



# Up To Now!

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July 9, 2025

July 11-13 Centennial Classic Baseball Tournament, Milbank SD  
July 11 SDDVA What's Brewing, Harding CNTY Courthouse 10am  
Jul 12 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PFC Fred Larson Community Center, Pollock, 2:30 pm  
July 14 Tee it up for the Troops Arrowhead Club, Rapid City  
July 15 National American Legion College Applications due to Dept  
July 16 SD Vets Council Meeting, Mitchell VFW Post 1pm  
July 18 Finance Commission Meeting, DEPT HQ, 10am  
July 19-20 DIST CDR Seminar, Post 17 Watertown, 9am  
July 19 DEC Meeting, 1pm Post 17 Watertown  
July 27 Commander Kevin Hempel's Homecoming, Chester School Gym, 1pm  
July 27 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, **Fly the Flag**  
July 28 SDDVA What's Brewing, Ward's Store, De Smet, 10am  
July 29 SDDVA What's Brewing, VFW Post 791, Yankton, 10 am  
Jul 30 Rosebud Veterans Stand Down, Sinte Gleska Multipurpose Building, Antelope 9am-2pm  
July 30 SDDVA What's Brewing, Jerauld Courthouse, 10am  
Aug 1 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PFC Mark Shields Community Center, Ft Thompson 1pm  
Aug 2 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PFC Ronald Dexter, 4-H Grounds, Milbank, 11am  
Aug 7—Purple Heart Day  
Aug 9 Post 303 Beers and Ears, Hermosa  
Aug 9 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, 1LT Larry Barbee, American Legion Post 92, Redfield, 2pm  
Aug 14 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, CPL Henry Kluess, VFW Post 2118, Brookings, 10am  
Aug 16 Post 132 Golf Tournament, Springfield Golf Course 9:30am  
Aug 20 SD Vets Council Meeting, Virtual, 1pm  
Aug 21 Cheyenne Rv Vets Standdown, Eagle Butte Vet Ctr 10am  
Aug 22-28 106th National Convention, Tampa, FL  
Aug 27-Sep 1 SD State Fair  
Aug 30 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, SP5 Richard Miller, Silo Market, Plankinton 1pm  
Sep 1 Labor Day **Office Closed, Fly the Flag**  
Sep 5-10 National Fall Meetings  
Sep 6 District 7 Meeting  
Sep 7 District 8 Meeting  
Sep 13 District 1 Meeting  
Sep 14 District 2 Meeting  
Sep 16 SD Vets Council Meeting, Yankton VFW Post 1pm  
Sep 17 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PVT Elmer Albertson, Harding County School 2:30pm  
Sep 17 Constitution Day, **Fly the Flag**  
Sep 18 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PFC Peter Ommen, 243 Central Main Street, Central City 1pm  
Sep 20-21 SDAL Golf Tournament, Wakonda  
Sep 23 Midwest Honor Flight Mission 27  
Sep 25 Rapid City Vets Stand Down, DoubleTree by Hilton 10am  
Sep 27 District 3 Meeting, Pierre Post 8, 1130am social, 12pm meal, 1pm meeting  
Sep 28 District 6 Meetings  
Oct 3 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, SGT Dirk Abbas, Britton Event Center, 2pm  
Oct 6-9 National Fall Meetings, Indianapolis  
Oct 7 Midwest Honor Flight Mission 28  
Oct 8 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication, PVT Leroy Goosen (location and time to be determined)  
Oct 11 District 4 Meeting  
Oct 11 District 5 Meeting

## DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Legionnaires,

It is a privilege and honor to serve as your Department Commander for 2025-2026. I stand by the acronym of L. I. S. T. or Legion family working together; Involved in our communities; Serving our veterans, children & youth and communities; and Telling our stories. More on that in the coming weeks.

I attended the Youth Trooper Academy June 26-27 and meet an outstanding group of young men and women who wanted to experience what a law enforcement officer does. Congratulations to Emma Niles who was the recipient of The SD American Legion scholarship. I would also like to thank all the posts that supported this year's Youth Trooper Academy.

Spring and summer bring American Legion baseball and this year we celebrate the 100th anniversary. July 11-13 will find Milbank, the home of Legion Baseball, hosting a special tournament. Teams from North Dakota, Nebraska and Minnesota and of course South Dakota will play in a nationally sanctioned tournament in Milbank. Along with the teams, representatives from National Headquarters will be attending. If you get a chance, come support our Milbank team. There will be a lot more baseball played this year and the state tournament schedule can be found in the Up To Now. Please support our baseball program by attending games and wear your Legion hat.

I have been asked what my Commander's project will be this year. I have decided to support two different programs. The first is the newly formed SD Legion Shooting Sports. This year's convention approved this program and I hope to help get it up and running. The other project has been around for a while and that is the SD American Legion Foundation. The foundation gives financial help to veteran and C&Y programs which includes programs at the Department level. This year, please consider a personal or post donation to either or both of these great programs.

Finally, I need your help. There are vacancies on several commissions and committees which need to be filled. These include the Trust Committee (would be helpful if the person had a background in finance), VA&R commission, Education committee, and membership committee. We also need a member to serve on the National Cemetery Committee (this person should live close to Sturgis). If you want more information or would like to volunteer your time, please contact me at [Commander@sdlegion.org](mailto:Commander@sdlegion.org).

Have a great and safe July.  
Kevin Hempel, Department Commander  
L. I. S. T.



## COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING

Authur-Peterson Post 136, Chester American Legion Family invites the entire Legion Family, and friends to The American Legion Department of South Dakota, Commander Kevin Hempel's Homecoming Celebration, Sunday, July 27, 2025, social begins at 1pm followed by program at 1:30pm at the Chester School Gym, 102 2nd Avenue, Chester 57016. Refreshments to follow. Please RSVP to commander@sdlegion.org or 605-610-5650

## AUXILIARY PRESIDENT HOMECOMING

The new Department Auxiliary President, Susie Learing's homecoming celebration is scheduled for July 26, 2025 at the Irene Community Center on Main St in Irene 11am Social, 12pm Lunch and program will follow. All are welcome to attend.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE & PROGRESS REPORT

To all my fellow Legionnaires across South Dakota!  
As we launch into the **2025–2026 membership year**, I want to thank each of you for your trust and confidence over the past 2 years. It's been an honor to serve as your Department Membership Chairman, and I'm proud of the work we've done together to grow our ranks and strengthen our mission.  
*But our work is far from over.*

Before we officially close out **24–25**, we need one last push. As of this morning, South Dakota slipped to **7th** in the national rankings—by **just 0.02%**! That's all that separates us from **Top 6**. I know we can climb back up with just a few more **2025 renewals**. So let's make those calls, knock on those doors, and reach out. Every renewal matters. Let's finish this year strong and proud!

Let's also talk briefly about our **Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs)**. While we didn't hit the **100% submission** mark, there's still time to get those reports turned in. **Nick Arnett at National** reminded us all how important these reports are—not just for stats, but to **tell our story to Congress**. The CPR is how we show the nation the true impact of The American Legion in our communities.

If your post hasn't submitted yet, **please do so**. We have till the first week in September. Every report matters, and it's never too late to make a difference.

Now, looking ahead to **2026**, it's more than just another year—it's a **milestone**. With the 250th birthday of our great nation on the horizon, **America250** gives us a once-in-a-generation opportunity to lead. And we're not waiting. We've set our membership goal for 2026 based on **where we stood on July 4, 2025**. That's our marker. That's our mission.

We haven't had the National Membership Meetings yet to hear what goals will be set from above—but in South Dakota, we're already out front. I've made this decision because I believe in all of you. Now I'm asking you—**let's win this game in 2026**. Let's renew early. Let's bring in new members. Let's reengage our Legion Family and raise our voices for service, community, and country.

Last let's make America250 more than a celebration—let's make it a movement. Clean up a vets cemetery, help a post in need, start a project in your town. Be proud. Be present. **Be Legion**.

We're South Dakota. We've got the grit, the heart, and the fire to finish strong and lead the nation.

**Let's keep the ball rolling. Let's aim higher. Let's go for Number One—and let's win 2026.**

**Thank you all.**

Bill Peters, Membership Chair  
605.360.6547 bpeters0551@gmail.com

## DEPARTMENT ELECTIONS AT CONVENTION

Congratulations to the Department Officers who were elected at this year's convention:

Commander— Kevin Hempel of Chester Post 136  
Western Vice Commander – Marv Tisdall of Box Elder Post 315  
Eastern Vice Commander – Shane Lamer of Montrose Post 154  
Dept Sgt At Arms- Greg Geiman of Scotland Post 155

## DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MAKES APPOINTMENTS

Commander Hempel has appointed Bill Peters of Sioux Falls to a one year term as Membership Chairman and Krisma DeWitt of Watertown for a two year term as Finance Officer.

## SWEEPSTAKES DRAWING AT CONVENTION

Congratulations to the following individuals who won the sweepstakes at the convention!

\$1000 Bradley Thompson of Tea, \$500 Richard Hoppe of Platte, \$300 Michael Marron of Sioux Falls, \$200 Dennis Rieckman of Sioux Falls, & \$100 Clifford Ruesink of Castlewood.

A special thanks to all those that donated to the sweepstakes. Your donation will help fund our American Legion programs.

## MEMBERSHIP CARDS

### **Cards are in the mail!!!**

Headquarters has received the 2026 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 information to [hq@sdlegion.org](mailto:hq@sdlegion.org) or give Judy a call at Dept HQ.

## POSTS THAT HAVE NOT CERTIFIED OFFICERS

10 Lake Andes, 14 Wessington Spgs, 19 Wood, 29 Woonsocket, 35 Highmore, 36 Bonesteel, 38 Miller, 40 Webster, 41 Alexandria, 44 Alsen, 61 Canova, 70 Flandreau, 77 Blunt, 79 Onida, 82 Bullhead, 83 Timber Lake, 86 Alcester, 93 Letcher, 94 White River, 96 White Lake, 105 Nunda, 106 Faith, 111 Bridgewater, 116 Alpena, 117 Viborg, 122 Trent, 125 Rosebud, 134 Elk Point, 137 Warner, 139 McIntosh, 144 Belvidere, 145 Howard, 147 Buffalo, 148 Conde, 151 Mellette, 152 Menno, 153 Carpenter, 157 Vivian, 158 Oldham, 161 Wentworth, 166 Emery, 167 Witten, 172 Edgemont, 184 Esteline, 187 Fairfax, 209 Raymond, 229 Big Stone, 235 Marion, 237 Gayville, 238 Oelrichs, 239 Little Eagle, 241 Erwin, 248 Freeman, 249 Delmont, 251 Pine Ridge, 256 N Underwood, 257 Greenwood, 258 Andover, 265 Kyle, 269 Wanblee, 273 Frederick, 282 Pickstown, 289 Mansfield, 292 Tulare, 294 Porcupine, 295 Par-melee, 297 St Francis, 299 Polo, 308 Eagle Butte, 310 Norris, 314 Old Agency, 317 Allen, 319 N Sioux City, 324 Rock Creek

## CONGRATS TO THE 2025 BOYS STATE PARTICIPANTS

124 boys participated in the 82nd session of South Dakota Boys State, Brody Tyana of Sioux Falls, O'Gorman HS, was elected Governor (\$1,000 Gene and Carla Opbroek Scholarship). Elected Lt. Governor was Ivan Stuwe of Hoven HS. Alex Smith of SF Lutheran HS and Lewis Carlyle of RC Stevens HS were selected as the delegates to Boys Nation (\$1,000 scholarship each). Ryler Stevicks of Gregory HS and Benjamin Bradley of Aberdeen Roncalli HS were selected as Alternates. Johnathan Burleson of Lead-Deadwood HS was selected for the Samsung Scholarship (\$1,250). His application has been forwarded to the National Selection Committee. The committee will award ten, \$10,000 scholarships to the National Scholars and ten \$5,000 scholarships to the National Runners-up. Other awards and scholarships were Outstanding Citizen Ivan Stuwe (Aberdeen Scottish Rite Scholarship \$1000), Spirit of Boys State Alex Smith (\$1,000 Doug Harris "I'm not dead yet Scholarship"), Outstanding Speaker Brody Westall (\$1,000 Doug Harris "I'm not dead yet Scholarship"), Chief Justice Will Van Schepen (\$1,000 Nelson & Ericsson Law Office Scholarship). **All together Boys were awarded \$7,250 in scholarship!**

## YOUTH TROOPER ACADEMY

The 2025 Youth Trooper Academy took place at the SD Law Enforcement Training Center in Pierre, the week of 23-27 June. It was a great event with 21 cadets from around the state participating. Emma Niles of Hot Springs, attending Wessington Springs Cyber High School, was recognized as this year's Outstanding Graduate, receiving a \$750 scholarship from the South Dakota American Legion.

YTA 2026 will be June 22-26, 2026. **Space in the program is limited to 24 students from across the state.**

### BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS SCHEDULE

The schedule for The American Legion 2025 baseball state tournaments is as follows:

CLASS "A" Senior Watertown, 7/29-8/2	CLASS "A" Junior Rapid City (Post #22) 7/31-8/3
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CLASS "B" Senior Milbank, SD 8/1-5	CLASS "B" Junior Milbank, SD 8/8-10
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### 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Every team is encouraged to celebrate the Centennial Season of American Legion Baseball in some way. JULY 17

### MASSING OF COLORS AT SENIOR B TOURNAMENT

For the State B Senior baseball tournament Birch-Miller Post 9 is planning a massing of Colors at the first day second session. We are inviting potential tournament teams to have their home post if willing, participate in the massing. If a tournament teams Color Guard is unable to participate, we offer other posts the opportunity to participate. For more information, please call Tim at 605-880-0184 or Noel Cummins at 605-467-3563.

### CAMPING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCOUTS

Commander Morello's program last year to support Scouts to go to Camp was a major success. It costs \$400 to send a Scout to camp all Posts were encouraged to send at least one Scout. Thanks to all the folks who donated and special thanks to one anonymous donor who donated \$40,000. Total raised for the program was **\$48,439.75**. The funds have been invested under the supervision of the Trust and Scouting Committees to send four Scouts a year to camp with out touching the principle.

### NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE (NALC)

The application is available and is structured for ease of navigation. Questions were added to emphasize the role of servant leadership, asking applicants reflect on their commitment to leading with integrity, purpose, and impact. Application is at <https://www.legion.org/information-center/training/legion-college> If you have any questions or need assistance, reach out to the Dept Adjutant. **DO NOT** send your applications to National they need to be routed through Dept HQ. Send to [hq@sdlegion.org](mailto:hq@sdlegion.org) no later than **July 15th**.

### CENTENNIAL CLASSIC BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

Birch-Miller Post 9 would like to extend an invitation to all Department Posts to the 100th Anniversary of the Birthplace of American Legion Baseball events in the coming week.

July 11 - 13 will be the National Centennial Classic Tournament, with teams from Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska and Milbank participating. The first game will start at 11:30 am on Friday with second game starting at 2:30 pm. Friday evening will be a banquet starting at 6 pm with social and dinner at 6:30 pm. Joel Erdmann, PH.D. Director of Athletics, U of South Alabama and Milbank graduate will be the guest speaker. Meal tickets are available at the door for \$25 each. National dignitaries will also be on the program. Saturday games will begin at 11:30 am followed by second game at 2:30 pm and third game at 6:30 pm. The championship game will be Sunday starting at 11:30 am. Milbank will also be hosting the State B Sr. Legion Tournament August 1 - 5 and the State B Jr. Legion Tournament August 8 - 10.

For more information, call Commander Noel Cummins at 605-467-3563 or Adjutant Tim Jurgens at 605-880-0184.

### 2025 SDAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The SDAL annual golf tournament will be held in Wakonda, SD over the weekend of September 20 & 21, 2025. For more information contact Athletic Commissioner Elton Blemaster 605-280-

2023 or Athletic Commissioner Gene Gillen at 605-415-0885

### DWIGHT WOOD POST #132 GOLF TOURNAMENT

At Springfield Golf Course Saturday, August 16, 2025 Shotgun Start @ 9:30 a.m. Open to ALL Golfers Four Person Teams \$50.00 per person Includes Noon Lunch Cart NOT included. To Register Contact: Springfield Golf Course 605-369-5525

### LEGION TABLE AT STATE FAIR

The SD Legion will have a booth at the State Fair in the **Air Conditioned** the Expo Building August 27 to September 1, from 9 am to 5 pm. If you are interested in helping, please contact PDC Gary Wol-kow at 605-203-0226.

### FUTURE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AND MIDWINTER DATES AND LOCATIONS

2026 MidWinter, Cedar Shores Resort, Oacoma, Feb 20-22  
2026 Convention, Ramkota, Aberdeen, June 18-21  
2027 MidWinter, Cedar Shores Resort, Oacoma, Feb 19-21  
2027 Convention, Ramkota, Sioux Falls June 17-20  
2028 MidWinter, Cedar Shores Resort, Oacoma, Feb 18-20

### 2030 DEPT CONVENTION & MIDWINTER

Bids for the 2030 Convention are being accepted, at this time there were no bids submitted for convention. Posts and Convention Centers who desire to submit bids to host either events should send that information to the Dept Adjutant. Application forms are available from Dept. Arrowwood Resort, in Oacoma was selected for the 2030 MidWinter Conference.

### 2026 MID-WINTER INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Mid-Winter Conference is being hosted by Potter Post 3, and will be held at the Arrowwood Resort, in Oacoma, 20-22 February 2026. The entire hotel is blocked off for the Midwinter, 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 Midwinter Conference. Other details such as the Joint Banquet, Go-Getters, and training sessions will be coming soon. Other lodging available: Chamberlain:

- AmericInn 1981 King Street, (605) 234-0985) \$105. 10 rooms blocked until 2 Feb, must state with The American Legion to get that rate.
- Best Western 220 West King Street (605) 734-5575 2 beds \$98, 1 bed 2 people \$88

Oacoma:

- Baymont 1100 East Hwy 16, 1-888-712-6558 \$119
- Howard Johnson 203 E Hwy 16 (605) 234-4222 \$89
- EconoLodge 400 East Hwy 16 (605) 734-4100 \$69 single queen bed, \$79 2 queen beds
- Quality Inn 100 Hwy 16 (605) 734-5593 single queen bed \$ 89, 2 queen beds \$ 99, one king bed \$94.00

### TRAINING TUESDAY UPDATE

There is an exciting lineup for National's Training Tuesday sessions. July 29, 2025: Be The One - **UPDATE**. Get more info at [www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays](https://www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays)

### NAT CDR POST EXCELLENCE AWARD

To qualify, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: 1) At least 103% of their membership goal. At least one post officer attends district meetings. 2) Consolidated Post Report submitted by July 1. 3) Renew at least 90% of their 2024 members. 4) Conduct an event that connects the community and Post.

District Commanders are responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria and submit to Dept HQ. List should include the post name, phone number, address, and commander's name. If possible, attach copies of press



releases. Dept HQ will send Posts that qualify to National HQ.

### **NAT CDR 103% MEMBERSHIP DOG TAG COIN**

Any Post, District, County, Department Commander or Membership Chair who achieves 103% of their member goal in 2025 can receive a dog tag coin. Complete the form online at [www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/103-percent-membership-award](http://www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/103-percent-membership-award) & send it to Dept HQ [hq@legion.org](mailto:hq@legion.org) for verification.

### **NAT CDR'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 member year. Transfers, Auxiliary and Sons members don't count. Only one coin per individual. Complete the form online at [www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/national-commanders-incentive-program](http://www.legion.org/about/leadership/national-commander/national-commanders-incentive-program) and send it to National HQ [kadams@legion.org](mailto:kadams@legion.org)

### **ALL AMERICAN LEGION POSTS TO FILE IRS FORM 990**

Federal tax regulations require every Post to file IRS form 990. This must be filled out by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your organizations accounting period. If the IRS does not receive this form, they will revoke the tax-exempt status of the Post. To get your Tax-exempt status back you have to apply and pay a fee. This process takes months and can be challenging. Download at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f990.pdf>

### **LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST (LIT)**

*This Year the Department received \$22,500 from the LIT Program.*

*Every legionnaire who signs up for any of the LIT programs brings money right back here to our Department.*

As a member of the Legion Family, you're eligible for No Cost LegionCare Insurance. \$5,000 NO COST To You Accidental Death Protection if traveling on official American Legion business. \$1,000 Accidental Death Protection for all other covered accidents. Activate your NO COST To You insurance coverage today. <https://www.thelit.com/no-cost-legioncare/>

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust is a trusted provider for Medicare Supplement and Medicare solutions, offering protection designed for American Legion members. Upcoming Medicare Open Enrollment period is October 15 - December 7, 2025

For those turning 65, or already eligible, this is your time to review and enroll. [e-Health Medicare](#), through LIT, connects members to: A+ rated Medicare Supplement & Advantage plans Nationwide access to top carriers.

### **CPR TRAINING**

The CPR/CSR Training Tuesday session from 5/27/2025 is now live and accessible at <https://www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays>. It's not too late, get your CPR done today!

### **WWII PAINTING RAFFLE RESULTS**

Thank you for supporting your SD AL Foundation by purchasing raffle tickets for the original WWII painting. The drawing was held on Sunday of the Department Convention. The winner was Gene Opbroek from Spearfish. Congratulations, Gene, and thank you all!

The oil painting Artist John Green, was originally purchased at a Fun Auction by Hugh "Homer" and Linda Holmes several years ago, and was generously donated back to the Foundation so it could again be used as a fund raiser. The raffle netted the Foundation \$3,729.11 after ticket printing. Thank you very much Homer and Linda, and to all who purchased tickets. Jim Kurtz, Foundation President

### **THE RIDE 605 WAS A BIG \$\$\$\$ SUCCESS!!**

Thank you to all SD Legion Riders and the entire American Legion Family for their unwavering dedication. The 2025 Ride 605 was a tremendous display of unity, successfully raising \$10,350 for the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. Contributions included from the ride itself, and a further collections at the Department Con-

vention. All funds raised will directly benefit Veterans and Youth. A big shout out to Dept. Riders Liaison Fred Nelson & Micheline for all their hard work in making this years ride a great success.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO ASSIST WITH A C&Y SCHOOL SUPPLY PICKUP AND DISTRIBUTION**

The 2025/2026 Children and Youth year is starting very soon. I am looking for volunteers to assist with pick-up and distribute donated school supplies from the Dollar Trees in Mitchell, Yankton, Watertown, Aberdeen, Brookings, Pierre, and Vermillion in the coming weeks. Donated toys will also need to be picked up later this fall from the same stores. I will line up local locations as to where the donated items can be distributed to.

If you or your Post family are interested in assisting with item pickup, let me know before the state convention and I can assist you with the registration process to be listed as a volunteer for this Operation Homefront project, or you can access the registration process from their web site at <https://my.operationhomefront.org/Account/Login> to create a login and then select which store you are interested to pick up supplies at.

I hope you are interested in assisting with this project. If you would like to help, please let me know as soon as you can. Keep an eye out also for more news to come related to volunteering for the Back to School Backpack distribution event at Ellsworth AFB that is scheduled for July 26. Thank you for your time and consideration. Best Regards,

Harry Boner, Department Children and Youth Chair  
(605) 691-4571, [hb.boner@gmail.com](mailto:hb.boner@gmail.com)

### **JULY HISTORY**

**July 4, 1776:** Happy Birthday America. Yay no taxes!

**July 1, 1862:** President Abraham Lincoln signed the first income tax bill. Nuts, taxes!

**July 1-3, 1863:** The Battle of Gettysburg, the deadliest battle in all of American military history with over 50,000 combined casualties.

**July 9, 1919:** The Legion emblem was officially adopted by the National Executive Committee

**July 17, 1925:** American Legion Baseball is founded in Milbank program. *Today, more than 50 percent of Major League Baseball players are graduates of the program. About 82,000 youths play on Legion-sponsored teams each year.*

**July 22, 1927:** Commander Travers D. Carmen awarded Charles Lindbergh the Legion's first "Distinguished Service Medal."

**July 21, 1930:** Pres. Hoover signed Ex. Order 5398, consolidating three agencies administering Veterans benefits programs into a single entity called the Veterans Administration.

**July 28, 1932:** The U.S. Army attacked the Bonus Army a group of World War I veterans in Washington D.C. with tanks, bayonets, and tear gas, under the leadership of Douglas MacArthur, George Patton, and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

**July 10-13, 1938:** The 20th Annual Convention of the American Legion Department of South Dakota is held in Aberdeen. Turner Rudesill of Rapid City Post 22 is elected Department Commander.

**July 16, 1945 -** The first atomic bomb "Fat Boy" was set off at 5:30am in the New Mexico desert.

**July 9, 1954:** The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is formed. *Today, more than \$11 million has been awarded to youth organizations and projects designed to help America's children.*

**July 20, 1969:** Neil Armstrong took man's first steps on the moon.

**July 21, 1983:** The Legion announces its sponsorship of an independent study on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans. Congress receives the results of the "American Legion-Columbia University Study of Vietnam-era Veterans" in 1989.

**July 2016:** The Legacy Scholarship is expanded to children of post-9/11 veterans who have a VA disability rating of 50 percent or more.

**July 30, 2019:** The LEGION Act is signed extending wartime service to cover previously unrecognized periods. The act allows veterans who served outside of the previously designated war eras to join The American Legion.