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## Commanders Column

Dear Comrades,

I hope this letter finds everyone doing well. It is with some degree of sorrow that today I write my final newsletter as Commander of our post. I am truly honored that you elected me to serve this post for the last three years. I'm grateful for the great team of officers you elected to serve with me. We have done our best during the time of Covid that included lockdowns, shutdowns, adjusting to masks, hand sensitizer, and social distancing. During this pandemic we have lost several of our comrades, but we have pulled together like a real team and persevered. We are having a little more freedom by forgoing masks and increasing our club's capacity. Hopefully we will get it all back.

Poppy weekend, May 21st thru the 22nd was a success. This year we were able to raise money for our Relief Fund. We were not able to give out poppies last year due to Covid, but this year, our post's volunteers spent their valuable time supporting others by collecting donations for our Relief Fund. If you would like to participate in next year's drive, please let us know. Your assistance is desperately needed and greatly appreciated. I am very grateful for those who volunteered during this year's drive. Without you, none of this would be possible. Remember, when we support our veterans, we are also improving the lives of all those in our community.

Many celebrate the long Memorial Day weekend with barbecues, family get-togethers, and a chance to kick off the summer months. As veterans and family and friends of those who served, we know it is a day to solemnly honor all men and women who have died in U.S. military service. Last year Morningside Memorial Gardens and Bunker Hills Regional Park were not able to host their usual Memorial Day observance because of COVID crowding concerns. This year we were able to gather at Morningside and Bunker Hills to thank all of those who gave so much and reflect on their deeds and ultimate sacrifice. After the services, lunch was held at the Bunker Hills Veteran Pavilion. The menu included: sloppy joes, buns, beans, chips, cookies, and beverages.

We were blessed to have great volunteers who helped

set-up, serve, and clean. Due to those who helped, the meal was a success. You have my sincere gratitude. The lunch was planned for 350 guests, but the head count was only about 160. After the lunch was served, the remaining food and beverages was donated to Haven for Heroes in Anoka. With Memorial Day behind us, it's time to start thinking about the 4th of July. I hope everyone can have a safe and fun summer.

Thanks for all you have done in supporting your post. The time of being your commander has been amazing with all its rewards and little disappointments. In closing, I would like to pass on my final orders to the membership:

1. Lead by example, be the honorable good person/veteran you would like to have as a friend.
2. If you know a fellow veteran, ask if they are a member. If not, be sure to give them an application or direct them to the post.
3. If you know of a Veteran or Family Member of a Veteran in distress, let us know how we can help them.
4. Volunteer at a place that helps veterans or visit a shut-in veteran. Be sure to keep track of your time for our community service reports.
5. Give the same trust and support to Commander Randy Munson and his team of officers as you gave me. I am confident our post is in good hands and will continue with the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Thanks for the memories.

Take care and God Bless.

Sincerely your Commander,

Bruce T. Niemi





## Greetings VFW Auxiliary Members

As you read this, I hope the weather has cooled down just a little bit. As much as we love our summers, this 95-100-degree stuff is more than we need!

Since the last newsletter, our auxiliary has gained some new members! I am always excited to learn from them and show off our great organization. We welcome all of you! We love getting new members and always encourage them to get involved and share new ideas.

The Memorial Day services at both Morningside and Bunker Hills were well attended this year and it was wonderful to be able to lay a wreath again in honor of our veterans. Thank you to all that helped with the picnic that followed the Bunker Hills services. I believe about 300 people were served that day.

The State Convention will have come and gone as you read this (it is June 12-13), but I will update you in the next newsletter.

The post and auxiliary are back in action this year for the 4th of July! The auxiliary will be having a Bake Sale inside while the post has the food and music outside. Festivities start at noon and should be a great time to meet up with old friends and make a few new ones.

The VFW and Auxiliary National Convention has been moved from Baltimore to Kansas City, Missouri, at the end of July, and I will be attending. This will be the introduction of any new programs or changes, and I am excited to be going and to bring back information to our members.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those who are ill and our sympathy to those who have lost a loved one.

President Shelley  
651-206-1777  
ssolheid19@hotmail.com

### Dates to Remember

#### July

- 4 - Independence Day
- 6 - Post and Auxiliary meetings, 7:00 pm

#### August

- 3 - Post and Auxiliary meetings, 7:00 pm
- 17 - Blood Drive, Noon-5:00 pm



Quilts of Valor Recipients.



Quilts of Valor Recipients.



Jim Harvieux and Shelley Solheid lay a wreath on behalf of the Military Order of the Cootie.



## Now Hear This Cooties:

We have survived a year with the Virus and things at the Sgt. John Rice Post are opening up.

We had a lousy year but Chad Solheid, our CCDB has put us in good financial shape so far.

I'm corrected with our new Cootie Dwight Carlton (not Carlson) as I put in the message last issue.

Our goal is fun, frolic and support VFW in membership and especially our National Home for Children. In Austin, I visited where SPAM is made at Hormel Meat Products. A few lucky ones got my gift of a can of SPAN. (YUM). Next month you will get Cat-Fish when I come back from Nationals in Missouri and Branson, MO Table Rock Lake this August.

A few are on the mend besides myself from eating too many VFW Beans and Wieners from the Memorial Day luncheon at Bunker Hills Park after the Memorial Day Services.

Let's have support for the 2nd annual get together at the Post this fall with Bingo, raffles and Booya.

We will not be in the parades this year. Hopefully there will be a good turn out at the Anoka County Fair this year.

Stay safe! If you have any questions, call me at 612-789-8741.

Jim "Smiley" Harvieux, SEAM SQUIRREL



## Cootie Auxiliary

I attended the Grand C of A in Austin in May. It was so good to see everyone again. Congratulations to the newly elected Grand officers and Chairmen. I would like to thank our MOCA Pup Tent #11 members for all your hard work this year. We donated \$210 to the Supreme projects and \$90 to the Grand projects. We also donated \$1,791 to the Hospital program. Well done, Cooties!!

We received a Certificate of Merit for Participation in the Grand and Supreme Scholarship Program and Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding and Timely Reporting.

Supreme Convention will be in Kansas City, Missouri instead of Baltimore the first week of August and I will be attending that. It should be a fun time with lots of new ideas and information to bring back for you. Keep cool in this crazy heat and I look forward to seeing you all at the post on the 4th of July!

### Dates to Remember

#### July

- 4 - Independence Day
- 13 - MOC and MOCA meetings, 7:00 pm

#### August

- 10 - MOC and MOCA meetings, 7:00 pm
- 17 - Blood Drive, Noon-5:00pm

## AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP

We welcome transfer Mary Mikkelson to our Auxiliary.

ANNUAL MEMBERS your dues of \$18.00 are due July 1st. Avoid a reminder in the mail or a phone call, send in your dues made out to VFW AUXILIARY to me Mary Lou Michels, 928 Constance Blvd. NE, Ham Lake, MN 55304. Would you consider going with a LIFE MEMBERSHIP and avoid the hassle each year. Below is a list of the fees:

Through 20	\$253.00	56 - 60	\$173.00
21 - 25	242.00	61 - 65	161.00
26 - 30	230.00	66 - 70	150.00
31 - 35	219.00	71 - 75	132.00
36 - 40	213.00	76 - 80	109.00
41 - 45	201.00	81 - 85	86.00
46 - 50	196.00	86 - 90	69.00
51 - 55	184.00	91 & over	58.00

If you have a change of address, please call me at 763-434-6580 so we can bring our records up to date.



**The following four Veterans received their Quilt of Valor on May 23rd at the Blaine Veterans Park.** Presenters of the Quilts of Valor are members of the Grateful Hearts Quilters of Anoka Chapter, Paul Evenson, Jayne Knowles and Linda Novotny

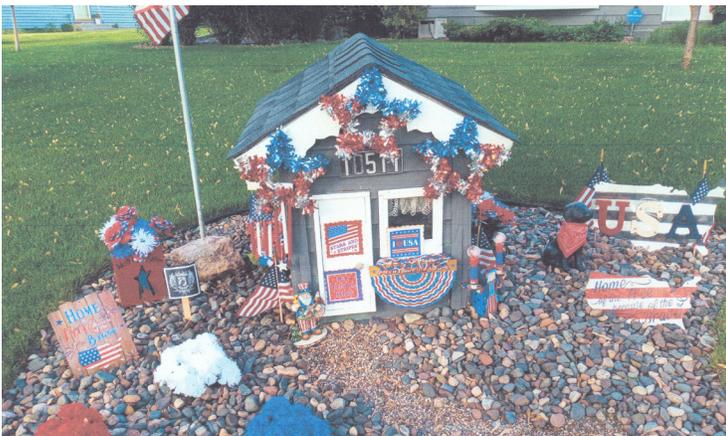
- Gerald Peterson Army 1965 - 1967
- Tom Ryan Army 1963 - 1966
- Dan Carroll Navy 1963 - 1970
- Gordy Nietz Army 1968 - 1970

Thank you for serving our Country.



**3 Veterans Memorial Park of Blaine President Steve Guider.**

We recently had a Quilt of Valor presentation at the Blaine Veterans Memorial Park and upon arriving, I noticed a gentleman sweeping the bricks you walk on and thanked him for doing it. (I didn't know who he was at the time) His reply was "I want this to look nice for the presentation". I soon found out who he was - Steve Guider, President of the Blaine Veterans Memorial Park. I think everyone will agree, Steve and his team are doing a beautiful job on this park. Words can't describe it, it is unbelievable. THANK YOU STEVE



**Little Patriotic House**

POW/MIA Chairperson Joanne Meyer decorated a little Patriotic House in her yard. Many people who pass by stop and admire Joanne's creation. It is Joanne's way of saying "We honor the sacrifices our Veterans have made".

Please keep our POW/MIA's and their families in your prayers everyday.



**Thirteen Veterans received their Quilts of Valor at the Blaine Veterans Park on June 5th.** Grateful Hearts Quilters of Anoka Chapter, Paul Evenson, Janet Knafila, Jayne Knowles and Linda Novotny presented the Quilts.

In no particular order are the following Veterans:

- Kenny Oberby - Air Force 1972 - 1985
- Thomas Kulvich - Navy 1966 - 1970
- Carroll Birkeland - Army 1965 - 1967
- Vern Knowlton - Air Force 1961 - 1965
- Allen Knowlton - Army 1964 - 1970
- John Donner - Army 1980 - 1986
- Gary Smith - Navy 1963 - 1969
- John Knoll - Navy 1950 - 1956
- Don LaCoe National Guard - 1963 - 1969
- Will Kocur - Marines 1963 - 1966
- John Witkowski - Marines 1999 - 2007
- Harold Torkelson - Air Force 1968 - 1971
- Jerry Lichtenberger Air Force 1967 - 1971

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and Veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor. The first Quilt of Valor was presented to a Veteran at the Walter Reed Hospital.

Each quilt is stitched with love, prayers and healing thoughts.

"Thank you for your service, sacrifice, and valor".



**Our Poppy entries at Department Convention**

Left to Right :

- Category I Promotion of Poppies 1,707 Poppies 12 hours
- Category II Memorial or Inspirational 1257 Poppies 13 hours
- Category III Decorative or Artistic 2152 Poppies 21 hours

THANKS to all who supported Poppy Card days and Poppy Sales dates.



Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. On July 4, 1776, the signers of the Declaration of Independence asserted that all are "created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." With these words, our forefathers formed a new nation and put forth a vision of liberty and democracy that would forever alter history. Every Fourth of July, Americans celebrate this pivotal moment in our history, which set into motion the development of a land of freedom and opportunity unequalled in the world.

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## HISTORIAN/MEDIA

Did you know that there is a VFW Auxiliary E-Newsletter? You can subscribe to receive it by going to [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org). National sends out new information and updates that may come up after the printing of the magazine. You can also follow them on Facebook!

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## MENTORING AND LEADERSHIP

What is a mentor within the Auxiliary? A mentor is you, the member. When you share ideas, ask questions, attend a meeting, or volunteer you are setting the example for everyone and encouraging others to speak up, share an idea, engage with other members and participate in events and programs. Thank you to all of you! Keep up the good work!

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### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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Army - June 14, 1775    Coast Guard - August 4, 1790  
Navy - October 1775    Air Force - September 18, 1947  
Marine Corp - November 10, 1775

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## NOTE! 1-800-698-2411 844-724-7842

"VA REPORTING LINE is a phone number that Veterans or their family members have to call within 72 hours of a visit to (or admission through) an other-than VA emergency room care this number must be notified right away so that the VA can arrange to have the costs of care covered. Not knowing about this has cost many Veterans lots of money - it isn't well promoted, but it is VITAL! Post this number in your Post too.



A Federal Holiday in the United States since 1941

From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American Independence with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades, family gatherings and barbecues.

JOIN THE POST on the 4th of July as we celebrate our Independence starting at 12:00 with good food, drinks, and live music for your listening and dancing pleasure. Check out the websites for more updates.

The Auxiliary's Bake Sale starts at 12:00.

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## VFW AUXILIARY BAKE SALE

The VFW Auxiliary will have their tasty baked goods for sale during the 4th of July Celebration starting at 12:00 and continuing until the baked goods are gone.

SO stop by our table and check out the goodies our members baked and take some home for your family to enjoy.

Any questions, call Laura at 651-784-8088

**NOTE!** The Minneapolis Veterans Home is in need of cake mixes, brownie mix, muffins, and bars. If you are able to donate a box or two, please bring your boxed items to the Post home and in the bar area will be a box marked DONATIONS FOR THE MPLS. VETERANS HOME.

Check the expiration date on the boxes. THANKING YOU IN ADVANCE.

## SEWING

Our sewing committee has been very busy sewing items for our Veterans. Our sewing chairman, Marge, is recovering at home and the committee members continue to bring her cut out squares so she can continue to sew and does a lot of crocheting.



The sewing group continue to meet every Thursday working on projects at the Post from 1:00 to 4:00.

NOTE! If you have extra cotton material that you know you won't use please bring it to the Post and mark it "sewing committee". Also, if you have yarn laying around and are not going to use it, we can use it. THANK YOU

Marge Saylor, Sewing Chairman



## SARAH DUCHARME SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

2021 - 2022 MOCA Grand Scholarship

The purpose of this program is to assist in furthering the education of a student who wishes to obtain a post high school education to earn a technical undergraduate degree in a medical field. These fields include but are not limited to areas in Nursing, Pharmacology, Radiology, Dental Assisting, Laboratory Technician, Dietitian, and degrees in Veterinary Science.

The scholarship program is not for graduate level or degree advancement. Auxiliary members are eligible for this scholarship.

If you would like a scholarship application, call Joyce Pierret at 763-913-7269.



## BLOOD DRIVES

Our blood drive is  
June 15th from  
12:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
August 17th is the  
next blood drive.



Thank you to all the dedicated donors and to the volunteers who continue to help.

Remember each unit collected can help save three lives.

## COLOR GUARD

Color Guard Captain Joel Frank and his color guard members have been busy posting colors at the following events:

- Five home games for the Blaine Baseball team
- Morningside Memorial Gardens and Bunker Hills Park for Memorial Day Services
- Dedication of the Blaine Veterans Park on Memorial Day
- Final Honor and Salute of Colors for Paul Star
- Final Honor and Salute of Colors for Dave Buhr
- July 4th Blaine City Hall

THANK YOU JOEL AND THE COLOR GUARD MEMBERS



## POW/MIA PRAYER

Heavenly Father, hold our troops in your loving hands,  
Protect them as they protect us.

Bless them and their families for the selfless acts  
they perform for us in this, our time of need.

These things I humbly ask in the  
name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Lord, we ask that you comfort and protect our fellow  
Americans, both missing and held captive.

In your Divine way let them know that they are not  
forgotten.

Amen

Joanne Meyer,  
POW/MIA Chairperson



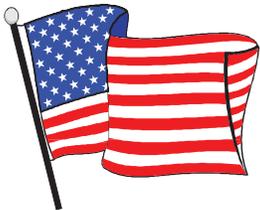
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# July/August 2021

## SGT. JOHN RICE VFW





**SGT. JOHN R. RICE**  
**US Army World War II - Korea**  
**Killed in Action Tabu-Dong, Korea on 6 September 1950**

*A career soldier who gave his life for his country.  
Denied burial in Sioux City, Iowa, because of his race.  
Through the intercession of President Truman,  
Sergeant John Rice was buried with honors at  
Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.*

