



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

Commander's News

November-December 2021

To all the Post 112 family, a hearty hello!

This will be the last newsletter of 2021. I wonder where the time went. The weather has been great these past days, but winter is just around the corner with all the snow and cold that goes with it! The darned virus won't go away and now comes the flu season! Lots of people are sick, but hopefully most have had their shots and will be protected from both.

The Auxiliary just had a 100-year celebration brunch. The halls looked great and I hear the food and the program went very well. Congratulations to our Auxiliary! If you missed it, make sure to check out the article in the Star News!

The post had the annual membership dinner the day after the Auxiliary celebration. The food was exceptional, as always, and all who attended were more than satisfied! The speaker was Bob Behrens from the St. Cloud Stand Down, also known as Veterans Helping Veterans. Bob gave an excellent speech letting all in attendance know what they do with all the volunteers in St. Cloud. Some of our members have donated various items to the group with more help to come from our post in the guise of clothing and other materials. There will be more information about this in the very near future.

The next dinner we will have at the post will be our annual Veteran's Day dinner and program. This will take place on Sunday, November 7th. Please sign up at the bar. The food to be served has not yet been determined, but will be great, I'm sure!

There have been many changes at the post of late, including some of the bylaws. A new bookkeeper, new bartenders and a new cook have joined us. There's a new view for the direction the post is heading with lots of new ideas and programs. I'm sure you'll find them to be a "breath of fresh air". Thanks to all of you for being part of our Legion family and looking to the future.

In closing: Wishing all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

For God and Country,

Tom Kulkay,

Post 112 Commander

1st Vice Commander

Greetings to all,

Autumn is here, but on a happy note, Post 112 is doing well. Our vision at Post 112 is that we make everyone feel welcome. The experience should be of remembering and honoring our veterans and when leaving should be "I'm glad that I came".

I am so happy to see the progress that all of us have made in working hard to guide Post 112 in that direction. I know it's been a slow process but all of the results have been very positive. A big thank you to everyone. The collective result of everyone's unique talents and connections have made it possible. I feel Blessed to be a small part of the Great Organization.

At your service,

Vaughn Smith, 1st Vice Commander

Service Officer

This is the follow up to the two veteran Marines story that appeared in the last issue of the newsletter. As you recall, a call came to the post requesting assistance in locating a former Marine buddy.

Floyd and his friend Al road motorcycles from Kentucky to Princeton to reconnect with Terry. They arrived on Friday August 20, 2021. After spending the day reminiscing and getting reacquainted, the guys headed for the Elk River Legion where there was a welcoming committee waiting for them. Terry also brought along his family.

It was an evening of meeting new friends, dining, telling stories and lots of laughter. And a great finish to Janet Harnack's support and diligence in aiding two of our fellow veterans.



Legion Riders

The Fall of 2021 is time for another chapter for the Legion Riders after some reorganization of the Officers. This newsletter update is from the new Director, Todd Jagodzinski. Also elected at our September meeting were new Assistant Director Troy Bixby and longtime Post Member Deb Lore as our secretary. Deb has held this position in prior years. We are looking forward to the upcoming November and December breakfasts. Breakfast on November 21 will be the famous B B & B (Breakfast, Bloody Mary's and BINGO.) There was a strong suggestion that we include Mimosas with the event. As always the breakfast hours will be 8:30 to 11:30 with the Bingo beginning at 9:00. Come early for your lucky seat and a hearty breakfast including friendly service, biscuits and gravy, sausage, eggs and all the pancakes you can eat.

The December 19th breakfast will have our special guest with a long white beard and a red suit. This has been a well attended Breakfast with Santa in the past. The November and December breakfasts in the fall of 2019 enabled the Legion Riders to help veteran families in the Elk River area. If you know a family in the area with a deployed service member or a veteran's family that is struggling with upcoming holiday expenses and could use a little help please let us know.

If you ride and would like to be a part of a great group of dedicated riders we are always looking for new members. The 2022 riding season will be scheduled soon. Riders meetings are usually held at the Post at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of every month.

Todd Jagodzinski

Riders Director

Adjutant's Corner

Hope this newsletter finds everyone safe and healthy as we close out 2021. My thought was how did the year fly by so fast? It's because we were busy every single month.

Here are some highlights to 2021:

- We started off with refurbishing the kitchen with new floors, paint, lights and a new stove. All made possible by some very generous donors.
- Our annual Lenten Fish fry experienced record numbers in a post COVID world.
- The Legion Birthday dinner also had record number of attendees.
- We hosted the first Ride 4 Heroes Benefit ride in May
- The 2021 Memorial Day Event will be one to be remembered for years to come.
- The Auxiliary received record donations with over \$5000 in Poppy donations!
- We retired over 2600 flags on Flag Day
- The Post led the Sherburne County Fair with the colors and a decorated float
- The American Legion Beer Garden had record sales at the fair in the 90 degree heat
- A big THANK YOU to Glen & Carol Haugen for the generous corn donation again
- The Auxiliary Unit 112 Celebrated its 100th Anniversary in October with a brunch
- The Honor Guard presented the first \$1000 SFC Jodie Walz Memorial Music Fund scholarship.
- We hired a new Chef/Kitchen Manager in August. Eric has really taken ownership and is doing some great things in the kitchen. He is working on a new menu with more home style plates, daily specials and also looking for ways to provide food for hall rentals in the future. Stop by and say hello to him.
- We have two very dedicated employees that have taken on more responsibilities of the Bar Management Committee. Kelly has been serving Post 112 for 19 years. She is handling the bartenders and scheduling as well as new hires. Lisa just celebrated her 1 year anniversary at Post 112. She has also been serving veterans in an American Legion for over 19 years as well. She is handling the Day time responsibilities including inventory, entertainment and hall rentals. Both of these ladies deserve a great big THANK YOU! And remember to tip your bartenders well!
- We also hired a dedicated book keeper. Welcome Jennifer Kokal. She comes with over 35 years of accounting experience and has spent most of her life around a Veterans Post at some capacity or another. She has brought new ideas, protocols and efficient accounting practices to the post in the short time that she has been here.
- Post 112 entered the 21st century in September – YEAH! We now do on-line bill paying which removes most check writing. Our vendor orders are now done on-line as well and the deliveries are set up on self delivery by the drivers. Payroll is also in the process of being done through Auto Deposit. Thank you Jennifer!
- Our Annual Veterans Day Dinner will be held the Sunday before on November 7th. The Honor Guard will be paying respects with a Volley Salute and a Post Everlasting ceremony.
- Please remember the “Meeting Hat Policy” effective Nov1. The only hats permitted are garrison soft caps, Post 112 Legion Ball Caps, 100th Anniversary Caps. If you wear a military branch hat, only unit crests or conflict affiliation is permitted. No outside groups, or political mottos or displays are permitted.

For God, Country and our Veterans

Greg Artman, Adjutant

SFC Jodi Walz Music Memorial Fund Scholarship Presented

The SFC Jodi Walz Music Memorial Fund scholarship was presented on October 1 at the Elk River High School with the family of Jodi present. After months in the works, the Honor Guard had the honor of presenting to the Elk River High School the scholarship worth \$1000.

There were 8 squad members including Jodi's father Ron who has served on the squad since the mid 80's. Most recently, following in family tradition, Jodi's son Ryan played the bugle on Memorial Day at the cemeteries and at the closing ceremony down by the river.

The Honor Guard squad is humbled to be able to start this scholarship in Jodi's name. It is an honor to dedicate a scholarship in the name of our own Veteran that served our country as well as the community.



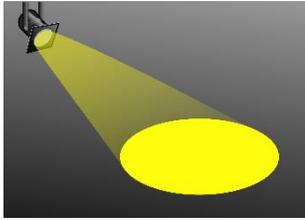
SAL

This is my first newsletter article for the SAL in 2021. I'm excited to serve the Post again as the Commander of the SAL. The SAL Adjutant and I are working on some fun activities and events for the upcoming months. They will be fun. We do participate in the monthly Post meeting and SAL members are encouraged to attend as we now serve on the Executive Board. We are also looking to schedule a monthly SAL meeting soon. We are also participating with the Riders Pancake Breakfast now. As we get the SAL rolling, it will be exciting to see how far we can go with this. The membership has soared above 80 recently and 100 members doesn't seem to be unreachable. Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve the post and like most, I'm sure my father would be proud that I am continuing his legacy of service above self.

Glen Haugen

SAL Commander

Veterans Spotlight



It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with, and write about this specific veteran to close out 2021. This veteran continues to serve selflessly every chance he gets. On

April 3, 1926 in Pipestone, Minnesota, Doug Stillwell was born. He was the grandson of a Civil War Veteran, the son of a WW1 veteran and when the time came, you know it, in 1943 as the war was raging on two fronts Doug also enlisted to serve his country. Like many, he joined up months before he graduated from high school.



On St Patty's day of 1944, Doug shipped out with the Army Air Corp. His first stop was in Amarillo, Texas for Basic training. Then it was off to Pecos AFB in Pecos, Texas to train as an Aviation Cadet. Here he also attended Teletype Operators School. After Cadet training, Doug reported to duty in Wichita Falls, Texas where he looked after the planes and flew test flights when repairs were completed. If he wasn't doing test flights, they kept him busy typing as a unit clerk.

He was all packed up with orders in hand to ship out overseas to the replacement depot, when the bombs were dropped on Japan, ending the war. Doug is humble when he says he really didn't do much or what he did wasn't that important as compared to what many others did and sacrificed. That may be the case, but he did what many did not do and that was enlist to serve. My comment back to Doug was, you climbed into a freshly repaired airplane, not knowing if the repair was done correctly, or what the problem really was and you flew it anyway. That takes courage!

In 1946 Doug enrolled in Pre Med at St Olaf College under the GI Bill where he also played football. Then a hand injury ended his brief football and Medical career. So off he went to another college in Northfield for 4 years. He received his teacher's degree there and landed his first teaching job in 1950 in a little town outside of Rochester, named Kasson, Minnesota.

Doug explained with a gleam in his eye, he was rather fond of a gal he met back at St Olaf. So he continued to see her while attending Northfield. He and Connie were married in 1950.

Teachers pay wasn't anything to write home about then, so Doug was always doing second jobs to earn extra money. Doug's actual first trip to Elk River was in 1949 when he was working for the State Health Department during the Polio Epidemic of 1949. It was believed that Polio was transferred through the water at the time so he was assigned to test the water in Elk River. He also worked on the highway department in the summers because they paid well.

Doug has some amusing stories about his second jobs. One of them is when he joined the legion the first time for a brief period back in the 50's. He said as a teacher they were not permitted to drink at a local pub as it didn't look right in society, not that he went out often, but when he did the legion was a place he could go as it was members only. Doug said he was really lucky to have a friend that played the piano.

The friend landed a gig playing piano at the legion post, and for that, the friend would receive free beer. Then Doug started laughing out loud, because his friend recruited him to be his page turner, and for that, he too received free beer.

In 1954, while traveling through Elk River on their way to go fishing on Mille Lacs. Doug stopped in and spoke with the gardener at Handke High School about a possible science teaching job. The gardener told him to stop on his way back through to Rochester to meet the School Superintendent. He would be in the house across the

street. So Doug stopped in on his way back through. When he knocked on the door a voice instructed him to enter. There in front of Doug was the Super, Mr. Handke, who was also the gardener that he spoke to on Friday night. Doug was offered the job on the spot as the science teacher. Doug and his young family officially moved to Elk River in 1954.

Doug's teaching career expanded tremendously after receiving his certification in Psychology. He was the very first Counselor, first football and basketball coach. He also became the first drivers training teacher in Elk River.

After 23 years of marriage, Doug found himself a widower with 3 kids. Then three years later in 1976, he met and married JoAnn who had four kids. He soon retired in 1988 as a full time faculty member but continued on as a substitute teacher, which were usually long term assignments.

Observing Doug at events around the community, is always fun. It is really great to hear many still addressing him as Mr. Stillwell, as if they were still in the classroom. Most recently, Doug was invited to one of his classes 60th class reunion, he said it was nice to see all of those kids again. We had a pretty good laugh when I asked if he was their chaperone to keep them out of mischief.

When I phone him for a funeral dispatch, he is always ready to serve, just as he was back in 1943. His outlook is always great and the conversations are always fun and inspiring. If you are feeling tired, sore or old and need a pick me up, give Doug a holler. He will politely set you on the right course.

Thank you, Mr. Doug Stillwell for your selfless service to this country, the Elk River Community, American Legion Post 112 and the Elk River American Legion Honor Guard.

It is an honor to know and serve with you!

Respectfully,

Greg Artman

Post 112 Adjutant / Honor Guard Commander



Auxiliary Unit 112 News

Greetings!

I hope you are all enjoying this lovely fall weather,

Early October was a very busy time with our 100th Anniversary brunch. District President Bev Grose joined us. We had an informative talk from V.A. Service Officer Mike Tschudi. Junior President Chloe Dragon could not make it, but her grandmother was kind enough to share her speech with us. The food was amazing and everyone seemed to really enjoy the event. Thank you all for your attendance and hard work!

The very next day was the membership dinner with a great turn out of over 70 attendees. The Auxiliary served the delicious meal with our Second Vice and volunteers doing the honors. Thank you all for a job well done.

The annual fall conference is October 21st-23rd. Our First Vice and I are excited to be attending as we will be presenting the Department President Patti Coleman with 33 pair of pajamas and several handmade blankets, as well as a cash donation of \$50. We are also looking forward to attending several of the workshops to learn more about the traditions of the American Legion and its operations. Also, National President Kathy Daudistel will be attending and we are excited at the opportunity to meet her. We look forward to this event as an opportunity to bring back lots of good information to share with the unit.

I'm confident the upcoming Craft and Bake Sale on October 23rd will be a great success!

The Post will be celebrating Veterans Day with the annual dinner and the traditional Post Everlasting Ceremony on Sunday November 7th. This dinner is open to the community so please invite a guest and RSVP with one of the bartenders. With that being said, we will need lots of potluck items. So please bring a salad, vegetable or desert to share. Social hour starts at 5 with dinner served at 6.

Also, it is not too soon to start planning for our annual Holiday bake sale on December 10th. It will be here before you know it. We missed last year and are really looking forward to all the goodies!

I am looking forward to seeing everybody at the meeting on November 4, 2021.

For God and Country,

Cathy Artman, Auxiliary President Unit

Membership

Why should we encourage friends, family, neighbors and strangers to join the American Legion or to even pay our dues? With each membership you create more power to advocate at the state and local levels, to create programs that will provide life changing assistance and guidance for fellow veterans, their families and the community. Help comes in the form of personal assistance grants, donated goods, disaster relief, jobs, networking, volunteerism and advocacy.

Your membership is more than money. You are a Legion member, you are a part of the Legion Family. Please help us to grow that family by asking your sons, daughters, grandchildren, friends, neighbors and any active or discharged military personnel you may know to join.

If you are in need of any help, please reach out and we can try to help here at the post. As Vaughn says with his plaque in Koehler Hall, "Alone we can go fast, together we can go far".

Michele Smith, 1st Vice President

Welcome to Post 112 New Members:

Post

Charles Young

Jerry Stange

Elmer Telfer

David Fitzsimonds

Larry Papenfuss

SAL

Jack Gangadeen

Tristan Hall

Tyler Hill

Christopher Holt

Scott Madsen

Bruce Schmidt

Auxiliary

Flo Bubalo

Aundrea Kring

Tammy Burgoyne

Linda Richter

No time to do the holiday baking?

Help is on the way!

Auxiliary Holiday Bake Sale

Friday, December 10th

3:30 to 7:00 pm

(unless we sell out sooner)

American Legion Post

550 Railroad Drive

Entertainment

Bingo on Wednesdays at 6:30

Live Music

Friday, November 5th – Terry DuBois 7-10:30pm

Friday, November 19th – Clear Blue Country 7-11pm

Wednesday, November 24th – Artisan 7-11pm

Friday, December 3rd – The Loons 7-11pm

Friday, December 17th – Tailspin 7-11pm

District 6 Website

Staying up-to-date with happenings in District 6, is easy by logging onto:

Mn6thdistrict.org

The menu provides easy access to a variety of topics, including the newsletter of other posts.

ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS

The Postal Service will not forward the Legion Newsletter while you are away. If you would like to receive it on-line and in color while away, contact

Bill Stevenson @wsteven444@aol.com or 763-370-2955

or

Sharon Mendenhall @sammenden@comcast.net or

763-441-7800

We will need the date you are leaving, e-mail address and tentative date of your return.

For those not wishing to receive the newsletter while away, please let us know so we can temporarily remove your name from our mailing list until you return.

Meeting Schedules

Executive Board Meetings

Thursday, November 11

Thursday December 9

Post and Auxiliary Meetings at 7:00 pm

Thursday, November 4

Thursday, December 2

Legion Riders Breakfasts

November 21, 8:30-11:00am

December 19, 8:30-11:00 am

Legion Riders Meetings

November 18, 7:00 pm

December 16, 7:00 pm

County Council

November 15, 7:30 at Zimmerman

READ THIS NEWSLETTER ON-LINE IN COLOR ON THE POST WEBSITE

Elkriverlegion.com

Auxiliary Anniversary



Members Dinner

