



THE AMERICAN LEGION

September 2010

Upcoming Events

- **Sep 11:** Patriot's Day
- **Sep 12:** Grandparent's Day
- **Sep 26:** SAL Meeting
- **Sep 27:** Legion Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- **October 16:** Bull Fry Night

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 Dale Kruse

Veteran Dale Kruse served as the Gibbon Public School superintendent for six years (1994-2000) and has been a member of the American Legion for 35 years. His parents (Ernest and Veona) encouraged him to join in his hometown of Syracuse when he received his Honorable Discharge from the United States Air Force in 1975.



Dale & Nancy with daughters, Dacia and Tai.

Dale graduated from Syracuse High School in 1967 and then received his social science/economics education degree in 1971 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dale and his high school sweetheart Darline Wilken married during his junior year of college (1969). During his senior year the lottery draft was started. After receiving his lottery draft number Dale visited the County Draft Board asking to know his chances of being drafted. The Board couldn't give any insight and since many school districts were leery to hire employees that could be drafted within the year, Dale decided to enlist in the Air Force. Dale received his

Kruse cont. page 2

Minutes from August Membership Meeting

Commander Randy Stocker opened the Gibbon American Legion Post #310 meeting at 7:30 a.m. on August 30, 2010. Sixteen members and one guest, Max Meents (nephew of Lee Meents) was present. The family of Erwin Lasich will be donating money to cement the handicap parking on the north west side of the building. The minutes were approved as read. To date 85 out of 133 members have paid their 2011 membership dues. NEW BUSINESS: The fall district round-up will be held at Gibbon on October 17. The Buffalo County Veteran Service Committee will hold a meeting at the Legion on September 15. Leslie Neuhaus, social security lawyer, will be speaking. The public is invited to attend. The finance report was approved as read. MANAGER REPORT: The Bull Fry Nights will be October 16, November 20 and January 15. SGT AT ARMS: Jim Myrick reported that the Honor Guard posted colors for the first day of school and received a thank you from the principal, Mrs. Miller. He also made an appearance at Howard Elementary for their character education assembly. SAL Report: Mick Darnell reported that elections were held and everyone held their same positions as last year. Commander Steve VanMeter will host a pre-game hot dog/braut fest for the members. A welcome home celebration will be held for Stormi Eatherton when she returns from Iraq sometime late this fall. AUXILIARY: The Auxiliary will box 760 caps for their "Caps for Troops" on September 12 at 2 p.m. They could use packing tape and plastic bags. The next meeting will be held September 27 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Basic Training at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas and then went to Lowery AFB in Denver, Colorado to be trained in supply administrative duties. He received orders to Cannon AFB Clovis, New Mexico (October 1971) and spent two years in the training office, using his teaching skills to conduct classes. Dale and Darline's first daughter, Dacia, was born in Clovis, New Mexico.

After two years in New Mexico, Dale and his wife decided that Dale would volunteer for duty in Europe. He received orders for Ramstein Air Base Germany, arriving there in July of 1973. While there he achieved the rank of E-5 and worked in an office that ordered materials: parts for aircraft, office furniture, etc. His daughter, Tai, was born at the Landstuhl Army Hospital. Dale remembers the birthing unit was being renovated, so Tai was born at a MASH unit in a tent that was adjacent to the hospital. While living in Germany, the family traveled extensively.

Dale's father was a World War II combat veteran who served in the Army in the 95th Infantry Company B 320 Engineers and had been decorated with a Silver Star & Purple Heart while fighting on the front lines in Germany. Dale was stationed 40 miles from where his Dad fought, so Dale brought his parents over in July 1974 and they spent the month traveling Europe and visiting the battlefields where his dad had been. After four years of enlisted service Dale processed out of the Air Force in May of 1975 because he wanted to use his college degree and teach.



L to R: Jason, Deanna, Dale, Nancy, Kim, Casey and boys Hayden and Jace.

His first teaching/coaching position was at Centennial High School, Utica, Nebraska, where he was the social science teacher and basketball coach. After four years, Dale took the Activities Director position at Cozad (3 years) and then moved to Harrison, Iowa, as the high school principal. In 1984, he accepted the Ogallala high school principal position; during his tenure, his wife Darline died of cancer. He met Nancy, whose husband had also died; they were married December 29, 1990, after Nancy's high school daughters overcame the shock of their mom marrying the high school principal. Nancy had three children: Deanna, Kim and Brian. Brian died

at the age of 13 during an asthma attack.

Dale accepted the challenge to become the superintendent of Gibbon Public School in 1994 and earned his Doctorate degree (1999) while in this position. Dale remembers working with an outstanding board of education and staff while at Gibbon. The board had a good view of the future and knew that a new school building needed to be built. Although two attempts to pass a bond issue failed during Dale's tenure it established the ground work for the later bond issue to pass. Dale also remembers the dedication all staff members had to the students of Gibbon Public School and their tireless effort to help improve student achievement. While in Gibbon Dale and Nancy lived on 5th street just east of Milan Schneider's house; "it was a house on the corner, we bought the house from Wes Hodges."

During his tenure at Gibbon, he also retired from the military after serving a total of 22 years (four years active duty and 18 years in the Nebraska Air National Guard). He retired at the rank of E7. Dale's responsibilities were combat support; if his unit were to be called into war, he would have been responsible for the morgue.

Dale accepted the superintendent job at Beatrice Public Schools in 2000. After serving 10 years as superintendent Dale retired July 1, 2010. In retirement Dale plans to golf, travel with Nancy, read, become more involved in community service, continue to volunteer at his church and is seeking to be elected to the Southeast Community College Board of Governors.

Dale and Nancy have four daughters who live in Tampa, Florida, Gothenburg and Lincoln, Nebraska and Denver, Colorado. They also have two grandsons.



August 2010 Minutes: The Gibbon Sons of the American Legion met for its August meeting at the Legion at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 29 with thirteen members attending. Old business covered included that the SAL had helped in the purchase of the 42 and 55 inch flat screen televisions that are now in the Legion at a cost of \$2,200.

Election of officers began the new business and there were no changes in the lineup of officers. Steve Van Meter remains commander; Ron Belau, vice-commander; Albert Krueger, Sergeant at Arms; Bob Godberson, treasurer; Pat Paitz, chaplain; Jim Wicht, historian; Mick Darnell, liaison and Dennis Walker, adjutant.

Commander Van Meter noted that the SAL membership renewals will remain \$20 until October 1, when they will be \$25. The hamburger-hot dog get together to highlight the new TVs during the first Nebraska football game on Saturday, September 4, was briefly discussed.

Commander Van Meter read from a letter requesting help at the Legion with the Nutter/Bombeck wedding on September 18 as a fundraiser for SAL. The commander invited all to a pot luck fish fry at his home on September 25. Time will be announced when the time for the Nebraska-South Dakota State football game is decided upon.

A welcome home event for Stormi Eatherton, who is currently serving in Iraq, in the future was discussed and SAL members thanked Commander Van Meter for all of his work and time donated behind the scenes to make the "We Care" packages to troops project work so well. Mick Darnell noted that the Legion still is in need of volunteers to help with funerals. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10. The next meeting will be on Sunday, September 26, at 4:00 p.m.

NEVER FORGET

September 11, 2001



According to the New York State Health Department, 836 responders died as of June 2009. Among the 2752 victims who died in the attacks on the World Trade Center were 343 firefighters and 60 police officers from New York City and the Port Authority. 184 people were killed in the attacks on the Pentagon. The overwhelming majority of casualties were civilians, including nationals of over 70 countries. Forty-four people, including four hijackers were killed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, when flight 93 crashed into a field after passengers attempted to "retake" the plane.

Notice of Meeting: Buffalo County,

Veterans Service Committee

Kearney, Nebraska

Wednesday, September 15th, 2010 at 7:00 P.M.

American Legion Club,

1029 Court Street, Gibbon

This meeting will be open to the public. Leslie K. Neuhaus, an attorney specializing in Social Security Disability will be presenting. See her biography below.



Leslie K. Neuhaus has been representing claimants for Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits since 2001. Leslie has successfully represented hundreds of disability claimants at administrative law hearings, on appeals and in federal court. She is committed in her representation of disabled adults and children in their claims and is dedicated to her client's cases. Her clients appreciate her compassion, concern and involvement as they advance to hearings.

Attorney Leslie Neuhaus is a graduate of the University of Nebraska- Lincoln (B.S. 1974) and the University of South Dakota School of Law (Juris Doctorate 1994). She taught school, managed her husband's law office and worked for non- profit organizations prior to her disability work. Health care providers, social services and support groups have enjoyed workshops and seminars given by Leslie.

Leslie's professional and community involvement includes: United States District Court- Nebraska; Nebraska Bar Association; Hall County Bar Association; National Organization for Social Security Claimant Representatives (NOSSCR); Moonshell Arts and Humanities Council Co-founder, Board of Directors, Past President, Chair-a-Table Ball, Co-Chair, Crane Mania Committee; Sandy Dennis Foundation, Co-founder, Board of Directors; P.E.O Chapter GP, former Chapter EM, Past President, former chapters GS and DA; Crane Meadows Nature Center, former Board of Directors; Grand Island Independent- Woman of the Year; Hall County Cultural Plan Committee Chair; St. Leo's Catholic Church, former Liturgy Committee, Ladies of St. Leo's; Hall County Leadership Unlimited, former Board of Directors, Class member; Hall County Youth Leadership Unlimited, Co-Founder, former Committee Chair; Grand Island Chautauqua Committee; Grand Island Central Catholic Fine Arts Guild, former Board of Directors; Harvest of Harmony Queen Pageant Judge; Grand Island Chamber Annual Meeting, former committee member; Association of Fund Raising Professionals, former Board of Directors; National Planned Giving Association, former Board of Directors; Wayne State Foundation Heritage Society; Toastmaster's International #5546, former member; Knox County Republican Party, former Chair; Bloomfield Public Library, former Board of Directors; Bloomfield Public Library Foundation, Co-founder, former Board of Directors; Order of the Eastern Star, Nazarene Chapter 117; Knox County Jr. Miss, former Board of Directors, choreographer; and Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority.



Veteran' s Day Salute
November 11 Gi bbon School



Jimmie Foster elected National Commander

Last month, at the 92nd National Convention in Milwaukee, The American Legion elected Foster national commander - Alaska's first. He's proud to shine the spotlight on a state he says takes good care of its nearly 70,000 veterans. Alaska's 33 Legion posts "fight tooth and nail for them, and their dependents," Foster says. Foster's Legion résumé is solid. A 29-year member, he's volunteered at every level. Nationally, he's served on the Economic, Internal Affairs and Legislative commissions, and as Legislative chairman from 2006 to 2008. Prior to that, he represented Alaska on the National Executive Committee.

Back home, Foster served as department commander in 1999-2000. He has been on nearly every department committee, including Americanism, Economic, Employment, Internal Affairs, Legislative, Military Affairs and National Security. During his term as chairman of

Membership & Post Activities, Alaska finished first in the nation on target-date membership. Foster is a member of Spenard Post 28 in Anchorage, where he was adjutant for several years and served as commander in 1989-1990. He's also been the Western District adjutant for seven department commanders. So, what hasn't he done? Forget a name or a face, for one thing.

For Alaska's department commanders, then, keeping members on the same page - bringing them together to support a Legion goal or program - is no small feat. Leading 55 departments as the Legion's national commander is an even bigger challenge. "I think if anybody can do it, Jimmie can," Franks says.

Farm Boy Turned Marine. Foster grew up in Delaware, Oklahoma, the son of a World War II Army veteran and the fifth of 10 children. "I caught it from the top and the bottom," he says dryly. And, occasionally, he caught it from his dad, who Foster says was a strict disciplinarian. "It didn't make a difference if you were male or female. If it was your time to get your little tail warmed up, that would happen."

After getting out of the Marine Corp, Foster worked as office manager for one of the oldest and largest law firms in Alaska. But his heart was in helping veterans. He began looking for a new job, and a conversation with Leon Bertram - at the time the Legion's leading department service officer in Alaska - took him in a new direction. In 2006, Foster joined Bertram's staff, assisting veterans who are filing benefits claims. Whether he's on the road or in his office at the new VA clinic in Anchorage, he enjoys hearing their war stories and guiding veterans through the twists and turns of the claims process. His knowledge of both sides of VA - health and benefits - makes Foster an ideal voice for The American Legion on Capitol Hill, Pisa adds. "He won't have to look around for an answer from somebody. He's going to be a great commander."

Foster is a strong believer in the Legion's Four Pillars, particularly mentoring youth. Oratorical, Boys State, American Legion Baseball - he's been involved with all of them. And throughout his year as commander, he'll encourage Legionnaires to support the Child Welfare Foundation.

"I think we do a great job with it, and I'm a sucker for kids," he explains. "They're our future. We can't shortchange them. You never know how your gift may change the life of somebody who could have gotten into drugs and alcohol or a gang. Don't give up on them."

As you'd expect, the Foster clan is a Legion family. Michael belongs to Sons of The American Legion, and Christopher is a dual Legion-SAL member. Rehta is well known in Alaska's American Legion Auxiliary, which she has served as a unit, district and department president. "She's as active as I am, sometimes more," Foster says admiringly.

Like his predecessors as national commander, he's excited about the Legion's recent leaps forward using the necessary communication tools of today: a dynamic Web presence, online social networking, Twitter. Nevertheless, he's convinced that traditional recruiting methods remain the Legion's No. 1 way of finding and keeping members. The Internet can't replace a warm handshake, a smile and the camaraderie found in a Legion post. "If the computers stop working tomorrow, what are you going to do?" he says. "I think we're on the right path, but we can't forget the basics."

In fact, Foster's motto is Serving America's Veterans Every Day, or SAVED. He'd like to see Legionnaires personally interacting with other veterans daily, "whether they're just talking to a vet and making sure they know they're appreciated, or helping them out in some way, whatever they need." Over the next year, expect to see that one-on-one approach in Foster's leadership style.

"If my BlackBerry is vibrating, I'm not going to read my message if we're having a conversation," he says, laughing. "I can wait. I believe in technology, but don't lose the personal touch."

Excerpted from *The American Legion Magazine*, written by Matt Grills, managing editor.

Membership News

To date, 90 members have paid their 2011 dues. 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. Legion memberships are great gifts for friends and family. If you would like to purchase a membership as a gift, stop the Legion or call Julie Schnitzler.

MEMBERSHIP GOAL: We need 90% of our membership to pay their dues by December 1, so the Gibbon Legion will receive the Pearl Harbor 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.

Membership Update as of September 1, 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 Mick Ross
Joseph Hehner William DeBrie Kermit Belau John Arias Lee Meents

The following members have paid their 2011 dues.

Neil Avery	Tom Belau	Dwight Bond	Greg Brodine	Dean Brown
Stacy Brown	Patricia Cantu	Dick Burr	Patricia Cantu	
Charles Carman	Arthur Carpenter	Terry Carpenter	Frank Carr	
Ronald Catlin	Tom Christy	Phillip Darnell	Daniel Dwiggins	
Donald Dye	Terry Eatherton	Larry Fox	Paul Frink	
James Ganz	Ben Garcia	Eugene Giger	Dean Grassmeyer	
Don Halkyard	Alvin Hartman	Ronald Hudson	Delbert Johnson	
Elmer Jurgens	Brandon Kee	Calvin Kelly	Rodney Keup	
*Jeff Krupp	Dale Kruse	Robert Kutsch	Richard Lange	
Lloyd Leetsch	Kim Lindgren	*Bill Manfull	Ray McLaughlin	
Diana Merryman	Ray Moffett	Carl Moffett	Terry Moffett	
Kelly Murr	Jim Myrick	James Nutter	Dwayne Olson	
Bob Owen	Dale Pallett	Dale Pearson	Joe Rayburn	
John Rinaker	Danny Roeder	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	
PeteTannis	Dave Tracy	Alvin Volguardsen	Elton Weston	
Gene Willmes				

*Denotes new members

Save the Date!!
Bull Fry Nights
Volunteers and
patrons needed

October 16
November 20
January 15



Generous Donors

Gold

Donald & Myrtle Halkyard
 Robert & Veda Thomsen
 In Memory of Norden Nutter
 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 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 Olson
 Craig & Julie Schnitzler
 Mick & Anita Ross
 Paul Frink
 Jim & Shirley Slater
 Dale Rose
 Lee Meents
 Bob & Joan Williams
 Rick & Julia Lange
 Bud & Betty Stall

BRANSON, MISSOURI

November 9—12

**For American Legion, Auxiliary
 and Sons of the American Legion**

**Enjoy Oak Ridge Boys, Yakov
 Smirnoff, Legends in Concert,
 Presleys Jubilee, Veterans Pa-
 rade, and Veteran's Museum**

**Travel arrangements have been
 made through Integrity Travel of
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa.**

**Fees include deluxe motorcoach trans-
 portation, 3 nights lodging, 3 break-
 fasts, 2 dinners and 1 dinner cruise**

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 for more information**

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