



**103rd Annual  
CONVENTION  
PROCEEDINGS**



**DEPARTMENT OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA**

*Including*  
**REPORTS OF OFFICERS  
AND COMMITTEES  
2021-2022**

**June 16-19, 2022  
Watertown, South Dakota**

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**PROCEEDINGS**  
**ONE-HUNDRED-THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION**  
**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
**Department of South Dakota**  
**June 16-19, 2022**

The Pre-Convention meeting of the American Legion Department Finance Commission was held at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, June 16, 2022, in The Whitewood Room at the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, South Dakota, followed by the meeting of the South Dakota American Legion Department Executive Committee, also in the Whitewood Room of the same facility, at 1:00 p.m.



The Convention Resolutions Committee's initial meeting was held at 10:00 a.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, in the Cattail Room in the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, South Dakota.

A break in the agenda at about 1:30 p.m. was announced so that Senator John Thune could address those present. He brought greetings and discussed current issues and concerns and entertained a few questions before his schedule required him to leave. The meetings of the other Convention Committees were held directly after Senator Thune's visit, in rooms so designated in the Event Center.

The South Dakota American Legion Foundation met in the Cattail Room at 3:00 p.m. A joint Convention, American Legion/American Legion Auxiliary, memorial service was held in the Heritage Theater of the Watertown Event Center at 4:30 p.m.

The American Legion/American Legion Auxiliary/Sons of The American Legion Joint Banquet was held at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 17, 2022, in the Cottonwood and Big Stone Rooms at the Watertown Event Center in Watertown, South Dakota with Daniel Seehafer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Leading Candidate for National Commander as the guest speaker.



The 103rd Annual Convention of The American Legion Department of South Dakota was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Saturday, June 18th, 2022, at the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, South Dakota, by Department Commander Gary Wolkow of De Smet, SD, after a mini concert by the State American Legion Band.

The Colors were advanced and posted by the Color Guard. The National Anthem was played. Department Commander Gary Wolkow led the delegates in the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was given by Reverend Dr. Mike Kumm, after which Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel conducted the POW/MIA ceremony. Department Commander Wolkow led the delegates in reciting the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion in unison.

The Call for Convention was read by Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel.

**OFFICIAL CALL FOR THE  
ONE-HUNDRED-THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

The ONE-HUNDRED-THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION of The American Legion Department of South Dakota is hereby called, and in conformity with action taken at the Ninety-Ninth Convention, will be held in Watertown, South Dakota, June 16, 17, 18, and 19, 2022.

**PURPOSE**

The Convention is called to elect officers for the ensuing year and delegates to the 103rd National Convention of The American Legion, to consider any proposed amendments to the Constitution and to transact such other business as may be brought before it.

**REPRESENTATION**

Representation at the convention will be by Posts. In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, each Post is entitled to two delegates and two alternates plus one additional delegate and alternate for each fifty or major fraction thereof, memberships shown on the books of the State Adjutant fifteen days prior to the convention, or this year on June 1st, 2022. The Constitution requires that the delegates to the Department Convention be chosen by each Post by election from its own membership. Alternates will have power to vote only in the absence of the regular delegates.

Forms for listing the Department Convention Delegates and Alternates are sent to Post Adjutants. These forms need to be signed by the officers of the Post and mailed to reach State Headquarters, PO Box 67, Watertown, SD 57201 by June 15<sup>th</sup>, or turned in at the Department Convention Registration desk in Watertown. Note that the 2022 membership identification number of each Delegate and Alternate is required.

In accordance with the Department of South Dakota Constitution and Bylaws, Article IX, Section 3: Every Legionnaire attending the Department Convention shall register and pay a registration fee of \$1.00 and upon proper identification as a Legionnaire in good standing shall receive a Convention badge and be entitled to the privileges of the Convention. The Legion Post hosting the Department Convention shall retain this \$1.00 fee to help defray expenses incurred in holding the Convention. The registration fee for each Post's delegate strength, regardless of attendance, shall be \$7.00 per delegate payable to The American Legion Department of South Dakota, in advance of the election at the annual Department Convention. Department Headquarters shall retain \$2.00 of each delegate registration fee and forward the remaining \$5.00 to the Department Convention host Post to help defray Convention costs.

## DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A pre-convention meeting of the Department Executive Committee, as constituted, is hereby called and will be held in the Watertown Event Center, Thursday, June 16, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

A post-convention meeting of the Department Executive Committee, as constituted, is hereby called and will be held in the Watertown Event Center, immediately following the adjournment of the 103rd Annual Department Convention of The American Legion Department of South Dakota.

## POST/DISTRICT OFFICIALS

Post and District Officials, unless elected as Delegates or Alternates to the Department Convention, have no privileges in the Convention except as guests of their respective Posts and Districts.

## CAUCUSES

Area Caucuses, for selection of State Vice Commander nominees, will be held in assigned areas, Saturday afternoon, June 18, 2022, immediately following completion of that day's convention business session.

## CONVENTION COMMITTEES

In accordance with the Uniform Code of Procedures for the Organization of Department Conventions of The American Legion Department of South Dakota, convention committees are to be convened for the purpose of compiling policy forming reports to the General Session of the Convention.

Each District shall designate Delegates or Alternates for service on each convention committee and shall file with the Department Adjutant a list of such designees at least two weeks prior to the convening date of the meetings of said convention committees. The convention committees consist of the following:

Americanism — 1 Delegate per District  
 Credentials — 1 Delegate per District  
 Employment — 1 Delegate per District  
 Internal Organization — 1 Delegate per District  
 Legislative — 1 Delegate per District  
 National Security — 1 Delegate per District  
 Next Meeting Place — 1 Delegate per District  
 Rehabilitation — 1 Delegate per District  
 Resolutions — 1 Delegate per District  
 Rules — 1 Delegate per District

The Department Commander will appoint Legionnaires, with membership in good standing, as the Chairperson and Liaison to each of the convention committees.

All convention committees will meet on Friday, June 17, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. at the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, SD, in rooms designated for that purpose. The directory of meeting rooms will be available upon entry into the Watertown Event Center on the day of the meetings and also in the Convention Program Book.

The Convention Resolutions Committee will hold its initial meeting, for the purpose of reviewing all convention resolutions to determine the distribution of said resolutions to the other convention committees, on Friday, June 17, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., in the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, SD. Room assignments will be announced in the Convention Program Book and will be posted in the convention facility.

Each convention committee chairperson will be responsible for compiling a final report of the actions of their respective committee to the Department Adjutant after their committee has adjourned and prior to the scheduled report of the convention committee to the convention body.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Resolutions emanating from a Post shall be forwarded to the Department Adjutant to be in his hands no less than two days prior to the opening session of the Department Convention.

Resolutions which call for an amendment to the Constitution of The American Legion Department of South Dakota must be submitted to the Department Adjutant in the proper form by May 6, 2022. This will ensure that the Department Internal Affairs Commission can screen them in time to allow for the commission's recommendations for approval or disapproval and for the Department Adjutant to distribute copies of these resolutions to all Posts within the Department at least 30 days prior to the convening of the Department Convention.

### **ELECTIONS**

The election of all Department Officers as well as Delegates and Alternates to the 103rd National Convention of The American Legion, shall be a Special Order of Business of the Convention and in accordance with the Uniform Code of Procedures for the Organization of Department Conventions of The American Legion Department of South Dakota, will be conducted at 12 O'clock noon on Sunday, June 19, 2022, or at the conclusion of all other business of the Department Convention, whichever occurs first.

Kevin Hempel  
Department Adjutant

Gary Wolkow  
Department Commander



The assembly body gave a warm welcome to the Watertown Mayor, Reid Holien.

Convention host, Post #17 Commander, Dana Jones, delivered his greetings and welcomed the assembled delegates to Watertown.

State Vice Commander for Districts 3-8, Doug Feltman, responded to the welcome.

Department Commander Gary Wolkow called Department Vice Commander, Eugene Iron Shell Jr., Rosebud, and Doug Feltman, Chamberlain, to the podium. He then presented them with their Past Department Vice Commander's pins.

Senator Mike Rounds sent video greetings to the Convention Delegates and was received at this time.

Commander Gary Wolkow introduced Andrea Rose-Prehn, a representative from Congressman Dusty Johnson's office, who brought video greetings from South Dakota's lone Congressman to the United States House of Representatives to address the convention body.

The Chair then recognized the immediate Past Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota, Danny Frisbe-Griffin, who brought greetings from their organization.

Department of South Dakota Disabled American Veterans Commander, Dan Francis, was introduced by Commander Wolkow, and delivered greetings.

Commander Wolkow introduced Roger Papka, representative of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Department of South Dakota, who brought greetings from that organization.

The Chair recognized Ken Teunissen who brought greetings from The Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Department Commander, Gary Wolkow, introduced the Deputy Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans' Affairs, Aaron Pollard, who brought greetings to the assembled delegates and shared information about current issues.



At this point, Department Commander Wolkow called NEC Jim Huls to the podium for the purpose of an introduction. NEC Huls introduced National Commander Candidate, Daniel J. Seehafer from the Department of Wisconsin to address the body of the convention.



Department Commander Wolkow introduced Krisma DeWitt of Watertown, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee, for the purpose of providing the Credentials Committee's initial report. Chairman DeWitt presented that report to the Convention.



Commander Wolkow then introduced Kevin Morello, of Black Hawk, SD, Chairman of the Convention Rules Committee, for the purpose of a report. Kevin Morello presented that committee's report to the Convention.

**CONVENTION RULES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The meeting of the Convention Rules Committee was called to order by Chairman Kevin Morello of Blackhawk at 2p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, at the Watertown Event Center in Watertown, SD.

In addition to Chairman Morello, the following were present: District 1 – Jon McDonald of Box Elder; District 2 – Don Fuller of Rapid City; District 3 – Aaron Swan of Pierre District 4 – Ted Kimball of Redfield; District 5 – Clayton Nei of Castlewood; District 6 – Jake Salathe of Huron; District 7 – Andy Lyngen of Garretson; and District 8 – absent.

Jon McDonald of Box Elder was appointed Secretary.

The meeting was opened at 2pm with hand salute and the Pledge of allegiance. The Rules committee met and there were no resolutions to be discussed. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:06. A motion to adjourn was made by Ted Kimball and seconded by Jake Salathe; no discussion; motion passed.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Morello, Chairman**

**Chairman Morello moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Rules Committee, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the rules for the convention adopted.**



Department Commander Gary Wolkow introduced Larry Madsen of Gettysburg, Chairman of the Convention Americanism Committee to give that report to the convention delegates.

**CONVENTION AMERICANISM COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The meeting of the Convention Americanism Committee was called to order by Chairman Larry Madsen of Gettysburg on Friday, June 17, 2022, at 2 p.m., at the Watertown Event Center in Watertown, SD.

Present besides Chairman Madsen of Rapid City were the following: District 1 – Ken Sabers of Sturgis Post 33; District 2 – Doug Harris of Rapid City Post 22; District 3 – Larry Madsen of Gettysburg; District 4 – Dale Strom of Aberdeen Post 24; District 5 – Calvin Hove; District 6 – Harry Huffman of Ethan; District 7 – Nancy Grandy, Post 154; and District 8 – Paul Jensen of Wakonda.

Salute the Colors. Chairman Madsen led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Americanism Committee in the Uniform Code of Procedures.



Doug Harris of Rapid City was appointed as secretary.

The Convention Americanism Committee reviewed a total of 4 Resolutions:

**Convention Resolution No. 22-5** was drafted by Chamberlain Post 3.

Larry Price spoke on the reasoning for the resolution citing the shortage of volunteers who are certified firefighters. Motion to amend by Dale Strom, 1<sup>st</sup> Resolved clause; change “urges” to “that”, second by Doug Harris. Motion carried.

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of South Dakota in Annual Convention assembled, June 16-19, 2022, in Watertown, SD, that The National American Legion change the requirement that would allow a State certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic (EMT-P) be recommended for, and receive the Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic of the Year award without the requirement that they be a "certified firefighter"; and, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)/ Paramedic (EMT-P) award be a standing award just as the Law Enforcement Officer of The Year, and Firefighter of The Year; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 103rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 2022.

**Dale Strom recommended a “Do Pass”, as amended, with a second by Paul Jensen. Motion Carried**

**Convention Resolution No. 22-12** was drafted by Gettysburg Post 135.

RESOLVED, By Ralph Leui Post #135, That the scholarships awarded for participants in the South Dakota High School Oratorical Scholarship Program “A Constitutional Speech Contest be as follows: for first place \$1,500, for second place \$1,000, for third place \$500 and Remaining finalists each receive \$200 each.

**Motion by Ken Sabers, seconded by Dale Strom to recommend a “Do Pass”, subject to approval by the Finance Committee.**

**Convention Resolution No. 22-14** was drafted by Milbank Post 9.

**Motion by Paul Jensen to amend the Resolve Clause, second line, to read “Junior Legion A and B” and recommend a “Do Pass”. Seconded by Ken Saber. Motion carried.**

Resolved, That in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the State A, State B and Junior Legion A and B State Baseball Tournaments be held at the newly constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2025 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2025 baseball season.

**Convention Resolution No. 22-1** was drafted by Milbank Post 9.

**Motion by Dale Strom to recommend “Do Pass” as amended; seconded by Paul Jensen, motion carried.**

RESOLVED, That in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the National Regional 6 American Legion Baseball Tournament be held at the newly Constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2026 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2026 baseball season.

Several questions came up about Boys State and were answered by BS Corporation member Doug Harris and Larry Madsen.

Other items discussed included getting names for the District Americanism Chairmen, dates for Oratory contests, and getting information into the schools.

There being no further business to come before the committee, after the benediction and a salute to the Flag, Chairman Madsen declared the Convention Americanism Committee meeting adjourned at 3:10 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Larry Madsen, Chairman**

**Chairman Madsen moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Americanism Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Americanism Committee Report adopted.**



The Chair recognized Harry Boner, Castlewood, Chairman of the Department Americanism Commission for the purpose of providing the Americanism Commission report. With the bulk of the report being published in the last issue of the Legion News, Chairman Boner reported on the Americanism Commission meeting in June and had PDC Fred Nelson give an update on the Scouting Program. The report was adopted.

Department Commander Wolkow and Americanism Commission Chairman Harry Boner presented the Department Americanism Awards for the 2021-2022 year:

**Certificate of Distinguished Service awarded to  
Spearfish, Inc. American Legion Post #164 of Spearfish, SD.**

**Certificate of Meritorious Service awarded to  
Olson-Reid American Legion Post #250 of Castlewood, SD.**

**Individual Americanism Award awarded to  
Jack French of Spearfish, Inc. American Legion Post #164,  
Spearfish, SD.**

Department Americanism Chairman Harry Boner presented each of the goal-size group award winners with the Golden Eagle "Americanism Excellence" traveling trophies. The Golden Eagle Award is presented to a post in each goal size group that

submits the best Americanism Program and is based on the number of activities the Post participated in as well as the documentation of the programs.

**Post Americanism Award for 15-45 goal-size group awarded to**  
James Marsh Post #28 of Burke, SD.

**Post Americanism Award for 46-74 goal-size group awarded to**  
Olson-Reid American Legion Post #250 of Castlewood, SD

**Post Americanism Award for 75-124 goal-size group awarded to**  
Potter Post #3 of Chamberlain, SD.

**Post Americanism Award for 125-350 goal-size group awarded to**  
Spearfish, Inc. American Legion Post #164 of Spearfish, SD.

**Post Americanism Award for 351 and larger goal-size group awarded to**  
Rapid City American Legion Post #22 of Rapid City, SD.

A smaller Golden Eagle mounted on a base was presented to the five Posts who won the Golden Eagle in 2020-2021 to take back to their post and display as a past award winner. Those posts were Herreid Post #170, Veblen Post #76, Castlewood Post #250, Spearfish Post #164, and Rapid City Post #22.

All other Posts that turned in Americanism Reports will receive an Americanism Certificate, signed by the National Commander for participating in this program.



Department Commander Wolkow introduced PDC Hugh Holmes of Mitchell, SD, Chairman of the Convention Resolutions Committee, for the purpose of a report. PDC Holmes presented that committee's report to the Convention.

## CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The initial meeting of the Resolutions Committee was called to order by Chairman Hugh Holmes of Mitchell, at 10:02 p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, at the Watertown Event Center, Watertown, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Holmes of Mitchell were as follows: Liaison and District 7 – Bill Peters of Sioux Falls; District 1 - Marvin Tisdall of Box Elder; District 2 – Marc Lamphere of Hot Springs; District 3 – Jeff Hrabanek of Colome Post; District 4 - Perry Schmidt of Redfield; District 5 – Byron Callies of Watertown; District 6 – Hugh Holmes of Mitchell; District 7 – Bill Peters of Sioux Falls; and District 8 – Robert Kucera of Wagner.

Chairman Holmes of Mitchell led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Resolutions Committee on page 7 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Byron Callies of Watertown was appointed as secretary.

The committee reviewed 11 resolutions.

**Resolution SDAL 22-1 submitted by AIR Working Group.**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded.

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Tisdall to send to rehab com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-4 submitted by Castlewood Post 250.**

RESOLVED, By the Department of South Dakota American Legion 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual State Convention voting majority, that the Department of South Dakota Legion College be established with the Department Training Committee establishing the curriculum and identifying format, instructors, venues and the schedule for said college.

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Lamphere to send to internal org com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-5 submitted by Chamberlain Post 3.**

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of South Dakota in Annual Convention assembled, June 16-19, 2022, in Watertown, SD, urges The National American Legion change the requirement that would allow a State certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic (EMT-P) be recommended for, and receive the Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic of the Year award without the requirement that they be a "certified firefighter"; and, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)/ Paramedic (EMT-P) award be a standing award just as the Law Enforcement Officer of The Year, and Firefighter of The Year; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 103rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 2022.

**Moved by Lamphere, Seconded by Tisdall to send to Americanism com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-7 submitted by Chester Post 136.**

RESOLVED, By American Legion Post 136, in regular meeting assembled in Chester, South Dakota December 13, 2021, That Post 136 recommends the American Legion Department of South Dakota strongly encourages suicide awareness and prevention training at the post level; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That posts are strongly encouraged seek out qualified trainers and invite them to provide training for their Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family.

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Peters to send to Internal org com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-8 submitted by Department Headquarters.**

RESOLVED, the National Executive Committee of The American Legion create a separate category of Employer of Veterans Awards for Health Care Employers to allow them the opportunity to be recognized as employers of veterans and such award criteria be developed to allow employers of health care workers to compete for said awards

**Moved by Peters, Seconded by Kucera to send to rehab com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-12 submitted by Gettysburg Post 135.**

RESOLVED, By Ralph Leui Post #135, That the scholarships awarded for participants in the South Dakota High School Oratorical Scholarship Program "A Constitutional Speech Contest be as follows: for first place \$1,500, for second place \$1,000, for third place \$500 and Remaining finalists each receive \$200 each.

**Moved by Tisdale, Seconded by Schmidt to send to Americanism com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-13 submitted by Badger Post 260.**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That the South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee actively lobby that the State of South Dakota amend the South Dakota Codified Law Chapter SDCL 10-4-40 and 10-4-41, to include the service-connected disabilities 70%-90% for the property tax exemption.

**Moved by Peters, Seconded by Lamphere to send to Legislative com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-14 Submitted by Milbank Post 9.**

Resolved, That in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the State A, State B and Junior Legion State Baseball Tournaments be held at the newly constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2025 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2025 baseball season.

**Moved by Tisdale, Seconded by Lamphere to send to Americanism com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-15 submitted by Milbank Post 9.**

RESOLVED, That in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the Region 6 American Legion Baseball Tournament be held at the newly Constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2025 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2025 baseball season.

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Tisdall to send to Americanism com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-16 received from floor.**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American

Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Lamphere to send to rehab com. Motion carried.**

**Resolution SDAL 22-17. was drafted by the Convention Resolutions Committee to express thanks to Watertown Post 17, for hosting a great convention.**

**Moved by Callies, Seconded by Schmidt to extend thanks to Watertown.**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Resolutions Committee meeting was recessed at 10:50 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Hugh Holmes, Chairman**

**Chairman Holmes moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Resolutions Committee, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Resolutions Committee report adopted.**



Department Commander Wolkow called on PDC Holmes to continue and give his Educational Scholarship Committee Chairman report. PDC Holmes presented the annual Educational Scholarship Committee Report. The report was adopted.



The Chair then introduced Chris VanDelist of Rapid City, Boys State Director for the South Dakota American Legion, who gave the Boys State Report. The report was adopted. Unfortunately, the 2022 Boys State Governor, Jason Lenning, was unable to be present to receive his plaque that will be displayed at his high school. He is attending the Naval Academy's Summer Seminar.



Buck Dewese, Liaison to the American Legion Riders, was called to the podium for his report by Commander Wolkow. The report was adopted.



Mark Weinmann of Canton, SD was called upon by Department Commander Wolkow to give the Convention Internal Organization Commission Report.

## CONVENTION INTERNAL ORGANIZATION COMMISSION REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The Internal Organization Committee was called to order by Chairman Mark Weinmann of Hudson, at 2:00 p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, at the Watertown Events Center, Watertown, SD.

Those present beside Chairman Weinmann of Hudson were as follows, Liaison Harry Boner from District 5, and representatives from the following: District 1 - Mike Pauling of Piedmont; District 2 – Absent; District 3 - Leroy Madson of Pierre; District 4 – Absent; District 5 - Noel Cummins of Milbank; District 6 - Charemon Dunham of Iroquois; District 7 - Mark Weinmann of Canton; District 8 – Absent.

Chairman Weinmann of Canton led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Internal Organization Committee on page six of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Harry Boner of Castlewood was appointed as secretary.

The committee reviewed two resolutions.

### **Resolutions:**

#### **22-4 Formation of Department of SD Legion Training College**

Chairman Weinmann led general discussion concerning this resolution by reviewing the Resolution.

RESOLVED, by the Department of South Dakota American Legion 103rd Annual State Convention voting majority, that the Department of South Dakota Legion College be established with the Department Training Committee establishing the curriculum and identifying format, instructors, venues, and schedule for said college.

**A motion of “Do Pass” was made by Dunham; seconded by Madson; motion carried.**

#### **22-7 Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training**

Chairman Weinmann led general discussion concerning this resolution by reviewing the Resolution.

RESOLVED, By American Legion Post 136, in regular meeting assembled in Chester, South Dakota December 13, 2021, That Post 136 recommends the American Legion Department of South Dakota strongly encourages suicide awareness and prevention training at the post level; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that posts are strongly encouraged seek out qualified trainers and invite them to provide training for their Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family.

**A motion of “Do Pass” was made by Dunham; seconded by Cummins; motion carried**

Other discussions were held regarding those resolutions that were not passed or sent to other committees.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Internal Organization Committee was declared adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Mark Weinmann, Chairman**

**Chairman Weinmann moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Internal Organization Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Internal Organization Committee Report adopted.**



Weinmann, being Chairman of the Internal Affairs Commission, then gave the annual report of that committee. They reviewed 11 resolutions; 5 of which they sent to the Convention Resolutions Committee and 6 of which they made recommendations on. A motion was made, seconded, approved to set aside Resolution 22-6 and to accept the remaining report as presented. Discussion was held on Resolution 22-6 and the resolution was amended. A motion was made and seconded to accept the resolution as amended, motion carried.



The Chair then recognized the 2021-2022 Membership Chairman, Travise Flisrand, who gave his annual Membership and Marketing report. The report was adopted. At this time, Department Adjutant Hempel announced, and Department Commander Wolkow and Membership Chairman Flisrand handed out membership awards.

The National Honor Ribbon is presented to Posts whose 2022 membership on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2022, exceeded the 2021 end of year membership on December 31, 2021. Those Posts that met this challenge included: Plankinton Post 5, Woonsocket Post 29, Alexandria Post 41, Harrisburg Post 45, Rosholt Post 48, Wolsey Post 59, Lake Preston Post 63, Hecla Post 68, Murdo Post 75, Timber Lake Post 83, Hitchcock Post 84, Faulkton Post 102, Chester Post 136, Northville Post 149, Herreid Post 170, Aurora Post 230, Roscoe Post 259, Claremont Post 262, and Springfield Post 323.

The Department had 26 Posts Earn the 100% Family Ribbon. These included: Sioux Falls Post 15, Woonsocket Post 29, Sturgis Post 33, Arlington Post 42, Rosholt Post 48, Onida Post 79, Bullhead Post 82, White Post 88, Presho Post 89, White Lake Post 96, Selby Post 100, Volga Post 114, Trent Post 122, Chester Post 136, DeSmet Post 138, Salem Post 140, Avon Post 150, Mellette Post 151, Cresbard Post 213, Aurora Post 230, New Underwood Post 256, Ethan Post 261, Claremont Post 262, Colman Post 278, Piedmont Post 311, and Sioux Falls Post 911.



This year, the "Pride of the Prairie" White Buffalo Award was changed to the "Pride of the Prairie" Post Excellence Award. The award will be presented to the Post that achieves the highest two-year membership average for their goal group. As this is now a Post Excellence Award, the Post must also have submitted the Post Data Report, Consolidated Post Report, certified their officers, and submitted their Post Americanism Report. Additionally, they must have submitted a Legionnaire of the Year package to their District Commander for consideration.

In goal groups 1, 2, 3, and 4, there a number of Posts that completed 4 of the 5 requirements but none that completed them all.

In goal group 5, 91-150, a number of Posts completed all tasks; the one with the highest membership average was Madison Post 25.

In goal group 6, 150+ a number of Posts completed all tasks; the one with the highest membership average was Sturgis Post 33.

This year a miniature White Buffalo was presented to the Posts who won the traveling "Pride of the Prairie" White Buffalo trophy last year to keep and display in their respective Posts. The miniature White Buffaloes were presented to Rosebud Post 125, Salem Post 140, Redfield Post 92, Sturgis Post 33, and Rapid City Post 22.



Department Commander Wolkow called PDC and Scouting Chairman, Fred Nelson to the podium to deliver the annual Scouting Committee report. The report was adopted. The 2022 South Dakota Eagle Scout of the Year, Riley Murphy of Summerset, SD was unable to be in attendance. He sent a letter, which Chairman Nelson read to the convention body.

The Chair then called PDC Larry Price of Redfield, SD, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, to the podium for the presentation of the Firefighter of the Year Award. Cody Linneweber of Garretson was on hand to accept this honor.



Commander Wolkow again called on PDC Nelson for a report on the Legionnaire Insurance Trust activities.



Commander Wolkow called on David Booze of Blackhawk, Chairman of the Convention National Security Committee, who gave the Convention National Security Committee Report.

## **CONVENTION NATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The National Security Committee was called to order by Chairman David Booze of Blackhawk, at 1:50 p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, at the Watertown Event Center in Watertown, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Booze were as follows: Liaison and District 7 Dan Wyatt of Madison, District 1 – Randy Kieffer of Sturgis; District 2 – Mike Ball of Rapid City; District 3 – Melvin Lee of Winner; District 4 – Bob Thomason of Selby; District 5 – Philip Egeberg of Brookings; District 6 – Kate Schmidt of Wessington Springs; District 7 – Dan Wyatt of Madison; and District 8 – Merle Stone of Wagner.

Chairman Booze led the Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention National Security Committee on page 7 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Dan Wyatt was appointed as secretary.

The committee reviewed 0 resolutions.

There was an open floor discussion on VA facilities and on-going studies for access, purpose of the committee and process for resolutions as pertains to American Legion business for action, recruiter access to schools which by SD law is required and it was pointed out that there is no requirement to notify recruiters of planned career events in schools.

There being no further business to come before the committee, with motion by Kate Schmidt and second by Phil Egeberg, the Convention National Security Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Dave Booze, Chairman**

**Chairman Booze moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention National Security Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention National Security Committee Report adopted.**



Rod Smith of Chester SD, Chairman of the Convention Employment Committee, was called to the podium by Commander Wolkow to give that report.

## **CONVENTION EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The meeting of the State Convention Employment Committee was called to order by Chairman Rod Smith of Chester, Friday, June 17th, at 2 p.m., at the Watertown Event Center in Watertown, SD.

The following committee members were present besides Chairman Rod Smith of Chester and Liaison Gary Warne of Aberdeen Post 24. District 1 – Jim Carlson of Box Elder; District 2 – absent; District 3 - Travis Hedrick of Fort Pierre; District 4 –

Gary Warne of Aberdeen; District 5 – Russel Mileham of Brookings; District 6 – Ken Anderson of Chamberlain Post; District 7 – Rod Smith of Chester Post 136; and District 8 – Jay Youngbluth of Wagner.

Chairman Smith of Chester led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Employment Committee on page 6 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Gary Warne was appointed secretary.

The committee reviewed 1 resolution. The following resolution came in late and was reviewed with a do not pass recommendation,

RESOLVED, the National Executive Committee of The American Legion create a separate category of Employer of Veterans Awards for Health Care Employers to allow them the opportunity to be recognized as employers of veterans and such award criteria be developed to allow employers of health care workers to compete for said awards

Travis Hedrick discussed tax credits under the Work Opportunity Tax Credits program which enables employers to hire qualified veterans.

Gary Warne handed out federal information on benefits of hiring veterans.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Employment Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Rod Smith, Chairman**

**Chairman Smith moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Employment Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Employment Committee Report adopted.**

After the Convention Employment Committee Report was given, and in the absence of Greg Dias, Spearfish, Chairman of the Employment Committee, Rod Smith announced the South Dakota American Legion Employer of the Year for the Employment of Veterans award winner; the Spearfish Emergency Ambulance Service. Brian Hambek, Director of the company, was on hand to accept the award on their behalf.

The Chair then recognized Warren Aas, Watertown, SD, Chairman of the Convention Rehabilitation Committee for the purpose of giving that committee's report.

**CONVENTION REHABILITATION  
COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The Convention Rehabilitation Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Warren Aas of Watertown, at 2:05 p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, in the Marsh Room in the Watertown Events Center, Watertown, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Warren Aas of Watertown were: Liaison – Courtney Van Zanten of Chester; District 1 – Eric Sorensen of Box Elder; District 2 – Absent; District 3 – Jeff Hrabanek of Colome; District 4 – Absent; District 5 – Chad Hardy of Langford; District 6 – Annette Dunham of Iroquois; District 7 – Larry Maxwell of Sioux Falls; and District 8 – Greg Geiman of Scotland.

Chairman Aas led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Rehabilitation Committee on page 17 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Courtney Van Zanten of Chester was appointed as secretary.

The Convention Rehabilitation Committee was assigned 3 resolutions for review and action, however Resolution 22-8 dealing with establishing additional employer of the year category and was sent back to the Employment Convention Committee since it was not Germaine to VA&R.

Our committee then reviewed two resolutions, both written and submitted by our Asset and Infrastructure Review Working Group. SDAL Resolution #22-1 and SDAL #22-16. Both these resolutions are very similar. Resolution #22-1 deals with Hot Springs and Fort Meade and resolution #22-16 deals with the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center.

In 2018, President Trump signed into law the VA MISSION Act, which sought to expand health care for veterans. That law established the Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission, referred to as the AIR Commission, and their task was to look at current VA health care facilities and find possibilities to realignment and modernize.

The Asset and Infrastructure Review report recommended for our state building a new VA health care facility in Rapid City. They also recommended closing the Wagner VA Clinic as well as the Fort Meade hospital in Sturgis.

As for the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center, they recommended changing the emergency department into an urgent care facility.

I will not read the either resolution in its entirety because they are both rather lengthy, but I will give you the Resolve Clause as it is identical for both resolutions.

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-1, submitted by: AIR Working Group**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded.

The committee felt strongly that the VA facilities in both Hot Springs and Fort Meade remain open and that the VA should not close or reduce any level of care for our veterans in any VA facilities including the community-based outpatient clinics that cares for our veterans. Jeff Hrabanek of Colome made the motion for a DO PASS recommendation and Eric Sorensen of Box Elder seconded the motion.

**The motion to send resolution SDAL #22-1 to the convention floor with a DO PASS recommendation was passed.**

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-16, submitted by: AIR Working Group**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded.

Again, the committee felt strongly that the Emergency Room at the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center should not be closed or capacity to serve our veterans should not be reduced. Larry Maxwell of Sioux Falls made the motion for a DO PASS recommendation and Annette Dunham of Iroquois seconded the motion.

**The motion to send resolution SDAL #22-16 to the convention floor with a DO PASS recommendation was passed.**

Our organization has always maintained that the VA Medical Centers and Community Based Outpatient Clinics should never be closed, nor should the VA ever consider reducing any services for our Veterans.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Convention Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Warren L. Aas, Chairman**

**Chairman Aas moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Rehabilitation Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Rehabilitation Committee Report adopted.**



As Chairman of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission, Mr. Aas delivered the annual report of that committee. It was adopted. Chairman Aas and

Commander Wolkow then announced the VA&R awards. The 2022 award went to Spearfish, Inc. Post 164, Spearfish.



Commander Wolkow called PDC Larry Price, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee to the podium for the purpose of that Committee's annual report. Chairman Price gave his report. The report was adopted.

Chairman Price introduced Samantha Pulse who was a mentor at Youth Trooper Academy. She graduated from the YTA and was the first female to become a State Trooper. Trooper Pulse addressed the convention body.

Chairman Price then presented the South Dakota American Legion Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award to Garret Mastin, Blackhawk. Garret was also selected as the Midwest Region Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.



Commander Wolkow called Nancy Grandy, Garretson Post 23 Commander and Kris Frerk of Garretson, to join him on stage. Kris is 2022 recipient of The American Legion, Department of South Dakota Good Samaritan Award.



Commander Wolkow recognized Department Finance Officer, Krisma DeWitt of Watertown, who gave the financial report for the Department. A full financial report will appear in the Convention Proceedings. The report was adopted.



Department Commander Wolkow called Jim Kurtz, Chairman of the South Dakota American Legion Foundation Board of Directors for the annual report on the foundation. The report was adopted. It was announced that Chamberlain Post 3 donated \$2000 to the foundation at this time.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow called all of the 2022 District Legionnaires of the Year to the front of the stage on the convention floor to be recognized.

- District 1 — Larry Haglund of American Legion Post #164, Spearfish.
- District 2 — Paul Rodriguez of American Legion Post #22, Rapid City.
- District 3 — Larry Madsen of American Legion Post #135, Gettysburg.
- District 4 — Brad Englund of American Legion Post #92, Redfield.
- District 5 — Gary Olson of American Legion Post #114, Volga.
- District 6 — Dave Gutzmer of American Legion #63, Lake Preston.
- District 7 — Dan Wyatt of American Legion Post #25, Madison.
- District 8 — Donald Kotab of American Legion Post #11, Wagner.

Department Commander Wolkow presented a framed Certificate of Commendation to each of the District Legionnaires of the Year.

Commander Wolkow called upon PDC Fred Nelson to announce the selection of the 2022 South Dakota American Legion "Legionnaire of the Year."

PDC Nelson announced the selection of Dave Gutzmer, Lake Preston American Legion Post #63, as the 2022 Department Legionnaire of the Year. Dave was presented with the 2022 South Dakota American Legion Legionnaire of the Year plaque to commemorate this important occasion.



PDC Tim Jurgens, Milbank, was called to the podium for the purpose of announcing the name of this year's recipient of the Robert C. Gabrielson Memorial Leadership Award. The winner was Krisma DeWitt of Castlewood Post #250.



The Chair recognized the Department Historian, Fred Lee, Sioux Falls, who gave his report and announced that there were no entries in the Department History Contest. The report was adopted.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow called Department Adjutant Keven Hempel to the podium to announce that caucuses to elect 2 new Department Vice Commanders, one from Districts 1-2 and one from Districts 3-8, would convene 15 minutes after convention is recessed with the current Department Vice Commanders to be in charge.

Two candidates have announced their bid for the Department Vice Commander representing Districts 1-2. They are Eugene Iron Shell Jr. of Rosebud Post #125 and Doug Harris of Rapid City Post #22. The delegates of Districts 1-2 voted and elected Doug Harris as the new Department Vice Commander for Districts 1-2.

The single candidate running for the Department Vice Commander representing Districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 was Courtney Steffen, Chester Post #136. The delegates from those Districts unanimously voted and elected Courtney Steffen as the new Department Vice Commander to represent Districts 3-8.




Department Commander Wolkow led the convention delegates by paying proper respect to our Flag with a hand salute and then declared the 103rd Annual Department Convention in recess until Sunday morning, June 9th, 2022, at 9:00am.




**SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2022**



The final session of the 103rd Annual Convention of the South Dakota American Legion was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, June 9, 2022, by Department Commander Gary Wolkow following patriotic music selections by the South Dakota American Legion Band. Commander Wolkow led the delegates in a salute to the Colors after which the invocation was offered by Mike Kumm, North Sioux City.




Department Commander Gary Wolkow introduced Governor Kristi Noem (R-SD). Governor Noem addressed the convention.



Commander Wolkow called on Krisma DeWitt, Watertown, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee for the purpose of presenting the committee's second report. Ms. DeWitt then proceeded to give the Training Committee's Annual Report, as the Chairman of said committee. The report was adopted.



Trust Fund Committee Chairman, Randy Rakness, provided the annual report of that committee and in his absence, was read by Adjutant Hempel. The report was adopted.



Commander Wolkow introduced Dan Sudbeck of Dimock, SD, Department Athletic Commission Chairman, for the purpose of presenting the Athletic Commission Report. Sudbeck presented the annual report of the South Dakota American Legion Department Athletic Commission, and the report was adopted. Athletic Commission Chairman Sudbeck presented four winning team-autographed, 2021 State Baseball Tournament baseballs to Department Commander Wolkow.



The Chair recognized Doug Feltman, Chairman of the Convention Legislative Committee for the purpose of a report. Chairman Feltman gave his report.

**CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

The Convention Legislative Committee was called to order by Chairman Doug Feltman of Chamberlain at 2 p.m., Friday, June 17, 2022, at the Watertown Event Center, in Watertown, SD.



In addition to Doug Feltman of Chamberlain, the following members were present: Liaison – C.P. Van Delist of Rapid City; District 1 – Ken Mowrer of Piedmont; District 2 – Eugene Iron Shell of Rosebud; District 3 – Gene Opbroek of Gregory; District 4 – absent; District 5 – Ward Champman of Milbank; District 6 – Doug Feltman of Chamberlain; District 7 – Rob Risty of Dell Rapids; and District 8 – Jim Hornstra of Springfield.

Chairman Feltman led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Legislative Committee on page 7 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Gene Opbroek was appointed as secretary.

The Convention Legislative Committee was assigned 2 resolutions.

**Resolution # SDAL 22-18 drafted by Sioux Falls Post 15**

**Ken Mowrer made the motion, seconded by Eugene Iron Shell to accept the resolution as follows with a do pass recommendation:**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion at the Department Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, that The South Dakota American Legion lobby the South Dakota Legislature during the 2023 session to pass legislation to amend SDCL 33A-1-22 to include the stipulation that counties with Veteran Populations of 1000 to 3999 according to the most recent Annual VA GDX Report have at a minimum one full-time dedicated County Veterans Service Officer; and for counties with greater than 4000 Veterans an additional one full-time dedicated County Veterans Service officer be employed for each additional 4000 Veterans.

**Resolution # SDAL 22-13 drafted by Badger Post 260**

**Jim Hornstra moved and Ward Champman seconded the motion amended as follows with a do pass recommendation:**

RESOLVED, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That the South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee actively lobby that the State of South Dakota amend the South Dakota Codified Law Chapter SDCL 10-4-40 and 10-4-41, to include the service-connected disabilities 70%-90% for the property tax exemption and also based upon Individual Unemployability.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Legislative Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Feltman, Chairman**

**Chairman Feltman moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Legislative Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried.**

**Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Rehabilitation Committee Report adopted.**



As Chairman of the Department Legislative Committee, Feltman proceeded to give the annual report of that committee and moved for the adoption of the report. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The report was adopted.



Department Commander Wolkow called National Executive Committeeman Jim Huls, Madison, to the podium to address the delegates and give his annual NEC report. The report was adopted.



Sons of the American Legion Detachment Commander, Casey Hanson, Badger, was introduced by Department Commander Wolkow. Commander Hanson reported on the SAL year and that their Detachment officers would remain the same for the coming year. The report was adopted.



Commander Wolkow called on Courtney Steffen, Chester, Chairman of the Media and Communications Committee for the purpose of a report from that committee. The report was adopted.



Kevin Hempel, Department Adjutant, was recognized by the Chair, to give the Annual Adjutant's Report. The report was adopted.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow delivered his Annual Commander's Report. We must remember that communication is a huge part of success; we must let people know what we do and don't give up on membership. He thanked everybody for a great year – it's been a pleasure and an adventure.



Commander Wolkow called PDC Charemon Dunham, President of the South Dakota American Legion Press Association for a report on that organization's activities. PDC Dunham also announced that she will remain as President for the coming year and then announced the winners of the South Dakota American Legion Press Association's Newsletter competition.

- First Place** — William H. Crippen American Legion  
Post #62, Humboldt, SD.  
Editor Fred Lee
- Second Place** — Sioux Falls American Legion  
Post #15, Sioux Falls, SD.

Editor Diane Diekman

**Third Place** — Greer American Legion

Post #11, Wagner, SD.

Editor Jerry Seiner

**Honorable Mention** — Thayer-Waters American Legion

Post #146 Colome, SD.

Editor Jeff Hrabanek



Commander Nelson called Steve Stier of Onida, Chairman of the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee, who gave that committee's report.

## CONVENTION NEXT MEETING PLACE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The meeting of the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee called to order by Chairman Travise Flisrand of Arlington at 1:58 P.M. on Friday June 16, 2022, at the Ramkota Events Center, Watertown, SD to consider applications for future MidWinter Conferences and Department Conventions.

The following members were present: Chairman Travise Flisrand of Badger; Liaison – Steve Stier of Onida; District 1 – Regan “Trip” McClurkin of Piedmont Valley; District 2 – Chris Rendon of Rapid City; District 3 - Steve Stier of Onida; District 4 - Tom Perrizo of Aberdeen; District 5 – Gary Watts of Brookings; District 6 – Vilas Kurtenbach of Dimock; District 7 – Brian Havard of Salem; District 8 – Wesley Rye of Wakonda.

Chairman Flisrand led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the duties of the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee on Page 7 of the Uniform Code of Procedures.

Regan “Trip” McClurkin was appointed the recording secretary.

The Committee considered invitations and bids to host the 2027 South Dakota American Legion MidWinter Conference and the 2027 Department convention. MidWinter Conference will be held in Oacoma, February 19-21, 2027. Department convention will be held at the Ramkota Hotel in Sioux Falls SD, June 16-19, 2027. There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 2:40 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Travise Flisrand, Chairman**

**Chairman Flisrand moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried.**

**Department Commander Wolkow declared the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee Report adopted.**



Commander Wolkow recognized Krisma DeWitt, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee for the final reading of the Credential report.



Commander Wolkow announced the 2022 Department Convention Sweepstakes winners as follows:

- \$1000 – Ed Pflipsen of Sioux Falls
- \$500 – David Laabs of Lake Preston
- \$300 – LeRoy Vanruler of Sioux Falls
- \$200 – Chris Larsen of Hurley
- \$100 – Michael Ernest of Aberdeen



Department Commander, Gary Wolkow announced the time had arrived for the election of delegates and alternate delegates to the 103rd Annual National American Legion Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. District Delegates and Alternate Delegates were nominated from the Spring District Meetings held in March and April. Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel read the nominations for delegates to the national convention, nominated during the spring district meetings.



## **ELECTION OF DELEGATES AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES**

Department Adjutant Hempel announced that there were 3 unfilled slots for Delegates, as a resolution was approved for all national call-ins to be automatic delegates, which totals 10 delegates. The Department Commander, Adjutant, National Executive Committeeman, and immediate Past Department Commander are also automatic delegates.

Following nominations from the convention floor, the following Legionnaires were elected as Delegates to the 103rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Jon McDonald of Box Elder, Eugene IronShell of Rosebud, Jeff Hrabanek of Winner (member of Colome Post #146), Dr. Tracy Diefenbach of Warner, Noel Cummins of Milbank, Travise Flisrand of Arlington (member of Badger Post #260), Bill Peters of Sioux Falls Post #15, Dan Hunhoff of Yankton (member of Tabor Post #183), Rod Smith of Chester, PDC Paul Evenson of Sioux Falls (member of Garretson Post #23), PDC and Alt NEC Denny Brenden of Watertown, Krisma DeWitt of Watertown (member of Castlewood Post #250), Courtney Steffen of Madison (member of Chester Post #136), Chris VanDelist of Rapid City, PDC Terry Hanson of Arlington, PDC Hugh Holmes of Mitchell, Doug Harris of Rapid City, Warren Aas of Watertown (member of Sisseton Post #50), and PDC Fred Nelson of Spearfish.

Department Commander Doug Feltman of Chamberlain, immediate past Department Commander Gary Wolkow of DeSmet, NEC Jim Huls of Madison (member of Salem Post #140), and Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel of Watertown (member of Chester Post #136, are all automatic delegates to the national convention.

Department Adjutant Hempel announced that there were 20 unfilled Alternate Delegate slots. Following nominations from the convention floor, the following Legionnaires were elected as Alternate Delegates for the National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Ken Sabers of Sturgis, PDC Byron Callies of Watertown, PDC Charemon Dunham of Iroquois, Annette Dunham of Iroquois, Dale Hill of Sioux Falls Post #15, Joseph Knoer of Vermillion, Ward Chapman of Milbank, and Tom Henley of Aurora.



Department Commander Wolkow opened nominations for Department Sergeant-at-Arms for 2022-2023.

Greg Geiman of Scotland, SD, (member of Wagner Post #11), was nominated and seconded for the office of Sergeant-at-Arms.

Subsequent calls for further nominations were unanswered. A motion was made to close the nominations and that a unanimous ballot be cast for Greg Geiman of Scotland, SD, for 2022-2023 Department Sergeant-at-Arms for The American Legion Department of South Dakota. **The motion carried.**



Department Adjutant Hempel announced that Doug Harris of Rapid City Post #22, was elected during the Districts 1 and 2 caucus as their new Department Vice Commander and that Courtney Steffen of Chester Post #136, was elected during the caucus of Districts 3-8 as their new Department Vice Commander. Their nominations were duly motioned and approved by the convention body.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow opened nominations for the office of Department Commander of The American Legion, Department of South Dakota.

Doug Feltman of Chamberlain, SD, was nominated for Department Commander by Jake Salathe of Huron, SD. Subsequent calls for further nominations were unanswered. A unanimous ballot for Doug Feltman for Department Commander was cast. Following the completion of the vote, Department Commander Doug Feltman was duly elected to serve as Department Commander of The American Legion Department of South Dakota for the 2022-2023 American Legion year.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow opened nominations for the office of Alternate National Executive Committeeman of the American Legion, Department of South Dakota.

PDC Fred Nelson of Spearfish, SD, was nominated for Alternate National Executive Committeeman by PDC Byron Callies of Watertown, SD. The nomination of PDC Fred Nelson was seconded by Jerry Lolley of Sturgis, SD.

PDC Hugh Holmes of Mitchell, SD, was nominated for Alternate National Executive Committeeman by PDC Mark Weinmann, of Canton, SD (Hudson Post #128). The nomination of PDC Hugh Holmes was seconded by Travise Flisrand of Arlington, SD (Badger Post #260).

Subsequent calls for further nominations were unanswered and nominations were closed. State Adjutant Kevin Hempel called the roll for a roll call vote of the delegates. Following the completion of the vote tabulation, Department Commander Gary Wolkow declared PDC Fred Nelson of Spearfish, SD, the winner and is duly elected to serve as Alternate National Executive Committeeman of the American Legion Department of South Dakota.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow opened nominations for the office of National Executive Committeeman of the American Legion, Department of South Dakota.

PDC Denny Brenden of Watertown, SD, was nominated for National Executive Committeeman by PDC Paul Evenson of Sioux Falls, SD (member of Garretson Post #23). The nomination of PDC Denny Brenden was seconded by Warren Aas of Watertown, SD (member of Sisseton Post #50).

PDC Terry Hanson of Arlington, SD, was nominated for National Executive Committeeman by Dave Gutzmer, of Lake Preston, SD. The nomination of PDC Terry Hanson was seconded by Kevin Morello of Black Hawk, SD (Piedmont Post #311).

Subsequent calls for further nominations were unanswered and nominations were closed. State Adjutant Kevin Hempel called the roll for a roll call vote of the delegates. Following the completion of the vote tabulation, Department Commander Gary Wolkow declared PDC Denny Brenden of Watertown, SD, the winner and is duly elected to serve as National Executive Committeeman of the American Legion Department of South Dakota.



The newly elected officers were called to the stage and Past Department Commander Denny Brenden of Watertown, SD, conducted the Oath of Office installation ceremony. Kathy Feltman, the newly installed Department Commander's wife, pinned the Department Commander's lapel pin on Department Commander Doug Feltman's lapel. PDC Gary Wolkow presented Department Commander Feltman with his white Department Commander's cap.

Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel presented the newly elected State Commander, Doug Feltman, to the Convention for his acceptance speech to the assembled delegates.



Newly elected State Commander Doug Feltman assumed the chair for the closing ceremonies and following the benediction and the retirement of the colors, declared the ONE-HUNDRED-THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION of The American Legion, Department of South Dakota, adjourned.



**THE  
AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**102nd ANNUAL CONVENTION  
Huron, South Dakota  
June 24-27, 2021**

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS  
AND COMMITTEES**



**DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS**

Article IV, Section 4 of the Department Constitution provides that: "All Department standing committees shall file written reports with the Department Adjutant 30 days before each Department Convention, and these reports shall be printed and available to Convention Committees and Delegates. Any standing or special Department committee to which Department funds are allocated shall file with the Department Commander at least five days prior to each Department Convention a complete and itemized financial report, showing funds received from whatever source and disbursement made. Such reports shall be placed before the Convention by the Commander and printed in the Annual Convention Proceedings. No further Department Funds shall be turned over from the Department Treasury to any committee until it shall have filed its financial report with the Commander."

**DEPARTMENT OFFICERS FOR 2020 – 2021**

Department Commander, Gary Wolkow .....	DeSmet
Department Vice Commander Eugene Iron Shell Jr., (Districts 1-2).....	Rosebud
Department Vice Commander Doug Feltman, (Districts 3-8) .....	Chamberlain
National Executive Committeeman, Jim Huls .....	Madison

Alternate Executive Committeeman, Denny Brenden .....	Watertown
Adjutant, Kevin Hempel .....	Watertown
Assistant Adjutant & Service Officer, Courtney VanZanten .....	Madison
Finance Officer, Krisma DeWitt .....	Watertown
Sergeant-at-Arms, Greg Geiman.....	Scotland
Judge Advocate, Jay Leibel .....	Madison
Chaplain, Justin Warfel.....	Spearfish
Historian, Fred Lee .....	Sioux Falls
Americanism, Harry Boner .....	Castlewood
Children & Youth, Donally Kranz .....	Brandon
Membership Chairman, Travise Flisrand.....	Castlewood

**DISTRICT COMMANDERS**

District 1: Jon McDonald.....	Box Elder
District 2: Christopher Rendon .....	Rapid City
District 3: Gene Opbroek .....	Gregory
District 4: Bob Thomason .....	Selby
District 5: Matt Lagerstrom.....	White
District 6: Vilas Kurtenbach .....	Dimock
District 7: Patrick Mullen.....	Madison
District 8: Jennifer VanRoekel.....	Parker

**LEGISLATIVE LOBBYISTS**

PDC Byron Callies.....	Watertown
Chris Van Delist.....	Rapid City
Doug Feltman .....	Chamberlain
Kevin Hempel.....	Watertown

**VA HOSPITAL REPRESENTATIVES**

Sioux Falls VA Medical Center, Larry Panning .....	Sioux Falls
Ft. Meade VA Medical Center, James Childers .....	Spearfish
Hot Springs VA Medical Center, Angela Koch .....	Hot Springs

**COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION CHAIRPERSONS**

Aeronautics, Jim Huls.....	Madison
Athletic, Dan Sudbeck .....	Dimock
Boys State, Chris Van Delist.....	Rapid City
Cemetery, Mike Kain.....	Lead
Educational Scholarship, Hugh Holmes.....	Mitchell
Employment, Greg Diaz .....	Spearfish
Internal Affairs, Mark Weinmann.....	Canton
Legislative, Doug Feltman.....	Chamberlain
Media & Communications, Courtney Steffen.....	Madison
Membership & Marketing, Travise Flisrand.....	Arlington
National Security, Mark Mills .....	Custer
Public Safety, Larry Price .....	Redfield
Training, Krisma DeWitt .....	Watertown
Trust Fund, Randall Rakness .....	Watertown
VA&R, Warren Aas.....	Watertown
VAVS, Dan Wyatt.....	Madison



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**THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET****ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS****June 30, 2022****See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report****ASSETS**


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Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 355,069
Certificates of deposit	17,500
Education loans receivable	122,007
Inventory	6,545
Marketable equity securities	601,203
Property and equipment	
Equipment	40,648
Vehicles	52,576
Leasehold improvements	3,320
Accumulated depreciation	(91,632)

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<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,107,236</b>
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**LIABILITIES**


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Dues & Payroll taxes payable	\$ 735
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<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>735</b>
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**Net Assets**

Temporarily restricted	201,648
Unrestricted	904,853

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	1,106,501
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<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,107,236</b>
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## THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND OTHER CHANGES IN  
NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

Year Ended June 30, 2022

See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report

	Temporarily Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
<b>Revenues and Gains</b>			
Membership dues	\$ -	\$ 237,070	\$ 237,070
Sales of merchandise	-	47,732	47,732
Cost of merchandise sold	-	(20,069)	(20,069)
Donations	5,174	-	5,174
Interest and dividends	34	20,759	20,793
Realized gain on sale of investments	-	20,554	20,554
Unrealized loss on investments	-	(133,989)	(133,989)
Other	12,800	240,636	253,436
<b>Total Revenues and Gains</b>	<b>18,008</b>	<b>412,693</b>	<b>430,701</b>
<b>Net Assets Released From Restrictions</b>			
Restrictions satisfied by payments	(4,606)	4,606	-
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program services:			
Children and youth	-	-	-
Athletic commission	-	4,606	4,606
Veterans services	-	-	-
Education loans	-	-	-
	-	4,606	4,606
General and administrative	-	336,249	336,249
Fundraising	-	194,172	194,172
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>535,027</b>	<b>535,027</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 13,402</b>	<b>\$ 117,728</b>	<b>\$ 104,326</b>
<b>Net Assets, Beginning</b>	<b>\$188,246</b>	<b>\$ 1,022,581</b>	<b>\$ 1,210,827</b>
Change in net assets	13,402	(117,728)	(104,326)
<b>Net Assets, Ending</b>	<b>\$ 201,648</b>	<b>\$ 904,853</b>	<b>\$ 1,106,501</b>

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
 SCHEDULE OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH  
 BASIS June 30, 2022

See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report

ASSETS	General Fund	Children and Youth Fund	Athletic Commission Fund	Oratory Fund	Historian Fund	Veterans Services Fund	Education Loans Fund	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 275,928	\$ 18,290	\$ 27,044	\$ 5,790	\$	\$ 9,550	\$ 18,467	\$ 355,069
Certificates of deposit	17,000				500			17,500
Education loans receivable							122,007	122,007
Inventory	6,545							6,545
Marketable equity securities	601,203							601,203
Property and equipment								
Equipment	40,648							40,648
Vehicles	52,576							52,576
Leasehold improvements	3,320							3,320
Accumulated depreciation	(91,632)							(91,632)
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 905,588</b>	<b>\$ 18,290</b>	<b>\$ 27,044</b>	<b>\$ 5,790</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>	<b>\$ 9,550</b>	<b>\$ 140,474</b>	<b>\$ 1,107,236</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>								
Dues & Payroll taxes payable	\$735							\$735
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$735</b>							<b>\$735</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>								
Temporarily restricted		18,290	27,044	5,790	500	9,550	140,474	201,648
Unrestricted	904,853							904,853
	904,853	18,290	27,044	5,790	500	9,550	140,474	1,106,501
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 905,588</b>	<b>\$ 18,290</b>	<b>\$ 27,044</b>	<b>\$ 5,790</b>	<b>\$ 500</b>	<b>\$ 9,550</b>	<b>\$ 140,474</b>	<b>\$ 1,107,236</b>

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
 SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND OTHER CHANGES IN NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH  
 BASIS Year Ended June 30, 2022

See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report

	General Fund	Children and Youth Fund	Athletic Commission Fund	Oratory Fund	Historian Fund	Veterans Services Fund	Education Loans Fund	Total
<b>Revenues and Gains</b>								
Membership dues	\$ 237,070	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$ 237,070
Sales of merchandise	47,732							47,732
Cost of merchandise sold	(20,069)							(20,069)
Donations		575		100		4,299	200	5,174
Interest and dividends	20,759	8	11	3		4	8	20,793
Realized gain on sale of investments	20,554							20,554
Unrealized gain on investments	(133,989)							(133,989)
Other	60,690		2,000					62,690
<b>Total Revenues and Gains</b>	412,693	583	12,811	103		4,303	208	430,701
<b>Net Assets Released From Restrictions</b>								
Restrictions satisfied by payments	4,606		(4,606)					
<b>Expenses</b>								
Program services:								
Children and Youth								
Athletic commission	4,606							4,606
Veterans services								
Education loans								
	4,606							4,606
General and administrative	336,249							336,249
Fundraising	194,172							194,172
<b>Total Expenses</b>	535,027							535,027
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	\$ 117,728	\$ 583	\$ 8,205	\$ 103	\$	\$ 4,303	\$ 208	\$ 104,326
<b>Net Assets, Beginning</b>	\$ 1,022,581	\$ 17,707	\$ 18,839	\$ 5,687	\$ 500	\$ 5,247	\$ 140,266	\$ 1,210,827
Change in net assets	(117,728)	583	8,205	103		4,303	208	(104,326)
<b>Net Assets, Ending</b>	\$ 904,853	\$ 18,290	\$ 27,044	\$ 5,790	\$ 500	\$ 9,550	\$ 140,474	\$ 1,106,501

## STATE COMMANDERS ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGION MEMBERSHIP

This will be my final article as your State Commander. This has been a great year! It will go down as one of my most favorite and memorable ever. I want to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to the entire South Dakota American Legion Family. The Legion, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders, your friendship and hospitality has been wonderful. You are ALL the best. THANK YOU, THANK YOU TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU. I have dedicated this entire year to promoting the American Legion and its programs and have enjoyed every minute. We set out with many goals and challenges, and we have accomplished many of them.



This has been a very rewarding and successful 2021-2022 year. THIS YEAR IS NOT OVER YET. I'm not signing off and saying goodbye yet. We still have challenges and goals to work on. My motto L.E.T.S. - lets end the slide- is still within reach. We began the year with a membership goal of 17,733. We are currently sitting at 16,333 members. We have until December 31, 2022, to reach it. With All of your help I know we can do it. There are veterans out there wanting to join the American Legion. Please take the time, we need to make sure every eligible veteran knows they are welcome to join the South Dakota American Legion, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK THEM.

We said after the State Convention in June, we were going to hit the ground running and we did. In July the Finance and Executive meetings were held in Chamberlain, then we attended the Youth Trooper program in Pierre. What a great program! The Highway Patrol, the mentors, and these kids attending are all amazing. Then we had my homecoming in De Smet, thank you to all who attended and on to Auxiliary President Mary Jo's Homecoming in Onida.

We were able to attend some of the exciting Legion baseball tournament games and then off to the National Convention in Arizona. What a great Convention, South Dakota was seated at the very front and represented very well. Then we were at the Veterans building in Huron at the State Fair to meet and visit with many veterans. Next, we traveled all over the state attending the Fall District Meetings. Thank you to all the Posts that hosted, they were well attended, and the food was great. In October we were able to attend the Fall Meetings in Indianapolis in person, attending committee meetings, and meeting with Paul Dillard, the National Commander.

I had the honor and pleasure to go on Midwest Honor Flight #8, all Vietnam Veterans, to Washington DC in October. This is an experience words cannot describe. I encourage all eligible veterans to get signed up for this event. The South Dakota American Legion decided to make Midwest Honor Flight their main fundraiser this year and has donated over \$180,000 to fund Flight #13 in October. THANK YOU to all the South Dakota Posts and communities for their hard work and dedication to make this project so successful and enable those deserving veterans to have that one final tour with honor.

In November, we had the honor to decorate and display our American Legion Christmas tree in the Capitol. Thank you to all who helped decorate. The Midwinter Conference in Chamberlain was a great success. The National Vice Commander, Angel Narvaez from Puerto Rico was our guest and many legionnaires from around the state attended. The Legislative meeting and reception were held at the Pierre Post in February. It was a great opportunity to invite our Legislators to an enjoyable evening with a meal and discuss our veterans' issues with them. Thank You Pierre Post #8 for the meal and hospitality. March brought the District Spring meetings, and we had the pleasure of traveling the state from one end to the other. The meetings were well attended, and a lot of good information was shared with the legionnaires. Thank you again to all of the Posts that hosted these events.

In April I was able to attend the DAV Convention in Rapid City and also to present the National Guard Plaques to their outstanding soldiers at their Convention. We were very honored to have our National Commander, Paul Dillard spend the last week in April with us. We showed our best South Dakota hospitality by touring him from Sioux Falls to Rapid City, making stops at many Posts along the way and showing him the sites in South Dakota. He is a great leader and Legionnaire and we very much enjoyed having him here in South Dakota. These were the main events we attended.

In between, several trips were made across the state to attend Post meetings, County Meetings, Veterans Council meetings, Committee and Commission meetings, installing officers, speaking at events and many other functions. The hospitality and friendship shown across the state has been so amazing and very much appreciated. Thank you to all. Ahead, I'm looking forward to the Boys State week in Aberdeen the first week in June, attending the VFW Convention in Mitchell and then our own State Convention in Watertown June 16-19.

It has been a pleasure and an adventure working with President Mary Jo Stier (and Steve) and the Auxiliary and meeting National Auxiliary President Kathy Daudistel at the DTOM Ranch and in Aberdeen. I am very proud of Commander Casey Hanson and the Sons for all they do. Their membership is awesome, and their fundraising is very much appreciated. And it is always great to see the Riders at many of the meetings and events, also great fundraisers. Thank you ALL.

I have to thank my two Vice Commanders for their support this year. They have been there every time they were needed and did their best to promote and encourage all of our Posts to be involved. And to all the District Commanders and District Vice Commanders. Thank you for your hard work and dedication, for all your Post visits, phone calls, zoom meetings and everything else you do to promote the American Legion. Thank you to all the other Committee Chairpersons, there are too many to name and I would probably forget someone but THANK YOU to all of you for everything you do for the American Legion.

Last but not least, THANK YOU to Adjutant Kevin, Judy, and Mary Jo for everything they do to keep this American Legion running as smooth as possible. Most of us do not realize everything they do, and I cannot begin to list everything, but you are very much appreciated, and we are very proud of the handling and the operations of the office at Headquarters in Watertown.

In closing again, I can only say it has been a great year, one I will never forget. The comradery and friendships are something I will cherish forever. The American Legion is truly a Family, The American Legion, The Auxiliary, The Sons of the American Legion and The American Legion Riders are all one big Family. We are the world's largest veteran's organization, and we have to pass this down to our "next generation" veterans so they can carry on the mission. We have achieved many of our goals and challenges and have had a very successful year and we should be proud of all we have accomplished, BUT we are not done, I'm not done, this year is not over yet. We have challenges and goals to achieve yet this 2021-22 year. We will always be Veterans serving veterans and Veterans Strengthening America. THANK YOU.

L.E.T.S. Lets end the slide  
 Department Commander  
 Gary Wolkow Legionnaires,

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Department Commander Wolkow,

This report is being written to satisfy the Constitution and By Laws requirement for the Department Adjutant to write and present to the annual convention, a report covering activities not covered in the annual reports of the Committee and Commission Chairs and other Department officials. This is the second year filling the position of Department Adjutant and the first year we have held all meetings and conventions which were previously not held due to the pandemic.

Both Fall and Spring District meetings were held this year and elections as required by the Constitution and By Laws were held. Most committees have met as required, some face to face and others through the use of Zoom. We have seen an increase in many committee meetings using Zoom as an alternative method for communicating.

The transition by National to the new MyLegion and Personify have had their challenges. Both have been online for a little over a year. We continue to experience issues, but I believe National is making headway in correcting identified problems. National is pushing forward with the programs and we must do our best to understand and make best use of those programs.

Although last year was the year to purchase a new vehicle, the cost and availability pushed the Department to wait for an additional year. Fall of 2021, the Department traded in the Dodge Caravan for a Buick Enclave which has become the Department Commander's vehicle. With the rising cost in vehicles, the Department will need to examine the amount which is budgeted each year for new vehicles as well as what is actually needed for the transportation needs of the Department.

The American Legion Department of South Dakota is a member of the South Dakota Veterans Council (SDVC) with five other Veterans Service Organizations as



members. I have the privilege of being elected as the Vice President of the SDVC and will do my best to ensure the Legion is well represented. The SDVC continues to discuss the selling of the Veteran's building at the State Fairgrounds. I have conveyed the Legion's stance that the building should remain a veteran's building, but I am afraid most of the VSO do not agree with my stance. I am sure the next year will continue to be interesting as the building continues to be a point of disagreement.

As stated last year, Judy Greenfield and Mary Jo Boner are mainstays in the office. They ensure the Department continues to function, membership is properly handled, and our various programs succeed. This office would not operate without their expertise and dedication.

Since most of the Committee Chairs and State Officers have filed their reports which will be available for review, most of the activities have been covered and reported on.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Hempel, Department Adjutant

## **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN REPORT**

Legionnaires:

First, thanks to all Posts and Legionnaires who went above and beyond in welcoming National Commander Paul Dillard to Dept of South Dakota and your Posts for the great Welcome provided. I was very proud of the effort by all concerned. We have great Posts all across South Dakota.

I just returned from the Spring NEC meetings in Indianapolis. Some points of interest are the Finance Commission says no dues increase in the foreseeable future because of Fund raising and Marketing initiatives are all doing well at the National level. I think the Dept of South Dakota should consider the same thought process when the time comes for additional revenue.

The Marketing Commission chaired by our Paul Evenson reports that innovation is the theme for the coming year. The National organization has increased emphasis on Marketing and is focused on shifting brand perception so that these objectives can be accomplished 1. Increase membership 2. raise money and 3. Continue the Legacy of being influential on Capitol Hill. Please use the New Brand Mark of the American Legion as this is the Modern version of the American Legion Emblem.

A study on Membership Processing is ongoing and will change many things about membership as we know it today. A more modern approach is forth coming, and some resolutions were passed at the Spring to start the ball rolling. Resolutions involving The American Legion Legacy Scholarship and the Temporary Financial Assistance Program were approved that change many Policies and Procedures





## DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER REPORT

Commander Wolkow,

Thank you for the honor of serving and appreciate your confidence in appointing me to serve as Department Service Officer for 2021-2022.

The South Dakota American Legion has incredibly tenacious State, County and Tribal Service Officers working under the American Legion Power of Attorney in South Dakota. I'm happy to report that in Fiscal Year 2021, these dedicated Service Officers secured \$37,337,300 in VA Benefits for Veterans and their families using the American Legion Power of Attorney.

We have upcoming battles on our hands with the potential VA closures in Hot Springs, Sturgis, Wagner and Sioux Falls. I am preparing a series of resolutions, loaded with data, to help us fight for what is best for our Veterans, their healthcare, their communities and more. If any Veteran has data they want to present, by all means, please reach out.



Again, thank you for the honor of this position. Helping fellow Veterans is both rewarding and humbling, and I can never get enough of it. To my fellow Vets: If you haven't gone in to see your local Service Officer yet, it's probably time to do so. And the best thing you can do for your fellow Veteran? Get them in to that same Service Officer, so they can get tied into the benefits that they've earned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Courtney VanZanten

## AMERICANISM COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commander Wolkow,

What a busy year for the South Dakota American Legion Americanism program. Thank you for selecting me as the Americanism Chairman for the Department of South Dakota. Your leadership and willingness to direct my efforts for the year were greatly appreciated. Americanism is alive and well in South Dakota. Stepping into this position of State Americanism Commission Chairman, I had large shoes to fill. Anyone that knows me and my size 16 5E feet would not think that filling the shoes of our most recent Americanism Commission Chairmen, Doug Harris, and Larry Madison, would be a problem. With their help, I was quickly able to get a grasp of a program that many Posts in SD are participating in. Working with the Boys State, Youth Trooper, Educational Committee Chairmen, plus working with the Youth Program Administrator at State HQ, we made enhancements to the "Big 3" handout and wall posters by adding a QRC code (the square box with dots in it) to the front cover of each document. By seeing this code, our youth could take their cell phones out and snap a quick photo of the QRC code. When the student had time, they could open the photo and that code would automatically direct them to the web site

to find out more information about these programs or even directly navigate the student straight to the registration process.

In addition to the enhancements to the “Big 3” literature, I built on the groundwork that both Doug and Larry had started regarding the 4-H program in South Dakota. Youth today are so busy with sports, Church youth groups, 4-H and FFA. These are all fine activities to be a part of. When thinking about these activities, 4-H was the best organization to match up with many of our Legion Youth activities. A letter was created for the State 4-H leadership, informing them about the Americanism programs of the American Legion and how Post members from across the state could assist their local 4-H leaders by helping with oratorical activities/public speaking and shooting sports. Students that participate in 4-H develop leadership qualities that will aid them well when participating in Boys and Girls State. The collaboration letter was submitted to the state 4-H leadership which in turn was sent to each county 4-H extension office in SD. 4-H is good for all Americanism programs and likewise the Legion is good for 4-H. Posts are encouraged to help with 4-H as often as possible and 4-H students make up a good selection pool to recruit students from for our Americanism programs.

At the time of this report, only one of the “Big 3” programs have concluded for the year. This would be the Oratorical program. I would like to once again thank all of the volunteers that helped to Judge, escort, keep time, and monitor the contestants. We had six great contestants from around the state compete on the last day of Mid-Winter Conference (February 20<sup>th</sup>) at Arrowwood Cedar Shore Resort in Oacoma, SD. The winner of the State contest, Thomas Haar, representing Post 22 in Rapid City, advanced to the National Oratory competition held April 22<sup>nd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> in Indianapolis, IN. Thomas did well in the competition, placing 9<sup>th</sup> overall. Congratulations on a job well done Thomas!! While this year’s competition has completed, now is the time to spread the word about this program to our high school 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. There are students that have the passion and drive to participate in the Oratory Contest. Please encourage them to compete in the years to come.

The 2022 Boy’s State session is scheduled for May 30<sup>th</sup> – June 3<sup>rd</sup> in Aberdeen, SD. Boys from across the state will be traveling to this great event to learn about how Government works from the local township on up to the National level. Attendance is down this year significantly. This can be attributed to all the various activities and events that compete with the boy’s time. Life experiences shape us all and these young men will learn about the rights and duties of a good citizen and what it takes to help promote change. Our way of government did not just happen. It was formed by those who came before us to help form a better way of life for us all. Let’s encourage our young men to attend Boy’s State to preserve our way of life and to help develop new leaders for our world tomorrow. Thank you to our Posts that sponsor these young men to attend this event at a cost of \$200 each. Blue cap day, held on the Thursday of every Boy’s State, is a day that Posts can come out and check out the activities the Boy’s go through. I encourage all Posts to take time in the coming years to stop in and check this out. Once again let us congratulate the 2021 Boys State Governor – Joseph Gebel of Mitchell on a job well done and for representing South Dakota over the past year.

The 2022 Youth Trooper Academy will be held in Pierre June 20<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>. The YTA is an intensive week of living and learning the life of a typical cadet attending law enforcement training school. To help recruit tomorrow's new law enforcement members, this course was developed to inspire your men and women who sign up and are chosen to attend this fine program. Thank you to our Posts who sponsor these young men and women to attend this event at a cost of \$200 each. Don't forget about Blue Cap Day on Thursday June 23<sup>rd</sup> at the shooting range. Watch for details in the Up to Now on how to get there. Come and watch these young men and women participate in demonstrations from the drug dogs, swat team and run through shooting courses. Once again, let's congratulate the 2021 Youth Trooper Academy Scholarship winner – Wyatt Anderson of Bryant.

The American Legion and Scouting go hand in hand since the Boy Scouts was developed back in 1919. While attendance has dropped off over the years, it is important that the American Legion continues to stay involved with our local Scouting Squads, assisting them with funding, activities and even hands on training programs of the Scouting program. Our Boy Scouts will eventually grow into Eagle Scouts. The American Legion supports that program as well. The top Eagle Scout in the nation can earn a \$10,000 scholarship for college. If you know an Eagle Scout, we encourage you to have them fill out the American Legion Eagle Scout nomination form. Congratulations to our Eagle Scout of The Year – Riley Murphy – Summerset, SD. We encourage future applications to be turned in shortly after they are released for submittal by the state office. I would like to thank Rick MacDonald for his many years of leadership in the Scouting program. The current Chairman of the American Legion Scouting program in SD is Fred Nelson from Spearfish.

Another program you do not hear much about is the American Legion Junior Shooting Sports program. When you think of shooting programs, the programs of 4-H come to mind. 4-H is a great introduction to shooting sports, however there are several clubs that have been developed in many counties across the state where they come together at various sponsored events to compete against one another. All to educate and sharpen the shooting skills of these young shooters. These shooters compete in multiple events each year, such as NRA, American Legion or even in state shooting competition. Top shooters are recruited by Colleges or Military. There is one South Dakota Shooting Sport competition for the American Legion, held each year in Britton, SD in late March. Congratulations to Jenna Kruger from the Pierre Junior Shooters who is the South Dakota Sporter Champion and Jasmine Hayes from the Dakota Sharpshooters who is the South Dakota Precision Champion. Additionally, the Pierre Junior Shooters, sponsored by Post 8, is the Sporter Team State Champions and the Dakota Sharpshooters sponsored by Post 15 is the Precision Team State Champions. As a side note, Jordyn Ewine from North Dakota, but shoots with the Dakota Sharpshooters, has earned the title of Precision State Champion for North Dakota. Well done to all the youth shooters.

While we have talked about many of the “Hands On” programs under Americanism, we sometimes forget about many of the other activities that our Posts take part in each year that all fall under the Americanism umbrella. Activities such as; Operation Comport Warriors, Flag Education Program, School and Student programs - American Legion School Medal Award, American Education Week,

Veterans in the Classroom, Reinvigoration Veteran Awareness, Citizenship - Get out and Vote Citizenship Outreach, and Committee on Children & Youth.

Our Posts capture their involvement with all these programs in their CPR and Americanism reports each year. The Americanism reports are submitted around Spring meetings each year. Winners of last year's Americanism reports can be found in the 2021 proceedings book. I encourage each Post to submit their Americanism report and be proud of what you have done as a Post.

Lastly, but not least, we finish out the year with Legion Baseball. Baseball can be noted in your CPR report, however most of the games are played in June and July. If your Post supports Legion Baseball, please be sure to find ways to support their needs over their season. If help is needed to support your team, ask your SAL group to help with gate working or fundraising. Ask your Auxiliary Units for the same help if needed. If your Post wants to start a team but is low on players, reach out to other Posts in your area to help find players. Registration will be completed by the time this report is printed. Please make sure that all background checks are completed for all adults that interact with the players and please make sure that your team has insurance. Our player's protection and wellbeing should be our priority. Let us have a great 2022 Legion Baseball season!

Some Posts are very active, and others are not. Small Posts can experience frustration as they may wish to be active but Post size, number of active members and geographical location can play a major part in the decline of activity and members over the years. Whatever your Post size, large or small, don't be afraid to brag about those activities and programs that you are active with. It's best to mark down the activities you are involved with on both your Americanism and CPR report as you participate in that activity. These reports are used by National to help promote our programs with Congress to help our fellow Veterans and youth. Thank you for all that you do as a Post!



This will wrap up this year's Americanism Report. A big thank you to Commander Wolkow for his direction over the past year and Thank You to all members for your continued community service and service to the American Legion.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Harry Boner, Chairman

## **ATHLETIC COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Mr. Commander:

My report begins with the 2022 baseball registration which began Jan 1<sup>st</sup>. Registration ended May 31<sup>st</sup> with a total of 93 teams. We increased our number of teams this year by a total of 7 teams. We have 17 Class A Sr Teams, 20 Class A Jr teams, 42 Class B Sr teams and 14 Class B Jr teams. A very good year for baseball participation in SD. With 93 teams and approximately 13 to 14 players per team, our

program has about 1200 to 1300 players participating. A huge number for our baseball program.

This year the State A Sr Tournament will be hosted at Rapid City Post 22 from July 27<sup>th</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>. The Class A Jr Tournament will be hosted by Sioux Falls Post 15 from July 28<sup>th</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>. The Class B Sr State Tournament will be hosted by Gregory from July 29<sup>th</sup> through Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Class B Jr Tournament will be held in Clark from Aug 5<sup>th</sup> through Aug 7<sup>th</sup>. One final tournament to be held at Rapid City Post 22, is the Central Plains National Regional where teams from 4 states will compete for one spot to go to Shelby, NC to play in the American Legion World Series. Rapid City will host this Regional for the next 2 years. Also, this year's American Legion Golf Tournament will be hosted by the Post in Hartford on Sept 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. This tournament is open to any Legion or Son of the American Legion member. It is a fun time so please try and make it to this event.

For next year, the 2023 State Tournaments have been awarded to : Class A Sr tournament – Yankton, Class A Jr tournament – Harrisburg, Class B Sr tournament – Redfield, and the Class B Jr tournament – Lennox.

What's up for the future? If baseball continues to grow next year as it has this past year, we need more help. We have expanded our commission from 6 members to 8 but we have not found anyone as of yet to come forward to fill these 2 spots. We really need someone out West to fill a vacancy and another one anywhere within the state to fill our needs. Any Legion or SAL person is eligible to be on our Commission. Remember it is a working job not a position. Please contact me or anyone of our Commission members or our office in Watertown if at all interested. Our commission could maybe use some new ideas.



Commander, that concludes my report, and I would like to say thank you to you for all your support throughout this past year and also to everyone at our Department Headquarters for putting up with me because at times, I am not very prompt on responding to some of my emails. I get about 50 emails a day but only 49 are about baseball. I am starting to wear down.

Sincerely,  
Dan Sudbeck, Chairman

**ATHLETIC COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT**

Balance, 5-1-21		\$17,391.56
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>		
Entry Fees	\$7,200.00	
Interest	<u>\$ 6.45</u>	
	\$7,206.45	<u>\$ 7,206.45</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$24,598.01
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:</b>		

Commission Expenses	<u>\$4,384.08</u>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,384.08</b>	<b><u>\$ 4,384.08</u></b>
Balance, 5-1-22		<b><u>\$20,213.93</u></b>

## **BOYS STATE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Commander,

It is with great pleasure I can report we are a GO for the 79<sup>th</sup> Session of South Dakota American Legion Boys State, May 30 – June 3, 2022 at Northern State University.

We currently have 168 boys signed up, we are down over 100 registrations at this time. Again this year we decided to include seniors in the session to allow them an opportunity that they were robbed of due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

We will hold our annual meeting for the corporation during the State Convention Friday and Saturday June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Some agenda items are future incorporation of Seniors, Changes to the Bylaws to better reflect the corporation organizational structure, 2023 Session Dates, Annual Meeting date changes, and election of officers.

I thank every Legionnaire for their continued support of this great program. Additionally I thank all the volunteers who come together to put on such an important event. Without all their dedication we could not fulfil our mission to help America's youth understand and appreciate the American system of government and way of life including the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and to give young men a better knowledge of the fundamental principles of South Dakota State government.



Respectfully submitted,  
 C.P. Van Delist, Director  
 South Dakota American Legion Boys State

## **CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHAIRPERSON REPORT**

Commander:

We had 5 applications for TFA money this year to investigate. We paid out zero funds on these claims due to eligibility requirement of minor children was not met on 3 claims. One claim was sent to the Department of North Dakota since the home of the veteran was Fargo, ND. Then the last claim was going to be filed however the veteran managed to catch a break and didn't need our assistance.

I continued to provide “Dollar Tree” School Supplies and Toys to veterans around the state. Operation Home Front is a charity in Dollar Tree Stores where patrons can donate supplies to military families. Then volunteers across the state pick-up the donations for distribution. I strongly encourage all veterans to visit their local



“Army National Guard” armories to take advantage of these donations. The school supplies in August thru School Starting and toys in November thru Christmas. We send them out across the state with little expense and farthest reach using the armories. If you have questions about any of these donations, you can call 1-800-658-3930 for assistance locating the nearest armory.

Don Kranz  
Children and Youth Chairman

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance, 5-1-21		\$17,056.45
<b>Memorial/Donations</b>	\$1,225.00	
Interest	\$ <u>4.23</u>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$1,229.23	<u>\$ 1,229.23</u>
		\$18,285.57
<b>DISBURSEMENTS:</b>		
TFAs	\$-----	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$-----	<u>\$ -----</u>
<b>BALANCE, 5-1-22</b>		\$18,285.57

## EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Mr. Commander:

Two thousand twenty-one/twenty-two was another exciting period for the Educational Scholarship Committee. In 2019, we changed from a loan concept to a scholarship format. We invested \$120,000.00 with the South Dakota Community Foundation. Our beginning fund balance (1/1/2021) was \$141,350.51 and ending fund balance (12/31/2022) was \$145,496.84. Recipients will be announced at the state convention. Edit: Those recipients are as follows: Allison Gross - \$2,500, Kathryn Aymar - \$2000, and Megan Linke - \$1500.

We received one donation of \$100.00 in 2021.

Applications and brochures are online at [www.SDlegion.org](http://www.SDlegion.org). We are currently revising the application for 2022/23 scholarship year.

The 2022 Educator of the Year packets were due May 1, 2022. Because the deadline for this article was May 3, 2022, the committee did not have time to review the packets. The winner will be announced at the state convention.

The education scholarships offered by the Department of South Dakota are for post-secondary education, college, or technical schools, for children of veterans,

grandchildren of veterans, and veterans, who meet the requirements as set forth in the Education Scholarship brochure. Please read the brochure for all the current changes. In all cases, the veteran listed on the application must be a member of the South Dakota The American Legion. The student must attend a higher education school in the state of South Dakota unless their plan of study not taught in a South Dakota school. The fund is self-sustaining through donations.

Annually, the brochure and application processes are reviewed. No monies were added to the fund from the Department's outside income programs. More specific details can be obtained from State Headquarters, your District Education Loan Chairperson, or a member of the state Education Scholarship Committee. The state committee consists of Jerry Mencke, Huron, Paul Weidenbach, Lesterville, James Moore, Burke, Perry Schmidt, Redfield, Shawnee Redbear, Pine Ridge, Michael Pauling, Piedmont, Philip Egeberg, Brookings, Ed Hruska Jr., Sioux Falls, and Hugh Holmes, Mitchell.



The Education Scholarship Committee expresses our appreciation for the various memorials and donations received this past year, totaling \$1000.00. We also thank the Department Executive Committee, State Headquarters, American Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, and individuals throughout our great state.

Mr. Commander, thank you for selecting me as chairman of the prestigious Education Scholarship Committee. It is a great honor. Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio?

Respectfully Submitted,  
Hugh W. Holmes, Chairman

**EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Balance, 5-1-21		\$18,257.45
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>		
Loan Repayments	\$ -----	
Interest	\$ 4.10	
Memorials and Donations	<u>\$ 200.00</u>	
	\$ 204.10	\$ 204.10
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>DISBURSEMENTS:</b>		
Scholarships	<u>\$ -----</u>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ -----	<u>\$ -----</u>
Balance, 5-1-22		\$18,461.55



## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commander,

It has been an honor to serve this past year as the Chair of the Employment Committee, and to provide this report on their behalf. As Legionnaires, we have a responsibility to advocate the employment and retention of veterans. There are many great organizations that recognize the fact that veterans bring unique skills to the workforce, such as excellent technical education and training, and leadership abilities. Integrity and discipline are hallmarks of sound personal character, and although these values seem to be in short supply these days, they are common among veterans. Savvy employers recognize these very important qualities, and go the extra mile to recruit veterans that possess these traits. They also make sincere efforts to recognize veterans for their honorable and faithful service to the nation. The annual Employment Awards showcase some of the great organizations that support veterans, and enable us to recognize them for their contributions.

For 2021-2022, we received 2 nominations in 1 category: Sioux Falls Post #15 nominated JMJ Caseworks, and Spearfish Post #164 nominated the Spearfish Emergency Ambulance Service, each in the Employer of Veterans - Small category. Both nominations were outstanding. However, the committee determined the nomination for the Spearfish Emergency Ambulance Service was stellar, and they were chosen to receive the award.

The Spearfish Emergency Ambulance Service has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to veterans. Including the employment of veterans, they are also involved in a wide variety of community projects such as organizing blood drives, participating in emergency preparedness fairs, raising funds for Special Olympics, providing care packages for deployed military servicemembers, and much more. We are extremely fortunate to have such a fine organization within South Dakota, and they set a great example for others to follow. In addition to being selected as the sole department recipient, their nomination was sent to the national committee in January for consideration.

This year's Employment Committee was composed of the following members: Oz Enderby of Lead-Deadwood, Rick Gully of Watertown, Doug Henwood of Spearfish, and Patrick Steele of Aberdeen. This is the 3rd consecutive year each committee member volunteered to serve, and I would like to thank each of the members for their contributions.

For 2022, I would like to again ask for the assistance of all posts to look closely at deserving organizations in their area, and take some time to submit a nomination. I am happy to assist posts in this endeavor. So many organizations go to great lengths to support veterans, and we would be remiss if we don't take the time to call attention to their efforts. Thank you for your help in this important endeavor.



Respectfully submitted,  
Gregory K. Dias, Chairman

## SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION REPORT

Commander,

Your Foundation was established as a 501(C)(3) non-profit corporation in 2010 for the purpose of accumulating an endowed body of funds that would be professionally invested, with the earning from it to come back to the SD AL to help fund the Legion Programs. Your forward-thinking leadership realized back then, that an income flow from the Foundation would be important to help fund the programs of the SD American Legion. That has proven to be more and more important as time goes by, and will continue to be essential in the future.

The seed money to start the Foundation (approx. \$40,000) came from the SD Honor Flight, when it was dissolved. Since then, the balance has grown from the contributions of individuals, Posts, businesses and events. The annual Fun Auction held at the Department Convention has been an important source of funding. Thank you for participating! Donations of property and collectables as well as cash have been donated. The Foundation being named in individual wills or as the beneficiary of life insurance are terrific ways of helping in the future.

The principal balance of your Foundation will only grow over time. Of the earnings on the invested funds, approximately 4% of the balance is paid back to the SD American Legion. The rest of the earnings go into growth. At the present balance, approximately \$10,000 per year is paid back to the SD American Legion to assist with the many programs within the four pillars of the organization, with emphasis on helping children and veterans.

It has been reported nationally, that giving from businesses and corporations has slowed since the Covid pandemic, but that donations from individuals have been strong. The experiences of your Foundation have been similar, this past year. Individuals have remained strong donors, and Legionnaires are the strongest of the group. Thank you very much!

In the past year, contributions have been just over \$18,000. The Total Net Assets of the Foundation are presently just over \$276,000. The downtrend of the stock market in recent months effects the Foundation's balances. This past year, the Foundation has granted funds to support the Midwest Honor Flight and the Youth Trooper Academy program.



Thank you for your contributions to the SD American Legion Foundation in the past, and please continue with your support! We are all proud of the work that the SD American Legion does through its many programs. You can be proud of the effects that your contributions to the Foundation are making now, and will continue to make for decades and decades to come. Thank you!

Jim Kurtz, Chairman,  
Board of Directors

## DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN REPORT

Commander Wolkow,

It has been a privilege and an honor to serve and continue to serve as your Department Historian. I am working on the Department History for the year so you will have a remembrance of your year as Department Commander. I will also assist those who are working to put their histories together or online for the State Convention in June.

Post Historians should be working on their Post Histories right now for the History contest at our next State Convention. Winners in each category (scrapbook and narrative) can be entered into the National contest. These entries should cover the past years' term of your Post Commanders election to the end of his or her term.



Guidelines, including the point system for judging, is found in the Post Officers guide. Plaques will be presented to the first, second and third place winners at our State Convention in Huron.

I encourage all post historians to put together a post history, either in book form or online. There could be a category for online versions by next year. I thank all historians and Post members for their hard work and commitment in preparing these reports. Your Post members will appreciate your hard work in the years to come.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fred Lee, Department Historian

## INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORT

Fellow Legionnaires,

I would like to thank Commander Wolkow for appointing me to serve as the Chairman for the Internal Affairs Commission for 2022.

The Internal Affairs Commission met on 9 May 2022. Present at this meeting were State Commander Gary Wolkow, State Adjutant Kevin Hempel, Chairman PDC Mark Weinmann, PDC Byron Callies, PDC Terry Hanson, and PDC Tim Jurgens.

The Constitution of the American Legion, Department of South Dakota, provides in Article XV, Section 1, that "Any amendment to this constitution may be proposed by any Post, or by the Department Internal Affairs Commission. Any amendment proposed by a Post shall be submitted in writing to Department Headquarters at least six weeks prior to the annual Department Convention. The Department Adjutant shall present it immediately to the Department Internal Affairs Commission. At least 30 days prior to said convention, the Department Internal Affairs Commission shall transmit to all Posts, through Department Headquarters, a

full copy of all amendments submitted by Posts, together with the favorable or unfavorable recommendation of the Internal Affairs Commission thereon, with a brief statement of reasons for such recommendation, and at the same time the Department Internal Affairs Commission shall in like manner, distribute to all Posts, full copy of any proposed amendment originating with the Department Internal Affairs Commission itself.

No amendment shall be in order for consideration at any convention unless it shall have been so submitted or unless one day notice of proposed of a proposed amendment is given and there is then unanimous consent of all delegates to such consideration. If such unanimous is given, the Commander shall immediately and without debate, refer the resolution to the Department Internal Affairs Commission for consideration and recommendation to the proposing. Convention for final action.

The only way the American Legion is able to change and grow is with resolutions submitted by local posts within the Department.

This year, 9 resolutions have been submitted to State Headquarters from local posts, and 2 resolutions have been written by the Department Internal Affairs Commission, of these 11 resolutions, 5 resolutions are being referred to the Resolutions Committee at the State Convention,

**2 Resolutions received DO NOT PASS RECOMMEDATIONS.**

- Resolution 22-3 to change the election cycles for District Commanders,
- Resolution 22-9, to change the term limits on members of the Department Finance Commission.

**4 resolutions received DO PASS RECOMMENDATIONS.**

- Resolution 22-2 would change the elected term of County Commanders to 2 years to coincide with the term of the District Commander.
- Resolution 22-6 would allow posts in good standing with less than 15 members to have 1 delegate and 1 alternate to a vote at the State Convention.
- Resolution 22-10 would change the selection process and term limits on the Department Finance Commission.
- Resolution 22-11 would create separate committees for Membership committee and Marketing, Media and Communications committee.

Annual reports are welcome from the Sons of the American Legion and The Legion Riders; however no reports have been received at this time

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark Weinmann, Chairman,  
Internal Affairs Commission



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## LEGION RIDERS REPORT

Commander Wolkow,

The year 2020 took a heavy toll on all forms of public gatherings. The American Legion Riders of South Dakota was no exception. However, 2021 was a year of recovery. Motorcycles were back on the road attending rallies, leading funeral processions and raising funds for Veterans and their families statewide.

One of the earliest events in 2021 was the May “River Wreath Run” with over 20 Riders and family members gathered at Post 8 in Pierre SD. Riders faced snow, sleet, hail and tornadoes on this 2-day event to place a Memorial Wreath on the steps of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in Pierre. The group gathered Saturday night for a meet and greet at Post 8. A burger fry with all the fixings was also served there. At 1030 Sunday morning, all gathered on the steps of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall. A wreath was laid on the steps, the first of many as this has become an annual event for the Riders. The next one is May 22, 2022, at 1030 a.m. As in the 2021 event, Post 8 will host an ala carte reception Saturday night at 6:00. Sunday morning Riders will gather on the steps of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial to lay a symbolic wreath for all who have perished in service to our country. May they Rest in peace and never be forgotten.

Another state-wide event was the Commander’s 605 Ride in June. Outgoing Commander Fred Nelson (also an American Legion Rider) led a group of 16 Legion Riders out of Post 164, Spearfish SD, on a state- wide circuit of the perimeter of SD. The event took 4 days and covered over 1400 miles. Interstate travel was avoided at all costs. 20 Posts were visited along the way. Each Post provided refreshments and donations to the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. Riders dropped off and/or joined the ride each day. All together over \$4800.00 was raised from the posts visited and another \$1300.00 from the Annual Convention in Huron for a grand total of \$6100.00.

Many other SD ALR Chapters had busy summers as well. The Hot Springs Hoka Hey and Freedom Ride, Spearfish Patriot, Back the Blue and Jacket rides, Custer’s Maor Ride, Lemmon’s Corn Hole and Hometown Heroes Ride, Wagner’s Labor Day and Viet Nam Wall Ride to Parkston, Aberdeen’s Teddy Bear and POW/MIA Rides, and Watertown’s DTOM Veterans Ranch Run are just a few of the annual events hosted around the state. If you would like to participate or support them they can be found on the SD American Legion web site for more information. They all support the American Legion goals, Veterans and their families in one way or another.



Respectfully submitted,  
Rodney A. “Buck” DeWeese  
Liaison, American Legion Riders

## **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Commander,

Here is the annual report of the South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee. The members of the committee are Chairman Doug Feltman, Chris "Van" Van DeList, Kevin Morello, PDC Rod Martens and PDC Gary Watts. The lobbyists for this year were Doug Feltman, Adjutant Kevin Hemple, PDC Terry Hansen and Chris "Van" Van DeList.

On 13 February a Zoom meeting was held with all committee members attending. Bills that had been submitted were reviewed and the committee was given instructions to review the bills so that an informed decision could be made on each bill at the 22 February meeting in Pierre.

The Council discussed the bills that were likely to be of a concern to Veterans and set the Council's priorities. That evening the Veterans Council hosted a Legislative reception with all Legislators invited and it was well attended by the Veterans Council and Legislators.

On 22 February 2022 the Legislative Committee met in Pierre at Post # 8. Roll called showed the following committee members present: Department Commander Gary Wolkow, Chairman Doug Feltman, Chris "Van" Van DeList and Kevin Morello. Americanism Officer Harry Boner was present as a guest. The Legislative Committee then reviewed and discussed 13 bills, and a decision was made on how we were going to proceed on each bill.

There were 4 House bills that were discussed, and we were going to monitor 3, support and lobby for 1. There were also 9 Senate bills that were discussed, and we were going to monitor 8, support and lobby for 1.

The evening reception was hosted by Post # 8. All Legislators received a written invitation, and it was well attended. This reception gave the Legislative Committee, the Legion Lobbyist, and Legionnaires an opportunity to meet the Legislators, get to know them and give them our recommendations and thoughts on particular bills that had an impact on Veterans. At the reception while talking to the Legislators, it is very obvious that The South Dakota American Legion has a good and respected relationship with the Legislators in the State.

Post # 8 again did an excellent job in hosting the reception and served a delicious supper to all in attendance. Thank you Post #8.

Here are the results of the bills on the Legislative Committee's list:

HB 1001 - An act to revise the freeze on assessments for dwellings of disabled and senior citizens - **Signed by the Governor**

HB 1011 -An act to revise the application process for the reduction of tax on dwellings owned by paraplegics - **Signed by the Governor**

HB 1013 - An act to make an appropriation for certain costs related to Capitol Lake and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

HB 1067 - An act to require the waiver of animal adoption fees for veterans - **Deferred to 41st day**

HB 1083 - Provide a partial property tax exemption for the surviving spouses of certain veterans - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 19 - An act to provide that health care facilities and accredited prevention and treatment facilities may establish reasonable restrictions related to the medical use of cannabis - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 41 - An act to revise the appropriation for the construction of a National Guard Readiness Center in Sioux Falls, for the purchase and exchange of property between the state and the Sioux Falls Development Foundation, and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 48 - An act to make an appropriation for the redesign and renovation of the Wagner Readiness Center and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 49 - An act to authorize the Department of the Military to construct a cold storage building located in Rapid City, South Dakota to make an appropriation therefor and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 50 - An act to make an appropriation for water, wastewater and storm water projects throughout state government and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 63 - An act to revise the appropriation for road improvements to the State Veterans Cemetery, to provide for ordinary operation of the cemetery, and to declare an emergency - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 68 - An act to revise holiday pay for state employees - **Signed by the Governor**

SB 75 - An act to establish certain pay provisions for state employees working shifts longer than eight hours a day - **Deferred to 41st day**

SB 197 - came to the committee's attention late in the session but was very important to The American Legion:

To require the POW/MIA flag be displayed in the Senate and House of Representative Chambers - **Signed by the Governor**



If anyone wants more information on a particular bill listed above please contact me at (605) 234- 4143 or e-mail [doug202@midstatesd.net](mailto:doug202@midstatesd.net)

Commander Wolkow, I want to thank you for having faith in me and allowing me to serve as chairman of the Legislative Committee. I also want to thank the members of the Legislative Committee and the Lobbyists for The American Legion Department of South Dakota. We had a very good year and it would not have been possible without your support, dedication and willingness to travel for the good of The

American Legion. **Thank You!!**

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Feltman, Chairman

## **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Commander,

I would like to thank Commander Gary Wolkow for appointing me to serve as the Chairman of the Media and Communications Committee for 2021-2022.

Our new committee set out with the purpose of opening communications with our membership through both traditional and social media avenues. To accomplish this task, I have had the assistance of my team: Michelle Eosso of Rapid City, Patrick Merrill of Box Elder, Brian Siemonsma of Garretson, and liaison from the Membership and Marketing Committee, Travise Flisrand of Castlewood.

The Media and Communications in South Dakota has seen a major shift in the past year: with me taking a full-time job in Brookings County, the newspaper went to Gracie Terrall, a journalism major from South Dakota State University who was willing to help us out. The software knowledge that comes with the newspaper was hard to replace, but Gracie has been wonderful in stepping up!

In addition, a lot of faces have stepped up to the Facebook/Social Media game as well. Commendations to PDC Fred Nelson, Vice Commander Doug Feltman, Americanism Officer Harry Boner and Media Committeeman Michelle Eosso for helping fill in the gaps where I used to be. Communication truly can be a full-time job!



Respectfully Submitted,  
Courtney VanZanten, Chairman  
Media & Communications Committee

## **MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Department Commander Wolkow,

The 2021-2022 year in the South Dakota American Legion was started off from a great year where South Dakota was the #1 Department in membership for the 2021 year. Your Membership and Marketing (M&M) committee's service projects had support from a good number of Posts. Our two service projects for this year were the DTOM 22 Veteran Ranch "sweat equity" day and the Midwest Honor Flight fundraiser. Both events were more successful than we had initially anticipated. Service projects coordinated at the State level are a great way to help organizations who are helping the South Dakota veterans on a daily basis and to increase media coverage of what our Four pillars are.

The DTOM 22 Veteran ranch project on July 10, 2021, had volunteers from across the state coming together to help a South Dakota non-profit. The volunteers from 6 organizations donated over 600 hours of service to include installing 1,000 feet of fence, tore down an old barn, and a significant amount of general cleanup on



the ranch. Local news was there to cover the event and was showcased on the front page of 5 large city publications.

The Midwest Honor flight fundraiser campaign of “Send One” was a huge success. The initial goal was to raise \$50,000 so we could name the flight the “South Dakota American Legion Midwest Honor Flight”. The South Dakota American Legion Foundation donated the initial funds of \$10,000 to encourage donations from the Posts. Post 88 of White, SD came to 2021 State convention with over \$6,000 as well to solidify a solid start to this Fundraiser. As of May 1, 2022, over \$180,000 has been raised, this enough money to cover two flights of veterans. This gives our leadership this next year to utilize the media to broadcast the South Dakota American Legion story of community service. This campaign is a huge success for the South Dakota American Legion Family.

The M&M committee this past year created a recruiting brochure specific to the South Dakota American Legion using the consolidated post reports from the past 5 years to show impact. They also created 3 sets of recruiting displays. The displays were paired with folding tables, tablecloths, a wheeled case full of brochures and a SDAL themed runner. The 3 sets of recruiting materials were given to the 2 Dept. Vice Commanders and the membership chairman to be available for loaning out to Posts for larger recruiting events. This provides a professional looking recruiting table that can help Posts have a standard display to recruit from.



Membership totals for this year were slower than the previous year. As of May 1, 2022, we are at 92.03% of our membership goal. With a historic year of inflation from varying circumstances, many have reported that they were impacted from the inflation.

Thank you for this opportunity to continue serving in the South Dakota American Legion.

Very Respectfully,  
Travise Flisrand  
Dept. Membership Chairman

## MEMBERSHIP FUND

Budget Amount 2021-2022	\$ 8,000.00
Membership award from National	\$ -----
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,000.00</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS:</b>	
Committee, Travel & Awards	<u>\$3,501.85</u>
Balance in Fund, 5-1-22	\$4,498.15

## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Commander,

The South Dakota Public Safety Committee is tasked with promoting and selecting the "Law Officer of the Year" and the "Firefighter of the Year" programs. We also serve as a liaison for the SD American Legion to the SD Youth Trooper Program.

In July we worked with the South Dakota Highway Patrol during our ninth week-long SDYTA in Pierre. Twenty-four outstanding young people spent the week learning what it takes to be a Law Enforcement Officer. Several of these young people are also enlisting into the military. I know personally, that three of last year's graduates are now Marines plus several others are members of the National Guard and other branches. We can all be very proud of our Youth Trooper Graduates. We recently learned that there are 25 or more Law Enforcement Officers across the state that are graduates of the first eight academies. Those who attended the last two academies are not yet old enough to get certified. The success of this program is very rewarding to everyone involved.

SDHP Colonel, Rick Miller wrote "Our partnership with the American Legion has phenomenal program for youth in our state that are interested in law Enforcement. This last Youth Trooper Academy was filled with so many energetic, determined and team-oriented kids. On behalf of the SD Highway Patrol, I want to thank you and the rest of the American Legion of South Dakota for their continuing support in Law Enforcement. We look forward to many more years of working together!"

On Thursday of that week, we were happy to see many Legionnaires visit us at the firing range for "Blue Cap Day". That evening we sponsored a cookout for the recruits, mentors and visiting legionnaires.

During the graduation ceremony on Friday, Commander Wolkow, after a few remarks, presented Wyatt Anderson from Willow Lake as the recipient of the "American Legion Outstanding Leadership" scholarship.

The District Commanders or their representatives have done a great job of getting our YTA applicants interviewed. The SDHP and our Committee will again select twenty-four outstanding recruits and alternates to attend the SDYTA on April 22. These selections are made based on their interview scores and recommendations of the SDHP and our committee.

On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, our committee met to select the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and the Firefighter of the Year. We are pleased that we saw an increase in the number of applications for both of these awards. We thank the posts that took the time to recognize the great work that these first responders do for our communities. Every community has someone who deserves recognition for their service. We encourage much better participation in the future.

Our committee selected Garret Masten from Rapid City as the Law Officer of the Year. We recently learned that Officer Masten has been selected as the National Regional Law Officer of the Year. We will learn before National convention if he

receives the National Law Officer Award. Congratulations to Officer Masten and we hope to see you at the National Convention.

We also selected Cody Linneweber, from Garretson, as our Firefighter of The Year. Cody has a great resume. As of this writing, we have not heard from National as to the disposition of his application.

Congratulations to Cody and good luck.

During our January meeting, we visited about the National Guidelines for the Firefighter of the Year Award. The award may be presented to a Firefighter who is also an EMT. We decided to develop a resolution to present at the Department level to separate the awards and ask National to develop an Award for EMT's and Paramedics separate from the Firefighter Award.

The resolution has been written and passed by the Chamberlain Post and will be considered at this year's convention in Watertown. We would appreciate your support!!

I would like to thank the members of our committee and everyone who has supported our goals by submitting nominations for Law Officer and Firefighter of the Year as well as helping us find applicants for and sponsoring the SDYTA recruits.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Price, Chairman



## DEPARTMENT SCOUTING REPORT

Commander:

As an Eagle Scout and Legionnaire, it has been an honor to serve as the chairman of the Department Scouting Committee this past year. Our committee consists of Matt Lagerstrom, Roger Hoyme, and Richard MacDonald. If we include our Department Adjutant, Kevin Hempel as a member, we have four Eagle Scouts and one longtime supporter of Scouting on the committee.

Boy Scouts were the first youth group that the American Legion supported. Our support for the Boy Scouts of America began at the American Legion's first national convention in 1919. Nationally the American Legion sponsors 2,500 plus units.

South Dakota has 103 Scouting units. Eighteen of these Troops and Packs are sponsored by a South Dakota American Legion Post, which leaves 85 Troops or Packs that could use a sponsor or co-sponsor.

Within South Dakota, probably the longest continued American Legion Post sponsorship of a Troop goes to Spearfish Post 164. They have sponsored Boy Scout Troop 17 for 93 years.

Contact your local Troop or Pack and have your Post check into sponsoring possibilities. Explore opportunities to help make a positive impact. Perhaps Post members could serve as merit badge counselors? Help provide transportation to an outing. If it weren't for an American Legion member that stepped forward, I likely would not have received Eagle Scout.

Each year, the Department of South Dakota awards one Eagle Scout of the Year, and this year's Eagle Scout of the Year is Riley A. Murphy from Summerset, SD. The Troop's sponsor is American Legion Post 320 in Rapid City, SD.



The American Legion annually honors the Eagle Scout of the Year at the national convention. The winner receives a \$10,000 scholarship, and the three runners-up are each awarded \$2,500 scholarships.

Our committee's goals for the upcoming year are to increase the number of scouting units sponsored by the American Legion Family and increase the number of Eagle Scout of the Year application packages.

As the scouts say, "Do a good turn daily."

Respectfully submitted,  
Fred Nelson, Chairman  
Department Scouting Committee

## **SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION ANNUAL REPORT**

Commander Wolkow,

This year for the Sons of the American Legion – Detachment of SD has been nothing shy of amazing. Our leadership team hit the ground running and we haven't looked back yet. We started the year off working in the Veterans Building at the State Fair, informing people about the SAL and recruiting new members.

Then, it was on to the National Convention in Phoenix, Ar. There, South Dakota was well represented and received four national awards. When we returned from National, we went right into the District Fall Meetings. We had an officer at every fall meeting, which is great exposure and representation for the SAL. We also had a representative at all Spring meetings too.

We chartered 5 new squadrons this past year: Lake Preston, Custer, Gregory, Tea, and Milbank. We also have Bruce, Menno, Rock Creek with applications out. Our leadership team has made contact with Mobridge, Murdo, Canistota, DeSmet, Aurora, Baltic, and Polo and they are all interested in starting a SONS squadron too. Our leadership team has also met with the Sioux Falls post/squadron on how to be more active and try and rejuvenate their unit.

The South Dakota Detachment committed to placing 3,500 flags for the National Commanders project, Flying Flags for Heroes. I'm excited to say that we have met and surpassed that goal and as a Nation have placed over 1 million flags at veterans graves this past year. As a detachment, we have also donated more than \$1 per membership capita towards the CWF. To date, the amount is just shy of \$1,500. And it is safe to say that we already have at least that amount committed to for next year.

The best experiences I personally have had this past year, besides working with you legionnaires and representing the SAL would be my trip to Washington DC

at the end of February for the 3 wreath laying ceremonies and being the guest speaker at Menno's Memorial Day program.

At this time, I am happy to report that South Dakota is 3rd in the nation for membership rate and leading the Midwest Region. We have another all-time high for membership. We sit at 125% membership rate (it's actually higher because we still have some transmittals processing yet). We also won our Border Battle Challenge against Nebraska for renewal rate, which stands at 90.88%. I couldn't be any prouder of our South Dakota Detachment on all the hard work they have done and all that they have accomplished this past year.



South Dakota also has a member that has his hat in the ring for National Recruiter of the Year!

I need to give a big shout out to the SAL leadership, Shane, Jeff, Dewey, Kerry...they all have stepped right up when asked for help. And another big thank you to the staff at headquarters, as they always helped with anything we have asked.

Thank you for allowing myself to be part of this great organization and I look forward to the great things we will accomplish in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Casey Hanson

SD SAL Detachment Commander 2021-2022

## TRAINING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Commander,

It has been a privilege to serve as the Training Committee Chair this past year along with the following members: PDC Fred Nelson, Kevin Morello Piedmont Post, Jack French Spearfish Post and Bill Peters Sioux Falls post.

The Commander's vision and mission statements for the Committee continue to provide direction for the committee. The Training Committee is now a Standing Committee of the Department of South Dakota American Legion as approved by resolution at the 2021 Department Convention in Huron, SD.

As directed by the Department Commander, the Training Committee has worked on developing training for all levels within the department from member to Department Officers. Since the formation of the Training Committee in 2019, it has accomplished the following tasks. Classes were prepared and offered at Mid-Winter 2019 and 2021. The committee developed and is implementing a Training Plan for the formation of a Department Legion College. All the courses with the exception of Training the Trainer/Facilitator have been developed and offered over the past 3 years. One of the more popular and in demand courses that has been offered is the MyLegion Class which was highly attended at the past Mid-Winter meeting.

As the committee moves forward, we continue to look for skilled instructors to conduct face-to-face or video training. Another initiative that the committee is

considering include establishing a once-a-month video training opportunity for members similar to the National Training Tuesday events. Training surveys were completed at all the District meetings this past spring and these will be used in determining the needs for future training.

The Training Committee continues to encourage all Legionnaires to provide input, suggestion, and ideas for courses, delivery, methods, and instructors. Our mission is to reach all Legionnaires and we appreciate input that is helpful in doing just that.

Respectfully submitted,  
Krisma D. DeWitt  
Training Committee Chair



**TRUST FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Mr. Commander,

This past year has shown a market correction in all sectors of the trust fund. The fund has averaged a negative 7.48% annual yield. The year-end market value as of April 30, 2021, was \$704,856, compared to a year end market value on April 30, 2022, of \$652,075.

The current asset allocation for the trust is as follows:

- Cash Alternatives is 1.91% which currently yields 0.17%;
- Fixed Income 44.05% with a current yield of 2.83%;
- Equities is 52.01% with a current yield of 1.36%;
- Real Assets is 2.03% with a current yield of 8.24%.



The committee was not able to meet this year. We were not able to get the information from Wells Fargo on a timely basis to hold a meeting. The market is in a very volatile state at this time, and we will continue to monitor the fund as needed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Rakness, Chairman

**SUMMARY OF ASSETS AS OF JUNE 2022**

Description of assets	Market Value	Assets
Cash (money market)	\$14,995	2.4%
Bonds (fixed income)	\$278,046	45.1%
Common Stock (Equities)	\$312,381	50.7%
Real Asset Fund	<u>\$10,776</u>	<u>1.7%</u>
	\$616,198	100.00%

## VA&R COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commander,

On behalf of the Department Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission, which consists of Chairman Warren Aas of Watertown, Vice Chairman PDC Tim Jurgens of Milbank, Noel Cummins of Milbank, Jim Childers of Spearfish, Jerry Lolley of Sturgis, Carole Gregg of Rosebud, Gary Schumacher of De Smet, and Dr. Tracy Diefenbach of Warner, it gives me great pleasure to present the following Department VA&R Commission report.

We are proud to welcome Dr. Tracy Diefenbach, member of Warner Post #137, as the newest member on our VA&R Commission. We thank Dr. Tracy (Doc T) for volunteering her time and talent to help make our VA&R program the best we can be.

There are numerous awards every post in our department can win throughout the year and be recognized for their achievement either at our Mid-Winter Conference or on stage at our annual department convention. There are Americanism awards, Membership awards, and several individual awards Legionnaires can win. One of the major projects our commission has been working on is making all the posts in our department aware of the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Award for Excellence. This award is open to every post in our department that will recognize one post for their outstanding work and accomplishments in VA&R. All posts can apply for the award, and we encourage all posts to submit for the award. The criteria for the award is on our department website and you may also contact our State Headquarters for assistance. The deadline for all applications for this award is May 1 of each year. The winning post will be recognized on stage at all state conventions.

The Department VA&R Commission meets twice per year. We make every effort to meet face-to-face and our other meeting is by Zoom or teleconference.

As a member of the National VA&R Commission, I had the privilege of attending the Washington Conference (by Zoom in March 2022) to listen and participate in the national VA&R agenda. I make a point to provide all the information I can get my hands on from our meeting and make it available to all VA&R Commission members in our department.

Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) is available for any veteran in your community that may have fallen on hard times and needs some financial assistance to get back on their feet. TFA is generally one time grant money and other requirements apply. Your post commander has more details about TFA.

If you are a veteran and would like to check into getting enrolled in the VA for healthcare, we encourage you to stop in and see your local Tribal or County Veterans Service Officer in your county for assistance.

Thank you, Commander Wolkow, for allowing me the privilege to serve as the Chairman of the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission



during your year. We encourage all Legionnaires to attend their post meetings. Ask your fellow members if they need a ride to the meeting. You'll be glad you did.

Respectfully submitted,  
Warren L. Aas, Chairman

**V.A.V.S. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Thank you, Commander Wolkow, for appointing me as the V.A.V.S. Committee Chairman this year. I appreciate the opportunity to serve you and the organization.

It has been a learning experience and a great and eye-opening experience spending time at the Sturgis and Hot Springs VA hospitals wrapping gifts and helping Veterans shop for gifts for their families. If you ever have the opportunity to assist at these events, I recommend you do so. There were restrictions on how many could be at these events this past year so check with the local representative or facility before showing up.



Due to Covid-19 we had one meeting over via Zoom and a proposal to increase our line item in the budget was discussed.

The generosity of the post was shown at all the Spring District meetings and was greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work supporting the veterans who are in need.

Rodney Smith, VAVS Chairman

**VAVS COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT**

Balance, 5-1-21		\$4,872.38
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>		
Interest	\$ 1.77	
Memorials and Donations	<u>\$4,539.00</u>	
	\$4,540.77	<u>\$4,540.77</u>
		\$9,413.15
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:</b>		
VA Facilities	\$-----	\$-----
	\$-----	\$-----
Balance, 5-1-22		\$9,413.15



**SUMMARY OF 2022 AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
CONVENTION AND CONVENTION  
COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

**2022 CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS**

The following Convention resolutions were reviewed for the 2022 year to be considered at the Department convention.

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-1**

Submitted by the Legion Asset and Infrastructure Review Working Group

**Title:** Retention of Veterans Affairs Healthcare Facilities

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee  
Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Rehabilitation Committee.

Convention Rehabilitation Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-2**

Submitted by Rapid City Post 22

**Title:** To Change the Interval for County Commanders Terms to Coincide with Their Respective District Commanders

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, That a change to the State of South Dakota American Legion Constitution Article V Section 3, line 8, to read: In the event that there is no County Association, County Commanders from each of the even numbered districts at the regular spring district meeting held in the even numbered years, and from each of the odd numbered districts at the regular spring district meeting held in odd numbered years, by vote of delegates from Posts in his/her county, and such County Commanders shall serve as a member of the District Executive Committee for a term of "two" years starting with his/her election"; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, once this resolution is approved it shall be considered in immediate effect.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-3**

Submitted by Higgins-Jessen-Olson Post #88, of White SD

**Title** Amending the Department Constitution to Allow for Variation to District Commander Election Cycles

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO NOT PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By the Higgins-Jessen-Olson Post #88 of The American Legion of South Dakota assembled at their regular meeting in White, South Dakota, April 25, 2022, The Department Constitution of The Department of South Dakota shall be amended to allow Districts with multiple Vice Commanders to set the terms of office for their District Vice Commanders as they see most advantageous for the future of the organization; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, To support this change, Article IV, Section 9 of The Department Constitution of The Department of South Dakota shall be amended to read: "In each District there shall be elected one, or more, District Vice Commander at the same meeting at which the District Commander is elected, unless the District Constitution has a different arrangement.;" and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That any current District policies shall remain in place, "as is", until they are changed by the various Districts of the Department at one of their future District Meetings; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, Once this resolution is approved, it shall be considered in immediate effect.

*The resolution was not adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-4**

Submitted by Olson Reid Post 250, Castlewood, SD

**Title:** Formation of Department of South Dakota Legion College

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Finance Commission for comment and then to Convention Resolutions Committee with a DO PASS recommendation.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Internal Organization Committee.

Internal Organization Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By the Department of South Dakota American Legion 103rd Annual State Convention voting majority, that the Department of South Dakota Legion College be established with the Department Training Committee establishing the curriculum and identifying format, instructors, venues and the schedule for said college.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-5**

Submitted by Potter Post 3, Chamberlain, SD.

**Title:** Allowing Non-firefighter EMTs to be Eligible for EMT Award

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Americanism Committee.

Convention Americanism Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation as amended.

**RESOLVED**, By The American Legion, Department of South Dakota in Annual Convention assembled, June 16-19, 2022, in Watertown, SD, that The National American Legion change the requirement that would allow a State certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic (EMT-P) be recommended for,

and receive the Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic of the Year award without the requirement that they be a "certified firefighter"; and, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)/ Paramedic (EMT-P) award be a standing award just as the Law Enforcement Officer of The Year, and Firefighter of The Year; and, be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 103rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 2022.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-6**

Submitted by Bergstrom-Bodeen Post #128, of Hudson, SD.

**Title:** Post Membership Strength for Delegate Eligibility

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, by the American Legion Department of South Dakota, in regular meeting assembled in the 2022 Department Convention held in Watertown, South Dakota, June 16-19, 2022, that Article IV, Section 2. be changed to read "CONVENTION COMPOSITION – DELEGATES – VOTE. The Annual Department Convention shall be composed of delegates and alternates from each Post with fifteen or more members. Each Post shall be entitled to two delegates and two alternates and to one additional delegate and alternate for each fifty or major fraction thereof, memberships paid up fifteen days prior to the date of the Department Convention. Posts with less than fifteen members will be reviewed by the Mid-Winter Department Executive Committee to ensure they are in good standing and if so approved, will be entitled to one delegate and one alternate. The vote of each Post represented by a delegate or delegates at the Convention shall be equal to the total number of delegates to which that Post is entitled"; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, The Department Executive Committee in the Mid-Winter meeting will examine posts with less than fifteen members and determine if each post is in good standing and is active in their community and if so, approve their delegate and alternate delegate status; and it further finally be it

**RESOLVED**, Article V, Section 1 be changed to read "POST-NUMBER OF MEMBERS -CHARTER. A local unit shall be termed a Post which shall have a minimum membership of fifteen, except the Department Executive Committee shall review the membership of posts with less than fifteen to determine good standing. The Executive Committee may authorize the chartering of a Post with less than fifteen members if it considers there is sufficient justification. No Post shall be received into this organization until it shall have received a charter. A Post desiring a charter shall apply to the Department which shall forward the application to National Headquarters with its recommendation." and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, this will take effect immediately upon approval.

*The resolution was passed.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-7**

Submitted by Arthur Peterson Post #88 of Chester, SD

**Title:** Veteran Suicide Awareness And Prevention Training

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolution Committee

Convention Resolution Committee Action: Send to Convention Internal Organization Committee.

Convention Internal Organization Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By American Legion Post 136, in regular meeting assembled in Chester, South Dakota December 13, 2021, That Post 136 recommends the American Legion Department of South Dakota strongly encourages suicide awareness and prevention training at the post level; and, be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That posts are strongly encouraged seek out qualified trainers and invite them to provide training for their Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-8**

Submitted by Department Headquarters

**Title:** Establishing Additional Employer of the Year Category

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Rehabilitation Committee.

Convention Rehabilitation Committee Action: Send to Convention Employment Committee.

Convention Employment Committee Action: DO NOT PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, the National Executive Committee of The American Legion create a separate category of Employer of Veterans Awards for Health Care Employers to allow them the opportunity to be recognized as employers of veterans and such award criteria be developed to allow employers of health care workers to compete for said awards

*The resolution was not adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-9**

Submitted by Piedmont Valley Post 311

**Title:** Department of South Dakota Finance Commission Term Limits

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO NOT PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By the Department of South Dakota American Legion Annual 103rd Annual State Convention voting majority, that the Bylaws clause “shall not be eligible for re-election for at least one year” be replaced and changed to read “any member who was elected to fill a term less than four years and whose expiring term is less than a full four years, shall be eligible for re-election for a second term and at the conclusion of a second term shall not be eligible for re-election for at least one year.”

*The resolution was not passed*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-10**

Submitted by the Internal Affairs Commission

**Title:** Department of South Dakota Finance Commission Member Selection and Term limits

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, that Article V, Section 1, of the South Dakota American Legion By Laws which reads “The Department Commander shall have available for consultation a Finance Commission of five members, of which four shall be elected by the Executive Committee for a term of four years, with the term of one member expiring each year, at the close of the Department Convention. The member whose term is expiring shall not be eligible for re-election for at least one year. By virtue of his/her office, the Department Finance Officer shall be the fifth member of the Finance Commission and serve as its Chairperson. The Executive Committee shall convene immediately following the adjournment of each annual Department Convention, and by election, fill vacancies on the Finance Commission. In case of any vacancy between conventions, it shall be filled at the midwinter conference meeting of the Executive Committee or by mail or e-mail ballot of the Executive Committee” be changed to read: The Department Commander shall appoint members of the Finance Commission to serve for revolving 4-year terms selected from a list of qualified persons vetted and approved by the Department Executive Committee prior to the Department Convention. The Commander will appoint to vacant positions as well as fill any unexpired terms. By virtue of his/her office, the Department Finance Officer shall be the fifth member of the Finance Commission and serve as its Chairperson. Finance Commission members shall be eligible to serve more than one consecutive term.”; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, Article V, Section 1 of the By Laws which reads, “The Executive Committee shall convene immediately following the adjournment of each annual Department Convention, and by election, fill vacancies on the Finance Commission. In case of any vacancy between conventions, it shall be filled at the midwinter conference meeting of the Executive Committee or by mail or e-mail ballot of the Executive Committee” shall be removed.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-11**

Submitted by Internal Affairs Commission

**Title:** Reorganization of Department Standing Committees

Internal Affairs Commission Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, the Media and Marketing Committee will become the Marketing, Media and Communications Committee and the Membership and Marketing Committee will become the Membership committee and changes will be made to the Department Constitution and By Laws to reflect the changes in the permanent committees.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-12**

Submitted by Ralph Leui Post 135 of Gettysburg, SD

**Title:** Increasing Award Amounts for Oratory Winners

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Americanism Committee.

Convention Americanism Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By Ralph Leui Post #135, That the scholarships awarded for participants in the South Dakota High School Oratorical Scholarship Program "A Constitutional Speech Contest be as follows: for first place \$1,500, for second place \$1,000, for third place \$500 and Remaining finalists each receive \$200 each.

*The resolution was passed*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-13**

Submitted by Howard Marquardt Post 260 of Badger, SD

**Title:** Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with 70-100% VA Disability

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Legislative Committee.

Convention Legislative Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation as amended.

**RESOLVED**, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That the South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee actively lobby that the State of South Dakota amend the South Dakota Codified Law Chapter SDCL 10-4-40 and 10-4-41, to include the service-connected disabilities 70%-90% for the property tax exemption and also based upon Individual Unemployability.

*The resolution was adopted*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-14**

Submitted by Birch-Miller Post 9, Milbank, SD

**Title:** Birch-Miller Post 9 of Milbank, SD to Host the State A, the State B And the Junior Legion Baseball Tournaments in Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in Milbank, SD

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Americanism Committee.

Convention Americanism Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation as amended.

**RESOLVED**, That in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the State A, State B and Junior A and Junior B Legion State Baseball Tournaments be held at the newly constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2025 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2025 baseball season.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-15**

Submitted By: Birch-Miller Post 9, Milbank, SD

**Title:** Birch-Miller Post 9 of Milbank, SD to Host The Region 6 American Legion Baseball Tournament in 2026 in Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in Milbank, SD

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Send to Convention Resolutions Committee.

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Americanism Committee.

Convention Americanism Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation as amended.

**RESOLVED,** That in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of The Birthplace of American Legion Baseball that the Region 6 American Legion Baseball Tournament be held at the newly Constructed Legion Field Complex in Milbank, SD Birthplace of American Legion Baseball in 2026 with final dates to be determined prior to the 2026 baseball season.

*The resolution was adopted*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-16**

Submitted By: Received from the Convention floor

**Title:** Retention of Veterans Affairs Healthcare Facilities

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Rehabilitation Committee.

Send to Convention Rehabilitation Committee Action: Send to the Convention floor with a DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED,** By The Department of South Dakota American Legion in State Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation that prevents the VA from closing hospitals and community based outpatient clinics unless existing requisite community services, both inpatient and outpatient, that the VA currently provides are met or exceeded.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-17**

Submitted By: Convention Resolutions Committee

**Title:** Thanks to Watertown for a great Convention

That the delegates of the 2022 American Legion Department of South Dakota State Convention express thanks and appreciation to Codington County American Legion Post 17 in Watertown, South Dakota, and the city of Watertown, South Dakota, for all the courtesies provided to make this a great convention.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**Resolution No. SDAL 22-18**

Submitted By: Sioux Falls Post 15

**Title:** Lobbying Support for Employment of County Veteran Service Officers

Convention Resolutions Committee Action: Send to Convention Legislative Committee

Convention Legislative Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

**RESOLVED**, By The Department of South Dakota American Legion at the Department Convention assembled in Watertown, SD, June 16-19, 2022, that The South Dakota American Legion lobby the South Dakota Legislature during the 2023 session to pass legislation to amend SDCL 33A-1-22 to include the stipulation that counties with Veteran Populations of 1000 to 3999 according to the most recent Annual VA GDX Report have at a minimum one full-time dedicated County Veterans Service Officer; and for counties with greater than 4000 Veterans an additional one full-time dedicated County Veterans Service officer be employed for each additional 4000 Veterans.

*The resolution was adopted.*



# 2021-2022



## GARY WOLKOW "L.E.T.S"

Let's End The Slide

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

