



American Legion Davis-Darrow-Meyer Post 112 Elk River, Minnesota

Website: elkriverlegion112.com Phone: 763-441-3150
FB: Elk River American Legion Family Volume 41 Issue 4

Commander's News July-August 2025

1st Vice Commander

Greetings Friends and Family of the American Legion Post 112.

I can't start without talking about the weather "RAIN."

We have new patio furniture set up. The next upgrade is the LED light bulbs. We need volunteers to help replace all of the old fluorescent and incandescent bulbs in the Post, no signup sheet, just talk to Keith, Greg Crow (G2) or me. A huge thank you to the folks at Home Depot for the Grant to pay for the furniture and light bulbs.

Congratulations to Bill Hannay of Big Lake Post 147 for accepting the position of County Council Commander. Everyone is invited to the County Council meetings to find out what is happening with other posts and exchange ideas. The next meeting is at Elk River Post 112, Monday, July 21, 2025, at 7:30pm. Mark your calendar or go to the district website (<http://mn6thdistrict.org>) for more information.

Have a wonderful and safe summer.

Vaughn Smith,
Vice Commander Post 112

Adjutant

Summer is here, Maybe.

Hello everyone. I will start with the project that has taken up many people's time, The front door to our building. I am notoriously cheap but couldn't find a way around replacing the front doors and adding handicapped accessible openers. We

need to thank several groups for donating to this project. The Zimmerman Fire dept and VFW 5518 as well as some private donors are helping make this happen. We continue to look at other organizations and private individuals for support for this project. The total cost will be a little over \$16,000. I need CPR just writing that number. Our Main man Keith Quammen is heading up this project along with several other building improvements. We can't thank him enough. He does an incredible job for a guy that spent over 30 years in the 4th grade.

By the time you read this the last Memorial Day and Flag Day events will be history. We can't thank all the helpers enough. These are some of our key Legion events that we report our participation every year to the national headquarters.

Planning is underway for our annual Smokin Tractor pull beer tent and the Sherburne County Fair Beer tent. If you would like to help sign up at the bar. There are a lot of moving parts to make it happen.

Again, I need to thank all the members of The Honor Guard for everything they have done, funerals, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Graduations, and sporting events. The Honor Guard is always looking for a few good Men [and Women] to fill our ranks so if you might be interested let us know. It's a very rewarding experience and doesn't take as much time as you think.

Our Membership for 2025 reached our goal plus 2. It's our members that keep us strong.

As always, a good place to learn how to get involved would be to come to our donuts with the commanders on Saturday mornings at 8:30. It's a good way to meet people and see what's going on.

We wish Commander Tom all the best as he continues to recover from his recent surgery.

Stop by the post to say hello and sign the book.
Gregory Crow (G2)
Post Adjutant

Post Chaplain

The following is my 19 APR to 18 JUN 2025 summary of Post Chaplain duties performed:

198 Personal Visit, Assisted Living

98 Messaging, Text, Phone

72 Chaplain Support AL Events, Spiritual Counseling

American Legion Chaplain's Calendar: Independence Day, 4 JUL; Korean War Armistice, 27 JUL; TAL National Convention 22-28 AUG Tampa, FL Continuing weekly and monthly vet visits and Sunday Worship services at the Wellstead Assisted Living Centers. Also, continuing weekly and monthly vet visits to five local Guardian Angels Campuses. Currently have 89 total vets to visit at least monthly at four different Independent Senior and Assisted Living Centers. Provided pastor care support and "Last Respects" with two veteran families during end-of-life hospice treatment. Continuing non-life-threatening hospice care with one family.

One WWII vet, 98 years, accepted Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior this past month! Praise the Lord! Finalizing Magnus Veterans Foundation vetting and orientation as a volunteer chaplain. I have begun performing chaplain requirements.

Please pray for Greg and Cathy Artman, Cathy's father, Leo Christenson, who passed earlier this period. Also, please pray for the family of Doug and JoAnn Stillwell at their passing. Finally, please continue praying for Commander Tom Kulkay as he continues knee rehabilitative care at home.

Post Service Officer

11 Personal Visits

20 Messaging, Text, and Phone

4 Coordinated Vet request for benefit review

3 Coordinated Vet request for personal support

Assisted with final preparation for the Veterans Benefit and Spouse Review Day. Conducted the fourth *Post 112 Veterans Benefit and Spouse Review Day* 24 APR 25, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM at Post 112. 20 veterans including five spouses attended the event. One CVSO representative from Sherburne County and one CVSO representative from Wright County along with eight veteran support organizations participated as well. Five follow-up appointments were scheduled with Sherburne County and six with Wright County. One SAL member signed. Special thanks to Vaughn and Michele Smith,

Tom and Sharon Mendenhall, and Greg Crow for assisting and hosting this event.

Paul Deneson,
Chaplain and Post Service Officer

Legion Riders

Hello from the Legion Riders,

This spring has been busy, We finished our winter with a breakfast in February and quickly began our volunteering with the well-attended fish fry. Our next event was participation in the annual Magnus ride. With great weather and over 100 motorcycles the area legions were able to raise thousands for Magnus. Magnus is proud to say all of the veterans seeking help at Magu are still alive.

Some of the riders participated in the Zimmerman Legion Riders ride to the Ollgie racetrack fundraiser. When the ride gets to the racetrack some of the riders participate in riding on the track in stock cars. We have a few more fundraising rides planned.

This Fall we are hosting a breakfast on November 2nd with a hunting theme. This breakfast is currently scheduled to be run with the shooting teams from the Elk River High School. The plan is to have some raffles and silent auction items. We are still working out the details of possible 2nd amendment items for the raffle.

The Riders, SAL, and the Post will be having our second annual veterans' organizations Ribfest on Saturday October 4th. We had a great positive experience with the inaugural Ribfest, so we just had to have another. Our Riders will be going on rides to the area Legions and VFWs to promote the event.

As always, we keep the rubber to the road and pray for great weather.

Todd Jagodzinski
Riders Director

2nd Vice Commander

Greetings Fellow Legion Members,

I will give you updates or changes to Post 112. In April I brought my lawn tractor and dethatcher to the Legion to clean up the grassy area in the back corner by the shed. Grass, leaves, branches, rocks, and tar pieces were cleaned up and hauled away.

I installed new shelves in the basement to put boxes on. The shelving already down there was already very well occupied.

One day in May, Vaughn cleaned up and trimmed the shrubs on the west side of the building. I trimmed the shrubs on the south side by the flagpole.

Vaughn and I cleaned and organized the shed in early June. Many bags of flags were loaded into Vaughn's enclosed trailer for retirement on Flag Day. We moved many boxes of old records that will be shredded at a later date. We placed new LED lights, that came from Home Depot, on shelves in the shed. They will be installed at a date to be determined.

We also received new tables and chairs for the patio area from Home Depot. Emily's husband Brenden, his cousin, Randy, Bill, Vaughn, and I were involved with assembling them. They look nice on the patio area.

It was voted on at a membership meeting to replace the front door. The current front door does not close properly and allows much cold air to come into the building in the winter. Some generous donations have been made that will cover half the cost of the door.

I spend time trying to battle the weeds that like to grow up along the building. I don't always win as weeds are very persistent.

Respectfully,

Keith Quammen
2nd Vice Commander

Auxiliary

Hello to all the Unit 112 Auxiliary members, As our 2024-2025 is coming to a close, I just wanted to say it is always so nice to work with you all and am greatly appreciative of all the hard work. We will take the summer off from meetings until September 4th.

That being said, there are still lots of opportunities to volunteer including the Sherburne County Fair, July 17-20th. Needed are ID checkers, money takers, and security (watching to make sure people don't leave with adult beverages outside our perimeter). It is always nice to meet new people.

Distribution of poppies was a great success again this year. Big shout out to all that donated, worked the locations, and our DECA students who raised half of the proceeds.

Next up will be the District Conference on June 7th and the Department Convention July 11-12th in Wilmar.

We thank the good Lord for our continued success as well, because without him we would not be where we are today.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns or if you need prayer. 763-300-6061 is my cell number,

Michele Smith
President Unit 112

PS: Due to the rising cost of postage, I can't recycle medicine bottles. I will continue to collect them and pursue another use for them. If you know of a purpose, please let me know. Thank you for helping to keep them out of landfills.

Membership & Craft Sale

I would like to welcome our new Auxiliary member, Linda A. Radke.

I have either emailed or mailed out to all the crafters the Document package for the Craft Sale on October 25, 2025. If you are a member of the Auxiliary and want a booth and you did not receive a document package, email me at dianetelfer491@gmail.com.

We will be discussing the craft sale and bake sale at our next meeting in September.

Wishing everyone a wonderful summer.

Diane Telfer



Veteran's Spotlight Vern Draxler

This Veteran's Spotlight shines on the "Spud Man," Vern Draxler, who cleans every single potato served during the Post's Fish Frys. This past event found 2760 potatoes passing through his hands & paring knife.

In 1937, Vern was born in Auburndale, Wisconsin where he lived with his parents and 5 sisters and 3 brothers.

He attended grade school in Auburndale and high school in Marshfield Wisconsin, graduating in 1955. He earned a degree in Industrial Education from Stout State College in 1959 with plans to teach.

However, knowing he was scheduled to be drafted in a couple of months, he enlisted in the Army for 3 years. After his training, he spent 2 years at the NORAD (North American Defense Command). He was part of a combat operations team in charge of early warnings of missile sites in Canada and Greenland. On October 5, 1960, at 1:00 am he was called into the Combat Operations Center. Radar system signals from Greenland indicated Russian missiles were headed for the United States. The NORAD Commanding Officer, General Kuter was on the red phone with President Kennedy all night. Ultimately, it was determined it was a false alarm caused by the moonrise over Norway, which caused radar reflections that were misinterpreted by the system as a missile launch. Soviet leader Khrushchev was in New York at the time of the supposed attack further adding to doubts that it was a real attack. (Source of some information found online *1960 Russian Missile false alarm*).

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In the third year of his service, the Army offered a program where if you extended your service an additional 4 years, they would pay for 2 years of education. Vern accepted the offer and attended the University of Wisconsin at Madison, graduating in 1963 with a degree in Physics. He was assigned to the Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia. During WWII, this arsenal manufactured weaponry and then went into research. He was assigned to the research lab working with high velocity

experimental ammunition made with tungsten alloy and steel reaching velocities of 7200 feet per second. Most of the research was in terminal ballistics, meaning that it is the study of projectile-target interaction. To obtain data on these events, high speed instrumentation, primarily high-speed cameras and flash x-ray were used.

In 1967 when he was discharged, he moved to Minnesota and was employed at Honeywell Defense Division doing the same type of work. In 1990 Honeywell split off to Alliant Tech Systems from which Vern retired in 1998. Professionally, he is a member of the Aeroballistic Range Association. While attending school in Madison Wi., he met Rita who was a nurse serving in the U.S Army Reserves as a 1st Lieutenant in a field hospital unit. They married in 1963 and moved to Philadelphia when Vern was assigned to Frankford Arsenal. They raised 3 daughters, have 9 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. Rita passed away in 2023.

Vern joined the Elk River American Legion in 1968. He worked his way up the chain serving as 2nd and 1st Vice Commander, Adjutant and served as Commander in 1973-74. He along with Jerry Takle and Ray Doebler are the remaining charter members of the American Legion Honor Guard and have served in that capacity since about 1984. He was band leader of the Elk River German Band for 34 years and has now turned that responsibility over to his son-in-law. He enjoys fishing and woodworking.

For the past 8 years he has been a member of the Honeywell Retirees Volunteer Program, a group of Honeywell retirees who partner with Rebuilding Together Minnesota. They build access ramps for people with disabilities. The group donates their time, and various companies pay for the materials. The group averages one to two projects per month. The soft-spoken Vern has served Post 112 over the years and still steps up when called upon. He has earned the respect of his peers and is highly regarded.

Submitted by Sharon Mendenhall



July Events

7/3	No Post Meeting	
7/4-7/7	Closed for the 4 th of July	
7/10	Legion Riders Meeting	7pm
7/12	Coffee with Commander	8:30am
7/12	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	
7/15	Sherburne County Fair Volunteer Meeting	6pm
7/17	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
7/17-7/20	Sherburne County Fair	
	Volunteers needed- sign up at Bar.	
7/19	Coffee with Commander	8:30am
7/19	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm
7/26	Coffee with the Commander	8:30am
7/26	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm

Meat raffle every Friday & Sunday 5pm
Bingo Wednesday 6:30pm
No Races Until Fall

August Events

8/2	Coffee with the Mayor	8:30am
8/2	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm
8/7	No Post Meeting	
8/9	Coffee with Commander	8:30am
8/9	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm
8/14	Legion Riders Meeting	7pm
8/16	Coffee with the Commander	8:30am
8/16	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm
8/21	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
8/23	Coffee with the Commander	8:30am
8/23	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm
8/30	Coffee with the Commander	8:30am
8/30	Open Jukebox & Open Pool	7pm

Meat Raffle every Friday & Sunday 5pm
Bingo Every Wednesday 6:30pm
No Races Until Fall

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR
AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!**

Scenes from Memorial Day



The Memorial Day Address was presented by Richard Lien Jr., Chief Master Sergeant, USAF (Retired).





The North Star Boys Choir sang God Bless America and Amazing Grace



The VFW provided the wagon for veterans to ride on, and additional veterans walked the parade route.

Flag Day June 14, 2025



The District Convention was attended by Auxiliary Members Roberta Takle, Wendy Brown, Sharon Mendenhall, and Michele Smith. Not pictured but representing Post 112 was Jerry Takle.

It is summertime and everyone has plans - trips to the cabin and lake, a memory making trip with the kids, school and family reunions....the list goes on.

Volunteering a few hours for an American Legion event or project can be a fun and rewarding time too.

How about lending a hand?

