

## WORLD WAR VETERANS BANDED TOGETHER

Two World Wars, Korea and Viet Nam took their toll of Pine City's young men. They were quick to respond to their country's call and many of them never returned. Others were wounded but recovered and Pine City had more than here share of heroes.

Following World War I in 1919, Pine City veterans joined the Minnesota contingency of the nationally organized American Legion and became known as Mn. Post # 51.

The first national convention was held in Minneapolis and the original contingency had grown to 126,000 members statewide.

At first the post was named after Leon Heath who at the age of 26 years was killed serving in the Navy during World War I.

Following World War II the name of Clifford R. Perkins was added. He died at the age of 23 serving his country in the Marine Corp.

The present clubhouse was once a restaurant known as the "Streamliner". The building was in need of extensive repair at the time the Pine City post purchased it.

Legion and Auxiliary members worked together tearing out portions too bad to repair and raising funds to remodel the building to the fine facility it is today.

Working as a branch of the national organization, Post #51 is dedicated to promoting at the local level programs which fall under veterans rehabilitation, child welfare, national security and Americanism.

In 1948 and in 1982, Minnesota Legion and Auxiliary members contributed \$50,000. as their share to the \$500,000. goal set nationally to be used for research to defeat heart disease and

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and rheumatic fever.

The American Legion claims credit for the present structure of federal and state veterans' legislation. They were instrumental in creation of the Veterans Administration, they conceived and sponsored the G.I. Bill of Rights, and have always been leaders in child welfare programs.

THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS Novak-Milliren Post #4258 began in Pine City on July 15, 1945. There were 33 charter members.

The Veteran's of Foreign Wars have the same goals and purpose as the American Legion but is a more exclusive organization in that members must have served their country on foreign soil.

The V.F.W. clubrooms are in the log building that was once owned by the Conservation department. It was built by the W.P.S. in 1938.

Eighty one year old Carl Meier hauled the logs for the building in 1937.

"The logs came from the east side of the St. Croix river in Wisconsin about a mile north of the old Soderbeck Ferry on the St. Croix road," Meier said.

"We dragged them across the ice to the Minnesota side of the river during the winter and then hauled them to Pine City with a semi-truck."

The building was completely remodeled by the V.F.W. including a new kitchen.

The V.F.W. also constructed a permanent building on the fairgrounds and their beer garden is a popular gathering place during the county fair and at other events.

"A membership in a veterans' organization is the best passport a veteran can have to veterans' hospitals," Dave Mansavage said.

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The V.F.W. has grown from the original 33 members to 167 and the V.F.W. auxiliary is actively involved in activities which benefit the entire community.

The post has had three all state commanders, Bob Pierce, Dave Mansavage and Laurence Peterson.

Bill Anderson is the present commander of the American Legion and Richard Hegman is commander of the V.F.W.

Sixty three years ago veterans were mustered out of the service with \$60. in their pockets, a kiss and a kick. They were quickly forgotten until they banded together in organizations dedicated to veterans' rights and through these organizations they have made valuable contributions to social welfare nationwide.

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