

## Supporting Our Future

### Boschult Scholarships Awarded



**Pictured (L to R) ROTC member, Grant Bowden (Scholarship recipient), and Senior Vice Commander Don Suchy.**

Senior Vice Commander Don Suchy was able to represent the Nebraska American Legion during the Joint Service 2022 Chancellors Review on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. During the ceremony, guests were able to see the formation of troops, the presentation of honorees & colors, and the presentation of over 20 different types of scholarships. Guests were able to mingle after the ceremony and Suchy was able to chat with other Legion members, VFW members, and members of the local Forty and Eight organization. Suchy said he enjoyed the ceremony and seeing the students who will benefit from the Edgar J. Boschult Memorial Scholarship.

The American Legion, Department of Nebraska, selected four recipients of the 2022 Edgar J. Boschult Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded to full-time students in the University of Nebraska system that are enrolled in military science courses or to honorably discharged veterans attending the University of Nebraska full-time.

The Edgar J. Boschult Scholarship was created in 1947 in memory of Edgar J. Boschult. Boschult was a veteran of World War I and Past Department Commander of the Nebraska American Legion. Boschult returned to serve his country in World War II and was killed in action on November 8, 1944.

The recipients of \$500 Scholarships are Grant Bowden, Lincoln, NE UNL (Air Force ROTC); Raen Lubben, Geneva, Illinois UNL (Air Force ROTC); Emma Brennan, Cedar Crest, NM UNL (Navy ROTC); Aiden Knopik, Lincoln, NE UNL (Air Force ROTC).

*Other scholarships awarded and the recipients can be found on page five.*

### Department Convention Special Guests

Headquarters is excited to announce that there will be multiple guests from The National American Legion Family attending our Department Convention. Representing Texas are National Commander Paul E. Dillard and his aide Walter Ivie. Sons Commander Michael Fox of California will also be visiting. Two members of Kentucky will be attending, National President Kathy Daudistel and Department President Karen Toll. Please give them a Nebraska Nice greeting!

### Events Calendar

#### June

- 5-11 Cornhusker Boys' State - Lincoln
- 20 Juneteenth - Office Closed
- 21-24 Junior Law Cadet - Grand Island
- 23-26 Department Convention - Columbus

#### July

- 4 Independence Day - Office Closed
- 21-24 National Junior Shooting Sports - CO
- 21-30 Boys' Nation - D.C.
- 27-29 Department Service Office School - Indianapolis
- 28-30 Membership Workshop - Indianapolis

#### August

- 11-16 American Legion World Series - NC
- 26-1 National Convention - Milwaukee WI

Check [www.nebraskalegion.net](http://www.nebraskalegion.net) under the meetings tab for upcoming National, State, and District events.

### Convention Agenda

#### Thursday, June 23

- 1:00 p.m. DEC Meeting

#### Friday, June 24

- 8:30 a.m. DEC Meeting
- 12:00-4:00 p.m. Registration
- 1:00 p.m. Joint Family Session
- 3:30 p.m. Opening Legion Session

#### Saturday, June 25

- 7:30-4:30 p.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Legion Session #2
- 1:00 p.m. Legion Reconvenes
- 5:00 p.m. Catholic Mass

#### Sunday, June 26

- 7:30-11:30 a.m. Registration
- 8:00 a.m. Joint Religious Service
- 9:00 a.m. Legion Session #3

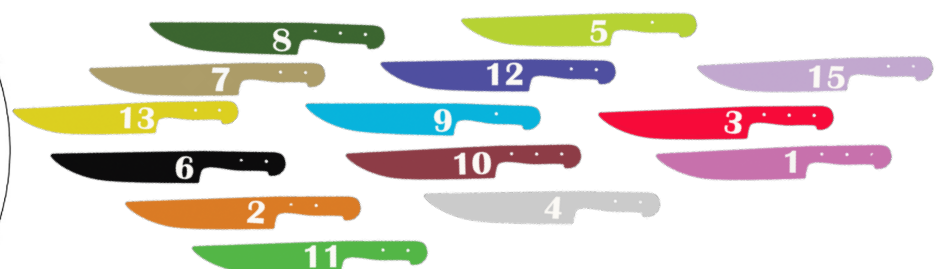
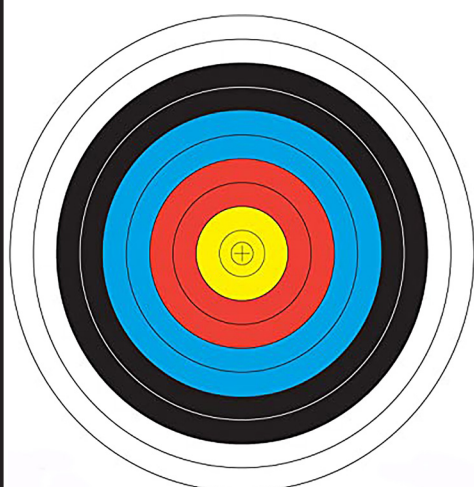
### FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

The Nebraska Legionnaire  
P.O. Box 5205  
Lincoln, NE 68505-0205

## 100% FOR TARGET

2022 MEMBERSHIP GOAL: 26,097 MAY 11TH TOTAL: 22,739 - 90.96%

DISTRICT 13 - 93.20%	DISTRICT 6 - 92.56%	DISTRICT 7 - 91.83%	DISTRICT 2 - 91.51%	DISTRICT 8 - 91.20%
DISTRICT 11 - 90.62%	DISTRICT 9 - 90.48%	DISTRICT 10 - 90.09%	DISTRICT 12 - 89.63%	DISTRICT 4 - 89.53%
DISTRICT 5 - 89.52%	DISTRICT 3 - 89.47%	DISTRICT 1 - 89.46%	DISTRICT 15 - 87.20%	







# Commander's Corner

**Dan Benes**  
Department Commander





This past year The American Legion held numerous events, all of which I was honored to attend. Recently I was able to attend The American Legion National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis, Indiana. Our Nebraska American Legion Oratorical winner, Juliana Scheopner, competed and represented Nebraska well. I was happy to see other members of our Legion supporting Miss Scheopner and our organization’s pillars of Americanism and Children & Youth. I had a great time watching the best of today’s youth represent their first amendment of rights. It was impressive to hear the high school contestants demonstrate their skills and knowledge of the

United States Constitution. The judge’s job was demanding because all the contestants did an outstanding job. Congratulations to Emma Noble of Alabama for winning The American Legion’s 83rd National Oratorical Contest. She flawlessly delivered a U.S. Constitutional speech and won a \$25,000 scholarship. For over 80 years the youth in our great country has shown their knowledge and understanding of this country that we all fought for in the past.

It was always an honor to participate in the well-organized District Conventions throughout our state during the beginning of this year. The members continue to display wonderful dedication to our great organization and the numerous communities around our state. Elections of members stepping up in leadership roles for this coming term are promising for our future. The amount of volunteerism in The Legion family is remarkable in so many ways. The numerous success stories of teamwork with each Post and District are amazing. Each Convention was impressive and a rewarding experience that I am honored I got to experience over this last year.

The Nebraska American Legion leadership and staff have always been great to work with. We are so fortunate to have so many dedicated and talented members. Being Department Commander is the best job in our Department’s organization! I was able to experience many new things that have made me have a deeper appreciation of The American Legion. My wife Collie and I thank you for all the great experiences and memories. It was truly an honor to serve The Nebraska American Legion and Legion Family as your representative and spokesman this past year.

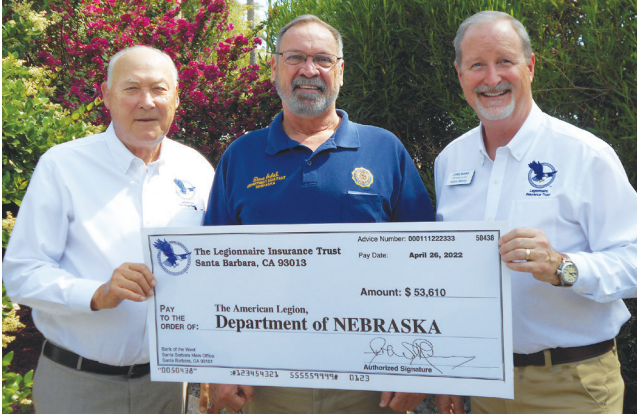
For God and Country

## From the Desk of the Department Adjutant

Dave Salak

For over 50 years, the Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) has been delivering peace of mind and financial support for veterans, their families, and the Departments of The American Legion organization. For the Department of Nebraska, this relationship extends back to 2005 when we partnered with AGIA.

I recently returned from a meeting where Department LIT Directors met with the leadership of AGIA to hear about products and services updates as well as some new products coming online or in the stovepipe for further consideration. After the briefing, Department Trust Directors were given the opportunity to air not only accolades and gratitude but also some concerns about existing products and services and how they might be made better for the Legion family. Of course, I was happy to accept a check for \$53,610, on behalf of the Department of Nebraska, which included not only our annual distribution but also a special monetary distribution and a generous donation to our VA&R budget. Above I am pictured with the LIT Chairman Braxton Bridgers (left) and AGIA President/CEO Chris Burke (right).



If you aren’t sure what LIT is about, then at a minimum you’re likely missing out on a “No Cost” benefit to your family in the form of Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance. This free benefit provides a \$1,000 (or \$5,000 if on Legion business) to your beneficiary in the case of your covered accidental death. All you need to do is sign up. Take three minutes and go to “thelit.com” website and fill out the information requested. This benefit is also open to Auxiliary and Sons members.

Keep in mind that AD&D is just the tip of the iceberg. There are many other useful products designed to guard us against fraud and stolen identity, better our enjoyment of leisure travel, assist in cancer insurance needs and many other products and services just for you. Visit “thelit.com” website to see all the products and services for yourself.

## Department Convention Program

It’s time to start putting together our Department Convention Program and the Department is selling space in the program for individuals or businesses to advertise. Please ask around your community to garner support. All ads and payments must be received before June 10, 2022. The program is 8.5 x 5.5 in size. Please contact Kylea at Headquarters.

- \$10 - page split into eight sections
- \$20 - page split into four sections
- \$30 - page split into two sections
- \$60 - Full page

## NEBRASKA AMERICAN LEGION Department Headquarters Office

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E-Mail Address.....dwsalak@windstream.net  
Editor.....kzpestel@windstream.net

## Department Officers

Commander.....Dan Benes, Valparaiso  
Senior Vice Commander.....Don Suchy, Valparaiso  
Area A Vice Commander.....Michael Sheridan, Omaha  
Area B Vice Commander.....William Berney, Spalding  
Area C Vice Commander.....James Doyen, Hastings  
Area D Vice Commander.....Monte Warner, Paxton  
Adjutant.....Dave Salak, Lincoln  
Activities Director.....Brent Hagel-Pitt, Eagle  
Chaplain.....Fr. Alexander Borzych, St. Paul  
Historian.....Jennifer Laux, Omaha  
Judge Advocate.....William Harris, Omaha  
Finance Officer.....Mark Novak, Dawson  
Sergeant-At-Arms.....Michael Landkamer, Columbus  
Asst. Sergeant-At-Arms.....Scott Cihal, Valparaiso  
Service Officer.....Levi Bennett, Lincoln  
National Executive Committeeman.....Fred Craigie, Lincoln  
Alternate NECman.....Jim Costello, Bellevue

## District Commanders

Dist. 1.....Judy Walters, Ainsworth  
Dist. 2.....Dave Merrick, Creighton  
Dist. 3.....Michael Ellis, Jackson  
Dist. 4.....Beth Linn, Scottsbluff  
Dist. 5.....Marvin Donnelly, Hershey  
Dist. 6.....Julie Schnitzler, Kenesaw  
Dist. 7.....Jerry Schulte, Omaha  
Dist. 8.....Ron Riley, Omaha  
Dist. 9.....Dennis Kennedy, Culbertson  
Dist. 10.....Roger Griffiths, Trumbull  
Dist. 11.....Rodd Paul, Western  
Dist. 12.....William Lawrence, Nehawka  
Dist. 13.....Larry Borchert, Pawnee City  
Dist. 15.....Ed Muggy, Lincoln



The NEBRASKA  
*Legionnaire*

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**Kylea Pestel, Editor**  
**Dave Salak, Publisher’s Representative**

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Did you know you can read the Nebraska Legionnaire online at  
[www.nebraskalegion.net](http://www.nebraskalegion.net)?

If you would rather receive the Nebraska Legionnaire by email or view it online, send in this form. The email and online edition of the newspaper is usually available a week or so before the paper arrives in your mailbox. All we need from you is your email address.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail this form to The American Legion, PO Box 5205, Lincoln, NE 68505, or you can email the information to [kzpestel@windstream.net](mailto:kzpestel@windstream.net)





# It's History

Jennifer Laux  
Department Historian





# POW/MIA

Boyd Yochum  
POW/MIA Liaison



American Legion Department of Nebraska History Word Search

S S E N I S U B W C J C E Q X  
R T Z M L L N L O O V E E U V  
E N S P F L A N Z V O J N S L  
E M G I O B V S U W P D R H E  
E P E C L E H L K M F L O O D  
N U N R N A M R E K C A N V A  
K I Q T G Z R M L N X Z R E R  
L J I E Z E B E B D U D E L A  
T O P X B E N S D H X G V I P  
N G V P R R S C E E G E O N G  
C R D S K E A K Y D F H G G P  
B D H X C C K B K B M R V O W  
X I M C D E L E G A T I O N T  
P G U Q C Y C A D I D N A C D  
M S T J F Z N U A K V G J I I

**Directions:** Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the bolded, underlined words described below.

June 1942 (80 years ago)

- The year 1942 now ranks fourth highest in **MEMBERSHIP** in the 23-year history of the Nebraska American Legion. On June 15, the Department had 19,483 members.
- Robert **ACKERMAN** of Sydney, a nominee of the '**FEDERALIST**' party, was elected **GOVERNOR** of Cornhusker Boys State in the election held at the ag college in Lincoln on May 25. Ackerman is from a family that has been active in Legion and Auxiliary work. His sister, Joline, was a candidate for Girls State Governor just a year ago.
- LINCOLN** Post No. 3 furnished about 60 members for duty during a **FLOOD** on May 11, in response to a police radio call. The men did rescue work, assisted in traffic direction, and performed other **EMERGENCY** aid. On May 15-17, various groups of Legionnaires went to homes of elderly people, most of whom had sons in the service, and helped in **SHOVELING** mud from homes and otherwise cleaning up.

June 1952 (70 years ago)

- The number 1 story appearing in this issue covers the preliminary work being done by Lincoln Post No. 3 in preparing for the annual Department **CONVENTION** to be held in Lincoln from July 20 to 22. Your individual presence at the **BUSINESS** sessions and participation in other convention activities such as the **BARBEQUE** and **PARADE** will measure the **SUCCESS** or failure of the 34th Department Convention. Conventions afford every member an opportunity to be seen and heard, either personally or through a post's **DELEGATION**, on any and all matters dealing with the Legion's programs. If your post is not represented at the convention, it is waiving these rights and privileges which rightfully belong to it.
- Warren **WOOD**, editor and publisher of the **GEHRING** Courier, has officially announced his **CANDIDACY** for the office of Department Commander. Endorsed by his home post in Gehring, Legionnaire Wood has received similar endorsements from posts at Bayard, Scottsbluff, and Mitchell as well as the Garden County American Legion organization.

Sergeant Gerald M. Biber

At various times during the 1950s and early 1960s, Special Forces advisors were forced to pose as members of the US Embassy Program Evaluation Offices, or the Combined Studies Group (CSG) in Vietnam. Either of these euphemisms strictly translated Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Most CIA documents from Laos and Cambodia remain classified today.

CPT Walter H. Moon, Battalion Commander; SFC John M. Bischoff, team medic; SGT O. Roger Ballenger, demolitions sergeant; and Sergeant Gerald M. Biber, a radio operator from Benkelman, Nebraska; were assigned to Company B, 7th Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces Command, and were advisors to the 6th Battaillo d'infanterie (Lao).

On April 22, 1961, the team was on a mission near Phou Tesao in the rugged jungle-covered mountains approximately 15 miles North-Northwest of Vang Vieng. The 6th was ambushed by a heavy and accurate enemy artillery barrage. The communists rapidly flanked them. The team radioed that the battalion was completely cut off, the perimeter defenses were collapsing, and Pathet Lao were quickly overrunning their positions. Shortly afterward, CPT Moon was taken as a prisoner.

SGT Ballenger, SFC Bischoff, SGT Biber, and some Royal Lao soldiers jumped aboard an armored car that was heading south on Route 13 to breakout. According to Lao survivors, they crouched behind the turret, but the car came under a heavy grenade attack. Bischoff fired a machine gun from the vehicle until he was shot through the neck and killed. SGT Biber, who had already been wounded, was "thought" to have been killed by stick grenades thrown against the armored car. The vehicle halted and its crew was captured. SGT Ballenger escaped through the jungle and linked up with a small group of Royal Lao soldiers, who were all captured seven days later. Ballenger was held in a massive cave complex at Sam Neua, which also served as the Pathet Lao headquarters. On August 15, 1962, after Geneva Agreements on Laos was signed, Ballenger was released to American control.

CPT Moon tried to escape twice during his confinement, and on the last attempt was wounded in the chest and head. After several months of persecution, CPT Moon was reportedly executed in his prison quarters. The Pathet Lao have consistently denied knowledge of Walter Moon, Gerald Biber, or John Bischoff.

Whether or not Gerald Biber survived the ambush on April 22, 1961, is unknown. Biber was among nearly 600 Americans who disappeared in Laos. Many of them were known to be alive on the ground. Laotians admitted "tens of tens" of American Prisoners of War, but these men were never negotiated for through the Paris Peace Accords. Laos and Cambodia were not a party to that agreement.

If dead, SGT Gerald Biber has a right to have his remains returned to his family, friends, and country. If he survived, his fate like that of other Americans who remain unaccounted for in Southeast Asia could be quite different.

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# S.A.L. Notes

**Chris Casey**  
**Detachment Commander**





Greetings from the Detachment of Nebraska! We are preparing to host the Sons of The American Legion National Commander, Michael Fox, at our Detachment Convention in June. The convention will be held at the Columbus Ramada on June 24-26, 2022. The business and elections of the Detachment are held during the convention. Your Squadron must have a delegate present to express the opinions of your Squadron and cast votes for your leadership. The Detachment will be hosting a Flying Flags for Heroes event at the Andrew Jackson Higgins National Memorial after the close of business on Saturday. Please make plans to attend!

I want to take a moment for a few housekeeping issues for our Squadrons. The assistance of the entire American Legion Family would be greatly appreciated to assure these tasks are completed by each Squadron. I serve as the Adjutant for my Squadron, so I understand the amount of reporting that is necessary this time of year. First, the Squadron Data Report (SDR) is due by April 15th each year. If you have not already done so, please get your SDR submitted ASAP. Second, the Consolidated Squadron Report (CSR) is the most critical document our Squadrons can complete. The information provides a picture of the activities, volunteer hours, and donations provided by your Squadron. It allows for the national organization to provide an impact report of the Sons of The American Legion nationally. You should be reporting your Squadron activity from June 1st to May 31st each year. The CSR is due to Detachment headquarters on July 1. You can complete the CSR via MySAL, mail a paper copy to the Detachment P.O. Box 5205 or email to Sandy at [actsecylegion@windstream.net](mailto:actsecylegion@windstream.net). Third, remember to complete and submit your Squadron Officer Report after your annual elections. Please submit a report whether you hold elections or not. We are in desperate need of valid contact information for Squadron leadership across the state. The Officer Report can be mailed or emailed to the Detachment.

It has been an honor to serve the Detachment of Nebraska as your Commander. I have received the endorsement of the Benson American Legion and Benson Sons of The American Legion as a candidate for the high office of Commander once again for the 2022-23 program year. We are the largest Detachment in the Midwest Region, and it is time we become the example of success for the entire nation. I look forward to continuing the work at hand and would appreciate your support at our Detachment Convention in Columbus.

## Charles Rigsby Volunteer of the Year Nominations

**Seth Rippe, Detachment Adjutant**

In 1991, Charles B. Rigsby was elected National Commander at the 22nd National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion. However, the organization was saddened to learn of his passing only a year after serving in the high office. Commander Rigsby was the first Past National Commander to be transferred into Squadron Everlasting. During the following spring National Executive Committee meeting, a resolution was presented and approved to rename the National Volunteer of the Year Award to the Charles B. Rigsby National Volunteer of the Year Award in his honor for his many years of service to volunteer programs at VA medical centers.

When completing your Consolidated Squadron Report think about where your VAVS volunteer hours come from. If you have a member in your Squadron who has a passion for volunteering, consider nominating him for the Charles Rigsby Volunteer of the Year Award. I'm sure he does not do it for the recognition, but wouldn't it be great to honor him with this gesture to show your appreciation for what he does for our veterans. Squadrons should submit their nominee to the Detachment Adjutant using the appropriate form from the national website no later than a week prior to the Detachment Convention. During the Detachment Convention, a nominee will be selected to represent the Detachment and be sent to National Headquarters for judging at the National Convention.

## Wilber Squadron 101 Birthday Dinner

**Nathan Deke**

The Sons of The American Legion Squadron 101 celebrated their 42nd birthday supper on April 7, 2022, at the Wilber Legion Park Building. A supper was served to Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons members in attendance. Legion Commander Lisa Shore presented a birthday cake to Squadron Commander Carson Homolka.

The Sons Squadron was chartered on April 7, 1980, and was the 17th chartered in Nebraska. Those in attendance were Charlie Filipi, Lawrence Filipi, and Mark Strouf of the nine that are current dues-paying charter members. The other original members who still hold membership are Kelly Homolka, Dale Ripa, Loren Ripa, and Lumir Tachovsky.

Recognition was given to members with 15 or more years of continuous membership. Those recognized were Charlie Filipi (43), Loren Ripa (43), Mark Strouf (43), Rodney Bergmeier (42), Lumir Tachovsky (40), Randy Homolka (33), David Kasl (26), Lawrence Filipi (27), Nathan Deke (23), Kenneth Keller (23), Dale Ripa (21), Jared Deke (20), and Douglas Ripa (18).

Meetings are on the first Wednesday night of the month at 7 p.m. at the Wilber Legion Park Building. If you are unable to attend, the Sons are welcome to the Legion meeting held on the second Wednesday at the Legion Park Building with supper with the Auxiliary at 6 p.m.

## Sons of The American Legion Membership As of May 16, 2022

District	2021 Members	2022 Members
1	313	329
2	630	602
3	227	203
4	318	339
5	133	133
6	1,334	1,274
7	732	688
8	865	794
9	312	336
10	352	359
11	1,087	1,036
12	254	223
13	153	130
15	148	145
Total	6,858	6,591



**Past Department President Donna Hatfield made a patriotic background to be used during future District 5 Conventions. Pictured at the Lexington Military Museum is PDP Donna Hatfield.**



**Benson Squadron 112 volunteered at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home. Pictured (L to R) John Wenninghoff, Detachment Commander Chris Casey, Elvis, Squadron Commander James Keyes, Rich Klinger, Bruce Husted, Dave Rippe, and Tim Hecke.**



**Millard Squadron 374 was presented a Children's Welfare Foundation (CWF) banner for their donations to the CWF. Pictured bottom (L to R) Commander John Polson and Past Detachment Commander Karl Frederickson.**



## Scholarship Committee

### Carroll Mohlman, Scholarship Chairman

The American Legion, in its four pillars, one being our children and youth, they are our legacy. Education is the cornerstone upon which the future of this nation is built. Where there are good schools, we find good citizens. In fact, education is the first requisite of good citizenship. Education can be from learning a trade, two or four-year schools, and a continuing education. This year the scholarship committee decided to update some details of the Maynard Jensen Memorial Scholarship. This year each recipient will receive \$1,000. Also, there are 30 recipients instead of the normal 20 recipients.

The American Legion wholeheartedly subscribes to the proposition that every educational facility should be provided for the fullest development of the mental resources and technical skills of our young people. We must provide these young people with the skills and finest training in communication and knowledge to think for themselves and to think with facts and understanding. The American Legion supports such a system of education and believes that our democratic way of life depends on it.

Nebraska American Legion District Commanders, you are my frontline to check posts to let them know of our scholarship program. **YOU ARE THE WORKHORSE OF THE DISTRICT, PROMOTE THIS PRODUCT.**

I want to thank Past National Commander Mike Helm, Bruce Husted of Omaha, and H-P at Headquarters for all your help with this program.

## Nebraska Eagle-Scout-of-the-Year



Braden Capek, 18, of Milligan has been selected by the Nebraska American Legion as the 2022 Eagle Scout-of-the-Year and will receive a \$500 scholarship.

Capek is a senior at Exeter-Milligan High School and is a member of Troop 218, where he achieved his Eagle Scout in December of 2021. He is a member of the United Methodist Church, and he volunteers at his church and at various community events in Milligan. Capek has held many Scout positions and is known to be a standout Scout. He participates in 10 different activities in school all while being in the top five percent of his class.

Selected for second place and a \$300 scholarship was Brandon Hollister of Grand Island. Selected for third place and a \$200 scholarship was Ryan Yost of Norfolk.

Christopher Adam of Mechanicsburg, Pa., has been named The American Legion's Eagle Scout of the Year for 2022. Adam was nominated for the National Eagle Scout of the Year award by American Legion Post 109 in Mechanicsburg.

For his Eagle Scout project, Adam designed and constructed a World War II D-Day memorial called Liberation Pointe to "honor the sacrifices of D-Day and WWII veterans," he wrote, "and to make sure that America's future generations do not forget what these men and women did for our country and for the world." The memorial is located on the grounds of the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, PA.

## Maynard Jensen Memorial Scholarships Awarded

The American Legion, Department of Nebraska, selected 30 recipients of the Maynard Jensen Scholarship. The Maynard Jensen scholarship began in 1989 as "The American Legion Scholarship" and it was renamed in 1992 in memory of Past Department Commander Maynard Jensen of Aurora.

Jensen was a World War II Navy Veteran who served in the invasion of Normandy and then in Southern France. He served as the Nebraska American Legion Department Commander from 1971-72. Jensen also served on numerous Department Committees within The American Legion.

For the 34th consecutive year, the Nebraska American Legion has done its part in helping Nebraska students with scholarship money. The recipients of \$1,000 scholarships are Emma Alder of Atkinson; Grace Alder of Atkinson; Dalli Anders of Crawford; Cody Barritt of Sutton; Cailyn Barry of Superior; Cameryn Brandt of Friend; Wyatt Brockman of Lawrence; Emma Brownlow of Alliance; Alyssa Buchholz of Bancroft; Braden Capek of Milligan; Sierra DeKoning of Pawnee City; Aubrie Edwards of Winside; Caden Holm of Mason City; Jaydyn Jorgensen of Wayne; Conner Klein of Tilden; Bailee Kovar of Wahoo; Cadence Kramer of Stuart; Mya Mikkelsen of Superior; Jacob Moseley of Grand Island; Caleb Paden of Columbus; Alexis Pallat of Seward; Logan Placke of Grand Island; Heather Riensche of Firth; Addison Rosno of Columbus; Cameron Sattler of Stuart; Bailey Schmit of Osmond; Sophia Talero of Martell; Dayton Vanosdall of Ord; Lily Wagner of Alliance; and Ryan Yost of Norfolk.



## Membership Minute

### Steve Bartos, Membership Chairman

It's been a disappointing year in membership. While a number of posts and districts have shined, we have collectively underperformed. Although activities in our American Legion life continued to get more normal during the year, the membership game just couldn't seem to get any traction.



No doubt, we all had to put up with some unexpected and aggravating occurrences this year --- like troubles with the new membership software and late and/or eliminated renewal notices from Indianapolis. We missed hitting some of the target dates that we hit last year, and we didn't win the Big 12 competition --- but we didn't fail completely.

We did top national's calculated "renewal rate" target of 90%. Several posts and districts HAVE achieved 100% of their goal. And I know that a number of posts and districts are still trying very hard to scratch up every member they can. That's encouraging, and I'm grateful for the effort.

With the Department convention just weeks away, it's time to start the membership cycle all over again. 2023 dues notices will be landing in your mailboxes soon. But that doesn't mean it's time to stop thinking about those Legionnaires who haven't renewed for 2022. I certainly encourage every post to keep working on renewing those 2021 members who are now expired. There could be a number of reasons they have not yet renewed, and it never hurts to contact them again.

Maybe you can offer them a deal to renew for 2022 and 2023 at the same time!!!

The first renewal notices for the 2023 membership year will be mailed out from Indianapolis about July 1st. I encourage every member receiving one to pay his or her dues promptly (you can pay online, too). And I encourage every post to process and transmit those dues promptly. Let's try to minimize the number of members who undeservedly receive a second notice. It's unfair to the member, it costs the national organization unnecessary postage, and it prevents us from getting a true picture of how we're doing.

Recruiting new members probably remains the more difficult task. Who are they? How do we find them? Just keep asking folks you know and folks you meet if they are veterans. You might be surprised!!

Have a nice June.



**Creighton Post 74 member Lyle Pospisil received a Quilt of Valor for his 75 years of continuous membership. Pictured Lyle Pospisil surrounded by Creighton Unit 74 members.**



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# Rider's Rally

John Arias  
Department ALR Liaison





The color guard performing during the 101st Airborne Memorial in April.

disappoint and blew hard, and my POW/MIA flag and pole broke off. Thankfully Greg Martin turned around and picked it up for me.

In June, Kearney ALR will host a Poker Run on June 4th Registration at 10 a.m., Clutches out at 11 a.m.; Benson ALR Annual Thank a Veteran Tour-North June 11th, Chadron ALR Poker Run June 18th; Ashland ALR State Romp June 17th-19th; Department Convention June 24th-26th and our summer ALR meeting will be held on Saturday, June 25th at 4:30 p.m. in Columbus at the Ramada Inn; our Rider of the Year will be awarded during the Convention. Please plan to attend.

In July, Grand Island ALR will host their 3rd Annual Freedom Run on July 16th. If you have any poker runs scheduled please let me know by emailing me at johnpaularias32@gmail.com or look for my Google Calendar.

Greetings Fellow Riders,  
It's that time of year again when Poker Runs will be in full swing every weekend. Please ride safe and be respectful on the roads.


Rusty Quebedeaux, Southeast Nebraska Assistant Liaison, along with many American Legion Riders, attended the 101st Airborne Memorial on April 22-24, 2022. On April 30th I enjoyed the Kearney Sons of the American Legion bull fry and talked to some Riders. They had a good turn out and it was a good time being there.

I also attended the Corndog Memorial Run at Post 1 on May 7th and there was a good turnout.

At one point I counted 21 Riders. The wind did not




During the Corndog Run Riders stopped in Pilger NE.



# Chaplain's Corner

Father Alexander Borzych  
Department Chaplain





Signs and symbols are all around us. It seems like every business, school, organization, and even religion has a symbol that, without much thought, one can identify and connect a logo, a symbol, or an emoji to something. When one sees a red 'N', one knows it stands for the University of Nebraska; a six-pointed star signifies the Jewish religion; more often than not, a cross is a symbol for the Christian religion.

One symbol that is very dear to veterans is the flag of the United States of America. We all served under this flag, and it has a deep meaning to each one of us. That is why on June 14th in the United States observes Flag Day. It gives a great feeling when we see a flag flying. My Mother's birthday is on June 14th, and we always kid her that everyone knows it's her birthday because they are flying Old Glory to celebrate the day she was born.

All kidding aside as veterans, we take pride in seeing the flag flying high, and respect and care for the flag in a special way. I recently came across a video of a veteran being pushed in a wheelchair, and he sees an American flag on the ground that has fallen from the pole to which it was attached, he has the person who is pushing him take him over to the downed flag and he picks it up. Together they folded it in the proper triangle fold, and they sat it on a table, which was on the porch. Such reverence this man had for the flag that all veterans have fought under.

Since 9-11, there has been a rise in the number of flags flown at residences. On the two-block street that I live on, there are eighteen homes. Among those eighteen homes, ten homes have flag poles flying the red, white, and blue flying in their front yards. We get comments from people who visit saying how nice it looks to have so many flags flying in one area.

The American Legion has a program giving instruction to students about respect for the flag and the proper way to fold the flag. We need to continue instructing people about the etiquette of the flag, so it is never lost.

Another thought is that the hundred days of summer start Memorial Day weekend and continue until Labor Day. During that time families will go on vacation but remember that we should not take a vacation from our faith. Look for your faith denomination's house of worship and take the time to attend services. It's always enjoyable to worship with new people and see their traditions and different styles of the liturgy. It's always amazing to meet new people that have the same desire to serve the Lord.

My challenge for you this month is to instruct or inform people that are unaware of the etiquette of the flag.



# Straight Talk

Levi Bennett  
Department Service Officer



## When Are VA Service-connected Disability Ratings Protected?

Recently a Veteran asked me how she would know if her service-connected disability compensation ratings were protected. A friend had informed her the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has rules regarding protected disability ratings. Her question is one that I am usually asked about two or three times per year and I'm sure there are veterans who have never heard of a protected disability rating. This led me to believe a protected rating discussion would make a great article for this edition of Straight Talk. The rules she had heard about are referred to as the VA's 5-year, 10-year, and 20-year rule.

The Veterans Administration (VA); specifically, 38 CFR Chapter 1 Part 3 outlines the rules for the preservation of disability ratings preventing static ratings from being reduced under certain conditions. One important aspect to remember is that no disability rating should be considered for reduction due to "Schedule of Rating Disabilities" changes unless medical evidence establishes that the disability to be evaluated has actually improved (§ 3.951 (a)).

VA's 5-year rule protects veterans from unfair reductions in disability benefits. According to VA, a stabilized rating is considered a protected disability rating. Normally if a veteran has maintained the same disability rating for 5 years the VA will no longer require reexaminations for that specific disability. Furthermore, after five years, a disability rating can only be reduced if VA obtains medical evidence indicating the veteran's condition is substantially improving overtime on a sustained basis. To consider reducing a veteran's disability rating after 5 years VBA must provide an explanation as to why VBA is reasonably sure the veteran's condition will continue to show sustained improvement (§ 3.3237).

VA's 10-year rule states a service-connected disability rating that has been in effect for 10 or more years will not be severed except upon a showing that the original grant was based on fraud, or it is clearly shown from military records that the person concerned did not have the requisite service or character of discharge (§ 3.957).

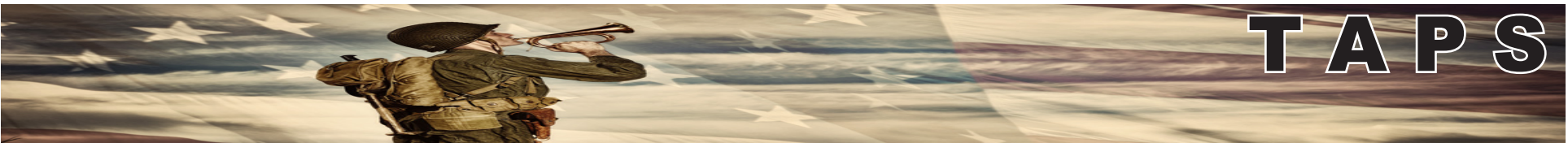
VA's 20-year rule protects service-connected ratings that have been rated at or above a certain disability rating for 20 years or more and are considered continuous. According to the VA 20-year rule, VBA is not allowed to reduce a continuous rating below its original disability rating unless the rating was based on fraud (§ 3.951(b)).

If a veteran is assigned a 100 percent rating, VA should not consider reducing the rating unless material evidence shows a significant improvement in the veteran's ability to function on a day-to-day basis. If VA grants a veteran Permanent and Total disability (P&T), the veteran's service-connected disabilities are considered to be total (rated 100 percent disabling) and permanent (zero or close to zero chance of improvement). If VA determines a veteran's condition is permanent and total, they are protected from the possibility of a reduction and will continue to receive disability compensation at the 100 percent rate for the rest of their life.



Orchard Post 136 presented a certificate for 75 years of continuous membership to Hoyt Sirek. Pictured (L to R) Hoyt Sirek and Commander Wayne Schacht.





Acklie, Stanley E., Norfolk, Vietnam  
Adams, Cleve, Fairbury, Vietnam  
Ahlers, W. Gary, Orleans  
Albers, Jim, Beemer, Korea  
Anderson, Richard C., Bennington, Vietnam  
Anderson, Richard D., Omaha, Korea  
Armknicht, Elmer Jr., Johnson, Vietnam  
Arnold, Kenneth R., Gering, Panama  
Ayala, Henry, Springfield, Persian Gulf  
Baasch, Dennis B., Cairo, Vietnam  
Baker, Ben L., Wood River, Korea  
Bates, Gerald, Decatur, Korea  
Baxter, John, Edison, Vietnam  
Beck, Lyle D., Wood River, Vietnam  
Bell, Merlyn F., Columbus, Korea  
Bellamy, George, Cairo, WWII  
Berglund, Roland K., Kearney, WWII  
Blackford, Maxine M., Kenesaw, Vietnam  
Blocher, Albert Jr., Lexington, Korea  
Bloom, Wesley, Laurel, Korea  
Boelter, Ronald C., O'Neill, Korea  
Bohling, Dale E., Deshler, Korea  
Bohuslavsky, Laverne J., Tekamah, Korea  
Bonifant, Whit, Millard, Vietnam  
Boshear, Dallas, Shubert, WWII  
Bossom, Oliver, Norfolk, WWII  
Boyer, Kenneth E., Norfolk, Korea  
Brandenburgh, Bruce, Columbus, Korea  
Bredehoft, Theodore H., Columbus, Korea  
Brim, Louis, Sargent, Vietnam  
Bruner, Wendell, Fremont, WWII  
Bryant, Clayton Sr., York, Vietnam  
Burns, John E., York, WWII  
Burns, Roger, Millard, Korea  
Calamanco, Manuel A., South Sioux City, Persian Gulf  
Callan, Neal, Alliance, WWII  
Clemens, Dick L., Plainview, Korea  
Colburn, Jerry L., Scottsbluff, Korea  
Copes, Donald F., Palmyra, WWII  
Cork, Dennis, O'Neill, Vietnam  
Cox, Erwin A., Kearney, Vietnam  
Crouse, Douglas, Cody, Vietnam  
Cullin, John T., Nebraska City, Korea  
Davis, Gerald A., Palmer, Vietnam  
Dejung, Steve M., Clay Center, SAL  
Deke, Lavern E., Kearney, Vietnam  
Dennis, Eugene, Millard, Vietnam  
Doeden, Robert L., Syracuse, Korea  
Doeschot, Gordon M., Omaha, Korea  
Doht, Marlin, Bancroft, WWII  
Doolittle, Henry, Cortland, Korea  
Drinkwalter, Roland, Crawford, WWII  
Drury, John, Ceresco, WWII  
Dugan, Edward R., Millard, Korea  
Duis, Loren, Fairbury, Vietnam  
Durham, Clyde O., Millard, Korea  
Ebel, Gene H., Norfolk, Korea  
Eggen, Lawrence M., Creighton, Korea  
Elwess, Leonard D., Chadron, WWII  
Engel, Delvin L., Fairmont, Vietnam  
Everett, Lindbergh L., Fremont, WWII  
Farnstrom, Llyod V., Hebron, WWII  
Figgins, Gerald R., Cowles, Vietnam  
Fonfara, Robert E., South Omaha, Korea  
Fox, Clayton D., Bassett, WWII  
Frahm, Roland L., Plainview, Vietnam

Frerichs, Cletust, Beatrice, Korea  
Fuelberth, Donald A., Stuart, Vietnam  
Garcia, Jerry J., Ogallala, Vietnam  
Gay, Neal, Columbus, Vietnam  
Gibbons, Ralph M., Fremont, Vietnam  
Gill, Leonard, Jackson, Korea  
Goodrich, Ronald E., North Loup, Korea  
Gray, George, Louisville, Vietnam  
Green, William H., Millard, WWII  
Halley, Marvin, Farnam, Vietnam  
Halsey, Melvin D., Dannebrog, Vietnam  
Hangman, Tim, Newcastle, Panama  
Hanus, Lawrence E., Lincoln, Korea  
Hart, Donald, Creighton, Korea  
Havekost, Donovan C., Millard, WWII  
Horn, Jerry L., Fullerton, Vietnam  
Hoskins, Robert D., Omaha, Korea  
Hoyt, Gary D., Fairfield, Vietnam  
Huber, Don A., Sutton, Korea  
Hunter, James R., Millard, Korea  
Hupka, Walter, Lincoln, WWII  
Isaacson, Gary, Ceresco, Vietnam  
Iverson, Vern L., Omaha, Korea  
Jacobsen, Robert, Homer, Korea  
Johnson, Larry L., Jansen, Vietnam  
Jonas, Dennis C., Fremont, Korea  
Keating, Hart, Columbus, Vietnam  
Kelly, Harold L., Cody, Korea  
Kemerling, Donald D., Grand Island, Vietnam  
Keslar, Larry E., Farnam, Vietnam  
Klasna, Harold D., Spencer, WWII  
Klein, Bobbie L., Millard, Korea  
Kolm, Gayland, Cedar Rapids, Vietnam  
Korber, Lowell L., Lincoln, Korea  
Krause, Wayne, Ansley, WWII  
Lakin, Charles D., Louisville, Korea  
Lancaster, Donald K., Lincoln, Korea  
Landis, Frank E., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Lau, Vern H., Ashland, Korea  
Layden, Larry D., Table Rock, Vietnam  
Leiding, David, Beaver City, Korea  
Lienemann, Gene M., Sidney, Korea  
Lintel, Michael, Lincoln, Vietnam  
Lipps, Thomas W., Tekamah, WWII  
Loomis, Donald, Hayes Center, Korea  
Lukasiewicz, David L., St. Paul, Vietnam  
Madison, Ervin D., Kearney, Korea  
Magnuson, Arnold L., Lincoln, WWII  
Maher, Gerry, Millard, Korea  
Mahnke, Bob, Beemer, Korea  
Mayfield, Richard A., Shelton, Korea  
Mayo, Ray D., Gibbon, Korea  
McCutcheon, Gaylen G., Millard, Korea  
McGuire, Robert, Cedar Rapids, WWII  
Messbarger, Gerald M., Millard, Korea  
Messman, Ron A., Aurora, Vietnam  
Miller, Bernard E., St. Paul, WWII  
Miller, William L., Springfield, Vietnam  
Milleson, Bill, North Platte, Vietnam  
Modlin, James E., Millard, Vietnam  
Monahan, Michael L., South Sioux City, Vietnam  
Moore, David, Crawford, Vietnam  
Moore, R. Al, Farnam, Vietnam  
Moseman, Wesley D., Alma, Korea  
Mougey, Richard D., Union, Korea  
Nelson, Harold R., Bancroft, WWII  
Nelson, Rollin, Burwell, Vietnam  
Nez, Darol G., Rushville  
Nicholson, Ronald A., Sutton, Vietnam  
Nielson, Harold W., Genoa, WWII

Nielson, Marvin B., Gordon, Vietnam  
Odvody, Daniel E., Prague, Vietnam  
Oltmer, John, Madison, SAL  
Ott, Leslie, Beemer, Vietnam  
Otte, Arthur H., York, Vietnam  
Patterson, Douglas L., Ogallala, WWII  
Paulsen, Myron, Beemer, Vietnam  
Pence, Roland M., Aurora, WWII  
Peters, Roger R., Norfolk, Vietnam  
Petronis, Michael A., South Sioux City, Lebanon/ Grenada  
Phelps, James W., Crawford, WWII  
Placzek, Michael A., Columbus, Korea  
Propst, Max, Utica, Korea  
Rathje, Norbert C., Shelby, Korea  
Reimers, Charles G., South Omaha, Vietnam  
Renter, Roger, Millard, Korea  
Reutter, Robert, Gordon, WWII  
Rhoads, Gary, Columbus, Vietnam  
Richardson, Jim, Beemer  
Rieman, Ralph J., Barneston, Vietnam  
Ringo, Robert E., South Omaha, Korea  
Roberts, Gary D., Hooper, Vietnam  
Roman, Ranson G., Norfolk, Vietnam  
Rupkalvis, Duane A., Holdrege, Vietnam  
Sabatka, Edward F., Brewster, WWII  
Schank, William A., Beatrice, Vietnam  
Scharff, Orville E., Minden, WWII  
Schepler, Gene L., Wilcox, Korea  
Schmeling, Alvin A., Stuart, Korea  
Schmidt, John H., Odell, Korea  
Schmidt, Martin, Gibbon, Korea  
Schmidt, Richard W., Winside, Vietnam  
Schuler, Donald, Hooper, Vietnam  
Schwensen, William, Ord, Vietnam  
Schwieger, Richard D., Grand Island, Vietnam  
Secord, James W., Nebraska City, Vietnam  
Semler, Roger L., Dorchester, Vietnam  
Shaw, Leonard M., Fremont, WWII  
Shores, Forrest C., Wymore, Vietnam  
Shryock, Wayne L., Benson, Korea  
Simpson, Chalmers, Wakefield, Korea  
Smith, Ernest, Columbus, Vietnam  
Smith, Roy, Plattsmouth, Vietnam  
Starman, Rudolph G., Elgin, Korea  
Stewart, Kim A., Wallace, Vietnam  
Stortz, Earl, Papillion, Vietnam  
Stumpf, Stanley, Chadron, WWII  
Sunderman, Richard J., Chambers, Korea  
Tepoel, Leo L., Prague, Vietnam  
Ternes, Richard J., Columbus, WWII  
Tesar, Karl, Papillion, Korea  
Tharnish, Steven E., Wayne, Vietnam  
Thomas, Jim B., Crawford, Korea  
Timothy, Gerard H., Nebraska City, WWII  
Turner, Ralph W., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Tyler, Paul L., Palmer, Korea  
Uhing, Harold J., Papillion, Vietnam  
Van Vleet, Robert, Sidney, Korea  
Vanover, Garland D., Fairbury, Vietnam  
Vanpelt, William W., Grand Island, Vietnam  
Veraecke, Cyril A., Ashland, Korea  
Vinson, Dane, Hayes Center, Korea  
Vulje, George F., Millard, Vietnam  
Ward, Jerry, Geneva, Vietnam  
Warren, Robert W., Wymore, Korea  
Weinand, Bob Sr., Millard, Korea  
Wendt, Daniel P., Lincoln, Vietnam  
White, Jerry F., South Sioux City, Vietnam

Wible, Richard D., Lincoln, Korea  
Winroth, Rodney, Lincoln, Vietnam  
Withee, Kevin J., Papillion, Global War

Wolf, Robert, North Platte, Korea  
Wood, Gordon S., Bridgeport, Vietnam  
Zierke, Monte R., Pierce, Vietnam

**Correction: John C. Beard of Hayes Center and Kenneth Heidemann of Tecumseh are both alive and well.**



**Orleans Post 184 presented certificates of continuous membership to its members. Pictured (L to R) Vice Commander Billy Schoneberg, Neil Collins (60 years), and Lester White (50 years).**



**Bennington Post 266 had two members receive Quilts of Valor from Bennington Unit 266. Pictured top Larry Witt with his grandsons. Pictured bottom Robert McKelvie in front of his quilt.**

## ID Resolve From The LIT



In today’s world, identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America. If you or your spouse fall victim to identity theft what would you do? Where would you turn? With Legionnaire ID Resolve you’ll have 24-hour identity theft resolution that helps

protect your money, your time and your financial reputation. If you haven’t fallen victim to identity theft yet, don’t think you’re safe. Data breaches happen every day, where thieves can steal your name, date of birth, credit card information, medical records, and your Social Security number. That’s why your Department of The American Legion has endorsed ID Resolve. A new program to help Legionnaires fight back instead of being a victim and not knowing where to turn.

ID Resolve helps you eliminate the uncertainty, by putting ID experts on your side to clean up the mess and help restore your name. You can be confident you’re getting the protection you deserve when it comes to your money, accounts, credit cards, financial records, and your good name. Plus, our no-obligation money-back guarantee allows you a full 30-day examination period in case you change your mind about this identity resolution.





Spencer Post 78 presented certificates of continuous membership to its members. Pictured top (L to R) George Mellor (60 years), Wayne Wendt (50 years), and Kenny Hoffman (50 years). Pictured bottom (L to R) Commander Gary Conroy and Harold Klasna (75 years).



Fremont Post 20 had three WWII veterans receive Quilts of Valor. Pictured top is Bob Kroenke. Pictured bottom (L to R) Dale Milligan and Jim Peterson.



Grand Island Post 53 presented a certificate for 50 years of continuous membership to Mike Ponte. Pictured (L to R) Jim Brettmann and Commander Mike Ponte.



Columbus Legion Riders and 40-8 Voiture members donated money to the Columbus Police Department for the purchase of a drone. Pictured (L to R) Owen Lloyd, Commander Don Patras, Police Captain Douglas Molczyk, Police Chief Charles Sherer, and Director Rollie Otte.



Kearney Post 52 awarded Eric Bayley as the Kearney Legionnaire of the Year.



Syracuse Post 100 presented many certificates of continuous membership to its members. Pictured back (L to R) Commander Ed Reed, Jerry Hespen (50 years), Don Harms (45 years), James Harms (30 years), Dennis Gotschall (45 years), Dennis Wendeln (50 years), and Dan Crownover (50 years). Pictured front (L to R) Duane Janssen (50), Larry Beers (35 years), Melving Kuhlengel (55 years), and Garry Hillman (30 years).



Wood River Post 314 member LeRoy Isaac was presented with a Quilt of Valor made by his sister-in-law Carol. Pictured (L to R) Carol Isaac and LeRoy Isaac.



Plattsburgh Post 56 Commander Candace Korman presented certificates of appreciation to Legion members for assisting with the Private Benton Kinkead ceremony. Pictured top (L to R) Commander Candace Korman and Louisville 353 Rider Bill Worlein. Pictured bottom (L to R) Commander Candace Korman and Weeping Water Post 353 Commander Bryon Gewecke.



Atkinson Post 86 presented a certificate for 50 years continuous membership to Jerry O'Conner.



Valley Post 58 member Duane Clausen received the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, being the 45th Nebraskan to receive the award. Pictured top (L to R) Duane Clausen and Pat Clausen. Valley Post 58 held a flag ceremony that featured special guests Governor Pete Ricketts and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Pictured bottom (L to R) Governor Pete Ricketts, Commander Dick Rowe, Vice Commander Roger Fallon, Adjutant Kurt Muhle, and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.