

Denise Milton

Department Commander

2016-2017

Denise Milton, Bagley, was elected to a one-year term as State Commander of the Minnesota American Legion at the organization's convention in Rochester in July, 2016.

Milton has been active in The American Legion for many years, and is a member of Bagley Post 16. She has been post commander, Ninth District commander, Department Chaplain, Department Membership Director, and Department Vice Commander.

At the National level, she has served on the Homeland Security Committee and the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Council.

Milton served for 28 years in the Army and Army Reserve as a clinical specialist and she was on active duty during the Vietnam War, Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

She is a nurse and has worked at the Bagley Hospital, and, more recently, at the Bemidji VA veterans clinic. In 2015, she won the Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary's Award for Nursing while employed at the Fargo VA Medical Center.

Milton has also been active in her community, serving eight years as a Clearwater Township Supervisor, and as a leader in 4-H, Girl Scouts and the Bagley Youth Hockey Association.

She is married to Dennis Henkemeyer, a Past Department Commander. They were married at an American Legion National Convention in 2004. She has a son and a daughter and two grandchildren.

Her theme for the year is "Victory for Veterans" and her project is to work with the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans on ending veteran homelessness in Minnesota.



Carol Kottom

Department President

2016-2017

Carol Kottom is a 34-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary and has been a member at the Buffalo American Legion Auxiliary since she joined. Her eligibility is through her husband Bruce, a Vietnam era veteran.

Kottom has been an active member of her unit serving in most offices and as Unit President. She went on to become District President in 1999-2000. She is also a member of the 40&8 La Societe de Femme and a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.

On the Department level, she has held the following chairmanships: Americanism, Membership, Girls State Director, VA&R Chairman three times, Historian, gift shop committee and chairman, finance committee for five years with the last year as finance chairman, and leadership. Kottom has enjoyed serving as counselor at Girls State early in her active years, and in the Moccasin office the last six years.

She and her husband Bruce have owned their own business, A & K Designs, Inc., for more than 25 years as computer specialists. After that, she worked for 10-plus years before she retired from Wright County Court Administration.

Reading, sewing, knitting and crocheting are how Carol spends her free time. She also volunteers at the St Cloud VA Health Care System for 4 hours a week. The Kottoms have three sons, two grandsons and a granddaughter.

Her symbol is an angel and her theme is: Thank a veteran -- all gave some, and some gave all.





A Woodbury player tracks down a long fly ball at Delano's Municipal Field. Ivy covers the walls much like the Chicago Cubs' Wrigley Field.

Baseball 2016 Tournaments in Delano and LeSueur-Henderson



Players line the field at Delano's Municipal Field during the opening day ceremonies for the Minnesota Division I State Tournament. Sixteen teams vied for the state title, won by Woodbury.



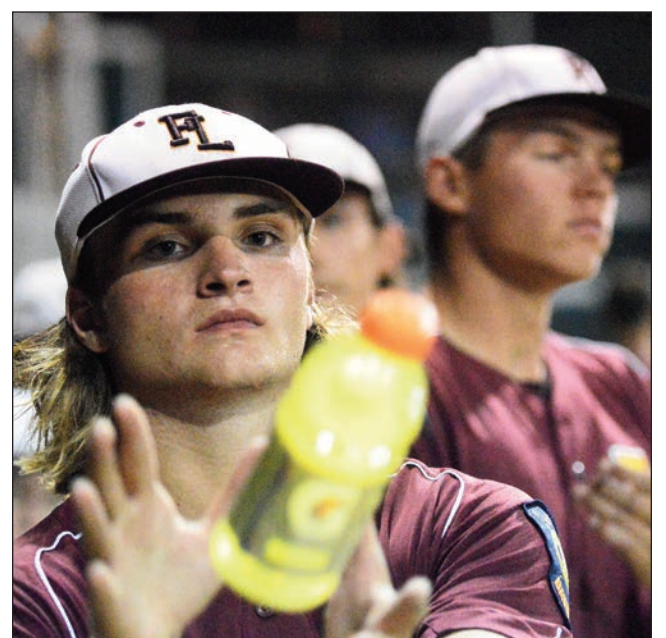
Jonah DeSmet slides in for Forest Lake as Woodbury's Sebastian Holte-Mancera gets ready to apply the tag.



LeSueur-Henderson's Cole Pengilly slides safely into third with a triple in the third place game vs. Pierz at the LeSueur Field in Division II play.

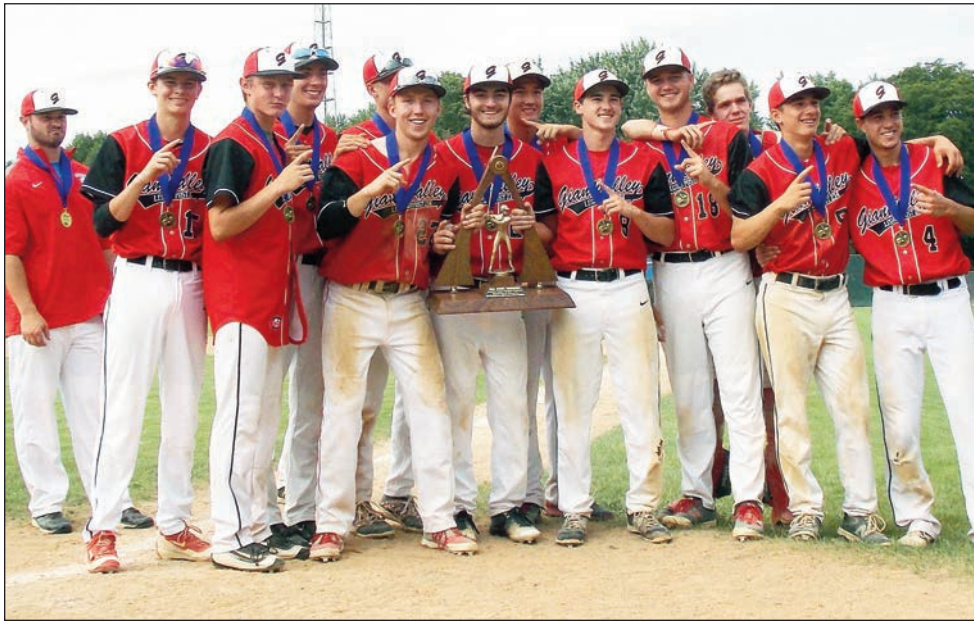


Woodbury's Ronald Sweeny III slides into the tag of Forest Lake's third baseman Cameron Kline during the championship game. Kline was named the outstanding player of the tournament.

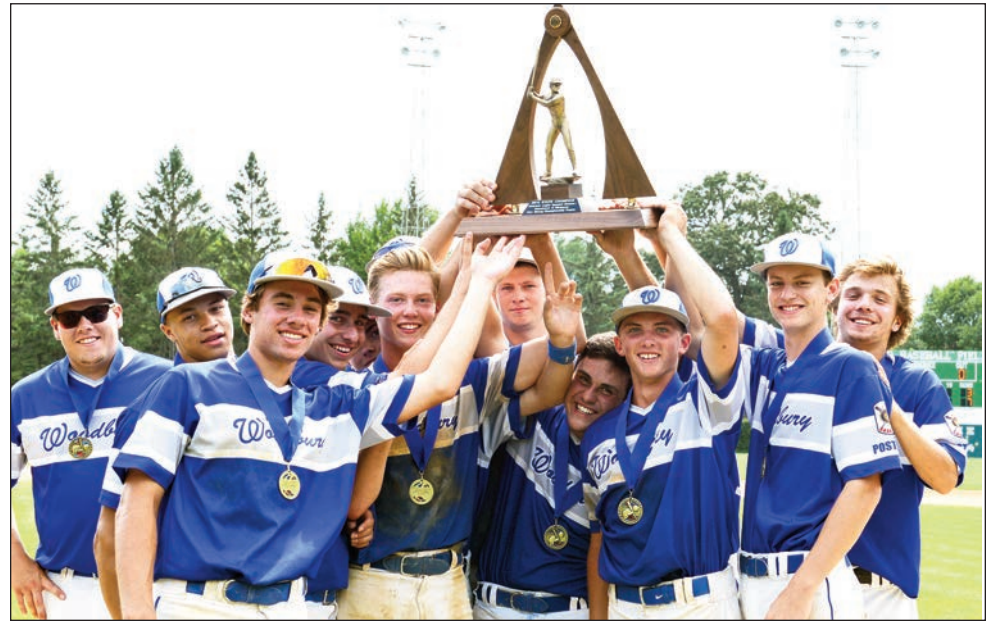


Forest Lake's Luke Wallner fields a Gatorade tossed to him by his mother during the tournament.

Photos by John Sherman and Al Zdon



Minneapolis Giantvalley Post 234 celebrates its championship in the Division II Minnesota State Baseball Tournament at LeSueur-Henderson. Giantvalley topped Glenwood-Lowry for the title.



Woodbury Blue hoists the Division I Championship trophy at the tournament in Delano. Woodbury defeated Forest Lake for the state championship, but was unable to attend the national regional because of a lack of players.



Andrew Wolpert of Minneapolis Giantvalley was presented the Tony Sipe Outstanding Player Award for Division II by Sipe's daughter, Trisa Olson.



New Ulm's Red Wyczawski and State Baseball Director Mike Perry both were inducted into the Department's Hall of Fame.



Cam Kline of Forest Lake was presented the Wanamaker Outstanding Player plaque by Past Department Commander Jim Kellogg.



Luthor Dorr accepted the plaque for Post of the Year for Princeton Post 216.



Mike Gort of Marshall was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He is also a state vice director.



Outstanding Pitcher Tony Skoro of Wayzata was presented with the Wassenaar Trophy by the person it was named after, Rob Wassenaar.



Craig Nesbitt of Prior Lake was named the Coach of the Year for Minnesota Legion Baseball.



Mike Max of WCCO was the featured speaker at the Division I banquet in Delano.



Past National Commander Dan Ludwig read the Sportsmanship Code at the Division II Tournament.



Division II Outstanding Player Andrew Wolpert takes a mighty cut in the championship game.



With dad's help, Will Bauman, 1, tries his hand at driving a field maintenance vehicle at Delano.

State tournaments held in August

Continued from Page 1

Those teams were Waconia, Rochester Patriots, Edina, Woodbury Blue, St. Paul Hamline Purple, Little Falls, Fairmont, Wayzata, Champlin, Eastview, Bemidji, Forest Lake, Princeton, Grand Rapids, Maple Grove, and host Delano.

The tourney was held at two fields in Delano, and also at fields in Loretto and Maple Lake.

Woodbury made it to the quarter-final without a loss before falling to the other unbeaten, Forest Lake 9-7.

Wayzata, last year's state champion, lost its second game of the tourney and had to fight its way back through the losers' bracket. They faced Woodbury in the semi-final game and lost 9-2. Wayzata earned the third place trophy.

In the final, Woodbury had its revenge on Forest Lake, pulling away to a 7-3 victory and the championship trophy.

The Outstanding Player of the tournament was Cameron Kline of Forest Lake and the Outstanding Pitcher was Tom Skoro of Wayzata. St. Paul Hamline Purple Post 418 won the Sportsmanship Award.

Past Department Commander Jim Kellogg was on hand for opening day ceremonies and to pass out trophies at the conclusion.

Forest Lake and Wayzata headed for the regional at Bismarck, but ran into early trouble. Forest Lake lost to Nebraska Post 1 11-0 and Wayzata lost to South Dakota 10-0. Forest Lake came back and beat one North Dakota team 6-3 and the other 9-6, but then lost to Nebraska 11-1 and was eliminated. Wayzata lost to Iowa in its second game and was eliminated. Nebraska Post 1 won the tournament and advanced to Shelby.

Texarkana, Arkansas, won the World Series 8-6 over Salisbury, N.C., in 12 innings. Texarkana scored four runs in the top of the 12th to break a 4-4 tie, and then weathered a Salisbury rally that fell just short.

In the Division II Tournament hosted by LeSueur Post 55 and Henderson Post 74, nine teams faced off to challenge for the Minnesota title. The teams were Pierz, Dilworth, Watertown, Adrian, Moose Lake, St. Charles, Dilworth, Glenwood-Lowry, Minneapolis Giantvalley and LeSueur-Henderson, the host.

Glenwood Lowry beat Pierz in the semi-final game 8-3, and Minneapolis Giantvalley topped host LeSueur-Henderson 11-1 in the other semi-final. LeSueur-Henderson defeated Pierz 12-2 to win the third place game.

In the championship tilt, Giantvalley squeaked by Glenwood-Lowry 3-2.

Glenwood-Lowry won the Sportsmanship Trophy.

Andrew Wolpert, Giantvalley, who went 9-16 in the tourney with two doubles, a triple and who scored the winning run in the championship game, won the Outstanding Player Award.

Past National Commander Dan Ludwig was on hand to lead the teams in the sportsmanship code, and the Outstanding Player award, also known as the Tony Sipe Award, was given out by Trisa Olson, daughter of Tony Sipe.

Both top teams advanced to the national regional held at Waupun, Wisconsin. Giantvalley lost to Menasha, Wis., 7-1 and to Viroqua, Wis., 7-0 to be eliminated after two games.

Glenwood-Lowry won its first game against Henderson, Nevada, 7-1 and its second game against Waupun 11-1. A win against Larned, Kansas, 6-5, put Glenwood into the championship round.

Glenwood lost to Menasha 6-5 and then lost the title game to Viroqua 4-1.

There is no national championship for Division II teams.

Prior to the Division I tournament, a banquet was held at Tiger Activity Center in Delano, and the Minnesota American Legion Baseball award winners for the year were honored.

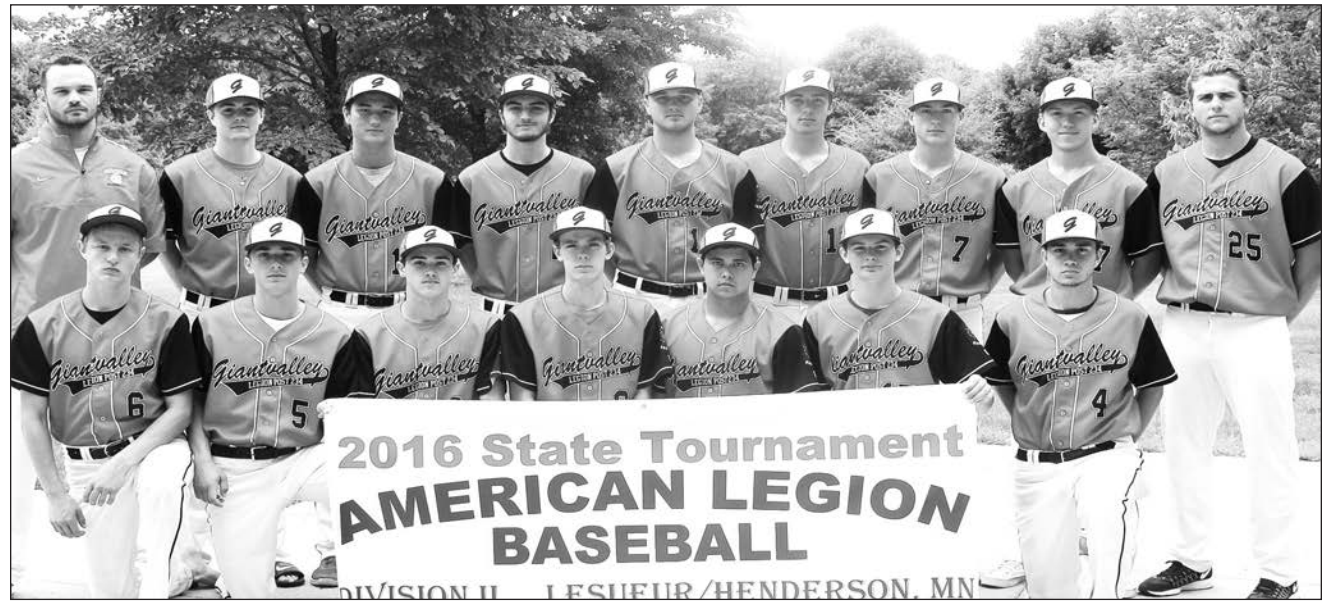
Named to the Hall of Fame were Mike Perry, Minnetonka, Mike Gort, Marshall, and Carl "Red" Wyczawski, New Ulm. Greg Nesbitt of Prior Lake was named Coach of the Year, and Princeton Post 216 was recognized as Post of the Year.

Mike Max was the featured speaker and Dick "The Polish White Eagle" Jonckowski was the emcee.

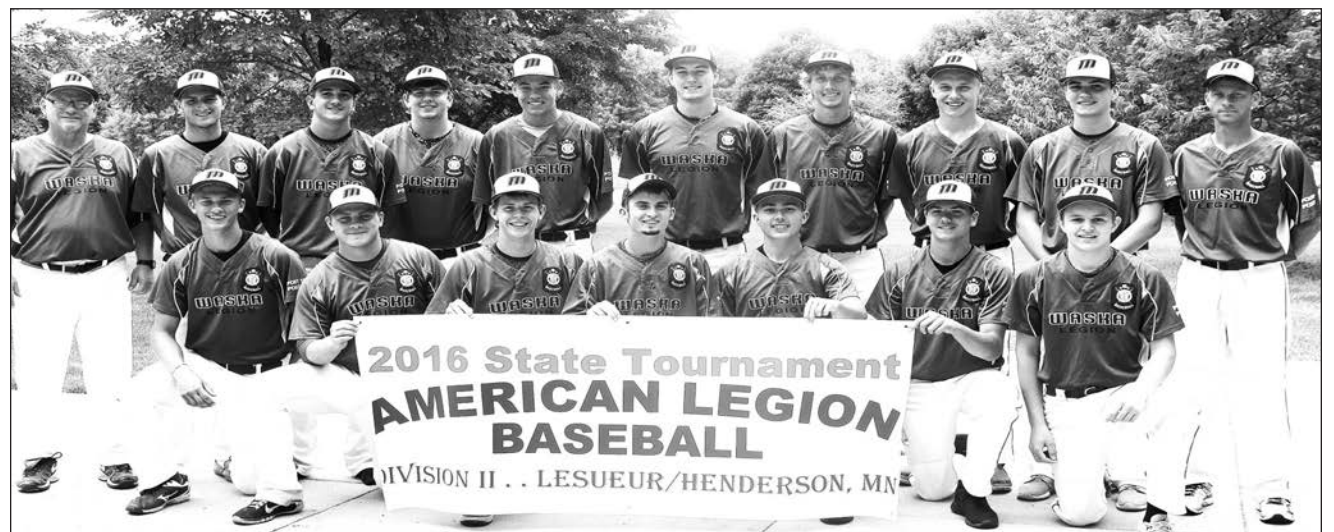
Next year's Division I Tournament will be in St. Paul at CHS Stadium, sponsored by Tri-City Post 513. The Division II tourney will be at New London-Spicer.



HOME RUN CHAMP -- After the opening ceremony, a home run derby was held. Joe Bernard of Princeton was the winner, knocking 19 balls out of the park.



DIVISION II CHAMPION -- Minneapolis Giantvalley Post 234 won the Division II Minnesota American Legion Baseball championship. From left, front row: Simon Huyck, Kenny Kiratli, Andrew Wolpert, Justin Evenson, Rylar McDowell, Brock Brumley, Nick Terlizzi. In back: Head Coach Sean Toomey, Alex Jordan, James Wong, Jesse Retzlaff, John Goth, Luke Mahler, Alex Evenson, Alex Fedje-Johnson, Assistant Coach Black Tritch.



DIVISION II RUNNERS UP -- Glenwood-Lowry finished second in the Division II Minnesota 2016 Baseball Tournament. The team's roster included: Justin Amundson, Matthew McIver, Michael Gruber, Austin Ver Steeg, Riley Thompson, Jackson Hendricks, Colin Richards, Shawn Stumpf, Chris Claussen, Royce Hoepfer, Matt Gruber, Riley Kinney, Craig Spore, Ryder Link, and Jake Held.



DIVISION I CHAMPIONS -- Woodbury Blue won the 2016 Division I Minnesota State Baseball championship. From left, front: Matt Wahl, Luke Swenson, Tyler Gustafson, Logan Welch, Brandon Trifiletti, Sebastian Holte-Mancera, Jack Herman. In back: Jordan Wilkerson, Nolan Glunz, Josh Mazur, Brodie Paulson, Ronnie Sweeny, Max Meyer, Nick Gehrt, Coach Kyle Hunt.



DIVISION I RUNNERS-UP -- Forest Lake Post 225 came in second in the 2016 Minnesota Division I State Baseball Tournament. From left, front: Thomas Maurer, Jake Schmitz, Zach Raabe, Ian Walker, Jonah DeSmet, Jared Swanson, Cameron Kline, Luke Wallner, Coach Phil Flater. In back: Coach Bruce Bates, Jason Schultz, Luke Palo, Jake Wensmann, Mitch Jerde, Tyler Boesel, Matt Wallner, Kevin Hildreth, Ross Peterson, Coach Brian Raabe.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By
Jeremy Wolfsteller



Legion presence in St. Paul

Since the early 1960s, the St. Paul VA Regional Office has had a National American Legion presence on its campus. The Legion staff is tasked with working specific VA benefit programs for veterans not just in Minnesota but across the Nation. Early on it was mainly veteran's government life insurance programs, whereas today the mission has drastically changed to keep up with the demand of the complexity of other VA benefits.

Today, Julie Larson (Team Leader), Beverly Moes (Asst. Director) and Judith Ojard (RACC Specialist) operate The American Legion National Rehabilitation Office located at the St. Paul Regional Office; together these dedicated employees of The American Legion have over 85 years of combined experience assisting veterans.

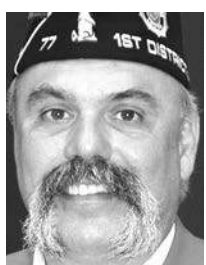
The St. Paul VA Regional Office is home to the Nation's only Debt Management Center. The current debt owed to the VA is estimated to be \$1.5 billion. All veterans' debt involving disability compensation, pension, education and home loan will end up here for collection. If the veteran has American Legion as their power of attorney for VA matters and has a VA debt, it will go through The American Legion National Rehab Office for careful review. In addition to facilitating debt issues for veterans, The American Legion National Office is also tasked with reviewing every Legion VA pension claim west of the Mississippi River along with every VA employee claim across the Nation that has The American Legion as their POA.

Recently The American Legion National VA&R Director (Lou Celli) and Deputy Director of MEB/PEB (Gerardo Avila) visited St. Paul's National Legion office. They were very impressed to see the level of commitment to assisting veterans their office brings each and every day. Their combined work experience, dedication to serving veterans and The American Legion has culminated into establishing camaraderie with Federal and State VA leadership and other Veteran Service Organizations.

We really do have something special right here in our own backyard; Passion, commitment and understanding when it comes to serving our nation's heroes.

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
State Director



Greetings American Legion Family,

I would like to start by thanking Paul Edwards for the nomination and the rest of the American Legion Riders for their support in electing me the new Department of Minnesota ALR Director. I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Legionville for our annual Romp on September 16, 17 and 18. Cost is \$75 individual, \$100 for family. If you were on the Legacy run and present a hotel receipt it will only cost you \$50 for the weekend. There will be lots of fun, food and games for one and all.

We have just completed year seven of the Department of Minnesota Legacy ride, another record year for funds raised. There are far too many folks to list who helped make this years ride a great success. Over the course of eight months, starting in January with the first planning meeting, through August when a group of Minnesota Riders go on stage at National Convention to present our check, hundreds of hours of work has been put in by numerous people. I rode towards the back of the group a few times and to echo the words of Dennis, "It is not only an awesome sight but breath taking to see the long column of motorcycles up ahead." The hospitality extended to the Riders at all of our stops, Legion posts, hotels, nursing homes, gas station etc. just proves that America is truly the greatest nation on earth. Last, but equally important, are all of the Law Enforcement, EMT and Fire Fighting personnel that assisted with traffic control along the way. Thank you one and all.

I have received a number of attendance requests for rides, fund raisers and gatherings. My calendar is filling up fast so get yours in soon. I will be challenging all riders to look outside the box when preparing for next year's Legacy Ride. Call it the Director's project, if you like. I will have all the details at our next meeting in September at Legionville.

That's all for now, keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.



WHICH ONE IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE BAND KISS? -- Past Department Commander Mike Ash makes a presentation to the band KISS when they performed in Mankato. Kiss is on a tour called "Freedom to Rock," honoring veterans. KISS donated \$150,000 to the Hiring our Heroes program. The Mankato Post 11 Color Guard was also on stage with the band. (Photo by Michelle Leonard)

Sociologists

Continued from Page 1

huge sense of community in rural towns.

"Sociologists say that there are three communities in everyone's life. First is their family, second is their workplace. The third is the community they choose. It might be McDonald's in the morning having coffee with the other old timers. It might be a bowling league.

"Or it might be The American Legion."

She said a Legion hall "can be a central space in small communities. We're excited about learning more."

Mainly the two researchers will simply set up shop, so to speak, at a table in a Legion bar. They will ask permission first. In order to fit in, they might indulge in a light beer.

If Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Riders or others want to talk with them, they would be glad to do so. But you'll need to sign a consent form first.

It's all research.

"We want to see how social life unfolds in these spaces," Glasser said.

They've already done one post, and Glasser said it was a good experience. "We don't have any pre-conceived notions. Things just happen. We want everything to unfold as it will. As time goes by, we'll have to decide if we're seeing some patterns."

They plan to visit clubrooms at different times of the day and different days of the week. They plan to travel around the state. They might drop in on a rally or at the Fall Conference.

Glasser has some past experience with The American Legion. She was the state oratorical champion for Rhode Island twice in the 1990s and also placed at national Oratorical Contest one year. "The Legion helped pay for some of my education."

Glasser did her undergraduate work at Tulane, and got her masters and PhD at the University of California, Irvine. Her specialty is methodology.

Emily Boyd studied at Florida State University, and she is currently the acting chairman of the sociology department at Mankato.

"We hope to help the Legion, and maybe look deeper into what's going on," Glasser said. "We want to know why people are interested in the Legion, why they join or maybe why they don't join."

Glasser said there is no firm timetable for the study. It will go on, perhaps for a year, until the pair have enough data and information to start drawing some conclusions.

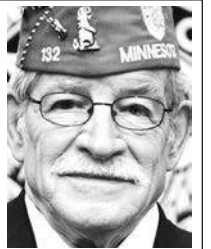
So, if you ever wonder who those two strange women are at that table under the Bingo sign, you know it just might be some scientific research going on.



MAJOR DONATION -- The John and Cathryn Buesseler Foundation of Lubbock, Texas, recently donated \$28,000 to the Minnesota American Legion Foundation and \$5,600 to Legionville. Accepting were Wayne Gilbertson, president of Legionville, left, and Lloyd Ricker, chairman of the Foundation. Presenting the checks was Mel Buesseler, a cousin of John Buesseler. John was a founding dean of the medical school at Texas Tech. He was also a World War II veteran, serving as a battalion surgeon, and he also served in Korea with the Air Guard, and in Vietnam with the Army. He helped develop the Medevac program for the Army. \$8,000 of the Foundation donation will go toward the state's Junior Shooting Sports.

Sons of The American Legion

By
Gene Olsword



As we start another membership year with new goals, I want to thank all SAL members in attendance at our June Convention for electing me for a second term as your Detachment Commander. I am so proud and honored to be a Son of this great organization we have in The American Legion Family. I qualify through my dad's service in the Navy during World War II and I am a dual member through my service in the Navy during the Vietnam Era.

So, what's in store for this coming year you ask? I am going to continue having a Detachment Conference Call held on the 4th Wednesday of each month starting a 7:00 p.m. Any squadron commander or SAL member may listen in, however, for the sake of time, I ask that you just listen with no comment. I keep these calls to one hour or less depending on business. If after listening in on our conference call you have questions or ideas for the betterment of the SAL, I ask you to take it to your District Commander who will then bring it to our next month's conference call. The dial-in number for these calls is: (641) 715-3580 and the conference code is: 248209.

My Commander's Project for this year is the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) so any squadron fund-raising for my project would be greatly appreciated.

An upcoming event is our annual Department Harvest Rally held at Legionville on Sept. 8th-10th. This will be part of the Camp-O-Ree which will be hosted by the SAL. This is a family event with many activities going on. So pack up your tent or camper and dorms are available at no charge -- just bring your own bedding. There is a small registration fee so mark your calendars and join the fun. Only electricity is available at Legionville.

Another important event is our Fall Conference being held this year in Marshall on October 29th. This is an educational event and much can be learned from it.

At the top of this list, is membership. I cannot emphasize this enough. Without your membership, we cannot do what we do and our strength is not strong. Your membership is part of the voice we take to Washington, D.C. to let our leaders know what we need for our Veterans. As the saying goes, "strength comes in numbers." We are strong and getting stronger each and every day. So, pay your dues now and sign up new members to your squadron. Remember why you joined the Sons of The American Legion out of honor for the service of your parent or grandparent who answered the call to protect our Freedoms we still maintain today. They served us so now let's continue to serve. God Bless America.



AWARDS -- Commander Denise Milton presented SAL Commander Gene Olsword with two national awards honoring the Minnesota Sons of the American Legion for its efforts in this membership year.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 17-1

President Carol Kottom

September 2016

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Carol Kottom



What a whirlwind of activity. We belong to the greatest organization – the longer I am a member, the more amazed I am.

Spent a weekend at Legionville with our Junior Auxiliary members and our Honorary Department Junior President Kiana Coleman-Woods. Our girls planted 100 trees under Roy Kruger's leadership. Lots of new maples and pine trees for our future leaders to enjoy. Commander Denise came to visit and went swimming with the girls. She is a great inspiration for them and we thank her for coming to spend some time with us. Of course, her husband, currently the National SAL Vice Commander, Dennis Henkemeyer was gracious enough to spend the time also. We all painted mugs which we then took home and baked to seal the artwork on them. I chose to have all who attended sign the mug and it is now baked and in my china cabinet. We spent Saturday afternoon playing some "water" games. If you are on Facebook, you can find some video of your Department President getting pretty drenched - - and having a fantastic time with these young ladies. Thank you to Robin Dorf and Pam Hoshal for planning all the activities.

When I arrived home on Sunday, I joined the American Legion Riders in Howard Lake and hitched a ride for the final run of the weekend to Buffalo. They had a fabulous weekend and collected over \$61,000 for the kids.

Wednesday brought a great deal of sadness to the Auxiliary. Kassondra Sage, a past 10th District Honorary Junior President, died in a car accident. I know that she is watching over her family and the rest of us and is in fact, our newest angel. God bless her family and friends and please keep them in your prayers.

The Department Workshop, or as I referred to it, our Organizational meeting, was held on Saturday, August 13th. This is the first year of a one-day workshop. As with all changes, there were some pros and cons. We had 52 members present – District Presidents, Department Chairmen and committee members, the District Membership Chairmen and Department Officers. The District Presidents all received approval for their projects, which are all fantastic and I hope all of our Units support them. The Chairman presented their programs and requests for solicitations this year and all were approved. The Auxiliary has now added solicitation of funds for the Legacy Scholarship to our Education Program. We enjoyed a visit from SAL Commander Gene Olswold and wish him the best in his recovery from recent surgery.

This was also the second and final weekend of the Legacy run. Sunday I joined them in Harris and got a ride. We continued on to Forest Lake and then ended in Fridley. A big thank you to Fridley for the hospitality they extended us all. The final number collected on the run was over \$117,000. Good job Riders who are some of the most dedicated people I have the privilege of knowing. (Flat Paul was with them both weekends and I know he enjoyed the ride.)

Until next month, thank a veteran – all gave some, some gave all.



President Kottom as a biker babe.

'Thank a veteran -- all gave some and some gave all'

Department President Carol Kottom has chosen "Thank a Veteran – all gave some, some gave all" as her theme for this year of service to our veterans, communities and nation through the programs and activities of the American Legion Auxiliary. Her symbol is an angel. She asks every Unit to make your programs and activities meaningful to those we serve as well as to your members.

The first Unit mailing of the year will soon be on its way to all Unit Presidents. It should be in the mail around September 7. It contains a wealth of information you need to develop your plans and get them underway. Information was included for many of your program chairmen as well as special instruction sheets that should be helpful to your Unit Secretary and Treasurer. Presidents, when you receive these mailings, please distribute the information to the appropriate people. Unit mailings are for all your Unit members and are not the property of any one person. Your Chairmen are waiting for ideas and suggestions so they may develop their programs in a meaningful manner for your Unit. Please note that this year we will be sending the Unit Mailing out every other month. The second Unit Mailing will go out around October 17. Remember to plan accordingly in submitting articles for the mailing.

Also remember that you may choose to receive your Unit mailing via email, all you need to do is contact the department office with your email address. Keeping in mind that if you receive it via email you can in turn share it with more people in your Unit. All Unit Mailings will be posted on our ALA website. The address is: www.mnala.org and any member can pick and choose articles to download and print.

Further program suggestions with specific "what to do and how to do it" will be forthcoming in the Unit Guide. Program planning and execution of your Unit's plans are critical not only to the success of our Auxiliary programs, but serve to attract and retain active members. President Carol has asked each Chairman to come up with an article regarding their program in the month the program shares. Programs should be carried on throughout the year, with special emphasis placed on each program during its special month. The program calendar for the year is:

August - Start of the New Auxiliary Year - Plan Your Activities

September - Junior Activities

October - Education - Constitution and Standing Rules

November - Past Presidents Parley

December - Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

January - National Security; Legislation

February - Americanism

March - Community Service

April - Children and Youth

May - Poppy

June - Girls State

July - Department Convention

Thank you to all who are giving of your time, talents and enthusiasm as you assume the responsibility for a program in your Unit and/or District. The success of the programs is up to you. By working together the Auxiliary will have a successful year not only for those we serve but for our own

members as well. Let's really step up for our Veterans this year and help our Department Chairmen make all of these programs a success.

PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

President Kottom has chosen the following as President's projects for the 2016/2017 year. She will work on raising funds to provide a six-passenger golf cart for the St. Cloud VAMC. Additional monies over the cost of the golf cart will be distributed between the other Minnesota VAMC's and Veteran Homes. Her special project is handing out or mailing pocket angels to veterans, active military or anyone you would like to have an angel in their pocket at all times. Department Honorary Junior President Kiana Coleman-Woods announced that her special project this year will be helping our homeless and/or hospitalized veterans. The Juniors are asked to collect socks and/or undergarments or to donate money to the Department Office for the purchase of these items. Please support our Juniors, they are such a vital part of our organization and work so hard for our veterans.

PRESIDENT'S VISITS

If you would like to have our Department President attend a function or meeting of your Unit, please invite her. She has dedicated this year to serving the American Legion Auxiliary, its programs, and working with you, our Unit members, in a meaningful and helpful manner. President Carol would like the opportunity to work with each of our Units and Districts and is more than happy to join you, schedule permitting.

Invitations should be directed to the Department President and sent to Sandie Deutsch, Department Secretary, American Legion Auxiliary, State Veterans Service Building, 20 W. 12th St., Room 314, St. Paul MN 55155. Please do NOT send invitations to her home address. An invitation form will be included in the first Unit Mailing.

"POWER IN NUMBERS"

Under the leadership of our Department Membership Chairman Zandra Kessler, we have refocused our million member march to "Enhance Membership". National Headquarters and our Department Membership Chairman Zandy have relaxed this very aggressive goal. This year the goal the Zandy has set is to use your total membership as of July 31, 2016, reach that figure and if you have under 100 members, increase by 2 and if you have over 100 members, increase by 4.

Zandy stresses that all Units need to make membership a "fun" program. Everyone should work together to bring in membership. Think of new ways to make your Unit exciting. Have a membership rally in your Unit or at one of your Unit meetings, take a few minutes, have everyone grab their cell phone and call unpaid members and ask if there is anything they can do to get their membership paid. Stress the benefits the organization has to offer by being a member as

Strasser endorsed for 2nd Vice President

Unit 39 has endorsed Sally Strasser for the office of Department 2nd Vice President for the 2017 – 2018 Legion Year.

She is a 16 year member of the American Legion Auxiliary, being eligible through the service of her father, Walter Zambino, who served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II.

At the Unit Level, Sally has been extremely involved and served as the Unit President since 2004-

2005, with the exception of 2006 – 2007 when she served as the 4th District President.

At the District Level, she has held the offices of 2nd and 1st Vice President, and has been the Membership Chair; nominating committee, Girls State and Americanism chairperson, as well as being the District Treasurer for four years.

At the Department Level, Sally has served on the Girls State Committee for two years, and as

Chairperson of the Auxiliary Emergency fund, Education and Junior Activities, Service for Veterans (Field Service) and Gift Shop programs. She has volunteered as the Nurse at Girls State for the past 6 years and as a Counselor for 2 years.

Sally has also volunteered at the Minneapolis Veterans Home and with the Christmas Gift Shop.

Strasser has three adult children and six grandchildren, and lives in Oakdale.



SALLY STRASSER

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

well as assisting our Veterans who gave up so much for each of us. Most importantly regarding membership is that it is NOT up to the Membership Chairmen to collect dues and recruit new members – it is every one of our responsibilities to make our goals a reality.

Remember that you can pay your dues online. Go to the National website and login in to the member section and pay your dues. You can print out a card, take that to your Unit Membership Chairman and she will give you your permanent card.

Zandy has set the following target dates this year; 1) 50% by September 1, 2016; 2) 60% by December 1, 2016; 3) 70% by February 1, 2017; 4) 80% by March 1, 2017; 5) 90% by May 1, 2017; 6) 100% by July 1, 2017. There are many awards and trophies to shoot for this year. Please consult your membership manual that each Unit received in their membership packet. This manual is also on our Department website.

FALL CONFERENCE

Fall Conference will be held Friday and Saturday, October 28-29 hosted by the Marshall American Legion Family #113. Housing and pre-registration information are included in this issue of the Minnesota Legionnaire.

This year's format will be a little different from last year. The initial program will have a joint American Legion Family Conference on one day and a separate Auxiliary Conference on the other day. There will be more detailed information in the next issue of the Legionnaire as plans are finalized.

Fall Conference is a time for each of us to become better informed about our programs. It is for all members, not just the officers. We hope every Unit will be represented at this Department school of instruction. All members are invited to attend. There will be training sessions on Thursday, October 27 on Leadership, Strategic Planning and Membership. The session will begin at 7:00 p.m. Please make sure and attend – our Chairmen are working very hard to rejuvenate our organization, to be inviting to new members and still not losing the focus of our mission.

SILENT AUCTION/BAG SALE -

A silent auction will be held at our Fall Conference with the proceeds going to support the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. This has become a tradition at Fall Conference, giving each of us the opportunity to help. The Chairman is asking for new or gently used items to be used in the Silent Auction. All items will be very welcome. We are looking for the very popular Theme Baskets again this year from Units, Districts, TAL, SAL or TLR's. The baskets bring in a tremendous amount of donations for our program. There will be an "Angel" District donation wall along with a bake sale. Remember bidders can be all members of The American Legion Family. All items should be brought Thursday evening or early Friday morning. Bidding will be on Friday only from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Be sure to attend and place your bids - the items last year were simply wonderful.

CORRECTION

Department Secretary Sandie wants to extend her apologies to Chris Ronning as her name should have been listed as who will be serving as the National Executive Committeewoman at the 2016 National Convention in Cincinnati.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

I am very sad that Past Department President Sandy's year is over because I enjoyed working with her and having the honor to be called her close friend – what a wonderful lady she is. On the other hand I am very happy to have the opportunity to work with President Carol. It is wonderful to be able to "spar" with somebody without worrying about her getting mad or even because she doesn't agree. The same goes the other way as well. Carol has great ideas for this year and I am excited to be part of it.

I know I am getting a bit older every day as my first granddaughter is now a teenager. I remember being in the hospital the day she was born. It was a life changing experience of which only grandmothers feel. She has grown into a fantastic, successful young woman, even though her Grandma still gets to call her "my little princess". Happy Birthday Frankie. With vacations, bike trips and all that over with I find my future brings eight stimulating nights in Cincinnati. Never been there, not one of those places real high on my bucket list, but I am sure that it will be very memorable.

I took a new plan to my own American Legion Post 79 manager Shorty, as I heard on the radio that October 31 is the end of the world again. We are going to have a Second Coming of the End of the World Party in Montgomery on October 29. I have to get my thinking cap on to come up with some crazy things to do. So – Vrzy, Joe and Dick, get me your ideas. This will be a good one. Just so you know, we will be doing the "get a ticket for a drink purchase" again.

Loch family thanks Auxiliary for support

In July I lost my husband of 18 years, and the father of my 5 beautiful children. He was a guy who always had a smile on his face and a quick joke to share. He would go out of his way to help people. James was involved with our local Legion Post in Kimball. He worked there a couple days a month and was a member of the SAL. Although he never served in the military, he loved his country.

James taught our kids from a very young age how important it is to serve as a community volunteer. Our children have been SAL and Junior Auxiliary members for several years. This year our nine-year old daughter Maleah was elected as Honorary 6th District President. She and her dad took part in the Memorial Day service in Kimball. It is a very special memory for Maleah. She just beams with pride when she talks about how the juniors can help to make a difference in the lives of our local veterans and how her dad taught her about that. James will be looking down on her as she completes her service project and activities with the Junior Auxiliary this year. He was so proud of her.

When my husband passed away the Auxiliary members were gathered in Rochester for the State Convention. In hearing of this tragedy in my family, they took up a collection. There are no words to adequately express my gratitude. I was fearful of how I would provide for my kids without the help of my husband, but your generous gift allowed me to set that fear aside and just be present for my kids when they needed me most. I sincerely thank each and every one of you for your support.

With grateful heart – **Kim Loch and children Krista, Matthew, Maleah, Joshua and Carly**



JUNIOR FUN WEEKEND -- The 2016 Junior Fun Weekend was held August 5-6 at Legionville. Junior Activities Chairman Robin Dorf, Department President Carol Kottom, incoming Junior Activities Chairman Pam Hoshal and Department Honorary Junior President Kiana Coleman-Woods kicked off the weekend with 30 Juniors and 18 Seniors in attendance. With the help of Roy Kruger, the girls planted many trees. Above, Coleman-Woods and Kottom enjoy a water game.



WOMAN OF THE YEAR -- Sharon Odegaard of Thief River Falls Unit 117 received the Minnesota Auxiliary Unit Woman of the Year Award. The award was presented by Past President Karen Thygeson. Odegaard has been unit president 10 times and is now membership chair. She has been strongly involved in the unit's blood program and other volunteer activities.

July 31, 2016, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year
One	6,146	4,859	79.06%	5,096
Two	5,979	4,750	79.44%	4,931
Three	5,323	4,289	80.57%	4,413
Four	920	702	76.30%	759
Five	1,047	802	76.60%	863
Six	7,318	5,868	80.19%	6,069
Seven	4,859	3,819	78.60%	4,010
Eight	2,005	1,577	78.65%	1,656
Nine	5,232	4,235	80.94%	4,315
Ten	6,382	5,021	78.67%	5,262
1982	198	156	78.79%	132
Totals	45,409	36,078	79.45%	37,506

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