



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

Website: elkriverlegion112.com Phone: 763-441-3150
FB: Elk River American Legion Family Volume 40 Issue 3

Commander's News May - June 2024

Hello to all my Legion Friends,
It's been a long wait but the riding season is finally here (motorcycle). Our rider group is excited and ready. We are planning more rides this year than in years past. Our breakfasts have been a success and we have fun working together and serving everyone.

The 4th Veteran Benefit Review is coming May 9th and the Memorial Day Service after that on May 27th. Both are very important dates to put on your calendar.

It has been very rewarding to see all of the activities at the Post and to see all of the smiling faces when I am there. It has been our mission to make Post 112 your Happy Place.

I attended the Eagle Scout Court of Honor on March 2nd at our Post. I felt so honored to witness the Celebration of Benjamin Thomas St. Martin earning the rank of Eagle Scout. I met the proud parents, Bill and Tina St. Martin and the Masters of Ceremony Dain and Beck Cleaveland, also Eagle Scouts.

It's wonderful and encouraging to know our country will be in good hands. Look for the good in people and celebrate that. Don't focus on the bad.

I would like to thank all the families involved in making scouting thrive. It's so important for the youth to be involved in an organization that teaches the principles that matter such as Trust, Loyalty, Helpfulness, Friendliness, Courtesy, Kindness, Obedience, Cheerfulness, Bravery, Thriftiness, Cleanliness and Reverence. Thank you for all you do and Congratulations to Benjamin.

Vaughn Smith, Commander
At Your Service

1st Vice Commander

I was contemplating some ideas for this newsletter and hope it interests you.

Last night was our smelt fry. We haven't had one for a number of years, and when Glen suggested the idea, I will admit I was more than skeptical. I was bringing up the horrors of past smelt fries. But to Glen's excitement we, as a board, voted to give it another try. Thanks to Glen and all those who helped make it a success! I was told that one of our guests yelled out "When are we going to have some lutefisk?"

The community once again helped make us the BEST FISHFRY around. It was really pleasing to see many new faces enjoying the dinner too.

The "What's Happening at the Post?" Facebook page has been really awesome. The person we hired to do this has really done a good job. Make sure to check it out.

Keith Quamenn has been working his tail off disposing of "stuff" that's been deposited at the post over the years. Luckily, they didn't ask me, as I'm a real packrat.

The American Legion has lost a really great man-- Wayne Gilbertson, of the Zimmerman post. Wayne was the kind of guy who helped out anyone who needed help. He will be missed by us in Post #112.

Thank you,

Tom Kulkay, First Vice commander



The St. Martin Family

Adjutant

This winter's weather may have seemed like time stood still but not at Post 112. Our membership is strong and thanks to a few key personnel changes, sunny days for our Legion are ahead.

Ann, our bookkeeper has been a blessing to the Post as well as to the books! We are in the final stretch for a complete financial facelift. Ken Quammen is working a facelift of her office space as well.

Our building has a new roof and we are in the midst of negotiating a complete resurface of our "beautiful" parking lot. Thanks go out to an anonymous, rather generous, donation for a brand new HVAC system installed.

If you were part of or attended a Friday fish fry, it goes without saying that not only was the fish itself the rage, the volunteerism was out of this world.

Thanks to all who participated and patronized the Fish Fry.

Big thanks to Carol and Denny who hold down the "Mess Tent". We would never pull off these dinner events without them. To the SAL and Auxiliary, a salute to your ancillary support of "everything" we do. Lisa and the staff are outstanding in their roles as well.

I'll have a full summer of events in three months.

Till the next newsletter, God Bless the Post, members and our loyal patrons.

Joe Lund, Adjutant

Chaplain

The following is a 19 FEB 2024 to 15 APR 2024 summary of Post Chaplain duties performed:

Personal Visits, Home, Assisted Living 187

Messaging, Text, Phone 121

Letters of Condolences 2

Chaplain Support AL Events, Spiritual Counseling 65

American Legion Chaplain's Calendar: Mother's Day Second Sunday May, Armed Forces Day Third Saturday May, Memorial Day Last Monday May, D Day 6 JUN, Flag Day 14 JUN, Father's Day Third Sunday

Continuing weekly and monthly vet visits and Sunday Worship services including communion at the Wellstead Senior Care and Assisted Living Centers. Also, continuing weekly and monthly vet

visits to five local Guardian Angels Campuses. Currently assigned 83 total vets to visit at least monthly on four different Senior Care and Assisted Living Centers. Provided for the first time hospice spiritual services to three families.

Praying in advance of this Memorial Day for the family and friends of Post 112 members who have friends and loved ones who have given their lives in service to our nation.

Paul Deneson, Chaplain

Post Service Officer

The following is a 19 FEB 2024 to 15 APR 2024 summary of Post Service Officer duties:

Personal Visits 12

Messaging, Text, Phone 15

Coordinated Vet request for service assistance 1

Coordinated Vet request for personal support 1*

*Special thanks to President Michele Smith and Auxiliary for taking the lead and continuing financial and personal support along with other veteran agencies for an Iraqi Vet making progress towards increasing self-independence.

The fourth Veterans Benefit Review and Spouses Event is scheduled for 9 May 2024, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at Post 112. Again, special thanks to President Michele Smith and Auxiliary for their support in inviting, coordinating, and advertising of this event. Invitations to Veteran Support Agencies and Volunteer Veteran Organizations have been sent. Event is being advertised on TAL Post 112 Face Book Account. To date 70 of 100 Printed Poster announcements have been delivered to local Assisted Living and Senior Care Centers, and Elk River Community businesses and service locations. The remaining 30 Printed Posters will be delivered the week of 15 APR. The Wellstead is sending an email to vet resident's families announcing the event. **Interestingly, the number of vet spouses attending has steadily been increasing with each benefit review event. Apparently, there is a definite need to improve vet spouses' knowledge of potential benefits for which they might be eligible. So, be sure to include reaching out to vet spouses along with your vet neighbors and friends to attend this next benefit review event.**

Paul Denesen, Post Service Officer

Auxiliary

Hello all of You wonderful people, Lent fish fry has come to a close and I am thankful for all the amazing people that volunteered their time and bringing their kids and grandkids to help, was very cool. Also, thank you for the people that came to eat and share your week with someone. The volunteering is more than I can explain - it truly is great. As I am writing this we are preparing for the Smelt fry. The Auxiliary Sundaes were a great success. Thank you all for helping and eating these tasty treats.

Reports are done. Thank you, Sharon Mendenhall, (who did the majority of them) and Diane Telfer. It is always helpful to share how to do them and collect the data. So we need to train members on how to do them so it doesn't fall on just one person. Next event is Veterans Benefit Review May 9th and Poppy Day May 10th and lastly Memorial Day May 27th.

It is time to also vote for new officers so if anyone would like to take a position reach out to me before the next meeting May 2nd. I will add you to the ballot.

Take care and let me know if you have any questions or if you need something we can help you with. I try to help with some of my resources.

Michele Smith

Auxiliary Unit 112 President

Auxiliary 1st Vice President

Hello everyone,

I am very grateful for all of you who helped with the 7 weeks of fish fry dinners and the smelt fry, preparing food on Friday mornings or working in the evening.

Thank you Ramona, for making the hot fudge for the Auxiliary and for sharing your recipe with Sharon Mendenhall for the smelt fry.

At the last meeting I handed out blue folders with Community Service Hour Forms that need to be turned in monthly. This is to aid gathering data for the annual reports. If you were not at the meeting I will have them at the next meeting on May 2nd.

I am looking for volunteers to assist with the October 26th Craft and Bake Sale. Some of the activities include setting up the rooms, putting up signs just to name a few tasks.

See you all at the May 2nd meeting.

Diane Telfer, 1st Vice

PACT ACT UPDATE

VA Health Newsletter (myhealth.va.gov)

Beginning March 5, 2024, millions of Veterans are eligible for VA health care years earlier than called for by the PACT Act. **Specifically, all Veterans who meet service and discharge requirements and who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country-at home and abroad-are now eligible directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits.**

In one of the largest-ever expansions of Veteran health care, 3 new groups of Veterans are now eligible to enroll directly in VA health care. You are eligible if you meet basic and discharge requirements and if any of the following applies to you:

- * You served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, or any other combat zone after 9/11.

- * You were deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

- * You were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty. This includes working with chemicals, pesticides, lead, asbestos, certain paints, nuclear weapons, x-rays and more.

You don't need to be sick or file a claim to become eligible. All you have to do is show that you served in a location or operation-or participated in an activity-that could have exposed you to hazards.

You can view more military exposure categories on **VA's Public Health website.**

Even if none of the descriptions match your service, you may be eligible based on your income. Bottom line: it's now quicker and easier than ever for you to enroll.

Don't wait. Apply for the care you deserve at **VA.gov/PACT.** Even if you don't need this care today, you might need it tomorrow, or the next day, or 30 years from now. It's quick and easy to apply. And once you're in, you have access for life.

**Welcome to new Post Member
Connor Hogan!**

Memorial Day May 27, 2024

The Honor Guard will have a rifle salute at each site to honor Deceased Veterans.

6:00 AM	-	Lakeview
6:15 AM	-	Nowthen Memorial
6:25 AM	-	St. John's
6:45 AM	-	Vernon
7:40 AM	-	Otsego
7:55 AM	-	St. Andrews
8:20 AM	-	Meadowvale
9:00 AM	-	Orono
9:20 AM	-	Bailey Station
9:35 AM	-	Veterans Park HWY 10

Mayor John Dietz is coordinating the parade that starts at 10:00AM and will be followed by a program at Rivers Edge Commons at 10:30AM. Any veterans who would like to march or walk (in uniform or not) in the parade should be at Norfolk St. (by Handke Pit) at 9:30, Monday May 27th. Questions regarding the parade may be directed to Mayor Dietz at 763-913-4933.

Calendar

- 5-2 Post and Auxiliary Member mtg. – 7:00PM
- 5-9 Veteran's Benefit Review 9:00AM-4:00pm
- 5-9 Riders and SAL Meeting – 6:00PM
- 5-10 Poppy Day
- 5-16 Boy Scout Leadership Breakfast 8:00AM
- 5-16 Executive Board Meeting – 7:00PM
- 5-27 Memorial Day

- 6-6 Post and Auxiliary Member Mtg. - 7:00PM
- 6-14 Flag Day ERX Park TBD
- 6-13 Riders and SAL Meeting – 6:00PM
- 6-20 Executive Board Meeting – 7:00PM



Entertainment

- 5-3 – Music by Bob Barrett – 7:00PM
- 5-4 – 1256 Medivac Reunion 5:00-7:00PM
If interested contact Greg Crow
- 5-10 – Music by Terry Dubois 7PM
- 5-11 – Line Dancing with Billie 7:00-9:00PM
- 5-24 – Soulful Sounder DJ & Music Bingo 7:00
- 5-26 – Community Table 4:00-6:00PM
- 5-27 – Memorial Day, Bar open 11:00-3:00

- 6-7 – Open Jukebox 7:00PM
- 6-8 – Smokin' Show Tractor Pull, Sherburne
County Fair Grounds 12:00PM
- 6-14 – Open Jukebox 7:00PM
- 6-21 – Open Jukebox 7:00PM
- 6-28 – Open Jukebox 7:00PM

Meat Raffle – Fridays and Sundays at 5:00 PM
Horse Races – 1st Thursday of each Month 6:30
Bingo every Wednesday at 6:30PM

The kitchen was a busy place on Friday April 19th, for the Smelt fry. The guys did a great job frying up smelt for a hungry crowd. Baked potatoes & beans and coleslaw rounded out the filling dinner.





AUXILIARY SPOTLIGHT

Roberta Takle

Roberta Takle is a 52-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 112. She grew up on a farm near Windom, Minnesota, with an older and a younger sister. They moved into town the year she started high school. She lived about a block from the high school and was involved in many activities.

She liked to say she met Jerry in a barn, which isn't quite true. They met through 4-H and got to know each other at Cottonwood County Fairs, most of the time in a barn where Jerry exhibited. Their first date was a week or so before she left for college at Hamline University in St. Paul and Jerry left for South Dakota School of Mines in Rapid City. Roberta graduated four years later with a BA in Mathematics. She and Jerry were married later that summer.

After Jerry finished college he entered the Army at Fort Belvoir, VA, was stationed near Heidelberg, Germany, two years and then sent to Viet Nam. Roberta felt like she lived in vacation land for the first four years of their marriage: the Black Hills, Washington, D.C. area and Germany. While Jerry was in Viet Nam, she and their one-year-old daughter, Teri, lived in Westbrook, MN, a few miles from Jerry's parents' farm.

The family of three moved to Elk River in 1967 and have lived in the same house ever since. Son Alan was born a year later. Roberta was a stay-at-home mom for 10 years. For the next 13 years she worked from home part-time as manager of Elk River Federal Credit Union (now Blaze CU). She took several classes at St. Cloud State in public relations and news writing, which she has used in many of her volunteer positions. Her working career ended as the attendance secretary at Elk River High School. She retired in 2002 after 11 years.

Roberta has served her church in many volunteer positions, primarily in the women's organization where she served in many offices including president of both local and regional women's groups. She served a term as treasurer on the church council and was in the altar guild many years. She has been the church historian for nearly 50 years

and wrote the church history for the 50th anniversary.

In the 1980s she was a school board member and served as chairman 4 years. She also served 2 years as the president of the lobby group for growing schools like Elk River during that time.

Jerry joined American Legion Post 112 when we moved to Elk River. Roberta joined the Auxiliary when Jerry was Commander in 1972-73. She didn't become an active member until the 1980s when Teri and Alan were out of the house. She and Jerry have attended many District and Department conferences and conventions, plus a few regional workshops put on by the national Legion and Auxiliary. She has served Unit 112 as President and Vice President and was membership director for 14 years. Her proudest achievement as an auxiliary member was planning the essay contest for students for 19 years. She chaired the 100th Anniversary Committee and assembled a history of the Unit. She also made scrapbooks of post activities for many years, some of them winning awards at the District and Department Conventions. She has donated over 16 gallons of blood, many at the Minneapolis VAMC when Post and Unit Members rode to the hospital by van driven by VA volunteers.

For fun Roberta likes to walk and bike, play bridge, scrapbook, and work on genealogy. In the past she was a runner including one marathon, cross country skied and bowled; sewed and did all kinds of needlework including Norwegian Hardanger embroidery; and collected Barbie and other dolls, doll houses, and miniatures for every season. At her church she is known as the hat lady by many having over 40 hats and she belongs to a Red Hat group. She loves to travel and has been to all seven continents, all Canadian provinces and visited her 50th state in February this year.





The Auxiliary's hot fudge/root beer float concession recruited the help of Angela Nies son Dayton, Gary Tonsager, Princess Emery and Aundrea Krings.



56-year member of the Legion, Wayne Rentz, attended the March 10th Birthday Dinner.



Paul Denesen, Mike Sampson, Vaughn Smith, Vern Drexler and Denny Heath serving the last fish dinners for the season.



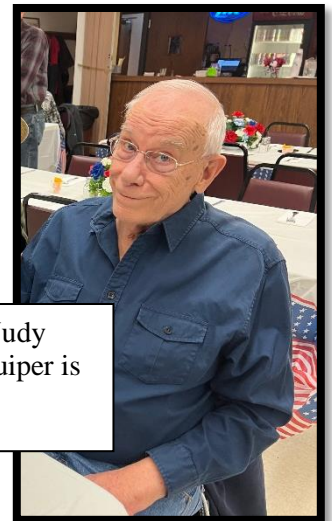
Carol Heath and Brenda Breyen



The last Friday morning fish crew happy to be done!



Marilyn Kuiper, Michele Smith and Judy Glenn having fun. Meanwhile, Al Kuiper is wondering what are they up to now.



Riders

The Riders and the Post have been very busy in the last month. It is great to see Line Dancing, card games, meat raffles and many other things going on. The Riders and SAL just had a Smelt Fry dinner on April 19th. We served around 150 meals with many of the attendees being new patrons. During the dinner many of the guests talked about in the past going to Duluth and the North Shore to catch their very own smelt. The food supply companies are having a problem with a short supply of smelt and we were lucky to get a delivery.

SAL President Glenn Haugen spent the morning of the dinner trying different recipes and breadings to come up with the best way to prepare the smelt. Many of us helping prepare the hall and food that morning were able to sample the various versions. Someone had to do it right? Mike Lestico again played the part of the old sage fish fryer and with Glenn they came up with the perfect way to serve the meal. Another thank you to Carol Heath with her tartar sauce and baked bean recipes. We did not have as many patrons for the smelt fry as we had hoped (we are blaming the perfect weather that day) so the remaining food was donated to an elder care facility and the Becker Legion for their event the following day. I want to thank the many volunteers and their many hours of help before, during and after the event. It is very possible we will do it again next year.

Many of the Riders have been able to have short rides but nothing organized yet. After a few days of rain in the middle of April we hope to change that. The Riders are hoping for good weather on May 1st for a dinner ride after meeting at our Post with the kickstand up at 5:30 or 1730 for those on military time. Magnus has a fundraising ride on May 11th and we are planning an overnight ride to Legionville on May 18th to help with spring cleanup and chores. The Riders will also be sponsoring an Elk River elementary student to attend Legionville for their crossing guard training.

Other rides include the Zimmerman annual Bikes and Classic Cars ride on June 2nd, A Clearwater Legion ride to Camp Ripley to tour their museum with dinner and a band on June 15th, I Got Your Six ride out of the Forest Lake Legion on July 13th, Clearwater Legion Ride for Homeless Vets on August 3rd and potentially many other rides. If you search often a rider can be busy most weekends with fundraising rides with great camaraderie.

One of our riders, Ron Shaw, was involved in an accident on Sunday April 14th. He is recovering in the hospital. We are asking for prayers for him, for our Riders and for all riders on our highways.

Todd Jagodzinski
Riders Director

Veteran Benefit Review for Veterans and Spouses

**Sherburne, Benton, Wright
and Anoka Counties**

**Make sure you are receiving
every benefit you are eligible
for, including your spouse.**

May 9, 2024 9:00am-4:00pm

**American Legion Post 112
Elk River, MN.**

**Bring your DD214. If you do not
have one, then be here to have
one ordered.**