

The Fabulous 4th

NEWSLETTER – January 2026

4th DISTRICT OFFICERS

Commander
Jon Haworth

Adjutant
Jennifer Havlick

Vice Commanders
Jess Kalinosk
Dan Bronk

Membership Director
Jamie Brooks
Asst – Mickey Ostrum

Chaplain
Richard Gardener
Asst - Joe Jansen

Finance Officer

Judge Advocate
Mike Ash

Historian
Ron Eddings

Sgt-at-Arms

Past Commander
Teresa Ash

District Webpage
<https://www.fourthdistrictamericanlegionmn.com/>

District Newsletter E-Mail:
mikeash202@gmail.com

4th District Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/MNFourthDistrict/>

4th District Legion Baseball
<http://tricitybaseball.org/dist4.htm>

Department Website:
www.mnlegion.org

National Website:
www.legion.org

THE COMMANDER'S CORNER

Hello everyone! I hope your holiday season was festive and merry! Here are a few announcements.

On January 24th we are going to be walking in the winter carnival parade in St Paul. If you have never been a part of this, I strongly urge you to come meet up with us! It doesn't matter if you're not from the 4th district, we are inviting everyone to come walk with us in the parade. The bus leaves Arcade Phalen Post 577 at 12:30 p.m. and heading down to the Grand Avenue and Dale Street area.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at the midwinter January 10th, 2026 that is being held at Crystal VFW Post 494 at 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm. Jerry and Jana Kyser will be there in the morning talking about Honor Flights. Janet Lorenzo and Jason Storm will be doing a Be The One presentation and will give any service officer updates. Reverend Mary Whitney will be the main speaker. She is a trauma-response coach. Matt Verkuilen will talk about the CPR Report and have the Auxiliary give a report. Joe Jansen is speaking about the Armed Forces Service Center at the airport. Dennis DeLong will talk about membership. Starting at 1:00pm we have reserved for talking about the 4th and 5th district merger.

I was talking to Chuck McCormick, commander of post 474 and he was talking about how many people don't come to the Christmas parties or walk in the parades anymore. There're so many different happenings that go on in St Paul and our communities that we should try and be a part of.

Winter time Legion Cruisers meetings will hopefully be held at local car museums. Although we have nothing set in stone yet.

Jon Haworth, 4th District Commander



District Meeting Schedule

(Per the District Constitution & By-Laws, District meetings are to be held on the second Wednesday of each month.)

January 10th 4th and 5th District Mid-Year 9:00am @ Crystal VFW Post 494, 5222 Bass Lake Rd, Crystal, MN 55429

February 11th – 6:00 p.m. Zoom Meeting (Meeting link will be sent out the Monday prior to the meeting)

March 11th – 6:00 p.m. Zoom Meeting (Meeting link will be sent out the Monday prior to the meeting)

April 8th – 6:00 p.m. – Location: N. St. Paul Post 39 – Primary discussion on reports and fine-tuning matter relating to the 4th & 5th District Merger. Invite to be sent to the 5th district

LEADERS BECOME GREAT, NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR POWER, BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR ABILITY TO EMPOWER OTHERS.

John Maxwell

Upcoming Events

Jan 10

Mid-Winter @ Crystal VFW Post 494
5222 Bass Lake Rd, Crystal starting
at 9:00am

Jan 18

VA Visitation 1:00pm @ VAMC

Jan 24

Winter Carnival Parade (see page 4
of this newsletter)



FROM THE 4TH DISTRICT AUXILIARY

To all the 4th District Auxiliary
Members.

I hope you all had a Very Merry
Christmas and were able to spend
with your family and loved ones.
My wish for all of you is A Happy,
Prosperous and Peaceful New Year.
I am hoping for a great showing of
Members to the Mid-Winter, January
10, 2026 yes 2026! It will be at the
Crystal VFW, in Crystal MN. Doors
open at 8:30.

It sounds like there are many
interesting and informative Speakers.
And don't forget the Winter Carnival
Parade, January 24. It is a lot of fun
marching with the Legion Family and
the Blue Star Mothers. It is a beautiful
site seeing all the American Flags
coming down the street and all the
Legion Family carrying those Flags
and then gathering after at Arcade /
Phalen for a hot meal and fellowship
with Legion Family.

Looking forward to the Auxiliary
Family Pot Luck in February.
Have a very Happy and Safe New
Year.

See you January 20, 2026
Thank you, Veterans and Service Men
and Women, for our Freedom.
Give your loved ones a Big Hug and
Kiss.

Sandy Gibson
4th District Auxiliary President

THE PASSING OF A GREAT LEGIONNAIRE

It is with deep respect and sadness
that we report the passing of
Ken Gibson, a dedicated Legionnaire
from Rosetown Post 542, who
transferred to the Post Everlasting on
December 22.

Ken was a 50+ year member of The
American Legion and served the
organization at multiple levels with
unwavering commitment. His service
included:

- Commander, Rosetown Color Guard
- Department Sergeant-at-Arms,
Department of Minnesota American
Legion
- District Vice Commander
- Member, Sons of The American Legion
(SAL)
- Member, American Legion Riders (ALR),
Rosetown

• Longtime member of the Fort Snelling
Rifle Squad, where he continued to serve
on numerous details most recently with
the Friday Squad
Ken's dedication to honor, ceremony,
and fellow veterans was evident in his
continued service right up until his
passing. His presence, and
willingness to serve wherever needed
left a lasting impact on his post, his
district, and the Department.

Please keep our 4th District Auxiliary
President Sandy Gibson and her
family in your thoughts and prayers.
Visitation: Thursday, January
08, 2026, 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm,
WULFF FUNERAL HOME,
1485 White Bear Ave, St. Paul, MN
Funeral Service: Friday,
January 9, 2026, 10:00 am, ST.
MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN
CHURCH, 1660 County B Road W,
Roseville, MN. Note: A luncheon will
immediately follow the service at the
church 12:00PM

Interment: Friday, January
9, 2026, 1:30pm, FORT
SNELLING NATIONAL
CEMETERY (Assembly Area
3), 7601 34th Ave S,
Minneapolis

Check out the memorial at:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/st-paul-mn/kenneth-gibson-12676898>

The holidays are over but now you
need to do a return here are some
tips to help you do it safely...

Protect Yourself from Return Rejections

By Kim Komando

Retailers are combating a \$100
billion return fraud problem with
aggressive AI bots that
sometimes flag honest customers.
If a warehouse claims your return
box was empty, you'll need proof.
Three-Photo Protocol:
Before sealing any return, take
these quick photos with your
phone:

1. Serial number on the
device and box (or model
number if no serial
exists)
2. Item packed inside the
shipping box with
packing material
3. Sealed box with return
label visible

Your photos are time-stamped
and geotagged — that's your
proof.

If your refund is denied: Don't
argue with the bot. Use this
phrase: "I have time-stamped,
GPS-tagged photographic
evidence of the serial number and
packed condition. Please provide
the direct email for your fraud
prevention department for manual
override."

This escalates your case to a
human reviewer. Takes 30
seconds, could save you
hundreds.

*Tip courtesy of Kim Komando,
America's Digital Goddess®*

**“You don’t need to
have it all figured out
to move forward.”**

— Amara Honeck

Adjutant's Corner

Welcome to 2026, here's a quick but important membership and district update. The 2026 membership challenge began July 1, 2025, and I'm happy to report that our District has met every membership goal so far this year—well done. Please note that Department Headquarters will stop processing 2025 renewals received by mail on December 31, 2025; any 2025 memberships received after that date will need to be processed by individual posts through mylegion.org. The grace period for 2026 renewals runs from January 1 through February 1, 2026. Members not renewed by January 1 will appear in "Grace" status on the roster, and any member not renewed by February 1 will be listed as expired, losing membership rights until their 2026 renewal is submitted. Our next goal is 80% by January 14, 2026. We are currently at 77.93%, just 33 renewals and/or new members away, from reaching that mark, which places us 8th in the Department membership race. Looking ahead, our joint 4th and 5th District Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for January 10, 2026, at Post 511 in Crystal, with additional details forthcoming from the 5th District. At this time, we do not have an Oratorical Chairman, so there will be no District Oratorical Contest this year. The 4th and 5th District Merger Committee is also putting the final touches on the DRAFT Constitution, By-Laws, and financial policy documents, with plans to distribute those drafts to the posts within the next couple of weeks. For those who read the Legionnaire article regarding the Department Redistricting Ad Hoc Committee, you may have noticed language stating that the committee was formed mainly for the purpose of merging the 4th and 5th Districts. I

have been assured that this wording is incorrect. The Department Redistricting Committee is reviewing district lines across the entire Department to determine what best serves the Department as a whole. Our 4th and 5th District Merger Committee has expressed concerns about the article's wording and has been assured by Commander Dvorak that it was an error. While our districts are open to accepting additional posts from outside the current 4th and 5th District boundaries, we are not interested in having the 4th and 5th Districts dismantled, either now or after the merger is complete. We will keep you informed of any information on the Department AD-HOC committee moving forward.

Jennifer Havlick
4th District Adjutant

4th / 5th District Midwinter

When:

9:00am on Jan 10, 2026

Where:

VFW POST 494
5222 Bass Lake Rd
Crystal, MN 55429

Registration:

\$20 (meal included)

Something for everyone including an update on Honor Flights (a non-profit that transports veterans to Washington DC free of charge). "Be The One" presentation 2 of the Department's finest. Rev Mary Whitney (a trauma-response coach). Updates on the Consolidated Post Report and a report by the Auxiliary. Report on how well the Armed Forces Service Center (Minnesota's very own version of the USO - except they get NO federal funding). An update on the membership status of both districts. And an update on the continuing talks about the 4th and 5th District merger.

**CHANGE, BY IT'S VERY
NATURE, IS THREATENING BUT
IT IS ALSO VERY PRODUCTIVE.**

Betty Ford

4th District Committee Chairs and members, 2025-2026

AMERICANISM:

Teresa Ash - Post 406

ARMED FORCES SERVICE CENTER:

Dave Dahl - Post 8

BASEBALL:

Gail Kalata

BELL RINGING - RAY SAUNDERS MEMORIAL:

John Weiss - Post 577

BLOOD DONATIONS

Mike Ash TEMPORARILY!

BOYS STATE:

John Weiss - Post 577

BOY SCOUTS:

John Weiss - Post 577

ENDOWMENT FUND:

Jon Haworth - Post 406

Mike Ash - Post 406

Dave Dahl - Post 8

EDUCATION WEEK:

Joe Jansen - Post 406

EMPLOYMENT

Mike Ash - Post 406

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Dave Dahl - Post 8

Randy Bastyr - Post 39

Mike Ash - Post 406

LAW and ORDER:

Ron Eddings - Post 406

LEGIONVILLE:

Ron Eddings - Post 406

LEGISLATION:

Joe Jansen - Post 406

Mike Ash - Post 406

MEMORIAL DAY ASSOCIATION:

NATIONAL CEMETERY:

NATIONAL SECURITY:

Ron Eddings - Post 406

THE WINTER CARNIVAL PARADE

The 4th and 5th District has a rich tradition of marching in the Grande Day Parade (Friday, January 24, 2026, from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM) that kicks off the St. Paul Winter Carnival. This year will be NO difference and once again, we will be the lead unit in the parade.

Arcade Phalen Post 577 will have a bus leaving to the parade. Here's more info:

Arcade 577 will be open at about 10am. Walkers will need to sign the release form to be turned at the parade site. Buses will load from 12:30 to 1 pm. Go to the parade site. We will lead the parade. After the parade, it's back to 577 for food and drinks.

NOTE: There will be some flags available at the post, if you have one (big or small) bring it and show your American pride!!

Location

The parade runs along Grand Avenue, beginning at Dale Avenue and ending near Lexington. The parade relocated from downtown St. Paul to Grand Avenue in an effort to reach another part of the city.

If you decide to drive to the site:

Several parking options are listed along and near Grand Avenue, including church lots and a public parking ramp (e.g., St Thomas More Church, St Paul United Church of Christ, House of Hope Presbyterian, and an SP+ public ramp).

More info can be found at:

https://www.wintercarnival.com/events/2026/king-boreas-grande-day-parade?utm_source=chatgpt.com



Above: 4th District Junior Auxiliary President Bree England displays her "haul" of gifts for underprivileged children at the R.S. Eden Family Project thanks to donations from the 4th and 5th District.

Start 2026 with a Buddy Check

As we begin the new year, take a moment to reach out to a fellow veteran. A simple phone call, text, or coffee can make all the difference.

We know the holidays can be tough, and winter isolation is real. That veteran you served with, the Legion member you haven't seen in months—they're thinking about you too. Be the one who reaches out first.

Check in. Listen. Let them know they're not forgotten. Our bond doesn't fade with time, but it does need tending.

This January, make it your mission to connect with at least one veteran in our 4th District family. It's what we do—we look out for each other.

4th District Committee Chairs and members, 2025-2026 (cont.)

ORATORICAL:

POW / MIA:

POST DEVELOPMENT:

Mickey Ostrum – Post 39

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS:

Teresa Ash – Post 406

ROTC:

Ron Eddings – Post 406

SAL LIAISON:

Mickey Ostrum – Post 39

SERVICE OFFICER:

Gabe Keith – Post 8

UNITED VETERANS' COUNCIL:

Mickey Ostrum – Post 39

VA HOSPITAL VISITATION :

Joe Jansen – Post 406

Jim Hassing – Post 406

VETERANS CAMP:

Tim Diamond – Post 39

Ron Eddings – Post 406

VETERANS HOME:

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION:

Tim Diamond – Post 39

4TH DISTRICT AUXILIARY:

President — Sandy Gibson
Unit 542

SONS of the AMERICAN LEGION:
Commander – Stu Sonnee
Squadron 577



The American Legion Family