

The Minnesota American Legion and Auxiliary

Legionnaire



Volume 98, Number 9

For God and Country

September 2016

DEC approves two ad hoc committees for 2016-17 year

Commander Denise Milton made her appointments to standing Minnesota Legion committees at the August Department Executive Committee, but also created two ad hoc committees for the year.

One committee will oversee training and education and the other will look at helping Minnesota participate in the 100th anniversary of the Legion.

The training committee will be a continuation of an ad hoc committee from last year, looking at ways to train Legion volunteers in such things as membership, protocol, and the ins and outs of the organization.

Milton named Barry Madson of Eden Prairie, Al Davis of Princeton and Jeff Gay of Marshall to the committee.

The Centennial ad hoc committee will deal with Minnesota's participation in the 100th anniversary.

Milton noted that only a handful of Minnesota posts have chosen to do their post histories, a Centennial project, on the national website.

She named Past Department Commanders Jim Kellogg of Taopi and Ray DeZurik of Breezy Point to the committee, representing the north and south parts of the state.

The committee will not do the same work as the Convention Corporation Committee which is planning Minnesota's participation in the 2018 National Convention in Minneapolis. The work of that committee will be aimed at planning for the convention, while the work of the ad hoc committee will be aimed at getting Minnesota posts involved in the celebration.

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Jack Vessey, state's highest ranking soldier, dies at 94

John W. Vessey, who rose from a Minnesota National Guard volunteer to become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, died at age 94.

Vessey's 46-year military career started prior to World War II and continued through the Reagan presidential years, when as the top military person in the nation, he oversaw a tremendous build-up in U.S. military force that led to the conclusion of the Cold War.

Vessey, a member of Brainerd Post 255, remained active until recently, both in state projects and as an advisor to the Army.

Vessey was featured in the Legion's book *War Stories II*, and his rise to the top was chronicled.

He was born in 1922, and grew up

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Out at home



Rochester Patriots catcher Joey Devlin tags out Eastview's Ryan Zellmer during action at the Minnesota Division I Baseball State Tournament at Delano. (Photo by John Sherman)

Woodbury, Giantvalley win state baseball tournaments

Minnesota's two baseball champions this year are Minneapolis Giantvalley in Division II and Woodbury Blue in Division I.

Woodbury was unable to advance to the national regional, however, because it didn't have enough players to meet the national requirement of 12 on the roster.

Instead, the two teams representing Minnesota at the regional in Bismarck, N.D., were second place finisher Forest Lake and the third place team Wayzata. Neither

team advanced to the World Series in Shelby, N.C.

In the Division II regional in Waupun, Wis., Minnesota's second entrant in the tourney, Glenwood-Lowry made it to the championship game but fell to Viroqua, Wis.

In the Division I tournament held in Delano, sponsored by Delano Post 377, 16 teams vied for the state title and the right to advance to the regional.

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TEARS OF JOY -- American Legion Riders Legacy Run coordinator Steve Sullivan shows his emotions when the total amount, over \$117,000, raised on this year's run was announced at the final stop. More pictures of the Legacy Run on Page 3. (Photo by Michelle Leonard)

State university to study Minnesota American Legion

By Al Zdon

If you go into your local American Legion club-rooms some day and see a couple of women sitting at a table sipping a light beer and taking notes -- you may be part of a study.

And if you approach the table and want to talk to these ladies, they'd be glad to do so. But they will also hand you a consent form.

Minnesota State University at Mankato, with the permission of the Minnesota American Legion, is conducting a study on the influence of community organizations, in particular, The American Legion.

Toward that end, two MSM professors will be traveling around the state observing what goes on and how people interact in Legion halls.

The two sociologists, Dr. Emily Boyd and Dr. Carol Glasser, both professors in the Sociology Department at Mankato, will share their findings when their study is complete.

Glasser said American Legion posts can provide a

Continued on Page 13

Official Registration Form – Mail to:

Legion Post 113 Fall Conference
412 W. Main St.
Marshall, MN 56258

Pre-registration sliding fee per postmark:

- Registration by 1 Oct: **\$15**
- Registration after 1 Oct: **\$18**
- Registration at event HQ: **\$20**

Dates: 28 – 29 October 2016

Registration form is for each person attending, with the exception of Junior SAL and Junior Auxiliary members. Please copy and **send a separate form for each person**. Make checks payable to:

'2016 Fall Conference Committee'

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ADDITIONAL PRE-REGISTRANTS: A separate form is required for each additional registration accompanying this request. This form may be photocopied. The registration fee must be enclosed for each person (except Junior Aux.).			
For more info please call (507) 933-4576 or e-Mail to jlymang@gmail.com (Local reproduction of this form is authorized)			

Fall Conference will be held in Marshall

This year's school of instruction, the Fall Conference, will be held in Marshall on Oct. 28-29.

The conference will again combine the Legion and Auxiliary for some sessions, but final details and meeting spaces are still being discussed.

The Legion meeting will be held in the Marshall Red Baron Arena, 400 Tiger Drive.

The main hotel for the Legion will be the Ramada Inn.

Registration will begin on Wednesday at 5 p.m. for two hours at the post. Registration will then move to the Ramada Inn for the Auxiliary and the Red Baron Arena for the Legion and will be held Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Thursday, same hours, and Friday, 7-9:30 a.m.

The conference will be sponsored by Marshall Post and Unit 113. Jeff Gay is chairman of the Legion conference.

DEC conducts business meeting

Continued from Page 1

In other business, the DEC:

-- Elected Randy Tesdahl, Elk River, to a new three-year term as Department Adjutant.

-- Elected Dennis Henkemeyer, Bagley, to a three-year term as a member of the Board of Publications.

-- Heard from the commander on her project for the year, which is to support the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans in dealing with homeless veterans in Minnesota. Donations can be made to Fund 82 in the dedicated funds of the Minnesota American Legion Foundation. Milton's theme for the year is "Victory for Veterans."

-- Heard from SAL Detachment Commander Gene Olsword who said the state unit has reached its all-time high for the second year in a row. Membership is now at 11,469, or 100.15 percent of goal with six new squadrons. He said his theme this year will be "Stay the Course with the SAL" and his project will be the Child Welfare Foundation. He noted that the SAL has taken over the Camp-O-Ree program beginning this year, and that planning is going strong.

-- Learned that this year's membership goal will be 77,000. Membership Director Mark Dvorak said his slogan for the year will be "Oak Strong," and growing stronger. He said Minnesota must increase its penetration of eligible veterans in the state. He said each year the state loses 3.5 percent of its members to death and another eight percent to those who don't renew. "That means we need to go out and recruit 8,878 members." He said there will be a renewed effort to sign up those who have never belonged, and that National Guard armories will be targeted.

-- Was told by NECman Marland Ronning that the National Commander's Tour this coming year will be Feb. 6-9. The stops have not yet been determined. He also said he was running again for NECman this coming year.

-- Heard from Tesdahl that his personal phone has now been connected to the office headquarters phone (651-291-1800) so calls can be transferred through.

-- Learned from Tesdahl that Alumacraft had donated \$19,140 to the Trolling for the Troops fishing program for veterans. He said such programs are attractive to younger veterans.



SUPPORT FOR FISHING PROGRAM -- Alumacraft donated \$19,140 to the Trolling for the Troops program. The American Legion is a sponsor and organizer of the program that provides a fishing experience with professional fishermen for veterans at Camp Ripley. The DAV, VFW, MOPH, and PVA are also sponsors. From left: Commander Denise Milton, Adjutant Randy Tesdahl and PDC Jim Kellogg.

Homeless project list:

Commander Denise Milton's project for the year is working with MACV to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota.

Toward that end, Milton has requested not only monetary donations, but also has asked Legionnaires to contribute helpful items that will be distributed by MACV to veterans at stand-downs across the state.

Items will be collected in duffel bags at rallies, beginning with the Harvest Rally, Sept. 10, at Legionville.

Items can include backpacks, sleeping bags, towels, duct tape, fishing poles, t-shirts, hats, gloves, scarfs, warm socks, gift cards to local stores, shampoo, deodorant, soap, razors, tooth brushes and food items such as coffee, granola bars and other non-perishable items.

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39375 County Hwy 24, Morton, MN 56270 (800) WIN-CASH			

• Those denoted with asterisk (*) participate in the American Legion Member Benefits Program
 • All prices are before taxes are added

Endorsements

Ronning endorsed for NECman

Marland Ronning has been endorsed by the 10th District and Osseo Post 172 for re-election as National Executive Committeeman for 2017-19.

Ronning served in the Army from 1959-1967. He has served Osseo Post 172 in all offices.

He has served the Tenth District American Legion as Historian, Judge Advocate, Adjutant, Americanism, Children & Youth and District Vice Commander. In 1986-87 he was the Tenth District Commander.

Ronning was Department Commander in

2004-2005. Other positions he served as include Sgt-at-Arms, Vice Commander, and Membership Director. He is Treasurer of the "V4V" Board.

He has served at the National level on the Membership & Post Activities Committee, National Aerospace Committee, Americanism Council, currently serves on the Veterans Employment & Education Council

He and his wife, Chris, have a blended family of five children, 13 grandchildren, and 18 great grandchildren.



MARLAND RONNING

Marland is retired from IMI Vision as a Senior Global Lab Technician in their R&D Lab.



LEGACY RUN 2016 -- American Legion Riders stretch out into the distance near Forest Lake on this year's Legacy Run. The North and Not So North runs raised money for the Scholarship Fund that will be presented at national convention.

R. Niesen endorsed for VC

Waconia Post 150 and the Third District have endorsed Rosemary Niesen as a candidate for Department 1st and 3rd Vice Commander for 2017-18.

She is a member of Waconia Post 150 and has held offices such as historian, executive office and presently the adjutant.

She is active in the Third District and had served as adjutant, vice commander and commander and was the blood chairman. She is presently the Armed Forces

Service Chairman. At department level she is presently serving on the Brain Science Committee as secretary. She is a member of the VFW 5462, Am Vets Post 13, Cabane 415 and the DAV.

She served for over 20 years with the 133rd Civil Engineering Squadron in the Minnesota Air National Guard. She is married to husband Joe for over 60 years. They have a family of three boys, nine grandchildren, and 13 grandchildren.



ROSEMARY NIESEN



ARRIVING IN STYLE -- Commander Denise Milton arrived in Forest Lake with 10th District Auxiliary President Linda Deschene. (Photos by Michelle Leonard)

Brockberg endorsed for VC

Round Lake Post 461 has endorsed Bill B. Brockberg for Vice Commander Districts 2 and 7, for 2017 - 2018.

Brockberg is a past Commander, Vice Commander, adjutant and membership director of Pipestone Post 6 and past Commander and vice-Commander of the Second District.

In his current American Legion Post, Brockberg serves as the second Vice Commander.

He is retired from the Army with 24 years in the Army and Army Reserve.

At the District level, Brockberg has served as Chairman of the Rehabilitation and Public Relations committees. Currently he is the Second District Historian.

Brockberg is the County Veterans Service Officer for Nobles County.

Brockberg is this year's Department Chaplain. He has served on the Post Revitalization, and Legislative committees, he is presently on the Department Rehabilitation Committee and is a graduate of The American Legion National College.



BILL BROCKBERG



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Niesen endorsed for Sgt. at Arms

Waconia Post 150 and the Third District have endorsed Joseph B. Niesen for Department Sergeant at Arms 2017-2018.

He is the Chaplain for his Post and was

Commander 1998-1999.

At District level he has held the office of Vice Commander, Membership Director and Commander. He served as Law and Order Chairman, Energy

and Conservation chairman.

At Department he served on the Fund for Hospitalized Veterans and Energy and Conservation.

He retired from the Minnesota Air National Guard having served over 20 years with the 133rd Civil Engineering Squadron. He and his wife Rosemary reside in Cologne.



JOE NIESEN

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Denise Milton



Wow, it has been a busy first month. The national membership training is complete – what an exciting few days to learn about The American Legion. You get an opportunity to meet every department and exchange ideas, brain storm and make challenges. Our region, the Midwest, has eight departments and five of the commanders are women. Finally, we are beginning to think of ourselves as veterans also. Only thing is now I have to wait in line for the bathroom. But that is a good thing.

Our bid for a goal of 77,000 members for 2017 was agreed upon at National. This is a doable goal and we can accomplish it by working as a team. We do have two stipulations to this goal – the National Commander requests to be called once we obtain 100% and be on stage next year at the national convention to receive recognition for achieving 100% goal on CPR's. These are both attainable goals working together. We can do it.

We had our first DEC meeting and Department Membership Director Mark Dvorak rolled out his plan – "Oak Strong." Training and education will be emphasized to increase membership and leadership in Minnesota. We have a lot of exceptional veterans in our great state. A focus on post level open houses and revitalizations will be accomplished this year. Thank you to all who have agreed to serve on a committee at your post, district or department.

Our 7th Annual ALR Legacy Run was held the first two weekends of August. Thanks to the phenomenal fundraising skills of the American Legion Riders the legacy scholarship funds are now available to children of a parent who has a 50% or greater service connected disability serving

since 9-11. I had the privilege and distinct honor to be a part of that fantastic group. Much preparation is done prior to kickstands up, with safety always a number one priority and raising lots of money for the kids. The sheer dedication and enthusiasm of the ALR members is catchy. No donation is too small and after riding almost 2,000 miles it was announced \$117,000 had been collected. The final tally won't be disclosed till we stand on stage at the national convention in Cincinnati – stay tuned.

I want to thank all of the riders for the hospitality and generosity that was extended to me and a special thanks to Bob Benjamin, Paul Edwards and Linda Deschene for letting me hitch a ride. It is an awesome site and feeling to see all those bikes streaming down the road with Old Glory fluttering in the breeze.

I hope to see many of you at Legionville Camp-O-Ree from around the 6th of September and concluding on the 11th. It will be managed this year by the Sons of The American Legion and they have many new things planned for this year. It is always a fun weekend and also includes the Department Harvest Rally Membership Rally on Saturday afternoon.

Finally, my project this year is taking care of our homeless veterans here in Minnesota. We will be assisted by MACV (Minnesota Assisted Council for Veterans). We will focus on homeless veterans and those teetering on the brink of homelessness. I chose MACV because they encompass the entire State of Minnesota and all 87 counties receive assistance. There are three regional offices (Duluth, Mankato and Metro) and there are nine StandDowns scheduled for the coming year. When making donations from gambling funds, please make the check payable to "American Legion Foundation Fund 82" or bring items on the MACV wish list to the department rallies this year. Items on the wish list include: white towels and wash clothes, hand and foot warmers, small flashlights, warm socks (men and womens), white t-shirts (men and womens) and winter hats and gloves, travel size toiletries (shampoo/conditioner, deodorant, soap and lotion), toothbrush and toothpaste. Also gift cards are welcome for Holiday, Cenex, SA and Kwik Trip-gas only!, Target/Walmart, fast food- McDonalds, Subway and Burger King and for haircuts at Great Clips and Fantastic Sams.

American Legion Day is September 17th and I encourage you to get the word out to your community. We are almost 100 years old and going strong.

Till next month – Victory for Veterans.

Editorial

It seems like whenever we look out our window, the American flag is at half-staff.

It's coming to the point where this symbol of national grief is so redundant that it has lost its meaning.

If the flag is flown at half mast a few times a year, it is a powerful acknowledgement of our shared sorrow following the loss of a leader or a terrible national calamity.

If the flag is in this position several times a week, well, who cares?

The president of the United States and the governor of Minnesota need to re-evaluate their overuse of this gesture. The orders they issue may seem to come from good motivation, but the cumulative effect dulls the impact of lowering the flag. It almost becomes a political nod, motivated

not by true grief or anguish, but in an effort to placate a certain political bloc.

Maybe we can find other ways to express ourselves over distant terrorism attacks or the anniversary of events in history. Maybe a memorial service. Maybe a proclamation is enough. Maybe a rally on the Capitol steps.

The flag should not be a yo-yo.

The American flag is meant to wave proudly at the top of the flag staff, a heartfelt symbol of an ascendant nation. It should not be used as a symbol of a nation that seems to be in perpetual mourning.

It's time to use some common sense in determining what actually merits an executive order to lower our flag to half-staff.

From the Adjutant's desk

By Randy Tesdahl

First off, I want to thank the Executive Board for their trust and confidence in me as the Department Adjutant shown by re-electing me to another three-year term at the August Department Executive Committee Meeting. I love my job and am looking forward to a great year with Commander Milton and her team.

As an Adjutant no matter whether one is at the Department, District, County, or Post, you are the primary keeper of the official records at that level. That means that you are the Chief Administrator.

You will work with the commander to make their year the best it can be.

It means working with other groups. At the Department level that includes the County Veteran Service Officers, the other VSO Commanders, The Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, the heads of the VA Hospital, VA Claims, and VA Cemeteries offices. Also we must be connected with the veterans homes and Yellow Ribbon coordinators, and the Veterans Employment representatives, as well as those facilities that work to help and support homeless veterans.

You need to stretch and grow your respective area of responsibility by seeking new "out of the box" opportunities to get your Post District or Department involved out in the community whether it be a 5K Fun Run, a fishing event for vets, a golf tournament, a wall climbing or BMX event. These events are important to raise money for your programs, and increase your imprint in the area.

It is not a 9 to 5 job for sure. And I am used to that. Depending on the size of your Post, District or Department you very well can be on call 24/7. It is not uncommon to work, travel or even just answer calls and emails late into

the night or on weekends, yes, even Sundays and Holidays.

As you can see it would not make sense to change the Adjutant every year or two without some sort of just cause. Or if that serving Adjutant was no longer wanting the job. The Idea is "continuity" in the position at all levels.

A Little history:

The State or Department of Minnesota has had 13 Adjutants since we started in 1919. From 1919 through 1925 five different men held the position. In 1926 the Adjutant served the next four years, 1926-1930, and they began to realize early on the importance of continuity in that role.

Then C.A "Chic" Zwiener served 16 years from 1931 until 1947. In 1948 Carl Granning served the next 18 years until 1966. Frank C. Momsen served 12 years from 1966-1978. In fact he went onto serve as National Adjutant for a period of time.

Then Chuck Ferguson followed with 15 years, 1978-1993. Al Davis and Lyle Foltz both served proudly taking us to 2009. Then I was elected in 2009 after serving as the Department's Service Officer from 2004-2009 under Lyle Foltz and the Department Rehab Committee.

As you can see through the history of the position here at the Department, the continuity is obvious and necessary for a smooth operation. I am sure most Districts and Posts reflect the same type of continuity in the position of Adjutant.

Again I want to say thank you to all Legionnaires out there. I am proud to serve the Department Commanders and all the members of the Department of Minnesota as your Adjutant.

Chaplain's Corner

By
Bill Brockberg



We will not falter, we will not tire and we will not fail.

As we move into this month of September we will be reminded of the worst attack against Americans on our soil through memorial tributes on the 15th Anniversary of those 9-1-1 attacks.

As Legionnaires, our remembrances, prayers, memorial ceremonies and acts of consolation will be largely directed toward those killed in the attacks and for their families and loved ones. We will remember too, the police and firemen who rushed in to save people from the World Trade Center Towers, but perished in their efforts.

As an American Legion family, we band together in support of one of our four main pillars, that of National Security. Shortly after the attacks on 9-1-1, Americans all across the Country banded together in a show of Patriotism and unity in defense of America. Just days after the attacks, President George W. Bush addressed a joint session of Congress and broadcasted to the American people of the intention to strike back and bring our aggressors to justice. In that upcoming endeavor the President proclaimed, "We will not falter, we will not tire and we will not fail," to a loud and raucous standing ovation. The United We Stand initiative took hold all across the Country and Americans were praying for grace and consolation to the victims, for safety for our citizens and for justice for the American People. However, as children of God, when we call upon divine intervention to support us in any endeavor or initiative, how does that "square" with the almighty? Does God choose us over our enemies? Or does God command us to love others as ourselves and to pray for others; even our enemies?

How, then, do we as Legionnaires "square" with God when we pray for the safety of our citizens while we simultaneously pray for justice, or should I say, vengeance, against our aggressors? Evangelist and author Corrie Ten Boom with her parents, sisters and brother were part of a Dutch underground who helped Jews hide and escape from Nazi storm troopers in Holland during World War II. While imprisoned, Corrie Ten Boom wrote of how she prayed for her captors and how she prayed for everything sent her way, good or bad, every day. She even thanked God when she came down with lice. As soon as her Nazi captors discovered she had lice, they stayed away from her and left her alone. No more cruelty or punishment.

In this same way and as Legionnaires we may call for guidance in our endeavors, and for God's grace to be shown upon the friends and families of all those who perished on 9-1-1. Without asking God to take sides, but rather to give us all peace and unity, we may pray for ourselves, our friends and family, and even our enemies. "Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart," wrote Corrie Ten Boom. We may ask God to relieve and remove the anguish of our aggressors, and become united in peace. Many are the wonderful works of God as written in Psalm 40 and God's love calls to all people of every tribe, language, race and nation as written in Revelation.

Our memorial services and events can unite us and bring grace and peace to those who lost loved ones. In God, may we not falter, not tire, and not fail.

The Minnesota Legionnaire

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Al Zdon, Editor

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What's Happening

Round Table

The World War II History Round Table will meet at Historic Fort Snelling twice in September. The first meeting, on Thursday, Sept. 8, at 7 p.m. will be "Deception in the ETO -- Fooling the Enemy." It will feature Jonathan Gawne, the author of *Ghost of the ETO*.

On Sept. 22, the program will be "Pacific Diplomacy in the 1930s, Events leading to hostilities in the Pacific." The author will be Sidney Pash who did *Currents of War*.

There is a \$5 admission. All programs start at 7 p.m.

Waconia Dinner

There will be a Veteran Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 3, at the Waconia Ballroom. Proceeds will go to the Carver County Veterans Memorial and Registry. The speaker will be Travis Mills, a quadriplegic veteran who served three tours in Afghanistan. For more info, go to www.ccvmr.org.

Vietnam War Anniversary

Hastings will mark the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War with a series of events. On Friday, Sept. 2, a community commemoration will be held at the Hastings Veterans Home. There will be free golf over the weekend at Hidden Greens Golf Course. A historic "cruise-in" will be held in downtown Hastings on Saturday from 5-9 featuring a monster truck. For more info, call 438-2208.

Rosetown Fall BBQ

The Rosetown Fall Barbeque will be held at the post on Sunday, Sept. 18, from noon until 5, with ribs, chicken and the "fixin's" until its gone. There will be prizes, silent auc-

tion, raffle, games. For more information call 651-483-3535.

Legal Clinics

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is sponsoring several events coming up. The free drop-in legal clinics offer veterans help on housing, benefits, debt collection, expungement, and family law. Attorneys will be available. Clinics will be held at:

-- St. Cloud VA Auditorium, Building 8, on Tuesday, Sept. 20 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

-- Minneapolis VA Medical Center, Flag Atrium Balcony Room 2S 114 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 13.

-- Anoka County Government Center, Thursday, Sept. 8, from 9 .m. to 3 p.m.

SAL Disabled Deer Hunt

The SAL Disabled Deer Hunt at Legionville has been slated for Friday, Sept. 30, to Sunday, Oct. 2. The SAL is looking to expand to add two more hunters this year. The SAL is seeking a 243 rifle and additional volunteers for the hunt. Donations are accepted from posts, auxiliaries or SAL squadrons. For more information, contact Dave Vulcan, 507-380-5095, or Steve Bilderback, 612-220-1333.

Fall Bomber's Moon Ball

The Commemorative Air Force will sponsor the Fall Bomber's Moon Ball Hangar Dance on Saturday, Sept. 10, with the Roseville Big Band. Dance lessons will begin at 7 with dancing at 8 p.m. There will be food and drink, and prizes for best WWII era dress. Tickets are \$12.50 online or \$15 at the door.

Go to cafmn.org for info or tickets.

Military Appreciation Day

The St. Francis Post 622 will honor veterans on Saturday, Sept. 10, from noon until 8 p.m. with music, food, kids' activities and military events. There will be a flag retirement, military recruiters, boot camp obstacle course, face painting, raffle and a live band.

9/11 Spaghetti Fundraiser

There will be an observance of the 9/11 attack on Sunday, Sept. 11, at the McConnell-Modeen VFW Post in Duluth on West Michigan Street. It is co-sponsored by the American Legion and other groups. It will begin at 2 with a social hour and the meal will be served at 3:15 p.m. The program is at 4. The cost is \$10 and reservations should be made by Sept. 7 by calling Ralph at 218-591-5610.

Flea Market/ Antique Sale

North St. Paul American Legion Auxiliary will hold a Flea Market and Antique Sale on Saturday, Oct. 1, at the post at 2678 East 7th Avenue in North St. Paul. There will be a bake sale and food available. All proceeds support Auxiliary programs. For more information, call Betty at 651-777-5552.

Medal of Honor Convention

The official public welcome ceremony for the Medal of Honor Convention in Minnesota will be Wednesday, Oct. 5, from 10-11 a.m. at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis. The event is free. No bags are allowed. The Commander's Task Force, including The American Legion, are sponsoring the event. For more information call 763-607-0245.

Taps

Goodwin, Leslie O., 74, Air Force veteran of the Persian Gulf War, died July 11, 2016. He served for 33 years including tours in Germany. He was the oldest and highest ranking command sergeant major in the Air Force when he retired. He was serving as Polk County Veterans Service Office. He was a member of Winger Post 200.

Holland, Gary Lee, 77, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 22, 2016. He served in Okinawa and Laos. He was a member of Chisholm Post 247.

Schuknecht, Archie Herman, 91, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 16, 2016. He served on three Navy ships. He was a member of Lakefield Post 4.

Dauffenbach, Robert Joseph, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 21, 2016. He was a member of Lakefield Post 4.

Langer, Elmer Anthony, 97, Army veteran of World War II, died July 11, 2016. He served as an interpreter in Europe. He was a member of Pierz Post 341.

Schulz, Dale W., 90, veteran of the Korean War, died July 4, 2016. He was a member of Austin Post 91.

Schoneck, John B., 75, Marine Corps Reserve veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 30, 2016. He was a member of Amboy Post 276.

Abbott, George William III "Buck," 85, Navy veteran of the Korean War, died July 20, 2016. He was stationed at Newport. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

Leigh, Dr. James A., 89, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 26, 2016. He also served in the National Guard during the Korean War. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Paal, William, 77, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 16, 2016. He was a drill instructor and served 20 years. He was a member of Chaska Post 57.

Zeimet, Warren G., 81, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died July 5, 2016. He was a member of St. Paul Park Post 98.

Rathbun, Jack H., 92, Army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 4, 2016. He was a sergeant in the Third Army and helped liberate the Buchenwald Death Camp. He was a member of Sauk Rapids Post 254.

Yetzer, Wilfred, 99, Army veteran of World War II, died July 29, 2016. He was a medic in Europe assisting doctors in surgery. He was a member of Waconia Post 150.

Ellison, John Smith, 92, Army veteran of World War II, died July 29, 2016. He served in France and earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He was a member of Monticello Post 260.

Newman, James, 81, Army and National Guard veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 26, 2016. He served 20 years in the Guard. He was a member of Little Falls Post 46.

Rose, Donald W., 88, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 4, 2016. He served in Korea as an electronics technician. He also worked on the Early Warning System in Alaska. He retired as a lieutenant. He was a member of Dent Post 148.

Haugan, Sigurd T., 97, Army veteran of World War II,

died July 29, 2016. He served in Aleutians. He was commissioned through the OCS program. He was a past adjutant of Minneapolis Business and Professional Post 450.

Jubie, Orville Frances "Pete," 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 23, 2016. He served in Korea with Company C of the 12th Infantry. He was a member of Barnum Post 415.

Halls, Allan Oliver, 87, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died July 6, 2016. He was a member of Broton Post 288.

Nohrenberg, Orville Lowell, 87, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 6, 2016. He served in the 369th Engineering Boat Battalion. He was a member of Madison Post 158.

Boyd, James H., 84, Air Force veteran of the Korean War, died July 4, 2016. He flew search and rescue missions. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Forsberg, Gerald F., 81, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 6, 2016. He was a radio technician. He was a member of Park Rapids Post 212.

Quarstad, Harold M., 95, Army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 7, 2016. He served in the Pacific in the Philippines and New Guinea. He was a member of Lanesboro Post 40.

Nygaard, Robert, 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 23, 2016. He was a radar and missile technician. He was a member of East Grand Forks Post 157.

Booth, Robert Harold, 89, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 12, 2016. He was a past adjutant and member of the color guard of Rush City Post 93.

Jensen, Elwood D. "Red," 88, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 28, 2016. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Johnson, Peter A., 73, Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 5, 2016. He was a member of Albert Lea Post 56.

Garard, James Francis, 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 4, 2016. He was a helicopter mechanic. He was a member of Hackensack Post 202.

Louwagie, Maurice, 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 30, 2016. He served as an electrician's mate on USS YF621 around the Philippine Islands. He was a member of Cottonwood Post 503.

Bahn, Duane, 74, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 3, 2016. He was a past commander and member of the color guard of Marshall Post 113.

Cochran, David, 67, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 9, 2016. He was an aviation mechanic and a crew chief for medical evacuation planes. He was a past commander of Marshall Post 113.

Schyma, Thomas Jr., 80, Army veteran of the Korean War, died July 22, 2016. He was a member of Hillman Post 602.

Bujarski, Vernon, 71, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 23, 2016. He was a member of Hillman Post 602.

Swanberg, Robert J., 88, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 16, 2016. He was a past commander of Willmar Post 167.

Holmgren, Alden L., 94, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 29, 2016. He was a member of Willmar Post 167.

Pearson, Oscar Iver, 93, Navy veteran of World War II and the Korean War, died Aug. 7, 2016. He was a member of Red Wing Post 54.

Walton, Roger, 73, Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 31, 2016. He was a member of Brainerd Post 255.

Cook, William O., 95, Coast Guard veteran of World War II, died Aug. 14, 2016. He was a radarman second class. He was a member of the University of Minnesota Post 548.

Krueger, Donald Herman, 92, Navy veteran of World War II, died July 30, 2016. He was a hospital corpsman stationed in Attu, Alaska, and in Washington D.C. He was a member of Alexandria Post 87.

Willner, Herbert M., 70, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 5, 2016. He served one tour in Vietnam. He was a member of Eden Valley Post 381.

Roos, Elmer, 85, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 4, 2016. He was a member of Paynesville Post 271.

Sybrandt, Harold L., Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died July 29, 2016. He was a member of Rush City Post 93.

Drager, Mark J., 83, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 14, 2016. He was a member of Zimmerman Post 560.

Delong, Darrell, 86, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 13, 2016. He was a member of the color guard of New London Post 537.

Lenk, Donald James, Sr., 84, Army veteran of the Korean War, died Aug. 5, 2016. He served as a guard on the demilitarized zone.

Rasmussen, Garrett Lee, 69, Army veteran of the Vietnam War, died Aug. 14, 2016. He served in Hawaii. He was a member of Chisago City Post 272.

Moerer, Ewald Ludwig, 96, Navy veteran of World War II, died Aug. 14, 2016. He was a member of Wheaton Post 80.

Erickson, Arvid A., 97, Army veteran of World War II, died Aug. 14, 2016. He served in the 407th Medical Battalion as a medic and he served in New Guinea and the Philippines. He was a member of Granite Falls Post 69.

Obituary Policy

All obituaries must be within two months of the issue they are published in. For instance, for this September issue, all obituaries must be from August or July. June obituaries will not be used.

Obituaries should contain the full name, age, branch of service, war era, exact date of death, any information about the veteran's service, and any information about the veteran's involvement in the post, such as past commander.

District Commanders

FIRST DISTRICT

Sylvan Fix
Commander



It was good to meet many of the District and Department officers at the Training session and Exec. Board meeting in Anoka. I am looking forward to an exciting and successful year. Our District picnic on the 14th was a great success. Thank you Grand Meadow for being the sponsor this year. You did a terrific job. And by the way, you also have a very nice Veterans Memorial in your park.

Mentor your membership is my theme this year. It is extremely important that we find that unique individual who may have the ability to take on a project or get more active within The American Legion. Mentoring someone does not happen overnight. It could take several months to a couple years. Patience is the way to success. Pushing one to hard could scare them away. The person being mentored doesn't even have to know that he is being mentored. It wasn't until a couple years ago that I realized that I was being mentored for 2 to 3 years prior. So seek that individual. Have casual conversation with them. Learn what you can without being pushy. Hopefully you find something within that individual that can be honed for the good of your Post, District, or even Department and will give that person the wow factor after realizing what they have accom-

SECOND DISTRICT

Mark Coney
Commander



The new year is off to a great start for the Second District. We are off the Goose Egg for the second year in a row. Thank you to all the posts, membership directors, and to my vice commanders for all of their hard work and effort.

The county fairs are keeping everyone busy at this time and soon it will be time for the Minnesota Homecoming, also known as the State Fair.

The Second District Legion Riders just finished their Legacy Run on the 14th of August. It has been another successful year for the riders. Although the totals have not been tallied as this writing, I was told that the 1st, 2nd, and 7th Districts donated a whopping \$61,000. That's quite an accomplishment from all that were involved. I want to thank all of you for all of your hard work.

On Saturday, September 24, the Legion Riders will be hosting an organizational meeting from 12 noon until 3 p.m. This will take place at the Hardwick Legion at 111 E. Main in Hardwick. All are welcome who wish to start the 3rd chapter in the District.

On September 12th, The Clay County Fair in Spencer, Iowa will have it's Veterans appreciation day allowing all Veterans in for free.

THIRD DISTRICT

Mike Maxa
Commander



First a big thanks to the Third Herd for getting the district off the goose egg. The goose egg sets the tone for our membership year and once again the "Thundering Third" is serious about membership.

This month I want to visit our committees and the responsibilities our committee chairman have volunteered for. In the district we have 28 committees with committee chairs. They are responsible for collecting information and reporting the activities of the district programs. Our chairmen have the responsibility to not only help you with your program, they also have the responsibility to collect what you have accomplished and report it.

National and Department present this data before our government to make their case to support our Veterans and our programs. Our programs are challenged every year for either elimination or reduction. This is why it's so important to take the time and complete the reports that will tell our story of what we Legionnaires do, day after day. The American Legion has made it so easy with the "CPR" consolidated post report to tell our story.

Our first rally is in the books and what a great exchange of ideas we had. I posed the question on "How can we get more participation and attendance from our posts?" This will be the focus going forward. How can we as a Legion Family do better and grow. I challenged my Vice Commanders for the remaining four rallies to bring the whole family together and come up with topics that will make us grow. These rallies or meetings belong to you, the posts, and we can discuss any subject you want. At the next rally/meeting we will have input from our Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders. "Ask" a Veteran to join and the Legion Family will grow.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Randy Bastyr
Commander



Greetings to all of the members of the Fabulous Fourth. Summer is coming to an end and the kids are back in school. The days are getting shorter, and soon the leaves will turn color and begin to fall.

Speaking of Fall, the Fall Membership Rally will be held at Legionville on September 10th. Please send your membership renewals into your Post so they can get them turned in at the Rally. Membership Chairman Mickey Ostrum wants to continue his streak of 100% membership for a third year in a row. Let's help him achieve this.

The Shop, Ship and Share Committee is working hard on this year's event, to be held at the Maplewood Mall on December 2nd & 3rd. We are looking for names and addresses of Minnesota service men and women that will be deployed over Christmas and New Year's. If you know of someone we could send a care package to, please forward their name, company and address to me at:

r-bastyr@comcast.net

Upcoming District events: September 14th - RCCC at No St Paul Post 39, Exec at 6:30 and Membership meeting at 7:00; September 18 - Hospital visitation at 1:00 and September 20th -Shop, Ship and Share meeting at NSP Post 39 at 6:30.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Ray Eiden
Commander



I wish to congratulate Denise Milton on being elected our new Department Commander. Also our own Curt Norenberg to Department Vice Commander for the 4th and 5th Districts and Dennis DeLong to Department Sgt-at-Arms. It was a pleasure meeting all the other District Commanders at the Convention and I hope they have a successful year.

I look forward to our first District Assembly on Sept. 6 at Post 1. My Commander's Project this year will involve the purchase of one or two clavinos for the Minneapolis Veteran's Home. The estimated cost of each is \$2,200.00.

An Ice-Cream Social/Antique Car Show was held Aug. 13 at the Minneapolis Veteran's Home. An SAL Commander from one of our posts belongs to an old car club and the residents greatly appreciated those who came to share their vehicles and enjoy in some conversation.

Our posts continue to bring in memberships. I encourage them to get off to a fast start and stay on top of their renewals. I am anxious to see what new ideas our Department Membership Director Mark Dvorak has regarding membership and revitalization.

Congratulations to the American Legion Riders for raising over \$17,000 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund.

Coming up: District Hospital Visitation - Sept. 4 at 2 p.m. and Harvest Rally in Legionville - Sept. 10 at 3 p.m. As always "Keep Focused and Look to the Future."

SIXTH DISTRICT

Vernonica Fernlund
Commander



Congratulations to our new Department Commander Denise Milton. The 6th District will do its best to help make this a successful year.

We recently held two Schools of Instruction. Thank you to St. Augusta Post 621 and Pequot Lakes Post 49 for their hospitality and to everyone who attended. Valuable information was shared and we had great participation.

The Camp-O-Ree is scheduled for Sept. 7-11, 2016 at Legionville. Legionnaires from around the state will be getting together to camp and have a great time. Saturday Sept. 10 there will be a fish fry, followed by the 6th District membership rally at 2 p.m. and then the Department Harvest membership rally, all at Legionville.

If anyone has not been to Legionville, this is a great opportunity to visit and meet with the new District and Department teams.

The Department provided each District with a public relations tool kit which has a pop-up sign, table top skirting and brochures. The kit is great for bringing attention to any event and is available to everyone in our District.

Sept. 16 is the next cutoff to have membership turned-in to National or expect a renewal notice mailing after Oct. 7. The 6th & 9th Dist. Membership Rally is Oct. 8, Little Falls Post 46. All 6th District Posts please help so we can keep the Leg in the 9th District.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Garylee Davenport
Commander



I hope everyone is enjoying the summer. But now it's time to get to work. We still have a couple of posts that have not yet turned in there officers report for the year. This needs to be done every year even if the post officers don't change. If this is not updated the post will not get any correspondence from Department. So please get this done.

We still have a couple of posts that are still on goose egg. The cutoff for the goose egg was August 3, so please get this corrected ASAP.

On another note I am still trying to fill two committees: Oratorical and Boys State. If anyone is interested please contact myself or Jeff Gay, the Seventh District Adjutant.

We have two rallies coming up: October 1st in Montevideo at 10 a.m. for areas B&D and October 15th in Glenwood at 10 a.m. for areas A&C.

And just a quick reminder that September 14th is the early bird 50% cut off date and September 10th is the harvest rally at Legionville.

And one last note please keep all of the members of our armed forces around the world in your thoughts and prayers.

NINTH DISTRICT

Eric Wilkens
Commander



Membership is off to a great start with the Ninth being off the Goose Egg for the first time in many years. A big thanks to the membership team in the Ninth for their hard work and dedication.

Our first membership rally will be on September 24 at the Thief River Falls Post starting at 2 pm. As this membership year continues to gather steam, I encourage everyone to make use of mylegion.org and if you have Posts that have not used it, offer to help get them started.

In addition, the key to growing membership is working the AD-1982, MN-1982 and the expired list form the Post. In the 1982 Posts the member has already joined, so let's get them local and make those numbers work for us. Membership Directory Mark Dvorak mentioned in his training that we should try to get into the National Guard bases and armories.

You should be able to call the National Guard location near you and request a time to come and promote membership. For example, the best time to promote to the North Dakota Air National Guard would be over the lunch period during their monthly drill. Don't forget we as Legionnaires are the best recruiters we have and our programs sell the value of membership.

TENTH DISTRICT

Bonnie Hanson
Commander



It has started to be a very good year. Had my first rally at the end of July and had a really good group and I made it through it. Then these last two weekends when to the Legion Rider kick-off for the Legacy run and that first weekend when they pulled into Buffalo with 51 bikes roaring into town sight to be seen and the money they collected was almost half of what they were looking for and then we had the next weekend where I really rode behind Bob on his 3-wheeler from Forest Lake to Fridley which was done on the best Sunday for everyone and seeing the landscape. And then getting to Fridley and hearing the amount of money that both weekends brought in. Different things that I could write about but I will leave that for another District to tell you.

Need to talk about the Camporee up at Legionville the weekend after Labor Day also known as the Harvest Rally. The 10th District will be roast up a pig for your Friday night feed so hope to see you all then. God Bless everyone and remember my motto "Family First." Take care until next time.

Thank you

Carol and I want to thank everyone for all the phone calls, texts, cards and other messages in recent days. I am in a cast and I have a cracked shoulder, but I'm feeling better every day. I can't tell you how much I appreciate The American Legion Family.

Bill Barbknecht
Battle Lake

DEC okays Milton's appointments to state committees

Appointments to the Department of Minnesota standing committees were approved by the Department Executive Committee in August.

Commander Denise Milton announced the following list:

(Those already serving on a committee are not listed, only those appointed this year. Some committees have annual appointments while others have multi-year terms.)

Floyd Kumerow, Lamberton, was reappointed to a new five-year term on the Finance Committee. Ray DeZurik, Breezy Point, will chair the committee this year.

Tess Davis, Princeton, will serve a three-year term on the Americanism Committee. Tom Hallett of Mankato will serve as Boy Scout chairman, Bob Locker of Fridley as Community Service chairman, and Don Skow of Lindstrom will be Education chairman.

Thomas Nelson, Tracy, will replace longtime Boys State Director Mike Bredeck of Madison. Bredeck will serve as vice chairman. Leon Dahle, Morristown will serve as chairman of Junior Shooting Sports.

Debra Norman of Northfield will chair the Oratorical Contest, and Linda Dvorak will be vice chair. James Blakesley of Aitkin will be the Safety School Patrol chairman.

Joe Jansen of Arden Hills will be the representative to the Armed Forces Service Center.

Tom Sanders of Pine City will be the chair of the Blood Program. Terry Buraas will chair the Children and Youth Committee and Karen Welander will serve as vice chair.

Jennifer Kafka of Blue Earth will chair the Citizens Flag Alliance.

Ken Meyer of Pequot Lakes was appointed to a five-year term on the Convention Corporation. David Bode of Nicollet will be parade coordinator.

Virgil Wagner of Middle River was appointed by Milton to a new three-year term on the Credentials Committee. Carl Moon of St. Joseph will chair the Employment Committee. Joe Niesen of Cologne will chair the Energy and Conservation Committee.

Tom Mullon, Eagan, will represent the Legion on the Fort Snelling Cemetery Association.

Mike Maxa, Le Center, will chair the Fund for Hospitalized Veterans Committee, and he will be joined by Wes Thompson, Sartell; Roland Hanson, Austin; and Eugene Olsword of New Ulm.

Tom Conway will chair the Law and Order Committee and he will be joined by Richard Abraham of Lake Crystal and Jeff Brokaw of Winona.

Paul Hassing of Montgomery will be the Legion Riders liaison, but while he is on deployment, the interim liaison will be Ron Rollins of North Branch.

Bill Barbknecht of Battle Lake was appointed to a new three-year term on the Legionnaire Insurance Trust Committee and will serve as chairman. Roger Myren of Eagan will be the Department representative on the Legionville Board of Directors.

Peggy Moon was named chair of the Legislative Committee and will be joined by Mike Ash, St. Paul, Gary Larson of Stillwater and Bob Hart of Oak Park Heights.

Mark Dvorak will be the membership chairman, as announced at the state convention.

Gary Olson, Moorhead, and Richard Janssen, Richmond, were re-appointed to three-year terms on the Brain Science Foundation. Richard Magraw of Spring Park will be a consultant and Dan Ludwig, Red Wing, will serve as the commander's advisor.

Don Walser of Hutchinson will continue as liaison to the Heart Research Foundation.

Dennis DeLong of Bloomington was named to a five-year term on the Minnesota American Legion Foundation.

Jim Kellogg, Taopi, was appointed to a five-year term on the National Security/Foreign Relations Committee. Curt Norenberg of Roseville will replace Denise Milton for a four-year term. Kellogg will chair the committee.

Glenn Mueller of St. Charles will chair Operation Post Home. Chuck Stone of Owatonna will chair the Pheasant Dinner Committee. Arnie Troe of Emmons will be vice chair.

Tom Norgaard of Fosston was appointed to a five-year term on the Post Development Committee. Carl Hendrickson of Cloquet was appointed to a four-year term to replace Bill Stein who passed away.

Tim Burley of Hutchinson was appointed to a three-year term on the Public Relations Committee.

Jack Russell, Sartell, was appointed to a five-year term on the Rehabilitation Committee.

Al Davis, Princeton, was appointed to a three-year term on the Resolutions Assignment Committee. Jeff Olson of Green Valley, Arizona, will serve as chairman.

Ray Ozmun of Northfield will continue as advisor to the Sons of the American Legion. The vice chair for the south will be Gary Weaver, LaCrescent and the vice chair for the north will be Walt Folendorf, East Grand Forks.

Mike Gort, Marshall, was re-appointed to a three-year



TESTIFYING -- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Vessey confers with Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger during Congressional hearings.

Vessey won DSC in fighting in Vietnam

Continued from Page 1

in Lakeville when it was still a small town. His father was a railroad man, and a World War I veteran.

He moved to Minneapolis in the ninth grade and attended Roosevelt High School where he was captain of the swim team.

Despite being too young, Vessey enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard in May, 1939.

His unit was federalized in February of 1941 as the 34th "Red Bull" Division, and Vessey left his job as a package wrapper at Sears Roebuck to become a full-time soldier.

At first he was a surveyor, but he changed jobs to become a radio operator because it paid more. When the sergeant in charge of the radio unit failed a test, Vessey was given a radio field manual to study.

They told him if passed the test on Monday morning, he would be a sergeant. If he failed, he'd be a private first class. He passed.

Vessey was assigned to the headquarters unit of the 59th Field Artillery Brigade, and soon was promoted to first sergeant. At age 20, he may have been the youngest first sergeant in the Army.

The 34th Division was sent overseas, first to Northern Ireland, and in February of 1943, to North Africa.

In the summer of 1943, Vessey and the 34th landed at Salerno in Italy and later joined the invasion at Anzio.

At Anzio, he was called into a headquarters office and offered a promotion to second lieutenant.

"There didn't seem to be any way to say no," Vessey told the *Minnesota Legionnaire* in 2003. "By this time, we'd been at war for a couple of years. I knew that second lieutenants were pretty much cannon fodder. I thought it was okay to be an officer, but it wasn't like I'd just won the lottery."

He was right about the new danger in his promotion as he was immediately assigned as a forward artillery observer. "The casualty rates for forward observers were pretty high, but there wasn't any work in Italy that wasn't dangerous."

Vessey survived the war, but was never promoted

because of a standing rule that second lieutenants who had received battlefield promotions should stay that way.

In April of 1946, he was finally promoted first lieutenant. He had gone from being the youngest first sergeant to perhaps the most senior second lieutenant in the Army.

From that point, though, it was a rapid rise through the ranks.

In 1967, he was a lieutenant colonel in Vietnam leading a 300-soldier artillery unit. The unit was attacked by a force of 2,000 enemy soldiers, and, at one point, Vessey grabbed a grenade launcher and from an exposed position, took out three enemy rocket launchers. He earned the Distinguished Service Cross.

By 1970, he was a brigadier general serving in Thailand and Laos. He got his fourth star in 1976, commanding all U.S. forces in Korea, and in 1979 became the Army Vice Chief of Staff.

In 1982, as he was set to retire, he was chosen by President Reagan to chair the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest military position ever achieved by a Minnesotan.

Under his watch, America went through the largest peace-time build up of military strength in its history. The arms race was a major factor in the financial problems and eventual breakup of the Soviet Union.

When he finally retired in 1985, he had served for 46 years, longer than any other person in the Army at that time.

He later led a U.S. mission to Vietnam seeking the return of serviceman killed there.

In 1992, he was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Bush, the nation's highest civilian honor, for his work in Vietnam.

He served on the commission that chose the design of the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C.

He retired to a rural home near Garrison, Minnesota, but also had a residence north of St. Paul. He and his wife, Avis, had two sons and a daughter.

Vessey was a frequent panelist at the World War II History Round Tables at Fort Snelling.

North Dakota's 'Sparky' Gierke III died August 7

Past National Commander H.F. "Sparky" Gierke III of North Dakota died Aug. 7, 2016. He was 73.

Gierke grew up near Williston, N.D., in what is now the heart of the new oil drilling industry, and earned his juris doctor degree from the University of North Dakota Law School.

He entered the Army's Judge Advocate Corps and served in Vietnam as a trial judge. He was state commander of the American Legion from 1983-84 and in 1988 was elected national commander.

He served on the North Dakota Supreme Court and in 1991 was appointed by the president to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. He was chief judge from 2006-08.

Gierke is survived by four children, nine grandchildren and three step grandchildren.



Vessey was appointed by President Ronald Reagan.

term on the Baseball Committee. Bob Mace, Waite Park, will chair the Bowling Committee, and John Torma of Brooklyn Park and Irv Tooker, Walker, will also serve on the committee.

Jim Lucas of Pine River was appointed a five-year term on the Strategic Planning Committee. Richard Wog of Willmar will serve as chairman.

Marland Ronning of Maple Grove was appointed to a two-year term as representative from the Legion on the Veterans 4 Veterans Committee.

The DEC approved Milton's selections, and also voted to give her permission to make new appointments to fill any vacancies.



DENISE MILTON
Bagley
COMMANDER



Minnesota's 2016 - 2017 Leadership Team



RICHARD SKILLESTAD
Eyota
VICE COMMANDER



HARLEY WAHL
Slayton
VICE COMMANDER



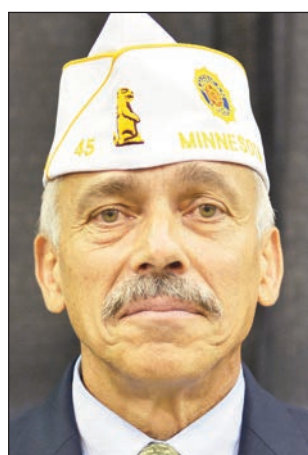
CURT NORENBURG
Roseville
VICE COMMANDER



JIM LUCAS
Pine River
VICE COMMANDER



WILSON SPENCE III
Duluth
VICE COMMANDER



MARK DVORAK
Le Center
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



RALPH SCHNEEKLOTH
Mabel
HISTORIAN



BILL BROCKBERG
Worthington
CHAPLAIN



DENNIS DeLONG
Bloomington
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



SYLVAN FIX
Brownsville
DIST. 1 COMMANDER



MARK CONEY
Hardwick
DIST. 2 COMMANDER



MIKE MAXA
Le Center
DIST. 3 COMMANDER



RANDY BASTYR
Oakdale
DIST. 4 COMMANDER



RAY EIDEN
Minneapolis
DIST. 5 COMMANDER



VERONICA FERNLUND
St. Cloud
DIST. 6 COMMANDER



GARYLEE DAVENPORT
Atwater
DIST. 7 COMMANDER



KEN OLIVER
Duluth
DIST. 8 COMMANDER



ERIC WILKENS
Detroit Lakes
DIST. 9 COMMANDER



BONNIE HANSON
Rockford
DIST. 10 COMMANDER

Denise Milton

Department Commander

2016-2017

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Carol Kottom

Department President

2016-2017

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

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

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

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

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

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





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

Baseball 2016

Tournaments in Delano and LeSueur-Henderson



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



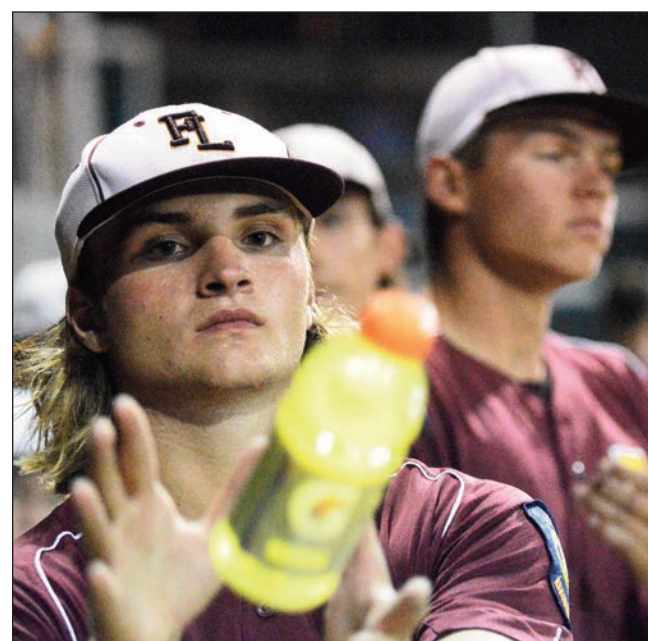
Woodbury's Ronald Sweeny III slides into the tag of Forest Lake's third baseman Cameron Kline during the championship game. Kline was named the outstanding player of the tournament.



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

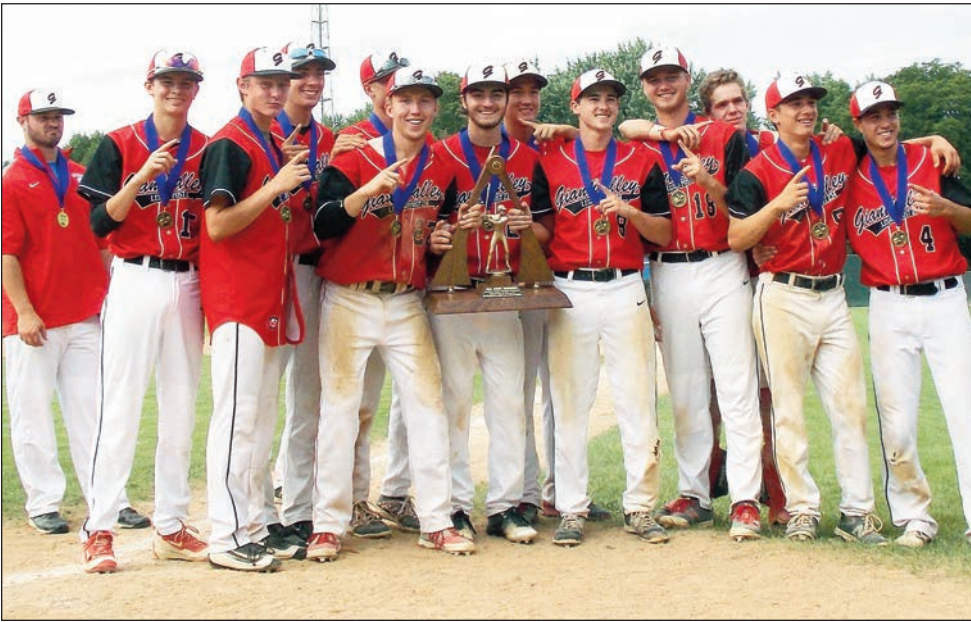


LeSueur-Henderson's Cole Pengilly slides safely into third with a triple in the third place game vs. Pierz at the LeSueur Field in Division II play.

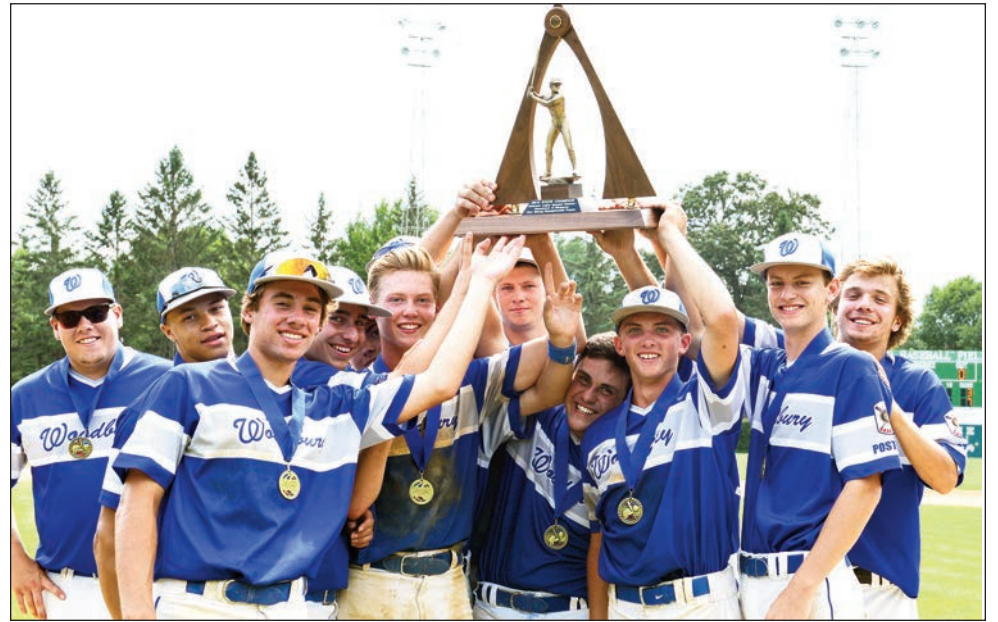


Forest Lake's Luke Wallner fields a Gatorade tossed to him by his mother during the tournament.

Photos by John Sherman and Al Zdon



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

State tournaments held in August

Continued from Page 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glenwood-Lowry won the Sportsmanship Trophy.

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

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

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

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

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

There is no national championship for Division II teams.

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

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

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

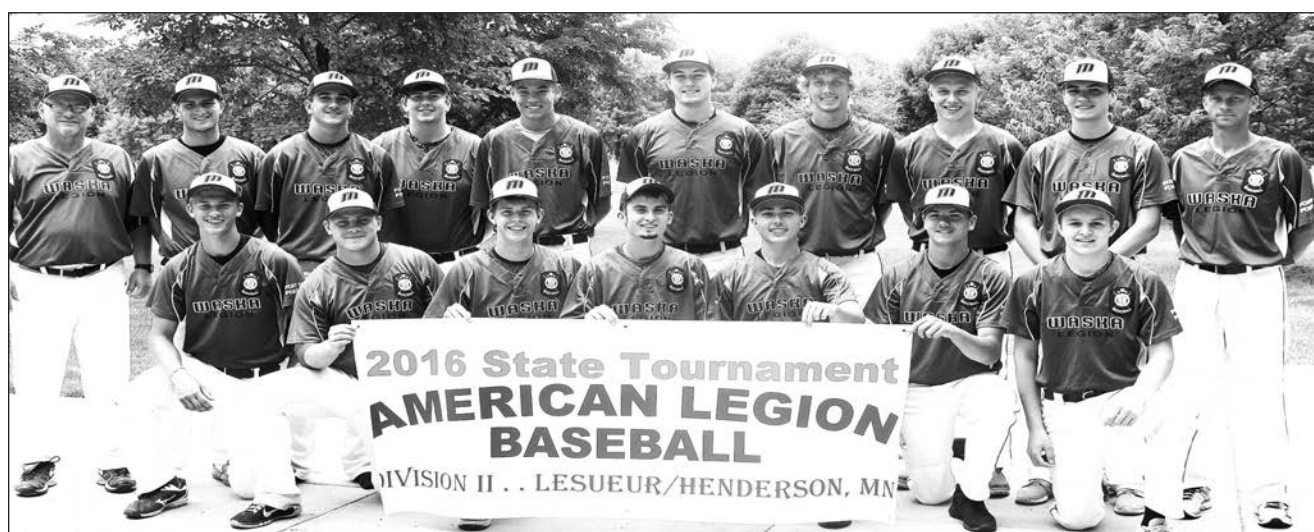
Next year's Division I Tournament will be in St. Paul at CHS Stadium, sponsored by Tri-City Post 513. The Division II tourney will be at New London-Spicer.



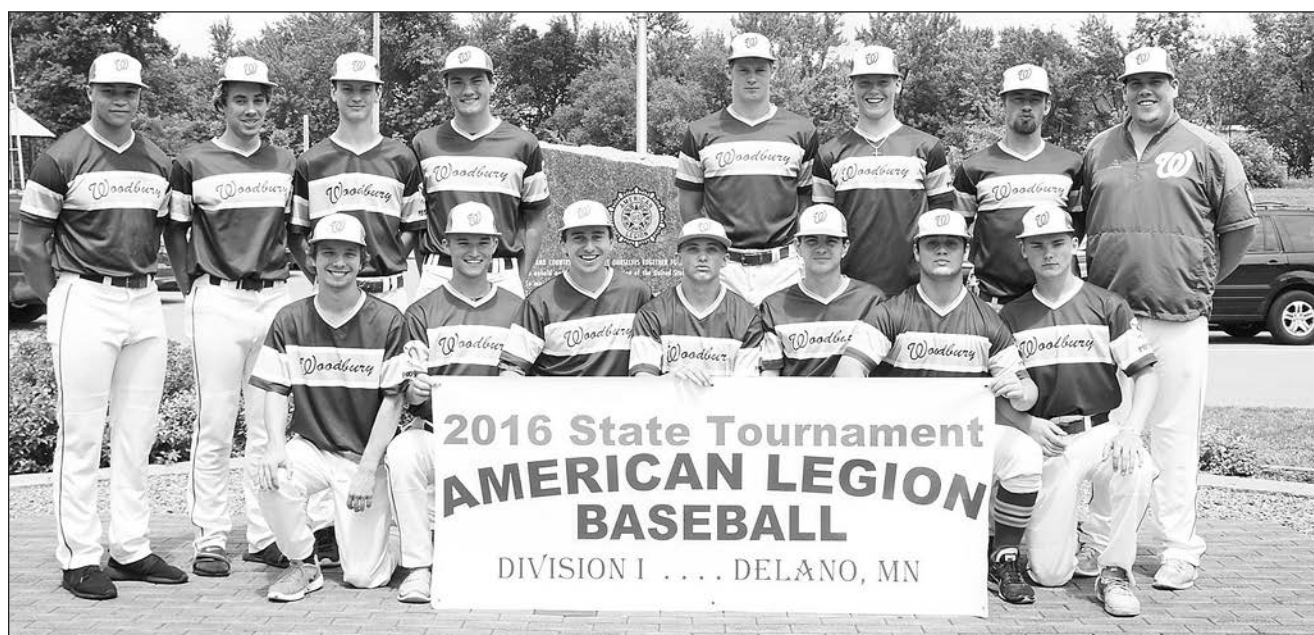
HOME RUN CHAMP -- After the opening ceremony, a home run derby was held. Joe Bernard of Princeton was the winner, knocking 19 balls out of the park.



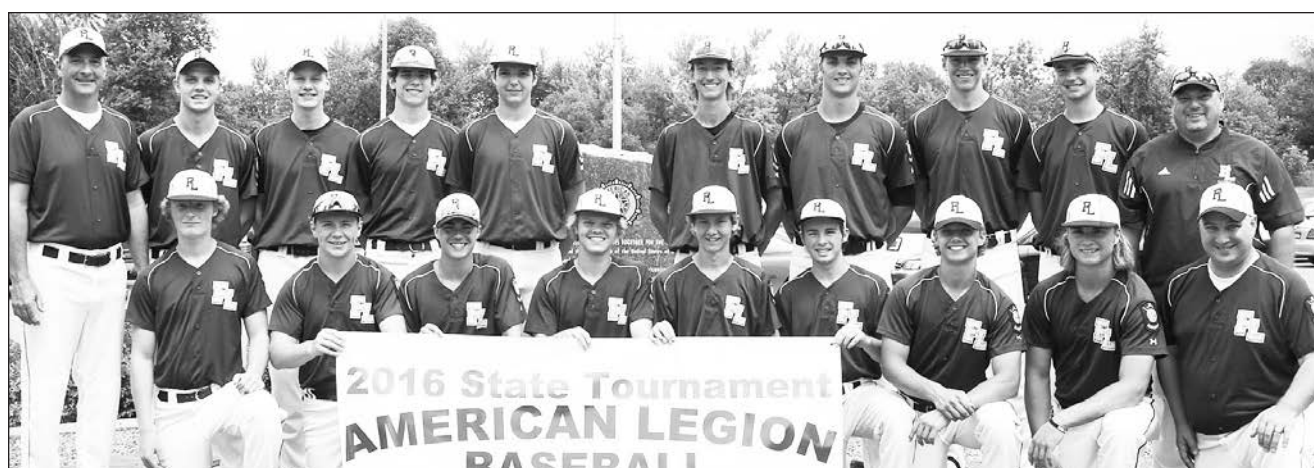
DIVISION II CHAMPION -- Minneapolis Giantvalley Post 234 won the Division II Minnesota American Legion Baseball championship. From left, front row: Simon Huyck, Kenny Kiratli, Andrew Wolpert, Justin Evenson, Ryler McDowell, Brock Brumley, Nick Terlizzi. In back: Head Coach Sean Toomey, Alex Jordan, James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



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



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



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

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

By
Jeremy Wolfsteller



Legion presence in St. Paul

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

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

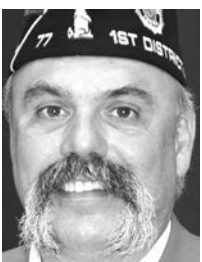
The St. Paul VA Regional Office is home to the Nation's only Debt Management Center. The current debt owed to the VA is estimated to be \$1.5 billion. All veterans' debt involving disability compensation, pension, education and home loan will end up here for collection. If the veteran has American Legion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

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

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

American Legion Riders

By Chuck Stone
State Director



Greetings American Legion Family,

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

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

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

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



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

Sociologists

Continued from Page 1

huge sense of community in rural towns.

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

"Or it might be The American Legion."

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

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

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

It's all research.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

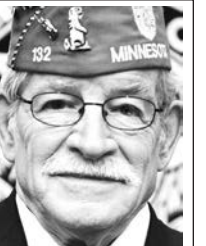
So, if you ever wonder who those two strange women are at that table under the Bingo sign, you know it just might be some scientific research going on.



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

Sons of The American Legion

By
Gene Olsword



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

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

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

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

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

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



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



The Auxiliary Bulletin

No. 17-1

President Carol Kottom

September 2016

Secretary Sandie Deutsch

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

The President's Column

By
Carol Kottom



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



President Kottom as a biker babe.

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

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

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

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

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

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

September - Junior Activities

October - Education - Constitution and Standing Rules

November - Past Presidents Parley

December - Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

January - National Security; Legislation

February - Americanism

March - Community Service

April - Children and Youth

May - Poppy

June - Girls State

July - Department Convention

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

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

PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

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

PRESIDENT'S VISITS

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

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

"POWER IN NUMBERS"

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

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

Strasser endorsed for 2nd Vice President

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



SALLY STRASSER

Auxiliary Bulletin

Continued from Preceding Page

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

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

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

FALL CONFERENCE

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

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

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

SILENT AUCTION/BAG SALE -

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

CORRECTION

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

SECRETARY SANDIE'S NOTES

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

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

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

Loch family thanks Auxiliary for support

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

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

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

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



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



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

July 31, 2016, Auxiliary Membership

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

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Smoky Mountains
October 10-17, 2016

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Manager, Joyce Langerud
- 7 nights accommodations
- 13 meals: 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 5 dinners
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Dollywood Theme Park
- Flood Walls of Paducah
- Guided tour of Smoky Mountain National Park
- Shows: Grand Ole Opry, Country Tonite, Smoky Mountain Opry

\$1,129.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

San Antonio Riverwalk
February 19-26, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- 7 nights accommodations with 3 nights in San Antonio along the Riverwalk
- 13 meals: 7 breakfast, 6 dinners
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Experience all the beauty San Antonio has to offer

More Information and Pricing to come!

New York City Tour
November 9-13, 2016

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Director, Sue Barber
- Roundtrip Delta airlines flights from Minneapolis to New York City
- 4 night stay at the Hotel at Times Square
- Broadway musical
- Radio City Music Hall "The Rockettes Christmas Spectacular"
- Manhattan Island City Tour
- 9/11 Memorial and Museum
- Harbor Cruise with lunch
- Luggage handling for one suitcase

\$2,299.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Branson
October 31 - November 4, 2016

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 4 nights accommodations
- 8 meals: 4 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners
- Arabia Steamboat Museum
- Titanic Museum
- Dutton Family Christmas Show, Clay Cooper, Daniel O'Donnell, Dixie Stampede Christmas Dinner Show, Showboat Branson Belle Lunch Cruise
- Luggage handling for one suitcase

\$849.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Minnesota Twins Spring Training in Florida
March 2-12 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Manager, Cindy Meany
- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- 10 nights accommodations including 3 nights in Cape Coral, FL and 2 nights in Nashville, TN
- 18 Meals: 10 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 7 dinners
- Anheuser Busch Brewery Tour, St. Louis, MO
- Coca Cola Factory Tour, Atlanta, GA
- 2 Spring Training baseball games or have a shopping day on the beach
- Best of Nashville Guided Tour
- Luggage handling for one suitcase per person

\$1,699.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Panama Canal Cruise
March 14-30, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Manager, Larry Alvey
- Roundtrip Delta Air flights Minneapolis to San Francisco and return Ft. Lauderdale to Minneapolis
- 1 pre-cruise hotel night at the Holiday Inn Express Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco
- All meals and entertainment aboard the ISLAND PRINCESS
- Visiting 6 ports of call including Ft. Lauderdale and San Francisco
- Onboard ship gratuities
- All transfers to and from the airport, hotel and pier
- Luggage handling at the hotel and ship

Starting at \$4,399.00
 Per Person Double Occupancy

Monuments of Washington D.C.
March 31-April 4, 2017

Tour Includes:

- 4-Seasons Tour Director, Sue Barber
- Round trip Delta Airlines flights Minneapolis to Washington D.C.
- 4 nights accommodations in the Washington D.C. area
- Evening guided Memorial and Monuments tour
- Two full-day guided tours of Washington D.C.
- Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Garden
- WWII Memorial, Capitol Hill, Embassy Row, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Smithsonian, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, and much more!

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