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|  | **7th DISTRICT NEWS** **APRIL 2023**  | *Our Legion Family*  |
| **COMMANDER** Karen Welander C 320.368.0760  **VICE CDR AT LARGE** Jan Ekert C 320.339.9927  **MEMBERSHIP DIR** Jan Ekert C 320.339.9927  **VICE CDR – AREA A** Carl Wilson C 320.304.5333  **VICE CDR – AREA B** Donald Brehmer C 320.304.1884  **VICE CDR – AREA C** Rueben Nathe C 320.593.8654  **VICE CDR – AREA D** John Jones 507.469.7995  **ADJUTANT** Carol Jackson C 320.979.4016  **FINANCE OFFICER** Chip Manson C 320.737.0014  **CHAPLAIN** David Ecker C 605.237.4736  **SGT AT ARMS** Keith Seidler C 320.309.3411  **HISTORIAN** Victor Gades C 320.288.6610  **JUDGE ADVOCATE** Dean Knutson 320.766.0502   | **FROM THE DISTRICT COMMANDER** THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA SEVENTH DISTRICT SUBJECT: Call to District Convention   | **\*\*MARK YOUR CALENDARS\*\***  **DISTRICT 7 CONVENTION** **DATE: May 20, 2023** **PLACE: Spicer Post 545** **TIME: Registration from 8 am to 9 am** **COST: Not set yet. No pre-registration necessary**

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| Here we are with Easter nearly upon us. Looking outside, it sure does not look like spring and Easter. We must remember that Easter is the day that Jesus arose again from the dead to defeat Satan and cleanse us from our sins. Typically, Easter is a day we get our best clothes on and go to church and probably eat too much at noon but remember that without our God, none of this bounty would be possible.  Please remember our troops that are scattered all over the world and will not be with their families this Easter. Let’s include them in our prayers.  |

**CHAPLAIN’S CORNER** Dave Ecker Chaplain, District 7  |
|  | TO: All District 7 American Legion Members |   |
| By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and By-laws of The American Legion, Department of Minnesota, District Commander Karen Welander hereby calls a Convention of the Seventh District American Legion, to convene in Spicer, Minnesota at Spicer American Legion Post 545, on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 9 am. The purpose of this convention is to:  |  |
|  | * Receive reports pertinent to district operations in the past year
* Present awards and recognition to individuals and posts
* Act on resolutions presented to the convention
* Elect officers for the coming year to include: District Commander, Vice Commander At Large, Areas A, B, C, & D Vice Commanders, Finance Officer, Sgt At Arms, Chaplain, and Historian.
* Elect delegates and alternates to the National Convention.
* Review/discuss/approve proposed changes to District 7 Constitution and By-Laws
* Act on other matters as may be properly brought before the convention.
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| The voting strength of each Post shall be as provided in the Department Constitution and By-laws, Article V, Section 3 and based on the membership numbers for each Post as reported on April 21, 2023. Karen Welander Commander, District 7 Department of Minnesota  |
|     |  **PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGES** The District 7 Executive Committee has completed a review of their Constitution and By-laws and will present it to post members at their District 7 Convention on May 20th at the Spicer American Legion Post.  The proposed by-laws can be found at the District 7 website. The link is:  <https://mnlegiondistrict7.org/index.php?id=104> Click on the By-laws link on the left side of the home page and then scroll down to find the link to the new by-laws.   **DISTRICT 7 CONVENTION MEMORIAL SERVICE** We are getting the Memorial Program put together for the service at the District Convention on May 20th. We would like to include the names of Legion members that have passed away since last year’s June District Convention. Please e-mail a list to me at eckertrans@outlook.com. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in compiling this list. I would like to have the names by May 1st if at all possible.  Thank you for your help. Dave Ecker, District 7 Chaplain   **COMMANDER’S COMMENTS**  I want to thank all the long-term members of The American Legion for your dedication to the mission of the Legion as defined in the preamble of this great organization. The national office sends out continuous membership certificates. To qualify you need to have 50, 60, 70, 75, 80, 85, or 90-years continuous membership years. Check your Legion card. Are you getting close? These members should be honored for their lifetime service and support of the ideals, principals, and programs of The American Legion.      | **VA & R** Please report your Post activities during the time period from April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 by filling out the 2022-2023 Post Service Officer Report. Once completed please return the form to me by May 2, 2023 either by email or USPS mail. I will make a consolidated report from all of the Post reports I receive and send the consolidated report on to the Department of Minnesota. The information then goes on to National where it becomes part of the American Legion annual report to Congress. **ACTIVITIES YOUR POST IS DOING MAKE A DIFFERENCE SO PLEASE TAKE TIME TO** **REPORT IT!** Awards are selected on the basis of the Post reports. If you need a copy of the Post Service Officer Report to fill out or more information, please contact me.  Respectfully submitted,  Keith Seidler District 7 VA&R Committee Chair 221 Lakeview Dr Spicer, MN 56288 Email address: claricekeith2014@gmail.com Cell phone: 320-309-3411  **\*\*ATTENTION ADJUTANTS\*\*** Please update the roster of your Post. There are many instances where members need to be contacted and the information has not been updated. Go around your meeting and ensure all phone and email information is current. In one instance both phone numbers were blocked and no e-mail address in mylegion. In the near future we will be able to send a newsletter through mylegion.org at no cost to the post. Let’s get this done.   |

**BOY SCOUTS**

Seventh District Scouts BSA's Eagle Scout of the Year is Dominque Claseman of Olivia, MN. Dominque (Dom) is a member of Olivia Scout Troop 313 and the son of Mark & Wendy Jurgenson. His Eagle Scout project was the new Olivia Veterans Memorial. This Veterans Memorial was officially opened and dedicated May 2022 Memorial Day. What a great addition to the Olivia city park! Congratulations Dom and thanks for your dedication to your troop and city!! Also, we've learned Dom is one of six civilians that received national recognition from the National

Medal Of Honor Society! This award was announced March 27th. Wow!

The Department of Minnesota Eagle Scout of the Year was selected at

Scouts BSA's annual meeting March 4th at the Apple Valley, MN American Legion Post. 2023 Eagle Scout of the Year is Jackson Kramer.

Jackson is a member of Troop 623 in Hutchinson, MN, a Junior at Hutchinson High School and the son of Mr. & Mrs. David Kramer. This young man is very impressive and well deserving of this Eagle Scout of the Year award! He will now compete at the National American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year competition in April 2023.

Congratulations to both District 7 winner Dominique Claseman and Minnesota's winner Jackson Kramer. We're so very proud of both of you!!!

Chip Manson

District 7 Boy Scout Chair

Testimonial Dinner Celebrating ALA Dept of MN President Mary Kuperus – Hosted by New London ALA Unit 537 April 22, 2023 at the Spicer Legion Post 545.

Social hour 5 pm. Dinner 6 pm. Program following. MENU: Broasted Chicken and Meatball Buffet – COST: $25. Checks payable to ALA Unit 537. Send reservations/checks by April 14 to Bev Dresser, PO Box 225 New London, MN 56273. Include name, # of guests, contact # and email.

# LEGIONVILLE

Greetings! We have just finished our spring meeting at camp. As of 25 March 2023, there are 105 registered campers. Let’s get our there and send some kids to Legionville. I am sure they would enjoy the experience. With this late winter we are having, their summer is drastically shortened, so let’s sponsor some fun for our youth. Remember you can partner with other organizations and parents to pool monies for the price of camp. The registration is online at the Department website and is easy to use.

As to Legionville maintenance and improvements, all 12 cabins will have new toilets installed before the start of camp. There is still a need for the mattress replacement program. Cabela’s provided a $1000 grant for new fishing equipment. Free time fishing is very popular during free time at the camp. We are looking for donations for a fishing pier away from the swimming area. Some dollars may be available from the MNFish program and we may have to supplement with donations.

Legionville Camporee Committee is still seeking volunteers to help with Camporee. Contact Rick Cross (763)-370-7882

**Work and Play is going on during the month of May. Call**

**Adam, Legionville Manager at**

**(218)-820-0431 to set up a time and reserve a spot for your tent, camper, dormitory or cabin.**

**Victor Gades**

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| **District 7 Legionville Representative**   | **Greetings to the Members of the Seventh District.** **We have come to the end of another year and that means that it is time to start thinking about who we are going to elect to the various positions within our organization. This includes not only post level but at district and department level as well. As we look at candidates, we need to look at those who are the best qualified for the different positions. We also need to look at the** **Constitution and By-Laws of the organizations and follow them as they are the guidelines by which we operate. The Constitution and By Laws are written to guide you through the process of filling these positions.** **If you are having problems with the process, please reach out to your past Commanders or District Officers for assistance.** **Now is the time that is very important in the way that our organization is run and the individuals that we as members choose to take over the leadership responsibilities. It is the time when posts and the district will be electing new officers and chairmen for the various committees within our organization.** **To properly elect an officer to a position, a slate of officers needs to be nominated by a nominating committee and presented to the body for their approval one month prior to them taking office. If the slate of officers is approved by the body as presented, it can be accepted by casting a white ballot and calling for no other nominations to be accepted. The slate is then voted on and if accepted, they are installed at the next regular meeting of the post or district. If these officers are not installed properly using the ceremony as presented in the Officers Manual, these officers are not legal officers and are not considered as such.** **In choosing our officers, we need to choose those individuals that are duly qualified and will accept the responsibilities of the position which they have been asked to fill.** **If there are questions concerning the selection of individuals and the Election process, refer to the Constitution and By Laws for your post or for the District. Remember that the people that we chose for these positions are the ones who will be guiding the organization for the next year. Let us use discretion in** **your selections and let us all work to keep your posts and district strong.** **Have a good Spring and I hope to see you at the District Convention in May in Spicer.** **Dean Knutson** **District 7 Judge Advocate**  **ORATORICAL CONTEST** **Megan Blonigen, a junior at Eden ValleyWatkins HS and District 7 winner, won the state Oratorical Contest for the second year in a row. She will be competing in the National Oratorical Contest April 21-24 National Contest in Indianapolis , In. Top prize $25,000. Best of Luck, Megan!** |  | **LEGISLATIVE** Have you read your April Legionnaire? In the January Newsletter I mentioned that a priority of the Department Legislative Committee was the revitalization and reconstruction of the Hastings Veterans Home. A more serious problem is allegations of a “toxic” workplace. When the plan for improvement did not yield the expected improvements, both Deputy Commissioner Douglas Hughes who oversaw the entire Minnesota Veterans Home system and Mike Anderson Hastings Veterans Home Administrator, were removed by the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Larry Herke. The American Legion, while troubled by the allegations, does not believe any care was compromised. I’m sure we will hearing more about this in the future. In February, District Legislative Chairs were invited to attend a Zoom meeting with the Department American Legion Legislative Committee led by Kristy Janigo. She reported on the standing on the 2023 Legislative Priorities. Of the 16 priorities it was decided to focus on 3: Provide 100% property tax relief for posts of veteran service organizations; Charitable gambling: Preserve use of e-tab devices; and Charitable gambling: Reduce tax burden on charitable gambling operations. The entire list of the 2023 Priorities is available for download at mnlegion.org/legislative.  Carol Jackson District 7 Legislative Chair  |  |
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#  “MIGHTY SEVENTH” DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR’S REPORT 2023

As of the date of the Mid-Winter Convention the “Mighty Seventh” District was sitting in 4th place in meeting the Goal set by the Department of Minnesota. As of the date of this Newsletter writing and the department membership report of 3/29/2023 we are in 5th place. Our total goal for membership is 5,376 members, we currently have 4,824. To meet the 100% membership goal, we need to renew or recruit 552 members. Well, we are close to the home stretch with membership. We missed the 90% mark and are now coming up to the 95% mark for our goal for membership. The 95% goal date is April 15th. Our current percentage is 89.73 which is up from last week. That means that we are short of the percentage by 5.27%. We are closer than last week’s report. That shows that our Posts continue to work hard at renewing or adding new members. Let’s give them a hand, call and ask how we can help. We have 12 Posts that have reached or exceeded the 100% goal. Our 100% or more posts did not increase with the following posts at greater than 100%. I have listed them: They are Echo Post 204, Cottonwood Post 503, and Hazel Run Post 559. The following Posts are at 100 %: Renville Post 180, Minneota Post 199, Clinton Post 258, Brandon Post

278, Elbow Lake Post 321, Eden Valley Post 381, Millerville Post 527, Taunton Post 604, and Wood Lake Post 556 for a total of 12 Posts at or above 100%. GREAT JOB! I know it was not an easy task. We did not have an increase in posts that need 5 or less to reach that benchmark of 100%, currently we have 35 posts needing 5 or less to reach the 100% goal. Again, they continue to work on increasing their numbers. I have listed them: Browns Valley Post 58, Benson Post 62,

Granite Falls Post 69, Cosmos Post 126, Hanley Falls Post 127, Hector Post 135, Marietta Post 156, Evansville Post 188, Boyd Post 198, Fairfax Post 205,

Kerkhoven Post 223, Sacred Heart Post 229, Kensington Post 268, Garvin Post 273, Graceville Post 297, Beardsley Post 302, Franklin Post 308, Starbuck Post 325,

Morton Post 344, Barrett Post 351, Milan Post 359, Dassel Post 364, Atwater Post 375, Herman Post 378, Hoffman Post 393, Wendell Post 426, Bird Island Post

430, Bellingham Post 441, Russell Post 460, Buffalo Lake Post 469, Clara City Post 488, St Leo Post 524, Nassau Post 536, Ghent Post 564, and Lake Lillian Post 615. Keep at it and you will make that 100%. Let’s work together and keep moving forward. The 7th District is known to be hard workers. Just a reminder that the Youth and Children Reports were due to Karen Welander March 31st. This helps her compile the things we as posts and as a District are doing to help the youth in our surrounding communities. If you have not completed yours, please do so and send it off to her. The next report that will come due is the Annual Post Data Report, which generates the Renewal notices and ensures that they are mailed with the correct information. The renewal notices are generated at the National level and if your Posts have not identified who receives the members’ dues it delays them getting to the right person. **I encourage all Posts to make copies of the reports they submit so that if any questions arise, they have a copy to show that they have submitted them. Last year some of the posts had sent reports yet the District list indicated they had not. Some had copies, others did not, which led to more work for whomever was picking up their membership packets. I have attempted to make a group email list for the Posts in our District; however, I have been getting multiple bounce backs as many of the email addresses I have are no longer accurate. If you have an updated email list for the post Commanders, Adjutants, and membership directors in your areas please share them with me and I will recreate a group email in my address book.**

Remember we are all about helping Veterans. We belong to a great organization. We are strong together. Jan Ekert, District 7

Membership Director

Vice Commander in Large

 **LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST – News about upcoming mailings**

We are mailing **Accidental Death (AD) insurance information on April 14th.**

Quick reminder about AD:

Provides the member’s beneficiary with a check if they were to pass away in a covered accident.

 Benefits up to $150,000 are available.

 Guaranteed Acceptance – i.e. no medical exams or health history.

 Product may not be available in all states and may not mail all your members. If you want a more detailed description of this product, visit [www.TheLIT.com/Accident-Protection.](https://www.thelit.com/accident-protection)

The next mailing is Cancer Care Insurance on May 3rd.

 The LIT Trust Meeting will be held April 23 – 26th at the Tradewinds Island Grand Resort.

 We are excited to report that the Travel Accident Insurance direct mail campaign we mailed in December brought in 2,400 new insureds!

# ALA NAT’L PRESIDENT VICKIE KOUTZ LUNCHEON

#  TESTIMONIAL DINNER CELEBRATING ALA 7TH

## Hosted by Spicer ALA Unit 545 *DISTRICT PRESIDENT WANDA SEIDLER*

May 2, 2023 at the Spicer Legion Post 545 Hosted by Spicer ALA Unit 545

Social 12:00 Lunch 12:30 p.m. Program following May 5, 2023 at the Spicer Legion Post 545

Menu: Chicken Wild Rice & Tater-tot Hotdish Buffet Social hour 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m. Program following

Cost $20 Checks payable to Spicer Post 545. Send Menu: Lasagna and Chicken Alfredo Buffet

Reservations/checks by April 21st to Jodi Elliott, Cost $20 Checks payable to Spicer Post 545. Send 163 Lake Ave South, Spicer MN 56288. Include reservations/checks by April 24th to Jennifer Lewison, name, # of guests, and contact # and email 8732 North Shore Dr, Spicer MN 56288

The End