



## State veterans agency change of command

### Shellito retires after 15 years of military, veterans leadership

Larry Shellito can finally take a break.

After serving for seven years, under Gov. Tim Pawlenty as Minnesota's Adjutant General and eight years under Gov. Mark Dayton as the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, he is done.

And, oh yeah, he was also president of Alexandria Technical and Community College for nine years too.

"I think I'm feeling good about retiring," Shellito said. "People say I should get into some volunteer work. I know one thing, if I



Commissioner Larry Shellito talks to the Legion.

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### Herke will lead vets agency that serves 330,000 state veterans

Coming from a military background like his predecessor, Larry Herke took over the reins of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs in January as new Gov. Tim Walz took office.

He will oversee an agency with 1,400 employees serving about 330,000 veterans in Minnesota.

Herke was, in fact, an officer in the National Guard and Walz was his first sergeant at the National Guard unit in St. James.

Herke graduated from Mankato State University and the ROTC program and

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Commissioner Larry Herke in his MDVA office.

## Commander's Tour will take northern swing

Last year's tour skipped across southern Minnesota, and this year the action shifts north.

National Commander Brett Reistad will begin his tour on the North Shore on March 10, and will wind up the three-day stay with a dinner at Anoka.

Reistad, a native of Virginia, was elected to the Legion's highest office this past summer at the national convention in Minneapolis.

The first stop will be at Two Harbors for a dinner at 6 p.m. on Sunday night.

On Monday, March 11, the tour will have breakfast at 8 a.m. The commander will then tour the headquarters of the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth. Dinner will be at Pequot Lakes at 6 p.m.

The final day of the tour, Tuesday, March 12, will feature a breakfast at 8 a.m. at Brainerd. The commander will then tour St. Cloud State University and its veterans center before having the final dinner at Anoka at 6 p.m.

All the dinner stops include a social hour beginning at 5. Reservations are needed for all meal stops, and a chart with contact information is on page 2.

All posts that are at 100 percent of goal by the time of the tour can have their photo taken with Reistad, and they will receive a certificate. The stops at Duluth Air Wing and St. Cloud are not open to the public

## MACV continues to be a force for homeless veterans

By Al Zdon

Last year, MACV touched the lives of 5,000 veterans in Minnesota.

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, founded some 28 years ago, continues to be a major force in Minnesota on behalf of veterans and, in particular, homeless veterans.

"A lot of our clients simply just didn't get a break," said Neal Loidolt, president and CEO of the non-profit. "We all got breaks in our lives that helped us succeed. But for some people, at one point everybody went left and they went right. They were put in a tough spot."

Finding a home for somebody is much more than giving them the key to an apartment. Statistics from MACV show that 61 percent of the homeless have a physical limitation, mental illness, PTSD, chemical dependency, traumatic brain injury or a combination of the above.

The goal of MAVC is to solve the problems that caused homelessness, and do it in a permanent way. The problems may involve not having a job, alcoholism or drug addiction, legal snafus, or domestic abuse.

This past year, over 600 housing placements were made.

In just the past few weeks, MACV could be seen with the Minnesota Twins and WCCO television staging a holi-

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MACV's Neal Loidolt

## Veterans lobby for legislative agenda

By Al Zdon

The lawmakers are back in town, but no one yet knows what kind of a Legislature this will be.

With a new governor, new veterans' commissioner, and the power shifting from the Republicans to the Democrats in the House, those seeking legislative help for veterans will be learning as they go.

The Commanders' Task Force, the County Veterans Service Officers and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs will be some of the players who will be seeking changes from the Legislature, which began its session on Jan. 8.

Made up of nine veterans' service organizations including The American Legion, the Commanders' Task Force has prioritized four initiatives for this year.

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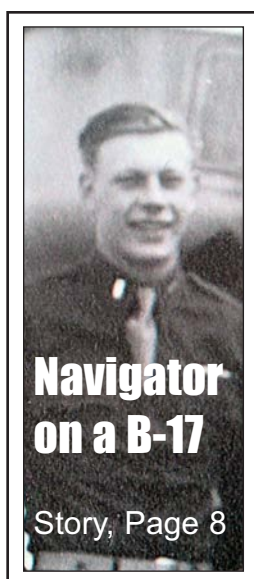
## Buses being planned for Veterans on the Hill event

The annual Veterans Day on the Hill will be even bigger and better this year.

Organizers are hoping veterans will hop on the bus and travel to St. Paul on March 20 for a day that includes a meal at the St. Paul Armory, a march up to the Capitol, a program in the Capitol Rotunda, and meetings with their legislators.

Post are encouraged to rent buses, or combine with other nearby posts to rent a bus, to transport members to St. Paul. The Disabled American Veterans, which is the lead organization in the event, will pay half the cost of

Continued on Page 2



Navigator  
on a B-17

Story, Page 8

## 2019 National Commander's Tour

| Post         | Event            | Day      | Contact:  |
|--------------|------------------|----------|---|
| Two Harbors  | 6 p.m. dinner    | March 10 | 218-834-4975<br>or 218-206-5796<br>Jennifer Havlick   |
| West Duluth  | 8 a.m. breakfast | March 11 | 218-628-2181, post                                    |
| Pequot Lakes | 6 p.m. dinner    | March 11 | 218-820-7683<br>218-568-9881 in February<br>Ken Meyer |
| Brainerd     | 8 a.m. breakfast | March 12 | 218-829-2249  |
| Anoka        | 6 p.m. dinner    | March 12 | 763-421-0883,<br>Denise                               |

All meal stops require a reservation at the above numbers. Commander Reistad will also tour the 148th Fighter Wing and St. Cloud State University. These events are not open to the public.

## Herke to lead MDVA agency

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spent four years on active duty, one in Texas and three in Germany. In Europe, he worked with other NATO nations and was in charge of a Patriot Missile air defense system.

In the Guard, he deployed to Iraq where he was chief of staff for the 5,200 soldier brigade combat team.

He retired from the National Guard as a colonel in July of 2016 after 26 years of service and became the first director of the Minnesota Department of Administration Enterprise Sustainability.

The new agency looks to reduce the government's footprint in areas like energy, fuel use, water use, solid waste and greenhouse gases.

Herke says he plans to use his background in sustainability at his new job. "We have three new veterans homes coming on line, and they all should have a life of 60 to 100 years. We should look at sustainability now or we'll kick ourselves later along the way."

Another main challenge for him will be working with other veterans organizations to improve the lot of veterans in the state. He said there are 64 stakeholders in Minnesota on veterans issues.

"I have a lot of life experience focusing on veterans. I love working with veterans. It's great to see what they've done and what they've accomplished. Veterans are successful people."

The MDVA has two main ways of serving veterans, through its veterans homes and through a series of veterans programs.

"Finding homes for all veterans is my goal. Right now there are 237 veterans in Minnesota that don't have homes. We may need an individualized plan for each one of those veterans."

## Veterans on the Hill

Continued from Page 1

each bus rented. For more information on partnering with the DAV on the cost of a bus, contact Trent Dilks at the DAV, trent@davmn.org.

Adjutant Randy Tesdahl said the rental should come from post funds and not from the veterans who will be traveling. "This is not a fundraiser for the post. We want the organization to pay for these buses, and not the veterans who will be riding them."

"No one should have to put money out there to see their legislator."

A tentative agenda has been set up for Hill Day. Veterans should arrive at the St. Paul Armory, which is on the Capitol grounds, between 10 and 10:30 in the

morning for socializing.

The meal, which is paid for by the DAV Foundation, will be served after 10:30 a.m. followed by presentations.

Non-ambulatory vets will be transported to the Capitol, while other veterans will walk over to the nearby Veterans Service Building at 12:45. From there, they will march up the hill to the Capitol Building.

It is hoped that the steps leading up to the Capitol will be manned by color guard units from various posts.

A program will take place in the Rotunda from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. The Minnesota American Legion will pay for half the cost of Rotunda rental.

Herke said ending veterans homelessness, also a priority for Gov. Walz, will involve collaboration of many agencies, and he has already met with new Commissioner of Housing and Finance Jennifer Ho, and she has told him how committed that agency is to veterans.

Another special interest will be reaching out to OEF and OIF veterans. "Sure, they all went through demobilization briefings, but at that time they didn't need the services we provide. They just wanted to go home."

He said a more aggressive outreach to those veterans was needed, and that the County Veterans Service Officers would be part of that plan.

Traditional ways of reaching those veterans may not work in these new times.

Besides sustainability, the opening of three new veterans homes in Preston, Bemidji and Montevideo in the next few years will also present great challenges for the department.

"We've got to find, hire and train staff for those facilities so that once we cut the ribbon, they can begin operating that same day."

He said that he is aware that there is support in the Legislature to also create more nursing home beds in the Twin Cities. Herke said there is additional room in Building 6 at the Minnesota Veterans Home at Minneapolis that might begin to reduce the huge waiting list for veterans nursing care in the Twin Cities.

Herke said his longtime relationship with the governor will help propel veterans issues in the future. "I can tell you he's a kind, honest and straight shooting person. His commitment to veterans is well known."

Afterwards, the veterans can see their legislators. It would work best if veterans made an appointment with their lawmakers prior to Hill Day.

Volunteers are needed for Hill Day to serve food, clear tables, act as guides and do other jobs. Information tables from the various groups will be set up in the Capitol.

Members of the various organizations' legislative committees are especially urged to be there.

More details will be forthcoming, including an agenda of veterans legislation the veterans hope to get through the Legislature this year.



**LEGION HONOR** — Department Commander Darrel Redepenning presents outgoing MDVA Commissioner Larry Shellito with plaque honoring his eight years at the helm of the state agency.

## Commissioner Shellito retires

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volunteer to work at a church supper, I don't want to be in charge. I want to be the guy in the back of the kitchen washing dishes."

He said he and his wife plan to do some traveling, both in the United States and abroad.

Shellito is a native of the Moorhead area and he graduated from Moorhead High School in 1964. He earned a degree at Moorhead State University in 1968 and joined the army. After basic training, he went to officer candidate school.

In Vietnam he served with MAC-V, training young South Vietnamese men to be soldiers and conduct special operations missions. By the end of his military career, he was a major general and the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard.

After seven years in that role, in which Minnesota had 33 overseas deployments, he became a civilian.

"I wasn't ready to stay at home all the time. I felt I had more to give, but I didn't know what."

With the change of governors, Shellito threw his hat in the ring to be the new commissioner of Veterans Affairs. A month and a half after leaving the Guard position, he was appointed as Minnesota's 17th VA commissioner in 2011.

"I've been appointed by both a Republican and a Democratic governor. When people ask me what my politics is, I just say I'm for veterans."

And now that 15-year journey is over. "It's been an enjoyable ride. I liked the work, and I met some nice people."

Shellito came on board as the state was still working its way through problems at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis.

He said the Minnesota VA, which had taken over the veterans home system, did well to restore confidence in the homes.

The major renovation of the Minneapolis home has also solved many of the infrastructure problems.

"Now it's a national model."

He also praised the other four homes in the system. "The outstate homes are phenomenal in so many ways. A lot of it has to do with community pride."

As he exits, the Minnesota Legislature has approved planning for three new veterans homes outstate: Montevideo, Bemidji and Preston.

He says one of his biggest accomplishments has been helping the Commander's Task Force, a group made up of the leadership of the veterans service organizations in the state, take a more prominent role.

"Working as a team can make a big difference. The organizations are all unique unto themselves, but in working together with the goal of taking care of the veterans, it all jelled."

Another accomplishment was the development of the Support our Troops license plate, which began when he was the Adjutant General and was working with previous commissioner Clark Dyrud.

He said money from the plate has helped many veterans' efforts, including helping to bring the troops home from deployments.

He met with new Commissioner Larry Herke during the transition. "I know Larry Herke from our Guard days. He's a good choice. All I told him was to take full advantage of the great people he's got working for him."

"He's a good detail person, and I told him to rely on that great staff."

Shellito said that one of the best things he saw during his eight years as commissioner was the growth of the staff. "The staff just increased its depth of knowledge so much in the last few years. They have grown exponentially."



**FAREWELL** — Past National Commander Dan Ludwig congratulated Shellito on his years of service.

# New acting director hired for St. Cloud Health Care System

ST. CLOUD, Minn: In a statement released to employees on Jan. 11, 2019, VA Midwest Health Care Network Director Robert P. McDivitt announced the appointment of Heath J. Streck, as Acting Health Care System Director for the St. Cloud VA, effective Jan. 20, 2019, not Jan. 14, as previously announced.

Since 2014, Streck has served as the Associate Director for Operations, Iowa City VA Health Care System, in Iowa City, Iowa.

Streck's VA service began as the Chief Financial Officer for the VA Central Iowa Health Care

System in 2009.

During his tenure in VHA, he has had the opportunity to conduct interim assignments in various capacities to include: Associate Director at the Montana VA HCS; and, Associate Director, Chief of Human Relations, Chief of Logistics, Chief of Prosthetics, Chief of Nutrition and Food Service and Administrative Assistant to the Director at the VA Central Iowa HCS.

Before joining the VA in 2009, Streck served over 29 years combined in the U.S. Army, U.S. Army National Guard and U.S. Army

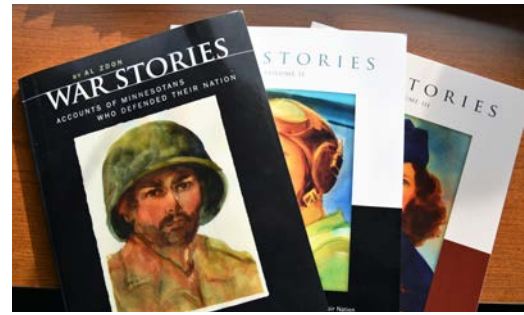
Reserve.

Streck holds a Master's of Science in Strategic Studies through the U.S. Army War College and has achieved the VHA Fellow Mentor status.

He is a graduate of the VHA Healthcare Leadership Development Program (HCLDP) 2011 class and the Leadership VA (LVA) 2017 class.

He also holds a Master's of Business Administration and a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting from the University of South Dakota.

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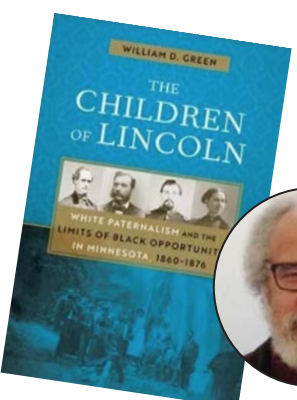
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## COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Darrel Redepinning



Greetings Legion Family,

Is it cold enough for you? I love Minnesota, but I don't love it in January. February seems more of a downhill slide to spring, so bring it on. February is also typically the month that our National Commander visits our great state. But this year that won't happen until March so February is a little lighter this year.

We will finish up on our District Mid-Winters this month. I would like to thank everyone for their hospitality and would like to apologize to the 2nd and 3rd Districts for not being able to attend theirs. You really find out how big this state is when you're trying to get to multiple Districts the same day and they're hundreds of miles apart.

This month brings another Legion Family get-together with the Sweetheart Rally in Royalton on February 9th. This one is sponsored by our ladies Auxiliary and I'm sure President Jean and Membership Chairman Robin have a great event planned for us. So come with a fun attitude, some membership and don't forget to bring your sweetheart too.

With a very busy March ahead of us, I would like to

# Editorial

## Relevancy in changing times

*Editor's Note: This editorial is based on a news story in the New York Times that appeared recently. Those who wish to read that story can go to:*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/04/us/politics/veterans-service-organizations.html>

A recent news story in the New York Times fired some strong salvos across the bow of the good ship American Legion.

Actually, the story took on all the major veterans' organizations, saying their influence was waning and that some of the small, newer veterans groups were providing what the veterans wanted.

The story was flawed in several ways, but was also dead-on correct in some of its themes.

The Legion could react to such criticism in a knee-jerk defensive way. We could point out that it was the Legion who pushed the original GI Bill through the Congress. It was the Legion that has steadfastly used its influence to break the barriers and force the government to deal with such issues as Agent Orange and PTSD. The Legion continues to be a major voice in the nation, and that strength is needed as again the government is dragging its feet on Gulf War illness. And that political power will be critical as certain forces in America try to privatize the VA medical system.

This is all true, and was absent from the Times story.

But maybe this historic organization could use the story as an opportunity to take a hard look at itself and its future, to be open to the kind of change that will ensure that it is able to do for veterans and American culture in coming years what it has done in the past.

Let's look at one of the themes of the Times story.

**Their (the traditional veterans groups) influence (is) diluted as newer smaller organizations focused on post 9/11 veterans compete for money, political influence and relevance.** The emergence of these smaller organizations is not necessarily the reason our political power is eroding. But their presence in the marketplace should be a bell, siren and flashing lights warning that something is amiss.

The Legion has been here before. The transition as World War II came to a close was not smooth as the different generations bumped into each other. There was a serious debate whether to even allow the new war veterans in or to remain a last man's club as the Civil War's Grand Army of the Republic had chosen. The Korean vets were also not welcomed in many cases with open arms, and the travails of the Vietnam veterans trying to join the Legion are legendary.

In each case though, there were enough veterans out there to swell the membership ranks, and, as time went by, to soothe the inter-generational differences.

That might not be the case this time around. The younger veterans are not only ignoring the Legion in great numbers, they also eschew other traditional organizations such as Rotary, Lions, bowling leagues, churches, and the Mickey Mouse Club. The electronic revolution has opened up thousands of other opportunities to spend your time and wealth.

touch on an important event for all veterans. Veterans Day on the Hill is scheduled for March 20th. Legislators refer to this event as: "The Day of the Caps", when all of our Veteran Service organizations come together to show combined support for our Legislative initiatives. The Commanders Task Force (commanders from all veteran service organizations) or CTF, have been meeting for several months to agree on what those initiatives should be, when to have the rally and how can we get the most veterans to attend.

To help out with travel for veterans from greater Minnesota, this year's event will be in the afternoon. The march to the Rally, will start from the Veterans Service Building at 12:45. Then up to the capital, with the Rotunda Rally from 1:30-2:30 p.m. There will also be a pre-rally free lunch at the St. Paul Armory (one block from the Capital) starting at 10:30 a.m. As with previous years, bus-ing is being coordinated thru the DAV. For transportation questions, please contact Trent Dilks, [TRENT@DAVMN.ORG](mailto:TRENT@DAVMN.ORG)

Although the CTF has discussed many topics of concern for veterans and our organizations, the four prioritized topics are as follows:

1. Ensure full funding for MDVA and the three new veterans homes.
2. Ensure the long-term stability of services for veterans across Minnesota.
3. Keeping veterans surviving spouses in their homes.
4. Increasing access to the outdoors for our disabled veterans.

All of our states VSO's have some individual organization issues also, but these 4 have the greatest impact on all veterans. I hope our whole Legion Family can support these initiatives. I also hope to see a multitude of Legion caps attend the Rally on the Hill. There is strength in numbers so let's show our Legislators that The American Legion is strong, proud and a force to be reckoned with.

Frankly speaking, the Legion is not an attractive choice.

Groups such as Team Red, White, and Blue or Team Rubicon have emerged with a mission and attitude to match the new veteran. They focus on camaraderie, team-building, serving their communities, and doing other activities that capture the imagination of the all-volunteer veterans. They do not have fish fries at their own bar and grill.

There's a kind of a feeling in the leadership of the Legion and other traditional vets groups that eventually, down the road, these young vets will become older vets and will gravitate into the mainstream organizations. After all, that's what happened with the Vietnam vets.

That may be true to a certain extent, but it also might just be wishful thinking. A more clear-headed vision might be that once these veterans have made their choice, not to join the Legion or the VFW, they are gone forever. In addition, even though the eligibility of all veterans has been open since 1990, there just aren't as many veterans out there. World War II produced 16 million veterans, Korea had five million, Vietnam had nine million. The current number serving in the armed forces today is 1.4 million.

The smaller organizations, far from being a threat to the Legion, should be seen as guiding lights as to what the Legion needs to become.

The problem, of course, is why in the world a younger vet would want to join a group of curmudgeonly Vietnam vets who spend most of their meetings trying to figure out how to keep the bar open.

The Legion, in one way, has a leg up on some other veterans groups. It has chosen over the years to not become a fund-raising organization, but instead to stay a grass roots group whose real power and effectiveness reside at the local post. This harkens back to the early years of the Legion, prior to World War II, when there were very few brick and mortar club houses, but instead the power of the group was in its enthusiasm, talent and effort to make communities better. Sounds a little like Team Red, White and Blue doesn't it?

At the same time, when these community-based posts flexed their statewide strength, they were able to create such programs as Legion Baseball, Boys and Girls State, and Legionville.

One of the first things we need to come to grips with is that we will be a much smaller organization in the future, perhaps approaching the size of the Legion prior to World War II. Minnesota never had more than 37,000 members in those days.

Each year we hear newly elected leaders in the organization say things like this will be the year we stop the membership slide. It's time to get real. There ain't no stopping the slide. There simply will not be that many veterans around, even if our market penetration stayed the same, which it probably won't.

Now that we've swallowed that bitter pill, the real question is how the Legion can survive and be relevant (getting back to that New York Times piece) in the future.

How can you take an organization that is run by 70-year-olds and make it attractive to new veterans who have a whole new way of looking at life, family and the world in

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## Chaplain's Corner

By Bonnie Hanson



### The Four Chaplains.

On 3 February 1943, an Army transport ship called the *Dorchester*, carrying American soldiers through the icy North Atlantic on their way to serve in World War II, was about miles off the coast of Greenland in rough sea. More than 900 people were on board.

Many of them were little more than boys—young soldiers and sailors who had never been so far from home. The journey had been arduous already, with the men crammed into claustrophobic, all-but-airless sleeping quarters below deck, constantly ill from the violent lurching of the ship.

In the blackness of night, a German submarine fired torpedoes at the *Dorchester*.

One of the torpedoes hit the middle of the ship. There was pandemonium on board. The *Dorchester* swiftly began to sink.

The soldiers and sailors, many of them wakened from sleep by the attack, searched desperate in the dark for life jackets and lifeboats and a route to safety.

With them on the ship were four military chaplains, from four disparate religions.

They were Father John Washington, born in Newark, New Jersey, who was Catholic; the Rev. Clark Poling, born in Columbus, Ohio, who was ordained in the Reformed Church in America; Rabbi Alexander Goode, born in Brooklyn, New York, who was Jewish; and the Rev. George Fox, born in Lewistown, Pennsylvania, who was Methodist.

In the chaos onboard, according to multiple accounts by survivors of the attack, the four men tried to calm the soldiers and sailors and lead them to evacuation points. The chaplains were doing what chaplains do: providing comfort and guidance and hope.

With the *Dorchester* rapidly taking on water, there were not enough life jackets readily available for every man on the ship.

So, when the life jackets ran out, the four chaplains removed their own, and handed them to soldiers who didn't have them.

More than 600 men died that night in the frigid seas, but some 230 were rescued. And some of the survivors, in official accounts given to the Army, and in interviews after the war, reported what they saw as the ship went down.

Those four chaplains, men of different faiths but believing in the same God, their arms linked, standing on the deck together in Prayer.

The story of the four chaplains was quite well known in America for a while; in 1948 a first-class 3-cent postage stamp was issued bearing their likenesses.

There are still stained glass windows in some chapels across the U.S. that pay tribute to the four men, including the Pentagon.

But the national memory is short, and they are no longer much discussed. 3 February was, years ago, designated by Congress to be set aside annually as Four Chaplains Day, but it is not widely commemorated.

I hope you all enjoyed reading about one of the Four Pillars and the story behind who the four Chaplains were and how they changed some of the veterans.

# The Minnesota Legionnaire

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Al Zdon, Editor

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# What's Happening

## Drop-In Legal Clinic

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will sponsor a free drop-in Legal Clinic for veterans at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis at the Flag Atrium Balcony from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be information and counseling on housing, employment, benefits, expungement, wills and debt collection.

## History Round Tables

The Minnesota Society of the Sons of the American Revolution will meet Saturday, Feb. 16, at Jax Cafe in northeast Minneapolis at noon. The program will be "Freemasonry and the Revolutionary War."

The society has talks on specific battles, uniforms, weapons and other topics. For more information, contact Dennis Croonquist at [dcroon@usinternet.com](mailto:dcroon@usinternet.com) or call 612-819-2877.

The Vietnam War Roundtable will be held Monday, Feb. 18, at Concordia University's Beutow Auditorium in St. Paul. Admission is free and donations are accepted for the Minnesota Military Museum.

The program will be on Vietnam War 360, an exploration of the war from various angles including veterans, refugees, activists, conscientious objectors, and a Gold Star Family.

The World War II History Roundtable will meet

Thursday, Feb. 14. The topic will be "Not all the Struggles for Victory Were on the Battlefield," and will look at the problems faced by Franklin Roosevelt's advisors and the effort to pay for the cost of the war.

The meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the Fort Snelling Visitor Center. Admission is \$5. The speaker will be James Lacey, author of *The Washington War*.

## Post 39 Car Show

North St. Paul Post 39 will stage its first Classic Car Show on Sunday, May 19, from noon to 5 p.m. Cost for participants is \$15, prior to April 15, and \$20 thereafter.

Cars will compete for cash awards as voted by the spectators. A maximum of 50 cars will be in the event.

Admission is free for spectators. Food and beverages will be available. For more information, email [alegion39@yahoo.com](mailto:alegion39@yahoo.com).

## Enrollment Fairs

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System will sponsor enrollment fairs in February. There will be a fair on Feb. 21 from 2-5 p.m. at the Sherburne County History Center in Becker. It's a walk-in event. Veterans should bring their DD-214 and a 2018 annual household income.

The second fair will be at the McLeod County Administration Building in Glencoe. It will be held from 9 a.m. until noon on Feb. 23.

## Sweetheart Rally

The annual Sweetheart Membership Rally will be held at Royalton Post on Saturday, Feb. 9. Membership turn in will be from 3-4 with a the program at 4 p.m. The dinner will follow.

## Omelet Breakfast

The Apple Valley Auxiliary's annual Valentine's Day Omelet Breakfast and Bake Sale will be held at the post on Sunday, Feb. 10, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The menu will include hash browns, fruit cups, juice, milk and coffee. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under nine and free for children under 2.

All proceeds sponsor Auxiliary community, children and youth and veterans projects throughout the year.

## Webinar for Vets Businesses

A free webinar will be offered by the National Veterans Opportunity Coalition and the First Business Growth Funding. It will be held Wednesday, Feb. 13, from 2:30-4 p.m. and will offer information on how veterans businesses can access enough capital for their business plans.

For more information, go to [tnvoc.org](http://tnvoc.org) and scroll down to "Upcoming Webinar Event."

## MACV a force in reducing veterans' homelessness

Continued from Page 1

day dinner for homeless vets at Target Field.

A few days later, MACV was part of an effort with Wells Fargo to bring a Tribute Bell to Minnesota for use by veterans.

The Stand Down for veterans in Duluth this year, an event where veterans can get services, information, haircuts, and much more, was held in conjunction with the Duluth Music Festival.

Work is underway to have the Stand Down in Rochester be part of Rochester Days.

All this public exposure of MACV, and its mission of ending veterans homelessness, is not an accident. The organization is deliberately reaching out and forming partnerships that can help the mission.

Much of this additional emphasis on working with others is due to the leadership of Loidolt, who is in his third year at the helm.

Loidolt joined the military in 1984 when he enlisted in the National Guard as an ammunition specialist. While in the Guard, he went through the ROTC program at St. Cloud and became an Army officer. Along the way he also earned a law degree at Hamline.

Loidolt served two tours in Iraq, one as a deputy director in the reconstruction office and the other as chief of staff for Minnesota's 34th Division. He is currently a two star general and serves as Minnesota's Deputy Adjutant General.

He will retire from the Guard this summer after 35 years of service.

Loidolt said he looked around for what to do with his post-military life, and the choices were either to go into the business world, or to try and use his skills in the non-profit world.

He decided on MACV. "The opportunity just seemed right. I wanted to help a group that could use my help."

The challenge of veterans' homelessness is a major one. "One thing I learned in the Army was organization. I can do that. But housing has been a high learning curve for me."

He said he didn't try to do it all at once. "My first year was mainly just paying attention. The second year was dealing with the crises and related things. I think the third year we can do some stuff."

Ending veterans homelessness requires a variety of tools.

One is financial assistance, just helping vets get back on their feet. "Give them a chance to stabilize," Loidolt said.

"Next you can find them a place to live they can afford. They can afford it by having a good job, and that job may require training. They may have legal issues."

Some, he said, simply have to quit drinking.

The average time from homelessness, or near homelessness, to stable living for a MACV client is nine months. "For 82 percent of our clients, we never see them again. It's a one-time assistance."

For the other 18 percent, it will mean more case management. No one gives up.

The legal angle is one MACV has worked hard on. Last year, it hosted 40 legal clinics around the state, often in partnerships with local law firms who provided their services for free. Over 1,800 vets received services.

"I'll give you one example. Suppose a vet has a bad driving record, and now he gets a DWI. No license, no job. No job, no stable housing. That's where legal help can be important."

A major problem is that affordable housing in Minnesota, and in the Twin Cities in particular, is hard to find. There is less than one percent of affordable housing open at any one time.

MACV has worked with federal, state and private partners to create housing around the state. The organization has 111 housing units statewide, some permanent, some transitional, and some sub-leased apartments.

## Editorial

Continued from prior page

general?

Well, it might be a little painful. Change is never easy, and change of this order is extremely difficult.

But what's the other choice? Should we let the efforts of 100 years of dedicated Legion members go down the drain? Should we let our wonderful youth programs slip away? Should we let our influence in Washington and our state capitols erode to nothing?

This newspaper certainly doesn't have all the answers. But we can say with some authority that if the Legion does not soon engage in a deathly serious debate on this question, we will be have front row seats in watching one of America's best service organizations slide into irrelevancy.

What can be done? How can we transition into an organization that young veterans want to join, and that will continue to help veterans, communities and youth? Here's three starter ideas.

1. Because The American Legion is a grassroots organization, any change must come at the post level. The posts simply have to get involved in their communities again. And by being involved, we don't mean sending a \$500 check to the food shelf from the pull-tab profits. We mean going down and volunteering at the food shelf. Members can build new dugouts for the ball team, start a clean-up program, volunteer at the library. The posts must once again become an integral part of the community and not just a financial resource. People must be involved.

2. In posts that are willing, perhaps a group within the group can be formed. These would be members who want to get involved, who want to volunteer for good projects,

who have a drive to make a better community. It doesn't have to be just younger vets, but any vets who want to actually do something and not come to the meeting because they'll get two free drink tickets. It can be called a cadre, or an echelon or whatever, but it will provide a landing spot for those new members who want to be active.

3. Consolidate our programs and work hard to preserve the best of them. Like any other organization that's been around for a century, we have a lot of programs that were valuable at one point, but now aren't very vibrant. Get rid of them and concentrate our energy and resources on the programs that work.

When the veterans of World War I decided to allow the veterans of World War II to join The American Legion, a huge decision was made: This will not be a last man's club. Our work will go on.

We got here through skill, hard work, and a burning desire to make our nation and our neighborhoods better places to live. But we also got here by genius. The genius of Harry Colmery writing the GI bill in his hotel room in Washington. The genius of the Minnesota American Legion establishing a Brain Sciences chair at the University of Minnesota that is now producing cutting-edge research into veterans' illnesses. The genius of establishing a summer camp for school patrol kids.

The New York Times story should not be seen as an attack on the veterans' organizations, but as a wake-up call.

It's time to use our genius again so that the Legion will continue to be a pillar in the edifice of America.

MACV was founded in 1990 with a donation from a VFW post. The organization's tie to veterans organizations through the years has been strong.

So what can the Legion do to help with this battle against veterans' homelessness?

"I think it starts at the post level," Loidolt said. "A post can sit down and figure out who are the five veterans in their community that need help. They can take responsibility. They can help these guys."

The post, like MACV, can work with others to help vets. "They can be referred to the county veteran service officer. The post should also know and work with the public health people and with housing authorities. Just using those resources, the post might be able to help three of those five veterans.

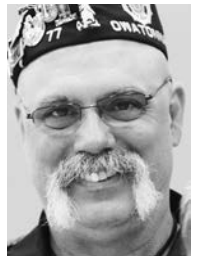
"The other two might need more resources. MACV might be able to help," Loidolt said.

"You know if we could solve veterans homelessness across Minnesota in the small communities, that would mean so much. It would only leave problems in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties."

The local post is key, he said. "It's just helping the veterans in their community."

## American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone  
Department Director



Wow.

Winter is finally here, lots of snow and some really cold temperatures, not exactly what a motorcyclist hopes for but I'll take it just the same. For those that like the winter the ice is nice and thick which makes for fun times ice fishing. I know there are a few outings on the calendar and I hope to make a couple of them.

Another Department Legacy planning Ride meeting was recently held and a number of posts have been identified as stops. It's not too late if you would like the ride to stop at your post. All you have to do is contact Steve "Sully" Sullivan or myself.

Coming up on February 9th will be the Department Sweat Sock Rally in Royalton. From what I hear it sounds like President Jean and her Membership Director Robin have one heck of a fun filled afternoon planned for all who attend.

Coming up March 24th - 25th is the annual Donnie Smith Bike Show at the St. Paul River Center. Kevin Wells has been working hard to get everything in order at the Legion Riders booth. If you have some free time and would like to lend a hand give Kevin Wells of Mound a call. He would be more than happy to talk about the the show and could use a little help in the Riders booth.

## New VA rules expected

New rules are expected this week on how veterans can access care under the VA Mission Act which was passed by Congress last year.

The rules will allow veterans freer access to VA care by shifting billions of dollars from the VA system to private health care systems.

VA Secretary Robert Wilke said the release of the new rules would be controversial. Veterans groups are concerned about the privatization of the VA.

## Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By  
Jeremy Wolfsteller



### Veterans, Infertility & VA

America's war on terror is multifaceted and one that I consider associated with asymmetric warfare. The enemy doesn't present itself in military uniform but rather disguises itself as one of the local community members. At one point can be found waving to U.S. Forces as they conduct presence patrols and then later those nights are found planting IED's on main routes used in and out of the cities. The insurgency's main instrumentality of war is known as the improvised explosive device (IED). These gave the insurgency visibility, control and influence in situations where they were outnumbered but wanted to intimidate using a show of force.

Improvised explosive devices have plagued the U.S. military and its allies since the earliest days of the fight against terrorism. Because of the success the enemy was having with IED's it lead the Pentagon to declare a "Manhattan Project" to battle the homemade bombs. The Manhattan Project origin began during WW2 which was a multibillion dollar research project that produced the first nuclear weapons. The "Post 9/11 Manhattan Project" lead to new individual body armor that most resembled a football player and reactive armor shipped to the Middle East that needed to be put on tracked and wheeled vehicles. I believe the Pentagon's mindset was to protect troops from these IED blasts quickly and create up-armored vehicles that can withstand IED detonation while conducting route clearances of IED's before missions were conducted on those routes.

Up to date statics on casualties can be found here <https://dod.defense.gov/News/aCasualty-Status/>. Although the data does not breakdown how the deaths or injuries happened, my guess is that more than 50% of the total casualties, both deaths and wounded in action, were from IED's. As you can imagine injures from IED blasts can be very traumatic and cause significant injuries including burns, amputations, spinal injuries, traumatic brain injuries

(TBI's) and internal organ complications like infertility.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) addresses infertility services in its basic healthcare package under 38 CFR 17.80 but not till recently did the VA circle back to the topic of infertility and issued a new VHA Directive in June 2017. VHA Directive 1332 establishes policies and procedures for providing infertility evaluation and treatment to Veterans enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare system.

Directive 1332 instructs VA Healthcare Systems to implement a process for providing infertility treatment which includes infertility assessments, counseling, hormonal therapies, surgical correction, artificial insemination and now can provide in vitro fertilization under 38 CFR 17.380. Up till the 2017, VA was not authorized to cover IVF treatment. I'm guessing because the topic has political associations and congress never directed VA to provide IVF services.

VA has yet to release its directive that covers policies on the new IVF program although veterans that want specific information and program referrals on infertility can work with their primary care team or call the Women Veterans Call Center number (855-829-6636). Because this is such a new service and must be most commonly associated with females, that's where the information is being disseminated at the national level.

From my research on VA's Directive and speaking with VA's Women Veteran Call Center employees, all veterans are eligible for assessments, counseling and multiple other services. Although to receive some of the advance treatment like the new In vitro fertilization a veteran must have a service connected condition resulting in infertility and be married.

I think this topic is kept a secret in a way and needs to be made more public. Veterans that have infertility issues regardless from their service or not, it can lead to depression. If you're interested in seeking these types of services, VA recommends starting with your primary care provider for an evaluation and then onto a urologist/gynecologist. After the lab results come back from the specialist and shows infertility problems, VA can either treat internally or refer eligible veterans to an infertility specialist in the community known as reproductive endocrinology & infertility provider (REI).

*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.

But are you still a member? By the time you read this, we are into February. You should have renewed your membership by now, your Squadron should have processed your renewal and submitted it, along with payment to Department and then on to National.

If you have not paid your dues yet, you lose your membership, your eligibility to vote at meetings, lose your continuous years of membership. The list goes on. So pay now, if you have not. Feel free to follow up with the squadron to make sure the memberships are being worked on. And be an active member. That makes a difference.

But the Detachment is doing well. We met our National goal of 60% by hitting 70%. Great job everyone. That is the sort of membership work you can be proud of. We are ranked 12th in the nation for membership, 3rd in the Central Region. I have heard from some Districts that there are anywhere from two to four squadrons ready to be chartered. Again that is great work getting people to want to honor the legacy of the veteran in their family and make a difference today.

Does your District have a Post interested in having a squadron to assist in carrying on the legacy? Let us know if do.

Donations to my Commanders project (\$2,000 each for Child Welfare, Brain Science, and Legionville) are coming in. If you would like to make a donation to these causes through my commander's project, please let me know.

Consider as well, any work you have been doing as an officer or chair. Start planning on completing the mission, and being able to tell everyone what you did, and how it helped the organization, the community, and veterans. Consider this the reminder to begin to prepare your Consolidate Squadron Reports (CSR). I would love to get 75% of the squadrons reporting this year.

Keep up the great work that you do.

## Why the American Legion?

Please allow me to quote from The American Legion's national website:

"The nation's cultural, moral and patriotic values have been under attack for decades, a disheartening trend that continues today. Prayer has been removed from schools. The U.S. Flag is no longer protected from desecration. The Boy Scouts of America have faced serious legal challenges in some communities they serve. Immigration laws are defied. References to God on U.S. currency, in the Pledge of Allegiance and on public monuments have been challenged by a minority of voices whose vision for America is far different than that of our founding fathers.

The American Legion is an organization dedicated to God and country, with a membership of military veterans who take deep pride in the U.S. Flag and all that it means. Since its inception nearly 100 years ago, the Legion has been a stalwart champion of patriotic values, morals, culture and citizenship. The Legion's pillar of Americanism embodies its devotion to law and order, the raising of wholesome youth, an educated and law-abiding citizenship, and observance of patriotic holidays and remembrances."

Within the Americanism program, we promote: U.S. Flag etiquette, U.S. Flag protection, voter registration and participation, Boy Scouts of America and the Establishment Clause Lawsuits.

In addition, the Children and Youth committee falls under the Americanism Commission. So programs like Boys State and Nation, American Legion Baseball, Oratorical contest and so many more programs.

The Sons of The American Legion also assists in all of these great programs and activities.

— Dennis Henkemeyer

## Sign up for the Legionnaire

Attention Post Members...If you are reading this article please take the time to let your squadron members know that they can receive a monthly copy of the Minnesota Legionnaire via email by merely signing up for it at department headquarters or go on [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org) and click on "Legion.Publications."

Cdr. Shawn Davis: [salshawndavis@gmail.com](mailto:salshawndavis@gmail.com)

Adjutant Doug Bible: [saladjmn@gmail.com](mailto:saladjmn@gmail.com)

Website: [www.mnsal.org](http://www.mnsal.org)



**NINTH DISTRICT MIDWINTER** — Sons of the American Legion members posed for a photo at the Ninth District Mid-Winter meeting.



**GREETINGS** — Detachment Vice Commander Robert Foss brings greetings on behalf of Detachment Commander Shawn Davis at the Ninth District Mid-Winter. District Legion Commander Arlo Rude looks on.

# District Commanders

## FIRST DISTRICT

Gary Miller  
Commander



I hope all went well for all of your holidays. And it's a new year already, 2019 now it will be our 100th birthday in March. Remind veterans of that when talking to a new prospect or even an old one when trying to get them to renew their dues. We must have done something right to have made it this long.

Sounds like old man winter is still at it: cold, snow and ice not letting up just yet. Still have 10 days or so before I have to come back. It was only 71 here yesterday and 78 is the high for today (1/20/2019) (Green Valley, AZ). Will more than likely be bad on the way home again.

Anyway keep the memberships coming in. We've moved up. Let's keep moving up. But we will never get there unless we get the new members or reinstate old ones. Remember National Commander's pin is for renewals as well as new ones. New works better.

Everyone be safe and was nice seeing a lot of you at the at the Sweet Heart Rally.

## SECOND DISTRICT

Cindy Brunk  
Commander



Mid-Winter Conference is now history and I could not be more pleased with all the good things that were accomplished. To the Bricelyn Legion Family, thank you for making everyone feel welcome, the wonderful meals, and the fine hospitality. Big thank you to the District Chairmen for all of your report presentations, keep up the good work and know your efforts are making a difference in our communities, state and nation!!

Thank you to everyone that could come that day including our special guests, Marland Ronning, Richard Wog, and Mike Maxa.

To our Department candidates, thank you for sharing your plans for the new year and the best of luck.

Thank you to Brad Pagel for taking charge of the Oratorical Contest and contestants. Adding this to the Mid-Winter was rewarding and appreciated.

I'm sorry to report that the Gilbert Larson Post in Ellsworth lost their meeting home at the City Hall. Nine Fire Departments were called, the firemen were able to rescue and save the Legions Rifles, Flags, etc. There were no injuries, the fire was mostly smoke other than flames that were in the walls. The Ellsworth Post is thankful to the Adrian Post for allowing them to store their Post items. Let this tragedy be a friendly reminder that all Posts should have a inventory of their belongings, and consider some fire safe. I encourage all posts to know where your "stuff" is, make copies if you can, and continue with all your hard work and effort to defend against these situations that can happen. Thank You.

Please continue to visit our veterans in the nursing and veterans homes. Thank you to all the post members that travel to Luverne and play bingo with the residents and visit them.

February 9th, Sweetheart Rally, Royalton Post #137.

February 16th, District Rally, Legion Post Lake Crystal.

May 5th Commander Cindy Brunk Testimonial, Brewster Legion Post.

June 5th Legion Family Picnic, East Side Resort, Round Lake.

Thank you for all contributions to my projects the Luverne Veterans Home and Legionville.

Thank you for your service to our country.

## THIRD DISTRICT

Carla Tappainer  
Commander



I'm so proud of our district. We have been in 1st place for membership for three weeks now. Thank you to everyone that put in time to reach out to new members. You are all awesome. We still have a ways to go so do not give up. That last 12% is in view and we can get to a 100% together. Make sure you are using your call lists and contacting your old members who have let their membership's lapse and invite them back into the Legion. Valentine's Day is this month so please do not forget all our older vets that may be housebound or in a vet's home and never get a cute valentine or a box of chocolates from anyone. Grab your kids or grandkids and head to a vets home to cheer them up.

Are you a musician?? The Third District is investigating starting an American Legion Band. We have an awesome band in the 9th District, but they can't cover the whole state. If you are interested and would like to get your name on the

list for more information, please contact me at ctappainer@charter.net. Right now, we are just in the planning stages and trying to see if we have enough interested musicians to start. Don't be afraid. It will be fun.

## FOURTH DISTRICT

Lane Stunkel  
Commander



Let's talk membership, as of bulletin 29, the 4th District slipped to 7th place, let's keep it going, let's work hard to retain our current membership and to find new members. We are over 85% but not close to the 87.46% that the 3rd District is at. Post Commanders and Adjutants, and Post Membership Officer 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:

— Sweet Heart Rally – February 9th, Royalton Post – I will send out more information as I receive it.

— 4th District RCCC - February 13th, Rosetown – Ron Woolery Public Affairs Officer with MDVA will be our guest speaker along with Pain Free Patriots is a 501(c)3 non-profit that provides medical grants for treatment of chronic pain for military veterans, the treatment costs the veteran nothing.

— VA Visitation – February 17th, 1:00pm, at VAMC

— The National Security / Foreign Relations Committee is looking for Outstanding Enlisted Soldiers from the Guard and Reserve Units, if you know of an outstanding soldier that is in the Guards or Reserves please let me know and I will put you in contact with the District Committee Chair.

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. Still Serving America.

## FIFTH DISTRICT

Joe Bayer  
Commander



What a start to the new year with a joint midwinter and then the St Paul Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade with the 4th District. Thanks Commander Lane and the 4th District for your continued camaraderie. This shows our devotion to mutual helpfulness. I'm looking to do more with the 4th District in the future.

I'm looking for posts in the 5th District to meet with the Guard and Reserve units in our area searching for candidates for the "Outstanding Enlisted" award for 2019. It seems right now that our Guard and Reserve need our support.

Congratulations to the young person who took first place at the 5th District oratorical contest held Saturday, January 19th at Minneapolis Post 1. Good luck at the State Contest in March.

Congratulations also goes out to those posts who've made their membership goals and those who are close. We need to keep working all of our programs. We need to keep track of what we're doing, so it's never too early to start working on those consolidated Post reports. I'm looking for another 100% turn in this year. Our next District Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 5th at Minneapolis/Richfield Post 435 at 7:30 pm. Stay warm and remember spring is coming.

## SIXTH DISTRICT

Richard Cross  
Commander



I hope everyone had a nice holiday, but it is now time to get back to work. We as a Legion must start planning for the Spring and Summer events to come. All the Districts have a mid-term program that is near in the future, the individual Legion Posts have spring events to plan.

The American Legion needs to enhance its image to the public. The public has heard of The American Legion, but they don't know what the Legion is and for what it stands. To most people, if you ask them what the Legion is, they will answer "It's a bar at the edge of town where a bunch of old guys go to drink." This is the public opinion of the Legion. As a Legion member, it aggravates me to hear this, but it is getting to be true.

Not all posts, but a good percentage will go through the motions and have a meeting once a month, then tell each other "good job" and go home until the next month. We must change the opinion of the public toward The American Legion.

The easiest way is to get involved with the local commu-

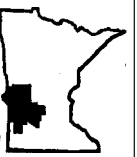
nity, let the local population know what the Legion is and what our beliefs are. It will take some work doing different events with the community, but eventually the attitude towards the Legion will change for the better, and we will become an organization to which the local veterans will want to belong.

Again, it is the busy time for membership activities, and we must keep bringing in membership.

Remember, membership is everybody's job. May God bless the veteran.

## SEVENTH DISTRICT

Jeffrey Gay  
Commander



It's another month, what have you done for your Legion? I received a call tonight, not recognizing the number and being in no mood to talk to anybody, I nearly didn't answer it but I did. It was a call from a Legionnaire who just wished to thank me for what I do and that he appreciated the monthly newsletter. We then just spoke for a spell, talked about "stuff" in general. It was nice. We really don't know one another all that well, just a couple of chance meetings. But still he called...

In life, at times, we all suffer indecision, guilt, feeling hopeless or helpless, wallowing in our own "pity party", angry at what we can't control and frustrated when what we can doesn't appear to make a difference. Moments like this can be very dark and seemingly inescapable at the time.

His call came out of the blue, at a moment like this when I needed it the most. The funk I was suffering was lifted, it made all the difference in the world to me! It's called the human factor. I need to pay this forward and will.

In our busy lives we often forget about the little things that really matter... As a Commander, or anyone for that matter, take the time to call and tell someone that they are appreciated. This may make the difference in their decision to renew their membership, because they feel valued as a Legionnaire.

Thanks for the call Don...

## NINTH DISTRICT

Arlo Rude  
Commander



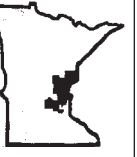
The Godfather Rally is February 9 at the Gary Post 505. It will start at 6 p.m. with dinner and finish at 8 p.m. It is for anyone to attend.

Our Mid-Winter Conference was January 12 at the Bagley Post 16. Thank you to Commander Redepinning for attending and providing information to the District. Thank you to Vice-Commander Tom Fernlund for attending and speaking to the members. Thank you to Department President Jean Walker for greeting members. Thank you to District President Lynn Carr for greeting the members. The conference was enjoyable and Bagley Post 16 was a gracious host to the District.

For God and Country.

## TENTH DISTRICT

Paul Orson  
Commander



Hope all had a joyous holiday season with time spent with your family and friends. Now that 2019 is upon us, we need to get dirty and talk to those who have not renewed. We are sitting just over the 84% mark, but we have a long way to go. The last 15% takes work, dedication and maybe even one on one conversation. Talk to your friends and neighbors and ask them if they have renewed.

I want to thank all the Posts that have invited me to one of their special events, i.e. parades, membership dinners, Veterans Day dinners, dedications and/or meetings. It is always great to network and talk to fellow veterans and family members from other posts that I normally do not see.

I am concerned with our steady loss of members with the district, state and nation. We need to welcome all, and I mean all veterans into the Legion. We will not survive if we do not integrate young and female veterans into our ranks and at our posts.

We need to get back to what we were founded upon 100 years ago, our 4 pillars – Americanism, Children and Youth, National Security and Veterans Affairs and Foreign Relations. Getting each member involved in one of these pillars will increase our involvement in the community, community awareness and support will increase and ultimately increase membership. We, the legion, need each of you to spread the Legions good work to your neighbors and friends.

# THE BLOODY 100TH

*Jim Rasmussen was trained as a navigator on a B-17 "Flying Fortress" bomber. When he got to England, he found out his crew would become part of the 100th Bomb Group, known in the Army Air Corps as the Bloody 100th, because of the group's history of losing planes and crews in bunches. The Bloody 100th will be featured in a new HBO series on World War II called "The Mighty Eighth," a part of a trilogy that began with "Band of Brothers" and "The Pacific."*

Jim Rasmussen was one of 1,500 young Army cadets hoping to be pilots at the Army Air Corps facility in Santa Ana, California, in 1943.

Trouble was, the Army at that point in time didn't need pilots. It needed navigators for its bombers.

So they took 400 of those waiting and sent them to navigator school.

"They told us that they had taken the top 400 test scores of everybody and pulled them out to be navigators."

Rasmussen doesn't know if that statistic was factual or if it was simply a morale booster.

"But I liked to share it with the pilots I knew over the years."

James Roger Rasmussen was born in Minneapolis in 1924. There were four James in the neighborhood, and so Rasmussen used his middle name Roger for many years – except for his family who called him Buster.

He lived in south Minneapolis where his father, a carpenter, had built a house. But during the height of the Depression, the family was forced to rent the house to pay on the mortgage and live on a farm they owned in Edina.

"Yes, we had a 15-acre farm in Edina. There aren't too many farms there anymore. It's where the community center now stands. I spent three summers there."

As young lads in Minneapolis, he and his friends would take their .22 rifles and go down along the Mississippi River to do a little shooting.

"That will show you how times have changed. I know in rural Minnesota, the kids would take their rifles to school so they could hunt on the way home."

Rasmussen graduated from Minneapolis Roosevelt in 1942. At six-foot-four, he was a candidate for the basketball team. "But when I ran up and down the court for 10 minutes, I'd get these severe shin splints, so I had to quit. I tried out for the football team too, but you had to be an exceptional player in those days when they only played about 15 or 20 players in a game. I wasn't exceptional."

After Pearl Harbor, in late 1941, he and some schoolmates tried to join the Navy. "I got all the paperwork, but I was only 17 and I had to get my parents' permission. They said, 'No, stay in school.' So that was that."

He graduated in the spring of 1942, but then took a job rather than join up. In 1943, he got his draft notice.

"I was lucky enough to get in the Army Air Forces and they sent me to Lincoln, Nebraska, for basic training. One day they came around and asked if anybody wanted to sign up for the aviation cadet program. They had just quit taking only college graduates at that point."

The Army offered Rasmussen college courses, and he learned more about such subjects as weather, math and how to fly an airplane. On his student flights, he found that he liked flying the airplane on the straight and narrow, but wasn't comfortable with stunts or aerobatics.

And then it was off to Santa Ana where he was one of the gifted 400 that got to go to navigator school in Hondo, Texas. "It was 16 or 18 weeks of school, and we spent a lot of time on how to do celestial navigation, using the stars or the sun as a fixed point. And, of course, we learned about drift and wind speed."

He graduated navigator school as a second lieutenant.

Then it was on to Ardmore Army Air Field in Oklahoma where he was introduced to the rest of his B-17 crew. "It was the first time I'd seen a B-17. One of the biggest surprises was that there were two .50 caliber machine guns that

were my responsibility. They taught me how to move the ring sight, and that was about all the training I got."

Once he found he was assigned to a B-17, he pretty much knew his destination. "They weren't sending B-17s to the Pacific, so we knew we'd be heading for England."

The trip over was on the Queen Elizabeth, a luxury liner converted to a troop transport.

In England, they found they were assigned to the 100th Bomb Group. "They called it the Bloody 100th. I thought that was just British slang, like 'That was a bloody good show.' I thought it was a compliment."

It turns out that the "bloody" adjective had more of an American usage from the losses it took in its raids over Nazi Europe. "In the end, I'm not sure if the 100th lost any more planes than other bomb groups, but they lost them in bunches. They'd lose 12 planes on one mission and 10 on another mission. Pretty soon you get a reputation."

Rasmussen and the new crew arrived at Thorpe Abbots, England, in early December and had to go through some orientation. They had to learn British flight control techniques among other things.

Each officer was issued a .45 sidearm. "They told us not to use it against the military if we had to bail out. They said we should use it to keep the civilians away. They were known to go after crews with pitchforks."

Rasmussen found the food at the chow hall pretty good. "But maybe that's because I never thought my mother was a very good cook. In England we had a lot of mutton, and some guys would get to the dining hall and smell that mutton and just turn around. But I thought it was okay."

If they were wondering if the "bloody" nickname was



**349th Bomb Squadron**

real, on New Year's Eve, they got their answer. The 100th Bomb Group in a mission over Hamburg lost 12 planes. That would be 120 crewmen either killed or captured.

"It was a very solemn New Year's Eve I remember that. It was an awakening for us."

On Jan. 5, 1945, the crew had its first mission. "And it might have been the most interesting mission of the 33 we flew."



**JIM RASMUSSEN**  
At home in Cedar, Minnesota



**JIM RASMUSSEN**  
As an officer in World War II



The group was sent to drop bombs at Frankfurt. “I don’t remember any fighters coming after us on that mission. The Luftwaffe was just a shadow of itself by this time. But there was always anti-aircraft fire.”

The plane dropped its bombs and soon found it had a major problem. “We were out of oxygen. We don’t know if it was because it was our first mission, and we were breathing hard, or if somebody made a mistake filling the tanks. Anyway, we had five walk-around oxygen bottles for the 10 guys in the crew. We had to share. You’d take a couple of breaths and pass it to the other guy.”

As soon as the aircraft left Germany and was flying over France, the pilot brought it down to a lower level where oxygen wasn’t needed.

But now there was another problem. They were running out of gas.

“The pilot told me to get him a course to Paris, and so I did. Then a while later he said, ‘We don’t have enough gas to get to Paris, just find me an airport.’”

Rasmussen did find an airport under the heavy cloud cover, and the B-17 found a little hole in the clouds to descend through. And there it was, an airport.

“It wasn’t the airport on my map, which was four miles away, but it was an airport. It might have even been a better airport. I found out later that at the airport I located, we might have got stuck in the mud.”

After a safe landing, the aircraft and crew settled in to wait until the weather broke. “The rain was so heavy, you couldn’t even see across the runway.”

Rasmussen said he did get a first taste of something he didn’t learn in school, the awful European weather. “I spent 12 weeks learning celestial navigation, and I never used it once in Europe.”

A typical day had the crew getting up at 4:30 a.m., going to the mess hall and then heading for the briefing room. He said it was just as you see in the movies with a large curtain covering a map with that day’s mission drawn on it.

“When they pulled the curtain back, it was just like the movies too. No matter where we were going, somebody would yell out, ‘Oh, no, not again!’ Half of it was just clowning around.”

Once at the aircraft, the crew got busy with their tasks. “The officers had their own sleeping quarters, eating places and clubs, but once we were on the airplane, there were no ‘No, sirs’ or ‘Yes, sirs.’ We all just worked together.”

The pilots would wait until dawn to take off so that they could see each other while they were forming up to make the bomb run.

“I had something I needed to do. While we were in the air, I had to go and try out every position on the ship. I even managed to get myself into the ball turret gunner’s spot.”

He said he did earn some notoriety with the crew. “We had a relief tube in the front of the plane in case you needed it. You were always supposed to inform the ball-turret gunner (underneath the plane) if you were going so he could turn the turret around.”

“Well, one time I forgot, and as soon as it hit the glass ball turret, it froze and he couldn’t see anything. He was yelling. He said he had wasted his time to even come on the mission.”

Rasmussen said every mission presented its challenges, but he recalled two in particular that caused some heartbeat elevation.

“We were heading into Berlin and we got into the anti-aircraft fire. Suddenly, the airplane right next to us exploded into flames and went down. The one next to that was hit, it also went down. That was our first really scary mission.”

Another mission he recalls was when they were just approaching a target and Rasmussen looked out the nose cone, where he sat, and observed that they were almost about to collide with another bomber.

“It was another squadron. We were where we were supposed to be, but they were not. I was just about to punch the radio to tell the pilot, when he saw them too.”

“He put us into a sudden dive. I remember that all of a sudden I was floating. I looked over, and an orange I was about to eat was floating too. The bombardier was also floating. And then, bam, we came back down. My flak jacket came down on my head and hit me pretty hard.”

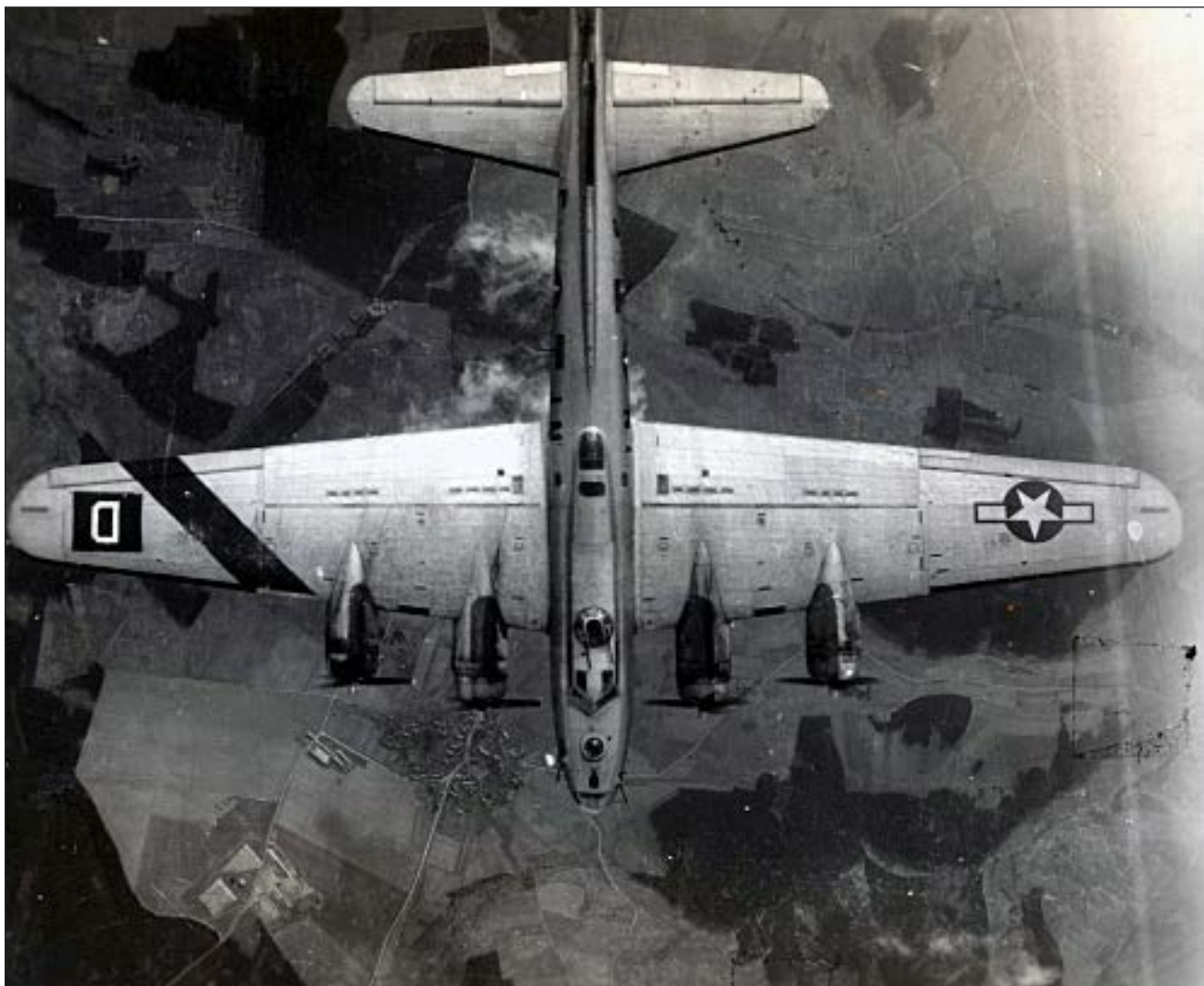
“The pilot told me later that he could see the bombs from the other bomber go right by his window.”

Rasmussen said he admired the skill of the pilot, but it was his impression that the pilot didn’t have much faith in the co-pilot. “Whatever side of the formation we were flying on, he’d sit in the seat closest to it and fly the plane. If it was on the right side, he’d actually make the co-pilot change seats so the pilot could watch the formation and fly from the right hand seat.”

Not knowing much about how to operate his “cheek” guns, as they were called, wasn’t a huge factor since he only got to try and use the machine guns twice on all the missions.

“The first time was when a German fighter was trying to ram us. Their pilots weren’t getting much training by that time in the war, and they taught them how to ram the bombers in such a way that they could still parachute out.”

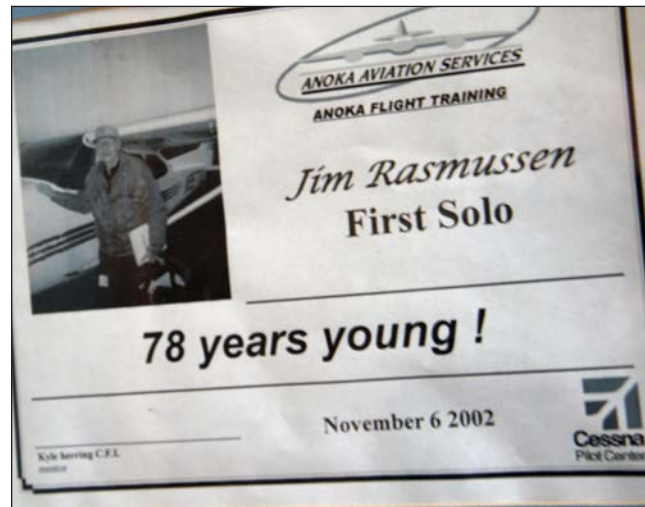
“He was coming right at us, but just before he got there,



An overhead view of a B-17 from the 100th Bomb Group. The group’s identifying insignia was the “D” located in the square. The D identified the 100th. Because it was in a square, it meant it was in the Third Air Division of the 8th Air Force. The plane generally had a crew of 10, and Rasmussen’s post as navigator was in the nose cone of the aircraft.



Rasmussen points to a tee-shirt he owns that shows the insignias for the four squadrons in the 100th Bomb Group. He is pointing at the patch for the 349th Squadron, which featured Mickey Mouse dropping bombs from a bomber that looked a lot like his dog Pluto.



Rasmussen built his own house when he was 70, and then reached down further in his bucket list and went to pilot training. He soloed at age 78 in 2002, but didn’t take his training any further. He said his wife didn’t want to fly with him, and it didn’t seem like much fun to fly alone.



As usual, the tallest guy in the photo, Rasmussen, third from left, was one of seven of his ten crewmates.

he stalled. He was just sitting there. I pulled the trigger on my machine gun, but it was on safe. I don't know how that happened. On our way over we always would fire off a couple of rounds to see if the gun was working. I did that, but somehow I put it back on safe."

The other time, the B-17 was being attacked by two German jet fighters. "They came in and I aimed my gun and pulled the trigger. I got off about a three-second burst, but it was pretty hard to hit a jet. Our ground speed was about 150 miles an hour, while they were flying at 350 miles an hour."

So Rasmussen at least got to fire one burst. "I knew a lot of waist gunners that never fired a round in the war."

Only the lead planes in the formation had radar and bomb sights. The rest of the planes would keep an eye on the lead plane, called the "Mickey" operator, to see when it dropped, and then let go of its own bombs.

"I remember one mission we were supposed to bomb some railroad tracks, and we released out bombs and they just went into the cloud cover. They just totally disappeared. Who knows what they hit."

Rasmussen's crew had the chance to use napalm on one mission. "It was the only mission where they told us we could not smoke on the plane, and we believed it. It just reeked of gasoline on the airplane."

The plane had four drop tanks full of napalm and was headed to a spot on the French coast where the Germans were still holding out.

"As we approached the target, the toggler (bombardier) opened the bomb bay doors, and the bombs just went out. Instead of hitting the target, we wiped out some farmer's field.

"We don't know if it was mechanical failure or what, but the bombardier was brought up for a court martial, and he was busted in rank. I told him I'd be glad to testify, because I watched him do his job, and it looked like he did it right. But they never called me. He was pretty unhappy about getting busted."

The bombardier suffered one more indignity on a mission. "A piece of flak, maybe the size of a pencil eraser, hit our nose cone. Little pieces of the glass just flaked off all over. It was like snowflakes flying. The toggler got hit by a small piece in the forehead, and he was bleeding.

"I told him that as soon as we got back, I was going to take him to the hospital so he could get his Purple Heart. He said, 'Oh, no, you're not.' It was just a little cut and he didn't think he deserved a medal for it.

"One of our gunners got hit with shrapnel, and he did get a Purple Heart."

**T**he crew flew 33 missions on its way to a limit of 35 when the war wound down. Rasmussen flew 32 because he was ill for one flight. They quit flying on April 20, about three weeks before the war ended.

"It just got to the point where there was no place for bombers to go."

The crew flew to Holland to drop food, mainly K-rations, to the hungry Dutch people.

They kept flying, which they had to do to earn their flight pay, but in September, the crew was sent home. Rasmussen joined some others on a bomber that flew down to Africa, then to South America, and finally to Florida where the plane was parked.

Up to the time the war ended in Japan, the crew wondered if they'd be sent to the Pacific to be a crew on a B-24 or a B-29.

Instead, Rasmussen was sent to Wisconsin where he was processed out of the service.

But his military career was far from over. After trying civilian life for two and a half years, a neighbor, who was a recruiting sergeant, talked him into joining the Air Force, which he did as a staff sergeant. He worked in the aircraft maintenance area for a squadron of P-51 fighters.

He was stationed in Japan in 1950 when North Korea attacked and drove South Korean troops south into the Pusan Perimeter.

"They sent us to Korea, and then they sent us back to Japan. And then they sent us to Korea, and then they sent us back to Japan."

In Korea, he recalls that they had an airstrip in the Pusan Peninsula. "The Japanese must have constructed it during World War II. But that's all there was. We slept in tents. We'd watch the P-51s attack the enemy on the mountains right next to us. They were shooting their guns at people coming over those mountains. We got into foxholes at night.

"You know we were nervous Air Force people, and they came around and told us that even if we heard sounds we shouldn't shoot in the dark. But when the guys heard sounds, they started to fire in that direction.

"When the morning came, we found that a bunch of our Army guys had taken up a position in front of us. We'd been firing at our own troops."

As the war shifted into an Allied advantage, and American troops headed north toward the border with China, Rasmussen's squadron was once more moved closer to the troops, this time at the port city of Hungnam.

"Again we were sleeping in tents, but we had a hangar to work in. Of course, the hangar wasn't heated and it was cold."

As the year drew to a close, China entered the war and forced the Allied troops into a retreat that eventually



The group was stationed at Thorpe Abbots Airfield in western England. Unlike the fighter squadrons that moved constantly to keep up with the Allied advances, the 100th Bomb Group stayed put at Thorpe Abbots throughout the war. Rasmussen is on the left.

reached all the way to Hungnam. Again the P-51s were withdrawn, and Rasmussen continued his tour of duty in Japan.

As the years went by, he worked in the recruiting command, in an office in Washington D.C., as a radar expert in Germany, and then back to Minneapolis as a recruiter. He even served another tour in Korea.

He and his first wife had three children, all of whom have retired or are nearing retirement. He said his absences during his military career took a toll on that marriage.

After 23 years on active duty, he retired in 1968 as a master sergeant but stayed in the reserves. "They wanted to send me to Vietnam. I'd already done two wars, and that was enough for me."

He took correspondence courses and eventually became a major in the reserves before he retired for good.

He had several jobs, and at one point he worked as a maintenance supervisor at Stillwater Prison, where he retired again at age 55.

He and his second wife, Marcia, both got real estate licenses, but they traveled too much to the South to maintain a business. Then they both delivered telephone books for several years to finance their trips to Florida.

When he was 70, Rasmussen began work on a large

house in a quiet, woodsy neighborhood north of the Twin Cities. The project took him three years and he did all the carpentry, plumbing and electrical work himself. "If I didn't know how to do something, I just got a book on it."

In 2008, he began one more project he had wanted to do all his life. He started taking flying lessons.

"My wife told me she'd never fly with me. I soloed but I never pursued my license. I didn't find it much fun to be flying by myself. And I still didn't like doing any kind of aerobatics or trick flying. I would have made a good bomber pilot.

"After soloing several times, I just quit and took that one off my bucket list."

He and Marcia stay active at their home in Cedar, but he's had to give up some of his past pursuits. "All the guys I used to golf with or go fishing with have died."

So what's Rasmussen's latest project, at age 95?

"I need a cane to get around these days. But my granddaughter is getting married this summer. We have some exercise equipment down in the basement and it's time to go dust it off.

"It's my goal to be able to walk out on the dance floor at the wedding without a cane, and to dance with my granddaughter."

## Veterans have legislative agenda

Continued from Page 1

First on the list will be an effort to eliminate the eight-year limit for surviving spouses of veterans in the Homestead Market Exclusion. Disabled veterans have been able to get a major break on their property taxes, and that break automatically transfers when the veteran dies to the surviving spouse.

However, in the past the Legislature has put an eight-year limit on the exclusion. For instance, the widow of a veteran can use that exclusion for eight years, and then it disappears, no matter what the financial position of the widow.

The bill the CTF is seeking would take that eight-year cap away.

Ben Johnson, the MDVA's legislative director, said one stakeholder that proposed change would affect is the county the veteran lives in. The county would get those taxes were it not for the exclusion.

The eight-year cap was a compromise with the counties, who wanted to see those properties come back on the tax rolls.

Another part of the bill would allow a surviving spouse to have a one-time transferability to the exclusion, allowing them to move to a property of equal or lesser value and carry the exclusion with them. Many older people choose to downsize, but they cannot in the current law because they would lose their exclusion.

Another way the current law could be altered, Johnson said, would be to change the amount of disability needed for the exclusion. At present, it starts at 70 percent disability.

Another bill the CTF is pursuing would be free or reduced hunting, fishing or trapping licences for service-connected disabled vets.

"The positive benefits for disabled veterans being outside has been demonstrated," Johnson said.

It could be a win-win situation for both the veterans and the Department of Natural Resources which is looking to have more citizens participate. The DNR, however, could oppose such a measure because it would lose revenue.

No bill has been introduced yet.

The third item on the CTF list was supporting the MDVA budget for the year. This session is a budget session, meaning the state money for the agency will be approved

for the next two years.

Johnson said the department has given a budget to the governor's office, and Gov. Tim Walz will be announcing his total state budget on Feb. 18. Most of the budget for the MDVA will simply be to maintain programs considering inflation, insurance increases, and other cost factors.

Johnson said all indications from the governor's office are that he supports strong funding for veterans programs. Walz is a former commander sergeant major.

But, Johnson said, the department is also looking to improve some programs, including the effort to end veterans homelessness.

The MDVA is also looking to expand the state's role in veterans justice programs. Veterans courts and other processes aim at helping a veteran overcome service-related problems and continue to be a good citizen – rather than punishing the veteran to the full extent of the law.

"We don't want a veteran to come back again and again into the justice system. We want to deal with the underlying issues," Johnson said.

The fourth initiative of the CTF is to get more state money for the veterans organizations. At present, the VSOs split up a \$300,000 pot of money based on how many veterans they serve through their claims offices.

The CTF is seeking that fund to be raised to \$1 million. The County Veterans Service Officers association is seeking to maintain government grants to the CVSOs. The grants allow the county veteran service officers to help veterans in ways that are not covered by their regular budgets, which are set by the counties.

The CVSOs also want the Legislature to approve adequate funding for the three new state veterans homes that have been proposed for Montevideo, Bemidji and Preston.

They are also in favor of expanding the veterans court or veterans justice system in the state.

The state will be submitting plans for the three homes to the federal government for a 65 percent match of state funds, on April 15. Minnesota won't know until January 2020 where the projects are on the federal list, or how much money is available.

Johnson said there is also an effort to build more facilities for veterans in the Twin Cities area where the waiting lists are the longest.

## World War II History Round Table

# Nazi Germany's defeat was a team effort

By Al Zdon

Historian Geoffrey Megargee told the World War II History Round Table that there is a persistent myth about the war. "There is an image that Germany lost the war and committed terrible acts because of Hitler and the small clique of people around him."

Megargee, who has written several books about Nazi Germany, said the reality is a little more complicated.

The German high command and officers down the line strongly supported Hitler for the most part.

The creation of that high command evolved from the disaster of World War I for Germany. "There was an agreement that the high command was not centralized enough in World War I."

"They also believed that the German Army had been stabbed in the back in World War I with a failure of will on the home front." They blamed the lack of morale on the Jews and leftists in Germany, he said.

They also agreed in the 1930s that, "War was an instrument of policy and they all expected to go to war."

But after that, the problem was that all the German generals wanted to be leading the troops into battle and not sitting back and creating strategy and planning logistics.

"They all wanted to be Patton and not Eisenhower."

As the war went on, there was a shifting pattern of who was doing what and who was in command, Megargee said. From battle to battle, that pattern would change with one group and then another group in control. The only thing that remained the same was that Hitler was in charge.

"The German high command was not centralized until April, 1945, and by then it was a bit late."

Megargee said the shifting pattern of leadership did not lose the war for Germany, "but it did contribute."

The strengths of the German high command were that it was united in its goal, it was acceptable for junior officers to speak up to senior officers, it was designed to react quickly to developments, and it was tireless.

One general said, "There are 24 hours in a day, and if that's not enough, there's the night."

Weaknesses of the top staff were a tendency to go over a superior's head, sometimes all the way to Hitler, and a tendency for the Nazi Party to micro-manage the operation of the army.

Another problem was the lack of an overall strategy. "It was felt that if you won the battles, the war would take care of itself." It didn't seem to trouble the high command that Hitler's actions meant that Germany was taking on Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union all at one time.

"The more enemies, the greater the honor," Megargee said.

While the Allies were careful to plan battles based on what was feasible in logistics, Germany "decided what to do and then went to the support staff to make it work."

An example was the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. "The generals planned a 15-week battle including a two-week break in the middle." When the support team said they didn't have the resources for such a battle, the generals simply decided to shorten the campaign to 13 weeks, then 11 weeks, and so on.

The invasion of Russia, called Operation Barbarossa, which many consider the downfall of Nazi Germany, had many other problems.

The German officers badly underestimated Soviet troop and materiel strength, and the resolve of the Soviets to fight. "There was no preparation for a winter campaign because we'll have won the war by then."

In the end, "The German Army was well organized at the lower levels, but at the top, it was in shambles."

An example of bad leadership was that of the 5.7 million that the German armed forces lost in the war, 1.4 million were in 1945 when the war was all but lost. "It was an example of the bankruptcy of the command system."

A second part of the program was a presentation of Dr. Connie Harris on the interviews by Dr. Harold Deutsch at Nuremberg following the end of World War II. The Round Table is named in honor of Deutsch who was a professor at the University of Minnesota.

Harris, who was a student of Deutsch and is an adjunct instructor of Dickinson State University in North Dakota, said there were several rules that the American interrogators of the German high command were told to follow.

"They were not to use titles, like General. There was no shaking hands. They could not do the prisoners any favors. Deutsch broke every one of the rules."

She said most of the interrogators were gruff with the prisoners. "They did not understand German thinking. But Dr. Deutsch's manner made them more willing to talk, plus it helped that he was fluent in German."

Harris said Deutsch had traveled on academic business to Germany in 1936 and 1938 and knew many of the key players in the German hierarchy.



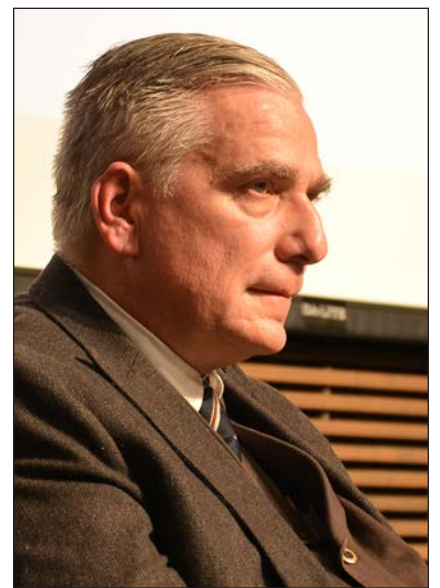
Hitler posed at Nazi event with some of his senior military staff.



DR. GEOFFREY MEGARGEE



DR. CONNIE HARRIS



DR. CHRISTOPHER SIMER

Deutsch did the most interviews with Gen. Walter Warlimont, who served as deputy chief of the OKW, the supreme command of the armed forces. He was later convicted of war crimes and served eight years in prison.

Deutsch interviewed him 12 times, and learned that Warlimont had tried to convince Hitler not to declare war on Belgium.

Another subject at Nuremberg was Gen. Georg Thomas, an economist on the general staff. Thomas revealed that he had told Hitler before the invasion that the Soviet Union had a solid economic base, and had a supply of war materiel that Germany was not prepared for.

"Thomas believed that the Nazi leadership was immoral to the core."

Another interview was with Gen. Heinz Guderian, who devised much of the strategy of Germany's highly successful lightning warfare using tanks in World War II. Later, he clashed with Hitler and was demoted for a time, but he later became chief of the general staff of the army.

"Deutsch did him favors. They went for a drive together in the spring. He posted Guderian's letters."

In the end, Guderian was not tried at Nuremberg.

Harris said one of Deutsch's great disappointments was that his wife got sick toward the end of the interrogation process, and he had to leave Germany before he could interview Hermann Goering, the leader of the German air force and Hitler's number two in command.

In a question and answer session after the presentations, Megargee, who works with the Center for Advanced Studies at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, talked about the anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany.

One questioner asked why Germany used so many resources to kill Jews during the war.

Megargee said that compared with the military effort, "it didn't take all that much resources to do the Final Solution."

But, he said, what the question implies was that the extermination of the Jewish race was a side action of Nazi Germany. "Eliminating Jews was one of the war aims for Germany. It was not a distraction."

Dr. Christopher Simer, the moderator for the program

and a lecturer at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, said, "Killing the Jews was the be-all and end-all of Hitler's world view."

Simer was also a student of Dr. Deutsch at the University of Minnesota.

Megargee noted that almost all of Hitler's generals were on board with the extermination of the Jews, as were most of the German people. "It was not just the SS, but the German Army was it in up to their eyebrows."

Even the decision of Hitler to declare war on the U.S. was influenced by what was seen as a world-wide Jewish conspiracy. "Hitler believed that sooner or later he'd have to fight the United States. He felt that the U.S. was dominated by Jews."

Germany had a defensive treaty with Japan that would not require Germany to take on the United States, but after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Hitler was quick to declare war.

Another factor in making war with America was that Hitler thought he would win. "He said, all I lack is a Navy, and Japan has that."

Megargee said his study of German sources show that there was very little if any reaction in the German high command to the declaration of war on the U.S. "I'm sure they gathered around a map and tried to figure out where Pearl Harbor was."

A questioner asked where Germany developed such a hatred for Jews.

Simer said some of it could be traced to Social Darwinism that was popular at the beginning of the 20th Century. He said a lot of science or pseudo-science was developed in examining the different races. "It was a witch's brew of late 19th Century thinking. There was a political world-view set in stone that the Jews were the enemies of all the peoples of the world."

Megargee said that racial anti-Semitism was layered on top of the religious anti-Semitism that had existed since the Middle Ages, based on the notion that the Jews had killed Jesus Christ.

# Listening Post

## News from around the State



**FALLDIN FLAG DEDICATION** — Falldin Post 555 conducted a flag dedication ceremony for the Edison Community and Sports Foundation. From left: Dick Anderson, Edison Foundation; Ray Eiden, adjutant; Paul Soderberg, sergeant-at-arms; Walt Lyndsley, District 5 Commander; Donovan Ortel, post commander; Fred Schilling, vice commander, John Vandermyde, foundation; and Mike Iacarella, president of the foundation.



**BRAINERD INSTALLS STAIRLIFT** — Brainerd Post 255 installed a power stair lift to the second floor of the Legion building. It will allow those who could not use stairs to partake in events on the second floor of the building. Members of the post-gathered around the lift. Individual and organizations donated to cover the cost.



**BACKUS PARTY** — Backus Auxiliary 368 staged its annual Halloween Party. Break, 2, and Brylee, 4, Freeman of Pine River showed off their monster outfits.



**FARMINGTON CHANGE OF COMMAND** — Doug Taube and Carroll Watson were recently sworn in as commander and finance officer at Farmington Post 189. They replaced Leonard Wisbrich who had held these posts for 20 years. Third District Vice Commander John Flynn did the honors.



**WAITE PARK FEMALE VETS** — Waite Park Unit 428 honored the female veterans in the post during a Celebration of Service event.



**SLAYTON HONORS LONG TIMERS** — Slayton Post 64 honored its long time members at a Veterans Banquet. Department Commander Darrel Redepenning spoke. Rick Parker, Larry Dahl, Howard Kunkol, James Jensen, Larry Joosten, Murl Cole, Brad Pagel, Colleen Miller-Cole, Betty Wilcoxin, Noreen McCalla, Harry McCalla were honored.



**HILLMAN PHEASANT DINNER** — Hillman Post 602 had a Pheasant Dinner at Harding Place and invited all the veteran residents. In the front row are World War II veterans.



**ELY MARINES** — Ely's Bob Niskala puts on the Marine Corps Birthday Party in Ely each year. This year featured Joe Telich, 96, World War II veteran, and Kael Richards, 23, just out of boot camp.



**EDEN VALLEY QUILTS** — 51 quilts were distributed at Eden Valley Post 381. Three women made every quilt. From left: Deb Hesse, Vicki Peschon, Commander Al Mueller and Donna Markwood.



**LUVERNE GIFT SHOP** — The annual gift store was held at the Luverne Veterans Home. Second District volunteers Jim and Jeanne Mertens and Virgene Bullis help organize, wrap and deliver the gifts.

# Taps

**Troe, Arnold Clifford**, 82, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 24, 2018. He served in Hawaii. He was a Department Vice Commander in 2012-13, First District Commander in 2006-07, and First District Adjutant, 2003-4. He was also Freeborn County Commander. He held many Department Appointments including Children and Youth. He was an avid Legion curler and fisherman. He was a member of Emmons Post 317.

**Risacher, Thomas A.**, 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 16, 2018. He served in the Seabees. He was a member Cloquet Post 262.

**Hickey, Richard William**, 87, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 20, 2018. He was in a military police unit. He was a member of Pine Island Post 184.

**Elgersma, Bernard**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 5, 2019. He was a clerk typist in occupied Germany. He was a member of Edgerton Post 42.

**Johnson, Kenneth G.**, 94, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 8, 2019. He was a member of Gary Post 505.

**Gunnufson, Donald**, 81, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 15, 2019. He was a member of Gary Post 505.

**Meyer, Roger**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 24, 2018. He was a member of Lake City Post 110.

**Simonson, Allen**, 90, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 22, 2018. He was a member of Hayfield Post 330.

**Bisek, John**, 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 13, 2018. He played tuba in the Army band. He was a charter member of the New Prague Post 45 Honor Guard.

**Behrens, Leroy J.**, 96, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

**Johnson, Donald Peter**, 93, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 21, 2018. He participated in the invasion of Okinawa and received a Purple Heart. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

**Nelson, Robert L.**, 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 24, 2018. He was a retired pilot, attaining the rank of Lt. Colonel. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

**Thometz, Paul John**, 89, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 17, 2018. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

**Fresonke, Shari**, 58, Air Force veteran of the Gulf War, died Dec. 27, 2018. She served for 24 years and was a personnel specialist and a general's aide. She was the post service officer at Dent Post 148. She was also the assistant Otter Tail County Veterans Service Officer.

**Fuhrman, Duane D.**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 29, 2018. He was a member of Elysian Post 311.

**Jacobs, Wayne**, 93, Coast Guard veteran of World War II, died Dec. 26, 2018. He earned a Purple Heart. He was a member of Caledonia Post 191.

**Westholder, Robert**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 1, 2019. He was a member of Hillman Post 602.

**Beyl, Donald C.**, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 25, 2018. He served on the USS Brown. He was a member of Brooten Post 288.

**Hansen, Robert G.**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 22, 2018. He was a member of Brooten Post 288.

**Lambert, Lenwood C., Sr.**, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 27, 2018. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

**Haspert, Joseph**, 98, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 28, 2018. He served in occupied Japan. He was a member of Buffalo Lake Post 469.

**Telich, Joseph F.**, 96, Marine Corps veteran of World War II, died Dec. 11, 2018. He served with the 4th Marine Division, 10th Amphibious Tanks, B Company. He earned a Purple Heart. He was a member of Ely Post 248.

**Bartkowicz, Richard**, 91, Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, died Jan. 18, 2019. He was a member of Bowlus Post 642.

**Skluzacek, John H.**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 19, 2019. He enlisted in the National Guard and transferred to the Army for the Korean War. He served 33 years in the Guard. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

**Caroon, Clarence**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 16, 2019. He was a member of Pine City Post 51.

**Gross, Donald Henry**, 74, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a boiler tender and served on the USS Frontier (AD-25). He was a member of Waite Park Post 428.

**Saehr, Norman J.**, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 23, 2018. He was a member of Waite Park Post 428.

**Peterson, Dwane E.** "Pete," 81, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 11, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Matheson, Carlyle N.**, 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 23, 2018. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Foss, John M.**, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 27, 2018. He was stationed in Japan as a radio technician. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Hodnefield, Dwaine John**, 91, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a life member of Lakefield Post 4.

**Larson, Jeffrey N.**, 67, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 5, 2019. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

**Nickel, Floyd W.**, 91, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 17, 2018. He was a member of Pequot Lakes Post 49.

**Butler, Carl**, 77, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 31, 2018. He was on the Veterans Memorial Committee of Grey Eagle Post 547.

**Eggen, Jimmy R.**, 84, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 8, 2019. He was a member of Milaca Post 178.

**Larson, William**, 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Cole, William**, 73, Army Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Hess, Owen**, 99, Navy veteran of World War II, died December 24, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Kesteloot, Scott**, 53, Army veteran of Lebanon/Grenada, died Dec. 31, 2018. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Blowers, John**, 76, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 6, 2019. He was a member of Marshall Post 113.

**Bahe, Henry "Hank,"** 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He was a message decoder in Alaska. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

**Diedrich, Harold W.**, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 4, 2019. He was a member of Parker's Prairie Post 219.

**Solinger, Andrew G.**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 1, 2018. He served on the honor guard of Holdingford Post 211.

**Foote, Ronald Dale**, 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 25, 2018. He was a sergeant serving in Vietnam, earning a Bronze Star. He was a member of Clarissa Post 213.

**Wunderlich, Charles E.**, 81, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 22, 2018. He was a Specialist 5. He belonged to Winona Post 9.

**Hoffer, Mervin E.**, 88, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 10, 2019. He was a member of Anoka Post 102.

**Hess, Douglas E.**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 5, 2019. He was a member of Litchfield Post 104.

**House, Alden**, 85, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 4, 2019. He served in Japan in a P-51 fighter squadron. He was a member of Hutchinson Post 96.

**Hoiseith, Donald S.**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Dec. 21, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Durst, Leland L.**, 91, Army veteran of World War II, died Dec. 30, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Hillenbrand, Melbourne E.**, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 31, 2018. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Nelson, Gary L.**, 68, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 2, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Hedin, Harris E.**, 100, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 7, 2019. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

**Remillard, Alden L.**, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 10, 2019. He served in Alaska. He was a member of Redwood Falls Post 38.

**Hendrickson, Corley A.M.**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 10, 2019. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Paczkowski, Joan A.**, 83, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 13, 2019. She was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

**Lewis, Ellis Lyman**, 93, Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 23, 2019. He served on the honor guard of Brooten Post 288.

**Hyland, Robert A.**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 22, 2019. He served in the 82nd Airborne, and earned his "senior wings" reflecting 30 jumps. He was a member of the color guard of Austin Post 91.

**Onstad, Kurt Otto**, 66, Army Reserve veteran of the War on Terrorism. He served 23 years, starting as an enlisted clerk and becoming an officer. He served at Buffalo, Camp Ripley and Arden Hills. He was a member of Spring Grove Post 249.

**Bunker, Delano**, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 19, 2019. He was a member of LaPorte Post 462.

**Buntrock, Ronald E.**, 73, Navy veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 21, 2019.

**Johnson, Bruce H.**, 75, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Jan. 12, 2019. He served in the Army Security Agency in Turkey. He was a member of Hopkins Post 320.

**Clark, Chester L.**, 73, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 17, 2018. He was a member of Savage Post 643.

**Goodoien, John Edward**, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Dec. 18, 2018. He served in the 981st Engineer Battalion, Construction, Company C, at Fort Bragg. He was a member of Richfield Post 435.

**Huston, Charles E., Jr.**, 93, Army veteran of World War II, died Jan. 19, 2019. He served in the color guard of Austin Post 91.

**Vosejpkka, Harold M.**, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Jan. 17, 2019. He was a past commander and color guard captain at Lonsdale Post 586.

## Correction

**Weibye, Steven O.**, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Dec. 15, 2018. He was a member of Long Prairie Post 12.

## Obituary policy

Updated: February 2006

Obituaries of members of the Legion will be published in the Minnesota Legionnaire in a monthly column under the heading "Taps."

Obituaries must be recent, within the last two months prior to the publication of the new edition of the Legionnaire. For example, the February edition would only contain obituaries from January and December.

While the obituaries are brief, the Legionnaire does seek certain information for our readers:

1. Complete name of deceased.
2. Age at death.
3. Branch of service and war or wars the veteran served in.
4. Exact date of death.
5. Additional information about the veteran's service background including unit, type of service, place of service, medals, etc.
6. The post, unit or squadron the deceased belonged to.
7. Additional information about Legion service including officer posts held.

The Legionnaire reserves the right to edit all obituaries for style and brevity.

## Membership Chart as of Jan. 29, 2019

| District      | 2019 Goal     | Total 2018    | Total 2019    | Weeks Gain | Total Posts | Goal Posts | % Of Goal     |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| District 1    | 8,553         | 8,495         | 7,508         | 16         | 58          | 7          | 87.78%        |
| District 2    | 6,793         | 6,709         | 6,015         | 18         | 84          | 4          | 88.55%        |
| District 3    | 11,262        | 11,197        | 10,070        | 75         | 65          | 10         | 89.42%        |
| District 4    | 2,281         | 2,263         | 1,991         | 30         | 18          | 4          | 87.29%        |
| District 5    | 2,340         | 2,318         | 2,063         | 2          | 22          | 4          | 88.16%        |
| District 6    | 11,342        | 11,271        | 10,078        | 26         | 71          | 15         | 88.86%        |
| District 7    | 6,089         | 6,013         | 5,324         | 15         | 76          | 17         | 87.44%        |
| District 8    | 3,998         | 3,958         | 3,456         | 10         | 40          | 3          | 86.44%        |
| District 9    | 6,482         | 6,417         | 5,672         | 46         | 65          | 7          | 87.50%        |
| District 10   | 9,539         | 9,485         | 8,321         | 150        | 54          | 6          | 87.23%        |
| District 11   | 2,009         | 2,084         | 1,709         | 0          | 2           | 0          | 85.07%        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>70,688</b> | <b>70,210</b> | <b>62,207</b> | <b>388</b> | <b>555</b>  | <b>77</b>  | <b>88.00%</b> |



# The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 19-4

President Jean Walker

February 2019

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

## The President's Column

By Jean Walker



In my travels this last month I have been to the Fourth and Fifth District Joint Mid-Winter in St. Paul, First District Mid-Winter in LeRoy and also the Tenth District Mid-Winter in Anoka. Believe or not, that was all in one day. It was so nice I got to travel with Commander Darrel to the Mid-Winters. I also attended the Ninth District Mid-Winter in Bagley. Then to Brownston Unit 143 for their Unit meeting and gathering with the Legion Family after the meeting. Also, on my calendar for this month yet is a visit to the Hastings Veterans Home for their Venison Lunch, Third District Mid-Winter, St. Paul Winter Carnival Parade and the Tenth District Snowmobile Rally. It was great visiting with so many members this last month. Thank you so much for your hospitality and thank you for all you do for our Veterans, their families and the active duty military.

February is Americanism Month. Please take time and work with your schools on the essay contests. It would be great for Minnesota to be able to toot their horn at the National Convention with a winning essay.

This month the Sweetheart Rally is going to be held in Royalton and the American Legion Auxiliary is hosting this rally. Thank you to our Membership Chairman Robin Dorf for handling the preparations for this rally. This could be very interesting! So, I hope we have a great turn out of our American Legion Family for this rally. You never know what Robin will come up with to entertain us at the membership rally. Also, don't forget to bring your membership turnins to this rally. It will be interesting to see the outcome of this turn in and to see which District will be in First Place. It isn't all about winning. It is about working together to see our organization grow One Member at a Time so that we will be here for the next 100 years to advocate for our Veterans.

National Salute to Veteran Patients is observed during the week of February 14th each year. This is the week the Veteran Affairs facilities: medical centers, outpatient clinics and nursing homes across the nation are honoring these men and women, who have given selflessly to protect the freedoms we hold dear, and to give back to those who served us. This is the time to pay tribute and express our appreciation to our Veterans, take time to visit hospitalized Veterans, and also our Veterans in our nursing homes. They have given up so much to protect our freedoms. Now it is time for us to give back.

Again, thank you all for all you do for our Veterans, their families and our active duty military. This is a team effort and working together for our Veterans we can make a difference. "Veterans Are Our Stars and Our Heroes."

Happy Valentine's Day.

## National President coming to Minnesota May 16-19

Get ready – National President Kathy Dungan will be visiting Minnesota from May 13-16, 2019. Department President Jean Walker, NEC Raleen Tolzmann, Membership Director Robin Dorf and Department Secretary Sandie Deutsch will be touring parts of Minnesota, visiting Units, Veterans Homes and Camp Ripley. Following is a brief itinerary of stops which at this time is subject to change. There will be times and contact names and numbers for reservations in next month's issue.

- Date Stop
- May 16, 2019 Litchfield - Dinner
- May 17, 2019 Morris - Lunch  
Fergus Falls Veterans Home  
Park Rapids - Dinner
- May 18, 2019 Sauk Centre - Lunch  
Camp Ripley  
Waite Park - Dinner
- May 19, 2019 Haven for Heroes  
Chanhassen - Lunch  
Hastings Veterans Home  
Montgomery - Dinner

This is a very big honor for our National President to visit so please try to attend one of our functions and get to know President Kathy.

### JUNIOR CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 13th is the date for the 56th Annual Department Junior Conference. It will be held at Richfield American Legion Post 435 with the Fifth District serving as hosts. A fun evening has been planned for Friday, April 12th. Complete information and the Call to the Junior Conference was included in the January/February Unit mailing. Be sure you share this information with your Junior Activities Chairman. Make arrangements for your Juniors to attend. We need more Juniors to attend our Conference and share their successes with other Junior members so we can grow the program. Junior members are the Auxiliary's future and we must nurture and promote what they do. We have a wonderful Honorary Junior President, Harley Donnelly, who has done a great job promoting Juniors and what they do for our Veterans.

### AMERICANISM MONTH

February is Americanism month. Chairman Bethany Dickert is a wonderful resource to have so please contact her with any of your needs regarding the Americanism program. All members should strive to be a patriot through Unit involvement in community events. Encourage and get involved with your youth to teach them the importance of Americanism. Work closely with The American Legion and their Americanism programs.

### POPPY ORDERS

If you haven't placed your Poppy order yet, please do so. We need to finalize the number of Poppies needed for this year's Poppy distribution so we can plan accordingly. Let's have 100% Unit participation in the Auxiliary Poppy program. Right now out of 438 Units 276 have placed orders. Remember our Poppies are made by our veterans and they receive a small compensation for their work. Let's support their efforts. It will help the Department Office tremendously if you get your orders in now and not wait until the last minute. That will ensure that we have the inventory to handle all orders.

### 2019 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Gosh, it seems that these months go by so fast – in the December/January Unit mailing, every Unit received a notice asking for the amount of your Unit's 2019 Senior and Junior dues, and the name and address of the person whose name should appear on your Unit's 2019 dues' notices. Please make sure this information gets back to Sandie at the Department Office by March 15. Please make sure and discuss the upcoming dues with your Units. Keep in mind that the National Organization has raised their portion of the dues from \$9.00 to \$12.00. The Department dues will still

be \$9.00 for 2019 so the amount you will send in to the Department Office will be \$21.00 per member. Many Units currently only charge \$20.00 for dues, send \$18.00 to Department and keep \$2.00 for themselves. Remember, that won't work in 2019!! Also keep in mind the dues of the American Legion Auxiliary are some of the most inexpensive organizations to belong to. What we do and what we stand for should make everyone very proud to be a member.

Another note to remember is that in the 2020 Membership year the Department portion of dues will also be increasing to \$12.00 per Senior member so the amount you will need to send in to the Department for each Senior member is \$24.00 per year. Make sure to take this into consideration when setting your Unit dues for 2020.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Just a reminder all applications for any Department and National scholarships must be received in the department office by March 15. Let your schools know they are available and provide them with the application forms. They are also posted on our website for your convenience. If additional copies are needed, you may duplicate those you have received or contact the Department office.

### UNIT ANNUAL REPORTS

Unit Annual Reports have been mailed to each Unit in January. All reports, instruction sheets and history paper will be in one envelope. If you don't receive this envelope, contact the department office immediately. Please note: The Unit reports cover the period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

This year the reports have again been reformatted because of the feedback we received from the Units. We have made the Unit reports like those in the past. When our Units ask for better ways of doing things we do everything in our power to come through.

All Unit reports are due on or before April 15. Reports are important! Let's hear from every Unit.

### GIRLS STATE RESERVATIONS

In the January/February Unit mailing, every Unit received the necessary information and reservation form to reserve a place for their candidate(s) to the 2019 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State. Please ask your Unit President for the necessary information.

After your Unit sends in the reservation fee (\$300.00 per girl) and it has been processed, your Unit will receive a packet of information including a complete registration packet for each girl you are sponsoring. This will be sent to the person who signed the reservation form.

Information will be mailed to each high school in January. The schools will be waiting to be contacted by you. Let them know now if you will be sponsoring a girl. A Unit may sponsor as many girls from the same high school as it would like to. There is no limit. The candidate(s) must attend a Minnesota public, charter, parochial, private, home-school, or be a resident of Minnesota. All reservation fees will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis. Any person, business or organization may provide the fee to sponsor a girl but this must be run through a Unit.

This year the American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State be held at Bethel University. The session will be held June 9-15. Please contact the Department Office if you have any questions.

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The American Legion Auxiliary Leadership Chairman Dee Dee Buckley, Membership Chairman Robin Dorf and Public Relations Chairman Cheryl Nymann have held their first Leadership Training Class in Little Falls and it was a huge success. All of the information is on the flyer that is on our pages.

### CANDIDATES NEEDED

The Department of Minnesota is in need of candidates

### Jan. 23, 2019, Auxiliary Membership

| District      | Goal          | Membership To Date | Percent of Goal | Membership Last Year 1/24/18 |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| One           | 4,907         | 3,507              | 71.47%          | 3,869                        |
| Two           | 4,924         | 3,581              | 72.73%          | 3,883                        |
| Three         | 4,422         | 3,397              | 76.82%          | 3,487                        |
| Four          | 720           | 516                | 71.67%          | 531                          |
| Five          | 788           | 500                | 63.45%          | 558                          |
| Six           | 6,042         | 4,578              | 75.77%          | 4,799                        |
| Seven         | 3,934         | 2,857              | 72.62%          | 3,110                        |
| Eight         | 1,628         | 1,078              | 66.22%          | 1,187                        |
| Nine          | 4,344         | 3,134              | 72.15%          | 3,360                        |
| Ten           | 5,129         | 3,392              | 66.13%          | 3,605                        |
| 1982          | 160           | 124                | 77.50%          | 115                          |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>36,998</b> | <b>26,664</b>      | <b>72.07%</b>   | <b>28,504</b>                |

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA



9 AM – 2 PM

\$10.00 Pre-Registration includes coffee, donut/roll, lunch & course handouts

Presented by  
Dee Dee Buckley, Department Leadership Chairman  
Robin Dorf, Department Membership Chairman  
Cheryl Nymann, Department Public Relations Chairman

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>** Thief River Falls American Legion Post #117  
324 Brooks Avenue  
Thief River Falls, MN 56701  
(Pre-register by Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>)

**March 9<sup>th</sup>** Waseca American Legion Post #228  
700 S State Street  
Waseca, MN 56093  
(Pre-register by Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>)

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Cut and return this portion to: Dee Dee Buckley, 1666 Oakcrest Ave, Roseville MN 55113 along with \$10 registration fee.  
Make checks payable to Dee Dee Buckley

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Name _____                | I will be attending:                                |
| Address _____             |   |
| City _____                |   |
| State _____ Zip _____     | _____ February 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Thief River Falls |
| Unit _____ District _____ |   |
| Phone Number _____        | _____ March 9 <sup>th</sup> - Waseca                |
| Email _____               |   |

## February is Nat'l Security Month

Minnesota has been busy, especially during the holiday season, which for us occurs almost monthly in activities, events and meetings. Many units and their posts have been involved in the Shop Ship and Send activities sending packages to our military men who didn't get to go home for the holidays. At our Fall Conference we promoted the GI Josh program which benefits children of our deployed military families. The stuffed GI Josh DOG encourages and provides comfort to children during very difficult and trying times of their lives. Units reported that they kept in touch with the National Guard and their Family Readiness Group Coordinator. Many Units send "Support the Troop" boxes to the Hot Zone. Members hosted a send-off for the National Guard troops and their families, they provided fruit and vegetable trays for the families being separated by the deployment.

**Honoring the Troops:** Our units support and help families display Blue Star Banners in their windows to show that someone in the home is serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. We offer help to families displaying banners Honor those still missing with a POW/MIA Remembrance Services. We host programs recommended by the Department of Homeland Security that assist members and communities in preparing for and/or responding to natural or manmade disasters

**CERT:** Earn your 'Community Emergency Response Team' certificate. This information is to train our members to assist communities in natural and manmade disasters. OUR Local Auxiliary units collaborate yearly with Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Operation Homefront, Operation Comfort Warriors, Heroes to Hometowns, POW/MIA Initiatives, USO affiliates, and ROTC/JROTC units as a means to care for our active duty military when serving, hospitalized, in transition, and as they return to civilian life. Ask your members to make a few calls, look up the websites listed above and report at your meeting on what YOUR UNIT can do.

**Welcome-Home Events:** Our members do helpful things such as collecting coupons and sending them to overseas commissaries, hosting warm send-off and welcome-home events for our troops, providing service members with pocket flags, and showing the gratitude of our nation by providing military families with Blue Star and Gold Star Banners. EVERYONE has the opportunity to work on these programs. WE encourage those who are not eligible to participate in our events and activities throughout our communities. National Security supports Homeland Security, along with our United States Coast Guard, we remember our first responders, our Police, Fire, and EMT, who put their lives on the line every day in our community to keep us safe. Units plan to assist local agencies with 911 ceremonies by bringing refreshments, and attend fallen Officers memorials.

**Tragedy Assistance Programs:** Airport greeting, transportation, meals, American Red Cross / Blood Drives USO, Armed Forces Servicemen Center @ Mpls Airport, Pocket Angels for the Armed Forces Service Center. Some members carry winter survival kits in their cars and shared the information at the Unit. Our members serve lunch to our firemen at one of their monthly meetings. Please donate blood at your local blood mobile, every drop counts!

"Remember to Wear Red On Fridays"

— Vicki Bibeau National Security Chairman

## Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

for the position of Alternate NEC for a one year term of August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020. This is in accordance with the Department Constitution, Article VI, Section 1, paragraph 2. Please keep in mind that in the 2020/2021 Auxiliary year we will be looking for candidates for both NEC and Alternate NEC for a two-year period each.

### SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

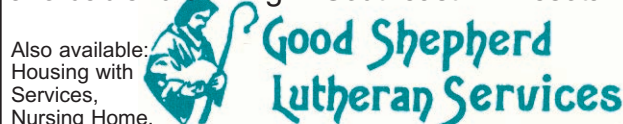
As usual, our "quiet time" in the office has come and gone and as usual we didn't get too much caught up. We seem to keep so busy with daily tasks that ongoing projects seem to keep taking a back seat – some Saturdays may be in my near future! This month my shout out is to send prayers to Marie, Carol B and Vicki – all of your Auxiliary sisters want you to get well and back to work – we need your dedication and passion towards our mission. I am busy planning the National Presidents Tour and hope to see many of you at one of the functions. This is a wonderful way to get together and see what our National leaders are up to. As I am typing this, I am sitting at home, snowed in and freezing – these winters are getting worse every year. I am looking forward to Valentines Day this year – President Jean Walker will be visiting the Montgomery Unit for our annual Sweetheart Dinner. Our American Legionnaires are simply wonderful in Montgomery. They wine and dine us at no cost to show their appreciation for all we do working together at The American Legion Family.

I just can't seem to come up with something witty this month so I called Confucius for some words of wisdom for you all – here's what he told me: "Man who fish in toilet... catch nothing but boneless brown trout – go figure. Have a wonderful February and Happy Valentines Day to all you sweethearts out there. Make sure and give lots of hugs!!

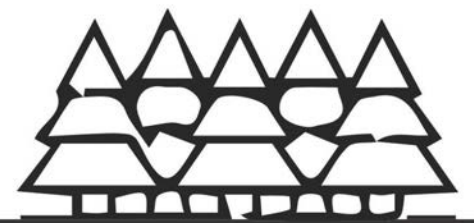


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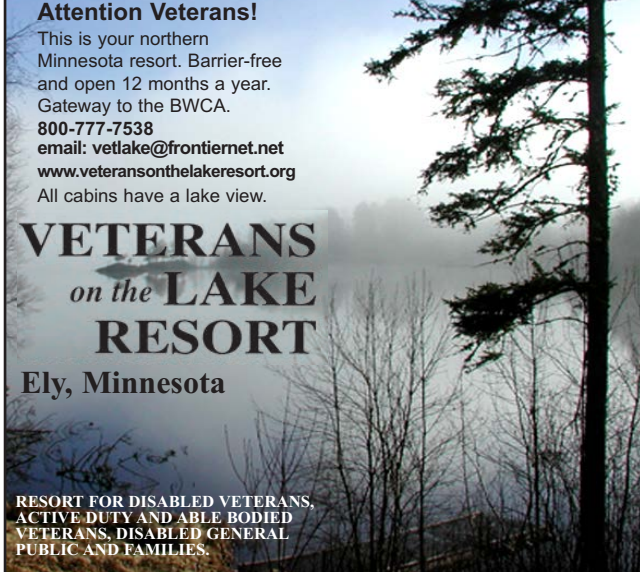
**Tour Includes:**

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