



# THE AMERICAN LEGION



**August 2010**

## Upcoming Events

- **August 4, 1790:** Coast Guard created
- **August 7:** Membership Dinner, 5:30–7:00 p.m.
- **August 16 :** Gibbon Public Schools, First Day
- **August 29:** SAL Meeting
- **August 30:** Legion Meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Support  
our  
Troops!



## Legion Officers

Commander  
Randy Stocker

Vice Commander  
Eugene Giger

Financial Officer  
Mick Ross

Adjutant  
Julie Schnitzler

Sergeant at Arms  
Jim Myrick

Chaplain  
Frank Spotanski

Service Officer  
Marlin Westberg

Bradley Buck Post #310 ♦ 1029 Court St. ♦ PO Box 175 ♦ Gibbon, NE 68840 ♦ (308) 468-5845

## Meet Mick Darnell

Mick Darnell is the only son of Belarina Martinez Darnell and the late George Darnell. Mick graduated from Gibbon High School in 1974, knowing he wanted to enlist in the United States Army. He had signed an early enlistment contract in march 1974 and shipped out to



Basic Training on August 28, 1974 with four classmates: Rusty Oliver, Fred RhamyRoland Krueger and Raul Meza. Mick, Roland and Fred all attended Basic Training in Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. Almost five weeks into the training Mick contracted a blood infection from a cut on the over head ladder and had to spend a week in the hospital. Mick didn't want to be recycled, but the drill sergeant sent him to sick call. Sure enough, Mick missed night fire and was sent to another company in its third week. After graduation, Mick was one of three assigned an 11B (Infantry) military occupational specialty (MOS) and was sent to Ft. Polk, Louisiana. He trained on south Ft. Polk, known as Tigerland where Vietnam soldiers were trained. At Ft. Polk, Mick first saw sugar cane as well as a pack of wild boars. "There was a lot of

Darnell Page 2

## Minutes of July Membership Meeting

Commander Randy Stocker opened the Gibbon American Legion Post #310 meeting on July 26, 2010, at 7:32 p.m. Sixteen members were present. Meents made a motion to donate \$35 to the Gibbon and the Shelton 4-H Booster Clubs. The Legion received a Thank you from the Gibbon Education Foundation for our donation to the Golf Tournament. A Thank you was received from the Dale Wrede Memorial golf tournament. The Gibbon Chamber thanked us for participating in the July 4<sup>th</sup> festivities. There are 510 caps ready to donate from the Auxiliary. Adjutant Julie Schnitzler gave the membership report. Currently there are 15 Paid Up For Life and Lifetime members. Forty-three members have already paid their dues. Vice Commander Eugene Giger read the previous minutes; Myrick made a motion to approve as read; motion carried. Unfinished Business: Bud Stall thanked everyone that helped take gate money for the regular season and district games. A couple times games were cancelled and nobody informed the Gibbon Legion. The financial report was read by Mick Ross; Marlin Westberg made a motion to accept as read; motion carried. Manager Report: The Legion is booked every weekend except for one. Frank and Linda Spotanski fixed the sign in front of the Legion. Mick Darnell has been mowing

racial tension at Ft. Polk. You had to be careful what you said. A white guy from Omaha was beat up by a couple of black guys for something stupid, like taking a shower out of turn." Mick was proud of achieving the Top Gunner award with a medium anti-tank weapon; he shot a perfect round of 60.

Mick arrived at Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. Because they were in Bravo Company, they called themselves "Bad Company" and Mick and fellow soldiers adopted the theme from a popular group at the time, "Bad Company". Officially the unit was known as the "Cotton balers". After graduating, Mick received orders to Aschaffenburg Germany. Traveling through O'Hare Airport, Mick experienced the discrimination against United States soldiers. "There were protestors at the airport and they spit on me as I was trying to find my gate. "Mick was the Radio Telephone Operator and was responsible for checking out radios, maintaining weapons, vehicles and equipment. While in the field, they trained on how to detain Russian tanks, locate snipers and fight in a "Cold War". Mick achieved the rank of E4 and became a fire team leader. He won the Distinguished Marine Man, an honor in which Mick's company commander recommended him. Mick also served on the drill team. They traveled to Spain for competition where he met a classmate from Gibbon who was with her husband who was stationed there.

Mick and his friend took leave and traveled to Innsbruck Austria. In June 1976 they rode the tram up the Alps to see four countries at once, but it was snowing. Mick also recalls the rivers that sparkled emerald green but were so clear, he could see the bottom of the streams.

Mick was discharged after his 19 months in Germany and returned to Gibbon to work. He



PFC Darnell in Germany, June 1975.

worked for various employers: Dale Rose on the potato farm, Paul Nickel (plumber), Gibbon Pack and Mid-Nebraska Community Service. One year after Mick's discharge, he received a call from a local National Guard (1-195<sup>th</sup>) unit, asking him to join. He joined serving in the communication center and then transferred to the company clerk position. He was sent to Ft. Benjamin Harrison for a two-month for administrative training. He graduated in the Top 5 and spend another four years in the National Guard; he quit in 1981 after another soldier was promoted into the E6 slot instead of Mick. Mick's two regrets were leaving the Army and the National Guard. "I should have joined the Reserves; then I'd had experiences from all three components."

Mick also served 10 years on the Gibbon Volunteer Fire Department. He was on the call when his boss, Paul Nickel, was hit by a train. "It bothered me more than I realized." Mick has served at the Gibbon American Legion as Commander (1979), Vice Commander, Adjutant and Chaplain. Mick has six children: Amber, Brendan, Cameron, Gram, Michael and Jessie. He has one grandson and one granddaughter. Mick enjoys volunteering and fishing with his sons.



Mick is pictured with his late father, George, and his mother Belarina. Mick served as the Gibbon Legion Commander in 1979.



# Membership Dinner

**August 7**

**5:30—7:00 p.m.**

FREE for paid

Legion Members: \$30

Auxiliary: \$15

Sons of American Legion: \$25

Social Memberships: \$20

All others: \$10

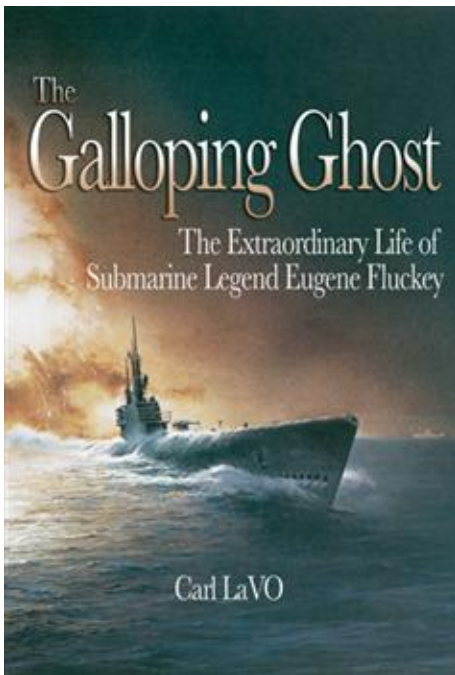


A special thank you to brothers Christian and Alex Steele, who played Taps and Revelry at Erwin Lasich's graveside service.



Our sympathies to the family of Don Lange, a 46-year member of the Gibbon Legion.

Our sympathies to the family of Erwin Lasich, 65-year member of the Gibbon Legion. Donna Rae and daughters, Pat and Nancy, are pictured receiving the flag for Erwin's service to his country.



It all started in a letter like this: “Dear Mr. LaVO, Your book, *The Galloping Ghost*, has made the United States Strategic Command’s Commander 2010 Professional Reading List. I would like to invite you to Offutt AFB in Omaha, Nebraska, to meet with General Chilton and discuss your book. Please reply with your interest. MSG Julie Schnitzler. You see, this summer I spent three weeks at Offutt Air Force Base, promoting General Chilton’s 2010 Professional Reading List. After reading *The Galloping Ghost*, I became more interested in submarine Legend Eugene Fluckey and the author. Wouldn’t it be cool to hear Mr. LaVo speak of his experiences with our WWII veterans?

So I sent an email to his Mr. LaVO at Courier Times in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he is the assistant managing editor, and holy cow, he responded. In fact, he offered to bring a sailor who sailed on the USS Barb when it sunk a train. Author Carl LaVO and CAPT Max Duncan (Retired) will be distinguished visitors at Offutt AFB on September 16.

And then..... Carl emailed this story: “Do you know if the 55th fighter group is still active at Offutt? (Yes, it’s still active.) My uncle Dave Fry who lives in Oregon was one of the original fighter pilots of that group. He was in the 343rd Squadron. Every January, for many years, the 55th Strategic Wing invited all “old pilots” to a birthday night. Uncle Dave went every year. As my Aunt Bennie puts it, “the young fellows in Omaha were in awe of some of their stories, especially the one involving Dave.” My uncle was shot down in his plane named “Julia” (a marvelous name) and became a prisoner of war. He flew a P-51 out of Wormingfort, England, and went down on 19 September 1944. Spent the next 9 months in Stalag Luft 1 at Barth, Germany. He flew 55 missions during the war, and remained active for many years after the war.”

Well, a good story like that has to be investigated, so I “googled” Dave and Stalag Luft 1 and became more educated about Veteran Dave Fry and the prison camp. Carl also forwarded me his Aunt Bennie’s (Dave’s wife’s story): “Dave’s plane was called Julia because he missed going to Wormingfort, England with the group because he had to have his tonsils removed at Ft. Hamilton, California. His nurse was Julia and she followed him to England. Nothing very binding between them, but he was supposed to spend the weekend either in London but he went down before Friday. Hmmm, I think forces had him picked out for me!! :):):):) Did you know that Dave came to visit his Aunt who lived next door to us? We met on the 5th of October. He left to go to Santa Ana to get discharged from the Army Air Corps. He came on Halloween, called me at work and I met him in San Francisco at the terminal. We went to the St. Francis for dinner. He asked me to marry him, I said yes. We met the next day to pick out rings and we were married on the 20 of January — 64 years ago. Julia’s loss. We did correspond with her for a while. She married later and lived in the Midwest.”

Bless you, Carl, for honoring Veterans Dave Fry, Max Duncan and Eugene Fluckey, our brave heroes, who successfully planned a raid to sabotage a railroad on the Karafuto coast. The submarine halted on the surface 950 yards from the beach and the invaders paddled to shore. They had three hours to plant the explosives and return to the submarine. After a some complications the team was able to set the explosives and were half way back to the submarine when a train hit the explosives which through wreckage two hundred feet into the air. The men were able to crawl back onto the USS Barb, which turned and disappeared into the bay.

For the “rest of the story”, you’ll have to read *The Galloping Ghost*.



**BE A PART OF THIS PATRIOTIC EVENT**

**NEBRASKA'S 1ST STATE VETERANS CEMETERY DEDICATION CEREMONY 11 AM AUGUST 13, 2010**



NEBRASKA VETERANS CEMETERY AT ALLIANCE

**PLAN ON STAYING THE WEEKEND FOR MORE EXCITING EVENTS!**

ALLIANCE & HEMINGFORD NEBRASKA

- P-51 Mustang Fly Over
- Plane Rides & Photos
- 1940's Dance in Airport Hanger
- BBQ & Picnic in Central Park
- Box Butte County Fair Week
- RC Model Airplane Competition



**Hotels, Motels & RV Parks**

American Inn ~ 1419 W. 3rd • Alliance • 308-762-8300  
 Days Inn ~ 117 Cody • Alliance • 308-762-8000  
 1st Interstate Inn ~ 1207 W. 3rd • Alliance • 308-762-4040  
 Hansen's B&B ~ 7660 Hayes Rd • Hemingford • 308-487-3805  
 Holiday Inn Express ~ 1420 W. 3rd • Alliance • 308-762-7600  
 J&C RV Park ~ 2491 S. Hwy 385 • Alliance • 308-762-3860  
 Patriot Inn ~ 851 CR 71 #3 • Hemingford • 308-487-3388  
 Rainbow Motel ~ 614 W. 3rd • Alliance • 308-762-4980  
 Sunset Motel & RV Park ~ 1210 E. Hwy 2 • Alliance • 308-762-8660  
 The Cottage ~ 405 Shoshone Ave. • Hemingford • 308-487-5272



**Tourist Information ~ 1-877-BOX-TRSM ~ [www.visitboxbutte.com](http://www.visitboxbutte.com)**

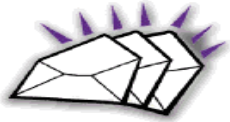
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**American Legion Night  
Lincoln Saltdogs**

**August 17, 2010      7:05 pm**

For more information contact Jeff at 402-441-4186 or toll free 877-464-2255.

**It's time to open the envelopes!**




If you've stuck your investment statements in a drawer hoping that what you didn't know wouldn't hurt you, just gather them up, bring them in and we'll open them for you.

**We'll**

- Review your current statements.
- Assess your goals and strategies.
- Help ensure your portfolio reflects your objectives.

**Don't wait – call now!**

**Michael Ross**  
*Financial Consultant*  
**AXA Advisors, LLC**  
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 Tel. (308) 237-9598  
 Fax (308) 234-5397  
[michael.ross@axa-advisors.com](mailto:michael.ross@axa-advisors.com)



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**FROM THE ARCHIVES**



Minutes cont. the lawn. The bill acceptor in the pickle card machine was replaced with a used one. The Erwin Lasich family contacted Ryan about a donation to pour cement in the handicap parking stalls. Sergeant of Arms Jim Myrick reported that he, Lee Meents and Julie Schnitzler volunteered in uniform at the Moving Wall in Grand Island. Jim also had the opportunity to speak of his military experiences at a Vacation Bible School program in Grand Island. Service Officer: Sympathies are offered to the families of Erwin Lasich and Don Lange. SAL Report: The next membership meeting is August 29. Officers will be elected at this meeting. Good of the Order: Frank Spotanski volunteered himself, Rick Lange and Bud Stall to cook the meat for the membership drive August 7. The next meeting will be held August 30 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.



# Generous Donors

## Gold

Donald & Myrtle Halkyard  
Robert & Veda Thomsen  
In Memory of Norden Nutter Olson  
In Memory of Andy McIntosh  
In Memory of Shirley Slater  
In Memory of Pete Day  
In Memory of Darlene Spotanski  
In Memory of Wayne Stroup  
In Memory of Tracil Power  
In Memory of LeRoy Power  
In Memory of Leonard Szafrajda  
In Memory of Clifford W. Shiers  
In Memory of Joyce Kraft  
In Memory of Charlie Kraft  
In Memory of Robert Williams  
In Memory of Vern Johnston  
In Memory of Erwin Lasich

## Silver

Pete Day  
Frank & Darlene Spotanski  
Donald & Barbara Cline  
Randy & Sheila Stocker  
Rod & Janell Towler  
Raymond & Donna McLaughlin  
Chuck & Janice Carman  
Greg & Linda Brodine  
Dianne Kraus & Lee Meents  
Dan & Kae Dwiggin

## Bronze

Kermit Belau  
Eugene & Joyce Giger  
DeWayne & Laberta  
Craig & Julie Schnitzler  
Mick & Anita Ross  
Paul Frink  
Jim & Shirley Slater  
Dale Rose  
Lee Meents  
Bob & Joan Williams  
Rick & Julia Lange  
Bud & Betty Stall

## Caps for Soldiers

To date 510 caps have been donated for soldiers who have suffered serious burns while deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. If you have NEW caps that you would like to donate to our wounded warriors, take the caps to the Gibbon Legion or Exchange Bank. The drive for new caps will end September 1 and then they will be delivered to soldiers and families at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston. Thank you to Foster Family Foods and Zwink Farms for the boxes for the caps. Thank you to local coordinator, Cricket Bell for organizing "Caps for Soldiers".



## Bev Blatchford Benefit Poker Run and Car Show August 28, 2010

Place: Gibbon Legion Time: 10-2:30 50-50 Split

Registration: 9-10 AM  
\$15 for 1 or \$20 for 2  
Prize for Best of Show  
Motorcycle and Car  
Silent Auction

Route: R Bar in Ravenna, Huckleberry Hideout in Broken Bow, (Lunch special), Sportsman in Amherst, back to Gibbon Legion.

Windmill Park is available for camping. Come enjoy the whole day with food and drink. Rides available from campground and back if needed. Showers are available at campground.

Mark Garrett: Bunkhouse Karaoke will provide music and Karaoke from 8-1

Home based business's: 9 am-4pm BBQ: 5-7 pm Jim Jurgensmier



## 2010 Nebraska State Fair

### Veterans Day Celebration

Friday, September 3, 2010

Heartland Events Center, Grand Island

Program: 9:00 a.m. ; Parade: noon

Free fair admission with military ID



# Membership News



To date, 73 members have paid their 2011 dues. Fifty-six percent of the Gibbon Legion members have already renewed their membership. Renewal notices will be sent to all members who haven't paid their dues by October 1. If you'd like to avoid a second notice, pay now.

**MEMBERSHIP GOAL:** We need 70% of our membership to pay their dues by September 1, so the Gibbon Legion will receive the One Star Citation Award.

**MEETING GOAL:** Currently, 16 to 17 members attend our monthly meetings. Our goal is to always have 20 members attend. If you need a ride to the meeting, please call Julie Schnitzler, 308-440-9218.

## FROM THE COMMANDER

Membership is the life of our club. We need members to assist with Bull Fry nights, clean up weekends, serve in the Honor Guard, eat meals at the Legion, recruit members and turn ideas into reality. If you'd like to become more involved but not sure how, come to a meeting. The Legion is not just a club, it's a family of Veterans working to improve the Gibbon community while making lasting friendships. See you at the August 30th meeting.

Commander Randy Stocker

## Membership Update as of August 3, 2010

### Paid-Up-For-Life & Life memberships

Marlin Westberg	Robert Thomsen	Richard Shafer	Eldon Ruby	Gerald Rose
Lenard Pedersen	Rick Musil	Julie Schnitzler	Ray Mayo	Stephen Clark
Joseph Hehner	William DeBrie	Kermit Belau	John Arias	Lee Meents

### The following members have paid their 2011 dues.

Neil Avery	Dwight Bond	Greg Brodine	Patricia Cantu
Charles Carman	Arthur Carpenter	Terry Carpenter	Daniel Dwiggin
Donald Dye	Terry Eatherton	Scott Elliott	Larry Fox
Paul Frink	James Ganz	Ben Garcia	Eugene Giger
Don Halkyard	Alvin Hartman	Ronald Hudson	Delbert Johnson
Elmer Jurgens	Calvin Kelly	Rodney Keup	Dale Kruse
Robert Kutsch	Richard Lange	Lloyd Leetsch	Kim Lindgren
Carl Moffett	Raymond Moffett	Terry Moffett	Chester Morgan
Kelly Murr	Jim Myrick	James Nutter	Dale Pallett
Joe Rayburn	Danny Roeder	Michael Ross	William Ross
Rodney Royle	James Saalfeld	LaVerne Scheidies	Martin Schmidt
Orville Schuster	Vernon Schuster	Clifford Shiers	Larry Shiers
Duane Sinn	*Tim Smallcomb	Frank Spotanski	Bud Stall
Randy Stocker	Peter Tannis	Dave Tracy	Alvin Volguardson
Elton Weston	Gene Willmes		