



DEC told that state gains a post and also loses a post

By Al Zdon

The Minnesota American Legion gained one and lost one following action by the Department Executive Committee in April.

The meeting had been postponed due to a snowstorm in Montgomery in March.

A new post will be formed at Nowthen, a small community in the northern suburbs of the Twin Cities, a few miles north of Anoka and Ramsey.

With a population of 4,700, Nowthen is in one of the fastest growth areas of Minnesota.

Paul Orson, 10th District Commander, told the DEC that the paperwork for the post is now at the National organization and the goal is to have the post up and running by the time of the state convention.

The post number will be 2018.

At the same time, the committee voted to revoke the charter of the Minneapolis Business and Professional Men's Post 332.

Fifth District Commander Joe Bayer said many of the members of the post had moved out of state, and the post

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Historical Society creates veteran outreach position

The Minnesota Historical Society has a new outreach program.

And it's for veterans.

Chris Belland has been named the program and outreach manager for veterans at the state historical society, and will work out of the Fort Snelling historical site to create programs for veterans.

Belland has worked for the society for a number of years at Fort Snelling and he has a military background.

Belland has been in the Minnesota National Guard since 2006, was commissioned in 2010, and has served deployments in Kuwait and Egypt. He is presently the public affairs officer for the First Brigade of the 34th Infantry Division.

He said part of his new role at the society will be to help veterans tell their stories in various ways.

"Veterans have always been very important to the historical society and they always will be," he said.

Special events for veterans are being planned. On Aug. 3 there will be a special event on military and citizen service.

Belland said that over the years, the Fort itself has become a destination for many veterans. Interpreters explain what life was like at the fort, and the historical significance of different episodes.

The visitor center to the old fort will be seeing some

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Bemidji Post reaches across border to help a grieving Canadian community



When Bemidji Post 14 leadership learned of the tragedy in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, where 16 junior hockey players were killed and 13 badly injured in a bus accident, they decided to do something about it. They invited the Humboldt AA Pee Wee hockey team to the Paul Bunyan International Hockey Tournament. In a project called "Help Humboldt Heal," the post raised funds to cover the expenses for the team to spend four days in Bemidji. "This was felt to be the best way to show our support in a tangible way," organizer Jim Haskell, said. After the tournament, the Humboldt parents took out an ad in the Bemidji newspaper and said, "Over the four days in Bemidji, our team and parents shared in the excitement, laughter and friendship. From the moment we stepped off the bus... Bemidji's citizens greeted us with open arms, demonstrating that the hockey we know and love in our country has no borders. We are more than opponents, we are friends who share a love of the game. The trip, in fact, did lift our spirits. Thank you Ralph Gracie Post 14. Your thoughtfulness will never be forgotten."

Above, the players and hosts posed for a photo at the opening welcome at the tourney.

101st Convention will be held in Willmar

There are still motel rooms available for the state convention. There were reports that Legionnaires had called and been told that the rooms were all taken.

Convention Coporation President Pat Logan, how-

ever, told the Department Executive Committee that there were rooms. Those who are having trouble booking a room, after they have called the hotel directly, should call Laurie Bapness 320-444-9480.

The 2019 Department of

Minnesota Convention, the 101st since the founding in 1919, will be held in Willmar on July 11-13.

It is the official business meeting of the Department, and elections will be held.

The Department Executive Committee will meet at 7 p.m. on July 10.

Official registration materials are on Page 2 of this issue. Registration is \$15 per person or \$18 at the door.

The official hotels for the convention will be the Best Western Plus and the Holiday Inn Express. Those planning on staying in Willmar should make their own reservations.

The phone number for the Best Western is 320-235-6060 and for the Holiday Inn is 320-231-2601.

The Auxiliary will also be holding meetings at this time.

Commander honored at testimonial



Commander Darrel Redepenning received a standing ovation at his testimonial at Anoka Post 102. Clapping are Past National Commander Dan Ludwig and Donna Redepenning, the commander's wife.

The Lumberjack

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LEGAL ADVICE — Department Judge Advocate Greg Colby tells the Department Executive Committee what leaders in an organization should contribute.

DEC meets in LeCenter

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was no longer viable.

The DEC also learned that an effort was underway to revive the Dayton-Rogers Post 531 and that a meeting was planned to pursue a revival.

Mike Maxa, Department Membership Director, said the Dayton-Rogers example was not unusual. "There are a lot of posts teetering in Minnesota."

In other business, the DEC:

— Adopted the recommendation of a resolutions committee that said a resolution sent to the DEC needs to be returned to its originator for more clarification. The resolution resolved that electronic communication should be a legal form of communication for the Department. Commander Darrel Redepenning said it could be brought back at the next DEC committee.

— Legionville Safety Patrol Camp already has 500 registered for this summer. The camp had to be closed last year because of a bog blocking the swimming beach. Wayne Gilbertson, the president of the Legionville Corporation, said the camp was developing a new sports utility building. Tom Sanford is the new camp director.

— Chairman Dan Williams of the Strategic Planning Committee, said a draft version of the committee's plan for sustained membership growth is available on the committee's Facebook page.

— National Executive Committeeman Marland Ronning said the U.S. Mint coins honoring the 100th birthday of The American Legion were selling well, with 67,000 sold so far.

— Gary Munkholm, a member of the Rehabilitation Committee, reported that facilities that serve veterans are having trouble hiring and retaining mid-level nurses, health assistants and LPNs.

— Membership Director Maxa informed the DEC that Minnesota had missed the 95 percent goal. He noted that between 2005 and now, Minnesota had lost 42 percent of its membership. He said that there are over 2,400 members in the national post that should be brought into local posts. Maxa scolded the membership team saying everyone needs to get off their rear ends to make membership succeed. "If you don't want to work, don't wear the white cap. Don't wear the skunk cap. Just sit in the weeds and support us." Maxa said he didn't want to be the mean guy, "but somebody's got to say it. We need to get this done."

— Finance Committee Chair Robin Picray said the Department needs to be seeking other ways of raising money to keep our programs going. He noted that posts rarely cover mileage and per diem anymore, and the Department has taken up the burden.

— Convention Committee Chairman Pat Logan said there are still rooms available for the Department Convention in Willmar. He said those seeking rooms should call the hotels directly and then if they have problems to call Laurie Barpness at 320-444-9480.

— Heard from Judge Advocate Greg Colby on the duties of those who take on Legion offices. He said that any charity a Legion body runs should relate to the four pillars of the organization. Colby said that officers of the Legion have three duties to the organization: Loyalty, obedience and care. "Do you attend meetings? That's your job." Colby

also said that while he is not allowed to give legal advice to posts, "That doesn't mean I can't be of some assistance. Please call me."

— Dan Ludwig, Past National Commander, said that in earlier times, posts and other Legion entities could operate more loosely. "We can't operate that way anymore. We have to function within the law." Ludwig said the National Judge Advocate will be invited to the Fall Conference. Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl said that it's time to stop the baloney in the Legion organization. "If you know something's being done wrong, tell somebody."

Tesdahl told the committee that the Minnesota delegation at the National Convention in Indianapolis will be housed at the J.W. Marriott Hotel and rooms would be \$154 per night plus tax. Parking will be \$44 or \$49 valet per night. Ludwig said it's possible a local Indianapolis post will offer cheap parking and rides to the hotel. There will be a Minnesota party, probably at the hotel. Tesdahl said there was an effort to keep the cost at \$25 per person with a cash bar. There will also be a post-parade party with two kegs of beer. The room will be locked until the marchers from the parade arrive at the room.

Minnesota Legion Foundation scholarships announced

The 2019 Minnesota American Legion Foundation Scholarships have been announced.

They include:
Chandler Ecker, Comfrey, South Dakota State University, sponsored by Comfrey Post 244.

Sonya Schroeder, Rochester, University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, sponsored by Rochester Post 92.

Ashley Wagner, Heron Lake, Minnesota West Community and Technical College, sponsored by Heron Lake Post 224.

Veterans outreach

Continued from Page 1

changes in the next several years. The visitor center now being used will be shut down after Labor Day, and then demolished at some point after that.

A new visitor center will then be constructed in Building 18, one of the old Fort Snelling building adjacent to the historic fort.

Belland was asked about the fact that some veterans have objected that the emphasis on the telling of history at the fort seems to be shifting from strictly a military interpretation to one that favors Native Americans.

For instance, the fort is now official called Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote, the Native American name for the area around the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers.

"Everybody has a place. Everybody has their story to tell. The space sits on nearly 10,000 years of history. The Minnesota Historical Society has a responsibility to tell all the stories there. Having said that, the veterans are very important the Minnesota Historical Society."

In the future, he said the society hopes to do a better job of telling the veterans story. For instance, Fort Snelling quit being an Army installation after World War II, and much of the history ends there.

However, the Fort continued to be an Army Reserve center for many years after that, and, Belland said, that story needs to be told.

Veterans will continue to receive discounts at Historic Fort Snelling.

On Memorial Day, all veterans get a free admission to the grounds. On any other day, veterans receive \$2 off the regular admission price.

New acting director named at St. Cloud VA system

ST. CLOUD — VA Midwest Health Care Network Director Robert P. McDivitt has announced the appointment of Martina Malek to the role of Acting Health Care System Director, St. Cloud VA Health Care System, effective May 6.

Malek currently serves as the Associate Director/Chief Experience Officer of the Minneapolis VA Health Care System.

Malek began her VA career at the Minneapolis VA in 2007.

Before Malek's appointment, Heath J. Streck served in the role of Acting Health Care System Director for the St. Cloud VA, from Jan. 14 to May 5, 2019.



MARTINA MALEK

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AMERICAN LEGION & AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY 2019 DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA CONVENTION	
I am registering as a representative of: (check only one and write in number)	I am registering as a: (check only one)
<input type="checkbox"/> American Legion Post #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate
<input type="checkbox"/> Auxiliary Unit #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate
<input type="checkbox"/> SAL Squadron # _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate at Large (Auxiliary Only)
District #: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Guest (No Vote Allowed)
Name: _____	
Address: _____	
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	
Phone #: _____	
A \$15 registration fee and separate registration form is required for every person registering to attend the convention. If you are registering as a voting member of both the American Legion & American Legion Auxiliary, a separate registration form and \$15 fee is required for each organization.	
Registration at the door will be \$18	
Mail registration forms and payment to: Legion Post 167 Attn: Greg Krause 220 19th Ave. SW Willmar, MN 56201	Make checks payable to: AMERICAN LEGION POST 167 (credit cards not accepted)

Membership chart for April 26, 2019

District	2019 Goal	Total 2018	Total 2019	Weeks Gain	Total Posts	Goal Posts	% Of Goal	
District 1	8,553	8,495	7,968	11	58	11	93.16%	8,368
District 2	6,793	6,709	6,355	18	84	9	93.55%	6,646
District 3	11,262	11,197	10,768	39	65	22	95.61%	10,995
District 4	2,281	2,263	2,095	5	18	5	91.85%	2,207
District 5	2,340	2,318	2,182	1	22	7	93.25%	2,255
District 6	11,342	11,271	10,705	19	71	25	94.38%	11,079
District 7	6,089	6,013	5,641	11	76	22	92.64%	5,940
District 8	3,998	3,958	3,682	14	40	6	92.10%	3,892
District 9	6,482	6,417	5,989	9	65	16	92.39%	6,287
District 10	9,539	9,485	8,894	26	54	10	93.24%	9,290
District 11	2,009	2,084	1,857	0	2	0	92.43%	2,053
Totals	70,688	70,210	66,136	153	555	133	93.56%	69,012

Same Date
Last Year

SOT grants announced

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs announced today the recipients of the competitive (2018 Cycle II) Support Our Troops (SOT) license plate fund grant program:

- Fishing for Life, Inc.: \$20,000
- Middle River Veterans Outdoors, Inc.: \$20,000
- Honor Flight Twin Cities: \$50,000
- 23rd Veteran: \$89,920
- Region Five Development Commission: \$92,400

The SOT grant program offers a competitive grant process which allows organizations to apply for funding.

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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

4 FANTASTIC WAYS TO EXPERIENCE MNHHS

JOIN. MEMBERS GET THE BEST DEAL IN HISTORY.



1 TOUR SUMMIT AVENUE
Summit Avenue Walking Tour, Saturdays & Sundays, May 4–Sep 29, departing from the James J. Hill House in St. Paul. Tickets at mnhs.org/calendar.



Photo/Daniel Corrigan

3 CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF LOCAL MUSIC
First Avenue: Stories of Minnesota's Mainroom, opening May 4 at the Minnesota History Center, St. Paul. Attend the exhibit opening celebration to hear local DJ sets and live music.



2 REMEMBER NORMANDY
World War II Round Table: Remembering the 75th Anniversary of the Normandy Landings, Thu, May 9, Historic Fort Snelling, St. Paul.



4 VISIT FREE ON MEMORIAL DAY
On Memorial Day, May 27, veterans and active military receive FREE admission to **Historic Fort Snelling**, featuring military demonstrations and a "living timeline" of America's military past.

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Darrel Redepning



Greetings Legion Family.

At the time of this writing I've just finished my testimonial dinner. What a fabulous and humbling experience. Once again my Anoka Legion Family did an outstanding job hosting the event and I thank them one and all. Past Department Commander Don Pankake M.C.'d the event. For a guy who told me several times that he doesn't tell jokes, he managed to keep the audience laughing thru the whole program. I was Don's Membership Director in 2012-13 and we've been good friends ever since. Past National Commander Dan Ludwig was the guest speaker and he reminisced about an important appointment as the Brain Science Chairman that he received when my dad was Department Commander. Dan also spoke on issues of

Mail Call

Elk River is a veteran-friendly city To the Editor:

Recent events concerning a flag in a downtown park have given veterans and Legion members the wrong impression of the City of Elk River.

It started with the Elk River American Legion Post wanting to move their Memorial Day program to Rivers Edge Commons Park in downtown Elk River. The park does not have a flag pole so the Legion Commander went to the Park and Recreation Commission to request that one be put up.

The Commission discussed the request and said that they would not put up a flag pole until they had studied proper placement. They also did not have the \$5,000 for flag pole purchase and labor to install it in their 2019 budget. They said they wanted to see how the Legion event went the first time through and then the flag would get strong consideration in the 2020 budget.

This response prompted a Letter to the Editor of the *Elk River Star News* from the wife of the Vice Commander of the Elk River Legion Post. The letter did not tell the entire story of what had been discussed at the Commission meeting. It said, "The Elk River Parks Department denied the request because it would spoil the view and be aesthetically unappealing. That says a lot about where the city of Elk River prioritizes veterans."

This half-truth sparked a firestorm on social media and has given Elk River a black eye in the view of many veterans. I am a veteran myself and I know that Elk River has worked very hard to help veterans in any way it can. I helped start the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program in Elk River seven years ago and we have spent a lot of time and money assisting our local veterans. Elk River has as much, or more respect and admiration for its veterans as any city out there. We fly a flag in our downtown parking lot that is as large as any flag in the entire metro area.

I believe the situation with the flag has been resolved. For this year's Memorial Day event, the city's ladder fire truck will sit in the park displaying a huge American flag. A GoFundMe page has been set up to raise the funds for a permanent flag pole to be installed at a site chosen by the Commission. They will be discussing the issue in upcoming meetings. If the GoFundMe page doesn't raise enough money, a local businessman has come forward to pay the balance.

I am proud of what Elk River does for its veterans. To imply that Elk River is un-American or not veteran-friendly is a flat out lie. It is just another example of why people should get all the facts before jumping to unjustified conclusions.

John Dietz
Mayor of Elk River

Color Guard anniversary

To the Editor:

We realize that this is the 100th year for The American Legion and the auxiliaries. Did you know or were you made aware of before now that it is 50 years for the Hibbing Post 222 Color Guard? This was started by Al Johnson. Al was the lead person for over 40 years before turning it over to Bill Kochevar. Al never missed a game. Bob Fluguear was another very dependable & dedicated person. We are the only one in the state that does this for our varsity hockey games at the Memorial Building in Hibbing. When Curt Kmett retired as one of the members they were in desperate need of help, there were only a few that had time to be at

declining membership in The American Legion.

In a previous article I had asked that attendees not bring me any gifts. Well that didn't work, so I thank all those who disobeyed orders and gave me touching mementos and cards. All three of my counterparts were also in attendance. So thank you to Jean, Shawn and Chuck, not only for being there, but for being such great people to serve with.

We were also able to keep the father/son emotional roller coaster going with my dad and mom present. There were several times this winter that I wasn't sure if dad would be at my testimonial and I just couldn't imagine doing it without him. It takes a lot of supporters to make it to this position and dad has always been my biggest cheerleader. He became a great-grandpa again the next morning. As I'm writing he's looking forward to holding a new great-granddaughter in his arms. Life is good as God continues to bless our family.

As we look to the onset of spring weather with more Testimonials and District Conventions, let's not forget an important day at the end of this month, Memorial Day. As a child I looked forward to the three-day weekend and kick-off to summer. As a veteran I remember some of the names on the Vietnam Wall that were friends of mine. Memorial Day changed forever for me. It's a time to remember and honor the sacrifices made for our country. If we as veterans don't honor those sacrifices, who will? I feel we are duty bound to honor our fallen comrades. Remember what Memorial Day really is. God bless and thank you for all you do.

the games, so I asked if I could help? It has been six years now, and I am the only active woman on the team. Bill Kochevar, now 80 years young, Chuck Findley and myself attend almost all the games.

We received a standing ovation for the 100 years of service for the Legion and Auxiliary and 50 years of dedicated service for the Color Guard. I feel that the ones that have gone before us and the ones that have retired and been dedicated for years should have some recognition, especially Bill, Chuck & Curt, who's retired now. Bill just picked up some one who can be at most games, Jim Fairchild, as Chuck is not available now. The people expect us on the ice, we receive many compliments for what we do. We can go on the ice with two people, but it's better with three.

There is a photo at the new South entrance of the Memorial Building with teams on the ice and Color Guard Members Al Johnson, Curt Kmett & Bill Kochevar. There is also a mural on the wall at the Hibbing High School with Bill, Barb & Chuck.

We would hope that this letter would inspire other Legion organizations to do the same practice if able for their events. If not hockey, something else. (For hockey, get cleats for your shoes.)

Bill has a few back up people: Mike Stavnes, Brian Tammi, Larry Pocrnich. These women could be called if needed as they just agreed to help: Tracie Ohren and Marie Pierce, American Legion Auxiliary members.

Bill Kochevar
American Legion Post 222
Barbara Hemenway
President, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 222

Alphabetize Obituaries

To the Editor:

I've been reading this magazine for many years and always pay close attention to "Taps." I find it difficult to locate individuals I might be interested in. The sixty-six names in the March 2019 issue were especially difficult.

I have a suggestion. It would be helpful to list them alphabetically or numerically by post, exampled by: POST 473 then the info if done numerically. I suspect they are listed in the order they are submitted.

Many members have great interest in this part of the paper and look specifically for individuals or look to see if a comrade in a post is listed. Please help make this easier reading.

James A. Hovda
Adjutant, Post 473, Rice

Editor's Note: Yes, they are listed in the order they came in, and have been for over 20 years. I'm not sure how to list them by post, because the program we use cannot distinguish between the post number, the age, or other numbers in the obituary. However, I can sort alphabetically by last name, and we'll give that a try this month. Let us know if you think it's an improvement.

Thank you

Thank you to all those who sent cards, emails and notes of condolence. It was much appreciated. And thank you to all those who came to Carol's service. There's no family like the American Legion Family.

Bill Barbknecht and Family

Chaplain's Corner

By
Bonnie Hanson



Happy May Days. It has been so nice to see the snow gone and the sun is out. I have put away my Winter things, yeah.

As long as I have had this position, I have been reading so many things. I think that I will share some of them with you. Many of us don't know what PTSD is, so I would like to write two things that should be very important to veterans and current service members. The first is a concept known as moral injury theory. The second is how we as the American Legion Family may be better able to assist our veterans and current service members with this challenge. My intent here is to raise awareness of moral injury or to provide you with a refresher if you are familiar with it.

So, what is moral injury? I'm sure many of you are familiar with the terminology of PTSD. PTSD is defined by many clinicians as "a fear-based disorder that results from exposure to life-threatening events, rather than on the consequences of active participation in warfare." PTSD then is described as a fear-based disorder resulting from one or several negative and traumatic events.

PTSD has come by many names over the years; soldier's heart, battle fatigue, shell shock, gross stress reaction, post-Vietnam syndrome and more. It is diagnosed by the VA on a regular basis and a seemingly large percentage of combat veterans are diagnosed with PTSD. VA estimates that roughly 20% of post 9/11 vets and roughly 30% of Vietnam vets have PTSD.

Does the definition of PTSD accurately describe the conditions many service members are dealing with? Could service members be dealing with something else entirely different, that is masked by other trauma? Could service members be struggling with what is becoming to be known as moral injury?

Moral injury "results when soldiers violate their core moral beliefs, and in evaluating their behavior negatively, they feel they no longer live in a reliable, meaningful world and can no longer be regarded as a decent human being." Others define it as "the constellation of shame and guilt based disturbances that some combat veterans experience after engaging in wartime acts of commission (e.g., killing) or omission (e.g., failing to prevent atrocities)." I know that in our background we have tried to help that person and sometimes we did but then sometimes we didn't. I could go on but I know that there are people out there that might understand what PTSD is. And please if you want to contact me and talk, I'd be happy to hear from you.

Let's just note that Minnesota has the highest percent of veterans that have taken their lives.

A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

Look for the rainbow, and cast away your sorrow. Somewhere just over the horizon, you will find a brighter tomorrow. Sometimes our joy is incomplete when sadness corners our way. Know with our Savior at our side we can have a happier day. We'll always have tribulations and many a cross we will bear, But God will carry us through these times because He loves us and cares. Every battle that we have conquered helps us in life to succeed. If we just look for the sunshine, God will grant our every need.

— Shirley Hile Powell

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Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Free train rides

The Osceola and St. Croix Valley Railway will be offering free coach rides for military veterans and families during Armed Forces weekend, May 18-19. Veterans will need a military ID, VA card or DD-214 or other document to show their service.

Trains depart from Osceola at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, and noon and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday. For more information contact Andrew Tighe, director@trainride.org.

Legal Clinics

Three free legal clinics for low income veterans are being planned by the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans. They will include housing, employment, benefits, debt collection, expungement, family law and child support. The clinics include:

— Thursday, June 13, Anoka County Government Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

— Thursday, June 6, American Legion Post at West Duluth, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

— Tuesday, May 14, Minneapolis VA, Flag Atrium Balcony, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Taps

Allen, Ronald Clifford, 63, Army veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, died April 19, 2019. He served for 31 years and retired as a colonel. He was a helicopter pilot. He was a past commander of Red Wing Post 54.

Anderson, Arthur A., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 26, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Andert, Kenneth, 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 19. He was a member of New London Post 537.

Arens, Anthony, 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 12, 2019. He served in Alaska. He was a member of Springfield Post 257.

Batesole, Virgil Keith, 88, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2019. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Bjorklund, Paul W., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died April 7, 2019. He was a Tech 5. He was a member of St. Peter Post 37.

Brewster, Thomas M., 89, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 24, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Buckley, Robert Leland, 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died April 24, 2019. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Buege, Wayne, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 28, 2019. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

Bullerman, Landel "Boysie," 87, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died April 11, 2019. He was a member of Adrian Post 32.

Cariveau, Paul A., 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 3, 2019. He served in Germany. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Christie, Bruce M., 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 21, 2019. He served two tours with the Black Horse Cavalry. He was a member of Litchfield Post 104.

Clark, Richard, 72, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 28, 2019. He served on the aircraft carriers Essex, Wasp and Roosevelt. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

Conway, Walter "Jack," 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 15, 2019. He served overseas. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Deshaw, Donald J., 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 19, 2019. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

Ebnet, John C., 92, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 16, 2019. He was a member of Holdingford Post 211.

Gross, Alfred, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 22, 2019. He served three years in Germany. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Hage, Wilbur Henry, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 13, 2019. He was a member Lakefield Post 4.

Hansen, Paul Leo, 85, Marine veteran of the Korean War, died March 16, 2019. He served as a field radio operator in Japan. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Henslin, Donald A., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 5, 2019. He was a member of St. James Post 33.

Herness, Lester Orris, 78, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 20, 2019. He served at the Duluth Air National Guard Base. He was a member of Ashby Post 357.

Hoppe, Aloys P. "Pete," 86, Army veteran of the

Round Tables

The World War II History Round Table will be held Thursday, May 9, at the Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center at 7 p.m. The program will be "Remembering the 75th Anniversary of the Normandy Landings," with author Stephen Alan Bourque, author of *Beyond the Beach*. Veterans of D-Day will discuss their service.

The Vietnam War Roundtable will be held Monday, May 20, at Concordia University in St. Paul at the Buetow Auditorium at 7 p.m. The program will be on the "Minnesota Connection at the Battle of Soui Tre." Many Minnesotans fought in the battle in 1967, including the base commander Lt. Col. Jack Vessey. Retired Major Gen. Rick Nash and Retired Chaplain John Morris will speak. Veterans will discuss their participation.

The St. Croix Valley Civil War Roundtable will meet Monday, May 20, at the Lowell Inn in Stillwater with dinner at 6 and the program at 7. The program will be "Militia Units from the St. Croix Valley in the Iron Brigade with Kevin Hampton. Call Steve Anderson at 715-386-1268 for dinner reservations.

The Stearns History Museum Civil War Roundtable will meet Tuesday, May 14, at the museum in St. Cloud. The program will be George Romano who is an expert on the

Korean War, died April 5, 2019. He was a member of Paynesville Post 271.

Iveland, Bryce Boyd, 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 22, 2019. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Jason, Milton W., 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 29, 2019. He was a past commander of Lonsdale Post 586.

Johnson, Gary W., 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 3, 2019. He was a member of Tyler Post 185.

Johnstone, Glen, 90, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 12, 2019. He was stationed in Korea. He was a member of Mora Post 201.

Kienlen, Raymond, 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 18, 2019. He was a longtime member of the Honor Guard of St. Peter Post 37.

Krause, William O., 92, Navy veteran of World War II and Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 24, 2019. He also served in the Marine Corps. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Kresl, Della E., 88, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died March 11, 2019. She was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Kuphal, Raymond Herman, 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died April 7, 2019. He was a member of Gaylord Post 433.

Larson, David M., 49, Army veteran of the war on terrorism, died April 4, 2019. He was deployed five times into Afghanistan and Iraq. He served for 26 years. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Larson, Irvin G., 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 23, 2019. He was a member of Thief River Falls Post 117.

Loehlein, Robert J., 93, Marine veteran of World War II, died March 22, 2019. He was a member of Deerwood Post 557.

Ludtke, William R., 80, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died April 5, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Lutterman, Douglas V., 69, Air Force and Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 18, 2019. He was a past commander of Jackson Post 130.

Magnuson, Donald L., 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 2, 2019. He was a member Willmar Post 167.

McLean, Scott D., 86, Navy veteran of the Korean War and Navy Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 17, 2019. He retired as a senior chief. He was an active member of Inver Grove Heights Post 424.

Monroe, Ervin Arthur, 89, National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died April 5, 2019. He was federalized and joined the 194th Tank Battalion, 47th Army Division. He served at Fort Rucker. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

Newell, John Ward, 77, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 21, 2019. He was an SP4 medical specialist. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Olson, Orvis Wayne, 84, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2019. He was an aircraft mechanic and served in Germany. He was a member of Roseau Post 24.

Olstad, Curt I., Sr., 79, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 10, 2019. He was a member of Backus Post 368.

Pearson, Larry A., 80, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died April 2, 2019. He served on the USS Boston, the first guided missile cruiser. He was a member of Albert Lea Post

Wood Lake Battle during the Dakota Uprising.

New Exhibit in Mankato

The Blue Earth County Historical Society has opened a new exhibit, "100 Years and a Million Stories, A History of The American Legion." It will be on view until June 1.

The exhibit highlights the history of Legion, the Mankato Post 11, and other posts in the area. Viewers will be able to explore the history, community service and camaraderie that have shaped the century of The American Legion. For more information call 507-345-5566 or go to www.blueearthcountyhistory.com.

Legion Day at the Twins

The 19th annual Legion Family Day at the Twins will be Friday, June 14, in a game with the Kansas City Royals at 7:10 p.m.

Two types of tickets are available at \$22 and \$38. There will be scoreboard recognition of each post attending. Commander Redepinning will throw out the first pitch.

Tickets can be purchased by going to <https://groupmatics.events/event/Americanlegion561> or calling 800-33-TWINS. Reference this promotion.

56.

Peterson, Kenneth Christian, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died March 26, 2019. He was a cook. He was a member of Granite Falls Post 69.

Petrich, William Gary, 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 14, 2019. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Potratz, James Arthur, 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died March 22, 2019. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Przedziecki, Roman W., 92, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died April 4, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

Ripley, Harold Donald "Rip," 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died April 5, 2019. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Rolland, Richard Gene, 76, Army National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died April 3, 2019. He was a member of Milroy Post 274.

Schulte, Michael H., 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 22, 2019. He was a member of Spring Grove Post 249.

Shogren, Warren V., 94, Army veteran of World War II, died March 22, 2019. He served in the infantry and participated in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a color guard member of Chisago City Post 272.

Skoog, Myer "Whitey," 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died April 4, 2019. He was a Minnesota basketball legend, and played six years for the Minneapolis Lakers. He was a member of St. Peter Post 37.

Stevens, Arnold, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 8, 2019. He was a member of Millville Post 579.

Stone, David W., 65, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 30, 2019. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Thielges, Myron, 88, Army National Guard veteran of the Korean War, died March 30, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

Torkelson, James Harold, 78, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 14, 2019. He served in Germany. He was a member of Lowry Post 253.

Twito, Jacob H., 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died April 11, 2019. He served aboard USS Shenandoah (AD-26) in 1945. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Underdahl, Elton, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 9, 2019. He was a member of Middle River Post 444.

Vukelich, Edward J., 73, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 23, 2019. He was a member of Deerwood Post 557.

Warzeerta, Sylvester, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died April 8, 2019. He was a member of Bowlus Post 642.

Weaver, Frank, 81, Navy veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, died April 13, 2019. He served 20 years and retired as a master chief petty officer. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

Weelborg, Myron, "Mike," 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died March 20, 2019. He served in the Corps of Engineers. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

Wegman, Stanley James, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died April 16, 2019. He was a member of Pine Island Post 184.

Weimerskirch, John, 71, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died March 20, 2019. He served as a commissioned officer for 25 years in the Navy and Navy Reserve. He retired as a commander. He was a member of Winona Post 9.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By
Jeremy Wolfsteller



The Veterans Administration's Origins & Pillar 1, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

For more than 100 years, The American Legion through its number 1 Pillar, VA&R, has been the nation's leading advocate for proper health care and earned entitlements for America's veterans. In fact, The American Legion was influential in creating the Veterans Administration in 1930, and a keen supporter of its rise to Cabinet status under President Ronald Reagan when it became the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 1989. But before we discuss The American Legion's importance of Pillar 1, let's look back into history to figure out how the VA got to where it is today.

As far back as 1636, The English colonies in North America under the first pension law provided money to those veterans that were injured in the colony's defense against Indians. In 1776, the Continental Congress encouraged enlistments during the American Revolutionary War by providing pensions for those who became disabled from the war. They also offered half pay for life if a soldier lost a limb or had a "serious" injury. Although because the Continental Congress did not have the authority or the funding to provide these entitlements, these pensions were provided and under the responsibility by the individual states.

It wasn't until 1917 when the United States entered WWI that Congress established a system of veterans' benefits. This included what we know today as disability compensation, life insurance and vocational benefits for disabled. Around 1920, there were three different federal agencies that administered veterans' benefits; the Veterans Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions of Interior Department and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

Shortly after the three agencies were formed, The Veterans' Bureau headquarters was established at the Arlington Building at 810 Vermont Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. The 11-story structure was built in 1918 and served initially as the headquarters for the Bureau of War Risk Insurance. Appointed as the first director of the Veterans' Bureau was Col. Charles R. Forbes, who had served for four months as director of the Bureau of War

Risk Insurance. A veteran of World War I, Forbes came from Seattle, where he had been vice president of an engineering firm. Within two years he was relieved as director. Forbes later was sentenced to prison and fined on charges of conspiracy to defraud the government on hospital contracts.

The second director, retired Brig. Gen. Frank T. Hines, was appointed March 2, 1923. He worked closely with Congress to reform laws governing the Bureau. In 1924, Hines reorganized the Veterans' Bureau into six services: medical and rehabilitation, claims and insurance, finance, supply, planning, and control. Under the reorganization, the Bureau had 73 subdistrict offices responsible for dealing with beneficiaries and claimants, supervising vocational training, administering outpatient medical care and giving physical examinations.

With Hine's success within the Bureau's direction, President Hoover in his 1929 State of the Union message, proposed consolidating agencies administering veterans benefits. The following year The Veterans Administration is established after persistent pressure from The American Legion. Consequently, begins a permanent relationship between the Veterans Service Organization, representing the stakeholders, and the federal agency whose responsibility is to ensure efficiency, excellence and timeliness of services for veterans.

As it has for a century, The American Legion through its Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation pillar continues to aggressively apply pressure upon congress through its vigorous lobbying powers for adequate VA funding to maximize veterans' programs, entitlements and quality health care. The Legion believes the VA is a system worth saving but it can also be its principal critic at times only because we believe the system must remain of the highest priority within our federal cabinet.

In Minnesota, the Department has one the most active Rehabilitation Committees nationwide. The committee consists of five subject matter experts that understand the delivery of care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. The members are recommended to the Dept. Commander by the chairman and Dept. Service Officer. They hold a five-year appointment and are tasked with staying engaged with both State and Federal Department of Veterans Affairs delivery of care and entitlements. Each year the committee conducts facility site visits to meet with executive leadership to discuss operations, veterans concerns and ways the Legion can assist their organizational mission. On average the committee will visit the five state veterans homes, four VA Healthcare Systems, one VA Regional Office, one National Cemetery, one Vets Center and Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, (MACV). The committee provides

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
Department Director



Greetings American Legion Family,

Spring is finally here and so is the motorcycling season. A few rides have already taken place with a great many yet to come. The 2019 Department of Minnesota Ride is coming together and the schedule will be finalized and released soon. Look for the Riders to visit your post or a post near you.

The annual spring lineup of testimonial dinners is almost part of the history book. Testimonials are not only a celebration of the leadership but of the whole American Legion Family's accomplishments. No leader is successful without a hardworking team and no team is successful without good leadership.

Memorial Day will here in a few weeks. This is a special day in which we will be honoring all whom have answered the final call. There are a large number of ceremonies all around the state. The hard part is deciding which one or two to attend. While many go to the lake, gather with family and friends, hold a bbq, please take some of time to honor their services and sacrifices. Later in the year will be a day in which living veterans and those serving will be honored.

Many district conventions will be called to order soon. As you gather at your convention to reflect on the past year and look to the future ask yourself what have you done to help the Legion grow. There is a saying "Lead, follow or get the heck out of the way." Everyone in the American Legion Family has followed their leadership through a great many changes. A large number have chosen to lead. Both have done their best to make a difference. As for the ones that have chosen to "get out of the way" it is up to those of us to get them involved. Bring some to convention who has never been.

Keep the chrome side up and the rubber side down.

reports on all their site visits so their members can gain a better understanding of the VA systems of care.

The reports can be accessed here, <http://www.mnlegion.org/html/reports.html>

jwolfsteller@mnlegion.org

Minnesota Sons of the American Legion News

Sons of The American Legion

By
Shawn Davis



Greetings from your Sons of The American Legion.

First off, I wish to thank all of you who gave warm wishes to me as we celebrated my leadership of the SAL. From those of you who attended my testimonial, to everyone else who sent me congratulations, the warmth of the greetings and well wishes overwhelmed me. Thank you for all your support. Thank you for all the gifts. Thank you to my Historian, Lou Michaels for the photos, and for making me look good with the lens cap on.

Many of you have heard that Past National Commander (PNC) Doug Bible has submitted his resignation as Detachment Adjutant. I (personally) and all the leadership at the Detachment (past and present) wish to thank him for all of his years of hard work for the Detachment and supporting the leadership of the Detachment. You will be missed, thank you for your hard work.

As Detachment commander, I appointed an ad-hoc search committee to find a new Detachment Adjutant to finish out this year. Based on the committee's recommendation, and the Executive board subsequent approval of my appointment, I would like to announce that Dennis Henkemeyer has accepted the role. Please share with him a congratulations and good luck.

We have continued to do well with membership, thanks to all of you. As of April 17th, National has us at 90.597%. We only need 1,083 membership turned in before May 8th. That is our 100% target per national. But to reach 12,000 (a challenge I asked all of you to strive for) we need 1,565. This is where all of us as leaders must step up. Reach out to our members who have not renewed. Work with them to resolve their issues and get that renewal completed. District leaders reach out to your squadrons. Help them do what needs to get done. We currently have 65 Squadrons that are at 100%. 17 could be at 100% with just a little bit of effort. Many more could reach this goal, if we all work together.

This is crunch time to get the mission done.

Consolidated Squadron Reports (CSR) will be due at Detachment Campout on June 29. So, ensure all squadrons either mail in their CSR's BEFORE that date, or ensure that the reports will be turned in that morning. These reports are how we (SAL squadrons) share what we have done to support the Four Pillars of The American Legion. It gets rolled up into a report on how we as a Detachment are doing. And at the national level, these reports help share what we do as part of The American Legion family with Congress and the nation. Turn in a CSR.

Officer Report forms are due once the Squadron has their election for officers for the next membership year. A form should be submitted even if the officers are not changing at the Squadron level. Complete this form to let us know who you are, who we can contact if we have questions, how much your dues are (in case we have a prospective member asking), and when you meet.

I hope to see many of you at the District Conventions. Thank you for all you do.



Commander Shawn Davis salutes the flag during his testimonial.

Cdr. Shawn Davis: salshawndavis@gmail.com
Adjutant Dennis Henkemeyer: dennish56621@hotmail.com
Website: www.mnsal.org

The National Emergency Fund

Another one of The American Legion's programs that the Sons of The American Legion is actively involved with is the National Emergency Fund. It is maybe more important to point this out in this addition because of all the flooding that is taking place in Minnesota this month.

NEF grants provide immediate financial assistance for American Legion and Sons of The American Legion members who have been affected by the natural disaster. Legion posts also qualify. The NEF provides up to \$3,000 for Legion and SAL members with an active membership who have been displaced due to damages to their primary residence, and up to \$10,000 for posts that have been damaged by a natural disaster and whose programs and activities within the community are impacted.

To apply for an NEF grant or to learn more, please visit www.legion.org/nef.

The Detachment of Minnesota is asking all of our Squadrons and Districts to make a special effort to donate to this very worthwhile program in this time of need.



National Executive Committeeman for the Minnesota American Legion presented outgoing Commander Shawn Davis with an eagle to honor his work with the Sons of the American Legion. Davis has been commander for nearly two years.



Winners of the District Vice Commander Awards line up with Commander Darrel Redepenning at the Appreciation Rally held at LeCenter.

RALLY AT LECENTER

2019 District Vice Commander Awards

- | | | |
|------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1st | Dale Wellik | Kason Post 333 |
| 2nd | Jim Hunt | Lake Wilson Post 285 |
| 3rd | John Flynn | Eagan Post 594 |
| 4th | Jim Anderson | Rosetown Post 542 |
| 5th | Andrew Rose | Johnnie Baker Post 291 |
| 6th | Karen O'Bar | Bertha Post 366 |
| 7th | Dean Knutson | Ashby Post 357 |
| 8th | Carl Hendrickson | Duluth Post 71 |
| 9th | Wayne Krantz | Karlstad Post 445 |
| 10th | Al Lund | Osseo Post 172 |

Appreciation Rally Turn In
Eighth District
New Member Award
Third District



Department Bookkeeper Jan Lauby, AKA Vanna White, passes out the stars for the Auxiliary membership winners at the rally. She is flanked by Brandi Christensen, 10th District Membership Chair, and Mary Hendrickson, Department Second Vice President.



Past Commander Bud Redepenning paid tribute to his son, Darrel Redepenning at the Commander's Testimonial in Anoka.

COMMANDER'S TESTIMONIAL



Past National Commander Dan Ludwig was the keynote speaker. He spoke about the future of The American Legion.



Department Vice Commanders Dick Ward, Jennifer Havlick, Tom Fernlund and Wayne Hammond Jr. presented a gift to Commander Redepenning.



Redepenning and his wife, Donna, shared some humor at the testimonial.

The Lumberjack

Floyd Ruggles said he had an 'attitude' while growing up on Minneapolis' near North Side. The Marines in Vietnam were a good place to put that attitude to work for his country.

By Al Zdon

They called him the Lumberjack, and it wasn't because he was from Minnesota.

Floyd Ruggles earned that nickname from his fellow Marines in Vietnam because trees were his specialty. Especially blowing them up.

Ruggles served in the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion. When his team would be done with their patrol, they would need to be extracted from the jungle by helicopter.

This was often a problem because the landing zone was obstructed by large trees.

"I always carried C-4 (a plastic explosive) with me. I loved to blow up those trees."

When the helicopter was approaching, Ruggles would do his magic and reduce a few trees to smithereens to clear the LZ.

But when he wasn't blowing them up, Ruggles found another use for the trees. He would climb them.

"If we needed to find out where we were, I'd shinny up to the top of the biggest tree I could find."

"So they started calling me the Lumberjack. We all had nicknames."

Floyd Ruggles grew up on the near North Side of Minneapolis, in a neighborhood that would soon be torn down for a freeway.

"I was always in scrapes at school. My dad taught me how to box right from the get go."

At North High School, he was a wrestler, or rather a "rassler" as Ruggles says it. "I made it to state but then I rassled a kid, he was a real animal from Washburn High School. He just picked me up and slammed me down. He went on to win the state title."

Ruggles, who tipped the scales at about 130 lbs., also tried out for football. "But my pants kept falling down. That's why I tried rassling. They wore tights."

In his spare time, he did three paper routes to earn spending money and buy clothes. He also worked at the Lyric Theater in downtown Minneapolis as an usher. "They put us in little penguin suits."

Ruggles was the oldest of eight children, and he was the first one in his extended family to graduate from high school. "I never missed a day. I was determined. But I have to admit that I always had an attitude. The Marine Corps tamed that a bit."

After a year working at a factory, it became clear to Ruggles that his draft number was coming up. "I didn't want to be drafted, and I didn't want to join the Navy, so I joined the Marines. My mother and father immediately wrote me off. They figured I'd be dead."

He signed up on Dec. 7, 1967, and was sent to San Diego for boot camp. "They called me the 'house mouse.' It meant I was the personal slave of the drill instructor. I was kind of a scrapper, and he took me under his wing." Then it was on to nearby Camp Pendleton for more advanced infantry training.

At Pendleton, recruiters for recon came to the camp. "They were looking for volunteers, and they painted a great picture. Going behind enemy lines was right up my alley."

Two in his training unit volunteered, and then went to four months of advance training to learn reconnaissance techniques.

"Looking back, if I had stayed with the other guys, I probably would have arrived in Vietnam just in time to meet the Tet Offensive (January and February of 1968) head on. I might not have made it."

As it was, he arrived on July 8, 1968. He remembers stepping off the plane in Vietnam. "The heat kind of comes right through you."

"Within 24 hours, I had to report to Bravo Company, 1st Recon. In that time I went from thinking I was going to win this war all by myself to pure panic."

Ruggles arrived seven days after a recon patrol had been completely wiped out, the seven members of the patrol and four helicopter crew all killed in a crash. "They were all dead. My first letters home said I was in hell."

Second Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, First Marine Division was located at Camp Reasoner near Da Nang. It was also known as Hill 327.

The battalion was comprised of 28 officers, 750 enlisted men, and 38 Navy Corpsmen.

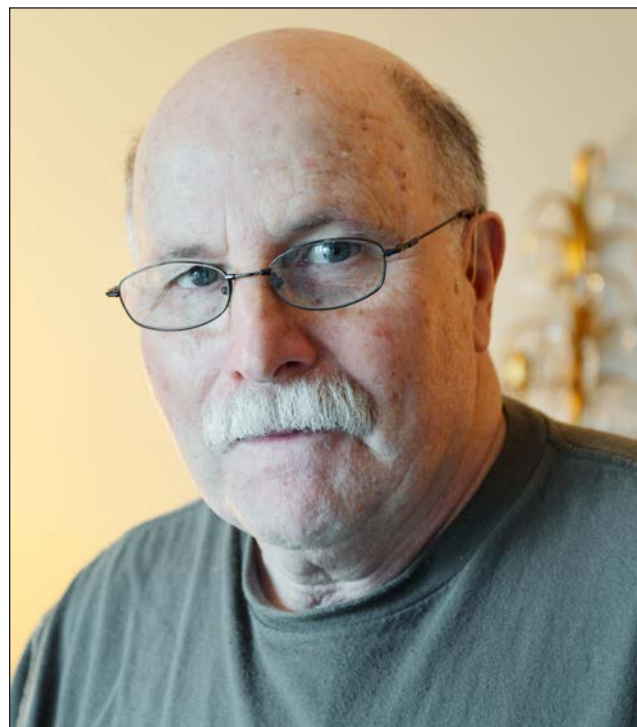
A staff sergeant showed Ruggles around the base including a hootch where the names of heroic Marines were displayed. "I told the sergeant I wanted to have my name on that wall. He put his arm around me and said, 'Son, you don't want your name on that wall.'"

The help Ruggles received from others who had been in-country for a time was key to his survival, he said. "Guys took you under their wings. They taught us the ropes and how to survive. I paid close attention."

The Marines would fly small recon units into enemy territory in South Vietnam and drop them off in the jungle. They would become the eyes and ears of the Marine Corps, and after five or seven days or more, the Marine helicopters would come and extract them.

The units usually had 6-8 men and would include a point man, a patrol leader, two radio operators, others carrying rifles or grenade launchers, and the guy who watched for trouble from the rear, "tail-end Charlie." "We would like to take a corpsman with us, but there weren't that many of them. Sometimes we'd have an officer, but sometimes we were so low on men that a corporal would be the patrol leader."

The mission would begin with two helicopters, usually Ch-46 Sea Knights, often called the "Phrog" by the troops.



FLOYD RUGGLES
At home in North Saint Paul



One would bring the troops in, and the other would act as a decoy.

Once on the ground, the troops quickly got moving, covering a mile or a mile and a half as fast as possible. "With the helicopters, you could really hear us coming. There wasn't anybody in the neighborhood that didn't know we had arrived. We wanted to put some distance between us and the landing zone. If they detected our position, it was a big problem."

Once established, the little group would move from Point A to Point B over several days, hoping to arrive at the extraction point at the right time. "It's part of the Marine training. You encounter an obstacle. You figure it out. You



FLOYD RUGGLES
In training with the Marine Corps in California

move on. You learn as you go.”

Along the way, they would gather whatever information they could of the enemy’s movements or strength. Sometimes their sole job was to take a prisoner for interrogation.

“If we got into trouble, we had tremendous fire power from that small team and from other places. The enemy really didn’t like us and they put a bounty on us. We’d see posters and cards strewn through the jungle. They wanted the recon guys dead or alive.”

After a mission, Ruggles said he liked the fact that they would always come back to a secure base, and they each had their own area inside the hootch. “I had all my own stuff there.”

Not that they could ever relax too much. “If a patrol team got into trouble, they would send out a rescue team. You had to be ready in 30 minutes. Sometimes they’d send 30 of us in to do a rescue.”

At first, Ruggles carried an M-79 grenade launcher out on patrol, but then got the job of being the point man for the group and switched to the lighter M-16 rifle. He also toted a .45 pistol. On an early mission, a bullet ripped into the butt plate of his M-16 and split the stock.

“I finally had to turn it in, but I kept the firing pin as a souvenir.”

About six weeks into his 13-month tour, Ruggles and his team found a cave. While the rest of the group was exploring the enemy tunnel, Ruggles was given the job of sitting on a rock and watching out for the enemy.

“I was still pretty new. I was watching out, trying to see if anything was moving. I was sitting on the rock with my M-16 in my lap. But then I day dreamed for maybe half a second. I looked up and there were heads peering at me from the top of the grass.

“I jumped up with my M-16 spraying bullets into the air. As soon as I discharged my weapon, the entire team came out and the enemy had disappeared.”

On another early mission, he and his pal, Herman, were sent to guard the perimeter on a hilltop outpost at night. “We kept hearing this sound. The Marines when they were finished with their C-rations would throw the cans down the cliff to make it harder for the enemy to sneak up on us without making noise.

“Well, something was rustling in those cans. Herman and I had a whole box of grenades, and we threw them all down the hill. In the morning, we could hardly wait to see all the bodies down there. But there was nothing.”

It turned out that enemy soldiers were really rock apes that were scavenging through the cans. “They were smart enough to know there was a delay on the grenades, and they would just clear out for a while. I heard that later in the war they got smart enough to throw the grenades back.

“So there we were throwing grenades all night. I’m sure the rest of the guys on the team were just laughing at us.”

Another time, a patrol surprised some enemy soldiers and they took off running down the path as fast as they could fly. “I followed them down the path, and I found four Ho Chi Minh sandals in the path. None of them matched. They had run so fast, they just ran out of their sandals. I still have them.”

One event he recalls most sharply was when he wasn’t on a mission.

“My buddy, Herman, had gone on R&R in Sydney, Australia, and had become engaged to a woman there. He wanted me to go on R&R with him to meet his girlfriend.

“You got two R&Rs during your tour in Vietnam, but I was saving my money for a car. I knew exactly what car I wanted, even the color. I didn’t want to waste my money on an R&R.”

But his buddy prevailed, and Ruggles signed up for the vacation. It was all he could have hoped for, he met the girlfriend, and he had fun.

Arriving back at the base, though, he was greeted with a shock. “My team was gone. They went out on patrol, and another guy took the point. He set off a booby trap and it killed the first two guys in line and took the legs off the third guy. Later, they just broke up the rest of the team and sent them to other teams.

“I always wondered if I had been on point if I would have found that trap. That was my job, to get them from Point A to Point B, and I wasn’t there. I’ve carried that burden with me for all those years.

“After that, I never had a team. I just bounced around with different teams. It wasn’t the same.”

It was during that time he earned his “Lumberjack” nickname. “I liked to blow things up. I would attach the C-4 to the trees. I later found out that I could do it with Claymore mines strapped to trees. I could cut an LZ in a few minutes.”

If a landing zone could not be created, helicopters would drop a “Jacob’s ladder” or rope ladder through the canopy and the Marines would be hauled up, one at a time, to relative safety.

Ruggles said that the Marines sneaking through the jungle always knew where they were, sort of. “When we got lost, I would go to the top of the trees and try to figure out where we were.”

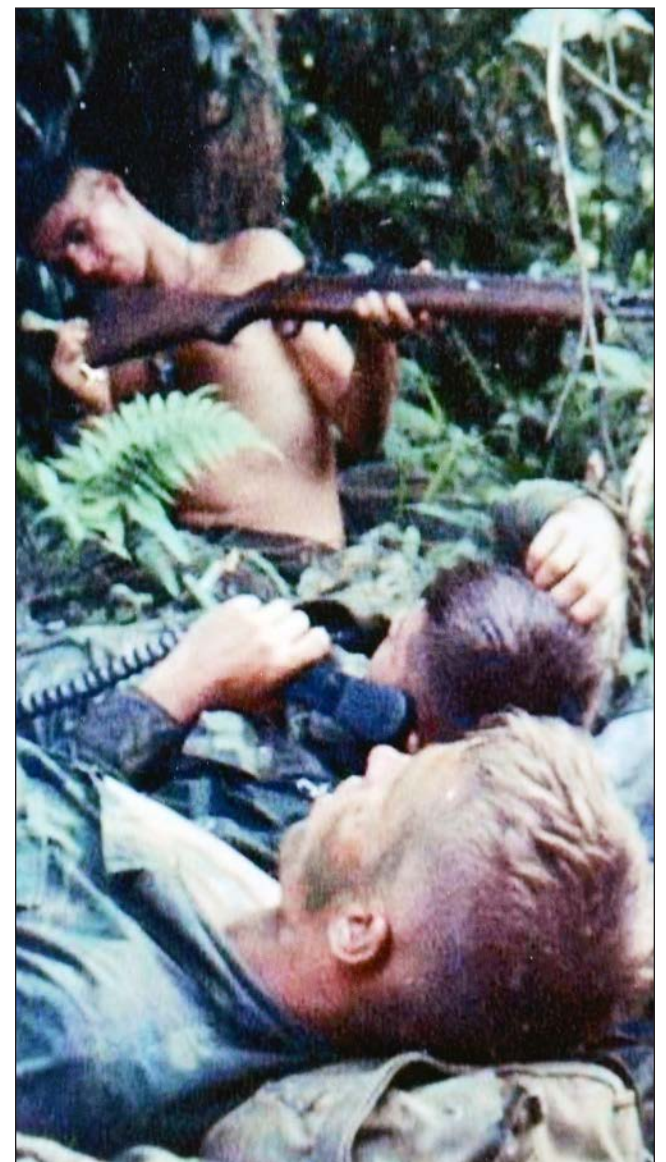
He said that he had forgotten that nickname until more



Early in his time in Vietnam, Ruggles, at right, pays close attention to a briefing about an upcoming patrol.



On his 21st birthday, Ruggles, right, liberated a bottle of Jack Daniels from the officer’s mess at Charlie Ridge. The enlisted men’s club only had 3.2 beer. A good time was had by all.



Lance Corporal Dykemen cleans his M-14 and Corporal Crabs is on the radio relaying coordinates for the evening. An unidentified Marine relaxes. All are from Bravo Company of the First Recon.



The young marine had 26 pen pals while he was in Vietnam, and he wrote to each of them regularly. Ruggles said it helped his mental state during the war.



Out on patrol, Ruggles hunkers down in the tall grass.

than three decades later, he attended a recon reunion, and somebody called him "Lumberjack." "It brought back a flood of memories."

Another patrol he recalled had him running the point. "We used hand signals because we couldn't talk. I could see a river below and then I saw a couple of North Vietnamese going down a path by the river." Ruggles put up his closed fist to stop and everybody hit the deck.

After a while, the enemy had passed, and the officer in charge of the patrol asked Ruggles and a sergeant to go down to the river and look for a place to cross. "I'm thinking, what did we just see here? Didn't we just see the North Vietnamese Army go down this path?"

Obediently, though, he and a sergeant moved about 25 yards through the elephant grass toward the river when suddenly a whole battalion of the enemy came down the path.

"We hit the ground and tried to be invisible. But the sergeant had thrown himself on the ground and trapped his leg underneath himself. He was trying to straighten that leg out and there was an audible noise, like stepping on a stick in the forest.

"About 15 yards away, a group of the North Vietnamese heard the sound and they stopped. We were so close, I could see their eyes. I thought they were looking at us, but then I could see that they were looking over us."

Ruggles said his greatest fear was that one of the men in the patrol behind them would open fire, probably a bad idea considering the odds. The enemy battalion passed without incident.

Out on patrol, the Marines would have to carry everything with them, sometimes for 10 days. "Those packs would sometimes weigh 70 pounds. On one patrol, we got caught in a monsoon, and the helicopters couldn't come to get us. We finally just ran flat out of food. At that point you'll eat almost anything. Those centipedes tasted just like Tootsie Rolls."

One of the things that kept Ruggles balanced during this traumatic time was that he cultivated a set of pen pals throughout the country. Some letters came from family, some from friends, and some from people who had signed up for pen pal programs.

"I had 26 pen pals and I wrote to all of them all the time. One gal would send me apple pies. All the other guys called her the Apple Pie Lady and wondered when she would write again."

As time went on, Ruggles found there were two types of Marines he didn't like patrolling with. One was someone who had signed for a second tour. "I figure you only had so much luck over there, and these guys were pushing their luck."

The other group was new guys. "They were dangerous to be around. They made mistakes. Not that I didn't make mistakes. I made plenty of them."

The tremendous noise of warfare finally caught up with Ruggles. "Maybe it was blowing up those trees. Or there were times when we'd come into a landing zone and they'd start firing at us. So everybody in the helicopter would be firing back, all in that confined space."

In any event, with just a couple of weeks left in his tour, Ruggles turned himself into the medics. He was stone deaf in his left ear. He was afraid his hearing loss would affect his effectiveness on the point.

He had completed 30 missions.

He spent three weeks in a hospital in Yokohama, Japan, and his hearing slowly returned, but never all the way.

The Marines gave him an honorable discharge in August of 1969, and he was back home a few days later.

To his dismay, he found that his younger brothers had assumed he'd be killed in Vietnam, and had sold off much of his personal property before he got home. "I marched them around the neighborhood, and I got most of it back."

He suffered from some of the post war trauma that many who served in Vietnam did. "A car would backfire, and I'd be on the ground."

But basically he got on with life. Ruggles had brought his souvenirs and Marine memorabilia home with him, but he put it in a large sea chest he had purchased and forgot about it.

He worked at Pako Corporation, and then the Post Office, and then he went into the real estate business for some years. On speculation, he bought a building on Smith Avenue in St. Paul in 1997 with the thought of putting a gift shop into the building.

The project soon mushroomed, and Ruggles and his wife, Linda, are the owners of West Side Antiques, one of the largest antique malls in the Twin Cities. It now covers three floors of the building, and includes three museums — including one for the St. Paul Winter Carnival that has 70 cases of artifacts.

The Ruggles kept the store open seven days a week in the early years, but now have cut back to four days a week plus vacations.

After 35 years, Ruggles decided to look in the trunk that he had never opened since he came home from Vietnam. The passage of time had made what he found more interesting to him, and not so painful. "I was like opening a time



Ruggles kneels by a tunnel complex at Charlie Ridge, holding his M-16.

Too close to whisper... one click for 'yes'
Two clicks for 'no.'
'Brothers of the Bush'

Recon... their name is
their honor... and nothing more
need be said... Recon

—Poem written by Floyd Ruggles, 1969



Between patrols, Ruggles takes a break leaning on a Jeep at Camp Reasoner.

capsule. I could laugh at a lot of things. I must have been crazy-dumb back then. I really had somebody looking over my shoulder in those days. I think it was my grandfather who was a machine gunner in World War I."

The chest of memorabilia also helped him understand what he'd gone through. "It helped me understand what I was. I have moods."

Accepting that part of his past also opened the door to going to reunions of the 1st Recon Battalion Association. "Some of the friends I made in the Marines were closer than family."

Recently, 1st Recon visitors to Vietnam found the battalion's sign in the brush where the base had been. "We went through a lot of trouble to try and bring it home, but in the end, the Vietnamese government is holding it hostage. They want to use it as a tourist attraction."

Ruggles is now serving a three-year term as the membership director and the webmaster for the association. "The Marines did so much for me, I feel like I have to give back some time."

He has also become involved with his North High School Class of 66 reunion committee and runs their website, including a personal page for every classmate.

The Ruggles make their home in North St. Paul.

Those interested can find the website for the antique store, the 1st Recon, and the North High School Class of 1966 at weststpaulantiques.com.



The tension clear on their faces, Corporal Crabs and Lance Corporal Dykemen check a map to find their location somewhere in Elephant Valley in 1969.



Ruggles' team provides security for a radio relay team on Dong Den Mountain Outpost overlooking Elephant Valley and the Garden of Eden. Ruggles is holding the ammunition belt for the M-60 machine gun.



Ruggles looks out the window of a Ch-46 helicopter as his team returns from a patrol in Elephant Valley in 1969.

News played a large role in Vietnam War

By Al Zdon

No war in American history was covered more thoroughly by the press than Vietnam.

And perhaps no war was as influenced by the American people's reaction to that news coverage as Vietnam.

Three Vietnam veterans who had communications experience during the Vietnam War spoke at the monthly Vietnam War Roundtable at Concordia University in St. Paul.

Conrad Leighton was an army journalist who served with the 1st Cavalry Division in 1970-71.

"What we did was propaganda, basically. It was public relations for the military. We had to show that we were all good people," Leighton said.

"The news had a big slant. We downplayed the violence. We just toned it down. It was basically human interest stories."

He said perhaps the best story he wrote was about when an American unit captured three major caches of enemy weapons. "It was a big find, a couple of howitzers. But it had been a difficult mission, and I had to write it up with no killing, no fighting."

He remembered one other story he did on jungle diseases. "It was all about boils, jungle rot and ringworm. I think those were the three big ones. That story was killed in a hurry."

Another story that never was told was the use of drugs by the soldiers. "There was a huge drug culture in Vietnam by the time I was there. A lot of soldiers weren't happy about being there."

Leighton was asked if he toted a weapon in the war. "Yeah, but I'm not sure if it worked." He said at times he carried a .45 pistol. "Earlier they had me carry around an M-16, but that was pretty awkward. I would have fought if I had to, but luckily I never had to."

Leighton was asked about Agent Orange and its wide use. He said that nobody at that time had any idea that it would cause health problems for the soldiers or the civilians.

One of the unintended consequences of defoliating the jungle, though, he said, was that a very thick underbrush quickly replaced the forest canopy, making it even more difficult for American soldiers to operate or get through.

Don Shelby, who later became one of the best known news anchors in Minnesota at WCCO, said he went directly from Air Force boot camp to working at the Pentagon, and then later served in southeast Asia with the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. Shelby said he was still under a secrecy act and could not tell exactly where he was or what he did.

But he said there was a heavy lid on what military reporters could divulge. "If you sought out information, and it conflicted with the military line, that was insubordination. It could mean time in the brig if you reported it."

He said the staff at his unit had access to all the major newspapers in the United States. "Every day there was one story that came off the DoD wire, and the story we read in the newspapers. The stories were totally different. The DoD simply put out propaganda. It was often not accurate or true."

Shelby said the soldiers in the field would shake their heads at the military reports that showed great success. "They wondered what we were winning."

He said he learned a lifelong lesson from being a military journalist. "I never, ever believe anything the government tells me. That attitude has served me well as a reporter."

But Vietnam was different. "Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, there is no free press."

Shelby said that one story that was never reported was the huge presence of the Central Intelligence Agency in the war.

Being shackled like that was not easy, he said. "It was the low point of my journalism career, and it was right at the beginning."

He recalled one incident where he was sent to report on a new pop-up land mine. "They set off a series of them, they just obliterated 700 paper targets that were hundreds of feet away. What I remember was the cheer that went up from the manufacturers and the Army people. They were ecstatic, laughing, patting each other on the back.

"It gave me a pause. I was deeply disturbed at the joy these people had at a new weapon that could obliterate other human beings, enemy or not."

The Vietnam War, Shelby said, was an example of the narrowness of how Americans see things. "If it's anything less than an American experience, it doesn't matter. We don't see things from other points of view. Vietnam was about winning or losing, and in the end the story was about losing. It was a failure."



VIETNAM ROUNDTABLE PANEL — Three news professionals with ties to the war in Vietnam told their stories at the April Vietnam War Roundtable at Concordia University. From left: Terry Wolkerstorfer, who was both a combat soldier and later a reporter; Don Shelby, well-known news anchor who worked for Armed Forces Radio and Television; and Conrad Leighton, a journalist for the Army during the war.

Terry Wolkerstorfer, who served in Vietnam as a combat officer in 1966-67, got out of the service and returned to Vietnam as a reporter for Associated Press, had a different viewpoint.

Asked why he came back to Vietnam, Wolkerstorfer said, "It was the biggest story in the world. How could you be a journalist and not want to cover it? I felt the American people had a right to know the truth."



Terry Wolkerstorfer as a reporter for AP.

for a thousand years."

Wolkerstorfer said the press had unprecedented access to the war, and he attributed some of that to the fact that journalists had been in Vietnam right from the start. "It's hard to go back and re-write the rules later."

He compared it to World War II where the reporting was heavily censored, and to the Gulf Wars, where reporters had limited access.

In addition to having free access to the battlefields, Wolkerstorfer said getting the news back to America without censorship was also standard policy. By the time of Vietnam, electronic transmission had improved to the point where a reporter could file a story and pictures from a remote battlefield, and it would be in the newspapers and on TV the next day in the United States.



News cameramen during the Vietnam War.

He said even with the access, it was difficult sometimes to get at the truth. "We had a report one time that we had killed 173 of the enemy, but then the report said we had captured only three weapons. We knew that wasn't right."

There were over 500 reporters in Vietnam from around the world at the height of the war. Many of them, he said, simply stayed in Saigon and reported what the military told them and used military video. "The report and the film were often not of the same battle."

Other reporters, though, got out in the field and did their best. "The AP Saigon Bureau was one of the great journalistic teams of all time."

Wolkerstorfer said many of the reporters had sources in the military and elsewhere, and he used a source one time to break a story that the U.S. had set up an assassination team to go into towns and take out enemy leaders.

The problem was that South Vietnamese leaders were using the program to assassinate their political rivals. "Not only was the program morally dubious to begin with, but then it was being misused."

Reporters, he said, did have two self-imposed rules. They would not reveal troop movements nor impending battles.

But the leaders in the military were often appalled at the reporting. "I remember one general telling us, 'Get on the goddamn team.'"

"And there was plenty that we missed. We didn't find out about the My Lai Massacre until two years later."

In the end, the reporters did the best they could. "We told people what was happening, and if they didn't like it... Parents were hearing from the news media and from their sons coming home."

A major change in America's acceptance of the war was the Tet Offensive, Wolkerstorfer said. The scale of the fighting and the heavy losses convinced many that the war was unwinnable.

The program was moderated by Dave Borton, a Vietnam veteran. The Roundtables are sponsored by the Minnesota Military Museum, Twin Cities Public Television and Concordia University.

World War II History Round Table

You can't win the war without logistics

By Al Zdon

It doesn't matter how great your strategy is during a war, if you can't get the bullets and gasoline to the front, the cause is lost.

Author Hank Cox told the April World War II History Round Table that the U.S. Army entrusted getting supplies to the soldiers in Europe to a little-known lieutenant general named John C. H. Lee.

Lee, who was hated by many of his colleagues, kept the position throughout the war, and, Cox said, earned high marks for getting the job done under trying circumstances.

Lee, a native of Kansas, graduated near the top of his class at West Point in 1909. He was a classmate of George Patton, and he served with honor in World War I, earning a Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Medal.

He had various postings between the wars and, as an Army engineer, oversaw many large public works projects during the Great Depression.

"He was intensely religious and would go to church every day and two or three times on Sunday. Often, he made his staff go with him."

When World War II began, Lee assumed he'd be leading men into war, and instead was given the job of watching over supplies in the European Theater.

"There had been a lot of problems with supplies in World War I. Logistics was called the orphan child of the war. Each division was in charge of its own supplies and it didn't work very well."

Lee was sent to Great Britain in 1942.

Cox said the miracle of World War II was the amount of war materials the United States was able to manufacture, supplying not only the U.S. military in two oceans, but also the British and Soviet Union to a certain extent.

"The American industrial machine made us the arsenal of the world," Cox said. "But without logistics, it didn't mean much."

The materiel for the invasion of Europe began to arrive in England, but the shipping was chaotic to say the least. "They just made sure the Liberty ships were full, and there was often no manifest. Then when it got to England, it was unloaded and put somewhere. No one knew what we had or where it was."

Lee began almost at once to become a pariah among his fellow officers. "First, there was his religious convictions. His initials were J.C.H. Lee. Other officers wondered if that stood for 'Jesus Christ Himself.'"

He also had his own private train to move about Great Britain, another sore spot with others.

Another reason for his unpopularity was that other parts of the army had a natural tendency to resent the guys in supply. "Others thought they were suffering and fighting the war while the supply guys got all the good food and women. Lee was the focus of a lot of that resentment."

One more reason was his command style. He was described as a martinet. "He had a strict interpretation of the rules. Others just thought he was pompous."

As the war wound into high gear, Cox said, Russia's Stalin was asking the Allies for a second front to take the pressure off the Red Army. The Allies decided to invade North Africa and take on Rommel's Afrika Korps.

Lee was given 90 days to arrange the logistics. "Some of the army had troops and no equipment, and other parts of the army had equipment and no troops. Lee was under the gun to straighten it out. Eisenhower told him that unless the Army 'got ahead of this thing,' heads would roll.

Lee had to find out where every piece of equipment was in Great Britain (other supplies would be coming directly from the U.S.) for Operation Torch. "But Lee was a good manager and smart as a whip. North Africa was a successful mission and Lee did it right."

He could then return to his primary task of preparing logistics for the invasion of Europe.

"D-Day was to be the greatest amphibious assault in the history, and it was. It will never be duplicated."

Cox said there were three million discreet items in the supply chain.

Lee had over 300,000 men in his command. The biggest problem would be after the invasion to have a port to land the supplies on the French coast.

To help, the Allies came up with two huge temporary piers that could act as a port for a while. The idea worked well, except that a massive storm washed away the American pier after a few weeks. Supplies had to be simply unloaded on the beach.

Compounding the problem was that Gen. Omar Bradley, the commander of the invasion army, who hated Lee, refused to release control of the beach to Lee even after the U.S. troops were far inland.

At that time, African Americans were not allowed to serve in combat roles in the U.S. Army, and Lee gladly employed them in his supply chain, often as truck drivers. Benjamin Davis, the only black general in the war, and Lee



Mountains of gear flooded into England during World War II, and the supply guys had to get it to the front.

got on well, both feeling that Black Americans were under-used in the war effort.

But Cox said that Davis did write home to his wife, "General Lee is worse than ma about going to church."

In the end, the invasion went well from a logistics standpoint, and, as the Allies roared across France, Lee set up his new headquarters in the best hotels in Paris. It was another black mark for the general with his peers.

Supplying Patton as he galloped toward Germany was a challenge for Lee. "They say that tactical brilliance is death to the people in logistics, and Lee was the guy who had to get the food and fuel to an army that every day was 30 or 40 miles further away."

Lee established the Red Ball Express, a round-the-clock trucking operation in a desperate attempt to keep up with Patton's army and the rest of the Allied forces.

As the war progressed, Bradley and other generals asked Eisenhower to fire Lee. Eisenhower's answer always was, "And replace him with who?"

"Ike felt that we were winning the war, and why should he disrupt his command structure?"

Cox said a huge challenge for Lee was when Germany counter-attacked in late 1944 in what became known as the Battle of the Bulge. "Hitler had one more arrow in his quiver, and he attacked the weakest point in the U.S. lines."

The key to Germany's plan was to capture Allied supplies, particularly gasoline, and eventually take the port of Antwerp which had become the major Allied port supplying the war effort.

"For Lee this was the high point of his career. He was able to move all the critical supplies out of the Germans' path. What they couldn't move, they blew up. Germany was prevented from getting these resources.

"At the same time, he kept moving supplies to either side of the German salient, making sure the Allies had what they needed. He got high marks for his effort."

As the war got into 1945, the U.S. began running out of soldiers, and many in the supply chain were transferred to combat units. Lee was instrumental in creating a plan for black soldiers to enter combat units, if they agreed to give up their rank and become privates. Over 2,500 volunteered.

The plan met with huge resistance from many in the Army, "but Lee stood tall. And in the end there were fewer problems than anybody expected."

One of the major complaints about Lee, from his peers who hated him, was that he didn't supply the army with enough heavy artillery. Lee responded that they had plenty.

"When the war was over, it was found that the Army had only used 30 percent of the heavy artillery it had been supplied. The officers were simply lying about it to get Lee fired."

In the end, Lee stood his ground. "There is no record of Lee ever responding in kind to the criticism. He was aware of it, but he didn't let it disturb his mind. It might have been a product of his strong religious faith."

When the war was over, Eisenhower put Lee in charge of the military government in Italy. "The veterans were going home, and it was all younger soldiers who had not been through the war. They wanted a disciplinarian running the Army in Italy," Cox said.

Lee retired from the Army at the end of 1947 and spent his remaining years leading a lay organization in the Episcopal Church.

His efforts at running the supply chain were generally reviewed positively, and Eisenhower said his "strong hand" was needed. Historian Stephen Ambrose simply called Lee "the biggest jerk in the ETO."

He is buried at Arlington.



LT. GEN. J.C.H. LEE



AUTHOR HANK COX

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

**Gary Miller
Commander**



Hello Legion Family:

Well, well, and well, no snow but still cool or cold to some but I'll take it. We finally got the Appreciation Rally in but the weather still tried to get us, but that day was quite pleasant. Should be done with all the rallies, got a few more testimonials to go, then we start the district conventions.

In between time we need to get all those pesky reports in and on time. Some times you ask why certain other things are not out yet, maybe its because their still waiting for the information from the posts, that's why we are on you to get these in on time.

District 1's Convention is in Stewartville, May 18, at Post 164, starting at 8:30 a.m. Be on time. If you have never been to a district convention maybe its time you went. Believe it or not it's not a bunch of reports, (yes there are a lot) but see what else goes on. You might be surprised, and you might like it.

We still need to get those few that just aren't paying their dues, and also still need lots of new members. Talk to them explain what Congress is trying to do to the VA system, plus taking away all the things that they said they wouldn't. Numbers is what keeps us in their faces and that's the only fact that keeps them listening to us. Because if you have the right numbers in the right places, well lets just say they want to keep their jobs so a least they listen. And with out the new members the Legion will not be around in 100 years, I won't either but I still want it The American Legion to be here still fighting for the veterans .

Semper Fi.

SECOND DISTRICT

**Cindy Brunk
Commander**



Hello American Legion Family.

I trust each post commander got my recent letter and acted on it. I cannot stress enough to read the 2nd District Newsletter, the Legionnaire Paper and the National Legion Magazine.

2nd District Convention is scheduled for June 7-8 in Pipestone. Please get your registration forms sent in. We have a lot of decisions to make and we need your help. The agenda includes New Officers, Delegates to Department and National Convention, 2nd District Newsletter, Resolutions, just to mention a few highlights. Each post should have someone there representing them. Thank you.

Consolidated Post Reports are due July 1st.

All Posts must send in their Officers Report. Every post, every line must be filled out completely and clearly, typed or printed, so the updates can be made correctly. If your officers stayed the same you still need to fill one out and send to Department.

Lots of Events are planned for the year!! Check over your uniforms, new covers, flags that should be replaced and get your orders into Emblem Sales early. As always, plan to participate and look your best. Thank you.

Sunday, July 28, at 2 p.m., Luverne Veterans Home will have an unveiling of the Ice Cream Machine. Everyone welcome.

Hope to see all of you at my testimonial May 5th, 4:30 p.m. at the Brewster Legion Post.

Thank you all for your service.

THIRD DISTRICT

**Carla Tappainer
Commander**



Spring Greetings to all.

I hope everyone had a blessed Easter and got to spend time with friends and family. This is always my favorite time of year with all the trees budding and the flowers peeking out of the ground.

I hope everyone is ready for our 3rd District Convention coming up in a couple of weeks in Forest Lake. It's going to be great. Please make sure you have your registrations in and your hotel reserved. I'm so proud of all of you. You all worked together to get us into 1st place for membership. I know how much work you did and I truly appreciate it. We aren't at the finish line yet so don't stop getting new members and reminding everyone else to renew their membership.

Thank you to everyone who came to my Testimonial last week. I was very humbled by how many people came and all the wonderful, funny stories that were shared. The

American Legion is the greatest family a person could have. I encourage you to go out to your local rest homes and contact the veterans that live there. I know that they would appreciate a visit from a fellow veteran. Sit down with them and play some cards or just chat.

Always remember.....

The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.

— George Washington

FOURTH DISTRICT

**Lane Stunkel
Commander**



Greetings Fabulous 4th District.

Thank you for renewing your memberships and thanks to the new members of the 4th District. As of Bulletin 42, the 4th District slipped to 10th, let's work hard to retain our current membership and to find new members. The District is at 91.63%, Post Commanders and Adjutants, and Post Membership Officers, please reach out to your District Vice Commanders, Mickey or myself for assistance. We all are here to help each Post make 100%.

Keep these dates in mind:

— 5th District Testimonial – Post 1, 2507 E. 25th St, Minneapolis, Social 5 p.m., Dinner 6. For tickets call Becky at 612-968-6159

— 4th District RCCC – May 8th Arcade Phalen, E-board 6 p.m. with general meeting at 7. Joint with Auxiliary, SAL and ALR.

— VA Visitation – 1 p.m., met at the VAMC.

— Legion Family Day at the Minnesota Twins – Friday June 14th at 7:10 p.m. Tickets can be purchased by calling 612-659-4083

— Consolidated Post Reports have been sent to Post Adjutants; please send them to Department ASAP.

God bless each and every one of you of the 4th District American Legion Family and please keep our ailing members in your prayers. Thank you all for everything you do in your post and community, and all of the volunteer work you do. God bless America.

FIFTH DISTRICT

**Joe Bayer
Commander**



It's that time to get those reports in and get credit for all of the hard work you've all put in. It's also time to look at next year and see who will take those positions in the future. Are we mentoring those who will follow us? Are we leaving our Posts in good hands? Our future is determined by what we do today.

I want to thank the 5th District for all of the great things you have done this year. The programs you've worked and the time spent on getting them done. We've done well this year in membership reaching third place at Department at one point. Congratulations on a job well done.

We have seven 'Goal Posts' with several others within reach before District Convention. Please remember to get your deceased lists to the District Chaplain as soon as possible and register for our District Convention.

We are still looking for nominations for District Officers and 'Legionnaire of the Year.' Nominations for 'Legionnaire of the Year' go to Gary Martin.

Our 5th District testimonial will be held on May 4th at Minneapolis Post #1. Our guest emcee will make it a fun evening. Thank you to our sister District for working with us this year. I'm looking forward to our picnic on June 9th. Last of all congratulations to our own Dick Ward for being named Vice Commander of the year at the Appreciation rally at LeCenter.

SIXTH DISTRICT

**Richard Cross
Commander**



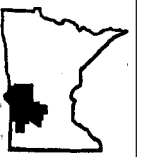
Hi Legion family:

The American Legion 6th District has been very good to me during my year as Commander. Membership, as in all the Districts, needs to be worked on but the Big 6 is doing extremely well. I would like to thank the officers and chairman and Legion membership for their support for the veteran, and the Department Commander and staff for their dedicated support during the 2018-2019 year.

Thank you. May God bless the veteran.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

**Jeffrey Gay
Commander**



Spring. A time to sow the seeds for next Fall's harvest and time to clean up the grill and get cooking. It's time to open your windows chasing the winter air out and smelling the sweetness of the fresh spring air. Spring is a new beginning for the world around us. Take some time to smell the flowers or whatever might waft your way from any adjoining fields.

We've had all Winter to lay back and have our meetings. Now the three seasons, Spring, Summer and Fall, are here and ripe with opportunities for us to grow our Posts.

Being prepared in The American Legion means knowing the many calendar events for veterans. Nary a month passes that there isn't one day you can sponsor a veteran event.

Go online to track them, plan your strategy. In May alone there's Silver Star Service Banner Day, Loyalty Day, V-E Day, Military Spouse Day, Children of Fallen Patriots Day, Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day. Get out there and just be present or sponsor a meal, dance or just a get-together in your community. Doing just that promotes awareness for you and educates your public.

Whatever you do, do it with style and respect. Just be there with information showing people who the Legion is, what we really do and why they need to be a part of it.

Make it a family affair too, the more the merrier. Team up with other posts as well as your Auxiliary and Sons, practice being the American Legion Family.

NINTH DISTRICT

**Arlo Rude
Commander**



Greetings:

I hope you had an enjoyable Easter.

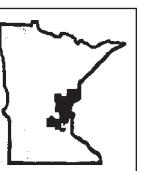
Thank you to everyone who attended the testimonial for myself and Lynn Carr, 9th District Auxiliary President, on April 6. Thanks for the donations to the project that Lynn and I are working on for the Veterans Home at Fergus Falls. The donations to the remodeling of the Dakota Room are greatly appreciated.

The Roaring 9th is at 92.26% in the membership drive. Let's make contacts and make it to 95% by May 3.

Memorial Day is on May 27. Please take time to attend a Memorial Program and pay respect and thanks to those who have served and those who died in service to our County. For God and Country.

TENTH DISTRICT

**Paul Orson
Commander**



Spring is upon us. The flowers are blooming and so are the Poppies, show your support of the Auxiliary and purchase your individual poppies and/or cards.

Memorial Day is a busy weekend for many of us, our posts and you the American veteran. Please take time during this holiday weekend and remember those who have passed away this past year. Many Posts have two or more ceremonies that they are part of each year. Wear your hat and attend one of these events.

Time to walk off your Easter candy and go knock on doors of members who have not paid their dues within the past five years. National has the tools to get this accomplished. If we get even 50% of these members, we will reach our goal. Our 10th District sits in 6th place with 92.97% renewed and just 0.06% out of 5th as of the April 17 Bulletin #42.

The combined District Testimonial for Commander Orson and President Locker is Saturday, May 4th, at Fridley Post 303. Hope to see you there.

St. Louis Park Post 282 hosts this year's Past District Commanders and Presidents Dinner on Saturday, May 11, with 4 p.m. social and 5 p.m. meal. Tickets are available from past President Jodi Hassing.

Fridley Post 303 is hosting the 2019 District Convention on Saturday, June 1st, with banquet on Friday night. Registration packets were sent out to post commanders and adjutants. Remember to get your posts registration in so your vote counts at the convention.

The remaining Department reports are due in May. Make sure each post gets yours turned in. Even if the report is late, please send them in. The Consolidated Post Report (CPR) is especially important and is available online at mylegion.org. You can fill in out after you have completed the supporting reports as they are due. This report is what national compiles and uses when they head to our Nations capitol fighting for our benefits and programs.



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 19-10

President Jean Walker

May 2019

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Jean Walker



It is hard to believe that it is May and my year is almost done. It has been an amazing year. I want to thank all of you for this special honor to represent Minnesota.

April was a busy month and with a little wrench thrown in with the inclement weather. It was a little trying but we made it through. I finished the month of March with going to Caribbean Night at the North St. Paul Post 39. It was an amazing night. Then to the Wells Post 9, then to the East Grand Forks Post 157, onto Plainview Unit 179 and finally the Moorhead Post 21 for their American Legion 100th birthday dinners. It was a great way to end March.

April 1st (not an April Fool's Day joke) started out with going to the Roseau Unit 24 Membership Supper. They had a fantastic group in attendance. For the supper and program, they invited the surrounding Units. Then onto Elk River Unit 112 for their Essay Contest Reception and Rosetown Unit 542 Spring Style Show. From there had our rescheduled Department Executive Meeting and our Membership Rally. Sorry I did not get to attend the Rally as I had to go to the Department Junior Conference where I had the honor of installing the newly elected Junior officers.

Then attended Squadron Commander Shawn's testimonial, Silver Lake Unit 141 meeting, and Hayfield Unit /Post Spelling Bee. This was held at the high school. It was awesome to see the 3rd-5th graders competing. They did an excellent job. They were all winners and congratulations to the actual winners.

From there attended the Fairfax Unit meeting. Then, on a sadder note I attended the funeral of Past Department President Carol Barbknecht in Ottertail where we presented a Memorial Ceremony at the mass. Carol will be missed. She was a great member and mentor.

I will finish my month with a visit to the Hillman Unit 602 which was rescheduled because of the weather. I know April was busy and thank you to all the units for sending in their Unit Reports and the District and Department Chairman for sending in their reports when completed. It is a big job but is very vital to our organization. The numbers you report are the ones that we send into our National Headquarters for their reports. Our numbers from our Department along with all the other Department numbers add up and mean a lot when we are advocating for our veterans.

May is Poppy month. Our unit members will be busy distributing poppies. Also, I will be traveling throughout Minnesota with our National President Kathy Dungan. Thank you to all the Units that will be hosting luncheons and dinners for her visit. We also have our District Conventions, Mother's Day, Graduations and much more, but let us not forget Memorial Day where we take a moment to remember our fallen veterans.

Thank you for all you have done for our veterans and our communities. God bless all of you and our veterans. God bless America and remember our "Veterans are our stars and our heroes."

Juniors hold 56th annual conference in Richfield

The 56th Annual Department Junior Conference was held on Saturday April 13, hosted by the Fifth District at Richfield American Legion Post 435. Honorary Department Junior President Harley Donnelly led the conference with lots of pride. New officers for 2019-2020 were elected and installed by Jean Walker, Department of Minnesota President. The newly elected Honorary Department Junior Officers are:

Honorary President: Emily Suess, Monticello Unit 260, District 10

Honorary 1st Vice President: Eva Burket, Belview Unit 309, District 2

Honorary 2nd Vice President: Honorary Treasurer: Ashley Stai, New London 537, District 7

Honorary Junior Treasurer: Elizabeth Spoden, Kimball Unit 261, District 6

Honorary Chaplain: Hailey Dunaway, Unit 225, Forest Lake, District 3

Honorary Sergeant-At-Arms: Isabelle Villette, Cold Spring Unit 455, District 6

The appointed officers are:

Honorary Secretary: Sydney Borntreger, Trimont Unit 373, District 2

Honorary Historian: Kiana Coleman-Woods, Lino Lakes Unit 566, District 10

Congratulations to these new Honorary Junior Officers, I know they will have the best year ever under the leadership of President Emily.

2019 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Our 100th annual Department Convention will be held July 11-13, 2019 at the Willmar Conference Center, hosted by the Willmar American Legion Family #167. A word of thanks to the Auxiliary Chairman and committee members for all they are doing to ensure a successful convention.

Hotel reservations are to be made directly with the hotel this year. The registration fee is \$15.00. Please use the registration form which is in this copy of the Legionnaire. You will also find the hotel information in the Legionnaire as well. President Jean Walker 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 will be posted on our website under the About Us tab, 2019 Department Convention, as they are received in the Department Office.

Don't forget the Poppy contests that will be held at the Department Convention. This year Chairman Shaaron Barnes has come up with two wonderful categories; Potted Plant or Terrarium and a Stuffed Animal both using President Jean's theme "Veterans Are Our Stars and Heroes". More than one entry is welcomed; there will be three places awarded and a People's Choice Award. Entries must be at the Department Convention on Thursday, July 11th by 9:00 a.m. Please read your Trophy and Awards packet for details and rules.



2019-20 JUNIOR OFFICERS — New Junior honorary officers were elected at the annual Junior Conference held in Richfield.

Walker endorsed for Alternate National Exec Committee Woman

American Legion Auxiliary Warren Unit 27 has endorsed Jean Walker for Alternate National Executive Committeewoman for the 2019-2020 Auxiliary year.

She has been an active member of Unit 27 for 26

years. Her eligibility is through her late father, Joseph Penk, a World War II veteran.

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

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

On the Department level, Walker has served as

Memory Book Chairman, Americanism Chairman, Leadership Chairman, and Girls State Counselor, Membership Chairman, VA&R Chairman, 2nd Vice and 1st Vice President and is currently serving as Department President.

She and her husband, John, have been married 26 years and live in Warren. They have one son, Michael, daughter-in-law, Heather, granddaughter Arietta and a grandson Bennett. All are members of the American Legion

Family.

Walker is the office manager at Evergreen Implement Company and John is a dispatcher - jailor with the Marshall County Sheriff's Office. She is very active in her community.

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES

I normally don't put items like this on your pages but I made an exception this time as it is very near and dear to my heart. Our Department of Minnesota has lost two of its members this year that were both mentors to me as well as friends. They were also very active in our organization and both held the title of Department President. They are Carol Holmgren and Carol Barbknecht. All of our blessings and prayers go out to their families. They will be so missed by the entire organization.

SECRETARY SANDIE'S CORNER

I am looking forward to our upcoming National Presidents Tour and hopefully God will not bring a snowstorm this year. We had the best time ever last year – hope to top the good times this year. I don't have much to say this month as I just don't have time to type much. Jan and I are having the time of our lives keeping (trying) up with everything. The search is on for a new Julie – if anyone is interested in working in the best office ever, give me a call. I am also looking forward to President Jean's testimonial in May. Shorty and I are making it a weekend in paradise, so to speak along with our very good friends Hawk and Sue. Just can't wait. Shooting Star, watch out, here we come! I best get back to work now – thank you to those who were at Le Center for the Membership Rally – that is my shout out this month. I was okay with the Membership portion filling in for Robin but was then called again to bring greetings from President Jean, well we had a few laughs anyhow, never a dull moment when I have a mike in my hand.

UPCOMING AUXILIARY EVENTS

The month of May is Poppy Month – Governor Tim Walz has issued a proclamation and all Units have received a copy in the last Unit Mailing

American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State – will be held June 9 - 15, 2019 at Bethel University in St. Paul – we still have room for girls to attend.

Department Convention – July 11 - 13 at the Willmar Conference Center – a reminder to all members that Resolutions that are being brought to the Convention are posted on our website mnala.org under Department Convention. Please go in and review these, discuss them with your Units and tell your Delegates your feelings on them.

National Convention – August 23 - 29 in Indianapolis – watch for details.



POST WINS RAFFLE — Auxiliary members Marlis Durose, left, and Jeanette Kane pose with a new Toro snowblower won for the Savage Post 643. The two won it in a Toro giveaway on behalf of the post, and it will be used to clear post walkways for veterans.

April 24, 2019, Auxiliary Membership

District	Goal	Membership To Date	Percent of Goal	Membership Last Year 4.25.2018
One	4,907	3,988	81.27%	4,357
Two	4,924	4,038	82.01%	4,290
Three	4,422	3,908	88.38%	3,911
Four	720	589	81.81%	656
Five	788	580	73.60%	646
Six	6,032	5,150	85.38%	5,415
Seven	3,934	3,243	82.44%	3,455
Eight	1,628	1,294	79.48%	1,400
Nine	4,344	3,472	79.93%	3,734
Ten	5,129	4,089	79.72%	4,308
1982	160	173	108.13%	156
Totals	36,988	30,524	82.52%	32,328

National President Kathy Dungun's Tour of Minnesota May 13-16

Monday, May 13, 2019

Location	Time	Event	Phone	email
Litchfield American Legion	5:30 p.m.	Social	320-693-9074-Post	
222 No. Sibley Ave, Litchfield.	6:00 p.m.	Dinner & Program	320-877-7530	
Barb Koelln				

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Morris American Legion	11:00 a.m.	Social		
507 Pacific Ave., Morris,	11:30 a.m.	Lunch	320-589-2040-Post	
Pam Gades			320-589-2147	pgadesala@gmail.com

Fergus Falls Veterans Home 2:00 p.m. Tour

Park Rapids American Legion	6:00 p.m.	Social		
900 1st St E, Park Rapids,	6:30 p.m.	Dinner	218-732-5238-Post	
Lynn Spilman			320-333-6522 or	lspilman@unitelc.com

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Sauk Centre American Legion	11:00 a.m.	Social		
67 12th St. So, Sauk Centre	11:30 a.m.	Lunch	320-352-9931-Post	
Bev Huot			320-351-1206	

Camp Ripley Veterans Cemetery & Museum Tour

Waite Park American Legion	5:30 p.m.	Social		
17 2nd Ave No., Waite Park,	6:00 p.m.	Dinner	320-252-7880-Post	
Marsha Bible			320-492-8977	marsha.bible@gmail.com
			320-252-3864 or	

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Haven for Heroes	9:30 a.m.	Tour		
Chanhasen American Legion	11:00 a.m.	Social		
290 Lake Dr E, Chanhasen	11:30 a.m.	Lunch	952-934-6677-Post	
Kim Carlander			952-934-5995	kim.carlander@hotmail.com
Hastings Veterans Home	2:30-3:30 p.m.	Tour		
Montgomery American Legion	5:30 p.m.	Social		
102 Elm Ave SW, Montgomery	6:00 p.m.	Dinner	507-364-7779	
Jean Keogh				trixie@frontiernet.net

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Niagara Falls
 June 9-15, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons vacations Tour Manager, Joyce Langerud.
- Deluxe Motor Coach transportation
- 6 nights accommodations
- 9 meals: 6 breakfasts, 3 dinners
- Musical: "Oh Canada Eh"
- Toledo Botanical Gardens
- Guided Tours of Niagara Falls & Niagara on the Lake
- Maid of the Mist Cruise
- Bronner's Christmas Store—Frankenmuth
- R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, Lansing, MI
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$1,059.00 per person double occupancy

ARK Encounter & Creation Museum
 June 23-28, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Season's Tour Director, Cindy Peterson
- Deluxe motorcoach transportation
- 5 nights accommodations
- 9 meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 dinners
- Judge Davis Mansion
- Ark Encounter and Creation Museum
- Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption
- Dinner Cruise
- Lincoln Boyhood Home, Lincoln Museum and Tomb
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$899.00 per person double occupancy

Mackinac Island, Door County & Apostle Island
 July 8-15, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Joyce Langerud
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 7 nights accommodations
- 13 Meals: 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 4 dinners
- Door County Fish Boil
- Guided tours of Door County, Washington Island, Mackinac City & Mackinac Island
- Shipwreck Museum
- Glensheen Mansion
- Northern Sky Theater
- Pictured Rock Cruise
- Apostle Island Cruise
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$1,559.00 per person double occupancy

PASSPORTS REQUIRED

Lake Superior Circle Tour
 September 8-13, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Joyce Langerud
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 6 nights accommodations
- 8 meals
- Guided Tours of Thunder Bay & Sault Ste Marie
- Pictured Rocks Cruise
- Soo Locks Dinner Cruise
- Beautiful Scenery and Stunning Water Falls
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$949.00 per person double occupancy

Wild West
 September 15-23, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Peterson
- Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation
- 13 Meals: 8 Breakfasts, 1 Lunch, 4 Dinners
- 8 nights Accommodations
- Buffalo Bill State Park
- Tour Stanley Hotel
- Bison ranch & Train Tour
- Old West Museums
- Wyoming Territorial Prison
- Gun fight & Trial of Jack McCall
- Little Bighorn Battlefield
- Mount Rushmore & The Badlands
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$1,899.00 per person Double Occupancy

PASSPORTS REQUIRED

The Best of Italy
 September 17-28, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Tour Director, Tammi Haney
- Round trip deluxe motor coach to Minneapolis Airport
- Roundtrip Delta flights Minneapolis to Rome
- 10 nights accommodations in superior hotels
- Full breakfast buffet daily, 5 three course dinners
- Local expert guides in 11 magical cities
- VIP access to must see sights and headsets throughout the tour
- Boat rides in Venice, jettfoil boat, funicular railway, open top taxi and boat cruise in Capri
- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person

\$5,399.00 per person double occupancy

PASSPORTS REQUIRED

NYC, New England Fall Colors Canada Cruise
 October 24-31, 2019

Tour Includes:

- 4 Seasons Vacation Tour director, Tammi Haney
- Roundtrip Delta flights from Minneapolis to New York
- 2 night stay at Millennium Hotel in Times Square
- Circle line cruise of Manhattan with lunch
- A Broadway performance
- Welcome dinner @ Carmine's Times Square
- 5 night cruise on the Regal Princess
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- 24-hour room service
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- Onboard boutiques and shops

\$2,699.00 per person double occupancy

Civil War Battlegrounds
 October 7-15, 2019

Tour Includes:

- Services of 4seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Peterson
- Deluxe motorcoach transportation
- 8 nights accommodations
- 12 meals, 8 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners
- Admission to all parks museums & battlefields including Vicksburg, Shiloh and others
- Jesse James, Patee House, Pony Express, Vicksburg Old Depot & Mississippi Civil Rights Museums
- Old Warren County Courthouse
- McRaven House & Anchuca Mansion, and Rosedown & Myrtles Plantation
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- Luggage handling for 1 suitcase per person


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