



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

Website: elkriverlegion112.com

Volume 39, Issue 3

Commander's News May-June 2023

Hello post 112 Members!

Old man winter is determined to not let go of his grip and go out like a roaring lion indeed. There is no sense in complaining as we live in this zip code. And to those that are

in the sunshine down south, we know you are dealing with your adversities as well, sunscreen, tee times and sand between your toes etc.

It just seems like the last newsletter was mailed. And here we are writing again. There are a lot of things happening at your post that need to be communicated.

The fish fry was very successful! The most successful thing about it was the many wonderful volunteers. They just continued to show up, week after week. On Friday mornings, they showed up like bees out of their hives. They knew what needed to be done and took care of the prep tasks. Thank each and every one of you. The potato position (the lonely and most unwanted) was handled by Vern Draxler again. He has been promoted to Colonel Potato after Bernard Richter retired. These gentlemen have been nothing short of amazing.

There were a lot of new faces that gave compliments that they really enjoyed helping. That is really great to hear and we may have a new A-Team frying?

We will be having a **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Sunday May 21**, starting with social hour at **5PM**. This dinner is for all of the volunteers who help make our events so successful. Please RSVP on the list at the post.

Remember this date: **MAY 11, 2023**. This will be the 2nd Veterans Benefit Review at Post 112. It is for ALL veterans, even if you already have a rating for benefits. There are so many changes recently with the PACT program, Blue Water and Agent Orange. The areas have been broadened and you may be surprised.

The Memorial Day ceremonies are coming up fast. Don't forget about the Flag Day Ceremony on June 14th. It will be held at the ERX Motor Park again. Last year's event was really nice. There were so many positive comments requesting it to be our place each year.

Here's to old man winter finally going away, wait he is back again, Arrrg.

Stay safe and healthy.

For GOD, Country and Our Veterans!

Commander Artman

1st Vice Commander

Hello to my Legion friends,

As I write this, I can't believe that the first day of spring was two weeks ago. It seems like February right now and how about that April fool's joke Mother Nature played on us.

The first fish fry this year was a big success. Thank you to all of the volunteers that helped make it happen. It is always a fun time especially when you see friends you haven't seen for a while.

I'm hoping for a great riding season for the American Legion Riders group. We are planning to be involved in more events and doing our best to grow our membership.

It's been very rewarding being a member here helping to improve our Post, volunteering when needed and creating friendships with all of you. As a member of Post 112 you have the right to attend the membership meetings on the first Thursday of the month and you have the opportunity to vote on issues concerning the success and future of your Post. Looking forward to seeing you at the meetings.

Vaughn Smith, 1st Vice Commander

Adjutant

This article is about members, membership and missions. I am always amazed by where our members seem to pop up. I went to get new glasses at Pearl Vision and I think half the Auxiliary was working there. Then I stopped by North Memorial urgent care and ran into more members. And if that wasn't enough I went to Walmart to pick up some things and there were more members there. Our members are always ready to jump in and help as proven by their selfless service during our fish fry season and the other various projects. And I believe we are even having fun so consider getting involved.

We need to try just a little more to reconnect and renew some of our members. I noticed that there are several long time members that still need to renew. Every member is valuable and we hope to see them stay involved. With hope the weather will finally get better we start to think of our upcoming mission. The Memorial Day events, Veterans Benefits Review day, Flag Day, Legion Rider rides, the tractor pull, the county fair parade and beer garden and our Sweet corn and Pork chop feed in Aug. 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.

Stop on by the post to say hello and sign the book.

Gregory Crow (G2)

Post Adjutant

Russ Anderson

In 1955, a veteran returning from duty during the Korean War joined the American Legion in Elk River. Russ Anderson has seen a lot of changes in his lifetime, in the country, as well as the American Legion. The American Legion was only 36 years old at that time.

During a membership renewal review, Adjutant Crow noticed that Russ had not renewed his membership and thought that was odd that a 66 year member didn't renew. He visited the last address on file and Russ's son told him where he was living. Bill Stevenson, our membership chair straightened out his membership years and issued a new card. Adjutant Crow suggested that he wanted to present it with the Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, Chaplain and himself.

It was an awesome visit as Russ was the bugler on the Honor Guard squad many years ago. And all of the presenting officers are on the Honor Guard squad. There is so much history in our aging members. They have amazing stories that some of the later generations should spend time and listen to them. We want to thank the Guardian Angels for taking such good care of our Veterans!

For GOD, Country and Our Veterans!

Post 112 Honor Guard Squad



Chaplain

The following is a 1 FEB to 30 MAR 23 summary of Post Chaplain duties performed:

Personal Visits, Home, Assisted Living	119
Messaging, Text, Phone	92
Letters of Condolences	3
Chaplain Support AL events & Spiritual Counseling	30
Honor Guard Presentation	1

Note: Robert Koehler discharged from hospital 25 February and Ron Walz hospital treatment progressing and scheduled for discharge on or about 4 April

As a representative of the Honor Guard presented refolded burial flag to WWII widow “On behalf of a grateful nation” with approximately 30 Staff and Residents in attendance at the Beehive Assisted Living, Elk River, 24 MAR 23.

American Legion Chaplain’s Calendar: Armed Forces Day 20 May, Memorial Day 29 May, D-Day 6 Jun, and Flag Day 14 Jun

Paul Deneson, Chaplain

Post Service Officer

The following is a 1 FEB to 30 MAR summary of Post Service Officer duties performed:

Messaging, Text, Phone 32

Next Veteran Service Reviews with Spouses scheduled 11 May and 28 September 23 at Post 112. Federal, State, and County VA Organizations invited and scheduled. Independent Vet Support organizations invited and scheduling is in process. Radio advertisement in draft format. Michele Smith, Sharon Mendenhall, and Kathy Artman of the Auxiliary have been indispensable with coordinating support. Please get the word out to friends, families, and neighbors.

AL records for 98 year old PUFL Auxiliary Member corrected and updated (thanks again to Michele for support). Request for refolding of burial flag completed and presented with Letter of Tribute (see Chaplain comments Honor Guard presentation).

Coordinated 1 vet request for Tax support services.

Paul Deneson, Post Service Officer

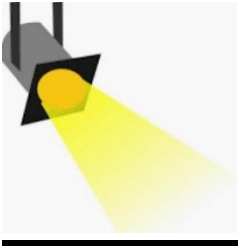
On March 24, 2023, I had the privilege as Post Chaplain, PSO and Honor Guard member to present the burial flag of her late husband and WWII Veteran, Melvin A. Ernst “On behalf of a grateful nation.”

There were approximately 30 staff and residents in attendance at the Beehive Assisted Living Center, Elk River. A letter of tribute was read.

Bertha is a 98 year old PUFL Auxiliary member who had requested Post assistance to help update her American Legion records and maintenance for the burial flag she was presented at her husband’s memorial and celebration of life.

The presentation was arranged to return the restored flag.





Veteran Spotlight



Commander Robert Koehler, U.S. Navy (Retired)

I am pleased in this article to tell you about an amazing man, Submarine Commander, Aircraft Maintenance manager, former Post 112 commander, and keeper of the Saturday donut fund, Robert Koehler.

Robert was born and raised on his parent's dairy farm near Elk River. He was the twelfth of thirteen children. He attended Elk River High School where he played football. Following graduation in June of 1949 he joined the U.S. Navy and attended boot camp in the Great Lakes Naval Training Station where he also attended Electronics Technician School. From there he volunteered for and was selected for submarine duty. New London, Connecticut became home while attending Submarine School at the naval base. Upon completion of his training he was assigned to the diesel submarine USS SEA FOX stationed in Pearl Harbor. The SEA FOX was sent to the Sea of Japan at the beginning of the Korean War for about a year before returning to Pearl Harbor. During this time he was awarded Silver Dolphins. He also served on the subs USS TILEFISH and USS SCABBARDFISH.

In June of 1953 Robert was selected for the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Program and decided to make the Navy a life-long career. He attended the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Program in Schenectady, New York, attended Officer School and was commissioned an Ensign Sept 8, 1955. He returned to Sub duty as an officer on the USS CAVALLA. Robert was later selected to attend the U.S. Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, CA. where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Naval Science. His next assignment was on the submarine USS TUSK out of New London, Connecticut at which time he became "Qualified as a Submarine Commander." The USS ANGLER became his next assignment as the Executive Officer. He was then selected to once again to attend the Naval Post Graduate School earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering. After which he was selected as Commanding Officer of the submarine USS IREX home ported in New London, Connecticut. During his command tour, IREX conducted operations in the Atlantic and Mediterranean from March 1968 to November 1969.

Robert served the Navy in several positions: Executive Officer of the U.S. Naval Station in Sidi Yahia, Morocco; two years at NATO HQ in Brussels, Belgium; Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer on the staff of Commander Carrier Group Three in Alameda, CA. He spent several years aboard various aircraft carriers including the USS MIDWAY (CVA-42).

Cmdr. Koehler retired from active duty on August 1, 1975 after serving 26 years.

He and his wife Joan and 4 children moved back to Connecticut where he started a career in aircraft maintenance for 21 years. He was the Maintenance Supervisor for Business Express Airlines, a part of Delta Airlines, for 6 years and then was hired as Manager of Technical Training responsible for training both pilots and mechanics on the various company aircraft. He held this position for 10 years.

After the passing of his wife, Joan, of 48 years he returned temporarily to Minnesota and met Virginia Barnier, a high school classmate, at their 55th high school reunion. They were married in Sept of 2007 and live in Elk River. One of our banquet halls was named in his honor and Robert continues to be a valuable member of our post.

Gregory Crow, Adjutant

Auxiliary

Happy spring to all and welcome home to all you snow birds!

With Lenten Fish Fry's over I can say Thank You all so very much! We're so grateful to all of the Auxiliary members that volunteered! It was a great success. The hot fudge sundaes and root beer floats had a record year. Thank you ladies for another fabulous job. The community just loves it.

As a thank you, the post is having a Volunteer appreciation dinner on Sunday May 21 with happy hour at 5 and dinner at 6. Anyone who volunteered is welcome! It will be so nice to just relax and let someone else do the cooking, so mark your calendars.

I really want to encourage everyone to attend our next meeting on Thursday May 4th at 7pm. We will be presenting the 27 handmade quilts that MANY have so graciously made to go into the 3 new Veterans homes. We could not be prouder or more grateful for the hard work that went into the making of these quilts. You all really stepped up to the challenge, 27 is just amazing!

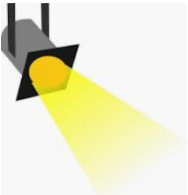
We will also be holding elections that night so participation in the process is encouraged.

It is hard to believe, but Memorial Day is coming soon and we are looking forward to that day. It's a great opportunity to get the community involved with remembering and honoring our fallen Heroes.

Honor and serve every day,

Cathy Artman Auxiliary President

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Auxiliary Spotlight



Dilly Olesen was born February 28, 1930 in Heyward, South Dakota. She grew up on a farm in Slayton, Minnesota. The farm burned down in 1943 and her family moved to St. Paul. She graduated from Harding High School.

While roller-skating she met her husband Floyd and were married on February 4, 1948. They were blessed with four sons, 10 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren

Dilly and Floyd moved to Elk River in 2003 and they joined the American Legion. Floyd served as the Post Commander and Dilly served as Auxiliary Chaplain for 5 years.

She and her husband spent 20 years in their RV touring the United States. They stopped along the way at local American Legions where they met many wonderful people. After 63 years of marriage, Floyd passed away on April 4, 2011.

During her years at our Unit 112, she attended many St. Cloud Stand Downs; participated in the annual poppy drive and attended dinners and celebrations.

My fondest memory of Dilly was how she was always with a smile and dressed very patriotically. She shared with me what she remembers about what her grandfather said: "You don't stop laughing and smiling when you grow old, you grow old when you stop laughing and smiling!"

This is something we can all remember.

Mary Murphy, Chaplain



Veteran Benefit Review for Veterans & Spouses of Sherburne & Benton Counties

Why: The main goal is to make sure you are receiving every benefit that you are eligible for, including your spouse.

When: May 11, 2023 from 9:00AM –6:00PM. This event is for ALL Veterans of Sherburne and Benton Counties.

Items to bring: Please bring your DD214. If you do not have one, then be here to have one ordered.

Agencies: Sherburne County Veteran Service Office, Veteran Benefits Administration, VA Health Care Systems, MPLS & ST Cloud Outreach, Eligibility, MN Dept. of Veterans Affairs, The ST Cloud Stand Down, DAV, and Agent Orange & Blue Water Navy Claims Representative

Where: American Legion Post 112, Elk River, MN • <http://elkriverlegion112.com>

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS

Hello Fellow Veterans,

On May 11, 2023, the Elk River American Legion Post 112 will be hosting its second Veterans Benefit Review. The event invites veterans and spouses to come in and spend one on one time talking to Federal, State, County Veterans Affairs and independent Veteran Support Organizations in the Area. Each Agency provides information on their services. The Veteran has the opportunity to review their current military benefits and potential eligibility for additional benefits. With the recent passage of the PACT Act, there are benefits that were not available before. New presumptive conditions and locations for toxic exposure have been added.

I personally attended the first review back in September 2022 and am now receiving a larger monthly check as service in Thailand and hypertension are now covered under the herbicide agent orange as a result of this Act. In my case the Sherburne county Veterans Service Office referred me to the Veteran's Service Officer in Anoka County who walked me and my wife through the whole process. He explained everything and filed my claim to receive more benefits. It only took a little over an hour and the ball was rolling. Thank you John!

Within 3 weeks I began receiving letters and calls to have medical records reviewed and a few tests done. Due to the high demand with the changes the Act created, it took another 5 months to hear back from anyone. However, when I did, I heard, "the check will be in the mail monthly; thank you for your service!"

All told I spent 3 hours meeting with 3 different people....Well worth my time! Join us at the Elk River American Legion on May 11th. Let's see what we may be able to do for YOU!

Tom Mendenhall, Post 112 Member

MEMBERSHIP

Auxiliary Membership Chair, Michele Smith would like members to let her know the year they joined the Auxiliary. She has uncovered discrepancies that resulted in grandchildren having more years than Grandma! Call her at 763-300-6061 to leave a message or email her at msmith6519@gmail.com.

New Auxiliary Members:

Angela Nies

Joan Haugen

Judy Glenn

Launa Erickson

Keri Franklin

Victoria Hiller

Cyndi Deneson

Transfers:

Lisa Ronneng

Olivia Krats (Junior)

New Legion Members:

Gary Berg

Joe Lund

Tom Meister

New SAL Members:

Randy DeRosier

Joseph Krats

POPPY DAY

May 12, 2023 is designated as Poppy Day in the Elk River area. Volunteers and DECA students will be at various locations throughout Elk River from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

A "drive-up" tent will also be located at the American Legion at 525 Railroad Drive.

Poppies will be available throughout the month at the Legion and Memorial Day Activities.

Meeting Schedule

May 4 – Post and Auxiliary 7:00pm

May 11 – Riders 6:00 pm

May 20 – SAL 10:00 am

June 1 – Post and Auxiliary 7:00pm

June 8 – Riders 6:00 pm

June 17 – SAL 10:00 am

Election of Officers will take place at the May 4th Meetings for Post and Auxiliary.

Members are encouraged to attend.

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Memorial Day Cemetery Honor Role Registration

Veteran Name _____

Branch Served _____

Date Served _____

Conflict Served _____

Cemetery _____

Date of Death _____

Please Remit by 5/15/2023 to: American Legion (c/o) Adjutant) 525 Railroad Dr., Elk River MN 55330 or

Email to: adjutant@elkriverlegions112.com

Memorial Day May 29, 2023

Plans for this year's Memorial Day are underway. The Honor Guard will start the day off early with ceremonies at local cemeteries. Hopefully a clear sunny day will set the stage for the parade from Veteran's Park to Rivers Edge Common. The Memorial Day Ceremony will begin at 10:30AM. Following the program everyone is invited to the Post for lunch served by the Post and Auxiliary members. There will be live music on the patio. A tent will be set with a focus on Children and Youth with handouts and activities for children.

The Honor Guard Cemetery Schedule is:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 6:00AM – Lakeview Cemetery | 6:15AM – Nowthen Memorial |
| 6:25AM – St. John's Lutheran | 6:45AM – Vernon |
| 7:40AM – Otsego | 7:55AM – St. Andrews |
| 8:20AM – Meadowvale | 9:00AM – Oromo |
| 9:20AM – Bailey Station | 9:35AM – Veteran's Park Hwy 10 Elk River |

We look forward to seeing you and your family along with friends and neighbors to this great community event. A Day of Remembrance and Honor for those who protected our freedom and liberty.

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Scenes from the Fish Fry's



Brenda Breyen and Ramona Doebler were busy making hot fudge sundaes while Rebecca Pratt and Michele Smith greeted customers with big smiles.



Big Friday night crowds kept the Friday morning coleslaw crew on their toes preparing for the evening meal.



Junior Auxiliary Member, Kenzie Hackenmueller along with her Girl Scout troop presented the colors at a Wolves basketball game.



"COLONEL POTATO"
Vern Draxler



This Irish group appeared to having a good time at the fish fry!

At the Birthday dinner March 19, 2023, Commander Artman presented Ervin Primus a Certificate for his 70 years of service and membership. Auxiliary Membership Chair, Michele Smith presented Certificates of Commendation for years of service to Vonnie Christensen for 40 years, Roberta Takle for 50 years and Rose Primus for 60 years.



Sheryl and Joan waiting for dinner. Looks like Sheryl found the chocolate chip cookies early!
Elysia, Laurie, Rose and Ervin made it to the front of the line.

