

# GOPHER OVERSEA'R

Volume 73, NO. 1 Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Official Publication to More Than 45,000 Members of the Department of Minnesota February 2019 - May 2019

## Warroad, Centennial Top Inaugural VFW State 'A' and 'AA' Hockey Tourney

In an effort to bring back more Bantam Hockey Teams to the VFW Hockey Program, our District and State Tournaments were divided into two classes (tournaments), 'A' and 'AA' Bantams. Obviously, this is the first year of this experiment and time will tell. But, if the 2019 VFW State Bantam Hockey Tournament is an indication --- the experiment was SUCCESS! When Minne-

sota Hockey created a 'AA' Bantam classification, it made it difficult for 'A' Bantam Teams to compete in the VFW State Bantam Hockey Tournament, which invited both classifications to play. With that said, we lost a lot of 'A' Bantam Teams from the VFW Hockey Program. Two years ago, the VFW State Youth Activities Committee voted to split the Tournaments in an effort to bring back those 'A' Bantam Teams.

Thief River Falls VFW Post 2793 accepted the challenge of this split Tournament, which would require two full sheets of ice for three days. What was a ten (10), then an eight (8) team tournament, is now a sixteen (16) team tournament.

On Friday night, the Players, Coaches and Parents were treated to Pulled Pork Dinner in the Community Room of the Ralph Arena. It was packed (570 meals served)! The food was Great! Thief River Falls Post

Commander Erik Beiktel kept the Program moving and made sure that everyone had a FUN time. While everyone enjoyed their meal, Erik and his VFW Post members conducted a 'door prize' Drawing (a lot of door prizes). It was an evening that was enjoyed by all --- everyone left with a smile!

Hey, when you have sixteen hungry teams in town and you have Hamburgers at your Post... you better order A LOT of hamburgers! On Saturday night, Thief River Falls VFW invited everyone over to the Post for Hamburgers. They sold out three times! BUT, there must be a couple of Marines in that Post, as they "Improvised, Adapted and Overcame"! The VFW Post 2793 pulls off another Great Success!

First all, we would like to THANK the Players, Coaches and

**WINNER - Cont. Page 12**



**2018-19 State Commander**

**Tom Hanson**

Member of VFW Post 1639 Willmar, MN



It is unfortunate that economic circumstances limit publication of the Gopher Oversea'r to three editions each year. This limitation infringes on the leadership of the Department to offer the membership the best in punctual and contemporaneous information. Our State Convention is slated to be held in mid-June and this edition will be published in mid-April. In essence then, this will be my "swan song" column as your State Commander. It is regrettable that this factor will not allow me as State Commander, or any of the other officers, an opportunity to impart further with the membership through this media prior to our Convention.

I share this because the VFW year doesn't officially terminate until June 30th. Therefore, we still have a quarter of the VFW year in front of us. There remains a lot to accomplish before this term expires.

We are on the edge of our goal of reaching 100% in membership for the first time in 27 years - WE CAN DO THIS! In these last three months

**CMDR - Cont. Page 3**



The Centennial Team- V.F.W. State 'AA' Bantam Champions, sponsored by Spring Lake Park Post #6587

## History of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Buddy Poppy Promotion

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was the first organization to promote a nationwide distribution of Poppies made by disabled and needy veterans.

The inspiration for the Poppy came from Col. John McRae's famous poem, "In Flanders Fields. In 1921, the Franco-America Children's League conducted a nationwide distribution of Poppies made in France for the benefit of children in the war-torn areas of France and Belgium.

In 1922, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States conducted a nationwide distribution of Poppies made in France. This was



after the dissolution of the Franco-American League, and in response to an appeal by Madame Guerin, the "Poppy Lady from France."

During the 1923 encampment, the Veterans of Foreign Wars evolved the idea which resulted in the V.F.W. "Buddy" Poppy fashioned by disabled and needy veterans who

were paid for their work in assembling the Poppies.

In February, 1924, the V.F.W. registered the name "Buddy" Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office and still holds all trademark rights to the name "Buddy" under the classification of artificial flowers. A Buddy Poppy distribution has been conducted by the Veterans of Foreign Wars each year since that time.

The Poppy has become traditional as the Memorial Day flower and as the symbol of remembrance for military members who have lost their lives or their health in the

**CONV - Cont. Page 7**

**State Convention  
June 12-16, 2019**

**See Page 7**

Department of Minnesota, VFW  
20 W 12th St  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Twin Cities, MN  
1580  
Permit NO.  
**PAID**  
U.S. Postage  
Non-profit Org.

\*\*Please use the form on the reverse side to note any address changes\*\*

## Save The Date!! Upcoming VFW Events

**State Convention  
June 12-16, 2019  
Best Western  
Kelly Inn  
St Cloud**

**National Convention  
July 20-24, 2019  
Orlando, FL**

Please watch for  
Veterans Activity  
Dates in the  
General Orders  
or on the State  
VFW Web Page  
[www.mnvw.org](http://www.mnvw.org)

**VFW State Baseball  
Tournament  
Aug. 8-11, 2019  
Brainerd**

**Fall Conference  
Sept. 13-15, 2019  
Mahnomon**

\*\*Red Events are Department Events\*\*

## Top News

# MN PDC Kirk Guest at Governor State of State, Note Takeaway for Minnesota VFW

Gov. Tim Walz's 2019 State of the State Address 4/3/19



**Gordy Kirk**  
WWII Veteran and Rondo Community Leader

In March, Past State Commander Gordy Kirk turned 96 and it is proving to be a BIG year already!

Gordy was the guest of Minnesota Governor Walz for the April 3rd State of the State Address. The WWII Veteran enjoyed nearly a minute of applause and honor by all of the State Delegates and special guests. Humble as he is, Mr. Kirk saluted the Governor before he took his seat for the remainder of the address.

Governor Walz, previously Congressman Walz, has long been a proponent of Veterans issues and a partner with the MN VFW in pressing for Veterans Benefits.

Among his comments, Walz commended Gordy for his service during WWII as part of the 3rd Army 4th Armor Division Patens VanGuard, landing in Normandy and

fighting across Europe from 1943-45. He noted the commitment it took Gordy to serve a Country that, upon returning home, "he could not have set at the same counter and eat the same food as someone next to him. But what Gordy did is come back to his community [the Rondo neighborhood in St Paul] and say 'I am going to be the change'..So [he] came back, became the State Commander of the VFW, changed how we deliver Veterans benefits across this State and continued to build his community. He gave us the gift [of freedom] and modeled it for the way we need to treat each other. So I hold myself to that standard," Walz stated.

The Governor also went so far as to challenge Minnesota... A challenge that may be a strong takeaway for the VFW: "...We can choose

to follow the same story that was written ahead of time...we can choose to let ideology drive us before people, or we can do what we have always done- Rise up and create a better way of life, lead the Nation in how things could get done... So here's my charge to you, and I walk hand-in-hand with you, let's write our own story. Let's write a NEW story how this can end. Let's do this in a way others can look at and say that's the way... let's do it because Minnesotans, we've always done it before. We've never feared the future- we create the future. Let's go write the story."

Minnesota members, take that challenge back to your Posts and Auxiliaries. Our State Organization has always been among the best in the VFW Organization, but we have been struggling lately. We used to be the innovators... the ones who challenged the status quo of the VFW and set the bar for others to meet! We may reminisce about the 'good old days' when things were thriving for us, when things were 'easy', and lament about the somewhat difficult times we face now as an organization. Whether we see situations such as membership, volunteerism, budget constraints or something else... there is frustration across the board. As members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, as Minnesotans, we are too strong to fold under these challenges.

Years ago, in WWII, a young Gordy Kirk, took up arms to fight for the freedom of this Country, not

knowing what the future held. Upon return from war, he looked beyond the challenges around him. Becoming an Officer in his local VFW Post, working to shape the organization and ultimately becoming the VFW State Commander of this great State from 1995-1996.

Since then, he has continued to serve the organization in various positions including State Chief of Staff and many years as the VFW Veterans Hospital Representative at the Minneapolis VA Hospital. He has made it his mission to serve his community and fight for Veterans benefits and services... hence his support for Governor Walz. As Gordy states, "It's not about Republican or Democrat, it's about Veterans. I will always support what's right for our Veterans."

As a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 724, Gordy has provided close to 75 years of service to our Veterans and Communities. Instead of accepting the status quo, he helped shape what his community and what this organization looks like. The challenge to us is not to maintain what has been established, but to build upon that, to move beyond that and to continue to advocate for our Veterans, our communities and our Country. Be innovative Minnesota, don't be afraid of the challenge... Create the future and write the NEW VFW Story!

*Editors Note: Gordy will continue to enjoy his 96th birthday year. Next up... Dinner at the Governor's Mansion!*

### Minnesota VFW Office Locations

#### Department Headquarters:

Patrick Bohmer, Adjutant  
Jerry Brletich, Quartermaster  
Melody Shryock, Office Manager  
B5 Veterans Service Building  
20 West 12th Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
Phone: (651) 291-1757  
Fax: (651)291-2753  
Email: vfwmnoffice@gmail.com  
Webpage: www.mnvwf.org

#### Auxiliary Headquarters :

Veterans Service Building  
20 West 12th Street - 3rd Floor  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
Phone: (651) 291-1759  
Fax: (651) 291-7932

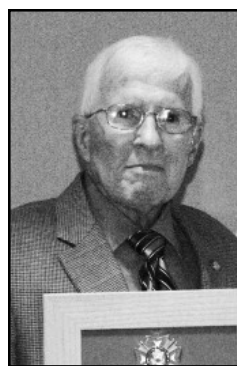
#### Department Claims Office:

Jon Gohn, Claims Director  
Whipple Federal Building, G900  
1 Federal Drive  
St. Paul, MN 55111  
Phone: (612) 970-5669  
Fax: (612) 970-5404

#### Minneapolis VA

Scott Sutherland  
VFW Hospital Representative  
Minneapolis VAMC - 4G Room 109E  
Phone: (612) 725-2000 ext. 4448

### MN: Godspeed to 'MR. VFW'



Minnesota mourns the loss of Chuck Quigley, known by many as "Mr. VFW". He passed away peacefully at home on March 17th after a long battle with cancer. He was 90 years old.

Chuck served in the Korean War from 1951-52. As a VFW Life Member of Post 217, Chuck was always on duty no matter how he felt... he always served with a smile. He worked every program in the VFW such as recognizing community leaders (Police, Teachers, etc.) to assisting his fellow Veterans. He served on many levels, with no job left undone as he spent endless hours distributing Buddy Poppies, volunteering at the State Headquarters and serving as Post Commander. He attained All-State Commander status many times including Captain of the All-State Team. In 2013, Chuck received one of only three Lifetime Achievement Awards ever given by the Department of Minnesota VFW. Services will be April 26 in Crystal, MN.

## GOPHER OVERSEAS

Department of Minnesota, VFW, Editor  
Rice Street Station, P.O. Box 17146, Saint Paul, MN 55117  
Phone:(651)291-1757 - Fax:(651)291-2753  
Email: vfwmnoffice@gmail.com - Webpage: www.mnvwf.org

#### Publications Committee:

Tom Hanson, Commander; Chad Solheid, Sr. Vice Commander;  
Curt Hermanson, Jr. Vice Commander; Barry Henriksen, Judge Advocate.

The Gopher Overseas is the official publication of the  
Department of Minnesota, VFW.

It is published three times a year out of the State Headquarters building at:  
State Veterans Service Building, 20 W 12th St. Saint Paul, MN 55155.

Upcoming deadlines are July 25, November 25, and March 25

To: VFW National Headquarters  
Data Entry Department  
406 West 36th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Please Note the below address change: (Please Print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Number: \_\_\_\_\_

# Department Headquarters News

## Senior Vice Commander

By Chad Solheid, State Senior Vice Commander

Hello from Sunny Minnesota! This has been a great year with many new faces to be seen. I have traveled around the state and met several new members as well as some more seasoned ones. I want to thank you for your support and trust in me as your Sr. Vice Commander for the past year. I hope to see you all at the State Convention in June.

This year is not over yet. We still need to contact our existing members that have not yet paid their dues for this membership year. The lists have gone out to the District Commanders with relocates and unpaid members in your area. These members are more than enough to make the Department of Minnesota 100% in Membership. I know we can do it. If there are any posts out there that need help or have questions, please don't hesitate to call the Department. They will get you the information you need or will contact the person that needs to talk to you. We are here to help.

Mid-Winter Conference was another success. The State Voice of Democracy winner was from the 7th District, Abigail Parker, and she went on to Washington D.C. to compete on the National level and finished with a Scholarship of \$2000.00. I was able to attend the banquet in Washington D.C and see her receive her award.

It is time to start thinking about moving forward out of the winter and into the spring. Let's spring board our way to the top. I participated in a membership round-up this past fall and some great ideas came out of the meetings we had at the posts we visited. One of them was having a community event at a post that will be attended by both the District and Department officers. This event would be geared towards a need in the community or area of the district it is held in. This can be a one- or two-day event to be decided by the district. The goal is to provide

**SR VICE - Cont. Page 9**

## Membership

By Dale Hoogeveen, State Membership Chair

Greetings to the comrades, sisters and brothers of the Department of Minnesota. Last month I had the privilege of attending the National Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, which reinforced the fact the strength of the Veterans of Foreign Wars lies in our number of members. Our elected officials are keenly aware of the votes those numbers represent and we need to do all we can, to at a minimum, sustain our current level. A better end state would be to increase our numbers and I am confident our goal of 100% for this year is going to happen. As of March 25, 2019, the Department of Minnesota ranks 21st world-wide at 97.69%. Generally, 97.69% would be looked as an admirable accomplishment however to me that number represents the 868 comrades needed to achieve 100%, something our department hasn't done in many years. Of the twenty departments ahead of us, seventeen have less total members than Minnesota has life

members! I tell you this not to evoke sympathy or to provide rationale for our current standing but to congratulate everyone for your outstanding efforts thus far! Minnesota is the 10th largest department in the Veterans of Foreign Wars making our mission of recruiting, retaining and reinstating eligible veterans crucial to the success of our National Organization. District and Post Commanders, we need your leadership more than ever!

The Department currently has 70 posts that have achieved 100% or greater. Since the last Gopher Overseas'r was published the following posts increased membership to 100% or greater – Congratulations and thank you!

- **District 1** – Stewartville 8980, Lake City 9729, Rochester 1215, Oronoco 9647, Waseca 1642, Blooming Prairie 878, Mabel 5769
- **District 2** – Hutchinson 906, Chaska 1791, Prior Lake 6208, Sherburn 8261, Winsted 9232

**MBRSHP - Cont. Page 13**

## CMDR- Cont. from Page 1

I need to ask once again that every member make an effort to sign up at least one new member to this great organization. We need to have our District and Post Officers to do what they too were elected to do. Direct contact with your members to ensure they are members in good standing is essential. I implore that we all take action to increase our membership base - our continued existence depends on it.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone for the courtesies and good will extended to me over the course of the four years I served in a leadership position of this great Department. I have enjoyed the close comradeship we have shared throughout this duration. Please know that even though I am leaving office I am not finished in this Organization. I plan to remain an active participant in what we do because of my passion about our mission to take care of our brothers and sisters in arms that may be in need or less fortunate than they deserve.

The wisdom and perspectives acquired from serving have been so very rewarding. An individual has little insight on some of the experiences and how to react. My hope, however, is that I conducted myself with integrity and virtue. Additionally, I have tried to always act in the best interest of the Department of Minnesota. Oftentimes decisions are made from the heart instead of the brain, or vice versa, and may not meet the approval of all concerned. But the membership puts their trust in those they elect to be decisive.

I too wish to extend my best wishes to the officers that will lead this Department in the forthcoming years. I thank you for your support while serving together and all the dedication you have signed up for in the future. I have faith that you will lead with distinction.

And finally a special thanks to our dedicated staff employees at both our State Headquarters and our Claims Service Office. These individuals work hard every day to provide goods and services to the public and to our members. I offer them all a "pat on the back" for their commitment and loyalty.

I'll close with one of the oldest and most appropriate slogans of the Veterans of Foreign Wars: "It's not the price you pay to belong to the VFW, it's the price you paid to become eligible".

## Community Service

By Dewey Hermanson, State Community Service Chair



Greetings, Comrades, Brothers & Sisters:

Wow! Where has this year gone? It has zoomed by very fast. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Community Service

Chairman this past year. I want to personally extend my gratitude to those responsible for submitting the information required in putting together our "Community Service Reports" each month. The numbers for community service are through March 31st. They include 86,083 members doing 514,810.77 hours and \$2,503,442.79 in donations, great job. Congratulations and thank you to all the posts in achieving 100% reporting for our Department. Let us always remember we can't get credit for something we don't report.

I would also like to thank Commander Tom for this appointment.

### ATTENDING STATE CONVENTION:

VFW National Representative

**Kevin Jones**

Adjutant General  
2018-2019



Kevin C. Jones was appointed Adjutant General of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. on July 25, 2018, at the 119th VFW National Convention in Kansas City, Mo.

Prior to his election, he held appointed positions as Assistant Adjutant General, VFW Programs Director and as Administrative Operations Director. He joined the VFW National Headquarters staff in 1996 as an Accounting Manager. His other appointments included serving as Marketing Services Director, VFW Programs Deputy Director, Development Assistant Director and as Manager of Institutional Development, VFW Foundation.

Jones served in the United States Air Force for 12 years as an accounting technician, budget analyst and accounting manager. Among his assignments was a tour of duty at Osan Air Base, Korea. His numerous decorations include the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. He received his bachelor's degree in business from Troy State University while on active duty. He also received an associate of science degree in financial management from the Community College of the Air Force.

Kevin joined the VFW in 1996 at Post 5789 in Lee's Summit, Mo., later transferring to Post 7356 in Parkville, Mo., where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. He is a member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers and the Alpha Sigma Lambda Honor Society, Troy State University. Kevin and his wife, Kelly, reside in Smithville, Mo.

# Minnesota Auxiliary News



**STATE PRESIDENT**  
**VFW Auxiliary**  
**Patricia**  
**"Patches"**  
**Presfield**



Member of  
 VFW Post **4847**, Saint Cloud, MN

Well members, we are on the down slide of this 2018-2019 year. I hope all the Auxiliaries got the year end reports to the respective District Presidents. Loyalty Day/District Conventions are coming up soon... please make every effort to attend and make them a success. Remember, election of District officers takes place at this time. It would be really nice to have some new members step up and accept some of these offices.

It has been a year full of changes. We have lost so many wonderful members including Past Department Presidents...and a couple of Auxiliaries. On the flip side we have many new members, many of them male members, and we will be instituting a new Auxiliary in Shakopee.

Membership is still most important and National is stressing that we all try our very best to collect the dues of existing members... go out and recruit new members, seek out and get those members that have lapsed to rejoin. I understand it is a big job, but this is the only way we can keep our VFW Auxiliary organization strong. Remember, those

numbers matter, especially for our Veterans when it comes to fighting for rights and benefits.

Convention this year will be held in St. Cloud at the Kelly Inn, the National Representative will be National Buddy Poppy/ National Home Ambassador, Renee Fulk. ATS (Auxiliary Training Seminar) will be held on Thursday, June 13. Registration forms are available, your early registration is appreciated. Upcoming General Orders will have all the information for Convention.

Election of Officers for the 2019-2020 year is to be held now in April. Please get your election reports in immediately. Make sure if those members are Annual members, that they are and remain in Good Standing. This means their dues is paid and gets paid for the 2019-2020 year. Officers dues should be paid early and not wait till the end of December.

This has a been challenging but very rewarding year for me. Thank you to ALL the Auxiliary members for all you do!!! You are very much appreciated.

## Membership & Recruitment

By Sonia Tatge, State Membership Chair

Membership is a year-long program. We still have about 600 unpaid members in Minnesota at this late date. Membership helps us build our Auxiliaries so we can continue to do more for our veterans, our active-duty military and their families. It is necessary for all of us to contact these members who are not in good standing at the present time. We do not want to lose them. If assistance is needed, give them a helping hand this year.

NOW is also the time to make recruiting members for our VFW Auxiliary a top priority. Share what our organization has to offer when you ask someone to join! Some of these are:

- Support of our veterans, past, present, and future

- Legislative action
- Cancer Grants
- Cancer insurance (if your Auxiliary offers it)
- Additional insurance opportunities
- Community involvement
- Scholarship opportunities
- Promote patriotism
- Develop leadership skills

Membership teams, please share your story...that it is an honor to have a veteran in your family who makes you eligible for this great organization. Not everyone can join and your membership is an opportunity to honor your veteran's service and sacrifice. Stay positive and keep trying. Believe---you can do it!!

## PDP Beverly Butman Passes

1989-1990 Past Department President Passed Away February 13

Beverly Butman (MRS. KENNETH) was installed into the office of President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, Department of Minnesota on June 17, 1989, in Moorhead, Minnesota. As a promotional logo she adopted the teddy bear with the letters L.O.V.E. -"Love Our Veterans Ever".



Beverly joined the auxiliary thru her husband's service in the Army Air Corps, and as a member of the Henning-Erickson Aux. #380, of Montevideo she served in countless chairmanships and offices on her way to State President. As State President she attended meetings, parades, Special Olympics, Legislative Day, luncheons, and dinners throughout the state. She presided over four Council of Administration meetings, a leadership seminar, Fall Conference in St. Louis Park, Mid-winter Conference in Minneapolis, and Department Convention in Rochester, Minnesota, June, 1990.

During her busy year she represented Minnesota at the National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Big Ten Conference in Omaha, Nebraska (presided over by Big Ten President Pat Horack), the National President's Homecoming in Columbia, So. Carolina the National Mid Year Conference in Phoenix, Arizona where Beverly was named a VIP President, and she attended a seminar at the National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

During her year, the MN Voice of Democracy winner was

Tom Seltz of Fergus Falls. He then went on to achieve second place in the national VOD contest.

National President Alice Hutto made her official visit to Minnesota, Sept. 10th-12th, 1989. Department officers, National officers and chairmen accompanied her as she visited Districts One, Two, Three, Five, and Seven. Special monetary gifts were presented to benefit veterans at Sioux Falls VA Medical Center, Minneapolis VA Medical Center, Fargo VA Medical Center, Minneapolis and Hastings Veterans Homes. A Schwin Air Dyne Exercise cycle was given to the Kinesiotherapy Unit at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.

Beverly produced a first time Americanism project as she directed the video taping of "Uncle Sam and the Flag" for the benefit of young children. Over 10,000 children have viewed this tape starring President Beverly as Uncle Sam and Jr. Vice President Marlene Lambrecht as a nursery school child.

A new Auxiliary was instituted in the seventh district, the Holan-Kasheimer Auxiliary #2627 of Rockford, Minnesota.

She served with Department Commander Mike Brainard. In addition to her official duties Beverly underwent major surgery very early in her year, and later she sustained a broken leg, two major problems that failed to dampen her spirits or enthusiasm to aid veterans and their families.

### Auxiliary Officers & Members NOTE:

There will be a 2019-2020 FULL

**Council of Administration Meeting**  
**Sunday, June 16th, 2019**

Starting shortly after the Installation of New Officers  
 St Cloud Kelly Inn (State Convention Site)

ALL Interested Members are welcome to attend!

**This Meeting REPLACES the usual July C of A**

### ATTENDING STATE CONVENTION:

**Auxiliary National Representative**

**Renee Fulk**  
**Buddy Poppy/National Home Ambassador**  
**2018-2019**



Renee Fulk of San Clemente, Calif., currently serves the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) Auxiliary as the 2018-2019 National Ambassador for the "Buddy"®Poppy/ VFW National Home Program.

A Life Member of Dana Point Auxiliary 9934, Renee joined on the eligibility of her husband, Earl Fulk, who served in the U.S. Navy from 1966-1970. She has served the organization in several capacities, including Auxiliary, District and Department President. She also was elected to serve on the National Council of Administration from 2015-2017, representing California.

In her spare time, Renee enjoys traveling with her husband.

# Claims and Service Office Report

By Jon Gohn, Claims Director

## VFW Concerned With VA MISSION Act Implementation

### Congressional testimony reveals VA ignored vital input from veterans' service organization community

March 06, 2019

WASHINGTON – This morning, during testimony before a joint hearing of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. called for full congressional oversight over the implementation of the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

The organization made clear its dissatisfaction with the Department of Veterans Affairs' implementation thus far, citing arbitrary and misguided decision-making.

With more than 80 percent of VFW members relying on VA health care, and dedicating more than 10 million volunteer hours annually to supporting their fellow veterans at VA medical facilities, the VFW's views were actively solicited while drafting the legislation, but the organization has not been engaged to ensure its efficient implementation.

"Unlike appeals modernization, VA has elected to largely ignore the views of the nation's largest war veterans' organization when drafting rules to implement the VA MISSION Act," said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence, who leads the more than 1.6 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary.

"VA executive leadership should be embarrassed that they have discontinued VA's strong collaborative relationship with the VFW and chosen to make arbitrary decisions without consulting those who most intimately understand VA's mission and the needs of the veterans' community."

Lawrence went on to state that through its lackluster implementation, VA has betrayed its vow to care for veterans and ignored the lessons learned from the Veterans Choice Program.

He also called on Congress to return earned disability benefits to some 90,000 Blue Water Navy veterans, a move failed by the 115th Congress.

"VA cannot continue to deny

**VA MISSION - Cont. Page 10**

## Student Veterans Helping Student Veterans

### The University of Kansas' Student Veterans of America chapter aids or assists veterans and their dependents through their college education

March 07, 2019

University of Kansas Student Veterans of America Chapter Vice President of Media Kylie Coffelt, Vice President of Finance Mike Ellis and President Omar Williams hang out on campus in front of the Campanile, a WWII memorial, in November in Lawrence, Kan. SVA chapters across the country advocate for improvements to benefits for the more than 700,000 student veterans on its campuses. Photo by Susan McSpadden. Over the past few years, groups of college students across the country have

made it their mission to provide military-affiliated students with the advocacy and resources needed for a successful college education and post-graduation careers.

The University of Kansas (KU) Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter, located in Lawrence, Kan., is one example.

SVA chapters nationwide advocate for improvements to student-vet benefits while helping vets attending their specific college navigate the complexities of academic life.

"SVA isn't like any other college organization," 2018-19 KU SVA President Omar Williams said. "We are not a fraternity or a sorority. We are very professional. We have the ability to network

**STUDENTS - Cont. Page 14**

## VA Makes New Nasal Spray Drug Available for Treatment-Resistant Depression

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced its health care providers will now be able to offer the newly approved Spravato nasal spray for treatment-resistant depression.

The treatment will be made available to Veterans based on their individual medical needs combined with providers' clinical assessments.

The move follows the March 5 Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of Spravato (esketamine) nasal spray. Spravato was approved for use in conjunction with an oral antidepressant for the treatment of treatment-resistant depression in adults.

"We're pleased to be able to expand options for Veterans with depression who have not responded to other treatments," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "It reflects our commitment to seek new ways to provide the best health care available for our nation's Veterans."

Spravato will be available through a restricted distribution system under an FDA-approved Risk Evalua-

tion and Mitigation Strategy (REMS). The purpose of the REMS is to mitigate the risks of serious adverse outcomes and the potential abuse and misuse of Spravato.

VA health care providers will monitor Veterans for serious adverse outcomes, such as sedation and difficulty with attention, judgment and thinking (dissociation), abuse and misuse, worsening of depression and suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Veterans will self-administer Spravato nasal spray under the direct observation of a health care provider in a certified medical facility, and then must be monitored by a health care provider for at least two hours after receiving their dose. Spravato cannot be dispensed directly to Veterans for use at home.

*For additional information on access to Mental Health Support for Veterans, visit VA Mental Health. Veterans in immediate crisis may call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 and press 1, text to 838255 or chat online at Veterans Crisis Line.*

## DOD and VA Issue Call for Strategies to Prevent Suicide

### On eve of joint conference in August, DOD and VA issue call for strategies to prevent suicide

March 29 is deadline for abstracts to address critical issue affecting military and Veteran communities

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) announced that they have again joined forces to host a bi-annual conference that will address suicide within the military and Vet-

eran communities.

Ahead of the 2019 VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference, scheduled Aug. 26-29, the departments are seeking abstracts for presentations, which must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. (EST) March 29 at [https://whova.com/web/vspc\\_201908/](https://whova.com/web/vspc_201908/).

"Suicide is a national public health concern," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "It's critical that everyone work collectively to develop

**SUICIDE - Cont. Page 9**

## VA Continues to Pioneer Metal Health

### VA continues to pioneer new approaches for treating Veteran mental health conditions

New study demonstrates effectiveness of implementing collaborative team method

WASHINGTON — A recent study by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published in the Journal of the American Medical Association Network Open on March 1, showed positive outcomes for Veterans struggling with multiple mental health conditions.

The randomized implementation trial, which included 5,596 Veterans receiving care in a VA outpatient mental health clinic, showed that effective teamwork and a patient's active involvement in their care can reduce hospitalization rates for Veterans with mental health conditions.

"VA is committed to ensuring Veterans receive the best mental health care available," VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said. "Combining best practices, such as those identified in the study allows VA to continually refine our mental health services."

The study outlines effective steps for Veterans, their clinicians and the larger VA health care system to all work together to positively impact the mental health of Veterans. The new collaborative, interdisciplinary team approach to outpatient mental health, demonstrated:

Reduced rate of mental health hospital-

izations among Veterans treated by the teams.

Improved mental health status for Veterans with multiple mental health conditions.

Improved clinician team function in terms of clarity of team member roles and prioritization of team over individual goals.

During the study, researchers worked with existing VA Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP) teams in mental health outpatient clinics. BHIP teams generally comprise psychiatrists, psychologists, RN care managers, advanced practice nurses, peer support specialists, social workers and licensed therapists.

Researchers helped these teams to align their care processes with the scientifically proven (i.e., evidence-based) Collaborative Chronic Care Model (CCM), which is an approach for integrating behavioral health care and engaging Veterans to be active participants in their care. This study extended the CCM, which had been scientifically proven to improve outcomes in formal clinical research trials, to VA outpatient clinics.

As a result of the findings collected during the trial and based off Veteran health status and satisfaction data gathered during telephone interviews at baseline and at six and 12 months of support, VA plans to nationally implement the unique team-based model of care over the next two years to benefit more Veterans and those who care for them.

# Capital Hill Press

By Tommy Johnson, Legislative Chairman

We are past the half-way point in the 2019 Minnesota Legislative session. Veterans Day On The Hill 2019 was held on March 20th and was very well attended. The focus was on the few bills affecting Veterans that your VFW, as members of the Commanders Task Force, the Mn Association of County Veteran Service Officers, and The United Veteran Legislative Council hosted this event with a rally at the Cedar Street Armory and a march to the Capitol Rotunda from the Veterans Services Building.

The three "must have" issues we need to get enacted this session are as follows:

**Homestead Market Exclusion Modifications** – We support eliminating the 8 year limit on the property tax exclusion for surviving spouses whose Veteran dies during, or as a result of, their service in the United States Armed Forces. The benefit will be available to the widow/widower until the property is sold, transferred or otherwise disposed. This allows surviving spouses to enjoy one of the few benefits for a longer period of time after the death of a qualifying Veteran. In addition, we support a one-time exclusion transfer so surviving spouses have the option of moving to a new home of equal or lesser value. Finally, we support changing the application due date from July 1st to December 31st of a given year. These initiatives are reflected in House Files HF 204 and HF 205 and Senate Files SF 113 and 114.

**Employee Tax Credit for Hiring Unemployed or Disabled Veterans** – We support the creation of a tax credit that urges employers to hire an unemployed or disabled Veteran. This is important because Veteran unemployment rates are significantly



higher than non-Veterans. This initiative is reflected in House File HF 120 and Senate File SF 300.

**MDVA Budget and Funding for Three New Veterans Homes** – We support the Governor's budget recommendations for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs ("MDVA") as they can continue to serve our states's Veterans and our families. Services funded include the Minnesota GI Bill and the State Soldier's Assistance Program, among others. Finally, if the Federal Government approves construction for three new Veterans Homes (Bemidji, Montevideo and Preston) later this year or early 2020, we support funding the operational budget so staff can be hired to give our Veterans the high level of care they have earned and deserve. These budget recommendations are reflected in House File HF 2086 and Senate File SF 2358.

*Please contact your State Representative and your State Senator and let them know – respectfully – that we are asking their support to ensure these bills are passed this session.*

# Washington Conference

March 2-6, 2019

Department of Minnesota Officers joined State Officers from across the Country for the Annual VFW National Legislative Conference March 2-6, 2019. The event included sessions to discuss the 2019 VFW Legislative Priority Goals, meet with respective State Representatives and the ceremony announcing the National Winners of the student Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Scholarship Competitions.



Pictured on left: Greetings awaited Minnesota VFW Delegates at Congressman Emmer's Office. Pictured on right: MN State Quartermaster Jerry Brletich, State Jr. Vice Curt Hermanson, MN State Representative (Dist.2) Angie Craig, State Commander Tom Hanson, State Adjutant Patrick Bohmer.



Pictured above: MN VFW State Legislative Chair Tommy Johnson, State Sr. Vice Chad Solheid, National Council Member Gary Anderson, MN State Senator Tina Smith, State Jr. Vice Curt Hermanson, Past State Commander Dewey Hermanson, Past 7th District Auxiliary President Nanci Bohmer, Past 1st District President Cheryl Hermanson.



Pictured above: MN VFW State Legislative Chair Tommy Johnson, Past State Commander Dewey Hermanson, State Sr. Vice Chad Solheid, State Commander Tom Hanson, MN State Representative Dean Phillips (Dist. 3), National Council Member Gary Anderson, State Quartermaster Jerry Brletich, State Adjutant Patrick Bohmer, Past 2nd District Commander Dale Hoogveen, State Jr. Vice Curt Hermanson.

Veterans of Foreign Wars- Department of Minnesota <b>DEPARTMENT CONVENTION</b> June 12-16, 2019	
<b>HOUSING RESERVATIONS</b>  Call the Hotel OR Log-in to Make Your Reservations. Simply follow the steps below and then make your reservations. <b>***DEADLINE May 22nd***</b>  <b>Kelly Inn- Best Western Plus</b> 100 4th Ave. S., St Cloud, MN Rate: \$92.00 Per Night Plus Tax  • Check-in 3 pm/ Out 11 am • Cancel by 6 pm of the night of arrival to avoid charges  Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____  <input type="checkbox"/> One Bed OR <input type="checkbox"/> Two Beds  Share With: _____ Special: <input type="checkbox"/> Handicap <input type="checkbox"/> Near Elevator <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  Get Credit Card Ready... CALL Kelly Inn to Reserve: 320-253-0606 'VFW State Convention' Room Block OR Reserve On-Line: <a href="https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24113.html?groupId=V61ZIOF8">https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24113.html?groupId=V61ZIOF8</a> Conf. # _____	<b>BANQUET RESERVATIONS</b> SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2019 Best Western Kelly Inn, St Cloud, MN  The Annual Department Convention Banquet will host the Safety Award Winners and naming of the Captain of the All-State Commander Team. This event is open to all members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary.  <b>BANQUET:</b> Social Hour 6:00 P.M. Dinner 7:00 P.M.  <b>MENU:</b> Thick-cut Pork Chop Butterflied and Stuffed with Homemade Sausage and Sage Dressing, Mashed Potato & Gravy Fresh Sunshine Blend Vegetables, Spinach & Spring Mix with Bacon Crumbles, Red Onion, Gorgonzola Cheese tossed with Red Wine Vinaigrette, Alt. Desserts: Chocolate Tiger Cake and Turtle topped Cheesecake  <b>TICKETS: \$30.00 per person</b>  Please note if you need handicapable arrangements or have specific dietary needs.  Ticket orders will be stamped with date of receipt and filled in that order. <b>FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.</b> Tickets will bear a table number and orders will be filled as received. <b>THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP POST AND AUXILIARY DELEGATES TOGETHER IS TO ORDER THE TICKETS AT THE SAME TIME.</b>  Tickets will not be mailed out. You may pick up tickets during Registration Hours. <b>PLEASE ORDER EARLY!!!</b> Fill out form below and return to: VFW Post #428 Attn: Convention Banquet Order 9 - 18th Ave. N St Cloud, MN 56303 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Post #428
<b>BANQUET RESERVATION FORM</b> Saturday, June 15, 2019 - 7:00 P.M.	
PLEASE RESERVE _____ TICKETS FOR THE ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION BANQUET. Enclosed is \$ _____ made out to <b>Post #428</b> to cover the cost of \$30.00 per person.  TICKETS ARE BEING RESERVED BY: _____ PHONE # _____ EMAIL _____ POST/AUXILIARY # _____ DISTRICT # _____ SPECIAL REQUESTS: _____  <b>**Deadline to Order: June 7, 2019**</b>	

<b>Auxiliary Training Seminar (A.T.S.)</b>	
<b>WHO:</b>	Auxiliary Officers & Members
<b>WHAT:</b>	Program, Leadership & Auxiliary Training
<b>WHERE:</b>	Best Western Kelly Inn, 100 4th Ave. S. St Cloud, MN
<b>WHEN:</b>	Thursday, June 13th, 9 AM — 5:00 PM
<b>COST:</b>	\$35 or \$45 per person based on supplies Includes registration, supplies, beverages and lunch
<b>DEADLINE:</b>	May 23, 2019
*****	
<b>Registration for A.T.S.</b>	AUX # _____ District # _____
Complete Name _____	
Position Title _____ Primary Phone # _____	
Email Address (or Mailing Address) _____	
<b>CHOOSE ONE:</b>	
<b>Opt #1:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is \$35 Chk # _____ reservation with... <b>Choose One:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> flash drive OR <input type="checkbox"/> paper copies
<b>OR</b>	
<b>Opt #2:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is \$45 Chk # _____ reservations with flash drive AND paper copies
<b>MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "DEPARTMENT OF MN VFW"</b> <b>&amp; Mail Form To:</b> Department of MN VFW Rice Street Station, P.O. Box 17146, St Paul, MN 55117  REGISTRATION FORM AND REMITTANCE MUST BE RETURNED <b>NO LATER THAN May 23rd, 2019</b>	

# State Convention - June 12-14, 2019

## VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

### 2019 State Convention TENTATIVE Agenda

Best Western Kelly Inn- Saint Cloud, Minnesota

As of 4/2/19

#### **WEDNESDAY, June 12:**

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM Early Registration for OTI  
6:00 – 8:30 PM **District Officers Leadership Training**

#### **THURSDAY, June 13:**

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM OTI & ATS Registration (Aux. times may vary)

#### **OFFICERS TRAINING SCHOOL:**

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM **VFW Officers Training Institute**  
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM **Quartermaster Class**  
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM **Auxiliary Training Seminars**  
9 AM – 7 PM VFW Convention Registration  
1:00 – 4:00 PM Auxiliary Convention Registration  
2:00 – 7:00 PM Veterans Home Displays

#### **STATE CONVENTION BUSINESS:**

3:30 – 5:00 PM Finance Committee meeting  
5:00 – 6:00 PM Dept. of MN V.F.W. Charitable Assoc. meeting  
6:00 – 9:00 PM **Auxiliary Council of Administration**  
6:00 – 8:00 PM **V.F.W. Council of Administration meeting**

#### **FRIDAY, JUNE 14:**

6:00 AM - 7:00 AM Rise & Shine Workouts (Watch for Details at Registration)  
7:00 AM – 4:00 PM Veterans Homes Displays  
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM VFW Registration  
8:00 AM – 3:00 PM Auxiliary Registration/Credentials  
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM **V.F.W. and Auxiliary Joint Awards Session**  
11:45 AM Past State Commanders and Presidents Luncheon  
1:00 – 2:00 PM **V.F.W. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**  
1. National Security/Foreign Affairs/POW 2. By-Laws/Ritual/Rules  
3. General Resolutions/Extension-Membership 4. Finance/Internal Affairs  
5. Legislative/Veterans' Service/Employment  
1:30 – 4:30 PM **Opening Auxiliary Convention**  
2:30 – 4:30 PM **Gambling Meeting**  
6:00 – 7:00 PM **Memorial Service (Joint VFW & Auxiliary)**

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 15:**

6:00 AM - 7:00 AM Rise & Shine Workouts (Watch for Details at Registration)  
8:00 AM – 1:30 PM VFW Registration  
8:00 AM – 3:00 PM Auxiliary Registration  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM **Open VFW Convention**  
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM **Auxiliary Convention Session**  
1:15 PM – 3:15 PM **Caucuses**  
4:00 – 5:00 PM Church Service(s)  
5:45 – 7:00 PM Social  
7:00 PM **Banquet**

#### **SUNDAY, June 16:**

7:30 AM – 9:30 AM VFW Registration  
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM **Reconvene VFW Convention**  
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM **Auxiliary Convention Session**  
12:00 – 12:45 PM **Joint Installation of Officers\*\***  
12:45 – 1:00 PM Council of Administration Brief 2019-20 Meeting  
12:45 PM Auxiliary FULL 2019-20 C of A Meeting

### **35th ANNUAL OFFICER'S TRAINING INSTITUTE (O.T.I.)**

**TO:** POST COMMANDERS, SR. VICE CMDR. AND JR. VICE CMDR. ELECTS, QUARTERMASTERS AND TRUSTEES...  
**AND ALL Interested MEMBERS**

**WHAT:** OFFICER'S TRAINING SCHOOL

**WHEN:** JUNE 13, 2019

**WHERE:** Best Western Kelly Inn, 100 4th Ave. S., St. Cloud, MN

**TIME:** 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

**COST:** \$75.00 per person by May 24, 2019  
– includes beverages, lunch, registration, Manual Binder and supplies.  
An optional CD available containing OTI Powerpoints, Manuals and More.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**OFFICER'S TRAINING INSTITUTE**  
**MEMEBER REGISTRATION** Post # \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (or Mailing Address) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is Chk # \_\_\_\_\_ for \$75.00 for the O.T.I. training on June 13  
**Make checks payable to "Department of Minnesota, V.F.W."**

**MAIL FORM TO:** Department of Minnesota, V.F.W.; Rice Street Station,  
PO Box 17146; St Paul, MN 55117

**SCHOOL ATTENDING:**  **Commander** OR  **Quartermaster**  
 Class CD Requested

REGISTRATION FORM AND REMITTANCE MUST BE RETURNED  
**NO LATER THAN May 24th, 2019**

As June approaches, we reach yet another milestone... State Commander Tom Hanson will close out his year during the 100th State Convention.

All members are encouraged to gather in Saint Cloud where we will celebrate, reminisce, honor and plan all things V.F.W. as we close out the 2018-2019 service year.

#### **LOCATION**

This year, we return to the Best Western Kelly Inn located in Saint Cloud, Minnesota. Our host will be the St. Cloud Granite Post #428 who is planning for a comfortable visit including shuttles to their Post home to enjoy their hospitality.

St Cloud provides a convenient meeting location with many stores in restaurants within walking distance or a short drive. Looking for a little activity? The Kelly Inn sits right on the river with access to a walkway along the river... a great chance to stretch your legs and get some fresh air throughout the weekend.

#### **LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

Plan to start your weekend with learning opportunities for ALL V.F.W. and Auxiliary members. The Officers Training School (OTI) is available to all Post members. Auxiliary members can attend the Auxiliary Training Seminar (ATS). Look for registration forms in this paper, monthly General Orders or the Department website.

Learn about how your Post should operate, proper meeting procedure, membership recruitment and retention and how to run fulfill our mission to serve our Active Duty Military, Veterans and their families. Take advantage of this great chance to become better acquainted with YOUR organization. Quartermasters will not be left out- a session will be held for them, taught by NEW Department QM Jerry Brletich, that will address procedures of interest to new and experienced QMs alike.

Those involved with or interested in any of the gambling functions of your Post or Auxiliary, can attend the Gambling Control Board presentation on Friday afternoon. The Minnesota Gambling Control speaker always does a great job explaining proper procedure and legal obligations of conducting gambling activities.

#### **BUSINESS SESSIONS**

State Convention is where we conduct most of our official business for the year. We review the Department By-Laws, make organizational proposals that will be forwarded to the National Convention for consideration, recap all of our service programs from the 2018-2019 year and more. During this weekend, the various committees will meet and the Council of Administrations will be open for all to attend as they discuss the business of the Organizations.

In addition, we hold election of officers. Have your say in determining who will lead the Department of Minnesota into the 2020 year. A tentative State Convention Agenda can be found in this paper detailing

all of the various meetings.

#### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

While we all agree that our Organization's business functions are important, it's the special events that we always enjoy... many of which come with a strong tradition rooted in the mission of our organization. Friday brings two, long standing traditions- the Joint Awards Session and the evening Memorial Service.

The Joint Awards Session celebrates all of the Post and Auxiliary accomplishments. Community Service, Poppy Program, Youth Activities and other programs honor outstanding members and Posts working their programs. Find out who has the best Newsletters, worked with the most youth and who donated the most to assisting our Veterans. The program is wrapped up by announcing the Post Commanders and Quartermasters that have attained All-State status... a huge accomplishment that really should be shared by the members who supported their Commander and Post by such efforts as working programs, recruiting members and conducting a Poppy Distribution program.

The Annual Memorial Service is a favorite of all V.F.W. and Auxiliary members. This is an opportunity to honor those having served our Country and our organization, but are no longer with us. The solemn and honorable guarding of the memorial tomb is always touching. Attendees will also be moved by this years memorial speaker. Closing the service will be TAPS. This annual Memorial Service is a MUST attend and as words cannot explain the impact it leaves with you.

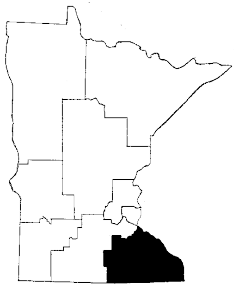
Saturday evening brings the Convention Banquet. This is an opportunity to gather with friends and enjoy a wonderful meal. The State Commander will conduct a parade of checks to benefit his Commander's Project- Patriot Assistance Dogs. Attendees will join in honoring our Safety (Police, Fire and EMT) winners as well as the State Scout of the Year. Our National Representatives V.F.W. Adjutant General Kevin Jones and Auxiliary Buddy Poppy/National Home Ambassador Renee Fulk will address the gathering and provide news and greetings from the National Organization. The night culminates with the naming of the Captain of the All-State Commanders Team... the highlight of any Post's year.

#### **PERFECT WEEKEND**

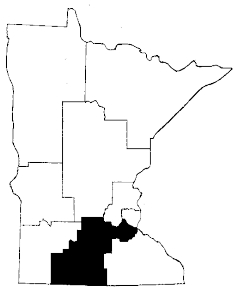
If you really think about what a 'perfect' weekend would entail, for many it would include accomplishing a little something, getting in a walk or activity, enjoying some time with others and having some fun.

In that case, this may just be the PERFECT weekend! Take part in conducting official organizational **business**, **learn** about programs you're interested in, **celebrate** accomplishments of the year, **honor** those that have served our Country... and while you're at it, join us for a little **exercise** during the Rise & Shine Workouts. The PERFECT weekend awaits... make your plans TODAY!

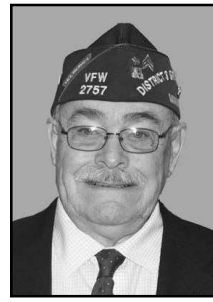
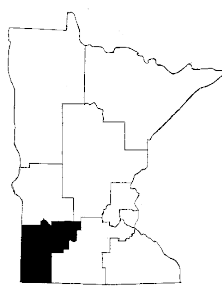
# News from YOUR District Commanders and Presidents!



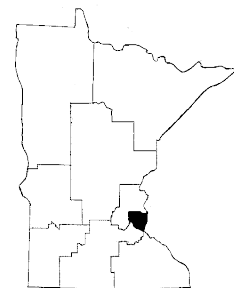
**Nathan Pike, Commander  
First District**



**Roy Bressler, Commander  
Second District**



**Buck Underwood, Commander  
Third District**



**Paul Lindahl, Commander  
Fourth District**

Greetings First District Comrades and Auxiliary Members!

I will start with a reiteration of my final comments from my last article: Shoot, move and communicate. This is a team effort; your team is YOUR Post membership and Auxiliary membership. Work together for the common good of the organization. Be relevant and active within your communities. Keep moving forward together. The year is not a sprint but a test of endurance and relevance. Be both.

My point is the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Auxiliary are a TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) in our Post and our communities. The leadership of the Post and the leadership of the Auxiliary should be able to work together for the common good of the Post. Trivial personalities and petty jealousies can and will destroy the organization if the TEAM cannot put aside personal differences and work for the common good of the organization there will be failure. IF this first portion of the article hits a nerve move beyond because this is not really about one person, this is about the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary and working together for our Veterans.

Moving on, I believe it is safe to say that the First District has heard the call on membership and is working towards the goal of achieving one-hundred percent for the district and our state. Senior-Vice Tom French is preaching the gospel of membership and the results are coming in. I know this because the Posts that are achieving one-hundred per-

**1ST CMDR - Cont. Page 10**



**Karen England, Auxiliary  
President First District**

In thinking about volunteering and the mission of this organization, I chose an OWL as my symbol, and the slogan: "Be WISE & Honor Our Veterans". In breaking down the word WISE, I planned to take one letter from each of the letters in the word "WISE" to talk about at each of our District Meetings. To be WISE, we need to be: Welcoming, Inspiring, Serving, and Empowering! No one wants to sit in "meetings" - people want to part of something exiting, meaningful, and fun! We need to focus on appealing to those who we already know have limited time to

**1ST PRES - Cont. Page 10**

Well, here it is the 2nd day of Spring and the weather is supposed to 50 degrees above zero not below. This is something we all have been patiently awaiting. Late this past winter was extremely hard on everyone. Our District meeting scheduled for March 9th at Mankato Post 950 had to be cancelled due to the weather. With that all behind us, we can look forward to blue skies and warmer temperatures.

Our 2nd District Convention will be held in New Ulm, at Sr Vice Pat Schipper's Home Post 1648. All the meetings will be held in New Ulm's Community Center which is located at 600 German Street. The meetings will start at 8 AM, lunch will also be served at the Community Center, the remaining District activities will follow, finishing up the elections and installations of next year's officers.

This past year has gone by so very fast. Many things have transpired since the beginning of the year. One of our Post has been having it's up and downs. Earlier they had decided to keep their canteen closed and are now struggling with the decision to keep their building or sell it. Having gone through that with my own Post, I know those decision will not be made easily.

The next is the big elephant in the room membership. 7 out of our 35 Posts are a 100%, there are several that are within 10 or less members from achieving that goal. I feel strongly that the District can be 100%; but it will take a lot of effort on everyone's part to make it happen. We can finish this year out as the "Solid Second".



**Paty Thron, Auxiliary  
President Second District**

I would like to start out congratulating all the Auxiliaries in Second District as they have all been very successful in aiding our Veterans and their families. Our next District meeting will be Loyalty Days being held in New Ulm. The meetings will be held at the Community Center with continental Breakfast at 7 am and meetings starting at 8 am to 10 am. There will be a joint Memorial Service and Flag retirement at 10:15. Lunch will be 12 to 1 with the live auction at 1:15. I will be honoring all Past Second District Presidents at this luncheon. Remember

**2ND PRES - Cont. Page 10**

Hello from the Third District. First I want to thank all the Posts that have reached 100% and the ones that are close to that mark, great work. Also I thank the Auxiliary for all the hard work they do for the District and the great work and support to the MN Vets Home Luverne. Thank you so much.

Our District is looking forward to our District meeting in Canby to help them celebrate there 100th anniversary as a VFW Post. Also be thinking of new Officers and Chairmen for the next 2 years.



**MaryAnne O'Reilly, Auxiliary  
President Third District**

Greetings from the 3rd district,

It is very encouraging and motivating as we are reading year-end reports from all our auxiliaries and becoming aware of all that has been done in the past year for our veterans, their families and our youth. It is the fuel we all need to keep going to reach our goals for another year.

We are preparing for our 3rd district meeting April 13 which is being held at Canby with Jamie Cassavant as our Department Representative and also will be celebrating Canby VFW post's 100th anniversary. All are welcome to attend to honor our veterans past and present as we recognize they were among the first to organize in the entire country!

We are looking forward to seeing you all at our June Convention in St. Cloud.



**Cleo Bonham, Auxiliary  
President Fourth District**

The 4th District Auxiliary convention will be Saturday, April 20th. We will meet at the Roseville VFW post home and have a memorial service at 8 AM and the convention at 9 AM.

The 4th District has been very busy. In January, we made weighted lap blankets for the Minneapolis Veterans' Home. We met for an afternoon and completed four. Our sewing chairman, Joanne Brown finished up

Greetings from the 4th District as we approach spring and hopefully experience absence of snow until November. We conducted our last District Meeting on 12 January 2019 at North St Paul Post 1350. A focus since that meeting has been membership. As of this writing, District 4 is over 98.0%, with more than 50% of our posts having reached 100.0%.

I continue to visit posts and am pleased to observe the professionalism of their meetings and very impressed to learn of the numerous activities and events that enable them to support various groups (veterans, community, youth, etc.) via volunteer hours and donation dollars. Our Posts are currently actively engaged in conducting monthly membership meetings and a variety of events, including Lenten Fish Fries, Annual Awards Banquets, Veteran Spaghetti Dinners, etc.

Several of our members attended Veterans Day on the Hill at the Minnesota Capitol on 20 March. Thanks to Mick Aguirre and Dan Campanaro for arranging bus transportation departing and returning to Roseville Post 7555. Governor Walz addressed the veterans, stating "We will keep our promises to live up to the way you served." During the program, the group present sang "happy birthday" to three (3) WWII veterans, including our own Gordon Kirk, Past District and Past Department Commander and current Fourth District National Home Chairperson, celebrating his 96th birthday.

Our District Convention is scheduled on 20 April at Roseville Post 7555. Memorial Program will begin at 8:00 AM, conducted by our District Degree Team, with Convention to follow at 9:00 AM.

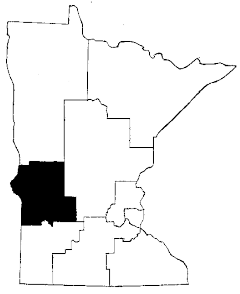
a few more. On March 23rd, we held a Family Freedom Festival (FFF) at Maplewood Mall. The FFF is a time to meet with the public and tell them about what the VFW and Auxiliary do for veterans and the community at large. We had a many displays and spoke with a lot of people. We gave out small American flags to the kids.

Thanks to everyone who assisted but especially to Terri Fenn and Cynthia Fritsche for the work coordinating. Thanks all for making this a great year!

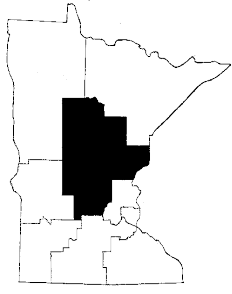


Don't forget to change your address back to Minnesota upon returning from the south.

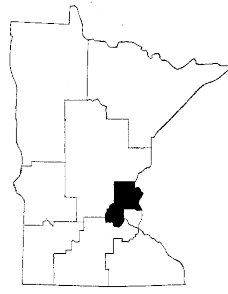




**Ann Hanson, Commander  
Fifth District**



**Aron Lambrecht, Commander  
Sixth District**



**Bob Bernier, Commander  
Seventh District**

Hello All,

Well it's been an interesting year with the weather and all. Well the 5th District has had it's ups and downs. We have lost some amazing soldiers in this year. We have had some interesting weather.

We have lost a post in Milton's 7826 but hopefully they will go to another post and help them reach 100 percent. But like always we will dust ourselves off and get things done.

One the lighter side I do have some new prospects so hopefully get them before I hand the rains over to the new Commander.

Well have a wonderful spring and see you at the Next District Meeting on Sunday April 28 Th at 2:00 or you can come at 1:00 for a light lunch before the meeting. Have a great day!! FYI this one won't be canceled!!

Greetings Comrades:

The Fighting Sixth District is currently at 98.49% for membership. About half of the posts in the district are over 100%. A few of our Posts are struggling with membership and have a giant goose egg thus far this year. I am hoping a little peer pressure/shaming might help them! Just 90 members away from 100%-we can do this! The help of all District and Department officers is available, please reach out for assistance if you are not at 100%!

I am hoping everyone can make it out to the Testimonial and District Meeting coming up in just over a month! Attendance has been a struggle for many of the posts in our district and I am hoping we can change that!

First off on a sad note, District 7 and the Department of Minnesota lost a true legend this month. Chuck Quigley passed away. He was such a fine man and inspiration to all who knew him. He will be missed by all. He gave so much to our organization; we honor him by continuing his legacy and doing what we can to ensure our organization continues to thrive.

Congratulations to the District 7 representatives at the State Hockey Tournament, Centennial, who are Champions this year in the AA level. And thank you to all our representatives at the tournament, Centennial, Andover, Champlain Park, and Rogers in the A level. The hockey program is alive and well in District 7 thanks to the efforts of Jim Hesselgrave. Along with a number of members from the Elk River VFW Post, this Championship is due in large part to not only the hard work of these kids, but the organization put together by Jim. Great job in fulfilling this part of our mission.

At the time of writing this, District 7 is still in first place in membership by a slim margin. Congratulations to all the Districts for having a great year in membership and thank you to our District Membership chair, Scott Hanson and all the Posts for their work. Truly a great job.

Looking forward to our District Convention and next District meeting to be held at Palmer Lake VFW on April 13, 2019.



**Pat Bjur-Johnson, Auxiliary  
President Seventh District**

Hello Auxiliary members! Spring has sprung after a long winter. Been very busy with volunteer services at the VA Hospital for Valentines Day, passing out hats, pins and cards made by the children. In March we did Adult Day Care, bingo and games night at the VA Hospital also.

I attended Veterans Day on the Hill at the State Capitol on March 20 and was happy to see such a great turnout in support for our veterans.

Our District Convention will be April 13th at Palmer Lake Post #3915 followed by installation and a joint testimonial.

This summer will be busy with Memorial Day, picnics, parades, the 4th of July, and Labor Day. Thank you all for your hard work on all of our programs. Keep membership as a top priority and recruit new members to keep our organization strong.

I wish a speedy recovery to all those that have been ill and my deepest sympathy to those who have lost a loved one.

### VA Mission- Cont. from Page 5

assistance for veterans who are sick and dying from Agent Orange-related diseases. To ensure Blue Water Navy veterans never have their earned benefits arbitrarily stripped away again, this Congress must pass the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act."

The VFW did commend the committees for joining the VFW in opposing the privatization of VA care, and reiterated that it will fight any attempt in that direction.

Lawrence also reminded committee members that the VFW has led or played a key role in every reform and/or expansion of veterans benefits to include modernization of the VA appeals process. And while the new process has the best interest of veterans at the forefront and alleviates the requirement that veterans wait approximately five years for decisions, the VFW will continue to keep a watchful eye on the processes.

"With more than 2,100 accredited service officers who last year assisted 526,000 veterans obtain benefits, we will keep a close eye on how Regional Offices and the Board of Appeals perform under the new framework and help VA address any unintended consequences," said Lawrence.

"Specifically, VA must properly address the legacy appeals backlog and improve quality so veterans get quick and accurate decisions on their claims, instead of poorly developed decisions that are immediately appealed."

The staggering veterans suicide rate

was also an important topic addressed today. Lawrence conveyed the VFW's work toward addressing the issue, and asked that Congress play an active role in helping to reduce the veterans suicide rate by:

- Conducting aggressive oversight of VA's mental health programs and hiring efforts to ensure veterans have access to care when they turn to VA for help.
- Expanding peer-to-peer support programs.
- Passing legislation to study medical cannabis.

"Suicide is a serious issue. We must do what is needed to save the 20 veterans who take their own lives — every day," he remarked.

He added that VA must consider how complementary and alternative therapies can help veterans cope with PTSD and other conditions such as chronic pain.

Several other key points made during today's testimony included the call to end sequestration, the demand of Congress to pass the Burn Pits Accountability Act, enact concurrent receipt of retirement pay and service-connected disability compensation, and improve gender-specific care for women veterans.

Video of today's testimony is available at [vfw.org/VFWDC2019](http://vfw.org/VFWDC2019), and the written version can be accessed here.

Today's testimony marks the end of the 2019 VFW Legislative Conference, where approximately 500 VFW leaders traveled to the nation's capital to discuss various veterans' issues, as well as the VFW's expectations of lawmakers.

### SR VICE- Cont. from Page 3

the community a chance to get to know the VFW better and what we have to offer the Veterans as well as the community. We will showcase VFW programs, Veterans programs and benefits and local resources that are available. The vendors we can reach out to are HUMANA,

US Department of Veterans Affairs, MN Department of Veterans Affairs, CV-SO's, as well as our own claims officers and staff. Advertising in your area in the local paper and radio will help get the word out in your district. The idea is to get out to your location and to help you.

Please contact me at the State Convention with any questions or ideas.

### More District Reports on Page 10

#### DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

##### First District

May 3-5 Spring Valley #4114 @ 9:30 AM

##### Second District

April 27 New Ulm #1648 @ 8:00 AM

##### Third District

April 13 Canby #117 @ 10:00 AM

##### Fourth District

April 20 Roseville #7555 @ 8:00 AM

##### Fifth District

April 28 Appleton #4955 @ 2 PM

##### Sixth District

May 4 Monticello #8731 @ 9:00 AM

##### Seventh District

April 13 Brooklyn Park #3915 @ 8:30 AM

##### Eighth District

April 26-28 International Falls #2942 @ 9:00 AM

##### Ninth District

April 27-28 Thief River Falls #2793 @ 10 AM

## Don't Go It Alone!!!

## THERE'S HELP!!!

## JUST CALL!!!

### SUICIDE- Cont. from Page 5

impactful solutions to suicide risk that meet the needs of America's service members and Veterans. This conference is a chance for subject matter experts from across the country to come together and share comprehensive strategies to prevent suicide nationwide."

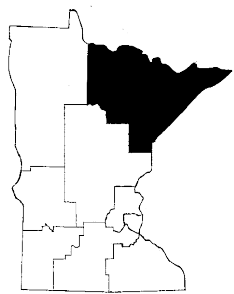
The conference is guided by the National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide and the Department of Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention, which apply the holistic public health approach to reducing suicide rates among service members and Veterans. This year's conference theme — Many Roles. One Mission. — emphasizes the impact that individuals and communities can have in preventing suicide. VA and the DOD invite researchers, clinicians and community, nonprofit and business leaders from multiple sectors to submit abstracts for inclusion in the conference program.

The conference location will be announced at a future date.

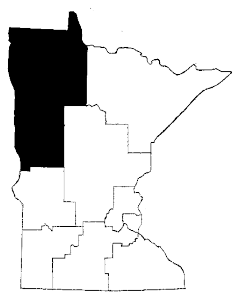
To learn more about the efforts of VA's Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, visit [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention).

Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can contact the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat).

Reporters covering this issue are strongly encouraged to visit [www.reportingonsuicide.org](http://www.reportingonsuicide.org) for important guidance on how to safely communicate about suicide.



**Harley Droba, Commander  
Eighth District**



**Norm Huth, Commander  
Ninth District**

Comrades,

Minnesota weather is as uncertain as any. As the spring melts away the last three months of winter, I can see the leaves in a definite layer of the snow. I remember we had 70 degrees and blue skies right up till we got three inches of snow. It never melted. Soon the leaves fell, and snow kept coming. This pretty much sums up my year as Commander of District Eight, lol.

Seriously, a new Commander is on cloud 9. Elected by his/her peers to represent them at the state level and to be looked to for guidance on VFW matters. Then things get real as the year's programs come up and post deadlines are due. Trying to contact members of posts for information. Then membership goals, community service, hospital, blood.... Everything is a whirlwind. But it is worth all of it. This is what we signed up for. This is the VFW.

I do however struggle with one aspect of ALL volunteer driven organizations. How do we get accountability from volunteers? We all have the 10-15 members that do a majority in the posts. We also have the people that say they will help but don't follow through. How do we turn this around? In the business world you would council an employee and set goals for them to reach. If that doesn't work, you must follow up and possibly terminate their employment. WE ARE VOLUNTEERS, I must expect that when someone volunteers to do a task, they do it? If you have suggestions, please pass them on to me.

As my time as Commander draws to a close so does others in the State. I would like to thank Department Commander Tom Hanson and his Council of Administration for a great year. I also want to thank District 8 Auxiliary President Cindy Slater for her strong work ethic and truly working with me through the last year.

Auxiliary President Slater and I extend an invitation to join us in International Falls, April 26-28 for Loyalty Days. Friday will be a testimonial dinner, Saturday will have District Meetings, Freedom Festival, Fish Dinner and Dance Party Bingo. Sunday will be installation of new leadership, a memorial ceremony and a luncheon. We hope to see you all.

PS. If you haven't heard it in a while, what you do matters!

*"With Great Power  
Comes Great Responsibility"*

Well the year is almost over. I want to thank every Post in the 9th District for trying to achieve 100% in membership. We still have 3 months to go, so keep up the good work and keep striving to get members. Get your reinstates and any members you can. Let's try to make our District 100%.

The 27th and 28th of April will be loyalty days. The 27th is our District Convention and then we have our Memorial Service and elections on the 28th.

You all have a good one and don't forget about the June State Convention. I believe it's the 13th 14th 15th and 16th. Again thank you for all the help, let's keep it going and hit that hundred percent mark as the 9th District!



**Bill Cassavant, Auxiliary  
President Ninth District**

Hello from District 9

What a year of learning, fun and volunteering that has happened in our District this year. District 9 has worked very hard and has participated in so many projects and events to improve the lives of our veterans, our active-duty service members, their families, and our communities.

Thank you for your dedication and your contributions. You have done an exceptional job and worked projects with our sole purpose in mind - our heroes.

*"Let Freedom Ring"!*

**Be Part of the  
Legislative Process to  
Protect Veterans Rights  
and Entitlements....  
PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES  
or Better Yet,  
Become a Life Member**

### 2ND PRES - Cont. from Page 8

there will be election of officers as well. Please consider "stepping up" and taking a chairmanship and/or office. We need each and every one of you.

Our District meetings have been wonderful Schools of Instructions for our members. I am so very proud of all the Officers and chairmen of the programs. I look forward to hearing a lot of awards for them all at the Department Convention in June.

Membership has been slow this year. Some Auxiliaries only need one or two members to be 100%. You can do this!!

### 1ST CMDR - Cont. from Page 8

cent in membership are directly impacting my wallet. I pay a bounty for membership.

I trust everyone has enjoyed the holiday and has survived a winter we have not seen in recent memory. I am aware of the concerns of flooding within our district. Post's that maybe effected by flooding do not hesitate to reach out to the district for assistance. Again, this is a team effort and we assist those in need.

Veterans Day on the Hill was again a great success and I always enjoy seeing the capitol rotunda fill up with Veterans and supporters of Veterans. We managed to crowd the capitol rotunda to the third floor again! Great work and a great job! A special shout out for a great job to district Junior-Vice/Legislative Chair Dave Thul in his efforts to coordinate a bus route for the First District to allow ease of travel to the state capitol for Veterans Day on the Hill. A shout out to Trent Dilks and the Minnesota Disabled American Veterans for their efforts on hosting a great event for Veterans Day on the Hill.

Our next district meeting is election of district officers and Loyalty Days in May on Saturday, May 4, 2019 in Spring Valley. State Commander Tom Hanson will join us. Much information has been sent forward to the Posts and

### 1ST PRES - Cont. from Page 8

spend "volunteering" -- We, as members of this AWESOME Organization need to focus on Membership & Recruiting! We always need to continue to seek-out others who are "like us" - serving others, and honoring Veterans.

Our first First District Meeting back last August addressed the letter "W" = Welcoming. I talked about what that means to Welcome others - at meetings and in your Post Home. I talked about how a spatula helps to "fold others into the mix". At the meeting, I brought all kinds of spatulas; large ones, small ones, colored and stained, nicked and "brand new". I talked about how all of us are different, but are able to be Welcoming to others who come to meetings or show up to volunteer! We need to make people feel welcome so they feel a part of something great, and so that they get involved and come back.

The letter "I" represents Inspiring. What Inspires you? The "spark of a flame" helps to light a fire in not only your own self, but in others, too. Be it a match, or a lighter, or the flames in a fire, all of us are inspired when we have our fire lit/sparked! We all need to be "fired up" and excited to bring attention to our Organization and our Mission! As Members, we need to do what we can to inspire others to be creative and try new ways to draw attention to the needs of our Veterans and fundraise for our programs.

In honor of my special project for this year, there will be an "Open House" of the Peace Garden at the Hastings Veterans Home June 9. A BBQ lunch will be served about 11:30 hosted by South Saint Paul #295 Auxiliary and Post. After lunch is served we will go over to the Garden to view the beautiful furniture that the Auxiliaries and Posts have donated funds for. I cannot express all the gratitude for these Auxiliaries and Posts for their monetary donations so our Veterans will have a beautiful area to rest, visit or meditate. THANK YOU ...THANK YOU!!

We are in the process of structuring a new Auxiliary in the Second

I also know information has been sent forward through the District Auxiliary. I am looking forward to showcasing Hanson-Raabe Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4114 in the post-fire remodel. I know the Spring Valley Community is looking forward to hosting the First District and Auxiliary for the 2019 Loyalty Days event(s). Look forward to visiting with the Boys of 61' as they will have an encampment located near downtown Spring Valley. Stay for the banquet and of course the parade on Sunday, May 5, 2019.

Okay, I am continually reminded by Department to be cognizant of the amount way- Take a message to Garcia on membership. You are doing an awesome job on membership, keep moving forward on membership. Let us finish strong on membership for the District so I can hand over the District guidance to the incoming District Commander with the knowledge that he will start his year strong on membership.

Remember: Shoot, move and communicate. This is a team effort; your team is YOUR Post membership and Auxiliary membership. Work together for the common good of the organization. Be relevant and active within your communities. Keep moving forward together. The year is not a sprint but a test of endurance and relevance. Be both. First Minnesota-

*To The Last Man, Follow Me!*

The "S" stands for Service. We are all working hard to serve our Veterans and their families! This year all of the 22 Auxiliaries and many of the Posts in the First District contributed towards donations of more than 2,000 pairs of socks which were sent to: the VFW National Home For Children, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Women Veterans of Minnesota, HOPE Coalition, a Minnesota Military Unit currently serving in Poland, to all of the VA Hospitals in the State of Minnesota, to all of the regional Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, and to lots and lots of our local Veterans who are in nursing homes, senior living, assisted living, and shut-ins. We showed how we can serve others by warming the toes of our heroes!

The "E" is for Empowering. Everyone wants to be a leader and be recognized. Some might say "no no, I don't like to be up in front", but in our hearts it feels really great to know that we have helped someone else. It is a powerful feeling to know that you have given of yourself to further the cause and bring attention to Veterans issues. When we stand together at the Capital, or at a military service or funeral, we feel proud and empowered to be part of this great Organization. And if we are able to boost others up so that they feel empowered to work for the cause, then our mission is accomplished.

Be WISE & Continue to Honor and Serve Veterans - always and in all ways!

District. Shakopee #4046 would like to get this going. We welcome them all to our District.

It has been a sincere pleasure to hold this office for the last two years so our Senior Vice President could learn, be mentored and plan for her year as President. I look forward to serving Johanna Rowe in her new endeavor as Second District President. In closing. Thank you to everyone for your love, hard work and dedication to our Veterans not only this year, but all the years past and years to come.

# Midwinter Banquet Highlights



Brennan Muhich, 8th Grade, delivers his speech at the Midwinter Banquet after he was awarded First Place in the State. Brennan is sponsored by Eighth District-George & Mark Klobuchar VFW Post #4456 and Auxiliary in Gilbert.



Abigail Parker, 10th Grade, delivers her speech at the Midwinter Banquet after she was awarded First Place in the State. Abigail is sponsored by Seventh District- Coon Rapids VFW Post #9625 and Auxiliary.



Honorees were escorted into the ballroom. Above is Andrew Nelson of Milaca High School, Teacher of the Year for Grades 8-12. He was sponsored by Saint Cloud VFW Post #428 and Auxiliary. Pictured left to right: 6th District Auxiliary President Deann Reynolds, Teacher Andrew Nelson, 6th District Commander Aron Lambrecht.



Nathan Dapper of Twin Oaks Middle School, Teacher of the Year for Grades 6th-8th, receives his award at the Midwinter Banquet. Zach was sponsored by Prior Lake Post #6208 and Auxiliary. Pictured left to right: VFW National Council Member Gary Anderson, State Commander Tom Hanson, Teacher of the Year Chair Jimmy White, Nathan Dapper, State Auxiliary President Patches Presfield, National Auxiliary Guard Carla Martinez.



Zach Stoltz of Pine City Elementary, Teacher of the Year for Grades K-5th, receives his award at the Midwinter Banquet. After receiving his award, he gave a heartfelt comment about why he enjoys instilling Patriotism in our youth. Zach was sponsored by Pine City Post #4258 and Auxiliary. Pictured left to right: State Commander Tom Hanson, Teacher of the Year Chair Jimmy White, Zach Stoltz, State Auxiliary President Patches Presfield.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

State Voice of Democracy Winner

**Abigail Parker**

Was Awarded the \$2,000  
Fridley VFW Post 363 and Auxiliary /  
Department of Michigan and Auxiliary Award

State Patriot's Pen Essay Winner

**Brennan Muhich**

was Awarded the \$1,000  
Silver Spring Memorial Post 2562 /  
Department of Utah Award

## 2019 - 2020 Voice of Democracy Theme

**"What Makes America Great"**

**2019 - 2020 Patriot's Pen Theme**

**"What Makes America Great"**

**Entries are Due to Local V.F.W.  
Posts by October 31st, 2019**

**1st place.....\$2,000.00 V.O.D. Scholarship**

**Provided by Department of Minnesota**

**Veterans of Foreign Wars Charitable Association Award went to:**

*Abigail Parker, 10th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Coon Rapids VFW #9625 & AUX- 7th Dist.*

**2nd place..... \$1,000.00 V.O.D. Scholarship**

**Co-Provided by Three Diamond Corporation (Shoreview, MN) & Department of Minnesota Award went to:**

*Jessa Mueller, 12th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Schanhaar-Otte VFW #7050 & AUX- Melrose- 6th Dist.*

**3rd place..... \$600.00 V.O.D. Scholarship**

**Betty Ann Heuer Memorial Scholarship provided by her Loving Husband Don Heuer went to:**

*Annie Frank, 10th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Eugene H. Traux VFW #4393 & AUX- Northfield- 1st Dist.*

**4th place..... \$500.00 V.O.D. Scholarship**

**Provided by Fred Babcock VFW Post #5555, Richfield, MN went to:**

*Harriet Fredericks, 11th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Keep-Zimmer VFW #1782 & AUX- White Bear Lake- 4th Dist.*

**\$100.00 V.O.D. Scholarship (in no particular Order)**

**Lois Herman Memorial Scholarship provided by her Loving Husband Don Herman**

*Nolan Mattison, 12th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Mapleton VFW #5338 & AUX- 2nd Dist.*

**\$100.00 V.O.D. Scholarship (in no particular Order)**

**Provided by Brooker-Edmond VFW Post #724, New Brighton, MN**

*Jadyn Anderson, 12th Grade, Sponsored by Luverne VFW #2757- 3rd Dist.*

**\$100.00 V.O.D. Scholarship (in no particular Order)**

**Provided by Prior Lake VFW Post #6208, Prior Lake, MN**

*Amara Carey, 10th Grade, Sponsored by Eveleth VFW #1172- 8th Dist.*

**\$100.00 V.O.D. Scholarship (in no particular Order)**

**Provided by Prior Lake VFW Post #6208, Prior Lake, MN**

*Logan Lipke, 9th Grade, Sponsored by Osakis VFW #7902 & AUX- 5th Dist.*

**\$100.00 V.O.D. Scholarship (in no particular Order)**

**Provided by Olaf B. Damm VFW Post #1216, Austin, MN**

*Greta Lee, 9th Grade, Sponsored by Roseau VFW #8663 & AUX- 9th Dist.*

## AWARD SPONSORS

We would like to THANK everyone that took on the request for sponsorships. These valuable scholarships & awards are being presented to recognize students and teachers outstanding achievement in these national scholarship and recognition competitions. Special Thanks to the Minnesota V.F.W. Charitable Association for their contributions toward the student jackets and awards.

**1st place.....\$300.00 Patriot's Pen Scholarship**

**Provided by the Department of Minnesota**

**Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars**

*Brennan Nuhich, 8th Grade,*

*Sponsored by George & Mark Klobuchar VFW #4456 & AUX, Gilbert- 8th Dist.*

**2nd place..... \$200.00 Patriot's Pen Scholarship**

**Provided by the Department of Minnesota**

**Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars**

*Gabrielle Verhelst, 7th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Clark Hanson VFW #117 & AUX- 3rd Dist.*

**3rd place..... \$100.00 Patriot's Pen Scholarship**

**Provided by the Department of Minnesota**

**Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars**

*Clara Tangen, 8th Grade,*

*Sponsored by Rasmusson Schedowski VFW #4020 & AUX, Perham- 9th Dist.*

**K-5th Grade Teacher of the Year.....\$300.00**

**Provided by Department of Minnesota Veterans of Foreign Wars**

*Zach Stoltz, 4th grade Teacher,*

*Sponsored by Pine City VFW #4258 & AUX- 6th Dist.*

**6th-8th Grade Teacher of the Year.....\$300.00**

**Tony Gozola Memorial Scholarship provided by the West Metro VFW Post #7051, Crystal, MN.**

*Nathan Dapper, 8th Grade Teacher,*

*Sponsored by Prior Lake VFW #6208 & AUX- 2nd Dist.*

**9th-12th Grade Teacher of the Year.....\$300.00**

**Betty Ann Heuer Memorial Scholarship provided by her Loving Husband Don Heuer**

*Andrew Nelson, Instrumental Music Teacher Grades 8-12,*

*Sponsored by Saint Cloud VFW #428 & AUX- 6th Dist.*

## Bantam "A" and "AA" Game Commentary

By Jim Hesselgrave, State Hockey Chairman

### Day One Friday, March 22nd

Friday started with eight games, four in the Huck Olson Arena and four in the Ralph Engelstad Arena:

- **Game 1A (Huck)** – Hibbing, sponsored by VFW Post 1221 and the 8th District played Alexandria, sponsored by VFW Post 936 and the 5th District. Both teams were evenly matched and came to play hockey. The game ended in a decision to Alexandria 3 – 2.
- **Game 1AA (Ralph)** – Moorhead, sponsored by VFW Post 1223 and the 9th District faced Grand Rapids, sponsored by VFW Post 1720 and the 8th District. These two teams had faced each other throughout the year and into the Regional Tournament. So they knew each other well. Both teams exchanged three goals each and it was tied after regulation. In Overtime, Grand Rapids struck first, sending them to winning side 4 – 3.
- **Game 2A (Huck)** – Thief River Falls, sponsored by VFW Post 2793 and the 9th District met Rogers, the number two team in state. Rogers is sponsored by VFW Post 5518 and the 7th District. Thief River Falls put up a fight, but Rogers prevailed 3 – 1.
- **Game 2AA (Ralph)** – White Bear Lake, sponsored by VFW Post 1782 and the 4th District challenged Champlin Park, sponsored by VFW Post 3915 and the 7th District. Champlin Park reinforced their high state ranking with an 8 – 3 victory.
- **Game 3A (Huck)** – Warroad, sponsored by VFW Post 4930 and the 9th District pounced on St. Peter, sponsored by VFW Post 1803 and the 2nd District. Warroad showed why they are the number one 'A' team in the state by defeating St. Peter 16 – 0.
- **Game 3AA (Ralph)** – Centennial, sponsored by VFW Post 6587 and the 7th District broke the ice with Bemidji, sponsored by VFW Post 1260 and the 9th District. Centennial walked away with the win 5 – 0.
- **Game 4A (Huck)** – Dodge County, sponsored by VFW Post 4555 and the 1st District took on Detroit Lakes, sponsored by VFW Post 1676 and the 9th District. This is the first year that Dodge County has fielded a competitive Bantam Hockey Team. They also showed why they are ranked in the top fifteen teams in the state with a first round win 7 – 1.

- **Game 4AA (Ralph)** – Roseau, sponsored by VFW Post 8663 and the 9th District matched up with Andover, sponsored by VFW Post 9625 and the 7th District. A good game, with Roseau winning 4 – 3.

### Day Two Saturday, March 23rd

- **Game 5A (Ralph)** – St. Peter played Hibbing. St. Peter is a good Team. Their Players and Coaches came to the VFW State Hockey Tournament knowing that they would face some of the Best Teams in the state. Their efforts were heroic, to say the least. Hibbing sent St. Peter home with a 3 – 0 win.
- **Game 5AA (Huck)** – Bemidji faced a common rival with Moorhead. Moorhead sent Bemidji down Highway 2 with a 5 – 2 victory.
- **Game 6A (Ralph)** – Warroad continued their quest to the Championship by defeating Alexandria 4 – 0.
- **Game 6AA (Huck)** – Centennial was intent on getting to the Championship game. Grand Rapids stood in their way. A good game! Centennial showed their ability to beat great goaltenders by sending Grand Rapids to the Third Place game 4 – 2.
- **Game 7A (Ralph)** – Detroit Lakes takes on their Highway 59 rival, Thief River Falls. Thief River Falls wins the game 5 – 1 and Detroit Lakes heads south.
- **Game 7AA (Huck)** – White Bear Lake faces an Andover team, that is getting better with each game. Andover sends White Bear Lake home with a 5 – 2 win.
- **Game 8A (Ralph)** – Dodge County looks to upset Rogers. Great game! Dodge county used their size and speed to put Rogers on the ropes. But, in the end, it was Hannah Skavnak, the Rogers Goaltender that made the difference. Rogers takes the decision and the game 6 – 4.
- **Game 8AA (Huck)** – Roseau looks to put a northern team in the 'AA' Championship, as they meet Champlin Park. Early, the two teams exchange goals – anyone's game. It was obvious, that Champlin Park wanted another shot at their North Suburban rival Centennial. Champlin Park sealed their ambition with a 5 – 2 victory and Roseau goes to the Third Place game.



The Warroad Hockey Team is the V.F.W. State 'A' Bantam Champions, sponsored by Warroad Post #9430

### Day Three Sunday, March 24th

- **'A' Consolation Game** – Hibbing plays Thief River Falls. Thief Rivers Falls had trouble finding the back of Hibbing's net. It was just the opposite for Hibbing. The Blue Jackets take the Consolation Hardware home to Hibbing with a 4 – 0 win.
- **'AA' Consolation Game** – Although Moorhead would like to have played Champlin Park in this tournament, they got Andover. Two well matched teams, both looking for the win. After one period, both teams were tied. In the second period, Andover scored three goals to Moorhead's one goal. That is all Andover would need to win in a close game that ended 4 – 3. Andover takes the Consolation trophy and heads home.
- **'A' Third Place Game** – Alexandria faced off with a determined Dodge County Team, in a match that was a carry-over from the Minnesota Hockey State Tournament. Yes, there was a little 'bad blood' between these two teams. Again, Dodge County used its speed. It was a hard fought game and both teams played a clean game. The game was scoreless into the third period. Alexandria was unable to score and Dodge County was able to beat the Alex Goaltender twice. Game ends 2 – 0 and Dodge County takes the 'A' Third Place honors back to southeast Minnesota.
- **'AA' Third Place Game** – After the Minnesota Hockey State Tournament, Grand Rapids had something to prove to Roseau --- that they were the better team. Grand Rapids took the lead in the first period and never gave it up... they outscored Roseau in all three periods. Grand Rapids regains their pride and takes 'AA' Third Place trophy down Highway 2 with a score of 9 – 5.
- **'A' Championship Game** – For most, this was to be the matchup of both

Tournaments --- Warroad (#1 in the State) vs Rogers (#2 in the State). In the first period, Warroad shocked the Rogers Netminder with two quick goals. Rogers then found the back of the Warroad net and they thought they were on track. Not so, Warroad again stormed an otherwise 'strong' Rogers Goalie with two more goals. This obviously, shock up the confidence of the Rogers Goaltender and Rogers called their time out. The first period ended 4 -1 Warroad. In the second period, it was a good game. Rogers held their own against a bigger and faster Warroad team. The second period ended 6 – 2. In the third period, it was evident that Rogers had their hands full and they upped their game... to little, too late, game ends 7 – 3 in favor of the Warriors. Warroad is your First VFW State 'A' Bantam Hockey Champion – 2019!

• **'AA' Championship Game** – Okay, how many times in one year can you play the same hockey team? How about seven or eight times. Yes, Centennial and Champlin Park traveled all the way from the Northern Metro Suburbs – to again play each other in the VFW State 'AA' Bantam Hockey Tournament. In the first period, Champlin Park scored the first goal. This must have woke Centennial up, as they put two goals by the Champlin Park Goaltender. The first period ended with Centennial in the lead 2 -1. In the second period, Centennial stayed in control of the game by scoring two more unanswered goals. The third period was well played with both teams scoring a goal apiece. There were NO Penalties in this game – Well Played! Centennial repeats as the VFW State Bantam Hockey Champion with a 5 -2 victory over Champlin Park. Centennial is the First VFW STATE 'AA' Bantam Hockey Champion – 2019!

### HOCKEY - Cont. from Page 1

Parents for extending their Hockey Season one more week to play VFW Bantam Hockey. Obviously, some of these Teams traveled great distances to play in Thief River Falls. The Veterans of Foreign Wars appreci-

ates that commitment. Secondly, we would like the VFW Posts throughout the State that have made a 'solid' commitment to Sponsor these Bantam Hockey Teams. Without your Sponsorship – the VFW Hockey Program would not exist.

We would like to THANK State Commander Tom Hanson for his time and dedication to the VFW Bantam Hockey Program and the VFW State Tournament. We would especially like to THANK State Youth Activity Chairman Rick Bugbee for his expertise and Leadership. A Thank You also goes to Ninth District Norm Huth for his help on the last day of the Tournament.

BUT, most of all, we would like THANK Thief River Falls VFW Post Commander Erik Beiktel and Gary Klemetson for Co-Chairing this Tournament in Thief River Falls. Without their 'true' Dedication and Commitment to 'details' – this Tour-

nament would have been a failure. Instead, the 2019 VFW State 'A' and 'AA' Bantam Hockey Tournament was a GREAT SUCCESS!!! We look forward to next year and our visit to Thief River Falls.

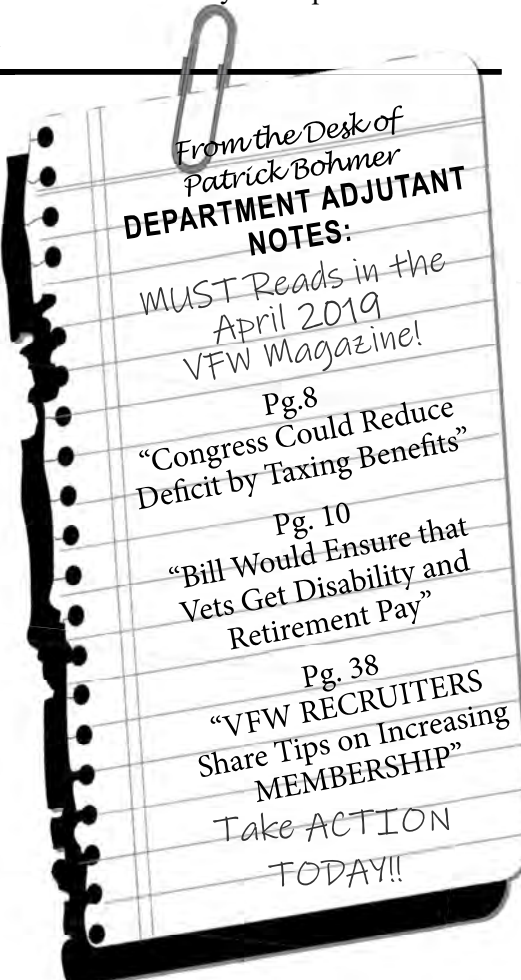
It could go without saying, that Tournaments like this are only Successful because of the people behind the scenes: Thief River Falls Mayor Brian Holmer, the Thief River Falls Amateur Hockey Association, the Members of Thief River Falls VFW Post 2793 and Auxiliary, the local Sponsors/Advertisers and a SPECIAL THANKS to Carna Von Holten, TRFAHA Committee Member.



Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Minnesota



V.F.W. State Commander Tom Hanson and 9th District Commander Norm Huth took in the games and handed out Awards.



# Veterans / Youth Activities

## State Pistol Competition

February 23, 2019

Jenkins VFW Post #3839 and Brainerd VFW post #1647 hosted the 2019 Minnesota State VFW Pistol Shooting Competition on Saturday, February 23, 2019. This was an indoor activity, held at Bill's Gun Shop & Range in Baxter. Event coordinator was Randy "Tex" Stafford from Jenkins.



Nine shooters competed in the Open Class and six in the 22 Caliber Class. Four Participated in both. The competition consisted of 8 rounds of shooting:

### ROUNDS

Round 1 10 rounds at 15 ft right hand  
 Round 2 10 rounds at 21 ft right hand  
 Round 3 10 rounds at 50 ft right hand  
 Round 4 10 rounds at 15 ft left hand  
 Round 5 10 rounds at 21 ft left hand  
 Round 6 10 rounds at 50 ft left hand  
 Round 7 10 rounds at 50 ft both hands  
 Round 8 10 rounds at 75 ft both hands

### WINNERS

22 Caliber Class  
 1st Ray Cowan, Post 3839 Jenkins  
 2nd Doug Koenig, Post 6033 Audubon  
 3rd Paula Persons, post 1647 Brainerd

Open Class  
 1st Dennis Maddox, 5518 Elk River- Rogers  
 2nd Michael Gutz, Post 1260 Bemidji  
 3rd Doug Koenig, Post 6033 Audubon

### BEST OVERALL

Doug Koenig, Post 6033 Audubon

## YOUTH UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### VFW STATE BASEBALL

**2019 State Tournament**  
 August 8-11, 2019

Hosted by Brainerd  
 Post #1647

### VFW STATE BANTAM 'A' and 'AA' HOCKEY

**2020 State Tournament**  
 March 27-29, 2020

Hosted by  
 Thief River Falls #2793

## VETERANS UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

**Golf**  
**August 2-4, 2019**  
 2019 Hosted by  
 Austin Post #1216

**Watch Future for Events**  
 Pistol Competition- Winter 2020  
 Bowling- Spring 2020  
 Cribbage- Spring 2020

*Watch the  
 General Orders and  
 Next Gopher Oversea'r  
 for Opportunities to  
 Host an Activity  
 Bids are Accepted at  
 Fall Conference*

## Purple Cross

### Funeral Plans for Veterans

Purple Cross has been serving America's Veterans since 1948 and continues to offer the best funeral plans available. With **Funeral Preplanning** -you:

- protect your burial funds from nursing home expenses
- Protect your family from financial burden in time of grief
- gain peace of mind by knowing your funeral is taken care of.

**Yes, I would like to know more about:**

- Traditional Funeral Cost  Cremation Cost  
 Payment Plan Options  Discount Plans

For a free **Funeral Preplanning Cost Estimate**, please return this coupon to Purple Cross, 15116 Manitou Rd NE, Prior Lake, MN 55372 or call Jerry Albrecht at 952-226-6393. **Absolutely no obligation!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

## MBRSHP - Cont. from Page 3

- **District 3** - Ivanhoe 2980, Olivia 4097, Westbrook 5098
- **District 4** - St Paul 5, Cottage Grove 8752, Mendota 6690, New Brighton 724, Woodbury 9024
- **District 5** - Madison 1656, Starbuck 4582, Montevideo 380
- **District 6** - Sauk Rapids 6992, Onamia 955, McGregor 2747, St Cloud 4847, Akeley 8508, Monticello 8731, St Cloud 428, Braham 1731, Jenkins 3839, Holdingford 5160, Swanville 6037
- **District 7** - Minneapolis 217, Brooklyn Park 3915, Golden Valley 7051, Elk River 5518, Minneapolis 246, Hamel 5903, Coon Rapids 9625
- **District 8** - Gilbert 4456, Keewatin 5516, Cotton 3044, Northome 3869
- **District 9** - Bemidji 1260, Bejuo

1226, Pelican Rapids 5252  
 Further reflective of the good work being done by our posts, there are 56 across the state that need 3 or less members to reach 100%, 16 of those posts only need a single member. Because I am confident those Post Commanders will not be satisfied only getting close to 100%, our previously stated number of 868 comrades will be considerably smaller. District 7 continues to lead at 98.95% followed by District 1 at 98.79% and District 6 at 98.47%. "Let's Make It Happen!"

One of the most challenging requirements for the All-State Post Commander and Quartermaster programs is the achievement of 100% in membership. If you are eligible for these prestigious awards, Department will notify you - please respond with the requested information. These awards are not only

recognition of the Commander and Quartermaster, but of the entire post and should be viewed with great pride by every member of the post! Membership will always require a team effort. Let's make the final push needed to reach our goal and advance in the National standings.

The Bag A Member quarterly competition ends on March 31, results will be reported in the May General Orders. The state hockey tournament drawing for the \$1000 National Convention Stipend was won by Stewartville Post 8980. Congratulations and please encourage your Commander, Senior Vice Commander or Junior Vice Commander to take advantage of this unique opportunity to attend our national convention.

At many of the District Meetings I attended, I told those in attendance I didn't think Commander Hanson nec-

essarily appointed me as membership chair because I possessed the skill set needed to do the job. Rather, I think he needed someone naive enough to believe he or she could manage a membership program that would return the Department to 100%. We're not there yet but I believed in June 2018 and I still believe, together we can do it. Thank you to the districts for the hospitality extended during those visits and thank you to Commander Hanson for this appointment. I encourage anyone who is offered the opportunity to serve as a chairperson at Department level to accept the appointment, learn all you can from your predecessor and enjoy the experience. The talent and experience of the comrades in this Department is immense - challenge yourself to make a contribution at the next level!

## Poppies- Cont. from Page 1

defense of their country. Its significance has spread throughout the world and a distribution of artificial Poppies is conducted throughout the British Commonwealth and in many countries of Europe.

In 2018, more than 9.3 million "Buddy" Poppies were distributed nationally, providing over \$12 million in income for the support of the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Home for children of deceased veterans at Eaton Rapids, Michigan and for rehabilitation services for disabled veterans. It also provides over a million dollars a year for local relief programs throughout the nation.

Every step in the production and distribution of the "Buddy" Poppy serves a useful purpose. The Poppies are assembled by needy and disabled veterans who are paid for their work; the income to the State and National organizations helps provide needed services to disabled veterans, their widows and orphans; the income to the Post and Auxiliary is used entirely for aid to needy veterans; and the wearing of the Poppy on Memorial Day symbolizes the nation's grief for the loss of departed heroes. It is important to note that since the Veterans of Foreign Wars holds a trademark on the "Buddy" Poppy, They are able to guarantee that all poppies



that bear the name and the VFW label are genuine products made by disabled and needy veterans... The name "Buddy" Poppy cannot legally be used by any other individual or organization.

While the period before Memorial Day is the traditional time to distribute Poppies, many areas in the nation distribute on or about Veterans Day. Some distribute on both days.

The date of the local distribution is fixed by agreement with other organizations and by permission of the governing body. In Minnesota, the local distributions vary from early in May until Memorial Day itself. In the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, a date is fixed by mutual agreement between the Districts of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion Auxiliary and all distributions are confined to that one date.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is especially proud that its Poppy distributions are conducted strictly and entirely by volunteers. No Poppy workers are paid for their work. Their recompense comes from a sense of pride in helping the less fortunate.

About 100,000 volunteers aid in the distribution of Poppies

each year in the United States; at least 6,000 of them in Minnesota.

The use of the funds derived from the Poppy distribution is carefully controlled on all levels. A report on the Minnesota Poppy distribution is filed each year with the Secretary of State. Local funds are audited by Trustees of the Post or Auxiliary and spent only by authorization of the members of the Post or Auxiliary.

In addition to their distribution to the public, Poppies are used for many other purposes by Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts and Auxiliaries. They are made into wreaths to decorate the graves of deceased members; they are used on floats in parades; they are made into corsages, table decorations and window displays. Each Poppy that is used does its job in reminding people of the sacrifices of the few and the obligations of the many.

You need not be a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars or its Auxiliary to aid in the Poppy distribution. Thousands of youth - both boys and girls - each year help their local Posts and Auxiliaries to distribute Poppies. By doing so, they perform a praise-worthy service and they help to prove that the spirit of patriotism and charity is not confined to the adult.



## STUDENT - Cont. from Page 5

with people across the country that we otherwise might not be able to meet and have the opportunities that other student organizations don't have available."

According to SVA, its 1,583 chapters at campuses nationwide advocate for more than 700,000 military-affiliated students. VFW and SVA have been official partners since signing a memorandum-of-understanding in 2013. The two groups attend each other's annual conventions, and VFW selects 10 SVA members annually to participate in a fellowship program.

Williams added that he is always trying to show student veterans and military-affiliated students the "value" SVA can have. He said this includes offering roles as leaders, advocates for veterans policy and the social members of various college organizations.

### Advocacy for Veterans

Williams, 25, was born in Arkansas and raised in Wichita, Kan. He enlisted in the Navy in 2012 after high school and became a corpsman. He served in the emergency room at Naval Hospital Jacksonville in Florida for two years, then finished aboard the USS America in San Diego. He was discharged from active-duty in July 2017, but before getting out, he applied to KU to start attending in the 2017 fall semester.

"Initially, I was in pre-nursing — as a corpsman, it just made sense," Williams said. "But, prior to joining the service, I wanted to be an attorney. So that's what I'm working toward." Williams is now an English major and said he wanted to work on his writing skills before heading to law school.

"In the military, I learned punctuality, meeting deadlines and professionalism," Williams said. "I absolutely learned how to be a professional in the military, and that trickled over into my academics."

Williams has been married for four years and has a 3-year-old daughter. But having a wife and child at home, as well as attending school full-time, has not stopped Williams from being heavily involved in SVA.

He said he has been involved with KU's chapter since he started attending the university, which is one of the top military-friendly schools in the country. The University of Kansas was among the top five for the second year in a row.

"I started really getting involved after I went to the SVA National Conference," Williams said.

He added that the conference, which took place in San Antonio in January 2018, was "inspirational" and that he was stunned by all the advocacy work SVA does for veterans.

Williams also said he receives advice from past KU SVA presidents, such as J.R. Cadwallader, a member of the VFW Department of Kansas and Marine Corps veteran who served in the Iraq War in 2009 and the Afghanistan War in 2011.

"I'm now in more of an advisory role with KU's SVA," said Cadwallader, who was president in 2016-17. "I try to answer any questions that any members might have about the past few years SVA has been around."

Currently attending KU for a Master of Business Administration, Cadwallader said that being in the military gave him the "discipline" to attend college.

"I never in my life thought I would go to college," Cadwallader said. "I now see how valuable and important an education is."

### SVA: Not Just for Veterans

SVA does not just serve student veterans but all military-affiliated students. This includes students who are members of the military — active-duty, reserves or National Guard — as well as students in the Reserve Officer Training Corps and students who are spouses or

dependents of military members and retirees.

One dependent involved in KU SVA is Brandon Decker, 20, who is attending KU for degrees in political science and philosophy. Decker is the son of two retired Navy chief petty officers.

"I'm involved with SVA because it advocates for veterans and for veterans' rights on campus," Decker said. "When I advocate for veterans, it's as if I'm advocating for people like my parents. It doesn't benefit me, but it benefits people like my parents who served in the military."

Decker currently is KU SVA's student senate representative. His role with SVA is to give the organization information on what other groups, as well as KU, are doing on campus.

Another student, Kylie Coffelt, helps with KU SVA's social media presence. Coffelt, 19, is the daughter of a retired Navy chief petty officer. She is KU SVA's vice president of media and is studying unified early childhood education.

"I was asked to join because they needed help with their social media pages," Coffelt said. "I'm here to help with SVA's mission, and to help get events going and to spread the word about them."

Coffelt and Decker said they enjoy being around SVA students because veterans typically take school seriously. "It's motivating to see someone like Omar, who has a family, getting their school work done on top of being a parent," Decker said. "When I see that, it makes me think, 'Why can't I get my work done, too?'"

Coffelt added that since a lot of the SVA members are older and have been in school longer, they help her find resources for her own needs. She said she does the same for newer student veterans.

Williams said he believes KU SVA takes advantage of having nonveteran students participate in the organi-

*Spring is the time to utilize the Poppy's that you have purchased this year and any others that you may have. In April take your Poppy Cards and Poppy's out into the businesses in your community. Many businesses will embrace this opportunity to support Veterans. Get donations for Poppy Cards from your members... write their name on the card and display it on the walls of your Post home.*

*Also, contact local businesses to get permission to distribute Poppy's in May. Try to get locations that have high traffic. Usually grocery stores. Get a sign up sheet going for your Post and Auxiliary. The more members that participate, the more donations you can receive for your relief fund. Include your auxiliary in the program. And if you do, make sure that they receive their fair share of the proceeds.*

*It is very important all who are involved in the distribution be dressed in VFW gear. And that all money goes into a sealed container. You are representing our great organization in the community. Its also a great opportunity to recruit new members. Many people that you will meet while distributing Poppies are veterans, and many of them are eligible. Be ready to engage with them.*

**Have a great Poppy season!**

zation. "They just bring a completely different perspective to the table," Williams said. "Having members who are a little more involved with the younger college students and organizations helps us get the word out about our program and our activities."

### An Annual Fundraiser

In November, KU SVA hosted the KU Vets Day 5K in Lawrence. The event aims to raise funds for student veterans on campus. A record 451 participants registered in the 2018 run and walk.

Proceeds from the event went toward supporting KU SVA, the school's veterans alumni network and KU's Lt. Gen. William K. Jones Military-Affiliated Student Center.

Since implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which VFW helped write, and now the Forever GI Bill, which VFW helped pass, campuses and organizations have opened military-affiliated student centers nationwide. At the University of Kansas, the Lt. Gen. Jones Student Center opened in March 2017 thanks to fundraising efforts by KU SVA.

The center helps military-affiliated students at KU find campus resources and obtain VA education benefits. The center also aims to help students transition from the military to school and from school to post-graduation careers.

Williams said he would not be the student he is today without the experience he gained from his five years as a sailor, and that he wouldn't be in school without the GI Bill.

"It's amazing to know that all these resources are here and all these people are fighting for you, so we can have things such as the Forever GI Bill," Williams said. "I wouldn't be where I am today without that legislation, and VFW and other organizations are the reason for it."

*This article is featured in the 2019 February issue of VFW magazine, and was written by Dave Spiva, senior writer for VFW magazine.*

# Timely Tidbits

## WHAT...

### ? Why Do "Buddy" Poppies Matter? ?

#### DEFINED:

VFW "Buddy" Poppy is a trademarked, artificial flower symbolizing the memory of those who have given their lives for their country and a symbol of concern and compassion for veterans who are disabled.

#### What do we DO with Buddy Poppies?

##### ~DISTRIBUTION~

Distribute Buddy Poppy Cards in April & Buddy Poppies during May Poppy Day  
We gladly accept donations from the recipient of a flower...  
Donations are not REQUIRED for someone to receive a Buddy Poppy, but they should know it is GREATLY appreciated!

##### ~SHARE~

Through donations of Buddy Poppies to the community on special, patriotic holidays and to school groups and others, the meaning of the Buddy Poppy... ultimately to "Honor The Dead By Helping The Living" is shared with all ages. We also use Buddy Poppies in creative ways like display items for the Veterans Homes, Poppy Display Contests, Corsages at your Post dinners and more. By purchasing and using Buddy Poppies, we support the disabled veterans and their programs that create the flowers.

#### Who Distributes them?

##### EVERY Post & Auxiliary Member

By volunteering to distribute Buddy Poppies or coordinating your Posts Poppy efforts, important funds can be raised to assist our veterans and their families. Your contribution and service to the program mean a lot to them!

#### Why should we have a Buddy Poppy Program?

Buddy Poppy promotions are the best way to get money for your Post & Auxiliary 'Relief Fund'. This fund is established in the VFW Manual of Procedure to be used ONLY for such purposes as Aid to needy & disabled veterans, VFW National Home assistance to provide for the welfare of a deceased veteran's surviving spouse/family/orphan, providing for care and comfort of hospitalized veterans, veterans rehabilitation & service work, foster patriotism education programs and the like. (Ask your Post Quartermaster to learn more about how YOUR Post uses their Relief Funds.)

#### Working your Buddy Poppy program shares the VFW's intent to

*"Honor the Dead by Helping the Living"*

and fulfills that intent by earning monies for the Relief Funds that are SPECIFICALLY for Helping our Veterans and their families.



## National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Series

A pass is your ticket to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites. Each pass covers entrance fees at national parks and national wildlife refuges as well as standard amenity fees (day use fees) at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A pass covers entrance, standard amenity fees and day use fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle at per vehicle fee areas (or up to four adults at sites that charge per person). Children age 15 or under are admitted free.

**Two passes that are of interest to VFW members are the Access Pass and Military pass.**



#### Access Pass

Cost: Free

#### Available for:

U.S. citizens or permanent residents with permanent disabilities. Applicants must provide documentation of permanent disability and residency or citizenship.

#### Additional information:

The Access Pass may provide a 50 percent discount on some amenity fees charged for facilities and services such as camping, swimming, boat launching, and specialized interpretive services. The Access Pass generally does NOT cover or reduce special recreation permit fees or fees charged by concessioners.

#### How to obtain Pass:

In person at the Mississippi River Visitors Center at the Science Museum of Minnesota



#### Annual Pass for U.S. Military

Cost: Free annual pass

#### Available for:

Current U.S. military members and dependents in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard as well as Reserve and National Guard members.

#### How to obtain Passes:

In person at the Mississippi River Visitors Center at the Science Museum of Minnesota showing a Common Access Card (CAC) or Military ID (Form 1173).

#### Mississippi River Visitor Center

120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Saint Paul, MN 55102  
The Mississippi River Visitor Center is located in the lobby of the Science Museum of Minnesota and is open all year.  
Call 651-293-0200 for more information.  
Sunday through Thursday: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Friday and Saturday: 9:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Closed on Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas days.

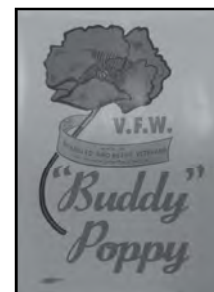
Or visit <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passes>

E M A A Y H D O D U T M D R T P E K T C U K L R E  
E C M B U U T S O H B R E R R C N C W B J O H E K  
R V N K U X A O E H A H P O A P B I Q Q D L P W G  
K A W A E D T T O C A H G B D O T E D P A I F O Z  
E K V S T R D S J B X R D T E P J O S N M B K L Q  
D L E I F S P Y I T A S W A M P I M O N J S C F C  
D W K D O I I L L M N Y F P A Y V I D D I O E J T  
F T J E T C I S T M D D V V R L T E Q P C B U V R  
A F J A N T J F S X I E T E K A H D M A X N I I R  
H T L Y A I H F G A S E N S N J E I N Z P V L F Z  
V S U T O H V H B E P N O G Y E O W M T P F A D U  
W E I O F F I C I A L Q N E F M V N I W Z R Z J H  
L O T Y A M T K P V A B E K U D B O W P B H I X F  
N U A E P A T E N T Y J P K N C P I N C D L M X O  
U V Y T R W Z M E N N F T X D V D T M H D I D Z A  
Y A G M T A W B N R I H K U E G Q A R E O D F Z X  
W P Q D D F N P X R X Y S Z T L E N R O T M H N A  
C Q L V O D Q S S K M L T F T S L E V O P O E G Q  
E N B P L W C T M B G I V X J S T E F M H P H D M  
I C B N O I T U B I R T S I D S R E B V G V U R P  
G A N B D W C M R A H A X Z I O I E X A E B F S L  
B D Z H J R B A I P D W Z G I L N L D X L Q Q P X  
W S Q I Y Q Q F W H P U E Z E K X A E N E H C D Z  
A R J K E C I V R E S R M R M X O I T A A C O I N  
X O X G W B K X P A H G W K S O N R D I Y L V Z A  
R X M W N O A V Z G Z E L Q T B L O W R O T F J P  
I W F O V F T M T O R Z V V I T L M L N H N T Z O  
D E L B A S I D L S C P P U P F V E H W F L S U P  
T V T N R I R Q A Q C P W G D I M M E E Y P C W W  
A S S E M B L E D Z M G H H F G Q D I M R I Z X M

## WORD SEARCH #4

### Buddy Poppy Season

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Assembled    | Memorial                                 |
| Assistance   | National                                 |
| Buddy        | Nationwide                               |
| Card         | Needy                                    |
| Coin         | Official                                 |
| Disabled     | Patent                                   |
| Display      | Poppy                                    |
| Distribution | Program                                  |
| Donations    | Registered                               |
| Field        | Rehabilitation                           |
| First        | Relief                                   |
| Flanders     | Service                                  |
| Flower       | Support                                  |
| Fund         | Trademark                                |
| Home         | Veterans                                 |
| Hospitals    | VFS (A.K.A. Veterans & Family Support)   |
| Label        | VFW                                      |
| May          | VMS (A.K.A. Veterans & Military Support) |



Looking for a Program that's Educational AND Entertaining?



## Fundraising for THE BOYS OF '61!

(Minnesota's Civil War Veterans Memorial)

If you are looking for program opportunities for special events at your post, consider having Historical Experiences bring a history program to your membership. These entertaining programs are educational and patriotic. You can choose from a number of topics including:

- THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
- MINNESOTA IN THE CIVIC WAR
- MINNESOTA IN THE GREAT WAR (WWI)
- MINNESOTA IN WORLD WAR II

THE U.S.S WARD: MINNESOTA FIRES THE FIRST SHOT IN WWII

The cost of each program is a \$550 donation to the BOY'S OF '61, plus mileage to your post and back from the speaker's residence in Mankato, MN. (Current IRS mileage rate is \$.545 per mile.) This fee will be donated to the BOY'S OF '61, which is Minnesota's memorial to the men from this state who went off to war to save the Union. The BOY'S OF '61 is a non-profit organization dedicated to the building of a memorial to all of Minnesota's Civil War veterans. For more information on programming to go to the website at...

[historicalexperiences.org](http://historicalexperiences.org)

or contact the presenter at...  
[arnkind@historicalexperiences.org](mailto:arnkind@historicalexperiences.org)

For more information on THE BOYS of '61 see:  
<https://www.minnesotaboys61.org/>

**Schedule your program today and help build Minnesota's BOYS of '61 Memorial!**

# Camp Ripley Run "3"



This is a Charity  
 Motorcycle Run to help the Disabled Veteran  
 Deer and Turkey Hunts at Camp Ripley

### Tentative Schedule:

Date: June 29, 2019

Route: Jenkins VFW Post 3839 to Camp Ripley

Registration: 9:00 AM—11:00 AM

Kickstands Up: 11:30 AM—Noon

Donation: Riders—\$15, Passengers—\$10

#### Some Planned Activities:

- Coffee and Rolls at VFW Post
- Tour Camp Ripley Military Museum
- After Ride Lunch and Refreshments—Site TBD

**If your Legion Riders, VFW Riders, Club, Group or Organization plan on doing this Ride, please send us an email at the information below.**

As we get closer to the Ride Date, more information will be available.

For more information, contact Jim Hesselgrave at 612-599-9149 or email at: [vfwmn@aol.com](mailto:vfwmn@aol.com)

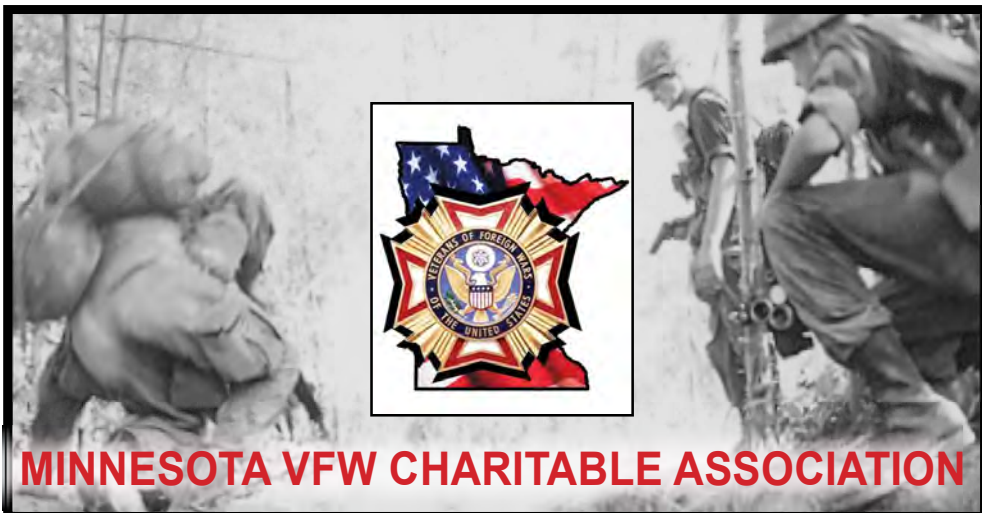


## 2020 MNVFW Charitable Association Raffle Calendars ARRIVE in JUNE!

POSTS:

Watch for Pre-Order Forms in  
the Monthly General Orders

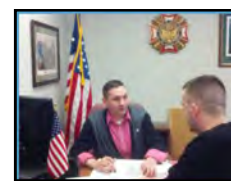
Members: Check with Your Local Post to Help with  
Calendar Sales or to Purchase Your Calendar



## MINNESOTA VFW CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION

The Veterans of Foreign Wars has been 'fighting' for Veterans since 1899. We have worked endlessly to gain the Benefits and Entitlements that Our Veterans deserve. For over 116 years, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has spent millions of dollars and hours to Educate our Youth and build our Communities in the areas of Patriotism, Americanism and those things that are RIGHT for the United States of America. The members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars have placed their 'bodies and minds' between the enemies of this Great Nation to preserve the American way and the FREEDOM of not only the United States, but other nations as well.

With that said, the Department of Minnesota Veterans of Foreign Wars Charitable Association (MN VFW Charitable Association) is asking that you remember this Sacrifice through your Gift Giving and Donations.



There are a number of ways that you can Preserve the Memory of the Sacrifices of our Veterans for now and the future:

Using the form attached, Donate to the VFW Charitable Association.

- \* Establish a monthly or annual deduction to the MN VFW Charitable Association from your checking account or credit card.
- \* Designate your Donation to a Charitable Trust in the name of the MN VFW Charitable Association.
- \* Establish a Charitable Gift Annuity to the MN VFW Charitable Association.
- \* Simply make a donation to the MN VFW Charitable Association.
- \* Donate to the VFW Outdoor Fund.
- \* Donate through the MN VFW Charitable Association Annual Raffle Calendar.

We certainly Appreciate the Consideration of the MN VFW Charitable Association in your Gift Giving Plans. Your Donation will ensure the future of the Programs of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

For more information, please contact the Secretary of the MN VFW Charitable Association at 651-291-1757 or email us at [scottbill15@gmail.com](mailto:scottbill15@gmail.com) or by writing to: VFW Charitable Association, 20 W. 12th St., Room B-5, St. Paul, MN 55155



The MN VFW Charitable Association is a 501-c-3 Charitable Organization under IRS Code.

Mail your Donation to: MN VFW Charitable Association, Rice Street Station, P.O. Box 17146, St. Paul, MN 55117

Please send more information about the MN VFW Charitable Association, its purpose and Programs.

Please accept my Tax Deductible Donation of: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be an ANNUAL Donor? \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes or No)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Earmark for one of the following: \_\_\_\_\_ General Un-designated  
 \_\_\_\_\_ VFW Outdoor Fund \_\_\_\_\_ Veterans Service \_\_\_\_\_ VFW Programs