



Up To Now!

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Issued Monthly from State Headquarters in Watertown, SD

Phone (605) 886-3604

- No. 33684** **November 1, 2024**
- Nov 4 Junior Legion Baseball Information Session, 7pm, MS Teams
 - Nov 5 Election Day
 - Nov 6 Commander’s Call, 7pm, MS Teams
 - Nov 9 We’ve Got Your Six, Sturgis 11am-2pm
 - Nov 9 Vets & Military Appreciation, Joy Ranch, Florence 10:30am
 - Nov 10 Marine Corps Birthday!**
 - Nov 10 The American Legion Auxiliary Birthday!**
 - Nov 11 Veterans Day **HQ Closed**, Display Flag
 - Nov 11 1LT Josef Thorne Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication 1:30 pm Beresford High School Gym
 - Nov 14 Trust Fund Committee Meeting, 10am MS Teams
 - Nov 14 SDAL Foundation Meeting, 5pm, MS Teams
 - Nov 14 Veterans Day Membership Target Date 65%
 - Nov 15 National Employer Award nominations due to Dept HQ
 - Nov 16 National Regional Conference, Westminster, CO
 - Nov 17-21 National Auxiliary President Visit to SD
 - Nov 20 SD Vets Council Meeting, Sioux Falls, DAV, 1519 W. 51 St
 - Nov 20 Legislative Round Table, Sioux Falls, DAV, 11am
 - Nov 21 Legislative Round Table, Watertown, 11am
 - Nov 22 Legislative Round Table, Rapid City Post 22, 11am
 - Nov 23 Legislative Round Table, Pierre Post 8, 11am
 - Nov 28-29 Thanksgiving **HQ Closed**, Display Flag
 - Dec 3 Governor’s Budget Address 1pm
 - Dec 4 Commander’s Call, 7pm, MS Teams
 - Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day
 - Dec 11 Pearl Harbor Membership Target date 75%
 - Dec 14 Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, Sioux Falls 11am
 - Dec 14 The Army-Navy Football Game, Sponsored by The American Legion
 - Dec 20 Department Holiday Open House, 12-4pm, at Dept HQ
 - Dec 20 Space Force Birthday!**
 - Dec 24-25 Christmas Holiday **HQ Closed**
 - Dec 31-Jan 2 New Year’s Holiday **HQ Closed**
 - Dec 31 Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, & EMT of the Year nominations due to Dept HQ
 - Jan 1 Legion Baseball Registration Opens
 - Jan 1 Legacy Scholarship Application opens
 - Jan 1 Samsung Scholarship Application opens
 - Jan 8 Commander’s Call, 7pm, MS Teams
 - Jan 12 Dist 1 Oratory 2pm, Countryside Church, Spearfish, storm date Jan 19
 - Jan 12 Dist 2 Oratory 10am at SD Mines, storm date Jan 19
 - Jan 12 Dist 7 Oratory 1pm at Humbolt Community Center, storm date Jan 19
 - Jan 14 Legislative Session starts
 - Jan 14 Governor’s State of the State Address, 1:00 pm, Pierre
 - Jan 15 SD Veterans Council Meeting & Legislative Reception, 5:30-7:30 pm, Pierre Post 8
 - Jan 15 Mid-Winter Membership Target date 80%
 - Jan 19 Dist 3 Oratory 2pm at Faith Lutheran Church in Pierre
 - Jan 19 Dist 5 Oratory 3pm Brookings Post Home, storm date Jan 26
 - Jan 19 Dist 6 Oratory 2pm Kimball Post Home, storm date Jan 25
 - Jan 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day **HQ Closed**
 - Jan 21 MidWinter Go-Getter certification due to Dept HQ
 - Jan 27 Legion Day at the Capital
 - Feb 5 Commander’s Call, 7pm, MS Teams

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER’S MESSAGE

Greetings from your Department Commander. Time is really flying by and I’m back although for short visits as I’m traveling back and forth between my mother’s house in Los Angeles and Rapid City. Again, I want to really thank my Vice Commanders for stepping in while I was away. Towards the end of October, I was able to attend Districts 5, 7 & 8 fall meetings; was so good to get back in the groove.



November, we honor the Veterans and Military Families. I highly encourage each post to host Veteran recognition events and more importantly invite your communities to participate. If all goes well, I will have a very busy schedule around Veterans Day starting off with Springfield Prison post, Tabor Post, Piedmont Elementary, Custer Armory and ending with Elk Mountain School. Thank goodness they are not all on the same day.

On November 6th, I’ll host the inaugural South Dakota Department Commander’s call at 7pm Central time. It is open to every Legion member in the Department. Check with your District Commander or the Department Adjutant for a MS Teams link. If you’re not computer savvy – you can call in on 872-239-6022, when prompted, enter conference ID# 532867600#. Get the word out to everyone in your post.

Continue to work on expanding your post Legion family and engaging with the local community. I also ask each post to continue doing buddy checks. Then follow up before and after the Holidays. Let me know if you want me to visit your post and/or event. The calendar is still open but starting to fill up.

I am so proud of the entire South Dakota American Legion Family.

Kevin Morello, Department Commander
“Legion Family Uniting Communities”



CAMPING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCOUTS

Commander Morello’s program this year is to support Scouts to go to Camp. It costs \$400 to send a Scout to camp and the Commander is encouraging all Post to send at least one Scout. Total raised to date is **\$4,780.25**. Send funds to Dept HQ marked “For Scouting”

NEW COMMANDER’S CALL

Commander Morello will host a monthly “Commander’s Call” open to all Legionnaires the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm central time starting Nov 6, 2024. This will be an town hall style gathering over MS Teams to give all an opportunity to talk directly to the Commander. The video link and call in number are below.

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 225 775 090 784 Passcode: N2jZoD

Dial in by phone +1 872-239-6022 Conference ID: 532 867 600#

HAT IN THE RING

Chester Post 136 has endorsed Kevin Hempel for Department Commander

DEPT COMMITTEE & COMMISSION VACANCIES

The Commander looking to fill the following positions:

Membership Committee one position

Employment Committee one position

VA&R Commission one position

Fundraising Committee one fill from the Membership Committee

LEGION INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion states, "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment." Additionally the National Charter, approved by Congress, stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is never to help or endorse a candidate. As a private citizen and not speaking for the organization, can do whatever is legal and ethical to advance his/her candidacy. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with The American Legion emblem visible, must be removed so as not to imply any endorsement by The American Legion. This includes in person or over social media.

GET OUT THE VOTE!

Elections are important to our republic, and they impact virtually all aspects of our society. The leaders we choose to put in office make decisions that affect not only the taxes we pay and the roads we drive on, but also issues that directly affect veterans and our national security. The American Legion believes voting in our country's elections is among the truest expressions of Americanism. The Get Out the Vote program has been a major activity of the Legion since the earliest years of the organization. Go to www.legion.org/advocacy/get-out-the-vote for more information.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Cards have been mailed!!!

Headquarters has received the 2025 membership cards. Certify your officers **NOW** to receive your cards. The form is in the Post Adjutant's Administrative and Awards Manual or you can email the info to judy@sdlegion.org or give Judy a call at Dept HQ.

POST THAT HAVE NOT CERTIFIED THEIR OFFICERS.

35 HIGHMORE, 38 MILLER, 44 ALSEN, 77 BLUNT, 82 BULL-HEAD, 86 ALCESTER, 158 OLDHAM, 201 PUKWANA, 238 OELRICHS, 239 LITTLE EAGLE, 251 PINE RIDGE, 265 KYLE, 256 NEW UNDERWOOD, 269 WANBLEE, 269 PORCUPINE, 295 PARMELEE, 299 POLO, 270 DRAPER, 302 MANDERSON, 310 NORRIS, 317 ALLEN, 324 ROCK CREEK

NATIONAL REGIONAL INFORMATIONAL CONFERENCE

The American Legion is excited to announce that the first National Regional Informational Conference will be Nov. 16 in Westminster, CO at the Westin Westminster hotel. The training is open to any Legionnaire. The Sons of The American Legion and Auxiliary will be hosting training as well. Register at <https://web.event.com/event/3cfa1e02-2191-4597-b13d-60fbfb9c4d0a/summary?RefId=ALA%20Website>

All courses will be 50 minutes with a 10-minute break. The current curriculum is: Be the One, Constitution & By-Laws, Limits of authority, Officer responsibilities, Liabilities, Post operations, MyLegion, Programs of The American Legion & Resolutions. All expenses related to attending the National Regional Informational Conference, such as travel, housing and food, are paid for by the Legionnaire. Hotel room rate is \$169 plus tax. Parking is free. Registration is \$70; this includes a lunch. A week prior to the conference registration will be \$80.

LEGION FAMILY CHRISTMAS TREE AT THE CAPITAL

The Auxiliary is leading the efforts for a Legion Family Christmas tree at the Capital this year. Decorating will be Nov 23 at 1pm and

take down will be Dec 27 at 1pm. Volunteers are needed, contact the Auxiliary if interested at southdakotaala@gmail.com.

Post/Unit/Squadron/Group are encouraged to provide an ornament following the theme of "Through A Child's Eyes." Please send decorations to The American Legion Auxiliary of South Dakota, PO Box 983, Mitchell, SD 57301 by Nov 10.

BASEBALL BIDS DUE

Bids for the 2026 Regional and State tournaments are due to the Athletic Commission no later than December 1, 2024. If you are interested in hosting one of the tournaments contact Beau Garcia or Dept HQ for more information. beau.garcia2@gmail.com or 605-206-0347 hq@sdlegion.org

AMERICAN LEGION SPONSORING ARMY-NAVY GAME

The American Legion is proud to announce an official partnership with the Army-Navy Football Game presented by USAA, which will be played for the 125th time on Dec. 14, 2024. The American Legion becomes the first veterans service organization (VSO) to sponsor "America's Game" in its history. The American Legion will also be participating in year-round sponsorships of both Army and Navy Athletics.

DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSE FOR THE HOLIDAY

The Department Headquarters will host an Open House for the Holidays on December 20th from 12-4pm in the HQ Office (14 1st AVE SE, Watertown.) All available are welcome to attend there will be hot cider & coco, eggnog and snacks. Join us in your favorite ugly sweater or holiday costume.

NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER/EMT OF THE YEAR (NFY).

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a firefighter. The Department winner is submitted to compete at the National level. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations should be submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st. <https://sdlegion.org/firefighter-of-the-year>

DEPARTMENT EMT OF THE YEAR.

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a Emergency Medical Technician. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations should be submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st. <https://sdlegion.org/south-dakota-emt-of-the-year>

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR (NLEOY).

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a law enforcement officer. The Department winner is submitted to compete at the National level. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations are submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st. <https://sdlegion.org/law-officer-of-the-year>

FUTURE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AND MIDWINTER DATES AND LOCATIONS

2025 MidWinter, Arrowwood Resort, Oacoma, Feb 14-16

2025 Convention, Crossroads Hotel, Huron, June 19-22

2026 MidWinter, Arrowwood Resort, Oacoma, Feb 20-22

2026 Convention, Aberdeen, June 18-21

2025 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

The Mid-Winter Conference is being hosted by Potter Post 3, and will be held at the Arrowwood Resort, in Oacoma, 14-16 February 2025. A block of rooms has been set aside, reservations can be made by calling the resort at 605-234-6376. The rate for the Standard King or Double Queen room is \$104 plus taxes. Be sure to mention you will be attending the American Legion Mid-winter Conference.

Training planned is: Post Constitution and By-Laws, Navigating the new Department and National Websites, Reports and Awards, Legion + App, & Be the One- National Rep

2025 MID-WINTER LUNCH & BANQUET TICKETS

A taco bar lunch buffet will be served at noon on Friday Feb 14th and a burger bar (beef burger or grilled chicken breast) on Saturday Feb 15th of the Mid-Winter Conference. Ticket cost will be \$20 per person each day.

Roast pork loin with loaded baked potato, house salad, vegetable Du Jour and dinner roll will be served at the banquet Friday evening Feb 14th with a ticket cost of \$30 per person.

Ticket requests for all Legion, Auxiliary and SAL members must be received no later than February 1, 2025. No tickets will be sold at the event. Tickets can be picked up at the conference registration table. One check can be made for the total lunch and banquet ticket costs. Please make checks payable to Potter Post #3. Ticket requests should be sent to:

John Payer
25120 344th Ave
Chamberlain, SD 57325

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

FOOD ALLERGIES _____

EVENT	PRICE	NUMBER OF TICKETS	COST
Friday lunch	\$20	x	= \$
Saturday lunch	\$20	x	= \$
Friday banquet	\$30	x	= \$
		TOTAL	= \$

GO GETTER CERTIFICATION

Please send your Go Getter Certification to Dept by Jan 21 for Mid-Winter. judy@sdlegion.org The form is available online in the Post Adjutant Manual Forms <https://sdlegion.org/post-adjutant-manual-forms>. *The requirement has changed to signing up three new members or getting three renewals.* Go out and Get them, all!

CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS CAN HELP BRING HOPE

Has your Post/Unit/Squadron been active lately to support the youth in your communities? I know some of you have been. I wanted to give a “Thank you” shout out to some the Posts that participated in the “Safe Halloween” program this year by hosting Halloween parties in their communities. Some nice photos can be found on Facebook pages from Rapid City, Madison, and Arlington. TFAs are coming in too – we’re making a difference! There are some exciting things happening with Operation Homefront that you can share with others in need.

Meals for Military® program at Ellsworth AFB on November 7th. Active duty military members with young children in their family can sign up for the free holiday meal card, go to: www.ellsworthfss.com/military-and-family-readiness-center/ The Military Child of the Year scholarship contest for 9th -12th graders is accepting applications now through December 15th for the child of any active duty military and National Guard service members. To apply, applications can be found at www.operationhomefront.org/military-child-of-the-year/

We are looking for assistance to collect Holiday items from the following Dollar Tree Locations: Watertown, Aberdeen, Pierre, Brookings, Sisseton, and Vermillion. To sign up to become a vol-

unteer to collect at one of these stores, please create an account at www.my.operationhomefront.org/Account/Register and then complete the background check application. Once accepted, you can choose the store you would like to help with.

For any questions regarding what’s happening with the C&Y program within the Department of South Dakota, contact me anytime. Thank you again to all your help within the state to support our C&Y programs.

Submitted by,
Harry Boner, SD C&Y Chairman
605-691-4571

AMERICAN LEGION BASIC TRAINING COURSE

Have you completed the Basic Training Course? It is a great way to better understand your American Legion. The course covers five topics: history and organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism; and Children & Youth. Each topic offers ways in which American Legion Family members can advance the organization’s values and services in their local communities. Following the Course Conclusion, a 40-question exam is provided. Graduates can download and print a certificate of completion and order a Basic Training Graduate pin from Emblem Sales. Take the Basic Training course online at www.legion.org/training.

2025 SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE

The 2025 South Dakota American Legion College will be April 26 & 27th. More details to come soon but mark your calendar.

TRAINING TUESDAY UPDATE

There is an exciting lineup for National’s Training Tuesday sessions. Below is the current schedule:

- Nov 26, 2024: Be The One - *Finding the Right Help*
- Jan 28, 2025: Membership - *Managing the Post*
- Feb 25, 2025: Programs - *SAL*
- Mar 25, 2025: Resolutions - *Workshop Ideas to Resolutions*
- April 29, 2025: Be The One - *Addiction Resources*
- May 27, 2025: Membership - *CPR/CSR*
- June 24, 2025: Resolutions - *Socializing Resolutions*
- July 29, 2025: Be The One - *UPDATE*

Get more info at www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE BAR VETERANS' COMMITTEE

Provides legal services and referrals to active-duty military, Veterans and their dependents, for service-related legal problems.

The SDSB Veterans' Committee also works with the Veterans' Legal Education Group (VLEG) at USD School of Law. Together, they host several clinics each year throughout the state. These clinics **DO NOT need to be service related** and is not formal representation. However, they do provide guidance and the ability to draft simple estate planning documents at no cost to the Veteran. For more info call 605-224-7554 or email info@sdbar.net

GROUPER FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION

Grouper, the national leader in activity benefit admin, is thrilled to announce a partnership with The American Legion. The collaboration aims to enhance the health of veterans by providing access to benefits that support staying active and engaged. Members who are 65 or older and have participating Medicare Advantage or Medicare Supplement plans can unlock the activity benefit offered by these plans and receive a check in the mail.

If a Legionnaire's Medicare coverage is not affiliated with Grouper and they want to switch to a plan that does have it, they must contact their doctor and/or health care facilities to make sure the switch will not impact current coverage – a lot of SD healthcare providers/facilities do not take Medicare Advantage

Some benefits of Grouper include paying members \$50 per year to help with Legion membership, paying \$20 every 3 months to encourage social connections – preferably Legion related but not

mandatory, and monthly emails encouraging being active.

For more info go to American Legion link to register - <https://app.hellogrouper.com/p/al> or call (833) 445-2400 or email info@hellogrouper.com

LEGION HISTORY

Nov 10, 1775- the 2nd Continental Congress resolved to raise two battalions of Marines. Commissioning Samuel Nicholas, as captain of the fledgling force of Continental Marines. From Tun Tavern (*yes, a bar*) in Philadelphia, Nicholas raised two battalions and began the long illustrious history of the United States Marine Corps.

Nov 25, 1783 - At the end of the Revolutionary War, the last British troops left New York City.

Nov 11, 1885- GEN George S. Patton Jr. born in San Gabriel, CA

Nov 11, 1918- Veterans Day, originally "Armistice Day" commemorating the end of World War I, now a day to honor all American Veterans

Nov 10-12, 1919- Minneapolis is home to the first American Legion National Convention, attended by about 15,000. Membership at this point exceeds 684,000. Among the delegates are 140 women veterans of World War I, and The Constitution and Preamble are adopted. Delegates consider 350 resolutions but approve only 50, including equal treatment for women who served in the war, employment programs for veterans, fair government benefits for those who came home disabled from service, support for the Boy Scouts, mandatory patriotic exercises in schools and the establishment of an air branch of service.

Nov 11, 1921-American Legion leaders join Allied generals and President Warren G. Harding in ceremonies to dedicate the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. The tomb was the culmination of Legion-supported legislation introduced by U.S. Rep. Hamilton Fish, Jr., a founder of the organization.

Nov 8, 1942 - Operation Torch, the Allied landings in North Africa, began as 400,000 soldiers under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower landed at Morocco and Algeria.

Nov 22, 1963- President John F. Kennedy assassination. Kennedy was a member of Somerville, Massachusetts Post 281 and spoke at the SD Dept Convention in June 19, 1960 in Sioux Falls.

Nov 11, 1972 - The U.S. turned over its military base at Long Binh to the South Vietnamese, symbolizing the end of direct American military participation in the Vietnam War.

Nov 4, 1979 - About 500 Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran, Iran, taking 90 hostages, including 52 Americans that they held captive for 444 days.

Nov 9, 1989 - The beginning of the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain. East Berlin transit restrictions were overwhelmed, discarded and sections of the wall were breached.

NATIONAL COMMANDER POST EXCELLENCE AWARD

To qualify for the Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas:

- 1) Membership: Attain at least 103% of their membership goal. At least one post officer attends district meetings.
- 2) Consolidated Post Report: CPRs submitted by July 1.
- 3) 90% Renewal Rate: Renew at least 90% of their 2024 members
- 4) Community Activity: The post must conduct an event that connects the local community with The American Legion post.

The district commander responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria. The district commander will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to department headquarters. That list should include the post name, phone number, address, and commander's name. If possible, accompany the last two criteria with copies of press releases submitted to the local media. The copy submitted should include a date and time stamp showing receipt by the media outlet. The department adjutant will transmit information as posts qualify to: National Headquarters.

NATIONAL COMMANDER 103% MEMBERSHIP GOAL DOG TAG COIN

A dog tag coin will be awarded to any Post, District, County, Depart-

ment Commander or Membership Chair who achieves 103% of their member goal in 2025. Complete the form online at www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/103-percent-membership-award & send it to Dept HQ hq@legion.org for verification.

NATIONAL COMMANDER'S MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE DOG TAG COIN

A National Commander's "Be the One" dog tag coin will be awarded to any Legionnaire who obtains three new members. A new member is anyone who was not a member during the 2024 membership year. Transfers do not count. Auxiliary members and Sons of The American Legion members do not count toward this incentive. Only one coin will be awarded per individual. Complete the form online at www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/national-commanders-incentive-program and send it to National HQ kadams@legion.org

2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP DUES

The 2025 dues are \$38.50 for each member sent to HQ.

LEGION+ APP NOW AVAILABLE

Stay connected with your American Legion community, get the latest news, find ways to help, and manage your membership, stories, and podcasts while also finding ways to support others. Legion+ helps you manage your membership, stores your membership card, and has tools to encourage users to reach out to recruit, advocate, and assist other members. The app will let you recruit new members directly into your Post. Get involved and show your spirit of service and patriotism with the Legion+ app today. Download through **your app store**, just search for Legion+.

NEW DEPT ONLINE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Department has created a membership application online to allow members to join or renew directly into the post of their choice. Simply go to sdlegion.org and click on the Join Today button. Cost is \$50 using credit card, Venmo or PayPal.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Thank you to everyone who attended the Fall District meetings. The success of these meetings was marked by your presence, and it was a pleasure to connect with so many of you. As we move forward, our focus must shift to the future. Recruiting one new member is a powerful strategy for each member. The 'Eye of the Tiger' spirit perfectly embodies the determination and vigor we need for this mission. Remember, a simple invitation can profoundly impact someone's life by introducing them to the camaraderie and support of the American Legion.

Our membership renewal is equally critical. It reaffirms our commitment to the principles that bind us together. Currently, our membership stands at 10,687, which is 68.51%. With the next cutoff date quickly approaching, November 14, I urge you all to strive towards achieving 85% by then. While this is an ambitious goal, I am confident that, with everyone's collective effort, we can achieve it. As our Commander has said and will continue to say, "We change lives, and we save lives."

We greatly appreciate the unwavering dedication of our members. This bond, forged in service and strengthened by shared experiences, is celebrated through the Legion's continued success and influence. Until next time, let's get out there and do our Buddy Checks. I wish you and your families a very Happy Thanksgiving.

God Bless you all
Bill

***Don't forget to Vote on
November 5th!***



**VETERAN
VOTES COUNT**

