



A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

\$3 • Vol. 104 No. 11

For God and Country

November 2022



From left are Korean War veterans Charlie Ciesman, George Seim and Vernon Kumerow.

## End of an era in Stillwater

The H & H Last Man's Club holds its 69th and final meeting

STILLWATER — Retired Lt. Gen. Richard Nash of New Prague was 4 years old when young men from Stillwater mobilized to Korea.

Upon their return, 153 of these men formed a club in line with a Stillwater tradition going back to the Civil War. The Korean War veterans called it the

H & H Last Man's Club for two Stillwater units of the Minnesota National Guard: Headquarters Co. 1st Battalion, and Heavy Mortar Co. They both were part of the 47th Infantry Division's 135th Infantry Regiment.

The World War II veterans from Stillwater had the A & D Last Man's

Club. The World War I veterans had the Last Buddies Bully Beef Club. The Civil War veterans from Company B, 1st Minnesota Infantry, formed the town's first last man's club, and Company C, 8th Minnesota Infantry, had what it called the Last Two Man's

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## Legion behind letter to VA

Congressional delegation calls for fixing billing issue

ST. PAUL — It almost never happens — members of differing political parties at the federal level signing their names to the same letter.

But the Minnesota American Legion staff helped to orchestrate just such a letter in September.

Six Democrats and four Republicans who represent Minnesota in Congress signed a letter to VA Secretary Denis McDonough calling for his department to ensure veterans are receiving fair coverage for emergency medical transportation.

"Thanks to everyone who contributed to this effort, bringing much needed attention to a topic that affects so many veterans across this country," said American Legion Department of Minnesota Service Officer Jeremy Wolfsteller.

He, Adjutant Mike Maxa and Communications Director Tim Engstrom

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## A monumental idea

Park in Blaine is being filled with veterans memorials

By Tim Engstrom

BLAINE — One of the challenges with any veterans memorial is: What to put on it?

Steve Guider, president of the Veterans Memorial Park of Blaine Committee, decided to contact the Smithsonian Institution and World War I and II museums.

"I just wanted someone to say what I should have," he said. "The Smithsonian said check with your local high school social studies teacher, and the war museums wanted to give me 30,000 photos."

Guider works in the tech department at Blaine High School and is in his first year of retirement from coaching the football team. He still coaches the girls' hockey team.

He contacted John Castellano, a longtime friend in Blaine who is a West Point graduate and a retired lieutenant colonel.

"You need to talk to Col. John Agoglia," he said.

Agoglia was Castellano's roommate at West Point and was a planner for battles during the Persian Gulf War and knew many high-level Army officers. Guider contacted the retiree, and they spoke for two hours.

"I know what you want," Agoglia told him. "Give me two days, and I'll



Steve Guider leads the charge in the north metro suburb of Blaine for erecting not merely a memorial to veterans but an entire park of memorials. Guider is not a veteran; he is a patriotic civilian who appreciates veterans and wants to recognize their sacrifices.

get back to you."

Agoglia contacted his group, and they let him know which images best represented each war. Guider sought out some, too, and got approval for each from Agoglia's group.

Now, he needed someone to patch

them together.

Karl Jaeger of KJ Branding designed a ceiling light for the locker room at the high school. His company does custom murals and other graphics for arenas, gyms, rinks and other sports facilities.

Guider asked him what he charges

for his Photoshop skills. He said he doesn't do basic Photoshop jobs. Then he asked Guider what he needed, and Guider explained his memorial project.

"I won't charge a thing for that," Jaeger replied.

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Renderings provided by Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. This architectural rendering shows how pieces of the USS Minneapolis-St. Paul submarine will be displayed outside the new Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. The museum is working with Minneapolis-based architectural firm HGA Architects.

## Museum on track to break ground by next spring

Pieces of USS Mpls-St. Paul submarine to be part of facility's exterior exhibitions

CAMP RIPLEY — Groundbreaking for a new \$33 million Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum takes place next summer, with a goal for the building to open in 2025.

"We are out there talking to everyone we can — the veterans, groups — to get their input," said Randal Dietrich, executive director of the museum.

In mid-September at the 34th Infantry Division HQ in Arden Hills, the museum,

in partnership with SnowGlobe Public Relations, unveiled new renderings of the 40,000-square-foot facility to be set on 32 acres east of Camp Ripley near the junction of highways 371 and 115.

The museum has existed inside the gates of Camp Ripley for 40 years.

Dietrich said the nonprofit is about halfway to its goal, having raised \$18 million, with \$10 million of that coming

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Are you the son of a veteran? Maybe you are a veteran and the son or grandson of one? Either way, join your local Sons of the American Legion.

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# What's happening?

## Pearl Harbor Rally in Spicer

SPICER — The meeting place for the annual Pearl Harbor Rally is at Spicer Post 545 on Dec. 3.

The rally begins at 11 a.m. with a social hour and membership turn-in. Lunch will be served at noon, and the program begins at 1 p.m. and ends at 2 p.m.

The meal will be broasted chicken, mashed potatoes, corn, coleslaw and a roll. The cost of the meal is \$15, payable at the door with cash, check or credit card.

Parking will be in the Saulsbury Beach lot across Lake Street.

The Minnesota American Legion Riders are hosting the rally.

Other rallies on the horizon are Sweetheart Rally at Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172 on Feb. 4 and Appreciation Rally at New Prague Post 45 on April 15.

Other upcoming events on the Legion calendar are the National Commander's Tour of Minnesota April 16-21 (heading north this time) and Minnesota Legion College April 20-23.

## State Veterans Program back like before

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS — The official state Veterans Day program returns to its

pre-COVID glory this year.

The event takes place Nov. 11 at the Veterans Memorial Community Center in Inver Grove Heights, with a free community breakfast starting at 8:30 a.m. The official program begins at 10 a.m., featuring remarks from Commissioner Larry Herke and state elected officials.

An online livestream of the program will be available, too.

The address of the community center is 8055 Barbara Ave., Inver Grove Heights.

## Free lunch planned for Veterans Day

NORTH ST. PAUL — Guaranteed to bring back memories of dining in the military, North St. Paul Post 39 will offer a free lunch to veterans from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Veterans Day.

Legion Post 39 is at 2678 E. 7th Ave, North St. Paul and is open to the public.

Served in mess halls throughout the military services, chipped beef on toast was fondly referred to as "SOS." The meal will include a fruit cup. Beverage not included.

Family members of veterans, and all other customers will be able to order from the regular lunch menu.

## Veterans Day breakfast is set

ST. PAUL — Arcade-Phalen Post 577 and North End Post 474, which both meet at the Post 577 home at 1129 Arcade St. in St. Paul, will offer a free breakfast to all veterans and their families on Veterans Day.

From 9 a.m. to noon Nov. 11, the posts will offer biscuits, gravy, eggs, bacon, sausage, pancakes, orange juice, milk and coffee.

## Legion invited to Restorative Justice event at law school

MINNEAPOLIS — The University of St. Thomas will host a special event on Veterans Day, and The American Legion is invited.

Called Honoring Veterans with Restorative Justice, this two-hour program at the university's law school in downtown Minneapolis will highlight why veterans need restoration and healing from invisible injuries resulting from military service.

It will describe the role veterans treatment courts and the Minnesota Restorative Justice Act play in their lives.

By contacting their lawmakers, the members of Minnesota American Legion played a major role in passing the Minnesota Restorative Justice Act. Not only did it help get it passed, their calls kept the issue alive over the course of five years.

The law was signed in 2021. The event at 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11, is free. Registration is necessary to determine a count

and to receive the livestream's link.

To register, find a link while hovering over "Events" at [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org).

A reception will follow the program.

## Special Forces leader Mark Nutsch to speak at banquet

HUTCHINSON — Saluting Community Heroes hosts an annual fundraising banquet, with a speaker from the American veterans community.

This year, the speaker is Mark Nutsch, who, as a captain, led a Special Forces 12-man team in the mountains of Northern Afghanistan.

Using horses and unconventional warfare and in seemingly insurmountable conditions, this 12 men won an early victory over the Taliban. Their story was portrayed in the 2018 movie "12 Strong." "Thor" actor Chris Hemsworth played Nutsch in the film.

The "Horse Soldiers" were commemorated with a statue of a modern soldier on a horse at Ground Zero in New York called "America's Response Monument."

He and his business partners today operate a craft distillery called Horse Soldier Bourbon, which is distributed in Texas.

The annual Saluting Community Heroes Celebration Dinner is at 7 p.m. Nov. 15, with a private VIP event at 5:30 p.m., at the Hutchinson Event Center, 1005 Minnesota Highway 15, in Hutchinson.

To learn how to attend, visit [salutingcommunityheroes.com](http://salutingcommunityheroes.com).

The nonprofit donates to veteran causes locally and all across Minnesota.

## Post hosts seminar on medical benefits

NORTH ST. PAUL — American Legion Post 39 in North St. Paul will host an educational seminar titled "How Medicare works with Military Medical Benefits" at 2 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 22.

Free to veterans and their families, the presentation will be given by Greg De Keuster, of NPF Benefits, located in North Oaks, a Medicare Broker and Consultant.

The hour-long program, which will be at the post's banquet hall, will present overviews of both Medicare Parts A, B, C and D; and the military medical benefits, like VA, Tricare, Tricare for Life and Champ VA. It will also focus on how they work together; and will provide answers to any questions the veterans may have relating to the various programs.

To register for the seminar,

veterans can visit [www.npfbenefits.com/events](http://www.npfbenefits.com/events) or call 651-371-6520.

## Minneapolis gears up for Decorated Vehicle Parade

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minneapolis Veterans Home will host the Minneapolis Veterans Day Decorated Vehicle Parade this year.

This parade is a joint effort between the Minneapolis Veterans Home and the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

The parade starts at 11 a.m. in Parking Lot 11 of the VA medical center. It will circle the medical center, then go to the veterans home.

Want to be in the parade and not just watch? Contact Greg Arrigoni at 651-248-1604 or via email at [gregory.arrigoni@va.gov](mailto:gregory.arrigoni@va.gov).



**Mark Nutsch**

## Fridley Post 303 likes Fridays

FRIDLEY — American Legion Post 303 in Fridley is going to be cutting a rug on Veterans Day.

The post is hosting "Friday Night Music: Vinyl Revival" from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11.

Reservations required. To reserve a spot, contact Bonnie Eells at 763-571-6151. Veterans attend for free. Others pay a \$2 cover fee.

Post 303 is at 7365 NE Central Ave. in Fridley.

Post 303 has a different musical theme each Friday. Contact Eells for more.

## Craft show coming to Post 398 in Mound

MOUND — Minnetonka American Legion Post 398, which is at 2333 Wilshire Blvd. in Mound, is hosting a craft show.

Called the Thanks for Giving Craft & Gift Show, this event is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20. Vendors will include handmade and non-handmade crafts alike.

## Check out live music at Post 92

ROCHESTER — Post 92 in Rochester is hosting southern Minnesota musician Nancy Tobiason-Kramer from 7 to 10 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 11.

She and her husband, Dan, deliver a wide variety of tunes, from the current to the classics.

Post 92 has live music every Friday at 7 p.m.

On Nov. 4, the feature is Denny and Anne. On Nov. 18, it is Kid Dakota. On Nov. 25, it is DJ Biggie Ben "Jammin" Schellhammer.

The post home is at 915 21st Ave. SE in Rochester.



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For more information or to find a chapter near you, visit us at [www.legion.org/riders](http://www.legion.org/riders).

### THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY



# Their service is not forgotten

Continued from Page 1

Club. These clubs were annual gatherings with socializing and a speaker.

On Thursday, Oct. 13, at the historic Lowell Inn in Stillwater, Nash was the featured speaker at the final meeting of the H & H Last Man's Club.

"We are honored to be in your presence," Nash told them.

One of the men, Ret. Maj. Gen. Lyle C. Doerr, who lives in Stillwater, said they decided to end their tradition. It was the 69th gathering.

There are eight remaining members, and only six were healthy enough to attend.

Doerr was joined by Charles L. Ciesman, Vernon E. Kumerow, Angus D. MacDonald, George W. Seim Jr. and Roger A. Kuhn. Unable to attend were Roger F. Utecht and Kenneth Streiff.

Nash said Korean War veterans came home to no parades and no protests. The country had a desire to forget it and move on.

"We just came home, took off our uniforms and went to work," he said. "You, the veterans of the Korea, deserve better."

No war in America should be forgotten, he said. U.S. troops in Korea often fought while outnumbered, and their deeds are equally heroic as any U.S. war. He listed Pusan Perimeter, Inchon Landing, Chosin Reservoir, Punchbowl, Heartbreak Ridge, Old Baldy and Pork Chop Hill.

Korean veterans fought in the bitter cold of winter, Nash said,



**Retired Lt. Gen. Richard Nash, former adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, among other Army commands that include multinational deployments to Iraq and Bosnia, speaks at the final meeting of the H & H Last Man's Club in Stillwater.**

and the POWs endured the worst an enemy could dish out.

"Our veterans of Korea are some of the strongest men our nation has ever produced," he said.

He noted how America's rapid drawdown of forces after World War II left the country unprepared for the Cold War.

"Korea reminds us that when we send our troops into battle, they deserve the support of our people," Nash said.

In the war, 36,574 American servicemen died, and their sacrifice, along with the sacrifices of South Korean allies, some say were for naught, Nash said.

"If we allowed an unprovoked invasion of a free nation, all

nations would be in danger," he said.

After three years, the communist forces were driven back to a line near where the war started. Some say Americans died for a tie, and it is a reason the conflict is called The Forgotten War.

"This was not a tie," Nash said. "This was a victory. This was a victory then, and it is a victory today."

He pointed to the economic success and the quality of life the people of South Korea enjoy today and how it contrasts with the poverty and oppression of North Korea.

Nash cited the inscription of the Korean War Memorial in Washington, which says: "Our

nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met."

Chaplain and retired Col. John Morris told the six H & H Club members attending: "You are the living connection for us."

He led a candle-lighting ceremony to remember comrades who have passed.

The Vietnam veterans and veterans of subsequent wars didn't form similar clubs. Of course, this is because the recruitment and mustering of military forces in America has changed since the mid-20th century. These days, veterans in the same town usually have not served together.

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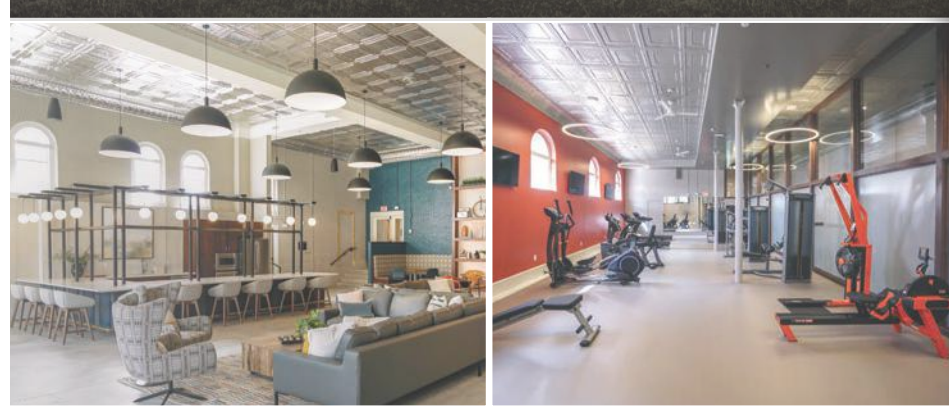
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# Need help? Fund 85 is a way to assist

Greetings Legion Family, as I write this, we are heading into our annual Fall Conference. We will gather in St. Cloud for camaraderie, education and to honor our National Security award-winners.

Our posts are working hard-serving veterans and their communities, and our districts are working hard to assist them. Our mission continues to be on our veterans, our communities and their families.

As the winter months approach, I encourage you all to look out for one another. Veterans Day is fast approaching and all around the state veterans will be coming together to honor each other and their service. Please make sure that those who need assistance getting to these

## Commander's Column

Jennifer Havlick



events, too.

National and local elections are also quickly approaching. Let's make sure those who need help getting to the polling place have the assistance they need getting there. With winter approaching, remember we have the Veterans Assistance Fund that can help with expenses such as heating and electricity.

Please don't wait until your utilities are turned off before reaching out for help. Applications are on the Department website. Checks are made out to Minnesota American Legion

Founda- tion Fund 85.

I continue to travel throughout the Department of Minnesota visiting posts, and I look forward to seeing all of you in the coming weeks. For God and Country.

*Jennifer Havlick of Duluth Wisted Post 28 is the commander of The American Legion Department of Minnesota. Her theme is "Honoring Our Past by Securing Our Future."*

# Mail Call

Send letters to the editor for Mail Call to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org).

*Editor's note: All letters are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily The American Legion or The Minnesota Legionnaire. We do favor dialogue as key to the American form of government.*

## Why not set down drinks instead?

In response to the letter "How can states deny drinks to men, women who serve?" I am suggesting a shift in attitude.

When did posts stop being a place for camaraderie and support and become a drinking club? For the majority of the first years of Legion existence, zero drinking was allowed because we were in the Prohibition period from 1920 to 1933.

What would happen if the 18-20-year-old veteran walks into the post's bar and everyone over 21 set down their alcoholic drinks in solidarity?

It makes me sad to be able to go into any post while traveling and immediately identify the heavy drinkers. Problem drinking causes issues at many posts.

Don't get me wrong, drinking alcohol even to excess is a choice and I don't disparage anyone who makes that choice. Beer doesn't make us who we are, though.

To say that we can't be supportive without a drink in our hand misses the point of the organization.

Steve DeSpiegelaere  
Minnesota Post 1982

## Albany Post 482 celebrates 100 years

Albany American Legion Post 482 held its annual Membership Dinner honoring Dennis Mareck and Larry Eggert (50-year members) and Donald Kalla (60-year member), along with celebrating Post 482's 100th anniversary. There were some 100 guests

in attendance to hear Lloyd Ricker, past Minnesota state commander and a native of Albany, give the keynote address. His talk emphasized on the American Legion Preamble.

Noting that the Legion is the only nonprofit organization in the United States to start its preamble with the words "For God and Country." This has been since the very founding of the organization. He further spoke about his years at the Holy Family School and Albany High School and his participation in the youth programs sponsored by the Legion (Legion Baseball and School Patrol).

Ricker recalled many of the deceased members who were active in the Legion as well as the community. He thanked the members of Al Besemann Post 482 for their many years of dedicated service, citing that in 2006, the post had an all-time high in membership of 268 members. As of today there are 175 members.

Albany Mayor Tom Kasner congratulated Post 482 for its many years in Albany, and wished the members continued success. Albany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sara Hoffner expressed her organization's sincere feelings of how fortunate our small community is to have a Legion post and its operation at 371 Railroad Ave. Hoffner talked about the historic core and heart and soul of our community and the Legion's commitment to our community through fundraisers, scholarships and supporting our local sports and festivals.

Unit 482 Auxiliary President Beatrice Schmidt presented 50-year awards to Geri Dirkes and Marcy Mareck. The Auxiliary is the right hand of Post 482, as the membership assists in all phases of the post's endeavors. The Auxiliary has a membership

of 100 and continues to grow.

See a photo from the gathering under the "Listening Post" section of this issue.

Terence Schwab  
Post Service Officer  
Albany Post 482

## Hunting at Heartland was excellent time

On a lighter note, on Saturday, Oct. 1, at the Heartland Preserve near Granite Falls, there was a veteran pheasant hunt put on by the Granite Falls Chapter of Pheasants Forever. I can only speak for myself, but I had a great time and we were all treated like royalty.

I would like to put out a big thank you to Dick Fagan at Heartland Preserve and his crew and Pheasants Forever of Granite Falls, and also to Ron Fagan of Fagan Fighters of Granite Falls. He provided a flyover with a Curtiss P40 Warhawk. Awesome!

If you are ever in the Granite Falls area and are looking for something to do, check out Fagan Fighters Museum just south of Granite Falls!

Earl Pederson  
Renville Post 180

## Letter to VA is a positive step in right direction

I am writing about the letter from the Minnesota congressional delegation to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, which was coordinated by the American Legion Department of Minnesota.

For me personally, this is a

# Legion's Indy Car is raising dollars

Thanks to all members of the Minnesota American Legion Family who attended the Fall Meetings in Indianapolis. "Be The One." Do Buddy Checks. We can maybe prevent a veteran or someone from an act of suicide.

We are asking each post to send in at least 25 cents per member for the Children and Veterans Foundation. Minnesota is close to reaching its goal. With a little more help, we can get it done before the first of the year. This program helps all veterans not just American Legion Family members.

The Indy Car is raising a lot of dollars for Legion programs and will be with us for some time — 57 million fans.

Every post, district, state and national officer must furnish a copy of their DD214 to their adjutant when they are elected.

I hope your post is doing something special for your veterans on Nov. 11 or the weekend of Veterans Day. My

very positive step the Department of Minnesota is taking.

I am one of those voices, who, in the past, had been frustrated by lack of action, and, yes, as an example, the LEGION Act languished in congressional committees for 14 years per admission by the 2019 national commander.

At the state level, I was able to reach all 10 of our Minnesota congressional representatives with a submitted white paper to change the Vietnam War period dates. The bill signing came in mid-2019.

This current letter, I had no part in advocating for change, but the department staff stood up and made Congress aware of this problem of the VA not covering emergency transportation, despite the intent of the MISSION Act.

Thus, I am asking each of our post's legionnaires to assist Department of Minnesota to pass resolutions and submit to District 5 who will forward to the Department to support the cause to continue to get this bill passed, and to amend, I believe U.S.C. 1725 & 1728.

This is where we veterans can step up. It is time to have our voices heard and to become more proactive vs. reactive or nonactive in Legion matters.

Each of our Posts can help. Make your voices loud and clear and encourage and support our department in becoming and continuing to be more proactive for supporting the Minnesota American Legion.

Remember Veterans Day is coming Nov. 11.

Andru Peters  
Vice Commander  
District 5

## National Report

Bill Barbknecht



post, Underwood Post 489, has a great program at our school and a free meal to all veterans and their families, served by the Boy Scouts.

It's a great time to sign up new members and renew memberships of anyone not yet renewed. Thank you, Commander Frank McKensie.

American Education week is Nov. 14-19. Please do something for your teachers, paras, office personnel, bus drivers, cooks, janitors and anyone else I may have forgotten to mention. These folks work tirelessly with our children in schools.

Make plans to be in Spicer at Post 545 by 11 a.m. Dec. 3 for the Pearl Harbor Rally.

National Oratorical Finals will be in Indianapolis April 23-24. Over \$203,500 in scholarships

will be awarded to you orators who speak on the U.S. Constitution. Now is the time to contact your speech coach at school to get students entered in the District Contest. Home-schooled students are also welcomed.

Donna and I look forward to a very interesting Fall Conference. Thank you, Al Davis and the Convention Corp., in the work they have and will do for our conferences.

As always if I can be of any help. Please call 218-770-6264.

Bill Barbknecht of Underwood Post 489 is the Department of Minnesota's National Executive Committeeman.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com



# The Minnesota Legionnaire

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Official publication of  
The American Legion  
Department of Minnesota

**About:** The Minnesota Legionnaire (USPS 013679) (ISSN 01644270) is published monthly by The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, 20 W 12th St., Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155-2000.

Periodicals postage paid at St Paul, Minnesota, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Minnesota Legionnaire, 20 W. 12th St., St. Paul, MN 55155-2000.

First published in 1920 as the Hennepin County Legionnaire, the Minnesota Legionnaire is now in its 101st year of publication. The Legionnaire is a member of The American Legion Media Alliance.

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## Flags will be waving for Veterans Day

ST. PAUL — St. Paul Post 8 has invited all veterans and their supporters to join its members for a Veterans Day walk in downtown St. Paul.

The walk departs from under the Veterans Service Building at the Capitol Complex

and goes down St. Peter Street to Kellogg Boulevard, then back up Wabasha Street to the Veterans Service Building.

Participants are encouraged to bring flags.

## Coffee and an ear for all veterans

MINNEAPOLIS — An American Legion

"Be The One" initiative called Veterans Coffee Talk is taking place at Every Third Saturday in South Minneapolis at 5402 43rd Ave. S.

There is free coffee, and veterans will have time to talk and listen to other veterans about anything on their minds. Veterans Coffee Talk meets every Tuesday at 9 a.m.

Need help now? Call the Veterans Crisis Line. Dial 988 and Press 1.

# Taps



Please send "Taps" entries to [tengstrom@mnlegion.org](mailto:tengstrom@mnlegion.org) or mail to 20 W. 12th St., Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155, or visit [mnlegion.org/taps](http://mnlegion.org/taps). Thank you.

Name of Deceased	Age	Date of Death	Branch	Era	Cont. Years	Post
<b>Adam, Kenneth W.</b>	84	10/4/22	Navy	Vietnam	15	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Asher, Paul J.</b>	78	8/18/22	Army	Vietnam	47	Farmington Post 189
<b>Baune, Donald</b>	92	10/8/22	Army	Korea	8	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Bendickson, Dennis V.</b>	87	9/14/22	Army	Vietnam	25	New London Post 537
<b>Besch, Lewis W.</b>	81	9/27/22	Army	Vietnam	9	Aitkin Post 86
<b>Bjerke, Ronald D.</b>	80	9/22/22	Marines	Vietnam	38	Bagley Post 16
Note: He served in the war with the VMA-311 Tomcats in Chu Lai.						
<b>Bland, Richard W.</b>	99	9/27/22	Navy	WWII	34	North St. Paul Post 39
Note: He died five days before his 100th birthday.						
<b>Bohmer, John O.</b>	101	9/7/22	Army	WWII	75	Brooten Post 288
Note: He served in the Pacific Theater at Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters.						
<b>Bolen, Donald J.</b>	94	9/28/22	Navy	WWII/Korea	67	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Bosquez, Toribio</b>	92	9/18/22	Army	Korea	14	Hillman Post 602
<b>Bruce, Loren B. Jr.</b>	80	9/18/22	Navy	Vietnam	55	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis.						
<b>Burmayer, Randy S.</b>	68	9/18/22	Marines	Vietnam	17	Walker Post 134
<b>Cardinal, Delwin E.</b>	85	7/10/22	Army	Korea	40	Monticello Post 260
<b>Casoria, Claude E.</b>	75	9/17/22	Navy	Vietnam	21	Pine City Post 51
<b>Chrast, Thomas S.</b>	68	10/2/22	Army	Vietnam	48	Silver Lake Post 141
<b>Classen, James E.</b>	83	10/4/22	Army	Vietnam	37	Willmar Post 167
<b>Clemens, Eugene V.</b>	88	6/14/22	Army	Korea	3	Bloomington Post 550
<b>Clifford, Herold E.</b>	66	6/28/21	Army	Leb/Gren	28	Rush City Post 93
Note: He was a retired staff sergeant, serving over 21 years.						
<b>Curtis, Michael W.</b>	70	9/25/22	Navy	Vietnam	21	Rochester Post 92
<b>Dornfeld, Robert W.</b>	97	10/6/22	Navy	WWII	35	Winona Post 9
Note: He served in the South Pacific and witnessed the raising of flags on Iwo Jima.						
<b>Erickson, Richard C.</b>	90	9/14/22	Army	Korea	53	Shakopee Post 2
<b>Evenson, Otto</b>	94	8/23/22	Army	Korea	19	Detroit Lakes Post 15
<b>Evenwoll, David L.</b>	74	9/13/22	Army	Vietnam	24	Bagley Post 16
<b>Goplin, Russell S.</b>	78	9/25/22	AF /ANG	Vietnam	16	Bemidji Post 14
<b>Green, Roland H.</b>	89	9/30/22	Air Force	Korea	65	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: He was stationed at Loring AFB in Maine and was part of the Air Force Band.						
<b>Haines, Robert G.</b>	85	10/9/22	Army	Korea	37	Albert Lea Post 56
<b>Hanson, Hjalmer M.</b>	85	10/5/22	Army	Korea	40	Middle River Post 444
Note: He was a member of the color guard for more than 20 years.						
<b>Hanson, Jack W.</b>	95	8/7/22	Army AF	WWII	42	Bloomington Post 550
Note: He was a parachute rigger. Both of his older brothers were in the Navy in the Pacific Theater, so the military would not send Jack overseas.						
<b>Hedum, Elmo D.</b>	96	9/7/22	Army	WWII	25	Albert Lea Post 56
Note: He received a Purple Heart.						
<b>Hemmingson, Kenneth W.</b>	78	9/22/22	Navy	Vietnam	55	Marietta Post 156
<b>Herold, Milton D.</b>	81	10/9/22	Army	Vietnam	43	Janesville Post 281
<b>Herzog, Leslie E.</b>	95	9/8/22	Navy	WWII	50	Litchfield Post 104
Note: He was stationed in Guam during the war.						
<b>Hogan, John C.</b>	93	8/3/22	Air Force	Korea	17	Aitkin Post 86
<b>Hogan, John C.</b>	93	8/3/22	Air Force	Korea	17	Aitkin Post 86
<b>Howard, Donald M.</b>	92	9/18/22	Army	Korea	27	Ashby Post 357
Note: He served as a combat engineer with D Company of the 682nd Engineer Battalion at Camp Rucker, Ala. (which became Fort Rucker in 1955).						
<b>Jacobson, Mark J.</b>	62	9/18/22	Marines	Leb/Gren	5	Milaca Post 178
<b>Jeseritz, Harold C.</b>	95	10/17/22	Army	WWII	68	Wood Lake Post 556
<b>Johnson, Dean M.</b>	67	9/1/22	Marines	Vietnam	39	Spring Grove Post 249
Note: As commander of the honor guard, he presided over 200 military funerals, plus many parades and veterans events.						
<b>Johnson, Larry</b>	78	9/25/22	Army	Vietnam	56	Park Rapids Post 212
Note: He did two tours in Vietnam. He received two Bronze Stars and two Army Commendation Medals, one of them from Gen. William Westmoreland. He left as a staff sergeant and joined the National Guard as a second lieutenant. He later served in law enforcement.						
<b>Keller, David H.</b>	79	9/28/22	Army	Vietnam	47	St. Joseph Post 328
<b>Kiecker, Elgar R.</b>	92	9/1/22	Army	Korea	31	Fairfax Post 205
<b>Kiehne, Wayne</b>	81	10/4/22	Army	Vietnam	51	Stewartville Post 164
<b>Klasen, John H.</b>	90	9/11/22	Navy	Korea	4	Bemidji Post 14
<b>Klehr, Robert F.</b>	88	9/17/22	Army	Korea	25	Shakopee Post 2
<b>Kosel, Walter J.</b>	98	9/11/22	Army	WWII-VN	67	Waite Park Post 428
Note: In addition to Army, then National Guard, he served with the State Patrol and was a district captain.						
<b>Krebsbach, John</b>	93	10/14/22	Army	Korea	31	St. Joseph Post 328
<b>Lenzen, John C.</b>	79	9/17/22	unknown	Vietnam	58	Chaska Post 57
Note: He was the former mayor of Carver.						
<b>Leonhardt, David L.</b>	80	8/30/22	Navy	Vietnam	41	Kelliher Post 470
Note: He served as a sonar technician aboard the USS Turner Joy during the Gulf of Tonkin Incident in 1964.						
<b>Lohse, Edward R.</b>	93	7/25/22	Army	Korea	2	Litchfield Post 104
<b>Lund, Alfred A.</b>	91	9/21/22	Navy	Korea	66	Tyler Post 185
<b>Marka, Frank J.</b>	83	10/1/22	Army	Vietnam	32	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Moore, Richard D.</b>	82	9/10/22	Army	Vietnam	19	Park Rapids Post 212
<b>Pelowski, James S.</b>	85	9/19/22	Army	Vietnam	39	Lewiston Post 90
<b>Pemble, Lester D.</b>	74	10/13/22	Navy	Vietnam	48	Walnut Grove Post 267
<b>Philip, Knutson</b>	86	10/2/22	Air Force	Vietnam	28	Anoka Post 102
<b>Postel, Thomas H.</b>	78	9/19/22	Army	Vietnam	40	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Reichert, Brian T.</b>	48	9/14/22	Army	GWOT	21	St. Francis Post 622
Note: He was past post commander, active in the color guard and started a Legion Riders chapter. He served in the 82nd Airborne Division.						
<b>Reimers, John C.</b>	82	9/10/22	Army	Vietnam	31	North St. Paul Post 39
<b>Rettmer, Harnold F.</b>	97	9/9/23	Army	WWII	35	Spicer Post 545
Note: He served in China, India and Burma building airstrips.						
<b>Rinn, Gerald F.</b>	84	10/10/22	Air Force	Vietnam	8	Lewiston Post 90
<b>Rinne, John D.</b>	79	9/30/22	Army NG	Vietnam	30	Two Harbors Post 109
<b>Ryder, Larry G.</b>	78	9/17/22	Navy	Vietnam	43	New Prague Post 45
Note: He was a Seabee in Vietnam.						
<b>Sanford, James A.</b>	73	9/21/22	Army	Vietnam	7	Rochester Post 92
<b>Schmidt, Philip E. Jr.</b>	91	10/3/22	Army	Korea	58	Wood Lake Post 556
<b>Schroeder, Dallas R.</b>	89	9/16/22	Army	Korea	65	Echo Post 204
<b>Schultz, Eugene W.</b>	89	10/17/22	Army	Korea	12	Lewiston Post 90
<b>Schultz, Wayne W.</b>	88	9/14/22	Army	Vietnam	27	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Shelstad, William J.</b>	80	9/27/22	Army	Vietnam	36	Red Wing Post 54

## All-Family Events Calendar

**Note:** Tours of Upper Post Flats at Fort Snelling are available every Tuesday and Thursday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Nov. 9:** 65 percent membership target

**Nov. 11:** Minnesota Veterans Day Program, Veterans Memorial Community Center, Inver Grove Heights

**Nov. 11:** Veterans Day Walk, Veterans Service Building, St. Paul

**Nov. 11:** Veterans Day Breakfast, Arcade-Phalen Post 577

**Nov. 11:** Veterans Day Lunch, North St. Paul Post 39

**Nov. 11:** Honoring Veterans with Restorative Justice, St. Thomas Law School, Minneapolis

**Dec. 3:** Pearl Harbor Rally, Spicer Post 545

**Dec. 11-16:** National American Legion College, Indy

**Dec. 14:** 75 percent membership target

**Jan. 19:** 80 percent membership target

**Feb. 4:** Sweetheart Rally, Osseo-Maple Grove Post 172

**Feb. 15:** 85 percent membership target

**Feb. 26-March 1:** Washington Conference

**March 15:** 90 percent membership target

**March 25:** ALA DEC Meeting, Dept HQ

**April 15:** DEC/Appreciation Rally, New Prague Post 45

**April 16-21:** National Commander's Tour of Minnesota

**April 19:** 95 percent membership target

**April 20-23:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley

**April 22:** Department President's Testimonial Dinner, Spicer Post 545

**May 13:** Department Commander's Testimonial, New Prague Post 45

**May 17:** 100 percent membership target

**June 11-17:** Minnesota Boys State, St. John's Univ.

**July 4:** Forest Lake Post 225 Fourth of July Parade

**July 12:** DEC, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls

**July 15:** Department Convention, Jackpot Junction Casino, Redwood Falls

**Aug. 25-31:** National Convention, Charlotte, N.C.

**Oct. 12-15:** Minnesota Legion College, Camp Ripley

**Oct. 26-28:** Department Fall Conference, River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud



The May 2021 class was all smiles at graduation.

## Have you considered Minnesota American Legion College?

By Michael Ash

What? Minnesota has an American Legion College?

Yes, we do! Who would benefit the most from attending this "college"? You may have guessed it, but the answer is ... you!

We not only teach you all kinds of important stuff that makes you say, "I did not know that!" but — shhh, this is a bit of a secret — we will answer every single question you have concerning absolutely anything concerning The American Legion.

Who is this college for? We have 60,000-plus American Legion members in Minnesota, and we truly believe it is for every and any of those 60,000-plus members!

If you plan to be a committee member, officer or just a regular member of The American Legion (this latter group would be those that do a lot of the work), this course is for you!

We start on a Thursday evening with a meet-and-greet kind of deal, then have the fun courses Friday and Saturday, and finish with a flourish on Sunday morning. That would be pictures, certificates and stuff like that.

All this is held at Camp Ripley, and the cost is only \$200, which is usually paid by your post or district. The fee pays for your room. We're housed in the six-packs — buildings with six rooms, a kitchen area and common area, and it covers other goodies we hand out in class.

The Camp Ripley Dining Facility (which others may know as a chow hall) is connected to the Education Center, so it is near the classroom. Plus, there are a couple of eating establishments right outside the main gate.

There's a simple form to fill out at <https://mnlegion.org/legion-college/> and that's it. We have limited the attendance to 18 students to ensure the best possible outcomes — but we have also expanded our classes to being held in both April (Thursday, April 20, through Sunday, April 23, with registration deadline of March 1) and October (Thursday, Oct. 12, to Sunday, Oct. 15, with registration deadline of Sept. 1).

Sign up at [mnlegion.org](http://mnlegion.org). It may seem a bit early, but now is the time to check with your post or district to ask them to invest in the future of our organization! Thank you!

# What are the different kinds of memberships?

## Membership Moment

Linda Dvorak



**Q: I hear people talk about an "Honorary Life Member." What is that?**

A: There are several types of memberships. The most common is the traditional membership. This is the one-year membership which you pay yearly.

There is also a Paid Up for Life (PUFL). This membership is one that you pay a lump sum (or pay over a 12-month period), and you never pay for your membership again, even if the dues go up.

The Honorary Life membership is one that your post pays for you each year.

The difference between the

Honorary Life membership and the PUFL is that, with an Honorary Life membership, if you transfer posts, your Honorary Life membership does not follow you and you would now be required to pay your new posts dues.

A PUFL membership stays with you no matter what post you belong to.

*Linda Dvorak of New Prague Post 45 is the membership director for the Department of Minnesota.*

# Minnesota Boys State sets path for online voting

## Minn. Boys State

Neil Kruse



Minnesota's attendees at last month's Boys State Directors' Conference in Indianapolis were updated by representatives from another state who adopted and adapted ideas of online voting. They had been advised last year by the Minnesota staff who had refined online voting at Minnesota American Legion Boys State.

Results had been quite positive for the borrowing state, and they were very pleased with how it went.

I hope you have heard from the young men or man you sponsored in 2022. It's never too early to start the process of recruiting for next year. The most current alumni may have

the most impact on potential candidates. Encourage your sponsored to talk up the program among classmates.

May you be successful in helping others get out to vote! It's our opportunity to make a difference and to be a positive example of civic responsibility to our youth.

Thanks again for promoting the program, as well as helping improve our communities, state and country!

*Neil Kruse is a counselor for Minnesota American Legion Boys State.*

# Donate toward assisting veterans

If your post has gambling funds, please consider donating to Fund 85, which is the Veterans Assistance Fund. This is the means by which the Department of Minnesota helps local posts with financial assistance when they encounter veterans in financial trouble. Cut out this official request letter and place it in the inbox of your post's gambling manager for the next gambling meeting.

Good day, Legionnaires:  
I am asking your post to consider donating any amount to the Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund. The fund has assisted Veterans the past 11 months to the tune of over \$107,000 and, right now, we have five cases in the works and more in the pipeline. This time of year, as we transition into winter and the challenging economic times, I anticipate more Veterans requiring our assistance. Thank you in advance for consideration to this much-needed assistance to our Veterans in need. Please make the check out to "Minnesota American Legion Foundation Fund 85." Please mail the check to: Minnesota Veterans Assistance Fund, 20 W. 12th St. Room 300A, St. Paul, MN 55155.

For God and Country,

Mike Maxa  
Adjutant  
The American Legion  
Department of Minnesota  
Desk: 651-424-4613

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2022

The Denis McDonough  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
1722 I St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20421

Dear Secretary McDonough:

On behalf of our constituents and the over nine million veterans enrolled in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) across the nation, we respectfully urge you to use your existing authorities to amend regulation 38(CFR) 17.4020 (c) to ensure veterans are receiving fair coverage for medical transportation.

In the event of a medical emergency, defined as an injury, illness, or symptom so severe that a delay in seeking medical attention would be reasonably expected to be hazardous to life or health, the VHA states that a veteran should seek immediate care at the nearest emergency department. Should such cases come forward, the VHA has two statutory authorities under which to cover the costs: U.S.C. 1728 for service-connected emergencies and U.S.C. 1725 for emergencies that are not service-connected. Both sections of the federal code provide coverage for land or air ambulance transportation during an emergency episode.

As you know, the VA MISSION Act of 2018 (U.S.C. 1703) established a Veteran Community Care program which includes coverage of emergency treatment at in-network, non-VHA facilities. However, under VA's current regulation 38 (CFR) 17.4020(c), emergency care authorizations will cover the emergency treatment but do not allow for reimbursement of emergency transportation, except in situations where the veteran patient is 30% service-connected or greater. In such cases, the VA processes the emergency transportation claim under the beneficiary travel office.

There is no need for the VA to process 1703 emergency transportation claims this way. Instead, the Department should simply amend 38 (CFR) 17.4020(c) by adding language that includes emergency transportation in the 1703 authorization for the episode of emergency treatment. Doing so would provide emergency transportation coverage to all veterans who receive an emergency care authorization under 1703 and not just those eligible for beneficiary travel benefits. If the emergency care is approved, then the emergency transportation should be approved as well.

By processing emergency transportation services as beneficiary travel, the VA leaves a large group of veterans with unpaid emergency transportation bills. This places an unjust burden on a population already facing rising medical costs across the board. From 2017 to 2020 alone, the cost to cover charges for emergency transportation services has risen at a rate of almost 18

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percent.<sup>1</sup> In addition to these costs, the VA Office of the Inspector General conducted an audit of non-VA emergency care claims and found 31 percent of denied or rejected non-VA emergency care claims were inappropriately processed.<sup>2</sup>

In light of the sacrifices our veterans have made, we must fulfill our obligation to provide those who have served this country with a high standard of care. While the VHA has played a critical role in providing necessary benefits for veterans, we call on the Administration to amend regulation 38(CFR) 17.4020 (c) to provide the coverage of emergency transportation services that was intended under the VA MISSION Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please know that our offices are willing to assist your efforts in any way possible.

Sincerely,

*Tom Emmer*  
Tom Emmer  
Member of Congress

*Tina Smith*  
Tina Smith  
Member of Congress

*Betty McCollum*  
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

*Ilhan Omar*  
Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress

*Dean Phillips*  
Dean Phillips  
Member of Congress

*Amy Klobuchar*  
Amy Klobuchar  
Member of Congress

*Pete Stauber*  
Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress

*Michelle Fischbach*  
Michelle Fischbach  
Member of Congress

*Brad Finstad*  
Brad Finstad  
Member of Congress

*Angie Craig*  
Angie Craig  
Member of Congress

<sup>1</sup> "Fast Facts on U.S. Hospitals, 2022." American Hospital Association, no. 2 (January 2022). <https://www.aha.org/system/files/media/file/2022/01/fast-facts-on-US-hospitals-2022.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Veterans Health Administration, "Non-VA Emergency Care Claims Inappropriately Denied and Rejected," Office of Audits and Evaluations, VA OIG 18-00469-150, Page 1, 2017. <https://www.va.gov/oig/publications/report-summary.asp?id=4671>

# SAL squadron to make omelets, while Auxiliary to pay the bills

FARMINGTON — Sons of The American Legion Squadron 189 in Farmington plans to offer a free omelet breakfast to veterans and active-duty military members 8 a.m. to noon Sunday, Nov. 13.

The meal takes place at VFW Post 7662 in downtown Farmington at 421 Third St. American Legion Auxiliary Unit 189 will pay for any veterans or servicemembers attending breakfast.

The SAL serves monthly breakfasts at the post.

# Commander Havlick to appear on Minnesota Military Radio

ST. LOUIS PARK — American Legion Commander Jennifer Havlick is slated to be heard on Minnesota Military Radio the weekend after Thanksgiving Day.

The recording takes place two days before Thanksgiving. Minnesota Military Radio is heard on radio stations across the state. The show airs at different times, depending on the station, but they are typically Saturdays or Sundays. Twin Cities News Talk 1130 AM airs it at 7 a.m. Sundays.

# Letter calls for VA to cover bills

Continued from Page 1

held a meeting July 6 with congressional aides to point out the problem: For veterans of 30 percent disability or less, the VA often was not including emergency transportation when covering episodes of care.

There, aides met a veteran from Northern Minnesota who had suffered a chainsaw injury but ended up having to pay the ambulance costs out of pocket because the VA wouldn't cover it, and he was getting dinged on his credit score for nonpayment.

Then Wolfsteller and Engstrom followed up by helping Rep. Tom Emmer's office to craft the letter. Engstrom touched base with national American Legion staff at the Milwaukee convention.

It is rare, as the Star-Tribune pointed out, for members of Congress to come together in a bipartisan fashion and sign a letter. Those congressional members are Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith and Reps. Tom Emmer, Pete Stauber, Betty McCollum, Michelle Fischbach, Ilhan Omar, Brad Finstad, Dean Phillips and Angie Craig.

The Star-Tribune penned a story, and The American Legion was not mentioned.

"Our efforts often go unsung. We don't get the headlines. We sometimes don't get included in the story, like this time," Maxa said. "However, you can rest assured your department staff are working on behalf of veterans daily. We care more about making Minnesota better for veterans and not as much about receiving credit."

The letter to the VA secretary is not the end. Engstrom and Wolfsteller met with the VA's Midwest regional office in Eagan on Wednesday, Oct. 12, where they discussed the issue with Minneapolis VA Medical Center Director Pat Kelly and other officials.

With them was Apple Valley Post 1776 member Stacey Morgan, a Rosemount resident who described getting stuck with a \$3,000 ambulance bill.

"I found it so interesting and it also helped me somewhat just being able to tell my story," she said about the experience of advocating for fellow veterans.



# Taps



Continued from Page 5

<b>Sikma, John L.</b>	100	9/14/22	Army	WWII	77	Bigelow Post 496
Note: He served as a truck driver and carbine marksman in New Guinea and the Southern Philippines.						
<b>Simpson, Ervin M.</b>	97	9/27/22	Navy	WWII	46	Wheaton Post 80
<b>Sitzman, Leo</b>	91	9/22/22	Army	Korea	27	Eden Valley Post 381
<b>Sperlich, Otto V.</b>	91	2/28/22	Air Force	Korea	56	Willmar Post 167
<b>Sperlich, Otto V.</b>	92	2/28/22	Air Force	Korea	56	Willmar Post 167
<b>Suchy, Gerald D.</b>	83	9/3/22	Army	Vietnam	8	Deer Creek Post 283
<b>Swenson, David A.</b>	83	9/21/22	Army	Vietnam	30	New Ulm Post 132
Note: After playing football at Luther College, the 6-foot-6-inch man played a season for the Minnesota Vikings before being drafted by the Army and serving two years.						
<b>Swenson, Gary A.</b>	77	12/8/21	Army	Vietnam	10	Monticello Post 270
<b>Thomes, Donald H.</b>	82	9/16/22	Army	Vietnam	4	Richmond Post 292
<b>Thompson, Jerry L.</b>	75	8/22/22	Navy	Vietnam	51	New Ulm Post 132
<b>Toth, Larry R.</b>	85	9/10/22	Army	Korea	32	Elk River Post 112
<b>Vagt, Kenneth R.</b>	76	10/7/22	Army	Vietnam	24	Rochester Post 92
<b>Vogt, Gary L.</b>	72	10/3/22	Navy	Vietnam	46	Glencoe Post 95
<b>Watson, Donald K.</b>	79	9/19/22	Air Force	Vietnam	36	Aitkin Post 86
Note: He was an expert at intercepting Morse code.						
<b>Wise, George Jr.</b>	88	6/27/22	Air Force	Korea	8	Bloomington Post 550
<b>Zeug, Donald L.</b>	82	9/19/22	Army Res.	Vietnam	29	Milroy Post 274



The Post-9/11 Exhibition made its final stop of the year at the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum "mission brief" at 34th Infantry Division Headquarters in Arden Hills on Sept. 14.

## The SAL Update:

### We've got spirit, yes, we do ...

Throughout high school it seemed like no matter who the opponent was or which activity it was, the cheer "We've got spirit, yes we do, we've got spirit how 'bout you" would start and echo between the two groups.

It was always in good fun, and, as expected, each side would try to out chant the other. Healthy competition can be a useful tool, and even so when a friendly challenge is laid before a newer group.

One of the many highlights of being membership director is both helping a new squadron get started and, even more so, being able to present their charter to them.

In every case, when the Legion Family is involved in the charter presentation, it begins that next chapter of their story infused with energy and support for the new kid on the block.

Recently, I was invited to present the new charter as part of

### Membership Director

Matthew Verkuilen



a traditional membership dinner hosted by a local Auxiliary unit. I could tell well before the event started, the new squadron was excited to be part of this.

Little did I know just HOW excited this group was to host the dinner. The food was outstanding. The attendance was amazing, and the energy was through the roof — but most importantly the support shown for this new group was off the scale.

If that wasn't enough, new charter members were signed up for the squadron on the spot. New PUFL members were signed up (including a very excited grandson), and members were sized for uniform caps and honor guard uniforms throughout the night.

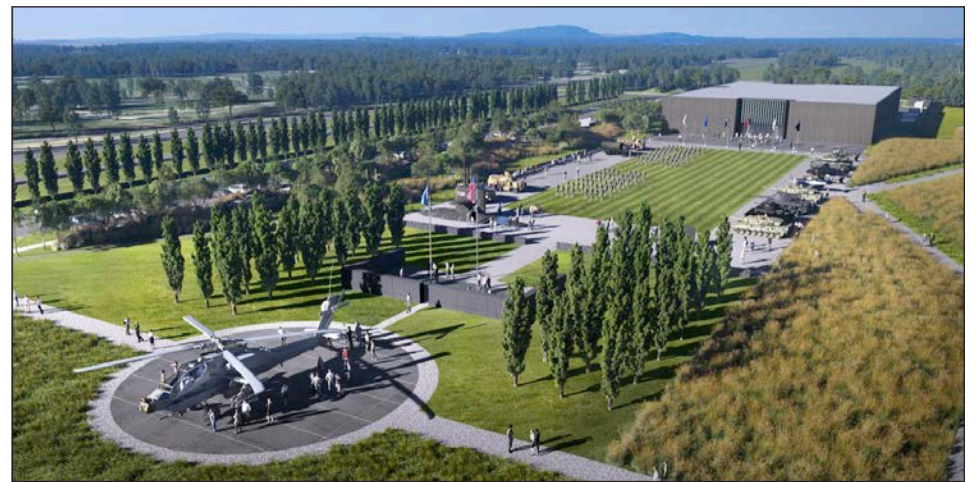
All I can say is, what an amazing way to start a squadron!

With all this excitement the evening ended with a two-fold challenge — to have someone be active in the district and for the new squadron to work to surpass the other in membership.

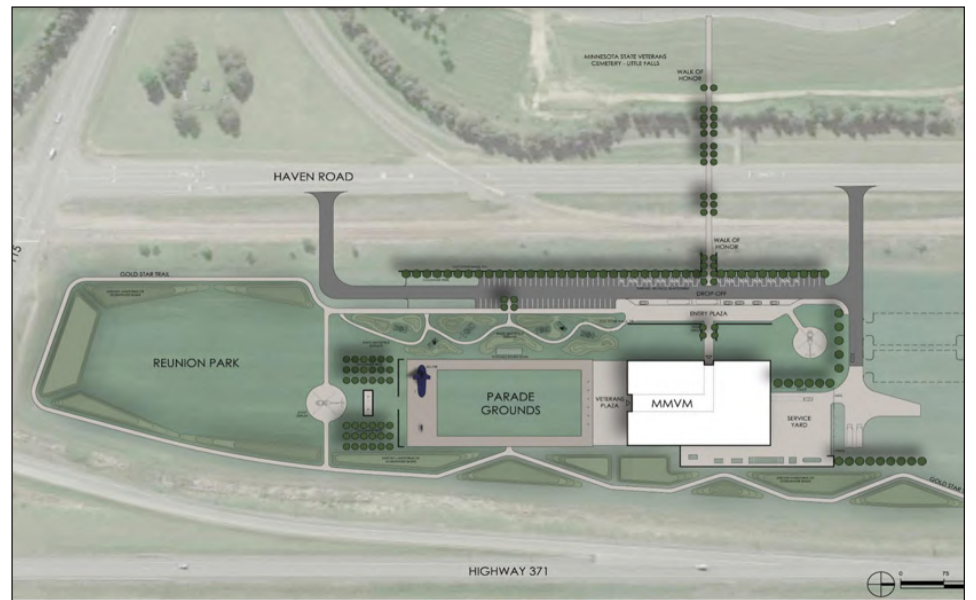
The challenge was accepted, the work began, and memories were made. So, from the Detachment of Minnesota to our districts and squadrons: "We've got spirit, yes we do, we got spirit, how about you?"

Let's build the Sons of the American Legion together.

*Matthew Verkuilen is the membership director for the Detachment of Minnesota for the Sons of The American Legion.*



Here is an aerial view rendering of the future Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum. The \$33 million project is expected to break ground this spring, with a tentative grand opening in 2025.



This map of the future Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum shows how it fits between Highway 371 and Haven Road, with a walkway to the state cemetery. The Museum will sit on 32 acres just outside the gates of Camp Ripley north of Little Falls.

## Museum project has Navy aspect

Continued from Page 1  
from the 2021 bonding bill. He said the project seeks \$10 million in private donations to help with classrooms, galleries and shelving. It has \$5 million already.

The prime fundraising time is over this winter, he said.

"At some point, designs are done and the construction people take over."

Posts, he said, can send checks made out to MMVM, with "New Building Fund" in the memo.

Dietrich said there will be a donor-recognition area in the museum in the Vessey Memorial Hall. A paver program is being tracked presently, too, he said.

A flier showing donation levels is on the way, he said.

"The best way readers can contribute is to become a member of the museum, and it's \$30 a year. We want to build relationships with people."

People can join through the web: [mnmilitarymuseum.org](http://mnmilitarymuseum.org).

Members have free admission to the museum, new or old, in addition to receiving updates.

A major aspect of the new renderings is the acquisition of the sail and rudder from the USS Minneapolis-St. Paul submarine. The sub will allow the museum to better convey the Navy story.

Often, memorials, post homes, museums, courthouses and other public places will have Army elements: tanks, trucks, cannons, helicopters. Some display Air Force aircraft.

Few show Navy machinery.

He gave credit to St. Cloud-based Anderson Trucking for hauling the submarine. It went to Bremerton Naval Yard in Washington state to get them. The museum has a crew at Camp Ripley working on restoration.

Dietrich said Gov. Tim Walz wrote a letter to the Navy requesting the pieces be released to the state. He shared plans the museum had presented, and the Navy liked the plans.

The submarine will be part of the museum's exterior, which displays an array of military vehicles.

Dietrich also mentioned how the museum will have a pedestrian walkway to the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery across the road.



DETACHMENT OF MINNESOTA  
2023 MEMBERSHIP TOTALS  
Report Date: 10/19/2022

2022 Results as of 7/31/2022	11158
Current Received as of 10/19/2022	2266
2023 Detachment Goal	11947

18.97% \*Includes traditional and online renewals

Vice Commanders	2022 Results	2023 Goal	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st and 3rd	3732	4008	847	21.13%	2
2nd and 7th	2120	2272	370	16.28%	4
4th and 5th	712	762	221	29.01%	1
6th and 9th	2528	2707	490	18.10%	3
8th and 10th	2064	2209	337	15.25%	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11156</b>	<b>11959</b>	<b>2265</b>	<b>18.94%</b>	

\*The above goals are set by the District Leadership

Districts	2022 Results	2023 Goal	Current at Dept.	Percentage	Placing
1st District	1676	1807	371	20.53%	3
2nd District	1216	1302	232	17.82%	5
3rd District	2056	2201	476	21.63%	2
4th District	364	390	56	14.36%	9
5th District	348	372	165	44.35%	1
6th District	1601	1715	334	19.48%	4
7th District	904	970	138	14.22%	10
8th District	475	509	75	14.74%	8
9th District	927	993	156	15.71%	6
10th District	1589	1701	262	15.41%	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11156</b>	<b>11959</b>	<b>2265</b>	<b>18.94%</b>	

\*The above goals are set by the District Leadership

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2023 Original Goal	Percentage	Ranking
3996	21.20%	2
2273	16.28%	4
761	29.02%	1
2707	18.10%	3
2209	15.25%	5

\*The above goal set by the Detachment Membership Director

2023 Original Goal	Percentage	Ranking
1795	20.67%	3
1302	17.81%	5
2201	21.63%	2
390	14.36%	9
372	44.40%	1
1715	19.48%	4
970	14.22%	10
509	14.74%	8
993	15.71%	6
1701	15.41%	7

\*The above goal set by the Detachment Membership Director

The Minnesota Legionnaire



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Laser-etched images on the black granite at the Veterans Memorial Park in Blaine make for a distinct tribute to veterans. Visitors can be witnessed mulling about from wall to wall — on both sides of each one — looking at the images chosen for each war.

## Fundraising is key part of a veterans memorial

Continued from Page 1

When Jaeger was finished, Guider sent the images to a company that does laser-engraving. The committee purchased the granite from Fergus Falls Monument Co., which was able to get black granite from India.

The Veterans Memorial Park of Blaine has six upright black slabs with laser-etching depicting World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Gulf War/War on Terror. There is a smaller slab for the American Civil War, and it is the only one with names of Blaine residents. There is a Purple Heart memorial with a bald eagle. The park has a yet-to-be-painted Freedom Rock. It has a brick wall with names of donors.

A fountain with flags nearby already existed, but the fountain didn't function. City workers got it going again, and the water adds a soothing sonic element to the park.

There are plans for a memorial honoring servicewomen, one for POW/MIAs, one for fallen soldiers, one for Gold Star children and a large centerpiece to recognize all military branches.

The No. 1 challenge of any memorial committee is fundraising.

The committee sold bricks on the donor wall for three sizes, and every monument is available for sponsorship. Communities near Blaine have taken part, too. The Ham Lake Lions is the sponsor of the Freedom Rock

and the memorial for Gold Star children, for instance. The 3M Open, which takes place annually in Blaine at TPC Twin Cities, is sponsoring the servicewomen's memorial.

Guider started out seeking \$1.25 million, but the committee realized it would work better to erect memorials while still raising money. The park is at 10802 Town Square Dr. NE. It is right in front of Blaine City Hall. The city has donated \$100,000.

Though many veterans memorials in Minnesota have received bonding bill dollars, this one has not. Well, not yet. That depends on Blaine's legislators picking up the cause.

He said raising funds in the metro is typically more difficult

than in Greater Minnesota. He told how Alexandria sought about \$250,000 and raised over \$1 million.

Now Blaine has raised \$465,000, and has about \$1 million to go, Guider said. Granite has gone up in price, so the goal has moved.

"It's a little bit unknown how much we have to raise."

Why is Blaine's memorial efforts so large? Guider said most veterans memorials look at a cost, then calculate what a design they can afford. He and his committee came up with the design, then figured out the cost.

Guider is not a veteran, but his story resembles many veterans memorials, in that they frequently are established by

patriotic civilians. His grandfather was in the Navy in World War II. His uncle served with the Army's 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam, the unit depicted in the 2002 film "We Were Soldiers." The Purple Heart recipient and Agent Orange victim died in 2009.

His death spurred a strong desire in Guider to honor veterans.

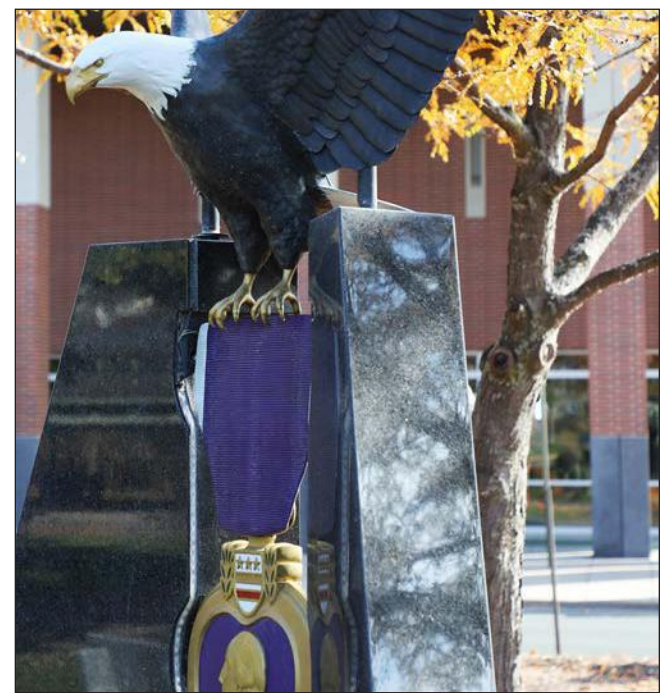
"I carried his flag-draped casket into Fort Snelling, and that's what did it for me," he said.

The Veterans Memorial Park of Blaine Committee is a 501c3 charity working to recognize the sacrifices of the members of the U.S. Armed Forces past and present. Its website is veteransparkofblaine.org. It's email is vmp2018@comcast.net.

There will be three new memorials erected between now and Memorial Day, and Blaine plans to have a dedication for them on the holiday, bringing the number of memorials at the park to 10.



Memorials have collages of images on some of the sides. This "War on Terror" shows the famed firefighter image from the 9/11 attacks. The World War II memorial, for example, has the Iwo Jima flag-raising image.



The Veterans Memorial Park in Blaine has several memorials, including one for the Purple Heart Medal.

## Special Memorial Issue



Two veteran memorials are located at the Freeborn County Government Center, 411 S. Broadway, in Albert Lea. The one shown is the Freeborn County Veterans Memorial, which was dedicated in 2007. The memorial features upright granite monuments and paver bricks. New pavers are added every Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

The Minnesota Legionnaire in the September and October issues asked Legion members from all across the state to send in photographs of their local memorials.

You responded in great number! Thank you. On this and following pages are images of veterans memorials from all across Minnesota. Each one recognizes veterans for their bravery and service.



Veterans Memorial Park in Alexandria was conceived by a group of local veterans over coffee in 2017 and funded through donations from over 600 businesses, charities and private citizens in 2018-19. It was dedicated as a park and dedeed in a sunrise ceremony to the city in 2020. It features the names of over 7,000 honorably discharged veterans engraved in black granite tablets from the Mesabi Range. The VMP Committee continues to approve the engraving of new names at a ceremony held each Veterans Day, making it an ongoing memorial. Visit alexveteranspark.org for more.