

Department Executive Committee discusses convention backup plans

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more likely to benefit our membership efforts," he said.

Maxa said he and Engstrom whittled the choices down from 12 firms down to four: Wild Fig, Magnetic North of Eden Prairie, Gaslight Creative of St. Cloud and SnowGlobe partner Townsquare Ignite of North Carolina.

Wild Fig appealed, Maxa said, because there was no contract, was affordable and has experience with Greater Minnesota.

"They are asking us to commit for six months," he said.

The monthly cost is \$1,500 a month plus \$300 for automation software, for a total of \$1,800 a month. There also a one-time \$1,000 setup fee. The Department was paying \$2,500 a month to SnowGlobe.

Emblem usage

Maxa urged Department and District leaders to send in requests for using The American Legion emblem to him as a way to avoid being rejected by National. It saves time, he said.

He said it is important that the emblem not touch anything behind it.

Ludwig noted the emblem and "The American Legion" logo are copyrighted.

"If you don't control your copyrights, you end up losing them," he said.

Clarification from Boy Scouts

The Department Executive Committee approved forwarding a resolution seeking clarification from the Boy Scouts of America concerning its June 15 statement denouncing racism in its ranks.

District 6 Commander Paul Edwards is the Boy Scouts chairman for Niswaga Post 627 and has been involved with Boy Scouts since he was a boy himself. Edwards said the Boy Scouts, like The American Legion and other organizations, came out with statements this summer condemning racism.

The Boy Scouts' statement is admirable, he said, but one sentence is confusing.

That line states: "The Boy Scouts of America stands with Black families and the Black community because we believe that Black Lives Matter."

Edwards questions why the statement would capitalize "Lives Matter." As a proper noun, it refers to the political organization Black Lives Matter, rather than "Black lives matter," a concept commonly agreed upon.

He said he doesn't believe the Boy Scouts intend to endorse the Black Lives Matter organization but many people in his community have quit Scouts over it or desire clarification.

People who donate via the Black Lives Matter website give to ActBlue, a fundraising platform affiliated with the

Democratic Party. The Boy Scouts and American Legion are nonpartisan organizations. That means they do not side with Democrats, Republicans or any other political parties.

Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby said Edwards is right in asking National, "Hey, will you clear this up?"

Colby also had a problem with the use of the word "murder" elsewhere in the BSA statement.

"As a 33-year practitioner in court, I am uncomfortable with the use of the word murder," he said.

Under the notion of innocent until proven guilty, many professionals avoid the term "murder" until after a conviction has been made. There are libel, slander and defamation laws that enforce the principle among the public,

(That's why the NY Times and other conventional news outlets call it a death or killing but not murder — unless describing the prosecution's charges, such as "charged with second-degree murder.")

Colby said he sees no legal impediment to the resolution.

Past National Commander Dan Ludwig said he spoke with National Judge Advocate Kevin Bartlett.

"He is of the opinion that when you capitalize it, it has a different connotation," Ludwig said.

He said everyone agrees there is no room in this world for bigotry, racism and other forms of discrimination — an American Legion policy since its founding in 1919. The resolution next goes to the National Executive Committee. He said the next NEC meeting comes in May.

Ludwig said he believes the Department of Minnesota is the best American Legion Department in the nation.

"It's easy to get distracted but the mission is all important. It's bigger than all of us," Ludwig said.

Ratify Legionville election

Legionville, the Department of Minnesota's safety patrol camp on North Long Lake near Brainerd, has its own board, and it elects its officers. The DEC then ratifies the results.

Eugene Leifeld of Red Wing Post 54 is the president again.

Victor Gades of Morris Post 29 is the vice president. Bill Goede of Plainview Post 179 is the treasurer. Maxa of Montgomery Post 79 is the secretary. Also on the board are Legion Commander Mark Dvorak of New Prague Post 45, SAL Commander

Dave Vulcan of North Mankato Squadron 510, 40&8 representative Cliff Teigland of Stearns County Voiture 415, Safety Patrol School chairman Jim Blakesley of Aitkin Post 86 and one member from each of the 10 Minnesota American Legion Districts.

The staff are Director Tom Sanford and Camp Manager Adam Felton.

Finance Committee

Department Treasurer Carl Hendrickson said the Finance Committee met at Anoka Post 102. He said total projected income is \$1,250,546, and total projected expenses are \$1,278,170, with a deficit of \$27,624.

"This could change as the year goes," he said.

Adjutant's report

Maxa said the Department of Minnesota has been working to engage veterans on college campuses through the Veteran Resource Center. The COVID-19 pandemic has shuttered the resource centers on campuses, but groundwork is being laid for when things reopen.

Maxa said it is important for officers to have an email address tied to their membership in myLegion.org because its upgrade, Personify 360, is going to be email-based for access.

"Make sure National has a valid email address for you," he said.

MyLegion.org has been in use for tracking membership since 2010. The Personify upgrade happens in December 2020.

Boy River Post 458 asked to turn in its charter, he said. He said the Post had three active members out of 33 and no one wanted to step up and lead. The DEC approved the turn-in of the charter.

Conventions?

Ludwig described how the numbers for COVID-19 were going in the wrong direction and continuing to get worse.

He said it is not a time to panic, but there could be further cancellations, perhaps even the Phoenix National Convention in August, unless an effective vaccine changes things.

Ludwig said it is unlikely The American Legion will ask officers to serve a third year. He encouraged the Department to form an emergency plan for having a Department Convention in July if members cannot gather in person.

Part of the problem is having a change-of-command ceremony, he said. To be sure, nothing is canceled. "It's really too early to decide."

The Department Convention is slated for July 15-17 at Jackpot Junction Casino, hosted by Redwood Falls Post 38.



Paul Edwards



Dan Ludwig



Greg Colby



Eugene Leifeld

The SAL Update: Sons of TAL are here to help you out

With Thanksgiving over with, winter is almost here, and we are looking forward to Christmas. We had to cancel the Pearl Harbor Rally scheduled for Dec. 5, and that saddens my heart. But we will hopefully be able to get together for the Sweetheart Rally in February.

The Sons of The American Legion are doing very well in membership. A reminder to all Squadrons that this is your last chance to turn in membership for 2020!

Remember, though, as a family, we all need help each

Detachment commander

Dave Vulcan



other. So if you need help with the Legion or Auxiliary membership recruitment, activities, or anything, please ask your Sons of The American Legion because we are here to help.

I also would like to say "Thank You!" to all my officers, my District commanders, and chairman for all the hard work that they are doing for the Sons of The American Legion.

Keep up the good work. Stay safe and healthy!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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

A history of the Sons of The American Legion

The Sons of The American Legion was created in 1932 as an organization within The American Legion. The SAL is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion. Together, members of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion make up what is known as the Legion Family. All three organizations place high importance on preserving our American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

Sons have always assisted Legionnaires with Legion Family programs. Our Family boasts a combined total membership of nearly 4.2 million members. This year, Sons attained an all-time high national membership of over 365,000. The largest Detachment, Pennsylvania, has over 61,000 members. Trophies and awards are given to Detachments and Squadrons for the largest membership and the largest increase in membership. Just as each Legion post determines the extent of its service to the community, state, and nation, each SAL squadron is permitted flexibility in planning programs and activities to meet its own needs. The SAL has study programs recommended for younger members. One such program, called "The Ten Ideals," teaches the elements of patriotism, health, knowledge, training, honor, faith, helpfulness, courtesy, reverence, and comradeship. If a member completes the Ten Ideals program, he is eligible to continue with another program called the "Five-Point Program of Service." This program covers patriotism, citizenship, discipline, leadership and Legionism.

Sons focus on much more than just membership. At all levels, Sons support The American Legion in promoting a wide variety of programs. Sons assist their posts in other activities such as Veterans programs, Veterans Administration

home and hospital volunteerism, Children Youth projects and fundraising. Since 1988, The Sons have raised more than \$6.9 million for The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Members have volunteered over 1.3 million hours to date in Veterans Hospitals throughout the country and raised over \$2,500,000 that has gone directly to VA hospitals and VA homes for a variety of items including TVs, radios, medical equipment and clothing for the patients.

There are many men who are members of both The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion. Often, these individuals started out as young members of the Sons. Then, when they were old enough to serve the military, they also became eligible to join The Legion. Such individuals are known within our organization as dual members. The Sons of The American Legion is one of many organizations that sponsors and supports the Citizens Flag Alliance, a coalition formed to secure flag protection legislation through an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. SAL volunteers work to establish local networks by having petitions available and handing out informational material. They alert their communities to the importance of respect for the flag, and they encourage flag education programs in schools and other local organizations.

Sons membership eligibility requirements

All male descendants, adopted sons, and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during World War I, and Dec. 7, 1941, to date, as set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion.

There shall be no forms or class of membership except an active membership.

GRAND TOTALS							
As of November 19, 2020							
Detachment of Minnesota							
2020 Results as of 8/22/20	11038						
2021 Goal from National	11749						
2021 105%	12455						
Current at Department	5000						
Percentage	42.56%						

Vice Commanders	2020 Results	2021		Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
		Goal	105%			
Glenn Mueller (1st and 3rd)	3762	3882	4114	1665	42.89%	3rd
Scott Gebel (2nd and 7th)	2206	2441	2591	771	31.59%	5th
Robert Bristo (4th and 5th)	666	773	818	251	32.47%	4th
Larry Ripplinger (6th and 9th)	2343	2429	2574	1336	55.00%	1st
Steve Sullivan (8th and 10th)	1976	2224	2358	1088	48.92%	2nd

District Commanders	2020 Results	2021		Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
		Goal	105%			
Greg Lemmer (1st)	1703	1818	1929	734	40.37%	6th
Russell Lietzke (2nd)	1250	1418	1507	371	26.16%	10th
Jack Thomas (3rd)	2059	2064	2185	931	45.11%	5th
John Weiss (4th)	347	378	400	111	29.37%	9th
LeRoy Gonzales (5th)	319	395	418	140	35.44%	8th
Robert Foss (6th)	1536	1589	1684	851	53.56%	2nd
Shawn Kosbab (7th)	956	1023	1084	400	39.10%	7th
Paul A Malzac (8th)	439	571	607	259	45.36%	4th
Terry Buraas (9th)	807	840	890	485	57.74%	1st
Daryl Harmon (10th)	1537	1653	1751	829	50.15%	3rd



Howard Seitzer, 100, relaxes in his easy chair at Oak Meadows Senior Living in Oakdale. He recalls what it was like coming to work on Monday, Dec. 8, 1941, at the Lockheed plant in Inglewood, California.

WORLD WAR II

Aerial superiority aboard the B-17

First Howard Seitzer was building aircraft for Lockheed, then he became a waist gunner on the legendary Flying Fortress

By Tim Engstrom

OAKDALE — In January 1940, Howard Seitzer spotted an advertisement in the St. Peter Herald. The aviation industry in California needed workers, but to get those jobs, the workers first attended United Aircraft School of Inglewood, California.

Seitzer, a 100-year-old American Legion member, grew up on a farm near St. Peter, and there was no work around besides farm work. His older brother was going to get the family farm, so, what the heck, he was going to save up for this school out West.

For a year he did farm work and saved \$200. He paid \$15 in gas for a driver, plus money for rooms and meals. He had to give the recruiter \$25 and made a down payment on the school.

He arrived in the Golden State and got a room in Inglewood that cost \$7 a week for everything: food, electricity, water. He completed six weeks of school, then applied to the aircraft companies for work: Douglas, Lockheed, Northrup, North American and others.

He picked Lockheed because it paid better than the others. He began working on the Lockheed A-29 Hudson bomber, a light bomber and reconnaissance aircraft made for the Royal Air Force. The U.S. was not in the war yet, but the Hudson was the first American design to destroy an enemy aircraft in World War II.

Seitzer's job was to finish the bomb bay by hanging the doors and racks. Two months in, he became the boss of that part of the line.

Soon enough, Lockheed gave him another role: pickup man. His job was to fix the areas the crews messed up. All the aircraft were made to detailed specifications that were essential for surviving combat, let alone flight, so his role was crucial.

The workers regularly used carbon tetrafluoride to clean, and he got sick from it and was out for two weeks.



379th Bomb Group

Seitzer was transferred to working on the Lockheed Constellation, the company's commercial airliner that later became the C-69 Constellation, a military version of the plane. It was the first civil airliner to have pressurized cabins in widespread use, allowing pilots to fly above bad weather and making air travel safer.

It was built in sections, and Seitzer was a riveter, bringing the sections together.

Then he worked on forced air for

the Lockheed P-39 Lightning, a fighter aircraft with twin tails and nose-mounted machine guns (the P in planes of that era stands for "pursuit"). Seitzer said Lockheed had made two when he arrived and 35 by the fall of 1940, confident the government would accept the radical and comparatively quiet aircraft.

In November, they discovered the metal around the P-38's machine guns would crumple. They switched to stainless steel, and that took care of the heat problem, Seitzer said.

When America entered the war in December 1941, the government needed fighters and more. Dec. 7 was a Sunday.

"On Monday morning, everything turned toward the war," Seitzer said. "There were no city streetlights at night. Everything was dark."

Not only did they make planes, they began manufacturing trucks and tanks, too.

"We didn't have anything, and everything tightened down then," he said.

He stayed on at Lockheed until November 1943. He had not been drafted

because he was deemed essential industry. He and another man decided to see if they could qualify to be pilots. Only about 30 percent pass, Seitzer said. They went to March Field, and Seitzer qualified.

He told the draft board he was quitting his factory job and asked to transfer his draft papers to St. Peter. He then went back home and reported to Fort Snelling in December. He was sent home again until Jan. 1. Then he boarded a train to Keesler Field in Biloxi, Mississippi.

It turns out pilot school was full, and they needed crews. The Army sent him to Las Vegas Army Airfield and he was retrained as a gunner and as a togalier (sometimes spelled togglier). A togalier armed and dropped bombs after seeing a bombardier on another aircraft — usually the lead craft and one other — drop bombs, then goes back to being a gunner.

With 38 or so planes flying together, this reduced the need to train as many full-blown bombardiers.

Seitzer then was off to Gulfport, Mississippi, for overseas training. He was put on a 10-man crew, and they would go on bombing missions over the Gulf of Mexico. As part of America's friendship with Cuba at the time, he was part of a show of Air Force power and got to spend four days wining and dining in Havana.

He and other airmen got in a taxi and asked to go to a bar. The cabbie brought them to a place with a big interior room surrounded by staircases leading to other rooms. Girls came out and the cabbie told them to choose a girl.

They left and told the cabbie they just wanted to drink, so the cabbie promptly took them to another place with girls. They gave up, figuring he was being paid by the brothels, and walked downtown. They found a hotel bar with a party and had their drinks.

They also got to fly around Cuba. It took around two or three hours, he said.

"It is such a beautiful island. The water is so blue. It was like a swimming pool," Seitzer said.

After Cuba, his team got orders, and they took a train to Savannah, Georgia, where they picked up a new B-17 and flew it up the coast to Gander Field, Newfoundland, where they waited. Orders came to go at midnight, but their new aircraft had a problem. One engine needed new spark plugs. They got that fixed in time and took off after midnight, then learned they were flying to RAF Valley, Wales. They couldn't use the radio and had to navigate by the stars.

Once they got there, the Army Air Forces took their plane away, and the airmen took a train to RAF Kimbolton in Huntingdonshire in central England, where pilots were getting adjusted to the countryside.

"Every time they went up, we had to go with them," Seitzer said.

He was now part of the 379th Bomb Group, one of 12 heavy bombardment groups in the 1st Bombardment

Division of the 8th Air Force. The 379th had four squadrons, numbered 524 through 527. Seitzer's was the 525th Squadron.

The 379th Bomb Group had been bombing Germans since May 1943,

On Nov. 1, 1944, Seitzer's flew on his first mission over Germany. He and his squadron bombed a synthetic oil plant and rail marshalling yards. He participated in 35 bombing missions. They hit Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Berlin twice, Mannheim, Neuss, Bonn, Munster, among others. He has a spreadsheet of them. Besides oil plants, they hit railroad marshalling yards, railroad repair shops, bridges, gun positions, tank and armament factories, airdromes.

He flew on B-17s of various names: Miss Liberty, The Birmingham Jewel, Nobody's Baby, Lucy, Scotch N' Soda, Picadilly Lilly, The Wish Bone, Round Twip Wabbit, Stormy Weather, Honey-Ho and Constipated Lady.

What? Constipated Lady? "They wanted to release the bombs," explained one of Howard's sons, James.

Howard said his missions never got attacked much by fighters. His commander ordered that they fly in close formation because the Luftwaffe pilots would focus on scattered units. His fellow airmen did get hit by fighters on a couple of missions he didn't go on.

Flak was dangerous, though. He said the sorties always encountered anti-aircraft fire, and the flak always came with two percussions. Boom boom.

"Germany shot more planes down with anti-aircraft fire than with fighter pilots," Seitzer said. "The plane would bounce this way or that, up or down."

The ground fire was worse on raids to Berlin or Frankfurt. Sometimes, they came back with holes in the plane. A nosegunner on one sortie survived getting hit by flak. Guys on other crews were killed by it. He never really described the danger of the flak to his family and just downplayed everything.

"I don't think my brother or dad ever knew that I was shot at every time I went up," he said.

He was a waist gunner. Which side? Both. It had .50-cal stations on each side, and he would fire from whichever side had the threat. He would arm bombs, too, and he helped the ball turret gunner get in and out.

Often, he was shooting at the ground 5,000 to 26,000 feet below. Every third round was incendiary. The fighters never got close enough for him to shoot at them. Some days, the Germans saved the fuel and didn't even contest the bombers.

The B-17 formations were escorted by P-38s, P-51s and P-47s. He said the P-51 Mustangs were the best. They were more maneuverable than the others and could outrun German fighters, drop down and strafe trains.

Landing was also treacherous at times. He said there were 10 or 12 missions the North Sea and English weather prevented the pilot from finding the

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The Birmingham Jewel and Lucy were two of the B-17 Flying Fortresses that Oakdale resident Howard Seitzer flew on.



Howard Seitzer, an Oakdale resident who lived in St. Paul most of his life and grew up near St. Peter, was a B-17 waist gunner during World War II.

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runway. One time, they were less than 500 feet high, peering out trying to see the ground. They only had barely enough gas to complete the mission — 2,400 gallons for short-range flights and 2,700 for long-range.

On Christmas Eve 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, the fog was so thick they took off on instruments.

“You could not see the runway ahead of you,” Seitzer said.

The airplane hit a pole, knocking out the No. 2 engine and breaking the prop off while the plane was about 4 or 5 feet off the ground.

“The co-pilot grabbed the yoke and pushed the plane down and bounced it off the ground and got up,” Seitzer said.

Yes, they had a full load of crew and bombs, too, but that bounce gave the B-17 enough altitude to climb. They also had to get out of the way of the next planes taking off, so they headed toward the North Sea and dumped their bombs in the water. They flew four or five hours to find a runway.

Because of broken gas lines, the plane filled with gas fumes. They didn’t use the radio because they were afraid of an electrical spark. They ended up having to drain the fuel line.

In February 1945, another crew’s B-17 attempted to take off and the wing got caught on a tree, and that slung it into an orderly room, killing the men in the orderly room and some in the plane. He said some of the men were able to jump out of the back of the plane and survived.

The plane caught fire and the bombs were blowing up. It blew up the entire area and several buildings. Everyone moved to a nearby Red Cross building originally meant for relaxation time.

The 379th received two Presidential Unit Citations and was recognized by the 8th Air Force for a grand slam of achievements from best accuracy, most raids, lowest abortive rate, least losses, greatest tonnage of bombs on target, among others.

At 35 missions, HQ said Seitzer didn’t need to fly anymore.

“You’ve done your duty.”

He and a tailgunner asked for a seven-day furlough to visit Scotland. They got it, and when they returned, they were told to pack their bags for the United States.

“That wasn’t hard to do. We were glad to go home,” he said.

Still, there was the threat of German submarines. He rode on a ship convoy back to the States. It took two weeks to get to Boston, and the ships had to weather a two-day storm, with bows pointed into the high waves. The Germans surrendered while Seitzer made the Atlantic Ocean passage aboard the SS Marine Devil, a troop transport. It had its own newspaper called the Devil’s Tail.

It was Mother’s Day 1945 when he arrived in Boston. The Red Cross presented the airmen with milk and doughnuts. Kids today would not believe the men were more excited about the milk.

“Milk was very prized overseas in the war,” Seitzer said.

He took a train to St. Paul, and his mother met him at the station.

“She was so glad to see me,” he said.

He enjoyed a 30-day furlough at the farm in St. Peter, then went to Frederick Field in southwestern Oklahoma. They spent time training French pilots. Civilian crews were repairing planes, so there wasn’t much need for him. He hung around waiting for the war to end. They dropped the bomb on Nagasaki on his birthday. He was on a bus to visit home in Minnesota when word came of the Japanese surrender.

“It’s a helluva way to celebrate the end of the war,” Seitzer said.

His discharge came Nov. 5, and he was released at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Howard married Virginia Bisch of Madison Lake in 1948, and they settled in St. Paul and raised six children. He worked at Northern States Power, then the telephone company and even drove a streetcar before becoming a St. Paul firefighter for the rest of his career. As for the kids, Marilyn is 49, Diane would be 50 but died in 2001, Cathy 52, James 54, Joseph 58 and Victoria 59. Virginia died at 93 in September 2019. Howard resides in Oakdale and is a member of at-large Post 1982.

COMMANDER IS NOW ROYALTY



The St. Paul Winter Carnival King and Sergeant at Arms knighted Minnesota American Legion Commander Mark Dvorak on Oct. 28 at Mancini’s as part of the Jewish War Veterans’ 75th annual membership dinner.



There were 125 people at the dinner, and the Legion Family had a big presence. Here, they pose with the national commander of the Jewish War Veterans, who is seated at right in the first row. It is worth noting this photo was taken in October before the latest COVID-19 restrictions were handed down in mid-November.

LEADERSHIP AMONG LEADERS



Alexandria Post 87 member Ronald Jacobson, right, is awarded the Post 87 Legionnaire of the Year award. Presenting the award is Post Commander Al Gerlach. Ron Jacobson, a 46-year member of The American Legion, is the Post’s immediate past commander, current historian and chaplain, and was recognized for his continual efforts to support the Post, Post activities and its members.

Don’t miss gambling class

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Gambling Control Board has set up a means for American Legion gambling managers to take a course that counts toward continuing education credit.

The online conference is slated for 10 a.m. Dec. 11.

Prior to the meeting, participants will need to install Cisco Webex, a video conferencing program much like Zoom, Teams and Chime.

After it is installed, register for the course at <https://minnesota.webex.com/minnesota/k2/j.php?MTID=t0eab-694334ba3f00ef1a4d7a1bc-1c0ae>. (Disregard the hyphens in that web address.)

The participant will need to have their organization name and license number to register. Once registered, they will receive a confirmation email with instructions on how to join the class.

Questions? Licensing Supervisor Steve Pedersen can be reached at 651-539-1910.

Listening Post

HAND SALUTE!



With the coronavirus shutting down many American Legion and community events around the state, the 2020 Department Firefighter of the Year award was presented to Fire Chief Kevin Grote of the North Branch Fire Department during a regular fire meeting with peers and subordinates present.

Grote is a pillar in the North Branch community and has been a firefighter for 26 years, 11 years as fire chief. With the possibility of being called out anytime day or night, Grote climbs that fire truck to save life or property without a second thought.

Grote is also a mentor for North Branch youth not only through the programs of the Fire Department and his children Kyle and Kallie, but as a middle school science teacher. He is highly respected by his students as well as his fellow educators.

North Branch Post 85 congratulates Chief Kevin Grote!

Presenting the Department award are Post 85 Chaplain Jim Johnson, left, and Post 85 Law and Order Chairman Ron Rollins, right.



Kandiyohi County Sheriff Eric Holien and Deputy David Holmquist were honored in special ceremonies Oct. 13 at Spicer Post 545. Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office received a Certificate of Commendation for "Outstanding Public Service benefiting our Community, State and Nation." Deputy Holmquist was presented with the 2020 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award for District 7 for his lifelong professional service to his community and country. Presenting the awards were District Commander Dean Knutson, Vice Commander Chip Manson and New London Post 537 Commander Dan Purkat.

LITTLE POST, BIG DONATION



Backus Post 368 Commander Bill Taylor presents Pine River-Backus High School counselor Mary Sigan with a check. The American Legion Post gave Pine River-Backus Schools \$10,000 for scholarships to be given out this school year. In addition, 40 \$25 Family Market gift cards were also presented for The Tiger Den, a food pantry program for all Pine River-Backus students and their families. Backus is a city north of Brainerd with a population of 250.

VETERANS DAY VROOM



Photos by Kara Hildreth/for the Legionnaire

Veterans were honored for their personal service and sacrifice to our country on Veterans Day with a drive-by parade held at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Parade Marshal Greg Arrigoni coordinated the event after putting together successful drive-by parades on Memorial Day and the Fourth of July during this year's challenging pandemic that has meant seniors have needed to stay safe indoors.



This man enjoyed the parade close up, but due to cold temps and snowy weather, most veterans enjoyed the parade indoors looking out windows as drivers honked horns and drove vehicles adorned with U.S. flags, red, white and blue balloons and posters with messages of love and gratitude.



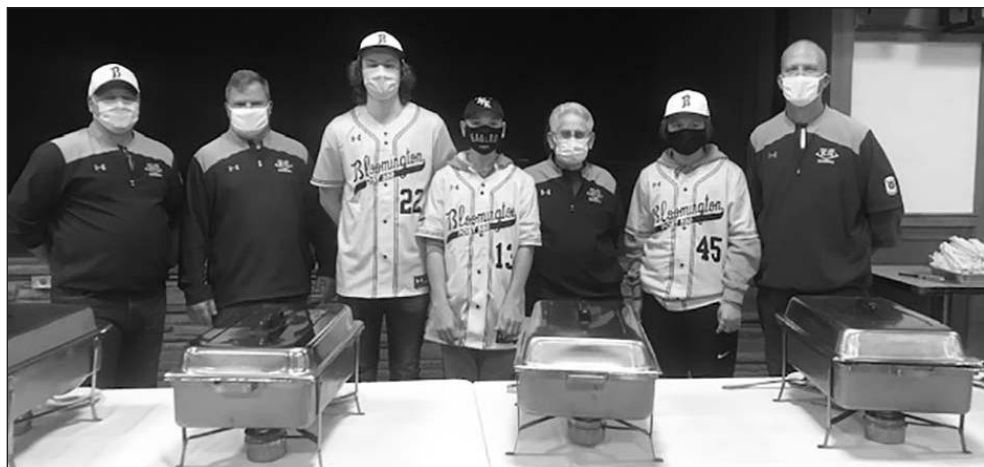
The Veterans Day drive-by parade touted more than 30 vehicles that took a five-mile route around the campus of the VA hospital, including past the Spinal Cord Injury Center entrance and to the nearby Minneapolis Veterans Home.



Parade participants reported they heard positive feedback from veterans and all those who took part in the parade, adding how there were many touching moments and they even witnessed a few tears of joy.

Listening Post

SEVENTH-MONTH STRETCH



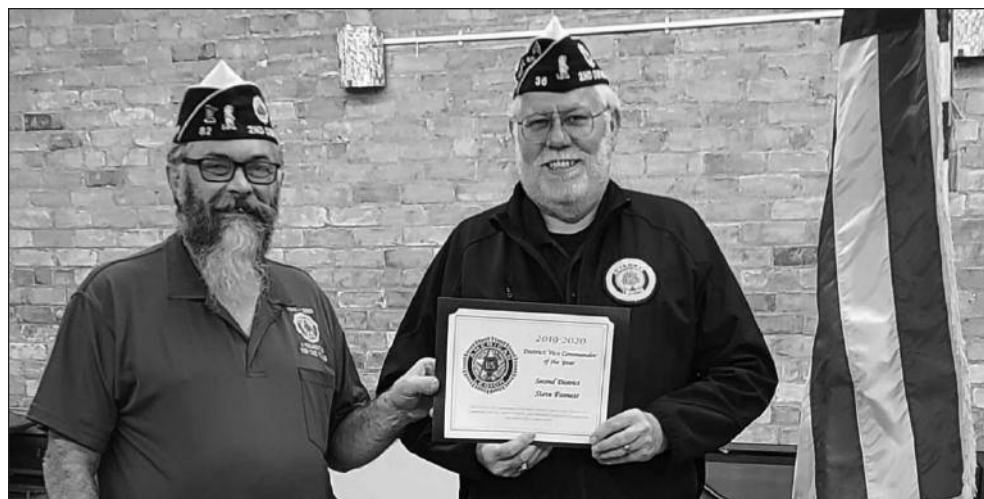
The Bloomington Post 550 baseball team served members on a snowy night Nov. 10 during the Post 550 Membership Dinner at the Bloomington Event Center. From left are Manager Mark Scott, Assistant Manager Matt Bach, players Will Scott and Rohr Brockman, Treasurer and Legion Representative Ron Nenovich, player Gage Schmidt and Assistant Manager Mike Steffen. They said they are looking forward to summer baseball.

DEDICATION AND DEVOTION



Robert "Bob" Meuwissen was a 67-year charter member of Chanhassen Post 580 and a charter member of the Chanhassen Fire Department. Chanhassen Past Post Commander George Beniek reports that the Legionnaires dedicated a memorial to Meuwissen by the flagpole in front of the popular suburban restaurant on April 10. Pictured are his family. From left are son Peter, daughter Mary Jo, wife Joanne and son William "Bucky."

CONSECRATE COMRADESHIP



American Legion 2nd District Membership Director Randy Olson presents the District Vice Commander of the Year Award 2019-2020 to 2nd District Vice Commander Steve Fosness of Fairmont Post 36. This District Vice Commander of the Year Award is given to the District Vice Commander that has shown initiative and dedication in pursuit of membership.

During the District 7 Workshop on Oct. 10, Alexandria Post 87 Adjutant David Christianson, center, is presented with a Citation for Meritorious Service from District 7 Commander Dean Knutson, left, and Membership Director Chip Manson, right. Using the myLegion.org program, Christianson transferred more than 35 at-large members to Post 87.



RELIABLE ON VETERANS DAY



Photos by Mark Persons

The Brainerd Area Honor Guard, a combination of Legion and VFW members, held a short ceremony at the All Veterans Memorial on Nov. 11 in honor of all veterans living and dead. They do this every Veterans Day regardless of rain, sleet, snow or even COVID. They've seen it all. Korean veterans know cold and snow; Vietnam veterans know monsoon rain in steaming jungles, and Gulf War veterans know sandstorms.

VETERANS DAY TEAMWORK



The members of Woodbury American Legion Post 501 and VFW Post 9024 held a joint Veterans Day ceremony at the Woodbury Veterans Memorial at 11 a.m. on Veterans Day. In addition to flag raisings, comments were made by Post 501 Commander Bob Dolan and Post 9024 Commander Paul Lindahl.

Listening Post

Is it OK to cut stars out of the flag?

In the October issue of The Minnesota Legionnaire, on Page 15, photos showed Rushford Post 94 members retiring flags in conjunction with the SAL, VFW and Boy Scouts. Memorial stars, cut from the retired flags, were presented to participants.

One of the photos showed a memorial star.

Apple Valley Post 1776 Honor Guard member Bernie Bauman, who also is on the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad, was curious about cutting the flag and thought others might be, as well. He contacted the Americanism Division of The American Legion National Headquarters in Indianapolis, and this was the reply:



Memorial stars, whether in plastic bags or frames, are growing in popularity.

establishes advisory rules for display and care of the national flag of the United States of America for civilians. Title 36, Subtitle I, Part A section 301 of United States Code establishes conduct during the National Anthem. The U.S. Flag Code, inclusive of the National Anthem, and other frequently asked questions are available on our American Legion website at <https://www.legion.org/flag/code>. The American Legion is considered a foremost leading authority the U.S. Flag Code, and on care and display of the flag of the United States.

We trust you are referring to cutting an unserviceable flag

that is no longer suitable for display, and as such, Section 8, paragraph (k) of the U.S. Flag Code states, "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." The Flag Code is silent with regard to cutting the flag or recycling its parts.

We are aware of organizations who collect old, tattered and worn-out American Flags and have volunteers cut each embroidered star from the flag, then properly dispose of the stripes and the blue union, and places each star into a tiny plastic bag with a card for members of the Armed Forces or veterans. While cutting an unserviceable flag and recycling its parts is not a practice that The American Legion subscribes to, there is nothing in the U.S. Flag Code prohibiting such. The key words within the U.S. Flag Code are "dignified" and "preferably" when it comes to unserviceable flags.

We thank you for your inquiry and for your patriotic regard.

*Veterans Strengthening America,
American Legion National Headquarters,
Americanism Division*

Hello, Mr. Baumann. Thank you for contacting The American Legion. On Flag Day, June 14, 1923, representatives of over 68 organizations met in Washington for a conference, called by and conducted under the auspices of The American Legion, to draft an authentic code of flag etiquette. The 77th Congress of the United States (Second Session) later passed a codification of the Flag Code, which is Chapter 1 of Title 4, United States Code. The United States Flag Code

Homelessness mark achieved

ST. PAUL — Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke, on Veterans Day, along with Gov. Tim Walz, announced a part of

the state had achieved "functional zero" when it comes to care of homeless veterans.

Functional zero means resources are available, usually thanks to cooperative landlords, property managers and housing authorities.

The area that achieved

functional zero is the suburban ring: Anoka, Carver, Scott, Dakota and Washington counties. The status is determined by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness after a housing region called a continuum of care meets federal criteria and benchmarks.

It means officials quickly identify veterans at risk of losing housing and get them access to immediate shelter and crisis services.

The suburban region joins the southeast, southwest, west central, northwest and northeast parts of the state. Central Minnesota, along with St. Louis County, Hennepin County and Ramsey County, remain undeclared.

Time to report volunteer hours

Thank you to the Posts that have reported in their community service report. This year we had 111 Posts send in their reports. Unfortunately, this was only 20 percent of all Posts and is down from last year. Hopefully, next year we can improve this.

Report summaries are as follows:

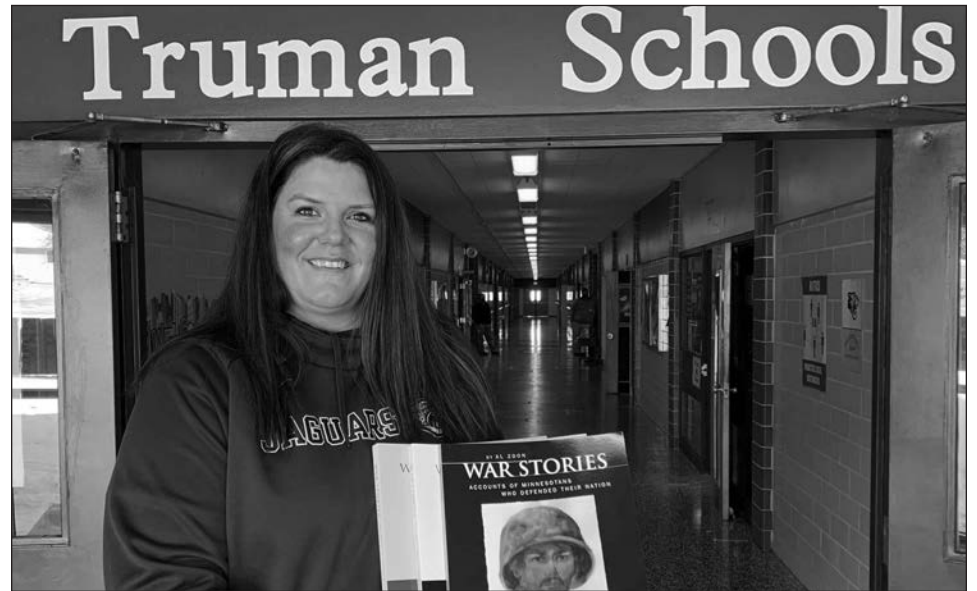
Children & Youth: 5,417 hours \$275,189 spent
 Veteran Affairs: 16,493 hours \$312,640 spent
 Americanism: 16,124 hours \$490,471 spent
 Military Funerals: 23,230.5 hours \$234,321 spent
 Community Service: 14,261.5 hours \$440,598 spent
 This year's grand totals are: 75,526 hours and \$1,753,219 spent.

**Thomas Clabo
Chairman**

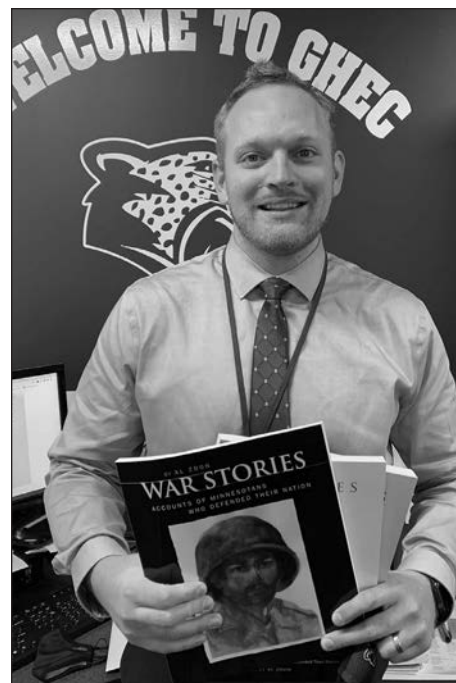
WHAT A GREAT IDEA!



In remembrance of Veterans Day, Fairmont Post 36-Fairmont donated War Stories Volumes 1, 2 and 3 by Al Zdon, about accounts of Minnesota veterans who defended their nation, to Fairmont Area Schools Media Director Jayne Peymann, and to ...



... Truman Public Schools teacher Kayla Anderson.



... Granada Huntley East Chain School District Assistant Principal Taylor Topinka.



... Martin Luther High School teacher Amanda Bergt.



... Martin County West School District secretary Sue Immens and paraprofessional Molly Roben. The books were added to the collections of the five school libraries.

Commander's Project

Let's do it for the dock!

Department Commander Mark Dvorak's Project gives 75 percent to Legionville and 25 percent to Wounded Warriors Guide Service.

The portion for Legionville is intended to fund a new dock that will enclose the swimming area, making it safer for campers.

Make checks out to Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 82.

Mail to American Legion Dept. of Minnesota, 20 W. 12th St. Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155-2000



Goal: \$40,000

Present: 51% at \$20,475

In the last month, \$8,550 was raised. Good job, Legionnaires!

Date of graphic: Nov. 18

District commanders

1st District Dale Wellik



Greetings from the 1st District American Legion Family. We must stay strong. United we stand. We will prevail.

We must continue to plan and move forward. We at times have to change them and be more creative.

I hope everyone is getting through this hunting season safely and enjoying the unseasonably warm weather.

Thanksgiving had to be changed from the way we were accustomed to celebrating that holiday, and I am sure Christmas season will be, too.

Buddy Checks are a good way to lift the spirits of members who haven't been able to get out much this year and remind them that it is dues-paying time. The American Legion

programs are still going on, maybe in a different way even if the clubrooms are closed or on pause.

We may have many more virtual celebrations this year.

Pray for our deployed troops and their families.

Pray for our leaders that are making life-and-death decisions, that they are the in best interest of all concerned.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe. Stay strong.

We will come out of this together.

For God and Country.

is the monthly Ramsey County Central Committee meeting. The next RCCC will be 6:30 p.m. Dec. 9 for executive board and 7 p.m. for all members.

Several of our scheduled get-togethers have had to be cancelled, and we are working with Posts 8 and 406, the 5th District, plus the Auxiliary from

both Districts, to see if our Joint Mid-Winter Conference on Jan. 2, 2021, at Rosetown Post 542 can be modified to allow it to happen. We will let you know by email, telephone or Zoom meetings when plans are finalized.

Hope you all have a safe and Happy New Year.

6th District Paul Edwards



Greetings to the 6th District Legion Family,

I am going to start this month's article by sharing something I have been thinking about for some time.

We are all aware of the COVID-19 virus and the impact it is having on all of us. I will not try to downplay any of the aspects of the pandemic, but I will mention specifically what it is doing to us as members of the Legion Family.

If you look for a moment at the Preamble to our Constitution that we recite so often, it starts and ends with a call to fellowship. "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together," and "To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

Both associate ourselves together and comradeship imply that should be spending time together. Obviously, we need

to meet to do the work of the Legion Family, but I think that the fellowship that strengthens us is just as, if not more important.

Zoom meetings and phone calls help, but they are no substitute for actually being in one another's presence. Obey the COVID rules and do what you must to stay safe and healthy but try to gather as much as possible. We need it.

Since this is the December Newsletter, I want to wish every member of the 6th District Legion Family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As much as possible be with family and friends to give and take strength and encouragement. And let's all look forward to a bright and shiny 2021.

For God and Country.

7th District Dean Knutson



Greetings to the 7th District American Legion Family!

This has been quite a year for trying to hold any activities within the District as it has been next to impossible to get together in person. We always seem to be able to overcome any obstacle that comes along.

Even though we look forward to meeting in person but are unable to, we cannot forget that we are an organization that strives to work for the good of all veterans and members of the American Legion Family.

As the Holiday Season comes upon us, let us do what we can for each other, whether it be a

phone call to check on each other, maybe a card in the mail offering support in any way we can or a word of encouragement. Remember the veterans and family members who may be suffering during this time and keep them all in our prayers.

Please stay safe during this uncertain time and do whatever we can to help each other stay healthy.

God bless each and every one of us and may God bless the American Legion Family and God bless America.

2nd District Brad Pagel



Well, here it is again, another month of whatever we want to call everything we are dealing with in life.

First there have been some changes to the calendar schedule for the 2nd District, after discussions with the District Family, we have had to make a very hard decision. Keeping in mind the health and well-being of all the American Legion Family members who would be attending from all corners of our district, we have made the difficult decision to *cancel* the 2nd District Midwinter Conference that had been scheduled for Jan. 8 and 9 at St. James Post 33.

As of this writing we are still working on what the District Oratorical Contest will look like. Please stay tuned for further updates on our social media pages and the website as we work to get everything updated.

These are very trying times for all of us. I know the mental health aspect is extremely difficult. Please reach out for the help if you need it. All it takes is a phone call or a video chat to help.

3rd District Linda Dvorak



Hello from the Thundering Third!

The Pearl Harbor Rally has been canceled, when will we ever get back to a more normal way of life? I hope soon. I have heard that some Districts are canceling their Mid-Winters. The 3rd District is still discussing what we are going to do — maybe a Mid-Winter on Zoom.

Our membership is going well, working on the Post 1982 and expired lists from MyLegion.org. I am excited to see the

new MyLegion.org. Don't forget Training Tuesdays. They aren't just for Department or District people; they are for anyone interested in learning so spread the word!

Wishing you and your family the Merriest Christmas and the Happiest New Year. Make sure to stay up on Dec. 31 and make sure 2020 leaves!

8th District D. Marvin Hill



Holiday greetings from the 8th District!

For personal reasons, 8th District District Commander Anne Koskinen unfortunately had to resign her position. We thank her for her service and for representing our District at the Department level.

At a Sept. 17 District Executive Committee meeting, I was honored to be elected to complete this Legion year as 8th District commander. This is my second round in this position. My home Post is Virginia Post 239.

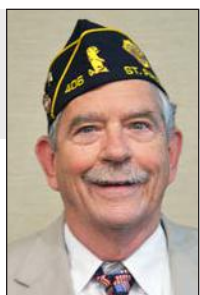
My replacement as vice com-

mander for the Mesabi-Vermilion District is Gary Esala. He also hails from Virginia Post 239.

Like so many other districts, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 8th District has been rather quiet. We are looking forward to gathering for our Midwinter Conference on Jan. 23 at Two Harbors Post 109.

God bless our troops. God bless America.

4th District Joe Jansen



Fellow 4th District members, please have a blessed Hanukkah and Christmas season. We are changing with these times to continue with our mission: to support our veterans and their families.

Each of us is part of that mission's success no matter how small or large our ability to contribute, Buddy Checks, volunteering to take someone to doctor's appointments, just calling or sending a card, every effort is important.

The governor's announce-

ment on Nov. 18 makes our interaction more difficult but not impossible. As you know, the 4th and 5th Districts (including The Auxiliary, The Sons of the American Legion and Legion Riders) meet most Monday evenings at 6 p.m. on Zoom. All members of the Legion Family are invited to participate.

The other Zoom meeting you are also invited to take part in

9th District Steve Sundstrom



Hello, everyone.

I hope everyone is staying COVID-free and not suffering from any other ailments that occur this time of year. Due to COVID, this is the first time I haven't spent Thanksgiving with my parents, brother and sister.

I hope most of you were able to spend time with family. With people being isolated, it can also lead to depression, so I encourage everyone to do whatever you can to keep in touch with each other. You never know how much a phone call could mean to someone if they are alone and feeling lost. Hopefully, we will have some advancements by Christmas.

For the near future, in-person meetings have been cancelled.

Thankfully we are still able to meet via Zoom to attend to the business at hand. At least we can still see people which I feel makes it a little more personal, I look forward to seeing you there. My thanks to all the people that work to make all this possible.

Membership for the 9th District is at 73.76 percent and in 6th place, and we need 103 renewals, new members by Dec. 11 to meet the 75 percent goal. I'm sure we will make that number and more.

Take care everyone. Stand tall, stay safe and be hopeful.

Know your CVSOs

Dustin Hunter is the county veteran service officer for Redwood County.

He joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 1999. He met his wife, Amanda, in the military, and they have been married for over 18 years and have five children. They are foster parents, too, for over 12

years for Cottonwood County. In 2003, Hunter was deployed to Belgium for a security mission, and in 2005 he was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The deployment lasted 22 months.

He has three military occupational specialties: 12B combat engineer, 91X maintenance



Dustin Hunter

supervisor, 42A human resources. He presently is a sergeant first class and has been selected for duties as company first sergeant once he completes the required course.

Hunter is a member of The American Legion and was commander of Redwood Falls Post 38.

He also is a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars and Vietnam Veterans of America. He is a part of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

He and his wife reside in Windom.

He can be reached at 507-637-4034 or dustin_h@co.redwood.mn.us.

Kathy Marshik is the county veteran service officer for Morrison County.

She was born and raised on a farm in the Little Falls and Randall area and attended high school in Little Falls. She joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 1992. After returning from training, she worked as a nursing assistant at a nursing home in Little Falls and attended Central Lakes College in Brainerd.

Marshik then worked full time as a logistics specialist at Camp Ripley and graduated with an associate's degree in supervisory management in 1995.

She married Glen Marshik that year, and they have lived in Little Falls since. Eventually, she moved into administration, training, logistics and readiness in her job at Camp Ripley.

She and Glen have two daughters, Sierra and Brianna. One is in the Air Force as a crew chief, and the other is attending college as a registered nurse.

Marshik graduated with a bachelor's degree in



Kathy Marshik

management and communications from Concordia College in St. Paul.

She deployed to Kuwait and Iraq from January 2003 to April 2004.

She transferred to a combat medical position with medical readiness. Then she sought her master's degree in human re-

source management and business administration from Capella University in Minneapolis, graduating in 2013. She retired from the military in July 2013.

She worked at Central Lakes College in Brainerd as director of veterans services until 2014, when she became the veterans service officer for Morrison County in Little Falls.

She is a member of The American Legion, with Little Falls Post 46 and Auxiliary Unit 46. She is a member of the VFW, DAV, Morrison County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and Retired Enlisted Association. She enjoys outdoor sports and gardening.

She can be reached at 320-632-0290 or kathym@co.morrison.mn.us.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 21 Vol. 5

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

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

651-224-7634

August 2020

A slight change in plans for the President's Project

President's Column

Mary Hendrickson



I hope you and your loved ones had a nice Thanksgiving. Carl and I are staying close to home. Whoever thought going to the grocery store would end up being an exciting event?

Some of you might have seen the commercial on television where the aunt is looking in the young couple's refrigerator. She holds up bottle after bottle while shouting, "expired, expired, expired."

I'm looking in my Auxiliary datebook and saying, "cancelled, cancelled, cancelled." Yes, the pandemic has been hard on our normal schedule and anticipated events. Getting back to what we knew as normal will only taste sweeter due to the sacrifices we are being asked to make now.

It has been necessary for me to make some changes to my President's Project for 2020-2021. Originally, I planned on purchasing gift cards to share with the County Veteran Service Officers in Minnesota's 87 counties. They would then be able to distribute them to veterans who came into their offices with special needs.

After an informative talk with Department Service Officer

Jeremy Wolfsteller, I realized that such an undertaking

would be a logistical nightmare and very difficult to assure the process would be equitable.

I was able to receive "needs" lists from our VA Medical Centers. They all mentioned a great need for grocery, gas and Walmart type gift cards. The VA has an excellent system to assess individual veteran needs.

All facilities mentioned a sharp rise in veterans dealing with financial hardship. I appreciate all the contributions to my President's Project, which have been received so far. All monies received will go directly into the purchase of gift cards for VA Medical Centers to distribute where needed.

I miss seeing my American Legion Family friends. Have a wonderful holiday season. Count your blessings, not your troubles.

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

Upcoming events

Dec. 5: Pearl Harbor Rally at North St. Paul (cancelled)

Feb. 6: Sweetheart Rally at Paynesville

March 6: Appreciation Rally & DEC Meeting at LaCrescent

March 14: The American Legion 102nd Birthday

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

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

July 14: DEC Meeting at Redwood Falls

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

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

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THE AMERICAN LEGION
FAMILY
water bottle!

Send a \$22.99 check marked "water bottle" in the memo to:

The American Legion Dept. of Minn.
20 W. 12th St., Room 300A
St. Paul, MN 55155-2000

(price includes shipping and taxes)



Kingston Unit 483 Juniors display some of the filled backpacks ready for homeless veterans in the St. Cloud area. Below are piles of gear they stuffed into the donated backpacks.

Kingston Juniors helping homeless vets in their area

Girls contact local merchants

Where there's a will, there is a way!

Six Junior members of the Kingston ALA Unit 483 Junior group recently discovered that there are at least 90 homeless veterans in the St. Cloud area that the VA identified to be in need.

The Juniors contacted local businesses including the Kingston Lions, KA Commercial Trucks, Kingston Mini-Mart,

Fleet Farm, Litchfield Dental, Kingston Realty and their local American Legion Family members of the need.

With the help of those groups, the Juniors were able to raise \$1,800 and stuff 30 backpacks with warm socks, gloves, hats, scarves, personal hygiene items, snacks, etc. Next year their plan is to distribute to all of the veterans identified by the VA as homeless.



Unit 202 thinks outside the basket

Each year, the Department hosts a Silent Auction at Fall Conference with all proceeds going toward the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF).

With the sudden cancellation of Fall Conference, many Units found themselves with gift baskets and items that they had planned to donate for the worthy cause.

The Unit members at Hackensack Unit 202 had made two Halloween-themed baskets to bring as their contribution.

Not having a place to auction their donations, the Hackensack auxiliary members held a raffle at their post on Oct. 29 during their Halloween celebration. Hats off to them for their creativity and donation of \$208 for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.



Hackensack Unit 202 Past President Donna Williams and President Diana Slinkard pose with Halloween baskets.



Presenting the quilt to Cheryl Garrison, public affairs director at the Minneapolis Veterans Home is Linda Kropuenske, VA&R chairman and Sandy Gibson, ALA representative to the Veterans Home.

Patriotic quilt brought to vets home

Auxiliary VA&R Chairman Linda Kropuenske has a friend from out of state that made a quilt to give to a veteran in one of the Minnesota veterans homes in honor of a loved one.

At the September hospital and home representative meeting, Minneapolis Veterans Home was selected to be the recipient of this beautiful patriotic quilt.

Initially it was thought that it could be used as a wall hanging, but the home asked if they could use it for another purpose.

The quilt is now being used as a "Quilt of Honor" and will cover a deceased veteran's corpse as they receive their final escort from the home.



Merry Christmas from the Department of Minn.

This year, more than ever, Legion Family members are feeling the loss of in-person contact with our members throughout the state. The Department staff — Marsha Bible, Jan Lauby and Jocelyn Yasis — want to wish

each of you a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Happy Holidays.

"This has been a year like no other, but we are all thankful for each of you. Stay safe, check on each other and we all look

forward to positive changes in 2021," Bible said.

The Department office will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas and Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 for New Year's.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation is in the spotlight during December

By Linda Kropuenske
VA&R Chairman

December is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Month. The month of December is busy for Minnesota's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Program.

Our Gift Shop elves, Mary French and Lynn Olson, have done an excellent job of coordinating the Gift Shops in each of the nine facilities.

Even though we couldn't host our traditional Gift Shop program in each of the facilities, we have made arrangements with the wonderful staff in Voluntary Services to be our

elves this year and distribute our gifts.

National is encouraging us to plan an event to do something to make a difference in the lives of our veterans and their families. Even with our dial back on activities set until just before Christmas, there are still ways that your unit can help our veterans in your community.

We are thankful for the many members who have volunteered tirelessly to sew items for our VA Health Care Centers and Minnesota Veterans Homes. They each have specific needs and patterns of items that they are to use. The sewing patterns

were sent to each Unit in the November/December Unit mailing.

The patterns have been given a facelift. Do not be intimidated by the step-by-step instructions along with photos.

Three new patterns have been added: Facemasks (two styles), Port Pillows, and Wound Vac covers. Due to COVID-19, some of the patterns have temporarily been put on hold such as the Children's Activity Bags. It is especially important to contact the rep to be sure they are still accepting the items before spending your time and money.

Your dues make a difference for vets

By Sharon Thiemecke
Membership Chairman

Membership as of Nov. 18

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 11/20/19
One	3,994	2,707	67.78%	2,676
Two	4,015	2,526	62.91%	2,816
Three	3,870	2,613	67.52%	2,730
Four	581	388	66.78%	455
Five	572	320	55.94%	437
Six	5,170	3,503	67.76%	3,846
Seven	3,197	2,066	64.62%	2,187
Eight	1,302	869	66.74%	927
Nine	3,445	2,334	67.75%	2,532
Ten	3,978	2,561	64.38%	2,714
1982	193	176	91.19%	153
Totals	30,317	20,063	66.18%	21,473

Ten months of stay at home, and for some it has been 10 months of isolation. Our members and our veterans need us now more than ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made us change the way we function in our everyday lives. When is the last time you contacted your membership just to say hello and how are you? Caring and sharing for our members can happen every month.

If our Department office received your dues before Dec. 2, then I thank you, your Department Office thanks you and our National leadership thanks you for your continued dedication to the American Legion Auxiliary's mission of helping our veterans, military and their

families.

Our dues make a meaningful difference as we focus on our next century of service for those we serve by strengthening the value of our members.



Continue serving veterans, military, and their families!

Renew your American Legion Auxiliary membership for 2021

Your Auxiliary Member Benefits:

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The value of being an American Legion Auxiliary member is growing! You bring untold value to the Auxiliary and America's veterans through your service to our mission. To show our appreciation, we bring valuable benefits to you! Your membership brings you access to a wide array of discounts, products, and services.

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- Travel: Hotel Discounts
- Entertainment: Discounts for Movie Tickets, Theme Parks, Restaurants, and More!

To learn more, visit our member benefits page at www.ALAforVeterans.org/Resources/Member-Benefits and start saving today!

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V4V comes through for Minnesota veterans' auxiliaries

The American Legion Auxiliary received notice that the Minnesota V4V Fund board of directors has granted \$20,000 to be divided equally to the four auxiliaries they represent — the American Legion Auxiliary, DAV Auxiliary, VFW Auxiliary and Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary.

This is \$5,000 per organization! This amazing gift is for us to provide something extra to our veterans in the Minnesota VA medical centers and state veterans homes during this COVID-19 pandemic. Each of the facilities is providing us with their mini wish list and will receive their gift before the end of December.

The Auxiliary is also working to assist our Department Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller with facilitating the purchase of gift cards with the funds they received from V4V.

Innovation Comes Standard

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Help for veterans and families

Military museum has new name

And it seeks stories about 9/11 and after

CAMP RIPLEY — The Minnesota Military Museum has a new name.

The museum's executive committee voted in October to insert "veterans" into the title. It is now the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum.

Director Randal Dietrich said the name change reflects what content the new museum will have.

"It signals the fact that in this new museum, you're going to hear much more from our veterans' voices," he said.

The museum in the October special session of the Minnesota Legislature received \$13 million through the bonding bill to acquire land and to design, construct and equip a 32-acre site for a new museum campus outside Camp Ripley. The present one is in a building inside Camp Ripley and lacks space

for its vast collection.

In addition to the public funding, the museum is seeking private fundraising. It has an \$8 million goal and has raised \$3 million. Dietrich said it will be a few years before the construction is completed, so there is plenty of time to capture the remaining \$5 million.

"The \$13 million will build the building, but we are also trying to fill that building with thoughtful gallery space, to fill it with rich multimedia, and that takes funding," Dietrich said.

Donations can be sent to:
Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum
Camp Ripley
15000 Highway 115
Little Falls, MN 56345

Post-9/11 Project

The museum has launched a project to gather stories of 9/11. Next year will mark 20 years since terrorists flew jet airplanes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and passengers brought down the terrorists aboard United Flight 93.

Dietrich said the museum's

project wants to hear veterans' accounts of 9/11 and their post-9/11 experiences, whether from the civilian or military side of life.

"It's a project we are really excited about," he said.

In September, Minnesota Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke formed a task force to look at recording and remembering the Minnesota experience of that fateful day.

"Memories fade with time. Veterans and their families will benefit from this opportunity to share their stories, some dating back nearly two decades, with future generations," Herke said.


Participants can share their stories through a website, mn-militarymuseum.org, and they will be used. Some will be selected for an on-camera story.

Dietrich also said the museum will have a Post-9/11 Roundtable via Zoom throughout 2021. The first is at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, and the others are always on the fourth Monday of the month. Sign up at the website.

(See ad on Page 3.)



This rendering shows what the new Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum will look like when completed in a couple of years.



Are you the son of a veteran? Maybe you are a veteran *and* the son or grandson of one? Either way, join your local Sons of the American Legion.

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LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST

Silver and Gold Health Discount Plans

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.

Your Department believes these benefits will help Legionnaires save money on important health care services, be a resource for answers to vital health care issues, and provide added convenience, quality and security to their lives. That is why the Department lends it endorsement to this high quality program. Legionnaires interested in learning more about these programs can call 1-800-235-6943.



SILVER PLAN - \$25/year			
PRODUCT	NETWORK	DISCOUNT	PROVIDERS
Vision	Cole Managed Vision Care	45% - 60%	9,000
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
Shopping & Dining	DDS	3% - 10%	See Plan Materials
Hotel & Car Rental	United Marketing Group	15% - 25%	See Plan Materials
Concierge Services	LesConcierges	N/A	Unlimited

Offered by the Legionnaire Insurance Trust

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Call today to become a Silver or Gold Member: 1-800-235-6943
- Live Operators 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday
- Bilingual Spanish representatives