

GOPHER OVERSEAS

Volume 76, NO. 2

Official Publication of the Veterans of Foreign Wars - Department of Minnesota Celebrating 100 Years 1921-2021

June 2022 - September 2022

Department Fall Conference Sept. 24-26

By Cheryl Burton, Department Office Manager

The 2022 Annual Fall Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza in Plymouth MN from September 23-25, 2022.

This fall is a great opportunity to learn about all of our VFW Programs, and continue catching up with friends in both the hotel and the hospitality rooms.

All VFW and Auxiliary members are encouraged to attend the Fall Conference. Of all the conferences organized by the VFW, this is by far the most educational. You do not want to miss it. If you have any questions about the VFW or the Auxiliary, or our Programs, this will be the place

to get all the answers.

This year's hot topics include: Special Guest Speaker, Marie Kessler, Ombudsman LTC, "Volunteers Advocate with residents in MN Veterans Homes", The "Ins and Outs of using Sports Engine", "Social Media and Advanced Social Media", "VFW Website Solutions", "Parliamentary Procedures", invitation for Auxiliary to attend and "Membership".

REGISTRATION

Registration for the Fall Conference, will begin on Friday and Saturday in the Fireside Lounge from Noon to 6:00 pm (Friday) and

7:00 am to 3:00 pm (Saturday). Don't forget to pick up your banquet tickets at the registration table.

SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

AND SEMINARS

VFW and Auxiliary members can expect some very positive and creative ways of being educated about the VFW Programs of this Great Organization. In addition, a number of opportunities will be offered for the membership to gain a greater knowledge of a variety of VFW Programs.

All Commanders, Presidents,

Convention - Cont. on Page 7



2022-2023
State Commander
Dale Hoogeveen

Member of
VFW Post 1791
Chaska, MN

Our 2022-23 year is off to a fast-paced start with State Convention completed in June and our National Convention in Kansas City in July. I offer my thanks to the comrades of the Department of Minnesota for honoring me with the privilege of commanding this great organization. At the installation ceremony I shared a discovery made when reading a "Rooneyism" - Andy stated "I've learned...that the easiest way for me to grow as person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am." I believe I've done that with the comrades selected to chair our many programs and with those elected to lead our posts, districts, and this department. I wish every leader in our department and its auxiliaries the very best for a most successful year. I urge you to truly enjoy the opportunity you've been given to make an impact in the lives of veterans, their families, and our communities.

Congratulations to Past State Commander Barry Henriksen and Past Department Auxiliary President Jamie Cassavant for their leadership and outstanding success achieved for their joint project, Folds of Honor. Auxiliary President Sonia Tatge and

COMMANDER - Cont. on Page 10

123rd National Convention July, 2022

By Dale Hoogeveen, MN VFW State Commander

The 2022 National Convention was held in Kansas City, Missouri for the second consecutive year. Unlike last year, this convention was a return to full attendance and the many activities and opportunities our members have come to expect. Thank you to each of the registered delegates who attended and represented the Department of Minnesota. Also, thank you to Hospitality Chair Gary Anderson and Steve VanBergen - the day they arrived was hottest of the week. It was not an easy task to unload the equipment needed to stock a great hospitality room. One of the many highlights of the convention came as the Big 10 Conference made history electing Carol Whitmore from Iowa as the Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief designee for 2023-24. Carol will be the first female veteran elected to the high office of Commander-in-Chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars. Joining by Zoom, Jon Stewart, host of the Daily Show and friend to the VFW,

urged all in attendance to contact their senators and encourage them to pass the Honoring Our Pact Act - a comprehensive bill that would address health care and compensation for those veterans suffering from toxic exposure from burn pits and other airborne hazards. In his remarks the following day, Secretary of Veteran Affairs Denis McDonough confirmed approximately 6500 emails were generated as a result and captured the attention of our senators and representatives.

Representing the Western Conference, Sr Vice Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland was elected and installed as our Commander-in-Chief for 2022-2023. His philosophy is "Every Veteran Counts" and his success as a recruiter is simply astounding. CiC Borland emphasized membership as he set a goal of 102% for this year, let's do our part to reach that goal. He also holds the

NAT'L CONV - Cont. on Page 12

"That Little Lady with a Camera"

By Char Guse,
MN VFW Secretary



PDP Lil LaVoy
1941 - 2022

As many of you have probably already heard, Minnesota veterans and their auxiliaries lost one of our most dedicated members recently.

Lil LaVoy, from Cloquet VFW Auxiliary #3979, lost her battle with cancer on July 11, 2022. She was laid

LAVOY - Cont. on Page 4

"Preserving and Extending Veterans Rights, Advocating a Strong National Defense, Promoting Patriotism and Serving Local Communities" - Veterans of Foreign Wars Founding Principles

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

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

Save The Date!!

Upcoming VFW Events

Fall Conference September 22-25, 2022 Crowne Plaza, Plymouth	Midwinter Conference January 19-22, 2023 Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park	VFW State Hockey Tournament March, 2023 TBD
Big 10 Conference October 14-16, 2022 Milwaukee, WI	Minnesota Veterans Day on the Hill March, 2023 (Day TBD)	State Convention & Training Schools June 7-11, 2023 Crowne Plaza, Plymouth

Red Events are Department Events

Top News

MN Officers Receive All-American Honors

CONGRATULATIONS!

2021-2022 All-American District Commander honorees from Minnesota:

- Mike Lindvall, 4th District Commander

2021-2022 All-American Post Commander honorees from Minnesota:

- George Brown, White Bear Lake Post 1782
- David Thompson, Prior Lake Post 6208
- Todd Roberts, USS Dorchester Post #8731
- Bruce Heil, Cottage Grove Post 8752

The Veterans of Foreign Wars All-American Program acknowledges exceptional leadership in helping their level achieve growth in membership and outstanding work in key V.F.W. scholarship programs.

District All-American Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership greater than 100%. • Conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit report through tghe dashboard. • Meet all of the following Program Particivpation Criteria: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging - Patriot's Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging - National Citizenship Education Teachers Award - one entry advanced to Department judging
District All-American Awards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-American District Streamer • All-American District Citation • All-American Name Badge • All-American Cap • All-American Lapel Pin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top two District Commanders in each division will receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A \$1000 stipend used towards attending the VFW National Convention - Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention Joint Opening Session
Post All-American Criteria	
* All-American Post candidates must meet all of the following criteria:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership greater than 100%. • Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit reports through All-American Dashboard. • Post Election Report must be submitted to National. • Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging. • Patriot's Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans & Military Support Program Services, minimum \$100. • National Citizenship Education Teacher Award - one entry advanced to next level of judging. • A Post must submit a community service report to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard NLT 30 June 2023. • Buddy Poppy - Purchase five (5) per member in the Post.
Post All-American Awards	
* All posts that meet the Qualifying Percentage and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American Post Citation, Post Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.	
* The top 50 Posts in each Division will receive:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment in <i>VFW</i> magazine • Acknowledgment during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention • All-American Post citation • All-American Post streamer • All-American citation - commander • All-American name badge - cmdr. • All-American cap (commander only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-American lapel pin (cmdr. only). • All-American team Post member lapel pin (25 pack) • The top five commanders in each division will also receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending VFW National Convention - Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session

Commander Kicks off the Year in a Parade

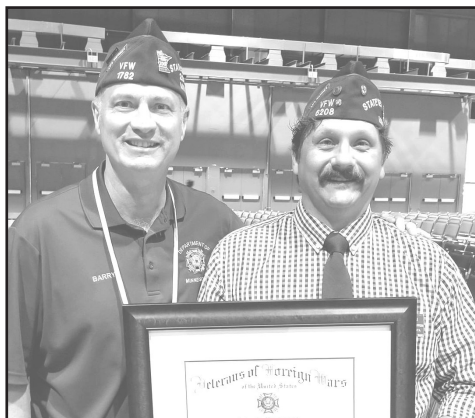
Commander Dale Hoogeveen started off his command year with an appearance in the Forest Lake 4th of July Parade. He was invited to join Post Cmdr. Bill Prinsen and fellow members of Forest Lake Post 4210 on the post float.

As expected, the temperature was high and so were the spirits of all float participants as they smiled and waved to the crowd along the parade route. Post members distributed flags and freezies to parade attendees. After the float reached the end of the parade, it continued on back to the post where everyone gathered for a brief lunch and visiting with fellow comrades.



Pictured above: Post 4210 Cmdr. Bill Prinsen, Cmdr. Dale Hoogeveen, Dist. 7 Sr. Vice Cmdr. Ken Schroepfer, Post 4210 QM Roger Fredsall

Gohn National Service Rep of the Year



Pictured above: 2021 Cmdr. Barry Henriksen and Claims Dir. Jon Gohn

Jon Gohn, Department on MN VFW Claims Director, received the 2022 John Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award. This award was preswented to Jon at the 2022 National VFW Convention.

Jon is an accredited, skilled professional, who has assisted veterans in filing for disability compensation, rehabilitation and education programs, pension and death benefits, and employment and training programs.

Minnesota VFW Office Locations

Department Headquarters:

Dewey Hermanson, Adjutant/QM
B5 Veterans Service Building
20 West 12th Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
Phone: (651) 291-1757
Fax: (651)291-2753
Email: adjutant@vfwmn.us
Webpage: www.vfwmn.org

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

Auxiliary Headquarters :

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

Minneapolis VA

Jeffrey Cowell
VFW Hospital Representative
Minneapolis VAMC
1 Veterans Drive- Room 4G- 109E
Phone: (612) 725-4448

GOPHER OVERSEAR

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: Oversear@vfwmn.us - Webpage: www.vfwmn.org

Publications Committee:
Dale Hoogeveen, Commander; Dan Meyer, Sr. Vice Commander;
David Staehlin, Jr. Vice Commander; Edward Keogh, Judge Advocate;
Ken Schroepfer, editor

The Gopher Oversear 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 15, November 15, and March 15

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 Dan Meyer, State Senior Vice Commander

The What a ride we are on!
We just had both our state and national conventions. There were two great opportunities to gain some outstanding knowledge and some new and wonderful comrades. Every time I go to one of the VFW state functions, I leave there with my batteries charged to the max and just raring to go.

We have an opportunity at our VFW Fall Conference to learn more about our VFW programs and make some more fantastic comrades. For me personally, this is very important. These friendships that are made at one of these events are life-long. I cherish each and every one of them.

We may have served in different eras and in different branches of the service, but the battles and the challenges are still the same. Everything that we do in the VFW, we do for a greater purpose. The VFW exists to help our fellow comrades and families. One kind gesture can change the day for someone else. Just as important, it can us feel so good that we really made a difference in someone's life.

So, I ask each of you to put on your VFW apparel. Go out in your communities and let people know that we are the VFW. Remember, no one does more for veterans than veterans.

Junior Vice Commander

By David Staehlin, State Junior Vice Commander

Comrades, thank you for giving me the honor of serving as your State Junior Vice Commander for 2022-23.

The year has started strong with a lot of activity. Your State and District leadership teams are in place. Throughout the state, both new and seasoned Post officers and chairs put their programs into action.

I recently returned--along with many other Department, District, and Post leaders--from what was my seventh VFW National Convention. We conducted important work of

the organization such as amending the National Bylaws, passing resolutions, and the budget, and electing our leadership.

I am also honored to have been appointed the Department's Parliamentarian for the year. I am available to assist not only the Department Commander but am happy to assist any officer or member of the VFW or Auxiliary throughout the state to have more effective meetings.

Let's all Be the Reason...this is a wonderful, successful year!

Adjutant-Quartermaster

By Dewey Hermanson, Department Adjutant-Quartermaster

This year the Department is again stressing that the posts report their Community Service Reports. They can be emailed to the Department chairman Aron Lambrecht, *aron.gtc@gmail.com* or to *secretary@vfwmn.us*. They must be received no later than the 20th of each month. I am hoping that this will be the last year paper copies will be done and

we go all electronic in reporting.

I ask that all Post and District Adjutants review the new requirements for ALL-AMERICAN ELIGIBLE IN DASHBOARD. If you are a new Adjutant, go to *www.vfw.org* and click on logon. Step one click on are you a new user?

ADJ/QM - Cont. on Page 10

Judge Advocate

By Ed Keogh, State Judge Advocate

I would like to thank all members who placed their vote of confidence in me to be your State Judge Advocate.

I will work hard to help any District or Post that has questions/concerns or proposed Bylaw changes. Please utilize the resources you have available to ensure your District and Post are operating in the correct manner.

The 2023 Podium Edition, VFW Congressional Charter Bylaws and

Manual of Procedure Ritual will be available for purchase from the VFW Store this fall. The new edition is also available in electronic format from Amazon and Barnes & Noble for a price.

Another great resource is the September 2020 Robert's Rules of Order newly revised in brief. This contains the rules you need in a meeting made simple and easy. If

JUDGE - Cont. on Page 12

2022-2023 Department Officers

Minnesota V.F.W. Council of Administration

Auxiliary to the V.F.W. Council of Administration

Officer	Home City	Home Post
Commander Dale Hoogeveen	Chaska	Post #1791
Sr. Vice Commander Dan Meyer	Fairfax	Post #8459
Quartermaster Dewey Hermanson	Cannon Falls	Post #4452
Adjutant Dewey Hermanson	Cannon Falls	Post #4452
Jr. Vice Commander David Staehlin	Cottage Grove	Post #8752
Judge Advocate Edward Keogh	Montgomery	Post 5340
Surgeon Dr. James Tuorila	St. Cloud	Post #428
Chaplain Scott Hansen	Brooklyn Park	Post #3915
Chief of Staff Curt Hermanson	Cannon Falls	Post #4452
Member at Large Dewey Hermanson	Cannon Falls	Post #4452
Chief Inspector Lawrence Grindland	S. Saint Paul	Post #295
Past Commander Barry Henriksen	White Bear Lake	Post #1782
Officer of the Day Donald Heuer	Rosemount	Post #9433
National Council MBR Thomas Hanson	Willmar	Post #1639
MOC Grand Cmdr Len Gudmunson	Hastings	Post #1210
1st District Cmdr. Samuel Landon	Prior Lake	Post #4452
2nd District Cmdr. Leon Grack	Glencoe	Post #5102
3rd District Cmdr. Matthew Martin	Sacred Heart	Post #3871
4th District Cmdr. Michael Lindvall	White Bear Lake	Post #1782
5th District Cmdr. Michael Gearmann	Madison	Post #1656
6th District Cmdr. Ryan Johnson	Sauk Rapids	Post #6992
7th District Cmdr. Jarrod McReynolds	Brooklyn Park	Post #3915
8th District Cmdr. Joseph White	Babbitt	Post #2717
9th District Cmdr. Richard Gabe	Detroit Lakes	Post #5252

Officer	Home City	Home AUX
President Sonia Tatge	Kenyon	AUX #141
Sr. Vice President David Scofield	Litchfield	AUX #2818
Jr. Vice President Karen England	Lake City	AUX #8729
Secretary/Treasurer Laurie Dale	Kenyon	AUX #141
Chaplain Julie Stoehr	Cook	AUX #1757
Conductress Paige Amundson	Madison	AUX #1656
Guard Amanda Weller	New York Mills	AUX #3289
Chief of Staff Laurie Dale	Kenyon	AUX #141
1st District President Sarah Escamilla	Owatonna	AUX #141
2nd District President Jean Keogh	Montgomery	AUX #5340
3rd District President Carolyn Penning	Wilmont	AUX #2603
4th District President Jean Opatrny	Mendota	AUX #6690
5th District President Caitlin Amundson	Madison	AUX #1656
6th District President Rita Reikofski	Watkins	AUX #5460
7th District President Doris Anderson	Blaine	AUX #6316
8th District President Marlaina Hart	Iron	AUX #4456
9th District President Amande Weller	New York Mills	AUX #3289
Past Department Presidents on Council:		
PDP Patches Presfield	St. Cloud	AUX #4847
PDP Francesca Bill	Brooklyn Park	AUX #3915
PDP Paige Amundson	Madison	AUX #1656
PDP Jamie Cassavant	Crookston	AUX #1902

Minnesota Auxiliary News



**STATE PRESIDENT
VFW Auxiliary**

Sonia Tatge

Member of
VFW Post 141 Auxiliary
Kenyon, MN



National District Council

By Frankie Bill, Member Area E

Comrades and Members,
I have the distinct privilege to represent all of our members from the Department of Minnesota, VFW Auxiliary as we move into year two of the 2021-2023 term. It is an honor to join all of you as the National Representative in Plymouth here at the Fall Conference. We are kicking off a new program year under the leadership of Jane Reape, National President with her theme: **Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care.**

Congratulations and best wishes to Commander Dale Hogeveen and President Sonia Tatge as they work

side-by-side serving Veterans, their families, and communities across Minnesota during 2022/2023. They have worked together to host a content-filled Conference where each and every one of us will be able to implement fresh ideas and further support our VFW communities. This is a great time to visit the myriad of workshops and learn from the Program Chairs what is new from the various programs available to assist our uncommon heroes. I look forward to visiting with everyone during Fall Conference!

Dear VFW and Auxiliary Members:

I am honored to serve as your 2022-2023 Department of Minnesota VFW Auxiliary President. I joined the Auxiliary in December, 1965 under the eligibility of my father, Sam Jacobson, past MN VFW Department Commander 1972-1973. Sam served during WWII in the Army Alamo Scouts to search out and secure islands in the Pacific.

During my 57 years as a Life Member of Kenyon VFW Post #141 Auxiliary I served many years as President. In District One, I served as District President in 2010-2011 as well as serving as Deputy Chief of Staff, Program Chairman and Musician over the years. On the Department level I

served as Department Musician for 12 years and as Program Chairman for Membership, Veterans and Family Support and Mentoring for Leadership.

As State President my theme for the year is "America's Heroes - Forever Remembered." My two symbols are the eagle and purple rose. I chose the color purple because it symbolizes the combined colors of all five branches of the military: Army green; Coast Guard, Navy and Air Force blue and Marine red.

Commander Dale Hogeveen and I are committed to raising funds with our joint project to provide shelter for homeless veterans. Serving our veterans in every capacity continues to be our goal!

LAVOY - Cont. from Page 1

to rest on July 21, 2022.

She joined the VFW Auxiliary in 1990, under the eligibility of her husband, Jack LaVoy. As he was active with the VFW, she jumped in with both feet, we are all the better for it. Always active on the local level, she went on to serve as 8th District President for one year, and District Treasurer for many years after that. She served as Department President in 2004-2005, following her five years leading up to that position.

Many of you around the state know her as "that little lady with the camera". EVERYONE (including District, Department and National people alike) took a pose when Lil said it was picture time. All other

meeting business and activities stopped until Lil got her pictures taken. She always took two!! Then at our next event, an envelope of pictures that you were in would magically appear on your chair or be handed to you.

She was a force of nature, and constantly in motion. Even when she was sitting, which was not often, she would still be in motion with her knitting and crocheting. Many of us are the benefactors of her crafts. We will think of her every time we do the dishes with one of the dishcloths she made.

If ever there was a member who deserves to put her feet up and rest, it was Lil.

Be at peace, dear lady.

Treasurer/Secretary Chair

By Laurie Dale

Hello all
National Convention was remarkably busy for me this year. As a Page to the National District Council Members, I missed sitting with the Minnesota Delegation, but still enjoyed the convention. There were several resolutions that passed on the convention floor, and we will make sure to share the "amended" versions with you as soon as we have them available from National VFW Auxiliary Headquarters and we will discuss them at Fall Conference.

A couple of things of note from the National Council Meeting on Friday, July 22:

1. It was revealed that the December edition of the VFW Auxiliary Magazine will be the last one that will be available in printed form. Only the digital version will be available after that issue. The reason the print version will be discontinued is there was a need to make cuts to the National Budget and by cutting the paper version of the magazine, a savings of approximately \$900,000 was realized. Please make sure you get signed up to receive the VFW Auxiliary Magazine online so you can continue to get the valuable information included in this publication.
2. We can expect an increase to the National Dues, most likely in 2023-2024. It has been some time since there was an increase and as we all are aware, the cost of doing business has gone up and there is no exception to our

headquarters in Kansas City. This of course is not a done deal, but I am certain there will be much debate and some real data shared in the future. We have many auxiliaries that currently charge barely what they need to cover the Five Dollar Per Cap to National and the Five Dollar Per Cap to Department; it may be time for your auxiliary to consider a dues increase for 2024.

It is not necessary to send a copy of your bond to the Department Office if you are bonding through the National Organization. Only when using an outside company is it necessary for you to send a copy of your bond to the Department Office. Bonds purchased from a source other than National require Council approval. Bonds must be purchased in the amount of DOUBLE the amount of your auxiliary assets. Bonds must be purchased no later than August 31, 2022.

990N e-postcards are due by November 15. A copy of your acceptance is needed in the Department VFW Auxiliary HQ Office. If your auxiliary files a tax return, you do not need to do the 990N, but we need a copy of your return on file in place of the 990N. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PAY ANYTHING TO FILE THE 990N ONLINE! If you are trying to complete the 990N e-postcard online and someone is trying to charge you a fee to do it... you are on the wrong website! Please let us help you if you need it.

All Post, District and Department Officers Dues

MUST BE PAID

by December 31

ALL MEMBERS

REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR DUES

Better yet,

Become a Life Member !!

MN Auxiliary Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8am - 4pm
Phone: (651) 291-1759

email: treasurer@vfwamn.org or secretary@vfwamn.org
Please do not use our personal emails or personal phone numbers for auxiliary business

Claims and Service Office Report

Jon Gohn, Claims Director

Claims Office Update

This past year has been an extremely productive year for your MN Claims Office. We reached over the \$500,000,000.00 mark for monies recovered for Minnesota Veterans. Further over the past couple of years we have drastically expanded our Powers of Attorneys. We represent over 35,000 claimants, which equates to 6% of all VFW claimants Nationwide. That does make us one of the top offices for number of individuals represented in our National Organization. We have conducted many hearings for appellants, and a great majority were very successful. Our people are busy for sure. All your representatives have been able to finally go to in person training once again, and it was very refreshing to be able to see some of our Veteran Service Officer comrades that we haven't been with for a couple of years now. All employees have passed their accreditation tests with flying colors, garnering average scores of 97.25%. We have been very active in a few projects. Recently we were able to achieve over \$1,500,000.00 in three separate three day projects. That was very life changing for quite a few individuals.

We have also been on a national team to help develop program

updates for VA appeals. With our help and valuable insight, we were able to help develop a portion of the program that will be very advantageous to veterans awaiting hearings. Your St. Paul Claims Office often participates in projects that help with other common issues, streamlining of claims, and giving input on form development. We are often called on by our National Veterans Service Staff or the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist in various ways.

During the past VFW National Convention in Kansas City, MO your Claims Office Director, Jon Gohn, was recognized as the National Veterans Service Officer of the Year. It was a great honor and a testament to the unrelenting work that the office staff puts forth on a daily basis. They truly are the best of the best and can hold their heads high when completed the mission statement of, "No One Does More for Veterans".

It is a pleasure assisting our Minnesota clientele, and we look forward to another successful year.

If you have any questions or need assistance from your claims office, please feel free to reach out.

Phone: (612) 970-5669

Email: vfw.vbaspl@va.gov

New, Easy-to-Remember Veterans Crisis Line

July 18, 2022

WASHINGTON — If you're a Veteran having thoughts of suicide or concerned about one, reach 24/7 crisis support through the new Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) number: Dial 988, then Press 1.

This shorter, three-digit number provides an easier-to-remember way to access the VCL. We're working to make sure all Veterans and their supporters know about the new number. Below are answers to some questions you might have about this change.

Why did the VCL get a new number?

The change is a result of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act. The law authorized 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Lifeline). Under the law, all telephone service providers in the U.S. had to activate the number by July 16, 2022.

Because VA administers the VCL through the Lifeline's national network, the service was affected by this transition.

What does the new number mean for me?

Since 2007, the VCL has supported millions of Veterans in crisis. This new, shorter number increases ease of access and clarity in times of crisis for both Veterans and supporters.

Like the current number, to reach the VCL, Veterans will press 1 after dialing to connect with VCL responders. Though the number is new, the Veterans Crisis Line dedicated service is still the same. And, you don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.

Is the old VCL phone number going away?

No. Veterans will still be able to call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 to connect with responders. The VCL will also still be available by chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) and text (838255).

What happens if I'm overseas?

The VCL's 800 number is a continental United States (CONUS)-based toll-free number that remains active. Some international calls may incur a charge, depending on the caller's location and network provider.

Veterans overseas may contact the VCL through chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.

If you prefer a phone call, you can request this within the chat venue. A responder will call you at the number you provide at no charge.

Be prepared and save the new number in your phone: Dial 988, then Press 1.

Remember, you're not alone. Day or night, the Veterans Crisis Line is here for you.

NO MORE DELAYS, Pass the PACT Act Now!!

July 18, 2022

WASHINGTON — A procedural issue required Congress to amend and pass the PACT Act again.

VFW Issues an Action Alert. The House has done its job and passed the bill with bipartisan support. Every day this bill is delayed means another day a veteran could get sick and die. The Senate must stop any further delays and immediately pass the Honoring our PACT Act.

This comprehensive legislation would help millions of toxic-exposed veterans receive VA health care and benefits. This bill is supported by more than 60 veteran organizations.

It would create a concession of exposure for burn pits and airborne hazards, establish a list of presumptive conditions, and provide a framework for assessing future conditions linked to any toxic exposure, foreign or domestic, past, present, and future.

Take Action. Contact your senators and tell them no more delays, no more amendments. They must bring the Honoring our PACT Act to the floor immediately and vote YES. Sick veterans cannot afford to wait any longer for health care and benefits.

The Senate must act now!

Post 9/11 Veteran Service Bonus Available

July 11, 2022

S.Paul, MN — The 2022 Legislature passed and Governor Walz signed the first-ever Veterans Omnibus Bill that included funding for a service bonus payable to eligible Veterans who served from 9/11/01 to 8/30/21. MDVA is honored to facilitate this program for eligible Veterans, currently serving service members, or Veterans' beneficiaries.

The online application is located at VetServiceBonus.mdva.mn.gov. Due to the large volume of applications, users may experience some issues with the application portal.

MDVA will begin processing payments the week of July 25, 2022. Applicants can expect their mailed check in August.

The application opened July 7, 2022 and will run until June 30, 2024, or until funds have been exhausted.

Visit the application portal to review and answer the initial pre-screening questions to assist in determining your eligibility.

If it is determined that you may be eligible for the bonus, you will be directed to the application.

- If you have previously applied for the Minnesota GI Bill or Veteran Owned Business Certification, you will login with your existing username and password.

- If you have never applied for the Minnesota GI Bill or Veteran Owned Business certification, you will be prompted to create an account.

If it is determined that you may not be eligible for the Post-9/11 Veteran Service Bonus, you will be directed to your County Veteran Service Office for additional assistance or guidance.

For more information or apply, visit: MinnesotaVeteran.org/ServiceBonus Or call LinkVet at 1-888-LinkVet.

Veterans Claim Service

Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Bldg.
1 Federal Drive, Room G900, Saint Paul, MN 55111
Phone: (612) 970-5669 FAX: (612)970-5404

email: vfw.vbaspl@va.gov

We'll Help with YOUR Veteran Benefits

Message From Your National Council Member

By Tom Hanson,
National Council Member

First let me offer greetings to you all from our newly elected Department and National officers. Our state is in good hands under the leadership of Dale Hoogeveen. Our National Commander-in-Chief is Tim Borland from Arizona. Tim was elected at our recently completed VFW National Convention in Kansas City and of course Dale took the helm of our Department following our State Convention. I'm sure you'll join me in offering a warm welcome to our National and Department officers.

As I indicated, we are back from the National Convention. The National Council of Administration met twice over the course of the convention. The new year budget was set, discussed, and ratified. Quartermaster General, Marc Garduno did a sensational and thorough job of deciphering the budget for the forthcoming year. The report given to all council members was a realistic and well thought out description of the enormous amounts of capital it takes to run this quarter of a billion dollar non-profit.

The delegates to the National Convention considered a number of bylaw, manual of procedure, and ritual changes. These will be amended in the new podium edition of the National Bylaws Manual of Procedure and Ritual available for sale through VFW Emblem and Supply. Some time in October I would anticipate the newest edition will be available.

The discussion continued regarding Claims Shark legislation. You may have seen recent editions of the VFW Magazine and other periodicals that offer representation by an attorney in the VA claims process. The fact is that the VFW service officers are far better trained in this process than any attorney in the country. These sharks promise big wins but in the event of success they have a contract to obtain a large portion of any retroactive payments. The National Organization is on top of this issue and we need to be on our congressional members to ensure this practice is put to death.

Again, there were several more issues that were considered by the Council but are too numerous to bring forth in this column. But I do ask that if there are any concerns or comments that any member would like brought to the National Council, or have questions about anything specific, please don't hesitate to contact me in that regard.

MN VFW National Legislative Report

By Nathan Morgan, National Legislative Chairperson

H.R. 3967 - The PACT Act

This is perhaps the largest health care and benefit expansion in VA history.

The official title of Bill H.R.3967 is The Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act. Known simply as the PACT Act or Honoring our PACT Act was passed in the evening of August 2, 2022. This act was headed by Representative Mark Tanano (D) from California's 41st District. This Bill was approved by the Senate and is sitting on President Biden's desk. After arguments and stalling by Pat Toomey (R) from Pennsylvania's 15th District citing that the bill had a 400 billion discretionary portion that they could not approve. This was proven to be incorrect.

Emails from VFW Director of National Legislative Service, Patrick Murphy stated as such "This Bill has no Pork." "This bill does not have \$400 Billion in non-veteran spending!". Feel free to read it yourself, search H.R. 3967, and view it.

This bill offers more benefits to



veterans affected by burn pits. These burn pits affect everybody (especially anyone who had to sit through a field sanitation class). This expands health care to more veterans, These benefits should come across as bipartisan and easy to approve for signature but are becoming a topic that are getting voted along party lines. This is why we need to continue to promote Veterans benefits.

Minnesota's representatives all voted in favor of the PACT Act bill.

Included in the bill are provisions for veterans who served in previous conflicts. It expands the benefits

for Vietnam veterans who have developed hypertension caused by Agent Orange specifically in Thailand at any U.S. or Royal Thai bases, Laos, Cambodia, Guam or American Samoa or the waters thereof, or on Johnson Atoll. It also includes veterans who participated in the cleanup of radioactive materials at Palomares, Spain, and the on-board fire and crash of a U.S. Air Force B-52 bomber in the vicinity of Thule Air Force Base, Greenland.

H.R. 2192 - Camp Lejune Justice Act

This is the next bill to come up. The H.R 2192 Camp Lejune Justice Act. Introduced by Rep Matt Cartwright (D-PA-8th) this will assist veterans who were stationed in Camp Lejune from 1953-1987.

Currently this has only been introduced but should pick up steam quickly in Congress.

Please be sure to write your Congressperson on your thoughts regarding this bill and also write showing appreciation for Passing H.R 3976.

MN VFW State Legislative Report

By Jennifer Shumaker, State Legislative Chairperson

MN Omnibus Bill signed June 2022

Governor Tim Walz ceremonially signed the comprehensive veterans omnibus bill and National Guard retention bonus bill. Governor Walz officially signed the veterans omnibus bill, SF4233, on May 10, 2022. Governor Walz also signed HF3379, which expands eligibility for reenlistment bonuses for Service Members in the Minnesota National Guard.

Highlights of SF4233 and HF3379 include:

1. Service Bonuses

The bill includes nearly \$25 million in FY23 for service bonuses to post-9/11 era veterans and Gold Star Families.

2. Veteran Homelessness

In FY23, \$5.4 million will go toward a grant to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans to provide assistance to veterans and former services members and their families who are homeless or in danger of homelessness. The bill also includes \$1.7 million annually to fund temporary housing options for veterans and former service members experiencing homelessness and to increase outreach activities to end homelessness.

3. Veterans Homes

The bill includes funding of \$10.3 million in FY22 and \$16.5 million in

FY23 for the design, construction, furnishing, and equipping of new veterans homes to support aging veterans in Bemidji, Montevideo, and Preston, Minnesota.

4. National Guard Retention

Around \$4 million will go toward enlistment incentives designed to retain the trained and ready members of the Minnesota National Guard over FY 23-25.

Veterans Cemeteries

The bill includes \$830,000 annually to operate state veterans cemeteries, including operations in Redwood County.

The bills passed the Minnesota House and Senate with nearly unanimous support.

National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO) Legislative Report

-National VA training conference June 6-June 10, San Antonio, TX

Why is this important for MN Veterans? Service officers within the 87 counties around the state of MN are your first line of communication for veteran benefits and updates for veterans and their families.

Key areas of emphases are:

Improving support for local government service officers

-HR4601 and S2405 CVSO act is no longer in the PACT act, cut out of

agreement does not mean we are not supporting the PACT act, tried to get CVSO points in there, but then the CVSO should be separate, and need to have as a standalone bill.

The purpose is to provide funding to local governments through VA administered grants, improve outreach and assistance to veterans and increase the number of county and tribal veteran service officers.

Increase veteran access to care

S3388 - Veteran Benefits improvement act addresses the following:

1. Establishes a Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) internship and honors program
2. Conduct a report on improving access to BVA tele-hearings
3. Compensation & Pension (C & P) exams and Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) VHA personnel and contractors will have access to DBQs, and the VA must keep the claims office notified of all those exams, and updates.
4. Section 301 forces the secretary to report back to congress one year no later of elements of the report include VA systems enhanced access, intergovernmental liaisons and improve the relationship between VA and veteran advocates.

Fall Conference - September 23-25, 2022

CONF. - Cont. from Page 1

Quartermasters, Treasurers, Chairmen and members are urged to attend as many Schools of Instruction or seminars as possible. Attendance at all these schools of instruction and seminars are important to the success of our VFW and Auxiliary programs for the coming year. Please encourage a member of your Post or Auxiliary to attend all the meetings and have them share the information with your Post and Auxiliary members who were unable to attend.

A complete schedule of schools of instruction and seminars are available in your Department and Auxiliary General Orders, on the VFW Department Web Page at: www.vfwmn.org and a QR Code at the event. There will be great classes on all our key programs.

The best way to have a successful year is to get a great start and the Fall Conference will help you launch into your new year.

COMMITTEE DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS

The Display and Exhibit Area will be open from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday, September 24th in the Europa/Copenhagen room. All members will have ample opportunity to visit these displays and exhibits to pick up samples of all the available program information.

All VFW and Auxiliary Programs will be exhibited here as well as our Veterans Homes and other related programs. All Post Commanders and Quartermasters wishing to have a chance at ALL-STATE honors should locate the Membership Display Area and sign-in on the sheets provided.

BANQUET DINNER

This year, the Annual Fall Conference Banquet will be a casual, fun BBQ dinner. State Commander, Dale Hooegeven and State President, Sonia Tatge wanted everyone to relax, enjoy a good meal and fellowship with friends.

Seating is not assigned but there will be tables reserved for distinguished guests. Don't worry there will be plenty of seating for everyone.

The BBQ will be outside. The Crowne Plaza has had wonderful experiences with hosting banquets outside. If weather is inclement then we will move inside to the Regency/Europa rooms. The hotel has a fire pit if you want to roast marshmallows later in the evening. It is open to all VFW and Auxiliary members.

Additional information including the menu are on the order form that has been printed in this issue of the Gopher Oversea'r. You can also find it online at www.vfwmn.org.

SUNDAY COUNCIL MEETING

Please stay and join us for our Council of Administration meeting on Sunday.

At this meeting, you will listen as the Department of Minnesota, VFW wrap up the final business of the 2022 Fall Conference. The VFW Council meeting starts promptly at 9:00 am.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS - DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA



VFW FALL CONFERENCE

September 23-25, 2022

Crowne Plaza Hotel, 3131 Campus Drive, Plymouth, MN
(Rev. 7-25-2022) Tentative

FRIDAY, September 23, 2022

9:30 - 10:00am	Convention Committee	Boardroom 1
10:30 - 11:30am	Internal Affairs Committee (Tentative)	Boardroom 1
NOON - 6:00 pm	Registration VFW & Aux	Fireside Lounge
	Pick up program book & Banquet Tickets	
1:00 - 2:30pm	Finance Committee	Boardroom 1
2:30 - 4:00pm	Gambling Meeting Deb Lewis	Regency
4:30 - 5:30pm	MNVFW Charitable Association	Boardroom 1
6:30 - 8:30pm	VFW Council of Administration	Regency
6:30 - 8:30pm	Auxiliary Council of Administration	Scandinavian
After Meetings	Hospitality Rooms	Second Floor

SATURDAY, September 24, 2022

7:00 A.M. - 3:00 pm	Registration VFW & Aux	Fireside Lounge
8:00 A.M. - 3:00pm	Seminars/Hands-on Instruction	Conf. Rooms C-F
		Boardroom 2
		Scandinavian
8:00 A.M - 3:00 pm	Program Exhibits/Poppy Contest	Europa/Copenhagen
	Exhibit set up from 7 - 7:45 am	
	Chairs please staff your Displays from 2 - 2:45 pm	
4:30 - 5:30pm	Non-Denominational Services	Conf. Room C
	Catholic Services	Boardroom 2
6:00 - 6:45pm	General Reception	Atrium
7:00 - 9:30pm	Casual BBQ	Outdoors (weather)
	Indoors (weather)	Regency/Europa

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

9:00 - 11:00am	VFW Council of Administration	Regency
----------------	-------------------------------	---------

VFW Sr. VICE Cmdr.-in-Chief to Visit Conference



Duane Sarmiento, the newly elected Nat'l VFW Sr. Vice Cmdr.-in-Chief will be visiting us at the Fall Conference.

He served in the United States Navy from 1988 to 1997, and the United States Naval Reserve from 2002 to 2006, earning his VFW eligibility by serving in Operations Desert Shield/Storm.

Duane joined the VFW in 1990 at Post 5579 in Gibbstown, New Jersey, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of New Jersey Commander from 2018 to 2019. He has served as the Nat'l VFW Inspector General from 2019 to 2020, and various Nat'l committee.

A retired township police officer, Duane is also a member of the Delaware Military Order of the Cooties, Ky-Yi Pup Tent #1.

Duane and his wife, Ellen, reside in Gibbstown, New Jersey.

Fall Conference Informal BBQ Event

Saturday, September 24th, 2022

Tickets \$34/person

Reception 6pm Dinner 7pm

Deadline: Friday September 9, 2022

Menu: BBQ Chicken & Pork Chops, Baked Potato Halves with Sour Cream & Butter, Boston Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Dinner Roll, Apple Crisp or Peach Cobbler, Coffee, Tea, Milk

No assigned seating except for the State Commander's Honored Guests' Tables

(Tickets will be at Registration Table in Lobby area)

Fill out the form below:

.....

• Mail and Make Checks Payable to: **Dept. of MN - VFW**

• **PO BOX 17146**

• **St. Paul, MN 55117**

• Please Reserve _____ Tickets at \$34/person.

• Name: _____

• Phone: _____ Email: _____

• Post/Auxiliary # _____ District # _____

.....

HOUSING RESERVATIONS

VFW Fall Conference 2022
Friday, Sept. 23 -- Sunday, Sept. 25
Crowne Plaza Hotel
3131 Campus Drive
Plymouth, MN 55441

For Reservations call 763-559-6600

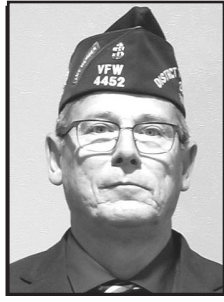
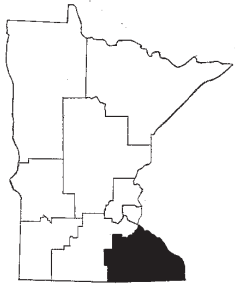
Room Block: **VFW 2022 Fall Conference**

Room Rate: \$115/night + tax
(Standard King OR Two Double Beds)
Check in: 3pm Check out: Noon

DEADLINE
September 2, 2022

after deadline date,
you pay full room price

News from YOUR District Commanders and Presidents!



**Samuel Landon, Commander
First District**

Greeting from the First District. Congratulations to Cmdr. Dale Hoogeveen and those elected or appointed to serve with Dale this year in representing the great state of Minnesota.

As new Commander for the First District, with the help of my line officers and the chairman I have appointed and with the support of the District President Sarah and her team, I believe our District will stand out in the support of many of our programs.

For the second year in a row the First District's VOD representative took 1st place in the state. Advancing to national where she placed 4th in the nation. (first the previous year).

Our Patriots Pen winner placed 3rd in the state.

We will continue to strive to do the best, but I believe we are definitely on the right track.

Zumbrota Post 5727 will be having a dedication to their new Veterans Memorial on September 17th at 10am. I am honored to have been asked to say a few words. Traveling around the country, my wife and I enjoy stopping and viewing a memorial when we see it.

Our first District meeting was held August 6th in Cannon Falls. It was a great chance for our membership to meet the new officers and chairman and also the VFW chairman to meet and get to know their Auxiliary counterpart.

I hope to see you all at the Fall Conference, where are chairman can pickup on valuable information and training.

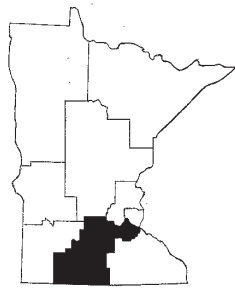
Thank you again for electing me your District Commander and I will do all I can to represent the District as well as many of my past predecessors have.



**Sarah Escamilla, Auxiliary
President First District**

Greetings from the First District! I am honored to have been elected as the First District Auxiliary President for the 2022-23 year. My focus this year is to promote our Auxiliary Outreach program within our communities. I feel that by partnering up with other groups and organizations this will help with not only promoting the VFW and our programs but with membership also. Eligible members are out there, we just have to find them and using the

DIST. 1 AUX. - Cont. on Page 12



**Leon Grack, Commander
Second District**

Hello from the 2nd District. I hope everyone's summer has been good; if it wasn't hopefully next years is better.

Its inspection time and lets get these done sooner than later. Get the harvest in, but also get the inspection completed. I hope everyone has a safe harvest and the hoppers are full.

Fall means hunting, fishing and camaraderie. Take a fellow veteran along and enjoy each others company while throwing a line in the water or shooting some targets. Get someone out of the house who may not be able to on a regular basis. Just a ride to a meeting can turn into an adventure.

Veterans Day will be here shortly and I want to say Thank You to all my brothers and sisters in arms for what you have and continue to do. Keep it up to the best of your ability and please pass along information to the younger generations.

I have had the pleasure of speaking with some of you "old timers" and no it's not boring. (I'm under 50 so yes most of you are old). I hope I have the pleasure to speak with more of you in the future and lets get those whipper snappers to join.

The best part of the year is coming up with winter just around the corner. I just love blowing snow and sliding around on the roads. Midwinter Conference will be here in no time. Remember to get those poppy displays ready.

Time for me to get back to fishing and spending time with fellow veterans and friends. If I or any of the 2nd District command staff can help with something please let us know.

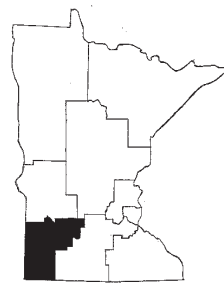
Keep your head down and your butt lower, because it hurts to get shot in the butt.



**Jean Keogh, Auxiliary
President Second District**

I am honored to be able to serve the Second District Auxiliary for a second year. Our team of dedicated officers and program chairs are here to guide and assist you during the year. All you need to do is contact us.

Ending the 2021-2022 year, we had 14 auxiliaries at or exceeding 100% membership. Congratulations and thank you for your work in "retaining and gaining". Membership is our life-blood - it keeps us going strong and is a year-round project. As we begin the 2022-2023 year, let's all continue to put recruitment and retention in the forefront.



**Matthew Martin, Commander
Third District**

Greetings from the third District. Congratulations to all newly elected officers. I am looking forward to a great year working with Dale and all other line officers. It's a new journey being district commander and so far, I have had great support from other officers, thank you.

My goal for this year is to attend post meetings around the district, and meet with others that I normally don't see at district or state functions. I also plan on setting up a pup tent in Granite Falls, and hopefully start a rider's group in the district.

On July 19th Granite Falls had a veteran's picnic honoring 5 comrades that are in there 80's and 90's that have been active or are still active, and have dedicated many years of service to the VFW. Thank you to Phillip Rachie, Don Hemple, Leslie Craig, Jim Shimming, and Delbert Geil. I want to thank all our comrades that have served 40 plus years to our organizations and have dedicated a lifetime of service.



**Carol Penning, Auxiliary
President Third District**

We have just had our budget meeting and are setting up where we will be visiting for the coming year.

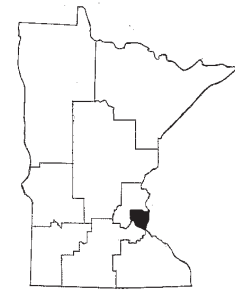
During the past year, the VFWs and Auxiliaries in District 3 did an outstanding job of honoring their veterans at their Memorial Day Services and at local cemeteries, large or small.

Thanks to all who accepted a program chair for our new year. I hope to see many of you at our district meeting on October 1 in Ivanhoe.

The district auxiliaries excelled at the June Department Convention where many awards were received. These will be presented at our October district meeting.

I encourage all auxiliaries to work with your posts to make our Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen competitions a huge success. Don't forget the Department Americanism contest. Now is the time to get the contest details to your schools and teachers. Media, and especially social media, can be great tools to promote these programs. Don't forget your home-schoolers who are also eligible to participate.

Please support Second District Commander Leon and my joint project: Veterans on the Water in Arlington, Minnesota. They provide



**Michael Lindvall, Commander
Fourth District**

The Fourth District had another great year and achieved 100% membership. This is our second year in a row of making this milestone. Which also means that the district is once again All-American. I would like to thank all posts that went above and beyond to make this happen. Keeping our membership up means the VFW can better serve veterans.

The Fourth District has only nine posts. However, we had a good year for recognition. Of the nine we had two All-American Posts; 1782 White Bear Lake and 8752 Cottage Grove. Besides the All-American honors, four posts; Post 5 St. Paul, Post 1171 St Paul, White Bear Lake, and Cottage Grove were chosen for the All-State Team.

I would like to thank the district by allowing me to be commander one more year. I look forward to serving the district and working with our new Department Commander Dale Hoogeveen. This will a great and fulfilling year.



**Jean Opatrny, Auxiliary
President Fourth District**

Greeting 4th District members, The District meetings have started on July 23. There was a small attendance, but we accomplished a lot.

The Auxiliary is awaiting the visit from the National President Jane Reape's August 15 at the White Bear Lake Post.

A committee is working on guidelines for district officers and chairman. This will help anyone interested in taking an office or chairmanship to know what is expected for that office.

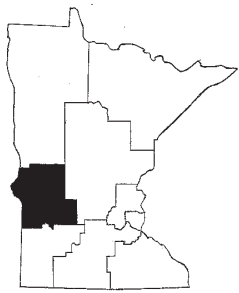
The next big project is co-hosting the hospitality room at Fall Conference. Please come to the conference. Check the General Orders for reservation & other information.

Wishing everyone a successful year.

free fishing excursions for all veterans. Auxiliary Presidents will be receiving the details soon.

Our Second District meetings this year will be held on October 8 in Wells, January 7 in Montgomery, March 11 in Chaska, and Loyalty Day Convention on April 29 in Hastings.

I look forward to seeing all of you at these meetings and the department conferences.



**Michael Gearmann, Commander
Fifth District**

Greetings from the 5th!
I hope this finds everyone staying cool this summer.

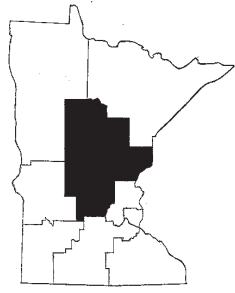
I am excited for the upcoming year and the challenges it will bring, as always membership will be a priority along with training for our officers. We started early this year with quartermasters this summer and will continue throughout the year to help not only with training but also with the networking of all of the officer positions.

I would like to congratulate Bob Friesen of Starbuck Post 4582 for achieving All State Commander status!

Our meeting schedule is: Osakis VFW on Sept 18th at 10 am, Willmar VFW on Jan 8th at 2 pm and Madison VFW on April 16th at 2 pm. As always they will be zoom accessible. Let's have a great year!!

Also our Senior Vice is deployed so if you would like to drop him a letter or care package his address is:

MSG Lee Christopherson
347th RSG, BOS-1 AAAB
APO. AE 09333



**Ryan Johnson, Commander
Sixth District**

Hello from the 6th District,
Let me just take a moment or two to thank everyone in the 6th District for putting their trust in me to lead them this year.

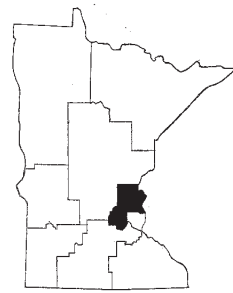
Summer is partly over and we need to be looking forward to fall. Specifically, the Fall Conference. I really would like to encourage all post commanders and quartermasters to attend the training sessions that will be offered. Plus, it is really important that we meet the officers from other posts in the department and learn from them. This is a great opportunity to learn from others what works well in their posts.

I am looking forward to working with Auxiliary President Reikofski this year.

Let me keep this short and offer my help as your post officers work toward 100% membership in each of your posts. This should be one of your primary goals this year.

Remember our District meeting at St. Cloud Post 428 on October 1 at 1pm.

See you at Fall Conference.



**Jarrod McReynolds, Commander
Seventh District**

Greetings from the Mighty 7th District.

First and foremost, I am honored to have been elected as your District Commander for this year. It is my mission this year to focus on programs, strive to increase membership, and work to get back to activities that were shut down because of COVID.

It was great seeing all our comrades and brothers and sisters of the auxiliaries at the National Convention. It is so vital for members at every level to attend conventions and conferences whenever possible. This is our opportunity to learn from each other about what is working, what is not, and what is expected for our programs, both in classes, and in social meetings. If you oversee a program at any level, I highly suggest you attend the Fall Conference. Each program will have classes where you can learn all about programs, ask questions of the department chairmen, and most of all meet your fellow comrades from across the state. These conferences are vital for every officer and member to attend, when possible. There are no limits to the number of people who can attend, learn, and assist to make our organization the best it possibly can be.

Please mark your calendars to join us on Veterans Day as we return to the Minneapolis Veterans Home to honor our veterans and spend time with the residents. It is an event you don't want to miss.

In closing, I just want to thank all the members of the 7th for all their hard work, and dedication to our veterans, their families, and our communities. It is you who is truly making a difference every day.



**Doris Anderson, Auxiliary
President Seventh District**

Greetings from the 7th District Auxiliary.

Congratulations to all who accepted an office or chairmanship this year. We look forward to working together with the VFW as we meet the challenges of the 2022-2023 program year. My priority goals this year is MENTORING and MEMBERSHIP. I believe these two programs work hand-in-hand. For us to keep our members, while recruiting new members, we must share our knowledge and experiences

DISTRICT MEETINGS

Dec. 3	First District Mabel #5769	@ 9:30 AM
Oct. 8	Second District Wells #1778	@ 1 PM
Oct. 1	Third District Ivanhoe #2980	@ 10 AM
Oct. 22	Fourth District Cottage Grove #8752	@ 9 AM
Sept. 18	Fifth District Osakis #1902	@ 10 AM
Oct. 1	Sixth District St. Cloud #428	@ 1 PM
Oct. 8	Seventh District Forest Lake #4210	@ 10 AM
Oct. 1	Eighth District Hoyt Lakes #8144	@ 9 AM
Sept. 11	Ninth District TRF #2793	@ TBD
Aug. 20	MOC TRF #2793	@ 10 AM



Don't forget to change your address when you head South for the winter.



**Caitlin Amundson, Auxiliary
President Fifth District**

Greetings 5th District members,
I am the 2022-2023 District 5 Auxiliary President. I have decided to serve a second year just like our Commander Mike Germann.

One major focus for this year is to work with all of you for the betterment of District 5. We accomplished an awful lot last year. That said, I know that we can do an even better job this year.

I am looking forward to productive meetings and great visits from our Department officers! Fall Conference will be in Plymouth in September. It will be fantastic. I can't wait. I always enjoy the workshops and all the information that comes from them. I am always ready to learn, and Fall Conference always gives me an opportunity to do that.

I was both excited and nervous last year as District 5 President, and I can't wait for this year to really get going. I am anticipating awesome things we will do for our veterans, current service members, their families, our youth, and our communities!



**Rita Reikofski, Auxiliary
President Sixth District**

Greetings from the 6th District.
I would like to congratulate Post 8391 Browerville Auxiliary for the great job on taking 2nd place at the National Convention. Also, congratulations on a great job to all of the other poppy displays that made it to convention.

I would like to thank all of the auxiliaries that donated socks to my sock project. Last year we collected 1,519 socks. Let's keep this going and break last year's record.

Thanks again for all of your help in the quilting project. Let's work even harder to get more quilts done to keep our veterans warm.

Our chairmen are busy with all of their programs I want to offer my encouragement as you work one by one program. Your efforts will make this year another successful year for our Veterans.

I am looking forward to a very busy and successful year. Keep up the great work that you are doing for your Veterans and their families.

Don't Go It Alone!!!

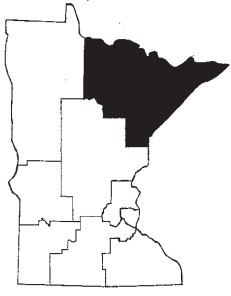
JUST CALL!!!



THERE'S HELP!!!

**Veteran's Day
is
November 11**

**Is your Post prepared to
honor those who served
their country in war or
peace - living or dead.**



**Joseph White, Commander
Eighth District**

Comrades and Friends,

This year has been a good year for the district. Our social media sites are slowly but surely starting to grow and increase.

The Silver Bay Veterans' Home had its 30th anniversary party on July 9th. Over 100 people attended throughout the state. It was a beautiful sunny day and a great show of support. Thank you all who attended.

There are many fundraisers throughout the district going on supporting youth activities, homeless shelters, and many other community functions where thousands of dollars are being invested back into our communities.

As always, we are working on increasing membership this year and will strive to be the number one district next year end of June.

The focus for the next 90 days is a big push to work with our auxiliaries to get a good jump start on Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen. We will also do a good job nominating teacher of the year, firefighter, police and so on. These are great ways to show our support and help increase membership.

The district is very motivated, and I am personally thankful for all the support I continue to receive from the district past commanders and my post commanders.



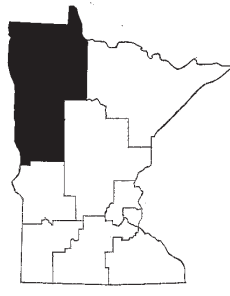
**Marlaina Hart, Auxiliary
President Eighth District**

Greetings from District 8.

Hello, my name is Marlaina Hart and I'm the newly elected President of District 8 VFW Auxiliary. I joined in 2015 under my husband, a Viet Nam Veteran. Due to the fact that I have many Veterans in my family, who selflessly gave of their time and/or their lives to serve this great country of ours, the U.S.A.! It is my way of giving back for their service.

In our District our elections are finished and are about to get busy with our Official Visits to each Auxiliary. District 8 Auxiliaries are busy with summer activities serving our veterans by taking them on pontoon boat rides, serving special Memorial Day Dinners, marching in local parades and generally helping the Posts with whatever they need. Veterans Day events are in the works, along with the Americanism and Youth Activities being planned for the school year.

This year the Commander and I are doing a joint project and we are



**Kelly Booge, Commander
Ninth District**

Greetings from the 9th District.

Since the last Oversea'r we finally warmed up and summer is upon us. For a while, we weren't sure if it would happen.

Like most posts those of us here in the 9th District have our main focus on recruiting new members. It is a little harder up here due to the fact so many of our younger veterans tend to relocate to larger communities after their discharge/retirement. There will be lots of leg work needed to accomplish this task. I know that we can achieve this goal. Visibility and participation in our communities and their activities will most certainly help. We will not give up.

Congratulations to Amanda Weller on being elected Auxiliary President for the 9th. I have had the opportunity work with her for the last few years on the Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy program. I continue to look forward for the year working with her.

The one thing that I have learned in my thirty-six years in the Air Force is that I don't always have the answers. That said, I will lean heavily on the past district and post commanders and pick their brains when I hit a snag.

Most of the time I don't have much to say just for the sake of being heard so I keep it short.

Enjoy the rest of the summer. I look forward to seeing all of you at our next district meeting in Hoyt Lakes on October 1 at 9am.

See you at the Fall Conference.

trying to raise monies for Veterans on the Lake facility. They have a few needs that we would like to help raise funds for. More to come on what the needs actually are.

We had an Auxiliary Organizational meeting on Aug. 6th at Post 4456 in Gilbert to get this year started off. Our first District meeting is planned for Oct. 1, 2022 in Hoyt Lakes Post 8144. We are in the planning stage at this time.

Our District is "reeling" with the passing of a wonderful patriotic, veteran loving, Lady- Lil LaVoy, who lost her 4th battle with cancer on July 11th. She was a Past Department of MN President, Past District 8 President and treasurer for many years, and local 3979 President and treasurer. An article in the Cloquet Pine Knot News said it beautifully "Local veterans organizations lost one of their most valued and beloved volunteers last week." She will be sorely missed by the whole District!

I look forward to serving District 8 this next year!

COMMANDER - Cont. from Page 1

I selected the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) for our joint project with emphasis on veteran homelessness. Minnesota has done an outstanding job of achieving functional zero in many counties throughout the state, however there is more work to be done and we want to support that effort. Veterans and their families sacrificed much by their service to our nation and should not have to worry about having a safe place to live. Please be generous with your support!

My slogan for this year is "Be The Reason." It's more than just words, it's a philosophy I encourage each comrade to adopt as I ask you to do the following:

1. Be the reason no veteran or their family's needs go unmet
2. Be the reason no comrade leaves this organization without being asked to stay
3. Be the reason disciplinary problems are non-existent

ADJ/QM - Cont. from Page 3

Then, follow these steps:

- Sign in with troop ID. You will be asked to enter your email, enter your password, and confirm password
- Check box, I accept the ID me terms of service and privacy policy
- Then create account.

Once this is done and Lynn Rolf at National sees your request and that you are the Adjutant on the election report, he will approve your request. If you are not able to login, contact the National help desk at 833-839-8387. At Fall Conference I will be putting on a workshop on the Dashboard hope to see many new



**Amanda Weller, Auxiliary
President Ninth District**

What a learning experience so far! My name is Amanda Weller and am honored to be serving as District 9 Auxiliary President alongside my good friend 9th District Commander Richard Gabe. I joined the Auxiliary under the eligibility of my Grandfather Eugene Raymond Dertinger who served in the Philippines during WWII.

Together Richard and I have come up with some ideas for better communication amongst our Auxiliary and Post on the District Level. Couple of such ideas are putting out a quarterly emailed newsletter, and bringing in joint speakers and presenters during the "lul" time of our meetings.

On the Auxiliary side we are shaking things up as well by doing a of couple programs school of instruction at each District meeting and focusing on the main area of talking points from the rest of our Chairman. We are hoping to utilize the newsletter to get anything else out to our Post and Auxiliaries.

4. Be the reason our fellow comrades aspire to serve at the post, district and department.

Membership decline continues to be our biggest challenge as we fell below 30,000 members last year. Please share our story, particularly our legislative successes, with all veterans and encourage them to join the federally chartered veterans organizations they are eligible for. Their voices deserve to be heard, their earned benefits must be preserved for future generations, and we have an obligation to honor the legacy of all who have served.

I'm asking every post to identify one program that needs improvement and to put forth the effort to elevate that program within their communities. We have many to choose from, we have many talented comrades, brothers, and sisters, and I am confident together we will continue to excel!

Adjutants in attendance.

The 2022 year is behind us and the financial activities for 2022-2023 fiscal year have begun.

At this time of the year, we need to plan for the upcoming year. A budget for your organization will help when you are planning your income and expenditures for the fiscal year.

Post and District quartermasters' remember to complete your 990's. It is your responsibility to submit them on time. Remember if you go without filing for 3 years, your nonprofit status is automatically revoked. Commanders are responsible for ensuring 990's and all other official documents are filed annually and in a timely manner.

This year the Commander and I have decided to do a joint project. PAD or Patriot Assistance Dogs. Since its conception in 2011, Patriot Assistance Dogs has certified 250 service dog teams. To date, they have over 190 active teams and as of 2022, have not lost a single veteran to suicide once receiving a service dog. Having lost my own son to suicide this really hit home. They are located in Detroit Lakes MN. To learn more about this wonderful program go to patriotassistedogs.com or email them at info@padmn.org. If you would like to donate to our project please email us at: prlbgabe@aol.com or amandaweller@rocketmail.com

Has your post hosted a blood drive lately ??

If not, why not ??

If never, why not now !

State Contest Winners

POST PUBLICATIONS CONTEST

CATEGORY I (250 and Less)

First Place

Harold Baggenstoss Post 1260
and Auxiliary Bemidji
Editor John Naastad

Second Place

Osakis Post 7902
and Auxiliary Osakis
Editor Steve & Lori Stixrud

Third Place

Siemers-Hakes Post 10794
and Auxiliary Milaca
Editor Deann Reynolds

CATEGORY II (251 & greater)

First Place

Charles R. Knaeble Post 494
and Auxiliary Crystal
Editor Lesley Kurke

Second Place

Sgt. John Rice Post 6316
and Auxiliary Blaine
Editor Mary Lou Michels

Third Place

McConnell Modeen Post 137
and Auxiliary Duluth
Editor Mark WasserBauer

BEST FEATURE STORY

First Place

Brooker-Edmund Post 724
and Auxiliary St. Paul
Published in the Quad Community Press
May 11, 2021

Second Place

Eugene H. Truax Post 2553
and Auxiliary Northfield
Published in the Northfield VFW Newsletter
September 1, 2021

Third Place

Granite Post 428
and Auxiliary St. Cloud
Published in the St. Cloud Times
March 11, 2021

MINNESOTA'S MOST OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POSTS

Curtis-Olson Post 9073
and Auxiliary Randall

Hugo Matejcek Post 3723
and Auxiliary Owatonna



National Outstanding Community Service Award 2021-2022
presented by Nat'l Cmdr. Fritz Mihelcic
Hugo Matejcek Post 3723 and Auxiliary



Firefighter of the Year
Jared Haider
Burnsville Fire Department
Sponsored by: Glen C. Turner Post 5833
Burnsville



Scout of the Year
Matthew Korf
Eagle Scout Palm
Sponsored by: Woodbury post 9024
and Auxiliary, Woodbury

SAFETY AWARDS

Emergency Medical Technician of the Year

Tariq Bashir
Emergency Medical Technician
Golden Valley Fire Department
Sponsored by: West Metro Post 7051
Crystal

Law Enforcement of the Year

Adam Medlicott
Law Enforcement Officer
Burnsville Police Department
Sponsored by: Glen C. Turner Post 5833
Burnsville

Bus Driver of the Year Award

Ben Neilsen, Bus Driver
Lincoln Elementary School
sponsored by: Lincoln County Post 2980
and Auxiliary, Ivanhoe

Dept. of MN Traveling Safety Award

1st place Keep-Zimmer Post 1782 and Aux.
2nd place Curtis-Olson Post 9073 and Aux.
3rd place Hugo Matejcek Post 3723 and Aux.



J. M. Jorgenson Poppy Trophy
Hugo Matejcek Post 3723 and Aux.
presented by Cmdr. Barry Henriksen and
Aux. Pres. Jamie Cassavant

BEST SOCIAL MEDIA SITE

First Place

Mahlum Hanson Post 1647
and Auxiliary Brainerd
Social Media Managers: Mark Persons,
Sue Sterling, Chuck Hanson

Second Place

Lyle Russell Post 6316
and Auxiliary Hastings
Social Media Manager: Lou Plevell

CHAPLAIN OF THE YEAR

James Lang
Athur Bernard Johnson Post 1112
Little Falls

MINNESOTA'S COMMUNITY SERVICE RECORDBOOK

CATEGORY I

First Place

Curtis-Olson Post 9073
and Auxiliary Randall

CATEGORY II

First Place

Hugo Matejcek Post 3723
and Auxiliary Owatonna

Second Place

Keep-Zimmer Post 1782
and Auxiliary White Bear Lake

OUTSTANDING POST YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

CATEGORY I (less than 101 members)

First Place

Brooker-Edmund Post 724
and Auxiliary Circle Pines

Second Place

A.R. Patterson Post 7
Forest Lake

Third Place

Wabasha County Post 1802
and Auxiliary Zumbro Falls

CATEGORY II (101 to 300 members)

First Place

Olaf B. Damm Post 1216
and Auxiliary Austin

Second Place

Rosemount Post 9433
Rosemount

Third Place

Greeder-Hinds-Comfort Post 323
and Auxiliary Oak Park Heights

CATEGORY III (greater than 300)

First Place

Kraus-Hartig Post 6587
and Auxiliary Spring Lake Park

Second Place

Hugo Matejcek Post 3723
and Auxiliary Owatonna

Third Place

Red River Valley Post 3817
East Grand Forks

All-State Commanders

Captain of the All-State Commanders: Dave Thompson Post 6208



Standing (l to r): Terry Bullock, Post 4118; James Fisher, Post 4393;
VFW Nat'l Inspector General Paul Lloyd.

Seated (l to r): George Brown, Post 1782; Dave Thompson, Post 6208;
State Cmdr. Barry Henriksen; Jim Doten, Post 494; Howard Lundin, Post 5833.

Missing: Vernon Bolle Jr., Post 5; Gerald Varner, Post 772; Maurice Vasquez, Post 1171; Gordon Nordby, Post 1731; Thomas Motacek, Post 1791; Tony Johnson, Post 1802; Jesse Johnson, Post 4452; Robert Friesen, Post 4582; Dennis Phelps, Post 5098; Troy Helget, Post 8980; Dan Sandberg, Post 10794

All-State Quartermasters



Standing (l to r): Jim Richter, Post 494; Colin Atkinson, Post 1802;
State Cmdr. Barry Henriksen; Edward Speiker, Post 6208.

Missing: Vernon Bolle, Sr., Post 5; Gerald Forsberg, post 1221;
Bruce Flaten, Post 4452; Jeffrey Ploof, Post 4930; Dennis Jutting, Post 5098;



By Dan Jordan, Project Coordinator

Comrades and Auxiliary members of the VFW Department of Minnesota, Commander Dale Hooegeven and President Sonia Tatge have selected the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) as their joint Commander's and President's project for 2022.

MACV was established in 1990 and has a long history serving Minnesota Veterans. This Veteran nonprofit organization provides services, including housing, employment, and legal aid, that address the reasons for Veterans' homelessness in order to create sustainable housing opportunities.

It has created a trusted network of organizations that offers services and resources for Veterans. MACV supports

every Veteran, wherever they are on their individual path, to find their home.

The first donation of \$1000.00 to the Project was received at the state convention. There will be another donation coming from Grey Duck Vodka as well.

Expect to see a quilt the Fall Conference. It will be raffled off at the Midwinter Conference.

Check the Department General Orders for updates.

For further information of MACV and what it does for our fellow veterans, check out their website at www.mac-v.org.

I am looking forward to a great year of fundraising. If you need to contact me regarding the Commander's/President's Project, I can be reached at jord007@live.com

NAT'L CONV - Cont. from Page 1

distinction of being the first Iraq war veteran to lead our organization.

Their are numerous committee appointments made each year giving comrades from the fifty-two departments the opportunity to attend the convention and be actively engaged in the business of the VFW. The Bylaws Committee considers all recommended revisions to the National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual. Those revisions can be initiated at the post level and submitted to Department for consideration at State Convention. The 2023 Bylaws will be published this fall incorporating the approved changes. I encourage all leaders to review the changes – one significant

change requires all posts to establish bylaws – a somewhat lengthy process culminating in approval by the Commander in Chief. Thinking ahead to next year, if you have interest in serving as a committee member and will be attending the convention in Phoenix, Arizona, please contact department headquarters or myself. Department Commanders request appointments, our Commander in Chief makes the appointments.

Our national convention is a unique opportunity to meet comrades from around the world, to participate and influence policy decisions and to leave with a deeper appreciation of the many good things being done on behalf of veterans, their families and our communities each day. I encourage you to attend in 2023!

BEWARE of VA Benefit "Claim Sharks"

On April 27, 2022, Ryan M. Gallucci, Director of the National Veterans Service Office of the VFW made a presentation before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Veterans' Affairs. He spoke on the issue of predatory practices in veteran benefit claims representation.

In his presentation, he stated that the VFW has been concerned that certain businesses have been preying on veterans seeking to access their earned benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He noted that the VFW has proudly provided high-quality veteran representation in the benefit process for more than one hundred years. Through the VFW's accreditation with VA, its global network of more than two thousand advocates represents more than 550,000 veterans. These same veterans have received more than 10.2 billion dollars in earned benefits in 2021.

The VFW has a world-class training program subject to periodic VA audit. It is proud of the Lifetime of Advocacy our accredited representatives provide to veterans. Further, the VFW is looking to make innovations based on lessons learned during COVID-19.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, non-accredited consulting groups which the VFW refers to as "Claim Sharks" started popping up. This was a perfect time for these "Claim Sharks" to exploit veterans. They aggressively advertised online for veterans to increase their ratings and finally get the benefits they deserved.

Some of these companies advertised that they want to "clean up" the system and offer veterans more "choice." When you quickly read between the lines, it is discovered that these are meaningless buzz words. Some predatory companies have used the confusion created by the COVID-19 pandemic to infiltrate

networks of veterans in need.

As far as the VFW and many of the other Veterans Service Organization (VSO) are concerned, if these companies want to help veterans, their staff should first seek accreditation with VA as accredited agents or attorneys, and appropriately file all required powers of attorney, contracts, and fee agreements with the VA Office of General Counsel (OGC) to ensure that they abide by professional and ethical standards. They would then be following the same rules the same way that accredited VSOs, attorneys, and agents have done for decades.

Legislation to reinstate penalties for companies that clearly violate VA policies almost made it through the last Congress as part of the Roe-Isakson omnibus package. Unfortunately, it was removed at the last minute.

Many of these companies enter into contracts well beyond the scope of what VA allows under law. They do not file powers of attorney, consulting agreements, or fee agreements with the VA OGC. Many of these predatory consulting agreements include a commitment by the veteran to pay the "Claim Shark" all or a portion of their increased benefits.

They also purport to provide "medical consultation," promising faster results for veterans, ignoring the VA's duty to provide medical examinations and render medical opinions for claimants at no cost to the veteran.

Some of these companies go so far as to ask veterans for sensitive usernames and passwords for their eBenefits or VA.gov accounts.

Lastly, recourse is minimal for veterans who believe they were scammed. Many of these contracts include binding arbitration clauses. Some even go so far as to include clauses that prohibit veterans from disclosing terms of the agreements

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

DIST 1 AUX. - Cont. from Page 8

Outreach program is a great resource for us in this respect.

I want to give a shout out to our youth here in the First District. What an AMAZING and talented group of kids we have! Once again, we took home national awards for Voice of Democracy and Patriotic Art. Ashley Homme from Rochester took home 4th place for her essay in the Voice of Democracy program and Joshua Wedde from Zumbrota for his 3rd place National award for Patriotic Art. Let's keep the momentum going this year!

The First District is proud to have one of our own lead MN; this year's Department President, Sonia Tatge! While we may not see her at our meetings much this year due to her travels all over the state, if you do happen to catch her give her a smile and congratulations. Oh, of course come to a State Conference or two to show her your support.

Our first meeting of the year was August 6, in Cannon Falls. Remaining district meeting dates are December 3rd in Mabel, February 4th in Rochester and ending the year with Loyalty Days, April 29th in Cannon Falls. Please consider coming to a meeting and learning about all the great things the First District has in the works for the upcoming year. I look forward to working with all of you and my counterpart, Commander Sam Landon, in showing MN why WE in the First District are first for a reason!

JUDGE - Cont. from Page 3

you want a more detailed version, you can purchase the only current authorized edition of the classic work on parliamentary procedure Robert's Rule of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition 2020.

If your District or Post does not have Standing Rules you may want to consider drafting them. If you have Standing Rules, you should address them and update them on an annual basis. Standing rules can contain information on your Budget, District/Post meetings, District Conventions, recurring contributions, sponsorship of VFW programs, Officer and Chairpersons stipends etc.

I challenge the District and Post Commanders to increase attendance at our Department Conferences and Conventions. Attendance is a great way to receive instruction, education, and guidance for your District and Posts. It is also a great opportunity to network, get new ideas, meet new people and renew friendships.

You may contact me by phone call/text 952-334-2128 or email, ekeoghvr24@gmail.com.

Happy 100th Birthday Buddy Poppy



Veterans / Youth Activities

Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen

by Ken Schroefer

Comrades and Auxiliary members, the themes have been announced. Now is the time to start two of the VFW's most important programs, Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen. This year every post needs to visit with the your local schools and their teachers and students to let them know that both programs are alive and well. Inform them that we want their thoughts to be captured for this year's themes on a recording and on paper.

The themes are: "Why is the Veteran Important?" for Voice of Democracy and "My Pledge to Our Veterans?" for Patriot's Pen.

Please do not hesitate to contact parents of Home School students as well. They have shown to be more than worthy entrants in these two premier programs.

The Rules and Eligibility as well as the Entry Forms for both Programs can be found on the VFW MN website at www.vfwmn.org.

And remember as in the past, Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2022.

2022 - 2023 Voice of Democracy Theme

"Why is the Veteran Important?"

2022 - 2023 Patriot's Pen Theme

"My Pledge to Our Veterans?"

Entries are Due at Local V.F.W. Posts by October 31st, 2022

VETERANS UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Visit www.vfwmn.org for Updates

Archery

2023
Open for Bids

Bean Bag

2023
Open for Bids

Bowling

2023 and 2024
Hosted by South St. Paul #295

Cribbage

2023
Open for Bids

Fishing

2023 & 2024
Open for Bids

Golf

2023 and 2024
Open for Bids

Horseshoes

2022
Open for Bids

Pistol

2023
Hosted by Palmer Lake #3915

Trap Shooting

2022 & 2024
Open for Bids

YOUTH UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Visit www.vfwmn.org for Updates

Contact Your District Veterans Activity Chairman if your Post would like to Bid to Host an Event

FALL CONTESTS

SCHOLARSHIPS



Senior High Scholarship (Grades 9-12)

Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Competition

ENTER: Students write & record a 3-5 minute essay addressing this year's theme. (See Application for Details - VFW General Order or at www.mnvfw.org under the Programs drop-down)

AWARDS: \$30,000 National Winner & Free Trip to Washington D.C.; \$\$ and MPLS Hotel stay for District Winner; \$\$ for Local Winner

DEADLINE: Entries due to local V.F.W. Post by October 31 each year

Middle School Scholarship (Grades 6-8)

Patriot's Pen Essay Competition

ENTER: Students write a 300-400 word typed essay addressing this year's theme. (See Application for Details - VFW General Order or at www.mnvfw.org under the Programs drop-down)

DEADLINE: Entries due to the local V.F.W. Post no later than October 31 each year

COMMUNITY



Citizenship Education Teacher Award

(See Your VFW Post or VFW General Orders for Details)

This award contest recognizes three exceptional teachers for their outstanding commitment to teaching Americanism and patriotism to their students. Each year, a classroom elementary, junior high and high school teacher whose curriculum focuses on citizenship education topics.

(See Nomination Form for Details - VFW General Orders or www.vfw.org under the Programs drop-down)

AWARDS: In addition to local, District & State Awards, National Winners receive:

- A \$1,000 award for professional development expenses.
- A \$1,000 award for his/her school.
- Two award plaques: one for the teacher, the other for his/her school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend a VFW national conference to receive their award.

DEADLINE: Entries are due to the local V.F.W. Post no later than October 31 of each year

VFW State Baseball Tournament

Great ball was played by all teams at the 2022 VFW Baseball Tournament. Rain forced a postponement of Sunday's Championship Game until Tuesday.

Here are the final standings and sponsoring posts:

- | | | |
|------|--------------|-----------|
| 1st | Foley | Post 6992 |
| 2nd | Cold Spring | Post 6915 |
| 3rd | Totino-Grace | Post 494 |
| 4th | Duluth East | Post 137 |
| 5th | New Ulm | Post 1648 |
| 6th | Northfield | Post 4393 |
| 7th | Austin | Post 1216 |
| 8th | Champlin | Post 3915 |
| 9th | Winona | Post 1287 |
| 10th | Andover | Post 965 |



1st Place: Foley
sponsored by Sauk Rapids Post 6992



2nd Place: Cold Spring
sponsored by Cold Spring Post 6915

Congratulations to all participating teams on a wonderful season.

Thank You to all those posts who sponsored teams in this year's tournament.

See you at next year's tournament.

Purple CrossSM

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 _____

Minnesota VFW Riders

By Todd Roberts



Comrades and Auxiliary members, my name is Todd Roberts, the new VFW Riders Chairman, and I am looking forward to a very fun and busy year. I would like to thank the presidents from our three groups for all the work they have done and the plans being made for this year. Ron Vaughn from Monticello Post 8731 group, Greg O'Brien from District 4 group, and Tim Peters from Rochester Post 1215 group.

So far this year our highlights have been the Bike Blessing hosted by the Monticello group back in May, the escort of the Wall That Heals to Winsted, MN, this was a joint effort

of many different motorcycle groups that the VFW Riders worked with to make the escort a huge success.

All three groups are actively trying to recruit new members and organize ways we can give back to the communities and the veterans. Also, I have had a few VFW members reach out to gather information about starting new groups in the state. This can be used as a great recruiting tool for posts to bring in the younger generation to revitalize and have members to carry on our mission.

Please contact me if you have any questions. Toddroberts10@tds.net or 651-303-2474 (text or call).



VFW riders gathered from around the state to have a leisurely ride and discuss upcoming events, recruiting, and other business. They had a very good ride and great conversations.

Pictured from left to right is Twyla Scofield, Todd Roberts, Paula Roberts, Tim Peters, Dave Scofield, Greg O'Brien, Todd Steffens, Dave O'Brien, Angie and Joe Hill

Pontoon Rides for Veterans

By Marlaina Hart, District Aux. President

Since 2013, James and Bonnie Keller, Commander and Aux President of Eveleth Post 1172 have been giving pontoon boat rides to Veterans from four local nursing homes. This gets the veterans out on the lake for a fun day away from the homes. They took them out on Ely Lake outside of Eveleth. Most of the rides include a veteran or their widow, but anyone can sign up to go. They usually give the vets a branch of service blanket the Auxiliary members make. They think it is cool to "think outside the box" for veterans and their families.



Pontoon riders from Edgewood Nursing Home in Virginia.

Cootie Korner

By Len Gudmunson

Commander of the Grand of MN

Here
 Listen up all you lousy cooties. The next Grand C of A will be held in Thief River Falls, August 20 at the VFW. The Cootie Auxiliary will meet at a hall about a block away. We will start at 1000 hours. I expect a big turnout. They drive down for ours in the Metro Area, let's return the favor.
 The rest of the schedule is as follows: November 12th at Isanti, February 25th at Hopkins and the Convention at Bloomington on May 6th.
 It is the duty of all Cooties to increase and multiply so I am challenging all Cooties to bring in one new member into the fold. I plan on visiting all district meetings at least once to explain the duties and history of the Honor Society of the VFW.
 At this time we need only two more applications for the Chaska Pup Tent to get their Charter. Let's do this.
 Lastly I would like to give a lousy cheer for the Grand of Minnesota for being an All Star Grand. There are ten of fifteen pup tents at 100% or more. An absolute lousy showing!!!
 God Bless the Cooties and the VFW.

The Wall That Heals

By Todd Roberts

VFW Riders from Monticello helped escort of the Wall that Heals from Clearwater, MN to Winsted, MN on August 26th.

While visiting the Wall, Mike Ackerman started talking to the Care Takers of the Wall and found out how to find someone's name that would be listed on the Wall. After a short time, Mike found the name of his friend that was KIA in Viet Nam. This was a very somber time for all the members present as they witnessed a very emotional Mike watch a caretaker make a rubbing of the name from the Wall's surface as a keep sake. Afterwards Mike told the story of what happened to his friend and he received a lot of support from the members as we are all brothers



Pictured in front of the Wall that Heals from left to right are: Tracy Albrecht, Jennifer Ackerman, Mike Ackerman, and Jamie Albrecht.

and sisters in this Group. This is why I consider it to be a very big honor to be the Department VFW Riders Chairman.

Timely Tidbits

WWII Vet Honored with MN Senate Resolution



State Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen, right, presenting a Senate resolution to Doug Dahlheimer

The Fort Chippewa Post 396 in Alexandria hosted a special omelet breakfast on April 29, 2022.

The guest of honor was WWII veteran Doug Dahlheimer. He was presented a State Senate Resolution plaque presented by State Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, R-Alexandria, recognizing his service to the United States and congratulating him on his 100th birthday, which was on May 9.

“It’s just something that we can do for citizens that have given so much,” said Ingebrigtsen. “And it’s very important we acknowledge our veterans.”

The VFW contacted Ingebrigtsen in hopes he would send a letter to Dahlheimer. But Ingebrigtsen wanted to take it further by presenting the plaque in person.

The resolution reads:

“A Senate Resolution congratulating Douglas M. Dahlheimer on his 100th birthday. Whereas, our communities are blessed by the presence of those who have lived long lives and who are part of our living history; and whereas, having a 100th birthday is a joyous occasion and a time to honor and congratulate the celebrant; and whereas, Douglas M Dahlheimer was born on May 9, 1922; and whereas, Douglas is a veteran of WWII, having served his country honorably in the Navy from 1942 to 1946 on the USS Blue Ridge (AG2) as a fire controlman; and whereas, Douglas will be celebrating his 100th birthday on May 9, 2022; and now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Minnesota that is congratulate Douglas M. Dahlheimer on his 100th birthday. Be it further resolved that the Secretary of the Senate is directed to prepare an enrolled copy of this resolution, to be authenticated by the Secretary’s signature and that of the Chair of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, and transmit it to Douglas M. Dahlheimer.”

The resolution will be in the state registry forever, according to Ingebrigtsen.

★★ WANTED ★★

Photos, captions and articles honoring our Century Veterans

The Gopher Oversea’r will include articles honoring the contributions of our Century Veterans in their service to our country.

The editor and staff of the Gopher Oversea’r are extremely pleased to publish any information as provided by a VFW post, friend or family member.

Send pictures, captions and stories to the VFW Office, Rice Street Station, PO Box 17146, St. Paul, MN 55117 or by email to Oversear@vfwmn.us

Photos will be returned upon request.

37 of the Longest Rivers in MN

Find out about more Minnesota fun at:

<https://www.minnesotafunfacts.com/minnesota-lists/longest-rivers-in-minnesota/>

WORD SEARCH #12

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

Bigfork
 Blue Earth
 Buffalo
 Cannon
 Chippewa
 Clearwater
 Cloquet
 Cottonwood
 Crow Wing

Des Moines
 Kettle
 Lac Qui Parle
 Le Sueur
 Littlefork
 Long Prairie
 Minnesota
 Mississippi
 North Fork Crow

OtterTail
 Pomme de Terre
 Rainy
 Red
 Red Lake
 Redwood
 Rock
 Root
 Roseau

Rum
 Sand Hill
 Sauk
 Snake
 South Fork Crow
 St Croix
 St Louis
 Watonwan
 Wild Rice
 Zumbro

The MNVFW Charitable Association Raffle Calendar is Now Available



This Calendar features photos of various National Monuments and Memorials Honoring the different branches of our Military

They sell for only \$20 each and your Post or Auxiliary will receive \$5 back for each Calendar sold...

Order your Calendars now- Email: mnvfwcharitable@gmail.com or Call 651-291-1757
To purchase a copy for yourself, contact your nearest VFW Post

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 Continental Soldier in the American Revolution
- The Soldier of the American Civil War
- The American Doughboy of WWI
- The GI of WWII
- The GI in the Korean Wars
- The Grunt in Vietnam
- Operation Overlord: The Normandy Invasion
- The First Minnesota Regiment at Gettysburg and MORE!

The cost of each program is a \$600 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

or contact the presenter at...

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!

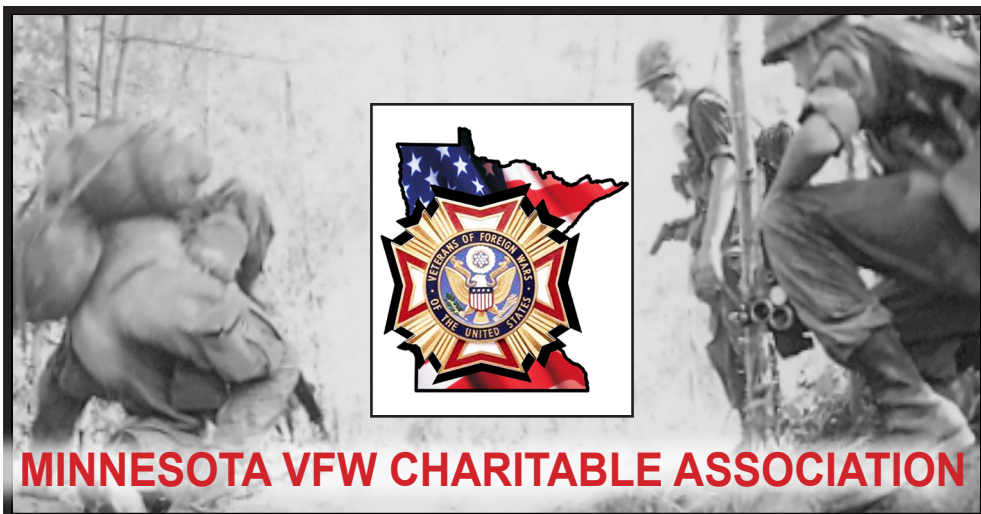


National POW/MIA Recognition Day September 17th

Ever since Congress established National POW/MIA Recognition Day in 1979, veterans and families of missing veterans have gathered to remember America's unreturned POWs and MIAs. They pledge to live by the creed, 'You Are Not Forgotten.'

Veterans Day November 11

It is on the hallowed day that we honor all military veterans of the United States Armed Forces who fought to preserve the freedoms which we have come to cherish. Let us stop to reflect on those who gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect our country.



MINNESOTA VFW CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION

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

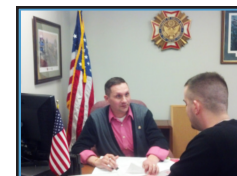
_____ VFW Outdoor Fund

_____ Veterans Service

_____ VFW Programs

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.



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

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 Treasurer of the MN VFW Charitable Association at 651-291-1757 or email us at mnvfwcharitable@gmail.com or by writing to: VFW Charitable Association, 20 W. 12th St., Room B-5, St. Paul, MN 55155.

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