



Patrick M. Novack Post 5222 Commander Teresa Huberty opens the post's first official meeting on Nov. 14.

Post formed in Mpls. is first in 6 years

Twin Cities TV reporters descend on initial meeting for Post 5222

By Tim Engstrom

MINNEAPOLIS — Under the spotlight of TV crews across the Twin Cities market, The American Legion Department of Minnesota welcomed its first new post in six years.

Patrick M. Novack Post 5222 of The American Legion has 27 charter members, with the youngest at age 27 and the oldest at 83. Teresa Huberty, the post commander, estimates about 85 percent of the new members are veterans of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Novack, a Coon Rapids resident, died with his wife, Mary, in a car crash in May 2004. He was 57. She was 60. They are buried at Fort Snelling.

He retired from a 30-year career with the Minneapolis Police Department in 1999

and was a member of American Legion post in Coon Rapids. His badge number was 5222.

Novack's son, Mike, is vice commander of the new post and said his father was awarded the Purple Heart, two Silver Stars and three Bronze Stars over three tours in Vietnam in the Army.

Assistant Adjutant Mike Maxa was at the Nov. 14 charter meeting.

"My goal is to meld our older veterans, our older generation, our older Legionnaires into our younger Legionnaires, our younger veterans, and to show them how we embrace the community, how we embrace our children and youth, the Americanism, national defense," Maxa told reporter Reg Chapman of WCCO, himself a Gulf War veteran.

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'They thought I was dead'

IRAQ WAR



Ryan Sabinish, an Army National Guard veteran of the Iraq War, stands in front of the State Capitol. The Albert Lea resident was the 2018-19 Department of Minnesota commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and visited St. Paul often that year. He also is an American Legion member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Ryan Sabinish survives checkpoint bomb, now urges younger veterans to get involved with local and state organizations

By Tim Engstrom

In the Iraq War, being a quartermaster could be just as dangerous or more so than being in the infantry.

Just ask Ryan Sabinish, an Albert Lea resident and a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

He is the former commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and advocates for younger veterans to get to know their local veteran organizations — join them all.

Sabinish, 38, graduated from Albert Lea

The Sabinish military tradition

- Great-grandfather, Lauritz Carlsen, Army, World War I, Europe
- Grandfather, Richard Sabinish Sr., Army, World War II, Europe
- Father, Richard Sabinish Jr., Navy, Vietnam War
- Ryan Sabinish, Army National Guard, Iraq War

High School in 2000. Three years later, he enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard, knowing that three previous generations in his family had served. He felt the duty, he said, to have the military experience.

In January 2004, he went through basic training at Fort Jackson in South Carolina, then he went to quartermaster school in Fort Lee, Virginia. His military occupational specialty? Petro supply specialist. The 224th Transportation Company in Austin is filled with truck drivers, mechanics and

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Chris Kyle widow: 'This doesn't end you'

By Tim Engstrom

HUTCHINSON — Life is getting better lesson by lesson for Taya Kyle, widow of U.S. Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle who served four tours in Iraq and survived, only to be murdered in February 2013 helping a veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder.

God, she said, has prepared her for obstacles, even ones within the past month. She has become stronger every time and is less scared of the challenges of life.

"When it's not me, it's not
Continued on Page 7



Taya Kyle speaks Nov. 13 at the Hutchinson Event Center.

National commander to head south

ROCHESTER — American Legion National Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford will tour much of southern Minnesota in his 2020 tour.

The schedule has Oxford, who hails from Post 29 in Lenoir, North Carolina, flying into Rochester International Airport Feb. 16. The next day, he is slated to have breakfast at Adams Post 146, lunch at Waseca Post 228 and dinner at Albert Lea Post 56.

After overnighting in Albert Lea, Oxford will have breakfast Feb. 18 at Wells Post 210, lunch at Madelia Post 19 and

dinner at Redwood Falls Post 38 before spending the night at Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel.

On Feb. 19, Oxford will eat breakfast at Gaylord Post 433, lunch at Minnesota State University in Mankato and dinner at New Prague Post 45. The commander plans to stay overnight in Bloomington before flying out of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport on Feb. 20. Oxford is a veteran of the



Bill Oxford

Marine Corps and served during the Vietnam War as an aviation electronic technician for the A-6 Intruder. He served in Vietnam during his initial enlistment. He was discharged as a sergeant in 1970, then joined the North Carolina National Guard, eventually retiring as a colonel after more than 34 years of military service.

He served as North Carolina commander from 2010 to 2011. (Tour times are on page 13.)



Below an American Legion emblem, the tablet reads: "100th National Convention of The American Legion: August 28, 29, 30, 2018: This tablet is placed in grateful recognition of The American Legion in awarding the 1st and 100th national conventions to the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota: Dedicated November 11, 2019: Department of Minnesota."

Plaque to note centennial convention

MINNEAPOLIS — A new American Legion plaque tells pedestrians on the Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis, stopping for a rest at Peavey Plaza, how their city hosted the 100th convention of The American Legion in August 2018.

At the base of an arrangement of flagpoles, the marker was installed a few feet away from a 1959 plaque that notes the city hosted the first American Legion convention in 1919.

A half-hour dedication ceremony is slated for Pearl Harbor Day, specifically 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 7.

But why Peavey Plaza? The site that is today Peavey Plaza (restored just last year) and Orchestra Hall in 1919 was the original Minneapolis Auditorium — the location of that first convention.

"The need to do something significant was there," said Dick Ward of Minneapolis Post 1.

The dedication will feature comments from Department

Commander Mark Dvorak, Department Vice Commander Teresa Ash, 5th District Commander Andrew Rose and Past Department Commander Jim Kellogg.

A moment of silence, along with a rifle squad and a bugler, will commemorate the lives lost in the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

The American Legion ordered the plaque from the St. Paul office of Twin City Monument Co., which installed it Saturday, Nov. 9.

The new plaque effort began with former Minnesota Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Jeff Olson, who was aware of the 1959 plaque and often had lunch nearby.

"There would be people sitting on the plaque with their Levi's," Olson said. "It was disrespectful."

He, Ward, Lloyd Ricker and Jim Kellogg all had hands in making the 2019 plaque come to fruition.



A Twin City Monument employee saws into concrete on Nov. 9 at the spot of new plaque at Peavey Plaza.

Did you know?

Did you know post honor guards in Minnesota can receive a stipend of \$50 a unit per day per burial from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs after military honors have been provided to a fallen comrade? There is a form available on the MDVA website, and requests for reimbursement are preferred within 15 days of the honors. Just enter "MDVA honor guard form" into Google, and the first result is the form. Be sure the funeral director signs Part 3.

Zdon fondly remembered during retirement party reflecting on his 23-year American Legion career

By Tim Engstrom

ANOKA — Past National Commander Dan Ludwig's first impression of Al Zdon came at the 1996 Fall Conference.

Zdon, the former editor for the Hibbing Daily Tribune, wore khaki pants and looked a bit haggard.

"I slept in khaki pants for a week that didn't look that bad," Ludwig said to laughter in a room of 125 people. "I thought he was a homeless vet. ... Never have I been so wrong about a first impression."

Anoka Post 102 hosted a meal and celebration Friday, Nov. 15, called 23 Years of Storytelling to let Legion family and friends reflect on working with Zdon, who retires Dec. 31 as the American Legion Department of Minnesota's communications director. The job title includes being the editor of The Minnesota Legionnaire and the secretary for Legion Baseball in Minnesota.

Zdon, 71, wrapped up the evening's festivities by playing the banjo and singing "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue" to a round of applause.

Ludwig said Zdon produced the finest state Legion newspaper in the country and commended him for capturing the history of Minnesota veterans.

A particularly poignant comment came from Dr. Rich Dinter of Hibbing: "Al Zdon could get men who were in the wars to talk about it. I want you to know that's not a skill.



American Legion Auxiliary Secretary Sandie Deutsch hugs Al Zdon after taking her turn at the microphone during a retirement party for the Mounds View man.



Friends and family of Department of Minnesota Communications Director Al Zdon, who edited the Legionnaire for 23 years, applaud Nov. 15 at Anoka Post 102. Zdon felt his retirement warranted a two-paragraph brief, not a story with photos.

That's a calling."

Department Commander Mark Dvorak said he shared a love of music with Zdon and called him "a class act and a true professional."

Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl called Zdon "a moral compass" and said everyone knew him. Rudy Boschwitz called Tesdahl to get an item in the Legion's "bulletin." When Tesdahl explained it was a statewide newspaper edited by Zdon, Boschwitz knew Zdon.

"You don't run into anybody, it seems, who doesn't know Al Zdon," Tesdahl said.

Sandie Deutsch, executive secretary for the Auxiliary, told how she dropped her column for one issue. Zdon advised her to keep it in. He was right, she said, because Deutsch received many comments from readers wondering where it went.

Don Walser, the former department judge advocate, said a "survey" revealed the three most important factors to Zdon's success: department staff members Laura Weber, Jennifer Kelley and Misty Padilla.

"They broke the mold when they made Al Zdon," said Bill Barbknecht, the state's representative on the National Executive Committee.

Many others commented, and the celebration included a few not-fit-for-print comments and jokes, but it was all in good fun.

Zdon's wife, Mary, said



Legionnaires got to see a side of Al Zdon that they don't often see. Zdon played the banjo and sang.

raising six children was difficult enough but moving them from Hibbing to the Twin Cities was tough. Al loved being the editor and the family loved that community. His career in journalism allowed him to meet people from Walter Mondale to Jimmy Carter and to tour former Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, Poland.

She said the greatest characteristic about Al is he has so many excellent friends.

Married for 45 years, Al thanked Mary for her support over the years: "She has given me perspective on what is important in life, and, you know what, it's not the Vikings."

He recalled the support he received from the two Dans — Daniel of the Old Testament and Daniel of the New Testament.

The former, the late Dan Foley of Wabasha, "was per-

haps the most extraordinary man I'd ever met in my life." Foley, a retired appellate court judge and past national commander, took Zdon under his wing.

The latter, Ludwig of Red Wing, appointed Zdon to a national committee, a rare move for a staffer, and gave Zdon sound advice: "Tell the truth. Take the high road. Remember the cause."

Zdon spoke of the baseball tournaments, fellow staff members and adjutants Tesdahl and Lyle Foltz.

On Tesdahl, Zdon said he had a big heart: "He would rather help a disabled veteran catch a three-pound bass in the Mississippi River than be in an office at the Veterans Service Building."

What's Zdon going to do Jan. 1?

"I will wake up and say, 'Now what?'"

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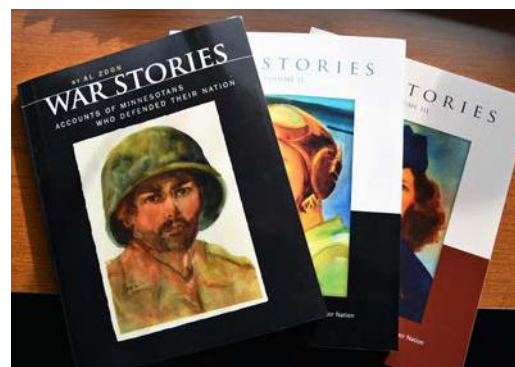


Minnesota Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Larry Herke, second from right, awarded medallions to nine World War II veterans on Sunday, Nov. 10, at the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel during the worship service. With Herke, back row right, is Rev. Kenneth Beale Jr. of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation. Awardees in the back row, from left, are Kenneth Johnson, James McDougall and Warren Fall. In the center row are Harold Gifford and Elmer Eckart. Standing in front are Gerald Schatzlein, Marty Romano and Harlan Widhelm. Seated is Bill Rasmussen.

Surrounded by family and friends Nov. 10 at Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel, World War II veteran Bill Rasmussen receives a medallion from Minnesota Commissioner of Veteran Affairs Larry Herke for his service during the war.



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Supported by major sponsor U.S. Bank.

3 GATHER FOR THE HOLIDAYS
Immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and aromas of Christmas 1875 during **A Victorian Christmas** at the Alexander Ramsey House. Dive into Gilded Age opulence with stories of the Hill family and their servants during a **Christmas Traditions Tour** of the James J. Hill House. Tickets at mnhs.org/holidays.



2

EXPERIENCE A WWI CHRISTMAS
Find out how Christmas was celebrated at home during wartime. **A WWI Christmas**, Nov 29 & 30, Dec 1, 6, 7 & 8, Charles Lindbergh House and Museum, Little Falls.



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Al Zdon, Randy Tesdahl will be missed

Greetings, Minnesota American Legion Family

A few comments in regards to our recently held Department Fall Conference. Thank you to all who attended and taking time out of your busy lives to be part of making a difference for our Legion Family!

Bagley Post 16 from the 9th District was our host in Mahnommen and did a great job taking care of all the attendees. Department Communications Director Al Zdon and Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl gave their closing remarks as both will be retiring Dec. 31.

They will both be missed! Combined they have over 45 years of dedicated service to our American Legion Family. Please take a moment and thank them and congratulate them on their retirement.

Congratulations again to Tim Engstrom, our new Department communications director, and Mike Maxa, Department assistant adjutant, on your new positions.

Commander's Column

Mark Dvorak



Mike will become the Department adjutant on Jan. 1. Again, I ask everyone to support Tim and Mike and help them in any way you can, as they both have a tremendous challenge.

Posts can now start processing their Consolidated Post Report (CPR) through MyLegion.org for the current year. As a reminder, the post can process their CPR now and periodically go back into MyLegion.org and add additions or make corrections as the year progresses.

Each District has posts that are using MyLegion.org to process their CPRs. If a Post has questions on how to use MyLegion.org, please contact your District commander or District adjutant. National Commander Bill Oxford is requesting 100 percent CPR reporting by the Posts. Due date for the CPR to National is July 1.

As I travel to various functions throughout the state, I'm witnessing the amazing community involvement by our local Posts. Our American Legion Family is making a difference in the lives of many Americans. Your commitment and dedication in making a difference each day in someone's life is inspiring. As we enter into the Christmas season, please keep all our deployed military service members in your thought and prayers. From my family to yours, I hope you have the best Christmas season!

For God and Country.

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



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

Let's give back during the holiday season

Each year during the holidays we find Coats for Kids, bell ringers, extra donations to the food shelf and many more as we try to figure out *what* we can do to help the less fortunate in our communities. All over the world the plight of people everywhere seems especially poignant during the holiday season.

Whether you want to make an impact locally or globally, there are a wide range of ways you can get involved. The holidays are the time of the year to truly think of someone besides yourself and your family and friends. I have collected several ideas that you can give back during the holidays.

1. Volunteer at a shelter or soup kitchen. Soup kitchens also rely almost entirely on volunteer help, but it's not always obvious who to contact to get involved. Helping to greet and serve the meal can have some valuable "feel good" moments as we ensure everyone is feed.

2. Participate in a clothing drive. With nearly one in every 30 children homeless (2.5 million) in the United States, winter coats and other clothing are an absolute necessity this time of year. However, be aware that many places that

Chaplain's Corner

Betty Jass



accept donated clothing are actually in the recycling business and don't pass on clothing to those that need it.

3. Volunteer at a food pantry or food drive. When you donate food, make sure you give to your local food shelf exactly what it needs to best take care of the people in your community. To find information about food banks in your area, check out feedingamerica.org.

4. School district community service programs. With many school districts requiring community service as a graduation requirement, many have annual holiday programs already in place. This makes the experience convenient and fulfilling for your student and you.

5. Attend a benefit event. Concerts, theatrical performances or exhibits are often held to benefit local service organizations. There are also opportunities to go eat at a benefit dinner. Many traditional community service clubs (such as the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, Jaycees and Optimists clubs) and churches put on holiday

bake sales and dinners that benefit local charities or services.

6. Engage in reckless acts of generosity and kindness.

- Pay it forward when in line at your favorite coffee house.
- Buy a drink anonymously for the total stranger behind you. Generously over-tip your server. Enjoy a street musician's music and pay them for their work.
- Make a tax-deductible donation to a charity in a friend's name.
- Leave random holiday greeting notes on windshields.

Whatever you do to give back this holiday season, make sure it has an impact! Let it be something that you enjoy and get that "feel good" moment. We have an opportunity to help those that are less fortunate than us. Happy holidays!

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

Mail Call

Piece on Canadian veteran was excellent

Thank you for honoring Boyd Sorenson in the recent Minnesota Legionnaire October 2019 issue.

Please offer more of these heroic stories so our grandkids will realize that freedom is not free.

Edward Broom
St. Joseph Post 328

Senator mourns loss of crusader for veterans

The Legion lost a very good friend recently: Evie Flom.

For the entire 12 years of my time in the U.S. Senate, from 1978 to 1991, Evie Flom handled Veterans Affairs in our office in St. Paul. Over that period she handled thousands of cases. The VA back in those times was hard for veterans to deal with — a situation which I hope has gotten better.

Evie knew how to handle the VA. She was one tough lady. She really thought highly of "her veterans" for what they did and for what they meant to our country. They were "my veterans" to Evie, every single one of them.

We had a deal that whenever she called and wanted my involvement, she got it. She convinced me (and I agreed) that she could get more done if the bureaucrats knew that "the senator" would call if she didn't get her way.

"You want to hear from Rudy?" was her standard line.

We use to hold a Christmas party for federal bureaucrats located in St. Paul and there are a ton of them. Evie made a point of knowing the people she dealt with and invited them all to the party and made sure I attended if the Senate wasn't in session.

Evie made the whole thing work. Best of all she was a nice person — a fun person — and easy for veterans to talk to.

Many veterans told me so when I met them throughout the entire state.

I suspect the folks at the VA found her tough, to be sure, but on the other hand nice and fun to work with. She really got a lot done. I talked to Loanne Thrane today before I wrote this letter. Loanne was chief of staff of our St. Paul office for more than 10 years.

"Evie went way beyond," was how Loanne described it and many of your readers who had problems would surely agree.

In life we all strive for a good life for ourselves and our family and to help others also have better lives. Evie Flom did that in spades. She was proud of that, and we were proud of her. Evie and her husband, Harvey, who took such good care of Evie in an extended illness, became very close friends to my Ellen and me, and we — together with many veterans who read this — will miss her.

Evie Flom made the most out of her life by making many, many lives better. What a great accomplishment. Evie Flom was wonderful.

Rudy Boschwitz
Minneapolis
U.S. senator, R-Minn., 1978-1991

Is Fort Snelling mainly a military post or not?

The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is continuing with its revitalization plan for Fort Snelling. But instead of the focus being on the military, it is on the indigenous people.

The Minnesota Monthly for Nov/Dec 2019 had an article where they interviewed MNHS

Correction

A story that appeared on Page 16 of the November 2019 issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire listed 11 bulletpoint reminders about gambling funds, and part of the eighth bulletpoint was incorrect. The second sentence of the bulletpoint incorrectly described gambling checking accounts at separate banks than the post accounts, but the fact is, they merely need to be separate bank accounts, not separate banks, according to the Minnesota Gambling Control Board.



The main gate of Historic Fort Snelling.

staff regarding an upcoming exhibit at the Minnesota History Center. Here it states, "[Lonna] Hunter [who is on the MNHS staff] also works with the MNHS Dakota Community Council, an advisory group leading an Indigenous-inspired revitalization of Fort Snelling."

So there we have the admission that this is their focus, not the military.

The fort was an active military site for well over a century — from 1819 to 1946. Its establishment predated the state of Minnesota by about 40 years, so it has been a part of — in fact arguably the central part — of our state's history. It is truly the crown jewel of our historic sites in Minnesota. As a veteran, I approach the fort with great feeling and respect. Significant numbers of the state's population have passed through the fort over the years, with some 24,000 Civil War soldiers and 275,000 World War II soldiers, both men and women. Of those numbers, many passed though only when being mustered in, as they died during their service.

While the peripheral stories, such as those of the indigenous peoples, are also important and need to be included, they are peripheral, and not the central story of the fort. Let's not re-make it into something different, just to please the current whims of some today. We have just observed another Veterans Day, a sacred day to many of us, so let's keep the veterans in our minds and honor them by keeping the fort — their fort — a military-centered site.

Please contact your state legislators and Gov. Tim Walz, urging them to ensure that the site remains firmly and primarily a military historic site, not just in word but also in deed.

Curtis Dahlin
Roseville

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What's happening?

Mpls. doctor is Physician of Year

The American Legion's 2019 Physician of the Year is a Minnesota doctor.

In early November, the headquarters of The American Legion notified the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Health Administration, the VA Midwest Health Care Network and the Minneapolis VA Health Care System that Dr. Megan Press, a general psychiatrist at the Minneapolis facility, was selected.

The award will be presented at the 2020 Washington Conference on Tuesday, March 10.

Jeremy Wolfsteller, the Legion's department service officer at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, nominated her.

"I cannot think of a finer physician for this distinguished award," Wolfsteller said in his nomination papers.

"The American Legion recognizes that national recognition can motivate these VA employees to remain with the

VA and combat the burnout that they may be experiencing," Wolfsteller told The Minnesota Legionnaire.

Press has been a Minneapolis VA doctor for 15 years.

Battle of the Bulge front and center



Megan Press

The World War II History Roundtable will meet Tuesday, Dec. 10, at the Minnesota History Center in downtown St. Paul. The program will be "Relief at the Bulge, the 7th Armored Division Counterattack: 75th Anniversary." The speaker is Dr. Greg Fontenot, author of "Loss and Redemption at St. Vith." He will be joined by veterans of the battle.

The program will be at 7 p.m. and will be held in the auditorium. There is free admission, but \$6 for parking.

The Vietnam War Roundtable will be held Monday, Dec. 16, at Concordia University in St. Paul. The program will be "Wounded in Action" and will feature combat wounded

veterans discussing their experiences of being wounded, evacuated and their recovery. Combat medics and nurses will discuss their experiences. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the Buetow Auditorium on the campus. Admission is free.

At the start of the November roundtable, Executive Director Randal Dietrich said he planned in December to make a "major announcement" in terms of support.

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will not be meeting in December.

Legal clinics slated

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will host two free legal clinics for low-income veterans. The clinics will include housing, employment, benefits, debt collection, expungement, and family law including child support. For more information, call MACV at 651-200-4750.

- Minneapolis VA Medical Center, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, in the Flag Atrium Balcony Room 2S 114.

- Anoka County Government Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5.

Attorneys, MACV staff, county veterans service officers and others will be in attendance.



To be sure, there is no meat inside these pieces of memorabilia.

Memorable cans of Spam are free

Step right up and get your centennial American Legion memorabilia.

The Department of Minnesota has 210 empty cans of Spam that honor the 100th National Convention, which took place in Minneapolis in August 2018. The cans feature the state of Minnesota on the front.

Assistant Department Adjutant Mike Maxa is giving them away free of charge.

Anyone, whether they are Legion members or not, can get them at the department offices on the third floor of the Veterans Service Building in St. Paul. Maxa said the department doesn't intend to mail them, but "if people let us know they are coming and want us

to save some, we will. They are a great way for Post commanders to show appreciation for volunteers."

The Department phone number is 651-291-1800.

Disabled veterans have access to commissaries

Service-connected disabled veterans now can shop at commissaries on military posts starting in 2020.

The Department of Defense on Jan. 1 extends access to commissaries, exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation retail facilities to four groups: veterans with service-connected disabilities, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war and approved family caregivers.

The measure is part of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

"These new privileges recognize the service and sacrifice of these veterans and those that care for them," A.T. Johnston, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Military Community and Family Policy, said. "If you or someone you know might be eligible for these privileges, share the message."

Continued on Page 6

Taps



Arnold, Eugene William, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 31, 2019. He was stationed in France. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Baune, LaVerne Charles, 91, Army veteran of the Cold War, died Oct. 1, 2019. He was a member of Vesta Post 306.

Baxter, Larry Allen, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 1, 2019. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Belcher, Royden, 93, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 18, 2019. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Bense, Rodger M., 82, Army National Guard veteran of the Cold War, died Nov. 9, 2019. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

Bezdicsek, Lawrence "Doc," 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 25, 2019. He was a member of Jackson Post 130.

Bjerken, Richard L., 79, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 15, 2019. He served in Turkey and Iceland. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

Burley, Harold T., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 8, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Dahlke, Earl, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 3, 2019. He was a member of Hillman Post 602.

Dehn, Adrian R., 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 4, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Dibley, Herbert Charles, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Oct. 29, 2019. He was a member of Monticello Post 260.

Doherty, Helen Margaret (Hudek), 104, Army veteran of World War II, died Oct. 18, 2019. She was a lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps and served in Europe. She was a member of Maple Lake Post 131.

Ellwood, Mervin O., 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 13, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Erwin, Darrel J., 85, veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 10, 2019. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Everett, Aaron Bernard, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Oct. 31, 2019. He took part in the invasion of Guam. He was a member of St. Peter Post 37.

Flocken, Vincent, 93, Navy veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Oct. 27, 2019. He was a member of Cass Lake Post 284.

Frantzen, Robert P., 72, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 19, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Gallus, Alois A., 97, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 11, 2019. He was a member of Bowlus Post 642.

Goede, Dwain P., 85, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 7, 2019. He was a member of Jackson Post 130.

Grussing, Fred Henry, 101, Army veteran of World War II, died Oct. 25, 2019. He served in the 10th Mountain Division in Italy. He was a member of Raymond Post 420.

Haley, Daniel C., 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 15, 2019. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Henle, Lawrence, 88, National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 23, 2019. He served for five years. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Hettinger, Everette L., 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 13, 2019. He was a military policeman and

Obituary policy

Obituaries of members of the Legion Family will be published in the Minnesota Legionnaire in a monthly column under the heading "Taps."

While the obituaries are brief, the Legionnaire does seek certain information for our readers:

1. Complete name of deceased.
2. Age at death.
3. Branch of service and war or wars the veteran served.

served in Germany. He was a member of Wells-Peterson Post 384.

Honer, Sylvester "Bud," 84, Army veteran of the Cold War, died Oct. 26, 2019. He was a member of Dent Post 148.

House, Robert D. Sr., 87, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 10, 2019. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Huisman, Frederick, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 4, 2019. He was a member of Ellsworth Post 196.

Johnson, Robert, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died Nov. 10, 2019. He was pilot. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Kalash, Dean Richard, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 2, 2019. He served as a signalman and quartermaster on the USS Exploit, a minesweeper. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

Koch, Paul J., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 2, 2019. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Kosel, Marcel J., 88, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 16, 2019. He was a member of St. Joseph Post 328.

Larson, Quantin L. "Bud," 93, Army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Nov. 7, 2019. He served on the troop carrier USAT Goucher Victory as part of the medical staff. He was recalled in the Korean War and served with a medical battalion in Korea. He was a second lieutenant. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Larson, Ronald L., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 31, 2019. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Lindholt, Virgil LeRoy, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Oct. 5, 2019. He stayed in the Air Force Reserve until 1953, and was a communications instructor and played in the Scott Air Force Base band. He was a charter member and treasurer of Coon Rapids Post 334. He wrote the very first check for the post.

Lindstrom, Harold, 96, Navy veteran of World War II, died Oct. 10, 2019. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Linnan, Frank, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Oct. 25, 2019. He participated in the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He was a member of Eagan Post 594.

Lundberg, James E., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 20, 2019. He was a member of Litchfield Post 104.

Malikowski, Rodger, 76, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Nov. 5, 2019. He was chairman of the trustees committee for many years for Willmar Post 167.

Meincke, James, 72, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 24, 2019. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Michaelis, Ernie R., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 1, 2019. He was a corporal. He was a member of Glencoe Post 95.

4. Exact date of death.

5. Additional information about the veteran's service background including unit, type of service, place of service, medals, etc.

6. The post, unit or squadron the veteran belonged.

7. Additional information about Legion service, including officer posts.

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

Please send to tengstrom@mnlegion.org.

Moldan, Joseph C., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 15, 2019. He served in Korea as a corpsman and also as an explosive ordnance disposal. He was a sergeant in the 14th Infantry Regiment, 25th Division. He was a member of New Ulm Post 132.

Mullen, Sylvester Christopher, 99, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Nov. 6, 2019. He earned a Silver Star. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Newbarth, Virgil LeRoy, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 4, 2019. He was a member of Brownton Post 143.

Notch, Gerald, 81, National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 27, 2019. He served for 22 years and retired as a captain. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

Odegaard, Alvin, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 3, 2019. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Peterson, Kenneth W., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Nov. 19, 2019. He served in both Europe and the Pacific. He was a member of Jackson Post 130.

Prins, Allen D., 70, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 1, 2019. He served on a submarine. He was a member of Chandler Post 338.

Rodmyre, Willard "Bill," 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 11, 2019. He served in Germany and was a sharpshooter. He was a member of Hector Post 135.

Sasse, Clarence G. "Chuck," Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Oct. 11, 2019. He was a flight engineer stationed in England. He flew many missions over Europe. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

Schweinfurter, James, 82, National Guard veteran of the Cold War, died Oct. 19, 2019. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Seldon, Fred F., 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 26, 2019. He served for four years in the Pacific. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

Stiller, Peter, 81, Navy veteran of the Cold War, died Nov. 19, 2019. He also served for 24 years in the National Guard. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Trinkle, Marlan "Jerry," 93, Marine Corps veteran of World War II and Army veteran of the Korean War, died Oct. 16, 2019. He served in the Pacific. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

Walker, John Harvey Jr., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 4, 2019. His unit was one of the first to be sent into combat in Korea. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Zapzalka, Arthur, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Nov. 14, 2019. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

It was a historic day on Jan. 29, 2019, when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit extended the presumption of exposure to herbicides to cover veterans who served in the territorial sea of the Republic of Vietnam.

The landmark court case was referred to as Procopio vs. Wilkie, which could benefit as many as 190,000 Blue Water Navy (BWN) veterans who became eligible for presumptive service connection for conditions associated with an herbicide exposure called Agent Orange. Specifically, the court ruled the definition of "served in the Republic of Vietnam" extends to 12 nautical miles off the coast of Vietnam.

Prior to this court case, the VA refused to grant the presumption of herbicide exposure to "Blue Water Navy" veterans who served in bays, harbors and the territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam. The Procopio court held that Congress spoke directly to the question of whether those who served in the 12 nautical mile territorial sea of the Republic of Vietnam are entitled to Agent Orange presumption, the court concluded. The court stated:

"When the Agent Orange Act was passed in 1991, the 'Republic of Vietnam' included both its landmass and its 12-nautical-mile territorial sea. The government has pointed to no law to the contrary. This uniform international law was the backdrop against which Congress adopted the Agent Orange Act. By using the formal term 'Republic of Vietnam,' Congress unambiguously referred, consistent with that backdrop, to both its landmass and its territorial sea."

While the Procopio case was going on, both the House and Senate Committees on Veterans

VA & Rehabilitation

Jeremy Wolfsteller



Affairs were doing their part to support the landmark court case. Congressional motivation was backed by The American Legion and other VSOs, and on June 25, 2019, the Blue Water Navy Veterans Act of 2019 was signed into law, also referred to as PL 116-23.

Because the law was passed, the VA secretary requested a stay on the case until Jan. 1, 2020, which is when the law will go into effect. At that time VA will start adjudicating both new claims and previously denied claims for Vietnam veterans and surviving spouses, although the catch is that the claimant must initiate the claim process. VA says it has mailed out notification letters nationwide to veterans and spouses with previous denied claims informing them on what to do.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and American Legion Claims Division is well-versed on this change in law and already has been submitting claims for veterans.

Ron Quade, director of MDVA/American Legion Claims Division, said: "We've always filled claims for Blue Water Vietnam veterans whether or not their ship was a part of the Agent Orange ship list VA uses to grant presumptive conditions."

And based on the information gathered from our Legion D.C. office, Minnesota has about 400 Vietnam veterans with previously denied Agent Orange claims that are now eligible. The question to be seen is will VA process these claims in accordance with the Nehmer Court Case which awards retroactive payments

for previously denied claims.

Lee McClary, a Marine Veteran with two tours of Afghanistan and a senior claims representative with MDVA who oversees the Vietnam Veterans Claims Office, said: "It's about time these Blue Water Veterans get taken care of. Lee attends monthly meetings with the St. Paul VA Regional Office Leadership and is prepared to assist these veterans and spouses."

The Agent Orange presumptive illness list includes the following conditions, AL amyloidosis, chloracne, chronic B-cell leukemias, diabetes type 2, ischemic heart condition, Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, multiple myeloma, Parkinson's disease, peripheral neuropathy, porphyria cutanea tarda, prostate cancer, respiratory cancers, and soft tissue sarcoma.

Currently the Office of Management and Budget is holding up VA-approved presumptive diseases for bladder cancer, hypertension, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson's like symptoms. This impacts approximately 100,000 Vietnam veterans.

For more information on benefits now available to BWN Vietnam veterans including VA Healthcare please contact your county veterans service office, MDVA/American Legion Claims Office or The American Legion detachment service officer.

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

Bikes are away, but let's remain active

Hello to all of the American Legion Family,

It's that time of year again. Time to put the bikes away for their winter hibernation. It is always a sad day when that happens. It doesn't mean our Legion Riders get to hibernate though. There are still a lot of things to do. We can use this time to make our group grow. I think the best way to grow our organization is to get out in the community and help those who need us.

It seems like there are a lot of Minnesota units deploying lately. We should be there for the military members as well as the families at home. It would be nice to see The American Legion as the first thing our military families, and veterans think of when they need help.

It's also time to have some

fun. We will have a New Year's Eve party at the Paynesville American Legion on the 31st. It's walking distance to the hotel. Let me know if you want any information on it.

The Riders will also be hosting the Pearl Harbor Rally at the Rosetown American Legion on Dec. 7.

Something else we can do over the winter is get together with all of our American Legion Family. Some of the Chapters, Units, and Posts are not even talking to each other. What kind of message does this send to the public? Figure out a way to make it work. We have great people in every part of

the family that are doing great things and have great ideas.

Put your egos aside and get to know one another. I'm not saying you have to invite them over for turkey dinner and sing love songs to each other. I'm just saying get along for the greater good. You might be surprised.

Everyone take care, and try to stay warm.

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



Legion Riders

Paul Hassing

Legion membership chart as of Nov. 20

District	2020 Goal	Total 2019	Total 2020	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,149	8,091	6,433	217	58	3	78.94%	6,206
District 2	6,497	6,413	5,096	146	84	3	78.44%	5,228
District 3	11,021	10,956	8,737	148	65	2	79.28%	8,597
District 4	2,136	2,118	1,682	32	18	2	78.75%	1,708
District 5	2,346	2,325	1,655	44	22	0	70.55%	1,714
District 6	10,891	10,820	8,597	155	71	6	78.94%	8,751
District 7	5,778	5,702	4,601	201	76	3	79.63%	4,704
District 8	3,788	3,748	2,915	86	40	2	76.95%	2,937
District 9	6,124	6,059	4,726	142	65	7	77.17%	4,707
District 10	9,108	9,054	7,015	242	54	2	77.02%	6,975
District 11	3,655	1,897	1,426	119	2	0	39.02%	1,426
Totals	69,493	67,183	52,883	1,532	555	30	76.10%	52,953

Same Date Last Year

Continued from Page 5

Veterans will need a "veteran health identification card" from the federal VA. The Department of Defense said the new "veterans identification card" is not acceptable.

Bridge nearly done

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs says progress continues with the construction on the truss bridge over Minnehaha Creek

near the Minneapolis Veterans Home.

This work started in late July.

"We are on schedule to complete the project by the end of the year," said Commissioner Larry Herke.

The effort is a joint project of Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and Minnesota Department of Administration Construction Services.

According to an MDVA news release, the

Continued on Page 13

The SAL Update:

News from the Sons of The American Legion



Legionnaire of the Year recipients Tess and Al Davis, center, pose with SAL Commanderr Dave Vulcan, left, and SAL Adjutant Dennis Henkemeyer.



State leaders appear together at Fall Conference. From left are Auxiliary Commander Mary Hendrickson, SAL Commander Dave Vulcan and Legion Commander Mark Dvorak.

November 12, 2019 Membership Report

Department of Minnesota Membership Bulletin No. 4



National Goal
Department Goal 11,596
Current Membership 4,652

District	2020 Goal	Total 2019	Total 2020	Week's Gain	Total Squads	% Of Goal	
District 1	1,789	1,803	685	221	41	38.29%	616
District 2	1,334	1,333	577	264	34	43.25%	355
District 3	2,066	2,042	937	274	36	45.35%	541
District 4	375	370	142	113	7	37.87%	162
District 5	382	386	115	17	7	30.10%	113
District 6	1,578	1,566	757	292	33	47.97%	405
District 7	1,016	1,019	366	234	22	36.02%	280
District 8	554	547	214	39	16	38.63%	143
District 9	846	830	249	121	18	29.43%	182
District 10	1,653	1,651	606	288	34	36.66%	444
District 11	3	2	4	0	2	133.33%	0
Totals	11,596	11,549	4,652	1,863	250	40.12%	3,241

Same Date Last Year



SAL Commander Dave Vulcan, left, recognized Steve Sullivan for running the Minnesota Legacy Run.



From left are Adjutant Dennis Henkemeyer, Judge Advocate Cliff Teigland and Chaplain Casey Lenort.

Detachment commander

Dave Vulcan

Hello to everyone in the American Legion Family. What a busy fall we have all had! It seems like we were just all in Mahanomen for Fall Conference.

First off, I would like to say congratulations to the Al and Tess Davis for winning the Legionnaire of the Year award. They are a very vital part in the American Legion Family and a strong supporter of the Sons of The American Legion. I would like to extend a very big thanks to the Bagley American Legion family. We all had a wonderful time at Fall Conference.

On another note we are having a great year in membership. I would like to extend a big thank you to all my officers and committeeman that are working so very hard at keeping Minne-

sota on top of membership.

Our next target date is Dec. 11 for 45 percent.

A reminder as well, that squadron officer reports are now overdue. You need to send one in every year, even if nothing has changed.

That is about all I have for this month. I hope to see everybody at the Pearl Harbor Rally on Dec. 7 for the luncheon.

That's all for now.

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



A drawing for a gift from the Bagley American Legion.



Hutchinson Boy Scouts applaud during the introduction of Taya Kyle on Nov. 13 at the Hutchinson Event Center. There were 450 people in attendance.

Taya Kyle describes outrunning her fears

Continued from Page 1

me, and when it is, I am already prepared for it," Taya said Wednesday, Nov. 13, at the Hutchinson Event Center.

Taya Kyle, 45, was the featured speaker at the third annual Saluting Community Heroes Celebration Dinner.

Saluting Community Heroes is a collaborative nonprofit supported by veterans organizations throughout the Hutchinson area. The dinner raised \$85,000. The funds go toward rehabilitation of veterans.

She was born Taya Studebak-

what he really does.

He replied he worked for a bank, and he maintains and operates the little cameras at ATMs. He asked her to wave the next time she pulls through.

Finally, Taya got him to truly admit his line of work. He had just graduated from BUD/S, short for basic underwater demolition, SEALs. It is a 24-week training they take prior to 26-week SEAL Qualification.

She knew the type. Her friend's boyfriend had been through BUD/S. She told him he must be arrogant, glory-seeking and self-centered.

game in the morning. Chris and friend Chad Littlefield were going to take this Marine veteran, Eddie Ray Routh, shooting. Taya took the kids to Build-A-Bear. The family had plans to go to dinner with friends that night.

By the evening, Chris and Chad had not returned home, and people gathered at the Kyle home. Finally, the authorities came to her home.

"I had this feeling of, 'Omigod, it is me,' and she asked 'Are you sure?' three times. Then the tears started flowing.

For years she kept busy, trying to run from the pain, trying not to "go in the ditch."

Finally, a friend said, "Taya, you can go into the ditch. We're not going to leave you there."

Losing Chris was like an amputation. She tells her kids: "This doesn't end you."

She found God had prepared her over her life: seeing her aunt cope with the loss of a child, learning life isn't fair, how not to live in fear as a Navy spouse, learning from Chris how to get through trauma.

Those lessons aided her in getting through her husband's death. And those lessons continue in the years since.

In the wake of the murder, the movie about Chris was in production, the book had come out, Jesse Ventura sued for defamation, plus the kids were active — she was overwhelmed.

She learned she doesn't have to be so "Type A" and to be patient for "doors to open up."

Taya only does three speaking engagements a month to support her family, and she said she came to Minnesota, she said, because she believes in Saluting Community Heroes.

Kyle is the executive director of the Chris Kyle Frog Foundation, which serves families of service members and first responders who lost their lives in the line of duty. She has written two books, "American Wife" and "American Spirit." She lives in Texas with their two children.



Hutchinson Post 96 member Shad Ketcher, a Persian Gulf War veteran and financial adviser in Hutchinson, right, helped launch Saluting Community Heroes in the community and hands a Veterans Warrior Award to Van Karg, a member of Hutchinson Post 96 and DAV Chapter 37. Another Veterans Warrior Award was given to the late Dick Bernick of Post 96.

er in Portland, Oregon, in 1974 and her father always wished he had boys, instead of two girls. Mom was sure to tell Taya that girls are just as good as boys.

As a result, "I wanted to go fast and crush things," she told the Hutchinson audience of 450 people, many of whom were veterans.

One day, she heard her mother sobbing. The 3-year-old daughter of her mother's sister and brother-in-law had died in a freak accident in Washington state. The young Taya learned sage advice from her aunt: "There is no fair in life."

Taya moved to Southern California, where she earned degrees, and, for the first time, she felt like God was urging her. "You weren't meant to go this road alone," was the message.

Being hard-headed, she went the road alone anyway, but the push remained, and she asked God to pick. She left her mind wide open to possibilities.

"Just bring me a good person," she prayed.

She was living in Long Beach, and she and a friend were at a bar in San Diego. There was this hot guy with an accent, didn't seem military, and she asked what he does.

The man replied how dolphins in captivity must be waxed to stay alive, and it was his job to wax dolphins. (The joke: "Waxing the dolphin" has a vulgar meaning.) She asked

Chris Kyle replied: "I would die for my country. How is that arrogant or self-centered?"

She was intrigued by this man and in time found he was great with kids, loved puppies and actually had been a real-life cowboy before the military. They married a year after that first encounter, and she was the one who proposed marriage to him.

Then the Iraq War kicked off. Friends were dying. Taya was going to funerals and so scared that Chris was next she could not speak.

"I realized I could not live like this," she said.

Finally, she adopted a philosophy: "If it's not me, it's not me."

On the Saturday it was her, it was a great day.

The kids had a basketball



Taya Kyle shakes hands with Red Wing Auxiliary Unit 54 member Mary Ludwig as her husband, Past American Legion National Commander Dan Ludwig, looks on.



Fifth District Commander Andrew Rose Sr. touches the shoulder of Post 5222 Chaplain Harry DeCrescenzo as he speaks to members and onlookers on Nov. 14 at the Cardinal Restaurant & Bar in Minneapolis.

5222 was namesake's badge number

Continued from Page 1

Huberty, a north Minneapolis resident, volunteers her time in south Minneapolis at the VA Medical Center and has come to know many of the veterans in the system.

"That's where I met half of our post," Huberty said.

Many of the new post members reside in apartment complexes nearby the hospital. That made the Cardinal Restaurant & Bar easy to access along the Blue Line commuter rail that lines Hiawatha Avenue.

Huberty simply asked them to join.

"You have got to go in and let them know what the Legion is about, and that we are there for them," Huberty said. "They have an opportunity to get involved so they can feel like they are a family member — somewhere they belong."

Huberty served in the U.S.

Want to go?

The next meeting of Post 5222 is Dec. 12, gathering at 5 p.m. with the meeting at 6 p.m. at the Cardinal, 2920 E. 38th St., Minneapolis

Army from 1983 to 1993 and was in the Gulf War of the early 1990s. She had a civilian career in warehouse management. She grew up in Ham Lake.

"I want to feel like what I'm doing matters to somebody," she said.

Chaplain Harry DeCrescenzo said the effort to pursue a new charter began in July. The temporary charter was granted Aug. 16.

"We wanted something special for ourselves," he said.

Department Vice Commander Teresa Ash, who

exceed the ceremony, said, "With 85 percent of the founding members being Iraq/Afghanistan veterans, we see a bright and longlasting future for this post."

The last new Legion post in Minnesota was 3H Post 1975 in St. Paul, starting in May 2013.

The establishment of a new post garnered TV coverage from WCCO-4, KSTP-5 and KMSP-9 in morning and evening broadcasts. Visit the "news" area of mnlegion.org to find hyperlinks to three of the segments.

The American Legion Department of Minnesota hired a public relations firm, SnowGlobe Communications, in October to help raise the profile of the organization throughout the state. SnowGlobe assisted department staff and post officers in reaching television media.



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VIETNAM WAR

7 years and 4 months in captivity

At monthly roundtable, David Wheat of Duluth recalls being shot down, captured and tortured

By Tim Engstrom

ST. PAUL — David Wheat was shot down over North Vietnam on Oct. 17, 1965. He was taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese government and released on Feb. 12, 1973. That's seven years and four months as a prisoner of war. After, Wheat simply returned to work — and eventually completed a 21-year career in the Navy. Twenty-nine years ago, he and his family left Southern

California and returned to his hometown of Duluth.

"That's probably the best move we ever made," he said. Wheat, who turns 80 this month, traveled to Concordia University in St. Paul to speak Monday, Nov. 18, at the Vietnam War Roundtable, a monthly series presented by the Minnesota Military Museum and Twin Cities Public Television.

Wheat grew up in Duluth and, as a boy, always enjoyed airplanes. He graduated from the

University of Minnesota-Duluth in 1963, then applied and was accepted to the Naval Aviation Officer Candidate program in Pensacola, Florida. After 16 weeks of training, he was commissioned and became a radar intercept officer for the F-4 Phantom.

He was assigned to Fighter Squadron 41 on the USS Independence, which was the first East Coast carrier to set sail for Vietnam, going south of Africa and through the Philippines before reaching Yankee Station.

The F-4 was built as an interceptor to escort fleets, but over Vietnam the Navy was using them for all kinds of purposes — doing recon, escorting photo recon aircraft, flack suppression and dropping bombs, Wheat said.

Lt. Roderick Mayer as an F-4 Phantom pilot and Lt. j.g. David Wheat as his RIO were part of an air attack of F-4 Phantoms on the Thai Nguyen bridge north of Hanoi, which had surface-to-air missiles.

One F-4 was hit and somehow managed to return to the carrier, Wheat said. Another was hit, killing the pilot, with the RIO becoming a POW. Mayer and Wheat were among those that loitered behind to protect the fleet from Chinese MiG fighters. They saw F-4 smoke, and two guys bailed, later becoming POWs.

Their aircraft was going 550 knots (633 mph) when it did an aileron roll.

"That's when you know something is drastically wrong," Wheat said.

Explosion. Ejection. Wheat landed on a hillside. He had trouble standing. He had broken a bone on his inside left knee. He would have to crawl up the hill. Local militia was all over, but searchers didn't find him.

As time passed, a man came up his path. Wheat had tried to stand up the grass behind him after he pulled himself over it, but to no avail.

"He looked back and around the tree, and he jumped backward. He was so excited to see me," Wheat said.

Militia men put Wheat on a 6-foot-long stretcher made of bamboo, and they traveled through a hamlet. Several villagers spit on him.

"As the spit went through the air, it cooled off, and by the time it got to me — air conditioning," he told the Concordia audience of mostly Vietnam veterans.

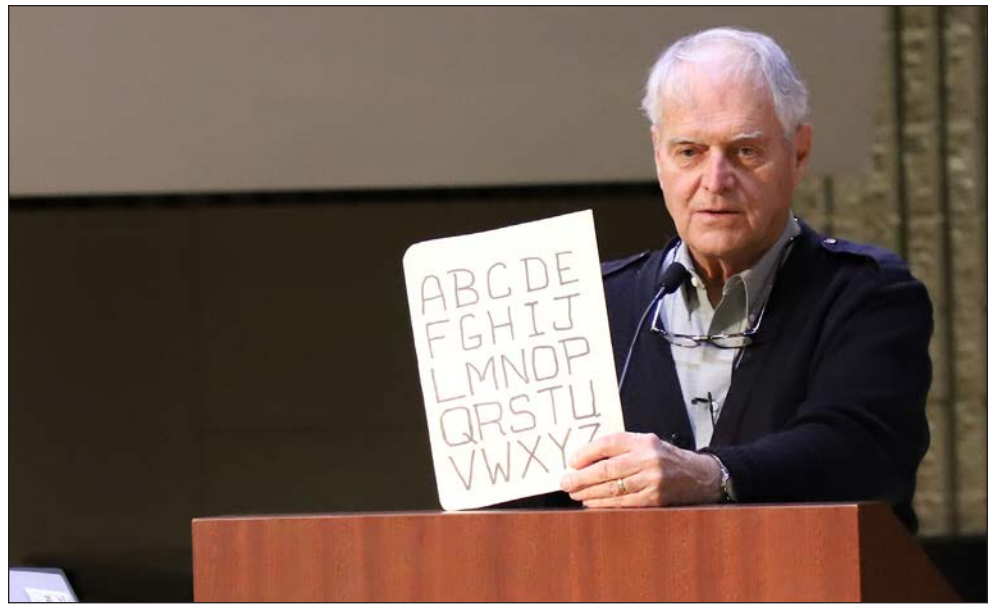
The men put him in a shack,



David Wheat, in 1984, stands with his wife, Ginger.



Wheat, in the States in 1964, in an orange flight suit.



David Wheat holds a tap-code alphabet at Concordia on Nov. 18. The POW tap code did not have the letter K because C made the same sound.



POWs rejoice as they become former POWs when a C-141 Starlifter takes off from Vietnam on Feb. 12, 1973. David Wheat is circled.

and a Vietnamese soldier showed him a book of airplanes, asking which Wheat flew.

"I didn't tell him anything," he said.

The next day, Wheat was taken to the Hanoi Hilton and placed in a room with a barbed door. Soon, they came to question him, and he was tired from being up nearly 24 hours. Wheat didn't talk much about the torture, just to say he stuck to name, rank, serial number and date of birth and that some guys have different breaking points.

One form of torture he did mention was being placed on knees with hands straight up. Whenever there was a raid, the guards would have the prisoners in that position, but the prisoners would put their hands down if the guards ran off. Other times, however, they had to stay that way for long periods of time.

Wheat also mentioned the presence of Cubans in the camps.

"Cuban interrogators were there. They beat the crap out of guys and tortured them extensively," he said.

He wasn't at the Hilton the entire time, as POWs were kept at country camps, too. At one called Briarpatch, Wheat was quizzed over and over for three days on his biography. They came and cuffed him tightly for three or four hours, and he finally agreed.

It was difficult to write with sore wrists, but Wheat penciled some nonsense, like about shapes on wallpaper in a house, just to give his captors words on paper.

In a prisoner camp, communication is key. Captives knocked the alphabet — 1 is A, 2 is B and so on. They had hand signals for

each letter. (Wheat demonstrated all the letters, noting a raised middle finger is Q, not a vulgar gesture.)

Siesta time, he said, was the best for communicating. Prisoners would memorize names in case anyone, via escape or release, could tell U.S. authorities who was alive in captivity.

"I had 350 names memorized at one time," Wheat said.

In fact, a sailor, Doug Hegdahl, was released in 1969, and he provided U.S. officials with 256 names he had memorized, including Wheat's, as well as the conditions of the camp and mistreatment of prisoners.

Prisoners, Wheat said, were fed twice a day. In the fall, the camps served pumpkin soup, usually with rice, sometimes French bread, and only water to drink.

When new prisoners came to the camp, it was a way to learn news about the war effort and America. In 1969, conditions improved a bit, and the Vietnamese allowed care packages, and the prisoners learned of the moon landing from a picture of Neil Armstrong on a sugar packet.

More men in larger rooms was good because it allowed more interaction to memorize

names and clarify names, like Bill Butler and Phil Butler were separate guys, Wheat said.

Two prisoners escaped, he said, and they made it two blocks. One was never seen again. The other returned but probably was in solitary the remaining time, he said.

Wheat paced his cell — "like these guys do it at the zoo" — to stay fit, but, considering his rations, didn't overexert himself, he said.

Finally, prisoners were brought to large cells in Hanoi and placed in rooms in sequential order, other than the sick and injured. Wheat was 43rd out of 660. Does this mean they will be released?

"You are thinking and hoping, but you don't know," Wheat said. "You still are behind bars."

Wheat, at this point a lieutenant commander, was on the second C-141 to take prisoners home. He went to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, then Great Lakes Naval Hospital in Illinois.

Mayer, who was from Washington state, was believed to be dead in his parachute and buried in Vietnam without records. Wheat remains close with his family.



The Hanoi Hilton in 2017.



Department Commander Mark Dvorak and Department Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller appear on "Minnesota Military Radio" with Host Tom Lyons. They discussed The American Legion's upcoming year and how the Legion can help veterans.



Co-Host Doug Wortham listens to Department Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller share his story of being shot in Iraq and the long recovery and how veterans can use his expertise of the VA medical system to get help. A podcast is available at minnesotamilitaryradiohour.com.



Commander Mark Dvorak explains The American Legion's key and historic role in the rehabilitation of veterans following combat. The segment was recorded Nov. 21 and aired the weekend before Thanksgiving.

"Minnesota Military Radio" is heard across the state:
 KTLK AM 1130 (Twin Cites): Sundays at 7 a.m.
 WYRQ 92.1 (Little Falls): Sundays at 7 a.m.
 KTLF AM 960 (Little Falls): Sundays at noon
 KOZY AM 1320 (Grand Rapids): Sundays at 6 a.m.
 KLKI FM 106.1 (Ramsey): Saturdays at 6:30 a.m.
 KLFD AM 1410 (Litchfield): Sundays at 3 p.m.
 KXRA 1490 AM (Alexandria): Saturdays at 2 p.m.
 KCHK AM 1350 (New Prague): Saturdays at 6 a.m.
 KCHK 95.5 FM (New Prague): Saturdays at 6 a.m.
 KDWA AM 1460 (Hastings): Sundays at 8 a.m.
 KDWA FM 97.7 (Hastings): Sundays at 8 a.m.
 KDMA AM 1460 (Montevideo): Sundays at noon
 KOWZ AM 1170/FM 106.3 (Owatonna/Waseca): Saturdays at 6 a.m.
 KLGR AM 1490 (Redwood Falls): Saturdays at 1 p.m.
 KLGR FM 95.9 (Redwood Falls): Saturdays at 1 p.m.
 KWLM AM 1340 (Willmar): Saturdays at 6 p.m.
 KWLM FM 96.3 (Willmar): Saturdays at 6 p.m.
 KAUS AM 1480 (Austin): Sundays at 6 p.m.
 KATE AM 1450 (Albert Lea): Sundays at noon
 AM 1190 KKOJ (Jackson): Sundays at 3 p.m.
 KKOJ FM 97.7 (Jackson): Sundays at 3 p.m.
 AM 800 KQAD (Luverne): Saturdays at 9 a.m.
 KLOH 1050 AM (Pipestone): Sundays at 5:30 p.m.
 WDSM AM 710 (Duluth/Superior): Sundays at 9 a.m.
 KDDG-FM 105.5 (Albany): Saturdays at 7 a.m.
 KROC AM 1340 (Rochester): Sundays at 7 a.m.
 KBGY FM 107.5 (Faribault): Saturdays at 7 a.m.
 KBUN AM 1450 (Bemidji): Sundays at 8 a.m.
 KBUN FM 104.5 (Bemidji): Sundays at 8 a.m.
 WGZS FM 89.1 (Fond Du Lac): Sundays at 11 a.m., Mondays at 6 p.m.
 KWAD AM 920 (Wadena): Mondays at 11 a.m.
 KNPS AM 1430 (Staples): Mondays at 11 a.m.
 WCMP AM 1350 (Pine City): Saturdays at 9 a.m., Sundays at 6 p.m.
 WJON AM 1240 (St. Cloud): Saturdays at 5 a.m.
 KBFT FM 89.9 (Bois Forte): Sundays at 11 a.m., Wednesdays at 5 p.m.
 KROX AM 1260 (Crookston): Sundays at 10 a.m.
 KROX FM 105.7 (Crookston): Sundays at 10 a.m.
 KXBR FM 91.9 (International Falls): Saturdays at 2 p.m.
 KNUJ AM 860 (New Ulm): Sundays at 5 p.m.
 KVBR AM 1340 (Brainerd): Saturdays at 9 a.m.
 KWNO AM 1230 (Winona): Sundays at 8 a.m.
 KWOA AM 730/FM 100.3 (Worthington): Saturdays at noon
 KNIN AM 930 (Aitkin): Saturdays at 7 a.m.
 KLKS FM 100.1 (Pequot Lakes): Saturdays at 7:30 a.m.
 KLQP FM 92.1 (Madison): Saturdays at 6 p.m.
 WKLX FM 95.9 (Forest Lake): Saturdays at 7 a.m.
 WQPM AM 1300 (Princeton): Saturdays at 7 a.m.
 KQCL FM 95.9 (Faribault): Sundays at 7 a.m.
 KVG0 FM 104.3 (Preston): Sundays at 7:30 a.m.
 KFIL FM 103.1 (Preston): Sundays at 6:30 a.m.
 KRFO FM 104.9 (Owatonna): Sundays at 7 p.m.
 KMHL AM 1400 (Marshall): Saturdays at 10 a.m.
 KSUM AM 1370 (Fairmont): Sundays at 4 p.m.
 KALY FM 101.7 (Minneapolis): Saturdays at 1 a.m.

'Hard to find that in daily life'

Walz and other officials speak at state's Veterans Day program

By Tim Engstrom

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS — With Todd Kemery of the Paralyzed Veterans of America as master of ceremonies and the 34th Infantry Division Band providing music, the State of Minnesota Veterans Day Event gave veterans, their families and their supporters a chance to hear state and federal leaders speak on veteran issues.

The Star Tribune reported about 250 in attendance.

Tim Walz

The governor of Minnesota, former 1st District congressman and former command sergeant major in the Army National Guard noted the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Bulge coming in December and the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima coming in February.

He recognized service of veterans in major conflicts in Korea, Southeast Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq and how they did not fight for glory or personal gain but for freedom.

But Walz also noted the challenging times. Many veterans, he said, experienced camaraderie and a single-minded purpose for a greater good while in the military.

"Many of us know that, afterward, it's hard to find that in daily life," the governor said.

He said less than 1 percent of the American population today serves in the armed forces, and he urged the audience to think of Minnesotans serving far away during the coming holidays.

He said "the next greatest generation" already exists: "It's the folks who raised their hands after 9/11."

Jon Jensen

The adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard described how Armistice Day became Veterans Day in the 1950s under President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

He thanked veterans and present-day service members for their "willingness to sacrifice their personal safety for the greater good."

He said 308,000 veterans live in Minnesota. There are 13,000 in the Minnesota National Guard, 5,000 in the Reserves and 500 in active-duty roles.

"On Veterans Day, I ask that you think of your veterans," said Jensen, a major general who advises the governor.

He quoted President Calvin Coolidge, "The nation that forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten."

Larry Herke

The commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs said entering the armed forces "was a brave and selfless act." Veterans, he said, have given their all to serve the nation "and now it's time to fight for them."

He mentioned his agency, among other things, works to house homeless veterans and is doing it at a rate of 40 per month.

It also is wrestling with the issue of veteran suicide, and Herke said Minnesota loses 90-100 veterans to suicide a year.



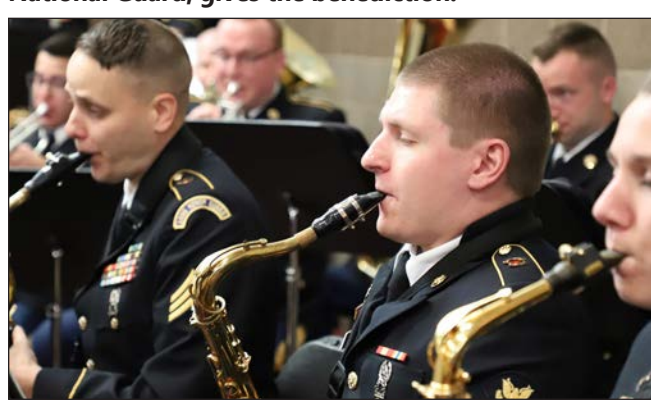
Minnesota American Legion Commander Mark Dvorak stands during the playing of the Air Force song on Monday, Nov. 11, during the state's official Veterans Day program in Inver Grove Heights. In the background is Assistant Adjutant Mike Maxa.



Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz speaks Nov. 11. at the State of Minnesota Veterans Day Event in Inver Grove Heights.



Capt. Hickory Smith, operations chaplain for the Minnesota National Guard, gives the benediction.



Spc. Samuel Bullert plays a tenor saxophone in the 34th Infantry Division Band.

"I know the rest of you have made sacrifices that the rest of society does not understand," he said.

George Tourville

The mayor of Inver Grove Heights, himself a veteran and Legionnaire, said his city is honored to host the official state Veterans Day program and has no plans to give it up. People, he said, appreciate seeing the gigantic American flag the city's firefighters fly outside the annual event.

"Veterans Day should be every day in the United States of America," Tourville said.

He called on people to reach out to veterans and work to

avoid the unfortunate situation of suicides.

Tina Smith

The junior senator from Minnesota brought up 2019 as the 154th anniversary of the end of the Civil War and said when the war broke out Minnesota was the newest state and first to volunteer. It promptly sent 24,000 citizen soldiers, roughly 13 percent of the Minnesota population.

She said today that sense of service prevails, and Smith recognized the efforts borne by spouses, children and parents.

Betty McCollum

The 4th District congress-

woman noted 2019 as the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

She said she had returned from another country where people wore poppies for Armistice Day, and she said Americans tend to forget that European allies celebrate Nov. 11 as the same holiday.

She encouraged veterans young and old to share their stories for the sake of history.

"You represent not only the stories of the past but the stories of the future to be written," McCollum said.

She also encouraged reaching out.

"It's important for veterans to not be afraid to ask for help," she said.

Dean Phillips

The 3rd District congressman said he is familiar with what government can share and can take.

"We find the resources to go to war and lack them when you come home," Phillips said.

He said he lost his father in the Vietnam War, killed in action in 1969.

He remains hopeful for how America treats its veterans.

"Optimism is just as contagious as fear."

Angie Craig

As the mother of four sons, there will never be a harder question to face than whether to send them off to war, the 2nd District congresswoman said.

She said the government needs to make sure veterans have jobs when they return home and the proper medical care. She said she has approached Mayo Clinic about veterans having difficulty getting seen, and she said the burn pits of wars in the Mideast are "the next Agent Orange."

Tom Emmer, the 6th District congressman, was unable to join but recorded a video, where he encouraged everyone to thank a veteran. Amy Klobuchar, the senior senator from Minnesota, left a letter for people to read in the lobby.

Veterans and anyone who came with them enjoyed a free breakfast prior to the program. The Veterans Day gathering was sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force, which comprises the various veterans service organizations. Kemery is the chairman this year.

Sabinish was .50-cal gunner on convoy scout truck

Continued from Page 1

the like, and Sabinish wanted to drill locally. Austin is only 20 miles away from Albert Lea.

He arrived in Austin, and in September 2005 he volunteered to deploy to Iraq with the 134th Brigade Support Battalion out of Brooklyn Park, part of the 34th Infantry Division. He spent six months in Fort Polk, Louisiana, then arriving in the Sandbox on the last day of March 2005.

Being in the Quartermaster Corps in the post-9/11 military wasn't like the olden days.

"I never really did my MOS besides go to schooling," Sabinish said.

Halliburton Company, a Pentagon contractor, handled the fuel supply. That meant Sabinish would play a security role. The 134th was stationed at Tallil Airbase in Iraq near An Nasiriyah and the ancient city of Ur, and he was a .50-cal gunner on a Humvee scout truck for convoys.

Sounds exciting, but Sabinish said being a .50-cal gunner can get boring on convoy after convoy during the Iraqi summer. He had to fight sleep.

"It's easy to fall asleep standing up when it's 150 degrees out," he said.

He would see infantry soldiers at guardpoints and small bases along the routes. Because of the roadside bombs, many soldiers concluded that any transportation role was more dangerous than a stationary role, such as an infantryman at a guardpoint.

Sometimes the convoys would get hit. One time, Sabinish's convoy came to a halt because the convoy in front had a truck blown out and the one behind them did, too. Their convoy somehow was safe.

The roadside bombs were generally two kinds: IEDs and EFPs. Most people who followed the war news knew about improvised explosive devices. However, some might recall explosively formed penetrators, too. They look like little barrels on their side and can shoot a round metal lid into an armor-penetrating slug. They can get used for fragmentation instead, sending shrapnel toward a chosen direction.

On March 23, 2007, the safety of Sabinish's convoy was disrupted by a fragmentation EFP while on a patrol around An Nasiriyah. He was 25.

"No one in my company had a Purple Heart until that day," he said.

He was the gunner for a group of four Humvees. Nearby was another group of four Humvees that had a soldier who controlled an unmanned aircraft called ROVER, which provided video from the sky.

The job of Sabinish's convoy was to go through the Iraqi army and police checkpoints while the ROVER flew overhead. The camera allowed the U.S. military to tell whether Iraqi security members were making suspicious phone calls, likely to enemies.

Before the first checkpoint, the convoy approached a T-intersection among heavy traffic and, because the

U.S. military had priority, the scout truck had to push its way to the front. Sabinish was warning people to back up and had lifted his hand to shoot a pen flare when — BOOM!

"I came to and I was on the floor of the Humvee, and my poor driver Emily was screaming, 'Omigod! Omigod!' and she looked at me and she stopped screaming," Sabinish said.

The EFP came from the driver's side and was intended for a taller Australian truck, so much of the shrapnel had gone above their upgraded-armor Humvee, but with the gunner being in a turret at the top of the truck, he was hit the worst among the four people in the Humvee.

They wore headsets to communicate, and one piece of shrapnel hit the microphone in front of Sabinish's mouth, saving his teeth.

"I was trying to communicate, and she thought, well, they thought I was dead because they noticed blood, and I wasn't talking back, not realizing my headset was hit."

He started to realize he was bleeding and couldn't feel his fingers or his arm. Soldiers from other vehicles noticed the bomb's triggerman off in the desert and fired rounds at him. Sabinish, despite bleeding and a concussion, climbed back in the turret.

"Everybody in the vehicle said I was pale as a ghost, and I had been in Iraq for so long that you kind of get a little tan going," he said, "so I guess I was pretty pale from all the blood loss."

They got him out of the vehicle and gave him medical attention. They put an Israeli tourniquet — a trauma wound dressing that uses pressure to stop bleeding — on him, yet he continued to bleed. About 10 or 15 minutes later, a medevac helicopter flew him to Tallil Airbase.

Emily Pesta, the driver, was left with a slight concussion. Mike Peterson had a bit of ricochet shrapnel in the face.

When the 134th got to Iraq, it had Humvees from the first Gulf War, some with holes in the floors.

"And then a couple months before we got blown up, we got brand, new, up-armored Humvees, so that probably saved my life," he said.

Sabinish credited his body gear for stopping shrapnel from hitting his heart.

At Tallil, they gave him morphine, then a chaplain came. He had heard that Sabinish had lost his arm.

"I'm like, what's going on here? I've got a concussion and just had morphine for the first time, and I'm like out of it anyway," he said.

Doctors cleaned out the wound. Still, seven pieces of shrapnel remain in his arm. Removing them, doctors told him, would cause further nerve damage. He still has nerves that never fully healed, and the scar tissue causes arthritis in his elbow.

From the Tallil hospital, he downplayed the injuries in a call to his mother and sister back in Albert Lea.



Ryan Sabinish, second from right, smiles for a photo on Feb. 22, 2007, in Iraq. Behind him is a desert Humvee with a gunner turret. A month later, Sabinish was injured by a roadside bomb.

"I could only really say so much at the time."

He was out of the hospital in a day, and he spent a couple of weeks in his room at Tallil while treating TBI, or traumatic brain injury. There was talk of sending him to Germany, but that was scratched, and Sabinish was eager to stick out the deployment with his unit.

"I went back up in that turret and gunned again," he said.

The Department of Veterans Affairs later said the Army should have sent him to Germany.

The deployment ended in July 2007, and Sabinish returned to his Austin unit. After a promotion to sergeant a year later, he drilled with the Brooklyn Park unit. He got out of the National Guard in 2009, spent one year on Individual Ready Reserve before entering the Army Reserve. He was all done in 2011.

At the time he went through the federal VA, the agency was overwhelmed with claims, and Sabinish had to fight again to get his combat injuries cared for, but these days, he has the status of 100 percent service-connected.

He joined The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans when he got home in 2007. In 2012-13, he became involved with the Military Order of the Purple Heart chapter in Rochester, whose area included Austin and Albert Lea. He became an officer for four years and in 2018-19 was the commander.

There are 12 chapters and 1,400 members across the state. Sabinish, Korean War paratrooper Paul Overgaard and other Purple Heart recipients, in 2017, helped Freeborn County become the first Purple Heart County in Minnesota. The idea was introduced by The American Legion Riders in Albert Lea and brought to the county commissioners.

Thanks to a grant from the Support Our Troops license plates, Freeborn County posted "Purple Heart County" signs along entryways.

The American Legion Post 404 in Alden, in turn, worked with Sabinish and MOPH to become a Purple Heart City, much like many other cities in Minnesota are becoming.

Ceremonies bring together the service organizations to honor "Purple

Heart veterans who didn't make it home and the ones who did make it home," he said.

He's learned about marketing along the way, contacting the media and becoming involved in recruiting younger veterans to join MOPH and other veterans groups.

Here are his tips for recruiting young veterans:

- Hold fundraisers to pay for memberships.
- Provide activities where people can bring families.
- Do sports tourneys, game competitions and shared experiences, such as watching the Vikings.
- Meet during convenient times, not when younger members are at work.
- Makes sure meetings are laid-back and not lengthy.

"Getting involved with your veterans community is good," Sabinish said.

After all, he said, you never know where it might lead. He got to visit Israel — twice — because he volunteers with Heroes to Heroes.

Sabinish has two daughters, Ryleigh, 9, and Stellah, 4.



Ryan Sabinish, left, speaks as a guest on Minnesota Military Radio in December 2018. Host Tom Lyons is on the right. The show airs at 7 a.m. Sundays on Twin Cities News Talk AM 1130 and on stations across the state.

What are the best ways to get investigated by the Attorney General's Office?

MAHNOMEN — Assistant Attorney General Sarah Gillaspie of the Minnesota Attorney General's Office was on hand at the Fall Conference in October, and she shared the leading ways for nonprofit corporations to get investigated:

- Misuse of nonprofit assets.
- Related-party transactions.
- An absent or detached board of directors.
- "Founder's syndrome."
- Manipulation of the financial information reported to the state.

- Certain types of "gift in kind" transactions.
- Questionable accounting practices.

She said it is popular in the country these days to raise funds to support veterans, but there are some groups claiming to help veterans but do not. She wanted all Legion members to watch for fakery in their communities.

"If it sounds too good to be true, report that to our office," she said. Gillaspie provided a room of

American Legion members with best legal practices for their posts.

She said nonprofits aren't required to have bylaws but bylaws show sound oversight. She recommended bylaws be a "breathing, living document" that provide procedures and operations.

Two types of nonprofit corporations must register with the Attorney General's Office: soliciting charitable organizations (soliciting contributions in excess of \$25,000 in Minnesota) and charitable trusts

(with gross assets of \$25,000 or more at any time during the year).

The charitable trusts typically have a charitable purpose and meet the IRS 501(c)(3) status, she said, and, under state law, they must provide the Minnesota Attorney General's Office in St. Paul with dissolutions, mergers, consolidations, conversations and transfers of all or substantially all assets.

"The money we raise," she told an audience of American Legion members, "should not go to law-

yers. It should go to causes."

Gillaspie said state law calls on board members to discharge duties in good faith, in a manner he or she believes in the best interest of the nonprofit and with the care "an ordinarily prudent person" would use in the same situation.

Nonprofit corporations are expected to keep records for six years, and she said any member or director can inspect the records at any time. Not in the middle of the night, but, of course, "a reasonable time."



Sarah Gillaspie



James Regan of the band Coconut Monkey sings Nov. 2 during Turkey Jam at the Stillwater Readiness Center. In true jam spirit, he was not with his band but with other musicians. To the right is Lori Lofstrom.



Nate Bittner of Stillwater dances with his daughter, Emma, at Turkey Jam on Nov. 2 at the Stillwater Readiness Center.



Craig Fritsche, commander of Stillwater Post 48, looks on at the people attending Turkey Jam at the Stillwater Readiness Center on Nov. 2. His post sponsored the concert.

TURKEY JAM

Fundraising campaign finds success with music

STILLWATER — It was the third year for a concert with proceeds to benefit homeless veterans, but it was the first year with the moniker Turkey Jam. Held Saturday, Nov. 2, Turkey Jam featured musicians from various bands, usually not playing with their bands, and instead playing with other musicians.

Succinctly put, a jam. "It's all about the language of music," said Randy Ralston, who organized the music.

MACV President Neal Loidolt said Turkey Jam raised \$30,000 for the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans. It was sponsored by American Legion Post 48 of Stillwater, and it featured a silent auction, pulled-

pork meal and various beverages. Legionnaires sought donations, sold tickets and helped set up, along with various members of the general public.

Post 48 Commander Craig Fritsche said it was good exposure for the local post and it was for a good cause. All proceeds went to fighting homelessness among veterans.

The Stillwater post is without an auxiliary, but the post and auxiliary in nearby Bayport contributed to making Turkey Jam happen, Fritsche said.

Also, Stillwater resident Donna Mae Glass, volunteers noted, solicited a great many businesses to contribute to the silent auction.

Loidolt said many people

come to MACV with ideas for fundraisers, but they want the nonprofit to handle the logistics, for which they lack the time and resources.

Kevin Tholen, a resident of the St. Croix Valley area, is an exception. He is retired from 3M and wanted to do something to help homeless veterans. He stayed at his project, doing the logistics and cobbling it together, Loidolt said. He brought the Stillwater community together, encouraging people to give and to attend.

And he's not a veteran.

The first two years, the effort was more of a fundraising campaign, rather than a singular event. Turkey Jam, people said at the show, is a name that sticks.



Randy "Santa" Burger of River Falls, Wisconsin, displays colors for the Packers and the Vikings, while showing musician Dave Oswald something on his cellphone. In the foreground is musician John Gangl.



Kevin Tholen speaks with supporter Pat Burchill on Nov. 2 during Turkey Jam.



Turkey Jam volunteers Jodi Krueger and Jane Bergland dance to the music Nov. 2 at the Stillwater Readiness Center.

Display, Protect and Preserve Your Memorial United States Flag in a Beautifully Handcrafted Solid Oak Flag Case with a Glass Front, Removable Back and Engraved Plate with Name and Branch of Service of Veteran.



"Made by Veterans for Veterans"

**Minnesota Veterans Home
1200 E. 18th Street
Hastings, MN 55033**

**Phone: 651-539-2486
Fax: 651-480-0058**

Listening Post

PARTY LIKE IT'S 1919



A get-together called the 3rd District 1919 Party was held Nov. 2 at Apple Valley Post 1776.



From left are Post 501 Vice Commander Robert Dolan, Legion/VFW member Russ Bentley, VFW Post 9024 Commander Paul Lindahl, Legion Post 501 Commander Tom Grezek, Legion/VFW member Bob Fritsche, District 4 VFW Auxiliary President Cynthia Fritsche and Sue Register, volunteer services coordinator at the Hastings Veterans Home.



District 4 VFW Auxiliary President Cynthia Fritsche, right, hands a \$400 check to Sue Register, volunteer services coordinator at the Hastings Veterans Home. The donations were done jointly by the Woodbury Legion and VFW posts.

Woodbury donates TV sets to Hastings Veterans Home

WOODBURY — On Nov. 18, Woodbury American Legion Post 501 and Woodbury Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9024 donated 10 flat-screen televisions to the Hasting Veterans Home just in time for the holidays. Sue Register, Hasting Veterans Home volunteer services coordinator, was thrilled with the donation and excited to be able to support bigger televisions in the home. "They will fill a real need for our veterans, and we are thankful for the support of the Woodbury American Legion and VFW," she said.

VFW Post 9024 Commander Paul Lindahl presented the home with a Vietnam War Wall Memorial print by Lee Teter titled "Reflections." Additionally, District 4 VFW Auxiliary President Cynthia Fritsche presented a check for \$400 to the home for van operations. Minnesota currently has five veterans homes in Minneapolis, Fergus Falls, Luverne, Silver Bay and Hastings. The Hastings campus was established in 1978 and has 179 domiciliary beds in private and semi-private rooms. The home provides a wide variety of services for veterans suffering from chemical dependency, mental health illnesses, dual disorders and the debilitating effects of aging.

Check out Facebook page of Woodbury Post 501.

3-STAR CIVILIAN



This photo appeared in the Plainview News and was taken by Editor Richard Johnson. The editor wrote: "Dick Grobe, left, of Millville Valley American Legion Post 579, presents a three-star service banner to Richard Stark of Kellogg. Stark's sons, Christopher, Daniel and Thomas, are serving in the military. 'It's an honor, because I wasn't in the military,' Stark said. 'It's an honor that my kids are.' Grobe also presented a two-star service banner to Tami Sawyer of Plainview, whose sons Justin and Ryan are in the military."

GOOD APPLES



Thirty-three volunteers from Apple Valley Post 1776 delivered 4,600 apples to Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan School District facilities.



From left are Brain Science Foundation Secretary Rosemary Niesen, Vice President Robert Locker, Chairman Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos, Dr. Lisa James and President Gary H. Olson.

\$30,000 funds research on anthrax, vets

By Gary H. Olson

MINNEAPOLIS — The annual meeting of the Brain Science Foundation was held at the Richfield American Legion Post 435 at 7 p.m. Oct. 14.

Amanda Sykora, CPA, with Clifton Larson LLP presented the financial report. Michael Danielson with Wells Fargo discussed the investment report. Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos, chairman of the Brain Science Center, and Dr. Lisa James each presented an update on the research that has been done and plans for the future.

Georgopoulos requested a donation of \$30,000 to support a special research project on "The Effects of Anthrax Vaccine on Veterans." It was approved under new business.

The current officers: Gary H.

Olson, president; Robert Locker, vice president and Rosemary Niesen, secretary, were re-elected to serve for 2019-2020.

On Oct. 30, a lecture was held at the University of Minnesota Medical School Mayo Memorial Auditorium at 4 p.m. at the Minneapolis campus.

Awards were presented to graduate students working on research for the Brain Science Center. This was followed by the presentation of the \$30,000 check to fund the research project on the effects of "Anthrax Vaccine on Veterans." Dr. Harry T. Orr then gave a lecture on "A Minnesota Journey: Spinocerebellar Ataxia Type 1 (SCA1) from Discovery to Therapeutic Trials."

Dinner followed at Christos Greek Restaurant in Minneapolis.



Zachary E. Zeidler, second from left, receives a \$2,000 scholarship check for his work on brain science research. Handing him the check is Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak.



Maya Zhe Wang, second from left, receives a \$2,000 scholarship check for her work on brain science research. Handing her the check is Department of Minnesota Commander Mark Dvorak.

District commanders



1st District

Dale Wellik



Greetings from the mighty 1st District American Legion Family!

The Fall Conference at Mahanomen was fantastic — a great place to learn from all the great speakers and the programs of The American Legion.

Again the four pillars. Veteran affairs, medical benefits: Get your ID card and get signed up into the medical system now before you need it.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends. I hope everyone remembered the deployed and their families.

More holidays are coming, and the families of the deployed will need our support and help and

prayers to get through the Christmas season. Pray for the deployed who are defending our freedoms.

The Pearl Harbor rally is coming up on Dec. 7, at the Rose-town post in Roseville. (Signup deadline was Nov. 28.)

Veterans Day weekend was very busy with programs at schools, nursing homes, churches and American Legion Posts.

Continue to honor and pray for all the veterans and all American Legion Family members and all people that support us.

For God and Country.

citizens but demonstrate the fellowship that helps bring in new members to all our groups.

By keeping new members involved (to the extent they have time and desire for participa-

tion), we grow The American Legion one member at a time.

Have a blessed holiday season not only while attending services at your synagogues and your churches but every day.



5th District

Andrew Rose Sr.



Commander Teresa Huberty, Post 5222 and the 5th District would like to thank all who came to their Post dedication and officer installation ceremonies. Because of this event, we see a bright future for the American Legion.

Our membership revitalization was a huge success. The results were not all for the 5th District, but we did sign loyal Legionnaires to other Districts and Posts.

The 4th and 5th Districts Mid-Winter program is quickly approaching.

Mark that date as Saturday, Jan. 4. With registration starting at 8 a.m. and the program

beginning 9 a.m., at Richfield Post 435, 6501 Portland Ave. S, Richfield.

Don't forget about the Commander's Project, "Every Third Saturday."

If you have donations of any type, please call Tom Mc Kenna at 952-356-5116, tom@everythirdsaturday.com.

And, please, don't forget those convalescing at home, in nursing homes and what a hospital visit means to our veterans, especially during this time of year.

Happy holidays to all!



2nd District

Brad Pagel



Sitting here thinking and pondering what to write about this month is sometimes harder than it seems.

First I think about the three-ring circus that the media considers newsworthy, then I am reminded that The American Legion is nonpolitical. Well, that just nixed about three months of stuff I could talk about.

Then I thought about the past memories of Fall Conference and some things are better left unsaid, although it was entertaining and lots of fun.

Then I was looking through the upcoming events that are on the calendar with family. Which family you ask? Well, Legion Family and personal family, as Christmas is fast approaching and Clark Griswold is my icon. This is a time to think about

social functions without all the pomp and procedure, a time to invite those younger veteran families to join the Legion Family at a district Christmas party, a time to get to know others who are still serving and what our mission is.

It's a time to socialize and have a good time amongst friends and family. The 2nd District Christmas Party is at the St. James Post on Dec. 14 starting at 5 p.m. Just remember: It's not Christmas until I see Hans Gruber fall off Nakatomi Plaza.

We can stop the "22 A Day" one step at a time. Still serving America.



6th District

Paul Edwards



Greetings to the American Legion Family.

By the time this article gets to your inbox, Thanksgiving 2019 will be nothing more than a memory and some leftovers in the fridge. I hope that all of you had a pleasant holiday with loving family and friends.

According to the membership reports I have received, Minnesota is No. 1 in the nation and our 6th District is No. 2 in the state. Well done, everyone. The District has six posts at goal and three posts are being submitted for special awards from the national commander for achieving 103 percent of goal.

Keep up the good work on membership. There is time for every post to get those awards for their commanders and membership

chairs. Don't forget to talk about the Legion Act.

The District website is up and running at www.mn6thdistrict.org. I encourage everyone in the district to check it out. Adjutants and membership chairs should be sure and look at the Legion Education tab.

There is training available for updating membership online and for online submission of memberships. The more reporting and submitting we can do over the internet, the quicker records get updated.

Since this will be in the December Legionnaire, merry Christmas and happy New Year to one and all.



3rd District

Linda Dvorak



Greetings from the 3rd District. It seems that as soon as I finish my article for the Legionnaire, it is time to start thinking about the next month's article! Where does the time go?

Much of my time this past month, it seems, has been working with Dick Ward on the MyLegion.org training that will be rolled out in the next month or so. It is very exciting, valuable and overdue training for everyone!

I was at an event, "Saluting Our Community Heroes" in Hutchinson, where Taya Kyle was the guest speaker. If you don't know who Taya Kyle is, she is the wife of "American Sniper" Chris Kyle. She was

very inspirational. Before the event, I was visiting with several veterans in attendance. One fellow Legionnaire from the Hutchinson Post and I were talking membership, and he told me a story regarding membership.

The story isn't especially important, but the moral is, which is: "We count veterans (membership) because veterans count."

I thought this was really a good message. We need to keep growing as an organization because our veterans count.



8th District

Anna Koskinen



Greetings.

I recently spent time at another meeting of Northeast Minnesota Women Veterans in Virginia and enjoyed that immensely. This group does great work among veterans and local communities; most of the women are Legionnaires and all are proud veterans dedicated to service beyond self.

I shall be visiting our older veteran friends in the local care facility with signed Christmas cards from our group; the others will be doing the same locally.

Let's remember to keep our brand of The American Legion visible to the public throughout the holidays when doing the good work we do.

I was very pleased to see all the great programs, tributes and remembrances throughout November. Our local high school had a great annual Veterans Day tribute program. I got a chance to talk about the American Legion Family and all the great programs; told the audience to apply for these available scholarships,

Boys and Girls State, etc., and invited all eligible to join the Legion, Auxiliary and Sons.

Please continue to talk among your veteran friends to offer membership in the Legion now. We truly need these newly eligible veterans to be among our ranks for their valuable insight.

I recently started following American Legion (@AmericanLegion) on Twitter, and find so many good tweets with interesting links. Check it out if you haven't.

I will attend Post meetings as I am able; call me.

I encourage our members to contact me with suggestions and comments.

There are many things going on and upcoming. Legionnaires are encouraged to attend Legion meetings and events. Our Winter Conference is coming up on Jan. 25 in Ely at Veterans on the Lake Resort (Fall Lake in Winton).



7th District

Dean Knutson



As time goes by, we tend to get very busy with the ins and outs of everyday life and sometimes forget the things that are important or the jobs that we have volunteers to do within the American Legion.

I would like to congratulate all District commanders and their membership directors for a very fine job on working membership both at District level and working the Post 1982 at large and getting members to transfer back into the Districts and Department of Minnesota.

Let's keep up the good work and try to end the slide in membership.

On another note, I would like to welcome Tim Engstrom on

board as the new editor for the newspaper and say I look forward to working with you, and I would also like to give a very heartfelt "thank you" to Al Zdon for his many years of service to the Department of Minnesota.

To everyone in The American Legion Family, I wish you all a very good Thanksgiving and a blessed Christmas season.

Keep veterans first in all our dealings within The American Legion.

God bless America and the American veteran!



9th District

Lowell Philp



Greetings from the 9th District.

I sincerely hope that you had the opportunity to spend Thanksgiving with your loved ones. With the onset of the Christmas season, please remember our veterans both here and abroad. It sure meant a lot to me when I was in the Air Force.

Please visit nursing homes

or veterans homes. Many of the residents have no family. We can be their family.

I wish you a very happy holiday season and look forward to the new year.

Continued from Page 6

construction crew, in the past month, completed installation of all steel girders and inspections of the approach spans.

Painting continues as weather permits, and inspections of the main span are under way.

CD sales benefit veteran causes

Compact discs went on sale Nov. 15 for the Minnesota Country Salute Vol. 6, a one-disc compilation of original music from local artists who donate their music.

Proceeds benefit the Minnesota Military Family Foundation and Tribute to the Troops.

The CDs are available at Cub Foods locations in Minnesota. A list of those locations are available at the BOB-FM website: mybobcountry.com.

BOB-FM, a country music station based in St. Cloud, Twin Cities and Faribault, produces the Minnesota Country

Salute CDs.

The performers on Vol. 6, among others, include GB Leighton, Chris Hawkey, Rockie Lynne, Lake and Lyndale, Ali Gray, Jake Nelson and the Mitch Gordan Band.

Hyperbaric treatment offered

The Fargo VA Medical Center now has the capabilities for the hyperbaric chamber treatment for veterans. The treatment has been effective in cases involving PTSD and other veterans' disabilities.

The federal Department of Veterans Affairs is studying the impact of hyperbarics as an alternative treatment at the Fargo location and in California, Texas, Oklahoma and Florida, according to North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven.

For more information, contact Melissa Sietz at 701-238-9485.

National Commander's Tour

Feb. 17-19, 2020

Please call number listed to reserve your spot:

Location	Meal	Time	Phone
Monday, Feb. 17, 2020			
Adams Post 146	Breakfast	8 a.m.	507-582-3266
Waseca Post 228	Lunch	noon	507-833-9935
Albert Lea Post 56	Dinner*	6 p.m.	507-373-7993
Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020			
Wells Post 210	Breakfast	8 a.m.	507-553-3012
Madelia Post 19	Lunch	noon	507-642-8106
Redwood Falls Post 38	Dinner*	6 p.m.	507-430-2261
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020			
Gaylord Post 433	Breakfast	8 a.m.	507-469-2346
New Prague Post 45	Dinner*	6 p.m.	952-457-2129

On Feb. 19, the tour will stop at Minnesota State University, Mankato, around 11 a.m. for lunch with veteran students. No reservations will be taken for the meal time.

*There will be a social hour starting at 5 p.m.



4th District

Joe Jansen



While most of us are confused about what's going on in Washington, D.C., let us remember a simpler time when President Kennedy said: "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."

Our multiple organizations

at the post level are consistently performing activities that help our communities. I believe that not only are these good works noted by our fellow



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 20 Vol. 5

President Mary Hendrickson • Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

651-224-7634

December 2019

We met an Aux. member who joined back in 1937

President's Column

Mary Hendrickson



November proved to be another busy month in the American Legion Family calendar. I was invited to several pheasant dinners, membership rallies and 100th birthday celebrations.

My first journey of the month took me to Crookston Unit 20 in the 9th District for their combination memorial service and 100th birthday dinner. Before the meeting began, member Margee Keller took Unit President Sharon Lanctot, 9th District President Pat Hanson and I went on a road trip to a local senior housing facility to meet a special Crookston Auxiliary member who joined our organization in 1937. She was paying her dues for the 83rd time. The three presidents were thrilled to have their photograph taken with her. (See photo at right.)

Speaking of longtime members, National President Nicole Clapp in the speech given at her inauguration in Indianapolis asked each department to find their oldest Auxiliary member in chronological age, as well as the member with the longest continuous membership in the American Legion Auxiliary. Auxiliary members should contact our Department Office if they have a Minnesota member who might qualify for either one of these special recognitions.

I was honored to be able to attend the Nov. 8 Veterans Day Program at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Hastings. Beautiful patriotic music was provided by the United States Air Force Midwest Winds and the Hastings Veterans Choir followed by the presentation of the Service Flags. The keynote address was given by Eugene Leifeld, past 3rd District American Legion commander. Attendees from various patriotic organizations were moved by the ceremony and enjoyed a time of fellowship following the event.

A unique opportunity presented itself on Sunday, Nov. 10, when I was invited by the Itasca County Historical Society to view its newest display room featuring veterans at their facility in Grand Rapids. There were artifacts and uniforms from each of the war eras. Tribute was paid to the Itasca County veterans who had lost their lives in these conflicts. Viewing of the historical display was followed by a program at a local hotel/convention center featuring a moving address by John Kriesel, an Iraqi War veteran. Kudos go out to the Grand Rapids Area Color Guard (all members of

the Grand Rapids Post 60 American Legion Family)

for their part in the program.

A few days after visiting Grand Rapids, I was able to attend the Osseo-Maple Grove Veterans Day Potluck Dinner hosted by Rudolph Priebe Post 172. In addition to honoring veterans, the evening featured talks by the Boys Staters and Girls Staters that were sponsored by Post and Unit 172. They did a great job of describing their special week and the impact it has already had on their lives. Girls State is certainly one of our most valuable Auxiliary programs.

Carl and I were pleased to attend Al Zdon's retirement dinner in November at Anoka Post 102. A nice crowd of Al's family, American Legion Family members, Al's former high school classmates and individuals from his early journalist days in Hibbing were present to "toast and roast" him. Al has done a wonderful job of recording in words and photographs the ongoing history of the Department of Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary. We'll forgive him for all the published photos of our zany costumes and faces during our membership skits.

On a personal level, I'll also forgive him for taking the exclamation marks out of all the columns I've written. I guess true journalists don't use exclamation marks. We wish him a healthy and happy retirement filled with success on the golf course and a life full of great exclamation-mark moments. (Sorry, Al, I couldn't resist.)

My December calendar is filling up fast with several American Legion Family Christmas dinners. This is the month that many of our Veterans Homes will have their Gift Shop distributions. Thank you to my Gift Shop Chairman Mary French and her committee of one, Lynn Olson for doing all the shopping for the gift shop items. This a huge undertaking with over \$40,000 worth of products (and gift cards) needed for this much-loved Auxiliary program.

I wish you all a great holiday season. As Tiny Tim said in Charles Dickens "Christmas Carol": "God bless us, everyone."

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

Changes made to preamble and to member eligibility

There have been a couple of very important changes to both our membership eligibility and also the Preamble to our Constitution.

Please note that per the IRS, our membership can go back only two places, daughter, granddaughter. You can no longer sign up your great-granddaughter or further back. Remember that if you have a great-granddaughter or great-greatgranddaughter already signed up as a member, they are just fine. As long as their dues are kept current they are and will remain members.

The American Legion has changed the Preamble to the Constitution and the American Legion Auxiliary is following suit. Following is the change:

To uphold and defend the constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;

Please change your documents to reflect the new wording.

Getting close on membership

Our big push is to get everyone off the proverbial goose egg. We only have 12 Units not having turned in membership — please make sure and get your dues paid.

We are doing a wonderful job with membership this year — pretty close to the same totals as last year. Why not spring for a Christmas present to the Department Office? Get all the membership you can collected before Jan. 1. Remember we have a rally in Roseville on Dec. 7 — make Department Secretary Sandie have to work real hard with lots to count.

Reserve a spot at Girls State

Information needed to reserve a place for your Girls State citizen(s) for the 2020 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State will be included in



Crookston American Legion Auxiliary Unit 20 birthday celebration was held on Nov. 6. Donna Jensen, who is 96 years old, joined the Auxiliary under her Army father and is an 83-year member of the Crookston Unit. Pictured is Department President Mary Hendrickson, 9th District President Pat Hanson, Donna Jensen and Crookston Unit President Sharon Lanctot.

the January/February Unit mailing. Please make sure and go through all the information.

After the Department Office receives your reservation form and your registration check of \$300 per girl, a packet will be sent to the Unit. It is up to each Unit sponsoring the citizens to get together with them and go through all of the material.

The packet will be sent to the person who signs the reservation form. The registration materials must be returned to the department office on or before May 1. If you have any questions, please contact the Department Office.

This year the Girls State week will be June 14-20 at Bethel University in the St. Paul suburb of Arden Hills.

Poppy poster contest

Please encourage your schools to participate in the Poppy Poster Contest. There are classes for all grades. All of the rules will be in the January/February Unit Mailing included in the Trophy and Awards packet. All of this information is also on our website mnala.org.

This is a great way to teach our youth

all about the Poppy, our Memorial Flower. Being the sponsor of the contest we must get into our schools and promote this wonderful contest. We have many very talented children in our schools. In the past few years entries have been dwindling. Make an effort to boost this great program.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The Department staff, Sandie, Jan and Jocelyn, want to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. This has been an outstanding year here. We are so happy to help you all with your needs and thank you for everything you do for us.

Here is a reminder of the Gift Shop dates:

Fargo VAMC	Dec. 2
Minneapolis VAMC	Dec. 3 & 4
Sioux Falls VAMC	Dec. 2 & 3
St. Cloud VAMC	Dec. 2-4
Fergus Falls VA Home	Dec. 9
Hastings VA Home	Dec. 10
Luverne VA Home	Dec. 12
Minneapolis VA Home	Dec. 4 & 5
Silver Bay VA Home	Dec. 12



The Bruno American Legion Post and Auxiliary Unit 563 held a Veterans Day poster contest with the East Central School sixth-grade class. There were three classes with a first, second and third place for each class. First received \$25, second \$15 and third \$10.

Pictured here are all the winners along with Post 563 Commander Derrell Jensen, First Vice Al Hoiland, Unit 563 President Sandy Hoiland and Unit 563 Treasurer Jean Jensen.

FALL CONFERENCE FUN



From left are Patti Coleman, Brandi Christensen and Tom Allen, portraying the 1920s during a membership skit for the 10th District.



Susie Learing holds out a microphone during the 7th District membership skit at the Fall Conference.



In the 3rd District skit, Linda Dvorak interviews Don Skow, portraying Korean War veterans, during Fall Conference in Mahanomen.



Raleen Tolzman speaks into the microphone during a 2nd District membership skit at Fall Conference in late October.



The 9th District led the room in singing "God Bless the U.S.A." by Lee Greenwood.



Veteran Burt Lundeberg, at the age of 101, celebrates the American Legion Auxiliary's 100th Birthday Party at the New London American Legion Post 537.



Cynthia Wenz, Deanna Meyer, 3rd District President Linda Kelly and Kim Carlander perform a skit on Nov. 2 at Apple Valley Post 1776 for the 3rd District 1919 Party.

Nov. 20, 2019, Membership:

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 11/21/2018
One	4,177	2,676	51.07%	2,723
Two	4,191	2,816	56.10%	3,073
Three	4,064	2,730	55.71%	2,741
Four	624	455	64.90%	435
Five	603	437	63.52%	380
Six	5,393	3,846	57.15%	3,926
Seven	3,369	2,187	52.12%	2,267
Eight	1,363	927	54.59%	839
Nine	3,618	2,532	59.04%	2,638
Ten	4,304	2,714	53.81%	2,696
1982	178	153	79.21%	113
Totals	31,884	21,473	55.55%	21,831

Secretary's Notes

Sandie Deutsch



It seems at this time of the year I sit and reflect on my life's path.

Twenty years ago I would have never thought of working for the American Legion Auxiliary. I didn't even know a corporate office existed. I had never written a resume before this position came about or had a formal interview. I thought I would just give it a shot as a practice run and look where it got me.

These last eight-plus years have been the most memorable years I have had in my professional life. The people I have met are simply the best in the world, and I feel I have made many, many lifetime friends.

Our family will be complete next May (according to my son) with a new grandbaby coming along (it's a boy!), and we couldn't be happier.

Again, back to reflecting — there is one person who has had a tremendous impact on the way I treat people since I have been with the organization, and my shout out goes to Karen Thygeson this month. That woman has taught me to treat everyone with respect and kindness and never lose your smile. I have asked her many times — how do you keep smiling, even when things aren't going so good, and she always answers with

the biggest smile and somehow I know the answer. All of my love and prayers to you, dear sister Karen.

Hats off to Al Zdon. What a retirement party! We had such a great time and whoever knew Al could sing so well. All of my love and best wishes go to Al and Mary — may they start their new journey with travel and memorable times with their loved ones.

From Shorty and myself we want to wish you a very merry, blessed Christmas and a happy, prosperous New Year. Make sure and remember those less fortunate, especially this time of year.

Upcoming notable dates

- Dec. 7 – Pearl Harbor Rally – Rosetown Post 542 (Roseville)
- Dec. 10 – Articles for the January/February Unit Mailing
- Dec. 24 & 25 – Department Office Closed for Christmas
- Dec. 31 & Jan. 1 – Department office Closed for Christmas

Sandie Deutsch is the executive secretary for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.



POSITION OPENING: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Resumes with cover letters are being accepted for the position of Executive Secretary for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota. Applicants must be eligible and/or a member in good standing of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Minnesota.

This position provides the leadership, management and supervision necessary to ensure that the organization has the proper operational controls, administrative and reporting procedures and systems in place to effectively grow the organization and to ensure financial strength and operating efficiency. This is a full-time position and is based in the St. Paul office. This position requires some weekend meeting and out of state travel.

Applicants must have a degree in business administration or ten years equivalent experience to include at least five years in a managerial or supervisory capacity, preferably in a nonprofit environment. Resumes and cover letters should be sent to:

Mary Hendrickson
 American Legion Auxiliary Department President
 721 Hantz Road
 Cloquet, MN 55720
 Or emailed to:
carmar21@msn.com
 Please submit your paperwork by Dec. 31, 2019.

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Get ready now for BUDDY CHECKS

As members of The American Legion, we watch out for each other. One way is through regular Buddy Checks. This year, on the week of The American Legion's birthday, March 15, gather a team to call or visit absent members or former members of The American Legion. Help them renew or rejoin the organization, ask them if they need any help or assistance in life, and invite them to an upcoming Legion or veterans-based event. Get them involved among the local veterans. Make them feel welcome. Listen to their input. Make sure to swap contact information. And thank them for their time.

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Legionnaire Insurance Trust has developed a discount card for health care savings exclusively for Legionnaires in your Department of The American Legion. This card can save you money every time you access the special services available to you.

No doubt you've noticed the increasing cost of health care services such as eye glasses, hearing aids, as well as diabetes supplies. This is why everyone should consider a program that gets you the discounts you need.

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Hearing	HearPO	30% - 62%	1,600
24-hour NurseLine	Optum	N/A	N/A
Diabetes Management	Liberty Medical	15%	N/A

GOLD PLAN - \$60/year			
PRODUCT	NETWORK	DISCOUNT	PROVIDERS
Vision	Cole Managed VisionCare	45% - 60%	9,000
Hearing	HearPO	30% - 62%	1,600
24-hour NurseLine	Optum	N/A	Unlimited Access
Diabetes Management	Liberty Medical	15%	N/A
Dental	CAREINGTON POS	20% - 50%	24,000
Chiropractic & Alternative Medicine	American WholeHealth	10% - 30%	25,000
Vitamins	American WholeHealth	25%	N/A
Podiatry	DDS	20% - 50%	3,500
Long Term Care	Healthcare Synergies	5% - 30%	3,300
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