important when a new member joins a post that a major effort be made to make them feel welcome and to encourage them to get involved. The Sixth District is in first place this year so far with 72.3 percent of goal.



TIM O'BRIEN
Vietnam War author



LYNN NOVICK
Vietnam PBS producer

Author, producer offer insights on Vietnam PBS series

Continued from Page 1

thousands of small towns across America made it possible to send young men to war, even a war that most did not understand.

"The draft didn't send me to war, the people of Worthington did."

He said he has no problem with the students and others who protested against the war. "You can love your country and hate what it's doing. Throughout our nation's history, the dissenters have been our heroes, even the people who founded this country."

He said he didn't generally take part in protests, but he did participate in a huge march down Grand Avenue in St. Paul to protest the student deaths at Kent State.

O'Brien talked about how a group of 100 American soldiers had to cross a bridge in Vietnam that was under constant enemy fire. "How we all made it across I don't know. I also don't know how I made my legs work. I had abandoned willpower and volition. It was just one foot in front of another."

The motivation of the American soldier in Vietnam was many things, he said, but probably not ideology. "I don't think anyone was there to stop communism. Damn few combat vets would think of those things."

He also said that when the treaty was signed, it didn't necessarily mean it was all over. "A treaty doesn't end the war. The war goes on. There are 58,000 names on that wall, and that means 58,000 families. And that's not all of our tragedy. So many of those veterans still living among us are still hurting."

O'Brien was asked about his type of writing which mixes fact and fiction. "I still love reading about Huck Finn, and he didn't even exist. At least we existed. Stories can hypnotize us, and impact not just the heads but the hearts of people."

"Stories have a powerful faculty in describing how we behave in the world."

Novick, who has worked with Ken Burns on several award-winning documentaries, was asked if the Vietnam series was anti-war. "I don't like to put a label on it. When we started, we checked our baggage at the door and tried to tell the story the best we could."

What can we learn from Vietnam?

"There were five presidents during the war, and every one of them knew the war wasn't winnable, but they kept at it. In the end, what was really at stake for the nation was our credibility. We lost 58,000 there, but the Vietnamese lost over three million."

She was also asked about how accurate the film was. "We were scrupulous about getting the facts right. But the film is also a work of art. I'm sure some came expecting a history lesson, but came away after having an experience."

Novick said the lessons of the war were strong, but they may still go unheeded. "Exactly what we have learned is the big question. We know we're not good at a conventional war in Asia. So, let's not do that again. But our policy leaders don't seem to hold on to the bigger questions. What's our role in the world?"

The panel was moderated by Don Shelby, former WCCO news anchor.

The second half of the 10-part Vietnam series will be on TPT television in Minnesota in November, with air dates on Nov. 7, 14, 21, and 28. The Minnesota American Legion is one of the sponsors of the show.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

**Les Shaunce
Commander**



Membership is doing very well. The Department is currently in 3rd place in the nation and is very close to 1st. We are also over 70% which is great for this time of year.

We just had our District Fall Rally. Although the turn out was poor the program was very interesting and informative. More posts have to get involved with the District functions. We can't continue to function if we don't have the support of our members. Some posts have never been to a District Rally. There should be at least one member from each post at each rally. I just attended my first Pheasant Dinner. It was held at the Hastings Veterans Home. We had a great turn out and the meal was great. I had a tour of the Home after lunch. This is a fabulous facility. It has everything a person would want or need. If all our Veteran Homes are comparable to this one, we can be rest assured that our veterans are being treated great.

Veterans Day falls on Saturday this year so most activities in schools will be held on Friday. Please take an active role in your local programs.

SECOND DISTRICT

**Randy Olson
Commander**



Let me begin by telling you how proud I am to be your 2nd District Commander. Thank you to all who support me and what I'm trying to do to excite and energize our great organization. It is impossible to do it alone, but with your undying efforts, there isn't anything that we can't accomplish together. Our Membership team, (Director, Vice Commanders, Posts Membership, down to every last one of us) has stepped up and put us in 3rd place in Department & 1st Place in the Kaiserhoff Race as of the last bulletin. Also, Minnesota is in 3rd Place, only 2nd to France and Wisconsin. This gives me great appreciation for our District & Department! Congratulations to all Districts.

My goal is help Minnesota to jump into 2nd Place ahead of our great National Commander Denise Rohan's, home state. Anyone with me? Let's Do It.

THIRD DISTRICT

**Eugene Leifeld
Commander**



During my time as 3rd District Commander this year I have been busy visiting with several posts. Posts are busy with activities to support their communities from Legion Riders, to Sons of the American Legion (SAL) to the Auxiliary units.

During my post visits I explain we need to tell new members about The American Legion and what it's about. I believe we need to explain the four pillars of the American Legion (Pillar 1, Veterans. Pillar II, National Security. Pillar III, Americanism. Pillar 4, Children and Youth.) There is a pamphlet entitled "Why You Should Belong." It has great resources on several programs I mentioned and contact information to the National American Legion and websites.

As the membership year continues to move forward it is important to thank the Vice Commanders, Membership Directors, and Posts for the job they are continuing to do with memberships. Thanks to all the Legionnaires who have renewed their dues.

Who ensured our first amendment rights? It was the military veteran. Veterans day is Saturday, November 11. Remember and honor our veterans who have served and are still serving. Consider attending a Veterans Day function in your community or post.

The American Legion will be hosting the 100th Anniversary in Minneapolis, Minnesota in August 2018. March in the parade with your American Flags and earn a special 100 year ribbon for your flags.

FOURTH DISTRICT

**Lane Stunkel
Commander**



Upcoming Events:

November 5th – Bone in Ham Breakfast, Rosetown Post 542, 9AM – 12.

November 6th – Red Cross Blood Drive, Arcade Phalen Post 577, 1PM – 6PM

November 8th – Ramsey County Central Committee, N St Paul, Post 39, 7PM

November 11th – Veterans Day – Arcade Phalen / Northend Post

November 19th – VA Hospitalization Visit, 1PM

December 1st & 2nd – Shop Ship & Share, Maplewood Mall, 10AM to 5PM

Now membership. The latest Membership Bulletin 15, the 4th District dropped to 9th place. I know we can do better. We all know someone who is a veteran or currently serving, talk to them and their spouse, ask them if they are an American Legion member. If each of us recruits one new member for the Legion, SAL and ALA, we will be 100%. When talking to potential new members, we need to tell them what The American Legion does for Veterans and their family, and also for active/reserve/guard service members, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, tell them what we do for the Community, Schools, JROTC, Non-Profits, local businesses, Churches, Children & Youth, American Legion Baseball, these are just a few.

FIFTH DISTRICT

**Walt Lyndsley
Commander**



It has been kind of slow for me this last month because I had a minor heart attack and am still not up to speed. I hope by the time we go to Willmar, I will be up to par.

Since the last letter I went up to Camp Ripley and had a really nice time. We went on a tour of the base by bus and they showed us all the facilities available for our troops to train. I met all the district commanders and got to know them, so, when I go to Willmar I'll know who I am talking to.

I'd like to have everyone in my district concentrate on driving up new membership. Our current membership is only at 50% and I would like to see 100% by the new year. Our fundraising project this year is to raise funds for the Minneapolis Veterans home so they can purchase art for the new addition, which is to open in April 2018. We are working in conjunction with the Auxiliary and SAL on this venture. Revitalization is coming up in November, but dates and location aren't finalized yet. I hope to get that information to you soon. I want to remind everyone that Shop, Ship and Share is December 1st and 2nd. We help the 4th District by supporting their project. They are looking for sponsors and donations and your help is much appreciated. I would like to have more people to show up for visitation at the Veterans home on the first Sunday of the month. The men in the wards really enjoy your time and conversation. Make it a point to be there.

SIXTH DISTRICT

**Ken Johnstone
Commander**



I don't know where the time has gone the last few months. With the Department Executive Board, National Security/Foreign Relations meeting and the many Post, County Council and membership dinners, time has really "flown by" for me.

I really enjoyed touring Camp Ripley and the time I had to spend with the other District Commanders and Chairpersons while at the National Guard installation. The conversations and the Friday night steak fry were a real treat for me.

Looking forward to the month of November. We have a lot going on in my District as well as continuing to visit Posts and enjoying their hospitality. There are a lot of Veterans Day programs taking place. I hope everyone gets the opportunity to attend or even participate in one or more of the events.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Richard Wog
Commander**



To the mighty 7th, keep up the good work. We got off to a slow start but we made a pit stop, put on new tires and changed fuel and are making some moves although we have to watch out for the bumps on the track. I have to say, the membership dinners I have been attending are wonderful. Not only is there wonderful food but I've had a whole lot of fun meeting the members of the posts, the auxiliary, and SAL. I never get tired of hearing stories from the veterans. Thank you for the wonderful evenings and the wonderful food. I have more membership dinners to attend and am looking forward to each one. Please, keep the invitations coming. I will be there, and if not me my vice commanders will attend, but so far I have made them all.

I had the opportunity to attend the District Commanders weekend at camp Ripley put on by the Foreign Relations and National Security Committee. It was good to see Camp Ripley again since I spent 28 years there. It was good to see

the changes that have taken place. We were given a tour of the post and some of the training sites. The classes we attended were very informative and I was given a lot of information to bring back and share with the post commanders and others. Most of all, we as new district commanders got the chance to meet each other and spend time getting to know each other better.

November 11th is Veterans Day. That is the day to remember our veterans and I hope every post is doing something to honor our veterans just to say thank you for your service and sacrifice serving our country. Thanksgiving will soon be here and is a time to reflect on the blessings we have been given; let us never forget the freedoms we enjoy.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

**Donovan Goblirsch
Commander**



As usual we start with a membership note. The Legion side membership is currently at 67.66% putting us in 6th place in the Department membership race. The Auxiliary side membership is currently at 42.69% putting us in 5th place in the Auxiliary Department membership race. Unfortunately I do not have the Sons of the American Legion membership numbers. November has two big events Veterans Day and Deer Hunting Season opener. I would to thank our fellow veterans and active duty and reservists for their dedication to serving and protecting our nation. I would also like to thank the spouses and family members for your support and dedication to our veterans. A quick reminder please do NOT hold membership renewals. I encourage those in charge of membership for all our organizations to please send your renewals in weekly even if you only have one. If you are struggling with your membership paperwork please give me a call and I will help you in any way I can. November is Education Week Posts, Squads and Units are encouraged to celebrate their local teachers. Thank them for helping to education and guide the next generation by having a luncheon or dropping off snacks at your local schools. Last have a safe and successful hunting season.

NINTH DISTRICT

**Tim Haugen
Commander**



I want to thank everyone in the 9th for working very hard on membership. We achieved the October National goal (55%) and came in at 65.11% which put us at November's target goal (65%). I would like to see the 9th make the December goal (75) by Veteran's day. We need only 470 new or renewals to make this and I'm feeling pretty confident that we can do it.

The 6th and the 9th district membership rally was held on October 14th and what a great turnout. I'm happy to say that the Leg will not be at my house this year as it went home with the 6th, who I know will take good care of it. I want to thank the 9th district for a great membership turn in. By the time you will be reading this article, the Department Fall Conference will have come and gone and I will report on it next month.

November also brings another very important event and that is Election Day and all I have to say is get out and Vote. On, November 10th I will be attending the Veteran's Day Program at Barnesville HS and will be attending Post 117, Thief River Falls membership dinner on Veteran's Day.

Until next month, God bless our Troops & their families and our Veterans.

TENTH DISTRICT

**Paul Hassing
Commander**



I know a lot of you will be celebrating Veteran's day soon. It is a great time to remember why The American Legion was formed in the first place. Basically to take care of Veterans and their families. Use this opportunity to reach out to those that need The American Legion family, as much as we need them.

It is also time to reach out to those who haven't renewed their membership this year. Most of the posts in the 10th District would be at or near goal if everyone who was a member last year renewed.

I know membership isn't the only thing we should focus on, but it does enable us to continue the programs we are so proud of in the Legion. It also makes things a lot easier when we have more people to carry the load.

I continue to be so proud of everyone in the 10th. Thank you all.

Taps

Benton, Joseph W., 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 16, 2017. He served as chaplain and on the honor guard of Sandstone Post 151.

McDowell, Donald Rufus, 94, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Oct. 21, 2017. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Schmider, Donald G., 86, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 20, 2017. He was an intelligence analyst. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Ray, Eugene E., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 14, 2017. He was a member of the Honor Squad of Windom Post 206.

Flatgard, Donovan "Shorty," 80, Air Force veteran of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, died Sept. 3, 2017. He served from 1953 to 1962. He was a member of the Honor Squad of Windom Post 206.

Heim, Gordon L., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 5, 2017. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Harvey, Theodore J., 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 18, 2017. He served in Germany. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

Schenk, Robert J., 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 29, 2017.

Paulson, Raymond, 82, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 19, 2017. He served in Okinawa and Japan. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

Anderson, Kenneth Adolph, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 30, 2017. He served in the Pacific aboard the USS Toledo (CA-133) and earned four Korean service ribbons. He was a member of St. Paul Post 577.

Hedum, Arthur Godfrey, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 9, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Borstner, Gene, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 16, 2017. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Mayzlik, Frank, 72, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 10, 2017. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

Alfuth, David Lee, 60, Army veteran of the Lebanon and Grenada Wars, died Oct. 2, 2017. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

Bugbee, Melvin, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 4, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Erickson, Glen L., 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 15, 2017. He was a past commander of Springfield Post 257.

Engenberger, Iver, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Oct. 5, 2017. He served as a mess sergeant in the 488th Light Platoon Engineering. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Ball, Raymond L., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 29, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Bang, Harlan A., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 1, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Jaschob, Ralph, 84, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 5, 2017. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Tersteeg, John T., 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died September 23, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Hauan, Donald O., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 30, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Pederson, Gordon A., 90, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 30, 2017. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

March, Terry L., 69, Army Veteran of the Vietnam War,

died Sept. 26, 2017. He served for 22 years. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Mears, Johnnie "Vic," 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 12, 2017. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Lanners, John, 73, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 15, 2017. He traveled on rescue missions. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Farasyn, Laurence, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 3, 2017. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Campion, Dr. Robert Francis, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 24, 2017. He was a quartermaster supply technician with the Headquarters Company of 48th Armored Medical Battalion. His unit was Truman's honor guard at the Potsdam Conference. He was a staff sergeant. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Marquardt, DuWayne G., 79, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 8, 2017. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

Tufte, Loren D., 80, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 8, 2017. He spent three years in Germany. He was a member of Lanesboro Post 40.

Rector, Allen, 83, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 26, 2017. He was a member of Eagan Post 594.

Anderson, Bob, 81, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 8, 2017. He was a member of the color guard at New London Post 537, and he also served on the rifle squad at Little Falls Veterans Cemetery.

Kempton, Robert S., 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 5, 2017. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Penning, John C., Jr., 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Sept. 24, 2017. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Itschert, John J., Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 9, 2017. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Jaekel, Waldo A., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 9, 2017. He served in Korea in Company F, 1st Regiment, 24th Division. He was a section leader who earned two Bronze Stars. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Laumann, Gerald P., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 25, 2017. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Schneider, Edward, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 15, 2017. He was stationed in France. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Appelgren, Wilbert E., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 23, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Ertsgaard, Bobby Dean, 87, Marine veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 4, 2017. He served in Korea. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Tokle, Roy P., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 24, 2017. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Loosbrock, Florian, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 13, 2017. He was a tank repairman in Korea. He was a member of Lismore Post 636.

Taylor, Robert, 78, Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 26, 2017. He was a member of Vesta Post 306.

Fridgen, Arthur James, 95, Merchant Marine veteran of World War II, died Sept. 27, 2017. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Lauer, Arnold P., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 30, 2017. He was a member of St. Joseph Post 328.

Clark, Gerald W., 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 18, 2017. He was a member of Hillman Post 602.

Brockhoff, Earl E., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 27, 2017. He was a member of Arlington Post 250.

Thies, Alton, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 28, 2017. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Ottman, Gary, 78, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 25, 2017. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Boyum, Rodney A., 77, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 29, 2017. He was an airplane mechanic. He was a member of the Wabasso Post 263.

Evink, John, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 5, 2017. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

Rutherford, Richard, 76, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 22, 2017. He was a heavy equipment operator. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Lentz, Ralph, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 1, 2017. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Jarrett, Eugene, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 28, 2017. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Svihel, Frank P., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 29, 2017. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

Hendrickson, John A., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 22, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Volk, James, 67, Marine veteran of the Vietnam War, died Sept. 30, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

LaDoucher, Russell, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 3, 2017. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Cottingham, Bruce K., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Sept. 14, 2017. He served with the 4th Marine Division in the Pacific, and later served on the LCI 462, participating in seven battles and seven landings. He served on the Honor Guard of Litchfield Post 104.

Prahl, Clinton Glenn, 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 20, 2017. He served in England. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Wilfahrt, Eldor A., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died Oct. 22, 2017. He served in the South Pacific. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Biedenbender, Gehard, 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 15, 2017. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Brose, Edward Russel, 83, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Sept. 27, 2017. He was a member of Chaska Post 57.

Jackel, Vernon W., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 23, 2017. He was a truck driver in Korea. He was a member of Claremont Post 422.

Schmitz, Kenneth Earl, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 12, 2017. He was a paratrooper in the 508th Infantry. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Bergherr, Robert Lavern, 89, Marine veteran of World War II, died Oct. 8, 2017. He was a member of Bloomington Post 550.

Christiansen, Jerry "JC," 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 12, 2017. He served 27 years in the Minnesota National Guard as a battalion operations sergeant. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Kassen, Myron Allen, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 18, 2017. He was a member of Cambria Post 329.

Maki, Leo G., 101, Army veteran of World War II, died Oct. 24, 2017. He served in a mechanized cavalry unit in Europe. He earned a Purple Heart in the battle near St. Lo. He was a past commander of the Buhl Post. He was a current member of Chisholm Post 247.

Dixon, Blake, 54, Army veteran of the war on terrorism, died Oct. 16, 2017. He served 22 years in the Army and served in Bosnia and South Korea. He was a past commander of Long Prairie Post 12.

Henke, Clarence W., "Bud," 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 19, 2017. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Paulson, Gayle A., 84, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 18, 2017. He served on the USS Des Moines. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Wobbrock, Lloyd J., 88, army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 20, 2017. He served as post commander of Claremont Post 422 for 25 years.

Schumacher, Tom, 76, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 15, 2017. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Membership Chart, as of Oct. 29, 2017

District	2018 Goal	Total 2017	Total 2018	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,953	8,895	6,417	267	58	4	71.67%	6,748
District 2	7,272	7,188	5,254	234	84	6	72.25%	5,697
District 3	11,712	11,647	8,402	265	65	3	71.74%	8,961
District 4	2,420	2,402	1,600	16	18	0	66.12%	1,828
District 5	2,486	2,464	1,642	30	22	1	66.05%	1,862
District 6	11,811	11,740	8,669	333	71	7	73.40%	9,125
District 7	6,398	6,322	4,595	293	76	2	71.82%	4,930
District 8	4,252	4,212	2,977	100	40	2	70.01%	3,153
District 9	6,729	6,664	4,669	92	65	5	69.39%	5,067
District 10	10,066	10,012	7,005	220	54	1	69.59%	7,517
District 11	401	2,358	1,390	0	2	1	346.63%	1,714
Totals	72,500	73,904	52,620	1,850	555	32	72.58%	56,602
								Same Date Last Year



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 18-1

President Donna Arends

November 2017

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By Donna Arends



Hello. Wow what a weather change. As I write this a West wind is blowing crazy.

Since the last issue, I have attended a Unit meeting, with great friends, a Fashion Show in Rosetown with great and new friends, a delicious Pheasant Dinner in St Cloud and witnessed firsthand what the Hospital Reps do for our Veterans there. I also attended a Membership Dinner where Auxiliary members received 50-60 plus year's awards. Then of course a wonderful Fall Conference. Fall Conference was in my opinion fantastic. All of the Department Chairmen that presented reports on their programs, did an outstanding job. The Poppy displays were beautiful.

The Thursday evening Leadership, Membership and Public Relations Workshop was tremendous. The Friday evening Family Feud game was a big hit. Thank you Membership Mary, Leadership Sandy Wersal and Public Relations Robin Dorf thanks to you for your extra efforts.

Thanks to Margie Keller and Pam Hoshal for freezing in the Atrium to secure a fantastic result for our Silent Auction. A huge thanks to all that donated such very good quality items for the auction.

Yes the hospitality area was cramped, and I am told plans are in the works to remedy that for 2020 when you return.

I am looking forward to more Unit meetings, visits, Pheasant Dinners, our Gift Shop Distribution Day, Veterans Day festivities and Gift Shops in the month ahead. Thank you all for the wonderful work you do.

Fall conference at Willmar judged to be 'great success'

The 85th annual Fall Conference was held in Willmar, Minnesota with The Best Western being the host hotel, our Auxiliary Conference at the Willmar Conference Center. The Conference was sponsored by the Willmar American Legion Family #113. The Auxiliary was blessed by receiving a \$2500.00 donation from Chuck Stone representing the Pheasant Dinner group. This will be used in our December Gift Shop program for Veterans and their families. Margee Keller and Pam Hoshal stepped up to the plate and ran our annual Fall Conference Silent Auction which the proceeds goes to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. This is an Auxiliary program where the Auxiliary helps their members in times of emergencies. Chairman Cindy Nelson had back surgery and although she wanted to be there, she couldn't. Along with Laura and Dorothy, Margee and Pam did a fabulous job. Thanks to the entire American Legion Family for making this a success. Over \$5,000.00 was raised for the program.

tative comes to your area. Check with your Post Commander for your pick-up day and time.

Please do not hold membership in your Unit. Mail your transmittals on a regular basis. Just be prepared to give those last minute membership to the representative who comes to pick them up for the rally.

Let's make this a special Holiday Season for our Department President Donna and Membership Chairman Mary as we continue to improve our membership counts. We need to get all Units off the goose egg so we can win a contest for \$500.00 from the National organization. We missed out on the \$1,000.00 but I am very sure we can make the next deadline!! If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Chairman Zandy Kessler or the Department Office.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP

The Department Office and the Hospital and Home Representatives want to give a big thank you to the Units and Posts that have contributed funds to our Gift Shop program. Again this year, the veterans at the four (4) VA Medical Centers and the five (5) Minnesota Veterans Homes will be selecting gifts for their loved ones through our Gift Shop program. About 2,000 veterans participate in this program. A huge change this year for the Gift Shop is the amount that was approved by the Department Executive Committee to spend on our Veterans at the Gift Shop.

The Gift Shop committee has been busy shopping for the gifts and would appreciate your Unit's financial support of this program. Those who attended Fall Conference saw the nice quality and selection of items the veterans may choose from. Please include a generous cash donation in your Unit's annual budget and send it to the department office earmarked Gift Shop. Let's support our own Auxiliary programs first.

Donations to the Gift Shop are accepted all year. You may use Poppy funds and Gambling funds for this program. The Gift Shop is available to all veterans who are in the various facilities at the time of the Gift Shop including

HAPPY 98th BIRTHDAY

Does your Unit know November is "birthday month" for the American Legion Auxiliary? Will your Unit be celebrating? It was November 10, 1919, when the American Legion Auxiliary was established by a resolution adopted at the first National Convention of The American Legion here in Minneapolis. Since then the Auxiliary has grown to around 9000 Units and over 600,000 members. This November is the American Legion Auxiliary's 98th birthday. We hope you are planning a celebration in your Unit. Do something fun and memorable as a Unit.

PEARL HARBOR RALLY

The Pearl Harbor Membership Rally will be held at the West Duluth American Legion Post 71 on Saturday, December 2nd. Turn in 3-4:30 p.m., with dinner at 5 and program to follow. You're District President and Membership Chairman asks every Unit to have membership ready to be picked up when they or a Legion represen-

Walker endorsed for Department President

Warren Unit 27, Ninth District Past Presidents Parley and the Ninth District, have endorsed Jean Walker for Department President for 2018-2019.

She has been an active member of Unit 27 for 24 years. Her eligibility is through her late father, Joseph Penk, a World War II veteran.

At the Unit level, she has held many positions including President. On the District level she has been District President, 1st Vice

President, 2nd Vice President, chairman for several of the committees including, Membership, Americanism, Education, Finance Chairman, Past President Parley and Legislation.

On the Department level, Walker has served as Memory Book Chairman, Americanism Chairman, Leadership Chairman, and Girls State Counselor, Membership Chairman, VA&R Chairman. This year she will be serving as

Legislation Chairman and the Northwestern Division AEF Chairman. Walker has attended many District, Department, and National Conventions. She has also attended 3 Mission Training Conferences.

She and her husband, John, have been married 25 years and live in Warren. Jean is the office manager at Evergreen Implement Company and John is a dispatcher - jailor with the Marshall County Sheriff's Office.



JEAN WALKER



GOODWILL AMBASSADOR -- The First ever "Goodwill Ambassador" award for 2017 was presented to Lois Davis, from Unit 294, Lake Crystal, MN on September 12, 2017. Kathy Burket, Past President 2nd District presented the award to Lois announcing that on behalf of the over 400 Auxiliary Units in Minnesota Lois was chosen to receive this prestigious award. This new award was created by the Department Strategic Planning Committee for someone in any unit that meets the requirements. The requirements are a great supporter of our Veterans, Patriotic, organized, hard worker, enthusiastic, helpful to others, and can be found wearing Auxiliary clothing and jewelry. All of the above describes Lois to a tea. Congratulations Lois on this awesome award. Keep up the good work. From left to right: President Kristeen Asleson, 2nd District Past President Kathy Burket, and Lois Davis.

Frederick endorsed for Department NEC

Hackensack Unit 202 has endorsed Shirley Frederick for a second two-year term for National Executive Committeewoman for 2018-2020.

She has the backing and support of the 6th District and their Past President's Parley members. She is eligible through her late husband Roy, a Korean War veteran.

In Hackensack, she has served 20 years as Secretary.

In the 6th District, she has been chairman of most of the programs including membership team 8 years and Chairman twice, Chaplain and Leadership Chairman 5 times, Field Service and Historian.

In the Department she has been chairman for Legislation, Leadership, History (winning top National Award) Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Community Service, Memorial & Chaplain, Veterans Affairs &

Rehabilitation, National Security. She was president 2013-2014.

On the National level National Executive Committeewoman and NW Division National Security Chairman for 2014-2015 Alternate NEC.

She retired in 2002 with 27 years of State of Minnesota service, she has five adult children, 21 grand and great grandchildren and is active in her community and church.



SHIRLEY FREDERICK

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

regular day care patients. The Gift Shop is chaired by Vida Bacon and her Committee Member is Linda Deschene. They are both giving much of their time to make this a very successful event.

GIFT SHOP DATES

Our representatives have announced the date(s) of their Gift Shop at their respective facility.

Fargo VAMC	December 4
Minneapolis VAMC	December 5 & 6
Sioux Falls VAMC	December 12
St. Cloud VAMC	November 27 - 29
Fergus Falls VA Home	December 11
Hastings VA Home	December 7
Luverne VA Home	December 7
Minneapolis VA Home	December 6 & 7
Silver Bay VA Home	December 14

Please let the representatives know if you would like to volunteer at any of the facilities. It is a very rewarding experience.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

Well, we made it through another Fall Conference and I must say thank you to all Auxiliary members who made the conference a huge success. The attendance was fabulous and we outnumbered The American Legion and The Sons of The American Legion combined. I hope everyone that attended had as good a time as I did. It's a lot of work to pull these events off but you soon forget the "work" part when getting together with the family. As I told the Legionnaires when I addressed them, I would like to thank Don Hayden, Sully and Diane, Linda D and Judy S, along with Sandy F and her nephew Dave Nelson for the wonderful time and comradery they all showed Jan, Julie and myself. I must say I really did learn a few new things and those "teachers" know what that is all about. We had such a good time - it is so much fun enjoying functions with the entire AL family. Also, thank you for the tremendous support you showed in purchasing our cookbooks and magnets - we ran out of both. We do have more cookbooks in the office and I will be ordering more of the emblem/magnets today. I have to run as I have much to do in 2 days - Finally off to Texas on Wednesday to see my three babies and their parents. Baby Elizabeth is already 5 months old and Brad did assure his father that she will know us when we get there. Have a very blessed and happy Thanksgiving. Enjoy each and every day you have and treat everyone as you want to be treated. It will make your life much more peaceful.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- November 10 - Department Office closed for Veterans Day
- November 23 - Thanksgiving (if you are in Montgomery-join us in the morning for a wonderful time)
- December 1 - Poppy Orders Due
- December 2 - Pearl Harbor Rally - West Duluth



The Third District recently had a Leadership Training session.

November is Past Presidents Parley Month

November is Past Presidents Parley month.

Celebrate the Past Presidents of your Unit. Your Unit's Past Presidents may even include some that have served as a President of the District, Department and National levels.

They are an invaluable asset and are ready to assist you in way possible. It is the goal that every Unit in Minnesota have an organized Past Presidents Parley.

Begin now to think about a member that you could submit as the Unit Member of the Year.

Along with your Unit Members the Parley should place an emphasis on the women veterans as their needs are often overlooked and vary a great deal from the needs of the male veteran.

Please note that the deadline for the Past Presidents Parley Health Care Scholarship is earlier than the Annual Reports. Should you have questions, my contact information is listed in the Unit Guide.

Please check the November Unit mailing, Unit Guide and Trophies & Awards as they contain detail information on these items.

Past Presidents are the best ambassadors for the American Legion Auxiliary knowing there is much information to share to make each level of the organization stronger and to maintain its growth and positive actions.



LINDA KROPUENSKE

October 28, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership to Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 1-31-2016
One	5,000	2,491	49.82%	2,693
Two	4,924	2,702	54.87%	2,854
Three	4,411	2,449	55.52%	2,456
Four	720	375	52.08%	433
Five	824	417	50.61%	484
Six	6,042	3,605	59.67%	3,854
Seven	3,934	2,015	51.22%	2,290
Eight	1,628	815	50.06%	898
Nine	4,350	2,637	60.62%	2,765
Ten	5,159	2,437	47.24%	2,883
1982	160	98	61.25%	104
Totals	37,152	20,041	53.95%	21,714

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Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary Leadership Workshop

Saturday, December 2, 2017
Workshop- Time 9am-2pm
\$10 includes materials and lunch.

West Duluth American Legion #71
5814 Grand Ave 3
Duluth, MN 55807
218-628-1495

The goal for the workshop is to keep Units, Districts and the Department strong.

This year the workshop will be with three programs working together to increase knowledge of our organization Leadership, Membership, Public Relations, and any other questions attendees may have.

This will be a casual and informational setting for members to ask questions, share ideas with other members, and enhance your membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

We need 12 members to hold this workshop so PLEASE get your reservations in!
We Welcome Junior Members.

Prepaid reservations by November 15, 2017 to ensure count for meal and preparation of materials.

Unit # _____ Unit Location _____ District # _____

Name: _____ Senior Junior

Mailing Address: _____ Cell phone # _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email Address: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ Make checks payable to: Sandy Wersal

Mail to: 16667 Co Rd 9 NE, New London, MN 56273

Reservation must be received by November 15, 2017.

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- WW II Memorial, Capitol Hill, Embassy Row, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Smithsonian, Lincoln Memorial
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\$1,499.00 per person double occupancy

New Orleans & Baton Rouge
 May 10-15, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Larry Alvey
- Roundtrip Delta flight from Minneapolis to New Orleans
- 3 nights in New Orleans
- 2 nights in Baton Rouge
- Breakfast daily
- Mardi Gras World
- City Tours of New Orleans and Baton Rouge
- Natchez Mississippi River Cruise and lunch
- Dinner and Show in the French Quarter
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

PRICING TO COME!

San Antonio Riverwalk
 February 4-11, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- 7 nights accommodations, with 2 nights on the Riverwalk
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 15 Meals: 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 3 dinners
- Market Square (San Antonio)
- Riverwalk district
- San Fernando Cathedral
- San Antonio History Tour
- The Alamo
- Magnolia Market Site's

\$1,299.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Savannah & Charleston
 April 13-20, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motorcoach transportation
- 8 nights accommodations & 14 meals
- Anheuser Busch Brewery, St. Louis, MO
- Biltmore Estates, Asheville, NC
- Gospel Dinner Cruise
- Savannahs Historic Davenport House Tour
- Historic Savannah and Charleston Tours
- Jekyll and St. Simons Island
- Patriots Point Tour
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

\$1,549.00 Per Person Double Occupancy

Northern Rocky Mountain National Parks
 September 5-17, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 12 nights accommodations & 20 meals
- Mount Rushmore National Memorial
- Scenic cruise on Lake McDonald in Glacier Park
- Glacier Parks Going in the Sun vintage Red Bus Tour
- Historic Stanley Hotel Tour
- Buffalo Bill Museum
- Scenic byways and highways

\$2,159.00 per person double occupancy

Minnesota Twins Spring Training in Florida
 March 15-25, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 10 nights accommodations
- 18 meals: 10 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 7 dinners
- Anheuser Busch Brewery Tour, St. Louis, MO
- Best of Nashville Guided tour
- Coca Cola Factory Tour, Atlanta, GA
- 2 Spring Training baseball games
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

\$1,799.00 per person double occupancy

Panama Canal Cruise
 March 23-April 9, 2018

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Larry Alvey
- Roundtrip Delta flights from Minneapolis
- 1 night pre-cruise in Minneapolis
- 1 night pre-cruise in Ft. Lauderdale
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