



# Legionnaire

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For God and Country

August 2014

## Moon rises over Minnesota *Peggy Moon will be first woman commander of the Department; Klinkner new chaplain*

Peggy Moon, St. Joseph, was elected Department Commander of the Minnesota American Legion at the recent Department Convention in Rochester.

Moon, 62, a Vietnam Era veteran, defeated Mike Schaffer of Fulda by a vote of 491 to 278.

Moon becomes the first woman commander in the state's history.

Another contested election developed at the convention when it was determined that the Department's constitution would not allow Department Chaplain Richard Wog to succeed himself. Wog was the only candidate for the position.

At morning caucuses, two candidates came forward, Steve Klinkner of Madelia and Darrel Redepenning of Fridley. Both were nominated, and Klinkner edged Redepenning by a 353 to 315 margin in the voting.

Other candidates elected, without opposition, were: Gary Olson, Moorhead, Department Historian; Clinton Burt, Slayton, Sergeant-at-Arms; Joe Bayer, Minneapolis, Board of Publications Member. Elected Department Vice Commanders were Glenn Mueller, St. Charles; Arne Gynild, Willmar; Dennis DeLong, Bloomington; Mel Buesseler, Hillman; Carl Hendrickson, Cloquet.

Moon is the first woman commander of the 98 who have held that office.

"The historical perspective is very important to me," Moon said in an interview. "They say that women have to work twice as hard and be twice as qualified to be seen on equal terms with men. So be it. I just want to set the bar at a high and attainable level for other women veterans to follow."

Her theme for the year will be "Celebrating Courage." "I like to think of it as knowing inside that some things are more important than fear," Moon told the convention. "Look into your district and find those stories about courage. As my husband (Sixth District Commander Carl Moon) likes to say, 'Say it loud and say it proud.' We're going to celebrate who we are."

Moon introduced Pat Logan, Bloomington, as Membership Director.

"I can tell you, I'll work my butt off as membership



PEGGY MOON ADDRESSES THE CONVENTION

director," Logan said. "I will do what it takes. I will not stop."

He said his theme for the year would be baseball, and he had helpers throw out Cracker Jacks and peanuts to the delegates while he had "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" and "God Bless America" played on the sound system.

Mike Ash completed his year as commander and thanked everyone for their support and suggestions through the year. He joked, "How could I get lost this year with everybody telling me what to do?"

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## Charlotte will host 2014 National Convention

The 2014 National Convention will come back to Charlotte, North Carolina, this year, Aug. 22-28 at the Charlotte Convention Center. The convention was held there in 2002.

The Minnesota delegation to the 96th national convention will be housed at the Sheraton Charlotte Hotel at 555 South McDowell Street. The room rate is \$151 per night, and there is a \$25 registration fee for each person attending.

Minnesotans are encouraged to bring their colors to Charlotte to march in the national parade. Minnesota has a tradition of massed colors in the parade.

The Department has reserved 100 rooms. Delegates and others must make room reservations through the Department headquarters. Parking at the Minnesota hotel is \$13 a day.

The Westin Charlotte and the Hilton Charlotte Center City will be the two official hotels for the Legion.

The SAL will hold its convention at the Charlotte Convention center on Friday and Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 22-24.

The registration hours for the Minnesota delegation will be Friday, Aug. 22, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. Registration will be in

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CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER

## DEC grapples with Riders' constitution

The future of The American Legion Riders in Minnesota became a discussion topic at the Department Executive Committee at the state convention in Rochester.

Richard Oelschlager, the Department's liaison for the Riders, came to the podium late in the meeting and informed the committee that it had never offi-

cially approved the Riders constitution and bylaws.

The constitution and bylaws had been presented to the DEC about a year and half ago, but the documents were filed but not approved by the Legion leaders.

Oelschlager said that if the state's Riders constitution and bylaws are not approved, the Riders have no Department level organization. "If we cannot meet as a group, then we cannot do what we do."

The state Riders annually do motorcycle runs in the state and raise money for the Legacy Scholarship Fund

among other activities.

Don Pankake, who was commander when the constitution was filed, said it would not be a good idea to try and vote on the document now. "Nobody in the room knows what's in it. Nobody knows what it says."

Oelschlager replied that it was crunch time for the Riders. "We cannot exist without your approval."

Treasurer Richard Horn said he was concerned about the liability to The American Legion should the constitution be passed. "What if something happens and there's a lawsuit to the

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DEC MEETING -- Members of the Department Executive Committee participate in the meeting held just prior to the Department Convention.

## Resolution will change delegate- at-large process

Minnesota will no longer be shorthanded at national conventions.

A resolution passed at the Department Convention in Rochester will allow the Department to fill delegate seats that are not used by districts.

In the past, districts would sometimes not send a delegate, and the state delegation would be short.

The resolution as amended, says that any district that does not fill its complete slate of national delegates at its convention, and if that position remains unfilled at the close of business on Friday at the Department Convention, that position will be added to the state's list of delegates at large.

The resolution went into effect for this year's convention, and an unfilled delegate position from the Eighth District was added to the Department's list of delegates at large.

Instead of electing three, as allowed by the bylaws, four state delegates at large were elected.

Other resolutions were passed or rejected without much controversy, but a resolution that called for all districts to have teams in the state's American Legion Division 1 (larger teams) tournament engendered quite a bit of debate.

The resolution came out of the Seventh District and

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# Resolutions pass at 2014 convention

Continued from Page 1

was assigned the Sports and Recreation Committee.

This past year, the Minnesota Baseball Committee changed the way teams advance to the Division I tourney. In an effort to make things more equitable, the committee changed the format from each district having tournaments to setting up 15 zone tournaments. About nine or ten team were assigned to each of these sub-states.

The perceived problem was that smaller districts only had a few teams competing for the Division I tourney, and it wasn't fair to districts that had many teams. A practice of giving the larger districts more teams in the state tournament field was not seen as the solution to the equity problem.

The winner of each of those zone play downs would then advance to the 16-team Division I state tournament – plus the host team.

Every team in the state had a chance to advance to the state tournament, but as it worked out three districts, the 4th, 5th, and 9th did not have teams in the state tourney this past year.

The resolution called for every district to have a team, and it was defeated in the committee by a 4-3 vote. On the floor of the convention, Delegate Nick Kakos of the 5th District asked that it be removed from the committee's report and discussed.

Kakos moved that the resolution be passed. "The changes in Legion Baseball have eliminated one of the cardinal principles in that every district should be represented."

Kakos went on to say that the way the Minneapolis teams were distributed into three zone tournaments against the suburban powerhouses, there was no way a Minneapolis team would ever advance.

Al Davis, a state vice director on the Baseball Committee, noted that the Minnesota baseball program was the largest in the nation, and has been very successful with teams it has sent on to national competition. It is one of the few baseball programs in the nation has not seen a major attrition of teams.

"The Baseball Committee has adapted to changing times," Davis said of the change to zone play. "If we start micromanaging all the programs, it would be a disaster."

The convention held a stand-up vote, and the resolution was defeated 115-62.

Resolutions that were passed at the convention included:

- Calling for a special prosecutor to investigate the problems at the VA health system.
- Changing the Korean War era eligibility dates for membership in the American Legion from ending on Jan. 31, 1955, to "open" through the years following. Congress sets the dates for wartime eligibility.
- Calling for 50 percent of VA jobs be filled by veterans.
- Endorsing Dennis Henkemeyer of Bagley for the National SAL vice commander post for this coming year.
- Recognizing the National Guard and Reserve at the National Convention.

# Round Table seeks vets for programs

The World War II Round Table that meets at the Fort Snelling History Center each month is seeking veterans for certain programs.

"As you know, finding World War II veterans is becoming more difficult," Round Table Director Don Patton said. "My priority for planning programs is the availability of veterans."

Those veterans who would be willing to share their experiences should call Patton at 612-867-5144 or email him at coldpatton@yahoo.com.

Programs this year that are seeking veterans include:

- Sept. 11, Canadian or British veterans from the D-Day landings.
- Dec. 11, Any veterans from the 327/401st GIR or 326th GFA or 502nd PIR who were in Bastogne on Christmas of 1944.
- Jan. 8, Eastern front veterans from German or Russian armies.
- Feb. 12, Veterans fighting in Italy, south of Rome.
- Mar. 12, Veterans who were in supply and other logistical units.
- Mar. 26, Veterans of the ground action in Leyte.
- April 9, Veterans of air operations in the 12th AAF or the 15th AAF, or British veterans of the Mediterranean.

The Round Table is also supporting the national Glider Pilots reunion in the Twin Cities on Oct. 2-5 with a symposium. The public will be invited. Glider veterans are sought.

Patton said he is always soliciting ideas for Round Table programs. The March 12 program was a suggestion by veterans.

# Charlotte Convention begins August 23

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Governor VI.

Those who are unable to register at those times should arrange for someone else to pick up their packet.

The Minnesota caucus will be at the Sheraton in Mecklenburg 2 and 3 on Monday, Aug. 25, from 8-10 a.m.

The Minnesota Party will also be at the Sheraton on Monday, Aug. 25, starting with a cash bar at 5 p.m. It will also be held in Mecklenburg 2 and 3. There will be a Jimmy Buffet theme and Hawaiian shirts and flip flops are encouraged attire.

The burgers and fixings will be set out at 6 p.m., followed by music and dancing. Tickets are \$28 and must be purchased in advance.

The National Commander's Banquet will be held at the convention center on Tuesday, Aug. 26, at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are sold out. The States Dinner will be at 7 p.m. the following night.



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Order sheets for the Minnesota Party are available through Department Headquarters. Tickets for the States Dinner must be purchased through the Auxiliary Headquarters.

The annual parade at the convention will be Sunday, Aug. 24, at 4 p.m. There will be a patriotic religious service on Sunday at 11 a.m. at the convention center.

Charlotte is named after King George III's wife, and it is the second largest banking center in the United States. There are several tours available, including a brewery, NASCAR, and the Billy Graham Library.

The American Legion will be offering free workshops on how posts can participate in the upcoming centennial celebration in 2018 and 2019. Participants are requested to pre-register on the national website: legion.org.

Other information on the Charlotte convention is also available on the website including listings of events and attractions. www.charlottesgotalot.com also lists attractions.

# Moon elected

Continued from Page 1

He said the job was tough, but worthwhile. "If I had to drive five hours to deliver a five minute speech, that was okay. I was proud to do it."

He praised his wife, Teresa Ash, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee, for her work on helping the Department into the electronic age, in particular for setting up Facebook pages for the Department and all 10 districts.

The four delegates at large elected by the convention were Joe Niessen, Wes Thompson, Larry Ryan and Dave Wendt.

Next year's convention will be at Redwood Falls.

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# Endorsements

## Kellogg runs for Commander

Jim Kellogg has been endorsed by the First District and Adams Post 146 for Department Commander for 2015-16.

Kellogg is an Air Force veteran of Vietnam War era, and is a life member of the Adams Post with 38 years of service.

At the post level, he has served as commander and has held nearly every officer position.

He was commander of the county Legion organization, and he was District Commander and Adjutant.

At the Department level, Kellogg has been Sergeant-at-Arms, Historian, and Vice Commander. He has

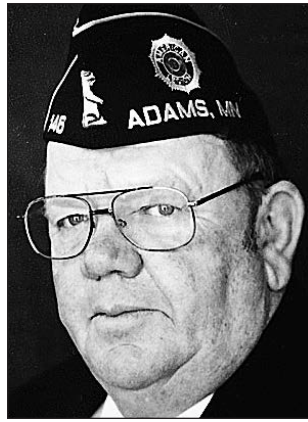
served on an ad hoc committee, the Executive Committee, and the American Legion Family Hospital Association. He has chaired the Brain Sciences Foundation for many years.

He is also a member of the Past District Commander's Club.

At the National Level, Kellogg has served on the Foreign Relations and National Security Commission, and he has been to national membership school.

He is a member of the VFW, the DAV, ANAVICUS and the 40/8.

He and his wife, Brenda,



JIM KELLOGG

have four children, and nine grandchildren. They are members of Sacred Heart Church in Adams.

## Ronning runs for NECman

Marland Ronning has been endorsed by Osseo Post 172 and the 10th District for National Executive Committeeman for 2015-17.

He served in the U.S. Army serving from 1959-1967.

Ronning has been a member of The American Legion for 39 years. He has served Osseo post 172 in all offices, and most chairmanships.

He has also served the Rural Hennepin County Council as Sgt-at-arms, Vice Commander, and was Commander for two years, from 1984-86.

He has served the Tenth District American Legion as Historian, Judge Advocate, Adjutant, Americanism, Children & Youth and District Vice Commander and Finance Committee.

Ronning served as Department Commander in 2004-2005. Other Department positions include Sergeant-at-Arms, Vice Commander, Membership Director and a member of the Executive Board. He was Post Home Chairman, Co-Chair of the Citizens Flag Alliance and was also on the Funds for Hospitalized Vets Committee. He is currently

serving on the Minnesota Hospital Association.

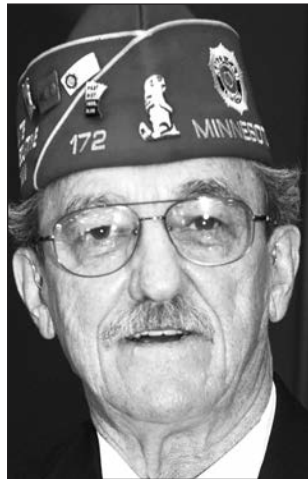
Ronning is a past Chairman, past Secretary and currently serves as Treasurer of the "V4V" Board of trustees (Veterans for Veterans).

He served the National American Legion as Committeeman on the National Membership & Post Activities Committee, Consultant on the National Aerospace Committee, Vice Chairman on the Americanism Council, currently serves as a member of the Veterans Employment & Education Council and also, is the current Alternate National Executive Committeeman from Minnesota.

He is an active member of Minnetonka Voiture 1281 of the 40/8.

He is a life member of The American Legion, DAV and the VFW. He is a dual member in the Legion and Sons of the American Legion. He is an Honorary Life member of ANAVICUS

He and his wife, Chris, have a blended family of five children, 13 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. He is retired from IMI Vision located in Osseo.



MARLAND RONNING

## DSO Newman gets national appointment

Minnesota Department Service Officer Tom Newman has been selected for a position on a VA national taskforce titled VHA Leading Access and Scheduling Initiative (LASI).

"I believe being a member of this initiative will greatly enhance our department's ability to advocate for the veterans we strive to serve," Newman said. "I'm also looking forward to entering into the collaborative relationships with the variety of VA leadership and other taskforce members with which we'll be working."

LASI will have 15 members. Some of the areas they will look at include:

-- A lack of transparency or accountability in the VA management structure.

-- A corrosive culture within the VA that has led to personnel problems that impact morale, and the delivery of health care.

-- Creating a situation where employees can speak out about problems and issues.

There are 11 issues in total that the task force will try to address.

## COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Peggy Moon



This is my first article for The Legionnaire, and I want to start out by thanking all of you for the wonderful support you have given me during the campaign, and for electing me as your Department Commander. Thank you also to Past National Commander Dan Ludwig for administering the Oath of Office - a pledge that I do not take lightly. There is a lot on our plate, and as we tackle the issues that face veterans today, I want to remember and honor those who have come before us and work together as a team to mold a great future for this organization.

In preparation for this year, I have been rereading The American Legion, An Official History, 1919-1989 by Thomas A Rumer. The dedication and drive of those veterans who founded this organization is very impressive and thought provoking. How did they accomplish so much with so little? I was also amazed that even before they had their first convention, our founders already knew they needed an Auxiliary. On page 61, the author writes, "Some of the group stated that when during the war they wanted socks and other items of need, it was the women's auxiliaries more often than not that sent them." This reminded me of Past Department President Dee Dee Buckley's campaign to furnish socks to our homeless veterans at Minnesota StandDown functions around the state. It wasn't that long ago, and some of our issues still remain. Some things don't change.

As I write this, I am also working on my list of committee appointments for the upcoming year. I will present this at our first Department Executive Committee Meeting

Saturday, August 9, 2014 at Rudolph Priebe Post 172 in Osseo. The meeting will start at 11:00 a.m. Prior to this meeting, there will be a Membership meeting at 9:00 a.m. where our new Department Membership Chairman Pat Logan will roll out his membership program for 2014-2015. Please invite your District Membership Chairmen to attend. Pat has been working hard developing an exciting strategy to this year's membership drive, and this is your opportunity to get the details and ask questions.

The end of this month will find many of us heading to Charlotte, N.C., for our National Convention. Please remember to bring your American Flags for the National Parade. Minnesotans continue to show their pride when marching with massed colors at this event - and this year should be no different. Let's show them the spirit that energizes us.

In preparation for our National Convention, our American Legion Riders will be conducting their 5th Annual Minnesota Legacy Scholarship Motorcycle Run throughout this great state. The Legacy Scholarship provides funds to children who have lost a parent on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001, for college expenses. You can view their schedule at [mnlegacyrun.org](http://mnlegacyrun.org). Please put this on your schedule and show your support for this worthy effort. They are a sight to behold.

Finally, remember that September 16 is American Legion Day in Minnesota. What is your Post doing to mark this occasion? This bill was signed into law by Governor Pawlenty in 2010. This is the time to open your doors and show your community what The American Legion is all about. Remember, Be Loud, Be Proud.



## Chaplain's Corner

By Steve Klinkner



Greetings to all American Legion Family Members. My name is Steven Klinkner from Second District Madelia Post 19 and current Post Commander. My wife, Donna and I have been married for 42 years and we have two children, son Jeffrey (Tonya) and daughter Sheila (John), and eight grandchildren.

Congratulations to our new Department Commander, Peggy Moon, our first female Commander for the State. The Second District will also have their first female Commander, Jennifer Kafka. As we look forward to a great year, may we ask for blessings upon all of the newly elected Legion officers and committees.

I would like to thank Teresa Ash and Bill Barbknecht for nominating me for Department Chaplain and introducing me to all of the Districts on Friday morning. I would also like to thank the Second District for their support, for without their guidance I could not have made it to this level to be of service for our Veterans. And of course, it is of honor to be following the foot steps of past Second District and past Department Chaplain Don Amundson.

I am looking forward to the new year and in keeping the faith in God and our country. There are two things we have to do. First: Exercise your faith; the more you use it the stronger it gets. The less you use it, the weaker it gets. We can use our faith every day simply by taking time to pray and obeying your conscience. Second: Keeping our country close to your heart. If you do not agree with what is going on in Congress, either e-mail or call your Senators and tell them how you feel, don't be afraid to speak, this is your country, be proud and stand up for what you believe.

Lastly, I would like to thank Richard Wog for his messages in the Minnesota Legionnaire and his service as Chaplain to the Department of Minnesota.

God Bless America. Keep our servicemen and women safe for they are keeping our country safe. Remember them in your prayers.

## Mail Call

### Thanks to Auxiliary

To the Editor:

Hello, I just wanted to express my gratitude and say thanks to whom I can. I was at the St. Cloud VA with my two little ones and my father today and a receptionist gave my daughter a bag full of wonderful toys/books/crayons/etc. I was very touched. The bag was artfully designed and colored and said it was donated by American Legion Auxiliary/ MN Girls State. I am very impressed and would like info on how to donate etc. Thanks again and thank you for your time.

Tony Mack

### Privatization

To the Editor

I am a life member of the Legion, my concern is in the latest edition of the Legionnaire. Tom Mullan who headed a report on the Phoenix health care I feel spoke out of turn with his statements about privatization of health care. I live in a very rural area of Minn and our closet VA facility is 200 miles. I have never had to wait for health care at my local facility which is way above any treatment I have ever got at a VA facility. At my local hosp. I am a person not a number. If you would look at the Big Fork Valley Hospital in Big Fork, Minn. you would find this is one of the top hospitals in the nation. We have been fighting to get rural health care for our older veterans because of the distances they have to travel to get the care they have earned and deserve. I have to admit I am angry as those statements that Mr. Mullan made pertaining to rural and private health care.

Today Bernie Sanders and John McCain introduced legislation to make it easier for veterans to get private health. Look at the bill at the VFW legislative report. All I have to say Mr. Mullan get out the urban and get out in the rural Minn then you will see the hoops we jump threw with the waiting for our appointments to get the care we need. It took 6 weeks to get an appointment in St. Cloud. My local hospital took me in 2 days. You folks seem to not understand what happens outside your little world. Please do not make statements if do not understand the truth. I really think if Mr. Mullan cared about veterans he would not make such uniformed statements. Please pass this along to Tom Mullan. If you really care about veterans you would come out with something better than those ridiculous statements. I'm very very upset because I believe our veterans deserve better.

Tom Moors  
Bigfork

### Memorial Day

To the Editor:

We recently celebrated Memorial Day 2014. Touching tributes to veterans were on Public TV, and last night Turner Classic Movies featured 'The Best Years of Our Lives,' an excellent show about 3 G.I.s returning home from overseas after WWII. We've all seen recent heart-tugging TV news scenes of loving wives and children greeting returning veterans. All this brought back memories of a long sad story commencing the night I returned unannounced in 1956 from deployment during the Korean War as an Air Force air traffic controller in Alaska. The condensed low lites follow:

A babysitter let me in, and hurriedly left. I kissed the two sleeping little ones, and waited until my wife and her live-in boyfriend came home. I had suspected something like that. When I opened the door, the guy ran down the apartment stairs and wasn't seen again (Ironically enough, he and other of her consorts were patrons of a VFW club she frequented). I talked to her about divorce, called a cab, threw my wedding ring in a nearby swamp, paid the driver handsomely to get me a (after hours) bottle of whiskey and take me to a sleazy hotel in downtown St. Paul. I drank the bottle and don't remember much after that. A bitter divorce and custody fight, all the way to the state Supreme Court, followed which I lost of course, being male (The laws and procedures are strange). I made application with the V.A. for psychological treatment, not compensation, for depression — nowadays it would probably be called PTSD — but the claim was rejected.

I was hired as a civilian air traffic controller, mostly in Minneapolis tower, but struggled with depression and heavy drinking. The whole catastrophe took a psychological toll. It eventually affected work. One night during only average traffic, I nearly caused a collision between a landing Navy jet and a fully loaded civilian airliner on the runway. Not wanting a repeat of that, I resigned from the FAA. With no income, I was jailed for not supporting my kids and at least one other child that she produced and claimed was mine. Admittedly, I became almost equally irresponsible. My kids, brainwashed during their entire youth, now blame ME for results of HER lifestyle choices.

I was rescued years later by an old girlfriend-schoolmate who remembered my better youth. Even despite her serious health problems including a stroke 7 years ago, we will have been happily married 40 years this summer in Forest Lake, Minnesota. Resolved to expose the legal and social prejudices that destroy families, I became very active in the men's defense movement. Active enough to have been invited to represent men in families at the April 2014 DOHA Qatar conference on families. The formal invitation

letter will be produced upon request.

Yesterday, I should have been, as in many previous years, with old American Legion friends making the rounds of cemeteries honoring departed vets, but this holiday I remained home to care for my 83-year-old good wife who is approaching death.

Richard F. Doyle  
Forest Lake

## Reunions

The USS *Monrovia*, APA-31, will holds its 30th reunion on September 17-21 at its home port of Norfolk, Virginia. Sailors and Marines who served on board are welcome. For more information, contact John Slagowski, 302-234-0701 or the Minnesota contact, Wayne Scheffel, 952-890-1112.

## The Minnesota Legionnaire

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Al Zdon, Editor

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# What's Happening

## First Exec Meeting

The first meeting of the Department Executive Committee will be held Saturday, Aug. 9, at 11 a.m. at Osseo Post 172. It will be preceded by a membership meeting at 9 a.m. Lunch will be available for purchase after the meeting.

## 45th Camp-O-Ree

The 2014 Camporee will be held at Legionville Camp on Sept. 4-7.

The camp is located just north of Brainerd on North Long Lake. It serves grade schoolers who are being trained in school safety patrol, first aid, patriotism and other activities.

The dedication of the new learning center at the camp has been postponed until next year, but all Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and SAL are invited to visit the camp during Camp-O-Ree in order to see the progress on the building that has been accomplished since last year. The building was used this year, but much taping and painting still needs to be done.

The organizers of Camp-O-Ree are hoping to have a lot of new faces at the event.

Activities include: A steak fry, bingo, pork feed, entertainment, SAL breakfast, fish fry, outdoor games for all ages, barbeque dinner, and a chili feed.

Campers can pitch a tent, bring in a RV, or stay in the dormitories. Linens and blankets should be brought if you intend to stay in the dorms.

There is a \$25 fee per adult for those arriving on Thursday, \$20 fee on Friday, and \$15 on Saturday. Children 4-17 are charged \$2 per day.

The American Legion Riders will be having a fund raiser at Legionville on Sept. 26-27.

For more information, contact Jay Beebe at 218-963-7750.

## Workshop at Convention

A workshop will be held at the National Convention in Charlotte on Monday, Aug. 25, from 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. at the Charlotte Convention Center, Room 203, Sections A&B, Ballroom level.

The workshop will prepare posts for the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of The American Legion which will begin with the Minneapolis Convention in 2018.

Every post should be a part of the centennial events, including the creation of a post history and other promotions and events.

There is no fee and pre-registration is not required.

## StandDowns Planned

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is planning four StandDowns in August and September across northern Minnesota.

The StandDowns are open to veterans and will feature legal clinics, StandDown Court, meals, clothing, VA benefit info, claims and services, tax assistance, haircuts, housing info, employment assistance, dependency counseling, and chaplaincy.

The four StandDowns are:

-- August 21, Virginia, Miners Memorial Building. The doors will be open from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. with a welcoming ceremony at 11:30.

-- August 22, Duluth, Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center, Edmund Fitzgerald Room. The doors will be open from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. with a welcoming ceremony at 11:30.

-- September 24, Bemidji, Bemidji Armory. The doors will be open from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. with a welcoming ceremony at 11:30. There will be a clothing distribution at 10.

-- September 25, Grand Rapids, National Guard Armory. The doors will be open from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. with a welcoming ceremony at 11:30. There will be a clothing distribution at 10.

For faster registration, please bring your DD-214. For more information, call MACV at 218-722-8763.

## VUMS need members

The Veterans of Underage Military Service are seeking possible members and others who might have an interest in the organization.

The organization is open to men who enlisted in the military when they were under 17, or women when they were under 20 in World War II, Korea and beyond.

For more information go to [oldvums.org](http://oldvums.org).

## VA plans housing hearing

The Minneapolis VA Health Care System is seeking public input on its plans to provide 100 units of affordable housing for veterans. A public hearing will be held Wednesday, Aug. 6, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

The VA intends to lease two acres of property adjacent to the medical center.

## Tax Credit Deadline

Those who served in a military combat zone in 2010 are eligible for a tax credit worth at least \$120 and possibly much more. You had to be a Minnesota resident during your service, and have served in a combat zone and received combat pay.

The credit is for \$120 a month for each month in the combat zone. Applicants have to file 2010 Form M99 to receive the credit.

The deadline is Oct. 15.

For more information, call 1-800-652-9094.

## St. Cloud Rendezvous

Central Minnesota veterans, their spouses and families are invited to the second annual Veterans Rendezvous on Saturday, Sept. 6, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.

There will be support, music, and fun provided.

The day will begin with a Suicide Awareness Walk/Run at 9 a.m. Lunch is available for purchase in the VA Canteen, or participants may picnic. Live music and entertainment will be available from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

There will also be free hearing screenings, tours of the VA, a petting zoo, car and motorcycle show and more.

For more information go to [www.stcloud.va.gov](http://www.stcloud.va.gov).

## SAL Deer Hunt

The Sons of the American Legion John Zgoda Memorial Disabled Veterans Deer Hunt will be held Oct. 3-5 at Legionville. Those who are qualified should contact Lloyd Schaeffer at 952-457-2981. Four slots are available.

Hunters will stay at Legionville and will hunt on the grounds. Evening meals, provided by the SAL, will be at a local restaurant.



## Your American Legion Department Sponsored INSURANCE PROGRAMS

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been Your Department's sponsored member benefits program for over 45 years and continues to fulfill members' needs while being the only such program to benefit Your Department.

Our Products include, but are not limited to:

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- CancerCare
- Travel Accident
- Emergency Assistance Plus™

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**LEGIONCARE**

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**AT NO COST TO YOU!**

*If you think LegionCare sounds too good to be true, please take a few minutes right now to find out why it isn't.*

**ABSOLUTELY NO COSTS TO YOU**

People would be right to ask "What's the catch?" if they had a benefit of up to \$5,000.00 at NO COST TO YOU. You're not like most people, you're a Legionnaire. As a Legionnaire, you are automatically authorized for this Accidental Death benefit coverage offers \$5,000.00 in coverage if a covered accident occurs while you are in the service of your American Legion Business or \$1,000.00 for all other accidents, all at NO COST TO YOU until it expires on 12/31/16. That's right: Absolutely NO COST TO YOU.

A great opportunity you can trust because you've earned it as a Member of Your Department of The American Legion. Your Department is committed to protecting American Veterans and their families, so they've worked with the Legionnaire Insurance Trust to arrange this benefit opportunity!

**Don't pass up this opportunity!**

For more information on the products and services provided by The Legionnaire Insurance Trust,

**CALL: 1-800-810-8369**  
or Visit us on the web at: [www.theLIT.com](http://www.theLIT.com)

\*Product specifications and availability will vary by state. Products are only available in the U.S.

## Preserving Minnesota's History

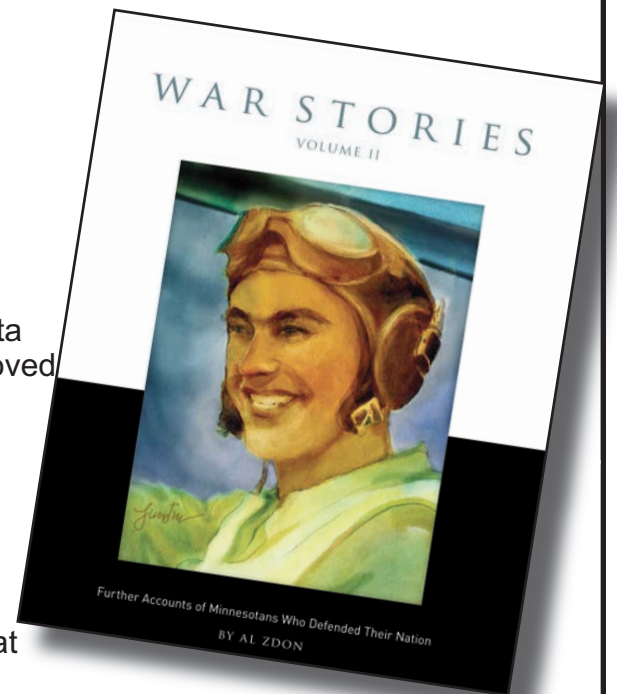
Give the gift of Minnesota military history to your loved one.

War Stories II has 35 stories about Minnesota veterans and over 300 pictures.

Books will be available at the Fall Conference.

To order simply go to [www.mnlegion.org](http://www.mnlegion.org). Credit cards accepted.

Or use the blank below.



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20 West 12th Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copy(ies) of War Stories Volume II  
Cost is \$29 per book. Includes shipping and handling.

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copy(ies) of War Stories Volume I  
Cost is \$23 per book. Includes shipping and handling.

Total amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Sons of The American Legion

By  
Dennis Henkemeyer



First of all, I would like to thank the members of the Detachment of Minnesota for the trust that they have placed in me by my election to the office of Detachment Commander.

My election and installation at Legionville was a very special day because it was witnessed by many members of my family including my parents, Jack and Harriet Henkemeyer.

I am eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion through my father who was a United States Navy Veteran who served in the Pacific Theater during World War II. My father is a member of Frank Heinzel Post 254 of Sauk Rapids, Minnesota.

I would also like to thank my longtime friend Ray DeZurik for installing me and the balance of the detachment officers. Thanks also for PNC Joe Mayne for the seconding speech that he gave on my behalf, my wife Denise Milton for placing the official hat of the detachment commander on my head, PNC Doug Bible for placing the pin of detachment commander and dual membership pin on my lapel, and to National Commander Joe Gladden for giving me the gavel of the office.

I am truly excited about the year ahead and look forward to all of the programs of the S.A.L. that will be carried out. Thanks to all of the members that have accepted leadership rolls and have stepped up to chair the various committees.

Thanks to Paul Spyhalski of Austin for accepting the responsibility of membership director. Paul will be working closely with all of the detachment vice commanders, district commanders and squadrons and I am sure that we will reach an all time high in membership by the end of the year.

As a matter of fact, I feel that 11,000 is a very realistic goal for us. Thanks also to PNC Bible for accepting the position of detachment adjutant.

My project for the upcoming year is the Fisher House in Minneapolis. This is a new program that the Detachment of Minnesota adopted at the fall conference last year. I would like to "stuff the shelves" and "pack the pantries" to make the stay for our wounded soldiers and their families just a little more like being at home. Any donations to this project are deeply appreciated.

I would encourage all of you to go to [www.mnsal.org](http://www.mnsal.org) and check out our website.

In closing, I would ask that all of you keep Immediate Past Detachment Commander John W Affolter in your continued prayers. As most of you know, John suffered a stroke and has been moved from the hospital to a home where he is presently rehabbing.

Recovery has been very slow and we wish John all the best and look forward to seeing him real soon.

The Sons of The American Legion is proud to be part of the Minnesota Legion Family and we stand ready to do our part.

Together, Let's Propel to the Top.

## Vietnam exhibit at Ripley

CAMP RIPLEY, MN – The Minnesota Military Museum will host a special Vietnam traveling exhibit for one day only, Monday August 4 from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. The exhibit is sponsored by the Mobile Riverine Force Association.

The mobile museum and memorial is dedicated to the soldiers of the 9th Inf. Division and sailors of Navy Task Force 117 as well as all Navy & Coast Guard Units in the Mekong Delta and other areas of Vietnam from 1966-70. It is housed in a 48-foot fifth wheel trailer and will be on the grounds.

In addition the museum will be hosting a used book sale and local author Wendell Affield will be on hand to sign copies of his book "Muddy Jungle Rivers."

"We look forward to a good turnout of Vietnam Veterans and people interested in honoring those who served on these river boats"

said Doug Bekke, Museum Curator.

The Minnesota Military Museum is open 7 days a week 10:00 to 5:00 and located on the Camp Ripley Military reservation.

## DEC debates Legion Rider constitution

Continued from Page 1

Department?"

Historian Dennis DeLong pointed out that the Riders, with or without a constitution, is still a program of the American Legion and the Riders can still meet.

Department Adjutant Randy Tesdahl said that the way it has been set up was that the connection between the Legion and the Riders is the liaison – Oelschlager. "It was never intended to have a cadre of officers."

Department Judge Advocate Don Walser noted that Departments around the nation were dealing with their Riders differently. There is no one correct way to organize them on a statewide basis.

National Executive Committeeman Ray DeZurik said he was also concerned about the liability. DeZurik moved to look at the issue again in the August DEC meeting which will be held Aug. 9 at 11 a.m. in Osseo.

The motion passed and the Rider's constitution and Bylaws were moved to the next meeting.

In other business, the DEC:

Heard a report from the Tesdahl on the National Convention slated for Charlotte, N.C., in late August. He said that the after-parade party on Sunday will be held at the hotel in conjunction with several other states including North Dakota and South Dakota. He said there may be a jazz band, and samples of Founding Father's Beer.

LIT Chairman Bill Barbknecht said the insurance program had turned over \$101,000 to the Department this past year. He urged all Legion members to take advantage of the free Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy.

A representative of Founding Fathers Beer, Bob Stephenson, told the DEC that a three-year agreement had been reached with the national American Legion. The Legion will get half of the profits of the sale of the beer. No exact distribution of the money had been determined, but he said he had heard that it would 50 percent would go to the posts, with 25 percent each to the Department and National.

A motion on changes to the structure of the American Legion committees was tabled. The motion came from the Strategic Planning Committee.

Wayne Gilbertson, president of Legionville, said the ribbon cutting planned for September will be delayed one year. He said funding was at a low point right now, and that there was other work to be done at new training center. He said that it's possible North Dakota school patrol kids could begin using Legionville. He said that screened in porches had been added to both ends of each dormitory building.

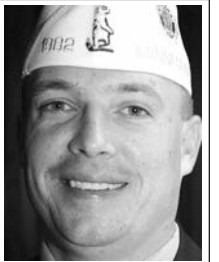
The DEC voted to endorse Dennis Henkemeyer for SAL National Vice Commander for 2015-16.

## Crisis center set up in Arizona

The American Legion Department of Arizona conducted a Veterans Command Crisis Center (VCCC) at Post 26 in Mesa recently, the first of what the department said will be several similar centers. Department officials said that with the success of the Legion's Veterans Crisis Command Center conducted in Phoenix in June, the department learned the great benefit of pulling together resources from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other community providers to reach out to Arizona veterans with help for their needs. "We're going to keep building on the collaboration that we enjoyed with (VA) during the Veterans Crisis Command Center in June," Arizona Department Commander Andy Jaime said. The Mesa center will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Post 26, 505 W 2nd Ave. VA outreach teams and other community providers will be available on site. The contact number for the post event is (480) 213-6277.

## Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By  
Tom Newman



### Tragic Stories

During the past six weeks, American Legion staff has teamed up with local Legionnaires and Departments of Veterans Affairs employees in conducting Veterans Crisis Command Centers in five cities throughout the country.

At these centers, veterans got to meet face to face with Legion service officers and representatives from the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration. More than 2,000 veterans have come to these centers for help. And many of those, the Legion's Verna Jones told the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs today, have tragic stories to tell.

"I'm deeply saddened," said Jones, the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation director. "The American Legion is saddened. We've listened to veterans and widows and children who, one by one, told their stories of broken promises, pain, mistreatment, delay and, yes, even death. Many of them – full of hurt, anger, confusion and uncertainty – just wanted to be heard.

"They've told their stories many times, but their pleas fell on deaf ears. The American Legion listened, because what they had to say matters. We wanted to help. It's woven into the very fabric of who we are." Jones, who has been to all five crisis centers, told of a homeless veteran who spent his last \$40 on a cab to the center in Fort Collins, Colo., to get help. In Phoenix, a 70-year-old widow was reduced to sleeping in gas station bathrooms because VA couldn't get her claim right.

"She came to us in tears," Jones said. "We were able to put her in front of the VA and get the errors fixed on the spot in our crisis center." "I talked to a veteran in North Carolina who had been working on his claim for 14 years. As he left the crisis center he said, 'I can't believe it took me 90 minutes to fix 14 years.'" Jones said she's read letters from VA's Office of the Special Counsel that reference "harmless errors" that include a veteran waiting more than eight years for a psychiatric appointment.

"We have veterans taking their own lives, 22 a day, here in America, and it's a harmless error that a veteran has to wait eight years for an appointment?" she asked. Jones said that those who become whistleblowers within VA should be put in positions of leadership "so they can set the model for the people who work for them. You can clear out some room for them by getting rid of the ones who covered up veterans waiting for care so they could earn a little extra money every year."

Jones said the Legion wants to fix VA – not tear it down – and that opinion is shared with many other veterans. "I talked to veterans in every city who has a VA – a place that belongs to them – and want the doctors who understand their service and understand their needs," she said. "When The American Legion says VA has a problem with access, with accuracy (and) with leadership, we don't want to throw out the VA. We want to fix it." Jones again referenced the homeless veteran who spent his last \$40 to get to a Legion crisis center.

"The system was supposed to take care of him," she said. "He was broke, he felt broken, and he felt lost. He arrived after the crisis center had closed for that day, slept at a nearby gas station and walked to the crisis center the next morning. He was at his wits end. This was do or die for him.

"We were able work with VA to get him placed into a supportive housing program and receive the services he desperately needed. The (Legion) chairman for Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation for The American Legion was so moved (that) he reimbursed the \$40 the veteran spent to get there because we truly believe no veteran should have to pay for services they have already paid for by virtue of their honorable service. That's what we want for veterans – the benefits they deserve. They shouldn't have to get down to their last \$40 to get there."

Following her testimony, Jones was asked what advice she had for Robert McDonald, who has been nominated to take over as VA secretary. "Transparency, so things like this scandal don't happen again," she said. She was also asked if she thought VA's budget needed an independent budget; Jones said yes, if it ensures every resource was being used to care for veterans. The hearing also featured testimony from acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson, as well as other veterans service organizations.

[tnewman@mnlegion.org](mailto:tnewman@mnlegion.org)

## Membership Chart As of July 23, 2014

District	2015 Goal	Total 2014	Total 2015	Percent of Goal	Same Date '13
1	9,976	9,918	2,178	21.83	564
2	8,110	8,026	932	11.49	586
3	12,486	12,421	2,193	17.56	601
4	2,554	2,530	699	23.37	100
5	2,959	2,936	516	17.44	161
6	12,698	12,627	2,679	21.10	1,089
7	7,245	7,167	1,266	17.47	360
8	4,768	4,727	882	18.50	741
9	7,443	7,378	1,687	22.67	1,047
10	11,243	11,189	2,352	20.92	823
At-large	2,340	2,338	129	5.51	77
<b>Totals</b>	<b>81,822</b>	<b>81,257</b>	<b>15,513</b>	<b>18.96</b>	<b>6,149</b>

# VISN 23's Stromberg and Rep. Tim Walz address the convention

## Stromberg

Acting VISN 23 Deputy Network Director Chris Stromberg took on the recent news about long waits and poor service at the VA head-on at the Department Convention.

"Trust in the VA is at its lowest point," he told the conventioners.

VISN 23 serves the Midwest states including Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and portions of five other states. There are 21 such networks across the country that link area health care facilities.

"This is a critical time for the VA. I've never before seen this amount of critical comments. This is a good time for us to improve."

Stromberg said VISN 23 was "quite decent, and competent" in its service to veterans, but improvement was still needed.

He said the first step the VA made to address the criticism of long waits, and cheating by agency personnel to make it appear that goals were being met, was to eliminate the 14-day deadline on appointments. He said that goal was impossible to meet, and caused managers to falsify their records to make it appear it was being met.

"It forced people to do things they shouldn't have done."

He said the VA will endeavor to increase its transparency about its wait times and statistics and those will be available for all to see on the VA website. He said already major gain had been made, but it was important for the VA to maintain those gains. "Check us out online. You are our eyes and ears. We depend on you for feedback."

He said there were certain areas of the VA, such as audiology and optometry, that had very long wait times. "We are working on that."

Stromberg noted that Minnesota has increased to 14 regional clinics or "CBOCs" throughout the state. And he said telemedicine was allowing people outside the Twin Cities to consult with specialists while staying in their communities.

He said that while the wait times and other problems have cast a negative light on the whole system, he urged people to remember that it's still a strong system. "We rank favorably with health care systems anywhere in the world."



Chris Stromberg addresses VA issues.



Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., called for VA reform.

## Walz

Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., said Legion members should be wary of politicians who pay lip service to veterans programs but don't follow through.

"You can't swing a dead cat in Washington D.C. without hitting somebody who's praising veterans," he told the state convention at Rochester. "Then you can't figure out why it's not getting done."

Walz said the news from the Phoenix VA about long waiting times for veterans and of mismanagement by staff has been difficult to understand. "If we cannot stand for programs for veterans, what can we stand for?"

Walz said we live in a dangerous world where people need to stand up for what's right. "Democracy demands we find solutions."

But when these veterans come home, America needs to support them to the max.

"I am the VA's staunchest supporter, but I am also its worst critic. If they have failed one veteran, they have failed."

He said the recent problems at Phoenix and other places, and the change of command at the top, presents a great opportunity to reform the VA where it needs to be reformed.

"It's a once in a generation opportunity."

He urged the Legion to continue to watchdog the VA and push for better quality.



State VA Commissioner Larry Shellito spoke Thursday.

## Convention notes from the 2014 meeting in Rochester

-- Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Shellito said that the federal funding match for the Minnesota Veterans Home Phase III was getting closer, as several other states had dropped out of the running. Shellito urged Legionnaires to be active in supporting veterans' programs in the Legislature. He noted that one Legislator had complained about being pushed around by the "hats in the room," referring to Legion and other veterans caps at Legislative hearings. "All I can say is that you haven't seen anything yet. All politics is local, and you are the ground forces for the veterans of the future," he said.

-- Minneapolis VA Medical Center Director Patrick Kelly echoed The American Legion's stance on the VA system saying it was "a system worth saving." He said the recent negative press in Phoenix and other places "should be an opportunity for us. We think we're good in Minnesota, but we will make it better."

-- St. Cloud VA Medical Center Director Barry Bahl said the bad news about the VA in different parts of the country was demoralizing both to veterans and VA staff. He said he is sure the VA can correct its problems, but he urged The American Legion to keep a watchful eye on the system. "You're our safety net." Bahl said there was extensive work being done at St. Cloud including a new pharmacy, new psychiatry building, and a doubling of the audiology spaces. He noted that usage of the St. Cloud facility has gone from 7,000 a year in 1992 to 38,000 per year now.

-- National Executive Committeeman Ray DeZurik said there has been considerable discussion about the DMS membership program. He noted that 800,000 of the 2.4 million members came through direct mail solicitation. He said that the national Legion will spend \$6 million this year on advertising to increase the Legion's brand awareness. He noted that the baseball program nationally was at 3,700 teams, down about 1,300 from its peak. He said that a rule that would have banned college players from the Legion teams was rescinded.

-- LIT Chairman Bill Barbknecht reported that \$101,000 was donated by the insurance company to the Minnesota Legion this past year. He urged all Legionnaires to enroll in LIT's accidental death and dismemberment program.

-- Founding Fathers Beer Vice President Bob Stevenson said the company had signed a three-year contract with The American Legion and that Legion posts, department and nation would be getting 50 percent of the profits. He urged post members to approach their bar managers about getting the beer into the clubrooms. Some of the beer was available at the Friday night hospitality event.

-- National Auxiliary Vice President Patricia Steranka of Colorado told the Legionnaires that their help was needed in reaching the Auxiliary's goal of one million members. She said by making the Auxiliary stronger, the Legion would also get stronger. "Wouldn't it be great to look out in this room and see Legionnaires where all those empty seats are?"

-- Gov. Mark Dayton paid tribute to veterans organizations and to veterans in his brief talk at the convention. He outlined the various accomplishments of state government in recent times including a jobs program, creating the Minnesota GI Bill, expanding training for CVSOs, and completing the state funding for the three phases of the Minnesota Veterans Home at Minneapolis. He said that if veterans have a problem with government, they should call him at 651-201-3468.

-- Newly-elected SAL Detachment Commander Dennis Henkemeyer said that the SAL would soon have a Facebook page. He said his project for the year would be to raise money and other donations to the Fisher House.

-- Boys State Lee Krough Award Winner Lucas Mumm told the convention about his experience in the program. "I wanted to meet some kids like me who wanted to learn and improve as leaders." He ended up losing the race for governor. "But whether I won or lost, I was a winner. Boys State will not only shine tonight, but well into the future."

-- Oratorical State Champion Caroline Donaldson, sponsored by Wayzata Post 118 and the 10th District, said that the scholarships she received at the state level and by going to the national competition in Indianapolis will help her greatly when she begins college next year. She said participating, "increased my confidence and taught me many valuable lessons."

-- Wayne Gilbertson, president of Legionville, said work on the new training center would begin again after the summer camp sessions were done. He said that the grand opening of the building has been postponed a year until September of 2015. Part of the problem in finishing the center is that the donation pavers came in the wrong size.

Phil Bellefeuille said the Convention Corporation heard a report from Rochester on the 2016 convention. He said a bid by Marshall for the Fall Conference in 2016 was tabled at this point. This year's Fall Conference will be sponsored by Bagley Post 16 and will be held at Mahnomen's Shooting Star Casino. He said a questionnaire will soon be available on the Legion's website on how to improve Department Conventions and Fall Conferences.

-- Auxiliary President Shirley Frederick thanked the

Legion for its support during her year. She said that part of her project will be to send Minnesota Legionnaires to every VA clinic in Minnesota. She said her life has always been based on supporting veterans. "I grew up with veterans since I was three years old. I understand them. I appreciate them. I plan to dedicate the rest of my life to what is good for veterans."

-- Membership Director Tom Fernlund said that Minnesota came to the convention with 81,186 members, or 96.03 percent of goal. Another 3,357 were needed to reach the national goal. Fernlund gave out several awards. Denise Milton was named the top Department Vice Commander. Dennis DeLong of Richfield Post 435 was named the Gold Brigade recruiter of the year and Don Skow of Lindstrom Post 225 was named Silver Brigade recruiter of the year. The Third and Ninth Districts won \$2,000 each for reaching 96 percent by the time of the convention.

-- Parade winners this year, announced by Parade Chairman David Bode, included Color Guard: Waite Park Post 428, third place; Hayfield Post 330, second place; and New Prague Post 45, first place. Top patriotic floats were 3M Post 599, third; Brownsville Post 58, second; and Rushford Post 94, first. The top districts were: Third, First District; second, Third District; first, Ninth District.

-- Mike Perry, State Baseball Director, said Minnesota was now in first place nationally for number of teams with 303.

-- The final credentials report, presented by Chairman Lynn Nottage, showed:

District	Posts	Delegates	Vote strength
1	23	45	117
2	24	34	92
3	21	52	109
4	7	17	31
5	12	27	51
6	27	44	132
7	9	19	44
8	6	8	35
9	12	19	64
10	23	51	127
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>802</b>

-- The top blood donors by district were announced. Those posts were: Winona Post 9; Gaylord Post 433; North St. Paul Post 39; Minneapolis Richfield Post 435; Melrose Post 101; Olivia Post 186; Grand Rapids Post 60; East Grand Forks Post 157. The Second and Tenth Districts did not submit blood reports.

# Listening Post

## News from around the State



**DOWIDAT HONORED** -- 5th District honored Dan Dowidat, who is the chaplain for the district's monthly visits to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Dowidat has done this service for 30 years.



**BACKUS HONORED** -- Sixth District Membership Director Jim Lucas, center, presents the district's small post of the year award to Backus Post 368. Receiving are Commander Gene Gagnon and 2nd Vice Commander Gary Dawson.



**FOURTH DISTRICT FLAG RETIRMENT** -- Boys Scouts stand at attention and hundreds of U.S. flags are retired in a huge blaze at Big Marine Lake



**FLAG PRESENTED** -- A Boy Scout presents a flag as part of the Fourth District Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Veterans Rest Camp at Big Marine Lake.



**POST 1 IN FLORIDA** -- Dave and Kathie Adam were asked to join the 2014 Florida Instate Run. They are pictured with Tina and Mike Kirchoff. Both couples have made all eight national rides.



**RIDERS ASSIST** -- American Legion Riders from the 5th and 10th Districts were called upon by Department Service Officer Tom Newman to assist a paralyzed veteran to transfer to a plane that would take him home to South Dakota.



**NORTH ST. PAUL COLOR GUARD** -- The North St. Paul Post 39 color guard marches into St. Mary's Cemetery on Memorial Day.



**SPRING GROVE HONORS** -- Arlen Doely, Jerome Ellingson and Glenn Kinneberg of Spring Grove Post 249 were honored for 60 years continuous membership.



# Annual Parade



The Ninth District Band oom-pahed its way through down Rochester in the annual Legion parade.



Old Glory passed the world-famous Mayo Clinic on Third Avenue in Rochester.



Youth champions had their own ride in the parade.



They shed their Mickey Mouse ears following the Musical Extravaganza, but the Auxiliary staff still had their Mouseketeer outfits on for the parade.



Past Department President Raleen Tolzmann had a special ride for the parade.

# Memorial Service



Third District President Joanne Joachim and Third District Commander Mark Dvorak place roses in the vases during the the annual Memorial Service held at the Rochester Mayo Civic Center.



Past Department Chaplain Jerry Barnhardt was the featured speaker at the Memorial Service.



LeAnne Lake was the singing soloist.



Connie Brophy was the piano soloist.



Commander Mike Ash light a candle at the Memorial Service to remember our fallen comrades.



Longtime Judge Advocate Don Walser got a standing ovation as he worked his last Department Convention. On the stage with Walser at the Rochester Convention were Commader Mike Ash and Adjutant Randy Tesdahl.

# 96th Minnesota Department Convention



Carl Renalls of 3M Post 599 accepts the Pat Cliff Award as the top post service officer in the state. Presenting were Phil Ringstrom and Mike Ash.



Commander Mike Ash sought out his wife, Teresa, in the audience for purposes of an introduction.



Commander Peggy Moon was installed by her friend and mentor, Past National Commander Dan Ludwig.



Al Davis, who will be installed as a National Vice Commander in August, and his wife, Tess, joined the conventioners in "God Bless America."



New SAL Commander Dennis Henkemeyer was presented with a mop by Past National SAL Commander Doug Bible. Henkemeyer's wife, Department Vice Commander Denise Milton, looked on.



As the Ninth District Band played on, Past 6th District Commander Harold Bergstrom and Past Ninth District President Sharon Thiemecke tripped the light fantastic during the hospitality event on Friday night at the convention.