



## **Leo C. Peterson Post #54**

**218 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Red Wing, MN 55066**

From the Commander:

Thank you for putting your trust in me to serve as your next Commander; I am humbled and honored! I want to start by thanking everyone for the visionary work initiated last year. It was a year of growth and positive change that is improving our post and the services we provide to our veterans and the community. It is important that we maintain the momentum established last year and continue to implement meaningful improvements based on recommendations from our 2024 Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan. Key to our success is increasing membership, improving communication and collaboration, and increasing meaningful member involvement. My vision to meet success is laid out below.

1. Increase our membership by 2%. We currently have approximately 383 members. Considering our current retention rate, we need to recruit 42 new members. This leads me to **Commander's Challenge #1**: I am initiating a steak-and-beans challenge starting July 1, 2024, and closing June 1, 2025. Members who sign up 5 or more new members will be treated to a steak dinner, prepared by me personally! Those who sign up 1 to 4 new members will enjoy my special BBQ bean meal—not as good as a steak dinner—but still quite nice!
2. Implement the strategies from our 2024 Strategic Communications and Marketing plan. This includes:
  - a. A new website
  - b. A targeted plan for social media use
  - c. Confirming all member email addresses and continuing to email newsletters and other important information
  - d. Technology upgrades that include high-speed internet access (150Mbps), and a 75" TV for casting post information, presentations, and meetings

3. Increase collaboration with the Post Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and the VFW. Identify other veteran-oriented organizations in our community and establish or improve relationships with them (e.g. Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, Goodhue County Veteran Services).
4. **Commander's Challenge #2:** I challenge every member to attend at least one meeting per quarter. Member input is vital to the success of our programs, and—though you would be highly valued on any number of committees—we promise not to pressure you to serve beyond your comfort level. If you struggle with transportation or location of the meetings, we are working on enabling remote attendance at our meetings and can arrange for someone to help you learn how to attend remotely, if needed.

The post has undergone several changes in the past few months, changes that were possible only because our members became involved, voiced their opinions, and helped to drive success. Our goal is not simply to survive as a post; it is to grow and maintain this great Red Wing tradition of supporting our veterans and providing impactful support to our community! I look forward to serving and inspiring this year!

**Are you up for the Challenges?**

Thank you,

Lance L. Garrick

Commander

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