

Harold Baggenstoss
Post 1260

January 2023
Volume 90, Issue 1



FROM THE COMMANDER

BY BRUCE MALTERUD

Comrades;

Here we are going into the new year with a bang. Lots of snow, cold weather and the lakes are flooding making it complicated to get out on the ice. Maybe we will get a Jan. thaw for our next meeting on Jan. 3rd at 7:00 p.m. at the Eagles Club Rooms. I hope that we get a good turn out as some of our snow birds have left for a warmer climate.

We held our Pearl Harbor Dinner once again with a good turn out. The Eagles once again with a perfect meal of roast beef. The program this year was an awards program recognition of the Public Servant Award for EMT of the year to Jake Wettschreck, Firefighter of the year to Ben Hein, Teacher of the Year from Blackduck High School was Pete Ofstedal. We also had 1st and 2nd place Voice of Democracy recipients, 2nd place to Paige Cowden and 1st place went to Anna Glen, which they both received a cash award along with a Certificate and a Medal. Anna then read her speech to the crowd, What does a Veteran mean to me. It was a very enjoyable evening with a lot of fun and very rewarding night.

Dec. 10th we were off to East Grand Forks for a district meeting, which was very challenging going over and back with the icy roads. Our next adventure, weather permitting, we will be heading to Brooklyn Park, MN for the state Mid-Winter Conference. a lot of info comes out of this meeting such as our legislative up dates and whats happening in our claims office and all the new things happening there.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Adjutant's Corner	2
Veteran Service Officer	3
Chaplain's Corner	4
Spot Light On	5
Veteran's Employment Rep...5	
Post Auxiliary	6
Activities Last Month	7
Points of Contact	7

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Next Two Months Meetings

February 7th

March 7th

This Fall Conference is always very informative.

The Wall that Heals is a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial In Washington D.C. and is the largest wall replica that travels the country. It will make one stop in Minnesota, May 26-29, 2023 in Mendota Hgts. Mark your calendars those of you who haven't seen it yet and would like to.

As the cost of living goes up, VA ensures that your benefit rates do too! Starting Jan. 1, 2023, all compensation benefit rates have increased by 8.7% to match adjustments made to Social Security benefits. This increase impacts disability benefits, clothing allowance, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), as well as other VA assistance programs.

On the Lighter Side; My wife caught me standing on the bathroom scales, sucking in my stomach. "Ha! That's not going to help!" she laughed. "Sure, it does." I said. "It's the only way I can see the numbers."

I wish you all had a wonderful holiday season and be safe on the ice if you must go out there.

Bruce Malterud

Commander

Mark your calendars! Next meeting - Tuesday, January 3rd .

ADJUTANT'S CORNER

NOTICE: VFW website: www.vfwpost1260.org. All updated information is available concerning our local VFW Post #1260 as well as our state and national information.

Date: Tuesday, January 3rd, 2022, at 7:00 pm at the Eagles Club

Jan 1 – New Years Day

Jan 3 – Post 1260 Meeting, Eagles Club, 7:00 P.M.

Jan 13 - 15 – VFW Mid-Winter Conference (Brooklyn Park)

Jan 16 – Martin Luther King Jr Day

Jan 17 – Operation DESERT STORM begins (1991) / 102nd Anniversary of MN VFW

Jan 21 – Birth of the modern National Guard (1903)

Jan 25 – Battle of the Bulge begins (1945)

Jan 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Jan 28 – Vietnam Cease-Fire Campaign ends (1973)

Jan 30 – Tet Offensive begins (1968)

Jan 31 – Operation JUST CAUSE ends (1990)



Please continue to check our VFW Post 1260 Facebook Page, Instagram Page and Webpage as: <https://www.facebook.com/BemidjiVFWPost1260> , https://www.instagram.com/vfw_post_1260/ and <https://www.vfwpost1260.org/> for updates.

VFW Launches PACT Act Referral Tool

Last month, VFW Adjutant General Dan West announced the deployment of a new webpage designed to inform veterans about benefits for which they may qualify due to the PACT Act and to generate referrals to their local VFW accredited service officer. Starting Wednesday, Nov. 16, veterans may now navigate to <https://pactactinfo.org> where they can enter certain military service details and medical conditions to help determine if they are eligible for compensation benefits on a presumptive basis as a result of exposure to toxins while serving in the military.

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Beltrami County

Retirees Get a Second Chance to Enroll In or Opt Out of the Survivor Benefit Plan

December 22, 2022

Military retirees who opted out of a valuable survivor's benefit when they left active duty will get a rare second chance to enroll thanks to a new rule in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act. The same measure allows currently enrolled users to leave the program.

Retirees typically get only one chance to enroll in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP). Those who opt in usually name their spouses as the beneficiaries, said Mark Belinsky, director of currently serving/retired affairs for the Military Officers Association of America and an Army retiree.

The SBP is like a life insurance policy with no cap. After a retiree dies, the SBP pays a beneficiary up to 55% of the retiree's retirement pay, adjusted for inflation, monthly for the rest of the surviving spouse's life, or till a child reaches an age cap.

The SBP is such "a very good plan," Belinsky said, that for retiring service members to opt out, their spouses have to consent.

But despite the benefit's high face value, many retirees declined coverage because of a rule known colloquially as the "widow's tax" and officially as the Survivor Benefit Plan offset. That law reduced SBP payments to spouses who were also eligible for the Department of Veterans Affairs' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) allowances. DIC allowances are for the surviving spouses of service members who died on active duty or of veterans who died from injuries received as a result of their service.

The Defense Department has eliminated the SBP offset in phases, with full removal as of the Feb. 1, 2023 pay date, so now is a good time to open up enrollment, Belinsky said.

When service members decline coverage at retirement, a few life changes allow them to enroll. For example, if a service member was single at retirement and later gained a spouse. But limitations apply. Those who opt in -- the default -- get to withdraw or change their coverage only in their third year of receiving retirement pay or in limited other situations such as if their beneficiary dies first.

A child may also receive the benefit, but not for life, as may others such as a business partner or parent in the absence of a spouse or children.

Those who enroll during the open season will have to catch up on paying the premiums they missed since retiring plus pay interest and "any additional amount" deemed necessary to maintain the "soundness" of the Defense Department's retirement fund, according to the new law.

Current enrollees can opt out during the open season with their spouse and/or beneficiaries' consent but won't receive a refund for the premiums they've already paid.

The open season to enroll begins with Biden's signature and ends Jan. 1, 2024. Anyone receiving retirement pay who hasn't already enrolled in the SBP may take advantage of the open season in 2023. Retirees are eligible who either already receive retirement pay or who would receive it except they haven't yet reached age 60.

Source: <https://www.moaa.org/>



OUR SACRIFICE

<u>Conflict</u>	<u>Casualties</u>
American Revolution	50,000
Northwest Indian War	1,881
War of 1812	20,000
Mexican American War	17,435
Civil War—Union	646,392
Civil War—Confederate	~524,000
Dakota War of 1862	263
Spanish-American War	4,068
Philippine-American War	7,126
World War I	320,518
World War II	1,076,245
Korean War	128,650
Vietnam War	211,454
Afghanistan War	20,149
Operation Iraqi Freedom	31,994
Operation New Dawn	298
Operation Enduring Freedom	20,194
Operation Inherent Resolve	276
Operation Freedom Sentinel	620

NOTE: There are other smaller conflicts not listed where service members sacrificed their lives

Afghanistan & Iraq source:

<https://www.defense.gov/casualty.pdf>

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Happy 2023 to each of you. I hope you all enjoyed in celebration of our Savior's birthday. It was also very cold for a while and warmer days are ahead as we work toward Spring.

Also working toward Spring is the continued construction of the Bemidji VA Center.

I recall an article where an administrator was hired, so I know it is getting close to being open. I look forward to working with whomever they bring on as VA Chaplain as we work together.

I also had the chance to be in Montevideo, MN last month and I saw the construction of that facility as well. It appears to be on a similar grand opening date as well. These are major steps where your involvement in the VFW has helped secure these needed services for our veterans who will find great care in a friendly and warm atmosphere.

I bring these up to you now to get you thinking about what you can do once these centers are open and occupied by veterans. Your VFW has set aside some money for some items once the Bemidji Center open but we are always looking to provide whatever we can to the new center to make it more like a home for all the residents and staff.

Like many of you, growing up we didn't have a lot of money but my parents used the motto toward charity, 'Donate with your time, talent or treasure as much as you can.' I learned this early and it was usually 'time or talent' for us. We would do different things for the, what we called back then, "The old folk's home" down the street. The residents always liked having us kids come and play cards, games, go for a walk, or just talk. We didn't spend a lot of time there, but when we did, it was very rewarding and the staff always thanked us as well.

With this little example from my past, I ask each of you to consider donating some time, talent or treasure toward any charity that you feel strongly for. We are coming off the most generous time of the year over Christmas, but using your time, talent and treasure all year round will make you feel like you did over the Holiday season. Happy New Year and God bless each and every one of you.

Kent Porter
VFW 1260
Chaplain

SPOT LIGHT ON....



EMT of the year
Jake Wettschreck
Bemidji Fire Dept.



VOD 1st place
Anna Glen
Bemidji High School



VOD 2nd place
Paige Cowden
Bemidji High School



Firefighter of the year
Ben Hein
Bemidji

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE

60

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HOT OFF THE PRESS

For 60 Years, the Navy Has
Been Training Dolphins and
Sea Lions to Keep Rivals
Away From Its Most Sensitive
Hardware

31 Dec 2022
Business Insider | By Gidget
Fuentes

Since 1959, the U.S. Navy has trained a small force of bottlenose dolphins and sea lions to recover lost equipment, intercept intruders in ports, and detect buried sea mines.

This year, the Navy sought to end one of those marine mammals' most important missions — hunting for and neutralizing mines buried in the seabed — and use sophisticated underwater vehicles and sensors instead. But there's a problem: That technology hasn't yet equaled a dolphin's unique ability to find mines. So Congress balked, using the 2023 defense bill to bar the Navy from retiring its mine-detecting dolphins or ending port-security training for its marine mammals until it deploys new mine-countermeasure systems that are as good or better. Congress' move halts the long-planned retirement of Marine Mammal Systems, a program run by Naval Information Warfare Center-Pacific at Point Loma Naval Base in San Diego. The proliferation of high-quality, relatively inexpensive drones means that the Navy's dolphins and sea lions may soon be deactivated, but for now they remain a part of the service's mine-countermeasures systems, alongside ships, helicopters, sonars, and mobile explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams.

Source: [military.com](https://www.businessinsider.com)



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

January 20, 1649 - At the conclusion of the English Civil War, King Charles I was brought before a high court of justice at Westminster Hall on charges of treason. The Civil War had been fought over whether the King's power was absolute or was limited by the powers of Parliament. Oliver Cromwell had led the Parliamentary forces to victory over the Royals. In the trial that followed, Charles was found guilty and condemned as "a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy" and was beheaded several days later in front of Whitehall Palace in London.

January 21, 1793 - In the aftermath of the French Revolution, King Louis XVI of France was guillotined on the charge of conspiring with foreign countries for the invasion of France. During the Revolution, the King had attempted to flee to Austria for assistance. Ten months later, his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette, was also guillotined.

6

POST AUXILIARY

Greetings Everyone,

Hope you are having a wonderful close to your holiday season, and you are anticipating beginning of the new year of 2023. Please remember to also keep our veterans in mind as we enter the new calendar year. Please consider coming to the Mid-Winter Conference at the Minneapolis Marriott on

January 13- 15, 2023. Contact any of our Auxiliary officers for more information.

We have been asked to bring mittens – for all sizes and ages – to the Mid-Winter conference. These will be distributed to needy veterans and their families.

Another project is to start making Thank You cards, and Valentine for Veterans cards for our veterans. These should be done and turned in to the Auxiliary by January 25th. These will go to vets in the nursing homes and veterans hospitals.

Believe it or not, we are already half way through our fiscal year. Be sure to keep track of work, projects, and volunteer work you are doing. We will need that information for completing our End of Year Report in March.

Another thing to remember is that we are headed into the year when our Bemidji Veterans Home is to be completed. HOW EXCITING

Thank you for your continued work for our local veterans and their families. Your help and participation is very important. Take care, and be safe.

Margaret Booge
President, VFW Auxiliary 1260

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ACTIVITIES THIS PAST MONTH

The VFW Post 1260 hosted their annual Pearl Harbor Dinner at the Bemidji Eagles Club



During the annual dinner, awards were given to the Teacher of the year, EMT of the Year, Firefighter of the Year, and Voice of Democracy 1st and 2nd place winners.



Teacher of the year

Pete Ofstedal

Blackduck High School.



OUR DAILY COMMITMENT

Hours served: 136

Members volunteered: 48

Total dollar: \$387

Current Members: 208

2022 TAPS

Leander F. Peterka

Francis Petersen

Clinton Lydick

Roger Burgoon

Donald Parson

Dennis Tangen

POINTS OF CONTACT

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Support Numbers

Education: <http://www.mymilitaryeducation.org>

Health Care: 1-877-222-8387

Suicide Prev. Hotline: 1-800-273-8255


Fargo VA: 1-800-410-9723

Help Line: 1-855-VET-TALK

VA Community Outpatient Clinic-Bemidji: 218-755-6360



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WHAT THE VFW DOES FOR THE COMMUNITY

- *Youth activities, Voice of Democracy & Youth Essay*
- *Patriotic Activities*
- *Aid to Schools & Churches*
- *Membership*
- *Help to obtain benefits*
- *Legislative Service*
- *Buddy Poppy Promotion*

HAROLD BAGGENSTOSS

POST 1260

The purpose is fraternal, patriotic, historical, and educational; to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain rue allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomever.