

to face severe anti-aircraft fire. Heavy flak was what we had to deal with. Always heavy flak.”

Kangas remembers that gunners on the plane would track the flak coming up. They called it bracketing. If it was coming at you, each shot would be closer. On one flight it went off right below me.

I could see the red flash, and if you could see that, there usually was damage to the plane. I got on the intercom and said, ‘Get this thing out of here.’ We lost engines all the time, and there were holes all over the plane when we’d get back.”

Kangas described a typical day when they flew. Well you went to bed tired and slept poorly. At four in the morning, someone would be shaking you to wake you up. They’d tell you what plane you were flying.

Then a truck would take you to the mess hall, and then you’d go to the briefing. They’d pull back the cover so everybody could see the map for the mission, and everybody would cuss and moan, no matter where we were going.

Then we’d go to the armament shed and get our guns. We had removed them after that last mission and oiled them up. Now we had to wipe them down very carefully so there would be no oil to jam up in freezing air.”

Kangas would board the plane, install his guns, and then wait while the plane took off and joined other planes in a flight formation.

We’d wait on the runway with the brakes locked, rev the engines wide open, and then release the brakes. When we started forward, the engines fought the load. I’ll never forget the thumping sound as the tires crossed the joints in the runway. Faster and faster. You didn’t want to lose an engine right then.”

Once in formation, Kangas would take his position.

As we left England, I’d get down in my turret and fire off a few test rounds to make sure the guns were okay.”

After that it was hours of a good view, boredom and occasional sheer terror.

The ball turret gunner had to leave his parachute in the plane because there was no room in the cramped space. If the plane got hit, by the time the turret gunner got out, everybody might be long gone. And they might have taken his parachute.”

Another problem was urinating, almost impossible in the heated suit and cramped space. You can imagine the result.”

Was he superstitious? “Well, I know one time I went out of the barracks and got on the truck. But then I realized I had gone out the wrong door of the barracks, not the one I always used. So I got off the truck, went back to the barracks, went out the right door, and got on another truck.”

The flying schedule was heavy during the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944 and early 1945.

We flew that old junker for 12 missions. Once when we were coming back we were over Normandy and we were all shot to hell. There was zero visibility, and we didn’t know where we were. You didn’t dare go over the North Sea unless you had a clue of where you were, so we just kept flying around Normandy.

Finally, we could see two small planes coming right at us. We didn’t know if they were ours or theirs. But when they got close they went sideways so we could see their profiles. Then we could see they were P-51s. They guided us in.”

On another mission, England was again socked in by fog. It was so dense, that the airfields were impossible to find.

When you get into fog, you immediately go out of formation and spread out. There was a crewman in every window looking for other planes or for something on the ground. We really didn’t know where we were.

All of sudden the pilot could see that we were going between two smokestacks, so he flipped the plane sideways and we got between those stacks. That’s how good a pilot he was.

Finally we crossed over an airfield, but we were at about 90 degrees from the runway. We were so low that as the pilot tried to do a 360 to get us back, I could see the sheep on the hill running in circles trying to get away from us. As we pulled up, we clipped the branches of a tree.

We came back at the runway, but we were still about 30 degrees off.” Kangas showed with his hands how the pilot slewed the plane to straighten it out just as it hit the runway. It was a safe landing.

It wasn’t our base, but any runway was good at that point.”

The crew flew 12 missions in that pile of junk” and then got a new plane. They were pretty happy.

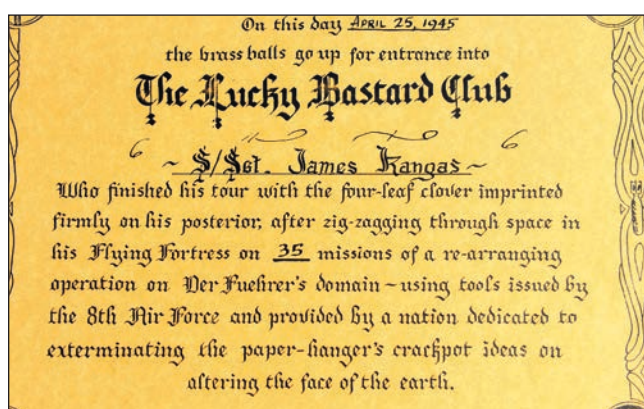
On the 13th mission, the conditions were even worse than they had seen before. The sleet and ice were pounding the plane as it returned from a mission and tried to find the base. Finally the wings began to ice up, and the pilots could no longer control the huge bomber.

He ordered us to bail out. Now you have to understand that we had no parachute training at all. I think we had seen a film about it.

I got my chute on. Where the waist gunner’s station is, there’s a door. You had to pull the pins, and then I kicked



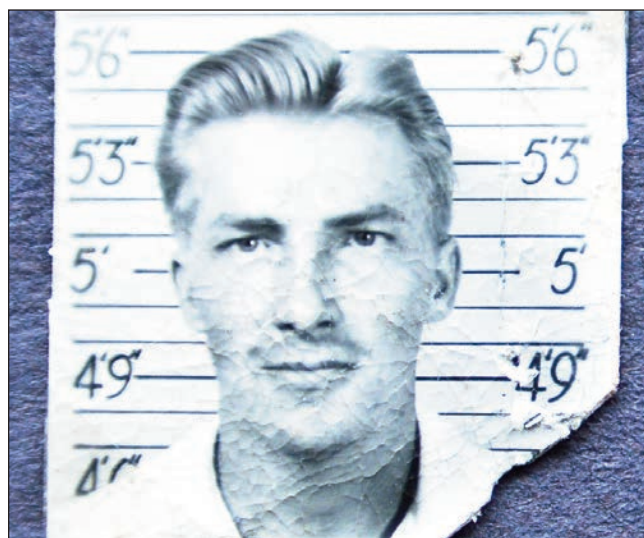
Kangas flew his first 12 missions in Satan’s Playmate,” which he described as a pile of junk.” The B-17 bomber survived the war, though, and was brought back to the United States. A P-51 Mustang flies escort duty in the distance. The ball turret can be seen below the wing. Two engines have been shot out and are no longer functioning in this artist’s rendition.



For completing his 35 missions, Kangas earned membership in the Lucky Bastard Club.



The crew shared a lighter moment together. Kangas is in front, center. The men did well in training in Florida and got a free night at Jack Dempsey’s Restaurant in New York City.



The Army Air Corps kept a photo record of the heights of all the crew members.



In case the men were shot down, they carried with them a fake civilian photo that could be used for a phony ID. Kangas said the Germans soon caught on to the ruse, though, because everyone wore the same jacket and tie for the photo.



The first crew Kangas flew with was assembled in Tampa, Florida. From left, standing: Forrest Barrel” Green, tail gunner; Howard Krup” Krupoky, waist gunner; Clarence Gus” Gustitus; Tom Hannis, radio operator; Houston Pete” Dossett, engineer and upper turret gunner; Jim Shortround” Kangas, ball turret gunner. In front: Roy Walker, navigator; Ray Cook, pilot; unknown; Phillip Leavitt, co-pilot. After 13 missions the crew was broken up because two men broke their legs bailing out, and the pilot was promoted to lead pilot. Note the size difference between Kangas and his friend Dossett.

the door. It just went flying away, and now there's just a big hole on the side of the plane. I've never heard anything as loud as that, with the ice hitting the propellers and the wings and the rest of the plane.

I stuck my head out the door to see what it was like, and the wind caught my helmet and the strap just about pulled my head off. What concerned me was that if I jumped out it looked like I would hit the horizontal stabilizer (the small wings at the tail of the plane.) I mean the thing was right there.

I didn't like the looks of that. There was just the tail gunner and me. I don't know where the waist gunner had gone. I was waiting so that he could jump out first and then I could see if he hit the stabilizer.

But he was fumbling with his parachute. The air was just screaming past the door. I couldn't wait any longer so I jumped. I asked him later why it took him so long, and he said he was waiting for me to jump so he could see if I hit the stabilizer."

Kangas knew the plane was flying low and so he pulled the rip cord as soon as he could.

I must have been upside down, because when the chute deployed it just flipped me over. It snapped me so hard I blacked out for a moment.

When I came to, it was so strange. I had gone from this wild ice storm hitting the plane to absolute quiet. All I could hear was the sleet hitting the parachute. Maybe because I was a farm boy, the image that came to my mind was that of chickens pecking at the metal feeder.

Not only was it deadly quiet, but there was also absolutely no sensation of movement. I knew I must be coming down, but I felt like I was floating.

I had heard somewhere that if you pull on one of the straps, that you could control which way you were going. So I pulled on a strap and I looked up at the chute. The damn thing was collapsing. I let it go in a hurry. I didn't try that move again."

Finally Kangas could see the ground beneath him, and he could see a road, and he could see a truck coming down the road.

I watched the guy get out of the truck and scrape his windshield. It looked like I was going to land right on him. I yelled, but he looked left and he looked right, but he didn't look up. He got back in the truck and drove away. Just as he was leaving, I went right over him and landed.

I managed to hit the ground without getting hurt, although it stunned me pretty good. All this time, I thought I was going to die, and all of a sudden I'm on the ground. I felt pretty good."

Kangas gathered up his chute and began walking down the road. On the way, he thought he heard somebody yelling in a field, but he couldn't tell where.

After about a half mile, I came into this town. It was kind of medieval with all these old stone buildings and thatched roofs. I still had my parachute and ripcord in my arms. I knocked on a door."

He was taken to a large house. There they could hear the yelling again, and the men of the town headed out with a bed spring, and soon came back with the tail gunner who had broken his leg on the landing. A little ways away, they also found the waist gunner, who Kangas never did see leave the plane, also with a broken leg.

Only one member of the crew, the navigator, didn't fly that day. He had said he was sick. I saw him years later, and he said he had to confess to me. He said, 'Burrhead, I wasn't really sick that day. I just faked it because it was the 13th mission. I didn't want to do a 13th mission. But ever since, I've felt that if I was there, I might have been able to help.' Well, he may have been superstitious about number 13, but he was right."

Kangas was back at the base the next day, happy to be alive. But the news in the next couple of days was not good. Because two crew members were injured, and because the pilot was being bumped up to be a squad leader, Kangas' crew was broken up.

For his next 22 missions, Kangas had to fly with strange crews on different planes.

I just flew as a spare. The crew camaraderie was gone. I didn't know anybody. I didn't trust anybody. I felt totally vulnerable."

The alienation hit its peak on one flight over Germany when the bomber was hit and lost all power. If there's no power, the turret gunner can't move the turret, and he can't get out except by using a hand crank. Well, that's what I did. I cranked and cranked, and got myself out of the turret.

We had all been trained well, and if that happens, the waist gunner is supposed to be standing there with what we called a 'walk around bottle' of oxygen when the turret gunner gets out of his turret. He'll need it.

But the waist gunner was nowhere to be seen, and I had to find the oxygen myself. I finally found the waist gunner laying on the floor with his flak vest pulled over him. He was hiding. I swore I'd never forget that yellow son of a bitch."

The strange thing is, this guy was from Omaha, and I was from Detroit. After the war I was walking down the street in Detroit in a big crowd, and all of a sudden here's this guy. I was so flabbergasted, I couldn't move. And then he was gone before I could slug him."

Kangas' last mission, on April 25, 1945, was to the



In a photo posed for a Detroit newspaper, Kangas is shown with his flight gear next to a ball turret. It was a publicity photo. We never wore those hats."



Kangas, left, and a buddy at a photo studio during the war.

Skoda Works in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, the last major armaments factory that had not been bombed in the war. Kangas learned later that the U.S. wanted to destroy the works before it fell into Russian hands. It was the last mission flown by the Eighth Air Force.

The huge plant was well defended, and Kangas' Flying Fortress was heavily damaged, and lost two engines. We had to throw all our loose equipment overboard just to stay in the air. We made it back to Luxembourg."

When the crew finally made it back to their barracks in England, they had a rude surprise. They found that their bunks had been stripped and all their gear was gone. It was standard Air Corps practice to immediately remove the gear of crews who had been shot down.

It turned out that another plane, whose pilot's name was Lovett, had been shot down over the channel. The pilot of Kangas' plane was Lt. Leavitt.

The confusion was cleared up, and the men got their stuff back, but not before they went through an eerie time.

In the end, Kangas completed his 35 missions 13 days before the war ended. I never got a scratch. Nobody in my plane ever died."

And he only got to shoot his 50 caliber machine guns once in action. By that time in the war, the Germans didn't attack from below anymore, only from above. I did shoot at one ME-262, a German jet fighter. I don't think I even came close to him. Whoosh, and he was gone."

Kangas was reunited with some of his old crewmates, and did some routine cargo flying before they were sent home.

He chose the ship because he figured he had used up all his airplane luck in the war. I still remember the name of the Liberty ship, the Joseph C. Hollister. It was supposed to be

B-17 Flying Fortress

Manufacturer: Boeing
Number built: 12,731
Cost: \$238,000 each
Crew: 10
Length: 74 feet
Wingspan: 103 feet
Height: 19 feet
Loaded weight: 54,000 pounds
Power plant: Four Wright R-1820-97 Cyclone turbosupercharged radial engines.
Power: 1200 horsepower
Maximum speed: 287 miles per hour
Cruise speed: 182 miles per hour
Range: 2000 miles
Guns: 13 x 50 caliber Browning machine guns.
Bombs: Long range missions, 4,500 pounds, Short range missions, 8,000 pounds

an eight-day trip, but it took 18 days. The weather was so bad and the waves were so high that the screws (propellers) kept coming out of the water. I'll never forget that 'Whop, whop, whop' when the screws would be hitting air.

And then we ran into the ship in front of us and opened a big gash in our side. Luckily it was above the water line, and they just stuffed it with mattresses. We ran out of food. We ran out of water.

When we got to Boston, I went and got the biggest bowl of ice cream I could find."

Kangas returned to Detroit, but his parents had moved back to Minnesota by that time. He soon followed them. Back in Kingston, he said he went through something of a rough time adjusting back to civilian life.

But there were guys coming home everywhere you looked. A lot of them had seen tough times. Nobody was holding your hand."

He eventually moved to the Twin Cities and became a general contractor, a job he worked until he was in his 80s. He goes to bomber reunions now and then, and has learned things about his time overseas that he didn't know while he was there.

I found out that our pilot would stay up drinking all night before a mission, and that he'd sneak through a hole in the fence to get to the plane in the morning. He was terrified before a mission, but after a few drinks he was fine. He'd tell the co-pilot, 'Wake me up when we're over the target.' All I know is that he was a hell of a pilot."

Kangas is now retired. He had four kids along the way, and now lives with his wife, Joy, in an apartment overlooking a lake in Columbia Heights.

World War II History Round Table

How America geared up for World War II

Historian Maury Klein warned his audience at the March Round Table at Fort Snelling History Center that you can't understand history unless you put yourself back in the era you're studying.

"You have to keep in their world, not in your world."

With that in mind, Klein talked about America's effort to produce war materials for World War II. He said we need to remember the context of that time:

— By 1939, when the war began in Europe, America was still struggling deeply with the Great Depression. Things had been improving, but a recession in 1938 wiped out many of the gains, and unemployment again soared.

— Many in America, still remembering the horrors of World War I, were totally opposed to the U.S. getting involved with what was seen as a European War.

— The American army was small, ill-equipped and poorly trained. By size, it was ranked 18th in the world. "It was embarrassing. It was said the U.S. didn't have enough fire power to beat a troop of Boy Scouts."

— Franklin Roosevelt was a lame duck president and had lost much of his clout with Congress.

— "There was absolutely no munitions industry in the U.S. None." Klein pointed out that when World War I ended, the government canceled all contracts and those companies making guns and bullets simply faded away.

So how did America get from that situation to where, by 1943, it was out-producing every other nation in the world in war materiel?

Klein said the U.S. had been slowly gearing up for a possible war in 1940 and 1941, but the attack on Pearl Harbor changed everything. "There was a lot of debate about what we should do. After Pearl Harbor there was no debate."

But there were plenty of challenges.

For one thing, there was very little heavy industry on the West Coast, and no steel mills. That had to be changed rapidly, and soon California and other places were dotted with aircraft factories and other war goods plants.

Klein said the need to mass produce tanks was brought to the Chrysler leadership. "They basically said, 'What's a tank?' They could figure out how to make one, but how do you mass produce it?"

Mass production was, as it turned out, the key to winning the war.

"Germany in many cases had the best weapons. But they could only make them one by one. We didn't need the best, just good weapons, but enough to bury the enemy."

By the end of the war, the figures were amazing. The U.S. built 300,000 airplanes while Germany made 111,000, Britain, 131,000 and Japan 76,000. America built 88,000 tanks while Germany produced 46,000 and Japan 2,500.

Germany built 674,000 machine guns while the U.S. made 2.7 million.

A big problem was getting the materiel over the ocean to the two battlefronts. By the end of the war, the U.S. had produced 5,777 liberty ships.

The only nation that rivalled U.S. production was the Soviet Union which produced more tanks and much more field artillery than the United States.

The large factories and assembly lines in America had major safety problems, Klein said. "There were more casualties in U.S. factories during the war than on all the battlefields."

Other negatives on the homefront included labor strikes, racism, and, with both parents often out of the home, a huge increase in juvenile delinquency.

The need to harvest the crops with 16 million in the armed forces led to bringing in labor from Mexico and other places. "Nobody wanted to build a wall in 1942."

"The big contracts went to the big companies, but who else knew how? They had means of production, and the research labs. But there were also plenty of mom and pop shops out there who would make one part."

One of the great discoveries of this shift to mass production of war goods was that women were often better at the jobs than men. "Some of this work was very tedious, and men's minds tend to drift. Women not only had the dexterity, but they were able to stick with it. One corporate leader said, 'If I had my way, my whole plant would be women.'"

Klein touched briefly on the transition from wartime to peacetime products. "There was a fairly smooth transition to consumer products."

Three other speakers at the World War II History Round Table talked about the local impact of the war effort and mass producing goods.

Dave Myers, a railroad historian from Milwaukee, talked about the Military Railway Service which had its headquarters in St. Paul.

Myers told about how railroads were of key importance in warfare starting with the Civil War. "A soldier can march 20-24 miles in a day. A horse can maybe go 50 miles. But you moved troops a couple of hundred miles on a train in a couple of hours, and the troops are fresh when they get there."

During World War I, the U.S. had to establish a railroad



MAURY KLEIN



DAVE MYERS



BRUCE KITT



JOHN LINDLEY

command in France in order to get troops and supplies to the front. When American joined the war in 1917, the French and British often shunted American soldiers and goods aside to transport their own.

Myers said a key player was William Wallace Atterbury, who was a vice president for the Pennsylvania Railroad before the war. "He had spent years dealing with unions, so he had no trouble dealing with the military. He started with nothing and created an extensive railway system to serve the U.S. military."

With World War II approaching, the government reached out to Carl Gray Jr., the president of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, who lived in Hudson, Wisconsin.

Gray had his offices in St. Paul. He liked working in Minnesota, Myers said, because he had his favorite fishing hole on the St. Croix River.

Gray set up the Military Railway Service, similar to previous incarnations in the Civil War and World War I. Much of it was run from Fort Snelling or from the Congress Building, which still stands in St. Paul.

When the war began, the planning turned into the creation of a system that operated all over the world with 87,000 former railroad workers now serving in the U.S. Army.

Bruce Kitt, the director of the Northwest Airlines Museum in Bloomington, talked about Bomber Modification Center 12 located at Holman Field in St. Paul.

Kitt also talked about America's ability to switch to a wartime mass production footing. "We made widgets up the wazoo. We out widgeted everybody."

Part of that production was in two massive hangars, about 650 feet by 20 feet, constructed at Holman Field. Bombers were manufactured in other places and then sent to St. Paul and 18 other modification shops around the country.

During the war, the St. Paul operation modified over 3,300 bombers, mainly B-24s.

The north hangar was finished at Holman in September of 1942, and the south hangar in March of 1943.

An unusual aspect of the modification was that Northwest actually purchased the aircraft. "They would be ferried into Northwest property by the military. They would then sell them to Northwest, and when the modifications were done, the military would buy them back."

The bombers started coming in in May of 1942, even before the hangars were finished.

"There were a lot of women working for Northwest. They were careful, diligent, and they stuck with it. One woman said after the war that she earned more than her father did."

Men and women wore different colored coveralls on the job, and Kitt said one reason was so the men would not use bad language if a woman was present. Often the only part of a worker another worker could see was their legs sticking out from under a piece of machinery.

There were about 4,500 employees in the modification factory, and about 1,300 were women.

When the war ended, the work stopped abruptly. "One day the workers showed up and were given a pink slip. It all just stopped. The government told Northwest to just make the planes airworthy so they could be ferried out."

John Lindley, editor of the Ramsey County Historical Society Magazine, completed the local part of the program with a talk on the gliders that were produced in Minnesota.

Lindley said at the onset of the war, the military considered several designs for gliders, which were a new weapon for the United States, and settled on the CG-4A.

The Northwest Aeronautical Co. was formed in 1942 by a group of St. Paul business leaders.

Space was leased at Wold-Chamberlain Field in Minneapolis and a contract was signed to build the CG-4As. The design was simple, and the gliders were mainly constructed of wood, canvas and metal tubing. Many of the parts were held together by glue.

One of the major subcontractors was Villaume Box and Lumber in Minneapolis, which specialized in the wood parts of the structure. DePonti Co. was hired to make the steel tubing.

"At one time, they had three hangars at Wold-Chamberlain, with about 400 employees, a lot of them women."

A complete glider only weighed 3,750 pounds, and two of them could be towed to the battle zone by one C-47 cargo plane.

In 1944, a plant was opened in St. Paul. "The employees had a lot of colds because very few of the buildings were heated," Lindley said.

A few years ago, local veterans took on the task of recreating a CG-4A and they built one from wartime plans and parts they found around the country. Villaume donated space to construct the glider. It is now on display at Fagan's Fighters museum in Granite Falls.



An assembly plant for fighter aircraft stretches into the distance in New York during World War II.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Sylvan Fix
Commander



Legion Family,

The months go by so fast it seems I spend all my time writing news articles. La Crescent Post 595 hosted the Detachment of Minnesota SAL Conference March 18th. There were 59 registered members. They also raised over \$980.00 on their auction for Child Welfare Foundation. The Sons are an amazing group. Many Posts have had their Legion birthday dinners in March. I hope you were able to add to your membership totals at those dinners. Look at your calendars and see if you are available to attend the state wide training session June 23-25th located at Legionville. We have heard many times that there is a lack of communication and training. Here is an opportunity to learn and have open discussions. This class should be attended by everyone especially if you currently are or are planning on being an officer at any level. Hope to see you there.

THIRD DISTRICT

Mike Maxa
Commander



This is going to be short and to the point. My laptop had catastrophic failure and the keyboard on my phone is quite small.

Thundering Third we are in a two month recruit new Legionnaire's contest. The "Spring Rally" out of department is all about signing up new members. This is our Rally to win! We have won the new members contest out of department for the 2017 membership year, congratulations and thank you! Winning the most new members and the "Spring Rally" parallels my slogan, "ASK" a Veteran to join and the Legion family will grow. I know we can stay number one in the department. Consolidated Post Reports will soon be due. Please start collecting your data and let the world know all the greatness you do for our organization. Thank you and let's keep moving forward.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Randy Bastyr
Commander



Greetings to all members of the Fabulous Fourth. We are still in 9th place in the Department membership race. I am asking all Post commanders and adjutants to get their list of unpaid members out and give them a call. Find out if they just forgot, or if there's something that is keeping them from renewing, whether it be financial, or something happened at a meeting or with another member that has given them a reason to not renew. These things can be corrected. Don't let your members slip away without trying to help them. Let's go Fabulous Fourth! I know we can do this together.

The 4th District Joint Testimonial dinner will be held on April 21st at North St. Paul Post 39. Cost will be \$16.00 per person. Reserve your tickets by contacting Maureen Gustafson at 651-487-2812 or email dgussie69@yahoo.com.

The 4th District Convention has been moved to May 20, 2017, due to an unfortunate double booking of the hall at Post 39. This is Armed Forces Service Day, and what a better time to gather with all your veteran friends.

Upcoming District events: April 12th - RCC at the Eagles Club on 3rd & Maria, hosted by Post 599. E-board @ 6:30, General meeting @ 7:00; March 16th - VA Hospital visitation @ 12:30.

Thank you all for this opportunity to serve the Fabulous Fourth District. Thank you all for your service to God and Country.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Ray Eiden
Commander



Greetings from the Fighting Fifth.

In March we had a good Membership Rally and Appreciation Dinner in Legionville. Recognition was given to our top Vice Commanders. Congratulations to you all, especially our own Walt Lyndsley. We need to keep working on our membership. We are at 87.64% of goal and need to be at 95% by April 12th, our next target date. Keep trying to reach those unpaid ones. Membership card data will be extracted from the National Database on April 12th so send in what you can before then. Also be sure to get your Post

Data Reports in by April 15th. Remember Department dues will increase \$3.00 come July.

Our Testimonial Dinner will be held April 15th at Post #1. Beef pot roast will be served. Cost is \$16.00. Social hour is from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. with dinner and program to follow. If you would like to attend send your payment to: Becky Nelson, 3217 19th Ave. S. #1, Mpls., MN 55407

Please make checks payable to "The American Legion 5th District" and put "Testimonial Dinner" in the memo line.

The fundraising for our District Project is at \$1435.00. We need \$565.00 to reach our goal. Any donations from Posts are welcome. I wish everyone a Blessed and Happy Easter.

Our next Hospital Visitation is April 2nd at 2:00 p.m.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Vernonica Fernlund
Commander



Spring is here, some robins have been spotted and I have seen more smiles on everyone with the sun feeling warmer. The 6th District has done a fantastic job in membership so far this year. We have been bouncing around the first place mark along with our Auxiliary and SAL. We have 18 Posts at goal or all-time-high and at the time of this article we only need 700 members to reach our goal for this year. Time is going by fast and we are so close to our goal. We need everyone to take a look to see if they have renewed for 2017. If your membership card says 2016, your membership is past due. We also need everyone's help to check with their friends to make sure they are up-to-date and to also ask all veterans they meet to be a member of our great organization. I need to mention our project to raise funds for purchasing a golf cart for the St. Cloud VA Health Care System. Thank you so much to all the Posts and individuals who have generously donated to this great project. We are very close to our goal for being able to purchase the cart. My family and I wish everyone a Happy Easter.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Garylee Davenport
Commander



Greetings Mighty 7th
April is upon us already.

I would like to thank the Villard Post for the wonderful dinner.

The 7th District has slipped down to 7th place in the State in membership and the Department of Minnesota has slipped down to 3rd in the Nation.

I know that it is that time of the membership year that it starts to get a little tough to get the membership in. One thing that may help is to work the expired and 1982#AD lists. You can get them on (mylegion.org) and if any Posts need help, give me a call. I would be more than happy to print them off and send them to you.

If any one would like me or one of the 7th District Vice Commanders to come to your monthly meeting, please feel free to call me.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Kenneth Oliver Jr.
Commander



April has arrived and with it hopefully spring. Our next district event is a very important one. On April 22nd at Post 71 in West Duluth starting at 10 a.m. we will be holding our district conventions. That means both 8th District American Legion and 8th District American Legion Auxiliary. The district cannot continue to function without active participation of its post and unit members. For over a decade the operations of both organization have been held up by a small group of Legionnaires and Auxiliaries. We need more people to step up into leadership positions. If you are interested in serving as an officer in the District for the Legion, Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion please attend our Conventions on April 22nd. Now that I've gotten that out of the way let's talk about membership. If you are reading this article and you have not sent in your membership renewal to the Legion, Auxiliary or the Sons of the American Legion please do so immediately. As a dual member of the Legion and the Auxiliary, I can tell you we need all our member's participation at every level to continue serving veterans and their families. I am looking forward to see new faces at our District Conventions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Past Commander Jennifer Havlick

NINTH DISTRICT

Eric Wilkens
Commander



Greetings from the Roaring Ninth District. Spring has finally arrived per the calendar although some days still feel like winter which means that the membership year is quickly coming to an end. We continue to push membership, having met the 90% goal, and are working hard on the 95% goal on April 12th. March was a busy month with Posts celebrating The American Legion's 98th Birthday and recognizing those members over 50 years of membership and service to our great organization. The Commander's Testimonial will be held on April 29th starting at 11:00 am at Detroit Lakes Post 15. Until next month keep doing great things and promoting the greatest veterans organization in the world.

TENTH DISTRICT

Bonnie Hanson
Commander



From the 10th District

Happy Spring and we had to change our clocks to spring ahead and it is nice to have the daylight longer. We also celebrated the 98th Birthday of The American Legion. We have started to have Testimonial Dinners and then getting ready for our District Conventions. Let us not forget about the memberships that we need to focus on. As of the last bulletin we all need to be digging on those members who have not yet paid their dues. Letters, cards and phone calls may not be enough. It will take personal visitations and maybe that is what they are looking for April is also Children and Youth month. This is one of the Four Pillars of the American Legion and every Post should have some activities planned that benefit the youths in your area. Your Post should be receiving their Post Data Forms and the Post Consolidated Report forms. Please fill them out. We really need to have 100% turn in. Something we haven't done in a very long time.

Until next time with hopes, heads and hearts held high and with our persistence in our endeavor to fulfil the mission and programs of The American Legion. May God continue to guide us in these endeavors. Forgot to say that we of the 10th District will be having a Revitalization this March and hopefully we will pick up those lost Veterans

And please keep our men and women in uniform and their families in our prayers.

SECOND DISTRICT

Mark Coney
Commander



March is the birthday of The American Legion and many Posts in the 2nd District have been very active celebrating. I have been blessed to attend three different birthday parties within the district this past month. They were hosted at the Charles Flentje Post in Round Lake, Seifert/Bianchi Post in New Ulm, and the Troska Post in Wells. Each and every one of the those Posts had a good turnout with Round Lake handing out continuous membership certificates to its members. There was one individual with 60 years of continuous membership.

Congratulations to all the Legionnaires for your continued service to your country. Thank you to all the Posts for your hospitality that you showed me as I had the opportunity to attend your celebrations.

We are having a revitalization for the district. If you have any questions on this, please feel free to contact Mike Schaffer or myself. We would be happy to help you out with any questions.

My commander's project is going well. My project this year is Brain Science and if your Post is wanting to make any donations, you can mail them to me at Mark Coney, 102 W. 1st St. Hardwick, MN 56134. If you are using gambling funds, please notate it as we have a different process for those.

The 2nd District newsletter will be back in publication as soon as we can secure a printer willing to take on the job. I hope to have it back up by Convention.

Happy Birthday American Legion and God Bless America.

Taps

Willmert, Grant Markhanna, 98, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 10, 2017. He was a radarman third class. He was a member of Glencoe Post 95.

Borash, Frank J., 84, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 3, 2017. He served in the National Guard for 18 years. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Long, Jimmie Dale, 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He served on Guam as a mechanic and also on the USS General M.M. Patrick. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Danelski, Franklin, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 6, 2017. He was a past commander and member of the honor guard of Denham Post 361.

Novotny, Beryl "BJ," 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 7, 2017. He served in both the European and Asian theaters. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

Ambroz, Arnold, 79, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 10, 2017. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

Peterson, Harvey R., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 1, 2017. He served on the Honor Guard at Arlington National Cemetery and guarded President Eisenhower. He was a member of Parker's Prairie Post 219.

Boeck, Delphin, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 8, 2017. He was a staff sergeant assigned to the 509th Bomb Wing, serving as a top gunner and left gunner. He was a member of Amboy Post 276.

Waurio, Reino, 76, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 26, 2017. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

Wiss, Thomas Michael, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 17, 2017. He was a member of North Branch Post 85.

Martinson, Donald M., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 20, 2017. He served with the Seabees and saw combat on Okinawa. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Knudsen, Roy E., 88, Navy veteran of both World War II and Korea, died Feb. 12, 2017. He was a member of Bloomington Post 550.

Zachow, Roger "Pee Wee," 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 8, 2017. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Froland, Archie, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 3, 2017. He served in the 40th Division as a military policeman. He was a member of Clarkfield Post 169.

Gates, Russell L., 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 24, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Sherman, Robert W., 91, Coast Guard veteran of World War II and Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 1, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Lee, Charles A., 88, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 24, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Ulstad, Armand M., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 22, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Stegenga, Ralph, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Wittmer, Melvin W., 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Furan, William, 72, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 27, 2017. He earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. He was a member of Tyler Post 185.

Bissen, Benno G., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died

March 9, 2017. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

King, David N., 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 11, 2017. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Schmitt, Raymond A., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 14, 2017. He was a member of Richmond Post 292.

Moore, Leo, 90, Merchant Marine veteran of World War II, died Feb. 28, 2017. He was a member of Cold Spring Post 455.

Hanson, Marlow W., 90, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 16, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Conklin, Curtis L., 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 23, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Woehler, Marvin C., 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 25, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Woltjer, Melvin C., 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 26, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Goblish, Harold W., 61, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 4, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Carlson, Alton L., 90, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 6, 2017. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Simmons, John Charles "Sparky," 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 13, 2017. He served in Company D of the 52nd Battalion. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Busker, Harold C., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 16, 2017. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Doering, Delmont, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 13, 2017. He was a tech sergeant for auto repair at Fort Sill. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Johnson, Orion Tillman, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Feb. 26, 2017. He served in Japan and assisted in the cleanup after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. He was a member of Paynesville Post 27.

Christopher, Lloyd, 88, Army veteran of World War II, died March 6, 2017. He served in Japan. He was a member of Hoffman Post 393.

McDermott, James L., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He served in Germany. He was a member of Chisago City Post 272.

Albright, Gerald D., 96, Army veteran of World War II, died March 1, 2017. He was a lieutenant and served in Europe. He was member of Deer Creek Post 283.

Hegna, Donald James, 88, Army veteran of World War II, died March 8, 2017. He served in Japan. He was a member of Granite Falls Post 69.

Tapp, Leslie, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 24, 2017. He served in the Signal Corps. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

Maxson, Curt, 61, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 3, 2017. He served as commander for six years and on the honor guard at Maple Lake Post 131.

Abel, Carroll D., 68, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 12, 2017. He served at Nellis Air Force Base. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Janke, Robert L., Jr., 75, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Feb. 25, 2017. He served in Turkey as a radio operator. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Nelson, Robert, 95, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 1, 2017. He served in Hawaii. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Johnson, Donovan Charles Edmond, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He was a radio operator in special operations. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Mattock, Lewis O., 92, Army veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died March 2, 2017. He was a medic. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Schloemer, Bernard H., 72, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 4, 2017. He served two tours in Vietnam in the Seabees. He was a member of St. Joseph Post 328.

Carpenter, Francis H., 98, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died March 13, 2017. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Higgins, Thomas Elsworth, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 18, 2017. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

Uecker, Roger Lee, 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 17, 2017. He was with the 452nd General Supply Company. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Wangen, Donald L., 86, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Feb. 24, 2017. He was a past commander of Lanesboro Post 40 three times.

Kruzal, Joseph A., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 14, 2017. He served in Korea. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

Finley, Dallas, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Feb. 27, 2017. He served in Japan. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

Bock, James, 81, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died March 7, 2017. He was a member of Breckenridge Post 53.

Schepper, Harold Everett, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died March 19, 2017. He served in the Mediterranean Theater. He was a member of Hopkins Post 320.

Jindra, John E., 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 20, 1927. He served on the USS Corregidor on convoy patrol. After the war, he joined the Army and served in Korea. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

Hanson, Dennis A., 81, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 17, 2017. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

Dallman, Frederick, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 17, 2017. He was stationed in Germany. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

Walker, Stuart, 86, Navy veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, died March 16, 2017. He was a jet mechanic. He was a member of New Prague Post 45.

Tibbett, Kenneth E., 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 12, 2017. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Cox, Martin Eugene, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 24, 2017. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

LeFebvre, Richard A., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 1, 2017. He was a member of Litchfield Post 104.

Lemke, Richard A., 70, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 25, 2017. He was a member of Arlington Post 250.

Annual Financial Report 2016

INCOME STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

Department Income	
Department Dues Income	\$786,428
Less: MN Legionnaire Portion	\$(230,751)
Revenue Enhancement Program	\$156,116
Grants	\$138,348
Investment Income	\$168,978
LIT Insurance - (Royalties)	\$210,732
Donations / Contributions	\$5,422
In-Kind Rent	\$74,461
Miscellaneous Income	\$14,028
Total Department Income:	\$1,323,762

Telephone	\$8,200	\$8,231
Misc. Expense	\$0	\$1,847
Prior Year Voided Cks	\$0	\$0
Total Headq. Exp.	\$545,893	\$529,044
Unbudgeted Annual Expense		
Depreciation Expense	\$0	\$25,132
Rent Expense	\$0	\$74,461
Tot. Unbud. Ann. Exp.	\$0	\$99,593
Special Budget		
Citizens Flag Alliance	\$400	\$0
Nat. Emer. Funds Disb.	\$1,000	\$1,000
Legal Expense	\$1,000	\$0
Operation Com. Warr.	\$1,000	\$1,000
Total Spec. Bud. Exp.	\$3,400	\$2,000

Convention Corporation	\$3,500	\$3,342
Dpt. Conv. Comm.	\$5,000	\$4,337
Dpt. HQ Conf. & Conv.	\$32,000	\$27,689
Department Treasurer	\$3,600	\$3,600
Employment Comm.	\$1,000	\$1,000
Energy & Cons. Comm.	\$1,000	\$1,665
Executive Committee	\$38,000	\$34,119
Exec. Cm. Contg. Fd.	\$1,500	\$0
Finance Committee	\$5,000	\$4,531
Fund for Hosp Vets	\$0	\$0
Historian	\$950	\$674
Ins. Trust Committee	\$500	\$405
Judge Advocate	\$1,000	\$0
Law & Order Comm.	\$750	\$623
Legislative Committee	\$4,000	\$3,520
Memb. (Inc. Vice Cdr.)	\$55,000	\$55,326
March. Dept C. Guard	\$3,000	\$3,000
NEC	\$4,000	\$4,000
Nat'l. Conv. Delegates	\$35,000	\$34,800
Nat'l. Sec./Foreign Rel.	\$7,500	\$6,997
Operation Post Home	\$300	\$0
Post Dev. Committee	\$2,000	\$1,609
Public Relations Comm.	\$15,000	\$14,864
Res. Assign. Comm.	\$1,000	\$700
Servicemen's Center	\$300	\$241
L.I.T. Advertising	\$3,400	\$3,375
Legion Riders	\$500	\$242
USAA Expense	\$3,400	\$3,375
Strategic Plan. Comm.	\$2,500	\$1,702
Credentials Committee	\$1,000	\$1,272
Sergeant-at-Arms	\$700	\$443
Alternate NEC	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total Comm. Exp.	\$277,400	\$260,418

STATEMENT OF BUDGET EXPENSE

Headquarters Exp.	Budgeted	Disbursed
Administration Salaries	\$307,000	\$306,037
FICA Expense	\$23,793	\$23,004
FUTA Expense	\$400	\$325
SUTA Expense	\$950	\$242
Gp. Health & Life Ins.	\$58,500	\$57,089
Employee's Ret. Fund	\$31,700	\$27,782
Unbudgeted Expense	\$0	\$0
Audit Expense	\$8,300	\$8,387
Inv.t Mgmt Fees	\$7,000	\$3,309
Furniture & Fixtures	\$1,000	\$1,159
General Office Exp.	\$48,000	\$48,476
Elect. Eq., Mt & Mod.	\$29,500	\$21,558
Insurance (Other)	\$8,750	\$8,750
Program Promotions	\$0	\$0
Travel Expense	\$12,300	\$12,727
Emergency Fund	\$500	\$121

Rehab Expense		
Salaries	\$116,000	\$93,049
FICA Expense	\$8,990	\$7,096
FUTA Expense	\$200	\$126
SUTA Expense	\$450	\$124
Group Health Ins.	\$27,770	\$14,868
Employee Ret. Fund	\$11,010	\$6,868
General Office Exp.	\$6,000	\$7,721
Claims Office Exp.	\$15,800	\$7,130
CVSO Trav. & Training	\$28,000	\$10,492
Hospital & Vet Ass.	\$4,000	\$6,400
Veteran Event Support	\$10,600	\$13,340
DSO & ADSO Travel	\$13,000	\$11,107
Rehab. Committee	\$9,300	\$7,398
Total Rehab Expense:	\$251,120	\$185,719

Committee Expense		
Americanism	\$8,250	\$6,569
Blood Program	\$250	\$0
Chaplain's Fund	\$500	\$138
Child. & Youth Comm.	\$3,000	\$3,260
Commander's Budget	\$31,000	\$31,000

GRAND TOTAL Budget vs. Actual		
	\$1,077,813	\$1,076,774
Total Undesig. Rev.		\$1,323,762
Total Undesignated Expense		\$1,076,774
Change in Net Assets		\$246,988



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 17-3

President Carol Kottom

April 2017

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Carol Kottom



Last rally of the year is over. Doesn't seem possible. Like closing a door. Our Auxiliary team has done an awesome job and I am very proud of them. Are we having issues? Yes. But the team is dealing with them as they come up and we find some things work and some don't. Please be sure you "Just ask" when you see anyone you think is eligible for the Auxiliary and doesn't yet belong. You'll be surprised how many have never been asked to join us.

Department oratorical contest is done. What a great bunch of contestants. I know that with these young ladies and gentlemen growing into the responsibilities of the world today, we are going to be in great shape. I'm always grateful I don't have to grade them and select the winners. They are all winners in my eyes.

Remember ladies, Girls State is coming right up. Visit your schools and talk to your students. I spent an hour at the school with a couple of perspective students and the government teacher and hopefully they will be attending. It's a great opportunity for them and it's up to us to sponsor them and allow them to participate.

Finally reached my goal. Went to all five veterans homes and four veterans health care systems this year. Hastings was my last stop. I found that Hastings is a "different" classification of a veterans home. They house veterans who are still able and willing to work – both internally and in the city. They have a great craft area and the veterans produce an amazing amount of craft work. It is the veterans at Hastings that make a lot of our poppies for us to distribute. I received a framed photograph one of the veterans took and I will treasure it always. Thank you 3rd District for allowing me to be part of your day in Hastings.

You know it's close to over when the testimonials start. Mine was the first one. By the time you get this I should be cried out and ready to move on to the District testimonials. Thank you to all who attended and a special thank you to those who helped out. The Legionnaires in Buffalo have been great. As many of you know, our unit president Marilyn Miller, fell and broke her leg and her shoulder. She has been in a nursing home recuperating since. As she was the one all the mail and calls went to, it was left up to her husband Pat. He has done a wonderful job and a special thanks to him. Thanks to Doris Karie and Robert Larson for bringing greetings from our Unit and Post. Also thanks to Robin Dorf, Mary Dorf and Emily Sues who stepped up to register everyone at the door. They are so appreciated. Then of course, is the emcee and my favorite Auxiliary member, Bev Otterness. She has always said yes when I've asked her to do something over the past 34 years and I can't tell you how much I love and appreciate her. You are awesome Bev.

I would like to send a sincere "Thank You" for coming to my Testimonial on the 25th – I was awe-struck at the room full of American Legion Family friends. Thank you for all of the gifts and hugs, they will be treasured forever.

We spent time at a number of Posts celebrating the Legion's 98th birthday. "Happy birthday Legionnaires" and thanks to all for the great food and the opportunity to hear your speakers and visit with your Legion family. We hope that the month of March found everyone happy and healthy. Just think – 2018 will bring the 100th birthday and it will be celebrated right here in Minnesota! Remember to always "Thank a Veteran". This country is what it is and we have what we have because of what they all did. "All gave some – some gave all".

Until next month, be safe, be happy and be thankful for what we have.

Registration extended for 2017 Girls State program

Registration fees for the 2017 session of American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State were due on March 31st. We do still have openings so don't feel that because March 31 has gone by that you still can't register. Units may send as many girls as they choose to from the same high school. Your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizens must attend a public, charter, parochial, private or home school in Minnesota or be a resident of Minnesota. Reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis. We are still taking reservations and would like each Unit to participate. The 2017 session will be held June 11-17 at Bethel University in St. Paul.

The enrollment card, registration form and pledge order form are due into the Department office no later than May 1st. Make sure the girls put their Capitol Day t-shirt size on the registration form. Your American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen is not considered registered until these items are received. Each American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State citizen who is completely registered will receive a mailing from the Department office around May 15th which will give her all of the necessary information she needs concerning items to bring, the health certificate form, etc. that are required to bring in June. Please remember that there are no refunds being given this year.

We look forward to the 71st annual American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State week and another educational and successful session.

JUNIOR CONFERENCE

The Department Junior Conference will be called to order by Kiana Coleman-Woods, the Department Honorary Junior President on Saturday, April 8th, at the Forest Lake American Legion 225 and hosted by our Third District. We are hoping many Juniors will attend their very own Conference.

On Friday, April 7 starting at 6:00 p.m. the Third District is hosting a "fun" night at the Legion Club for all Juniors. Please come and enjoy the weekend.

2017 POPPY DAYS, MAY 19 & 20

Poppy Days will soon be with us. If your Unit has not ordered its 2017 Poppies we would appreciate hearing from you soon. We have 78 Units that have not yet ordered. Let's have 100% participation in our Poppy Program. If you cannot locate an order form just write your order on a plain piece of paper and send it along with your check to the Department office.

We do have poppies available for any Unit that wishes to order more. The Department does not carry the Poppy cans many Units use on Poppy Days. They must be ordered from National Emblem Sales. Also, we do not carry the Poppy Cards. Emblem Sales also has a card that is available directly from them.

Governor Dayton has been asked to proclaim May as Poppy month. A suggestion to all Units is to present a poppy to your government officials and ask them to wear the poppy on Memorial Day.

Please remember to promote and display our Poppies all year round.

2017 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Our 98th annual Department Convention will be held July 13 – 15, 2017 at the Shooting Star Casino/Hotel in Mahanomen hosted by the Mahanomen American Legion Family #31. A word of thanks to the Auxiliary Chairman and committee members for all they are doing to ensure a successful convention.

Housing information will be out in the May Unit mailing. Hotel reservations are to be made directly with the hotel this year. The registration fee is \$15.00 for pre-registration and \$18.00 at the door. Please use the registration form which is in this copy of the Legionnaire. President Carol Kottom has made this such a memorable year for us – let's attend to support her and our organization. There will be Resolutions to vote on so make sure your delegation is covered. All pending Resolutions are posted on our website under the About Us tab, 2017 Department Convention.

Don't forget the Poppy contests that will be held at the Department Convention. This year there will be two categories; Table Centerpieces and tri-fold education boards on poppies, history, what your Unit has done, etc. More than one entry is welcomed; there will be three places awarded and a People Choice Award. Entries must be at the Department Convention on Thursday, July 13th by 9:00 a.m. Please read your Trophy and Awards packet for details.

UNIT INFO NEEDED

Units received a request for information on your Unit's 2018 dues. A second notice went out in the last Unit Mailing and thanks go out to those Units that have gotten us the information. This information was due in the Department office by March 15th. It is critical that this information gets forwarded on to National. If your Unit has not yet responded, please send in the information as soon as possible. I show 189 Units still haven't sent in their rates. If we do not receive this information before mid-April, National will be printing the information they have from last year on the dues notices. Also, as you have your annual elections, please get us your 2017-2018 Officers lists so we can update our records. Even if they haven't changed, we still would like the form submitted.

ST. CLOUD VAHCS

If your Unit is looking to donate items to the St. Cloud VAHCS, they are in need of underwear (boxer briefs) in small, medium and large, white T-Shirts in small, medium and large and both sweat shirts and sweat pants in medium and large. If you can't get to the St. Cloud VAHCS you can always drop them off at the Department Office and we will get them delivered. These items must be new.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MONTH

Just a reminder that April is Children and Youth month. It was printed in the last Legionnaire with the heading March is Children and Youth month. We are sorry for the misprint.

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE APRIL 15th

Annual report time is fast approaching. All Units should be preparing their reports covering the time period April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017. The white copy is all that needs to be returned to the Department Office by April 15. It is important that your Unit report your activities each year and send them in. The information received on the reports is then compiled into a Department report that is sent onto our National organization. These reports become part of the American Legion Auxiliary record for the 2016-2017 year. Our National organization gives the information to The American Legion and they use the information when they report to Congress each year. Every activity your Unit has participated in is important. Be proud of your accomplishments and activities and share them. Forms are also on our Department website. For those computer guru's, just save those forms to your computer, fill them out and email them to us. How easy is that?

Trophy and Award entries are also due by April 15th unless otherwise stated in the rules. Be certain to label each entry with the name of the award you are applying for. Follow this year's rules. A separate entry is needed for each award unless the Department winner is forwarded for National competition. Any Unit may apply for any award whether your Unit has reached its membership goal or not unless that is a requirement stated in the rules.

Please remember to nominate a worthy member for Auxiliary Member of the Year. There are so many ladies worthy of this award and we never have very many nominations.

2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The National Convention this year will be held in Reno, Nevada. This year the Parade will be on Sunday August 20, 2017 in Reno. How great is that? Reno in August – your

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

Secretary Sandie can't wait! When we Minnesotans go to the National Convention we bring with us our national colors from our Posts, Units, Squadrons and AL Riders to march in the National Parade. When we do this, we typically take up an entire city block or more of just Minnesota's attendees all carrying their US colors. We often are on the front page of the newspaper in that city's morning issue the following day.

More information will be forthcoming regarding the National Convention in future issues.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

Here we are again – I went to talk to Jennifer, looked at Al in The Legion offices and said “Legionnaire is due today right?” He confirmed so here I am. It seems I just typed the last one a couple days ago. Where does time go? When you are reading this we will have celebrated President Carol at her Testimonial – again, how can her year be almost done? We are getting kind of excited in the office, we will be remodeling and reshuffling organizations and people in the next couple of months. The American Legion and Auxiliary will have the entire third floor, with the exception of the DAV, they are still up here with us. Randy and I have great plans for our area. We are going to put together an American Legion Family Museum on our floor. We never have many visitors here and are hoping we can get our members to stop in and see us. We really are nice people and do like visitors. That was one thing I never understood working here. Nobody ever comes to see us except Pat Logan. Need I say more? No Pat we do love you up here – we will try and keep the chocolate bowl filled. Countdown to Baby Deutsch is now 8 weeks. Pretty dang excited about that too. With all this excitement I better sign off before I pass out! Everyone have a wonderful Easter, enjoy your families and don't forget to give a hug to each of them. Hugs make a world of difference in my life, hope they do for you too. (Happy Easter from my curmudgeon Shorty too).



TRAINING -- Department Leadership Chairman Robin Dorf held another one of her Leadership Training Sessions at the Redwood Falls Post 38. Pictured below are those that attended. Robin has done a fantastic job this year promoting both Leadership and the Department Long Range Strategic Plan. When you see her – give her a hug of thanks.



COOKIES FOR TROOPS -- Monticello Auxiliary Unit 260 shipped 28 boxes of freshly baked cookies to the military stationed throughout the world. Left to right: Chantelle, Mabel, Cheryl, Dianne, Barb, Sandy, Mary, Cindy and Roseanne. Seated in the front are Eli from the SAL and Louella of the Junior Auxiliary.



ALA BRACELET – Remember to pre-order your bracelets and support your Auxiliary Department. Donation of \$5.00 or more each – contact us at 651-224-7634 or mnala.org. They are to be here the first part of April.



WASHINGTON DELEGATION -- Minnesota had a great contingency in support of our Veterans at the annual Washington Conference. Pictured from left: Margee Keller, Raleen Tolzmann, Shirley Frederick, Department President Carol Kottom, National President Mary Davis, Jean Walker, Norma Tramm, member from the North Dakota Auxiliary, Sharon Thiemecke and Peggy Tesdahl.



TESTIMONIAL -- President Carol Kottom's Testimonial was held on Saturday, March 25 at the Buffalo American Legion Post. A large crowd from the entire American Legion Family attended the event. Insert Picture: President Carol and her District Daughters – Cindy Nelson, Joanie Krantz, President Carol, Bonnie Brenna, Theresa Rudnicki, Betty Underthun, Linda Deschene, Kathy Burket, Marcie Baysinger and Connie Anderson.



PRESIDENT HONORED -- The head table at President Carol Kottom's Testimonial included, from left: Buffalo Post Commander Robert Larson, Dennis Henkemeyer, representing The American Legion Commander Denise Milton, President Carol, Emcee Bev Otterness, Doris Karie of the Buffalo American Legion Auxiliary and Judy Stein American Legion Auxiliary Chaplain.




PLUMMER HONORS MEMBERS -- Awards were given to the following members: Jean Matt – 70 year member, Jean Carpenter – 65 year member and Bunny DuChamp – 70 year member. Both Jean and Bunny are Charter members of Plummer Unit 623.

Mar. 22, 2017, Auxiliary Membership				
District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year
One	5,000	4,500	90.00%	4,630
Two	4,924	4,379	88.93%	4,620
Three	4,411	3,876	87.87%	4,108
Four	720	655	90.97%	659
Five	824	680	82.52%	769
Six	6,042	5,516	91.29%	5,721
Seven	3,934	3,453	87.77%	3,669
Eight	1,628	1,415	86.92%	1,494
Nine	4,350	3,885	89.31%	4,071
Ten	5,159	4,582	88.82%	4,822
1982	160	154	96.25%	152
Totals	37,152	33,095	89.08%	34,715

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